



An analysis of SABC coverage of political parties in the 2019 elections.

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This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work, each significant contribution to, and quotation, in this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people have been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature

Signed by candidate

 Date.....

DEDICATION

My humble and deepest appreciations to the Almighty God for seeing me throughout this journey and affording me the opportunity to attain a master's degree. I dedicate this thesis to my mother who has been a pillar of strength throughout my academic years, my father and my siblings for being supportive and lastly my kids. I hope this work will make them proud and to know that anything is possible with God.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
COO	Chief Operation Officer
DA	Democratic Alliance
EFF	Economic Freedom Fighter
FF+	Freedom Front Plus
ICASA	Independent Communication Authority of South Africa
NP	National Party
MP's	Members of Parliament
MMA	Media Monitoring Africa
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SADAC	Southern African Development Community
SANEF	South African National Editors' Forum

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ABSTRACT

This study critically analyses the coverage of the three main political parties (ANC, DA and EFF) in the 2019 elections by the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). The SABC has been one of the main sources of information for millions of citizens across the country and many South Africans rely on the SABC for news concerning election proceedings. Therefore, the study aims to observe the role of the SABC in society, and politics during the 2019 elections in South Africa. The objective of this dissertation is to investigate whether the SABC's coverage was fair on the three main political parties or not. This research chose to use framing and social responsibility theory as guidelines to reliable and convincing information. Data for this research was obtained through secondary data from the SABC online channel; the study used election reports and its visuals such as pictures, videos for analysis. The study further used videos from the beginning of 2019 election campaigns, until the last day of elections which was scheduled on the 10th of May 2019.

According to the research findings, the SABC did not represent the real image of the political parties which may be regarded as unprofessional and may taint the quality of their work. The research shows that in the media there are deep-rooted social and cultural issues that need transformation. The studies notes that media reforms can be the solution to some of the issues discussed in this dissertation. During election period the media was seen as bias, giving more coverage to the ruling party and this conduct led many to conclude that the SABC was used as a mouthpiece of certain political parties. However, the study also observed that there are traditional news factors that influenced the news selection.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

This study investigates the representation of the three main political parties by the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) on the 2019 national elections. These political parties are the African National Congress (ANC), Democratic Alliance (DA), and Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF). The study critically analyses the guidelines followed by the SABC when reporting, by using framing and social responsibility as guiding theories. This research grapples with information relating to the role of the media, politics, and elections and how the SABC played its role in the society during the election period. This research utilises qualitative content analysis study which assisted in analysing the content of the SABC English news bulletin of the 2019 national elections. The reason of this method usage is because of its element in terms of coding of word choice and images. Therefore, an extensive literature review of different sources and a content analysis of the relevant SABC English news bulleting form the basis of this research.

Media play an important role in society. It is known as the ear and eye of the society, which should report on major public issues (Olien et al., 2018). The media should be in a position to condemn and sanction the state with observations to sustain democracy (Isike & Omotoso, 2017). However, Isike and Omotoso (2017) argue that a public owned media is capable of being bias towards the government; public-owned media is painted as the government's lapdog while private owned media claim to report objectively, without fear or favor (Isike & Omotoso, 2017).

According to Curran's perspective, the role of the media under democratic country is a free-market watchdog where the media constantly check the movement of the state and fearlessly expose the wrongdoing of those in authority (Curran, 2002). He further notes that this conduct is a sign that displays the independence of the media from the government; and if the media is not showing signs of independence, it can, therefore, lose its bite as a watchdog (Curran, 2002). Curran also asserts that a media that is licensed, franchised or regulated is subject to political pressure when dealing with issues affecting the interest of those in power. He believes that free and independent media briefs the electorate and help voters during an election to make an informed decision (Curran, 2002).

Isike and Omotoso (2017) argue that media should report for development. This means that the media's reports should not only entail what the state does but the reporting should be for building and uniting the government with the society and report on news that will build and improve people's lives. This idea comes after the media has been labeled as twisting and disseminating information that brings conflict rather than reporting information that brings peace in the society (Isike & Omotoso, 2017).

Fourie explains the role of the SABC in the society by quoting the SABC's manifesto that took place the day when the SABC was established in 1936. The manifesto notes that the broadcast should provide its audience with information that promotes discussions and debates in the society (Fourie, 2010). This means that the SABC has to serve in the public sphere where all people feel free to participate in discussions and debates. Moreover, the SABC has a role to provide an impartial space where everyone is free to discuss anything (Fourie, 2010). The SABC's mandate notes that the broadcaster's code of conduct is to offer plurality on views and be able to deliver diverse news, information and sentiments from the citizen's point of view (SABC Mandate, n. d.).

During the elections period, Piombo and Nijzink (2005) observed that the media struggle a lot because of political parties' interference. Journalists, therefore, find themselves in a place where they feel pressured by some political parties who need more coverage than others. For example, during the 2004 elections the ANC complained about the coverage of the independent press which led the ANC to use the SABC as the mouthpiece of its campaigns (Piombo & Nijzink, 2005).

After the apartheid regime, the SABC was made a public broadcaster; the President is responsible to appoint board members after a parliamentary process of selecting names and making recommendations. However, the SABC has stipulated in the code of conduct that the broadcast is not a mouthpiece of the government, but of the public. The SABC has a mandate to report news that enables the society to make informed decisions (SABC editorial policy, 2018). In addition, the SABC code of conduct further notes that SABC takes the principle of journalistic freedom seriously; meaning journalists are never prevented to report on any stories that are deemed public interest (SABC Mandate, n.d.). Therefore,, this study observes the fairness and impartiality of the SABC reports.

According to Findlay and Dayile (2019), South Africa is the most unequal country in the world in terms of race, class, and ethnicity. According to Fourie (2003), South Africa is the

youngest democratic country, it is multicultural, has multiple languages, and a history of racial fragmentation, the role of public broadcasting is to mend those broken and fragmented areas. However, the SABC code of conduct states that during elections, the broadcaster will maintain a gender and race balance and will continue to promote diverse viewpoints (SABC editorial policy, 2018). Subsequently; this study also identified the need to research on gender and race balance during the elections.

1.2 As regulatory bodies, the Independent Communication Authority of South Africa (ICASA) and Media Monitoring Africa (MMA) are in place.

As previously stated, election season is a difficult time for the SABC because the use of the code of ethics is scrutinized by regulatory bodies such as the Independent Communication Authority of South Africa (ICASA), Media Monitoring Africa (MMA), and the general public. These regulatory bodies monitor public broadcasters' progress in implementing the code of ethics during national and provincial election broadcasting (editorial policy, 2018). For the 2019 elections, ICASA decided to review and amend the National and Provincial Election Broadcasting Regulations, as well as the Political Advertisement Regulation 2014 (ICASA, 2018). The board received complaints about SABC's conduct during the 2016 local government elections, which prompted this amendment in an attempt to avoid repeating the same mistakes (ICASA, 2018).

The SABC was accused of bias by other parties during the 2016 elections due to reporting of inaccurate information, the SABC has an obligation to request transparency and accurate information from political parties on a suitable day for broadcasting the PA's (Political Advertisements) (ICASA, 2018). The SABC's policy ensures that journalists are given time to acquaint themselves with internal guidelines developed for election coverage, such as the National and Provincial Party Elections Broadcasts and Political Advertisements Regulations.

One of the policies developed by the SABC to demonstrate fairness is that the editorial staff are not permitted to wear political party regalia or pose for photographs with any political member, as this may cause trust issues between them and media consumers in terms of news reporting (editorial policy, 2018). This principle was created to promote trust and transparency in society (editorial policy, 2018). As a result, the regulatory body has decided to give each political party the same amount of time to deliver their Party Election Broadcast (PEBs), which is 50 seconds long instead of the previous one minute (ICASA, 2018).

Since 1994, Media Monitoring Africa (MMA) has tracked the coverage of every democratic election in South Africa. The MMA serves as a watchdog to promote ethical and fair journalism that promotes human rights (Media Monitoring Africa, n;a). The organization promotes democracy and a culture in which the media and the powerful respect human rights and promote a just and equitable society. The vision of MMA is a responsible, high-quality media that promotes an engaged and informed citizenry in Africa and around the world. The mission of MMA is to promote the development of a free, fair, ethical, and critical media culture in South Africa and throughout the continent. To achieve MMA's vision, the three key areas that MMA seeks to address through a human rights approach are as follows: Media ethics, Media quality, Media freedom (Media Monitoring Africa, n;a).

The South African Electoral Act 18 of 2013 includes an Electoral Code of Conduct that aims to promote conditions conducive to free and fair elections by fostering a climate of tolerance, free political campaigning, and open public debate (electoral code of conduct, 2013). The Act commits to following the provisions of the Electoral Code of Conduct as soon as the election date is announced until the election results are officially announced. It also speaks out against political violence and threats against other parties, such as the Electoral Commission, the general public, and the media.

The electoral act also stipulates the role the media plays during such proceedings. Every registered party and every candidate-(a) must respect the role of the media before, during, and after an election conducted in accordance with this Act; (b) may not bar members of the media from attending public political meetings, marches, demonstrations, and rallies; and (c) must take all reasonable steps to ensure that journalists are not harassed, intimidated, hazarded, threatened, or physically assaulted by any of their representatives or supporters. All registered parties and candidates should respect the role of the media in elections, not bar media access to public events (electoral code of conduct, 2013).

The SABC was openly used as a tool of state propaganda during apartheid, a strong coalition of domestic and international media experts worked to ensure that it did not become a mouthpiece for the new administration, particularly during election coverage (Glenn & Mattes, 2011). Political parties, as a result, play an important role in the political communication process because they recruit the country's future leaders. As a result, in a departure from previous scholarly work, this study attempted to bring the three major political parties (ANC, DA, and EFF) into a systematic focus.

1.3 Statement of the problem

In May 2016, the SABC journalists were prevented from covering or displaying images that portrayed violence during the service delivery protests that were unfolding in Vuwani and were also prevented to report negatively about the former President Jacob Zuma (Gcubule, 2017). The SABC's conduct could be depicted as the mouthpiece of the ANC. Furthermore, political parties such as EFF and DA felt that the SABC was bias; it was not reporting objectively on the events, however, it was reporting in favour of one party, the ANC (Selfe, 2016). This conduct was against the SABC code of conduct, which is to report to the society without fear and favour. In addition, research shows that there is an impact on how the media relate to the ruling and the opposition parties, particularly in the course of election campaigns (Piombo & Nijzink 2005, p.232).

Therefore, this research investigated how the public broadcast represents the top three political parties, which are African National Congress (ANC), which has 230 seats in Parliament, Democratic Alliance (DA), which has 84 seats in parliament, and Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), which has 44 seats in parliament (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2019). Given the new wave of changes at the SABC, the study seeks to understand the stance and style of reporting the SABC adopted, whether they reported to these political parties in an objective, impartial and independent manner without the interference/influence of other external forces or they continued with their previous style, which led people to believe that the SABC was captured (Piombo & Nijzink, 2005). The study used the SABC news bulletin videos because; television news is the public's main source of political information; excluding social media (Hopmann et al. 2012, p.178).

1.4 Research question

How did the SABC frame South Africa's three main political parties-ANC, DA and EFF during the 2019 elections?

1.5 Research objective

To investigate if the SABC's coverage was fair on the three main political parties.

1.6 Significance of the study

This research study is significant because it yields valuable information on the role of the SABC in society in terms of informing and educating the public; the professionalism of journalists on reporting news which is not biased. The main objective of the SABC is to supply information to the Republic of South Africa and beyond its borders and to see that the objectives set out in the Broadcasting Act 4 of 1999 are achieved (SABC code of conduct, n.d.). However, there are events whereby the SABC fail to adhere to its mandate by allowing external influences to control which information should or should not be disseminated. Therefore, the study analysed the SABC reports during the 2019 national elections. The study used the SABC English news bulletin for its content because English is a dominant broadcasting language in South Africa, especially on Television (Hlophe, 2014).

Scholars like Shubbar and Nasir (2017) recognize that there should be a connection between media, politics, and elections, especially in a democratic society. According to Ziauddin (2017), there is media capture and political influence that affects the flow of news, and the media is censored by powerful or wealthy elites. Some SABC journalists were fired in 2016 after refusing to be censored from reporting on a service delivery protest that occurred during the 2016 local government elections (Right2Know, 2018).

The study also seeks to gain a better understanding of the significance of visuals during such proceedings. This is significant because it promotes accountability, transparency, accuracy, and other qualities.

With all of the information from scholars, this research identified a need to examine how the major political parties are portrayed during such proceedings (elections). Many of the studies undertaken by the researcher discussed elections and framing, but none addressed the main political parties and how they are represented by the SABC, given that the SABC is under new management.

1.7 Research methods

1.7.1 Introduction

This section explains the methodology the study used to critically investigate the representation of the political parties (ANC, DA and EFF) in the 2019 national elections. According to Igwenagu (2016) methodology is a theoretical analysis of methods which is used to a field of study; it only offers a theoretical perspective which enables one to understand the method used and therefore, the research critically analysed the SABC coverage of political parties in the 2019 elections using the SABC news bulletin (videos). The data essential to provide such analysis was the use of qualitative content analysis.

In addition, the method allowed the study to have more information and bring a better understanding of the research. The study refers to the headlines, word choice, frames adopted, sources used, the length of the story and some elements related to framing theory and social responsibility theory. The study therefore focused on the representation of political parties; the method of sampling required the research to select visuals that are closely related to the topic.

1.7.2 Research design and methods

The study used qualitative content analysis using a framing and social responsibility perspective. This study focused on critical research designs, which enabled researchers to freely critique on the topic. Qualitative content analysis uses secondary data (SABC English news bulletin on the national elections). According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), qualitative analysis is a research method applied to analyse data. These data referred to word meaning, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes, or any messages that can be communicated (Afful, 2016). It is often used for the analysis of media texts such as newspaper stories, radio, television reports as well as visual content in photographic, film and television images (Afful, 2016).

Moreover, qualitative content analysis is a procedure of collecting and organizing information in a standardized manner that permits experts to make analysis through interpreting content and codes from the documents, communication, graphs, videos, pictures, and among others. (See Krippendorff, 2012; Cissel, 2012). Therefore, the methodology that was used to choose was good for the study as the research aimed to find patterns which assisted the researcher to evaluate news media and its use of representation. In addition, the

research used anything written, visual, or spoken in order to have more data to analyse (Afful, 2016). The study focused on counting stories or measuring the number of spaces allocated to different themes of different political parties. This was done by using content analysis which assisted the study to come to an element of objectivity. Therefore, the research method assisted the study to get information on how the SABC performed its role in terms of framing the election campaigns by the information disseminated in a way of educating as well as helping to encourage and affect voters' decisions. The study guarantees that the use of content analysis yields valid and elements objectivity to interpret messages/ video footages.

1.7.3 Sampling

The research used systematic random selection for sampling, "Systematic random sampling defined by Rahi (2017, p.3) as a "probability sampling technique where initial sampling point is selected at random and then the cases are selected at fixed intervals" This type of sampling is also used for homogenous population. In this type of sampling the elements are selected at a regular interval, the interval may be in terms of time, space, or order (Alvi, 2016). Systematic random sampling is an unbiased method of producing responses from a large group. Producing a simple random sample, as the name implies, is much easier for this study. Another reason for the study's use of systematic random sampling was the study's focus on politics. However, from the 1st of January to the 10th of May 2019, it chose to use only election-related videos. This sample size appeared to be reasonable considering the scope of the thesis.

The video analysis method used was Perlmutter's (n.d.) eight ways of comprehending and identifying images. The method assisted the study to examine how the SABC chose footage to support its narratives.

1.7.4 Data collection

Data collection is a "process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes" (Kabir, 2016, p.75). Data collection can be done in any field of study; however, methods do differ in certain field of study, but the collection of data remains the same. The use of data collection was to reveal or find evidence or prove that allowed the study to analyze and create convincing and reliable findings (Kabir, 2016). As a result, secondary data was obtained by downloading videos and images from the SABC's

online channel/website. The study analyzed 62 election-related videos and images and transcribed all of the messages from the video footages. The content used in the study ranged from January 1st, 2019, to May 10th, 2019, and covered the national elections.

The study pledges to be trustworthy and to produce results that can be tested for validity and reliability by comparing different versions of the same measurement; reliability and validity can also be estimated by comparing the results to other relevant data and theories.

1.7.5 Data analysis strategies

1.7.6 Coding

The coding procedure shows which types of stories were mostly used by the SABC in covering the 2019 national elections. Coding process has assisted the study by analysing words, short phrases, language, and attributes based on visual data/ photographs (Saldaña, 2009). The use of coding enabled the study to interpret the secondary data attained from the SABC online channel; the study then transcribed the voices/ message disseminated through the SABC (English news bulletin videos).

The research created a coding category by crafting a code-sheet where it described few guidelines to come up with objective findings such as number of articles appearing on the three major political parties (length of appearance), the frequency of appearance and how the topics are presented (the language, word choice, and headlines). The use of such guidelines was brought by Cissel (2012) when the author elucidates that the length of a news report signifies its importance. Moreover, the studies will also focus on the evaluation of political actors, tone towards political actors and headlines. In addition, the research interrogated which sources were used the most, comparing politicians, political experts, and citizens.

The study used visual analysis to scrutinise the visuals used such as photos and footages/ recordings by the SABC. According to Belk (2007), visual analysis is a method that enabled the researcher to conceptualise images on how they embody and express cultural values and contradictions. Schill (2012) believes that media do use certain images to convey a particular message to the society; the author posits that images have the power to set an agenda, assist on emotional appeal, assist on structuring a political party's image and create a new identity. Schill further notes that images are like texts, they can communicate a message even more successful (Schill, 2012). The scholar acknowledges the power that moving images have

compared to still images; the author asserts that moving images may cause more emotional stimulation than the stills (Schill, 2012). Lalancette and Raynauld (2017) have observed that many people believe what they see rather than what they read or hear from another medium. Hence the study chooses to use videos for analysis.

Schneider (2013) indicates the important elements of visual analysis and how one can best use visual representation to interpret the image used and its intentions, these elements include: angle of the image, colour scheme, lighting, arrangement of a person and the object in the scene, action or demeanour of persons depicted in the image and the length of the scene which indicates/emphasises the importance of that particular scene or object. Therefore, the study used visual analysis to explore the intentions of the media when using certain images for their reports.

Finally, the study made use of excel spread sheet. The reason to use this, is that excel automatically updates graphs and tables indicating the frequencies of news report for the three main political parties which are ANC, DA, and EFF; the nature of headlines, type of stories mostly reported.

1.8 Validity and Reliability

"Validity describes how well the data collected covers the actual area of investigation" (Taherdoost, 2016, p.28). And reliability refers to the consistency and accuracy of results obtained using the same methodology (Golafshani, 2003). The data explanation demonstrates that the conclusion is valid and reliable.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses literature review. Literature review is defined as an “informative, critical, and useful synthesis of a particular topic. It can identify what is known (and unknown) in the subject area, identify areas of controversy or debate, and help formulate questions that need further research” (Bolderston, 2008, p.89). This literature review addressed the issues faced by the media and journalists during the 2019 South African election period. This dissertation starts by looking at the role of the media in society and politics, as well as its role during the elections.

Furthermore, it looked into the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) with regard to its mandate to South African society, as well as the SABC’s news reporting policies during the election period. In addition, the review described how the SABC covered the 2016 local government elections by highlighting the frequency of coverage in relation to the three leading political parties: the African National Congress (ANC), the Democratic Alliance (DA), and the Economic Freedom Front (EFF). It also described the foregrounding opinions and critics of writers and commentators who made observations on these issues – writers such as Muswede, (2016); Fourie (2013); and Dlamini et al. (2016); and among others.

2.2 Normative theory on media and society

Throughout apartheid in South Africa, the media was regulated by the then ruling power – the National Party (Fourie, 2010). During that period, the relationship between the media and society was under scrutiny by the apartheid government through strict regulations and withholding of information from the public, for example the state’s security, combating terrorism, etc. (Fourie, 2010). This behaviour revealed that the apartheid government expected the relationship between the media and society to be one centred on patriotic conformism, where both parties were in support of the apartheid policies (Fourie, 2010). However, things changed when South Africa gained its democracy and moved from an authoritarian to a libertarian state in 1996. It was made evident that the media now had rights when the constitution was adopted in 1996 (Wasserman & De Beer, 2005).

According to Wasserman and De Beer (2005), in this democratic era, the media is expected to freely disseminate information to the public and ensure that society is exposed to diverse opinions concerning any issue. Post-apartheid, the media has been positioned as the fourth estate to ensure that the government does not abuse its power (Wasserman & De Beer, 2005). The authors further assert that the media is expected to report news in the public's interest and is supposed to defend and protect the public from the government's abuse of power. In addition, it is to keep the government in check and offer information that will assist society to participate in public discussions. Furthermore, the media is supposed to support the growth of industries and society, allowing citizens to participate in debate and democratic processes and intermingle with political and cultural leaders (Wasserman & De Beer, 2005).

According to Christians et al. (2010), the media is a highly regarded channel of information with the power to disseminate information to society. The authors describe the characteristics of the media in this era by defining four different roles it plays in society: monitoring, facilitative, radical, and collaboration. The *monitoring* role positions the media as observers (watchdogs) of what is happening in society, and which then reports these activities objectively and neutrally (Christians et al., 2010). The *facilitative* aspect of the media is where it allows citizens to participate in public discussions and express their views. For instance, the media creates a platform for dialogue and engagement in a debate regarding issues that are affecting society (Christians et al., 2010). The *radical* aspect of the media is aimed at seeking information from the authorities that will bring radical change to society; for instance, the role of the media in covering the commission of inquiry that is (at the time of writing) taking place in South Africa, in which the behaviour of leaders within various portfolios is being audited. The role of the media in this case is to engage with the leaders of the commission of inquiry, the lawyers and the witnesses, and report back to society (Christians et al., 2010). The final role the media plays is the *collaboration* role, where it serves the government and those in authority. However, this role depicts the media as a lapdog in which it is perceived to only report news that favours the government, without scrutinising issues that are affecting society (Christians et al., 2010).

Different scholars have diverse arguments on the influence the media has on society. De Vreese and Elenbaas (2008) state that the media has been the most influential actor in politics and election campaigns. In the 1930s and 1940s, researchers concluded that the hypodermic needle theory plays a role in changing people's behaviour after seeing media reports (Fourie, 2010). This theory argues that the media affects the behaviour, attitudes and thoughts of

society, and is therefore seen as an injector of values and ideologies to users of the media which results in a particular behaviour: media users become panicked and do not think thoroughly about the reported issue (Fourie, 2010). However, a noted limitation of this theory is the assumption of media consumers as passive participants that rely only on the media for information, and then use this information without critiquing and processing it. After the publication of the aforementioned research, Lazarsfeld et al. (1994) disproved the effect of hypodermic needle theory, which implied that media consumers are passive. However, Kenechukwu (2015) argued that while media users do receive information from the media, they are able to think independently about issues that affect them, give their opinions on certain issues, as well as disagree or go against what has been circulated by the media. The media, of course, is regarded as a powerful instrument of news and information, capable of shaping people's beliefs and behaviour; however there are scholars who disagree with that notion. They are of the belief that media reports do not change people's voting decision on who to vote for (De Vreese & Elenbaas, 2008).

2.3 media and politics

Politics play a distinct role in democratic societies in terms of economic growth, low unemployment rates, and equality for all races; however, the opposite is also possible. Politics is the result of a continuing sequence of events in which communities gather with the aim of dealing with their struggles through government structures (Shubbar & Nasir, 2017). It is therefore imperative for the media to report accurately events that unfold during the electoral campaigns of political parties and give political parties the platform to disseminate messages to their supporters. It is expected that media and politics should work together to achieve a symbiotic relationship because they share a common goal – to serve society. Therefore, the relationship between the media, politics and the elections are crucial in democratic societies. Media has the power to shape public opinions by focusing on certain issues (Shubbar & Nasir, 2017). However, Shubbar and Nasir (2017) claim that it is impossible to have fair, opinion-free and objective political coverage. They also claim that much research has revealed a strong political bias in the media, particularly in cases where some political parties receive more coverage than others. Since society gets its information from the media, political bias may also cause damage to the image of certain political parties (Shubbar & Nasir, 2017).

The function of the media is to disseminate the news through journalists who are appointed to investigate and report on different events that unfold around the society. De Vreese and Elenbaas (2008) maintain that journalists are likely to operate within a strategy framework which allows the fabrication or manipulation of news coverage on politics. For example, the citizenship of the former President of the USA, Barack Obama was questioned in order to discredit his presidential campaign. In addition to this, the media can frame politics by zooming into the tactics of politicians by using words that will implicate or paint the politicians in a bad light. De Vreese and Elenbaas (2008) further highlight that this has led to some citizens disengaging themselves completely from politics; for example, by not voting or being involved in any discussion about politics.

Lane (2007) agrees with Shubbar and Nasir (2017) on their view that it is impossible to have equal and positive media coverage. The media is sometimes faced with the difficult job of choosing which political party to cover, and which informative quotes and facts to choose in order to report the news as accurately as possible. Lane notes that media coverage is influential because of greater repetition of some news, which may rank these items as more important than others, so that society can more easily be persuaded (Lane, 2007). This indicates that the media can also influence the voter/s by limiting the political coverage of other political parties while giving the main political parties more screen or airtime. For example, there have been complaints that the ANC received more media coverage during the 2016 local government elections when compared to the other political parties. This kind of situation therefore paints the media as the gatekeeper and the agenda-setter during the campaigns. This could potentially mean that the media has the power to choose which party will make the news (Lane, 2007). De Vos (1998) asserts that in order to enable equal media coverage during the election campaign, the culture of freedom and debate should be enforced for smaller as well as larger political parties.

Besley et al. (2002) posit that media coverage can improve government accountability to society. The more that media brings political issues into salience, the more likely government will respond and act with regard to the reported issues. These scholars note that the deregulation of the media in democratic countries gives it the power to hold accountable the incumbents. This will assist voters to make rational decisions on who to vote for based on the information from the media (Besley et al., 2002). The deregulation of media enhances the ability of the media to 'blow the whistle' and publicly report news without fear or favour, for example on politicians who attempt to use bribery as a means to elevate their status. Besley et

al. (2002), further note the reason media emphasise particular issues is because it demands accountability from the politicians. However, some media outlets have hidden agendas such that their motives lead to victimisation and abuse of other political parties (Besley et al., 2002).

Furthermore, there are times where the media no longer report news that will benefit society or make politicians accountable for their actions; instead, it will report news selected by their sponsors or handlers; a concept known as 'media capture'. This concept refers to when media systems are persuaded or influenced by powerful interest groups around the world on which news to report, and how it should be reported (Ziauddin, 2017). Besley et al. (2002), argue that media capture results in restricting the media's ability to perform its watchdog duty. Ziauddin (2017) argues that media capture is at work if the media's role is hindered by external forces. The author provides reasons why the media will then not adhere to its duty. The author argues that the media is controlled by government ideologies, the media is controlled by the advertisement and owners of the advertisement, or the media is controlled by the hidden agendas of media outlets. Ziauddin (2017), further notes that these aforementioned reasons will affect the news flow, the media can no longer perform its duty and it will be censored through these mentioned supposed overseers. This will result in political influence over the media. In instances where the media is captured, there is a risk that its ability to monitor politicians and deliver well-researched and investigated information to society is jeopardized. In addition to this, the author notes that the influence of the media by the rich entities by (powerful or affluent elites) will create inequalities among society. He suggests that media pluralism will stop influence of the media by the supposed overseers. He posits that it would be more difficult for one entity to bribe or influence the whole media industry if the media was diverse (Ziauddin, 2017). "Media pluralism refers to a number of aspects, such as diversity of ownership, variety in the sources of information and in the range of contents available" (Švob-Đokić, Bilić & Peruško, 2011, p.261).

2.4 The media and elections

According to the United Nations Development Programmes (n, d. p.12), "Elections, are political events with high-stakes outcomes that take place in many different contexts". In addition, media could potentially have influential on the election and on their outcome. United Nations Development Programmes further notes that elections are frequently won or lost through the media depending on how the media portrayed or reported that particular

political party. Jiménez et al. (2017) note that people who are more exposed to the election campaigns communicated by the media are more likely to engage with politicians. However, D'Alessio and Allen (2000) observed that in most cases reporters and editors choose to cover news stories based on their political beliefs and this manner interferes with the news selection or agenda-setting of that particular media outlet which can then affect how people within society view certain issues. According to Manganyi et al. the media's role during the national elections is to provide platforms for both the electorate and the political parties. The scholars recognise the difficulty the media faces during the elections, which leads to hindrances on how it performs its duty to society (Manganyi et al., 2018). Nonetheless, it is the duty of the media to broadcast the political parties as broadly and intently as possible; no matter the pressure, the media has to treat all political parties equally during the election period (Manganyi et al., 2018).

Manganyi et al. (2018) have done a study on the South African election's coverage between 1999, 2004, 2009 and 2014. In the study the scholars observed that the media sometimes fail to provide diversity in terms of news reporting, instead, one media outlet mimics other media outlets and end up reporting the same thing. Manganyi et al. (2018) claim that during the elections the agenda-setters are likely to be the politicians and not the media. However, instead of the media setting an agenda, it rather reports on the issues unfolding which shows lack of thorough investigations and analysis (Manganyi et al., 2018).

In addition, Stromberg (2015) posits that during elections the media should inform the voters with what is happening with the political parties. For example, voters should know about corrupt politicians and the outcome of the court cases. This may help the voters make informed decisions on who deserves their vote. Stromberg claims that the media can manipulate voters to act in a certain manner through its coverage on election campaigns. He elucidates that the media does not only report news that make voters change their minds, but it also gives voters information about the political parties they are affiliated to. The scholar cites Berelson et al. (1954) who observed that media reports during the election period can increase the amount of genuine information that may assist the voter/s. This information enables the voter/s to learn the truth about the positions of the candidates and it also enables them to participate in politics for example, by voting and engaging in political debates (Stromberg, 2015). Manganyi et al. (2018) posit that diversity is crucial, especially in societies like South Africa where society is already divided economically, socially and racially; due to the previous apartheid regime. Therefore, the media has to see to it that these

divisions are resolved. Manganyi et al. (2018) observed that it is not an easy task to cover elections. However, trained and professional journalists are the ones needed to execute the task, given the challenges that are faced, such as political interference and pressure in the newsrooms.

My research, therefore, focused on the 2019 national election coverage by the SABC. The SABC as a public broadcaster and a media outlet with wider national coverage and the mouthpiece of society which is mandated to adhere to the principles of professional journalism. Moreover, this study uses the SABC English news bulletin to get content of the 2019 elections as English is a dominant broadcasting language in South Africa, especially on Television (Hlophe, 2014). Shubbar and Nasir (2017), posit that television is the most used medium by society during the election period, and has a lasting impression when compared to other traditional mediums (excluding new media). This is because many people believe what they see rather than what they read or hear from other mediums (Lalancette & Raynauld, 2017).

2.5 The SABC coverage during 2016 government elections

Dlamini et al. (2016) in their article on the 2016 government elections, observe the manner in which the SABC failed society with bias reporting. Their hypothesis was that the SABC had failed to meet its public service responsibility in several areas about the salience of issues while others were ignored. For instance, the public broadcaster refused to show violent service delivery protest images in Vuwani, Limpopo province (Muswede, 2016). This protest was an outcry from the community of Vuwani to the ANC municipality (Vhembe District Municipality) about the lack of service delivery (Muswede, 2016). Therefore, the research notes that during the 2016 elections the SABC was only interested in national leaders such as President Jacob Zuma (former ANC President), Mmusi Maimane (DA Leader) and Julius Malema (EFF Leader) (Dlamini et al., 2016). Seeing that the news was not reported according to the stipulated regulations, the scholars' notes that the Independent Communication Authority of South Africa (ICASA) confronted the SABC journalists to cease from relying on politicians for information and conduct their own investigations (Dlamini et al., 2016). According to the researchers' perspective, the SABC framed the 2016 elections by reporting conflict rather than focusing on how the elections unfold. The article notes that there were 103 news bulletins by the SABC, of which only 22 per cent was not conflict (Dlamini et al., 2016).

Motsoeneng, the former Chief Operation Officer (COO) of the SABC threatened to fire the broadcaster's journalists if they were to report about violent service delivery protests (Right2Know, 2018). This conduct led to the dismissal of eight SABC journalists (Busisiwe Ntuli, Foeta Krige, Jacques Steenkamp, Krivani Pillay, Lukhanyo Calata, Suna Venter, Thandeka Gqubule, and Vuyo Mvoko) who refused to be censored by the broadcaster (Right2Know, 2018). These journalists were suspended because they refused to be censored and were later reinstated to their posts after they won the case against their COO (Right2Know, 2018). However, under a new board, Motsoeneng and other senior executive members were dismissed (Right2Know, 2018). One of the eight suspended journalists, Krige confirmed that the SABC was now a new SABC, in that people were free to debate issues and take an unpopular stance without the fear of being threatened or losing their jobs (Right2Know, 2018).

This study chose the year 2016 local government elections as the period to focus on or investigation because it was the period in which the public broadcaster, as well as its journalists, had received critiques or complaints and backlash from society and politicians of various political parties. In addition, the study observed whether lessons have been learned from the mistake the public broadcaster made in 2016 in covering the 2019 national elections. Therefore, the study demonstrated whether the SABC reported the 2019 election accurately and without bias, seeing that it had a new COO and new board members.

The SABC has been one of the main sources of information for millions of citizens across the country, and it has been the vital political tool in influencing voters to vote and take over national leadership (Rowen, 2019). As a result, this notion has brought negative impact to the quality of journalism at the SABC in that there were questions and complaints about how the SABC covered the 2016 local government elections; the safety of the journalists being compromised and the escalation of biased reportage (Rowen, 2019). Therefore, seeing that changes were done by the SABC, the study aims to investigate the representation of political parties during the 2019 national elections. Given that the SABC has new management and board members that were selected by President Cyril Ramaphosa; the study revealed which approach the SABC took in covering the 2019 national elections. The investigation determines whether the reports were objective, impartial, and independent. It demonstrates whether the SABC acted without the interference or influence of other external forces such as political parties and other individuals, or whether they maintained their previous style, which

led many to believe that the SABC had been captured by external forces (Piombo & Nijzink, 2005).

2.6 Conclusion

The literature has reviewed the role of the media and politics in the society, during the elections; using different scholars and authors who give intently and well-researched information. The literature has shown how the SABC covered the 2016 local government which was questioned by many political parties and society. The literature also exposed how the complaints by society have influenced ICASA to amend its regulation to see to it that the 2019 national elections are covered objectively and impartial. The review has also discussed the importance of the SABC during elections and how the SABC prepares itself to better cover the 2019 elections, However, the study focused on how the SABC portrayed the 2019 national election, particularly the three main political parties (ANC, DA, and EFF), given changes in management, board members, the country's President, and editorial policy. Many kinds of research have spoken about the coverage of the elections, but none have examined the media coverage after such changes have been done in the SABC and society as a whole.

As a result, the study expanded on what the literature and scholars have revealed. The study's discussions/analysis remains in conversation with the study's earlier scholarly discussion. The perspectives of the scholars' echo what the study identified as a problem, and the study demonstrated some elements that are consistent with the reviewed literature.

CHAPTER THREE: POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE SABC

3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the national broadcaster's political economy. The chapter discusses the SABC's history, funding, control, and viewership. It also discusses the SABC's editorial policy and political coverage during elections.

3.2 History

The public broadcaster was founded in 1936, but it did not launch its own news service until 15 years later, just after World War II (SABC news, n;a). SABC News continues to experience significant growth across its various platforms. The SABC News Channel has increased its market share and now leads the country's 24-hour news market (SABC news, n;a). The SABC is a leading broadcaster in the country which has 28 328 million listeners who tune into one of the SABC radio stations (SABC Annual Report, 2018). The SABC has three free to air television channels (SABC 1, SABC 2 and SABC 3). The national broadcaster is important to society because what is being broadcasted on their platforms reflects the beliefs of the South African community and delivers programmes that have quality and information. It delivers programmes that encourage citizens in terms of life-related issues (Skinner, 2011).

Skinner (2011) notes that the public broadcaster should be involved in building society through education and information, rather than focusing on private self-interest. For this to happen Skinner maintains that the public broadcaster has to be independent from commercial interests and the state. Furthermore, it must be accountable and transparent to the people it serves which is the society and its citizens (Skinner, 2011).

The SABC is managed by appointed board members who are selected by the President of the country (Government Gazette, 2014). These board members and the Minister of communication appoint the CEO of the broadcaster to run the editorial sector (Government Gazette, 2014). The CEO has to have the qualifications or experiences that are relevant to the functions of the organization and work not more than five years. However, the Minister of Communications and the board members are permitted to extend the contract should the need arise (Government Gazette, 2014). The board members and the Minister are endorsed to promote the CEO or terminate the contract if the CEO fails to adhere to the rules and regulations of the public broadcaster (Government Gazette, 2014).

After 1994, the SABC was changed from being a state-controlled broadcaster into a public broadcaster. A controlled broadcaster means that the state or the government was in charge, in terms of selecting news and agenda-setting and post 1994 the public broadcaster became more concerned about society – on whether they are served through news flow and a public sphere. According to Ndyondya (2013), many theorists believe that the media landscape in post-apartheid South Africa has remained unchanged and that what took place during apartheid where the government was controlling the media has remained unchanged. The current government instructs the media to do the same, the media to serve those in power – this conduct lead to duty negligence by the public broadcaster which is to serve society (Ndyondya, 2013).

This was the beginning of the clause which states that the broadcaster must be independent and ensure that it reports news based on fairness and diversity in order to accommodate all South Africans (Lloyd, 2013). Many South Africans rely on the SABC for different reasons such as news, sport, soapies, etc. However, the public broadcaster was once faced with financial situations and was accused of “manipulating the news to promote particular groupings within the ruling party” (Lloyd, 2013, p.14). This may result in damaging people’s trust to the public broadcaster as they rely on it for factual information without bias.

The SABC has been facing not only financial issues but internal issues as well, which immensely affect the public broadcaster to perform its duties to society (Lloyd, 2013). In a short period of time the SABC has appointed the board of directors four times, therefore four different CEO’s (Lloyd, 2013). Moreover, there were allegations from other advocacy organisations that some government ministers are interfering with the duties of the public broadcaster and such conduct led to unfairness or biases towards other political parties (Lloyd, 2013). Following these allegations, there were oversight structures put in place to review the allegations and see whether the SABC still adheres to the mandate of reporting news that educates and informs the society, by probing the way the SABC does its reporting (Lloyd, 2013).

O'Mahen (2013) asserts that a public broadcaster is capable of decreasing the influences of economic and social powers that worsen the knowledge gap. The author states that the public broadcaster enables society to be smarter by disseminating information that is educative to narrow the gaps between the society’s elite and the underprivileged (O'Mahen, 2013). In addition, the scholar asserts that the government’s involvement in choosing the board

members is not a problem. However, the problem is when the government interferes with the public broadcaster's policies and code of conduct.

What the former SABC COO did during the 2016 local government was to try and censor other news and not to be part of the editorial policy that was against the broadcasting act of reporting news in a truthful, accurate, and objective manner (Muswede, 2016). The SABC mandate states that the public broadcaster will serve as a vehicle for transforming lives through disseminating news without influences from external forces (Muswede, 2016). The SABC has a duty to play in society as it uses the national purse (licenses and government funding), therefore it has to be accountable to society in the decisions it makes (Muswede, 2016). The vision of the SABC is to serve as a medium in the public sphere that promotes and supports democracy (Muswede, 2016). The SABC's decision to stop protest images from being broadcast was infringing on the societal right of the free flow of news, freedom of expression, and access to information. This, however, painted the SABC as the government mouthpiece, which is not concerned about the public but the leading party, the ANC (Muswede, 2016).

Fourie (2013) in his article recounts how the SABC, as an independent public broadcaster, was launched. He asserts that the key element in the news legislation was to transform the apartheid broadcaster into a democratic broadcaster where its main concern/s and code of ethics were to ensure the liberation and plurality of South Africa (Fourie, 2013). The SABC in the democratic South Africa or democratic era, is guided by principles concerned with serving society and without external influences such as, providing a public sphere for expression of opinions, create a space for debate about any issues, provide society with objective and impartial news, address a variety of social and cultural interest in terms of pluralism and diversity, provide services in all eleven official languages and prioritise minority groups (Fourie, 2013).

Fourie agrees with Lloyd on the financial and management struggles the SABC has faced lately. He asserts that the SABC has been dealing with issues of accountability because the board tried to mollify the mandate of politicians and the ANC. While the board is accountable to parliament, there are instances where the Members of Parliament (MP's) and the executive may try to interfere with the broadcasting services (Fourie, 2013). This comportment led many board members to resign because they felt deprived of doing their duties.

Fourie also highlights some of the attributions that led to SABC issues which are: (a) the strategy to cease the state from funding the SABC (which led to its reliance on advertising – contradicting the SABC’s mandate as a public broadcaster and causes institutional instability. (b) Giving the Minister of Communication extensive power over the SABC, and which lead to an increase in governmental control. (c) The SABC’s focus on saving costs and leading to less local content, and as a result a decrease in viewership. (d) The plans to do away with public accountability (Fourie, 2013).

3.3 The SABC funding

Teer-Tomaselli (2008) defines a public broadcaster as a broadcaster which has the public interest at heart and provides the public and citizens with information that is relevant on political issues and other programmes, and the disseminated information has to be ethically correct. The scholar notes that a public broadcaster belongs to a public domain. It is similar to public institutions such as libraries and universities among others, whose establishments are assured by the state. However, they remain a public property and accountable to the society, which allows it to be free from state regulation (Teer-Tomaselli, 2008). However, the author asserts that the first two boards (from 1993–1996 and 1997–2000) within the organisation were racial, gender and politically balanced compared to the present board members being affiliated with the ruling party, ANC (Teer-Tomaselli, 2008). Contrary to that, Fourie (2003) asserts that as South Africa is the youngest democratic country that is multicultural, has multiple languages, and a history of racial fragmentation, the role of the public broadcaster has to mend those broken and fragmented areas.

The public broadcaster should be funded by license fees, and not by advertising since this would mean that the broadcaster has to venture to commercial interest (Teer-Tomaselli, 2008). However, over two decades, the SABC still depends on commercial revenue with roughly three-quarters of the organisation’s income coming from advertising and sponsorship, while only a quarter (fiscal years less) comes from licenses. Less than 5 percent is sourced directly from the government and all of that money is allocated for specific educational programming (Teer-Tomaselli, 2008). Fourie (2003) observes that the reason the SABC opted for sponsorships and advertising as other revenues is that the public broadcaster was not able to rely on limited public funding such as licenses and was later allowed by ICASA to do commercial funding. However, the SABC promised that this conduct would not

affect its role to the society; it will always check for the balance in their stories as well as being transparent to the society.

Kupe (n, d.) claims that a public broadcaster can and is allowed to use a mixed model in terms of funding; he asserts that a mixed model is the only option in this era. The scholar states that the SABC sources its funding from commercial activities that dominant above 75 per cent, licence revenue at below 30 per cent, while Government support under (5 per cent) (Kupe, n.d.). Kupe asserted that the SABC's commercial funding has an effect on how the collaboration is run; he explained that diversity, language usage, and local news reporting are all affected (Kupe, n.d.).

3.4 The SABC's editorial policy

The SABC's editorial policy was established in 2003 after the amendment of the Broadcasting Act No.4 of 1999 and a review was done in 2017 after the public broadcaster received complaints from Media Monitoring Africa (MMA) about failing to adhere to section 6 (6) (SABC editorial policy, 2018). In addition, before the change of policies was finalised, the SABC distributed the draft to the country's nine provinces in order to enable transparency on how the board runs the SABC and allowing the citizens to have inputs on the policies (SABC editorial policy, 2018). The public broadcaster has put core editorial codes in place that staff ought to adhere to in promoting and maintaining professionalism (editorial policy, 2018). The editorial team is responsible for the coverage of news, and they vow to report newsworthy events that will enable society to make informed decisions (SABC editorial policy, 2018).

3.5 News

3.5.1 Coverage of politics and election broadcasts

Election time marks a challenging time for the SABC because this is where the use of the code of ethics is thoroughly assessed by regulation bodies such as Media Monitoring Africa (MMA), (SABC editorial policy, 2018). The editorial staffs, responsible for covering the news, is also facing difficult times in terms of professionalism because they experience the pressures of political parties who try to influence them. It should be noted that what the journalists go through is not only on the election period. However, this pressure is increased during elections. The SABC ensures society that in their policy, journalists are given time to

enlighten themselves with the internal guidelines developed for election coverage, including policies such as the National and Provincial Party Elections Broadcasts and Political Advertisements Regulations. The editorial staffs are prohibited to wear any political party regalia or pose for pictures with any political member as this may cause trust issues between them and the media consumers in terms of news reporting (SABC editorial policy, 2018). This principle is developed in order to promote trust and transparency to society (SABC editorial policy, 2018).

Throughout the election campaigns and the election day, the SABC invites political analysts to give commentary on how political parties campaigned, review the details in their manifestos and their deliverance, and also discuss the movements which they participated in – for instance, women’s marches, and among others (SABC editorial policy, 2018). However, the SABC policy also notes that only political analysts that are skilled in terms of political history will be selected, and gender balance will be adhered to (SABC editorial policy, 2018). While it promotes diverse opinions, it does not tolerate the incitement of violence, hate speech, and propaganda from the panellists or political analysts (SABC editorial policy, 2018).

3.6 Conclusion

The chapter outlined important information about the SABC’s viewership, editorial act, funding and other issues. Many South Africans rely on the national broadcaster for news, especially about elections, as they mark a special event or proceeding in the country. With all the information on the political economy of the SABC, the study needed to show how the SABC made some changes in terms of reporting in the past few years and how that reflected on how they framed the 2019 elections.

CHAPTER FOUR: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework the study used for analysis. Theoretical framework/s enables one to select a theory that will guide them to think about a particular concept through which to approach their research topic (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). Adom et al. (2016), define theoretical framework as an already existing theory that helps one or the researcher to make sense of and understand the hypothesis of their study and the theories are borrowed by researchers to sustain/support their research topic. Therefore, framing and social responsibility theories, as theoretical frameworks, guided this study.

4.2 Framing

The framing theory is one of the theories used to help to examine and understand how mediated messages are constructed and the factors that shape this construction. Framing, as a representation of a certain aspect of news, alludes an angle/s used by the media to interpret or convey an ideology they have about a particular event (Fourier, 2010). It analyses the media's selection (i.e., the salience of different issues by looking at the images, stereotypes, metaphors, actors, and messages sent through the media) and looking at the principle/s of selecting the news in terms of emphasis and presentation (Matthes, 2009).

The framing theory is a theoretical framework that offers a theoretical foundation for studies of bias in the media. It is an ever-present process in any political sphere and policy analysis Entman (2010). It is often used to highlight a few aspects of the truth by merging it with other narratives in order to promote a particular idea (Entman, 2010). Scheufele & Tewksbury (2007) discuss the evolution of framing, agenda-setting, and priming as three media effects models. The scholars posit that although these models are not the same, they play the same role in shaping mass opinion. According to Scheufele & Tewksbury (2007), agenda-setting is the emphasis and salience that the mass media put on certain news stories and priming, is the audience's judgment of how they view things through the media. However, the scholars note that framing differs from priming and agenda-setting, in that it focuses on how issues are characterised in media reports and how influential they can be on the public in terms of changing their perception of certain issues. Scheufele & Tewksbury citing Shoemaker & Reese (1996), define framing as a mode of communication that journalists use to present

information to the public, in ways that do not have a negative impact and as a tool to reduce unnecessary complex issues. Entman (2010), believes that no matter how journalists try to be objective, framing, prioritizes the narration of a single story over others and uses priming to shape the public's perception.

Framing is one framework that is used to shape the news and how people should perceive it through schemas of interpretation, anecdotes, and stereotypes that people rely on in order to understand the news (Cissel, 2012). Cissel posits that framing has been used throughout media coverage to shape mass opinion in order to direct media consumers to understand the content of the story reported (Cissel, 2012). The scholar notes that it is impossible for journalists not to use framing because they always use a certain angle to report different issues. However, the motive behind the framing is very crucial; it can negatively affect the society's decision making. The author further highlights that news companies and journalists have the power to choose which story is newsworthy and how prominent it is (Cissel, 2012).

The framing theory can have a negative impact on the news sources especially in cases whereby the theory creates a stereotypical and a generalizing impression among media consumers based on what they are fed through the media. Citing Entman (1993), Cissel asserts that framing the message was all about a particular aspect used when it is not the case the media will choose to salient the issue in order to stir conflict (Cissel, 2012). The scholar also claims that framing is not only used by media but by politicians as well, who are trying to persuade their followers, make some issues more salient than others. This is further supported by Luntz (2006) who asserts that the use of words and phrases can manipulate the media consumer through ways in which meaning is conveyed and not the message itself 'it's not what you say but how you say it'.

Afful (2016) explains framing as a form of representation in media that is delineated through a selection of sources and presentation of arguments. Citing Entman (1993) Afful notes that framing involves selection and the salience of some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more important. These communicative texts are used in order to promote a particular problem, definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation (Afful, 2016). However, journalists have seen a need to use framing in order to attract the audience by magnifying claims politicians make and this has led or encouraged reporters and editors to continue to offer stories that will enhance the stereotyped novelty and this approach has kept the audience to come back for more (Entman, 2010). In politics, framing includes games or strategies that

are used by the media which is often contrasted with how political issues are covered in order to profile political candidates and presents them as prospective winners or losers in the political game (Afful, 2016). Lawrence (2000) notes that framing also personalizes the story making it look like a series of conflicts.

According to Lawrence, framing is found mostly in mainstream media where journalists use game-based framed coverage to demonstrate drama and conflict, which portrays political actors as stirrers of conflict (Lawrence, 2000). The scholar notes that the game, framing, has been seen a lot during election-season or electoral-coverage season or through election coverages especially in cases where politicians use radical change as their electoral weapon to being voted into office (Lawrence, 2000). Afful (2016) offers a distinction between game framing and personalization framing, suggesting that these forms of framing are used differently by journalists who are well trained in these concepts. The author notes that game framing is used by journalists who use a competition language to tell their stories on election campaigns with a focus on a candidate's campaign strategy in order to assess who is ahead or behind in the political race. Whereas personalization is used in order to frame a particular candidate or a leader of a political party. The scholar observes, for instance, that there are instances where the media will focus on the personal characteristics and personal life of a political leader as a way of drawing attention (Afful, 2016). The aforementioned models, therefore, reifies that the core values of journalism are focused on drama, conflict, and negativity.

In addition, the framing theory as described by Tankard (2001), indicates that the theory uses eleven ways or focal points to present news such as headlines, subheads, photos, photo captions, and leads. The rest is source selection, quotes, pull quotes, logos, statistics, and charts as well as, concluding statements and paragraphs (Tankard, 2001). These eleven focal points which are used daily by journalists may determine integrity. Therefore, the way election campaigns have been covered since democracy in South Africa by the SABC has raised some questions of biasness through the media. This study, therefore, aims to see how the 2019 election will be covered by the public broadcaster.

4.3 Social responsibility theory

The social responsibility theory is founded on the idea that journalism has its primary obligation to the people who read, listen and watch the news (Ravi, 2012). Therefore, journalists are expected to report news based on facts /truth and without bias (Buchinger,

2006). Social responsibility theory prioritizes accountability by the media to society, in order to keep their promise of professionalism and of promoting diversity and innovation in societies (Nordenstreng, 2006). This theory has a duty to play in society in terms of providing/sustaining a truthful, comprehensive, and intelligent account of everyday events unfolding in the society (Christians & Nordenstreng, 2004).

Social responsibility theory is part of the four theories of the press, which were developed to give more insight into the various roles of the media. The theory also determines what ought to happen - how media ought to behave in relation to society and the social responsibilities they ought to assume or adopt (Fourie, 2010). Social responsibility theory is based on freedom and independence which is guided by accountability (Fourie, 2010). It was first used in the twentieth century when there was a gradual shift from the libertarian theory (Siebert et al., 1956). Social responsibility theory is founded both on respect and intentions of reportage. However, the idea of social responsibility is debatable in open or liberal societies (Siebert et al., 1956).

The libertarian theory was premised on the idea that no one should tell the media what to do and the media should not account to an external body because such conduct will impose a limitation on the freedom of the press (Uzuegbunam, 2013). Therefore, social responsibility theory was launched in order to replace the libertarian theory which licensed the media to report on social issues boundlessly (Uzuegbunam, 2013). Social responsibility theory has borrowed some of the libertarian tenets however those guidelines are expected to be coupled with responsibility and accountability. Uzuegbunam believes that the libertarian theory was found to abuse the freedom of the press commission in that its conduct led many to believe that it was pushing "yellow journalism" because of its sensationalist practices where news stories were overhyped (Uzuegbunam, 2013). Yellow journalism is defined by Spencer & Spencer (2007, p.xi) as the "blurring of facts and sensationalism and overemphasizing of the negative news".

It is believed that the beginning of social responsibility theory marked the rise of journalistic professionalism in the media (Uzuegbunam, 2013). The media was informed that failure to adhere to reporting based on the theory's commission, the government and the society will be forced to censor the media until it reports according to its needs (Ravi, 2012).

Although social responsibility theory was born to replace libertarian theory, however, Demarais (1996) insists that the libertarian theory was the best. Through this approach/theory

journalists had unlimited freedom than in the social responsibility theory where they had to self-regulate and adhere to the responsibility they have to the community. Demarais claims that social responsibility theory is formulated in order to make journalists ignore the truth but only report the truth 'behind the facts', meaning not to report the whole truth' (Demarais, 1996). He notes that during the Rodney King riots in Los Angeles a reporter was labelled as blunt by other reporters because they wanted her to report the truth 'behind the fact' which he calls newspeak which excuses lawbreakers (Demarais, 1996). Demarais admits that Social responsibility theory is not a problem but rather a symptom of unseen dishonesty from those who control the media and he further claims that the theory is just a name given to hide the immoral of media overseers created to cover their hidden agenda (Demarais, 1996). This means that the theory works for those in power to cover the truth and useful information that will help guide the society to make an informed decision.

Fourie (2010, p.194), in his book *media history, media, and society*, outlines the principle of social responsibility which elucidates how media should report to the society with responsibility and accountability. [A] The media should support democratic political principles and [B] should be under an obligation to create a forum for different viewpoints. [C] Its independence should be emphasized in relation to their responsibility towards society and [D] should meet certain standards.

Fourier further demonstrates how social responsibility theory should be applied in the news report/s, in order to reveal that the freedom the press has come with responsibility and accountability (Fourie, 2010). That it [a] accepts certain responsibility towards society and [b] fulfills their responsibilities by mainly setting professional standards in regard to the supply of information and the truth/accuracy, objectivity, and the balance of their reporting. That it [c] self-regulates within the framework of the law and established institution/s and, [d] avoids the publication of information that can lead to crime, violence/social disruption, as well as information that can offend ethnic or religious minorities. Lastly, [e] that it represents all social groups and reflect the diversity of society by giving people access to a variety of viewpoints and the right to react to these viewpoints and that [f] the society is entitled to expect high professional standards and interventions. Therefore, these guidelines show how the media should report on societal issues, and how in failing to adhere to those guidelines can be considered irresponsible.

Given that there are scholars who believe that libertarian theory in the 17th century was a good media theory. In what is to follow Uzuegbunam (2013) outlines the difference between social responsibility and Libertarian theory:

- A. While libertarian is formulated under negative freedom, social responsibility is formulated under positive freedom.
- B. The latter acknowledges that the government will help the society to regulate the media if it fails to uphold the self-regulating features of the commission.
- C. It also considers this right as a moral issue rather than an unqualified one, the Libertarian theory considers them as expected rights.
- D. The Libertarian theory regards people as with moral, rational and as guided by nothing but the truth, whereas social responsibility theory considers people as inactive, people who expect news that are already plaid for propaganda and harm.

Social responsibility theory is used to make the press to be responsible to perform its duty to the society, in terms of reporting the news. According to Fourie, the media should fulfil their duties by setting professional standards which include accuracy, fairness, objectivity, and impartiality which also form a part of the code of ethics in journalism (Fourie, 2010). It should be noted that these following principles or code of ethics were firstly incorporated in libertarian theory; however, the social responsibility theory has also introduced new elements (Uzuegbunam, 2013).

4.4.1 Accuracy

Accuracy is the most honoured journalism principle and is at the core foundation of professional journalism (Temenugova et al., 2015). Journalists are expected to report news that are verified, well researched and which considers all the 5 W's and H (what, who, when, where, why and how) (Temenugova et al., 2015). These directives will enable the journalists to supply society with accurate/non-misleading information in order to allow society to make an informed decision based on the news they have received. It is the duty of the journalists to assess the information given by the sources and check the credibility of the sources (Temenugova et al., 2015). Journalists should reveal to the society if the story is not complete to avoid unproven speculations (Temenugova et al., 2015). The media should be accurate/truthful and creative in documenting the events of the day (i.e., have the capacity to identify

facts over opinions (Siebert et al., 1956). These scholars offer an example that uses false pictures that may favorably or unfavorably cause harm to the other party and such conduct can undermine the power and authority of accuracy (Siebert et al., 1956).

4.4.2 Fairness

Despite their beliefs, journalists are expected to treat individuals, institutions, events, and subject matters ethically and with due respect (Temenugova et al., 2015). No media house or journalist is allowed to mistreat any individual organization or political party in ways that are unjust or discriminatory. If an individual or political party feels that the evidence or allegations which were produced against them were inauthentic, they should be given a chance to defend the allegations without any prejudice from the media (Temenugova et al., 2015).

4.4.3 Objectivity

According to Nel (2005) Objectivity, is one of the important principles of journalism, which was not an issue in the early 20th century, stories that were reported at that time were evidently influenced by propaganda. However, this principle was introduced so that journalists would be able to write their stories without the infiltration of their personal feelings /opinion and write fact-based report (Nel, 2005). This means that the report should be based on well-researched information and verified sources. In the nineteenth-century media was used as a weapon for prejudice, oppression and distortion of information in order to discredit the other political parties (Siebert et al., 1956). Furthermore, these scholars state that the media gradually changed from that mindset and began to exclude their opinions when reporting and reported their news objectively and without personal intrusion (Siebert et al., 1956).

4.4.4 Impartiality

Impartiality occurs when the editors select which news to report, we may not run away from the process of selecting which includes some aspect such as time (who broke the story first), money (how much money the story will generate) and the reporters' perspective (Nel, 2005). It is proven that reporters are influenced by how they were shaped by society, in regard to the level of education they possess and their life experiences. However, a reporter or editor should be able to take themselves out of the situation/ story and report impartially (Nel,

2005). Journalists should be careful when reporting not to show bias or siding with one position over the other. It is understood that Journalists are human beings who have their beliefs and experiences, however, when reporting they need to put those beliefs aside and report news in ways that are neutral (Temenugova et al., 2015).

4.4 Conclusion

The study has considered these two theories (social responsibility and framing) as a template/lens in which the 2019 elections are assessed/studied, to see how the media represents the three main political parties. The theories chosen for this research does fit with the study, in that, they focused on how media represented the news to society. They are mainly concerned with how the news are delivered to the society and principles needed to be followed before news reporting. I have highlighted the importance of framing and the impact it has on news reporting and the reliance of society on news in order to make informed decisions. I have addressed the importance of social responsibility theory, how it is used to change the way news are reported to the society by stressing the code of ethics that needs to be adhered to. Social responsibility theory is the theory that guides the press on how to report the news to the society and if the ethics are not applied well, they can create tremendous damage to the media's reputation and the society will be inconvenienced in terms of news flow that is based on objectivity.

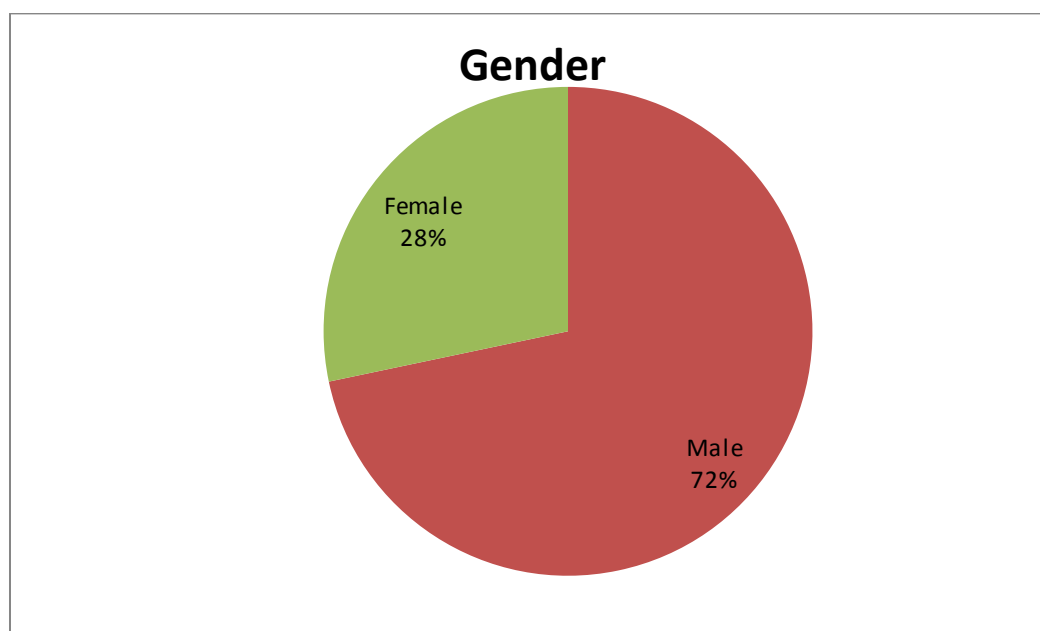
CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

The study analysed the data/ information collected from SABC online videos. The researcher conducted content analysis to provide detailed findings from the 2019 national election-related videos. The researcher then transcribed the messages from the videos to make sense of the information and coded accordingly. The study chose to use content dated from 01st January 2019 to the 10th of May 2019, covering the national elections. Sixty-two (62) election-related videos were analysed, appendix 1 identifies themes from the content analysis: news stories, political parties, dates, and the duration of the 2019 national elections.

The coded data was transferred or displayed in an Excel spreadsheet. One of the reasons to use Excel was because the application automatically updates graphs and tables indicating for instance the number of articles appearing on the three major political parties (length of appearance), the frequency of appearance and how the topics are presented (i.e., the language, word choice, and headlines). The researcher then converted these themes into graphs as a way of summarising the results into clear and understandable formats. Additionally, to compare trends and relations that came up in the videos. Furthermore, the outcome had been compared to the literature review, including the related works as discussed in the previous chapters. Therefore, this chapter presents the findings and analysis of data.

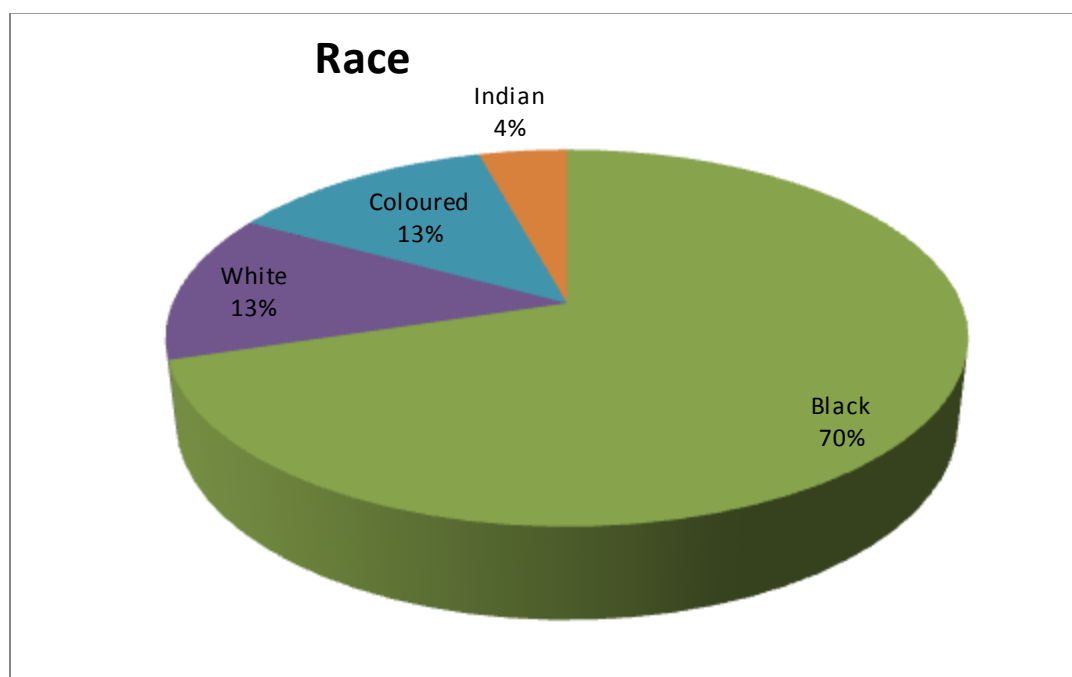
The researcher analysed the election videos to observe in each video which gender is selected to comment or analyse the election events. The researcher found that out of 54 videos, females only participated in 15 (28%) while males participated in 39 (72%). It should be noted that in eight (8) of the video's females were sharing platforms with their male counterpart and the news anchors are not included.

Figure 1: Gender in the election

With regard to the figure above, it is essential to note the representation and participation of genders within political parties. Representation in politics plays a pivotal role according to Diamond & Morlino (2005) because if all voices are given a chance to participate, that will strengthen democracy. The scholars note that democracy is when the citizens are given a right to participate in politics and exercise their right to vote and be granted an opportunity to discuss issues, not only related to politics, but social issues too (Diamond & Morlino, 2005). These findings can explicitly confirm that the share of voices remained unequal; this illustration above indicates the voices used during the 2019 national elections. In the 2019 national elections, male analysts and political representatives were 72% while females only made 28%. This percentage reveals that politics are still male dominated. The 2019 national elections were male dominated in terms of analysts and political party representatives. This behaviour does not align with the SABC's code of conduct. The SABC's code of conduct notes that political analysts will be selected based on political knowledge and gender balance will be adhered to (editorial policy, 2018).

Figure 2: Race in the election

The analysis of the videos is based on which race has the highest number in participation in the 2019 national elections. The researcher found that out of 47 videos, Indian people only participated in 2, coloured and white people participated in 6 each and black people participated in 33. The researcher then made use of an Excel spread sheet, then converted these themes into graphs and changed the numbers to percentage. It should be noted that in some of the videos only news anchors were responsible for comments; hence the outcome of 47 videos and not 62 videos.

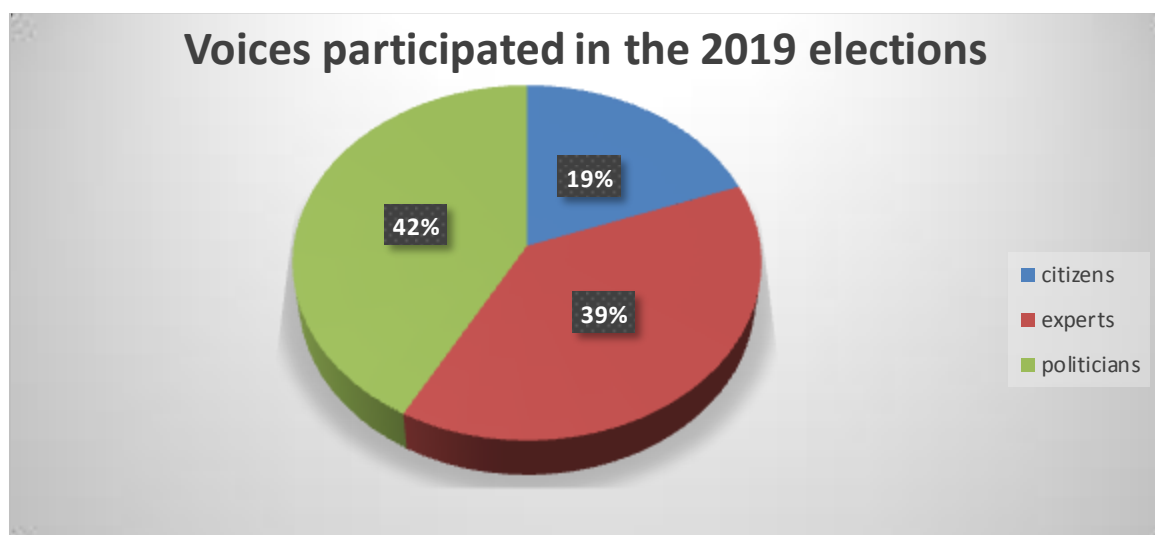


According to Findlay and Dayile (2019), South Africa has been considered as the most unequal country in the world in terms of race, class, and ethnicity. While the argument makes some good points, however, it can be seen now that the division of the country lies more in class rather than in race, but one cannot ignore the fact that race is a problem that South Africa is dealing with even today (news24, 2016). Apartheid and colonialism systems created a huge gap between races. Although it can be argued that South African inequality is based on class rather than race. However, all of these inequalities, whether racial or social, stem from these two systems, colonialism, and apartheid. During the apartheid system, black people were made subordinates to white counterparts, while white people held high-ranking positions (news24, 2016).

With regard to fighting inequality, there were measures put in place by the post-apartheid government to mend those broken areas such as anti-discrimination legal framework (Government, 2019). Therefore, the chart above shows the coverage of the elections by political representatives and analysts according to race. It is no surprise that the chart indicates that the 2019 national elections were black dominated in terms of the analyst chosen by the SABC and political representatives of political parties, considering the number of black South Africans. However, the percentages were quite sticking; black with 70% of representatives; while, white and coloured were quite shocking with a tie of 13% each. One of the many reasons it could be that coloured voters have trust issues with the previous leadership. According to Statistics South Africa (StatsSA), South Africa has 1, 5 million Indians, which make up 2, 5 % of the population (Stats SA, 2019). However, the participation of Indians is 4% and this percentage highlights the imbalance of race in politics.

Figure 3: people participated in the election.

The researcher analysed election videos to determine who had the most influence in the 2019 national elections, whether it was citizens, politicians, or experts? The researcher then used excel for graphs and changed the numbers to percentage.

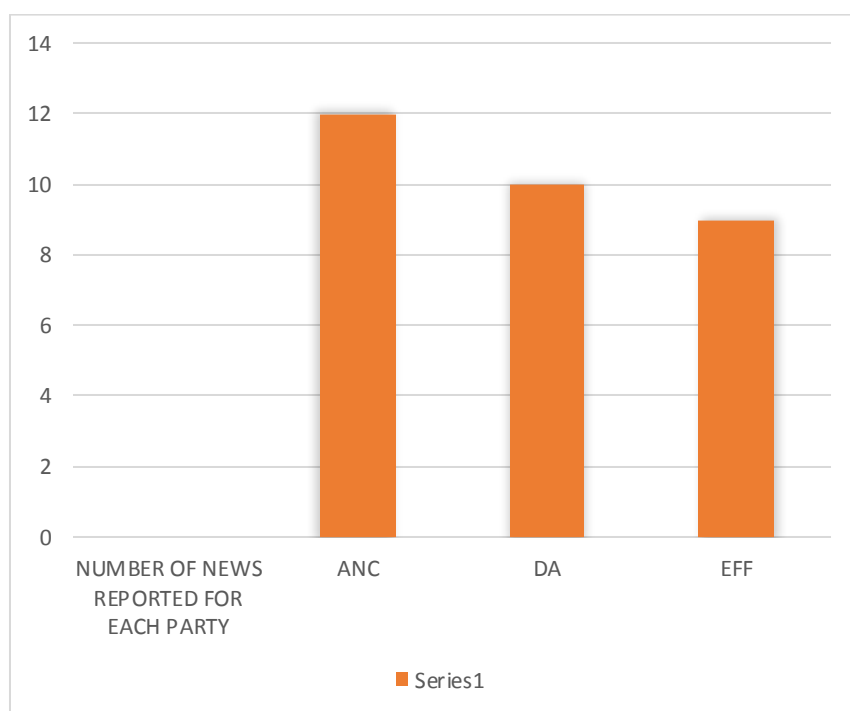


Diamond and Morlino (2005) spoke much about the importance of citizens' participation in politics and discussions about social issues. They posit that "good democracy" is a democracy that allows people the platform to discuss and be involved, not only in political matters but in social discussions (Diamond & Morlino, 2005). Figure 3 displays the percentage of who had a platform to speak and, who were the sources of the news or the

elections, whose voices were heard the most and who received an opportunity to participate in the 2019 elections. 19% (N=12) of the voices were the citizens who were only given a chance to talk during service delivery protests, while the experts (at 39%, N=24) were given many opportunities to comment and predict the 2019 elections and politicians at 42% (N=26) who used the platform to campaign for votes and also defending allegations placed on them. This graph indicates that political parties and experts participated more; they were given more platforms to speak and be heard; while the citizens only had limited time to voice out their concerns.

Figure 4: Number of news reported for each political party.

Out of 62 videos the study selected videos that featured these three political parties (ANC, DA and EFF) with the focus on interviews, events and discussions. The researcher then counted how many election-related reports per political party.



In previous elections, there has been political bias in the media, where some political parties would receive more coverage than the others (Shubbar & Nasir, 2017). During the 2016 provincial elections, the Media Monitoring Africa (MMA) noted that the ANC attained more media coverage compared to the other political parties (Sokutu, 2018). However, the figure above indicates the number of news stories reported on each political party during the 2019 national elections. Amongst the covered stories, the ANC was covered the most in 12 stories,

the DA in 10, and the EFF in 9 stories. Furthermore, this did not come as a surprise, because this was what the ANC spokesperson Zizi Kodwa demanded from the SABC (Madia, 2018). He (Kodwa) further claimed that they (the ANC) are the majority party; therefore, they need more media coverage for the 2019 national elections (Sokutu, 2018). It can be seen as if the SABC did what Kodwa demanded, however, this issue of more news coverage has been happening for a while, during the 2004 elections; the ANC was a victim of such conduct and complained about media coverage. This is when the ANC decided to use the SABC as their mouthpiece (Piombo & Nijzink, 2005). This was evident when the ANC received more coverage on the 2016 provincial elections.

5.2 News headlines used by the SABC during 2019 national elections.

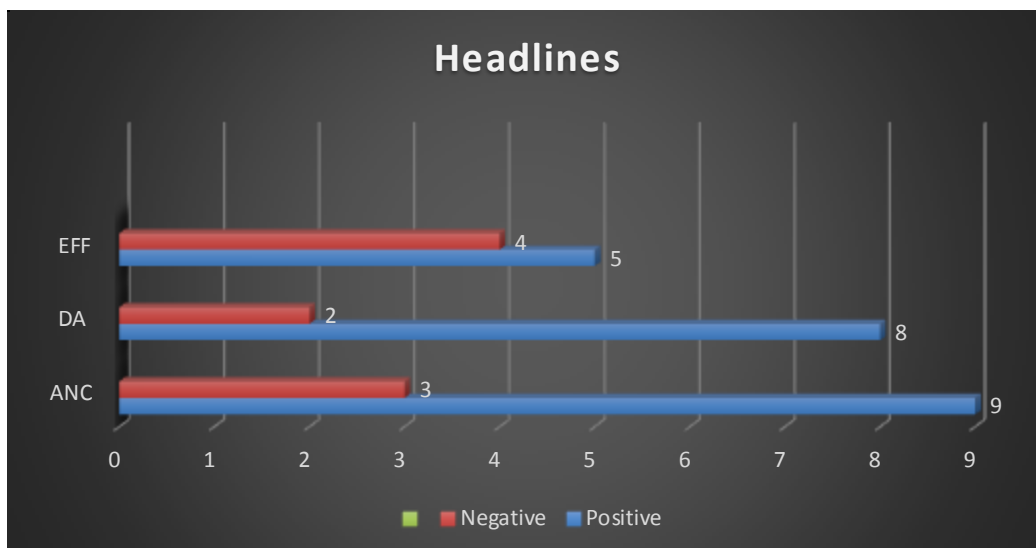
Headlines are meant to summarise a story for one to be interested to read (Ifantidou, 2009). However, in this case, headlines have been used to sensationalise and dramatise the stories. For instance,

- *'Chaos erupts at the ANC Eastern Cape rally'*, - this story is about the Minister of communications, who tried to stop the SABC from reporting about the protest that unfolded during the ANC rally launch in the Eastern Cape.
- *'Chaos erupts at SABC election debates in Houtbay,'* - the story talks about the EFF members fighting other political party members during a debate in Houtbay.
- *'DA controversial billboard destroyed'*, - this story is about the DA using an unfortunate situation to campaign for votes.
- *'Election debate turns chaotic,'* - this is during the Houtbay debate where political members got in a fight.
- *'Who will emerge victorious in SA elections?' - 'This is when the analysts were to discuss the votes and predictions.*
- *'ENCA Journalist Samkelo on Duarte's verbal attack,'* - the story is about a journalist and an NEC member of the ANC, who were quarrelling.
- *'DA slammed over election billboard,'* - this story is about the DA and the billboard that displayed victims' names without the families' permission.

- ‘*SANEF condemns EFF attack on Karima Brown,*’ - this is when the EFF allegedly threatened journalist Karima Brown.
- ‘*Karima Brown to lay charges against Malema,*’ - This came after the EFF went public with Karima Brown’s contact number.

Figure 5: Headlines

Using the 62 videos, the researcher analysed how many news reports a party received. The researcher then further analysed to see how many parties were reported positively and/or negatively. The researcher judged negative and positive reports based on the headlines. In addition, the researcher made use of excel spread sheet to create a graph (below) that illustrates clearly what the study analysed.



The graph above shows that during the 2019 national elections; the EFF is the one which received more negative reporting, compared to the other two political parties (ANC and DA). This conduct is revealed by Patterson and John who wrote about the *2016 American general elections*, where they observed how Journalists would report on negative news more than positive news. They argue convincingly that such report about a candidate will shadow even the good things the person /party has done Patterson and John (2016). One can say the same with how the SABC portrayed the EFF with this negative reporting.

It is, therefore, evident that the SABC used such dramatic headlines to attract viewership. This conduct can destroy the SABC’s image/reputation. Further, the SABC used “framing” to shape the news, and also shaped how people should view or perceive the news. In addition,

these headlines have been framed for people to view: Firstly, journalists as victims of the attacks, secondly, political members as violent, and finally, the national elections being toxic. For example, much news reported was about conflict and disagreement between these three political parties.

5.3 Word choice.

5.3.1 Language of competition.

During elections, Journalists tend to use “game framing” as their strategy to report the news, this includes presenting elections or contesting candidates as winners and losers (Afful, 2016). The same can be said about the 2019 national elections: the journalists used many words that portrayed the elections as a competition. For example, certain headlines and words used in some news stories demonstrated a competition such as ‘Vote counting- EFF overtakes DA in Mpumalanga’; ‘Who will emerge victorious in SA elections? ‘Some party agency has decided to maybe accept defeat’; ‘bloodbath comes to mind’; ‘highs and lows’; ‘the ANC received a bloody nose in the 2016 elections’; ‘the DA and EFF fighting for a second spot’.

5.3.2 Language of conflict.

The language of conflict has been used many times, mostly during the election period where journalists report news in a way that stirs up conflict and drama (Lawrence, 2000). Likewise, in these 2019 national elections, the SABC was inclined to use the conflict language. The word choices used in these elections were used to intensify the issue and paint the elections as violent or toxic. For example, the use of words such as ‘vicious attack’, ‘toxic situation’ and the headlines such as the following: table 1

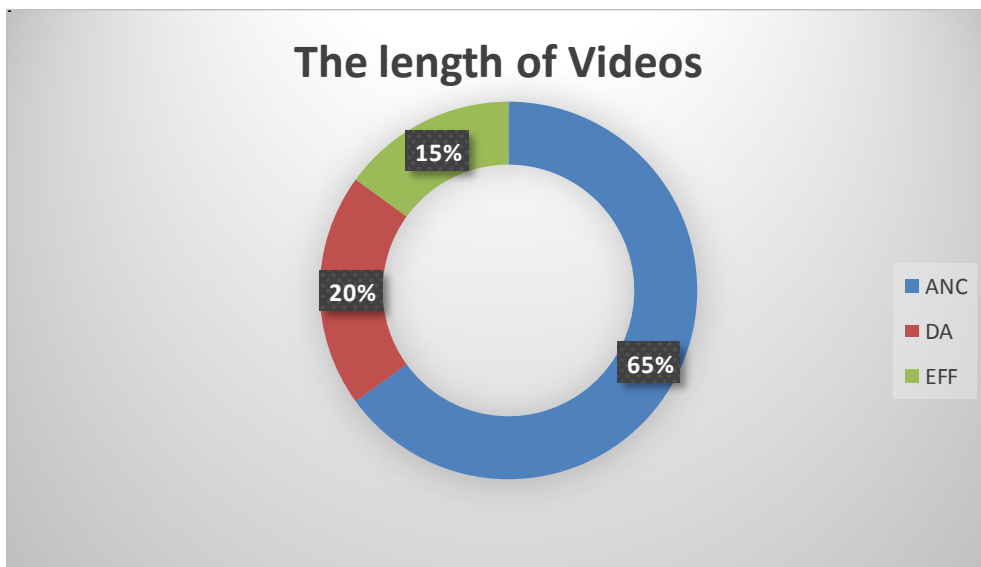
Table 1: Examples of conflict language used on each political party.

ANC	DA	EFF
‘Chaos erupts at the ANC Eastern Cape rally’.	DA controversial billboard destroyed’.	‘Chaos erupts at SABC election debates in Houtbay.’
‘ENCA Journalist Samkelo	‘DA slammed over election	‘Election debate turns

on Duarte's verbal attack'.	billboard'.	chaotic'.
'Ntlangano residents have boycotted elections (nothing to celebrate after 25'.		'SANEF condemns EFF attack on Karima Brown'.
		'Karima Brown to lay charges against Malema'.

Figure 6: Length

The researcher selected all videos that are related to each political party (ANC, DA and EFF) and the time allocated for each video was counted. The researcher also made use of the excel spread sheet and rounded off the number to the nearest decimal to come up with the duration allocated for each political party.



This diagram support what has been happening from the past elections where one party will have more coverage and their stories will be given more airtime. With the coverage and the duration of videos, one can say that what the ANC spokesperson asks from the SABC was granted to him. In this diagram we see ANC leading with more airtime compared to the other political parties (DA and EFF). Cissel's study provides much relevant information; it reveals

that the length of a news report signifies its importance (Cissel, 2012). Therefore, the length of ANC news videos suggests that the ANC events were the ones taken seriously by the SABC.

5.4 Types of stories mostly reported on each party.

5.4.1 The African National Congress (ANC).

The stories ‘Chaos erupts at the ANC Eastern Cape rally,’ and ‘Minister Stella Abrahams apologies to the media’ involves a Minister of Communications, Stella Abrahams who tried to cease the SABC photojournalist from reporting a protest during the ANC rally in the Eastern Cape. This story was all over the news because no one could believe that the Minister of communication could be the one who abuses the public broadcaster from doing its duties. Referring to table 1, The Minister was portrayed as one who practices hegemony over the journalists that were present.

The second story that was reported on the ANC which created a bad representation for the party is the story about the secretary general, Ace Magashule, on whom a book was published exposing his dirty laundry to the public. The book was written by an investigative journalist Pieter-Louis Myburgh who revealed how Magashule was involved in illegal dealings, the title of the book says much about the character of the ANC secretary general, ‘*Gangster State: Unravelling Ace Magashule's Web of Capture*’ (refer to table 1).

Thirdly, a story that was frequently reported was about the ENCA Journalist, Samkelo Maseko and the ANC executive member Jessie Duarte who allegedly verbally attacked the journalist. These stories and others relating to the similar situation (see list of stories in table 1), painted the political party as an abuser of journalists. Finally, a story titled ‘Ntlangano residents have boycotted elections (nothing to celebrate after 25)’ – see table 1- reported the ANC as having had wasted 25 years of democracy by not meeting the needs of the people especially in rural areas.

5.4.2 The Democratic Alliance (DA).

The DA had the same story that was frequently making headlines, and it was reported that the party was using a wrong angle to campaign for votes. These stories were about billboards which were not pleasing to the society, for example, ‘DA launches new election billboard’;

‘DA slammed over election billboard’; ‘DA unveils another billboard’; ‘DA controversial billboard destroyed’; ‘Maimane has refused to comment on DA’s campaign billboard’.

5.4.3 The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF).

In these 2019 national elections, the EFF had been in reports about attacks on journalists. Most of the headlines about the EFF were about the dispute between the party and ENCA news producer Karima Brown. For example, headlines such as ‘SANEF condemns EFF attack on Karima Brown,’ ‘Karima Brown to lay charges against Malema,’ ‘Karima Brown responds to EFF leader Julius Malema.’ Refer to table 1.

5.4 The visual analysis.

It has been seen that media can use footage that conveys a certain narrative, and it has also been seen that footage that has the power to set an agenda, assist emotional appeal and assist on structuring a political party’s image (Schill, 2012). Therefore, in these 2019 national elections, there were events where the SABC used footage to support their narratives and also to amplify other situations. The study used video analysis method to scrutinise how the SABC selected its footage to support their narratives. This study used Perlmutter's (n.d.) eight ways of understanding and identifying images. The eight ways are as follows:

1. **Production’s** entail examining how the image was physically produced and how the elements of the image are combined with the frame.
2. **Content identification** looks at the major elements and the story being told.
3. **Functional** checks the context for the image and how it was put to use.
4. **Expressional** deals with emotions that are conveyed by the content and how those feelings are translated across culture.
5. **Figurative** observes how symbols and metaphors employed and any culturally sensitive elements.
6. **Rhetorical moral** looks at the philosophical justifications for making and showing the work and checks any responsibilities the producer has to the subject and viewers.
7. **Societal or period** deals with how the image reflects the culture and mores of the time it was produced and what it communicates to the future generation.

8. Comparative observes how the image is similar to previously created works and how it fit within the bodywork of image creator.

However, the study saw fit to use four of the eight ways because they resonate with the study; namely: Productions, Content identification, Functional, and Expressional. Furthermore, the researcher chose to analyse videos that have action and disregarded videos from a studio and without action.

Table 2: visual analysis table (news stories, production, content identification, functional and expressional).

News stories	Production	Content identification	Functional	Expressional
1. President Ramaphosa arrives to vote.	The video focuses on the President and his protocol. People willing to talk and touch him.	The President about to cast his vote at his place where he grew up which is Soweto.	The footage shows people of Soweto happy to see the president. Some want to touch him and made it difficult for journalists to manoeuvre.	The video demonstrates happiness, excitement, and people of Soweto proud of the President because he is one of their own.
2. Chaos erupts at the ANC Eastern Cape rally.	There was slow motion when the minister's hand was to touch and block the SABC cameras. This act was created	The video shows protesters and the Minister of communication causing chaos by trying to stop the photojournalist	The footage shows an angry community who is disappointed at the political party (ANC). The minister's conduct reveals	The emotions revealed are anger, frustration from the community and the Minister's misbehaving conduct.

	so that the viewers will see what the minister was trying to do.	from shooting protesters at the manifesto launch in Eastern Cape.	the abuse journalists experience in the hands of those in authorities or politicians.	
3. Chaos erupts at SABC election debates in Houtbay.	The footage involves EFF members fighting other political party members. The movement of the camera from one fight to the other and using different angles indicate the intentions of the SABC of showing these types of videos.	The SABC was conducting a debate for different political parties and the fighting started when some members did not agree on certain issues. However, in the video EFF members are visible because of the red overalls.	The footage shows EFF members fighting. However, the use of this footage amplifies/ paints the EFF as a violent party.	Anger, frustration, and disrespect are emotions revealed from this video.
4. DA erects a Gupta statue at Waalhoek Wesleyan church.	The footage was created to draw attention from viewers. Showing the church and the Gupta monument and	The video displays the church and the Gupta monument that needs to be erected, according to the	The church is where the ANC was started and the Gupta monument has history, especially the name 'Gupta'	The footage shows an angry crowd that is ready for a chance. It is seen in their placards with messages

	placards written '25 years of empty promises.'	DA.	has been an issue for the ANC and the country.	directed to the ANC government.
5. DA launches a new election billboard.	The footage was created to show how DA used a wrong and an ugly angle to campaign for votes.	The video shows a torn billboard that contains the names of the Marikana and Life Esidimeni victims who lost their lives.	What is contrary about the image is that it was an issue for DA to display victims' names without consulting the families, however, the SABC when shooting their video showed the same billboard with those names not blurred	This footage caused a commotion in the society and forced the families to experience the hurt again.
6. DA controversial billboard destroyed.	The footage was created to display how DA used a wrong and an ugly angle to the campaign.	The video shows a torn billboard that contains the names of the Marikana and Life Esidimeni victims	What is contrary about the image is that it was an issue for DA to display victims' names without consulting the families,	The video reveals some members of the families' affected destroying the billboard. This footage demonstrated anger and

			however, the SABC when shooting their video showed the same billboard with those names not blurred	disappointment from the families and the DA was viewed as this careless political party that only thinks about their campaign and not people's feelings.
7. SA electoral commission satisfied with voting abroad.	The footage was produced to display how South Africans vote abroad and the mood thereof.	Voting has commenced in outside countries and people are excited to make their mark.	The footage was used appropriately to show the mood and the processes of voting.	The footage displayed a celebratory mood and excitement from South Africans who are abroad and who still acknowledge South Africa as their country.

These videos illustrated in the above table portrayed the two opposition parties (DA and EFF) as troublesome parties. All of their videos are full of drama and chaos.

5.5 Visual elements design chart

Explained by Chandler-Gilbert College (n.d.) which analyse visuals based on these following elements:

- 1. Composition-** how the image is put together. Where things are place in relationship to one another and to the space of the canvas. It focuses on the way

different parts of the image are put together draws the viewer's attention to some parts more than others. It also creates tone, mood and meaning.

2. **Focal point/angle-** where your attention is drawn to in the picture. This means understanding the focal point helps one to understand the meaning of the picture.
3. **Colour-** all of the colours as black, white and neutrals. Monochromatic means using one colour. Complementary means using colours opposite one another on the colour wheel. The colour can create meaning by creating moods, highlighting particular parts of the image, connecting aspects of the image, or by being symbolic.
4. **Line-** actual lines in picture or lines created by the placement of other objects. Artists use lines to draw ones' attention to the focal point.

The researcher used the visual elements and their description to analyse the videos and the intentions of the videographer. The researcher analysed the same videos in table 3, to analyse in-depth the selection of these particular events.

Table 3. Visual element table

News Stories	Composition	Focal point/ Angle	Colour	Line
1. President Ramaphosa arrives to vote.	The visual is composed to show the excitement of the crowd as they welcome the President.	The cameras are focusing on the crowd as they are taking visuals of the Presidents.	The photographer used different colours that were dominating at the event to show the exciting mood, colours such as red, blue and yellow.	The composer used the crowd to draw a line of focus to the President, as one can see his /her starting point was to show the excited crowd first before focusing on the President.

<p>2. Chaos erupts at the ANC Eastern Cape rally.</p>	<p>There was repetition of two incidents; the protesters and when the Minister of Communication Stella Abrahams, tried to stop the recording. Such repetitions are created to amplify the incidents.</p>	<p>The focus was on the protesters while the hand of the Minister was shown in slow motion for everyone to see while protesters were not in slow motion. This focus needed to only highlight the reaction of the minister.</p>	<p>The colours used were bright colours that used to show the incident very clearly.</p>	<p>Protests and the blocking hand of the Minister were constantly shown throughout the video. The attention was shifted from the speaker to the distracting occurrences.</p>
<p>3. Chaos erupts at SABC election debates in Houtbay</p>	<p>All the LED studio lights in the venue were focused on the centre of the hall where the fight was happening while the other areas were dark.</p>	<p>The photographer focused on the fight, the camera was moving from one fight to the other and the main characters who were vividly shown were the EFF members, because of their bright colour clothes.</p>	<p>The room was dark around, however, where the fight was there were lights which were focusing on the fight alone. A sorrow mood was created by the darkness around the room.</p>	<p>The use of the LED studio lights pointed exactly where the focus was.</p>

<p>4. DA erects a Gupta statue at Waalhoek Wesleyan church.</p>	<p>The visual was created to show all that people are concerned about. For example, the statue and people protesting for its removal.</p>	<p>The cameras were focusing on the placards which were written “25 years of empty promises”. The camera was moving from one action to the monument and the church.</p>	<p>The colour used was a dull colour to show an unpleasant mood.</p>	<p>The photographer shifted from one incident to the other; that created a line of focus for one to pay attention.</p>
<p>5. DA launches a new election billboard.</p>	<p>The photographer was moving from DA’s billboards to the ANC billboards as if he/she was comparing the messages written on them.</p>	<p>The focus was on the billboards and the other billboard that was torn by people because they unsatisfied with what was written on it.</p>	<p>The colour used was a dull colour to show an unpleasant mood.</p>	<p>The movement from one billboard to the other; created a line of focus for one to pay attention.</p>
<p>6. DA controversial billboard destroyed.</p>	<p>The composition of the video is to show the video different views of different political leaders voicing out their concerns on the DA billboards.</p>	<p>The focus of the video is on the torn billboard and the concerned political leaders.</p>	<p>In some scenes the colour is dull and dark showing a distressed mood and in other scenes the colours are natural.</p>	<p>The video starts from the billboard to the protesters. It already draws ones’ attention to the event by building up a scenario.</p>

	It creates a sense of disagreement on what the DA has done.			
7. SA electoral commission satisfied with voting abroad.	The video was composed to show the rainbow nation, diversity in terms of race.	The focus was on how the voting process took place and the excitement of South Africans voting outside the country.	The colour used was natural; there is no unusual colour used.	The video moves from one scene to the other creating a description for the viewer to focus on.

5.6 How the SABC framed these major political parties.

5.6.1 ANC

Some of the discussions during the 2019 national elections concerning the ANC are about the BOSASA scandal, where most of its members were implicated. Many stories reported on the party were stories that paint the political party as corrupt and does not deliver services to its people.

5.6.2 DA

There is only one story that was frequently reported on the DA: the story of campaigning billboards. The party was labelled as problematic and could not be disciplined (referring to one controversial billboard to another). The party is also framed as the party that always detects some of the social challenges but fails to implement changes. The broadcast made it clear that the DA manifesto was not what a manifesto is supposed to be, it was emphasizing the failures of the ANC. The manifesto did not highlight to the supporters what the 82 pages of the manifesto entail and left the supporters confused.

5.6.3 EFF

The journalists presented the EFF as a party that is ill-behaved; threatens journalists, depriving them of their right to report news. This comes after the report done on the incident between Karima Brown and the EFF. This party is also painted as unreliable as they change their views too often; this is after the EFF withdrew their support for Pravin Gordan. They were seen as an unreliable, unstable party and always involved in chaotic situations.

5.7 How the SABC represented the 2019 national elections.

The SABC managed to produce news content that brought a sense of positivity and hope to society. Some of the events were relatable because the broadcaster spoke the language of the people in terms of culture and tradition. For example, there is a video where the broadcaster invited a *Sangoma* to predict who is going to win the 2019 national elections. The SABC reported these elections as a milestone because of the developing democratic era. However, there were events where the SABC reported stories using the language of conflict and competition. This conduct may depict the SABC as playing “game frame”, whereby it speaks of winners and losers in a serious and important event such as the national elections.

The SABC managed to cover many places, even in rural areas where it is difficult for cars to move, but the SABC was there to cover the elections and stories happening around the election period. However, it seems like the broadcaster was targeting stories that are controversial, for example, service delivery protests; and internal fights happening in political parties. These stories were reported frequently, for example, the story of the DA's campaigning billboards was reported frequently and painted the DA as an ill-disciplined party. Another story that made the news frequently was the EFF and Karima Brown saga. The SABC reported this story multiple times and they interviewed Karima Brown with the same story on different bulletins without an EFF representative or speaker. According to the social responsibility theory, journalists are mandated to report balanced stories.

The SABC revealed to the public the hardship faced by journalists when reporting, especially during the elections. The broadcaster publicised this by inviting the Director of the South African National Editor's Forum (SANEF), Dr. Skinner, who spoke much on the issue of journalists' threat; and she asserts that the media has a right to freedom of speech; and journalists should be allowed to do their job without being threatened by political parties or

the public. This is fuelled by what transpired between the ANC National Executive Committee (NEC) member Jessie Duarte and ENCA Journalist Samkelo Maseko, the threats to harass Karima Brown and the conduct of Minister Stella Abrahams. Skinner asserts that these conducts or threats disrupt and prohibit journalists to do their job freely without hindrances.

The SABC was able to bring to light that many voters outside the country recognised the historical nature of voting in South Africa and embraced their civil duty even if some were a thousand kilometres away from home. The SABC also highlighted that these elections mark the Madiba era where everyone voted and was equal. The reports of the broadcast showed a huge difference in political growth in terms of the number of political parties participated in the 2019 elections. The broadcaster notes that in 1994 there were not more than five political parties who contested for the elections and today it is a different story, where more than forty political parties participated. One journalist said, "It is clear that this democracy is well and alive".

5.8 The analysts' description of the 2019 national elections.

5.8.1 ANC

In these elections, ANC is seen as a very complex organisation, which is governed by a structure that limits the powers of its leader, even when the leader does not want to support certain things he is, however, forced to support. The analysts note that the ANC list had controversial people, people who have been implicated in the state capture, yet they were placed high on the list, and it was going to be difficult for the ANC to get rid of such people. President Ramaphosa characterised his leadership based on anti-corruption, while the party-list undermined his message. The analysts highly recommend the ANC in terms of policies, and identification of problems; strategies; coming up with different means to address issues. However, they observed that when it comes to implementation, one can realise that the same challenges that were there in 1994 remain the same challenges faced even today. They assert that there is a cancer in the ANC and the party is struggling; firstly, the idea of non-racialism is not reflected in their parliamentary list. Secondly, they have been talking about how to deal with the minorities, how to bring them as representatives around the table, yet their list is not diverse.

5.8.2 DA

The analysts posit that race and gender do also affect the DA, but race is the DA's major problem: one may question their thinking on race, but they are willing to bring those groups and begin to start a conversation. The analysts observed that many disputes erupt in these big parties, it is a balancing act. The political parties are trying to balance so many things, like race; gender; and generational gaps. In these elections what was indicated in the early counting process is that the VF PLUS was one of the biggest winners in terms of its performance and what attributed to that fact is the land and the language issues, it might have rallied the VF PLUS constituency. Those who have been within the DA might have come home precisely because the DA is trying to diversify with more black voters, causing a discomfort to some Afrikaners who were within the DA. They also note that the DA takes advantage of the ANC's failures.

5.8.3 EFF

The EFF is described as a no problem, tightly knit political party. Furthermore, there seem not to be any concerns about the list. The analysts refer to the EFF as a party that stands a chance in the 2019 elections, to be the first party in post-apartheid to retain a 3rd position in the elections. The EFF is seen likely to oppose the DA, maybe two or three elections down the line, because they have tested the stable position on number three, and there are no signs showing that the EFF will settle there. Furthermore, the EFF was viewed as good in exaggerating their performance.

5.9 Democracy

The political analysts view the focus of this democracy phase as the second generation of human rights. They note that it is no longer going to be political and civil rights but freedom of association and the freedom of expression. Socio-economic transformation and materialism improvement seemed to be the key issues that came up to dominate these elections. They noted that the commotions happening around the country were caused by issues of service delivery and where billions of Rands were said to go every direction except on the programme where they are destined. One other challenge that the analysts observed is the fragmented nature of the population, where, during the apartheid, homelands and four provinces existed. They acknowledge that the homelands that were at the centre of the

apartheid system have been destroyed to amalgamate into the different nine provinces, and that has been a very huge task.

In terms of economic problems, the analysts acknowledge that it is a complex issue in nature, sometimes it may seem simple to fix. They posit that there is hope for the country only if the economy were to be improved; if the investments were to be realised; if the employment rate were to improve; if corruption were to be reduced this might over time give the ANC President space to consolidate.

Coalitions started in the year 2000, and so far, the country has had 124 actual coalitions. However, the analysts put forward the idea that coalitions by nature are unstable; people who have never worked together have a lot of showmanship and have different temperaments; it was described as a non-ideal situation.

The analysts describe South Africa as a very important country in Africa and having a bearing on African politics. “When South Africa sneezes” they say, “the continent may certainly catch flu”. So many countries are looking to see what they can learn from South Africa's ability to cross this threshold again. With two decades of democracy and starting the third, it comes with consolidation and an alignment of politics. Parties that used to be dominant are slightly becoming low, and new parties have emerged. What they have observed is that South Africa will test waters and many things will start to apply to other African countries. They note that most people are watching how things are turning out and watching how the leaders across the board are responding and managing things. Will they be proud or ashamed? How the parties came together; how the institutions are working efficiently; how South Africa deals with challenges professionally and with solemnness will make other countries proud. The analysts assert that South Africa has to lead; it has the opportunity of being a last born in terms of democracy. They note that 48 political parties registered to participate this year; it shows the beauty of democracy, and they view democracy as a preferred form of government.

5.10 Conclusion

The research findings have touched on the participation of different genders in politics, division in terms of race and class, dominating voices and how the three main political parties were represented throughout the elections. From the findings it is clear that the SABC did not follow its code of conduct when reporting some events and reported stories that will push a certain narrative. With regard to the selection of political analysts and gender equality; the SABC failed to adhere to the rules. The research notes the choice of words used to describe certain scenarios were toxic and dramatic, which represented the issues as bad. The study can further say that the amount of airtime given to each political party was not equal and the types of stories reported were mostly negative stories which send a wrong message to the society and to other countries. The use of visual analyses allowed the study to dig deep on the angle and the intentions of the broadcaster. With that being said, the political analysts see a huge change from apartheid until now, in terms of the participation of political parties and their growth.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explains further the research findings. This research aimed to assess the SABC news bulletin (videos) of the 2019 national elections, to see how the elections were reported by the SABC journalists. The research question was the following: was the SABC coverage fair on the three main political parties in the 2019 national elections? To achieve this, the study looks at how the SABC reported the three main political parties which are (ANC), (DA), and (EFF). This was important because the SABC is a public broadcaster, and it had to be seen how the broadcaster conducts itself during such an important event and to see whether the broadcaster adhered to the SABC code of conduct and ethics of reporting.

To understand how the SABC represented the three main political parties, the thesis undertook a content analysis of the Sixty-two (62) election-related videos, dated from 01st January 2019 to the 10th of May 2019. The study focused on the number of articles appearing on the three major political parties such as length of appearance, the frequency of appearance, and how the topics are presented (i.e., the language, word choice, and headlines). The study analysed which voices were represented in the elections, with regards to gender, and race.

The results were then examined within the framework of framing theory, where scholars such as Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007) believe that framing is a mode of communication that journalists use to present information to the public, in ways that do not propagate negativity and it serves as a tool to reduce the unnecessary complex issue, while Fourie (2010) argues that framing is a representation of a certain aspect of news, alludes an angle/s used by the media to interpret or convey an ideology they have about a particular event. The study used social responsibility theory. Scholars such as Christian and Nordenstreng (2004) argue that social responsibility helps with a truthful, comprehensive, and intelligent account of everyday events unfolding in the society. These communication research theories were essentially engaged to understand from journalistic principles, how the SABC went about their functions as framing and how the reporters played their role as election campaigns or events framers. The results of the study show some interesting thought-provoking conclusions and implications for the election coverage including framing and social responsibility practices.

6.2 Overview of findings

Based on the findings, this study observed that the SABC news coverage was not fair on the three main political parties; this is based on how the framing was used during the 2019 national elections. As discussed in the previous framework chapter, framing theory enabled the study to examine and understand how mediated messages are constructed and the factors that shape this construction. Through research Fourie (2010) has found that most journalists used framing theory because of certain angles they use to report on different issues. For example, the EFF was framed as a 'chaotic' and 'rebellious' political party while the DA was represented as a party that disregards people's feelings for a campaign and the ANC portrayed as a 'corrupt party'; these, therefore, affirm what Entman (1993) asserted that such use of words can negatively impact the news source and perpetuate a stereotype. As previous studies indicated that framing is used by journalists to create a certain image, however, this conduct can damage the reputation of the political party and it can manipulate the media consumers into believing what the media portrays (see Cissel, 2012; Luntz, 2006). These unprofessional practices of journalism somehow have elicited favourable framing, which undermines objectivity as well as promoting uncritical reporting.

6.2.1 Media Culture

This behaviour mentioned above points to media culture. Showkat defines culture as a "pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group has learned to solve problems such as knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Showkat, 2017, p.53). Klينenberg defines culture as a "shared system of beliefs and knowledge, also known as a system of meaning and symbols. It is a set of shared values, beliefs, and practices, as well as modes of communication" (Klينenberg, 2005, p.121). With this information on culture, it is clear that the SABC as an organisation has a culture that is shared among the journalists about the style of reporting; this is seen when the style of reporting in the 2019 national elections is still the same as the 2016 local government elections, where most of the headlines and words used were negative and with possibilities of perpetuating violence. This conduct demonstrates to the society that media has a culture that journalists inherit as stated by Showkat (2017) that culture is believed to be learned and transmitted from generation to generation, it is inherited. Media is known as a powerful social system which plays an important role in creating a person's sense of reality; it does this

through media content (Klinenberg, 2005). Media is therefore, believed to influence/manipulate the society in considering what is being disseminated. For example, it can be through political propaganda, and advertising. It is said that media has political and persuasive power over the society (Klinenberg, 2005). A person closely monitoring media consumption is not immune to media effects. Therefore, there is a need for a change of culture on the wider ground which is a cultural shift (Showkat, 2017). The cultural shift could focus more on good reporting, transparency and impartiality.

Klinenberg (2005) argues that media is capable of amplifying issues and make them publicly legitimate. This has been the case with the 2019 national elections, where EFF has been framed as a rebellious party. This conduct speaks a lot on deep-rooted social issues and media culture that needs transformation. For example, during the time of former President Jacob Zuma, he was believed to be a controversial figure, a leader who was accused of rape and also charged with fraud, however, the cases were eventually dropped (Geertsema-Sligh, 2015). The image that was framed by the media has not received any counter framing by other media that speaks to the contrary, as it stands the image that people have of Zuma is that he was a greedy and a corrupt President because of how the media portrayed him. In addition, there has been more push back against the EFF, because the EFF is seen to be at rivals with the ANC, and the EFF could be a threat to the ANC more than they are to the DA. This can be seen in how the EFF acts to continue with the struggle against imperialism, capitalism, and racism, which were struggles the ANC promised to deal with (Koekemoer, 2017). This analysis points out that political insecurity is affecting not only political parties but news organizations in the country, which propels them to choose a preferred political party. Political insecurity is described as fear of how political parties will challenge the values of economy and justice, how they will contribute to the society without undermining the democracy (Huysmans, 2004).

6.2.2 News factors

In the past elections, there have been complaints about media coverage, where one party received more coverage compared to the other political parties (Piombo & Nijzink, 2005). The study found out that there was bias in terms of the number of news reported for each political party during the 2019 elections; the study showed that the ANC had many news coverages compared to the other two political parties (EFF and DA). In my view, naturally as the majority party ANC would have the lion's share of the coverage. Another reason can be

that the party has indirect control of the SABC; ANC can receive more coverage to see how the ruling party candidates are a better alternative to opposition.

This conduct indicates that there are traditional news factors that influence news selection. News factors or news values are known as guidelines or criteria used to determine how much prominence a media outlet gives a news story (Nel, 2005).

Therefore, this may communicate to some that the ANC was seen as a popular or prominent party that was eligible for more news coverage. Thus, the study selected videos in which these three political parties (ANC, DA, and EFF) featured. The videos selected were videos that only focused on the political parties' interviews and campaign events. The results show that the ANC lead by 12, the DA by 10, and the EFF lead by 09. The study observed that this conduct has been happening over the years where a political party lead in news coverage. Lane (2007) asserts that it's impossible to have positive, not alone equal news coverage during elections because some parties have greater influence compared to other parties. Lane agrees that the media can use news coverage to influence the voters by limiting the news coverage of other political parties and give the main party/parties more screen or airtime. The study notes that this conduct of news coverage may not only be about the influence of political parties, but it may also be about the prominence and how the leading party is a centre of attraction during election proceedings.

Sokutu (2018) claims that there have been complaints happening in the past elections where ANC got covered more compared to other political parties. In the 2016 local government elections where the media was seen as the gatekeeper and the agenda-setter during the campaigns; this portrayed the media as having the powers to choose which stories/political parties to cover. These complaints, however, are not well informed, this thinking goes back to news factors that the media use to see whether a story is worth of coverage or not.

Given the fact of South African history it is inevitable that there's so much pressure exacted towards the ANC, which makes the journalists to always cover them to see their strength, because the media often likes to see how the ruling party behaves under pressure. The expectations from the ruling party are too high compared to the opposition party and often the party has been reported to be incompetent, this makes the party to be worthy for more coverage. The study observed that during the elections, political parties face societal pressure,

as a result that affect the reporting. This may portray the media as gate keepers; however, it is the duty of the media to report news that can communicate to the news factors.

According to the literature, Manganyi et al. (2018) have done a study on the South African election's coverage between 1999, 2004, 2009, and 2014; they noted that the media sometimes fails to provide diversity in terms of news reporting. Instead, one media outlet mimics other media outlets and end up reporting the same thing. However, it is not so in this study because the study only focused on the SABC coverage no other media houses. Therefore, looking at the numbers of the news coverage for each political party, the SABC gave the ANC first preference based on the news factors compared to the other political parties. However, this may not indicate that the ANC was reported positively, it only acquired more coverage.

The study observed how the ANC stories were long compared to the DA and EFF. This explains how opposition parties are represented during election campaigns; they are not the centre of the elections. The media focuses on the leading political party or candidate, and this may cause other political parties to be ignored and their achievements not reported because everyone is channelled to the "winning" political party. This may also point back to the news elements, Boukes et al. (2020) indicate that it's through reporting and editing where a decision is made on the prominence of a story that leads to its length. The length of the story according to the scholars represents the prominence and personification of a story.

What contributes to the length of the story is when it contains more news factors, meaning news factors determine the prominence of news (Boukes et al., 2020). In addition, Cissel also acknowledges that the length of a story denotes the importance of a story/ or event and who is the source in the story (Cissel, 2012). Therefore, according to the research findings, the SABC saw the ANC stories as prominent; this is seen in how long ANC videos are, compared to the other political parties; precisely (DA and EFF). The findings show that the ANC led with 65%, the DA with 20%, and the EFF with 15%.

In my view the length of videos or stories are affected by numbers and strength of audiences or how many followers the party has. For example, the ANC is the ruling party which has more followers compared to the other political parties; the length of coverage will not be the same because they have many voters who are fascinated to express their impression and the society is interested to hear more about the leading party during the elections.

6.2.3 The type of news stories covered by the SABC.

News story is a written or recorded events or incident (Nel, 2005). According to the research findings, stories that were mostly reported for each political party were based on violence, service delivery protest, and campaign strategies. Examples of those stories, 'Chaos erupts at the ANC Eastern Cape rally', 'Chaos erupts at SABC election debates in HoutBay', and 'Election debate turns chaotic'. The approach used by the SABC to report on the 2019 national elections was focused on contravention or controversies. According to literature during the 2016 local government elections, the SABC framed the elections by reporting conflict rather than focusing on how the elections unfold (Dlamini et al., 2016). This kind of reporting is condemned by Patterson & John in their research titled *'the 2016 general elections in America'* which analysed how journalists worked during the elections, concluding that they report negative news compared to positive ones. They mentioned that negative news creates a narrative that elections are not peaceful and fair (Patterson & John, 2016).

The study notes that the media instead of focusing on positive news that educates the society about elections reported the news that portrayed the political parties as disruptive. However, this framing of political parties as disruptive displays elements of biasness in the media, it is obvious that political parties do clash during elections; however, that does not describe them as violent or disruptive. Example of the headlines used to demonstrate the SABC framing the political parties as disruptive, 'SANEF condemns EFF attack on Karima Brown, Election debate turns chaotic,' 'Chaos erupts at the ANC Eastern Cape rally', 'DA slammed over election billboard,' etc. This is similar to what happened in the 2016 local government elections where the SABC framed the 2016 local government elections as destructive because they were focusing only on negative news (Dlamini et., 2016). Based on the literature review the analysis of the scholars does not eliminate the fact that there are clashes during the elections, they are, however, against the narrative that elections are jam-packed by negative news always. Therefore, one should look at framing theory, because how things are framed is not necessarily the true reflection of a political party; given that elections can be intense and political parties quarrelling, this does not portray them as violent. In my view this image affected the EFF because people's emotions were raised. Given the history of South Africa where violence was common, the citizens are now sensitive to political parties which demonstrate violence and toxicity; this may lead to them holding back their votes or change them. These headlines show that they are politically influenced to sensationalise the society.

6.2.4 Word choice

Word choice refers to the specific vocabulary which the media or journalists use to describe certain events or candidates. Based on the literature, the study observed that the word choice used by the SABC was competitive language and language of conflict. Words such as ‘vicious attack’; ‘toxic situation’, ‘Vote counting- EFF overtakes DA in Mpumalanga’; ‘Who will emerge victorious in SA elections? ‘Some party agency has decided to maybe accept defeat’; ‘bloodbath comes to mind’; ‘highs and lows’; ‘the ANC received a bloody nose in the 2019 elections’; ‘the DA and EFF fighting for a second spot’. These kinds of words are what Afful calls “game framing”, where the media uses “winners and losers” trying to indicate the intensity of the political campaigns (Afful, 2016). These word choices by journalists are common, especially during elections and this shows how strongly media can influence the dynamics of conflicts. Media can play a huge role in shaping the predictions of conflict in parties (Vladisavljević, 2015). However, as we have mentioned that it takes away the importance of the election proceedings; most of the words used by the SABC were indicating disputes and were mostly negative in tone.

According to Patterson and John (2016) journalists are mostly under pressure, they become conditioned to the situation, and it becomes tougher for a journalist to write a positive story during elections. However, Manganyi et al. (2018) disagree with that notion, they believe that the media have to broadcast the political parties as largely (more coverage) and carefully as possible, no matter the pressure; the media has to treat all political parties equally during the election period. Therefore, the SABC is supposed to be a watchdog for the society, report news that are fair, balanced and news that engages the public. However, the news coverage blurred the quality.

6.2.5 Media and democracy

The public's trust in the media is of crucial importance to ensure that the media can play a constructive role in democratic debate and contribute to sustainable development. This may also assist in civil society and regulatory bodies to contribute to an enabling environment for the media to build a foundation of public support for the media as a democratic institution (Klinenberg, 2005). Media bias is believed to be caused by individuals with so much power. In my views, in this time of democracy media should not be biased, media should serve its purpose, as to disseminate information that builds and create a society. Media has so much

power that regardless of one's opinions on a given issue when you hear about it in the news you are more likely to treat it as an event of importance (Klinenberg, 2005). This leads political leaders to believe that media has powers to agenda-setting and can change the progression of political events.

If one can look at the way 2016 local government elections were reported, it can be noted that there are small changes done to fix the complaints, and the journalists who were reporting during that time are different from those who were reporting in the 2019 national elections. This, however, means that there are issues of media culture and media reforms that need to be discussed because it is the media's responsibility to deliver well-researched news to the public without prejudice. Therefore, this research has found out that the same style of reporting in the past three years (2016) has been the same. It has so many similarities, for example, the 2016 local government election stressed a bleak picture of the broadcaster's coverage of the elections, finding that the "SABC's coverage was characterised by overwhelming bias in favour of accredited national leaders at the expense of local candidates and the electorate; a greater focus on personalities and conflict rather than electoral issues; poor representability of women actors; and a glaring urban/rural divide" (Dlamini et al., 2016, n.d.). And in 2019 this was the same case, the SABC framed the political parties in a negative manner, gender balance was not adhered to, and the citizens did not participate in a way that is pleasing to the society. Therefore, this study notes that even in a democratic era there are still issues of bad media culture in South Africa.

6.2.6 Visualness

Visualness refers to the strongest of the pictures and videos, on how dramatic are the scenes (Nel, 2005). The research did a visual analysis to investigate how the media used its footage to broadcast news to the public. The study revealed that the SABC showed footages that were implying chaotic behaviour and fights, for example, the DA billboards that were torn by angry citizens, the EFF fight with other political parties, the story of the minister of communication when trying to stop the media from reporting a protest, etc.

Figure 7: DA billboards tarnished.

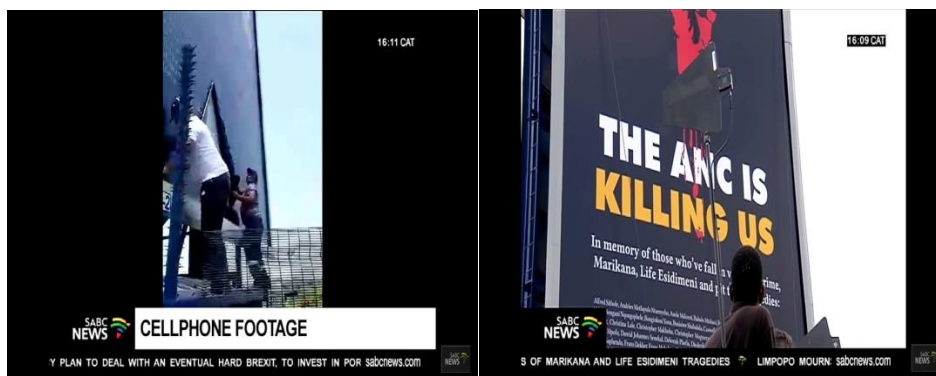


Figure 8: EFF supporters are seen throwing chairs at other parties during an election debate in HoutBay.



Figure 9: Eastern Cape ANC rally: Minister tried to stop the SABC from filming.



These actions are what Schill (2012) talks about when he mentions that the media sometimes uses images or footage to convey a certain message to the public. However, some footages or images are toxic and convey a negative message to society and frames the party as an ill-behaved party. The research has observed that the SABC used certain visuals or digital storytelling to create or construct their own political identity. The videos used by the SABC

created a new identity for certain political parties; most of the videos were portraying violence, insensitive behaviour, treason, etc. Some of this information, however, is dramatized, taken out of context, and portrayed as toxic. The videos used by the public broadcaster received extensive attention from the public and other political parties. Given the history in South Africa where violence can be a trigger to most people, these images full of violence may send misleading information, in terms of the behaviour and the political party's image. Political parties having disagreements or fights does not mean they have to be described as violent or chaotic, because during elections emotions are high and some political parties feel pressure from other political parties.

Some political parties used the videos to their advantage to slur other political parties. For example, the DA billboard saga gave many politicians a chance to paint DA as an insensitive party and EFF did not dodge the bullet; the party also faced judgement during the Karima Brown saga.

The same may be said about the ruling party (ANC): the story of the Minister of Communication (Stella Abrahams) gave other political parties a chance to campaign and take advantage of the situation. These findings do relate to previously discussed literature where Maganyi et al. (2018) observed that journalists operate under pressured circumstances to bring dramatic, persuasive, and evocative visuals as stories that sell. This conduct is seen by Lawrence (2000), that images can be used to frame a particular issue, mostly in mainstream media where visuals are used to demonstrate conflict and drama which can lead to misrepresentation of political actors or political parties. And Schill (2012) further acknowledges that visuals are easy to recall than written or verbal communication. Likewise, with most of the visuals used by the SABC, it can be easy for one to remember the stories based on how the visuals were shot because they contained compelling and negative narrative. The angle of a visual can somehow suggest or imply an attack without the politician or political party making the attack (Schill, 2012). For example, when the Minister of communication blocked the visuals during a rally, the show of hands by the SABC was made to imply an attack against the photojournalist.

In my view the SABC should try and change the media culture that has been operating for many years, the culture doesn't demonstrate media freedom, it only implies that media is under a control of some elites who are not concerned about the well-being of the society or

the organisation. The study suggests that the SABC should either adhere to its code of conduct or create governing bodies that will help them enforce those media laws.

6.2.7 Gender and race in the elections

One other interesting finding of this study was that gender and race were not balanced, for example, males were dominating in terms of political analysts and party leaders, with regard to race, blacks were the ones dominating the elections in terms of political analysts and party leaders. According to the SABC code of conduct, it indicates that during elections the broadcaster adheres to the balance of gender and race, and it shall continue to promote diverse opinions (SABC editorial policy, 2018). However, what the results show is different from its code of conduct. The study discovered that gender inequality is still a problem in South African society; it is manifesting itself even in media. Unless the media try to work on these imbalances, media reforms will not be possible and basic structures of the society need to be gender-sensitive all the time.

According to the findings, the SABC had few women as political analysts while men were leading; this may explain the dominance of men in politics. The issues of gender inequality do not affect only the SABC, even political parties are facing challenges where women are neglected or are not selected in powerful positions. For example, the ANC had one woman in its top six of the national executive committee, the EFF had one woman in their top five, with the top three positions being occupied by men and the DA had five women in their top 20 (April 2019). This conduct indicates how women are treated and how society view(s) women in politics. Tadros (2014) posits that women who have the opportunity to be in politics are entering a male-dominated place and this forces them to develop a thick skin to deal with some of the bias and perceptions already exist in the society.

Therefore, the research analysis shows that only 28 percent of women; political candidates, and political analysts who were invited by the SABC to participate in the 2019 national elections while 72 percent of male candidates and political analysts dominated the political talk. While analysing the videos, the study observed that the SABC was using the same male analysts during their political commentary; analysts such as Dr. Somadoda Fikeni and Professor Mcebisi Ndletyana were constant guests in the SABC. Folke and Rickne (2012) reveal that bias against women happens when meritocracy is overlooked or not enforced at all to favour men. Gender inequality was a problem in African countries, this was when the

Southern African Development Community (SADC) was propelled to amend their gender equality policy, the policy in previous years only allowed 30 percent of women in politics; while the new policy stipulates that women have equal rights as men and the policy adopted that a parliament should be 50:50 (SADC, 2009).

It should be noted that women in South African politics have increased; however, the question may be which positions are they occupying? Further, race played a massive role in elections, in these 2019 national elections, there has been a huge level of inequality and racism. The research findings indicate that South Africa has a long way to go in terms of racism and class. However, during the 2019 national elections, things were the other way round; black people were the ones who were running the show, in terms of political analysts and party speakers. This conduct does not promote a rainbow nation as declared by Nelson Mandela, who believed in multiracialism. Most political analysts and political party speakers were black people as indicated on the finding's session, where only 13% of both white and Coloureds participated in the 2019 elections, while Indians were only 4% and blacks owned the whole 70%. The SABC has not done justice to the racial division that the country is currently facing. The public broadcaster promised in its code of conduct that the balancing of race and gender will be their priority, see (SABC editorial policy, 2018); however, the research findings speak otherwise. In my views one race will always analyse things based on their experiences and the analyses will only be one sided, this can affect the SABC style of reporting. The issue of race is very critical in South Africa because it advances/ perpetuates one point of view; this conduct can be dealt with by bringing some form of transformation to the media as a whole. Therefore, the study believes that the media transformation could be a solution.

6.2.8 Voices participated in the elections

This study shows that ordinary citizens were not given enough time or airtime to voice out their concerns or participate in debates related to the national elections and on how their leaders are performing. As stated by Rocha (2014), leaders may relax and not improve their standards because there are no feedbacks from society. This can lead to stagnation and failing governance. The findings illustrate how the citizens were deprived of the opportunity to engage and participate in the elections. 19% of the voices were the citizens who were given a chance to talk through the platforms opened by the SABC during service delivery protests (which were not enough), while the experts at 39% were given many opportunities to

comment and predict the 2019 elections and politicians at 42% who used the platform to campaign for votes and also defend allegations placed on them.

These numbers indicate very well what the SABC prioritised; their focus was not the citizens but the political leaders and the analysts. The SABC is to serve the nation, to teach, inform, and to be society's mouthpiece (Christians et al., 2010). What we observed in the findings does not represent what the mandate of the SABC entails; it reveals that the citizens are not included on such topics. According to Wasserman and De Beer (2005), in this democratic era, the media is expected to freely disseminate information to the public and ensure that society is exposed to diverse opinions concerning any issue. In addition, it is to keep the government in check and offer information that will assist society to participate in public discussions. Furthermore, the media is supposed to support the growth of industries and society, allowing citizens to participate in debate and democratic processes and intermingle with political and cultural leaders (Wasserman & De Beer, 2005).

The study notes that having different voices during elections assists the political parties to learn about the difficulties of the society and the people to be able to engage their leaders on issues affecting their communities (Diamond & Morlino, 2005). Political voices are important. After all, they also enable the citizens to seek justice and redress whenever corruption erupts because they would be informed about the values, ethics, and policies of the government. As stated by Diamond and Morlino (2005) participation in politics determines the goodness of democracy, where people feel free to engage with those in authority on service delivery and other matters. True democracy and a developing era is when citizens can engage freely with their leaders without fear. They can speak about whatever issues they see as significant without being discriminated against (Diamond & Morlino, 2005). Furthermore, many leaders do not pay attention to what the citizens have to say, instead, they do as they please; they forget that the citizens' input matters in improving and strengthening the governance by increasing demands for accountability and transparency (Rocha, 2014). According to Rocha's perspective, elections are supposed to be the enabler that allows the citizens to participate, to have a voice, and also to hold the leaders accountable for their decision/s. It is believed that when citizens do protest or participate by voicing out their concerns, a change is guaranteed because that will make the leaders be on their toes to make things right again (Rocha, 2014).

It must be noted that the study was aimed at showing how the SABC represented the 2019 national elections. However, the study also discovered new information on how the political analysts saw the 2019 elections. The three main political parties (ANC, DA, and EFF) are said to be around for the long run. However, the analysts had concerns about the ANC list which did not show a non-racialism element, this concern goes against what the ANC was founded upon; it was founded on the premise that it will not exclude other races with the hope of building a rainbow nation. While DA tried to balance the races, they had issues of blaming the ANC without coming up with their solutions as the opposition party; and the EFF promising to take the second position in the next elections. During this election period, the most focus was on the socio-economic transformation; and the materialism improvement which was seen as the important issues that the country needed to address to better people's lives. With that being said, South Africa was regarded as the pillar of the continent in terms of its politics, many African countries look up to South Africa for a blueprint of how a democratic country is run.

6.2.9 Professionalism of journalism

Professionalism of journalism refers to the practice of adhering to news reporting ethics such as fairness and objectivity. This study found that the SABC used framing on the three main parties during the 2019 national elections, indicating unprofessionalism on the SABC's part, and unprofessionalism does affect the quality of work or news. Social responsibility theory as discussed in a previous chapter is one of the theories used to guide the study on how the press reports the news to society and if journalists do apply the principles or ethics; If not this can create tremendous damage to the media's reputation and the public will be restricted in terms of news flow that is based on objectivity.

The findings revealed that the SABC used negative headlines, competitive language and negative word choice to report news and frame the political parties, which are not part of the journalistic principle and do not serve the public nor write objectively about the political parties. Journalists have the opportunity to choose which storyline they would report; however, somehow it created bias and unprofessionalism. The study noticed that the style of journalism in this country has the potential to damage society. For example, headlines should not be a source of violence; this could lead to social unrest and violence. The research acknowledges that journalists although are supposed to use a certain language, must not violate the boundaries of ethics. There have been complaints in most elections around the

world where journalists are seen as scrupulous with the way they have reported the news (Patterson & John, 2016). However, South Africa needs to come up with a framework or regulations to avoid such conduct and the regulations need to be enforced. Although in South Africa there is freedom of speech it comes with accountability, journalists can report on any matter. However, the freedom must be accounted for, and the reports should not motivate/perpetuate violence (Fourie, 2010). Therefore, the study observed that the headlines were problematic, they were questionable. The study noticed that the SABC did not adhere to their ethical conduct, this should not by any means be received as censoring the media and limiting their rights, however, their reporting should show that they are dealing with a fragile society that may potentially erupt in violence. Therefore, any news organisation must be sensitive to the dynamics of society.

The study has answered the research question and the findings do relate to the literature discussed previously. The research results add to what other scholars have written about bias in the media during elections, it also reveals how other political candidates around Africa see South African politics. The findings demonstrate that the media (SABC) uses framing in their reporting, which portrays them as unprofessional and lowers the quality of their work. Although other studies have revealed that government sometimes does interfere with the work of the media and be dictators on the media, however, my findings do not show the government interference or influence in the media (SABC) except when the minister of communication tried to block the SABC to record a protest; other than that, the SABC reported the election uninterrupted.

6.2.10 Media Reforms

The study noticed that the style of reporting used by journalists do not demonstrate media accountability in the society. Media accountability is defined by Von Krogh (2012) as reactive or proactive responses to critique of media conduct and the quality of content. However, such reporting style reveals that there is a certain media culture that journalists are subject to. This research, therefore, recommends that there should be media reforms where media regulations and style of reporting are reviewed to build, educate, and inform society through well-researched news.

Media reform refers to new ways of transforming mass media towards an agenda that is concerned with public needs that do not perceive bias toward corporate, government, or

politics (Hackett & Anderson, 2011). Wasserman & Benequista suggest that special training for journalists and standard-setting processes by the media sector itself are important, they assert that independent regulators as well can be strong enough to hold the media accountable and somehow bring media reforms to action. These scholars believe that if the regulatory system functions well, civil society organizations, the public, or governments can make complaints to regulators when they feel aggrieved by journalists, and these can eliminate threats, attacks, or incarceration of journalists (Wasserman & Benequista, 2017).

Klinenberg (2005) argues that when prejudice sinks in, it becomes hard to argue for the importance of journalists as democratic stakeholders who deserve safeguards. Wasserman and Benequista (2017) noticed that other factors contributing to bias in most African media houses are especially subject to capture by powerful or affluent elites given how many of the African media outlets were already struggling with financial sustainability which began to intimidate traditional advertising revenue. This finding is supported by Ziauddin (2017) based on the research literature, who argues that the media no longer perform its duty and is censored through these mentioned supposed overseers who influence the media, and these rich entities create inequalities among society and makes it difficult for voters to make informed decisions as the media is not able to monitor politicians or deliver well-researched information to society (Ziauddin, 2017). Media capture has led journalists to often focus on political issues or actions of the government, leading to a narrow, elite narrative that marginalizes parts of the population. Even independent, commercial media can focus so much on the interests of wealthy audiences that they neglect issues of interest to the majority of citizens or report in favour of the elite not to inform the society (Wasserman & Benequista, 2017).

The study recommends that the SABC should also create governing bodies that will be responsible for implementing regulations that will guide journalists when reporting, especially during election proceedings. These bodies should also be accountable to the society through platforms where the society shares their grievances, and this should be monitored to eradicate prejudice.

6.3 Conclusion

This discussion chapter has shown that the SABC news coverage was not fair on the three main political parties; this is based on how the framing was used during the 2019 national elections, which questioned the professionalism of the SABC. This behaviour points to media culture, it shows that media has deep-rooted social issues and media culture that needs transformation. The chapter discovered that journalists/ the SABC used the traditional news factors that influenced their news selection. These news factors or news values are the ones that guide or determine how much prominence a media outlet gives a news story. Other scholars have argued that it is impossible to have positive, not alone equal news coverage during elections because some parties have greater influence compared to other parties.

Therefore, this chapter notes that one should look at framing theory, because how things are framed is not necessarily the true reflection of a political party; given that elections can be intense and political parties quarrelling, this does not portray them as violent. Therefore, this research has found out that the same style of reporting in the past three years (2016) has been the same. It has so many similarities, for example, the 2016 local government and it suggests media reforms to take place. Lastly, the study discovered that gender inequality is still a problem in South African society; it is manifesting itself even in media.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to bringing the research to a close. The chapter's goal is to focus on the representation issues raised in the study and provide a critical evaluation of the findings. This section highlights recommendations and future research areas.

7.2 Concluding Remarks

The main topic of the study was the SABC's representation of the three major political parties. The study questioned how SABC framed South Africa's three main political parties—the ANC, the DA, and the EFF—during the 2019 elections. Both video footage and photographs aided the study in demonstrating how the media played an important role in the construction of this representation. Using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent, the world meaningfully to other people is what framing entails. As a result, the research sought to reflect on how the SABC strategically used images, language, and headlines to construct this reality, which may threaten the national broadcaster's professionalism.

Framing and social responsibility were two major theories that influenced the research. As framing entails using language to meaningfully inform and construct reality. The research provided an understanding of the major themes such as word choice, length of news headlines, and number of news reported due to framing and social responsibility. The research also examined which voices were heard during the elections, gender equality, and media culture.

The data gathered in this research revealed that the SABC portrayed the three political parties in a biased manner; there was no impartiality to some news reports and other parties were reported negatively compared to others. Through analysis of the videos, the SABC was not fair on time allocation or airtime, meaning other political parties had more time coverage. However, the study notes that the SABC used news factors to select news, however, this conduct framed other parties important than others. The study exposed that there was gender inequality, racial inequality, and less participation of citizens through their news reporting.

The research also showed that the type of news reported was news that was painting the political parties as bad or ill-behaved parties. The study used visual analysis which showed how the SABC covered the news in terms of their footages or videos; the SABC focused more on fights and controversies more than they focused on the actual event and issues affecting the citizens. The study acknowledged that elections are a difficult event to cover; however, journalists are expected to report impartially and fairly without any favour. They are some factors that interfered with their work, the study revealed how journalists were being threatened during such events. However, the SABC intervened by allowing media experts such as, DR Skinner to sensitise the public and the political parties about the importance of journalists and the work they are doing.

The study discovered that media culture has a significant impact on how the media frames their news; Showkat defines culture as a pattern of shared fundamental assumptions such as belief, custom, and art. Lastly, the study demonstrated that journalists adhere to a culture that is passed down from generation to generation in the media. According, such behaviour should be changed by enacting media reforms.

7.3 Contribution to the knowledge

The study's contributes to the field of election representation, by means of advancing the discourse of framing political parties and candidates during election campaigns. The research examined several critical issues such as women in politics are still a minority in big political positions, especially in South Africa. The study focused on framing and social responsibility as guiding theories. However, it discovered how other African politicians see South African politics. In contribution to knowledge, the study has revealed that there is a pattern of how news is covered in the SABC which taints the reputation of the broadcaster; this is after the research literature showing how the SABC covered the 2016 local government elections and also compared it with the recent findings from the study and noticed that the broadcaster has been doing this for a while. The journalism practice in the country has indirectly allowed some journalists not to comply with the principles of reporting. According to the literature, elections have been covered negatively using framing as a tool and the findings do prove this hypothesis to be true. With all these findings, the study suggests that media culture should be reviewed, and media reform is seen as a good idea to better news reporting.

Previous studies have indicated that public broadcasters sometimes do report events to favour a certain individual or political party, this study also reveals that public broadcaster still is capable of bias. In summary, the research's ability to report such significant results using framing and social responsibility theory has humble contributed to knowledge in the field of media and politics.

7.4 Limitations of the study

The research has aimed to investigate the representation of the three main political parties during the 2019 national elections. Therefore, the focus of the study was narrowed down only to the SABC English news bulletin videos, not including newspapers, other online news platforms, or social media. It would have been useful to include all the media platforms, however; the scope of this thesis is limited by length. The data collection was confined to only to 2019 election-related videos and the study had no access to SABC journalists or editorial team for interviews, and the viewers were not contacted to hear their thoughts about the SABC's ways of reporting.

7.5 Future research directions

With the above limitations, recommendations suggested for future studies are that the next researchers should widen the scope of the study to avoid being limited because of length. Future researchers should also note the importance of including many media houses for better results, not only focus on one medium and not to be shy to embark on interviews with the public about their experience and opinions on media coverage, especially during such an important event, the elections. In addition, a deeper study into its form and shape and its effect on the quality of election coverage is highly recommended. In addition, a study of this nature is and will be more effective during the election period, it brings awareness to the public about the public broadcaster, and sheds some light on the journalism practice in South Africa so that Journalists would up their game.

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1. Appendix 1

(News stories, political party, date, and duration)

News Stories	Political Party	Date	Duration
1. 2019 is here, SA parties gear up for elections (2019 election preview).		01 January 2019	02min: 56sec
2. UPDATE: ANC launches its 2019 Election Manifesto - Solly Mapaila weighs in	ANC	11 January 2019	13min: 18sec
3. ANC 2019 manifesto launch	ANC	12 January 2019	05hrs: 48min: 59sec
4. DA controversial billboard destroyed.	DA	17 January 2019	02min: 04 sec
5. Maimane refused to comment on DA's campaign billboard.	DA	19 January 2019	03min: 08sec
6. DA slammed over election billboard.	DA	20 January 2019	03min: 05sec
7. DA, COPE debate low	DA	25 January 2019	19min: 30sec

turnout by youth to register to vote.			
8. Chaos erupts at the ANC Eastern Cape rally.	ANC	09 February 2019	05min: 28sec
9. DA launches a new election billboard.	DA	17 February 2019	01min: 56sec
10. Democratic Alliance 2019 election launch	DA	23 February 2019	04hrs: 59min: 18sec
11. DA has launched its 2019 election manifesto.	DA	24 February 2019	02min: 32sec
12. SANEF condemns the EFF attack on Karima Brown.	EFF	06 March 2019	02min: 30sec
13. Karima Brown to lay charges against Malema.	EFF	06 March 2019	12min: 45sec
14. Karima Brown responds to EFF leader Julius Malema.	EFF	06 March 2019	12min: 44sec
15. Analysis of the ANC candidate list - Mazwe	ANC	13 March 2019	06min: 47sec

Majola.			
16. Analysis for ANC candidate list: Mzwandile Mbeje.	ANC	13 March 2019	05min: 57sec
17. Speaking to political parties in KZN.		15 March 2019	26min: 13sec
18. SAFM election Town Hall debate - Bushbuckridge.		15 March 2019	2hrs: 03min: 47sec
19. Discussing political parties' lists.		17 March 2019	19min: 12sec
20. Elections 2019: Political Parties		20 March 2019	20min: 25se
21. Free State under the spotlight.		22 March 2019	09min: 05sec
22. ANC's parliamentary candidate's list and Ace Magashule.	ANC	02 April 2019	12min: 40sec
23. ENCA Journalist Samkelo on Duarte's verbal attack.	ANC	02 April 2019	7min: 49sec
24. Chaos erupts at	EFF	05 April 2019	02min: 02sec

SABC election debates in Houtbay.			
25. Election debate turns chaotic.	EFF	05 April 2019	02min: 11sec
26. SAFM election Town Hall debate - Orient Theatre, East London, Eastern Cape.		12 April 2019	2hrs: 06min: 58sec
27. Election news - political parties on their economic policies.		17 April 2019	02min: 46sec
28. Expression - Western Cape election debate.		24 April 2019	49min: 00sec
29. DA unveils another billboard.	DA	26 April 2019	01min: 20sec
30. SA electoral commission satisfied with voting abroad.		28 April 2019	16min: 40sec
31. DA erects a Gupta statue at Waalhoek Wesleyan	DA	29 April 2019	01min: 38sec

church.			
32. African Perspective	EFF	01 May 2019	54min: 37sec
33. Which party will rule South Africa after the elections?		05 May 2019	08min: 41 sec
34. EFF holds Tshela Thupa rally at Orlando stadium.	EFF	05 May 2019	05min: 40sec
35. EFF CIC Julius Malema rally keynote speaker (EFF last push for votes ahead of elections).	EFF	05 May 2019	1hrs: 13min: 35sec
36. African National Congress election rally.	ANC	05 May 2019	03hrs: 51min: 55sec
37. Who will emerge victorious in SA elections?		06 May 2019	12min: 52sec
38. Special elections build-up show.		06 May 2019	28min: 15sec
39. SA decides 2019		06 May 2019	05min: 22sec
40. Election results affecting business.		06 May 2019	14min: 46sec

41. Gogo Ntoleng predicts ANC will win the elections by 60, 7%.	ANC	07 May 2019	06min: 57sec
42. The second day of special votes underway.		07 May 2019	06min: 49sec
43. Bushbuckridge, Mpumalanga update.		07 May 2019	03min: 37sec
44. Mopani in Limpopo update (people decided not to vote in this village).		07 May 2019	02min: 15sec
45. Eyes on elections - talking elections hashtag with Yari Mudurai.		07 May 2019	06min: 31sec
46. Election coverage (Protest, service delivery, SABC reported on most of the voting stations).		08 May 2019	03hrs: 47min: 55sec
47. Vote counting underway - Prof Somadoda		08 May 2019	09min: 45sec

Fikeni.			
48. South Africa votes.		08 May 2019	01min: 25sec
49. Vote counting underway.		08 May 2019	06min: 33sec
50. Gugulethu voters were concerned about high levels of crime.		08 May 2019	05min: 31sec
51. Analysis of elections so far - Dr. Somadoda Fikeni.		08 May 2019	03min: 59sec
52. Updates on voting in Pretoria.		08 May 2019	04min: 31sec
53. EFF leader Malema speaks after casting his vote.	EFF	08 May 2019	05min: 08sec
54. DA leader addressing the media after casting his vote.	DA	08 May 2019	1min: 50sec
55. South African leaders vote.		08 May 2019	07min:11 sec
56. President Ramaphosa arrives to vote.	ANC	08 May 2019	07min: 44sec

57. Minister Stella Abrahams apologies to the media.	ANC	09 May 2019	04min: 38sec
58. Vote counting - EFF overtakes DA in Mpumalanga.		09 May 2019	03min: 29sec
59. Election results coverage.		09 May 2019	04hrs: 27min: 34sec
60. Political parties react.		10 May 2019	11min: 24sec
61. Political parties react in Limpopo.		10 May 2019	05min: 49sec
62. Ntlangano residents have boycotted elections (nothing to celebrate after 25 years of democracy).	ANC	12 May 2019	02min: 06sec