University of Cape Town, Centre for Film and Media Studies

From illegitimate disruption to failing state:

How South African newspapers framed ‘service delivery protests’ in 2013

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Rebecca Pointer
Student number: PNTREB001
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Faculty of the Humanities
University of Cape Town
Supervisor: Dr Wallace Chuma
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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

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 has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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Date: 24 May 2015

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Abstract

This study unpacks the key frames and sources used by the South African print media in their coverage of the 'service delivery protests' in 2013. It explores how the frames are linked to each other, how the sources link to each other, and how the frames and sources correlate. The study focuses on print media sources as catalogued in the SA Media database, identifies the most prevalent frames and sources used, and using a hierarchical cluster analysis identifies how frames are related to each other, how sources are related to each other, and how frames and sources correlate. The study found that the most prevalent frames on 'service delivery protests' used by the South African print media in 2013 were the war/spectacle frame and the failed democracy frame, followed by the law/crime frame, all of which serve to delegitimise service delivery protests. Local government and police sources were most prevalent. The study suggests that there is still contestation about the kinds of spaces citizens should use for political engagement, and contestation about how power operates at local government level. The media also implies that the South African state is failing, and suggests remedies for these failings.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Choice of research

This thesis focuses on South African print media framing of 'service delivery protests' with the aim of establishing if and how these frames are politically significant. This study is based on the hypothesis that media framing of 'service delivery protests' is not advantageous to protesters and highlights the dramatic elements of protest without exploring protesters' underlying concerns. The second hypothesis is that the media gives salience to elite voices and, despite protesters wishing to draw attention to their concerns, their voices are subordinate in the media coverage.

The topic for the research was chosen because with 155 major 'service delivery protests' recorded by the media or online sources in South Africa in 2013 (Municipal IQ, 2014a), the phenomenon has become an everyday reality in the South African political landscape. The media are usually the main means by which such protests are brought to public attention (Mander, 1999; Cottle, 2008), so general knowledge and understanding about such protests is therefore often dependent on what the media conveys to the public. Many of the studies of 'service delivery protests' have relied on media reports as a basis for exploration (e.g. Nyar & Wray, 2012; Municipal IQ, 2014b, 2014a; Mottiar & Bond, 2011; Tapela, 2013), so even academic knowledge about the protests is often linked to how the phenomenon is framed by the media. In spite of the link between media coverage and academic knowledge of 'service delivery protests', few previous South Africa studies have explored how the media covers South African protests in general, and I could find none on 'service delivery protests' in particular.

Since protest is one action in a 'repertoire of political participation' (Booysen, 2007, p. 24), it is a way for communities to call attention to their condition (Jain, 2010), identify issues that affect them, and publicly define themselves (Smilde, 2004). 'Service delivery protests' occur in communities which are already vulnerable and marginalised (Alexander, 2010; Akinboade et al., 2013), and where efforts to give voice to their political and practical

concerns have often been ignored (Nyar & Wray, 2012; Sinwell et al., 2009; Thompson, 2011). Protest can be considered a type of political communication whereby protesters actively engage in an effort to communicate with others in their communities, local, provincial and national government actors, and the broader public. It is therefore important to consider whether media are helping communities draw attention to their issues or if they are aggravating marginalisation.

Analysing media frames is a useful way to unpack how the media draws attention to 'service delivery protests' and whether the media are sympathetic or not to the political communication of protesters. For the purpose of this study, a frame 'identifies a problem that is social or political in nature, the parties responsible for causing the problem, and a solution' (Johnston & Noakes, 2005, p. 5). The study aims not to simply catalogue the 'loose elements' in the newspaper articles sampled, but to explore 'the impact of the implicitly present cultural phenomena conveyed by all the elements as a whole and relate them to the dynamic process in which social reality is constructed' (van Gorp, 2007, p. 72–73). Implicit in the choice of frames is a notion of power — which are the voices that must be listened to, who has the power to be heard and define issues, and how do the chosen frames aid in maintaining or challenging the existing social order?

This research is underpinned by a theoretical exploration of framing theory in general, framing theory as it relates to the practice of covering social protests, and as it relates to previous South African studies of media framing. The study will explore how the framing of 'service delivery protests' is 'central to the production of hegemonic meanings and to the development of counter-hegemonic ways of seeing' (Carragee & Roefs, 2004, p. 227–228). Central to how this study explores the framing of 'service delivery protests' is the understanding that the media are not a neutral objective observer, but a political actor in its own right, 'helping to distribute political power to particular groups, causes, or individuals' (Entman, 2007, p. 166). Using a framing analysis, this study will explore to which political actors around 'service delivery protests' the South African print media distributes power.

1.2. Rationale

In respect of 'service delivery protests', the South African media has been accused of being 'sparse' and offering only 'descriptions of rioting mobs', with 'little or no attempt made to find out what motivates the protests' (Friedman, 2011, p. 111). According to other studies, this is not unusual as '[m]ainstream media often discredit and marginalize protest action … [focusing] on tactics, spectacles and dramatic actions, rather than the underlying reasons for protest' (Harlow & Johnson, 2011, p. 1359), with 'selective coverage of violence' (Baylor, 1996, p. 249). Despite such claims, I could find no previous studies examining how the South African media frames 'service delivery protests', although various studies have argued that the term is neither descriptive nor appropriate, since 'protests frequently mix claims about services with other issues' (Alexander & Pfaffe, 2014, p. 207), '[d]eeper discontent with the available channels for participatory democracy underlies the protesters' anger' (Sinwell et al., 2009, p. 9), and the term 'is functioning as a catch-all term for multiple issues of governance and government' (Nyar & Wray, 2012, p. 26).

Research on media framing of protests elsewhere in the world has shown that 'the frames used most often by the news media did not necessarily advance the protesters cause, and often directly hindered it' (Baylor, 1996, p. 249). Studies in the US and Britain have found that while groups of protesters frame issues in one way, in the media 'framing contests routinely favour political elites' (Carragee & Roefs, 2004, p. 216).

I would argue that in South Africa there are competing elites[1] — on the one hand, 'white' South Africans who control most of the economy (Giampiccoli & Mtapuri, 2014; Ntim & Soobaroyen, 2013) and who may also over-determine media content in favour of white middle-class narratives (Friedman, 2011), and on the other hand, political elites in government dominated by high-ranking members of the African National Congress (ANC), who complain of media bias (South African Human Rights Commission, 2000). Therefore, if media are a 'means by which powerful social classes maintain their control over society'

[1] Steenveld (2004, p. 102) also argues that unlike Western societies which are largely treated as homogenous by the media, in South Africa 'there is a sharp division between economic power (largely "white"), and political power (largely black)'.

(Steenveld, 2004, p. 92), the contestation between economic power brokers and political power brokers may well result in a different media picture of protest to that identified in the literature on media framing of protest in the US and Europe.

While elsewhere in the world protest stories may 'rely heavily on official government or police sources, rarely quoting protesters themselves' (Harlow & Johnson, 2011, p. 1362),the representations of protests by the South African media may well be more complex, especially given the 'conflicted relationship between the ANC and the political print media' (Johnston, 2005, p. 13). Since the media are a 'site of struggle where there is no consensual agreement between the media and the democratic government' (Radebe, 2007, p. 99), it is possible that in covering 'service delivery protests' the media might not concede to frame the voice of the 'democratic government' as authoritative.

As South Africa is in the process of a social change (recovering from the social engineering of apartheid), the media framing of 'service delivery protests' may 'contribute new metaphors, narratives, myths, information, knowledge, and even new forms of looking at the world' (Hertog & McLeod, 2001, p. 147). Since 'service delivery protests' occur in the context of 'the ongoing failure of formal channels of participation' (Thompson, 2011, p. 2), the media could be problematising and challenging official government framing of reality, and helping communities to rectify communications break-downs. If the protests are not just contestations about 'houses, water, taps and toilets, but also about political processes' (Atkinson, 2007, p. 63), to what extent are problematic political processes highlighted by the media, and if the media does cover those processes, how are they framed?

Given the accusations levelled at the South African mass media that 'the journalistic reporting of most protest events has often obscured the finer details of perceived grievance issues and how these transform into protest action' (Tapela, 2013, p. 2), as well as the contrasts in the South African political landscape compared with other countries, this study will seek to unpack how the South African media frames 'service delivery protests', comparing and contrasting this media framing with previous literature which has studied the framing of protests elsewhere in the world. Exploring the interaction between 'service

delivery protesters' and the media 'represents an opportunity to examine not only frames embedded in news texts, but also the process of framing within movements and news organizations' (Carragee & Roefs, 2004, p. 228).

1.3. Objectives

This study aims to establish how the South African print media framed 'service delivery protests' in 2013. The study also aims to link framing in news texts 'to broader social and ideological contexts' (Carragee & Roefs, 2004, p. 228).

The study will also aim to establish the following:

1. Are the frames found in other studies of media framing of social protest relevant to South African print media coverage (in the SA media database) of 'service delivery protests' or does South African coverage generate other novel frames?
2. How are the frames in SA Media sample coverage politically significant? What do they tell us about the organisation of power in media coverage of 'service delivery protests'?
3. What are the implications of the political, power arrangements for 'service delivery protesters' and for our understanding of 'service delivery protests'?

1.4. Methodology

This study explores the literature on 'service delivery protests' and undertakes a framing analysis of print media coverage of 'service delivery protests'. Although there are multiple media platforms in South Africa, including radio, television, print media and internet platforms, for ease of access to a relevant sample, this study focuses on print media sources as catalogued in the SA Media database. While Municipal IQ (2014a) indicates that 155 major 'service delivery protests' were recorded by the media or online sources in South

Africa in 2013, this study focuses on the 55 print media articles in the SA Media database from 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2013.

The sample was coded with respect to 19 frames, which were identified in other studies on the framing of social protest, or from the literature on 'service delivery protests', and new frames were added as they were found during the coding process. Each article was coded as having a frame present (1) or absent (0). The list of frames identified were as follows: i) contest; ii) injustice; iii) collective action; iv) inconvenience; v) economic; vi) war/ spectacle; vii) sympathy; viii) accountability; ix) law/crime; x) moral; xi) democracy; xii) failed democracy; xiii) corruption; xiv) rights; xv) high prevalence; xvi) failed governance; xvii) factional interests; xviii) police action; xix) dialogue. Data analysis involved identifying the most prevalent frames, and a hierarchical cluster analysis using Ward's method, to identify which frames were linked. The sources used in each article were also identified, coded, and data was analysed in terms of prevalence and hierarchical cluster analysis. The cluster analysis of frames and sources, were then correlated to identify which sources were used with which frames.

1.5. Findings

This study found that the most prevalent frames on 'service delivery protests' used by the South African print media in 2013 were the war/spectacle frame and the failed democracy frame, followed by the law/crime frame. While the war/spectacle frame corresponded with other framing studies of protest, which found that Western media focussed on superficial action (Baylor, 1996; Cottle, 2008; Harlow & Johnson, 2011), the failed democracy frame (alongside other failing state frames) were unique to this study of protests; however, they were not unique to discourses on Africa (Cornwall, 2007; Englebert & Tull, 2008; Gruffydd Jones, 2013; Gruffydd-Jones, 2008; Szeftel, 1998). Local government and police sources were most prevalent in the sample, which corresponded with previous media framing studies of protest, which found that elite sources dominate protest coverage (Carragee & Roefs, 2004; Gitlin, 2003; Matthes, 2012). Analysis showed that the media framing, on the whole,

supported neither protesters nor the state, but instead suggested that protest is illegitimate, but also indicative of a failing state that needs to be remedied.

1.6. Conclusion

This study unpacks the key frames and sources used by the South African print media in 2013 to frame 'service delivery protests'; and explores how the frames are linked to each other, how the sources link to each other, and how the frames and sources correlate. It then goes on to analyse the political significance of the absent and present frames, and the clustering of frames and sources, and what this tells us about i) the print media as a political role-player; ii) the ability of protesters to make their political voices heard; iii) the political terrain as it is shaped by and in response to 'service delivery protests'. The study takes the view that the protests 'are demonstrably the *stuff* of contemporary politics' (Cottle, 2008, p. 855), and that understanding this political terrain helps us understand more about South African political lives.

Exploring the media's construction of 'service delivery protests' through frames 'necessarily involves an examination of power' (Carragee & Roefs, 2004, p. 217). Exposing the frames inherent in South African print media of 'service delivery protests' in 2013, not only reveals the news frames, but also the frames deployed by protesters and by other political forces, including police, local officials, political parties, academic analysts, etc. The framing analysis yields important information about the kinds of social change taking place in South Africa, the contestation between the protesters and the state, and between the media, the protesters and the state. While the study does not suggest that 'the divide between elected representatives and community members is deepening' (Fakir & Moloi, 2011, p. 116), it does suggest that there is still contestation about the kinds of spaces citizens should use for political engagement, and contestation about how power operates at local government level.

2. Literature review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter investigates how 'service delivery protests' are understood in South Africa and puts these protests in historical context. Although I could find no previous studies of how the media frames 'service delivery protests' in South Africa, literature on the nature of these protests, including unpacking the causes, strategies, and processes of protest is diverse.

With regard to this study, which looks at the media framing of 'service delivery protests', it is also important to highlight the role of the media in these struggles, since some 'protests were carefully planned so as to have maximum impact by involving media organizations … protests do not start before journalists arrive' (Tapela, 2012, p. 75), and protesters in one area often mimic media examples of other protests (Booysen, 2007).

In this section, I will contextualise 'service delivery protests' in relation to the history of protests in South Africa, the significance of violence in protest, how protests against the local state are related to the structure and competencies of the local state, how protests arise from contested notions of citizenship, and the economic climate in which protests have been and are taking place.

2.2. Overview

Service delivery protests in South Africa emerged after the third democratic election of April 2004, when Thabo Mbeki took office as president for a second time (Veriava, 2014; Hart, 2006; Kotze & Taylor, 2010; Hart, 2008; Alexander, 2010; Booysen, 2007), but continue into the Zuma era in a similar vein (Alexander, 2010). The first 'service delivery protest' is usually identified as having taken place in Harrismith on 31 August 2004 and resulted in the death of a teenager, Tebogo Mkhonza (Veriava, 2014; Freedom of Expression Institute, 2004; Booysen, 2007). However, the term 'service delivery protest' did not come into popular use immediately, and the first record of its use appears to be in the Diamonds Field Advertiser on 27 May 2005 (Modiba, 2005). While the term continues to be popularly used in the media, as well as in academic writing (e.g. Jain, 2010; Jili, 2012; Allan & He ese, 2011; Tapela, 2012;

Connolly, 2014; Johnston & Bernstein, 2007; Kotze & Taylor, 2010; Netswera & Kgalane, 2014; Ngwane, 2011; Tsheola et al., 2014), 'service delivery protests' are also argued to be, not about service delivery, but instead about protesters 'dissatisfaction with government's poor consultation' (Mathekga & Buccus, 2006, p. 13), 'claims for substantive citizenship' (Lau et al., 2010, p. 15), 'problems located within local government structures' (Sinwell et al., 2009, p. 2), and because of 'the ongoing failure of formal channels of participation and representation' (Thompson, 2011, p. 2).

Despite the contentions about how to understand these protests and what to name them, it is generally agreed that they differ somewhat from the period immediately preceding, where South Africa saw the rise of various well-organised 'social movements' tackling a variety of issues on an ongoing basis (Ballard, Habib, Valodia, et al., 2006). The 'service delivery protests' emerging after 2004 were different to the 'social movement' era, as they are mainly local (Ballard, Habib & Valodia, 2006; Alexander, 2010), likely to pop up suddenly and die down again quickly (Bond & Mottiar, 2013), with protesters often seeing themselves as still aligned with the ANC despite anger and frustration (Booysen, 2007; Matlala & Bénit-Gbaffou, 2012; Marais, 2011; Sinwell et al., 2009). Even though the specifics of what each local area is protesting about may vary, 'service delivery protests' are similar 'in forms of contention … geographical space … organisation … and demographics' (Alexander & Pfaffe, 2014, p. 207).

2.3. A culture of protest

Local-level social contestation involving regular mass action by communities has been taking place in South Africa since at least the 1970s (Ballard, Habib, Valodia, et al., 2006; Bundy, 2000). Recent 'service delivery protests' may be seen as a continuation of the contestation repertoires of the apartheid era, since there are 'similarities in the issues taken up, their framing, repertoires of resistance, songs, symbols, etc.' (Ngwane, 2011, p. 84). Indeed the 'long history of violent protest culture' (Netswera & Kgalane, 2014, p. 264) maintains a

trajectory in terms of how protesters use 'the spaces available to them as social and political 'theatres'' (Bozzoli, 2004, p. 10). As under apartheid, protests today are not 'the practice of the politically marginalised but of the politically engaged' (Piper & Africa, 2012, p. 225). The political cultures of the past are 'mobilised and reinvented in order to suit contemporary political needs and opportunities' (Bénit-Gbaffou & Piper, 2012, p. 175).

In the context of social and economic exclusion, by which poor black people are confined to the townships by their poverty, today's protesters often live in very similar spatial terrains to those of apartheid, whereby 'individual/collective bodies suffer from everyday violence' (Stewart, 2014, p. 2), with limited access to housing, water, sanitation, food and healthcare. Because today's protesters are similarly confined to spaces geographically removed from where other citizens access services, the features of mobilisation bear similar spatial marks, in terms of the operations of local politics, and 'the use of spatial technologies and tactics such as barricades, the myriad ways in which crowds occupy, use and manipulate spaces, and the struggles over territory' (Bozzoli, 2004, p. 9). This results in similar identity formation and consciousness, so that space becomes 'extraordinarily central to the nature of rebellions' (Bozzoli, 2004, p. 10). Hence, struggles in post-apartheid South Africa 'are very often local and immediate; they are pragmatic and quite logical responses to everyday hardships' (Ballard, Habib & Valodia, 2006, p. 402). The recurrent gesturing to the past makes visible a particular way of understanding politics, particular ways of talking about being political, and a particular way of understanding what it means to be political (Veriava, 2014).

Like the civic organisations that came before them, 'service delivery protests' are 'focused upon aspects of life particular to their time and place' (Bundy, 2000, p. 27). Both during and post-apartheid material demands are often central to mobilising protest, with socio-economic rights seen as central component of democracy (Zuern, 2011). We can also see in the operation of 'service delivery protests' strong connection with the civics' notion of participatory democracy, whereby 'the ballot box constituted a truncated and deformed form of citizen power' (Adler & Steinberg, 2000, p. 8) — elections are not the sum total of people's

political life; indeed township citizens demand much more regular, active participation in the political practices that determine their lives.

While the civic organisations and structures of the past all but collapsed after the end of apartheid, we can arguably see in the convening of 'service delivery protests' a still surviving notion that '[c]ivic organizations should remain independent from and not participate in state structures' (Seekings, 2000b, p. 54). The civics articulated the idea that 'traditional institutions of representation are inadequate and that grassroots organs of resistance are the embryos of popular government' (Steinberg, 2000, p. 175). Arguably, service delivery protests reveal that township communities are again finding purely representative democracy to be inadequate. And despite the civics having 'lost influence' with the institution of new local government structures (Seekings, 2000a), similar forms of civic organisation are once again flexing their muscles.

Because 'government only listens when we toyi-toyi' (Piper & Nadvi, 2010, p. 226), toyi-toyi as a 'resistance culture' is vital to mobilising and uniting black people in political action (Twala & Koetaan, 2006). While the ANC government might be strongly opposed to the idea that civics should play a major role in democratic representation post-apartheid (Seekings, 2000a), the consistent displays through (often) violent protest suggest that township communities still retain the right and power to contest the foreclosure of community organising as a means for political expression and finding voice.

However, the current form of protest regards creating instability on the doorstep of the local state 'as the most useful strategy by aggrieved members of society' (Netswera & Kgalane, 2014, p. 269), so it continually re-inscribes 'political desire within the domain of the nation state' (Veriava, 2014, p. 179). This means that power is, in effect, handed to the state: the state must resolve issues on behalf of the people. And, in the current milieu, unlike in the apartheid past, there is no overarching broader national struggle uniting these grassroots, issue-based mobilisations (Piper & Nadvi, 2010, p. 215). Therefore, despite the regularity and militancy of the 'service delivery protests', they continue to operate in atomized silos, preventing 'a broader advance' (Mottiar & Bond, 2012, p. 328).

2.4. The politics of violence

Apart from the political limitations discussed in the previous section, there are other problematic ways that protesters draw on the past. For example, in Mpumalanga young men 'draw on the repertoires of militarised masculinities of the past' (Langa & Kiguwa, 2013, p. 23), through which violence is 'a nurtured male activity' and militarism allows individuals to define themselves in terms of a collective, reducing feelings of social exclusion (Lau et al., 2010). While insurgent politics can help disempowered communities recover agency, gain confidence, hone leadership skills, master local developmental issues, and develop a political identity (Ngwane, 2011), insurgent politics demonstrates 'the paradoxical combination of liberatory and oppressive symbolic and physical practices' (Von Holdt & Kirsten, 2011, p. 32).

While the media are unlikely to support violent tactics (Baylor, 1996), the meanings of violence may be dramatically different for media and communities. Whether or not the media sees violent protest as legitimate, protesters undertaking violent actions usually 'have some kind of broad mandate to undertake these actions on behalf of the larger and more heterogeneous crowd that represents the community at public gatherings' (Von Holdt & Kirsten, 2011, p. 12).

Several studies insist that 'violent protests are instigated by the police's use of force' (Mchunu & Theron, 2013, p. 121), violence 'comes as a direct result of police provocation' (Kunene, 2014, p. 257), and '[h]eavy-handed policing has led to, or worsened, violent confrontations' (Alexander & Pfaffe, 2014, p. 207). It may be that due to the delegitimisation of communities' own created spaces of political participation, 'reactions of authorities to the protests focus on the restoration of order and safeguarding of public property' (Nyar & Wray, 2012, p. 31), with police 'engag[ing] in collective violence against protesting communities' (Von Holdt & Kirsten, 2011, p. 3).

However, violent protest particularly often takes place in urban and peri-urban formal housing areas and informal settlements with unmet service delivery needs (Tapela, 2013, p. 3). In these areas, the 'dynamics around poverty, unemployment, population growth,

inequality, relative deprivation, marginalization, injustice, indignity, identity and histories of struggle activism by predominantly black residents coalesce' (ibid). Some authors argue that protesters were simply 'protesting violently to reflect their frustration and anger' (Jili, 2012, p. vii), the powerless 'are fed up with being dominated and exploited' (Paller, 2013, p. 587), and violent outcomes result from 'situations where the individual feels thwarted' (Lau et al., 2010, p. 12) or that 'persisting racial inequalities result in a high level of social violence' (Peet, 2002, p. 75). Others suggest that 'everyday forms of community expression are mostly ignored by the media' (Thompson & Nleya, 2010, p. 225), and 'the current political climate is characterised by generic violent forms of engagement' (Langa & Kiguwa, 2013, p. 27).

While collective violence may give the poor the power to challenge authority, impact on the world, and force a response from authority (van Holdt in von Holdt & Alexander, 2012), violent actions 'also represent strivings for societal inclusion and claims for substantive citizenship' (Lau et al., 2010, p. 15). Nevertheless, violence can corrode organisations and paradoxically combines oppressive and liberatory practice (Von Holdt & Kirsten, 2011).

In particular, violence is 'a nurtured male activity … [and] therefore appears to be a "natural" response against the perceived threat to individual's personal or group identity' (Lau et al., 2010, p. 13). While women do take part in violent collective action, violent protest re-inscribes 'social meanings of masculinity' (Langa & Kiguwa, 2013, p. 29). So while violence may disrupt 'the dominant symbolic order' (Von Holdt & Kirsten, 2011, p. 27), it also expresses 'the local hierarchies and prejudices of local moral orders' (Von Holdt & Kirsten, 2011, p. 32).

2.5. Why local? How local shapes protest agendas

A convergence of factors are leading to the local character of protests including, as already discussed, that protesters have seemingly not identified a national uniting theme, despite the impact that national government decisions are having on local governments (Kunene, 2014; Nyar & Wray, 2012). Aside from that, many of South Africa's municipalities are understaffed, with no proper policy framework, no performance management systems, under-qualified

staff and officials appointed on the basis of political reliability, not skills (Koelble & Siddle, 2013a). Despite the inclusion in law of democratically elected ward councils, integrated development planning (IDP), and the necessity of consulting widely on local government budgeting processes, these systems for local participation in government are not functioning properly in many cases (e.g. Booysen, 2007; Atkinson et al., 2006; Netswera & Kgalane, 2014; Tapela, 2012; Akinboade et al., 2013; Koelble & Siddle, 2013a). So it would not be surprising if protests occurred because of 'local authorities' failure/ inability to deliver basic services' (Akinboade et al., 2013, p. 459) and 'protests were about lack of or poor services delivery … which in turn is a result of poor management', corruption, nepotism, low budget and of pro-market policies adopted by the new governments (Jili, 2012, p. vii).

Arguably, some of the failures of the new local government structures can be traced back to the ANC's dismantling of the civics, and the way it confined civic organisation to a developmental, not political role (Seekings, 2000a). In the height of apartheid civic organisation, it was clear that democracy was about more than just formal institutions and processes; it 'must include a political culture which allows for dissent' (Cherry, 2000, p. 106). While the new local government structures sought to suppress the 'insurrectionary inheritance' of the civic movement past (Adler & Steinberg, 2000), 'service delivery protests' suggest that such suppression has not been entirely successful.

As the new systems of local government go along with 'policies of fierce fiscal austerity' that starve local governments of resources (Hart, 2008, p. 681), municipalities emerge as sites of contradiction in terms of how the South African state conceives of its role in governing poor bodies, 'encapsulating in an intense form the tensions between stern rhetorics of efficiency, fiscal discipline, and responsibility on the one hand, and invocations of local participation, social justice, and democracy on the other' (Hart, 2008, p. 684).

Nevertheless, while some government officials react to local protests with 'honest acceptance' (Atkinson, 2007, p. 53), other officials insist that 'service delivery protests' are not driven by need but by selfish political motives (Mkhabela, 2014), aggravated by criminal activity (Miraftab, 2006, p. 195). Government officials are not the only ones arguing that

protests are not about service delivery; several authors have argued that service delivery is not the central issue: rather 'relative deprivation' (Allan & Heese, 2011, p. 2) and 'income inequality must rank highly among the structural determinants of the protests' (Alexander, 2010, p. 32), as protesting communities 'are typically significantly poorer, have higher levels of unemployment and have lower access to services than the average resident living in their municipalities' (Akinboade et al., 2013, p. 459). Some authors argue that protests are about community perceptions rather than the objective circumstances (Nleya, 2011), because people are willing to wait for delivery unless they see everyone else in their municipality getting services while they wait (Allan & Heese, 2011).

Other authors find that 'protests have not only been about houses, water, taps and toilets, but also about political processes'(Atkinson, 2007, p. 63). Arguably, elected representatives are letting constituents down by improving their own lot while ignoring the plight of the communities they serve (Alexander, 2010). Frequently, there are no effective channels to air grievances or resolve problems at local level (Nleya, 2011), and protest often follows from 'unsuccessful requests to meet ward councillors or municipal officials in order to share grievances' (Nyar & Wray, 2012, p. 30).

Across much of the literature on 'service delivery protests', authors identify 'local clientelism as a rising form of relationship between voters and the state' (Bénit-Gbaffou, 2012), with community members often claiming that government officials were 'engaging in nepotism' (Jain, 2010, p. 31). For example, in Sedibeng reasons for protest included allegations of 'rampant corruption and nepotism in local government structures' (Akinboade et al., 2013, p. 467), while in Phomolong 'various structures of the local state aid the politics of patronage and clientelism' (Kunene, 2014, p. 79). Despite laying claims of corruption, none of the research actually investigates the claims to establish validity. Some research has found that perceptions of corruption are 'exacerbated by the clumsiness, opacity, confusion and capriciousness' of state functions (Rubin, 2011, p. 488). International research has found that 'perceptions of corruption are in fact only weakly linked to actual experience' (Harrison, 2006, p. 15). Indeed, it is difficult to find evidence to determine 'if

corruption levels are worsening or whether there has simply been increasing legal and public recognition … [or] manipulation of public fears' (Brown & Cloke, 2004, p. 278).

Instead, corruption discourses frame 'particular norms and values of bureaucratic practice' as the only acceptable model (Harrison, 2006, p. 15), and imagines a state that is able 'to separate good management techniques … from the political content of what is being managed' (Polzer, 2001, p. 20). Such notions of the state and bureaucracy express an ideology that the government should perform purely technical functions, without being influenced by 'the various networks, factions and institutions that collectively get called "the state"' (Pierce, 2006, p. 898). Corruption discourses contribute to perceptions of Africa as 'less able to construct good societies' (Gebel, 2013, p. 327), and function as 'political strategies to restructure the laws, institutions and the civil society in target countries' (Gebel, 2013, p. 319). Nevertheless, as elsewhere in Africa, community assertions of corruption are complex in that they 'might contain both a popular antipathy to corruption and a struggle for patronage' (Alexander, 2010, p. 11). Discourses of corruption reveal a 'complex interplay between indigenous and foreign understandings of appropriate governmental conduct' (Pierce, 2006, p. 888).

Despite being critical of the discourse, it may still be true that 'there are no effective measures to deal with corrupt or incompetent municipal councillors and officials, nor ways to make these officials downwardly accountable' (Tapela & Pointer, 2013) so that people view themselves 'as powerless objects and subjects of the government, rather than as citizens whose voice was taken seriously' (Fakir & Moloi, 2011, p. 112). Hence, the protests have been read as being rooted in a crisis 'of formal democratic structures and processes embedded in the formal spaces' (Thompson, 2011, p. 2). The breakdown of communication between protesting communities and their elected officials occurs despite structures of ward councils and integrated development planning being in place to ensure public participation in local decision-making (Tsheola, 2012). Therefore, people try to assert political power by building a collective community voice, distinct from formal party politics (Alexander, 2010); in

turn these new spaces created by communities tend to be delegitimised by institutions of power, who only recognise their own facilitated structures as legitimate (Miraftab, 2006).

The delegitimisation (and sometimes even criminalisation) of community's own created structures of political participation, 'paint a picture of repressive state rather than an accommodating and approachable state' (Sinwell et al., 2009, p. 9). The climate of regulating service delivery through integrated development planning structures can exacerbate 'dangerous divisions in South Africa's social fabric, eroding public accountability and fomenting the public apathy, frustration and anger necessary for violent protestations' (Tsheola, 2012, p. 165).

However, while some may argue that protests 'reflect disappointment with the fruits of democracy' (Alexander, 2010, p. 37) and protesters 'have lost their trust in government' (Jili, 2012, p. 76), it is also true that these protests do not necessarily represent a radical break against the forms of governance or even 'a radical critique of neoliberal policies pursued by the ANC run capitalist state' (Kunene, 2014, p. 296). Despite the negative impact of the ANC's neoliberal policies on the poor (Habib & Padayachee, 2000), protesters often fail to recognise that national government may be as responsible for their woes as local government (Nyar & Wray, 2012). For example, while protesters identify local officials as corrupt, the discourse ignores the role of neoliberal practices in enabling corruption: as neoliberalism has led to privatisation and out-sourcing, so government officials have been able to use their privileged position to benefit from the resulting business opportunities, at the same time as state spending cuts have left the state with a limited budget to monitor and regulate itself (Brown & Cloke, 2004; Harrington & Manji, 2013; Harrison, 2006, 1999; Pierce, 2006; Szeftel, 1998). Internationally, corruption discourses have become more prevalent as neoliberalism has rolled out (Brown & Cloke, 2004; Harrison, 2006; Pierce, 2006; Szeftel, 1998), with communities identifying corrupt individuals as the problem — not the economic and political system. So protesters 'stress that they are loyal to the ANC and believe that the root of their problems is located within local government structures and not within the ANC itself' (Sinwell et al., 2009, p. 2).

Whereas protesters may be seen as an oppositional part of civil society, given the lack of resistance to the overarching state per se, protest is 'closely articulated with or integrated into — even contradictorily and co-optively at times — key elements of the ruling establishment' (Berger, 2002, p. 26). Thus the protests can be seen as the 'contestation between factions for power … [which] continues to take place through the ANC' (von Holdt, 2013, p. 599). In these contestations, contained within the party-political structure of governance, interactions between democratic institutions and power relations tend to lead to 'practices of violence in struggles over social order and hierarchy' (Von Holdt & Kirsten, 2011, p. 7). Nevertheless, the processes of protest remain quite ritualised — as already discussed, even the tactics do not represent a break from the established social order, since protesters continue to mimic the 'insurgent civil society of the struggle against apartheid' (ibid), using burning tyres and barricading roads (Mottiar & Bond, 2011, p. 314), 'memoranda, petitions, toy-toying, procession, stay-aways, election boycotts … looting, destruction of buildings, chasing unpopular individuals out of townships …' (Alexander, 2010, p. 26).

2.6. Protest, the construction of citizenship and forms of state

Despite the continuities with the past, people shape their lives in geographically and historically nested ways (Ballard, 2014), so these mimicking practices also inscribe 'new meanings of "true liberation" … new constructs around what true citizenship might mean' (Langa & Kiguwa, 2013, p. 25). Although 'service delivery protests' can be seen as a means by which protesters hold the state to account, it is also true that by enshrining constitutional rights which will only be realised over time (as for social economic rights), the state has adopted 'global and internal measures whereby segments of the population are treated differently, leading to injury, violence and vulnerability' (Stewart, 2014, p. 2). While local government policies and structures are designed to increase local participation in state decision-making, 'translating policy into meaningful and effective participation at the local level for all groups is proving difficult' (McEwan, 2005, p. 974).

Even though these new policies and structures of governance are accompanied by rights enshrined in the constitution and new technologies for governing the poor (albeit ones articulating policies of fiscal austerity, such as prepaid meters) (Veriava, 2014; Tissington, 2013; Tapela, 2012; Van Heusden, 2012; von Schnitzler, 2008), many poor black communities are still on the political and socio-economic periphery (Kotze & Taylor, 2010). Some argue that the resulting 'service delivery protests' present 'unambiguous illustrations of a faltering democracy' (Tsheola et al., 2014, p. 392), and that 'pockets of fragility were creeping into South Africa and the state' (Connolly, 2014, p. 88). They argue that a need exists for 'genuine public participation' to curb 'the space for rebellion' (Nembambula, 2014, p. 149) and renewal of the state-society contract 'to prevent future protests and violence' (Connolly, 2014, p. 88).

This 'failing state' discourse 'must be recognized as a contemporary successor to a much longer genealogy of imperial discourse about Africa' (Gruffydd Jones, 2013, p. 49). Through this discourse the African state is identified as lacking and inferior, creating a situation in which protest thrives, while 'the achievement of a democratic civic tradition [is] all the more elusive in South Africa' (Reddy, 2010, p. 203). The assumption underlying this discourse is that a high prevalence of protest is counter to a thriving democracy.

Given that 'service delivery protests' remain local and do not build into a broader movement, it can be argued that 'service delivery protests' actually reveal the strength of the state, not its fragility, in that it is able to contain the spread of protests. The protests 'seem to stem less from abject failure to provide services and entitlements than from the *partial* success of those efforts' (Marais, 2011, p. 458). In a sense, post-2004, the ANC government has out-maneuvered the social movements that contested state apparatus from the late 1990s, as these movements have all but collapsed, while the ongoing protests 'exemplify the failure of the first round of post-apartheid NSMs [New Social Movements] to tap into huge reservoirs of popular anger and discontent' (Hart, 2008, p. 682).

Nevertheless, I argue that the landscape of citizenship is empty for the poor and revolt will emerge 'in spite of everything that is established to prevent or suppress it' (Veriava,

2014, p. 40); township communities have not forfeited the cornerstones of their insurrectionary past. Abstract constitutional rights are 'unresponsive to the everyday violence' of poverty (Stewart, 2014, p. 20), because those expressing distress about their material conditions 'are often met with direct state resistance, political confrontation, and conflict with the law' (Stewart, 2014, p. 6). Although the constitution guarantees socio-economic rights (if they are affordable), it also uses a 'paradoxical device' of 'progressive realisation' of rights such that it constitutes 'a state of exception, in which the rights of the citizen are [indefinitely] suspended and deferred pending appropriate governmental action' (Veriava, 2014, p. 211). While protest may well be about the 'terms of inclusion in the system' (Piper & Africa, 2012, p. 225) the system is only able to respond with a 'mix of force and persuasion' (Ngwane, 2011, p. 128) since it has identified a second economy[2] which makes a segment of society 'superfluous to the "modern economy" and in need of paternal guidance' (Hart, 2006, p. 26).

Despite discourses of participation, the poor are seen as an underclass who make continual demands on the state amid a 'culture of entitlement', even though they are also the site at which the wrongs of apartheid must also find redress (Veriava, 2014). Indeed, '[b]elying the constitutional universalism of rights are representations of the non-working poor as an alien threat to the body politic, for which self-help is a psychological as well as social treatment' (Barchiesi, 2011, p. 107). By associating emancipation and liberation with 'self-reliance', the ANC authors fiscal discipline and market forces as the solution to poverty (Barchiesi, 2011). Even though it still celebrates 'the contribution of grassroots radicalism to liberation, the new rulers moved to tame and defuse it as inimical to investment and growth' (Barchiesi, 2011, p. 64).

[2] According to Thabo Mbeki (2003), South Africa is constituted of two economies, not one. The first economy is modern, technologically savvy and educated, while the second economy is composed of unskilled people who are surplus to the first economy due to low employability.

2.7. Economy as a system of exclusion

Even before the end of apartheid, the state tried to 'respond to black South Africans' demands through their integration as consumers of services' (Van Heusden, 2012, p. 231). In line with this notion of citizens as consumers, the ANC government became 'preoccupied with the fiscal consequences of non-payment' (Barchiesi, 2011, p. 64). Starting with its Operation Masakhane in 1995, the ANC urged South Africans 'to pay for services such as water, electricity, sewerage, and refuse collection' (McDonald & Pape, 2002, p. 1). Thus, the state tried to prepare those who are unable to pay to accept limited services, and therefore a neoliberal model of cost-recovery dominates in national legislation and local government practice (McDonald & Pape, 2002). At the same time, government services saw 'increasing privatization and commercialization, particularly in the form of public sector corporatization where publicly owned and operated … systems are managed like private businesses' (McDonald & Ruiters, 2005, p. 13–14). Thus, in response to the 'ideological dichotomy between private-based and state-driven solutions, the ANC invokes a flexible pragmatism of public-private partnerships' (Barchiesi, 2011, p. 71).

The introduction of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR) in 1996, saw increased cuts to social spending, privatisation, a restructuring of public services and fiscal restraint (Fiil-Flynn & Naidoo, 2004). Several authors argue that the problems that dog local government and lead to 'service delivery protests' now, can be traced back to these national government neoliberal economic policies, which have 'sustained massive inequality' (Alexander, 2010, p. 37) because the pressure to cut costs at local government level has contributed to 'a sharp deficit in terms of service delivery' (Mathekga & Buccus, 2006, p. 15).

It may be true that the commercialisation, handed down from national government to local government, makes the policy of locally based decision-making, based in local advocacy, a moot point (Tsheola, 2012). However, case study research has often found among protesters 'an absence of a radical critique of the neoliberal policies pursued by the ANC-run capitalist state' (Kunene, 2014, p. 296). Perhaps this is because 'service delivery

protests' are focussed on the local government and protesters fail to recognise that 'local government only has certain powers and functions … [and] some dissatisfaction should be directed towards other spheres of government' (Nyar & Wray, 2012, p. 24).

However, 'service delivery protests' continue, even though national policy has changed in response to the resistance to privatisation during the new social movement phase of protest (Veriava, 2014; Hart, 2013a, 2006), and due to the failure of GEAR to create jobs and ensure redistribution (du Toit & Neves, 2007). Instead, the government has moved towards a notion of a 'developmental state' (Aliber et al., 2006), with increased government spending, slowed down privatisation of key parastatals, expanded public works programmes, an extended social security through broader access to social grants, and creating a role for 'community development workers' to identify people who were 'unregistered' and 'indigent' so as to 'draw them into social security nets' (Hart, 2006, p. 13).

After the first phase of fiscal austerity which sought to '"normalise" the fiscal relationship between the state and its citizens' (von Schnitzler, 2008, p. 907), the state began to transfer huge resources from the national coffers to local governments, while trying to bring local governments under provincial and national government control (Hart, 2013a). The main way that these transfers take place is through government's indigent policies; and, as a result, the roll-out of indigency policies are a key site through which local government tensions play out (Tissington, 2013; Hart, 2013a). Part of the conflict arises because while government has set the broad terrain for indigency and allocates funds to local governments based on the number of indigent citizens, each municipality is left to determine for itself who can and will be classified as indigent (Tissington, 2013; Hart, 2013a).

With regard to determining who and who is not indigent, local government is the site of contradictory impulses that arise from two different definitions of citizenship. On the one hand, government is anxious to 'create a consumer citizen who will … understand the fiscal responsibilities of citizenship' (von Schnitzler, 2008, p. 916). On the other hand, the government is trying to identify and target poor households with free basic services through municipal indigent registers (Tissington, 2013). This involves local governments in 'endless

battles' to sort out which of their constituents cannot pay for services and which are simply unwilling to pay (Hart, 2013a). At the same time, 'the poor come to occupy an extremely paradoxical place' (Veriava, 2014, p. 210), whereby they are both dangerous classes, who amid a "culture of entitlement" are making undeserved claims on the state purse *and* they also deserve 'a modicum of social security, but on tightly disciplined terms' (Hart, 2006, p. 26). These two state conceptions of citizenship are also at odds with people's own conceptions, whereby township residents express the belief that they have a right to basic services and question the deferral of those rights, challenging 'the imposition of the rule of money as a social relation' (Van Heusden & Pointer, 2006, p. 110).

The complexities of how the different notions of citizenship play out puts municipalities at odds with councillors and with township residents resulting in 'indigent policies [that] are not effective at ensuring that basic services are affordable to all' (Tissington, 2013, p. 74). Just as apartheid was 'an exclusionary mechanism that allocated rights and privileges on the basis of racial group membership' (Twala, 2014, p. 159), so too the indigent policies seek to exclude most citizens from access to free services and resources, with a 'tight-fisted attitude to any meaningful assistance' (Tissington, 2013, p. 73). Through indigent policies, the poor are pathologised as having 'external ailments that strike individuals and groups predisposed to specific misfortunes or lack of initiative, morality, or temperament' (Barchiesi, 2011, p. 72).

So economic policies and the complex bureaucracy for determining who is indigent make it difficult to effectively address South Africa's sharp and growing inequalities, and what are ostensibly 'pro-poor' policies feed into and inflame 'the popular anger they were designed to contain' (Hart, 2013a, p. 97). The efforts to systematise the definition of who is poor, or rather so poor that they cannot afford to pay, is 'tearing apart the fabric of local government' (Hart, 2013a, p. 141). In essence, the state is trying to provide technical solutions to political problems (Hart, 2013a), and arguably, through 'service delivery protests', communities are refusing to have the political content of their lives — questions about power relations and their access to rights — reduced to technocratic bean counting.

Resisting the exclusion created by the state's economic notions of citizenship, 'service delivery protests' may be seen as an effort by citizens to make themselves, and their struggles for meagre livelihoods, visible. While the state definitions of citizenship only leave room for agency in terms of paying for and consuming services, through 'service delivery protests', township dwellers reassert a broader definition of citizenship and agency, whereby they can contest local power relations and local systems of delivery.

2.8. Conclusion

The literature on 'service delivery protests' identifies diverse but overlapping motivators of protests. On the one hand, local politicians try to juggle competing demands in terms of managing fiscal austerity; on the other they are faced with powerful demands from their constituencies (Hart, 2002). Viewing this from the outside, protesters experience 'numerous frustrations, often building up over a long period of time' (Atkinson, 2007, p. 58). Given the local understandings of rights enshrined in the constitution, protesters see themselves as demanding citizenship rights, not just for service delivery (socio-economic rights) but also the right to have a voice (Thompson, 2011; Tapela, 2012; Thompson & Nleya, 2010). How this complex picture plays out in the media will be discussed in succeeding chapters.

3. Theoretical underpinnings

3.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, which sought to understand the nature of 'service delivery protests', we can see a struggle between different protest interpreters who compete in framing contests to sponsor 'their preferred definition of issues' (Carragee & Roefs, 2004, p. 216). This chapter will unpack what 'framing' is and how it functions through the media. The chapter will also look at how protesters are understood to deploy framing to draw attention to their issues: to understand framing theory about media coverage of protests, it is necessary to recognise that both the protesters *and* the media engage in framing.

This chapter will not only unpack media framing theory, but also framing theory about political protest. As there is barely any research on the media framing of protest in South Africa, the theory for understanding the media framing of 'service delivery protests' is drawn from international literature as well as, in a small way, South Africa studies of media framing on topics related to protest, such as media framing of violence, media framing the struggle for anti-retroviral treatment, and media framing of the Marikana massacre. Similarly, I could find no South African studies that explore how South African protesters frame their issues, so the theoretical input in this regard is also drawn from the international literature.

3.2. Defining framing

Framing can be defined as 'part of the collective struggle over meaning that takes place through a multiplicity of media and interpersonal communication' (Vliegenthart & Zoonen, 2011, p. 106). Communication is not simply a mirror for the world, but involves building an understanding of the world from a particular point of view. Through framing, the complex nature of objective reality, which is often untidy or chaotic, is reduced to an orderly, understandable whole (van Gorp, 2007). When people engage in framing, they cull aspects of reality to build a story that makes connections between the culled elements and promotes a particular interpretation of reality (Entman, 2007). Therefore, framing is an active (albeit

often unconscious) process of choosing what aspects of reality to communicate, and what to leave out, thereby actively defining problems , diagnosing causes, making moral judgements and suggesting remedies (Entman, 1993).

A frame organises thinking by highlighting certain events and facts, then linking them together in a coherent way, that makes some aspects of reality seem pertinent, and rendering other aspects as irrelevant or invisible (Ryan & Gamson, 2006). However, frames do not stand apart from social life; they are 'inevitably part of a much larger set of structures, or societal ideology, that finds its manifestation in the text' (Reese et al., 2001, p. 14). Framing theory looks at both media frames and societal frames in which media messages are embedded; frames are '*shared* and *persistent* over time … [they] work *symbolically* to meaningfully *structure* the social world' (Reese et al., 2001, p. 11). Indeed news frames flow from society into the media frames, and media frames flow back into society reinforcing or altering existing social frames; beneath every successful frame lies 'discarded "social narratives," or cultural meanings' (Durham, 2001, p. 129). News discourse operates in a domain of 'shared beliefs about society … [which] are known and accepted by a majority of society as common sense or conventional wisdom' (Pan & Kosicki, 1993, p. 57). And because frames are embedded in wider social structures, they can seem 'so natural and normal that the process of social construction remains invisible' (van Gorp, 2007, p. 63). Frames can seem routine, can be taken for granted, and 'contribute to the structure of dominance' in society (Gamson et al., 1992, p. 381).

Therefore, frames are not politically neutral; the contest over meaning is an ideological contest (Pan & Kosicki, 2001), in which certain perspectives are amplified, while others are quelled (Shah et al., 2002). Framing is a process of 'active, interested meaning creation by different actors vying for support for their respective positions' (Fiss & Hirsch, 2005, p. 46). Framing interprets and constructs narratives based on the distribution of power in society, and is therefore linked to hegemonic meanings and 'to the development of counter-hegemonic ways of seeing' (Carragee & Roefs, 2004, p. 227–228).

Therefore, in choosing a frame, a narrator confers agreement and power on particular social actors, 'helping to distribute political power to particular groups, causes, or individuals' (Entman, 2007, p. 166). The media are centrally implicated in these framing contests, since the media 'play an important role in selecting, defining, and communicating pertinent issues in society, especially in periods of socio-economic and political flux' (Williams, 2006, p. 430). The media are commonly expected to be broadly representative, represent diverse views and connect different parts of society (Radebe, 2007), but instead the media choose between different frames to tell a story, and this partly determines the meaning society ascribes to events (Hertog & McLeod, 2001). Media framing takes place in a political terrain where power is already asymmetrically distributed, and so the powerful are already better placed to influence news frames (Carragee & Roefs, 2004). Media frames are then 'shaped by the frames sponsored by multiple social actors' (Carragee & Roefs, 2004, p. 216). Therefore analysing and unpacking frames inherent in media stories enables one to examine political power relations in society; identifying which frames are prevalent in a group of news stories reveals which groups (typically elites) are routinely favoured and whose views are routinely suppressed.

Because of the ability of frame analysis to examine the politics at play around an issue, frame analysis is an excellent tool for understanding media coverage of 'service delivery protests' in South Africa. Framing analysis can make explicit the different frames deployed by different social actors, examine the power relations between these social actors, and explore the different narratives about 'service delivery protests'. Through frame analysis, we can explore not only the media framing of 'service delivery protests', but also the kinds of 'common sense' or 'conventional wisdoms' about 'service delivery protests' in South African society. As will be discussed in the next section, the political quality of framing also shapes the framing of protest in the media.

3.3. Media framing of protest

> Frames are principles of selection, emphasis and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters.
>
> (Gitlin, 2003, p. 6)

In his seminal work on how the mass media framed the US political struggles of the 1960s, Gitlin (2003, p. 251) (first edition 1980) highlighted how 'the production of news is a system of power', by which the media are implicated and involved in constructing the meaning of different political actions and actors, helping to determine their fate. These meanings are not constructed by the direct intervention of the elite, since they do not 'produce and disseminate ideology directly' (Gitlin, 2003, p. 254). Nevertheless, the US media in reporting on protests, served to stabilise the 'liberal democratic capitalist society' (Gitlin, 2003, p. 256).

Later studies of media coverage of protest have also found that the media are not neutral, but 'part of politics and part of protest, the three of them are inextricably intertwined in ongoing events' (Oliver & Maney, 2000, p. 463). Accordingly, media are not simply recorders of events but are political actors in their own right and like other political actors, 'fight to control the construction of social meaning' (Walgrave & Manssens, 2005, p. 117). However, gaining control is not an entirely smooth process because the liberal media tolerate different views and ideologies, striving to create the impression that political views and opinions flow freely (Gitlin, 2003).

International research on the media framing of protests highlights how protests are treated by the media as 'a potential or actual disruption of legitimate order' (Gitlin, 2003, p. 271). Conflict and violence in protests may be portrayed as dysfunctional, not as 'an important vehicle for establishing social relations' (Mander, 1999, p. 4). Whereas protesters may have come together to act collectively, 'media discourses work to encourage adversarial frames' (Gamson, 2003, p. 102). Media coverage tends to focus on the actors and actions, not the 'structural causes of events' (Gamson, 2003, p. 93). The media's chosen frames are often 'controlling, hegemonic and tied to larger elite structures' (Reese, 2007, p. 149), revealing 'the imprint of power' (Entman, 1993, p. 55).

Media frames of protests in previous studies have shown 'recurring ideological patterns' (Carragee & Roefs, 2004, p. 224), including militant frames (Baylor, 1996), public nuisance frames (Di Cicco, 2010), law and (dis)order frames (Cottle, 2008), delegitimising and spectacle frames (Harlow & Johnson, 2011), the diagnostic frame (Scheufele, 1999, p. 114), the remedy promotion frame (Entman, 2007, p. 164), catastrophic, contest and moral frames as well as costing, legalistic procedural frames and economic analysis frames (Pointer, 2013). In maintaining such ideological consistency, the mainstream media may bolster frames so that they become 'valuable for maintaining social order' (Hertog & McLeod, 2001, p. 143).

While 'the media may function to reinforce existing power arrangements with the social system' (Strohm, 1999, p. 81), when the power arrangements and social systems are in a state of flux, the media may align with and reinforce either the old elite or the new guard entering power. In South Africa, although 'the old economic elite managed to retain the majority of its power' (Sparks, 2009, p. 213) becoming a formal democracy has led to some re-ordering of political opportunities and power structures (Barnett, 2003). So it is possible that new opportunities have opened for different actors to influence news coverage, albeit amid 'ongoing compromises and negotiations between different imperatives and norms' (Barnett, 2003, p. 15). But even if the orientation of the media and the rules of interaction between groups of political actors and the media have radically altered (Voltmer, 2004), South Africa's print media — like the print media in the Western world — is largely commercialised (Duncan, 2003), with liberalism prevailing 'as the dominant political ethos' (Wasserman & De Beer, 2004, p. 68).

Like the liberal media in the Western world, South Africa's media 'have avoided playing a leading role in promoting broader discourse on the deeper and more complex issues' (Bornman, 2013, p. 445). The interests of the poor are marginalised by the South African media (Duncan, 2003), and 'there is still substantial racism, xenophobia and white middle-class bias in the South African press' (van Baalen, 2013, p. 18). As will be discussed

in the next section, the media orientation poses dilemmas and challenges for poor communities and protesters trying to communicate about their issues to the wider world.

3.4. Protesting and collective action frames

In South Africa, community meetings among those who are interested in public affairs often precede protest (Nleya, 2011). In such meetings, those facing difficulties discuss their problems and who is responsible for addressing those problems (Pointer, 2004; Baud & Rutten, 2004). So protest actions usually follow from systematic planning, with the protest activities being agreed and negotiated before the protest takes place, depending on available skills and resources needed to create a protest (Kunene, 2014; Thompson & Nleya, 2010). Protests are 'not simply the spontaneous uprising of the people. At the centre of protest is usually a close-knit co-ordination centre' (Kunene, 2014, p. 303).

However, individual participants in such meetings rarely share identical views and motivations (Snow, 2008); instead the variance in discussions reveals 'dislocations, instabilities and contestations in social relations, and in the meanings of these relations' (Von Holdt & Kirsten, 2011, p. 7). Meetings therefore often involve efforts to resolve these areas of disagreement and the discussions leading up to protest involve finding a shared understanding — 'a collective sense of injustice' (Paller, 2013, p. 587). The activities involved in discussing and resolving contentions between community members and finding a shared understanding can be understood as framing contests, whereby some meanings are chosen and others are discarded. In order to resolve discussions into a political programme, groups of protesters engage in framing to connect 'events, experiences, and strands of one or more ideologies so they hang together in a relatively integrated and meaningful fashion' (Snow, 2008, p. 400). Through community meetings, we can see protesters as 'signifying agents actively engaged in the production and maintenance of meaning for constituents, antagonists and bystanders or observers' (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 613).

These 'collective action frames' are an attempt by protesters to co-ordinate and inspire shared action and to legitimate the group's activities and campaigns (Benford & Snow,

2000), as well as to challenge existing elite views (Snow, 2008). Therefore, protests can be understood as a form of political communication — protesters communicate to connect with each other, to connect with others in their community, to challenge adversaries and to communicate with the world at large (Baud & Rutten, 2004).

However, it can be argued that protest is only an effective form of political communication if it reaches a wide audience:

> ... it is not enough for an organisation … to be legitimate within the communities in which it draws support, but essential to *be seen* to be legitimately representative and accountable by other actors, not least by media organisations …
>
> (Barnett, 2003, p. 12)

As previously discussed, South African protesters are very conscious of the importance of drawing media attention to their protest (Tapela, 2013; Booysen, 2007). Gaining media attention for a protest is often crucial to put pressure on decision makers (Barnett, 2003), because through the media, protesters can demand the attention of powerful political actors. Also protest can lead to the media scrutinising the responses of powerful political actors to protest, and political actors are thereby subjected to a media logic (Hjarvard, 2008).

But attracting media attention is not straightforward; in South Africa 'everyday forms of community expression are mostly ignored by the media' (Thompson & Nleya, 2010, p. 225). Therefore, to attract attention, protesters must engage in action that has 'news value' for the media (Barnett, 2003); more extreme and dramatic activities are more likely to attract media attention (Baylor, 1996). While the protesters may wish to deploy frames that 'negotiate a shared understanding of some problematic condition or situation' (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 615), the protesting community is only likely to get media attention by highlighting conflict and contention: conflict may be necessary to ensure a 'maximum diffusion of information about social problems' (Tichenor et al., 1999, p. 31).

Protesters may therefore resort to violence to attract media attention; the protesters and surrounding communities may understand violence 'as a language, a message, a way of calling out to higher authorities about the state of things … [and] a warning at the same time' (Von Holdt & Kirsten, 2011, p. 27). But even though other communities may read protests in

a supportive way and go on to follow their example (Booysen, 2007), protesters' efforts to exert influence and communicate do not necessarily get read and rewritten by the media in ways they would choose. Violent tactics are unlikely to elicit media support (Baylor, 1996) or indeed the desired support from other political actors.

The 'collective action frames' through which communities try to show how they share similar concerns to those of broader society may therefore be at odds with the dramatic tactics needed to attract media attention. Hence, violent protests may be viewed as 'ambiguous and contradictory in their implications for citizenship and democracy' (Von Holdt & Kirsten, 2011, p. 7). Because such ambiguity and complexity are at odds with the easily understandable story the media are trying to tell, the mainstream media may ignore efforts to explain protest and instead focus on the most spectacular aspects of the protest (Harlow & Johnson, 2011). So while protesters may need the media for 'mobilization, validation, and scope enlargement' (Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993, p. 116), media coverage can be a double-edged sword: protesters gain visibility, but their poverty and livelihoods struggles are likely to be, at best, presented superficially (Bullock et al., 2001).

Through framing analysis, this study will explore the extent to which protesters' collective action frames are taken up or ignored in media frames. This might reveal the extent to which protest is an effective tool for political communication in South Africa, and if so, which of the protesters' frames are resonate most with other societal frames.

3.5. Media framing in the South African political terrain

Given the dearth of studies on media coverage of protest in South Africa, I looked at framing studies on topics related to protest, such as political life; violence; GEAR, neoliberalism and privatisation of public services; the Marikana massacre; HIV/AIDS (including protests on treatment provision); and environmental activism and protest in Durban. Various framing studies on different aspects of South Africa's political life, have found for example, in the coverage of 2010 Soccer World Cup, class and racial features (Chuma, 2012), sensationalised coverage of school violence in a way that may prevents deep knowledge

and understanding (De Wet, 2012), and the perpetuation of neo-liberal discourse in the coverage of privatisation debates (Mayher & Mcdonald, 2007), conferring 'legitimacy in the primacy of market led growth' (Mudzamiri, 2009, p. 85). These examples reveal *inter alia* that class and race discourses are still very much part of the South African political terrain; despite widespread societal violence the media still does not offer any in depth understanding of the underlying causes; and discussions around economic matters are still very much dominated by the values of the economic elite.

In the case of a frame analysis of South African media coverage of HIV/AIDS, Jacobs and Johnson (2007) found that the coverage focussed on the political battle between then President Thabo Mbeki and the Treatment Action Campaign, but did not provide sufficient information about treatment, services available, how provinces were rolling out care, etc. In addition, where activists protested the media was said to 'display "ambivalence" when the poor do away with decorum, display unmediated anger and break with the law' (Jacobs & Johnson, 2007, p. 143). The study also highlighted media deficiencies in terms of media's support for GEAR and privatisation such that 'it removes certain key economic policy issues from the public realm and from political debate' (Jacobs & Johnson, 2007, p. 142). These limited and limiting frames were directly linked to 'the very inequalities and democratic deficit that the media is expected to help correct' (Jacobs & Johnson, 2007, p. 144). The HIV/AIDS framing study is particularly relevant for our current study on 'service delivery protest' in that it suggests that the coverage is likely to focus on political battles, lack context about service provision, display "ambivalence" to the violence and anger displayed by protesters, and fail to highlight the economic systems which underpin basic service delivery in South Africa's poor townships.

In a framing study of school violence, Jacobs (2014) found that the media tended to ignore the societal factors that contribute to violence, that official sources dominated the coverage, and that there was a lack of follow up articles. This suggests that the South African media may tackle violence as episodic and gruesome, but neither provide readers with an understanding of the sources of violence, nor an understanding from the perspective

of the victims or perpetrators of violence. With respect to this study on 'service delivery protests' this speaks to the possibility that violent protests might be covered with no deeper understanding of the causes, and without speaking to the perpetrators (protesters) directly. Jacobs (2014, p. 13) found that the coverage failed 'to elicit social responsibility' and promoted 'civic indifference'.

In a framing study of media coverage *after* the Marikana massacre, van Baalen (2013) found that the dominant frame was government and elite denial that either government or the mining industry could be blamed in any way for the massacre. The second most dominant frame was more sympathetic to the protesters and victims as it placed emphasis on structural factors such as economic inequality and police brutality. This finding is particular relevant to the study of 'service delivery protest' frames, as it indicates that elite voices may dominate, but there is scope for alternative voices to emerge regarding the underlying factors leading to protest.

Similarly, in my previous study of the Western Cape farmworker strikes in South Africa, the media used both frames oriented against protesters as well as sympathy frames (that identified with the protesting workers) and solidarity frames (which pointed to ways in which the protesters could find common ground with those they were protesting against) (Pointer, 2013). This suggests that South African media coverage of protests might not be as one dimensional as revealed in studies of US and UK protests.

While in the case of environmental activism and protest, Barnett (2003, p. 20) found in the media 'significant opportunities for marginalised political actors to exert influence and assert their presence', he acknowledges that the receptiveness to environmental activism may not be applicable to all forms of protest on all issues. While Barnett (2003) identifies opportunities for protesters in the media, the international literature has identified the dangers of these opportunities and thus we must be cautious to not simply take positive coverage at face value (Gitlin, 2003; Gamson et al., 1992; Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993; Zald, 1996). In the case of media coverage of environmental activism, it may simply portray hegemonic ideology meeting partial challenges and adapting (Gitlin, 2003).

Given the nature of 'service delivery protests' in South Africa, conflict is likely to give rise to increased media attention on the protests (Tichenor et al., 1999), but voluminous coverage is not necessarily favourable to the voices of protesters, not necessarily establishing 'a sense of public *legitimacy*', nor building the '*standing* in eyes of government and business' (Barnett, 2003, p. 12). This study will explore the extent to which media framing of 'service delivery protests' ensures that the dominant culture of South African society appears stable, and that the notion that 'conflict is dysfunctional' (Mander, 1999, p. 4) prevails.

3.6. Conclusion

Exploring the interaction between South African 'service delivery protesters', the news media and other social actors, by analysing protest and media frames, can potentially help unpack aspects of the South African political terrain, expose how power is distributed among various social actors, and contribute to understanding the meaning of protest in the South African political terrain. While protesters are trying to communicate with the wider world, the strategies used to attract media attention may be at odds with the messages they are trying to communicate. Previous South African framing studies suggest that there are parallels and divergences from international framing literature on protests, and these will be explored further in subsequent chapters.

4. Methodology

4.1. Introduction

This study involves a frame analysis of print media articles about 'service delivery protests' on the SA Media database from 1 January 2013 until 31 December 2013. In the literature there is no agreement on how to undertake a frame analysis (Chong & Druckman, 2007; D'Angelo, 2002; de Vreese, 2005; Entman, 1993; König, 2005; Matthes & Kohring, 2008; Matthes, 2012, 2009; Tankard, 2001), although various methods and approaches have been proposed and used. The controversy around how to undertake a frame analysis mainly revolves around the fact that 'a frame is a quite abstract variable that is hard to identify and hard to code' (Matthes & Kohring, 2008, p. 258), so empirically identifying frames is notoriously difficult (König, 2005). In the literature it is often unclear how definitions of framing were translated into a concrete methodology with operational steps (Matthes, 2009).

Framing theorists argue a broad range of positions on methodology. On the one hand, some theorists argue for rhetorical analysis techniques, which 'actively involves the personality of the researcher' (Kuypers, 2010, p. 291) and is difficult to verify objectively (Kuypers, 2010). On the other hand, some theorists break down texts into various components (e.g. keywords for Entman (1993) and Miller & Riechert (2001), identified characters for van Gorp (2010), or topics and actors, risks, benefits, and responsibilities for Matthes & Kohring (2008)) and perform various types of cluster analysis including hierarchical cluster analysis, factor analysis, and latent class analysis.

Regardless of the approach for identifying and counting frames, framing analysis studies the 'process of constructing meaning' (Gamson et al., 1992, p. 385) and typically 'identifies a problem that is social or political in nature' (Johnston & Noakes, 2005, p. 5). Although there are 'at least four locations of framing that can be studied: the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture' (van Atteveldt et al., 2006, p. 3), this study will focus on news texts. The text is of particular interest, because the South African media has been accused of a middle-class bias, presenting 'service delivery protests' as 'a violent and

mysterious set of event for which strange and presumably primitive people are responsible' (Friedman, 2011, p. 112). Through a framing analysis of news texts, this study will unpack the 'system of organized signifying elements that … indicate the advocacy of certain ideas' (Pan & Kosicki, 1993, p. 55) and 'constitute broader interpretative definitions of social reality' (van Gorp, 2007, p. 63) with respect to 'service delivery protests' in South Africa.

Framing analyses of news texts take as their starting point the idea that

> … journalists play an important role in constructing the news: choices about language, quotations, and relevant information lead to emphasis upon certain features of a news story and, in turn, significantly structure citizens responses to public events and issues by encouraging certain "trains of thought".
>
> (Shah et al., 2002, p. 367)

This study also assumes that 'the repertoire of frames is, conceptually, situated largely externally of the individual' (van Gorp, 2007, p. 62) and that 'frames are tied in with … cultural phenomena' (van Gorp, 2007, p. 65). However, unlike van Gorp (2007), in the South African context, I do not necessarily agree that these cultural phenomena are shared or that

> [t]he domain in which the news discourse operates consists of shared beliefs about society. These beliefs … are known and accepted *by a majority of the society* as common sense or conventional wisdom …
>
> (my emphasis) (Pan & Kosicki, 1993, p. 57)

While exploring the extent to which there are shared cultural values in South Africa is beyond the scope of this study, frames are 'controlling, hegemonic and tied to larger elite structures' (Reese, 2007, p. 149) and contribute to 'a structure of dominance' (Gamson et al., 1992, p. 381). Framing may be considered a contest over how an issue is defined, pointing to which ideological principles and societal values are relevant (Pan & Kosicki, 2001). Based on whose meanings are included and whose are not, frames signal power relations and create the illusion of the full story being told 'by limiting the universe of possible social meanings' (Durham, 2001, p. 130).

As for others who have undertaken frame analysis, this study sees news texts as a set of 'organized symbolic devices that will interact with individual agents' memory for meaning construction' (Pan & Kosicki, 1993, p. 58). Frames reduce complex events to an easily

understandable whole by linking different elements of the story into a cohesive , plausible narrative (van Gorp, 2007). Media framing is 'the process of culling a few elements of perceived reality and assembling a narrative that highlights connections among them to promote a particular interpretation' (Entman, 2007, p. 164).

Since frames are 'relatively comprehensive structures of meaning made up of a number of concepts and the relations among those concepts' (Hertog & McLeod, 2001, p. 142) this frame analysis identifies concepts that point to particular frames. These could include 'rhetorical devices such as metaphors, catch phrases, and imagery … reasoning devices that draw on causal attributions, consequences, and appeals to principle' (Bullock et al., 2001, p. 233), but also 'themes and subthemes, types of actors, actions and settings, lines of reasoning and causal connections, contrasts, lexical choices, sources, quantifications and statistics, charts and graphs, appeals (emotional, logical, and ethical)' (van Gorp, 2010, p. 91). These manifest elements in the text function as 'demonstrable indicators' and are 'framing devices' (ibid).

However, this study will not simply systematically identify the 'loose elements' of frames in the print media texts on 'service delivery protests'; it will also explore 'the impact of the implicitly present cultural phenomena conveyed by all the elements as a whole and relate them to the dynamic process in which social reality is constructed' (van Gorp, 2007, p. 72–73). Frames 'are not singular persuasive messages or assertions … [but] always refer to a pattern involving interpretation, attributions, and evaluation' (Matthes, 2012, p. 252). Therefore, while the manifest elements may guide identification of frames, only coding manifest content can lead to validity problems (Scheufele & Scheufele, 2010), so this study also identifies frames by reading between the lines, not just counting the manifest elements. This makes frame identification and the framing analysis somewhat subjective, which is 'a distinctive characteristic of framing analyses' (van Gorp, 2010, p. 103).

4.2. Research design

Even though no uniform measurement standards exist for counting frames (Chong & Druckman, 2007), framing analysis usually consists of:

1. identifying an issue or event for study;
2. identifying a sample;
3. generating a list of possible frames — inductively or deductively, with an explanation of how they might be identified (e.g. keywords, catchphrases, symbols);
4. coding the articles;
5. analysis (adapted from: Chong and Druckman, 2007; Tankard, 2001)

This study used both quantitative and qualitative methods, with quantitative content analysis techniques being used to:

1. measure and code the presence of frames in news texts; and
2. count the various sources used in each news text.

Qualitative techniques were then used in the analysis, drawing on discourse analysis, to explore the meaning of the frames present. Combining 'the strengths of quantitative and qualitative textual analysis is seen as the best way to get "at" the complex, latent structures of meaning' (D'Angelo, 2010, p. 360). Although initially framing studies mainly used qualitative and inductive techniques for analysis, over time data-based, quantitative studies using deductive frame-extraction and manual coding is on the rise and becoming common practice (Matthes, 2009). Van Gorp (2007, p. 72) argues that:

> The strongly abstract nature of frames implies that quantitative and qualitative research methods should be combined with the interpretative prospects of qualitative methods.

Quantitative analysis will help identify the features 'that when taken together, tell a larger tale than the manifest story' (Reese, 2007, p. 152) by converting the textual materials into numerical values to determine the frequency and/or intensity of frames in a statistical way. Qualitative methods, including critical discourse analysis and rhetorical analysis, can help explore the 'collective struggle over meaning' (Vliegenthart & Zoonen, 2011, p. 112) taking place in print media coverage of 'service delivery protests'; since analysing textual data in its

embedded context can help interpret data in ways that are lost in a purely quantitative study. By combining quantitative and qualitative techniques there is a trade-off, as 'qualitative analysis offers higher validity of the findings but less reliability' (Johnston, 2002, p. 69).

4.2.1. Data collection and sampling

The sample is drawn from the SA Media database over a one year period starting on 1 January 2013 and ending on 31 December 2013; the most recent full year period was chosen in order to study the most contemporary period possible. The data was searched using the site's search engine, using the search terms 'service delivery protest' and 'protest march'. However, on checking these results for relevance, it was concluded that only those articles collected with the term 'service delivery protest' were relevant to the study, as articles under 'protest march' were of different types of protest (e.g. union marches, political party marches, protests related to court hearings, etc.). In total 55 articles were identified from 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2013. Fifteen (15) of the articles were from *The New Age* (a national daily), seven (7) were from the *Daily Dispatch* (a regional daily), the *Diamond Fields Advertiser* (a Kimberley local paper) and *The Star* (a regional daily) each carried five (5) stories, *Witness* (a regional daily) and the *Daily News* (a Durban local paper) both carried four (4) stories, three (3) were from *The Times* (a national daily), the *Cape Argus* (a regional daily) and the *Pretoria News* (a Pretoria local paper) each carried to articles, other newspapers (the *Sunday Independent*, the *Independent on Saturday*, the *Cape Times*, the *Sowetan*, the *Express*, the *Citizen*, *Business Day*, *City Press*, the *Mail & Guardian*) all carried one article each.

4.2.2. Coding

The literature on frame analysis identifies two possible approaches to coding frames, i.e. an inductive approach through which 'frames emerge from the material in the course of analysis' (de Vreese, 2005, p. 53) or a deductive approach which 'investigates frames that

are defined and operationalized prior to the investigation'(ibid). This study sought to compare South African media frames on 'service delivery protest' with previous studies on media coverage of protests and social movements in the US and UK, therefore, both inductive and deductive techniques were used.

First of all, using a deductive approach, I identified a list of possible frames from the literature, including literature on 'service delivery protests' in South Africa and framing literature, yielding the below table of frames:

Table 1: Frames identified from the literature

Frames from framing literature	Frames from 'service delivery protest literature'
contest frame	democracy/citizenship frame
injustice frame	failed democracy/participation frame
collective action frame	corruption frame
inconvenience frame	a rights frame (includes human rights and constitutional rights)
economic frame	
war/spectacle frame	
sympathy frame	
accountability frame	
law and order/criminal frame	
moral frame	

Because without criteria for identifying frames 'assessment falls into a methodological black box' (Matthes & Kohring, 2008, p. 260), I then identified a set of 'framing devices' (van Gorp, 2010) which could be used to help identify each frame. These devices include keywords, characterisations, sources, actions and settings. However these devices serve only as a guide — since frames are usually latent, 'not spelled out in their entirety'3 (König, 2005). While using framing devices avoids the problem of 'dependence on the creativity of the frame analyst' (König, 2005), in English words can have multiple meanings and contexts, so relying only on framing devices may result in false positive results for the presence of a frame. It is also possible that a frame may be clear without all of the devices being present. Therefore it is necessary to read for meaning, not simply search texts for particular framing devices. The aim was to identify '[a]ll conceivable framing devices that point at the same

[3] Available at:http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/methods/publications/frameanalysis/measurement.html

core idea [thus constituting] the manifest part of a frame package' (van Gorp, 2007, p. 64) as follows:

Table 2: Keyword guide to frames

Frame	Frame devices
1. Contest	Several sources who appear to disagree with each other
2. Injustice	unfair, not right, inequality, unequal, protesters characterised as victims
3. Rights	rights, constitution, protesters characterised as citizens with rights
4. Collective action	community, we, our, protesters characterised as community members united in action
5. Inconvenience	nuisance, obstacle, delays, traffic, obstacles
6. Economic	economy, cost, business, monetary sums
7. War/ spectacle	burning, bomb, shattered, smashed, attack, war zone, battle, trashed, violent, sometimes protesters characterised as young men
8. Democracy/ citizenship	democratic, democracy, citizens (tone positive)
9. Failed democracy	democratic, democracy, citizens (tone negative)
10. Sympathy	understandable, understanding, needs, protesters characterised as victims
11. Accountability frame	answers, answer, answering, public officials called on to answer
12. Law and order/ criminality	crime, criminals, criminality, law and order, restoring peace, police viewpoints
13. Corruption	corruption, corrupt, lack of transparency, misspending, public officials
14. Moral frame	value judgements like: disgraceful, appalling, abhorrent

Guided by the above devices, articles were then manually examined to identify which of the frames were present. Manual coding 'allows greater flexibility to discover new frames' (Chong & Druckman, 2007, p. 108) and decreases the likelihood of false positives and false negatives, whereas computerised processes 'miss a great deal of contextual information' (Johnston, 2002, p. 78). Each article was classified with 0 = frame not present; and 1 = frame present. I assumed that each article may contain more than one frame, and coded for that, rather than trying to identify and code 'a dominant frame per news item' (Matthes, 2009, p. 355), which would mean relying too much on the my interpretative capacity, and would ignore how 'many speakers actively engage in frame alignment processes … which presuppose the existence of more than one frame in a text' (König, 2005).

The above deductive frames 'are limited to already established frames' (Matthes & Kohring, 2008, p. 262). Since South African media may use different frames to those

identified in previous framing studies of protest in the US and UK, it is important to remain open to the possibility that other frames may exist in South African texts. Therefore, in the process of checking for the above frames, I remained flexible to 'discover new frames that were not identified in the initial coding scheme' (Chong & Druckman, 2007, p. 108); where this occurred, the frame was added to the list and articles were also classified with 0 = frame not present; and 1 = frame present. Although the increased flexibility of an inductive approach has 'a potential cost of lower reliability' (ibid), the deductive frames derived from the literature may not adequately cover the range of frames used in South Africa. Five new frames were identified during the course of coding, as follows: high prevalence; failed governance; factional interests; police action; and the need for dialogue.

The articles were also coded in terms of sources used, with 1 = source present and 0 = source not present. Sources were simply catalogued as they were found in the texts; in all 15 types of sources were identified, as follows:

1. bureaucrat
2. local government
3. national/provincial government
4. police
5. protesters
6. academic/ research
7. editorial
8. residents
9. political party representative
10. representative of a community based organisation (CBO)
11. business
12. farmer
13. public protector
14. union
15. lawyer

4.2.3. Analysis

Because articles in the sample came from different newspapers, the analysis paid attention to which articles were from which newspaper, and noted similarities and differences in frames deployed by each newspaper, although only *The New Age* produced a big enough sample to draw any conclusions.

Based on the above coding, the most prevalent frames and sources were identified. A hierarchical cluster analysis was then undertaken on the framing data using Ward's method, to determine how different frames (or sources) were related to one another and to group together frames (or sources) that are as much alike as possible. Ward's method hierarchical cluster analysis was done using the R statistical software environment with the hclust and pvclust packages.

Given the members of a dataset, the cluster analysis sought to 'group members with respect to many variables' (Ward, 1963, p. 263) (e.g. the presence or absence of frames or sources). The resulting clusters represent classes, or conceptually meaningful groups of articles (Tan et al., 2005, p. 487). Since the number of clusters that best describes the data was not known from the outset, hierarchical cluster analysis involved multiple steps of grouping articles that are closely related to each other, reducing the number of groups at each step, until 'a single all-encompassing cluster remain[ed]' (Tan et al., 2005, p. 495). With regards to forming clusters, Ward's method found articles that form a group where members are most similar to each other, and because of this property, it was 'a good technique for identifying suitable cluster solutions' in frame analysis (Matthes & Kohring, 2008).

Ward's method is a form of prototype-based hierarchical cluster analysis that seeks to reveal (frame or source) similarities between data objects (in this case articles) by creating a hierarchy of groups of articles (clusters). The method starts by considering clusters generated by each possible pairing of articles. Since the frames in each article were coded using a binary scheme (1 = frame present, 0 = frame not present) an "average article" was computed for each cluster. Knowing this "average article" (called a centroid in cluster

analysis) the compute the “scatter”: how much the articles in the cluster differ from this average. The cluster with the lowest scatter was then merged and the process began again. At each stage, new clusters were formed by combining existing clusters with each other and individual articles, computing the centroid, and finding the resulting new cluster with smallest scatter. This process continued until all articles were joined into a single final cluster. Then p-values for each cluster were calculated using multi-scale bootstrap resampling (implemented by the pvclust package). When clusters are largely supported by the data they have high p-values (Kabacoff, 2014).

The results of the cluster analysis were graphically represented in a dendrogram (tree diagram), which revealed clusters and sub-clusters of frames (or sources) that are closely related to each other. For the frame clusters, the analysis identified thematic meta-frames for each cluster, exploring the political significance of these meta-frames. (The cluster analysis process for frames is shown in *Appendix 1* and the cluster analysis for sources is shown in *Appendix 2*.)

Once the cluster of frames and cluster of sources was established, the analysis went on to examine the relationship between the prevalence of frames and the prevalence of sources. I counted the number of articles where a frame was present, and then for each frame counted how often a particular source was used. The resulting ratios of sources to frames was used to generate a heat map (the rows (sources) and columns (frames) of the heat map were each clustered using hierarchical clustering with Ward’s method to illuminate where particular frames used similar sources and where particular sources are used in a similar collection of frames).

Although it would be tempting to analyse only the dominant frames and sources (in each time period) for meaning, the analysis also paid attention to ‘social meanings that do not survive as frames’ (Durham, 2001, p. 127) — the ‘discarded “social narratives” or cultural meanings’ (Durham, 2001, p. 129) lying beneath the successful frames. Because ‘what is absent from a text is often just as significant from the perspective of sociocultural analysis’ (Fairclough, 1995, p. 2), the analysis looked at the interplay between what is included and

what is not included in the sampled new articles, in order to identify if and how the frames used are politically significant, if there are politically significant frames not used in the articles, and what the frames reveal about the organisation of power in relation to 'service delivery protests'.

The analysis refers to the dominance and subordination of frames (and sources) in terms of frequency used, but also used techniques of qualitative discourse analysis and rhetorical analysis to identify particularly salient examples of the frames in the news texts, and explore meaning in more depth. I agree with D'Angelo (2002, p. 872; 881) that 'framing researchers should draw liberally from available theories' and utilise 'techniques found in content analysis and discourse analysis'. Rhetorical analysis is useful for exploring 'the inner workings of a text' Kuypers (2010, p. 295). By exploring the rhetorical and discursive processes in the news texts, frames can be tied to larger ideological structures (Steinberg, 1998). The media 'use rhetorical devices to invoke images, increase salience of a point, and increase vividness of a report' (Pan & Kosicki, 1993, p. 62). When applying frame analysis, rhetorical insight can help reveal why the frame is relevant and 'bring the frame to life' (Binder, 1993, p. 755).

Several authors have noted the differences, similarities and relationship between discourse analysis and frame analysis (e.g. Fiss & Hirsch, 2005; Greenberg, 2002; Johnston, 2002; Pan & Kosicki, 1993) and pointed to usefulness of both in confronting 'the difficult tasks of describing and presenting evidence for concepts that reside in the black box of mental life' (Johnston, 2002, p. 63). In this study, discourse is understood as the 'summation of symbolic interchange … the interrelations of symbols and their systematic occurrence' (Johnston, 2003, p. 218). At the simplest level discourse analysis reveals the scripts that are embedded in frames (Johnston, 2003), through 'potentially ideological' features including 'features of vocabulary and metaphors, grammar, presuppositions and implicatures, … generic structure, and style' (Fairclough, 1995, p. 2). If frames are mental structures, then 'there is a fundamental relationship between the structures of mental life and the production of written or verbal discourse' (Johnston, 2003, p. 220). Indeed, 'discourse

and its intensity of contention result from the active, interested meaning creation by different actors vying for support for their respective positions' (Fiss & Hirsch, 2005, p. 46).

With respect to print media coverage of 'service delivery protests', the analysis examines how the news texts 'define problems … diagnose causes … make moral judgements … and suggest remedies' (Entman, 1993, p. 52). The analysis discerns the interplay of power and domination through frames and discourse, given that framing 'plays a major role in the exertion of political power and the frame in a news text is really the imprint of power' (Entman, 1993, p. 55). The framing analysis 'pays close attention to the systematic study of political language' (Pan & Kosicki, 1993, p. 70) and explores the extent to which, for protesters, 'making a conflict more public [i.e. through 'service delivery protest] offers an opportunity … to improve its relative power' (Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993, p. 116). The analysis determines whether the print media articles advance the frames of political actors other than the protesters, and thereby helps 'distribute political power to particular groups, causes, or individuals' (Entman, 2007, p. 166).

4.3. Conclusion

This study incorporates quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis in an effort to overcome the problems that arise from using one or the other technique. The quantitative analysis ground the research in countable elements in the text, while the qualitative analysis explores the meanings of these countable elements, with particular attention to the political and/or ideological significance of the framing patterns found in the print media texts of 'service delivery protests'. The study thereby explored how the production of news about 'service delivery protests' reflects systems of power in the South African political terrain.

5. Findings

5.1. Introduction

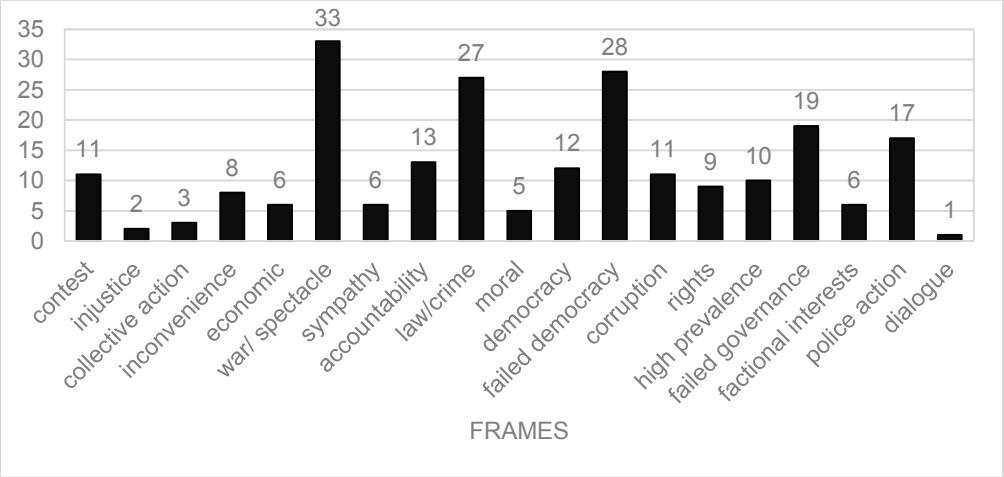
This chapter presents the quantitative findings from the data coding and data analysis of South African newspapers' framing of 'service delivery protests'. In all, 55 newspaper articles were analysed, all published between 1 January 2013 and 31 December 2013. This chapter presents the frames used in the newspaper articles (identifying which are most prevalent), as well as the sources used in the articles. In the findings, I include results of the quantitative analysis of newspaper coverage of 'service delivery protests' and some qualitative observations about key features of the quantitative results.

5.2. Results of frame analysis

Prevalence of frames

From the sample of 55 newspaper articles, the dominant frame (used in 33 articles, see *Figure* 1) was the war/spectacle frame, whereby 'service delivery protests' were framed in terms of burning, chanting, barricading, stone throwing and other similar activities undertaken by protesters. While this frame focussed on the actions of protesters, the police action frame (which was 5th most prevalent, used in 17 articles) highlights actions undertaken by police, e.g. shooting tear gas and rubber bullets, making arrests, and generally trying to disperse protesters. Cumulatively, these two frames amount to a strong focus on action in covering 'service delivery protests'.

Figure 1: Prevalence of frames in coverage of 'service delivery protests', 1 January 2013–31 December 2013



The second most prevalent frame found in the sample was the failed democracy frame, used in 28 articles. This frame focuses on the failure of community efforts to communicate effectively with local government officials — either because meetings disintegrated into fighting or because the protesters failed to get a meeting with local government officials. Alongside the fourth most common frame of failed governance, used in 19 of 55 articles, the failed democracy frame creates a narrative of local government failing the people. The failed governance frame typically involves criticising government officials and/or political parties for their failure to limit or totally eradicate protest action. The failed democracy and failed governance frames correspond with some of the literature, which argues that 'service delivery protests' are a sign of a failed or failing state (e.g. Connolly, 2014; Tapela, 2012; Tsheola et al., 2014). This runs counter to the sixth and seventh most prevalent frames — accountability and democracy — used in 13 and 12 articles respectively; these articles cite protesters arguing that they are acting to hold government accountable and that protest is an aspect of or enhances democracy.

The third most common frame, used in 27 articles, is the law/crime frame, which cites various aspects of the law or refers to protesters as criminals. This frame typically asserts that 'service delivery protests' are unacceptable and should be prevented. The contrasting rights frame, is barely used (9 articles), which suggests that regarding legal framing, the criminality of protesters is asserted more often than the rights of protesters.

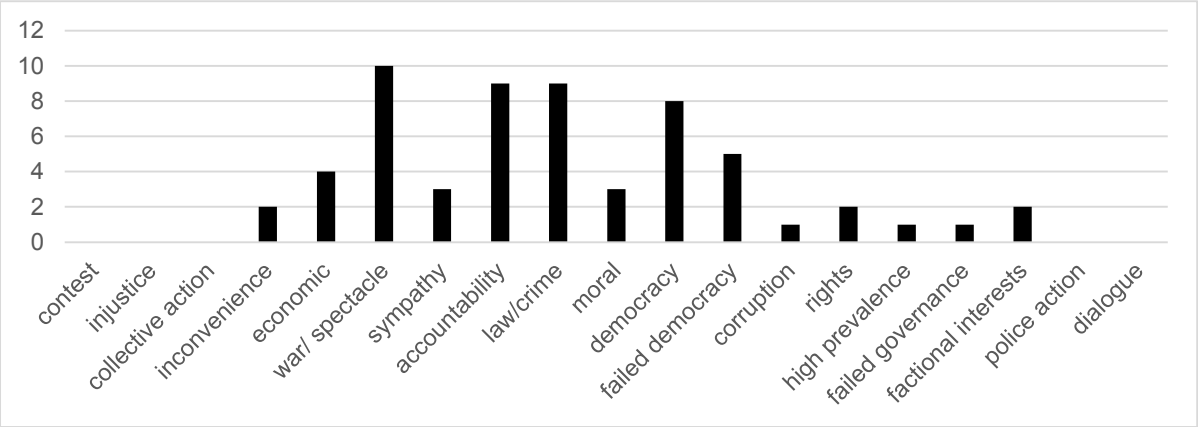
Although the literature on Western media framing of protests finds the contest frame to be quite common (e.g. Carragee & Roefs, 2004; Mander, 1999; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000; Smilde, 2004; Tichenor et al., 1999), in this sample, the contest frame was only used in 11 articles, suggesting that articles tend to focus on one narrative or another, not narratives and counter-narratives. Similarly, although the literature suggests that corruption is often behind 'service delivery protests' (e.g. Banjo & Jili, 2013; Bénit-Gbaffou, 2012; Jili, 2012; Koelble & Siddle, 2013b), this frame is also only used in 11 articles.

Sample articles barely used economic frames (6 articles), while the literature on 'service delivery protests' often identifies economics as the underlying cause of the protests

— either in terms of neoliberalism, privatisation and GEAR, or in terms of municipal indigency policies (e.g. Alexander, 2010; Bond & Mottiar, 2013; Hart, 2013b; Kunene, 2014; Ngwane, 2011; Tissington, 2013; Tsheola, 2012).

While ideally, the frame analysis would compare articles in different newspapers to explore any similarities and differences between the media sources, the bulk of the articles were sparsely spread across different newspapers, with the exception of the 15 articles covered by *The New Age*. Because *The New Age* relatively often covered 'service delivery protests', it is interesting to look at its particular framing of 'service delivery protests', as shown in *Figure 2*:

Figure 2: Prevalence of frames in The New Age coverage of 'service delivery protests', 1 January 2013-31 December 2013



Given that the 15 articles in *The New Age* constitute 27.27% of the total sample, the prevalence of the war/spectacle frame and the law/crime frame is consistent with the overall sample, constituting 30,3% and 33,33% respectively of articles using those frames. However, it is notable that the accountability frame and the democracy frame are much more prevalent than in the general sample; indeed 69,23% of articles used the accountability frame and 66,67% of articles used the democracy frame in *The New Age* sample. This indicates that *The New Age* is as likely as other newspaper sources to use the war/spectacle frame and the law/crime frame, but much more likely to use frames suggesting that government is accountable, and democracy is working. *The New Age* is also much less likely than other newspapers to deploy the failed governance frame (constituting only 5,26%

of such articles); it is also much less likely to deploy the failed democracy frame (constituting only 17,86% of such articles).

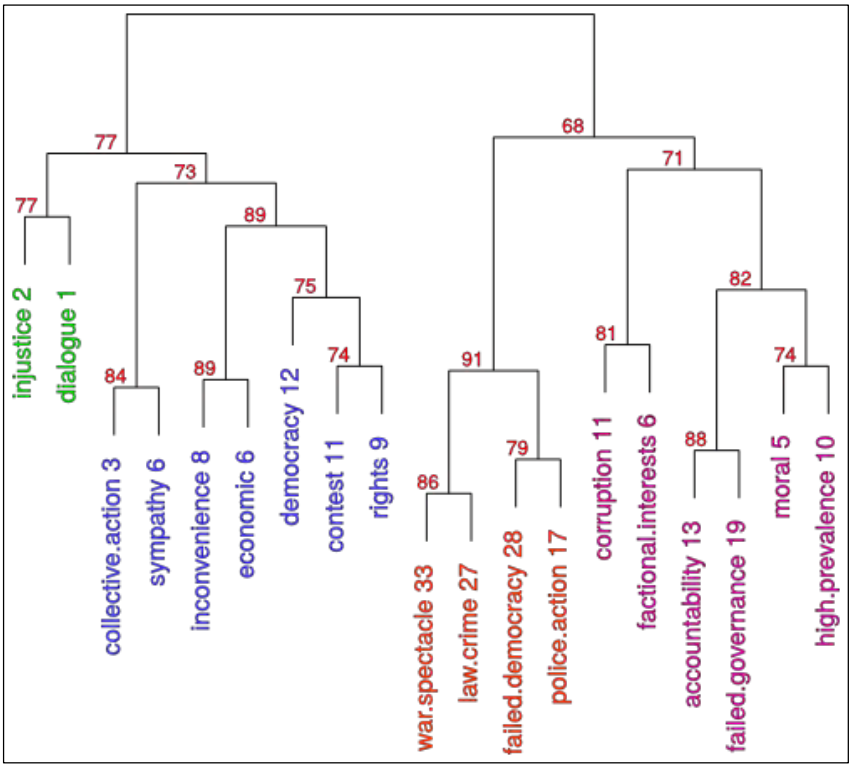
Overall, the prevalent frames create the impression of superficial description with little deeper analysis or effort to understand the protests; where an explanation is given, the dominant explanations focus on the either the failed state (failed democracy and failed governance frames) or on the criminality of protesters. *The New Age* gives no clear reasons for protests, but frames the government as accountable and able to explain problems with service delivery.

Hierarchical cluster analysis of frames

A hierarchical cluster analysis of the frame data reveals the relationship between use of different frames (see *Figure 3*). The figures in red are the p-values. These results strongly link the war/ spectacle frame to the law/crime frame, the police action frame and failed democracy frame. This is the only cluster with really strong links between the frames, with a confidence score of 91.

In the small number of articles using the economic frame, this frame is strongly linked (89 confidence score) to the inconvenience frame, with economics usually linked to the costs of protest damages, and not to wider economic analysis of the causes for protest. The hierarchical cluster analysis found a strong link between the failed governance and accountability frames (88 confidence score), and in the texts accusations of failed governance often lead to calls for government to be accountable. In articles using the corruption frame (11 articles), in just over half (6 articles) accusations of corruption are brought into doubt by representing arguments between different factional interests, muddying the waters with regard to whether or not corruption is actually taking place. The confidence score for other clusters of frames is fairly low (below 80% confidence that those clusters are accurate).

Figure 3: Hierarchical clustering of 'service delivery protest' frames



For convenience, I have given each cluster a name, and the analysis will be discussed in terms of these clusters: the cluster made up of the war/spectacle, law/crime, failed democracy and police action frames is the 'illegitimacy cluster'; the cluster around corruption, factional interests, accountability, failed governance, moral and high prevalence frames is the 'failing state' cluster; the cluster made up of collective action, sympathy, inconvenience, economic, democracy, contest and rights frames is called 'weighing up protest'. The cluster around injustice and dialogue is very small, so as to render a detailed examination of these frames impossible; however, as this thesis aims to look at not only what frames are present, but also what significant frames are absent, the analysis in the next chapter contains a short discussion of the injustice frame.

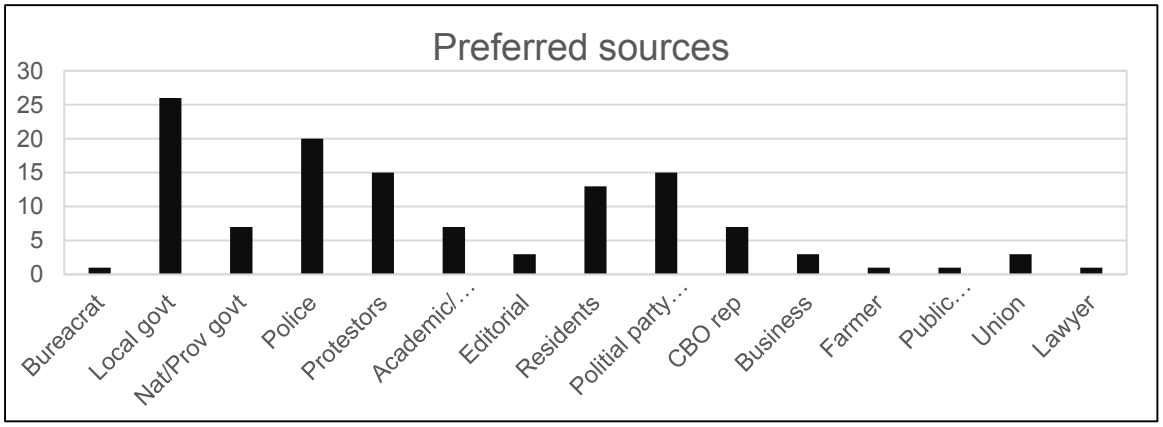
5.3. Results of source analysis

Source prevalence

The pattern of sources in the sample matches Western studies on the media framing of protest (e.g. Carragee & Roefs, 2004; Di Cicco, 2010; Harlow & Johnson, 2011; Hertog &

McLeod, 2001), in that elite sources dominate (see *Figure 4*) — particularly, local government officials (in 26 articles) and the police (in 20 articles), but also political party representatives (in 15 articles). Other elites are also represented in the sample, albeit at a much lower level. Elites include: national/ provincial government officials (7 articles), academics (7 articles) and editors (3 articles), business representatives (3 articles) (all of them in the transport sector, complaining about disruption to transport services), (white) farmers and farmer organisations (1 article), a single bureaucrat and single lawyer, and the Public Protector, Thuli Madonsela.

Figure 4: Preferred sources used in newspaper coverage of 'service delivery protests', 1 January 2013–31 December 2013



By contrast, only 15 articles use protesters as a source. The sample also poorly represents those directly affected by the protests (although not necessarily protesters): only 13 articles cite residents in the area where the protest took place, while 7 articles cite representatives of community-based organisations (CBOs). However, it is possible to argue that people near the protest are cited in 35 articles — cumulatively more than the times local government sources are used, albeit not more than the cumulative total of elite sources. Nevertheless, while the voices of protesters do not come across strongly, the voices of the poor do make a good showing in the sample.

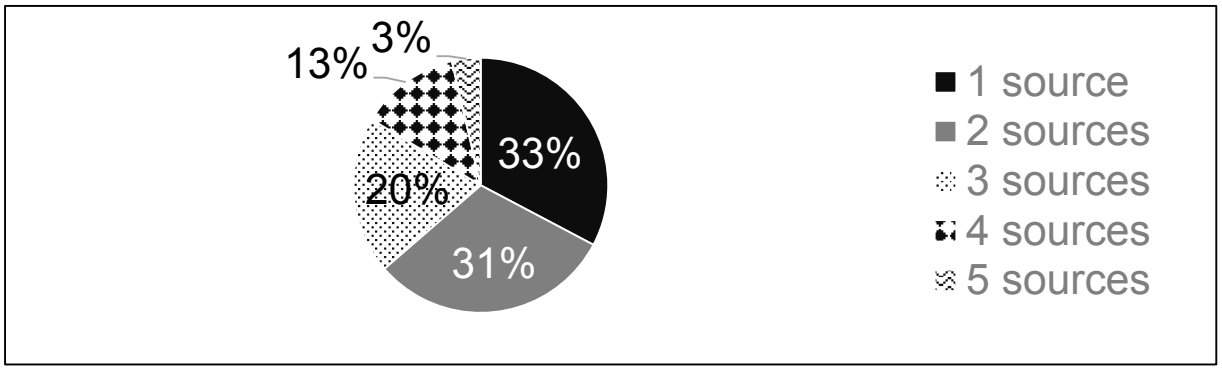
Given the prevalence of protests, it is surprising that the media has rarely relied on provincial or national government sources to comment on either a particular 'service delivery

protest' or the protest trend. This suggests that 'service delivery protests' are very much treated as a local contest, with no real implications for South Africa as a whole.

Number of sources per article

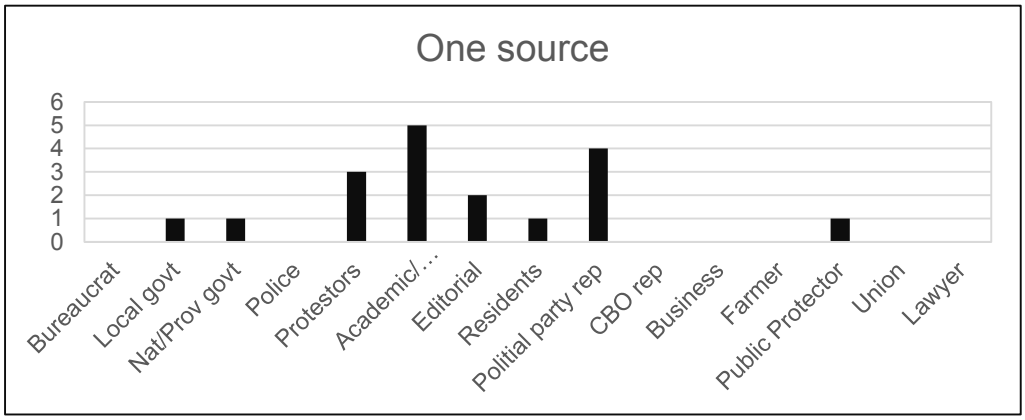
The bulk (64%) of the 55 newspaper articles in the sample only used one or two sources (see *Figure 5*). Strikingly, 33% of articles used only one source. This correlates with the frames, in that since the war/spectacle frame was most prevalent, journalists often relied on their own observation and descriptive capacity, rather than on sources.

Figure 5: Number of sources used in newspaper articles about 'service delivery protests', 1 January 2013–31 December 2013



However, an interesting pattern emerges when we look more closely at the articles that only used one source (see *Figure 6*): this group of articles was much less likely to use local government (1 article) and police (0 articles) sources, but did sometimes used protesters as the only source (3 articles). However, the bulk of the stories using only one source also rely on elite input, but more likely an academic/ researcher source (5 articles), or a political party representative (4 articles).

Figure 6: Sources chosen when only one source is used in 'service delivery protest' articles, 1 January 2013–31 December 2013



When more than one source is used, however, the pattern reverts to the overall trend with local government and police sources dominating (see *Figures 7, 8, 9 & 10*).

Figure 7: Sources chosen when two sources are used in 'service delivery protest' articles, 1 January 2013–31 December 2013

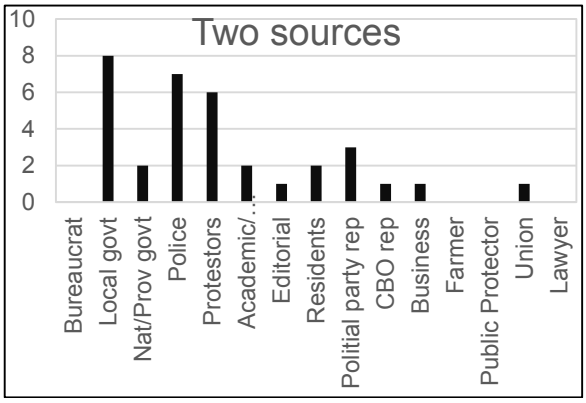


Figure 8: Sources chosen when three sources are used in 'service delivery protest' articles, 1 January 2013–31 December 2013

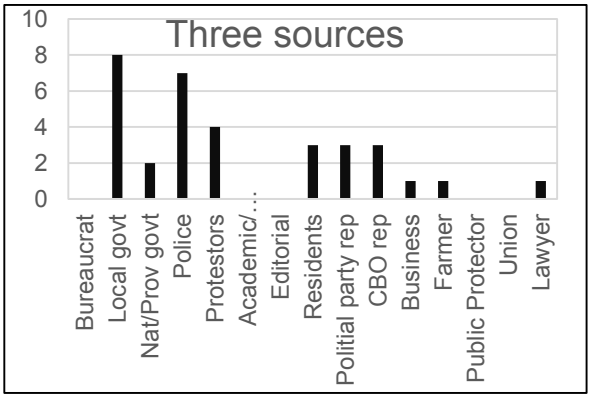


Figure 9: Sources chosen when four sources are used in 'service delivery protest' articles, 1 January 2013–31 December 2013

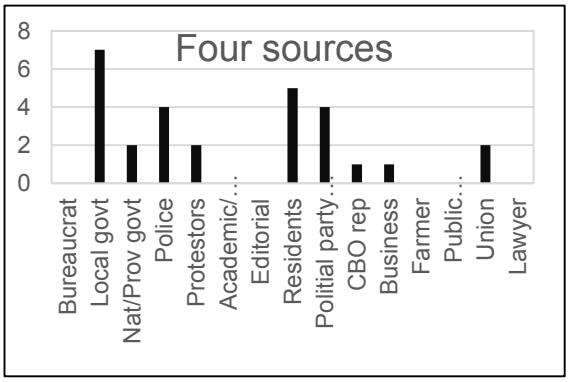
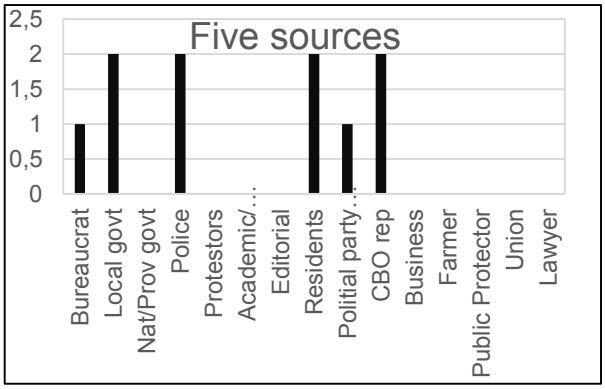


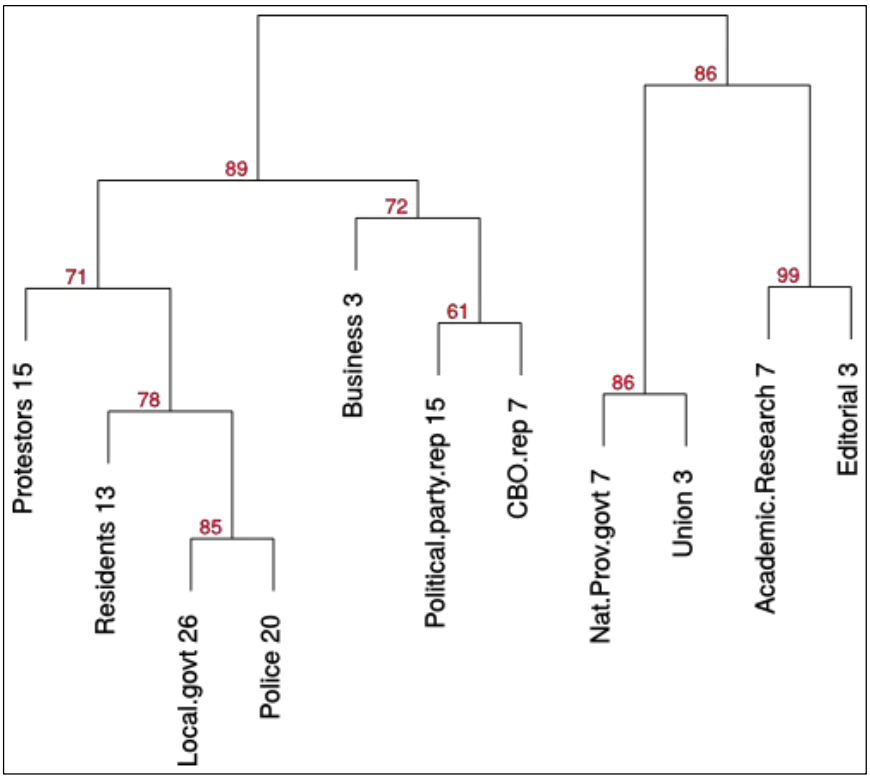
Figure 10: Sources chosen when five sources are used in 'service delivery protest' articles, 1 January 2013–31 December 2013



Hierarchical clusters of sources

Apart from the number of sources, I undertook a hierarchical cluster analysis to determine if clusters of sources commonly grouped together. The farmer, lawyer, Public Protector and bureaucrat sources were removed from the cluster calculation as they were insignificant and distorting the cluster analysis. Academic sources and editorial comment were strongly correlated, as were national/provincial government and unions, as well as local government and police (see *Figure 11*).

Figure 11: Hierarchical cluster of sources used in 'service delivery protest articles', 1 January 2013–31 December 2013



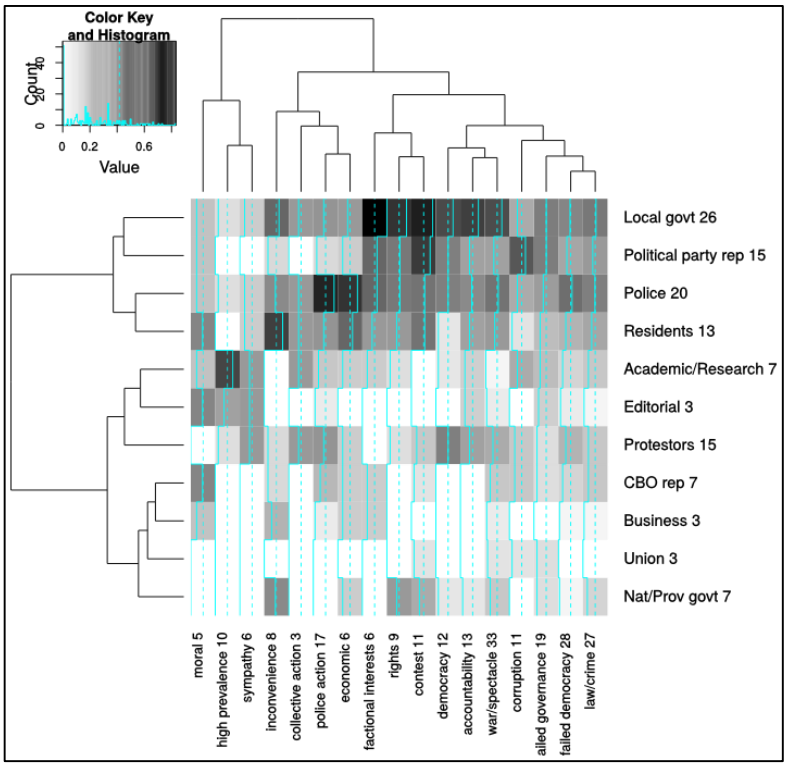
5.4. Correlation of frames and sources

To understand the relationship between the prevalence of frames and the prevalence of sources, I counted the number of articles where a frame was present, and then for each frame counted how often a particular source was used. Based on the resulting ratios of sources to frames, I generated a heat map (the rows (sources) and columns (frames) of the heat map were each clustered using hierarchical clustering with Ward's method to illuminate

where particular frames used similar sources and where particular sources are used in a similar collection of frames).

The heat map reveals (see *Figure 12*) that articles used local government sources regardless of what frames were used. However, local government sources are most strongly correlated with frames of factional interest, contest and then rights, as well as democracy, accountability and the war/spectacle frames. Again, regardless of which frames are used, the police are commonly cited, but the police are most strongly correlated with frames of police action and economic costs. Political party representatives are most strongly correlated with the contest and corruption frames, while residents are most strongly correlated with the inconvenience frame. The high prevalence frame is strongly linked to academic/research sources, while the moral frame is most linked to editorial opinion, residents and CBO representatives. Protesters are most commonly linked with the democracy and police action frames. The law/crime frame is predominantly associated with local government and police.

Figure 12: Heat map of ratio of frames to sources in articles on 'service delivery protests', 1 January 2013–31 December 2013



5.5. Conclusion

The results show a dominance of the war/spectacle frame, and a cluster of frames around this dominant frame, which emphasise the criminality of protesters and the negative impact of protests on democracy. There is not much coverage of the underlying causes of protests, particularly the economic circumstances driving protest. Elite sources dominate the coverage, and these tend to be local government and police sources, with provincial/ national government sources seemingly not having much to say on the issue. Nevertheless, the voice of the poor does get a look in, typically in a cluster with protesters, local government and/or police getting voice, but even occasionally with protesters used as the only source for a story. Many of the frames are not strongly linked with one source or another, but the dominant frame (war/spectacle) is most strongly correlated with local government sources, while the second most dominant frame strongly correlates with both local government and police sources. Several interesting patterns emerge from the data, which will be discussed in more depth in the next chapter.

6. Discussion

6.1. Introduction

The media framing of 'service delivery protests' in South Africa shows some marked similarities to the framing of protests elsewhere, as identified in the literature. The similarities include favouring a war/spectacle frame, and a preference for elite sources over the voices of protesters. Apart from when only one source is used in a story (see *Figure 6* on page 55), no matter how many sources are used, local government sources dominate (see *Figures 7, 8, 9* and *10* on page 55), giving such sources preferential treatment, and creating the impression that local government officials are the authority on 'service delivery protests'. This is in line with other South African media research which has found that the media are 'dominated by official sources' (Jacobs, 2014, p. 11) and has failed to develop a 'pro-poor media vocabulary' (Duncan, 2003, p. 10). However, what seems exceptional in the coverage of protests in South Africa, which is not mentioned in literature on Western media framing of protests, is the framing of protests in terms of a narrative of a failing state (i.e. the failed democracy and failed governance frames). In addition, while a large body of research on 'service delivery protests' identifies economic factors underpinning protests (including neoliberalism, inequality and municipal indigency policies), underpinning economic factors hardly receive a mention in the media reports.

This chapter will explore the above issues in more depth, making connections where possible, to other framing literature in South Africa. The chapter will explore the prevalence of frames in the coverage of 'service delivery protests', but will also explore the political significance of the framing. The overarching framework for discussing the political significance revolves around the unresolved issue of how power should be wielded in South Africa's fairly new democracy — should political power reside mostly in state structures or in the hands of citizens, many of whom have voted for the ruling party, and what model does the media preference through framing?

While I explore the frames in the sample, however, a caveat is that 'service delivery protest' is itself a frame — embodying several elements that recur throughout the newspaper

coverage in the sample. Other frames are embedded in the 'service delivery protest' frame, which originated in media coverage in 2005 (Modiba, 2005); previous to that highly local protests were not described under one banner. Calling a protest a 'service delivery protest' has the effect of tarring all local protests with the same brush. I argue that the term is used to undercut and downplay the variety of underlying factors leading to the protest, by deploying the frames that I will go on to analyse in this chapter.

The structure of this chapter is based around the hierarchical cluster analysis of frames (see *Figure 3* on page 52), and frames and sources are discussed within the context of clusters of frames. I have identified a theme prevalent in each cluster, and used the theme to identify each cluster. The cluster made up of the war/spectacle, law/crime, failed democracy and police action frames is the *illegitimacy cluster*; the cluster around corruption, factional interests, accountability, failed governance, moral and high prevalence frames is the *failing state* cluster; the cluster made up of collective action, sympathy, inconvenience, economic, democracy, contest and rights frames is called *weighing up protest*. The cluster around injustice and dialogue is very small, so as to render a detailed examination of these frames impossible; however, as this thesis aims to look not only at what frames are present, but also what significant frames are absent, this chapter contains a short discussion of the injustice frame.

6.2. Street battles and illegitimacy

In this cluster, one (strongly linked) sub-cluster is around the war/spectacle frame and the law/crime frame, while the other sub-cluster (more loosely linked) is around failed democracy and police action (see *Figure 3* on page 52). The frames work together to delegitimise protest and highlight the dramaturgy of protest, rather than analysing what protests are about or giving voice to protesters. Throughout this cluster, police and local government sources dominate, so that these elite sources become 'experts' on 'service delivery protests', while the voices of protesters are delegitimised.

Vivid and criminal?

Both the literature and the media link disparate protests by identifying commonalities, particularly superficially similar tactics and strategies deployed (as discussed in the literature by Alexander & Pfaffe, 2014; Alexander, 2010; Bond & Mottiar, 2013; Langa & Kiguwa, 2013). In the sampled media articles, the war/spectacle frame highlights the common strategies and tactics, often under the label 'violent protest' (e.g. Diale, 2013; Macupe, 2013; Motumi, 2013a; Phakathi, 2013). This 'violence' mostly involves simply barricading roads (usually with rocks, branches, burning tyres and/or burning debris) and property destruction (usually by burning). In 6 (of 55) articles sampled, the action extends to stoning police vehicles and passing cars (e.g. Editor, 2013b; Linden et al., 2013; Maimane, 2013; Makhubu, 2013; Motumi, 2013a; Tau, 2013); but no other violence is reported, despite Lieutenant General Elias Mawela, Divisional Commissioner of Public Order Policing, reporting on 3 September 2014 that the number of violent protests in 2013 had increased (Mawela, 2014) (albeit that Mawela was not necessarily referring solely to 'service delivery protests'). In focussing on the supposed violence of the protests, '[t]he superficial and sensationalised nature of the majority or articles may … prevent deep knowledge' (De Wet, 2012, p. 29).

The focus on the war/ spectacle frame is not unusual; literature on protest coverage in the Western world also finds that the media focuses on 'tactics, spectacles and dramatic actions' (Harlow & Johnson, 2011, p. 1359). Arguably this frame results because 'news involves the novel event, not the underlying, enduring condition' (Gitlin, 2003, p. 263). The media bring home to us otherwise inaccessible social conflict by highlighting 'conflict's tenor, urgency, and immediacy' (Mander, 1999, p. 3).

The war/spectacle frame creates an impression of the protesters as irrational, simply following what the Editor of *The Star* on 17 October calls 'macabre dance steps' (Editor, 2013c). Protesters are variously described as 'angry' (e.g. Hartley, 2013), 'irate' (e.g. Plaatjie, 2013), 'furious' (e.g. Mokoena, 2013a), 'outraged' (e.g. Mgaqelwa, 2013), and

'baying for blood' (e.g. Mokoena, 2013a). The emphasis on protesters' emotions heightens and manipulates 'perceptions of threat' (Zald, 1996, p. 272) from irrational, frenzied mobs. The discourse underpinning this frame is that conflict is dysfunctional: while readers may be sympathetic to the protesters' poverty, the war/spectacle frame makes protesters less sympathetic, providing only vague explanations of the cause of protests, so that it is difficult to understand what is driving protests. If, as Entman (1993) argues, frames are in part about defining problems, the war/ spectacle frame identifies the protest itself as the problem, rather than underlying issues that drive protesters to the streets, so protests are an 'actual disruption of legitimate order, not … a statement about the world' (Gitlin, 2003, p. 271).

As shown in *Figure 3* on page 52, the war/spectacle frame is clustered with a law/crime frame, emphasising the criminality/illegality of the protesters. For example, in Durban's *Daily News* on 17 April, 'the *illegal* gathering only served to fuel the anger of the community,' (my emphasis) (Peters, 2013); and in the *Witness* on 4 June, 'when there are *criminal elements* we need to investigate,' (my emphasis) (Ngqulunga, 2013c). Framing protests as illegal and hijacked by 'criminal elements' delegitimises the protest and suppresses protesters' complaints: protesters are not sympathetic people seeking human living conditions, but unsavoury criminals trying to take what is not legitimately theirs.

Even when protesters are not directly accused of criminal activity, crime is sometimes seen as a by-product of protest, or linked to protest, for example, in *The Star* on 13 March, 'Nkosi said the blockades had also resulted in an increase in criminal activities,' (Motumi, 2013b). And in *The New Age* on 26 March, a bus company spokesperson reportedly says 'we are worried that criminal activities might start [due to the protests]' (Masilela, 2013). Similarly, in the *Pretoria News* on 9 August, '[i]llegal electricity and water connections are common in the area' (Tau, 2013). Framing a link between protesters and criminals implies either that protesters are criminals or that they have a shared agenda — defeating the ends of justice. This negates the injustice inherent in protesters' poverty and negates their calls for a more just distribution of services.

Do police actions indicate a failing democracy?

In this same cluster, and extending the dramaturgy of the war/spectacle frame, articles commonly use the police action frame (17 of 55 articles), with police often the main sources in such articles (see *Figure 12* on page 57), allowing police to define the reasons for their own actions. Police and protesters are framed as adversaries, since police action is often (14 of 17 articles) framed as being a response to disruptive actions taken by the protesters, rather than protest violence responding to police action, as described in the literature (e.g. Alexander & Pfaffe, 2014; Kunene, 2014; Mchunu & Theron, 2013). For example, in the Pretoria News on 19 April:

> About 10 people were arrested in the morning for alleged public violence and malicious damage to property. … Metro spokesman Elias Mahamba said the situation had spun out of control, *forcing police* to use rubber bullets and tear gas.
>
> (my emphasis) (Makhubu, 2013)

And in *The New Age* on 14 May, 'Petros said police were *forced to deploy* more officers and extra resources to control residents during service delivery protests' (my emphasis) (Ramothwala, 2013a). The frame suggests that the police had no choice but to use force; force is the only remedy to 'service delivery protests' and the illegal and 'irrational violence' of protesters. This takes the responsibility off the police's shoulders and squarely blames protesters for protest violence. Sometimes the descriptions of police action even become quite lyrical, for example, in the Saturday Star on 20 April:

> Cold rain fell past the swishing blades of a police helicopter; past the arc of the flash grenade, down on to the heads of protesters as they turned and fled. A small explosion and a smattering of rubber bullets followed them.
>
> (Olalde & Makhetha, 2013)

The description creates the impression that forceful attacks on protesters are not even carried about by police per se, but by unpiloted helicopters, arcing flash grenades, and rubber bullets that 'follow' protesters. The police attack on protesters is simply a force of nature, like the rain, with attacks on protesters happening without human intent or decisions being made.

Nevertheless, police actions are not framed as entirely innocent in the whole sample; several articles frame police action in terms of negative outcomes, for example when a schoolgirl is shot dead, the *Daily News* on 3 October reports:

> Nqobile Nzuza, who her family said was an innocent bystander in a housing protest by shack dwellers, was shot in the back on Monday, allegedly by police after protesters mobbed their van.
>
> (Mlambo, 2013a)

In Bekkersdal, the *Star* on 16 October frames police action as fairly indiscriminate, riding hippos through the streets 'and wherever they would find a crowd, regardless of whether residents were armed with rocks or not, fired at them with rubber bullets' (Motumi, 2013a). In an editorial on 17 October, the *Star* is scathing:

> All there is, is a police force that is becoming as feral and as brutal as the blue line that propped up the apartheid regime. The weapons are the same, the uniforms are the same, the tactics are the same — the only difference is that the officers and members today have grown up in the very communities they now try to suppress.
>
> (Editor, 2013c)

The discourse framing police action as problematic suggests that this is an organ of state that is failing to act appropriately; in identifying the inappropriate action, the media has an alternative in mind — a specific role that the police should play. For example, in the *City Press* on 21 April sponsors a mediation specialist, arguing that the police should collaborate with mediation specialists, be informed by academic research, apologise for past mistakes, train police officers to listen and build relationships, and reorient police towards de-escalation (Spies, 2013); such arguments are quite prescriptive and do not include protesters' voices about what roles they would like to see government officials (like the police) playing.

The framing of failed police action goes alongside the framing of local government's 'failed democracy' (see *Figure 3* on page 52), as failing participation is often the only explanation for the protests taking place (28 of 55 articles). This media frame mirrors research on 'service delivery protests', which argues that while the government has put in place Integrated Development Planning (IDP) and Ward Councils to facilitate participatory

democracy at local government level (Tsheola, 2012), the failure of these structures are leading to 'service delivery protests' (e.g. Nyar & Wray, 2012; Sinwell, 2011; Thompson, 2011; Tsheola, 2012).

Some media articles frame meetings between communities and councillors, mayors or other local government officials, which end in community dissatisfaction. For example, in East London the *Daily Dispatch* on 21 March highlights how '[t]he meeting was about service delivery and the councillor's conduct but the mayor left before the issues had been addressed and the people were not pleased' (Plaatjie, 2013). Similarly, the *Pretoria News* on 9 August reports that in Protea South protesters said they had been holding meetings with government officials since 2010, but the only thing they have to show are meeting 'minutes in which we were fed what have now become empty promises' (Tau, 2013). In Kimberley, the *Diamond Fields Advertiser* on 5 June reports:

> Chaos erupted when Ntlhangula [the mayor] told the protesters to appoint five people to represent them, pointing out that she would not tolerate the noise and shouting … The unhappy residents, however, pointed out that they all wanted to voice their unhappiness because each one had his or her own problems and grievances … As their councillor tried to calm them down, Ntlhangula walked away.
>
> (Halata, 2013)

In other cases, the problem was that meetings between councillors and residents did not take place at all, for example, in an editorial on 7 May, a *Daily Dispatch* editorial bemoans the breakdown of local participatory government systems in East London, and argues that communities often 'do not even know who represents them at council' (Editor, 2013b). Similarly, the *Star* gives Op-ed space to the DA premier candidate for Gauteng to complain that protesters 'tried and tried again to meet the member of the mayor committee (MMC) for housing in the city … they tried to meet the regional head of housing … it became clear the MMC wanted to avoid them' (Maimane, 2013).

The frame around 'failed democracy' gives credence to protesters claims and highlights that, in fact, protests are understandable given that local participatory structures are not working effectively. However, this places protest in a false dichotomy with

participatory democracy — it suggests that the only legitimate reason to protest is that 'legitimate' structures of democracy are failing residents. The structures put in place by government in which citizens are *invited* to participate are framed as preferential to any spaces citizens might *invent* for themselves; invented and invited spaces are configured 'in binary relations and tend to criminalize the latter by designating only the former as the "proper" space for civil participation' (Miraftab, 2006, p. 195).

The failed democracy frame gives preference to the invited space, ignoring how 'routinization of community participation depoliticizes communities struggles and extends state control within society' (Miraftab, 2009, p. 34). For example, the *Daily News* on 17 April, sponsors the mayor's insistence on formal structures of engagement:

> [Mayor Chris] Ndlela listened to the complaints of the irate residents and said he was willing to address their issue, but they would have to follow the proper channels. … "There is a proper way to resolve these disputes. The proper channels must be followed so that an amicable solution can be reached," Ndlela said …
>
> (Peters, 2013)

A *Daily Dispatch* editorial on 7 May opines that councillors 'are the link between the community and council and should, ideally, be located in their designated areas and providing feedback on any developments or delays' (Editor, 2013a). This view is quite prescriptive about how democracy should function; it imagines specific roles for particular actors in a technocratic way, ignoring what kinds of participation the protesters want. The implication is that protesters should be satisfied with the prescribed structures, as long as they function in the prescribed way. It is not made clear where these prescriptions come from, and there is no critique about whether such technocratic models will indeed satisfy protesting citizens. Such views are not confined to newspapers; in the *Business Day* on 1 November, President Zuma verbally tries to foreclose on communities using their own invented structures to bring about change, saying that disruptive protests 'have no place in a democracy like ours, which provides space for people to state their views openly and freely' (Phakathi, 2013). Zuma's framing implies that state structures are adequate in giving people a voice, and invented spaces are unnecessary.

This 'failed democracy' frame suggests that government only need listen if citizens follow the proper channels and that amicable solutions are only possible if communication happens within government-prescribed procedures. Assuming that invited spaces can or should replace people's own invented spaces ignores the history of civic organisations in South Africa, which saw the need for civic organisations to 'remain independent from and not participate in state structures' (Seekings, 2000b, p. 54). Indeed, given that many 'service delivery protesters' draw a connection to the anti-apartheid struggles of the past (Langa & Kiguwa, 2013; Von Holdt & Kirsten, 2011; Zuern, 2011), relegating democracy only to invited spaces ignores the foundations of civic participation in South Africa by which '[d]emocracy is not only about formal institutions and processes, but must include a political culture which allows for dissent' (Cherry, 2000, p. 106).

While the media and some analysts argue that 'service delivery protests' suggest that 'municipalities have not as yet adequately democratized' (Tsheola et al., 2014, p. 402), this ignores how organising and creating their own spaces for political engagement allows protesters to recover agency and feel empowered (Ngwane, 2011). Since the civic imagination was for organisations independent of state organs, the failures of the South African state may be because they try to impose government-created, invited spaces, rather than connecting with peoples' own created structures that they feel best represent them.

Indeed, communities seem to experience buck-passing and powerlessness in invited spaces; for example in the *Diamond Fields Advertiser* on 28 May:

> Ward 31 councillor, Moses Nhlapo, said yesterday that it was the officials at the municipality who were to be blamed for the protest because they were not doing their part to fast-track service delivery to residents … "We report these problems to the municipality and I am open to you. You can go to the municipality to scrutinise my reports there. I cannot do much if the officials delay in implementing issues." …
>
> (Mokoena, 2013b)

However, the invited spaces may not necessarily be moribund only because of local politicians' failures (as suggested by the 'failed democracy' frame), but because invited spaces have limited decision-making powers, so 'local politicians find themselves perched

precariously on seismic faultlines, confronted with direct and urgent demands for redistribution in the face of fiscal austerity and protections of white privilege' (Hart, 2002, p. 235). Indeed, although 'local government has been elected, it does not have the power to determine key development decisions, and is therefore unable to call upon civil society to influence state policy' (Sinwell, 2011, p. 371).

Even in those articles using failed democracy frames, police sources, followed by local government sources still dominate (see *Figure 12* on page 57). So even when tackling failed participation as a source of community frustration, protesters are still not a preferred source. This suggests that local government and police are winning the framing contest, emphasising 'the news media's relationship to political authority' (Carragee & Roefs, 2004, p. 224). In spite of taking part in protests to make their issues known, and despite adopting strategies with 'an appropriate "value" to news organisation' (Barnett, 2003, p. 11), the protesters preferred definition of their issues is mostly invisible, and the reasons underlying the protest are lost (Harlow & Johnson, 2011). Even when articles frame how democracy may be failing protesters, official sources dominate, and the efforts of protesters to find alternative routes to voice their concerns mostly fail. The frames in this cluster feed into a meta-narrative about the unresolved question of power in South Africa — in this cluster, the frames clearly suggest that state institutions should act to defuse community power in their own invented spaces (the space of protest) and community power should be redirected into the formal, invited, albeit better functioning, spaces. If communities instead use their own invented spaces, they can expect to be criminalised and face forceful police action.

6.3. Is the state failing?

The fragile state cluster is not as prevalent as the illegitimacy cluster already discussed; but in this cluster, the media take up a distinctive political position, criticising the government. In the strongest sub-cluster (see *Figure 3* on page 52) some of the media in the sample highlight failed governance, while others (notably *The New Age*) strive to show the government as accountable; in the next strongest sub-cluster, the frames focus on

corruption and factional interests; and in the final sub-cluster the focus is on the high prevalence of protest and moralising about protest.

Failing to govern or accountable and delivering?

This cluster is markedly different to Western studies of media framing of protests, which routinely adopt 'the main frames from the political elites, without changing their substantive nature' (Matthes, 2012, p. 256). Instead, using the failed governance frame, the media underscore the idea that government is failing in its duties, broken and collapsing. Instead of relying on the elites of the elected political party, in using the failed governance frame, the media turns to other elites — opposition political parties, academics and other experts, and its own editorial opinion.

Most often, the failed governance frame conveys opinions, using only one source in many of the articles (9 of 19) — so unsupported opinion is commonplace when framing failed governance in the sample. For example, in an Op-ed in the *City Press* on 21 April, a mediation practitioner, Chris Spies argues that 'interaction between protesting residents and local councillors, national government and police seems to indicate a *widespread collapse of systems and structures*' (my emphasis) (Spies, 2013). The argument is that the very fact of 'service delivery protests' indicates a collapsing, failing government. This framing of a failing government is echoed in the *Cape Argus* on 5 November when it cites a member the Economic Freedom Fighters, arguing that 'service delivery protests' are 'a symptom of how government over the past 20 years has failed the marginalised masses' (Meyer, 2013). The *Daily Dispatch* on 18 April allows the leader of the United Democratic Movement, Bantu Holomisa, space to argue that '[p]eople are starting to say they have been forgotten by this government' (Ntshobane, 2013). While the *Star* on 30 August creates space for the Leader of the Official Opposition in Johannesburg City Council, Mmusi Maimane, to opine that 'service delivery protests' are due to a government that 'couldn't care enough to listen' and does not have 'brave leaders, who can speak to communities truthfully' (Maimane, 2013).

In all of these articles, the 'service delivery protests' are framed as being due to failures of the ruling party. While there is nothing strange in political parties critiquing the ruling party, it is noticeable that the media sponsor such views, but do not sponsor the views of the ruling party on protest (except in the case of *The New Age*). While it is impossible to discern from the coverage that the media supports one or the other political party, choosing to primarily convey the frames of opposition parties, does indicate that the media are taking an anti-ruling party political position.

On the one hand, the failed governance frame can be seen as sympathetic to protesters, but protesters cited do not use this frame, so it seems that the frame is putting words in protesters' mouths. While the media mainly reports protesters using the democracy, police action and collective action frames (see *Figure 12* on page 57), the media, through editorial and select political opinion, inserts the failed governance frame as if it is speaking on behalf of protesters. So, for example, in *The New Age* on 24 October Public Protector Thuli Madonsela argues that 'service delivery protests' display 'the diluted trust that communities have in authorities who are supposed to serve them' (Radebe & SAPA, 2013). These sponsored frames are underscored by editorials; for example, a *Star* editorial on 17 October argues that:

> The 20th anniversary of our democratic miracle is no cause for celebration for them [protesters], but a nagging abscess that reminds them every day of the gulf between what they hoped for (and in many cases have been promised) and the situation in which they find themselves.
>
> (Editor, 2013c)

Here, the *Star* editor claims to understand the protesters, arguing that the end of apartheid is for protesters 'a nagging abscess', and they do not celebrate the end of apartheid. Nowhere in the sample of articles on 'service delivery protests' do protesters themselves express such deep dissatisfaction with the new democracy, but the editor imagines this must be true, simply because protests are taking place. The editorial goes on to call for leadership from the President, because 'our country is burning' (Editor, 2013c).

This vein of a lack of leadership is also picked up in a *Daily Dispatch* editorial on 25 January, which opines that:

> Our government just never learns. … Even though many areas around the country have been rocked by service delivery protests in the past few years, we still do not know how to respond swiftly in dealing with these riots. … Sadly, our government has again failed to provide the kind of leadership that would have dealt with these issues head on and before they got out of hand.
>
> (Editor, 2013b)

The clear tenor of this editorial is that the government is failing to provide leadership because it does not act strongly enough to suppress, limit and contain protest; 'service delivery protests' are not seen as the normal political activity of communities finding voice, but abnormal events that must be quelled. Again, as in the failed police action frame and the failed democracy frame, the media are quite prescriptive about what roles government should play, as if there is some ideal form that government must live up to. This framing treats an end to protest as the only appropriate political solution, and since the government is failing to end protest, it is a failure. So even though protest arises in part because it is strongly tied to South African political culture (see e.g. Matlala & Bénit-Gbaffou, 2012; Netswera & Kgalane, 2014; Twala, 2014), the media deems the culture problematic. Accordingly, the only appropriate way for citizens to voice their displeasure is to 'forfeit the cornerstones of its insurrectionary inheritance' (Adler & Steinberg, 2000, p. 10). And the only way for the President and government to act is to bring an end to protests: anything less is a failure of governance.

However, this failure is not attributed to, for example, a system failing to alleviate poverty, but instead to the personal, individual 'lack of leadership' among elected party officials, including the president. While much of the literature attributes 'service delivery protests' to a failure of the neo-liberal doctrine that has dominated South African policy post-apartheid (e.g. Alexander, 2010; Cheru, 2001; Jili, 2012; Kunene, 2014), the media are silent on the economic situation underpinning protesters' lives. Previous studies have shown that the media support neoliberal economic policies (Jacobs & Johnson, 2007; Mayher & Mcdonald, 2007; Mudzamiri, 2009), but in discussing 'service delivery protests' the economic

factors contributing to the problem are invisible, implying that the media does not connect protest to economic factors. This blindspot suggests that the media are unwilling to critique the government's economic policy, although it is willing to criticise the government on purely personal merits of 'poor leadership'. This ignores how the government is, in fact, successfully imposing neoliberal policies, by successfully limiting the number of citizens who can access state support — through limited free basic services (McDonald & Pape, 2002; Van Heusden, 2012; Veriava, 2014; von Schnitzler, 2008), through limited indigency policies (Hart, 2013a; Tissington, 2013), and through limiting social grants (Meth, 2006). Hence, while the newspapers lament the state failure, state success (in applying neoliberal bureaucracy) may be at the heart of protest.

Indeed, when one looks at the related accountability frame (which mainly comes from *The New Age* coverage of 'service delivery protests' (see *Figure 2* on page 50)), we find the state, through its local government organs, grappling with the complexities of service delivery. In these articles, *The New Age* is at pains to show government as responsive to protesting communities. For example, on 29 April an article entitled 'Houses in pipeline after protests' details, in quotes from a Johannesburg city official, specific timelines of service delivery that has already taken place, service delivery that is scheduled, as well as the 'appointment of an architect to design houses and civil engineers to install roads and storm water drains and implement water and sewers' (Ramothwala & Pongoma, 2013). And on 10 May, it carries an article in which a Johannesburg city official insists that 'the formalisation process for the township was at an advanced stage and was expected to be completed by September' (Ramothwala, 2013b). Most of these articles do explain that there are delivery delays, but go on to show that service delivery is planned and moving forward.

This deviation from the frames of other newspapers in the sample is striking, in that they show a government at work, as opposed to other newspapers which frame governance failures. However, this deviation is hardly surprising given that *The New Age* is known to be more supportive of the government (e.g. the *Mail&Guardian* article on 9 January 2011 (Staff Reporter, 2011) and to only criticise the government in a constructive way (as described in

the 'about us' section of its website (The New Age, 2014)). What is striking though, is how little other newspapers are inclined to use similar sources to examine government accountability.

Given that 'the frame in a news text is really the imprint of power' (Entman, 1993, p. 55), the playoff between the failed governance frame and the accountability frame in the different media sources in the sample, marks a political struggle between the experts, opposition parties and editors on the one hand, and the official government sources (used in *The New Age* coverage) on the other. Interestingly, the pattern of coverage in *The New Age* is quite similar to Western media framing, in that its frames are 'in synchrony with the status quo' (Johnston & Noakes, 2005, p. 6). But where other media sources break from typical framing (found in Western studies) there is a clear political agenda of critiquing the government, and this indicates that the media (other than *The New Age*) are asserting a different form of political power in South Africa. The media frames covering South Africa 'service delivery protest' point to a media (apart from *The New Age*) which is markedly opposed both to the status quo (elected government) *and* to those who act to challenge the status quo (protesters). The South African state and the South African culture of political participation are framed as 'deviance and aberration' (Osaghae, 2007, p. 692).

Corrupt government officials fighting factional battles

The corruption frame and the factional frame continue from the failed governance frame in building a narrative of state failure. Since there is 'no value-free way' to define corruption (Harrison, 2006, p. 26), the corruption frame in the sample underscores South Africa as a site of 'mal-governance and poverty as well as violent contestations of citizenship and statehood' (Osaghae, 2007, p. 693). In using the corruption frame, the media sample simply treats it as one problem in a shopping list of 'failing state' arguments (unlinked to structural problems), for example, in the *Daily Dispatch* on 18 April:

Some major grievances were:

- Appointment of incompetent staff in the two municipalities;
- Irregularities in tender procedures;
- Nepotism; and
- Corruption.

(Ntshobane, 2013)

Similarly, in *The Times* on 17 September, a catalogue of residents' frustrations is provided, including 'unmet expectations for water services, lack of accountability by municipal officials, *corruption*, indifference, lack of monitoring and censure of non-compliance by water services authorities and officials' (my emphasis) (Mouton, 2013). While corruption is mentioned, no examples are given and mostly there is no further investigation of the corruption charges, even when more specific types of corruption are elaborated. For example *The New Age* on 30 September reported: 'The fact that people serving on the ward committees are also working on the projects aimed at developing the township and its people calls for concern.' (Tlhakudi, 2013). And in the Daily News in Durban on 3 October, while the DA's George Mari calls for investigation of 'allegations of unlawful evictions, illegal contractors, unfair allocations of houses and other-corruption based activities' (Mlambo, 2013a), no further investigation takes place.

Indeed allegations of corruption seem worthy of a mention, to reveal government failures, but do not seem to warrant further investigation to ascertain validity. Claims of corruption are mostly correlated with political party sources (see *Figure 12* on page 57), but even others making corruption allegations do not present evidence. Only in one instance — in the *Saturday Star* on 20 April does the corruption frame seem to hold any weight:

> Anger has recently boiled over in this community after government corruption was exposed. … These include financial invoices and account audits that reveal massive overtime payments given to government employees and subcontractors, as well as misuse of municipality funds.
>
> (Olalde & Makhetha, 2013)

The general accusation of corruption with only one example of actual investigation to back it up, allow the corruption frame to be embedded in the 'service delivery protest' frame, without proof. The assumption underpinning the corruption frame is that corruption is so

widespread and so much part of local government operations that it can be stated, uncontested, without needing supporting evidence. In part, the media are allowing the corruption frames because protesters are reporting corruption, but South African protesters may also label practices as corruption simply because bureaucratic processes are clumsy, opaque, confused and capricious (Rubin, 2011). Since the media (and the academic literature) does not explore allegations of corruption any further to determine the truth of the claims, however, the corruption frame links media articles on 'service delivery protests' to international discourses on corruption in Africa.

Corruption claims are highly political — 'publicly calling a person or government corrupt is a political act' (Bukovansky, 2006, p. 185). The frame assumes that corruption is 'the cause of democratic and development problems rather than a symptom or consequence of them' (Szeftel, 1998, p. 238). It is as if corruption is so obviously a fault of the South African government that no evidence is needed to make such claims.

While the sample does not particularly suggest that corruption is because South Africa is an immature society that needs to be tutored by more enlightened institutions and societies (Brown & Cloke, 2004), the link between corruption and factionalism does underscore an "immaturity" of government officials. The faction frame shows various local government role players squabbling (the faction frame most often correlates with local government sources — see *Figure 12* on page 57), for example, in the *Daily Dispatch* on 21 March:

> Ward 28 ANC Youth League chairman Xolisa Jita claimed residents were not happy with the outcome of the meeting with Ncitha. … Jita added that after Ncitha left at about 8pm residents started venting their anger on the streets. … The Sanco chairwoman of the area, Nokwanda Kalana, disputed that Ncitha left without making any resolutions at the meeting … Kalana added most residents had no problem with the councillor.
>
> (Plaatjie, 2013)

In this article, the faction frame highlights community disagreements between ANC youth, and (presumably older) ANC members in Sanco. This points to the media again framing a failing, dysfunctional state, whereby people are unable to resolve their differences

'maturely' through democratic processes, but resort to 'violent' protest, taking their fights to the streets.

Similarly, in the *Diamond Fields Advertiser* on 28 May:

> Although the protest was initially about lack of service delivery in the area … it turned political with both [sic] Modise, Pharasi and Segwagwa launching attacks on each other. … Responding to the allegations, Modise said it was a known fact that Pharasi and Segwagwa never supported her as ward councillor and that they were colluding with one official at the municipality to unseat her.
>
> (Mokoena, 2013a)

And the *Witness* on 3 June cites a DA spokesperson saying that infighting between factions of the ANC was creating 'ongoing dissent [which] is having a severe impact on the administration of the town' (Ngqulunga, 2013b). While factionalism has been identified as a contributing factor in 'service delivery protests' (e.g. Kunene, 2014; Marais, 2011; Mkhabela, 2014; Von Holdt & Kirsten, 2011), the media faction frame creates the impression of local government and community role players that are so out of control that they are damaging the structures they purport to serve, instead of playing orderly, agreeable roles. By implication, the media marks the ANC party members as unfit for governance and suggests that the ANC itself is unfit to govern.

At the same time, the frame links back to the illegitimacy cluster, because significant role-players claim that the protests are not legitimately about service delivery. They thus cast aspersions on protesters' motives, and in effect, discredit the protesters, for example in *The New Age* on 28 August:

> KWADUKUZA mayor Ricardo Mthembu has made startling allegations that there are people inside the ANC who want him out and were turning the community against him. … "The protests are not legitimate … these waves of protest are perpetuated by certain individuals within my organisation who want to oust me.
>
> (Mdletshe, 2013)

Since the factional frames are linked to the corruption frames (see *Figure 3* on page 52), and these frames are mainly put forward by local government role players (see *Figure 12* on page 57), the media are in effect using elite voices to tar other elites. However, the factional frame also creates an excuse for the media not to investigate corruption claims to

establish their validity, because too much confusion is created by competing voices. At the same time, the factional frame is one form of the contest frame typically taken up across media (Benford & Snow, 2000; Carragee & Roefs, 2004; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000); it implies that the media are able to present a dispute without taking sides, and thus reinforces notions of the media as 'objective'. The faction frame feeds into other frames in the 'failing state' cluster, because like the failed governance frame it suggests that leadership is lacking, and disorder reigns at local government level.

High prevalence of protest 'authorises' moralising

Highlighting disorder at local government level and within the ruling party legitimises the use of the moral frame (either by highlighting the views of residents and CSOs opposed to protest, or through the editorial voice — see *Figure 12* on page 57). This frame is rarely used (5 of 55 articles) (see *Figure 3* on page 52), but as it fits with the failing state cluster, I have chosen to highlight its tenor. The moral frame is always normative (Kyriacou, 2014), assuming a prevailing, society-wide set of standards and norms to which everyone ascribes (or should ascribe). As discussed in previous sections, other frames also include assumptions of society-wide standards that include an orderly state, orderly citizens that communicate with each other in state-led structures, and constructively channel disagreements into orderly conduct. The moral frame tries to show its allegiance to a society-wide set of norms, for example, in a *Daily Dispatch* editorial on 25 January:

> … please say a prayer for the six families who are mourning the death of their loved one following yet another week of violent protests … the unrelenting violence that has accompanied the protests was unnecessary and disturbing.
>
> (Editor, 2013b)

The editor assumes that all people say prayers for mourning families, and all would join in calling protests 'unnecessary and disturbing'. The moral frame sets itself up as "common sense" and implies that all reasonable humans would agree with the particular ideological notion being touted, for example, in the *Star* on 17 October:

> But it's neither the broken promises nor the seething fury that is the harbinger of doom; it is the way in which this disquiet is being handled that should break the heart of every concerned South African.
>
> (Editor, 2013c)

In this article there is a notion of the right feelings that every South African should have — everyone should be 'heartbroken', with the implication that everyone should read the situation in the same way, and agree that government is not handling protests as the editor sees fit. The moral frame emphasises that certain behaviours and actions are right and proper, while others are not, for example, as highlighted in a bold pull quote in the *Daily Dispatch* on 21 March, '[y]ou can't claim to want service delivery and then destroy existing services' (Plaatjie, 2013). The moral frame also involves ascribing motives and actions to deviant others, for example, attributing selfish, thoughtless actions to protesters, as highlighted in a bold pull quote in *The New Age* 26 March, '[t]hose who torch buses don't think about the consequences of their actions' (Masilela, 2013).

The moral frame is linked to the prevalence frame in the cluster analysis (see *Figure 3* on page 52), and while the prevalence frame is largely touted by academics (see *Figure 12* on page 57), the prevalence frame is also used to justify a 'moral panic' about 'service delivery protests'. While the prevalence frame mainly just gives data, it is linked to other frames in the 'failing state' cluster because the prevalence of 'service delivery protests' is used to justify a critique of the South African state.

The frames used in the 'failing state' cluster all point to a universal standard of normal behaviour (the moral frame), embodying an ideal state structure (where citizen—state contestation takes place in government invited spaces), where specific roles are assigned to the police, counsellors, mayors, the President, and other government officials, who act with orderly procedures, to deliver technocratic solutions to an appeased citizenry. By this political and ideological standard, the South African state is failing — by failing to exert proper leadership governance and quell protest, by being corrupt, by being embroiled in political disputes, and by failing to exhibit the right morals. While the concern (or is it demand?) expressed is for 'good governance', there is an implicit assumption that better

models for functioning states are known, and a different political party might be able to deliver what the ANC does not.

While this cluster might be unusual in the framing of protest action as compared to international literature on framing protests, it is not unusual in the framing of African states. The failing state discourse is often adopted by international institutions in relation to Africa (Englebert & Tull, 2008; Gruffydd Jones, 2013; Osaghae, 2007; Szeftel, 1998), and it assumes '[t]he superior capacity of Western states to govern and the proper form of the Western liberal state as a universal model' (Gruffydd Jones, 2013, p. 65). The media, in using the frames in the failing state cluster, at best reveals antagonism to the ruling party, and at worst assumes it knows better than elected officials do how to run the government. This aligns with Wasserman and De Beer's (2004, p. 64) assertion that the South African media's 'relationship with government remained uneasy'.

6.4. Weighing up protest with cumbersome machines

In the cluster on weighing up protest, the frames attempt to weigh up the pros and cons of protest, in various ways. This cluster consists of less prevalent frames (see *Figure 1* on page 48), and less strong clusters (see *Figure 3* on page 52). The strongest sub-cluster in this cluster is around the inconvenience and economic frames, which attempts to weigh up the cost of protest. The next strongest sub-cluster around collective action and sympathy frames, attempts to weigh up protest from the point of view aligned with protesters. The sub-cluster around democracy, contest and rights frames is much weaker (see *Figure 12* on page 57), but looks at the systematic and procedural aspects around protest, as well as the competing voices.

Weighing up the costs of protest

Given the emphasis on economic conditions and neoliberalism in the literature, the media's minimal use of this frame is striking (see *Figure 1* on page 48). Also surprising is that the

main source for the economic frame is the police (see *Figure 12* on page 57) — hardly an authority on economic matters. All but one of the articles using an economic frame use economic arguments against protesters. In particular, the police highlight the expense of policing protests, for example, in *The New Age* on 14 May, the Gauteng police commissioner said: 'It is our duty to police any protest but when in turns violent, it means more resources and manpower to address it,' (Ramothwala, 2013a). Similarly, in the *Daily News* of 4 October, a police spokesman argues that 'protests were placing a great strain on police resources' (Joyce & Dawood, 2013). This framing suggests that 'service delivery protests' are too expensive to police, but, for example, it does not calculate the costs to protesters lives of not protesting (e.g. invisible but ongoing economic hardship).

Costs are again highlighted in the *Witness* on 25 July, when an Agricultural Union representative argues that a road blockade is problematic because 'it was essential for farmers to have immediate access to markets and businesses' (Ngqulunga, 2013a). And in the *Cape Argus* on 5 November, a labour lawyer argues that protests create 'a strong feeling in the business community that they should not invest anything further in their business' (Meyer, 2013). By framing economic concerns in this way, the articles imply that business and farmers' economic interests are more important than the protesters' economic interests, which receive no mention.

Only one article in the *Star* on 13 March breaks this pattern, with a resident highlighting why the protest is necessary: 'this water situation is putting us out of business' (Motumi, 2013b). This quote is telling; despite the framing in other articles, business owners are not universally united in condemning protests — some business owners also have problems with accessing services and getting attention for their issues, so they either participate in protests or support protesters. However, even here, the article does not take the discussion further to explore how many businesses are affected by poor service delivery, and how many people are unable to pursue economic, livelihood activities due to poor services.

Overall, the economic frame chosen in discussing 'service delivery protests' is extremely narrow: none of the articles look at the economic issues facing local municipalities, the economic doctrine followed, and how this impacts on local residents. Focussing on the costs of protest instead of the broad economic factors underpinning protest emphasises the nuisance aspect of protests, creating a negative view of protests.

Similarly, the inconvenience frame emphasises the 'perceived bothersome effects' of protest (Di Cicco, 2010, p. 136). For example, in the *Star* on 13 March, a police spokesman argues that 'service delivery protest' is limiting access to services because 'Pikitup, emergency ambulances, fire departments and public transport can't get into the roads' (Motumi, 2013b); it also cites a city council official arguing that people cannot catch taxis in the 'usual spots' (ibid). Curiously, only police and government officials are quoted citing this litany of complaints, not residents. Similarly, in an article in *The New Age* on 26 March entitled: 'Torched buses inconvenience many', it is again officials (a bus company official) worrying about residents' safety in trying to get to work (Masilela, 2013). Difficulties getting to work are also cited as inconveniences in other articles; for example, the *Daily Dispatch* on 30 April, a protest meant 'motorists and commuters struggled to get into the city for the start of the day's work' (Linden et al., 2013).

Since blockading roads is a common strategy in 'service delivery protests' (see e.g. Alexander, 2010), we can assume protesters are aware of and intend to create disruption and inconvenience. Protests are 'subversive acts that challenge normalized practices, modes of causation, or systems of authority' (Beissinger, 2002). Protesters are unlikely to get media attention without creating disruption, as the disruption is what creates value for news organisations (Barnett, 2003). By focussing on the inconvenience, instead of the underlying causes, the media are 'directly hindering' the cause of the protesters (Baylor, 1996, p. 249). In choosing the inconvenience frame, the media align with the 'counter-mobilization of elites' (Carragee & Roefs, 2004, p. 228) to oppose protesters. Instead of helping poor communities to meet their service delivery and political needs, the media 'reinforce existing power arrangements within the social system' (Strohm, 1999, p. 81).

Balancing the scales and seeing through protesters eyes?

A small number of articles do sympathise with the protesters — or at least, identify sympathetic issues that could be driving protest. For example, in the *Saturday Star* on 20 April, 'community's anger derives from the potential corruption documented in government papers' (Olalde & Makhetha, 2013). Similarly, when *The Times* quotes researcher Dr Barbara Tapela on water 'service delivery protests', she sympathetically states: 'It is not easy to go to work or find work when a person has not bathed or washed their clothes [due to water scarcity]' (Mouton, 2013). While she is an 'expert', speaking from observed experience in the field, in choosing a researcher to speak to the issues, instead of protesters, the media are still privileging elite voices.

Only one *Diamond Fields Advertiser* article, using the headline 'We are tired of buckets', breaks out of this model, giving extensive coverage to protesters' voices, complaining that they 'don't have electricity' and were 'using bucket toilets but the municipality failed to clear them regularly' creating health hazards in their homes (Mokoena, 2013c). The article stands out because protesters get space to document, in detail, their problems. The article also incorporates the collective action frame, with protesters indicating their intentions to act together, warning that 'if they were not provided with toilets and electricity, they would withhold their votes' (ibid). A few other articles also highlight protesters' collective action; for example, the *Star* on 13 March begins with 'DUBE residents want to make sure their area councillor hears their cries,' (Motumi, 2013b). And in the *Sunday Independent* on 14 April, an academic argues that 'citizens in their local contexts have gained scepticism,' predisposing them to protest (Booysen, 2013).

Unlike earlier frames, the collective action frame (alongside the sympathy frame) creates the impression that protesters are rational, thinking people, who are familiar with the political terrain, and familiar with the available political tactics to engage on that terrain. In these handful of articles, we see the only glimmers of a media that has a 'desire to reach under-represented groups' (Sparks, 2009, p. 214) and show that 'society is full of political

vitality, that opinions and interests contend freely — that society is pluralist' (Gitlin, 2003, p. 285). However, given the minimal use of such frames, the media clearly ignore and silence certain voices, creating two "publics" — 'a vocal public', which has media access 'and a voiceless public whose interests are marginalised' (Wasserman & De Beer, 2004, p. 69).

Contesting rights and bureaucracy: A cumbersome machine

While the sympathy and collective action frames do show protesters as human beings, their human rights are not unproblematic in some of the other articles. While a rights frame may be adopted by protesters themselves, the way the media use the frame is often not aligned with protesters' own framing. In the rights frame, the rights of protesters almost always come with caveats, for example, in the *Cape Argus* on 5 November, an ANC provincial secretary argues 'that while people had a democratic right to protest they must ensure they did so peacefully' (Meyer, 2013). Such caveats again essentially link protest to unlawful activities, with 'service delivery protests' that are almost automatically associated with violent and illegal action by criminals.

Linking the rights of protesters to their criminality ignores the fact that research has shown 'the vast majority of criminal charges laid against protesters or community activists are likely to be withdrawn or dismissed for lack of substance' (Clark, 2014, p. 55). While the police in the sample accuse protesters of criminal activity, in reporting on these claims the media help blur the line between protests and criminal activity, 'enabling the government to label protests "illegal" and allowing the police to react with increasing brutality' (Clark, 2014, p. 59). By claiming the protesters are acting illegally, the police in effect deny protesters other rights, for example 'the right to safety and security' (Nyar & Wray, 2012, p. 31), i.e. protection from the police so as to be able to undertake a peaceful, but meaningful protest. By deploying the rights language in this limiting way, the media ignores that protesters have little means to secure their rights because they 'have no, or limited, access to public interest litigation and are faced with complicated legal and political processes to participate in

decisions affecting their material existence' (Stewart, 2014, p. 3). None of the articles acknowledge that a legal loophole means poor communities only have access to a progressive realisation of socio-economic rights, creating 'a state of exception, in which the rights of the citizen are suspended and deferred pending appropriate government action' (Veriava, 2014, p. 211). The media does not address how 'abstract constitutional rights are unresponsive to the everyday violence' experienced by protesters as a result of poverty (Stewart, 2014, p. 20). While the protesters attempt to 'translate local grievances into broader claims' (Baud & Rutten, 2004, p. 1), the language of rights in the sample does not challenge the injustices of life at the margins. Instead, the emphasis is on the invited space of the courtroom, which must decide whether protesters conducted their protest in a legitimate manner, or not. This feeds into the metanarrative that, even though issues of power are unresolved in South Africa, state invented spaces must ultimately have the arbitrating power, not the citizens.

However, using a rights language that is contained within the logic of the South African governance system does not mean there is no conflict. Indeed, using the contest frame, articles in the sample reveal several schisms — between communities and local government officials, between elected council official and council employees, and between protesters and non-protesters in communities. Although the contest frame is rarely used (11 of 55 articles), it nevertheless conveys the politics of protest to media audiences (Cottle, 2008).

For example, in a *Daily Dispatch* article on 21 March, the protesters claimed that the councillor left before addressing their issues, while the Sanco chairwoman argued that 'most residents had no problem with the councillor' (Plaatjie, 2013). Similarly, in the *Diamond Fields Advertiser* on 28 May, the article focuses on two groups — one supporting the local councillor (Modise) and one opposed to her, when 'residents aligned to Modise clashed with those baying for her blood' (Mokoena, 2013a). These articles do not resolve the conflict, but simply record the different voices, each making different allegations.

The minimal use of the contest frame in the articles in this sample is quite striking, as framing studies in general have shown how news stories are 'a forum for framing contests in

which political actors compete by sponsoring their preferred definition of issues' (Carragee & Roefs, 2004, p. 216). In regard to the framing of protests, studies have shown that the contest frame is quite popular in juxtaposing official voices to the voices of protesters and making protesters' 'alternative views seem irrational or lacking' (Harlow & Johnson, 2011, p. 1362). The way the contest frame is used in these articles highlighted above does show some inclination towards favouring elite voices over protester voices, but they equally show different elites arguing. This seems to feed into the failing state narrative, in that it suggests that there are too many unresolved differences within local councils, hampering their proper functioning. Instead of being a well-oiled machine, local government officials appear to be jockeying for position and trying to out-frame each other. In weighing up the different voices, most often the sampled articles leave it up to the reader to discern who to believe.

Similarly, when using the democracy frame (12 of 55 articles — see *Figure 3* on page 52), the articles throw competing points into the mix, but ultimately leave it up to the reader to decide what to believe. The bulk of articles using the democracy frame are from *The New Age* (see *Figure 2* on page 50) and often reveal the gears of the democratic system turning, often in favour of the protesting communities, but sometimes it is unclear if protesting communities will really benefit. For example, in Uitenhage, while meetings have been held and there is clearly an eagerness to talk, it is unclear what action will result from the meetings:

> "Meetings have been held with the people of the northern areas led by human settlements portfolio chairperson Buyisile Mkhayu." … Ngcolomba said a series of meetings would be held at various venues in the area tomorrow. … "We are always in touch with our people on the ground and are always willing to, and do, engage with our communities."
>
> (Velaphi, 2013)

Similarly, in the *Daily News* on 13 August, the official response to a protest is that a project has been approved and communicated, but the community 'have been waiting a long time and are tired of waiting … Motheo Construction Group, had completed stage one of the project — which included identifying if the land was large enough' (Mlambo, 2013b). In this article, on the one hand protesters have been waiting a long time for results, and on the

other, only stage one of the project has been completed. Nevertheless, it is up to each individual reader to weigh up whether or not the council's progress is satisfactory. The media also does not pick up on the out-sourcing of services here, even though 'the record of private company involvement is a poor one with specific reference to disadvantage communities' (Narsiah, 2002, p. 7) — in this case, for example, it would be interesting to know how much was paid to Motheo Construction Group, simply for identifying land and establishing if it was large enough. This again links into the already discussed failings in the economic frame used by the media, in that outsourcing is taken at face value, in a model whereby, while facilitated by government, delivery by business is preferred over direct delivery by government. The framing reveals local officials' efforts 'to manage poverty and deprivation' and the attempt to 'render technical that which is inherently political' (Hart, 2013a, p. 5). In framing the actions of government in this way, the media create the impression that answering the protesters effectively is simply a technical question. While this frame does not entirely 'discredit and marginalize protest actions' (Harlow & Johnson, 2011, p. 1359), it does position the proper response as a bureaucratic one, rather than at a level of political decision-making, with the protesters having space to voice their concerns and be heard.

Overall, in the cluster of frames 'weighing up' protest, the media seems to definitively refuse to adopt a position and instead leave it to the reader to weigh it up. However, given the sparseness with which many of the frames in this cluster are used, the overall effect of a media who encourages 'weighing up' remains negligible. Instead the more dominant frames of delegitimising protest and delegitimising the 'failing state' hold far stronger sway.

6.5. Injustice

Since it is not only the frames in media stories that create a picture of power and politics at play, but also the frames that are excluded (Durham, 2001), this analysis looks at the injustice frame, which only appears in 2 of the 55 articles (see *Figure 3* on page 52). The injustice frame is relevant to social protest, because social movement theorists looking at social movement framing have identified the injustice frame as key to social movement

messaging (Baud & Rutten, 2004; Benford & Snow, 2000; Gamson et al., 1992; Harlow & Johnson, 2011; Johnston & Noakes, 2005; Snow, 2008). Because the injustice frame is highly favoured by protesters and movements, if the media was adopting the frames of protesters at all, one would expect to see much more of the injustice frame in the sample than is apparent. While the protesters in this sample have won the battle for media access, the lack of an injustice frame in the sample points to a failed 'fight for the definition and framing of [the] covered issue' (Walgrave & Manssens, 2005, p. 116). At the same time, the poor showing of the injustice frame points to the 'inability of organised journalists to relate the needs and interests of the very communities they claim to serve' (Duncan, 2003, p. 2).

6.6. Conclusion

Even in introducing frames that are sympathetic to protesters, the weight of the evidence from this frame analysis is neither in favour of protesters, nor in favour of the 'failing state', but aligned instead with another 'invisible' force that attempts to grapple with our new democracy, while remaining sceptical of its possibilities for success. This suggests that the South African media, like the US media in Gitlin's (2003) study, is indirectly shaped by a 'dominant economic class' whose interests are aligned neither with the poor communities who attempt to highlight their livelihood struggle, nor with the newly formed state that claims to answer to these poor communities. The preferred solution to the protests is posited as a technocratic one, especially through the democracy frame adopted by *The New Age*, but also through the rights frame (where the court must arbitrate), a different type of policing, firmer leadership, and allocation or roles to councillors and other government officials. The injustices and harsh economic realities are almost invisible in the sample analysed; tackling injustice and changing the economic order are not imagined as solutions to protests.

The organising principle underlying the articles is one of interrogating 'service delivery protests' within the context of existing and potential models of states and citizenship. While the preferred state model is not specified in the sample, the chosen frames 'consist of tacit rather than overt conjectures' (König, 2012, p. 3). Implicit in the chosen frames is that the

media support a strengthened state bureaucracy to deliver consistent service, rather than a model in which the state engages citizens to resolve problems with diverse solutions, specific to local circumstances. Hence, the model does not support a stronger voice for citizens, but a state that has a firmer hand on citizens, and is thus able to limit citizen action.

However, the study is limited in that it only looked at a one year (2013) sample of newspaper articles; therefore these finding may not be applicable to other years, and may not reflect the overall picture from all media (including radio, television, and internet news sources). Further studies of the South African media are needed to assess if, in particular, the failing state frame is common across other types of political coverage, or if it is unique to 'service delivery protest' coverage in 2013.

7. Conclusion

The framing analysis method has proved extremely useful in unpacking how the media views political action in South Africa, and how 'the news media are part of politics and part of protest' (Oliver and Maney, 2000, p. 463). In particular, rather than simply analysing the prevalence of frames, the hierarchical cluster analysis using Ward's method was useful for analysing how the different frames relate to each other and are connected: this method allowed me to unpack patterns of frames, so that themes could be identified and explored. Nevertheless, this study contributes to framing studies in general, and specifically to framing studies of protest, and to South African media framing studies.

This study has confirmed the hypotheses that South African newspaper coverage in 2013 was not advantageous to protesters and mainly highlighted the dramaturgy of protest, without much deeper analysis; and newspapers mainly used elite sources, rarely using protesters as sources. Because of the framing and choice of sources, the media does not aid protesters in getting their message across, and often instead frames protesters as either irrational/ emotional or criminal. In the sample of 55 articles analysed, local government and police sources have the most power to define and explain 'service delivery protests', and do so in a way that suggests 'service delivery protests' are illegitimate.

The weakness of protesters' voice as a source in the sample suggests that the protesters are not framing their issues in a way that media are receptive to; this implies a weakness in protesters messaging, and perhaps in how it goes about engaging the media. For example, it would be interesting to know if 'service delivery protests' go along with press releases stating the aims and intentions of the protest, and if so, are these ignored? However, that question is beyond the scope of this study.

South African newspaper framing of 'service delivery protests' in 2013 is similar to framing of protest elsewhere in the world, which promotes a negative view of protests (Di Cicco, 2010), mainly frames dramaturgy (Baylor, 1996; Cottle, 2008; Harlow and Johnson, 2011), and prefers elite sources (Carragee and Roefs, 2004; Gitlin, 2003; Matthes, 2012). However, unlike media elsewhere in the world, the media does not frame 'service delivery

protests' in such a way as to 'reinforce existing power arrangements within the social system' (Strohm, 1999, p. 81). Instead, using the failed democracy frame, as well as failed governance, police action, corruption and factionalism frames, the articles in the sample endeavour to show that the government is failing to create appropriate spaces for citizens to voice their concerns, failing to use its police force to effectively quell protests, failing to show leadership by firmly bringing protests under control, failing to prevent corruption, and failing to effectively deal with power contests within the ruling party. This litany of failures, builds up to a failing state narrative: one that is not common in previous studies of media framing of protests, but is common to narratives about Africa (Cornwall, 2007; Englebert and Tull, 2008; Gruffydd Jones, 2013; Gruffydd-Jones, 2008; Szeftel, 1998). The only exceptions to this failed state narrative are provided by the pro-government newspaper, *The New Age*, which endeavours to show how local government officials are, in fact, delivering services and accountable to the protesting communities.

The framing of a failing state in relation to 'service delivery protests' underscores how the South African media are 'political actors in their own right' (Walgrave and Manssens, 2005, p. 117) — their position is both anti-protesters and anti-ruling party, and pro- a state in which citizen action is controlled by and limited to official government structures. The media (other than *The New Age*) is therefore challenging the existing social order, and proposing alternatives, although it does not go as far as naming specific alternatives. On the other hand, *The New Age* supports the existing social order, and implies that protesting communities simply need more patience.

The media framing of 'service delivery protests' is markedly different to the literature on the topic; for example, whereas the literature shows local politicians trying to juggle protesters demands for delivery with national government demands for fiscal austerity (Hart, 2002), this complexity is not apparent in the media coverage. Indeed, the coverage does not really tackle the relationship between 'service delivery protests' and the economy, except insofar as to suggest that protest is bad for business. Furthermore, given that according to the literature protesters see themselves as demanding various rights — particularly socio-

economic ones (Tapela, 2012; Thompson and Nleya, 2010; Thompson, 2011) — it is striking that the media never mentions these socio-economic rights, and only mentions the right to protest with caveats limiting the right to protest . And while the protesters' call can be read as a call for justice (Baud and Rutten, 2004; Benford and Snow, 2000; Harlow and Johnson, 2011; Johnston and Klandermans, 2013; Snow, 2008), the injustice frame is all but invisible in the coverage in this sample, suggesting that the media are blind to the 'systemic and structural violence' (Stewart, 2014, p. 3) that accompanies protesters' everyday lives.

Appendix 1: Frame cluster analysis calculation

Box 1: Calculation of Frame Hierarchical Cluster Analysis (Ward's method) using R statistical analysis software

Computed using R version 3.1.0 running in IPython 2.2.0 from data - all sheet.

```
frames_data <- read.csv("data - all.csv")

rownames(frames_data) <- frames_data[,1]

frames_data = frames_data[,-1] # remove first column - this is the article names

frames_data = frames_data[2:56,] # 56 articles - remove first row, it's the totals

frames_data = frames_data[,1:19] # 19 frames

# add the article count to the label

colnames(frames_data) <- lapply(colnames(frames_data),

        function(x) { paste(x, sum(frames_data[,x])) } )

# this code is for running pvclust (with the fix so we can use ward.D2 )

source("pvclust.R")

source("pvclust-internal.R")

frames_result = pvclust(frames_data, method.dist="binary", method.hclust="ward.D2", nboot=1000)

svg("clusters_by_frames_pvclust.svg")

plot(frames_result)
```

Appendix 2: Source cluster analysis calculation

Box 2: Calculation of Source Hierarchical Cluster Analysis (Ward's method) using R statistical analysis software

Computed using R version 3.1.0 running in IPython 2.2.0 from data - Sources sheet.

```
sources_data <- read.csv("data - Sources.csv")

rownames(sources_data) <- sources_data[,1]

sources_data = sources_data[,-1] # remove first column - this is the article names

sources_data = sources_data[1:55,] # 56 articles

sources_data = sources_data[,1:15] # 15 different types of sources

# remove poorly represented data

sources_data = sources_data[,!(colnames(sources_data) %in%

        c("Lawyer","Public.Protector", "Bureaucrat", "Farmer"))]

# add the article count to the label

colnames(sources_data) <- lapply(colnames(sources_data),

        function(x) { paste(x, sum(sources_data[,x])) } )

# this code is for running pvclust (with the fix so we can use ward.D2 )

source("pvclust.R")

source("pvclust-internal.R")

sources_result = pvclust(sources_data, method.dist="binary", method.hclust="ward.D2",

        nboot=1000)

svg("clusters_by_sources_pvclust_majority.svg")

plot(sources_result)
```

Appendix 3: Calculations correlating frames and sources

Box 3: Calculation of correlation ratios between sources and frames
Computed using R version 3.1.0 running in IPython 2.2.0 from data - all & Sources sheets

```
#This is all python code

import pandas

# first look at the list of sources

# we want to be able to find the set of articles for a given source

data = pandas.io.parsers.read_csv('data - Sources.csv')

excluded_sources = ("Lawyer", "Bureaucrat", "Farmer", "Public Protector")

excluded_frames = ("injustice", "dialogue")

# select only the grid: 56 rows by 16 columns

# the rows are articles, the columns are the articles names (removed below) and sources

data = data.iloc[0:55,0:16]

# now take the article names, we'll use them for row names

index = data[data.columns[0]]

# and delete that first column (article names), set the row names and our dataframe is

# done

del data[data.columns[0]]

data.index = index

# Exclude rarely cited sources

for colname in excluded_sources:

    data = data.drop(colname, 1)

sources = data.columns

source_to_art = dict()

numbered_source_labels = []

for source_str in data.columns:

    source_to_art[source_str] = set()

    for i, value in enumerate(data[source_str]):
```

```
        article_name = index[i]
        if value:
            source_to_art[source_str].add(article_name)
    numbered_source_labels.append("{} {}".format(source_str,
len(source_to_art[source_str])))
# now we want two things:
# total # of articles for a frame (Narticles_with_frame)
# set of articles for a given frame
#  with this we can intersect this set with the set of articles with a source
#  to get the Narticles_with_frame_and_source
data = pandas.io.parsers.read_csv('data - all.csv')
# select rows 2 to 57 (the articles) and columns 0 to 20 (article name + 19 frames)
data = data.iloc[1:56,0:20]
#print "first row", data.iloc[0]
# get the article names to use as row names
article_index = data[data.columns[0]]
# remove first column
del data[data.columns[0]]
data.index = article_index
# remove poorly represented frames
for colname in excluded_frames:
    data = data.drop(colname, 1)
frames = data.columns
numbered_frame_labels = []
ratio_frame = pandas.DataFrame(columns=frames, index=sources, dtype='float_')
num_articles_frame = pandas.DataFrame(columns=frames, index=sources, dtype='int_')
frame_to_art = dict()
```

```
for frame_str in data.columns:
    frame_to_art[frame_str] = set()
    for i, value in enumerate(data[frame_str]):
        article_name = article_index.iloc[i]
        if value:
            frame_to_art[frame_str].add(article_name)
    numbered_frame_labels.append("{} {}".format(frame_str, len(frame_to_art[frame_str])))
    for source_str in sources:
        total_articles_this_frame = len(frame_to_art[frame_str])
        article_this_frame_this_source = len(
                frame_to_art[frame_str].intersection(source_to_art[source_str]))
        ratio = float(article_this_frame_this_source) / float(total_articles_this_frame)
        num_articles_frame[frame_str][source_str] = article_this_frame_this_source
        ratio_frame[frame_str][source_str] = ratio
output_filename = "frame_source_ratios.csv"
ratio_frame.to_csv(output_filename)
num_articles_frame.to_csv("num_articles_by_source_and_frame.csv")
```

```
#This is all R code:
%%R -i ratio_frame,sources,numbered_source_labels,numbered_frame_labels
library(gplots)
rownames(ratio_frame) <- numbered_source_labels
colnames(ratio_frame) <- numbered_frame_labels
ward_clust <- function(x,...) hclust(x, method="ward.D2", ...)
svg("heatmap.svg")
heatmap.2(as.matrix(ratio_frame), hclustfun=ward_clust, col=grey(seq(1,0,-0.01)))
```

Appendix 4: Articles analysed

1. Booysen, S. (2013) 'Protesters tighten grip on power', *Sunday Independent*, Johannesburg, 14th April.
2. Cele, P. (2013) 'Isipingo residents block road demanding decent homes', *Independent on Saturday*, Johannesburg, 28th September.
3. Decker, A. (2013) 'City might go to court after staff attacked', *Cape Argus*, Cape Town, 21st May.
4. Diale, L. (2013) 'Church pelted in Bekkersdal protest', *The New Age*, Midrand, 28th October.
5. Editor (2013a) 'Leadership of silence', *Daily Dispatch*, East London, 25th January.
6. Editor (2013b) 'The country is burning', *The Star*, Johannesburg, 17th October.
7. Editor, T. (2013) 'Frustration boiling over', *Daily Dispatch*, East London, 7th May.
8. Ford-Kritzinger, N. (2013) 'City braces for march', *The New Age*, Midrand, 29th November.
9. Halata, C. (2013) '"Restore our power"', *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, Kimberley, 5th June.
10. Hartley, A. (2013) 'Angry Mfuleni residents protest over electricity delivery', *Cape Times*, Cape Town, 3rd April.
11. Joyce, L. and Dawood, Z. (2013) 'Shackdwellers take to streets in KwaMashu, uMlazi', *Daily News*, Durban, 4th October.
12. Kwon Hoo, S. (2013) '"We also want basic services"', *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, Kimberley, 29th October.
13. Linden, A., Prince, S. and Fuzile, B. (2013) 'Duncan Village flames of fury', *Daily Dispatch*, East London, 30th April.
14. Louw, P., Nair, N. and Davids, N. (2013) 'Extreme matric: Pupils write under police guard, in secret and after seeing murder', *The Times*, Johannesburg, 29th October.
15. Macupe, B. (2013) 'Matriculants to be evacuated: Pupils from riot-ravaged Bekkersdal to write final exams at secret venue', *Sowetan*, Johannesburg, 25th October.
16. Maimane, M. (2013) 'Communities want a government that will listen to them', *The Star*, Johannesburg, 30th August.
17. Makhubu, N. (2013) 'Youths protest in Mabopane, Sosh: 10 held as youngsters vent anger over unemployment', *Pretoria News*, Pretoria, 19th April.
18. Makinana, A. (2013) 'Potty-training in the Western Cape', *Mail & Guardian*, Johannesburg, 20th June.
19. Masilela, S. (2013) 'Torched buses inconvenience many', *The New Age*, Midrand, 26th March.
20. Mdletshe, C. (2013a) 'Clash over taxi routes, speeding driver kills child', *The New Age*, Midrand, 24th July.
21. Mdletshe, C. (2013b) '"Comrades want me out"', *The New Age*, Midrand, 28th August.
22. Meyer, W. (2013) 'Opposition back "peaceful march"', *Cape Argus*, Cape Town, 5th November.

23. Mgaqelwa, A. (2013) 'Threat to turn EC town "into a Marikana": Sanco, Samwu protesters bring Port St Johns to a standstill as anger grows over "non-delivery"', *Daily Dispatch*, East London, 7th November.
24. Mlambo, S. (2013a) 'DA calls for commission of enquiry into housing', *Daily News*, Durban, 3rd October.
25. Mlambo, S. (2013b) 'Shack dwellers block off R102, demanding housing', *Daily News*, Durban, 13th August.
26. Mokoena, M. (2013a) 'ANC leader pulls out knife', *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, Kimberley, 28th May.
27. Mokoena, M. (2013b) 'Blame Sol officials - councillor: Service delivery chaos', *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, Kimberley, 28th May.
28. Mokoena, M. (2013c) '"We are tired of buckets"', *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, Kimberley, 2nd August.
29. Motumi, M. (2013a) 'Bekkersdal protest turns violent: Rubber bullets and stones fly as residents, cops engage in street battles', *The Star*, Johannesburg, 16th October.
30. Motumi, M. (2013b) 'Cops unblock road barricades after Soweto protests', *The Star*, Johannesburg, 13th March.
31. Mouton, S. (2013) 'Flood of water protests: Country united over concern for basic service', *The Times*, Johannesburg, 17th September.
32. Mpalantshane, L. (2013) '15 000 likely to join Port St Johns protest', *Daily Dispatch*, East London, 12th November.
33. Ngqulunga, T. (2013a) 'Farmers suffer as protesters block road', *Witness*, Durban, 25th July.
34. Ngqulunga, T. (2013b) 'Municipal contracts spark protests', *Witness*, Durban, 13th June.
35. Ngqulunga, T. (2013c) 'Richmond protesters block roads demanding delivery', *Witness*, Durban, 4th June.
36. Ntshobane, S. (2013) 'Cry the "forgotten" Transkei: UDM's Holomisa leads protest over neglected regional towns', *Daily Dispatch*, East London, 18th April.
37. Nyaka, F. (2013) 'Youth burn down reputation: Steve Tshwete municipality is the best in the province but protesters destroy services they're demanding', *The New Age*, Midrand, 27th June.
38. Olalde, M. and Makhetha, T. (2013) 'Police shut down Sasolburg protest: 16 arrested after Zamdela residents protest against allegations of corruption at municipality', *Saturday Star*, Johannesburg, 20th April.
39. Peters, S. (2013) 'Stun grenades, tear gas used to disperse Pietermaritzburg protesters', *Daily News*, Durban, 17th April.
40. Phakathi, B. (2013) 'Cape Town will pursue protesters - De Lille', *Business Day*, Johannesburg, 1st November.
41. Plaatjie, P. (2013) 'Fiery end to mayor's talk: Eight arrests after community structures torched', *Daily Dispatch*, East London, 21st March.
42. Radebe, M. (2013) 'Cops fire rubber bullets to break up Hopewell protest', *Witness*, Durban, 22nd May.
43. Radebe, S. and SAPA (2013) 'SA faces "worrying culture": Madonsela says communities believe that starting a fire will draw attention from authorities', *The New Age*, Midrand, 24th October.

44. Ramothwala, P. (2013a) 'Gauteng protests on the rise', *The New Age*, Midrand, 13th September.
45. Ramothwala, P. (2013b) 'Protests strain police resources', *The New Age*, Midrand, 14th May.
46. Ramothwala, P. (2013c) 'Residents march to demand the release of service delivery protesters', *The New Age*, Midrand, 10th May.
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