

**THE SOUTH AFRICAN PRESS AS WATCHDOG OR LAPDOG: A
CONTENT ANALYSIS OF PRESS COVERAGE OF A HEALTH POLICY
MAY 1997-FEBRUARY 1998
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degree of Master of Philosophy at the University of Stellenbosch**



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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this study report is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Date: 25.11.1998.....

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The debate around the role of a critical media in South Africa has emerged from growing government criticism of media coverage. The general perception appears to be that the need for a vigilant press has lapsed since the election of a democratic government. In 1994, Thabo Mbeki stated that "as the liberation leaders are now in government, there is no need for a watchdog press".

This exploratory study aims to assess the nature of newspaper coverage of the government. This assessment is limited to coverage by the Cape Times, Die Burger and Sowetan of Dr Zuma's Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Bill. The May 1997 to January 1998 time frame of the study corresponds with the health policy's development from a clause in the White paper to its promulgation as an Act.

Besides assessing the nature of newspaper coverage, i.e. whether coverage is positive, negative, neutral or balanced, two main propositions are suggested. The first proposition is that the ideological stance of a newspaper may influence newspaper coverage of government policy. The second proposition suggests that media ownership will influence newspaper coverage of government policy. The quiet revolution of media ownership is expected to stimulate ideological shifts that may affect the nature of newspaper coverage.

As the focus of the study falls on the content of printed media, namely newspapers, content analysis constitutes the research design. Both the manifest and latent contents of the newspaper articles are analyzed and the results are interpreted in relation to the three propositions. The findings suggest that while newspaper coverage of the health policy is generally critical, it is not overly critical. Positive, neutral and balanced articles equalize negative coverage.

Newspaper coverage serves as an important indicator of the role that the newspaper is assuming in relation to the government. Although the results of this analysis are limited to coverage of one aspect of government policy by the Cape Times, Die Burger and Sowetan, one may extrapolate about the theoretical approach being adopted. Coverage of the three newspapers indicates a combination of the libertarian and development approaches to media/society relations. The developmental media approach is not being espoused by any of the three newspapers. It appears as if the sampled newspapers are fulfilling their watchdog roles by reporting critically on government policies. These results bode well for the press' role in the consolidation of South Africa's democracy.

OPSOMMING

Die woordstryd rondom die rol van 'n kritiese media in Suid Afrika is uit 'n groeiende regerings kritiek op nuusdekking afkomstig. Dit wil voorkom asof die regering meen dat die behoefte vir 'n noulettende pers verval het na die verkiesing van 'n demokratiese regering. In 1994, het Thabo Mbeki byvoorbeeld te kenne gegee dat "aangesien bevrydings leiers nou aan bewind is die bestaan van nuuswaghonde nie meer nodig is nie".

Die doelwit van hierdie navorsing is om te bepaal hoe nuusdekking die regering raak. Die dekking is beperk tot dié van die *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* en *Sowetan* oor Dr. Zuma se Mediese, Tandheelkundige en Aanvullende Professionele Wetsonderwerp. Die tydperk Mei 1997 tot Januarie 1998 dek die gesondheidsbeleid se ontwikkeling van 'n Witskrif tot die uitvaardiging as 'n wet.

Behalwe om die aard van nuusdekking te bepaal, bv. of dekking positief, negatief, neutraal of gebalanseerd is, is twee ander proposisies ondersoek. Die eerste proposisie is die verband tussen die ideologiese posisie van 'n nuusblad se nuusdekking en die invloed daarvan op regeringsbeleid. Die tweede proposisie handel oor eienaarskap van koerante en die nuusdekking van regeringsbeleid.

Die fokus van hierdie navorsing val op die inhoud van nuusblaaie en inhoudsanaliese dien as die navorsingsontwerp. Die klaarblyklike sowel as die latente inhoud van die artikels word ontleed en die resultate word volgens die proposisies vertolk. Die bevinding is dat alhoewel nuusdekking van die gesondheidsbeleid in die algemeen krities is, is dit nie oorweldigend krities nie. Positiewe, neutrale en gebalanseerde artikels balanseer negatiewe dekking.

Nuusdekking speel 'n belangrike rol in die verhouding tussen nuusblaaie en die regering. Alhoewel die resultate van hierdie ontleding beperk is tot die dekking van 'n aspek van regeringsbeleid deur die *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* en *Sowetan*, kan 'n ekstrapolering van die toepaslike teoretiese benadering moontlik gemaak word.

Dekking van die drie nuusblaaie dui 'n kombinasie van die Liberale en Ontwikkelings (Development) benaderings tot media-gemeenskap verhoudings aan. Die Ontwikkelingende (Developmental) persbenadering word nie deur die drie nuusblaaie voorgestaan nie. Dit wil voorkom asof die nuusblaaie hul rol as waghond vervul deur kritiese verslag te doen oor regeringsbeleid. Die resultate is bevorderlik vir die rol wat die media speel in die bevestiging van demokrasie in Suid Afrika.

DEDICATION

**This study report is dedicated to my mother, Anne Powell, for her
sacrifice and support.**

**It is also dedicated to the memory of my father, Neville Powell, who never
stopped believing in me.**

LIST OF CONTENTS

I. CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. THE PRESS AS WATCHDOG OR LAPDOG	
1.1.1. Media and Ideology	
1.1.2. South Africa's Transition from Authoritarianism to Democracy	3
1.1.3. The South African Press after 1994	4
1.2. RESEARCH DESIGN	5
1.2.1. Research Problem	
1.2.2. Aim of Research	6
1.2.3. Significance of the Research	
1.3. EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS	8
1.3.1. Method of Research	
1.3.2. Broad Research Problem	9
1.3.3. Research Questions and Propositions	10
1.3.4. Universe and Population of Study	12
1.4. MOTIVATION FOR SELECTION OF PRINT MEDIA	
1.4.1. Motivation for Selection of Cape Times, Die Burger and Sowetan	14
1.5. MOTIVATION FOR SELECTION OF DR NKOSAZANA ZUMA AS THE GOVERNMENT CASE STUDY	15
1.5.1. Criteria for Selection of the Government Case Study: Dr Zuma	
1.5.2. The Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill	16
1.5.3. The Health Policy within the Public Policy Framework	19
1.5.3.a The Concentric Schema	
1.5.3.b The Hierarchical Schema	20
1.5.3.c Booysen and Erasmus' Central Government Schema	21
1.6. CHAPTER SUMMARY	23
II. CHAPTER TWO GENERAL HISTORY OF THE PRESS IN SOUTH AFRICA	25
SECTION ONE: HISTORICAL CONTEXT	
2.1. INTRODUCTION	
2.2. THE CAPE TIMES	27

2.2.1.	Origin of the Cape Times	
2.2.2.	The Origin of Times Media Limited	28
2.2.3.	The Relationship Between the Government and the Cape Times	29
	2.2.3.a <i>Before 1990</i>	
	2.2.3.b <i>After 1990</i>	30
2.2.4.	The Focus of the Cape Times	
2.3.	DIE BURGER	31
2.3.1.	The Origin of Die Burger	
2.3.2.	The Origin of Nasionale Pers	
2.3.3.	The Relationship between the Government and Die Burger	32
	2.3.3.a <i>Before 1990</i>	
	2.3.3.b <i>After 1990</i>	34
2.3.4.	The Focus of Die Burger	
2.4.	THE SOWETAN	35
2.4.1.	The Origin of the Sowetan	
2.4.2.	The Origin of the Argus Company	37
2.4.3.	The Relationship between the Government and Sowetan	39
	2.4.3.a <i>Before 1990</i>	
	2.4.3.b <i>After 1990</i>	
2.4.4.	The Focus of the Sowetan	40
2.5.	THE 'QUIET REVOLUTION' OF MEDIA OWNERSHIP	
2.5.1.	Phase 1	41
2.5.2.	Phase 2	42
2.5.3.	Phase 3	44
2.5.4.	Phase 4	45
2.6.	CIRCULATION AND READERSHIP	46
2.6.1.	Circulation and Readership before 1990	47
2.6.2.	Circulation and Readership after 1990	
2.7.	SECTION SUMMARY	52
	SECTION TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	53
2.8.	INTRODUCTION	
2.9.	MASS COMMUNICATION	
2.9.1.	Definition of Mass Communication	
2.9.2.	Four Philosophical Approaches to Mass Communication	
	2.9.2.a <i>Functionalist Approach</i>	
	2.9.2.b <i>Symbolic Interactionist</i>	54

2.9.2.c <i>Phenomenological Approach</i>	55
2.2.2.d <i>Critical Theory Approach</i>	56
2.9.3. Social Scientific, Normative, Operational and Everyday Theories of Media-Society Relations	
2.10. NORMATIVE THEORY OF PRESS/SOCIETY RELATIONS	57
2.10.1. Authoritarian Approach	58
2.10.2. Libertarian Approach	59
2.10.3. Democratic- Participant Approach	61
2.10.4. Social Responsibility Approach	
2.10.5. Soviet/Communist Approach	63
2.10.6. Developmental Approach	64
2.11. A THEORETICAL APPROACH FOR SOUTH AFRICA	66
2.12. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEDIA AND GOVERNMENT	70
2.13. EXISTING MEDIA RESEARCH	71
2.13.1. General Media Research	
2.13.2. Media Research in South Africa	72
2.14. SECTION SUMMARY	74
III. CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH DESIGN AND ANALYSIS	75
SECTION ONE: RESEARCH DESIGN	
3.1. INTRODUCTION	
3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN	76
3.2.1. Propositions, Conceptualisation and Operationalisation	
3.2.1.a <i>Propositions</i>	
3.2.1.b <i>Conceptualisation</i>	77
3.2.1.c <i>Operationalisation</i>	78
3.2.2. Content Analysis	
3.2.2.a <i>Manifest Analysis</i>	79
3.2.2.b <i>Latent Analysis</i>	
3.2.2.c <i>Substantive and Procedural Analysis</i>	
3.2.3. Rationale for Content Analysis	80
3.2.4. Sampling	81
3.2.4.a <i>Stage One</i>	
3.2.4.b <i>Stage Two</i>	82
3.2.4.c <i>Stage Three</i>	84
3.2.5. Construction of Coding Categories	85

3.2.6. Reliability and Validity	86
3.3. PILOT STUDIES	87
SECTION TWO: DATA ANALYSIS	88
3.4. INTRODUCTION	
3.5. MANIFEST ANALYSIS	
3.5.1 Frequency of Articles	89
3.5.2. Direction of Articles	
3.5.3. Direction by Month	91
3.5.3.a <i>Positive Articles by Month</i>	92
3.5.3.b <i>Negative Articles by Month</i>	93
3.5.3.c <i>Balanced and Neutral Articles by Month</i>	
3.5.4. Frequency of Variables	94
3.5.4.a. <i>Modes for whole sample, positive and negative column</i>	97
3.5.4.b <i>Modes for the Cape Times, Die Burger and Sowetan</i>	98
3.6 LATENT ANALYSIS	99
3.6.1. Newspaper coverage by Direction	
3.7. SECTION SUMMARY	101
IV. CHAPTER FOUR DATA INTERPRETATION	102
4.1. INTRODUCTION	
4.2. MANIFEST ANALYSIS	104
4.2.1. Frequency of Newspaper Articles	
4.2.2. Newspaper Articles by Direction	105
4.2.3. Direction of Newspaper Coverage by Month	110
4.2.3.a <i>Positive by Month</i>	112
4.2.3.b <i>Negative by Month</i>	113
4.2.4. Frequency of Variables in Thematic Categories	116
4.2.4.a <i>Column A Section III</i>	121
4.2.4.b <i>Column B Section I</i>	122
4.3. LATENT ANALYSIS	123
4.3.1. Newspaper Articles By Direction	
4.3.2. Newspaper Ideology by Direction	126
4.3.3. Newspaper Ownership by Direction	128
4.3.4. Frequency of Directional Scores	130

4.4.	RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY	131
4.4.1.	Reliability	
	4.4.1.a <i>Stability - The Test-Retest Method</i>	132
	4.4.1.b <i>Reproducibility - Intercoder Reliability</i>	136
4.4.2.	Validity	139
4.5.	CHAPTER SUMMARY	140
V.	CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUDING REMARKS	141
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	147
	APPENDICES	

LIST OF DIAGRAMS AND TABLES

DIAGRAMS

1. Diagram 1: Concentric Model Of Policy Making	20
2. Diagram 2: Hierarchical Model of Policy Making	20
3. Diagram 3: Influences on Central Government Policy Making	22
4. Diagram 4: Media Control in 1990 Times Media Limited and Argus	38
5. Diagram 5: Assets of Argus Holdings and Newspapers after 1994	43
6. Diagram 6: English, Afrikaans and Black Control of JSE	44
7. Diagram 7: The Holding Company of New Africa Publications	45
8. Diagram 8: Content Analysis Structure of Study	79
9. Diagram 9: Content Analysis as Unobtrusive Research	80
10. Diagram 10: Number of Articles dealing with Zuma and Community Service	104
11. Diagram 11: Percentage Distribution of Newspaper Titles	105
12. Diagram 12: Newspaper Articles By Direction	106
13. Diagram 13: Frequency Distribution of Articles	112
14. Diagram 14: Positive Articles by Month	113
15. Diagram 15: Negative Articles by Month	115
16. Diagram 16: Frequency of Variables in Positive and Negative Column	117
17. Diagram 17: Variable Scores for each Thematic Section	120
18. Diagram 18: Newspaper Contribution to Scores in A Column Dealing with Motive of Bill	122
19. Diagram 19: Newspaper Contribution to Scores in B Column dealing with Zuma	123
20. Diagram 20: Newspaper Articles by Direction	124
21. Diagram 21: Frequency Distribution in Cape Times	125
22. Diagram 22: Frequency Distribution in Die Burger	
23. Diagram 23: Frequency Distribution in Sowetan	126
24. Diagram 24: Newspaper Ideology by Direction	128
25. Diagram 25: Newspaper Ownership by Direction	130

TABLES

1. Table 1: Average Newspaper Readership by Race	49
2. Table 2: Average Newspaper Readership by Language	50
3. Table 3: Concepts, Variables and Indicators of Research Propositions	76
4. Table 4: Sample Frame of Newspaper Articles	83
5. Table 5: Number of Articles dealing with Zuma and Community Service	89
6. Table 6: Frequency of Newspaper Articles by Direction	90
7. Table 7: Frequency Distribution of Articles by Direction	91

8. Table 8: Total Number of Articles by Month	92
9. Table 9: Positive Articles by Month	
10. Table 10: Negative Articles	93
11. Table 11 Balanced Articles by Month	94
12. Table 12 Neutral Articles by Month	
13. Table 13: Frequency Distribution of Variable Scores	95
14. Table 14: Variable Mode by Newspaper	98
15. Table 15: Latent Analysis of Newspaper Articles - By Direction	100
16. Table 16: Frequency Distribution of Latent Analysis	
17. Table 17: Newspaper Ideology by Direction	107
18. Table 18: Newspaper Ownership by Direction	109
19. Table 19: Variable Scores for each Thematic Section	119
20. Table 20: Newspaper Ideology by Direction	127
21. Table 21: Newspaper Ownership by Direction	129

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A	CODING SHEET
APPENDIX B	CODING INSTRUCTIONS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. THE PRESS AS WATCHDOG OR LAPDOG

The title of this research essay is derived from Guy Berger's (1996) metaphorical description of the press as a vigilant watchdog. Berger (1996: 1) uses the term "watchdog" to refer to the guardian role which media is required to play within civil society. A watchdog press, ensconced within civil society, is free to monitor government policies and possible power abuses. In 1992, Mandela used the watchdog description when he stated that "a free press will be the vigilant watchdog of the South African public against the temptation to abuse power" (Berger, 1996: 16).

In contrast, a newspaper that operates beyond the ambit of civil society by acting on government decree can be termed a "lapdog" press. A lapdog press tends to report positively on government events and policies (Berger, 1996: 16). These two metaphors can be related to three press concepts within the normative media approach. While the theoretical links will be expounded upon in later sections, it is important to note here that the watchdog press is indicative of the libertarian press concept while the lapdog press is associated with the authoritarian or developmental press concepts.

1.1.1. Media and Ideology

The role of the media is largely determined by the societal structure in which it operates (De Beer, 1987: 71). The dominant values in a society are said to have a direct influence upon the way in which the media operates within that society. Before 1990, South Africa's media was white-dominated and generally reflective of the values of white South Africa (Jackson, 1993: 5, 36). Apartheid ideology was therefore represented in the ideologies of many South African newspapers. Ideology refers to symbolically charged beliefs and expressions that interpret and evaluate the world. These interpretations allow actors to mobilize, organize and justify courses of action (Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought, 1991: 235). Ideology affects the way in which institutions, like the

media, interact with the environment. Tomaselli, Ruth and Muller (1987: 22) define ideology as an interlinked system of political, economic and political structures that infiltrate all experiences. Using this definition of ideology, one can suggest that the ideological discourse of a newspaper affects its coverage of the government.

Potter (1975: 161) identifies two dominant press ideologies of the South African press before 1990. The English newspapers were classified as Libertarian, while the Afrikaans newspapers could be described as Authoritarian. Tomaselli and Louw in Diederich and De Beer (1998: 92) expand Potter's two-pronged classification to include the following press categories

- Liberal or western concept of the press: mainly anti-Apartheid English newspapers like *Rand Daily Mail*, *the Star* and *Sunday Times*.
- The Authoritarian press concept: The Afrikaans pro-Apartheid press until 1950's. Later, newspapers like *Die Beeld* moved away from partisan newspaper coverage.
- The conservative English press: Supported the National Party. Newspapers like *The Citizen*.
- The social-democratic or Alternative press: Anti-apartheid publications like *The Weekly Mail*, *Vrye Weekblad* and *Indicator SA*
- The progressive-alternative Community press: Anti-apartheid newspapers targeted at the black and Coloured townships, *Grassroots*, *Saamstaan* and *Iliswe Lase Rini*
- The left-commercial Anti-apartheid press: Titles like *New Nation*, *South* and *New African* placed more emphasis on news.
- The neo-fascist, Pro-apartheid and right alternative press: *Die Afrikaner* and *Sweepslag*
- Press linked to Bantustan Infrastructures: Titles like the pro-Inkatha *Ilanga*
- White-owned newspapers aimed at black readers: *Sowetan*, *Imvo Zabantsundu*, *Post*, *City Press*
- Miscellaneous: Regional newspapers, free sheet, in-house publications etc.

These ideological classifications are derived from the historical backgrounds of the press in South Africa. Chapter two provides an historical overview of the press in South Africa

before 1990. It is important to refer to these traditional ideological roles when examining the relationship between the press and the government after 1990. One may presume that a new government may have caused an ideological shift that will be reflected in newspaper coverage. Whereas Afrikaans newspapers supported the Nationalist government (Potter, 1975), the new ANC-lead, democratic regime may have an uneasy relationship with the Afrikaans media. As Ton Vosloo, executive of Nasionale Pers, states, "the Afrikaans press is becoming increasingly critical - maybe [they have] learnt from the past" (Harris, 1996:21). The former opposition English press may be more lenient in its coverage of the new, liberal government (Jackson, 1993: 34).

1.1.2 South Africa's Transition from Authoritarianism to Democracy

The election of 1994 marked South Africa's transition from authoritarian to democratic rule. Democratisation involves two crucial moments; liberalisation and consolidation. Liberalisation, also referred to as transition, refers to the institutional processes associated with the emergence of a new opposition (Breytenbach, 1996: 14). De Klerk's momentous February speech, which called for the unbanning of political organisations like the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and the African National Congress (ANC), can be seen as the genesis of South Africa's democratic transition (Johnson and Schlemmer, 1996: 6). The lifting of restrictions on political parties paved the way for the election of a new government in 1994. Other institutional moves involved the lifting of media restrictions, the promulgation of a liberal constitution and the passing of legislation to redress past racial and gender discrimination (Johnson and Schlemmer, 1996: 6).

While elections satisfy the procedural aspects of democracy, they are not sufficient for the consolidation of democracy (Esterhuyse, 1995: 18). Dahl in Breytenbach (1996: 15) notes that democratic consolidation calls for the creation of meaningful and representative institutions. To ensure that the democratically elected government is held accountable, these institutions must operate independently of government influence. Autonomous institutions existing separately from the state and family comprise civil society (Shils in Gouws, 1993: 15). Civil society accommodates freedom of religion, profession, political association as well as freedom of the mass media (Gouws, 1993: 15).

The election of 1994 completed the transitional phase of South Africa's democratisation. The next phase, which involves the consolidation of democracy, requires the reconstruction of political, economic and social institutions within South African society

The large-scale transformation of South African society is reflected in the radical restructuring of its media. Studies in other countries undergoing transitions from authoritarian to democratic rule, like Russia, reveal similar trends. The restructuring of society filters through to civil society and leads to the transformation of media institutions (Froneman and De Beer, 1993: 53). Diederich and De Beer (1998: 85) cite 1997 as the incipience of South Africa's media evolution. Four years into democratic rule, the ANC-lead government still confronts a media tainted by the legacy of Apartheid. Before 1990, newspapers that opposed government policies were silenced with repressive legislation and censorship (Berger, 1996:8,9). State manipulation of the media, especially the Afrikaans Press, stood in conflict with the tenets of civil society. As a media that operates without government interference is able to hold the government accountable, it is necessary to redefine the role of the media in South Africa's emerging civil society (Macozoma, 1991: 152).

1.1.3. The South African Press After 1994

The euphoria of the 1994 election has dissipated and rifts in the relationship between the government and media are becoming more obvious. The government, lead by the ANC, appears to view media's role from the developmental perspective (Du Plessis, 1996: 123-125)[See chapter three, section two]. Mbeki is reported to have said that the press is avoiding its new role in South Africa's nascent democracy (Berger, 1996: 17). While some may argue that the media should provide coverage in support of government transformation, Johnson in Merrit (1995: 165) provides the counter-argument that, "given the likelihood of an enhanced one-party hegemony in the new state, the historic responsibility of the media for the preservation of liberal, democratic values will be as great, if not greater, than it was at the height of the late and rightly hated Apartheid regime". While the media has undergone structural transformation, the role of the media in South Africa's emerging democracy remains contested and unclear.

1.2. RESEARCH DESIGN

An examination of literature dealing with the transformation of the media in South Africa reveals three core issues¹: media structure, media ownership and media function and role. Although the focus of this research essay falls on the third issue - the function and role of the media - the three themes should not be viewed as separate issues. The perception is that newspaper ownership influences the editorial policy of a newspaper and therefore, the nature of its government coverage. Media ownership has been a contentious issue, especially since 1994 (Mabote, 1996: 320).

Until 1995, press concentration in South Africa was among the highest in the world. Four newspaper groups controlled almost 90% of the newspapers in the country. Since then, the "Quiet Revolution" has seen the gradual dissolution of this press concentration. Black empowerment groups, like Nail and Kagiso Trust, are growing increasingly prominent (Grové, 1996: 327). These changes in ownership, while positive for the restructuring of the media, may have serious implications for editorial independence. Some newspapers, like the *Sowetan*, are defending their editorial independence by signing editorial charters (Mabote, 1996: 323).

1.2.1. Research Problem

The research problem being explored in this research essay deals with the nature of newspaper coverage in South Africa. Conflicting views of the press' approach to the current government make an exploratory study of newspaper coverage pertinent. Newspaper coverage serves as an indicator of the role being played by the media in South Africa. The study therefore focuses on the direction of newspaper coverage, namely whether coverage is generally positive or negative. Generally positive coverage of the government may indicate a lapdog style press, while critical coverage may suggest an adherence to the watchdog press typology. Section 1.3.2. provides a more detailed discussion of the broad research problem.

¹ See Steyn, 1994; Grové, 1996; Berger, 1996

1.2.2. Aim of the Research

The object of this research essay is to explore the relationship between the press and the government in South Africa's new democracy by looking at newspaper coverage. While neither the media nor the government denies the importance of the media in democracy, there is contention about the role that the South African press **should** play in the new political dispensation. The following comment by Thabo Mbeki reveals a government perception of the role of media: "the government recognizes the role of media to be a critical commentator on government activity...but are the relations between the media and government of necessity hostile? Our own view is that such a relationship is not generic to those two institutions" (Johnson, 1996: 297). The government seems to support a media that will promote its efforts to transform South Africa (De Beer, 1996: 121). In contrast, the media feel that, as civil society institutions, they have a right to fulfill a watchdog role. In 1998, Moegsien Williams advised the South African national Editors' Forum (Sanef) to "reaffirm that South Africa's new constitution has granted newspapers a historical role to be critical watchdogs; especially over those who wield power in our society" (*Cape Times*, 1998: 8). Critical coverage of the government is deemed as a necessary component of democracy. While this research essay will not attempt to provide a definitive explanation of the role the press should adopt, an examination of newspaper coverage may indicate the role that newspapers may currently be assuming. The direction of newspaper coverage may serve as an indicator of the role being assumed. A newspaper with more critical coverage may be closer to the watchdog typology than a newspaper with predominantly positive coverage.

1.2.3. Significance of the Research

As South Africa approaches its second democratic election in 1999, the relationship between media and the government becomes more relevant. There is speculation that the government and media lack a clear understanding of their new roles in a democratic dispensation. Whereas some government leaders view negative coverage as an attempt to undermine the government, journalists assert their right to critical coverage of the government (Berger, 1996: 8). Democracy requires a press that is committed to critical and objective coverage. It is crucial that media and government adopt a relationship that

benefits both without undermining democracy. It has been argued that the consolidation of South Africa's democracy depends upon the ANC's attitude towards the press. The government must realize that the press should be able to criticize its leaders if necessary (*Die Burger*, 1994: 5).

The major concern in media circles is that the ANC is accusing the press of negative coverage as a campaign ploy (Patten, 1998: 10). By blaming critical coverage on misrepresentation by the media, the ANC can divert attention away from any existing faults. Shifting the focus of the public to a common scapegoat, like the media, is a cunning campaign tactic. If the ANC can convince voters that the media is targeting it, the ANC may win some sympathetic votes. Du Preez (1991: 201) also notes that elections provide the only real contact between the public and their political representatives. The media is therefore responsible for informing the public of government policies.

The public's perceptions of government leaders, formed partly by media coverage, explain the ANC's concern over critical press coverage. The ANC government is also particularly concerned about the English press' portrayal of government activities as a large portion of the ANC constituency read the English newspapers. Another problem is that the ANC is not as cohesive as it was before 1994. Negative coverage may exacerbate these rifts. Finally, the English press impacts directly on international perceptions of South Africa and its government. The government wants to be seen as legitimate and strong in the eyes of the international community (Uys, 1996: 26).

This research essay aims to augment existing media research on the relationship between the press and the government in South Africa. There is a need for a more extensive study of the relationship between South Africa's press and government. Although this study is primarily exploratory, the findings may provide the basis for further explanatory research. As South Africa prepares for its second, democratic election, it is imperative that the role of the media is defined and accepted by both the government and the media. This research will therefore contribute to the elucidation of the nature of current press

coverage and provide postulations about the role being played by the press in South Africa. The findings of this research paper will be useful to both government leaders and journalists seeking clarity on government-press relations in South Africa.

1.3. EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

As the nature of newspaper coverage may serve as an important indicator of the role of the newspaper in society, an empirical examination of newspaper coverage is appropriate. Time and space constraints limit this assessment to the coverage of one government policy by three newspapers. The three newspapers selected for this purpose are the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan*. To assess coverage of a government figure and government policy, it was decided to concentrate on one case study. Motivation for the selection of Dr Zuma, Minister of Health, is provided later in this section. Media coverage of the Minister of Health, Dr Nkosazana Zuma's Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill will be evaluated by analyzing the content of the three selected newspapers. One can then use the results to extrapolate on general government coverage by the print media. These results should not be seen as generalizable to coverage of the government in general. As an exploratory study, the findings may form the basis of further, more extensive explanatory research.

1.3.1 Method of Research

As newspaper coverage of government is under scrutiny, it is relevant to analyze the content of the newspaper articles. Content analysis is the most suitable research method as it allows one to extract inferences from the text (Whimmer and Dominick, 1987: 166). The assessment of newspaper coverage will involve both latent and manifest analysis, looking at the content of newspaper articles. As content analysis allows for unobtrusive research, the researcher can also make assertions about the communicator of the information as well as the audience that the text is targeting. Inferences about the target audience of the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan* will be drawn from an examination of circulation and readership figures. Content analysis is suitable for a comparative study of the three newspapers (Weber, 1985: 9-10). Content analysis involves ten important steps:

1. Formulation of research question
2. Definition of sample universe
3. Selection of sample
4. Defining units of analysis
5. Construction of coding categories
6. Quantification of coding categories
7. Codification of content
8. Data analysis
9. Data interpretation
10. Testing of validity and reliability

(Whimmer and Dominick, 1987: 171-186)

The research problem and possible research questions are outlined in this section. The research process, as outlined in steps two to ten, is dealt with in chapter three.

1.3.2 Broad Research Problem

As mentioned earlier, one of the problems currently defining the media debate in South Africa is the lack of consensus regarding the media's role in society. Dissent over the role of the media has fuelled hostility between the press and the government. The ANC-lead government has become increasingly critical of media coverage. There is a perception that the media should uphold the government and report positively on government policies. In 1994, Thabo Mbeki revealed his frustration with the critical media saying "four years ago [he] was made to feel like a hero, now [he] is made to feel like a villain" (*Sunday Times*, 1994:20). President Nelson Mandela has also been vociferous in his criticism of the press, especially black journalists. Mandela is reported to have referred to black editors as "token appointments in a white newspaper industry" (*Cape Times*, 1998: 8). In 1996, Mandela warned, "as long as they (media) touch on the integrity of the ANC...they must not expect me to fold my arms" (Khumalo, 1996: 9). Comments like these suggest a recalcitrance of the government to accept that critical coverage is not synonymous with disloyalty (Diederich and De Beer, 1998: 85).

Louw (1996:37) asserts that the ANC-lead government's uneasy relationship with the media may stem from the party's liberation tradition. Commenting on a meeting between Mandela and black journalists, Jon Qwelane observed that the "problem is one of identity - the ruling party, as government, may still be finding it difficult to separate the role which black journalists played so admirably during the liberation struggle, from the role they now are, or ought to be playing in a democratic post- Apartheid South Africa" (Tomaselli, 1997: 62).

Having achieved its goal of freedom, the ANC is perhaps uncertain of how to exchange its authoritarian struggle tactics for democratic governance. As the government wrestles with the dismantling of Apartheid structures and the implementation of nation building policies like the RDP and GEAR, there is mounting dissatisfaction with negative media coverage. In his Mafikeng speech, Mandela accused the media of standing in opposition to the ANC saying that "the bulk of the mass media as set itself up as a force opposed to the ANC" (Mafikeng Speech, 1997). Likening the media to the former National party government, Mandela described the press as "waging a campaign against government attempts at transformation" (Coetzee, 1997: 17).

1.3.3. Research Questions and Propositions

This section has suggested that newspapers in South Africa emanate from differing ideological perspectives, with the *Cape Times* and *Sowetan* representing the Libertarian ideology and *Die Burger* representing the Authoritarian ideology. It was also shown that ideology influences interaction with the environment and therefore, may influence the way in which newspapers report on the government. The discussion of South Africa's democratisation highlights the potential for a possible ideological shift in the stance of newspapers in South Africa after 1990. Whereas Afrikaans newspapers were supportive of the National Party government, they are likely to be more critical of the ANC-led government. Newspaper ownership was mentioned as a variable that may also influence newspaper ideology and therefore newspaper coverage. From these postulations, one can pose the following research questions:

- Is media coverage generally positive, negative or neutral?

- Will newspaper ideology influence newspaper coverage of the ANC-lead government?
- Will ownership affect newspaper coverage of the government?

Using the ideological categories of Tomaselli and Louw in Diederich and De Beer (1998: 2), one can formulate the following propositions:

- Newspapers from the libertarian ideological category may be more supportive towards the new ANC-lead government than newspapers of the Authoritarian, pro-Nationalist government
- Newspapers owned by TML and the Independent Group may be more positive of the government than newspapers of the Nasionale Pers Group
- Newspapers of a black newspaper group, like New Africa Publications (NAP) will be more supportive of the ANC-lead government

Using the press concepts outlined in chapter two, one can propose that

- Newspapers with more positive than negative coverage of the government may adhere to a developmental, rather than libertarian press concept.

Two main concepts comprise the core of this study: the ideology of the newspaper and newspaper coverage. In the working propositions, these concepts are defined as variables, meaning that they may hold more than one value. The dependent variable in this study is newspaper coverage of government. Newspaper coverage may be positive, negative, balanced or neutral. The independent variable that may influence the nature of newspaper coverage is newspaper ideology. Using the classification of Tomaselli and Louw in Diederich and De Beer (1998), one can conceptualize ideology as Authoritarian or Libertarian. Newspaper ownership may also be defined as an independent variable that may influence newspaper coverage. Chapter three of this research essay deals with the conceptualization and operationalisation of the dependent and independent variables.

respectively (Jackson, 1993: 47). Ideologically, the Afrikaans press could be categorized as Authoritarian, while the English press followed the Libertarian approach adhered to by Britain (Potter, 1975:17,161).

Although mention will be made of the Afrikaans press as pro-government until 1994 and the English press as the official opposition, it must be noted that the alternative press formed the third leg of the South African press tripod. Although the English press was more sympathetic to the Anti-Apartheid struggle, the English press can only be termed the "opposition press" by default. As Potter (1975:161) notes, the English press contributed to the illusion of democracy by voicing limited opposition to government policy. Some analysts have criticized this "opposition role" by saying that the English press actually practiced "safe opposition" by resisting only the trivial aspects of National Party policy. Furthermore, white ownership of the English press ensured that the English press could not blatantly challenge the white Nationalist regime (Hachten, Giffard and Antony, 1984:97). The *Sowetan*, one of the newspapers selected for this study, initially owned by the white-controlled Argus Company, does not fall into the Alternative Press category.

Print media has been selected as, under draconian Apartheid legislation, the print media provided an outlet for some criticism of the government (Jackson, 1993: 5-6). Although Television was also moulded by Apartheid, its strong government ties prevented it from assuming an oppositionary role. Speculation regarding the SABC's independence from government influence also precludes the inclusion of electronic media in this study. Most government criticism of the media has been directed at the print media (Lelyveld, 1996: 301-302). Jordan (1992: 177) expounds the importance of newspapers with the estimate that, within the African community, each newspaper is read by at least three people. This research essay therefore tests government claims of an overly critical media with an exploration of newspaper coverage.

1.4.1. Motivation for Selection of *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan*

Apartheid rule divided the press into three categories: the English, the Afrikaans and the black/Alternative Press. It is therefore pertinent to assess government coverage by examining newspapers from each of the three broad, historical groupings. The newspapers selected for this study are the *Cape Times* as representative of Times Media Limited (Later Independent Newspapers), *Die Burger* as representative of Nasionale Pers and the *Sowetan* as representative of the Argus Company until its take over by New Africa Publications in 1994. The three newspapers therefore not only represent three major ideological cleavages; they also emanate from three different ownership blocs. As already mentioned, Potter (1975: 161) characterizes the pre - 1990 Afrikaans press as Authoritarian and the critical English press as Libertarian. Diederich and De Beer (1998: 92) reinforce this ideological classification while adding a category for white owned black press. The *Sowetan*, which until 1994 was owned by the Argus Company, does not fall into the Alternative Press category (See Tomaselli and Louw, 1991). As it the *Sowetan* was formerly controlled by the Argus Company, it may be placed within the Libertarian ideological category.

These traditional ideological roles are significant as one presumes that an ideological shift has taken place in the last eight years. The new ANC-lead, democratic regime may have an uneasy relationship with the Afrikaans media, while the pro-democratic English press may be more lenient in its coverage of the new, liberal government. There are fears that Times Media Limited and Independent Newspapers are likely to be more pro-government, especially as Tony 'O Reilly is reported to be an associate of President Mandela (Harris, 1996: 21). The *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* represent two diametric ideological and linguistic blocs. Only three newspapers are available in languages other than English and Afrikaans. *Ilanga*, a Durban-based newspaper published in Zulu and English, is distributed bi-weekly. The Xhosa and English *Imvo Zabantsundu* is only available on Saturdays. The *Umafrika*, published entirely in Zulu, is distributed once a week (South African Yearbook, 1996: 447). There is, however, no daily national newspaper published in a black language.

The *Sowetan* has been selected to typify a newspaper initially targeted at black readers (Tomaselli and Louw, 1991: 6). The *Sowetan*, which was owned by the Argus Company, is currently controlled by New Africa Publications. As South Africa's largest national daily, the *Sowetan* wields considerable influence. Unlike newspapers of the Alternative press, the *Sowetan* was initially aligned with Black Consciousness, rather than the liberation movement (Louw, 1993: 164). The *Sowetan* strives to appeal to the needs of the broader community, not just black readers, by retaining its editorial independence, making it an important inclusion in this study. In view of Mandela's strong accusations against black journalists, it is salient to assess the nature of government coverage from a black-owned newspaper. As Dr Zuma's Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill is a national issue, the *Sowetan* ensures that national coverage is also assessed.

1.5. MOTIVATION FOR SELECTION OF THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND HER HEALTH POLICY AS THE CASE STUDY

There have been numerous claims from government that the media is portraying government members and their policies in an overly negative manner. The government feels that attempts at problem solving are being hampered by press criticism (Bunsee, 1996: 9). As this exploratory study aims to assess the nature of newspaper coverage of the government and its policies, Dr Zuma has been selected as a government case study. Case study research involves the selection of a one or a few cases of a phenomenon for detailed examination. Case study research is suitable for exploratory, as well as descriptive and explanatory studies. The use of a case study may provide possible answers to 'how' and 'why' questions (Johnson and Joslyn, 1995: 144). As this study aims at an exploration of **how** newspapers report on government, it is applicable to concentrate on a government case study.

1.5.1. Criteria for selection of the government case study: Dr Nkosazana Zuma

Three main criteria were stipulated for selection of the case study: The case study had to be a member of the ANC and hold a position in the National Assembly. The case study must also have attempted to address a national issue through a public policy. Dr Zuma

qualifies as a case study as she serves as Minister of Health in the National Assembly. She also occupies one of the 252 ANC seats in parliament. Since assuming the Health portfolio in 1994, Zuma has endeavored to address the health crisis in South Africa. While Zuma and the health department aim to improve health services for all South Africans, many of the health proposals have been dogged by controversy. The misappropriation of funds for the Sarafina II Aids play overshadowed Zuma's bid to increase Aids awareness. Zuma has also been lambasted for recruiting Cuban doctors to augment health personnel. Her support of Virodene drug trials has also received criticism (Financial Mail, 1996: 21).

1.5.2. The Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Profession Amendment Bill

In 1997, the Health Department released its White Paper on the Transformation of the Health System in South Africa. The White paper highlighted three bills that required attention:

- The Medicines and Related Control Amendment Bill
- The Pharmacy Amendment Bill
- The Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Profession Amendment Bill

This study focuses on newspaper coverage of the proposed Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Profession Amendment Bill that called for community service for graduate doctors. Chapter four of the White Paper states that in order to distribute health personnel throughout the country, the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Act of 1974 should be amended. Section three calls for all health professionals to spend at least two years in a public sector, non-tertiary institution, prior to entering health practice (White Paper on the Transformation of the Health System in South Africa, 1997: 57-60). Zuma's proposed community service bill therefore serves as the case study for government policy.

Zuma's proposal to extend medical training with two years of community service is referred to as legislative policy-making. Submissions by the public and relevant interest groups contributed to the policy process (Campbell, 1997: 6). The five stages set out by

Hanekom (1991: 51) can be used to define the time frame of the study of Zuma's community service policy. The proposal for extended community service was first included in the White Paper's recommendations for the transformation of the Health Service in April of 1997. The White paper serves as the broad statement of government policy (Legislative Process, 1997). Following comments from interest groups, the policy was considered by the cabinet in the form of a legislative proposal. The Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill [B35-97] was tabled in May 1997. The Bill called for the amendment of the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Act of 1974. Newspaper coverage of Zuma's community service policy is therefore measured from May 1997. The Bill evoked mixed responses from the public and the medical fraternity. For example, the Interns Alliance described the Bill as a transgression of civil rights (Christianson, 1997: 13). Others saw the Bill as a form of conscription, akin to National Party tactics of the Apartheid years (*Finance Week*, 1997: 11). The Bill was withdrawn on the 11 June 1997 to allow for additional public comment.

The revised bill [B62-97] was introduced on 1 August 1997. The Bill included the important insertion into the principal Act:

24A(1) Notwithstanding section 24, every person registering for a profession in terms of this Act, 1997, shall perform remunerated medical community service in terms of the regulations contemplated in subsection (2) and shall, on completion of such service, be entitled to practice the profession in question"

24A(2) The Minister may, after consultation with the Council, make regulations concerning the performance of the service contemplated in subsection (1) including, but not limited to

- i) the duration thereof
- ii) place or places where it will be performed
- iii) conditions of employment

(Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Services Professions Amendment Bill [B62-97])

The Bill was then submitted to the Health Portfolio Committee for consideration. The Portfolio Committee reported dissent in the Health Department regarding community service. The Health Department expressed misgivings about the January 1998 date of implementation. It was advised that implementation be delayed until 1999 (Health Department Comments, 1997). Following a review of the Bill by the Select Committee on Social Services, the revised Bill [B62b-97] was sent by the National Assembly to the NCOP for concurrence on 20 October, 1997. The proposed two-year community service was reduced to one year with the following amendment:

24A(1) Notwithstanding section 24, any person registering for the first time for a profession listed in the regulations in terms of this Act after the commencement of the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Services Professions Amendment Act, 1997, shall perform remunerated medical service for a period of one year in terms of the regulations contemplated in subsection (2) and shall, on the completion of such service, be entitled to practice the profession in question.

24A(2) The Minister may, after consultation with the council, make regulations concerning the performance of the service contemplated in subsection (1), including but not limited to-

- (i) the place or places at which it is to be performed;
- (ii) the conditions of employment

(Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Services Professions Amendment Bill [B 62B-97])

The modified Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Services Professions Amendment Bill [B22-98] was promulgated on 11 December 1997. In February 1998, the Joint Tagging Mechanism classified the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Services Professions Amendment Bill as a section 76 Bill (Hansard, April: 576). A section 76 bill refers to ordinary legislation affecting the provinces. Section 76 bills require the approval of both the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces before the President will sign it. After the Health Portfolio Committee reported no further amendments to the bill, it was passed by the National Assembly on 26 February 1998. Following the approval of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP), the

bill was sent to the President for assent. The Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Services Professions Amendment Bill was published as Act No 1 of 1998 in April (Hansard, 1998: 576).

The opportunities for public input into the bill illustrate the interaction between the various policy-making levels. Media coverage of the policy process also contributed to the reevaluation of the bill. The months selected for study in this analysis correspond with the development of the policy into national legislation. The origin of the policy can be traced to the White Paper of May 1997 and its conclusion can be set at the February promulgation of the bill as an Act. The May 1997 -February 1998 time frame therefore runs parallel with the policy process. One can assume that press coverage contributed to the development of the bill. It is probable that press coverage was most extensive while the bill was still open to debate. Once the basic principles of the bill were fairly fixed, from December 1997, it is likely that press coverage waned. The results of the content analysis may reveal these patterns.

1.5.3. The Health Policy within the Public Policy Framework

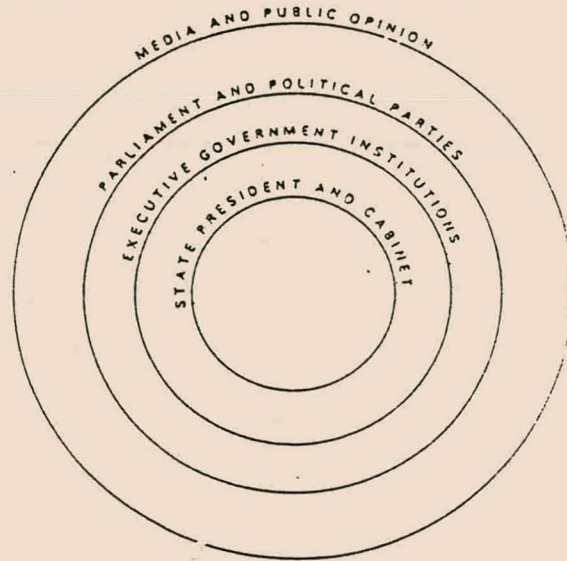
The integral role played by media in the policy process can be explained using public policy theory. Although public policy can be defined in numerous ways, most theorists agree that public policy refers to an articulated goal set out by a legislator to address the needs of society or groups in society (Hanekom, 1991: 7). Policy-making refers to the activity preceding the publication of the goal. Anderson (1994: 68) states that media participate in policy-making by acting as suppliers and transmitters of information. While numerous models may be used to explain the policy process, Hanekom suggests two exemplars that illustrate the involvement of the media in policy-making.

1.5.3a The Concentric Schema

The concentric schema illustrates the continuous interaction between the policy role players. Actions of the State President and his cabinet are represented by the inner circle. Dr Zuma, as the Minister of Health, falls into this category. The next circle refers to executive government institutions, like the National Assembly and the Health

Department. Political parties and parliament comprise the fourth layer of the circle. Reaction to the policy from the ANC and opposition parties would be included in this circle. The outer circle includes public opinion and media coverage. Public submissions and public hearings also constitute this layer. The outer circle is important as it provides feedback that may compel the other three layers to reassess the proposed policy. The policy process can be likened to the ripple effect of a stone in water, where the actions of one layer affect the other layers.

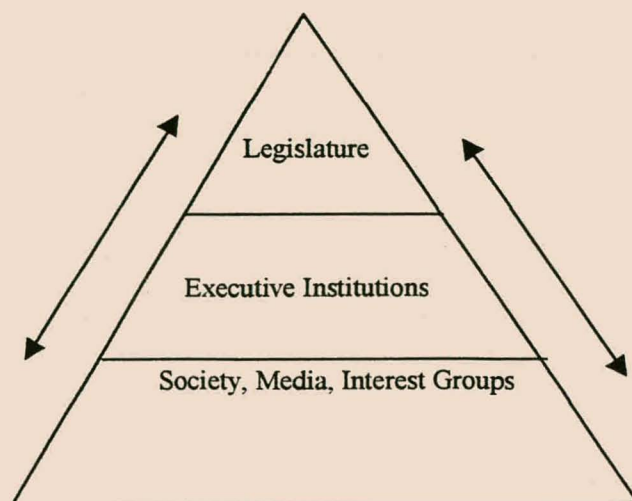
Diagram 1: Concentric Model of Policy-making (Hanekom, 1991: 48)



1.5.3b The Hierarchical Schema

The interaction between policymakers, media and society may also be explained with the hierarchical model. As with the circular model, there is interaction between the three layers.

Diagram 2: Hierarchical Model of Policy-making (Hanekom, 1991: 50)

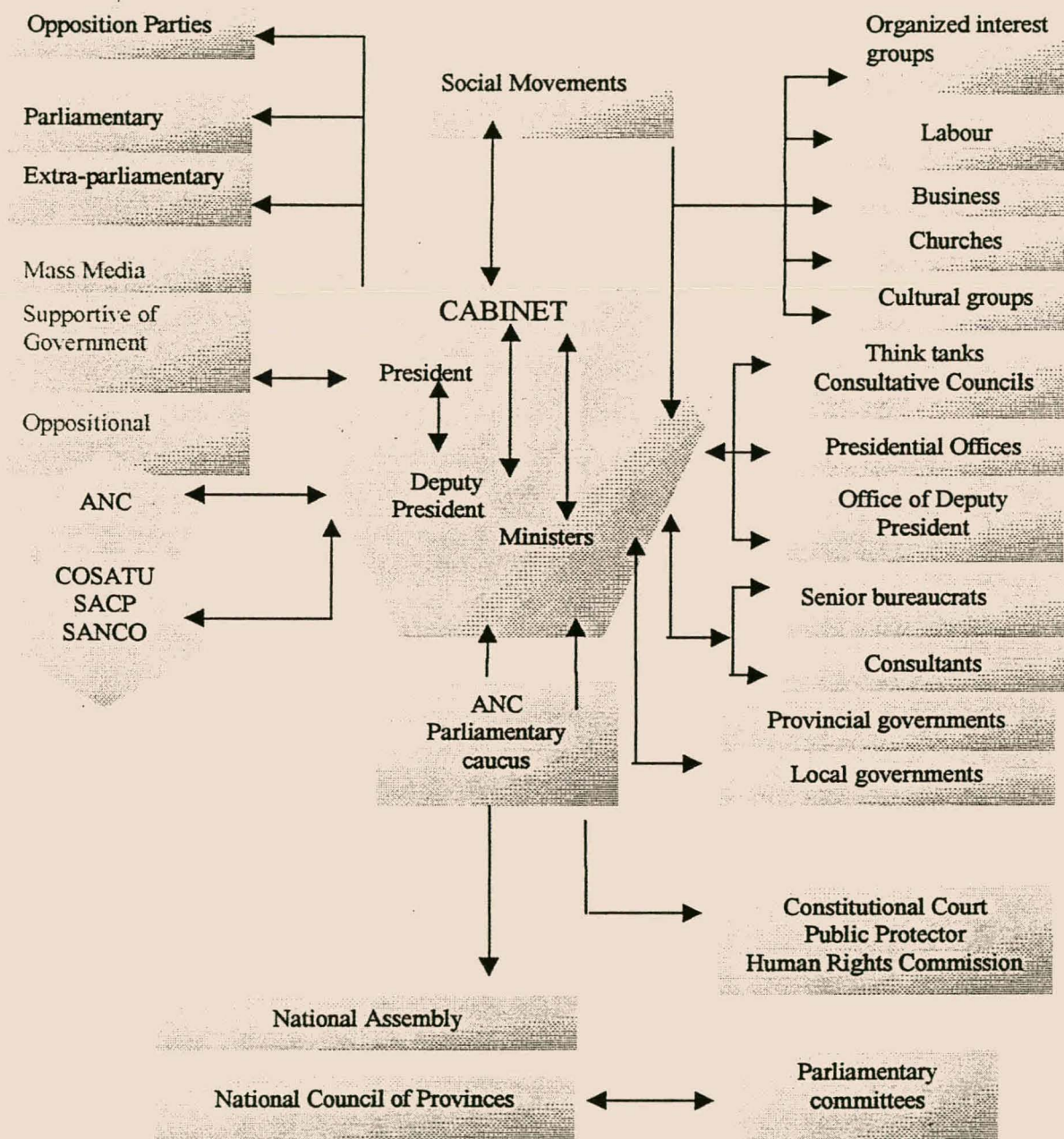


1.5.3c Booyesen and Erasmus' Central Government Schema

Booyesen's examination of policy-making in South Africa after 1994 is particularly salient as it relates policy theory to the South African context (Booyesen, 1998: 239). Although policymaking adheres to certain standard processes, the domain of each policy is unique. The convoluted policy process of the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill substantiates this statement. As Zuma's health bills can be placed within the policy domain of the South African cabinet, Booyesen's model of policy-making by central government merits attention. Although Booyesen argues that the print media have had a limited effect upon policy since 1994, one cannot deny that media **do** play an important role (Booyesen and Erasmus, 1998: 235).

The effect of press coverage on health policy can be attested by the Health Department's plan to improve their public image. Controversial moves, like the Sarafina II Aids play tarnished the press images of Zuma and her health department. Zuma has reportedly spent R2, 8 million on developing a more 'media-friendly' image. Haffajee suggests that the media have toned down their critical coverage since the reworking of Zuma's image (Haffajee, 1997: 7). One assumes that the impact of negative press coverage on the health department's policies, contributed to the image overhaul. Booyesen's model examines the position of the cabinet in the policy making process. It also emphasizes the reciprocal and mutually interactive relationships between central government and other policy agents (Booyesen and Erasmus, 1998: 232- 234).

Diagram 3: Influences on Central Government Policy-making (Booyesen and Erasmus, 1998: 233)



Dr Zuma's controversial health policies enjoy extensive media coverage. Over the last four years, issues like the Sarafina Aids play, community service, Virodene drug trials, her confrontation with the Medical Council and most recently, restrictive tobacco legislation, have been publicly debated. The National Party even called for the resignation of Zuma following the proposed Medicines and Related Substances Amendment Bill (Bisseker, 1997: 45). Dr Zuma's notoriety means that media coverage is often negative. Patten (1997: 10) describes Zuma as the "minister the mainstream press love to hate". Zuma is vociferous in her dissatisfaction with media coverage, often openly denouncing newspapers like the *Cape Times* (Berger, 1996: 8). In an interview with Ryland Fisher, editor of the *Cape Times*, Zuma is quoted as saying, "sometimes when I read the newspapers, I don't recognize myself" (*Cape Times*, 1997: 35). Zuma's leadership style has also received negative press coverage. Some critics argue that, while they support the underlying principles of Zuma's health policies, they resent her unilateral approach to health policy (Christianson, 1997: 14). The coding categories devised for the analysis of newspaper content must therefore distinguish between coverage of Zuma's leadership and coverage of her health policy.

1.6. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter expounds on the use of the lapdog/watchdog typology to explain the role of the media in society. It was shown that a press that is uncritically supportive of the government might be described as a lapdog press, while a critical press acts as a vigilant watchdog. The prevailing values and ideologies of a society affect the way in which the media interacts with the environment. After a brief explanation of the term 'ideology', the dominant ideological stances of the South African press were outlined. Newspaper ideology is an important independent variable that may influence the nature of newspaper coverage of the government. Although the ideologies mentioned refer to the press before 1990, they may influence the relationship between the press and government after 1990. South Africa's transition to democracy provides the backdrop for possible ideological shifts in newspaper coverage.

Antecedent variables that may influence newspaper ideology are newspaper ownership and newspaper structure. The structural transformation of newspapers after 1990 is not outlined in this research essay. Instead, the focus of the study falls on the role of the press and the relationship between the press and the government. The adversarial relationship between the press and the government was highlighted as a pertinent problem in South Africa's media debate. Using the ideological classifications set out by Tomaselli and Louw in Diederich and De Beer (1998), one may propose that the ideology of the newspaper may influence the way in which the newspaper reports on the government.

By examining the nature of newspaper coverage of the government in an exploratory study, one may be able to assess the role currently being assumed by the press in South Africa. As newspaper coverage is being examined, content analysis serves as the mode of research. Newspaper coverage was limited to articles pertaining to Dr Zuma, Minister of Health and her Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Services Professions Amendment Bill. The following section provides an historical overview of the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan*.

CHAPTER TWO

GENERAL HISTORY OF THE PRESS IN SOUTH AFRICA

SECTION ONE: HISTORICAL CONTEXT

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Hachten, Giffard and Antony (1984: viii) assert that an examination of the relationship between media and government requires an overview of the historical context of media in South Africa. Potter (1975: 30) agrees, stating that the origin and history of the press shape its function in society. The ideological classifications of newspapers, outlined in the previous section, are based upon their historical relationship with the government. This section includes a general description of the press history in South Africa. An understanding of the historical roles of the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan* will enable one to relate their respective ideological leanings with an appropriate press concept.

The origin and ownership of the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and the *Sowetan* respectively is expounded upon as a precursor to the later discussion of press concepts. Ownership is significant as newspaper policy may be affected by the interests of the controlling company (Potter, 1975). Newspaper ownership therefore relates to issues like editorial independence and nature of coverage. A proposition that illustrates this correlation is the concern that Tony 'O Reilly's friendship with Mandela may dilute TML's critical coverage of the government (Harris, 1996: 21). Mandela and the ANC-led government have levied much criticism at the apparent white hegemony of the press. Lamont (1995: 52) states that a white-dominated press and foreign investment in press groups hinder black empowerment. Referring to media ownership, Mandela describes media as "still controlled by conservative elements of a tiny minority of the population who have co-opted certain black journalists to do their dirty work and to try undermine the democratically elected government" (*Financial Mail*, 1996).

It is important to note that South Africa inherited a media moulded first by British Imperialism and then by Apartheid. The dominant linguistic and racial cleavages in South African media can be traced back to historical events. In 1914, the National Party advocated a two-stream political

policy in reaction to the formation of the Union in 1910. This policy called for the separate development of English and Afrikaans speaking South Africans. The split in white society was reflected in the polarization of the press into two linguistic blocs. Whereas English newspapers developed along commercial interests, Afrikaans newspapers were established in response to growing Afrikaner nationalism (Potter, 1975:31).

Between 1910 and 1924, the South African Party implemented segregation programmes throughout the Union. In 1924, a new cabinet took over the reins of governance. D F Malan, editor of *Die Burger*, was included in the new cabinet. Malan introduced bilingualism into the civil service, paving the way for the recognition of Afrikaans as an official language in 1925. In 1948, the Herstigste Nasionale Party replaced the Smuts government. Building on the segregation trends of the 1930's, "Apartheid" became the election mantra of the Nationalists. A committee was established to draw up Apartheid policy that included the separation of whites, coloureds and blacks in institutions like education, employment and government. By 1954, Apartheid was advocated in earnest by Verwoerd who said, "Apartheid comprises a multiplicity of phenomena...it is not just a question of numbers. What is of more importance is whether one maintains the colour bar or not". Over the next twenty years, draconian Apartheid legislation restricted social and political activities of all non-white groups (Davenport, 1987: 329-374). The exclusionist nature of National Party rule led to a further split in the South African media as the English press served as a voice for black interests. The 1980's saw an emergence of the Alternative press, owned by and targeted at blacks. Potter argues that although the English press appeared to stand in opposition to the government, the Alternative press was the true revolutionary opponent of government oppression (Potter, 1975: 27-30).

Potter (1975: 30) notes that the press is largely shaped by historical origin. Before examining the nature of press coverage of the government in 1998, it is pertinent to review the historical origin and development of the respective three newspapers being studied in this research essay. Trends in newspaper ideology and newspaper ownership may be identified with a brief historical overview of the Cape Times, Die Burger and Sowetan. The following section expounds on four core aspects: the origin of the newspaper, the origin of the controlling newspaper group, the relationship between the newspaper and the government and the focus of the newspaper.

2.2. THE CAPE TIMES

2.2.1. Origin of the Cape Times

The early newspapers in South Africa were modelled upon the British Libertarian press. In 1823 Pringle, Fairbairn and Faurie established the *South African Commercial Advertiser*. This newspaper served as a source of trade information and was therefore published without any political intent. As South Africa's first independently owned newspaper, the *South African Commercial Advertiser* exhibited the ideals of objective and critical coverage (Potter, 1975:32). Before the appearance of the *South African Commercial Advertiser* in 1924, the *Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser* served as the official publications of the government (Jackson, 1993: 17).

Relations between the editors of the *South African Commercial Advertiser* were not amiable and pre-publication censorship forced Greig, the printer of the newspaper, to return to England. Greig was granted permission to resume publication (Potter, 1975: 33). Altercations over the political content of articles resulted in hostile relations between Lord Somerset, the government at the Cape and the two editors of the newspaper. This enmity culminated in the confiscation of the eighteenth issue and the order to cease publication. Fairbairn, disgruntled by the interference of the government, sought a Press Ordinance to protect editorial autonomy. Ordinance No. 60 of 1929 guaranteed that the government could only intervene if articles contained libelous or irresponsible statements. The ordinance, which protected the rights of newspapers at the Cape, is known as the Magna Carta of press freedom in South Africa (Diederich and De Beer, 1998: 88). This early antagonism between the *South African Commercial Advertiser* and the Cape Government is salient as it set the precedent for an adversarial English press. Between 1910 and 1948, English newspapers dominated the media landscape (Jackson, 1993: 16-18).

In 1876, Frederick York St Leger established the *Cape Times and Daily Advertiser*. By September of that year, the lengthy title was shortened to the *Cape Times*. The *Cape Times*, like its predecessor the *South African Commercial Advertiser*, endeavoured to produce a newspaper by "following their own independent line" (Shaw, 1978: 9-10). The *Cape Times* served as the Cape's first daily newspaper. The *Cape Times*, with its strong British character, was viewed as

progressive within the South African political context (Potter, 1975: 38). By 1877, the *Cape Times* was firmly established in South Africa. During the early part of the nineteenth century, the *Cape Times* focused ostensibly on commercial and financial interests. By 1948, English newspapers such as the *Cape Times* continued to uphold the Libertarian notions of journalism. As the English press were not affiliated with the Nationalist government and therefore did not disseminate National Party information, the government came to view the English press as the opposition press (Merrit, 1995: 156).

2.2.2 The Origin of Times Media Limited

The origin of the TML group can be traced back to its founding company, South African Associated Newspapers (SAAN). Before SAAN, the *Cape Times* fell under the control of *Cape Times Limited*, which was formed in 1901. Although Syfrets was a large shareholder in the *Cape Times*, the *Cape Times* was independent of press group ownership until 1968 (Potter, 1975: 75). Sir Abe Bailey, a mining capitalist, purchased the *Rand Daily Mail* in 1902 and the *Sunday Times* in 1906 (Diederich and De Beer, 1998: 95). In the next five years, press ownership contracted as the *Rand Daily Mail Ltd.* and *Sunday Times Syndicate* absorbed rival newspapers. Shares belonging to *Cape Times limited* were acquired by the Bailey group (Potter, 1975: 42-43). In the 1920's, the Bailey group opted to concentrate on the morning news market thereby opening the afternoons for the *Argus Company*. In 1937, the Bailey Group bought the *Sunday Express Limited*, which was established in 1931. This purchase laid the foundation for the *South African Associated Newspapers Company*, established in 1965 (Diederich and De Beer, 1998: 95). SAAN was known for its opposition to Apartheid policies of the Nationalist government. In 1975, Anglo-American was given de facto control over SAAN (Grové, 1996: 330).

The closure of the *Rand Daily Mail* and *Sunday Express* in 1985 due to financial constraints, heralded the demise of SAAN. By December of 1985, SAAN was in dire financial straits. Stephen Mulholland, Managing Director of the *Financial Mail*, reduced the size of the company and handed control of the printing of the *Cape Times* to the *Argus Company*. The transformation of SAAN was reflected in the 1987 name change to *Times Media Limited* (Jackson, 1993: 82). TML assumed control over newspapers including *Cape Times*, *Business Day*, *Eastern Province Herald*, *Weekend Post* and *Algoa Sun* (Grové, 1996: 330). The company emphasized profit

creation as a prerequisite for editorial autonomy. Johannesburg Consolidated Industries (JCI) was a major stakeholder in TML (Jackson, 1993: 81).

JCI remained a prominent force in TML until 1996. There is the suggestion that early mining and commercial interests affected TML's relationship with the government. The profit motive liberated SAAN, and later TML editors from toeing the NP party line. English newspapers, like the *Cape Times*, were able to adopt a critical view of government policies. The Afrikaans government came to view the English press groups with suspicion, claiming that they were 'unSouth African'. Louis Luyt's 1976 bid to buy SAAN from the Bailey group indicates an inclination to gain control of the English Press (Louw, 1993: 168).

2.2.3. The relationship between the government and the *Cape Times*

2.2.3a Before 1990

The *Cape Times*, like most English newspapers, was modelled upon Britain's libertarian press. Financing by mining capital made profit, not politics, the motive of the newspaper (Berger, 1996: 15). The role of the English press as the opposition can be traced back to its origin in 1824. After the rise of the National Party and its subsequent election to power in 1948, the English press became "the main opposition replacing an ineffective parliament" (Potter in Jackson, 1993: 32). The English press' criticism of the government fuelled government accusations. Critical coverage by English newspapers led to perceptions of the English press as overly adversarial and disloyal to the South Africa nation. Brown in Jackson (1993: 41) criticizes the pre-1990 English press as being, "less inclined to watch over government than to catch out the National government". The distance between the English press and the government, albeit limited, allowed for a semblance of democratic debate. English newspapers could extend beyond the institutional political process to serve as a critic of the government and as a platform for citizen criticism levelled at the government. The English press' committed to open discourse, for all readers, resulted in a series of threats and restrictions in the 1980's (Potter, 1975: 205).

The view of the English press as the opposition press is challenged by Louw, Tomaselli and Kenyan (Jackson, 1993: 42). They assert that, as the English press was largely financed by white capital, it could only serve as a token opposition. Potter (1975: 27) refers to this token opposition as "opposition by default". The Alternative press, which existed independently of the government or white capital,

may be seen as the true opposition press. Potter also shows that while the English press appeared to be in opposition to the government, its reliance on white capital prevented it from blatantly denouncing Apartheid policy. The English press, as the apparent opposition, contributed to the illusion of democracy in South Africa.

2.2.3b After 1990

The ownership of the English press groups, like TML and Independent Newspapers, by black empowerment groups has raised concern over the relationship between the English press and the ANC-lead government. There are claims that the close involvement of people like Cyril Ramaphosa, former secretary-general of the ANC, could jeopardize critical coverage (Uys, 1996: 32). Nigel Bruce of *Financial Mail*, which has interests in TML, went so far as to draft a charter protecting editorial independence. It was feared that Nail would intervene in editorial policy and insist on pro-government coverage (Mabote, 1996: 326).

2.2.4. The Focus of the *Cape Times*

From the outset, the English press in South Africa imitated the British press. This meant that newspapers were profit-motivated and committed to open public debate (Potter, 1975: 161). Early English gazettes focused on the mining interests of the white middle class (Berger, 1996: 15). By divorcing their commercial interests from the purely political point of focus held by Afrikaans papers, publications like the *Cape Times* drew readership from the South African society as a whole. Including all races in their audience allowed the *Cape Times* to become a pivotal platform for liberal and non-white political views (Potter, 1975: 164-165).

Despite fears that ownership of the *Cape Times* by Independent Newspapers may compromise the newspaper's editorial-autonomy, the *Cape Times* appears committed to objective journalism. The editor of the *Cape Times*, Ryland Fisher, said that Independent Newspapers is committed to transformation. He has also reacted strongly against government's denouncement of black journalists as token appointments (Fisher, 1997: 8).

2.3. DIE BURGER

2.3.1. The Origin of *Die Burger*

While the English press can be linked with British Imperialism and commercialism, the Afrikaans press was associated with Afrikaner nationalism. This nationalism was originally broad, in the guise of anti-imperialist sentiment. However, after 1915, nationalism became the buzzword of the National Party. *Die Burger* was established in 1915 to serve as a media outlet for the Hertzog group in the Cape region. The Hertzog group's basic intent was to advocate Afrikaner nationalism (Hachten, Giffard and Antony; 1984: 44). Other Dutch newspapers included *De Zuid Afrikaan*, which was established in the 1830's as a counterpoise to the *South African Commercial Advertiser*. In 1849, J H Hofmeyer established *Het Volksblad* to promulgate separate development views. *Di Patriot* became the Cape's first Dutch newspaper in 1876. The consanguinity between the Afrikaans press and the National Party is evidenced by the links between editors and the party. For example, Dr Malan, the first editor of *De Burger* in 1915, served in the National Party (Davenport, 1987: 325). Malan also served as Prime Minister from 1948 until 1954 (Pollak, 1981: 13). Botha is another National Party stalwart associated with the newspaper (Hachten, Giffard and Antony, 1984: xiv). National Party members of Parliament also dominated the directorial board of Nasionale Pers, the group in control of *Die Burger* (Potter, 1975: 205).

De Burger was not only an institution of the National Party, it also contributed to the Afrikaner language movement. In the 1800's, Afrikaans speakers were underrepresented in Parliament and newspapers were published either in Dutch or in English. In 1922, *De Burger* signified its shift to Afrikaans coverage by altering its title to *Die Burger*. In 1925, the extension of the term 'Dutch' to include Afrikaans meant that Afrikaans gained recognition as an official language (Hachten, Giffard and Antony; 1984: 44-45). Unlike the English press that aimed to represent commercial interests, Tomaselli, Ruth and Muller (1987: 87) assert that Afrikaans newspapers served as a means to a political end.

2.3.2 The Origin of Nasionale Pers

Nasionale Pers was formed in 1915 to manage newspapers advocating Afrikaner nationalism. Nasionale Pers remains the largest Afrikaans press group in South Africa. De Beer and Steyn

(1993: 205) assert that Nasionale Pers Beperk (NPB) was established as part of the move to develop Afrikaans institutions in society. Organisations like the Afrikaner Broederbond were established to further the development of the Afrikaans language movement. Although the Afrikaner Broederbond was initially a cultural organisation, it soon evolved into a political grouping advocating Afrikaner Nationalism. The cultivation of an Afrikaner-aligned press formed an integral part of the Broederbond's policies. *Die Burger*, controlled by Nasionale Pers, guaranteed press coverage in support of the Nationalist Party (Davenport, 1987: 322-325). Nasionale Pers and the Broederbond and National Party enjoyed a close relationship, especially during the earlier part of the century.

The NP's partnership with NPB ensured that newspapers like *Die Burger* would support NP policies. While Perskor, the other major Afrikaans press group also represented Afrikaner views it was not as powerful as Naspers. Unlike the *Cape Times* that was funded by mining capital, *Die Burger* and other Afrikaans newspapers were beset with financial difficulties. To survive financially, Naspers was forced to rely upon a proliferation of shareholders for economic support (Potter, 1975: 66-69). In 1953, *Die Burger* comprised 3 239 shareholders, with Santam and Sanlam as the predominant stakeholders in NPB (Potter, 1975: 66-69 and Tomaselli, Ruth and Muller, 1987: 86). The shareholders of NPB exerted a direct influence on editorial policy of their recipient newspapers. The NP and government also influenced the authority of Afrikaans editors. Afrikaans newspapers were therefore politically, rather than commercially driven. Naspers was responsible for several newspapers including *Die Burger*, *Die Volksblad*, *Oosterlig*, *Rapport* and *City Press* (Grové, 1996: 331).

2.3.3 The Relationship between the Government and *Die Burger*

2.3.3a Before 1990

Die Burger, of Nasionale Pers, was established in 1915 to serve as a mouthpiece for the National Party. As a component of the Afrikaner move to develop Afrikaans institutions, *Die Burger* served as an intrinsic part of the ideological struggle of the Afrikaner (Louw, 1993: 170-172). Afrikaans newspaper initially opposed British rule and propagated Afrikaner nationalism. By 1948, Afrikaans newspapers became proponents of the National Party government. McClurg in Jackson (1993: 33) explains that, when looking at Afrikaans newspapers from 1948, one would "search in vain for the mildest dissenting

opinion or news to embarrass the [NP]". To ensure that the Afrikaans press could frame news along party political lines, the Nationalist government ensured that Afrikaans journalists enjoyed substantial access to government information. This allowed newspapers like *Die Burger* to serve as channels of communication between the government and National Party supporters. The relationship between the National Party and the Afrikaans press has been likened to a marriage, with both sides striving for the same goal.

The Nationalist government, intent on controlling its relationship with the media, established the Steyn Commission in 1982. It was decided that the press should fulfill the following functions as an extension of the government. The press was required to provide extensive coverage of external enemies, while ensuring that domestic security forces received positive attention. The press was also required to assist the government in its "total strategy" against the burgeoning African nationalism, also known as "the total onslaught" (Hachten, Giffard and Antony; 1984: 77). The Steyn Commission found that the opposition press, including English newspapers, was detrimental to the government and the development of South Africa. The Commission proposed the establishment of a media council to monitor the relationship between the press and the government (Jackson, 1993: 22-23).

It is erroneous to generalize about the Afrikaans press by calling it a monolithic extension of the National Party. Firstly, there are regional differences between the Cape and Transvaal newspapers of *Nasionale Pers* and *Perskor* respectively. *Naspers* was seen as the more enlightened of the two press groups (Tomaselli, Ruth and Muller, 1987: 94). From 1948 -1950, the Afrikaans press appeared to provide unequivocal support for the Nationalist policy, although the Cape newspapers were more receptive to dissenting views (Potter, 1975: 210). When Vorster became Prime minister in 1966, the new editor of *Die Burger*, Piet Cillié initiated important shifts in editorial policy. Unlike previous party-loyal editors, Cillié allowed for increased political debate (Potter, 1975: 208). Cillié was, for example, outspoken in his disapproval of the disenfranchisement of Coloured South Africans (De Beer and Steyn, 1993: 208).

The 1980's split between hard and soft line Afrikaners led to the emergence of the Conservative Party in 1982. The Conservative Party replaced the Progressive Federal Party as the National Party opposition (Jackson, 1993: 33). Instead of adopting a hard-line approach, the Afrikaans press remained

pro-government in its coverage. However, after the 1950's, some Afrikaans newspapers moved away from partisan reporting towards coverage that was more independent. Potter (1975: 178) identifies three factors that triggered the move away from a purely political Afrikaans press. Instead of being subservient to the government, the Afrikaans press wanted to be an equal partner. The Afrikaans press also felt manipulated by factions within government and the National Party. Finally, the Afrikaans newspapers realized that they were in danger of losing readers to rival English newspapers.

It must be noted that Afrikaans newspapers generally wanted partnership, not independence, from the government. While Afrikaans newspapers were generally not outspoken against the Nationalist government, Afrikaans newspapers of the Alternative Press, such as the *Vryeweekblad* did challenge Apartheid policies (Froneman and De Beer, 1992: 55).

2.3.3b After 1990

It is expected that the Afrikaans press will be more critical of the ANC-lead government.

Afrikaans newspapers, like *Die Burger*, have made some moves towards black empowerment. These moves include opening shareholding to the whole community and the selling of shares to black business consortiums (Diederich and De Beer, 1998: 96). Naspers has also embarked on a shareholding scheme that will allow readers from all communities to purchase Naspers shares. The recently established Welkom Trust will handle the shares (Hasenfuss, 1998: 2). However, many Afrikaans newspapers feel that they have no role to play in nation building. The government appears to be focussing on the role of the English press in the consolidation of democracy (Patten, 1998: 10). The relationship between the Afrikaans press and the incumbent regime is likely to be more adversarial than it was with the former regime.

2.3.4. The Focus of *Die Burger*

In contrast, *Die Burger* initially concentrated on the Afrikaans, agricultural sector of the South African population (Berger, 1996: 15). While the *Cape Times* appealed to the broader society, Afrikaans papers like *Die Burger* were established to cater ostensibly for Afrikaans concerns and the consolidation of the Afrikaner nation. The main role of newspapers like *Die Burger* was to act as the expositor of the National party after 1948. The differing ownership represents the distinct interests of the newspapers. While mining and industrial magnates owned the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger*'s top structure was affiliated with the National Party (Potter, 1975: 31-66). The English

press sought to concentrate on the suitability of government policies, while the Afrikaans press supported the government and only questioned the manner in which government policies were implemented. One could say that, unlike its Transvaal counterparts, *Die Burger* wrote for the more enlightened (verligte), urban Afrikaner. After 1950, *Die Burger's* narrow focus broadened and criticism of nationalist policy started appearing in the publication (De Beer and Steyn, 1993: 208).

Prof. Cilié, former editor of *Die Burger*, succinctly sums up the role which Naspers and therefore *Die Burger* envisions for itself after 1994, “ We want to be more representative of the whole community. We see our destiny as that of a ‘national press’, a country wide, nationwide communication industry” (Diederich and De Beer, 1998: 96). Naspers has also moved away from the Afrikaans focus that characterized it as a linguistic monolith by incorporating publications like Drum, City Press and True Love. *Die Burger* is also enjoying strong support from Coloured readers (Froneman, 1997: 213). Research completed in 1998 shows that 54% of *Die Burger* readers are coloured or black (Loxton, 1998: 1). The issue of Coloured readership is exceedingly critical in the Western Cape as the ANC and NP compete for Coloured votes in preparation of the 1999 elections. In the 1994 elections, it is estimated that just over half of the coloureds voted for the National Party, while only 28,4% voted for the ANC (Mattes, 1995: 26). Coloured readers probably have a greater affiliation with Afrikaans newspapers than with English papers because of language.

2.4. THE SOWETAN

2.4.1 The Origin of the Sowetan

The *Sowetan*, established in 1981, lacks the historical precedent of *Die Burger* and *Cape Times*. Although the *Sowetan* emerged during the turbulent 1980's, it does not fall into the Alternative press category. Unlike alternative newspapers, the *Sowetan* was initially owned by a white owned media group the Argus Company. This means that the *Sowetan* has parallels with the *Cape Times*, which was owned by the other large media group, South African Associated Newspapers. It is relevant to examine the *Sowetan's* early history with a brief reference to the Argus Company. While the *Sowetan* was initially white-owned, a short examination of other black newspapers

owned by blacks is also relevant as the *Sowetan's* early history overlaps with that of other black newspapers. Unlike many newspapers of the Alternative press, the *Sowetan* emanates from a tradition affiliated with the Black Conscious Movement. This means that the *Sowetan* cannot be seen as a former liberation newspaper of the ANC or UDF movements. The *Sowetan*, as a formerly white-owned publication, stands in contrast to black newspapers managed by black owners.

In 1876, the first newspaper published for black readers, *Isigdimi Sama Xhosa*, appeared. In 1884, *Imvo Zabantsundu* became the first black owned newspaper (Diederich and De Beer, 1998: 88). The *Sowetan*, however, can trace its origin to the early black newspapers of the Argus. Saul Solomon founded the Argus Newspapers in Cape Town in 1857. In 1881, ownership was passed to Francis Dormer. The Argus expanded to the Johannesburg market and in 1889, *The Star* was established. By the 1950's, the Argus realized the worth of tapping into the urban, black market (Louw, 1993: 163-164). In 1963, *The Star* purchased *Bantu World*, which was established by Bantu Press (Pty) Ltd. in 1932 to cater for black South African readers (Tomaselli and Louw, 1991: 20-23). Bantu Press limited, which was started by Bertram Paver, was incorporated into the Argus Company in 1934 (Oberholzer, 1990: 89-90). The "Bantu" was removed from the title in 1956 and *World* went on to dominate the black newspapers of the Argus group until its banning in 1977.

The banning of *World* forced the Argus Company to redirect its resources to another newspaper, the *Golden City Post*. The *Golden City Post* was established in 1955 to appeal to the growing body of literate black South Africans. Government banning lead to the replacement of the *Post* by the *Sowetan* in 1981, with Joe Latakgoma as the first editor (Mortimer, 1996: 91). The *Sowetan*, because of its ownership by the Argus Group, reveals parallels with the *Cape Times* (Louw, 1993: 164). The Founder of the Bantu Press, BC Paver, targeted the black market to expand profits. Although white-owned publications like *Post* and *Sowetan* were banned and restricted by the Apartheid government, they cannot be termed as Alternative newspapers. As the Switzers in Tomaselli and Louw (1991: 25) state, "few, if any, of the white-owned publications were committed ideologically, even when they did recognize black political movements." Unlike many

of the Alternative newspapers that were aligned with the ANC or UDF, the *Sowetan* was affiliated with the Black Consciousness Movement² (Louw, 1993: 164).

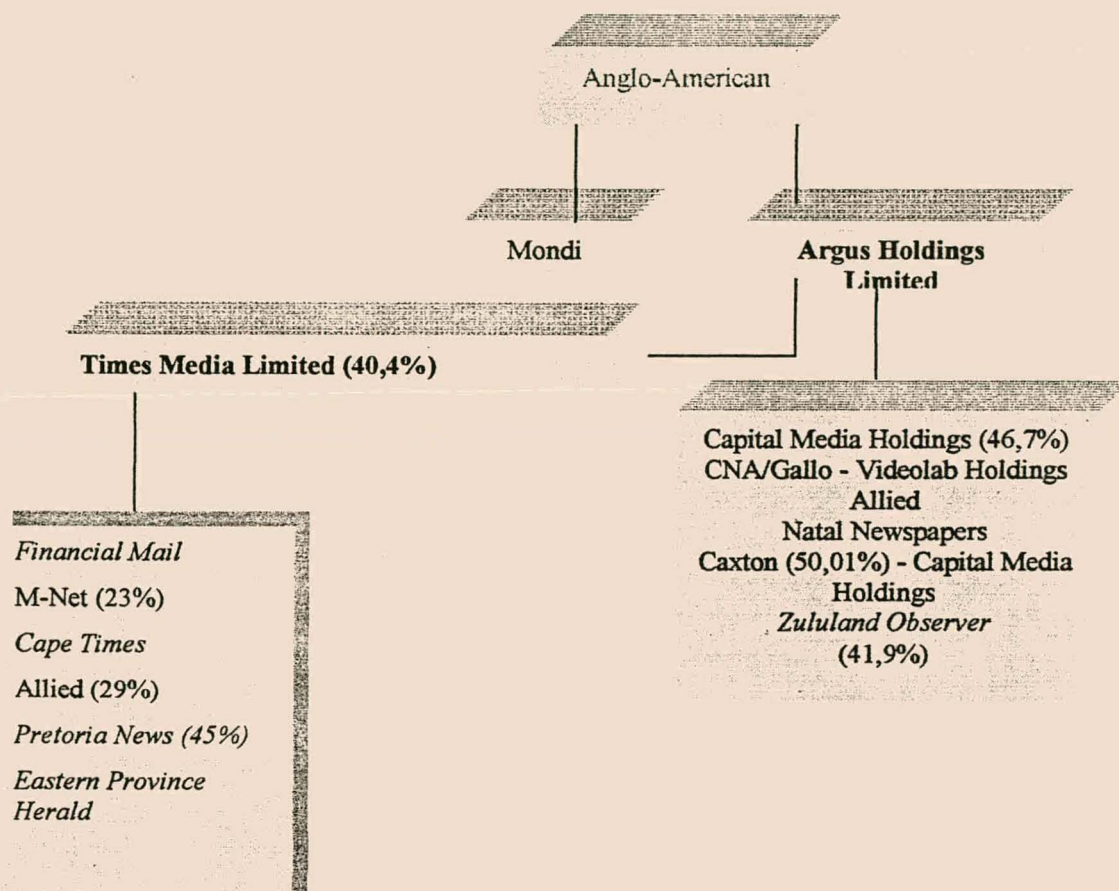
2.4.2. The Origin of The Argus Company

Francis Dormer founded the Argus Printing and Publishing Company in 1889 (Grové, 1996: 328). As Dormer enjoyed the backing of Cecil John Rhodes, the Argus Company was inextricably linked with the mining industry. The Argus Company, as with the *Cape Times* and the Bailey group, represented pro-British interests. Political support was reserved for parties like the United party (UP), the Progressive Federal Party (PFP) and the Democratic Party (DP). By 1960, Anglo-American assumed control of JCI and forty percent of the Argus. Fallon (1993: 48) notes that before 1990, Anglo-American controlled most of the English press with substantial shares in Argus and TML.

By 1990, Argus Holdings Limited controlled newspapers like *The Star*, *The Argus*, *Pretoria News*, *Natal Mercury*, *Sunday Tribune* and *Sowetan*. Forty percent of TML was also controlled by Argus Holdings Limited (Louw, 1993: 160-162). The following diagram illustrates the Anglo-American control over TML and Argus in 1990.

² Black Consciousness emerged in the 1970's as a response to the vacuum created by the banning of the Pan Africanist Congress and the ANC in 1960. Black Consciousness has its origins in the Black Power movement of the United States, as well as writings from Algeria. Steve Biko was the leader of South Africa's Black Consciousness movement. The core tenet of the movement is the psychological emancipation of the black man from his inferiority complex. BC was not limited to Africans, but applied to all groups oppressed by Apartheid. Biko died in 1977 because of injuries sustained while in police custody (Pakenham, 1987: 417-419).

Diagram 4: Media Control in 1990: Times Media Limited and Argus (Tomaselli, 1997)



2.4.3. The Relationship between the Government and *Sowetan*

2.4.3.a *Before 1990*

The *Sowetan* was initially owned by the Argus Company, and therefore served as an extension of mining interests rather than political concerns. This means that the newspaper did not stand in opposition to the Apartheid government, as did newspapers of the Alternative press. The *Sowetan* was purchased by the Argus to tap into the black, urban market, not as an altruistic gesture (Tomaselli and Louw, 1991: 23). Before 1990, the *Sowetan* was more closely aligned with the Black Conscience Movement than with liberation movements like the ANC. Precursors to the *Sowetan* were banned by the National Party government. In 1977, *World* was banned and three years later, government pressure forced *Post* to close (Louw, 1993: 164).

After 1990, the sale of *Sowetan* to Nail has raised concerns about the autonomy of the newspaper. There are fears that the *Sowetan* will align itself with the ANC (Diederich and De Beer, 1998: 101). Dr Motlana, who served as Mandela's physician, is reported to be ANC-aligned (Khumalo, 1996: 9). A 1995 survey by Media Market research found the *Sowetan* nonaligned and objective in its coverage of the government. The *Sowetan's* charter, compiled after the takeover by NAP in 1994, embodies the newspaper's commitment to objective coverage free of party bias (Mortimer, 1996: 90).

2.4.3b *After 1990*

Black journalists from, newspapers like the *Sowetan*, have received harsh criticism from Mandela and the ANC. Mandela is reported to have accused black journalists of being "Co-opted to discredit the ANC" (*Sowetan*, 1996: 10). The ANC appear to expect support from the black journalists who fought for the institution of a legitimate government (*Sowetan*, 1996: 12). The ANC lacks a newspaper that can provide a platform for its policies (De Beer, 1996: 138). This lack of ANC platform has led to fears that Motlana will direct the *Sowetan's* editorial stance along ANC lines (Mabote, 1996: 323). There appears to be a growing perception within the ANC that a supportive press is required for an election victory. The approaching 1999 elections may be exacerbating the ANC's anxiety regarding an overly critical press. The view that a party needs a supportive press to win an election, reveals a striking parallel with the former National Party government (Froneman and De Beer, 1992: 55). The imminent 1999

election makes the relationship between the government and the press one of vital importance. The relationship between the government and the black-owned press will be even more crucial. Will newspapers usually associated with black readers and ownership unequivocally support the ANC because of the liberation, or will the newspapers opt for a liberal, watchdog role (*Sowetan*, 1996: 12)?

2.4.4. The Focus of the *Sowetan*

The *Sowetan* was initially targeted at the urban, black market. It currently aims to serve the broader black community. However, recent research suggests that other groups read the newspaper as well (Marketing Mix: 1996:). Unlike many newspapers of the Alternative press, the *Sowetan* was more aligned with the BC movement than with the liberation struggle. The *Sowetan* Charter is an indication of the newspapers desire to retain editorial autonomy. Aggrey Klaaste, editor-in-chief of the *Sowetan* sees the newspaper as a community service. Not only does it appeal to the community; it contributes to the development of the community with educational supplements (Marketing Mix, 1995). The newspaper is also committed to nation building, defined by Klaaste as the promotion of self esteem within all sectors of South Africa's society (Television Interview, 1998). This philosophy is analogous to the tenets of Black Consciousness (Pakenham, 1987: 417).

2.5. THE 'QUIET REVOLUTION' OF NEWSPAPER OWNERSHIP

Grové (1996: 327) refers to the changes in media ownership as the "quiet revolution". The dissolution of economic sanctions against South Africa and the subsequent inflow of foreign capital can be seen as central causes of the quiet revolution. Until 1995, four major press groups dominated almost 90% of the print media in South Africa - The Argus, Times Media Limited (TML), Nasionale Pers (Naspers) and Perskor. South Africa's dense press concentration poses a threat to democratic consolidation. Diversification of news groups allows for a plurality of views and encourages open political debate (Grové, 1996: 328).

Tomaselli (1997:23) attributes South Africa's press concentration to the connection between the print media and the mining industry. While TML and Argus were both directly linked with Anglo-American, the Afrikaans press groups were less reliant upon mining capital. Instead Afrikaans press groups relied upon capital accumulated by the government or through Afrikaans business. Santam and Sanlam were two of the largest contributors to Naspers (Potter, 1975: 66).

Although there has been a brief discussion of ownership trends, it is necessary to pay particular attention to ownership after 1990. The quiet revolution of ownership may result in changes in the political and ideological leanings of newspapers (Tomaselli and Louw, 1997: 16). Therefore, one can postulate that the quiet revolution of newspaper ownership may influence the nature of newspaper coverage of the government. The three newspapers in this study, *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan* emanate from three of the four dominant press groups of the early 1990's: TML, Nasionale Pers and Argus Holdings Company respectively. In 1990, ownership of TML and Argus was in the hands of Anglo-American, a mining conglomerate. Sanlam stood as Naspers' dominant shareholder. The redistribution of JCI and Anglo capital led to changes in media ownership. Tomaselli (1997: 67) notes that while capital reallocation prompted the restructuring of the press, profit gain was the main motive. It is therefore within these spheres that most of the changes in media ownership after 1990 occurred. The changes in media ownership after 1990 will be traced using the frame provided by Tomaselli (1997). Tomaselli (1997: 32) identifies five phases or moments in the quiet revolution of media ownership.

2.5.1. Phase 1

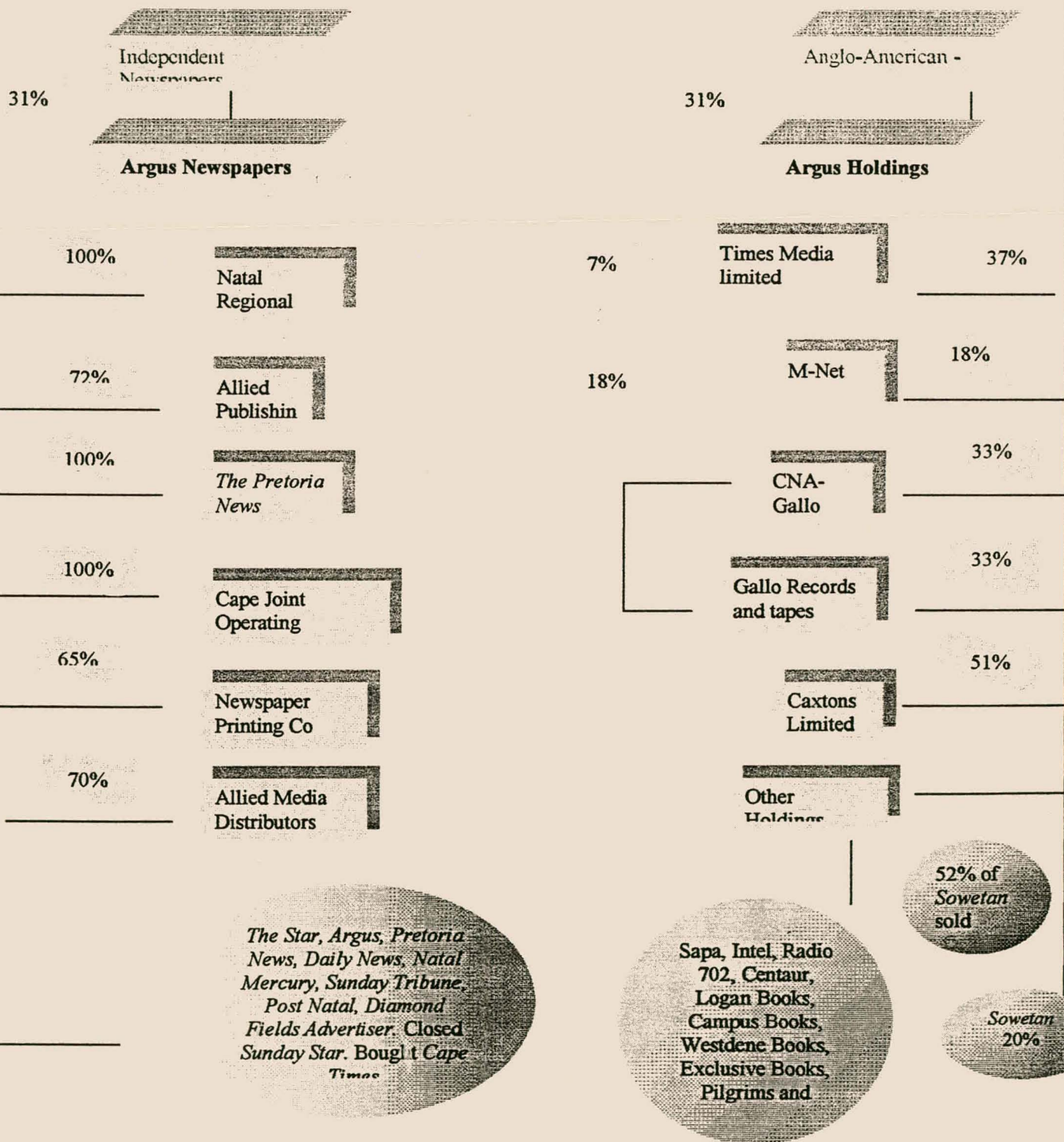
The first phase in the restructuring of newspaper ownership involved Argus' sale of 52% of the *Sowetan*. Dr Motlana, head of Corporate Africa, bought the Argus share of the *Sowetan*. Despite the sale, Argus retained 20% of New African Publishers Ltd. (Nail) and 42% of the newspaper, printing, advertising and management contracts. Corporate Africa owned a large 75% of Nail. Sanlam, traditionally an Afrikaner-owned company, held 17% shares in Corporate Africa (Tomaselli, 1997: 32-33).

2.5.2. Phase 2

The cessation of sanctions against South Africa and the democratic elections of 1994, led to an inflow of foreign investment into the country. In the election year, Tony 'O Reilly, owner of the Irish Independent Newspaper group, purchased 31% of Argus from Anglo-American (De Beer, 1998: 93). By 1995, Independent newspapers bought a further 27% to make Argus the largest company in the Independent group (Tomaselli, 1997: 33). The Argus group was renamed Independent Newspapers and Argus Holdings became Omnimedia. Independent Newspapers (IN) therefore assumed control over Argus Newspapers (De Beer, 1998: 93). 'O Reilly's takeover meant that Anglo-American and JCI no longer enjoyed direct shareholdings in Independent Newspapers. The *Cape Times* was bought by Argus Newspapers bringing it under the control of Independent Newspapers after 'O Reilly's takeover (Tomaselli, 1997: 31).

Diagram 5: Assets of Argus Holdings and Newspapers after 1994 (Tomaselli, 1997)

Assets of Argus Holdings and Argus Newspapers

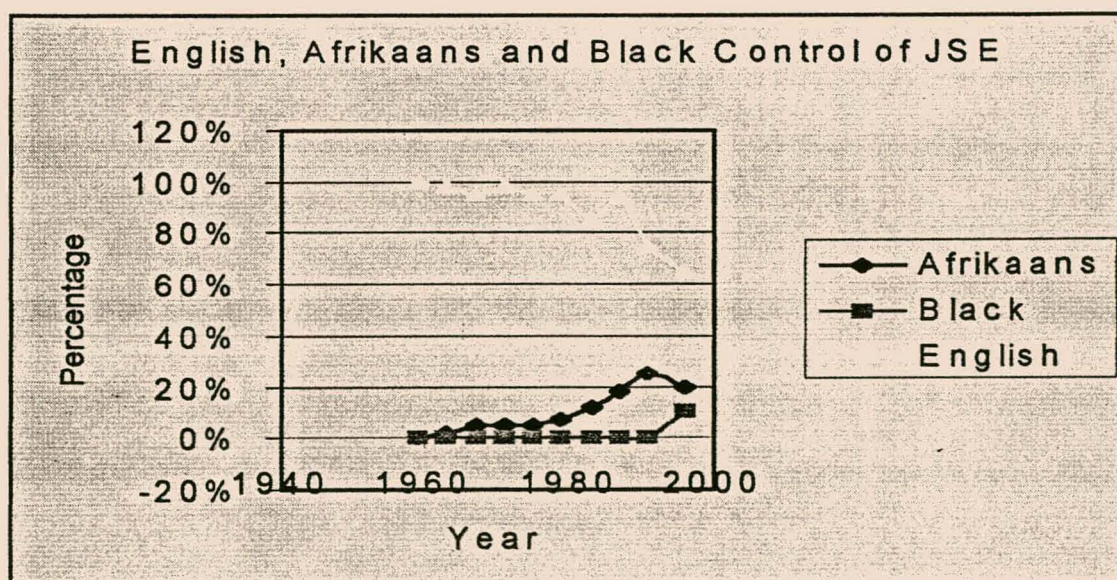


In April 1994, the Argus Group gained control over TML's 30% interest in Natal Newspapers and the Cape Joint Operating Agreement. The title to the *Cape Times* was sold to Argus Newspapers for R66 million.

2.5.3. Phase 3

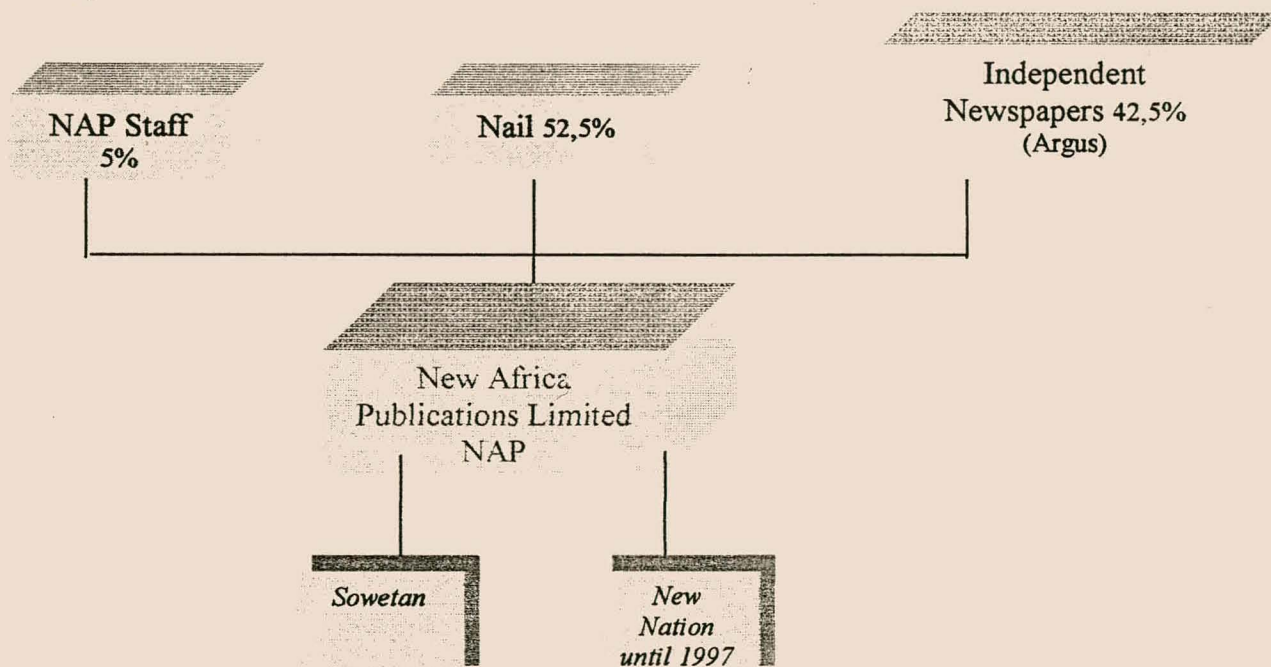
In 1996, the National Empowerment Consortium (NEC) purchased Johnnic from Anglo-American. The NEC is made up of about fifty black businesses and was founded by Cosatu-aligned trade unions. The sale of Johnnic, the industrial division of JCI, heralded a major shift in ownership patterns. The sale of Johnnic gave the NEC control over interests in CNA, Gallo, M-Net and TML. The NEC consortium also includes Worldwide Africa Investments and Nail. NEC's takeover of Johnnic meant that ten percent of the JSE was controlled by black capital. While it took Afrikaans capital twenty six years to achieve a seven percent JSE market level, it took black capital a mere two years to reach a ten percent level. The exponential increase of black ownership between 1991 and 1996 is greater than any other group since the late 1940's. The following diagram illustrates the increase of black control according to JSE listing, since 1991.

Diagram 6: English, Afrikaans and Black Control of JSE (Tomaselli, 1997)



This exponential increase of black shares indicates the possibility of future black hegemony of the JSE. Ten percent of the JSE already falls under the control of black capital. This control presents a major departure from South Africa's historically white-dominated media market. Control of the media market by mining capital has been relinquished to emerging black consortiums. The *Sowetan* was bought by Independent Newspapers, Nail and staff at the *Sowetan*. The new company is called New Africa Publications (NAP). NAP had control over both the *Sowetan* and *New Nation*. However, *New Nation* was closed down in 1997. The Holding Company of New Africa Publications is as follows:

Diagram 7: The Holding Company of New Africa Publications (Marketing Mix, 1995)



2.5.4. Phase 4

Until 1996, Naspers was in control of Nasionale Media Beperk, Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk and Primadata. Naspers was traditionally associated with the National Party government before 1990 although Naspers did extend beyond the Afrikaans market by incorporating *Drum*, *True Love* and *City Press* (Froneman, 1997: 212). In 1996, Naspers joined the restructuring game by

opening its shares to black stakeholders (Harris, 1996: 21). A large 51% of *City Press* was sold to Ukhozi Media and Dynamo, both black investment groups (Tomaselli, 1997: 52-53). Changes in the ownership of Nasionale Pers are significant in view of the argument that ownership affects editorial policy. As *Die Burger* was generally supportive of the former nationalist government, it may adopt a more critical stance towards the ANC-lead government (Harris, 1996: 21). Sanlam's share has been reduced from 24,8% to 3,4% (Diederich and De Beer, 1998: 96).

As stated earlier, ownership is linked to the role of media in South Africa. The Government seems to expect the black -owned press to be more supportive than a white press oligarchy. The unbundling of white-owned media groups has not been accompanied by a diversification of the press. Instead of a white press oligarchy, press ownership may be shifting to a black monopoly. Tomaselli (1997: 102) argues that the press may become the domain of a growing black elite. The quiet revolution will therefore only benefit a core group of black consortiums. Diederich and De Beer (1998: 102) emphasise the interpenetration of press ownership. For example, Dhlomo of Dynamo Investments also has shares in *City Press*. The Independent Newspaper Group has a 42,5% share in the *Sowetan* and 37% share in TML (Mabote, 1996: 321).

2.6. CIRCULATION AND READERSHIP FIGURES

When looking at the coverage of newspapers, it is important to note the circulation figures and readership trends of the newspapers. This exercise relates back to Weber's (1985: 1) observation that content analysis not only allows one to extract inferences about the text, but about the audience that the text is targeting. Potter (1975: 79) maintains that newspaper readership contributes to an understanding of government attitude towards the press. The government is concerned about the way in which media coverage may affect its supporters. Newspapers with a predominantly black readership are likely to be targets of public scrutiny as the ANC prepares for the 1999 election.

2.6.1. Circulation and readership before 1990

Before 1990, English newspapers exhibited higher circulation figures than Afrikaans newspapers. Readership figures were also higher. The English newspapers also drew readers from all racial groups, while white, Afrikaans speakers mainly read the Afrikaans newspapers. These pre-1990 trends substantiate statements that English newspapers served as the platform for all racial groups. In contrast, Afrikaans newspapers were generally not intent on extending readership beyond the Afrikaans audience (Potter, 1975: 162).

2.6.2. Circulation and readership after 1994

In 1995, one year after the historic democratic election, English newspapers reported a drop in circulation and readership. The decline was particularly marked in newspapers of the Independent Newspaper Group. It was said that the increase in cover prices and the limited target focus might explain the decline in circulation and readership (Marketing Mix, 1995: 50). The *Cape Times*, which was taken over by Independent Newspapers in 1994, was identified for its decline in circulation. Circulation dropped from 61 951 in the Jan-June 1994 period to 54 947 in the same period in 1995 (Marketing Mix, 1995: 35).

In 1997, circulation of the *Cape Times* stood at 52 266 for the Jan-June 1997 period. *Die Burger's* total circulation for Eastern and Western Cape, stood at 94 193 for the weekly editions and at 104 216 for Saturday's edition. *Die Burger* therefore enjoys a higher circulation than the *Cape Times*. The *Sowetan*, which is distributed nationally, revealed a high 225 987 circulation figure. This statistic far outweighs the circulation of the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* (SARAD, 1997: B3-B15). These findings coincide with the South African Yearbook's (1997: 446) position that newspapers focusing ostensibly on the emerging black market exhibit increased circulation figures. The *Sowetan* is reported to have sold an average of 211 433 newspapers a day in 1996.

The average sales figures for the January to June 1998 period indicate an increase in sales of all three of the titles of this study. The *Cape Times*, with a circulation of 52 774, boasts a 3,5% increase on the July-December 1997 figures. *Die Burger* increased its circulation

by 3,2% to attain a 114 028 circulation figure. The *Sowetan* increased by 1,1% to a readership of 228 166 (Financial Mail, 1998: 114). Circulation figures do not provide the full picture of newspaper audience. It is important to refer to readership figures when describing the target audience of a newspaper.

The All Media and Products Survey (AMPS), conducted by Market Research Africa, investigates, inter alia, average newspaper readership of the South African population. The 1997 AMPS was conducted on a sample of 16 517 respondents. Of this total, 6 805 were black, 1 916 were coloured, 850 were Indian and 6 946 were white. The data was then reweighted to conform to estimated population demographics. Respondents that qualified as "readers" must have read a copy of the newspaper within the period of the newspaper distribution. For example, a daily newspaper must have been read in the last twenty-four hours. The number of readers refers to the estimated average readership. The survey spans the January to June 1998 period. The tables represent the survey findings in terms of numbers in thousands, with percentages rounded to one decimal (AMPS, 1997).

Of the sample population who read daily newspapers, 5.5% claimed to have read the *Sowetan* within the past day. This high figure contrasts with the 1.0% and 1.7% of the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* respectively. It was found that 264 000 people read the *Cape Times*, while 437 000 read *Die Burger*. The *Sowetan* revealed a high 1406 000-readership figure, meaning that 5.5% of the population read the *Sowetan*. Readership percentages for the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* are both below 2.0% (AMPS, 1997). As South Africa's newspapers are products of a system that enforced racial categories, it is pertinent to cross-tabulate race with newspaper readership.

Table 1 Average Newspaper Readership by Race (AMPS, 1997)

	Total	Blacks	Coloureds	Indians	Whites	CIW
Informants	16 517	6 805	1 916	850	6 946	9 712
Population '000	25 722	18 843	2 176	677	4 025	6 879
<i>Cape Times</i>	264 1.0%	50 0.3%	115 5.3%	- -	99 2.4%	214 3.1%
<i>Die Burger</i>	437 1.7%	4 0.0%	235 10.8%	- -	199 4.9%	433 6.3%
<i>Sowetan</i>	1 406 5.5%	1 381 7.3%	14 0.6%	5 0.8%	5 0.1%	24 0.4%

(CIW - Coloureds, Indians, Whites)

The readership figures reveal that race is still an important determinant of newspapers readership. A high 1 381 000 of black respondents had read the *Sowetan* in the last day as opposed to the 5 000 white readers. It is interesting to note that Coloured readers make up 0.6% of the *Sowetan's* readership, while only 0.1% of the readers are white. However, the incidence of white readers of the *Sowetan* is higher than the number of blacks reading *Die Burger*. Only 4 000 black respondents read *Die Burger*, while 5 000 white respondents read the *Sowetan*.

Surprisingly, more coloureds than whites claimed to have read the *Cape Times*. This readership trend may be attributed to the demography of the Western Cape. Readership of the *Cape Times* is predominantly from coloured and white readers. While a high 199 000 of the *Die Burger's* readers are white, an even higher 235 000 are coloured. This correlation may be attributable to language. A large portion of coloured readers are Afrikaans and therefore read *Die Burger*. Research conducted in 1998 reveals that 54% of readers of *Die Burger* are Coloured (Loxton, 1998: 1). Whereas 2.4% of CIW readers had read the *Cape Times*, 6.3% of CIW respondents named *Die Burger* as the newspaper most recently read.

The *Sowetan* is clearly aimed at the black market with a high 1 381 000 black readership. The 5 000 readership tally for coloured and Indian respondents respectively substantiate the *Sowetan's* claim that its is not only a 'black newspaper'. However, as only 0.4% of the readers fall into the CIW category, one may say that readership is black dominated.

As race and language overlap, one may also cross-tabulate newspaper readership with language.

Table 2: Average Newspaper Readership by Language (AMPS, 1997)

	Total	Language			
		<i>Afrikaans Both</i>	<i>English Other</i>	<i>Nguni Other</i>	<i>Sotho Both</i>
Informants	16 517	5 967	3 745	3 854	2 951
Population '000	25 722	4 173	2 705	10 943	7 900
<i>Cape Times</i>	264 1.0%	93 2.2%	121 4.5%	46 0.4%	4 0.0%
<i>Die Burger</i>	437 1.0%	407 9.8%	26 1.0%	4 0.0%	- -
<i>Sowetan</i>	1 406 5.5%	13 0.3%	11 0.4%	540 4.9%	841 10.5%

Afrikaans Both refers to Coloureds, Indians and Whites (CIW) who use Afrikaans or both English and Afrikaans as home languages. The rest of the CIW, for example those speaking only English, fall into the *English Other* category. Black readers, who named Sotho or both Sotho and a Nguni language as mother languages, fall into the *Sotho Both* category. Black readers, who do not speak Sotho or both Sotho and a Nguni language, may be classified as *Nguni Other*.

As expected, most CIW, who speak Afrikaans and English, read either the *Cape Times* or *Die Burger*. Of the 4 173 000 *Afrikaans Both* readers, 93 000 or 2.2% read the *Cape Times*. The number of *English Other* readers of the *Cape Times* is higher at 121 000 or 4.5%. The *Cape Times* was also read by 46 000 Nguni Other speakers and by 4 000

Sotho speakers. This relatively high number of black readers proposes an explanation for the ANC-lead government's interest in coverage of English newspapers. The comparatively low incidence of *Sotho Both* readers of the *Cape Times* may be explained by the primarily Western Cape distribution of the newspaper title. The *Cape Times* is read by more English CIW, than by bilingual readers suggesting that the *Cape Times* may still be seen as an English newspaper.

Die Burger, as the original mouthpiece of the Afrikaans movement, retains its high number of *Afrikaans Both* readers. While 407 000 Afrikaans or bilingual respondents read *Die Burger*, only 26 000 respondents of the *English Other* category had read the newspaper in the last twenty-four hours. The *Cape Times* is more accessible to other linguistic groups. While Afrikaans newspaper coverage is important, Afrikaans newspapers are not widely read by black South Africans. Of the *Nguni Other* group, only 4 000 contributed to readership tally of *Die Burger*. No respondents of the *Sotho Both* category reported reading *Die Burger*. Readership was highest from Afrikaans speakers with 407 000 readers. The high 9.8% of Afrikaans readers stands in contrast with the 1.0% of English readers of *Die Burger*. *Die Burger* is therefore remains a predominantly Afrikaans newspaper.

Surprisingly, slightly more respondents from the *Afrikaans Both* category claimed to have read the *Sowetan* than from the *English Other* category. While the *Afrikaans Both* group reported 13 000 readers, a lower 11 000 emanate from the *English Other* category. However, if one looks back at the cross-tabulation with race, one notes that Coloured readership of the *Sowetan* is relatively high. This may account for the increase in Afrikaans readership, as opposed to English readership, of the *Sowetan*. Most of the *Sowetan's* readership emanates from the Nguni and Sotho groups. There are more Sotho readers than Nguni readers. This disparity may be attributed to the distribution and focus of the newspaper. As the *Sowetan* is distributed mainly in the Gauteng and PWV area where Sotho is widely spoken, it is understandable that readership is mainly Sotho. The *Sowetan* is read by 841 000 readers of the Sotho both group and 540 000 of the Nguni group.

The *Sowetan* has the most varied readership distribution. While Afrikaans speaking South Africans mainly read *Die Burger*, the *Sowetan* is read by all of the four language categories. The *Cape Times* also enjoys a varied readership distribution, although very few Sotho speakers read the *Cape Times*.

2.7. SECTION SUMMARY

This section provided an historical overview of the press in South Africa as well as a discussion of the origin of the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan*. History plays an integral role in the categorization of newspapers into ideological blocs. The ownership history of the three newspapers was also traced as ownership may affect newspaper coverage. Particular attention was paid to ownership after 1990. The quiet revolution of newspaper ownership is expected to result in new ideological alignments. As content analysis allows one to make inferences about the target audience, it is necessary to examine newspaper circulation and readership figures of the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan*.

The historical overview outlined in this section links with section two's discussion of mass communication theory. The normative theory of press-society relations is expounded upon extensively. History and ideology are important components of the press concepts set out in the normative media approach.

SECTION TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.8. INTRODUCTION

The section dealt with the broad media debate and the history of the press in South Africa. Tracing the origin of the newspapers being studied allows one to place the ideological classification of Tomaselli and Louw in Diederich and De Beer (1998) within an historical context. The ideological categorizations may also be linked with theoretical paradigms. McQuail (1994: 4) states that theory does not only refer to law-like propositions. Theory can also be used to clarify social and political phenomena. The phenomenon being explored in this study is the nature of newspaper coverage of the government. This exploration is based on the premise that the nature of newspaper coverage serves as an indicator of the role assumed by the newspaper in society.

2.9. MASS COMMUNICATION

2.9.1. Definition of Mass Communication

Mass communication involves the flow of information across society. It can therefore be contrasted with institutional or interpersonal communication that only reaches a portion of the population. Mass communication is coordinated by the mass media institution comprising of subunits, such as print media, television, radio etc. (McQuail, 1994: 2-22). This research essay deals exclusively with print media as one component of mass media communication.

2.9.2. Four Philosophical Approaches to Mass Communication

Mass communication may be studied from four different approaches: The Functionalist Approach, the Symbolic Interactionist approach, the phenomenological approach and the Critical Theory approach. The four approaches offer different philosophical views of mass communication (Jansen, 1989: x-xi).

2.9.2a Functionalist Approach

The functionalist approach defines media's role according to the needs of the society in which it operates. Building on the work of Laswell (1948) and Wright (1960), McQuail

(1994: 77-79) makes use of the functionalist theory to identify five core media functions. Firstly, media provide information regarding events, power relations and societal progress. Secondly, media are responsible for correlation meaning that media interpret and comment upon events, while ensuring that societal norms are upheld. News coverage may influence the setting of the public agenda. Media also fulfil important socialization roles. Thirdly, media encourage the continuity of common values, like nation building. The fourth role of media is to serve as entertainment for the society. Lastly, media may be used to mobilize support for war, political campaigns or economic development (McQuail, 1994: 77-80).

Francke (1995:109) asserts that mass media contribute to democracy by performing a watchdog role for society. This assertion links up with McQuail's (1994: 80) postulation that the functions of media are dependent upon the nature of the society. Gurevitch and Blumler (1994: 25-26) identify the following role expectations of media in a democratic society. Media are expected to report critically on the socio-economic environment, allow for political debate, provide a platform for political actors and interest groups and hold government accountable by acting as a watchdog and influence public agenda. The importance of media as watchdog is currently being contested in South Africa (Berger, 1996: 17).

2.9.2b Symbolic Interactionist Approach

The Symbolic Interactionist Approach emphasizes the way in which the media contribute to the construction of social reality. Through mass communication, media create meaning and influence the way in which the meaning is interpreted (Jansen, 1989: 28). Political communication refers to communication **by** political actors, communication addressed **to** political actors by voters and opinion writers and communication **about** political actors and their policies. Media is generally responsible for the third form of political communication. In democracy, media transmit political communication between government and political actors. Media also construct political information through their interpretation of political reality (McNair, 1995:3-5). Mead argued that as humans interpret and attribute meaning to situations, social reality is constructed. Social reality is therefore in a constant state of flux as interpretations of reality undergo continuous

redefinition (Jansen, 1989: 28-34). Cillie in De Beer (1987: 72) states that "media do not only reflect reality, Media provide their own interpretation of reality". If society is democratic, media are more likely to provide an interpretation reflective of democratic values. The view that media influence the political process by framing events is also referred to as the Social Construction Theory.

The underlying premise of the social construction theory is that meaning is not inherent, but created through action or events. As events are often determined by context, meaning is dependent on context. Important contributors to the Social Construction theory are Berger and Luckmann, Schultz and Goffman (Davis, 1990: 159-160). This theory postulates that media interpret reality. McNair (1995: 12) offers three categories of political reality. The first reality is the objective reality that records events as they really do occur. The subjective reality refers to events as perceived by political actors and society. Media constructs the third reality by interpreting and selecting events for news coverage. The subjective reality is often influenced by the constructed reality of media.

Media contribute to the shaping of societal perceptions by defining which issues should appear on the public agenda. As Martin Lewin, a broadcaster for the BBC, emphasized, "people in media shape the psyche of the nation...and that imposes a responsibility to present a more accurate mirror image of the overall balance of events and issues that affect our viewers and their world (Johnson, 1996: 296). Numerous studies have been conducted on the proposed impact of media on perceptions, for example McCombs and Shaw (1960's) (Francke, 1995: 177). De Fleur and Dennis (Froneman and De Beer, 1992: 57) found that media has a limited short-term effect on perceptions. However, protracted media coverage of a specific event was found to affect long term societal thought. Potter (1975: 164) states that the media in South Africa, especially during Apartheid, played an important role in determining the perceptions of South Africans.

2.9.2c The Phenomenological Approach

The Phenomenological approach also deals with the social construction of reality. Unlike the Symbolic Interactionist approach, phenomenology defines social reality through the existence

of every-day patterns in social existence. As patterns pervade everyday life, the researcher employing the phenomenological approach must be familiar with the context in which communication is studied (Jansen, 1985: 60-63).

2.9.2d The Critical Theory Approach

The Critical Theory approach stems from a neo-Marxist approach. Approaches that challenge capitalist society and its control over the masses fall under the Critical Theory mantle. Mass communication is seen as an oppressive tool of the capitalist order. Researchers working from the critical theory approach view media as a means of articulating the interests of the masses (Jansen, 1985: 64-66). This approach is echoed in the Soviet/Communist press theory of the normative approach (Discussed later in section).

This research essay uses the functionalist theory of mass communication to examine the function of the press in South Africa. As the title of this research essay asserts, the press may fulfill either a watchdog or a lapdog function. One of the important functions of the press, according to Gurevitch and Blumler (1994: 25-26) is to hold government accountable with critical coverage. As South Africa's press debate centres around the nature of press coverage and therefore its function in society, the Functionalist Approach to mass communications serves as the basis of this study.

2.9.3. Social Scientific, Normative, Operational and Everyday Theories of Media-Society Relations

Using the Functionalist approach, one notes that the function of the media is partly related to its relationship with society and the state. It is therefore pertinent to refer to theories of Media-society Relations to clarify media's function in society.

Four main theories of mass communication may be used to analyze the relationship between media and society in South Africa: social scientific, normative, operational and everyday theory. The social scientific theory advocates the examination of the media to determine the nature and effects of mass communication. As this theory involves numerous aspects and deals with a broad range of issues, it will not be applied in this

study. The normative theory examines the way in which the media **should** operate within a society. As the operation of the media is dependent upon the dominant societal values, normative theory stems from the ideological discourse of the society (McQuail, 1994: 4-5).

The previous sections have suggested that the ideological values of South African society filtered through to the ideological stances of the three newspapers being studied. As this research essay aims to establish a connection between newspaper ideology and the role of the newspaper in society, it is appropriate to adopt the normative theory. Although normative theory may not be as objective as other theories, it can be tested with objective research methodology (McQuail, 1994: 5).

The third media theory, operational theory, refers to the practical knowledge gathered by journalists and media experts. Operational theory is used to define the news process such as the selection of news, newspaper layout and response to societal values (McQuail, 1994: 5). The operational theory is not relevant to the study of the role played by the media in a given society. The final theory referred to as everyday theory, deals with common sense knowledge of the media. Included in this theory are media genres, media content, and media usage (McQuail, 1994: 5). As with the operational theory, the everyday theory does not pertain to this study of newspaper coverage of the government. This research essay therefore employs the normative theory of mass communications in the examination of the role of the South African press.

2.10 NORMATIVE THEORY OF PRESS/SOCIETY RELATIONS

Siebert, Peterson and Schramm (1956:2) argue that societal values and beliefs influence the way in which the press operates within that society. Differing perceptions of the role of the press in South Africa arise from contrary normative prescriptions of the functions of media. Siebert, Peterson and Schramm (1956) identify four main press approaches within the normative theory: Authoritarian, Libertarian, Social Responsibility and Soviet/Communist theory. McQuail (1994) adds the Developmental, the Development and the Democratic-

Participant approaches. It is necessary to examine these media theories before suggesting an appropriate approach for South Africa's press.

2.10.1. Authoritarian Approach

The Authoritarian approach is the oldest and most prevalent media approach. This approach is usually adopted in societies with the capacity to produce and sustain mass media. The basic tenet of the Authoritarian approach is that the press is state or government controlled. The Authoritarian Press approach, as a product of the Renaissance, states that man can only achieve his full potential through group membership (Siebert, Schramm and Peterson, 1956: 2). The state is therefore deemed as essential for the development of man. Using the philosophies of Plato, Hegel and Machiavelli, the approach postulates that the press can only be effective if controlled by the elites within society. The development of the state supercedes individual needs. True freedom, said Hegel, could only be attained within the domain of the state (Siebert, Peterson and Schramm, 1956: 10-15).

The state is clearly of paramount importance in the Authoritarian approach. The press is therefore subordinate to the goals of the state. Media may not challenge or undermine the government or ruling authority. The press should also refrain from offending the prevailing political values. Censorship may be imposed to protect the government from any negative criticism. Any press attacks on government policy may be treated as criminal offences. The Authoritarian approach results in state subordination of the media. The government may prescribe the behaviour of the press and appoint the staff of press groups. Journalists may not exert independent views that deviate from state policy (McQuail, 1994: 1-5). Although the press institution operates outside of government, it must produce material that will enhance the state's goals. The press operates under the top down control of an all-powerful state. The Authoritarian approach to the press is evident in countries like Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Taiwan (Hachten, 1996: 17).

Jackson (1993:37) suggests that South African media, prohibited from undermining state authority during the 1980's, could be characterised as Authoritarian. Any opposition to the state was repressed with legislation or with intimidation. Sethi (1987: 217) agrees that the South

African media, before 1990, followed the Authoritarian approach. However, it is incorrect to generalize about the pre -1990 press as a uniform institution. Differing ideological viewpoints contributed to divisions between the English, Afrikaans and Alternative Press. The Afrikaans press, as an extension of the National Party government, promoted government policy in accordance with the Authoritarian approach. The English press, which maintained its independence from the government, aimed to provide objective and critical coverage of the government. The English press was therefore closer to the Libertarian press approach (Potter, 1975:161). The Alternative Press could be described as closer to the revolutionary Democratic-Participant press concepts.

2.10.2. Libertarian Approach

The Libertarian approach, which gained momentum in the 18th century, inverts the state-man relationship of the Authoritarian approach. Instead of placing truth and knowledge in the realm of the state, man is defined as a rational being with the ability to make informed choices. The affirmation of truth is seen as one of man's inherent rights. Instead of serving government, the press allows society to hold government accountable (Siebert, Peterson and Schramm, 1956: 3-4). The state no longer exists for its own aims but must allow for the realization of individual goals. If the state fails to allow for individual development, it can be replaced. The Libertarian approach rests on the work of Locke who posited power in the will of the people. The state obtained its power from the people. Another important contributor to the approach is Carl Becker who said, "the sole method of arriving at truth is by the free competition of opinion". Milton's "market place of ideas" serves as the underlying assumption of the approach (Siebert, Peterson and Schramm, 1956: 4).

In contrast with the Authoritarian approach, the Libertarian press enjoys independence from government control. Although there should be press freedom, the press is compelled to avoid material that could be construed as defamatory or obscene. The press is required to "provide a check on government that no other institution [can] provide" (Thomas Jefferson). The watchdog role of the press is thus justified by Libertarian press principles. The press contributes to the consolidation of democracy by ensuring that the electorate can make informed decisions. The Libertarian view of media is evident in Britain and the USA. Both of

these countries exhibit stable economies and a strong democratic tradition. The libertarian approach is therefore suited to developed countries (Siebert, Peterson and Schramm, 1956: 40-56).

McQuail (1994: 87) refers to the Libertarian press as the Free Press approach. The Free Press approach reflects liberal, democratic principles like individualism, truth and popular will. The freedom of society is reflected in the freedom of the press. This freedom, however, does not exist without qualification. As Pool in McQuail (1994: 87) notes, "No nation will indefinitely tolerate a freedom of press that serves to divide the country and open the floodgates of criticism against the freely chosen government". There should laws that protect the rights of individuals without imposing censorship on the press. The following comprise the core assumptions of the Free Press approach. Firstly, publications must be free from advanced censorship. Publication should not require a license and there should be no obligation to publish. Access to local and international information may not be restricted. Finally, and most importantly for the South African context, press attacks on political parties or the government may not be punished (McQuail, 1994: 87- 89).

Hachten (1996: 18-19) refers to the Western Concept of the Media. This definition coincides with Siebert, Peterson and Schramm's (1956) Libertarian press approach. The core of this approach, as defined by Hachten, deals with the right of the press to report on and, if necessary, criticize the government without fearing government action. The government must refrain from any interference in the collection of information and the dissemination of that information. Although not an exhaustive list, the following countries exhibit Western media systems: Britain, USA, Canada, Sweden, Belgium, Austria and Denmark. A country must possess the following attributes for the Western media concept to take root. Firstly, the country's legal system must ensure meaningful protection of civil liberties and individual rights. Per capita income, education and literacy levels must be relatively high. Breytenbach (1996: 37) puts the minimum literacy level at 50%. Using Przeworski's bottom line, the minimum per capita income is set at \$1 000 (Breytenbach, 1996: 36). Parliamentary democracy is best suited to the Western media concept where the principles of freedom and individualism are enshrined in a

constitution. The country requires a market economy that will be able to sustain media enterprises. Finally, there must be a relatively established tradition of independent journalism.

2.10.3. Democratic-Participant Approach

The Democratic-Participant approach developed from disillusionment with profit-driven, mass media. It was felt that media should function for the benefit of society and not for commercial goals. The proliferation of media outlets in society fails to address the needs of society. Instead, societal needs can be articulated via the establishment of smaller, participative media units. For example, groups and organisations in society should possess their own media channels. This will make up for mass media's inability to respond to the needs of minority groups (McQuail, 1994: 96-97). This recognition of "grass roots" media gained momentum in the 1960's. Forms of media endorsed by the approach include the alternative press, pirate radio, community television and wall posters.

Instead of the top down media of the Authoritarian approach, the emphasis falls on participation and interaction (McQuail, 1996: 132). South Africa's alternative press, which developed in the 1980's as a reaction against Apartheid oppression, may fall into the democratic -participant press approach. The Alternative press did not rely on local financial support, but survived on overseas funding (Berger, 1993: 106). The alternative press advocated community involvement and participation (Louw, 1993:129). This media approach, which may be found in Western democracies dissatisfied with the performance of mass media, is particularly prevalent in Northern Europe (Hachten, 1996: 21-22).

2.10.4. Social Responsibility Approach

The Social Responsibility approach, an adaptation of the Western Media concept, is said to have originated in the United States. This approach argues that the press is obligated to fulfill important functions within society. The press must allow for the airing of conflicting views, as long as they do not threaten the values of society (McQuail, 1984: 90). As the goal of the media is to serve society, government may intervene if media fails to fulfil this function satisfactorily (Hachten, 1996: 22). This approach is most appropriate in Anglo-American countries with stable economies and relatively homogenous populations. As media has a

responsibility to respond to the needs of society, truthful and accurate journalism is crucial. The press must adhere to scrupulous standards of journalism while operating within the legal framework (Potter, 1975: 218). Media must reflect the diversity of society without offending minority groups. The approach therefore repudiates hate speech and unsubstantiated negative coverage. The approach attempts to accommodate individual choice, press freedom and the commitment to society, in an inclusive media approach (McQuail, 1994: 90-92). The sophistication of the Social responsibility approach calls for a democratic society and a stable infrastructure (De Beer, 1987: 4). Jackson (1993:217) argues that the Social responsibility applies to most media systems in western countries.

Peterson in Siebert, Peterson and Schramm (1956: 74) notes that the Social Responsibility Approach emerged from the industrial revolution. Like the Libertarian press, Social responsibility press calls for critical newspaper coverage, with the proviso that it upholds the values of society. While the Social responsibility approach reflects some principles of the Libertarian approach, there are distinct differences between the two. The libertarian approach expounds the importance of freedom **from** governmental or legislative restraint, while the Social responsibility approach aims to gain freedom **for** a social or political aim. Proponents of the Libertarian approach view the state as a possible hindrance to press freedom. Social responsibility theorists view the state as both guardian and promoter of press freedom. Whereas the Libertarian approach describes freedom of speech as a natural and absolute right, the Social responsibility approach characterizes press freedom as a moral right that has to be earned. Man is depicted as rational by the Libertarian approach, but as lazy and impressionable in the Social Responsibility approach (Siebert, 1956: 73-94).

The commitment of the English press, before 1990, to accurate news coverage, suggests possible correlation with the Social Responsibility approach. Unlike Afrikaans newspapers, English newspapers appealed to all linguistic and racial segments of society. The English press therefore reflected the plurality of South African society. The commitment of the English press to accurate and truthful coverage, revealed a basic tenet of the Social Responsibility approach. It was felt that the English press had an obligation to provide objective and critical coverage

(Potter, 1975:205-207). However, as the press did not operate autonomously of the National Party government, overt criticism of the government was limited.

2.10.5. Soviet/Communist Approach

The Soviet Media approach developed from the work of Marx and Engels, as well as the Communist doctrines of Stalin and Lenin (McQuail, 1994: 92). In a parallel with Communist attacks on Western capitalism, the Soviet press approach arose in opposition to the concepts of Western media. The Soviet Press approach postulates that the working classes and the communist party should control all media. The press freedom of Western societies results in elite-owned, exploitative press (Hachten, 1996: 22). Private media ownership is repudiated as media is deemed as state property (McQuail, 1994: 92). The profit motive of press is therefore eliminated.

As instruments of the Communist State, media are obliged to adhere to government prescriptions. The state and the Communist Party are seen as the only sources of authority in society. Institutions, like media, that should occupy civil society, may not exist independently of the state. The state can therefore use media for propaganda purposes. Soviet newspapers may not reflect the objective reality, but must frame events according to the Communist view of truth and reality. Although the state initially controls the Soviet Press, the state will become obsolete once a classless society is attained. The press will therefore become an extension of the Communist Party (Schramm in Siebert, 1956: 110-142). The press is removed from profit motive to advance the political aims of the party. Any information that fails to correspond with Communist ideology or the progression of the Communist Party may be censored by the state. The Soviet Press may report on any local or foreign events that relate to the Communist cause (McQuail, 1994: 92-94).

The Soviet media approach contrasts with the Libertarian/Western media approach. The Soviet Approach denies any private media ownership as all media is state-controlled. The Press, which serves as a tool of the Communist Party, controls the flow of information in and out the country. News values are determined by the Party and not by society. The press is used to mobilize and control the thoughts and actions of the people. Soviet Media is evident in

countries with Communist regimes. Its prevalence is waning as people in Eastern and Central Europe grow disillusioned with Communist media. Since the 1970's, Soviet Media approach has become less dominant. By 1986, Soviet newspapers were permitted to cover incidents like the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. Gorbachev made further adaptations of the soviet media approach by unblocking, for example, the flow of information in and out of Russia. The Soviet media diversified, heralding the end of Communist monopoly over news. The decline of the Soviet approach has seen a move towards the Libertarian mode in former Communist countries, like Russia (Hachten, 1996:222-27).

A spin-off of the Soviet approach is the Revolutionary approach advocated by Lenin. According to this approach, the press aimed to publish information that would contribute to the demise of the government. This form of the press is common in societies dissatisfied with the performance of the incumbent government. As government is not seen as legitimate, the people mobilize to topple the ruling authority. Newspapers, like the secret press in France during Nazi occupation, can be termed as revolutionary. The underground newspapers, known as samizdat as they were independently published, were viewed as revolutionary by the Communist Regime in Russia. In parts of Africa, the revolutionary press is often the only manner in which unbiased information may reach the public (Durrani, 1995: 145-154). The use of revolutionary media contributed to the removal of Communism in Poland, Romania and East Germany (Hachten, 1996: 27-29). As the revolutionary concept of media is inherently short-term, the developmental approach may be seen as the next phase in the evolution of the media.

2.10.6. Developmental Approach

Hachten (1996: 30) describes the developmental approach of media as a variation of the Authoritarian media concept. The Developmental approach has taken root in countries that have recently gained independence from colonial rule. Musa (1997: 134-135) notes that ironically, the major impetus for the developmental approach came from United Nations and American involvement in the restructuring of developing countries. Based on the assumption that media may contribute to social change, the UN policy advocated the use of media for nation building in countries in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. The approach is most evident in developing countries devoid of infrastructure or resources that would permit the examination of

the other theories. For example, developing countries may lack professional skills, possess an illiterate population or exhibit poor economic development (McQuail, 1994: 94).

The developmental approach is relatively undefined. As Musa (1997: 145) asserts, developmental media can be seen as an evolving response to the cultural and political environment of developing nations. The approach lacks the historical precedence of the Authoritarian and Libertarian press theories. However, one can identify five basic theoretical premises of the developmental approach. Mass media, including the press, must be used to advance nation building, the elimination of poverty and other socio-economic concerns, while assisting with economic development. Like the social responsibility approach, the press has an obligation to respond to the needs of society. Secondly, media must not challenge authority. As the removal of the incumbent government may result in chaos and uncertainty, the press is dissuaded from criticizing the government. Press freedom may be restricted in accordance with the developmental needs. The third principle echoes the Authoritarian control of information. Information, viewed as state property and a national resource, must be used to further national development. The fourth principle suggests that freedom of speech and individual rights are less important than socio-economic problems, like poverty. Finally, the developmental approach maintains that each nation has the right to regulate the flow of information across its borders (Hachten, 1996: 30-31).

Jackson (1993: 218) adds that the developmental approach calls for press coverage that is representative of the national culture and language of the society. Articles should refer to events in other developing countries. The approach is criticized for its rejection of Western Libertarian media values. Instead of responding to the needs of society, Western media is seen as an imposition of alien values in traditional cultures. Countries divided by poverty and socio-economic disparity tend to support the developmental concept of the press (Hachten, 1996: 30-32). Unlike the Libertarian press concept, the developmental press no longer serves as the fourth estate, holding government accountable. Journalists must report on issues that will promote nation building. National interests supercede all other concerns. As a Somali official noted, "Truth is whatever promotes your government. If something is not favourable to your country, then it is not true" (Jackson, 1993:222). The danger of this perception of the media is

that it may encourage excessive media control. Leaders may advocate developmental media as a means of protecting their political authority. Developmental media approach has therefore developed a sub-approach, known as the Development concept. Developmental journalism advocates uncritical and supportive government coverage. In contrast, development journalism covers development issues without relinquishing objectivity and integrity. One can therefore refer to development journalism as "advocacy" journalism. The watchdog role of the media is maintained despite the commitment to nation building and development (Musa, 1997: 140-142).

Froneman (1997: 201) proposes that the ANC-lead government may support aspects of the developmental media approach. Nation building is clearly an intrinsic part of government policy. There is a perception that the press should advance nationalism with positive government coverage. There should be more news about other developing countries. De Beer (1996: 117) also suggests that the ANC support the developmental concept of press coverage. Newspaper coverage that is adversarial and critical is seen as detrimental to South Africa's transformation. The media has been criticized for its apparently negligible contribution to nation building. The press, perhaps wise to the Authoritarian connotations of the developmental approach, has refused to dilute its critical coverage of the government.

2.11. A THEORETICAL APPROACH FOR SOUTH AFRICA

As noted earlier, South Africa is bifurcated into First and Third world elements. This bifurcation results in socio-economic disparities. South Africa is a nascent democracy devoid of a culture of tolerance and a history of democracy. Before proposing a media approach for South Africa, it is important to note that the media theories are not mutually exclusive. As normative concepts, it is unlikely that a country will reflect any approach in its pure form. South Africa, as a divided society, is therefore unlikely to reveal traits of one particular approach. It is probable that a hybrid media approach will be adopted to accommodate South Africa's linguistic, racial and cultural diversity. Jackson (1993: 217) argues that the Soviet and Libertarian media concepts will not take root in South Africa. Jackson's view is in accordance with Sethi's (1987: 217) repudiation of the Soviet and Libertarian models for South Africa. There is the perception that, as South Africa can not be defined as a first world country;

emphasis should be placed on national development. Although South Africa has a parliamentary democracy and a market economy, it lacks other factors that augur well for the institution of the Libertarian approach. For example, a 1995 study found that illiteracy levels are highest in the 16-25 and 35-60 age groups. This distribution may affect economic growth and development in South Africa. It was found that 10-15 million South Africans are unable to read (Central Services Statistics, 1997).

There are, however, institutional frameworks in place to regulate press freedom in South Africa. The 1996 Constitution makes provision for freedom of expression and freedom of information. Section 16 1(a) explicitly calls for freedom of the press and other media, while section 32 1(a) states that everyone has the right to access to any information held by the state (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996: 7,12). Section 32 also states that legislation must be enacted to give effect to the right to access government information. If passed the proposed Open Democracy Bill, drafted in 1997, aims to guarantee media access to government information³. The government will not be able to impose legal restrictions on the press. The press must refrain, however, from seditious or defamatory coverage. This draft bill, if passed, will indicate a commitment to the Libertarian principle of a free information flow (Hachten, 1996: 18). It is also improbable that South Africa will revert to the Authoritarian approach that characterised media during Apartheid. During the 1980's, press attacks on government were silenced with censorship and oppressive legislation (Sethi, 1987: 217).

South Africa could adopt the Social Responsibility concept, which is prevalent in Western societies. Although Jackson (1996: 219) suggests that the Social Responsibility approach may be evident in South Africa's media approach, one must note the possible obstacles. The Social responsibility approach occurs in societies with high levels of tolerance and internal stability, where democracy is firmly in place. South Africa has only enjoyed fully inclusive democracy since 1994. Gouws (1993: 15) emphasizes the need for tolerance in a divided society like South Africa. Political tolerance means that political groups allow for dissenting views within the

³ The Open Democracy Bill has been dogged by controversy since its inception. In 1997, the draft bill was amended without the consultation of civil society organisations. Whereas the Bill was intended to ensure public right to government information, the amended Bill excised the clause which guaranteed public

framework of democracy. Tolerance is derived from a civil society based upon autonomous institutions, the separation of civil society and the state and civil manners. Gouws' 1993 study revealed low levels of tolerance in South Africa. Lipset in Gibson (1996: 6) states that democracy requires "an acceptance by the citizenry and elites of the principles underlying freedom of speech, media, religion and opposition". South Africa may not yet enjoy a democratic culture able to support the Social Responsibility concept of media.

Froneman (1997: 200) notes that the ANC government already reveals an allegiance to the developmental media approach. As a developing country, South Africa would benefit from a developmental media. By advocating nation building and development, rather than negative news, the press could further the consolidation of a democratic and united South Africa. Government intervention in editorial autonomy and media policy is justified by the common goal of national development. However, most of South Africa's newspapers are not liable to accept this infringement on their autonomy. Nigel Bruce's charter for the *Financial Mail* illustrates the recalcitrance of the media to revert to a pseudo-Authoritarian style of journalism (1996: 39). Furthermore, Lawrence Schlemmer (Sethi, 1987: 220) argues that South Africa's "social and institutional separation [make it difficult] to establish consensus on socio-economic goals".

South Africa is most likely to adopt an eclectic press approach that encapsulates aspects of the dominant media approaches. As an emerging democracy, South Africa requires institutions committed to liberal principles. Certain Libertarian principles should therefore be embodied in South Africa's media. The press should hold the government accountable by ensuring critical and objective coverage of government policies. As South Africans were divided by Apartheid legislation until the 1990's, there is likely to be anxiety regarding the preservation of ethnic and cultural identity (See Kotze, 1997). It is important, therefore, that media do not offend any ethnic or minority groups. This consideration is in line with Social Responsibility approach. Media, as mirrors of society, must provide coverage that coincides with South Africa's diversity. Media should also exhibit high standards of accuracy and truth in their reporting.

access to government meetings. Many feel that the amended bill therefore restricts open government (Haffajee, 1997). The Bill was tabled and then withdrawn in 1998.

While many regard the developmental approach as anathema, it offers some important contributions to the South African media debate. South African newspapers and other media should contribute to the promotion of nationalism. Media should also be committed to the development of national, political, cultural and economic goals (De Beer, 1987:3). The challenge is determining the cost at which these national goals should be pursued. The press challenge the right of the state to intervene in media policy, albeit for national interests. Perhaps Musa's (1997: 138) Development media approach is more relevant to the South African media context. This approach allows for critical government coverage while promoting nation building. The approach implies that government also has an obligation to nation building. If government compromises the goals of society, newspapers have an obligation to inform society. The watchdog role of the media is therefore used to advance nationalism. De Beer and Steyn (1996: 94-95) also advocate a media approach based loosely upon developmental theory. They argue that by assuming certain roles, the South African press can bridge the divide between African and Western values. These roles include

- Informing and educating readers
- Serving as a watchdog on government and other institutions
- Setting the agenda for public debate.

As with the Musa's development approach, these roles accommodate a synthesis of the nation building and watchdog roles of the press.

It is evident that a South African media approach will have to incorporate aspects of other media theories. There have been suggestions that the current media debate arises from the opposing media theories supported by the government and media respectively. The ANC-lead government's sensitivity to negative press coverage may increase as the 1999 election approaches. Steyn (1994) notes that while a democratic government requires a vigilant press, a developing country should avoid an overly adversarial press. This statement summarizes the conundrum facing the South African government and media. There needs to be a balance between negative and positive coverage. It is perhaps helpful to view press coverage as a continuum with overly critical and overly positive at opposite ends. The press should not commit to either one of the poles, but should place itself in the middle of the continuum. This simplification of media policy does not imply that coverage must be unqualified. Critical

coverage is only acceptable when it can be substantiated with empirical evidence. In turn, an overly critical press may eventually adopt the subversive mode of the Revolutionary press. An overly positive press might become an extension of the government or ruling party. As newspapers "mute their criticism in favour of national reconciliation" (Merrit, 1995: 165), the crucial watchdog role of the press may be eroded. Musa (1997:144) observes that a composite media approach needs to encapsulate the varied elements of South Africa's media environment. South Africa ought to adopt a media approach that juxtaposes national reconciliation with democratic principles.

2.12. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEDIA AND GOVERNMENT

Two theoretical paradigms may be applied to the relationship between media and government. The Adversarial paradigm is based upon the ideological premise of liberal-democratic approach. The approach prescribes the way in which media should view government actors. As government is potentially corrupt, media should act as a guardian or watchdog. This results in hostility from government officials who rely upon media coverage for legitimacy and power. This approach has been criticized for being too narrow. While the adversarial nature of the relationship is emphasized, the paradigm fails to account for the symbiotic interaction between government and media. If the relationship is based exclusively on enmity, the relationship will eventually be destroyed. Weaver and Wilhoit (1980) proposed the Exchange paradigm to accommodate the interdependence of media and government. This paradigm does not imply that media serves as an extension of government. Instead, the paradigm accedes that the relationship involves conflict and cooperation. To develop a comprehensive paradigm of the relationship between media and government, it is important to acknowledge the following factors. Political communication can be described as the relationship between two mutually dependent actors with divergent goals. This relationship is regulated by the roles of the respective actors and may be characterized by conflict and cooperation. The socially prescribed behaviour of an actor refers to the actor's role (Gurevitch and Blumler, 1994: 496).

In summary, as relationships are determined by the roles of the actors, South African media needs to redefine its role before it can establish a working relationship with the government. The ANC-lead government may feel that the press has not adapted its role to fit in with a

democratic dispensation. It is felt that the press should support rather than criticize the government (Berger, 1996: 17). Steyn (1994: 4-5) states that South Africa's media should act as a mirror for society, provide a channel of communication between government and the electorate and provide a forum for open political debate.

The government's strong reaction against critical press coverage challenges the press' watchdog role. There is a lack of understanding regarding the respective positions of the press and government (Berger, 1996: 6). South Africa is not only an ethnically divided society; it is also bifurcated into first and third world divisions (De Beer, 1996: 109). The two divisions are likely to ascribe to contrasting roles of the press. The government and the press may also be looking at the functions of the press from opposing theoretical premises. South Africa's challenge lies in adopting a theoretical approach that accommodates the needs of both the government and the press. The following section provides an overview of the normative theoretical approaches to media and government relations.

2.13. EXISTING MEDIA RESEARCH

The next section deals with the content analysis of newspaper coverage. Before turning to the methodological aspect of this study, it is necessary to refer to existing media research. Other studies may provide important methodological guidelines for this study. There is first a brief discussion of general media research and then a look at recent research developments in South Africa.

2.13.1. General Media Research

Griswold (1991: 47) approached the media debate by studying public perceptions of the role of the media. Responses to two roles, namely watchdog and consensus building, were assessed. It was found that respondents with high levels of education were less inclined to support either of the media functions. Wanta and Mahmoud (1991) investigated the impact of media upon agenda setting by conducting an exploratory study of news coverage in America. The issues raised in 34 polls were correlated with newspaper coverage in the six weeks preceding the polls. It was found that message, economic and respondent variables may affect the impact of media on agenda setting. There have been several studies on the media transformation in post-

communist countries. Atwood (1995) looked at the restructuring of the Polish press, while Bauer and Straubhaar (1994) examined media changes in Europe.

In 1984, Lange conducted a comparative study on the news values of first and third world newspapers. Lange used content analysis to test the hypothesis that developing nations place greater emphasis on positive news (Musa, 1997: 142). A study by Nair (1967) of the Indian media led to the assertion that although the press should report on development issues, the need for critical journalism remains pertinent. Critical coverage highlights problem areas and encourages the government to improve its response to development needs (Addison, 1993: 37).

2.13.2. Media Research In South Africa

In South Africa, there has been research on the role of media in development. In 1985, Gouws investigated the relationship between the press and government leaders. As the research focused on the attitudes of members of Parliament to various newspapers, Gouws used survey methodology in her study. The results indicated that certain political parties were loyal to certain newspapers. For example, the members of the NP believed in the credibility of newspapers controlled by Nasionale Pers and Perskor, while supporters of the Progressive Federal Party (P.F.P) were loyal to newspapers of the SAAN and Argus groups (Gouws, 1985: 44-54). Although the results of this study are dated, having being conducted before 1990, they do consolidate certain theoretical perceptions of the press before 1990. The results substantiate the claim that English newspapers, before 1990, targeted liberal South Africans, while Afrikaans newspapers were more government-aligned.

Burton (1996: 159) analyzed the impact of media on a rural community using a focus group in Kwazulu Natal. It was found that media did not adequately address the needs of the society. In 1996, the Media Institute of South Africa (MISA) studied the attitudes of twelve Southern African governments to their press institutions. The results indicated an increase in hostile attitudes towards the press after a transition to democracy. It appears that after the honeymoon period of democratic elections, relations between the government and the media tend to sour (The Citizen, 1996: 11). The cessation of South Africa's transition period may account for the strained relations between the government and the press.

The Media Monitoring Project (MMP) evaluates the content of media coverage of the government (Golding-Duffy, 1996: 8). While this study concentrates on print media coverage, the MMP analyses all print and broadcast media coverage. A 1996 study of twenty-seven newspapers and six hundred and seventy radio broadcasts indicated that coverage of the government was more positive than negative.

NEGATIVE COVERAGE	POSITIVE COVERAGE	NEUTRAL COVERAGE
21%	30%	49%

The *Sowetan's* government coverage was relatively uncritical, while *Die Burger* was generally neutral in its approach to the government. The assessment of government coverage by the MMP was commissioned by Comtask, a body established by the government to evaluate government communication (Golding-Duffy, 1996: 8).

Other than the Media Monitoring Project, there has been no recent research dealing specifically with the nature of press coverage of the government. As the 1999 election approaches, the relationship between the press and the ANC-lead government is likely to be under scrutiny. There are fears that the ANC will rebuff a critical press as part of its election campaign (Patten, 1998: 10). The nature of press coverage is also pivotal in the media debate on press freedom and democracy (Uys, 1996:32). The government's accountability needs to be maintained through critical press coverage (*Sowetan*, 1996: 10). The government's claims of an overly critical press need to be evaluated. Patten (1998: 10) takes the position that the press is fulfilling their watchdog role by balancing critical and supportive coverage. Cohen (1996) notes that many opposition parties feel that the ANC gets more positive coverage than other political parties. Cohen then states that press criticism has been mild, rather than vehement, especially when compared with coverage of the government in countries like Britain and America (Cohen, 1996).

There are clearly conflicting views regarding the nature of newspaper coverage. This research essay aims at an exploratory study of the nature of newspaper coverage of Dr Zuma, Minister of Health. The results of this study should be consolidated by further, more comprehensive research.

2.14. SECTION SUMMARY

This section commenced with a brief examination of mass communication approach. Four main approaches were identified, of which the Functionalist and Symbolic Interactionist approaches received extensive mention. Within Mass communication theory, one may also approach a study of press/society relations from four press approaches. The normative approach, which rests upon the premise that ideological values affect communication, is the most appropriate for the study of the relationship between the press and the South African government. It is expected that the traditional, pre-1990 ideological roles of newspapers may have altered. These ideological shifts may be reflected in the nature of newspaper coverage of the ANC-lead government.

The section concluded with a brief survey of recent media research, both generally and in South Africa specifically. The literature review contextualises the current research essay within a research framework. The lack of recent research pertaining to newspaper coverage of the government consolidates the necessity of the current study. It also compounds the need for further, detailed study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND ANALYSIS

SECTION ONE: RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1. INTRODUCTION

As outlined in the preceding three chapters, part of the debate on South Africa's media involves the relationship between the press and the government. Members of the ANC-lead government appear to view their relationship with the press as overly adversarial. The press, however, seem committed to the watchdog role demanded of them by the norms of democracy. While enmity between a government and its media is common, even desired in a democracy, Cohen (1996) cautions that the intensity of dissent in South Africa may present a cause for concern. Cohen argues that, according to international standards, press criticism in South Africa may be mild. The nature of government coverage by the print media is therefore a contested issue. As South Africa prepares for its second round of democratic elections in 1999, the nature of press coverage is likely to become more important.

It is therefore important to link these assumptions with empirical research. There is no existing research focusing specifically on the way in which the press reports on government leaders and policies. This study is primarily an exploratory study. Babbie (1992: 90) provides three motivations for an exploratory study. Exploratory studies are undertaken to develop a clearer understanding of a specific phenomenon. This study is an exploration of press coverage of a specific issue. The direction of coverage, whether negative or positive is the phenomenon being explored in this study. Exploratory studies also test the feasibility of further, detailed study. While this paper focuses on the coverage of a specific issue by three newspapers, the results may lead to further study of more newspapers. This will allow for more generalizable and representative data. Finally, an exploratory study may lead to methods that can be replicated in additional studies. Clearly, the results of this content study will not be definitive, but merely exploratory. The study should be seen as a precursory study for later, more explanatory analysis.

3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.2.1. Propositions, Conceptualisation and Operationalisation

The target or phenomenon that is being evaluated, is the nature of press coverage of the government. Theoretically, the two main concepts are newspaper ideology and newspaper coverage.

3.2.1a Propositions

In the working hypothesis or proposition, these concepts may be reduced to the following variables: Newspaper ideology may be Authoritarian/Conservative or Libertarian/Western. Newspaper coverage may be positive, negative, balanced or neutral. Newspaper ideology can be operationalised according to the historical context outlined in the literature review. A reference to the newspaper's editorial charter, where applicable, may also serve as an indicator of newspaper ideology.

Table 3 Concepts, Variables and Indicators of Research Propositions

CONCEPT	VARIABLE	INDICATOR
Ideology of newspapers	Authoritarian Liberal/Western Neutral	Historical context Categorization of Tomaselli (1998) Newspaper Charter
Newspaper Coverage	Critical Supportive Balanced Neutral	Negative Positive Balanced Neutral

Newspaper coverage is operationalised by a content analysis of newspaper articles dealing with Zuma and community service. The number of positive as opposed to negative thematic assertions will indicate the overall direction of the article. Nominal measurement will be augmented by the ordinal measurement of the latent content of the article. Press coverage is therefore the dependent variable of the study. Newspaper

ideology and newspaper ownership are possible independent variables that may affect the way in which newspapers report on government issues.

Using these ideology and ownership as the two independent variables, the following propositions are established:

- The ideological stance of the newspaper may affect the nature of its coverage towards the government.
- Afrikaans newspapers may be more critical of the ANC-lead government than English newspapers.
- Newspaper ownership may affect editorial policy and therefore newspaper coverage.

3.2.1b Conceptualisation

Ideology may be conceptualised according to the categories set out by Tomaselli and Louw in Diederichs and De Beer (1998: 92). Newspapers of the English press, before 1990, were classified as liberal or Western, while newspapers of the Afrikaans press were seen as authoritarian or conservative. The *Sowetan*, though not part of the Alternative press, was classified as part of the liberal press. It is expected that these ideologies have changed since 1990. The Afrikaans press may have shifted to a more liberal approach, while the English press may be moving towards a developmental approach. The ideological stances of the respective newspapers may therefore be operationalised according to the classifications in the existing literature. One can also refer to the editorial of the newspaper, where applicable, to operationalise ideology.

Coverage is conceptualised as the content of a newspaper article. Positive coverage therefore refers to content that contains positive assertions about Zuma and her policy. Words like "legitimate, progressive and positive" will indicate positive coverage. Negative coverage is therefore any content that refers to Zuma in a derogatory or unfavourable manner. As with positive coverage, negative coverage can be operationalised by noting the use of words with negative connotations, like "autocratic, protest and dissatisfaction". Neutral coverage will include content devoid of positive or

negative connotations. Balanced articles contain an equal amount of negative and positive assertions.

3.2.1c Operationalisation

Newspaper ideology, in reiteration, may be operationalised by referring to the historical context of the categories provided by Tomaselli and Louw (1998). One may also operationalise newspaper ideology by referring to the editorial charter of the newspaper, where available. The newspaper ideology of the *Sowetan*, for example, may be operationalised in this manner (Mortimer, 1996: 190). Coverage, which refers to the content of newspaper articles, may be operationalised in the form of a content analysis of newspaper articles in *Die Burger*, *Cape Times* and *Sowetan*. Coverage of Nkosazana Zuma, as a government case study, will be evaluated. Coverage is limited to a specific issue, namely community service for doctors. The content categories must differentiate between coverage of Zuma's leadership, the content of the health bill, the motive of the bill, reaction to the bill, reaction to withdrawal of the bill and the effects of the bill. Each variable category is numbered to allow for the quantitative measurement of newspaper coverage.

3.2.2 Content Analysis

As the study focuses on the nature of newspaper coverage, it is salient to employ content analysis as the mode of research. Berelson in Nafziger and White (1966: 181) describes content analysis as a "technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication". To ensure objectivity, the content categories need to be clearly defined. The categories must be systematically devised, ensuring that all possible elements are included. Content analysis allows for the quantitative measurement of communication. The results can therefore be described in percentages, ratios and in frequency distributions. Although Berelson's definition refers to manifest content analysis, namely the recording of the visible content (Babbie, 1992: 318), this study will also code the latent content of newspaper articles. Although it is possible to use computers for the coding of data, the size and nature of this study make manual content analysis a feasible option.

3.2.2a *Manifest Analysis*

Manifest content analysis refers to the recording of the visible content and therefore involves the counting of specific words or phrases. While manifest content analysis is relatively elementary and reliable, it lacks validity. The nuances and connotations of words and phrases are often obscured in manifest coding (Babbie, 1992: 318).

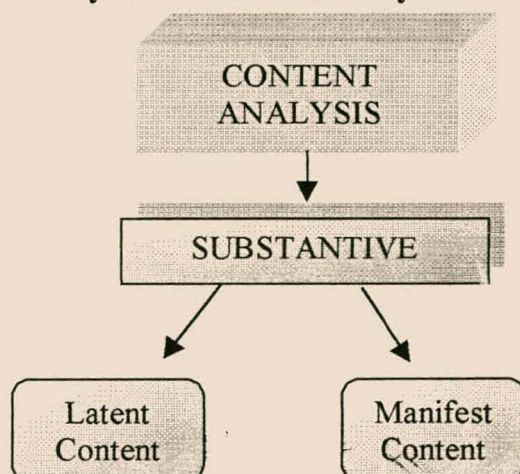
3.2.2b *Latent Analysis*

Latent analysis involves the subjective evaluation of an article or text. Although latent content allows one to assess the prevailing tone of an article, latent analysis is an inherently subjective exercise. The results of latent analysis may be difficult to replicate in later studies (Babbie, 1992: 318). To ensure both reliability and validity in this study, both the latent and manifest content of newspaper articles will be coded.

3.2.2c *Substantive and Procedural Analysis*

Content analysis can also be substantive or structural. Substantive content analysis focuses on the content of the article (Mannheim and Rich, 1986: 156). As already mentioned, the latent and the manifest content of an article may be analyzed. Structural analysis allows one to examine the **way** in which the text is communicated. By looking at the number of words in the article, the size of the headline and the location of the article, one can infer the importance of the issue being covered (Mannheim and Rich, 1986). Although structural analysis is important, it is not relevant for this particular study. The researcher is concerned with a comparative analysis of the direction of newspaper coverage. The study is therefore primarily substantive, rather than structural. The mode of content analysis for this study may be presented schematically:

Diagram 8: Content Analysis Structure of Study

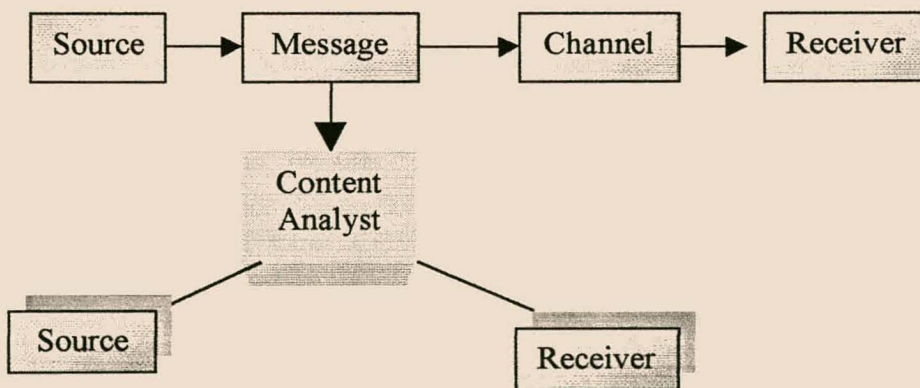


3.2.3. Rationale for Content Analysis:

There are numerous advantages in the selection of content analysis as a research method. As content analysis is conducted using existing textual data, the costs of the research project are reduced. The dependence on the text serves as a safety mechanism. Any ambiguities may be clarified by referring directly to the text. Content analysis is also convenient, as the construction of coding categories is often a replication of the conceptualization process. The basic premises of research methodology are applicable to content analysis as well (Woodrum, 1984: 5-6).

Content analysis allows inferences to be made directly from the text. Unlike survey or field research, content analysis is unobtrusive and nonreactive (Babbie, 1992: 328). Weber (1985: 1) notes that content analysis provides information about the sender of the message, the message itself, as well as the audience that the message is targeting. Content analysis can be used to compare different newspapers and their messages or content. Without disrupting the communication process, the researcher may code and interpret the message and draw inferences about the target audience. Diagram 9 illustrates the unobtrusive quality of content analysis.

Diagram 9: Content Analysis as Unobtrusive Research (Budd, Thorp and Donohew, 1967: 51)



The disadvantage of using content analysis is that, unlike other research methods, it is not as widely documented. The coding categories of content depend upon the content being measured. As measurement is determined by the content, it is imperative that the researcher is familiar with the content before formulating possible categories (Budd, Thorp and Donohew, 1967: 51).

3.2.4. Sampling

Whimmer and Dominick (1987: 172) note that most content analysis involves multistage sampling. This study involves three sampling stages: The selection of newspaper titles, the selection of newspaper editions and the selection of the recording unit.

3.2.4a Stage one

The newspaper titles were selected purposively, rather than randomly according to the principles of nonprobability. Budd, Thorp and Donohew (1967:23) describe purposive sampling as the selection of newspaper titles according to the researcher's knowledge of the publication. The selection criteria of titles should be able to serve as bases of stratification in a random study.

The *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* were selected as representatives of the two main linguistic blocs that dominated the press before 1990. The two newspapers also emanate from differing historical backgrounds. While the English press developed from mining interests, the Afrikaans press developed as an extension of the National Party. Newspapers like the *Cape Times* targeted the broader South African society, while newspapers like *Die Burger* were seen as Afrikaner publications. After the 1950's, the Afrikaans press did broaden its market focus (Potter, 1975). Although the *Sowetan* was established to cater for the urban black market, the newspaper is read by South Africans of all races (*Marketing Mix*, 1995: 45).

The selected newspapers also belonged to three of the four dominant pre-1990 press groups (Jackson, 1993: 37). The *Cape Times* fell under the ownership of South African Associated newspapers and Times Media Limited, until its takeover by Independent Newspapers. The white-owned Argus Company initially controlled the *Sowetan*. The *Sowetan*, as a newspaper now owned by the black New Africa Publications, has been the target of government criticism (*Sowetan*, 1996: 10). All three newspapers appear daily and in the morning, with *Die Burger* also appearing on Saturdays. While the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* are distributed in the Cape region, the *Sowetan* is distributed primarily in the PWV area. (Nail Company Information Sheet, 1998).

3.2.4b Stage two

The second sampling stage involves the selection of editions for analysis. As the analysis is confined to one particular case study, a census of relevant articles was drawn for each of the three newspapers. This census, referred to as the study population, includes all articles dealing with Zuma's community service policy, published in *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan* between May 1997 and February 1998. Articles must contain more than six lines and mention "Zuma" and the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill. If the bill is not explicitly mentioned, there must be an implicit reference to 'community service'. Zuma's proposal of community service for interns, listed in section 24A of the Medical, Dental and Supplementary health Service Professions Act [B22-98], serves as the case study of government policy. Time and space constraints mean that other health issues, like Sarafina, Virodene and tobacco regulations, will not be included. The content of newspaper articles and opinion pieces, not letters and briefs, will be analyzed. Articles mentioning Zuma and her community service policy are therefore the observation units of the study.

The sampling frame was constructed manually by extracting relevant articles from the respective newspapers between May 1997 and February 1998. As the study is limited to the coverage of a specific issue by three purposively selected newspapers, it is unnecessary to draw a sample. The sampling frame therefore serves as basis of the study. Eighty-eight articles were originally selected for the study. After four preliminary studies of the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan*, the sample frame was reduced to eighty articles. Articles that were either too short or irrelevant were eliminated from the sample frame. The articles, mistakenly included in the initial sample frame, were deemed as irrelevant after preliminary coding. Although January and February 1998 record no articles, the months have been retained in the sample frame in accordance with the time period of the health policy process.

Table 4: Sample Frame of Newspaper Articles

<i>MONTH</i>	<i>CAPE TIMES</i>	<i>DIE BURGER</i>	<i>SOWETAN</i>
MAY 1997	0	2	0
JUNE 1997	7	13	1
JULY 1997	2	7	1
AUGUST 1997	1	7	3
SEPTMEBER 1997	5	6	0
OCTOBER 1997	4	7	3
NOVEMBER 1997	2	7	1
DECEMBER 1997	0	0	1
JANUARY 1998	0	0	0
FEBRUARY 1998	0	0	0
TOTAL	21	49	10

The ten-month period was selected in accordance with the tracking of the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill through parliament. The Bill's origin can be traced back to the White Paper on the Transformation of the Health System in South Africa, which was produced in April 1997. Chapter four of the White Paper calls for a review of legislation pertaining to the health profession. One of the Acts cited for revision was the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Act of 1974. To ensure an equitable distribution of health professionals throughout the country, the White paper proposed that all health professionals devote two years to community service before entering the health service (White paper on the Transformation of the Health System in South Africa, 1997: 57-69). Dr Zuma then submitted the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill to Parliament in May 1997.

It is therefore appropriate to use May as the start of the study's time frame. Following dissatisfaction and public outcry, the Bill was withdrawn on 11 June 1997 (Hansard, June 1997: 3789). Zuma withdrew the Bill to study and incorporate pertinent submission to the Bill. The Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill [B62-97] was then reintroduced on the 1 August 1997. The Bill unlocked varied responses from the public and from opposition parties. Some criticism was leveled at the

Bill itself, while other criticism was aimed at Zuma's leadership style. The coding categories of the content analysis will therefore reflect these variances. In February 1998, The Joint Tagging Mechanism classified the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill as a section 76 Bill, meaning that it is an ordinary Bill affecting the provinces. Classification followed after the bill had been dealt with by the Portfolio Committee on Health. The Bill was then sent to President Mandela for his assent. In April, the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Act [B22-98] was promulgated (Hansard, April 1998: 576). The ten month time frame therefore includes articles dealing with the introduction, resubmission and promulgation of the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Act [B22-98].

3.2.4c Stage three

The selection of the recording unit is the third stage of the sampling process. Holsti (Krippendorf, 1980: 58) defines a recording unit as "the specific segment of content that is characterised by placing it in a given category". Whimmer and Dominick (1987: 174) refer to recording units as the units of analysis. The recording unit, or unit of analysis, is determined by the nature of the content analysis. In a manifest analysis, syntactical or thematic assertion units are most common. The syntactical units refer to a word or phrase that may be counted and coded. Words are seen as the most reliable coding units. Thematic assertions refer to phrases or sentences dealing with a particular subject. The assertion, which may be negative or positive, is directed at a particular subject. Budd, Thorp and Donohew (1967: 34) define an assertion as a single unit or idea that conveys information about a segment of content. This definition confirms that the assertion may be a whole sentence, or a part of a sentence. Assertion units are particularly suited to directional analysis.

As this study aims to evaluate press coverage of Dr Zuma and her Health Bill, thematic assertions comprise the units of analyses. Any phrase or sentence that refers to Zuma or the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill may be coded as a thematic assertion. The directional nature of this study makes the thematic assertion the most appropriate recording unit.

In latent analysis, the entire article serves as the unit of analysis. An evaluation of the article should highlight the dominant theme or tone of the article. For example, excessive use of words with negative connotations may suggest that the article is very negative (Krippendorf, 1980: 61). Alternatively, excessive use of positive assertions may connote a very positive article. An article containing no evaluative or directional assertions will be coded as neutral (0) in latent analysis.

3.2.5. Construction of Coding Categories

The coding categories of the content analysis must be mutually exclusive and exhaustive. As the nature of newspaper coverage is evaluated, newspaper coverage will fall into one of the following direction categories: positive, negative or neutral. To accommodate the direction of newspaper coverage, this study will be based upon the coding sheet devised by Donohew (Budd, Thorp and Donohew, 1987:40-41). Donohew incorporated both latent and manifest categories into one coding sheet, while allowing for the recording of the direction of the content. The categories differentiate between coverage of Zuma's leadership, her actions, her policy, the reactions of interest groups and the reactions of the ANC and opposition parties. The categories have been designed in line with Budd, Thorp and Donohew's (1967: 40) postulation that elaborate coding categories reduce coder bias.

The coding sheet (See Appendix A) was based upon the coding sheet of Donohew (1987). As the direction of assertions is central to the analysis, the coding sheet was divided into two directional columns. The A column represents the positive (+) assertions and the B column represents the negative assertions (-). Eight thematic sections were constructed based upon the findings of several pilot studies. As coverage of Zuma, as a Minister, and Zuma's health policy may differ, it was deemed necessary to allow for this differentiation in the theme categories.

The first thematic section, I, includes assertions that pertain directly to Dr Zuma and her style of leadership. The other seven theme categories deal with various aspects of the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Services Bill. Section II deals with perceptions of the bill, Section III with the motive of the bill and Section IV concentrates

on the process of the bill through parliament. Section V records coverage of the bill's content, while the following two sections deal with reaction to the bill and the withdrawal of the bill. Section VIII looks at the effects or consequences of the bill. Section IX is reserved for the coding of the headline of the article. Section X contains the neutral assertions that pertain ostensibly to legislative process.

Each assertion or variable was designated a number. The coding sheet contains 60 variables and coders could denote any number of variables in positive, negative or neutral directions. Variable 60 refers to the latent analysis of the article. With variable 60, the structure of the coding sheet differs from the manifest section to accommodate the ordinal measurement of article content. Instead of only two directional options, the latent analysis includes seven possible coding options. Articles that were either very positive or very negative were coded as (+3) and (-3) respectively. Articles that were positive or negative received either (+2) or (-2) scores. If articles were only slightly positive or negative, they were coded as either (+1) or (-1). Articles that could not be described as positive or negative were coded in the neutral (0) category.

3.2.6. Reliability and validity

As content analysis is often denounced as a subjective mode of observation, it is necessary to include tests for reliability and validity. An analysis is considered reliable if repeated coding yields the same results (Whimmer and Dominick, 1987: 182). Reliability will be attained in two ways. Firstly, if the results remain unchanged when coded by the same coder over a period of time, the analysis is stable. Secondly, intercoder reliability involves the testing of data by different coders. If different coders produce the same results, the study is said to be reliable (Weber, 1985: 17).

Validity refers to the ability to establish causal relationships between the variables being studied (Mannheim and Rich, 1986: 83). Put differently, Krippendorff (1980: 155) maintains that an instrument is valid if it measures what it intends to measure. Chapter four deals extensively with the reliability and validity tests of the study.

3.3. PILOT STUDIES

Budd, Thorp and Donohew (1967: 51) advise that before devising a directional coding design, the researcher must familiarize his or herself with the text being analyzed. It is therefore advisable to conduct a number of preliminary studies before beginning the construction of categories. After the purposive selection of the three newspaper editions, each newspaper was scanned for articles mentioning Zuma and community service. Once the relevant articles were noted, each article was read and possible categories were identified. These rudimentary categories were then tested in four pilot studies.

Although pilot studies are not compelled to conform to scientific norms, the editions selected for each study were selected according to the principles of probability sampling. As Stempel in Whimmer and Dominick (1987: 174) notes that expanding sample size beyond twelve elements does not ensure an incremental increase in accuracy, only four editions were sampled from each of the three newspaper titles. Twelve newspapers formed the composite sample of each study. Each element was selected systematically with a random start. The sample interval for each title was determined by dividing the title's population size by four. In the *Cape Times*, every fifth edition was included, every thirteenth in *Die Burger* and every second edition of the *Sowetan*. As the distribution of articles varies with each month, the possibility of periodicity is minimized (Babbie, 1992: 214). The results of the pilot studies indicated problem areas in the initial coding design.

SECTION TWO: DATA ANALYSIS

3.4. INTRODUCTION

This section contains the findings of the manifest and latent content analyses of newspaper articles dealing with Dr Zuma and the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill. An analysis and interpretation of the data follows after this section. The data will be summarized and presented in the form of frequencies and cross tabulations. Patterns within the data and relationships between the subgroups will therefore be more apparent (Krippendorf, 1979: 109).

The aim of this research essay is to establish the nature or direction of newspaper coverage of the government using Dr Zuma and the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill as the case study. The findings are presented as subgroup comparisons, meaning that frequencies for the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan* are compared with each other (Babbie, 1992: 397). This study makes extensive use of univariate analysis, namely the distribution of cases according to one variable. Univariate analysis produces descriptive statistics that may be presented graphically as bar graphs, pie charts or line diagrams (Johnson and Joslyn, 1995: 295-311). When newspaper coverage is cross tabulated with variables like newspaper ideology and newspaper ownership, a bivariate analysis is being conducted (Babbie, 1992: 389-391). In a univariate analysis, one can report on the frequency of relevant articles contained in each of the newspapers.

3.5. MANIFEST ANALYSIS

As mentioned earlier, manifest analysis refers to the coding of words or assertions (Babbie, 1992). In this study, thematic assertions serve as the unit of analysis for the manifest analysis. Articles that contain more than six lines and mention Zuma and the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill were read and the assertions were coded in directional categories. References to Zuma and the bill could be direct or implied. The articles were selected after a manual reading of newspapers within the ten-month period. After a series of pilot studies, the *Cape Times*

was found to have twenty-one relevant articles, *Die Burger* has forty-nine and the *Sowetan* has ten articles.

3.5.1. Frequency of Articles

The total sample therefore comprises eighty articles. It is evident that *Die Burger* has more articles than the other two newspapers. Of the total sample, 61,25% of the articles are found in *Die Burger*, while the *Cape Times* and *Sowetan* contribute 26,25% and 12,05% respectively to the study.

Table 5 Number of Articles dealing with Zuma and Community Service

Newspaper	Articles	Percentage of sample
<i>Cape Times</i>	21	26.25%
<i>Die Burger</i>	49	61.25%
<i>Sowetan</i>	10	12.05%
TOTAL	80	100%

3.5.2. Direction of Articles

The direction of newspaper coverage forms the locus of this study. The overall direction of an article was established by comparing the sum of all the negative assertions with the sum of all the positive assertions. If the positive assertions outnumber the negative assertions, the article is classified as positive. If there are more negative assertions, the article is referred to as negative. Balanced articles contain an equal amount of positive and negative assertions, while neutral articles contain predominantly neutral assertions. The assertions are divided into theme sections and coders are permitted to code more than one assertion in each thematic section. Coders are also able to code both positive and negative directional scores for one variable.

The manifest analysis reveals that of the twenty-one *Cape Times* articles, eighteen are negative and only two are positive. The one balanced article was found in the *Cape Times*. Forty one of *Die Burger's* articles are predominantly negative, while eight articles are positive. *Die Burger* had no neutral or balanced articles. The *Sowetan*, despite its small number of articles, reveals results distributed across the directional categories. Two

of its articles are positive, six are negative and two articles are classified as balanced and neutral respectively.

The following table may be read horizontally and vertically. The horizontal reading reports on the positive, negative, balanced and neutral articles for each newspaper. The vertical reading shows the number of positive, negative, balanced and neutral articles contained in the total sample. Of the eighty newspaper articles, twelve articles are positive and sixty-five articles are negative. Two articles are balanced, while the *Sowetan* contains the only neutral report.

Table 6 Frequency of Newspaper Articles by Direction

Newspaper	Positive	Negative	Balanced	Neutral	Total
<i>Cape Times</i>	2	18	1	0	21
<i>Die Burger</i>	8	41	0	0	49
<i>Sowetan</i>	2	6	1	1	10
Total	12	65	2	1	80

As the sample is disproportionately weighted, it is necessary to report on the relative distribution of the data. Johnson and Joslyn (1995: 299) note that the calculation of the simple frequency distribution facilitates the comparison of subgroups of different sizes. The relative distribution, or simple frequency distribution, converts the raw data into percentage form. Percentages are calculated from a numerical base. The base can be calculated in two manners. One can calculate the frequency distribution of direction for all the articles by making the sample size the base of the calculation. The base of the sample is eighty. The vertical reading of the table therefore uses eighty as the percentage base. Alternatively, the table may be read horizontally to establish the percentage of positive, negative, neutral and balanced coverage in each of the three newspapers. The base for the calculation of the relative distribution of each newspaper is the number of articles denoted for each newspaper title. The percentage base of the *Cape Times* is twenty-one, forty-nine for *Die Burger* and ten for the *Sowetan*.

Table 7 Frequency Distribution of Articles by Direction

Newspaper	Positive	Negative	Balanced	Neutral	Total
<i>Cape Times</i>	9.5%	85.7%	4.7%	0	21
<i>Die Burger</i>	16.3%	83.6%	0	0	49
<i>Sowetan</i>	20%	60%	10%	10%	10
Total	12	65	2	1	80
% of Total sample	15%	81.25%	2.5%	1.25%	100%

Of the twenty- one *Cape Times* articles, only 9,5% are positive, while 85,7% are generally negative. The one balanced article translates into 4.7% of the *Cape Times* sample. In *Die Burger*, 16,3% of the articles are positive and 83,6% are negative. There are no balanced and neutral articles to compute. Of the *Sowetan*, 20% of the articles are positive and 60% are negative. The balanced and neutral articles each represent 10% of the *Sowetan's* sample size. A vertical reading of the table shows that the positive articles comprise 15% of the total sample, while 81,25% of the articles are negative. Only 2,5% of the sample contain balanced coverage, while neutral coverage accounts for a slight 1,25% of the total sample. For all three newspapers, the mode or most frequent attribute is negative.

3.5.3. Direction by Month

As the ten-month period of the study has been selected in accordance with the tracking of the bill through Parliament, it is salient to explore the nature of newspaper coverage for each month. To reiterate, the sample time frame begins with May 1997 and ends with February 1998. The distribution of articles by month indicates possible trends in the policy process. The following table suggests that June 1997 contains the most articles relating to Zuma and community service. This central tendency is referred to as the mode (Babbie, 1990: 390). The second most frequent month is October 1997. The modes of the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* coincide with the overall mode of the sample. Both the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* carried most of their articles in June 1997. In contrast, the *Sowetan's* mode is distributed between August and October 1997. The *Sowetan* only carried one article in June 1997. None of the three newspapers contains any relevant articles in January and February 1998. As already mentioned, these two month are

included in the sample to complete the time frame of the policy process. The Bill was promulgated as an Act in February 1998 (Hansard, April 1998).

Table 8 Total Number of Articles per Month

	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Total
<i>Cape Times</i>	0	7	2	1	5	4	2	0	0	0	21
<i>Die Burger</i>	2	13	7	7	6	7	7	0	0	0	49
<i>Sowetan</i>	0	1	1	3	0	3	1	1	0	0	10
Total	2	21	10	11	11	14	10	1	0	0	80

3.5.3a Positive Articles by Month

One may look at the distribution of positive, negative, balanced and neutral articles by month to establish shifts in newspaper coverage. Of the overall sample, October and November of 1997 carried the most positive articles - three articles respectively. There are no positive articles in May and December 1997, or in January and February 1998.

The *Cape Times* contain only two positive articles, one in July 1997 and the other in October 1997. Three of *Die Burger's* eight positive articles are found in the November issues, while two are carried in June 1997. The other three positive articles are distributed between August, September and October 1997. The *Sowetan's* two positive articles are in August and October 1997.

Table 9 Positive Articles By Month

	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Total
<i>Cape Times</i>	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
<i>Die Burger</i>	0	2	0	1	1	1	3	0	0	0	8
<i>Sowetan</i>	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Total	0	2	1	2	1	3	3	0	0	0	12

3.5.3b Negative Articles by Month

Of the sixty-five negative articles contained in the total sample, eighteen articles are found in the June 1997 editions. September and October 1997 contain ten negative articles each, while July and August each contain nine negative articles. June 1997 clearly stands as the month with the most negative articles. December 1997 contain no negative articles. The distribution of negative articles in the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* coincides with the overall monthly distribution of negative articles. In June, the *Cape Times* contains seven negative articles, while *Die Burger* carries eleven negative articles. The *Cape Times* reports no negative articles in May or December 1997. *Die Burger* is the only newspaper that records negative articles for May 1997. The *Sowetan* contains six negative articles: two in August and October 1997 respectively. July and November 1997 each contain one negative article from the *Sowetan*. The *Sowetan* contain no negative articles in May, June, September and December 1997.

Table 10 Negative Articles by Month

	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Total
<i>Cape Times</i>	0	7	1	1	5	2	2	0	0	0	18
<i>Die Burger</i>	2	11	7	6	5	6	4	0	0	0	41
<i>Sowetan</i>	0	0	1	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	6
Total	2	18	9	9	10	10	7	0	0	0	65

3.5.3c Balanced and Neutral Articles by Month

There are only two balanced articles and one neutral article in the entire sample. The *Cape Times* reported one balanced article in October 1997, while the *Sowetan* contain a balanced article in June 1997. The *Sowetan* carried the single neutral article in December 1997.

Table 11 Balanced Articles by Month

	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Total
<i>Cape Times</i>						1					1
<i>Die Burger</i>											
<i>Sowetan</i>		1									1
Total		1				1					2

Table 12 Neutral Articles by Month

	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Total
<i>Cape Times</i>											
<i>Die Burger</i>											
<i>Sowetan</i>								1			1
Total								1			1

3.5.4. Frequency of Variables

The coding sheet was divided into eight theme categories (See Appendix A). Each thematic section contains a number of assertions that could be coded as positive or negative. As mentioned earlier, an assertion refers to a sentence or phrase that communicates information about a particular subject. For example, assertions in thematic section I pertain to Zuma, the Minister of Health. The direction of the assertions were coded as positive (+) in the A column and as negative (-) in the B column. Neutral assertions dealing with legislative process were coded as (0). Variables 51-59 deal with the assertions related to the legislative process. Variable 60 deals with the latent content of the article. Assertions that were not explicitly mentioned were coded in the miscellaneous categories. While the categories are important, the researcher is concerned primarily with the direction of the assertions.

21	1	9		6	8		2	1
22	2	3		4	15		1	0
23	0	0		0	0		0	0
24	0	2		0	4		0	1
V								
25	0	2		6	2		0	0
26	4	3		12	8		1	0
27	0	4		0	10		0	1
28	1	3		1	7		0	0
29	0	1		2	7		0	0
VI								
30	0	0		3	4		0	1
31	1	0		2	14		0	2
32	0	8		2	24		0	3
33	1	0		0	1		0	0
34	4	2		1	0		2	0
35	1	3		1	6		4	1
36	0	0		1	2		0	0
VII								
37	2	0		4	1		0	0
38	1	2		5	0		0	0
39	0	0		0	0		0	0
40	0	0		0	0		0	0
41	1	0		1	1		0	0
42	0	2		2	7		0	0
43	0	0		0	1		0	0
VIII								
44	0	0		0	0		0	0
45	0	0		0	0		0	0
46	0	1		0	1		0	0

47	0	4		0	2		0	0
48	0	6		0	5		0	4
49	0	1		1	0		0	0
IX								
50	2	11		13	28		0	6
51	0			0			0	
52	3			3			1	
53	1			9			0	
54	2			1			1	
55	2			3			0	
56	4			3			1	
57	3			3			2	
58	1			1			0	
59	1			4			1	
Total	46	108		88	222		17	37
Title	154			310			54	
Total								

3.5.4a Modes for whole sample, positive column and negative column

The mode for the article in general, without noting the direction, is variable five. The variable, which deals with "consultation between Zuma and interest groups", is coded thirty nine times. The second most frequent variable, variable 32, deals with the "reaction of students and interest groups to the bill". Variable 32 was coded thirty seven times. As the direction of the assertion forms the crux of the study, it is pertinent to identify the positive and negative modes for the entire sample. The variable that was coded most frequently in the positive A column, was variable 5. Variable 26, dealing with "agreement with the principle of the bill", was the second most frequent variable. The mode of the negative column B is variable 32. Most newspapers mentioned "student and interest group opposition to the bill". The description of the bill as "controversial", variable 11, records the second most frequent score.

3.5.4b Modes for The Cape Times, Die Burger and Sowetan

Of the individual newspapers, variables 5,11 and 21 occurred most frequently in articles of the *Cape Times*. Variable five deals with "consultation between Zuma and interest groups", while variable 11 codes "descriptions of the health bill". The "process of the bill" through parliament is addressed with variable 21. As with the *Cape Times*, variable 5 appears most frequently in articles of *Die Burger*. Variable 5 occurs ten times in the *Cape Times* and twenty six times in *Die Burger*. Variable 32 also occurs twenty six times in *Die Burger*. As already mentioned, this variable notes the "reaction of students and interest groups to the bill". The mode for the *Sowetan's* articles is variable 12, which occurs seven times.

The negative mode for the *Cape Times* is variable 11 which occurs ten times. *Die Burger's* negative mode, variable 32, is coded twenty four times. The variable that describes the bill as "undemocratic and forced", variable 12 occurs the most frequently in the *Sowetan*. The most positive variable of the *Cape Times*, variable 17, notes that the bill will "distribute doctors to the rural areas". *Die Burger* records fifteen positive scores for variable five. Variable 35, which records "support of opposition parties for the bill", serves as the positive mode for articles of the *Sowetan*.

Table 14 Variable Mode by Newspaper

	Mode of total variables	Mode of Positive Variables	Mode of Negative Variables
<i>Cape Times</i>	V5,11,21	V17	V11
<i>Die Burger</i>	V5,32	V5	V32
<i>Sowetan</i>	V12	V35	V12
All Three Newspapers	V5	V5	V32

3.6. LATENT ANALYSIS

The latent analysis involved a subjective evaluation of the article. In latent analysis, the entire article serves as the unit of analysis. Coders are asked to read the article and then to code the entire article into one of seven possible categories. Articles that are generally very positive or very negative are coded as (+3) or (-3). Articles that contain mostly, but not entirely positive or negative assertions are coded as (+2) or (-2) and are classified as positive or negative. Articles that contain only a few assertions of either positive or negative directions, are classified as slightly positive (+1) or slightly negative (-1) respectively. Articles that could not be evaluated as positive or negative are recorded in the neutral (0) category.

3.6.1. Newspaper Coverage by Direction

Of the eighty articles, twenty-two articles are coded as slightly negative, while eleven articles qualified as slightly positive. Twenty-four articles are described as generally negative in comparison to the five articles that are deemed as positive. While only two articles can be seen as very positive, fifteen articles fall into the very negative category. The *Sowetan* contains the only neutral article. The article contains no judgmental or evaluative assertions. The article concentrates on the legislative process of the bill.

In the *Cape Times*, most of the articles fall into the negative category. Eight articles are negative, seven are slightly negative and two are very negative. The *Cape Times* reports no very positive articles. Two articles fell into the positive and slightly positive categories respectively. The *Cape Times* contains no neutral articles.

Of the forty-nine articles of *Die Burger*, fourteen are classified as slightly negative and fifteen as negative. There are nine very negative articles. While *Die Burger* has seven slightly positive articles, it only contains two positive and two very positive articles. *Die Burger* is the only newspaper that coded any very positive articles.

The *Sowetan*, in relation to its sample size, recorded the most number of very negative articles. Of the ten articles, four are coded as very negative. One article fell into the

negative category and one article fell into the slightly negative category. As mentioned earlier, the *Sowetan* contains one neutral article. Two articles are seen as slightly positive, while the remaining article was coded as positive.

Table 15 Latent Analysis of Newspaper Articles - By Direction

	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)	(-1)	(-2)	(-3)	Total
<i>Cape Times</i>	0	2	2	0	7	8	2	21
<i>Die Burger</i>	2	2	7	0	14	15	9	49
<i>Sowetan</i>	0	1	2	1	1	1	4	10
Total	2	5	11	1	22	24	15	80

Table 16 Frequency Distribution of Latent Analysis

	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)	(-1)	(-2)	(-3)	Total
<i>Cape Times</i>	0	9.5%	9.5%	0	33.3%	38.0%	9.5%	21/100%
<i>Die Burger</i>	4.0%	4.0%	14.2%	0	28%	30.6%	18.36%	49/100%
<i>Sowetan</i>	0	10%	20%	10%	10%	10%	40%	10/100%
% Total	2.5%	6.25%	13.75%	1.25%	27.5%	30%	18.75%	100%

As with the previous tables, the percentage frequencies may be read vertically and horizontally. Read vertically, one can ascertain the frequency distribution of the entire sample. Of the eighty articles, 27.5% are slightly negative while only 13.75% of the newspaper articles are slightly positive. Almost one third, or 30% of the sample is negative. Less than ten percent of the total sample is positive. While 18,5% of the articles fall into the very negative category, only 2.5% are very positive. The one neutral article accounts for 1,25% of the sample.

If one looks at the simple frequency distribution for each newspaper, the following results are evident. The *Cape Times* has an even distribution of articles in the positive, slightly positive and slightly negative categories. Nine and a half percent of the *Cape Times* articles are distributed in each of these categories. One third of the *Cape Times* articles are coded as slightly negative (-1). While 9,5% of the articles of the *Cape Times* are very

negative, there are no very positive articles coded. Most of *Die Burger's* articles, 30.6%, are coded as negative and 4% as positive. Of the forty-nine articles, 28% are slightly negative and 18,36% are very negative. In comparison, the very positive and positive categories reveal low scores for *Die Burger*: 4% for each category. The slightly positive articles account for 14.2% of *Die Burger's* forty-nine articles. A high 40% of the *Sowetan's* articles fall into the very negative category. As with the *Cape Times*, the *Sowetan* reports no very positive articles in the latent analysis. Twenty percent of the *Sowetan's* articles are slightly positive, while the other categories: positive, neutral, slightly negative and negative each contain ten percent of the *Sowetan* sample. The *Sowetan* is the only newspaper that contains a neutral article in the latent analysis.

3.7. SECTION SUMMARY

This section reports on the data findings of the manifest and latent content analysis. The findings are outlined and represented in tabular format. The most important findings of the study relate to the direction of coverage in the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan*. To counter the unequal sample sizes of the respective newspaper titles, relative distribution or percentages have augmented frequency statistics. The results described in this chapter are interpreted and analyzed in chapter four.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous section documented the findings of both the manifest and latent analysis of the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan*. It is important to note that the results of this study cannot be deemed as representative of all newspaper coverage of the government. The study is primarily exploratory and results are therefore not generalizable to newspaper coverage of government. All data interpretations in this chapter therefore relate directly to coverage of the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Services Bill by the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan* and findings only permit tentative extrapolations about the nature of newspaper coverage of the government. This section expands upon these findings with an analysis and interpretation of the data.

The empirical findings may be linked to the following central propositions stated in Chapter 1:

- Newspaper ideology may affect the nature of newspaper coverage of the government
- Newspaper ownership may influence newspaper coverage of the government

These propositions may be refined into working hypotheses:

- Newspapers classified as Authoritarian may contain more negative coverage of the ANC-lead government than newspapers classified as Libertarian
- Newspapers owned by black groups, like NAP, will be more supportive of the government than newspapers of the Nasionale Pers group
- Newspapers of the Independent Group will contain more positive coverage of the government than newspapers of the Nasionale Pers Group

As denoted earlier, Afrikaans newspapers like *Die Burger* were viewed as 'servile to the National Party' (Diederich and De Beer, 1998: 105). The Apartheid state's control over the media, particularly the Afrikaans press, contributed to the Authoritarian ideology of most Afrikaans newspapers (De Beer, 1987: 73). In contrast, English newspapers, before

1990, endeavoured to serve as a mouthpiece for the views of the broader South African society. English newspapers, like the *Cape Times*, criticized the Nationalist government and its policies. The English press reflected the Libertarian ideological values of America and Britain (Jackson, 1993: 37). Before 1990, the Argus Company controlled the *Sowetan*. As the Argus Company also espoused the Libertarian approach to government/media relations, the *Sowetan* may be classified as Libertarian.

Whereas Afrikaans newspapers generally supported the National Party government before 1990, it is expected that coverage of the ANC government will be more critical. Conversely, rumours of close associations between the ANC and owners of the Independent and NAP groups suggest that the *Cape Times* and *Sowetan* will be less critical of the government. These central propositions are vital to the interpretation of the data findings of the content analysis. Once the data has been interpreted, one may use the results to identify which media approach of the normative approach is being adopted in each newspaper. For example, one may assume that newspapers containing generally positive coverage of the government may be adopting a developmental approach to relations between media and government.

Newspaper coverage serves as the dependent variable of the study. Newspaper coverage is conceptualised as positive, negative, neutral or balanced. These four categories represent the direction of newspaper coverage. The direction of newspaper coverage in the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan* was evaluated using both manifest and latent analysis. Most of the data in this chapter is interpreted in the following format:

- a) Analysis of newspaper coverage of total sample and of individual newspaper titles
- b) Cross Tabulation of analysis of newspaper coverage with newspaper ideology
- c) Cross Tabulation of newspaper coverage with newspaper ownership
- d) Extrapolation on theoretical approach suggested by data findings

4.2 MANIFEST ANALYSIS

4.2.1. Frequency of Newspaper Articles

Of the total sample of eighty articles, *Die Burger* contributes 49 articles to the sample. The *Sowetan* contributes ten articles, while the *Cape Times* accounts for a approximately a quarter of the sample at twenty-one articles. The predominance of *Die Burger* articles in the sample is best evidenced by the percentage distribution of articles. *Die Burger* contributes 61% of the articles to the sample, while the *Cape Times* and *Sowetan* accounted for 26% and 10% respectively. *Die Burger* contains the most articles relating to the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill.

Diagram 10 Number of Articles Dealing with Zuma and Community Service

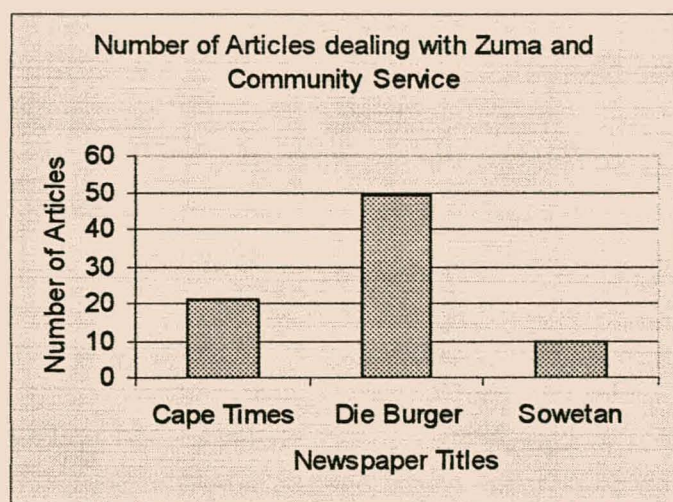
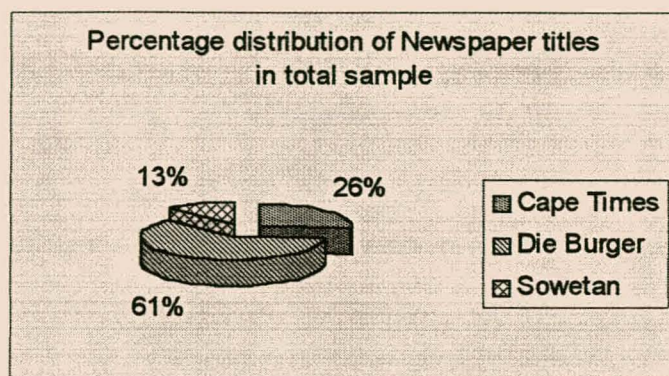


Diagram 11 Percentage Distribution of Newspaper Titles

Without comparing the number of articles relating to Zuma with the number of articles pertaining to other government figures, it is difficult to assert the importance of the Zuma issue to *Die Burger*. It would therefore be erroneous to claim that *Die Burger* afforded the most coverage because it ranked the issue as significant. It is possible, however, to note that compared with the *Cape Times* and the *Sowetan*, *Die Burger* carried an extensive number of relevant articles. The relatively small number of articles in the *Sowetan* may be attributed to the format of the newspaper compared with the other two dailies. Whereas *Die Burger* may devote up to eight pages to topical news, the *Sowetan* only allocates four pages.

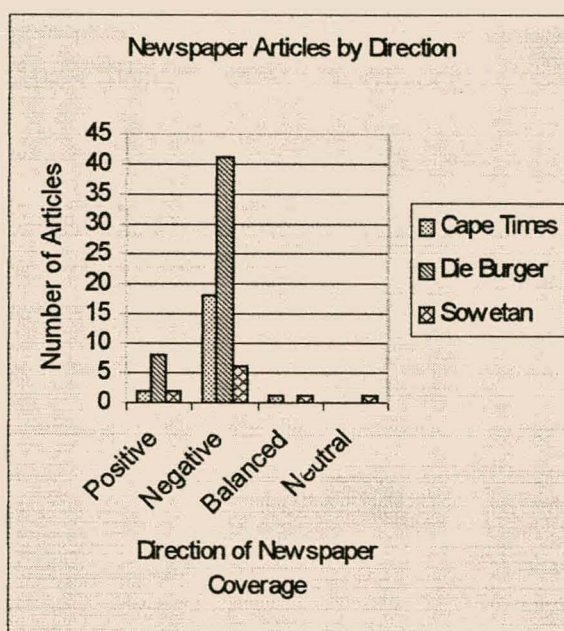
4.2.2. Newspaper Articles by Direction

To reiterate, direction refers to the nature of newspaper coverage: positive, negative, balanced and neutral. The overall direction of an article was established after the sum of the positive assertions was compared with the sum of the negative assertions. The direction with the highest score serves as the overall direction of the article. Balanced articles contained an equal number of positive and negative scores, while the neutral article contained no scores for the positive and negative direction.

Of the eighty articles, sixty-five or 81,25% are negative, while only twelve articles are positive. The overall coverage of Zuma and the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill in the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan*,

is generally critical. As noted earlier, Zuma's health policies tend to evoke heated debate (Bisseker, 1997: 45). It is therefore not surprising that over 80% of the sample contains negative articles. There were only two balanced articles and one neutral article. The low incidence of balanced articles supports the view of the bill as contentious and controversial. Most newspapers reported either positively or negatively on the health issue. The neutral article derived from the *Sowetan's* sample, deals entirely with the legislative process of the bill.

Diagram 12 Newspaper Articles By Direction



A cursory examination of the bar graph in Diagram 12 indicates that *Die Burger* has the most negative articles. Of the forty-nine articles in *Die Burger*, forty-one articles are negative. The *Cape Times* has eighteen negative articles while the *Sowetan* has six negative articles of a total of ten articles. As the newspaper titles contain varying numbers of elements, it would be erroneous to interpret the data without referring to the relative percentage distribution of the articles (Johnson and Joslyn, 1995: 299). Whereas it appears as if *Die Burger* contains more negative coverage than the other two titles, the

relative distribution merits the *Cape Times* with the most negative coverage. Of the twenty-one articles in the *Cape Times*, 85,7% are negative.

Although the number of negative articles in *Die Burger* is larger, the percentage of negative articles is 83,6% of the forty-nine articles. There is a 2,1% difference between the negative scores of the two newspapers. *Die Burger* is classified as authoritarian, while the *Cape Times* is associated with Libertarian press ideology. These findings therefore refute the proposition that newspapers of the Authoritarian ideological tradition contain more negative coverage than newspapers of the Libertarian tradition. It appears as if the *Cape Times* is continuing its pre-1990 watchdog role. The 4.7% allocated to balanced coverage of Zuma consolidates the *Cape Times'* watchdog role.

Table 17 Newspaper Ideology By Direction of Coverage

Ideology	Positive	Negative	Balanced	Neutral	Total
Libertarian (Cape Times)	9.5%	85.7%	4.7%	0	100% (21)
Libertarian (Sowetan)	20%	60%	10%	10%	100% (10)
Authoritarian (Die Burger)	16.3%	83.6%	0	0	100% (49)

However, the negligible 2,1% difference in the negative scores of the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* suggests that *Die Burger* is shifting towards more critical coverage of the government. The *Sowetan*, although now owned by a black consortium, may also be classified a Libertarian according to the categories of Tomaselli and Louw in Diederich and De Beer (1998: 92). As with the *Cape Times*, 60% of the *Sowetan* sample was negative, while 29% of the sample is positive. Ten percent of the *Sowetan* sample falls into the neutral category and 10% falls into the balanced category. This distribution across the directional categories suggests an adherence to objective and critical coverage. The data may also be interpreted in relation to the proposition that newspaper ownership affects the direction of newspaper coverage. It is feared that Tony 'O Reilly's close relationship with President Mandela and the ANC may taint objective newspaper

coverage of the government (Uys, 1996: 32). Table 17 indicates that the *Cape Times*, controlled by Independent Newspapers, is not overly supportive of the ANC government. The results of this analysis suggest that the *Cape Times*, as a newspaper of the Independent Group, is not pandering to ANC directives. The data supports statements by Fallon refuting claims that the Independent group unequivocally supports the ANC government (Harris, 1996: 21). Furthermore, the *Cape Times* is not overly critical as 9,5% of its sample is positive and 4,7% is balanced.

Die Burger's high score of negative articles suggests that Nasionale Pers is encouraging a more critical approach to government coverage. Ton Vosloo asserts that the Afrikaans press is becoming more critical (Harris, 1996: 21). The data findings support this view. The slight discrepancy between negative coverage of the Independent Group and the newspaper of Nasionale Pers may indicate a reluctance of Nasionale Pers to appear overly critical of the government. The Afrikaans press is already being criticized for its apparent recalcitrance to restructure. Nasionale Pers may be hesitant to adopt an overly critical approach to government issues. *Die Burger* has a higher number of positive articles in relation to its size than the *Cape Times*. However, unlike the *Cape Times* and *Sowetan*, *Die Burger* contains no neutral or balanced articles relating to Zuma.

The *Sowetan* has been berated on two accounts. Firstly, the government has accused black newspapers, like the *Sowetan*, of serving as tokens in a white media industry. The government feels that black newspapers, as components of the liberation struggle, should refrain from overly critical coverage of the government (*Sowetan*, 1996: 12). Secondly, there has been speculation that ownership of the *Sowetan* by NAP may compromise the editorial autonomy of the newspaper. The affiliation of Dr Motlana, Executive of NAP, with President Mandela and the ANC has cast doubt over the nature of government coverage. Many feel that the *Sowetan* will adopt an overly supportive stance towards the ANC government (Diederich and De Beer, 1998: 100).

In 1994, an editorial charter was drafted in an attempt to protect the *Sowetan's* editorial integrity. The Charter outlines, inter alia, a commitment to factual coverage reflecting the

views of South African society as a whole. The Charter guarantees the standards of professional and honest journalism, implicative of the Libertarian media approach.

In 1996, the Media Monitoring Project (MMP) found the *Sowetan's* coverage to be "often uncritical of the government" (Golding-Duffy, 1996: 6). The findings of this analysis suggest that the honeymoon period of the *Sowetan* and government's relationship has ended. Although the proportion of negative to positive coverage is smaller in the *Sowetan* than in the other two newspapers, more than half of the articles are negative. Ownership by NAP does not appear have affected the *Sowetan's* coverage of the government. Although this study only looks at coverage of one government issue, one can extrapolate that the *Sowetan* appears to be adhering to its editorial charter. As a black owned newspaper, the *Sowetan* is not overly supportive of the government. Proportionally, the *Sowetan* contained the most positive articles. This refutes the government's claim that coverage by black newspapers, like the *Sowetan*, is overly critical.

Table 18 Newspaper Ownership by Direction

Newspaper Group	Positive	Negative	Balanced	Neutral	Total
Independent Group	9,5%	85,7%	4,7%	0	100% (21)
Nasionale Pers	16,3%	83,6%	0	0	100% (49)
New Africa Publications	20%	60%	10%	10%	100% (10)

The *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan* appear to be approaching government coverage from a libertarian perspective. The *Cape Times*, being slightly more negative of Zuma than *Die Burger*, reveals a continuation of its pre-1990 ideological stance. The balanced and neutral scores of the *Sowetan* indicate a possible move of the newspaper towards an eclectic media approach. Negative and positive coverage is complimented by balanced and factual reporting. A developmental approach, as outlined in chapter two, is not evident in the three newspapers analyzed in this study.

4.2.3. Direction of Newspaper Coverage by Month

As the ten month time period of the study coincides with the development of the bill from a clause in the White paper to an Act, it is important to trace shifts in the direction of newspaper coverage according to month. Important moments in the policy process may be summarized in the following timeline:

- 16 April 1997 White Paper on the Transformation of the Health System in South Africa is published in the Government Gazette, vol. 382 no 17910. Chapter four of the White Paper includes a proposal to distribute health care personnel by compelling health professionals to devote two years to community service before registering as doctors (White Paper on Transformation of the Health System in South Africa, 1997: 60).
- May 1997 [B35 -97] Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill introduced in the National Assembly
- 11 June 1997 [B35-97] is withdrawn following criticism, to allow for further public input.
- 1 August 1997 The bill, revised as [B62-97], is introduced in the National Assembly and sent to the Select Committee for Social Services
- September 1997 Public Hearings on the Bill are held
- 20 October 1997 [B62B-97] sent to NCOP for concurrence after being approved by the National Assembly
- 24 February 1998 [B22-98] introduced in the National Assembly
- 25 February Tagged by the Joint Tagging Mechanism as a Section 76 Bill
- 26 February 1998 Bill sent to NCOP after approval of National Assembly
- February 1998 Bill receives the assent of State President and is promulgated as Act No 1 of 1998

(Hansard Volumes of the National Assembly, May 1997- April 1998)

An examination of article frequency by month indicates that most of the articles are in June 1997. Of the eighty articles in the sample, twenty-one articles appear in the month of June. This preponderance of articles in June can be explained with reference to the

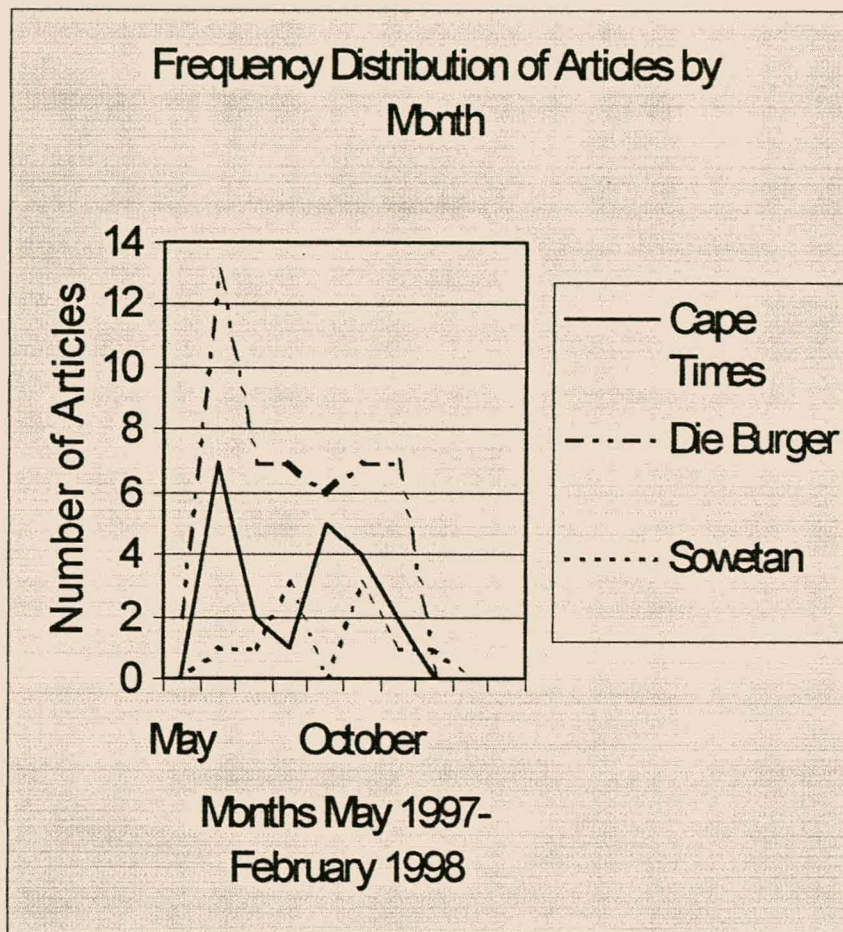
period of the study. The suggestion of two years community service, contained in chapter four of the White Paper, led to public debate and discussion. The bill was then drafted and sent to the Portfolio Committee on Health in May 1997. By June, the bill was eliciting varied responses from medical groups and students. Accusations of limited consultation and autocratic leadership forced Zuma to withdraw the bill in June 1997 (Christianson, 1997: 14).

It is therefore not surprising that most of the articles pertaining to Zuma and the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill appear in June 1997. The bulk of articles in the sample appear between June and October of 1997. This distribution is in accordance with the period of the bill's withdrawal and resubmission in the National Assembly. December 1997 recorded one article, while January and February 1998 record no articles. The negative scores for January and February 1998 suggests that, once the bill was set to become an act, media coverage of the bill waned. By December, the bill had been amended and community service had been set at one year. The implementation of the bill had also been postponed until July 1998. It is unlikely that any further developments in the policy process would have warranted media attention.

Both the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* record most of their articles in June 1997. Yet, while *Die Burger* continues with seven of its forty-nine articles in November 1997, the coverage of the *Cape Times* dwindles to two articles. Of the three newspapers, only *Die Burger* reports on Zuma in May 1997, as the bill was being placed onto the public agenda. Therefore, looking at monthly distribution of coverage, *Die Burger* reported on the issue for a month longer than the other two newspapers. Of the 10 months, *Die Burger* reported articles in seven months, while the *Cape Times* and *Sowetan* only covered a six-month period. The *Sowetan* is the only newspaper of the three titles that reports beyond November 1997. The *Sowetan* appears to have remained with the community service issue, even though the bill was set to be promulgated as an Act. The majority of the *Sowetan's* articles appear in August and October 1997. These two months contain coverage dealing with the revised bill, while coverage in June pertains mainly to the

original Bill [B35-97]. Whereas the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* report most of their articles in June 1997, the *Sowetan* only reports one article for that month.

Diagram 13 Frequency Distribution of Articles By Month



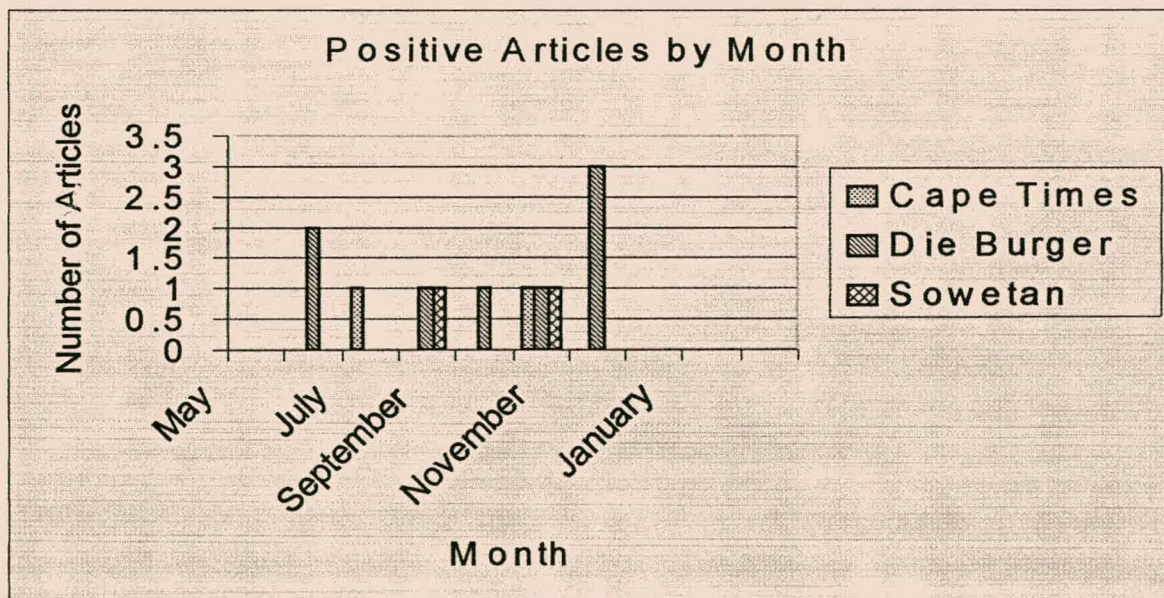
4.2.3a Positive by Month

Most of the sample's positive articles are in the months of October and November 1997. This is significant as the revised bill was sent to the NCOP after being passed by the NA in October 1997. The positive articles in these two months suggest that the newspapers noted the improvements in the revised bill and reported accordingly. Claims that coverage of Zuma is unwaveringly negative can therefore be challenged. It is possible to assert that coverage of Zuma's bill, in these three newspapers, improved after the revision

of the original draft bill. The revised bill reduced community service to one year and limited Zuma's powers ([B62-97], 1997: Sec 24A(2)(1)(ii)). As expected, May 1997 contains no positive articles for any of the newspaper titles. This score is indicative of the initial reaction to Zuma's community service proposal.

The *Cape Times* and *Sowetan* both record two positive articles each, while *Die Burger* records eight positive articles. The positive articles of the *Cape Times* are spread between July and October 1997. Three of *Die Burger*'s eight positive articles are concentrated in November 1997. The *Sowetan*'s two positive articles appear in August and October 1997. All of the newspapers recorded positive articles in October, thereby supporting the assertion that coverage improved after the revision of the bill. *Die Burger*'s three articles in November are interesting as they suggest a move towards more positive coverage of the revised bill.

Diagram 14 Positive Articles by Month

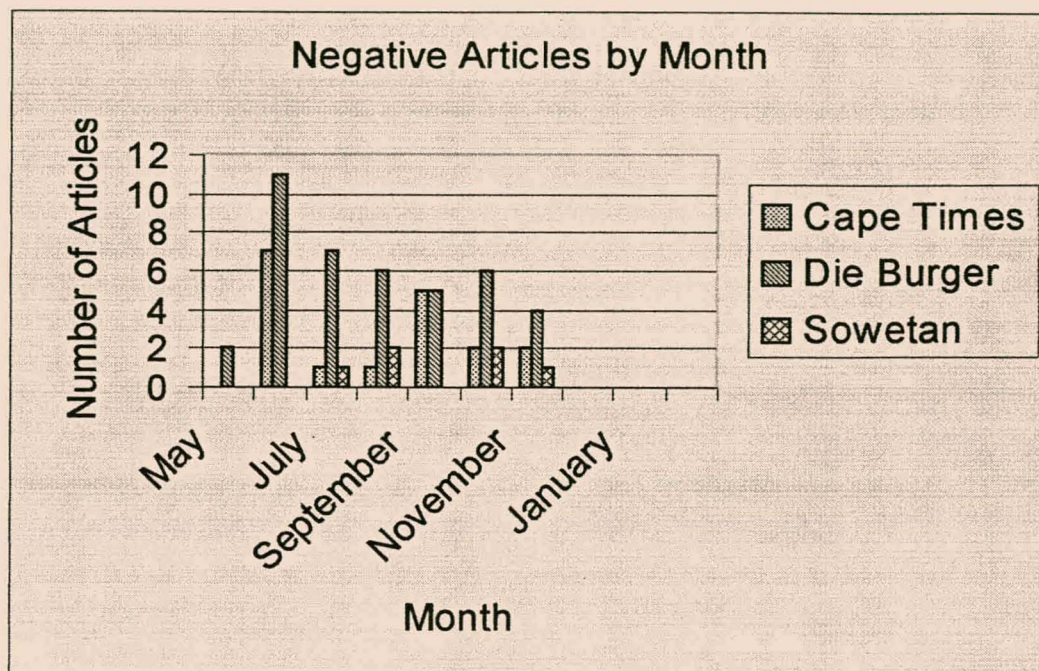


4.2.3b Negative by Month

The results of the negative frequency analysis also conform to the period of the study. As most criticism and debate occurred in June 1997, it is expected that June records the most negative scores for the total sample of eighty articles. Of the sixty-five negative articles in the sample, eighteen appear in June 1997. September and October 1997 contain the

second highest negative score, with ten negative articles recorded for each month. The negative articles in September may be partly attributed to the public hearings that were held during that month. It is likely that newspapers reported on the negative arguments and sentiments expressed by interest groups at the public hearings. While October records the most positive articles, it also contains the second highest number of negative articles. There are three positive articles, compared with ten negative articles, in October 1997. This statistic suggests that, despite the revision of the bill in September 1997, the bill still elicited mixed responses. As with the positive articles, there are no negative articles recorded in December 1997. By November, it was clear that the bill would become an Act early in 1998. The decline in newspaper coverage after November 1997 is therefore not unexpected.

There is a decrease in the number of negative articles in the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* from June 1997 to December 1997. This trend indicates the changing perception of the bill. After the initial negative coverage of the bill in June, coverage becomes more positive towards November 1997. Unlike the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger*, the *Sowetan's* negative modes are August and October 1997. It is interesting to note that October also served as the mode for the *Sowetan's* positive articles. This implies that newspaper coverage of Zuma, by the *Sowetan*, was fairly balanced for the month of October.

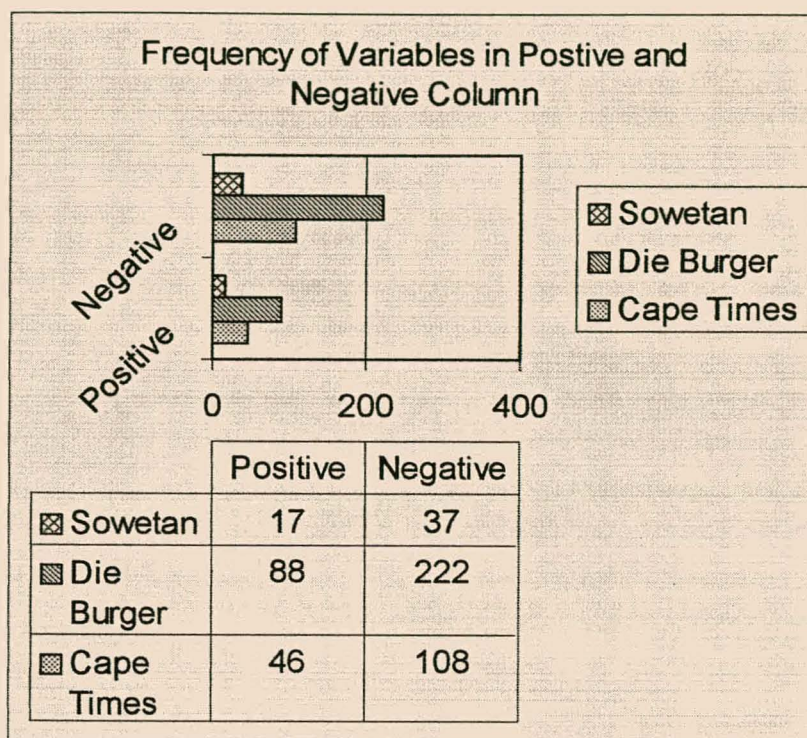
Diagram 15 Negative Articles By Month

The sample records only two balanced articles, in the *Cape Times* and *Sowetan* respectively. The balanced article of the *Cape Times* appeared in October 1997. The revised bill was sent to the NCOP for concurrence in October 1997. The *Sowetan's* balanced article is coded in June 1997. This score stands in contrast with the negative scores of the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* for June 1997. This contrast may be explained by a reference to the *Sowetan's* editorial charter. The Charter strives to ensure coverage devoid of gratuitously scandalous content. There is a commitment to factual and balanced coverage (Mortimer, 1996: 90). The *Sowetan* also carries an article dealing with the legislative process of the bill. The article, which is coded for December 1997, lacks any directional assertions and is primarily concerned with the technical aspects of the bill. The article therefore informs the reader of the bill, without providing any evaluation of the bill. The *Sowetan* appears to be placing its commitment to inform the public above the need for sensational coverage. The *Sowetan* is the only newspaper of the sample that reports beyond November 1997 on the community service issue.

4.2.4. Frequency of Variables in Thematic Categories

The coding sheet is divided into fifty variables or assertions which may be coded as positive (Column A) or negative (Column B) [See Appendix A]. The variables are grouped together into nine thematic sections, with the tenth section representing neutral assertions. Thematic Section XI codes the latent content of the article. Dr Zuma is a controversial government figure who often receives critical press coverage (Patten, 1997: 10). The thematic sections were therefore constructed to distinguish between coverage of Zuma and coverage of the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill. It is probable that newspaper coverage will be more supportive of the bill than of Dr Zuma's leadership style. In addition, while many students supported the principle of community service espoused by the bill, many resented the manner in which the Health Department dealt with the bill (Christianson, 1997: 14). The thematic sections are therefore cognizant of these distinctions.

The findings interpreted in the following paragraphs refer to variables 1 to 49. These variables received a total coding score of 518, of which 154 scores were in the *Cape Times*, 310 in *Die Burger* and 54 in the *Sowetan*. Of the total scores, the positive (A) column received 151 scores, while the negative (B) column records 367 scores. The majority of scores, 59,8% are derived from *Die Burger*, while *The Cape Times* contributes 29,7% to the sample and the *Sowetan* contributes 10,4%.

Diagram 16 Frequency of Variables in Positive and Negative Column

Variable 5 serves as the mode of the entire sample as it records the most number of scores. This variable deals with "consultation between Zuma and interest groups". Without noting the direction of the coding, variable 5 is coded 39 times. This frequency suggests that consultation between Zuma and interest groups is a central issue in all three newspapers. Variable 32 received 37 scores, making it the second most frequent variable. Variable 32 deals with the "reaction of students and interest groups to the bill".

Variable 5 is also calculated as the mode of the positive A column of the sample. It received 17 scores. Newspapers clearly reported favourably when Zuma entered into consultation with interest groups. It is notable that the most frequent score for the positive column should fall on a variable of thematic section I dealing with "Zuma's leadership style". This finding challenges the supposition that newspapers are generally negative of Dr Zuma. Variable 26, which codes "agreement with the principle of the bill", also receives 17 scores. This frequency therefore suggests that all three of the newspapers noted support for the principle of the bill.

In the negative B column, variable 32 received the most number of scores; 35. This score indicates that most newspapers reported on the "opposition of students and interest groups to the bill". Again, the most negative scores are not recorded in thematic section I, but in the thematic section pertaining to "reaction to the bill". The three newspapers have therefore not concentrated their negative coverage on Dr Zuma herself, but on aspects of the bill. The second highest score in the negative column is variable 11, which deals with "perceptions of the bill". Most newspapers noted that the bill was perceived as controversial.

Of the newspaper title samples, the mode of scores for the *Cape Times* concurs with the mode of the entire sample. Variable 5 has 10 scores. Variables 11 and 21 also record a score of ten. Most of the assertions of the *Cape Times* therefore relate to "Zuma's leadership", "perceptions of the bill" and the "process of the bill". Variable 5 is coded 26 times in *Die Burger*. *Die Burger* also records 26 scores for variable 32, the "reaction of students and interest groups to the bill". The *Sowetan* records the most scores for variable 12. The assertion dealing with the "perception of the bill", received seven scores.

In the *Cape Times*, variable 17 receives five scores in the positive A column. Therefore, the bill's intention to "distribute doctors to rural areas" is coded the most frequently in the A column. Variable 5 records fifteen positive scores in *Die Burger*. The most frequently noted positive assertion in *Die Burger* therefore pertains to "Zuma's consultation with interest groups". For the *Sowetan*, the "support of opposition parties for the bill", variable 35, receives the most number of scores. Variable 11 receives the most negative scores in the *Cape Times*. This variable deals with the perception of the "bill as controversial". *Die Burger* noted the assertion dealing with opposition to the bill twenty-four times, making variable 32 the negative mode of the subsample. As with the *Cape Times*, the negative mode does not fall into the first thematic section. It is therefore possible to suggest that negative coverage in the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* was not directed at Dr Zuma. One can assume that the negative scores accurately reflect coverage of the health bill and do not serve as part of a media smear campaign against the health minister. In the *Sowetan*, the assertion coding for the perception of the bill as forced and undemocratic, received

seven scores. The *Sowetan* is also vindicated of the allegation that negative coverage is directed at Dr Zuma and not at her bill.

The following table provides a breakdown of the scores for each thematic section. The scores are divided into positive and negative directions. The scores have been calculated for all three newspapers and not for each newspaper title. As section IX pertains to the newspaper headline and section X contains the neutral assertions, the table only records the scores for sections I to VIII.

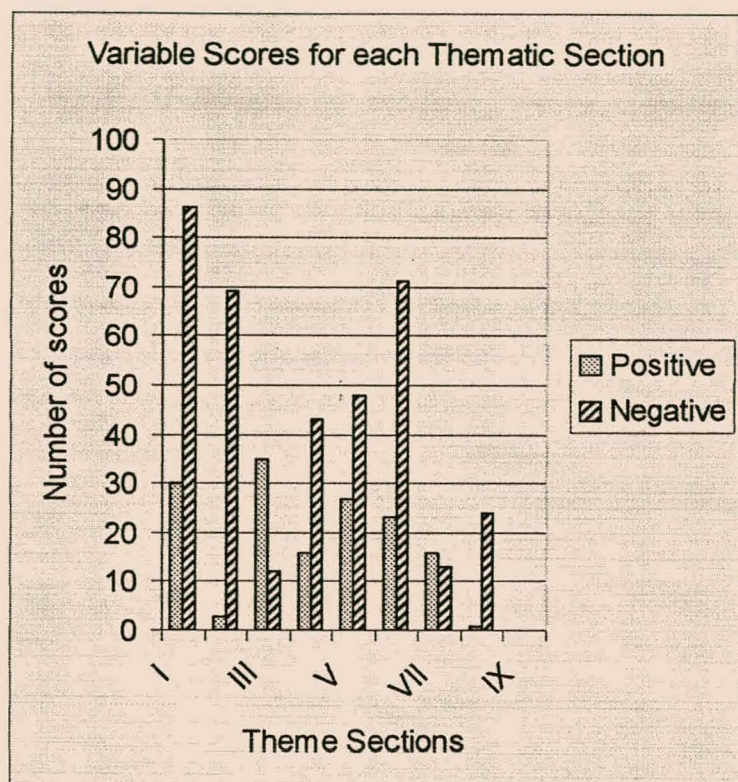
Table 19 Variable Scores for each Thematic Section

THEME SECTION	VARIABLES	A	B	TOTAL
I- Zuma	1-10	30	86	116
II-Perceptions of Bill	11-15	3	69	72
III- Motive of Bill	16-20	35	12	47
IV-Process of Bill	21-24	16	43	59
V- Content of Bill	25-29	27	48	75
VI-Reaction to Bill	30-36	23	71	94
VII-Reaction to withdrawal of Bill	37-43	16	14	30
VIII-Effects of Bill	44-49	1	24	25
TOTAL		151	367	518

An examination of Table 19 reveals that "Zuma and her leadership style" received the most number of scores in the manifest analysis. Of the total 518 scores, 116 scores were coded in the first theme section. This section also received the most number of negative scores, suggesting that the three newspapers **did** provide extensive negative coverage of the health minister. The dominant variable in that section is variable five, pertaining to "Zuma's lack of consultation with interest groups". Section VI, dealing with "reactions to the bill", received the second highest number of negative scores. Variable 32, which codes the "opposition of students and interest groups to the bill", is coded 35 times. The section with the third highest number of negative scores relates to "perceptions of the bill". Most of the scores record the assertion that the bill is controversial. While there is

extensive negative coverage of Dr Zuma, there is also coverage of negative reactions to her bill as well as negative perceptions of the bill. One cannot claim that negative coverage is directed solely at the health minister.

Diagram 17 Variable Scores for Each Thematic Section



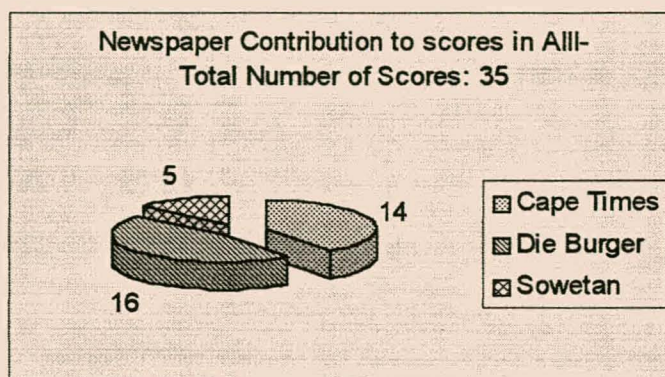
The dominant thematic section in the positive column relates to the "motive of the bill". In the thematic section pertaining to the "motive of the bill", variable 17 received the most scores. The most laudable motive of the bill appears to be the "distribution of doctors to the rural areas". Surprisingly, the first thematic section, dealing with "Zuma", exhibits the second highest number of positive scores. This finding supports the position that Zuma does not only receive negative coverage in the three newspapers of this sample. Zuma's consultation with interest groups and students received positive coverage in all three of the newspapers. As suggested earlier, it is expected that many students, although opposed to the bill, actually supported the principle of the bill. Of the positive scores, the thematic section dealing with the "content of the bill", received 27 scores.

Variable 26 recorded the most number of scores at 17. It is evident that support for the principle of the bill is also covered by the three newspapers.

4.2.4a Column A Section III- The Motive of the Bill

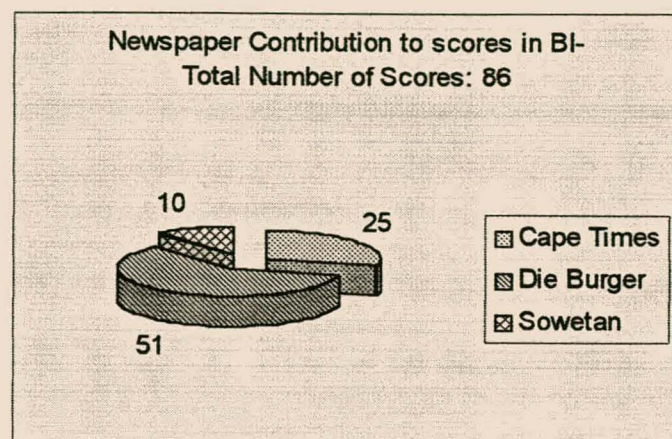
In the thematic section dealing with the motive of the bill, the *Cape Times* records 14 scores of the total 46 positive scores of the *Cape Times* sample. All the scores of the *Cape Times* comprise 154 scores of the total score tally for all three newspapers. This means that 9% of the total sample is coded in this section, while 30,4% of the positive scores are in Section AI. *Die Burger* records 5.16% of its total sample in Section AIII, while only 18,18% of its positive scores derive from Section AIII. While 9,2% of the *Sowetan's* total sample is coded in AIII, 29,4% of its positive scores arise from this section. Of the positive scores, *Die Burger* records the fewest scores in this section. The *Cape Times* has more of its positive scores in AIII than *Die Burger*. The *Sowetan* has almost the same percentage of its positive scores in this section as the *Cape Times*. Compared with the other two newspapers, the *Sowetan* has the most number of its total score in this section. *Die Burger* scores the lowest percentage of the three newspapers, both in relation to the number of positive articles and total number of articles. The *Sowetan* therefore contains more negative assertions about Zuma than the other two newspapers. This suggests that the *Sowetan* is not supporting the ANC government unwaveringly.

Diagram 18 Newspaper Contribution to Scores in A Column dealing with Motive of the Bill



4.2.4b Column B Section I- Zuma and Leadership Style

The *Cape Times* has 25 scores in the negative column pertaining to Zuma, *Die Burger* has 51 scores and the *Sowetan* has 10 scores. These scores can be converted to percentages to ascertain the relative distribution within each newspaper title. Of the 153 scores of the *Cape Times*, 25 scores are negative. This means that 16,3% of the total *Cape Times* sample scores negatively in the thematic section dealing with Zuma, while 23,3% of the negative scores for the *Cape Times* are coded in this section. Of the 222 scores for *Die Burger*, 16,4% of the total *Die Burger* sample codes negatively for Section B1, while 22,9% of the negative scores arise from this section. Of the total 54 scores for the *Sowetan*, 18,5% is coded in section BI, while 27% of the negative scores are located in this section. In relation to sample size, the *Sowetan* has the highest percentage of negative scores in section B1. However, *Die Burger* has the highest percentage of negative scores of the entire *Die Burger* scores.

Diagram 19 Newspaper Contribution to Scores in B Column dealing with Zuma

The *Sowetan* has the most negative scores about Zuma in relation to its sample size and frequency of negative scores. The *Cape Times* has the lowest percentage of negative scores in the thematic section relating to Zuma. Of the positive scores, the *Cape Times* records more scores in favour of the motive of the bill.

One would expect *Die Burger*, as a newspaper formerly associated with the National Party government, to be more critical of an ANC minister. However, the *Sowetan*, a black owned newspaper records the most number of negative scores about Zuma. The negative scores can perhaps be attributed to the *Sowetan's* earlier affiliation with the Black Consciousness Movement. The *Sowetan's* association with the ANC and UDF during the liberation struggle was weaker than that of newspapers of the Alternative press (Louw, 1993: 164). Consequently, the *Sowetan* is perhaps not obliged to provide favourable coverage of the ANC-lead government.

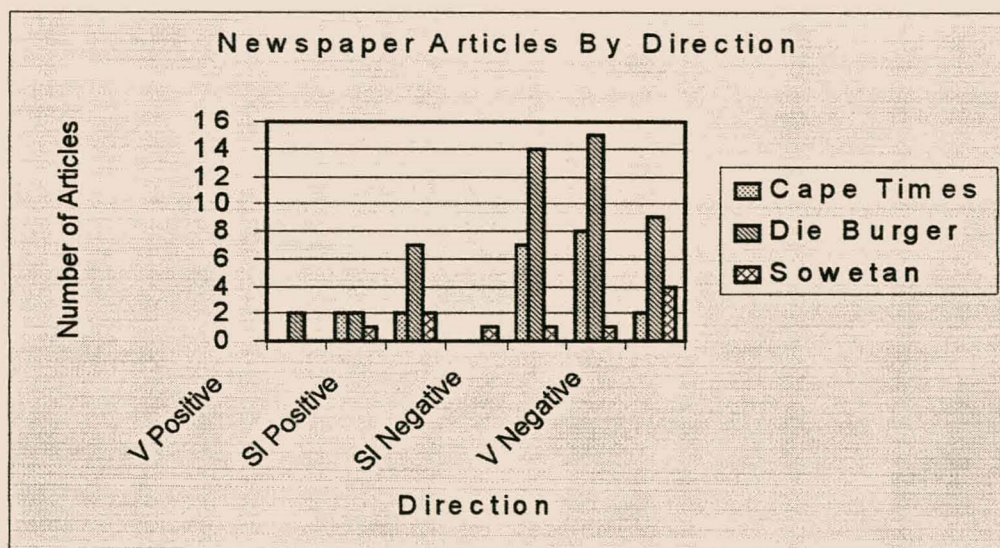
4.3. LATENT ANALYSIS

4.3.1. Newspaper Articles By Direction

Of the eighty articles in the sample, twenty-two articles fall into the slightly negative (-1) section. This statistic suggests that coverage of Zuma and the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill is not overly critical. One can say that nearly 28% of the sample falls into this category. Only fifteen articles or

18,7% of the sample falls into the very negative category (-3). Twenty four articles are classified as negative (-2). The scores for positive number of articles are lower than for the negative. While eleven articles are categorized as slightly positive (+1), only two articles are very positive (+3). Five articles fall in the positive category (+2). The positive scores, like the negative scores, indicate that none of the newspapers is very positive in their coverage. While the incidence of very negative scores is higher than the number of very positive scores, one may assert that coverage of the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan* is not concentrated in either of the extreme directional categories. The bulk of the coverage is concentrated in (± 2) and (± 1) categories. These findings challenge claims of an overly critical press or an overly positive press. Only one article received a neutral coding score in the latent analysis.

Diagram 20 Newspaper Articles By Direction



An examination of the scores for each newspaper reveals that the *Sowetan*, in relation to its sample size, has the highest percentage of very negative scores. Of its 10 articles, 40% fall into the very negative category. One may state that the *Sowetan* has the greatest percentage of very negative coverage of Zuma and the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill. As with the manifest analysis, this finding counters fears that the *Sowetan* would be overly positive in its coverage of the government. Most of the coverage of the *Cape Times* falls into the

negative (-2) category. Of the 21 *Cape Times* articles, 38% are negative, while 33.3% are slightly negative. Like the *Cape Times*, most of *Die Burger's* articles fall into the negative category. Of the forty-nine articles, almost 30.6% are negative and 28% are slightly negative.

Diagram 21 Frequency Distribution in Cape Times

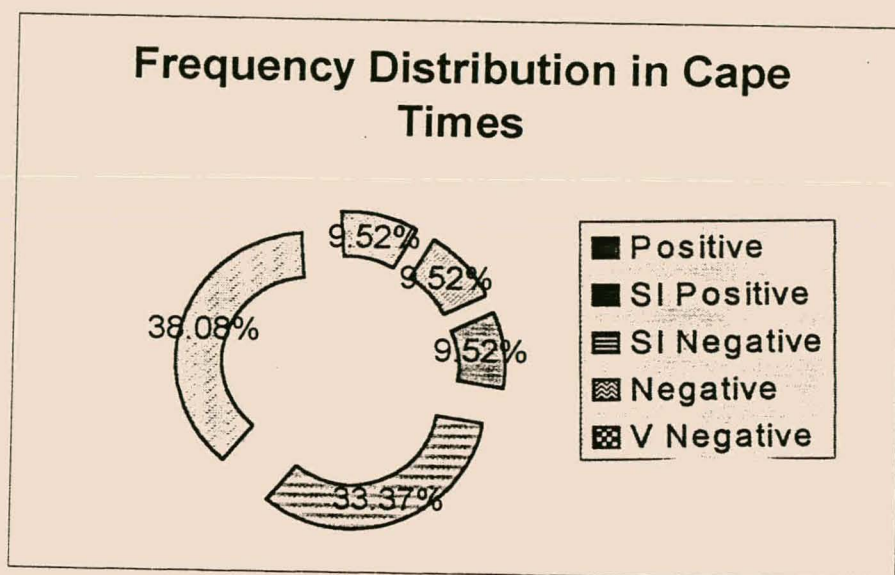


Diagram 22 Frequency Distribution in Die Burger

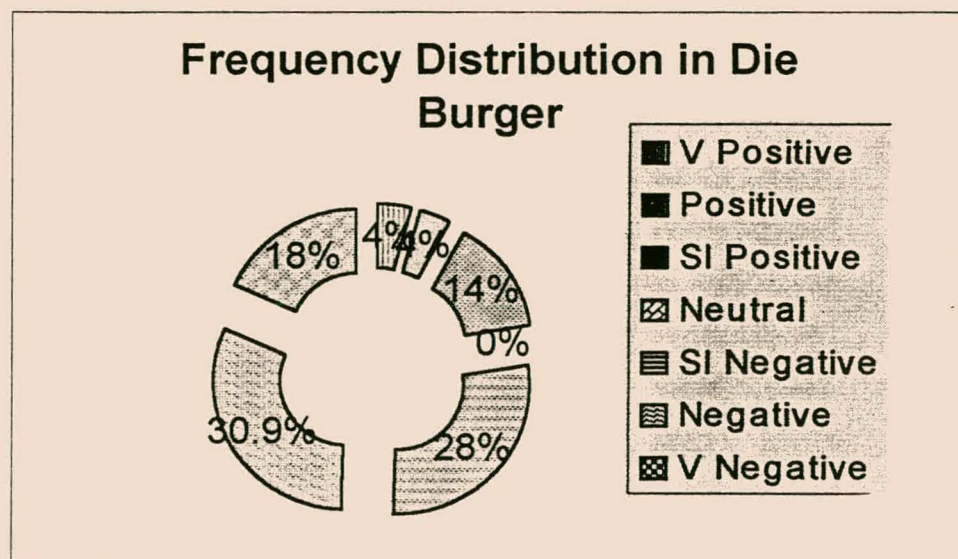
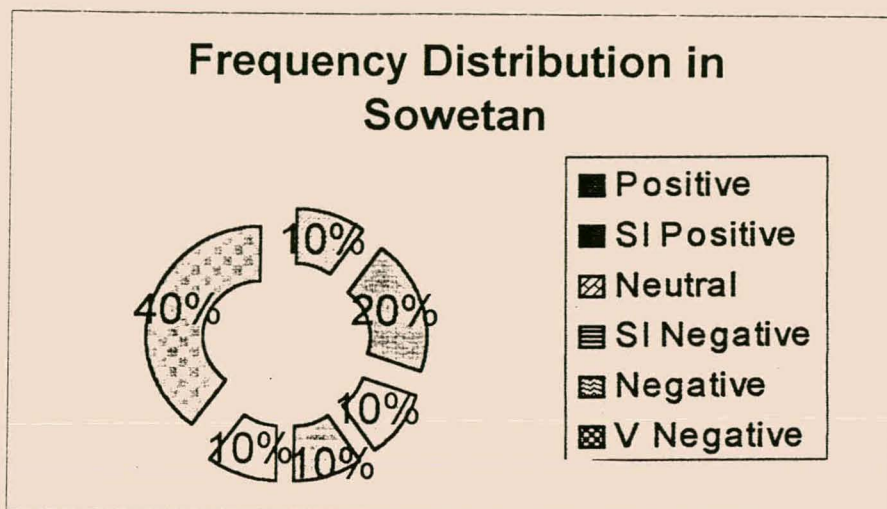


Diagram 23 Frequency Distribution in Sowetan



An examination of the sum of negative scores (-1), (-2) and (-3), reveals that *Cape Times* has the highest percentage of negative articles in relation to its sample size. Whereas *Die Burger* has 77.5% of its articles negative and the *Sowetan* has 60%, the *Cape Times* has a higher 80% of its articles in the negative direction.

4.3.2. Newspaper Ideology by Direction

If one cross-tabulates these percentages with newspaper ideology, the latent analysis suggests that Newspapers of the Libertarian press ideology are more critical of the government. This statement should be viewed as tentative as the analysis only applies to newspaper coverage of one government minister and her policy. Although the newspaper representing the Authoritarian ideology has a lower percentage of negative scores than the newspaper representing the Libertarian ideology, the scores are still above 75%. One may therefore postulate that, in this latent analysis, newspapers of the Authoritarian perspective are also fairly critical of the government. There is a low 2.5% difference between the negative scores of the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger*. One may argue that *Die Burger*, representing the Authoritarian tradition, is moving towards a more critical stance.

Table 20 Newspaper Ideology By Direction

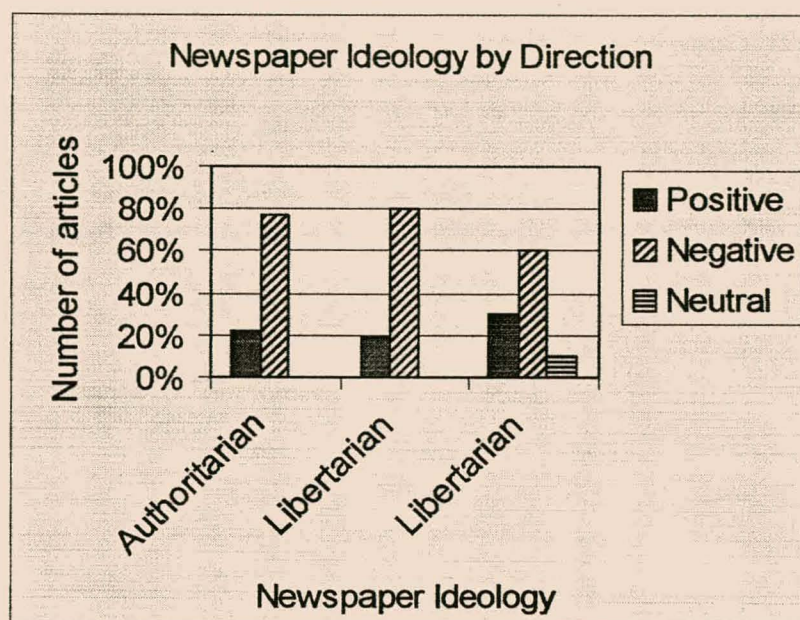
Ideology	Total Positive Articles	Total Negative Articles	Total Neutral Articles	Total Number Articles
Authoritarian <i>(Die Burger)</i>	11/22%	38/77%	0	49
Libertarian <i>(CapeTimes)</i>	4/19%	17/80%	0	21
Libertarian <i>(Sowetan)</i>	3/30%	6/60%	1/10%	10
Total	18	61	1	80
Total %	22.5%	76%	1.25%	100%

The *Sowetan*, as a representative of the Libertarian ideology, contains the one neutral article of the latent analysis. This article deals with the legislative process of the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill. This reiterates an earlier position that the *Sowetan* is committed to factual and objective reporting. The *Sowetan*, as representative of the Libertarian ideology, has the greater percentage of positive scores in relation to its sample size. While 30% of the *Sowetan*'s sample is positive, the *Cape Times* has 19% of its articles in the positive direction.

It is interesting that the *Cape Times*, also of the Libertarian strain, has the lower percentage of positive scores. This apparent discrepancy may be attributed to two factors. Firstly, the *Cape Times* stems from an established libertarian ideology. Since its inception in 1876, the *Cape Times* has emulated British Libertarianism (Potter, 1975: 38). In contrast, the *Sowetan* emerged in the 1980's and aligned itself with the Black Consciousness Movement. The *Sowetan* is classified in the Libertarian category as it was initially owned by the Argus Company. Like other newspapers of the Libertarian

category, the *Sowetan* was formerly controlled by mining capital. Secondly, the *Sowetan* is now owned by NAP, a black consortium that might encourage coverage that is more supportive of the ANC-lead government. *Die Burger* has a slightly higher percentage of positive articles than the *Cape Times*, with 22% of the forty-nine articles being coded in the positive direction.

Diagram 24 Newspaper Ideology By Direction



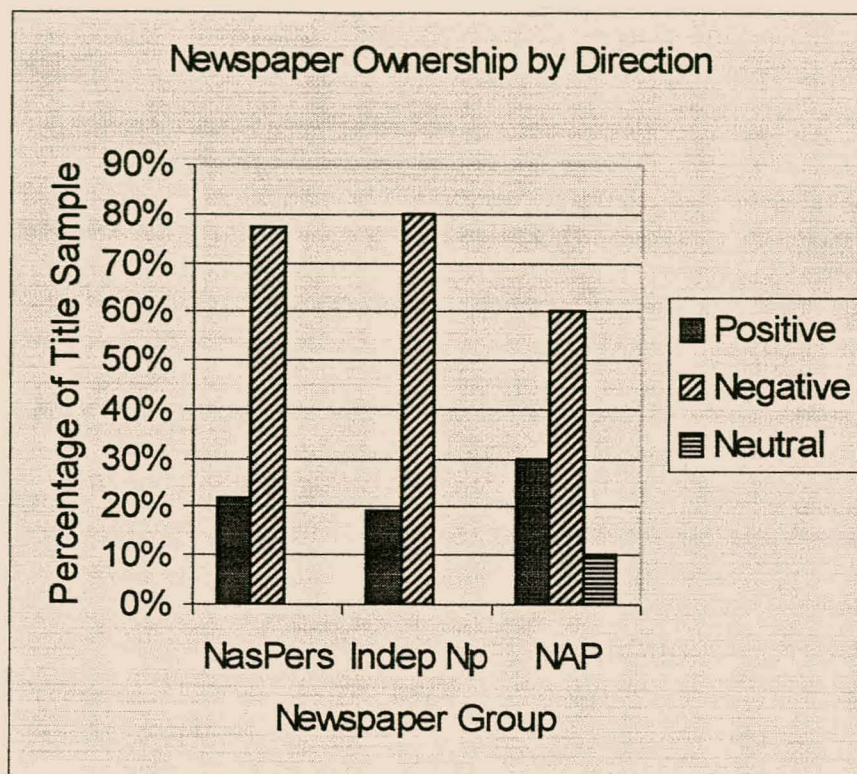
4.3.3. Newspaper Ownership by Direction

These directional trends may also be cross-tabulated with newspaper ownership. The following table indicates that the *Cape Times*, as representative of Independent Newspapers, has the highest percentage of negative articles in relation to its sample size. Of its 21 articles, 81% are distributed between the negative categories of the latent analysis. As with the manifest analysis findings, this frequency indicates that the Independent Newspaper Group is slightly more critical of Zuma than Nasionale Pers. *Die Burger*, representing Nasionale Pers. Also has a relatively high percentage of negative articles. At 77%, the score of *Die Burger's* negative articles only falls four percent behind the scores of the Independent Newspaper Group. The *Sowetan*, controlled by NAP, has the lower negative percentage score of the three newspapers. However, the score of 60% suggests that coverage of Zuma by the *Sowetan* is more negative than positive.

The *Sowetan*, as a newspaper of the NAP, has the highest percentage of positive coverage in relation to its sample size. While it may seem as if the *Sowetan* is supportive of the ANC government, its positive scores are still below 50%. Unlike the other two newspaper, the *Sowetan* also contains a neutral article, suggesting that the *Sowetan's* coverage may be more evenly distributed across the directional categories. One may adduce that NAP is not interfering with the editorial policy of the *Sowetan*. Although these findings only apply to the study of one government figure, one may tentatively suggest that the *Sowetan* does not appear to be acting on the directives of the ANC. Nasionale Pers, evidenced by *Die Burger*, has 3% more positive scores than the *Cape Times* of Independent Newspapers. It is evident that Nasionale Pers is adopting a more critical approach towards the government.

Table 21 Newspaper Ownership by Direction

Newspaper Ownership	Total Positive Articles	Total Negative Articles	Total Neutral Articles	Total Number Articles
Independent Newspapers (CapeTimes)	4 (19%)	17 (80,9%)	0	21
Nasionale Pers (Die Burger)	11 (22%)	38 (77%)	0	49
NAP (Sowetan)	3 (30%)	6 (60%)	1 (10%)	10
Total	18	61	1	80

Diagram 25 Newspaper Ownership By Direction

4.3.4. Frequency of Directional Scores

One may also look at the frequency of directional scores for each newspaper group. The *Cape Times*, of Independent Newspapers, has mostly (-2) or negative scores. *Die Burger* of Nasionale Pers also has mainly (-2) or negative scores. New Africa Publications (NAP), represented by the *Sowetan*, has the most very negative (-3) scores. The latent analysis therefore indicates that both Nasionale Pers and Independent Newspapers are negative towards the government. As mentioned earlier, the Nasionale Pers may be wary of appearing overly critical of the ANC. Independent Newspapers, despite an alleged close relationship with the ANC, exhibits negative coverage of Dr Zuma's health policy. The *Sowetan* has the most very negative coverage. The modes of all three newspaper titles fall into the negative directional category. One may surmise that the three newspapers are generally libertarian in their media approach. If the modes were in the positive direction, one may have posited that newspapers were developmental in their relation with the government. The *Sowetan*, although critical, also has neutral coverage.

The *Sowetan* may therefore have the potential of moving towards a development approach. The Development approach combines critical coverage with coverage aimed at nation building. The editorial charter of the *Sowetan* supports this press approach (Mortimer, 1996: 90).

4.4. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

These results need to be validated and tested for reliability. Krippendorff (1980: 129) notes that reliability is necessary, yet not sufficient for the validation of a research design. Reliable measurement procedures produce the same results irrespective of variations in the measuring process (Kaplan and Goldsen in Krippendorff, 1980: 129). Put differently, reliability ensures that the same results are attained at different times. Measurement should also be valid, meaning that the operational definitions of variables should coincide with their conceptual definitions. Validity ensures that measurement techniques are measuring the appropriate phenomena (Whimmer and Dominick, 1987: 62).

In content analysis, reliability and validity are related. Firstly, reliability places limits on the validity of data. If measurement techniques are not fairly reliable, it is unlikely that the data results will be valid. Secondly, although reliability is a necessary component of validity, reliability does not ensure the validity of data findings. Reliable measures may produce the same results without actually measuring the phenomenon being investigated (Krippendorff, 1980: 129-130). This section outlines the tests of reliability and validity employed in both the manifest and latent analyses of newspaper coverage.

4.4.1. Reliability

Reliability refers to the duplicity of results, with the same measurement techniques, over a period of time (Budd, Thorp and Donohew, 1967: 66). There are three types of reliability tests that may be applied to content analysis:

- Stability,
- Reproducibility and
- Accuracy.

Stability, meaning the invariance of measurement results over time, is measured with the test-retest design. The same coder repeats the measurement and compares the scores. If the scores do not reveal major variances, the measurement is deemed reliable (Babbie, 1992: 130). Krippendorf (1980: 131) asserts that stability, while useful for detecting intra-observer inconsistencies, is the weakest form of reliability testing. Stability should be augmented by the two other types of reliability: reproducibility and accuracy.

Reproducibility occurs when the same results are attained by a number of different coders. Intercoder reliability is used to establish reproducibility. The underlying premise of inter-coder reliability is that two or more coders, using the same operational measure, should produce the same data results (Whimmer and Dominick, 1987: 61). The strongest form of reliability, accuracy, is tested using the test-standard reliability design. The accuracy of a measurement is determined by the extent to which the measurement process conforms to an established standard. If the scores differ, one may say that the measurement lacks accuracy. However, the standards of accuracy do not always apply to content analysis. This means that content analysis does not insist on all three types of reliability. To ensure the reliability of a content analysis, it is sufficient to establish stability and accuracy (Krippendorf, 1980: 132). This research essay employs the test-retest method and intercoder reliability to assess the stability and reproducibility of the coding measurements.

4.4.1a Stability - The Test-retest Method

The test-retest method of reliability involves the duplication of measurement by the same coder (Weber, 1985: 17). The results of each measurement are compared. If the results show little variation, one may say that the measurement is reliable. The test-retest method was applied to a sample of twelve newspaper articles, four from each of the newspaper titles. The articles were selected systematically with a random start. The sample interval was calculated by dividing the size of the sample by the number of articles required for the sample (Babbie, 1992: 212). In the *Cape Times*, every fifth article was tested, every twelfth article in *Die Burger* was tested and every second article in the *Sowetan* was tested.

The sample for each newspaper was as follows

<i>Cape Times</i>	<i>Die Burger</i>	<i>Sowetan</i>
2 June 1997	7 June 1997	5 August 1997
20 June 1997	16 July 1997	22 August 1997
1 September 1997	25 August 1997	14 October 1997
1 October 1997	28 October 1997	25 November 1997

Intra-observer consistencies can be ascertained by measuring the correlation of two variables. In a test-retest design, the scores of the first measurement are connoted as the X Variable, while the scores of the second measurement are labelled as the Y variable. The correlation between the X and Y variables can then be measured using the Pearson's product-moment correlation, or r . If the correlation coefficient, or r , is +1.00 the variables exhibit a perfect positive correlation. A -1.00 r depicts a perfect negative correlation. If the r is 0.00, one can assert that there is no relationship between the X and Y variables.

One may assume that, for the purpose of intercoder reliability, an r above .90 between two measurements ensures a high degree of reliability (Whimmer and Dominick, 1987: 232). Krippendorf (1980: 147) cites Brouwer's standards of statistical significance. After conducting a series of studies, Brouwer argued that a correlation below .8 lacks statistical significance. A correlation between .67 and .8 only allows for tentative conclusions about the sample's reliability. Yet, Krippendorf adds that the level of statistical significance for an exploratory study need not be as stringent as that of an explanatory study. The level of statistical significance for this study is .8

The correlation coefficient is calculated using the following formula:

$$r = \frac{NZXY - ZXZY}{\sqrt{[NZX^2 - (ZX)^2][NZY^2 - (ZY)^2]}}$$

The square root of $[NZX^2 - (ZX)^2][NZY^2 - (ZY)^2]$

X and Y represent the scores of the first and second measurement of the sample. N refers to the number of cases comprising the sample and Z symbolizes summation. ZXY stands as the sum of the products of each X and Y (Whimmer and Dominick, 1987: 229-232).

Calculation of r for Positive scores of the *Cape Times*

Case	X	X ²	Y	Y ²	XY
A	1	1	1	1	1
B	2	4	2	4	4
C	0	0	0	0	0
D	0	0	0	0	0
N=4	3	5	3	5	5

$$(ZX)^2 = 9$$

$$(ZY)^2 = 9$$

$$r = 1.0$$

The correlation between the first and second measurement of the positive scores of the *Cape Times* reveals a perfect 1.0 relationship. The results of this test therefore suggest a high reliability.

Calculation of r for Negative scores of the *Cape Times*

Case	X	X ²	Y	Y ²	XY
A	5	25	5	25	25
B	6	36	6	36	36
C	4	16	3	9	12
D	4	16	4	16	16
N=4	19	93	18	86	89

$$(ZX)^2 = 361$$

$$(ZY)^2 = 324$$

$$r = 0.94$$

Although there is not a perfect correlation between X and Y, the correlation coefficient is above .90. The measurement of the positive scores of the *Cape Times* is therefore also reliable.

Calculation of r for Positive scores of the *Die Burger*

Case	X	X ²	Y	Y ²	XY
A	2	4	1	1	2
B	3	9	3	9	9
C	1	1	1	1	1
D	1	1	1	1	1
N=4	7	15	6	12	13

$$(ZX)^2 = 49$$

$$(ZY)^2 = 36$$

$$r = 0.87$$

The correlation coefficient for positive scores of *Die Burger's* sample is below 9.0. The measurement of this sample is therefore less reliable than the other samples. As this is an exploratory study, the lower correlation does not render the content measurement unreliable.

Calculation of r for Negative scores of the *Die Burger*

Case	X	X ²	Y	Y ²	XY
A	10	100	12	144	120
B	8	64	8	64	64
C	5	25	5	25	25
D	1	1	2	4	2
N=4	24	190	27	237	211

$$(ZX)^2 = 576$$

$$(ZY)^2 = 729$$

$$r = 0.97$$

There is a high correlation between the scores of X and the scores of Y. The coding measurement is therefore reliable for negative scores of the sample of *Die Burger*

articles. As with the positive scores of the *Cape Times*, the correlation coefficient for both the negative and positive scores of the *Sowetan* sample is calculated at 1.0. The *Sowetan* sample therefore contains a perfect positive correlation between the first and second measurements of both positive and negative columns.

4.4.1b Reproducibility - Intercoder Reliability

Intercoder reliability measures the consistency of the measurement process when employed by different coders. Several coders conduct independent measures of the content and then compare their scores. If the scores are fairly similar, one may deduce that the operational definitions are reliable. There should be at least two independent coders (Krippendorff, 1980: 132). The test for intercoder reliability relies upon sound training of coders. All coders involved in the test should be informed about the research problem and the purpose of the study. Each coder should receive a set of coding instructions outlining the coding steps. The researcher must ensure that each coder understands the categories and knows how to code the content of the text being analyzed (Whimmer and Dominick, 1987: 182).

Four coders were trained for the intercoder reliability test of newspaper content. The coders worked independently of each other. All four of the coders have a basic knowledge of research methodology. As with the test-retest design, four newspaper articles from each of the newspaper titles were selected for the intercoder reliability test. Using Systematic sampling with a random start, the following twelve articles were selected for the reliability test:

<i>Cape Times</i>	<i>Die Burger</i>	<i>Sowetan</i>
11 June 1997	12 June 1997	12 June 1997
23 June 1997	18 July 1997	5 August 1997
5 September	10 October 1997	14 October 1997
21 October 1997	1 November 1997	25 November 1997

Before coding the newspaper content, each coder received verbal instructions from the researcher. Written coding instructions were also given to each coder (See Appendix B).

Care was taken to ensure that the four coders received the same instructions. This was done to safeguard against possible coder bias. The same instructions also enable the researcher to rule out misinformation if one coder differs from the other three coders (Budd, Thorp and Donohew, 1967: 67). However, If all four coders differ from each other, the precision of the coding instructions will be questionable.

Holsti in Whimmer and Dominick (1987: 187) proposes the following formula for testing the reliability of data:

$$\text{Reliability} = \frac{2M}{N1 + N2}$$

M = the number of coding decisions on which coders agree

N1, N2 = The total number of coding decisions made by the coders respectively

Four coders tested the reliability of the four sample editions of each newspaper title. The number of variables coded serves as the N of each respective coder, while M represents the number of variable scores on which all four coders concur.

$$R = \frac{4(M)}{N1+N2+N3+N4}$$

Using the equation described above, the following reliability scores were obtained:

Newspaper Title	Total Number of Variable Scores (Sum of N)	Number of Agreed Scores (4M)	R=Reliability
<i>Cape Times</i>			
11 June	35	20	0.68
23 June	46	28	0.60
5 September	46	28	0.75
21 October	38	28	0.73
<i>Die Burger</i>			
12 June 1997	41	28	0.68
18 July 1997	46	36	0.79

10 October 1997	24	20	0.83
1 November 1997	34	28	0.82
<i>Sowetan</i>			
12 June 1997	39	24	0.61
5 August 1997	25	16	0.64
14 October 1997	25	20	0.80
25 November 1997	37	28	0.76

Whimmer and Dominick (1987: 185) assert that the acceptance level of intercoder reliability depends upon the context of the study and the nature of the content. Coding that requires a measure of interpretation and judgement, requires lower reliability estimates. As coders had to contend with an elaborate coding sheet containing directional columns and numerous variable categories, .60 serves as an acceptable level of reliability. All of the editions tested indicated a reliability level of .60 or higher. Considering the nature of the content analysis, one may assume that the measurement is relatively reliable.

The scores for the latent analysis were calculated using the same formula. However, instead of calculating the reliability of the each edition of each title, the reliability of all the newspaper titles of the sample was assessed. The number of concurrent scores is calculated as M, while the number of coding decisions made by each coder in the latent analysis is coded as N1-4. Each coder made 12 decisions in the latent analysis of twelve newspaper articles.

$$R = \frac{4(M)}{12+12+12+12} = \frac{4(7)}{48}$$

$$R = \frac{28}{48} = 0.6 \text{ (rounded off)}$$

Coders were asked to evaluate the direction of newspaper articles being tested. Coders were given a wide berth in the subjective evaluation of the articles. The only instruction

provided was to evaluate the direction of coverage in the article. The scope of the instruction means that the level of acceptable reliability may be lower. AS with the manifest analysis, the acceptable level of reliability was set at 0.6. The articles analyzed produced a reliability result of .6. This score, while acceptable, indicates that the latent analysis is subjective and therefore open to possible coder bias. The comparison of scores obtained in the latent analysis with scores of the manifest analysis will supplement these reliability scores.

4.4.2. Validity

Krippendorff (1980: 155) asserts that a measuring instrument is valid if it produces results that accord with what is being measured. There are two types of validity: Internal and external validity. As internal validity actually refers to the reliability of the measuring instrument, it is salient to concentrate on establishing external validity. External validity means that findings of the analysis reflect the nature of the phenomena in an external context (Krippendorff, 1980: 156). This study makes use of three validity tests: face validity, content validity and correlational validity (Babbie, 1992: 132).

A measurement instrument has face validity if the measurement produces an adequate measurement of the phenomenon being explored. Face validity is assured by the strength of the relationship between a variable and the abstract concept that it is measuring (Weber, 1985: 18). Whimmer and Dominick (1987: 186) maintain that the construction of well-defined coding categories coupled with detailed coding instructions will ensure a measure of face validity. The coding categories of this research essay were based on this requisite of face validity. Content validity is attained when the researcher is confident that the domain of a particular concept has been measured (Johnson and Joslyn, 1995: 85). Newspaper coverage of Dr Zuma and the Medical Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Bill serves as the dependent variable of the study. The literature review indicated that there might be a distinction between coverage of Zuma, the Minister of Health and her Medical Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Bill. To accommodate this dichotomy, elaborate thematic sections were

constructed. Section I refers to coverage of Zuma and her leadership style, while thematic sections II to IX concentrate on coverage of the bill.

The results of the analysis indicate that there is distinction between coverage of Zuma and her health bill. The thematic sections and elaborate coding categories ensure content validity.

As this study employs both manifest and latent analysis, it is possible to test the correlational validity of the study. Correlational validity is attained when the scores of one method correlate with the results of another method (Krippendorf, 1980: 157). Babbie (1992: 318) notes that the concurrent use of manifest and latent analysis serves as a means of testing for reliability and validity. Agreement between the scores of the two methods need not be perfect. Similar scores should produce a final score reflective of the results of the two independent analyses.

Of the twenty- one *Cape Times* articles, only one article records an incongruent result. The article scores (1), or slightly positive in the latent analysis, yet has five variables scores in the negative directional column. *Die Burger*, which has a larger sample size of 49 articles, contains three incongruent results. The three articles, which code as slightly positive (1), contain two, two and five negative scores respectively in the manifest analysis. The *Sowetan* has perfect congruency between its manifest and latent analysis scores. The relatively small sample of *Sowetan* editions may explain this correlation. The results suggest that the content measurement is relatively reliable and valid.

4.5. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter interpreted the findings of the content analysis, both manifest and latent, in relation to the three central propositions of the study. The nature of newspaper coverage was assessed and cross tabulated with newspaper ideology and newspaper ownership. The results were then used to propose tentative assertions about the type of media approach being employed by the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan* to media -society relations. The final chapter contextualises these findings within the broad research problem outlined in chapter one of the research essay.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The aim of this research essay was to assess the nature of newspaper coverage by examining the way in which the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan* report on Dr Zuma and the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Bill. The premise of this exploratory study of newspaper coverage is that the nature of coverage serves as a possible indicator of the role being played by the newspaper in government - media relations. Using newspaper coverage as the dependent variable, the following propositions were assessed:

- Newspaper coverage of the government is overly critical
- Newspaper Ideology may affect the nature of newspaper coverage of the government
- Newspaper ownership may influence the nature of newspaper coverage of the government

The results of the manifest content analysis indicate that most of the articles in the three newspapers are coded in the negative direction. Before concluding that newspaper coverage of Dr Zuma is generally critical, it is important to take cognizance of the case study being analyzed. Dr Zuma is a controversial government figure, notorious for a series of failed health policies. The Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Bill was one of three contentious bills that elicited reactions from the public and political spheres (Bisseker, 1997: 45). As an inherently negative issue, it is difficult to evaluate coverage of Zuma. Negative coverage does not necessarily imply that newspapers are overly critical of the issue. The negative connotations of the bill motivated the construction of thematic sections that distinguish between coverage of Zuma and coverage of the bill.

The first thematic section deals with coverage of Zuma, while the other seven sections deal with the bill. Although thematic section I, pertaining to "Zuma" records the most scores compared with other categories, 402 of the total 518 variable scores are distributed between sections II, "perceptions of the bill" to VIII, "effects of the bill". An examination

of the frequency of positive scores reveals that Section III, dealing with the "motive of the bill", contains 35 scores. This section, which deals with the motive of the bill, has the most responses to the assertion that the bill will "distribute doctors to rural areas". In relation to sample size, the *Cape Times* is most positive about the "motive of the bill". Section I, dealing with "Zuma", contained the second most number of scores suggesting that coverage of Zuma is not entirely negative. "Reaction to the content of the bill" received the third most frequent number of scores. This is noteworthy as the newspapers therefore reported on support for the underlying principle of the bill.

As expected, the frequency of scores in the negative B column fell into thematic section BI. This section deals with coverage of "Dr Zuma" and her style of leadership. Although a high 116 scores are coded in this section, the theme section dealing with the "consequences of the bill" coded almost 100 scores. The findings show that Zuma does receive extensive negative media coverage. In relation to size of the title sample, the *Sowetan* codes the most negative scores about Zuma. This statistic challenges claims that newspapers owned by black press groups will be more supportive of government ministers. The scores of the *Cape Times* are concentrated in the section pertaining to the positive "motive of the bill". As Cohen (1996) notes, the ANC's criticism of the press is vague. Coverage of Zuma and the health policy also contains two balanced articles and one neutral article. It would therefore be incorrect to assert that coverage of Zuma is entirely negative.

To assess the nature of press coverage, it is salient to refer to the latent analysis of newspaper coverage. As attested by the manifest analysis, most of the articles are coded in the (-2) negative category. One can therefore assert that coverage is not overly negative. Remembering that the health issue is inherently critical, it is fitting that most of the articles are classified as slightly negative and negative. Fears of an overly positive press are also allayed by the low incidence of very positive (+3) scores. Most positive coverage is slightly positive. There is also one neutral article.

Writers like De Beer (1997) and Sethi (1987) argue that an eclectic media approach would be most appropriate for the South African context. The need for an eclectic approach emanates from South Africa's first and third world dichotomy (Sethi, 1987: 220). While it is important to adopt the libertarian concepts of objective and critical coverage, a developing country like South Africa should avoid an overly adversarial press-government partnership (Steyn, 1994: 9). Although the findings of this research essay pertain to coverage of the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan* of Dr Zuma, it allows for tentative postulations about the press' approach to its relationship with the government.

Most articles are coded in the negative direction for both the manifest and latent analyses which suggests that the press is assuming a watchdog role. To reiterate, the term 'watchdog' connotes a vigilant media that criticizes the government when appropriate (Berger, 1996: 16). The watchdog role of the press serves as a basic tenet of the libertarian press approach to media-society relations. The Libertarian approach posits that the press should be free to criticize government leaders and their policies. If press coverage was concentrated in the very negative category, one may have suggested a revolutionary approach to media-society relations. Alternatively, generally positive newspaper coverage would have supported the argument that newspapers are approaching a developmental media approach. The *Sowetan's* neutral and balanced article scores suggest a possible affiliation with the development approach. The development approach combines the nation building principles of the developmental approach with the watchdog role of the libertarian press. The Development approach is important for South Africa as critical coverage may enhance nation building and development in South Africa (Addison, 1993: 37).

Using the ideological classification of Tomaselli in Diederich and De Beer (1998), the *Cape Times* and *Sowetan* are classified as Libertarian, while *Die Burger* is classified as Authoritarian. The manifest analysis reveals that the *Sowetan*, as representative of the Libertarian category, has the most positive coverage in relation to its sample size. The *Cape Times*, also representing the Libertarian ideology, has the lower percentage of positive articles compared with the other two newspapers. This discrepancy may be

explained by the divergent historical contexts of the *Cape Times* and *Sowetan*. As mentioned earlier, the *Sowetan*, established in the 1980's, lacks the extensive libertarian tradition of the *Cape Times*.

Die Burger, as representative of the Authoritarian ideology, does not contain the most negative coverage in relation to its sample size. While this finding challenges the proposition that newspapers of the Authoritarian category will be more critical of the present government, the results are significant. The low difference between the percentage scores of the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* suggests that newspapers of the former Authoritarian category are adopting a more Liberal ideological stance. A follow up study may reveal a more substantial shift in the coverage of the Authoritarian newspaper.

The proposition that newspapers of the libertarian ideological category may be supportive of the ANC-lead government is therefore only substantiated by the *Sowetan*. The *Cape Times* of the libertarian category indicates no shift from critical to supportive coverage. The scores of *Die Burger*, of the Authoritarian ideology, imply a gradual shift towards a critical stance.

One expects the Quiet Revolution of media ownership to affect the nature of government coverage (Grové, 1996: 327). There has been speculation that newspapers of the Independent Group, led by 'O Reilly, will contain more pro-government coverage than newspapers of the other press groups. 'O Reilly is reputed to be an associate of President Mandela (Harris, 1996: 21). Dr Motlana, of New Africa Publications, is also reported to be an associate of the President. These relationships raise doubts about the editorial autonomy of the *Sowetan* (Uys, 1996: 32). Nasionale Pers, which enjoyed a close affiliation with the former Nationalist Government, is expected to advocate a more critical approach to the ANC-lead government (Harris, 1996: 21).

In relation to sample size, the newspaper of the Independent Newspaper group has the most negative coverage. This finding may refute the proposition that newspapers of the

Independent Newspaper Group are more supportive of the government. Nasionale Pers, as expected follows closely with almost as much negative coverage of the Independent Newspaper Title. Coverage of *Die Burger*, representing Nasionale Pers, is almost as critical as that of the *Cape Times*. Although the *Sowetan* of New Africa Publications has more positive articles in relation to its sample size than the other two newspaper groups, its coverage of Zuma is predominantly negative. The *Sowetan* also has a neutral and a balanced article. It appears, therefore, as if the *Sowetan* of New Africa Publications is adhering to its editorial charter. The charter encourages factual and balanced reporting (Mortimer, 1996: 90). The results of the manifest analysis are corroborated by the latent analysis. The newspaper of the NAP group does not exhibit overly-supportive coverage of the government.

Although the findings only support two of the three propositions, they do allow for interesting inferences. It is erroneous to view newspaper coverage as a uniform phenomenon. The contrasting results of two newspapers of the Liberal ideological category show that each newspaper title should be examined separately. The findings also concur with Patten's (1998: 10) observation that the press, rather than adopting a lapdog role in South Africa's consolidating democracy, is acting independently of ownership and ideological influences. Critical coverage is qualified with supportive and balanced reporting.

While an adversarial relationship between media and government is conducive to democracy, the ANC's growing criticism of the press raises concern. This concern is compounded by the imminent 1999 election (Patten, 1998: 10). The government appears to expect a supportive press in the developmental approach (Berger, 1996: 8). De Beer (1996: 187) reports that the ANC is anxious about the press' commitment to nation building and negative coverage is often perceived as anti-government sentiment. However, the Media Monitoring Project's 1996 study indicated that press coverage of the government is more positive than negative (Golding-Duffy, 1996: 8). These findings coincide with Cohen's (1996) observation that South African press coverage of the government is fairly diluted compared with coverage in other countries.

It is evident that there is dissent about the role of the press and the nature of press coverage. This study uses press coverage as an indicator of the press' role in government-society relations. Although the results account for coverage of Zuma by the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *Sowetan*, one may extrapolate that coverage of the government by the press is fairly critical. The results support the claim of James (1998: 6) that, while the press has legitimized the democratic government, it has not approved of all government policies. The honeymoon period of South Africa's democratic transition has ended and it is not surprising that coverage has become more critical since the 1996 survey by the Media Monitoring Project (The Citizen, 1996: 11).

The lapdog typology does not apply to the three newspapers sampled in this study. While the press appears committed to its role as vigilant watchdog, strong opposition from the government is increasing. Until the ANC-lead government accepts that press criticism is not intended to undermine political legitimacy, the government will continue to attack the vigilant press (Berger, 1996: 8). For the moment, the three newspapers sampled seem to denote a commitment to the watchdog typology. The consolidation of South Africa's democracy depends upon a vigilant press that will hold the government, regardless of the political party in power, accountable.

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World Association of Newspapers. 1998

APPENDIX A

CODING SHEET

DATE OF ANALYSIS.....

NEWSPAPER.....EDITION.....PAGE.....

HEADLINE.....

CODE Variable	+		CODE Variable	-	
A			B		
I	ZUMA		I	ZUMA	
01	Leadership: democratic		01	Leadership: autocratic	
02	Relinquishing power		02	Excessive powers accrued by bill	
03	Descriptions of Zuma: progressive		03	Descriptions of Zuma: controversial	
04	Zuma's motives for the bill		04	Doubts about her motivation for bill	
05	Consultation with interest groups		05	Little consultation	
06	Zuma informs students of legislation		06	Zuma fails to inform students	
07	Zuma supported by cabinet		07	Zuma not supported by cabinet	
08	Zuma supported by ANC		08	Zuma not supported by ANC	
09	Zuma supported by opposition parties		09	No support from opposition parties	
10	Miscellaneous		10	Miscellaneous	
II	PERCEPTIONS OF BILL		II	PERCEPTIONS OF BILL	
11	Bill as progressive		11	Bill as controversial	
12	Bill as fair, voluntary		12	Bill as forced, undemocratic	
13	Bill as community service		13	Bill as conscription	
14	Bill as beneficial for doctors		14	Bill as discrimination against doctors	
15	Miscellaneous		15	Miscellaneous	
III	MOTIVE OF BILL		III	MOTIVE OF BILL	
16	Improve health care in South Africa		16	Allow health Department to control health care	
17	Distribute doctors to rural areas		17	Doctors to work in exchange for government subsidies	
18	Improve training of doctors		18	Bind doctors to vocational training	
19	Greater health access in rural areas		19	Force white doctors from 'opulence'	
20	Miscellaneous		20	Miscellaneous	
IV	PROCESS OF BILL		IV	PROCESS OF BILL	
21	Bill withdrawn for further evaluation		21	Bill pushed too rapidly through parliament	
22	Implementation postponed		22	Still too soon for implementation	
23	Support for amended bill		23	Underlying principles of amended Bill unchanged	
24	Miscellaneous		24	Miscellaneous	
V	CONTENT OF BILL		V	CONTENT OF BILL	
25	Community service set at 1 year		25	Doctors cannot choose location	

26	Agree with principle of bill		26	No infrastructure to support Bill
27	Clarity regarding bill and community service		27	No clarity regarding bill/community service
28	Community service to replace vocational training		28	Community service as well as vocational training
29	Miscellaneous		29	Miscellaneous
VI	REACTION TO BILL		VI	REACTION TO BILL
30	Negotiation by students/interest grps		30	Protest marches against bill
31	Compromise to avoid court action		31	Legal action
32	Supported by medical students/interest groups		32	Opposed by students/interest groups
33	Support of cabinet members		33	Not supported by cabinet members
34	Support of ANC		34	Not supported by ANC
35	Support of opposition parties		35	Not supported by opposition parties
36	Miscellaneous		36	Miscellaneous
VII	REACTION TO WITHDRAWAL OF BILL		VII	REACTION TO WITHDRAWAL OF BILL
37	Support for withdrawal		37	Cautious about withdrawal
38	Confidence that submissions will be considered		38	Too little time for meaningful submissions
39	Approval of cabinet		39	Disapproval by cabinet
40	Approval of ANC		40	Disapproval of ANC
41	Approval of opposition parties		41	Disapproval of opposition parties
42	Amended Bill more satisfactory		42	Underlying principles remain unchanged
43	Miscellaneous		43	Miscellaneous
VIII	EFFECTS OF BILL		VIII	EFFECTS OF BILL
44	Improve health care in South Africa		44	Economic strain of paying doctors
45	Improve standard of medical practitioners		45	Will result in poor training of doctors
46	Equitable distribution of health workers		46	Emigration of doctors
47	Doctors volunteering for community service		47	Students that do not do community service will not be registered as doctors
48	Students will get extra credits		48	Less students enrolling for medicine
49	Miscellaneous		49	Miscellaneous
IX	Headline		IX	Headline
50	Positive		50	Negative

0	
51	Bill in Parliament
52	Bill sent to Portfolio Committee
53	Bill sent to/passed in National Assembly
54	Bill sent to/approved by Cabinet
55	Bill sent to/approved by NCOP
56	Bill withdrawn
57	Bill signed by President
58	Public hearings
59	Miscellaneous legislative process

CONTENT TOTALS
+.....
-.....
0.....
TOTAL

Latent Analysis

Code Variable	Very Positive (3)	Positive (2)	Slightly Positive (1)	Neutral (0)	Slightly Negative (-1)	Negative (-2)	Very Negative (-3)
60							

APPENDIX B

CODING INSTRUCTIONS

CODING INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONTENT ANALYSIS

The aim of this study is to assess whether articles are generally critical or supportive of Dr Zuma and her community service health bill.

Brief History of the community service bill

Dr Zuma, Minister of Health, introduced three controversial health bills in 1997

- The Medicines and Related Control Amendment Bill
- The Pharmacy Amendment Bill
- The Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill

This study focuses on newspaper coverage of the third bill, the Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill. The bill received much media attention because of its proposed community service clause. The bill stipulated that students complete an additional two years of training in a rural area, before being registered as medical practitioners. The bill was met with resistance from student doctors and medical groups who felt that two years forced community service was unacceptable. The community service was to be added onto the one year of vocational training that following six years of training.

After much criticism and debate, Zuma withdrew the bills to allow for submissions and public input. The amended bill set community service at one year instead of two. The Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Service Professions Amendment Bill was signed into law by the President in February this year.

Manifest Analysis

Manifest analysis refers to the coding of assertions or themes into content categories.

Explanations of terms:

Interest Groups	Includes student doctors, medical groups, medical associations and other policy role players
Omstrede	Afrikaans word for controversial
Halsoorkop	pushed too rapidly, hastily
Lukrake	Haphazard
Betwiste	Debated/contested
Onversetlik	adamant/stubborn
Optog	march/protest

Direction refers to whether the assertion is negative or positive. If the assertion is positive, it is coded in the A section. Negative assertions are coded in the B section. An assertion refers to a phrase or word that indicates something about a subject. For example, in the phrase "Zuma is controversial". Zuma is the subject of the assertion. The assertion is negative, as it implies that Zuma's leadership may be flawed. The nine sections are actually theme categories that deal with different subjects. For example, the subject of the second section is perceptions of the bill, while the third section deals with the motive of the bill.

All of the theme sections have a miscellaneous category. If nothing can be coded in the existing category, place it in the miscellaneous category. The important thing is noting the **direction** of the assertion.

Code I	This theme category deals with Zuma's leadership style. Only references to Zuma herself must be coded in this category
I01	Anything that refers to Zuma's style of leadership, as autocratic or democratic, must be coded in the applicable directional category.
I02	Mention of Zuma using the bill to increase her powers or to reduce her powers.
I03	Descriptions of Zuma herself. Zuma as being progressive or positive in her policy initiatives.

- I04 Any comments about Zuma's motive for the bill. It does not have to state specifically what her motives are, just if they are positive or negative.
- I05 Has Zuma consulted with interest groups
- I06 Has Zuma kept students informed of developments in the legislation? Do students know where they stand with her?
- I07 Does cabinet, i.e. other Ministers e.g. Minister Bengu, support Zuma?
- I08 Does Zuma have the support of the ANC
- I09 Does Zuma have the support of parties like the IFP, NP, FF, PAC, DP and ACDP?

II This theme category deals with any perceptions of the bill. These perceptions may be of interest groups, political parties, ministers or any other person or group. Who holds the perception is not important.

- II11 If the bill is seen as progressive or positive or beneficial, it can be coded here. Any negative perceptions, for example, the bill as controversial or contested must be coded here too.
- II12 If the bill is seen as fair and justified. Code in the negative category if the bill is described as undemocratic, a threat to democracy or unconstitutional. The use of the phrase 'compulsory community service' need not be coded. Only code 'compulsory' if it is used as a verb. For example, if the article states "The Bill forces doctors to do community service"
- II13 The bill is known as the community service bill, so do not code every time the word community service is used. Only code if the article says, for example, "The bill must be seen as community service". In other words, a subject must describe the bill as community service. If the bill is described a conscription (diensplig) it must be coded here.

III This category deals with the general motives of the bill or what the bill intends to achieve.

IV This category refers to the policy process of the bill, namely its movement through parliament.

Zuma was applauded for her withdrawal of the bill. Positive comments relating to the withdrawal of the bill are coded here. There was also support for the postponement of the implementation of the bill. Negative responses to the rapid movement of the bill through parliament must be noted in the B category. In addition, comments that the date set By Zuma was still too soon for implementation of the bill will also fall into the B category.

V This category focuses on the content of the bill.

While some groups agree with the bill in principle, many felt that the bill could not be implemented without the necessary infrastructure. Infrastructure includes references to facilities, accommodation for the students etc. Some articles contained support for the replacement of vocational training with community service. If community service is suggested as well as vocational training, it is coded in the negative category.

VI Any reaction to the bill is coded in this category.

30 If students and interest groups mention negotiation it is coded in A. Protest marches against the bill are coded in B.

31 If students will compromise with the health department to avoid legal action, it is considered positive. Threats of legal action, by interest groups or political parties, will be coded in B

VII The bill was withdrawn to allow for public input and further evaluation.

Support for the withdrawal is coded here. Positive phrases to watch out for include "optimistic" and "applaud". If the reaction is "cautiously

optimistic", it is coded in the A category. If the reaction is just "cautious", it is coded in the B category

VIII The last category deals with the effects of the bill or implications of the bill.

The reference to extra credits refers means that doctors who have done community service will have a greater chance of specializing after completion of their training.

IX The last category deals with the headline. Is the headline a positive or negative assertion?

Assertions that are neither positive nor negative are coded in the '0' category box. Items included here usually refer to legislative process, like the bill being sent to the National Assembly. If there is no obvious negative or positive connotation, it is coded in the neutral category.

Latent Content Analysis

Latent content analysis refers to the underlying meaning of the text. This analysis requires you to make a subjective evaluation of the article. If the article is generally critical of Zuma and/or her policies, one can code the article as being negative. If the tone of the article is very derogatory and critical, one can say that the article was very negative. If there are only a few negative references and some positive references, one may say that the article is only slightly negative. The same applies to the positive assertion. This exercise is subjective and based upon your impression of the tone of the article. You may only mark in one of the seven boxes. If the article is completely neutral, only dealing with straight facts without any judgmental or evaluative comments, it can be coded in the neutral category