



BUS5000W

Dissertation

**Exploring the Signalling Potential of Mega-Sporting Events: An Analysis of
the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa.**

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ABSTRACT

Mega-sporting events such as the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa and the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil have been observed to serve as highly influential tools for the promotion of positive media impressions surrounding the host destination. Drawing from the field of existing knowledge surrounding the sociology of sport, the media and media content analysis, this study reports on a media content analysis conducted on the local news coverage of the 2010 FIFA World Cup in selected South African newspapers. Monitoring coverage over an eight-year pre- and post-event period, the analysis identified five principal themes: stadiums; safety and security; Bafana-Bafana; social-impact; and economic-impact. The findings indicated a cyclical-type shift in conversation, where focus was placed on impressions of host-nation capabilities and readiness in the lead up to the event, to profound euphoria, unity and pride during the hosting stages of the event, and finally onto critical impact and legacy evaluation in the post-event phase. The sentiment of the coverage was largely balanced across all periods, with the total number of positive references only slightly exceeding that of negative references. These findings serve as critical insight to the work of event organisers, media managers and policy developers alike, whom all hold a vested interest in managing the perceived impressions of mega-sporting events. Practical implications for these stakeholders include: i) establishing greater clarity with respect to the overall signalling benefits of mega-sporting; and ii) informing media management campaigns to reinforce the power of mega-sporting events as a positive reference point - especially in the post-event legacy period.

Keywords: Mega-sporting events; Events marketing; Mass media content analysis; Leximancer; 2010 FIFA World Cup; Legacy; Longitudinal content analysis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH	6
1.2.1 The Media Signalling Impulse of Mega-sporting events	6
1.2.2 Qualifying The Assumption of Pervasive Media Effects	8
1.2.3 The Practical Considerations Surrounding Media Signalling at Mega-Sporting Events: A Longitudinal Framework.....	10
1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION AND OBJECTIVES	12
1.4 METHODOLOGY	13
1.4.1 Research Approach, Design and Method	13
1.4.2 Target Population and Sampling Procedure	14
1.4.3 Data Collection and Preparation.....	15
1.4.4 Pilot Study	16
1.4.5 Data Analysis	16
1.5 POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY.....	17
1.6 DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY	19
1.7 CONCLUSION.....	20
CHAPTER II: UNDERSTANDING MEGA-SPORTING EVENTS AND THE MOTIVATION TO HOST THEM	22
2.1 INTRODUCTION	22
2.2 UNDERSTANDING MEGA-SPORTING EVENTS	23
2.3 THE IMPACT OF MEGA-SPORTING EVENTS.....	27
2.3.1 The Socio-Economic Impact of Mega-sporting events	28
2.3.2 The Socio-Cultural Impact of Mega-sporting events.....	32
2.3.3 The Physical Impact of Mega-sporting events.....	35
2.4 RATIONALIZING MEGA-SPORTING EVENT BIDS	37
2.5 CONCLUSION.....	40

CHAPTER III: SIGNALLING THROUGH MEGA-SPORTING EVENTS: THE 2010 FIFA WORLD CUP IN SOUTH AFRICA	41
3.1 INTRODUCTION	41
3.2 BUILDING NATION IMAGE THROUGH MEGA-SPORTING EVENTS	42
3.3 QUALIFYING THE ASSUMPTION OF PERVASIVE MEDIA EFFECTS.....	48
3.3.1 The Hypodermic School of Thought (Direct Effects).....	48
3.3.2 The Law of Minimal Consequence	49
3.3.3 The Political School of Thought.....	50
3.3.4 The Cultural School of Thought.....	51
3.3.5 A Contemporary Understanding.....	52
3.3.6 Media Effects Theory and Mega-Sporting Events	54
3.4 THE 2010 FIFA WORLD CUP IN SOUTH AFRICA	56
3.4.1 An Introduction to the ‘African’ 2010 FIFA World Cup	56
3.4.2 Negotiating African Essentialism, Afro-Pessimism and South African Exceptionalism.....	58
3.4.3 The Perceived Benefits and Costs of the 2010 FIFA World Cup	60
3.5 THE PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS SURROUNDING MEDIA SIGNALLING AT MEGA-SPORTING EVENTS: A LONGITUDINAL FRAMEWORK.....	64
3.6 CONCLUSION.....	67
 CHAPTER IV: METHODOLOGY	69
4.1 INTRODUCTION	69
4.2 RESEARCH QUESTION AND OBJECTIVES	70
4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD	71
4.3.1 Research Design	71
4.3.2 Longitudinal Data Collection Method.....	72
4.4 TARGET POPULATION AND SAMPLING APPROACH	74
4.4.1 Target Population	74
4.4.2 Sampling Procedure.....	74
4.4.3 Sample Size	76

4.5 DATA COLLECTION AND PREPARATION	77
4.5.1 Content Sourcing	77
4.5.2 Content Identification and Extraction.....	78
4.6 PILOT STUDY.....	79
4.7 DATA ANALYSIS.....	79
4.7.1 Software for Analysis: Leximancer	79
4.7.2 Analysis Performed.....	81
4.7.2.1 Descriptive Statistics	82
4.7.2.2 Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis.....	82
4.8 CONCLUSION.....	84
CHAPTER V: FINDINGS	86
5.1 INTRODUCTION	86
5.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS.....	86
5.3 FINDINGS WITH REGARD TO THE SECONDARY OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	89
5.3.1 Objective 1: Evaluation of the Media Narrative 2-4 Years Prior to the Event.....	90
5.3.2 Objective 2: Evaluation of the Media Narrative 0-2 Years Prior to the Event.....	93
5.3.3 Objective 3: Evaluation of the Media Narrative During the Event	96
5.3.4 Objective 4: Evaluation of the Media Narrative 0-2 Years After the Event	98
5.3.5 Objective 5: Evaluation of the Media Narrative 2-4 Years After the Event	101
5.4 FINDINGS WITH REGARD TO THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY	104
5.4.1 Analysis of the Thematic Coverage.....	105
5.4.2 Analysis of the Observed Sentiment	108
5.5 CONCLUSION.....	109

CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSION	111
6.1 INTRODUCTION	111
6.2 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY.....	113
6.2.1 Objective 1: Evaluation of the Media Narrative 2-4 Years Prior to the Event....	113
6.2.2 Objective 2: Evaluation of the Media Narrative 0-2 Years Prior to the Event....	114
6.2.3 Objective 3: Evaluation of the Media Narrative During the Event.	116
6.2.4 Objective 4: Evaluation of the Media Narrative 0-2 Years After the Event.	118
6.2.5 Objective 5: Evaluation of the Media Narrative 2-4 Years After the Event.	120
6.2.6 Conclusions Regarding the Primary Research Objective (Objective 6).....	121
6.3 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS	124
6.3.1 Establishing Buy-in with Media Representatives.....	125
6.3.2 Plan for the Future to Build Re-assurance of the Present.....	126
6.3.3 Co-branding Considerations of Single Nation Hosted Mega-Sporting Events ...	128
6.3.4 Mitigating Negative Impressions Through Contingency Planning	129
6.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.....	129
6.4.1 Loosely Defined Data Collection Points	130
6.4.2 Limited Relative Scope of Coded Concepts in Sentiment Lens.....	130
6.4.3 Confined to Reports on Potential Signalling Outcomes	131
6.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.....	132
6.5.1 Baseline for Future Media Signalling Research	132
6.5.2 Correlating Media Signalling Outcomes and Public Perceptions.....	133
6.6 SUMMARY	133
LIST OF REFERENCES	135

LIST OF APPENDICES:

APPENDIX A: Review of the 2010 FIFA World Cup Planning Documentation.....160

LIST OF TABLES:

Table 1: Published Definitions of Mega-Events24
Table 2: Data Collection Schedule 73
Table 3: Number of collected articles per time period and newspaper source86
Table 4: Total concept count per time period and newspaper source.....87
Table 5: Number of favourable and unfavourable mentions for each time period..... 109

LIST OF FIGURES:

Figure 1: Outline of Chapters20
Figure 2: Leximancer cognitive map of local media coverage 2-4 years prior to the event....90
Figure 3: Leximancer cognitive map of local media coverage 0-2 years prior to the event....93
Figure 4: Leximancer cognitive map of local media coverage during the event.....96
Figure 5: Leximancer cognitive map of local media coverage 0-2 years after the event99
Figure 6: Leximancer cognitive map of local media coverage 2-4 years after the event 102
Figure 7: Leximancer cognitive text map of local media coverage 2-4 years prior,
0-2 years prior, during, 0-2 years after, and 2-4 years after the event..... 106

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The complications in reconstructing South Africa into a stable, cohesive and unified nation has preoccupied various leaders of the emerging state for over 20 years now. A particularly popular approach for the post-apartheid South African government has been to employ a variety of mega-sporting events and associated symbols in their efforts to drive this South African renaissance (Ndlovu & Gatsheni, 2011). In the two decades since the fall of the apartheid government in 1994, South Africa has played host to three mega-sporting events – the IRB Rugby World Cup in 1996, the ICC Cricket World Cup in 2003, and most recently the FIFA World Cup in 2010. This, in itself, is a remarkable achievement for South Africa, especially considering its previous suspension from international sport during the apartheid era (Ndlovu, 2010). The primary rationale behind South Africa's enthusiasm to host such prestigious mega-sporting events, post-apartheid, centres around its pursuit of 'World-class' status, nation-building and to assert its exceptionalism within - and leadership of - the African continent (Alegi, 2004). Nelson Mandela ingeniously imagined sport and mega-sporting events as a means by which a largely divided nation could be reunited, a common national identity could be promoted, and national reconciliation could be processed (de Almeida, Bolsmann, Junior & de Souza, 2015).

It was in early 2004 that FIFA President Joseph Blatter declared that the 2010 FIFA World would be hosted by South Africa – the tournament's first ever African host (Greeff, 2008). Meeting the significance of such a prestigious opportunity, therefore, South Africa wanted to make sure that the first ever Football World Cup hosted on African soil would serve as a benchmark for all future revisions of the competition. Therefore, it was in this context that the 2010 FIFA World Cup was set to be South Africa's greatest post-apartheid pursuit for global status and recognition. The 2010 FIFA World Cup, however, was also set to be South Africa's most expensive investment in such pursuits; and with little empirical evidence to confirm the profound success of South Africa's mega-sporting event centred growth strategy (cf. 1995 Rugby World Cup), several concerns arose as to the potential opportunity cost and social distribution of the proposed benefits. Subsequently, it was largely within this wider ideological and political context that several debates emerged within the academic literature surrounding the sensibility of not only South Africa's bid to host the 2010 FIFA World Cup specifically, but emerging state bids for mega-sporting events more generally (Whitson & Horne, 2006).

The discussion as to the overall benefits and costs of mega-sporting events can be traced back over half a century. In particular, it was the widely publicised debts of the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal that first raised questions around the feasibility of mega-sporting events (Horne, 2007). In particular, the literature has focused on evaluating the socio-economic, socio-cultural and physical Impact (Bull & Lovell, 2007). Overall and on balance, in this regard, the perceived potential of mega-sporting events to generate significant benefits for their host cities, regions and countries remains highly contested. In terms of the immediate observations, it is difficult to argue against the significant economic benefits that a mega-sporting event can offer a host region (Weed, 2009). However, in observing these benefits alongside the widespread pursuit of enhanced power and status by many contemporary businesses and politicians, several questions have been raised by critics as to the social distribution of such benefits (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006). Lowes (2002) points out that, which social groups are excluded, which groups ultimately benefit, and what scope there is for contestation against such events, are three pertinent questions that are often too easily dismissed by event organisers.

In exploring this academic debate further, it became evident that whilst mega-sporting events could often be found to generate several positive outcomes for their host nations, many of these events had also be linked to having a negative impact, especially on low-income residents (Black, 2007). Weed (2009) pointed out that almost every positive application associated with these events also generated some form of negative outcome – a key observation of the perpetual paradox which pervades much of the mega-sporting event research. In the United Kingdom, for example, several claims and counter-claims have been proposed, with the emphasis of critics typically on the social costs, while advocates tended to promote the immediate economic benefits (Roberts, 2004). More specifically, urban redevelopment, job creation, economic growth and improved destination images have been witnessed together with terrorist attacks, threats to human rights, high inflation, and even the defamation of national brand after exposures of bribery and corruption (Horne, 2007).

Meanwhile, in North America and Australia, in terms of substantive material – based on works by, *inter alia*: Ritchie and Lyons (1990) on the 1988 Winter Olympic Games in Calgary; Kim (1989) on the Seoul 1988 Summer Olympic Games; Brunet (1993, 1995) on the 1992 Barcelona Summer Olympic Games; Humphreys and Plummer (1995) and Baade and Matheson (2002) on the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games; Jones (2001) on the 1999 Welsh Rugby World Cup; Arthur Andersen (1999) and Madden (2002) on the 2000 Summer

Olympic Games in Sydney; Papanikos (1999) and Balfousia-Savva, Athanassiou, Zaragas and Milonas (2001) on the 2004 Athens Summer Olympic Games; Horne and Manzenreiter (2004) on the 2002 Korea/Japan Football World Cup; Tyrrell, Williams, and Johnston (2004) on the 2012 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver – an overwhelming collection of evidence has emerged in recent years which confirms that mega-sporting events play an important nation-building role for their host destinations. That being said, however, while the consequences of mega-sporting events were generally found to be positive in much of the above-cited research, the precise scope and nature of these consequences still remained fundamentally unclear (Weed, 2009).

Such observations, therefore, add an increased sense of urgency to the question as to whether these incredibly expensive and largely privatised mega-sporting events should be funded by the use of public capital – especially in emerging states such as South Africa (Duminy & Lockett, 2012). Given that many of the event-related benefits have been observed to accrue primarily to the political elite, as identified above, it could be suggested that the use of public funds is highly inappropriate (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006). Yet, the answer is rarely ever this simple. Certainly, the fact that predictions of the expected benefits are almost always wrong, and usually heavily overstated, doesn't seem to have done much at all to stifle the enthusiasm of prospective hosts (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006).

Black (2007) suggests that part of the reason for this paucity of accurate expectations and analyses surrounding mega-sporting events might be that they also endeavour to serve several other, intangible purposes. In particular, sport organising bodies together with media relations experts and commercial stakeholders, especially in recent years, have been quick to point out several more intangible benefits of mega-sporting events (Duminy & Lockett, 2012). Malfas, Houlihan and Theodoraki (2004) explain, in this regard, that mega-sporting events now promise to deliver something much bigger than their immediately observed socio-economic, socio-cultural or physical outcomes; and, as such, countries' growing enthusiasm to host such events is being driven in pursuit of something of much broader intrinsic value to a host nation. That is, the opportunity to reinforce strategic messages, to reimagine prevailing narratives, and to establish 'soft' power through the widespread media exposure that mega-sporting events tend to attract for a host destination (Black, 2007; Black & Van der Westhuizen, 2004). Black (2007) discusses these status-building strategies in the context of symbolic politics and the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa, whereby he points out that in today's increasingly

competitive 'global' economy, mega-sporting events are now one of the few ambulatory sources of potential competitive advantages still accessible to emerging states.

The impulse to employ mega-sporting events in an endeavour to reimagine a nation – through symbols and signals of distinguishing characteristics or important trends and departures – is certainly not difficult to understand, especially in today's highly globalised era of the mass media and fiercely debated hosting decisions (Schriener, 2009). Farquharson and Marjoribanks (2003) explain that the proposed outcomes of mega-sporting events, in this regard, can be observed not only through the physical, cultural and economic processes relating to the event, but also through struggles in the socio-cultural and symbolic texts that narrate the event for the local and international audience. Similarly, Clarke and Everest (2006) suggests that regardless of how they are framed in official reports, mega-sporting events are – as are all central social-economic policy items - experienced and understood according to their underlying socio-cultural context; and, in today's post-industrial society, this context is largely provided by the information and entertainment observed within the mass media.

Importantly, for the purposes of this study, the literature has observed an increasingly close connection between sport, the nation and the media over the past decade, whereby the media has been shown to play a critical role in constructing, reconstructing and amplifying dialogues around the nation and sport (Blain, Boyle and O'Donnell, 1993). In terms of practical observations, at least, mega-sporting events can be seen to have had somewhat of a long and profound history of serving as critical vehicles of articulation through which host nations can project several positive messages and impressions surrounding their socio-economic state (Black, 2007). However, to assume that the signals projected from hosting a mega-sporting event are always positive is almost certainly a mistake (Dimeo & Kay 2004); as such high profile showcasing opportunities are rarely seen to come without considerable risk (cf. the globally broadcasted debts of the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal). It is within this context of largely conflicting theoretical observations, therefore, that Morgan, Pritchard and Pride (2010) tend to argue that the intrinsic link between the media, image-signalling and mega-sporting events is not always well understood.

In terms of substantive empirical research, there appears to be very little published academic evidence that could contest Morgan *et al.*'s (2010) claims. In fact, to this study's best knowledge, the literature has only ever documented two published empirical analyses that explore the media signalling outcomes of a mega-sporting event (cf. Swart, Linley & Bob,

2013; Swart, Linley & Hardenberg, 2012); although, the recently observed increase of signal, power and status driven mega-sporting event bids by emerging states, suggests that a clear need exists for further empirical research in this regard (Swart *et al.*, 2012). It is clear that mega-sporting events are likely to generate significant media impressions surrounding a host destination (de Almeida *et al.*, 2015). But what is the scope of these impressions? While supporters and advocates promote several socio-economic, socio-cultural and physical benefits for a host region, does the media accept this view, and to what extent does it endorse such activity, or does it tend to reflect more critically on the negative outcomes? Furthermore, to what extent do these impressions change in focus and sentiment over time, or do they remain consistent? These are all important questions that appear to remain unanswered within the academic literature.

This paper is focused on exploring the abovementioned issues by examining the media coverage surrounding South Africa's especially controversial bid to host the 2010 FIFA World Cup. More specifically, the purpose of this study is to answer the following research question:

How was the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa framed by the South African National Press over an eight year pre- and post-event period?

In understanding the important role that the media plays in signalling impressions surrounding mega-sporting events, and conceiving the centrality of these impressions to a country's decision to bid for such events; the remainder of this chapter outlines the critical details required to interpret this study and discusses its broader scope and selected objectives. The chapter also positions this study in the context of the broader field of mega-sporting event research, and presents key sections of information surrounding the background to the study. The remainder of this chapter opens with a discussion of the theoretical considerations surrounding the study of the media - qualifying the assumption of media effects that is often broadly implied within the associated research. The considerations surrounding the practical applications of the media at mega-sports-events is then reviewed, and several important observations are discussed which help frame the research question and objectives. Next, the methodology is discussed, where the specific research methods, sampling measures and analysis tools are reviewed. Lastly, the justification for the study is presented and the overall structure of the entire study is outlined.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

This section introduces the theoretical context for this study. First, the signalling potential of mega-sporting events is discussed and the lack of empirical evidence to support the widespread claims of mega-sporting event signalling is made clear – especially with respect to its non-tourism based applications in local markets. Then, the critical assumption of media effects is tested to qualify the proposed research question. Finally, several practical considerations surrounding the study of media signalling at mega-sporting events is discussed and the context of the study is introduced.

1.2.1 The Media Signalling Impulse of Mega-sporting events

The employment of mega-sporting events to signal arrival or graduation amongst the leading countries of the world, especially in recent years, has become an increasingly popular endeavour and ambition for potential hosts (Black and Van der Westhuizen 2004; Horne & Manzenreiter 2006). Primarily, Knott, Allen and Swart (2012) explain that this impulse is about ‘place promotion’ and ‘marketing’; yet, beyond these obvious incentives, several scholars have suggested that it can also extend to dynamics of symbolism and legitimation (Black, 2007; de Almeida *et al.*, 2015; Farquharson & Marjoribanks, 2003).

In this regard, Farquharson and Marjoribanks (2003) suggest that the analysis of media signalling through mega-sporting events is best understood in relation to Benedict Anderson's (1991) proposal of countries as ‘imagined communities’ – imagined as both intrinsically independent and limited. In employing the theory of ‘imagination’, Anderson (1991) proposes that in a country of any size, status or demographic composition, while most residents won't actually know each other, they are intrinsically connected by the ‘image of their community’. Furthermore, this notion of ‘imagined communities’ also implies that countries can be ‘re-imagined’; and, as such, fundamentally transformed in the minds of individuals.

In terms of its practical application, Black (2007) explains that media signalling through mega-sporting events can be observed even as early as the bidding process. Every prospective host is required to compile a convincing narrative as to why they might be both desirable and capable hosts (Malfas *et al.*, 2004). In this regard, Allen, Knott and Swart (2013) explains that the audience for these early story-telling narratives can be both internal and external, domestic and foreign. Externally, for example, the audience is likely to include international sport-organising-bodies (i.e. FIFA and the IOC) and prospective commercial sponsors. Black (2007)

explains that these stakeholders usually hold their own, unique motivations in seeking to expand their attraction and power by closely connecting themselves to nations that propose to represent something more exciting than the simple vision of an efficiently-organised event (Black, 2007). Similarly, in a domestic context these promotional narratives tend to serve somewhat of an equal purpose; whereby, in the face of what are typically extremely expensive and labour intensive ventures, local bidding committees are required to rally widespread and enthusiastic public support for the nation's proposal to stage a mega-sporting event in the host region (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006).

Beyond these early bidding incentives, there is also the more popular idea that mega-sporting events, in connection with the modern sports-media-tourism complex, offer unrivalled opportunities to build a universal spectatorship and provide international exposure (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006). Take a look at the final match of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, for example, which attracted a global viewership of over 1 billion, or the opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games which was watched by around 900 million people (Muller, 2015). Hoberman (1984) explains that, it is in this context - whereby they can grip the attention of a widespread audience across multiple cities, countries and regions, and carry to them complex and highly symbolic impressions – that mega-sporting events remain inextricably linked to the pursuit of image, status and power. In fact, de Almeida *et al.* (2015) claim that the composition of mega-sporting events - especially those that include extravagantly staged opening and closing ceremonies – largely lends itself to the packaging and amplification of an attractive, and typically simplified and contextualised, narrative surrounding the host.

In terms of practical observations, at least, mega-sporting events can be seen to have had somewhat of a long and profound history of serving as critical vehicles of articulation through which host nations can project several positive messages and impressions surrounding their socio-economic state (Black, 2007). However, to assume that the signals projected from hosting a mega-sporting event are always positive is almost certainly a mistake (Dimeo & Kay 2004); as such high profile showcasing opportunities rarely come without risk (cf. the widely publicised debts of the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal). It is within this context of largely conflicting theoretical observations, therefore, that Morgan *et al.* (2010) tend to argue that the intrinsic link between the media, image-signalling and mega-sporting events is not always well understood.

In terms of substantive empirical research, there appears to be very little published academic evidence that could contest Morgan *et al.*'s (2010) claims. In fact, to this study's best knowledge, the literature has only ever documented two published empirical analyses that explore the media signalling outcomes of a mega-sporting event (cf. Swart *et al.*, 2012; 2013); although, the recently observed increase of signal, power and status driven mega-sporting event bids by emerging states, suggests that a clear need exists for further empirical research in this regard (Swart *et al.*, 2012).

It is clear that mega-sporting events are likely to generate significant media impressions surrounding a host destination (de Almeida *et al.*, 2015). But what is the scope of these impressions? While supporters and advocates promote several socio-economic, socio-cultural and physical benefits for a host region, does the media accept this view, and to what extent does it endorse such activity, or does it tend to reflect more critically on the negative outcomes? Furthermore, to what extent do these impressions change in focus and sentiment over time, or do they remain consistent? These are all important questions that appear to remain unanswered within the academic literature.

Before launching directly into the examination of the media signalling role of mega-sporting events, however, there are several theoretical and practical considerations that first need to be discussed here. First, for example, in order to theoretically qualify this topic of research, the widely cited assumption of pervasive media effects needs to be discussed and confirmed.

1.2.2 Qualifying The Assumption of Pervasive Media Effects

One of the primary issues in professional as well as academic discussions about the mass media is whether or not media exposure, by itself, significantly influences the behaviour and attitudes of its audience (Falkheimer, 2007). When it comes to the analysis of media effects in communication and media research, there are several conflicting theories that can be cited; and as the literature has evolved, media effects thinking has shifted from a notion of force in the early 1920's (i.e. within the realm of propaganda), to limitation in the late 1950's (i.e. as governed by Klapper's law of minimal consequences), on to coercion in the 1960's (i.e. as implicated by a growth in organisational power in the late 20th century) and finally to consent towards the end of the 20th century (i.e. as part of the collective attraction to social governance) (Macnamara, 2006).

However, it is the school of ‘cultural’ thought that underpin much of our contemporary understanding of mass media effects (Perse, 2001). This theory suggests that as society continues to develop an implicit willingness to be governed by a set of converging social policies (i.e. as society becomes increasingly globalised), the media has contrived an increasing degree of influence. In this regard, Collins, Abelson, Pyman and Lavis (2006) note how the salience of the media has grown exponentially, especially over the last decade with the introduction of modern media formats, such as the internet and social-media.

Mass media has been described by several scholars to have completely revolutionised the way that society now gathers and shares information (Palen, Vieweg, Liu, & Hughes, 2009). Media expert David Rowe (2009) uses the term “mediatisation” to describe this evolution process, suggesting that society itself has undergone an intense course of integration with the media. The result of this process, Roche (2003) argues, is that the media now filters and frames our everyday realities. It publishes diverse representations and provides obscure references, benchmarks and touchstones in which individuals use to guide the performance of their daily lives (Rowe, 2003).

In fact, the reality for many of us is that we cannot evade the presence of the mass media (Silverstone, 1999). In our daily routines we move in and out and across media spaces; from one media connection to another (Rowe, 2009). From newspaper, to radio, to television, to the internet; at home, at work, in public, alone and with others (Silverstone, 1999). Therefore, in the context of this persistent growth in media salience, alongside our aggregated reliability on the media to perform our daily tasks, scholars now describe the mass media as one of the most influential components of the modern period (Edney, 2004).

Furthermore, it is with these learned assumptions and practical considerations, therefore, that this study establishes its case for the importance of analysing the mass media – especially within the context of signalling, framing and positioning. More specifically, from the perspective of mega-sporting events, assumptions of strong media effects can now be entertained with much greater clarity here. Before the study proceeds to the execution phase of this research, however, there are several practical considerations that need to be discussed, which will help further refine and focus the study’s research question and objectives.

1.2.3 The Practical Considerations Surrounding Media Signalling at Mega-Sporting Events: A Longitudinal Framework

To this study's best knowledge, only two previous studies have empirically explored the media signalling outcomes of a mega-sporting event (cf. Swart *et al.*, 2012; 2013). These studies highlight several important practical considerations surrounding the study of media signalling at mega-sporting events. Perhaps the most important of which identifies the longitudinal nature of mega-sporting event driven media impressions, whereby changes in media narratives are likely to be observed in three critical time periods – before, during, and after the event.

First, prior to the hosting of the event itself, Hiller (1999) explains that mega-sporting events are generally preceded by some form of social circumstance which is often reflected as the underlying issue that an event intends to change. From a media signalling perspective, therefore, pre-event bidding and lead-up periods can be considered particularly important areas of analysis in this regard, as they are likely to detail the extent to which an event is expected to be both invasive and transformative in addressing such issues (Black, 2007).

Next, Hiller (1999) suggested that another critical moment in the production process of mega-sporting events is during the actual hosting period of the event; which, Gibson, Walker, Thapa, Kaplanidou, Geldenhuys and Coetzee (2014) claim, is likely to generate the most positive impressions for a host nation. Moreover, several scholars have warned of the 'temporal' nature of mega-sporting events, in this regard; whereby the euphoria and excitement experienced during the hosting of such events has been observed to heavily skew the findings of several associated research papers (cf. Gibson *et al.*, 2014; Kim, Choi & Kaplanidou, 2015).

Finally, Hiller (1999) suggests that the third critical moment in the production process of mega-sporting events is during its post-event 'legacy' phase. For, as Malfas *et al.* (2004) explain, it is at this point where the overall Impact and legacies of mega-sporting events are typically signalled and experienced. In terms of media associations, in this regard, it is at this point that critical evaluations are likely to be made of the collective outcomes generated throughout the course of the event; and, in accordance with the pre-event expectations, is where the overall state of change will be determined (Swart *et al.*, 2013).

Subsequently, in review of the abovementioned theoretical and practical considerations, there appears to be three core areas in which this research field requires further exploration. First, the importance of media signalling at mega-sporting events appears to be recognised and

valued most by emerging state hosts, especially those that have integrated mega-sporting events into their strategic growth plans (Nauright, 2004). Second, there appears to be very little empirical research that can confirm the media signalling potential of mega-sporting events – especially beyond their tourism-based applications in foreign media markets (Swart et al., 2013). Third, despite the important insights that it would likely generate for event organisers, media managers and destination marketers, it appears that there is a lack of longitudinal research in this field - not only in the realm of media signalling, but surrounding most components of mega-sporting events (Weed, 2009).

It is in this context, therefore, that this study proposes to conduct an empirical-based, longitudinal analysis of the media coverage surrounding South Africa's especially controversial hosting of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. In doing so, the study's primary aim will be to provide greater clarity as to the broader signalling potential of mega-sporting events, as well as the topic areas that feature most prevalently amongst these media signals. More specifically, previous research (cf. Swart *et al.*, 2013) suggest that media signals should be monitored over the following periods, to observe shifts in impressions:

Observation Point 1: 2-4 years prior to the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament

Observation Point 2: 0-2 years prior to the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament

Observation Point 3: During the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament

Observation Point 4: 0-2 years after the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament

Observation Point 5: 2-4 years after the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament

Looking at the media content over eight years will provide insight not only into the media narrative of the event, but also whether there were any sustained changes in the narrative due to the legacy of the event. The 2010 FIFA World Cup was hailed as a great success by most accounts, however, it is still unclear whether that success was reflected in the longer-term narrative.

Refining the discussion and focus of this study one step further, the next section presents the specific research question and objectives of this study, thereby providing further direction in both its acclaimed execution and interpretation stages.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION AND OBJECTIVES

The research question of this study aims to fully explore the potential media signalling outcomes of mega-sporting events. As the signalling frames are longitudinal, as different images and narratives are uncovered, this study proposes the following research question, which will guide its focus:

How was the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa framed by the South African National Press over an eight year pre- and post-event period?

The secondary objectives stemming from this research question focus on exploring the potential media signalling outcomes of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. As media impressions are longitudinal in nature, several objectives are established for a better understanding of these impressions at five key time periods.

- To explore how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 2-4 years prior to the event.
- To explore how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 0-2 years prior to the event.
- To explore how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press during the event.
- To explore how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 0-2 years after the event.
- To explore how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 2-4 years after the event.

Furthermore, there is little empirical research that tracks the longitudinal change of media impressions (Swart *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, this study adopts the following methods - as laid out in the next section - and proposes the primary objective of this study:

- To compare how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 2-4 years prior, 0-2 years prior, during, 0-2 years after, and 2-4 years after the event.

In order to explore the proposed research objectives, a relatively new research methodology must be adopted. The intricacies of this methodology will be discussed in the next section.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

To offer further context to the objectives set out in the previous section, this section delineates the steps that this study followed throughout the execution process; describing and mitigating the implicated methods. First, the research approach and methodological design will be examined. This will be followed by a review of the target population and sampling procedure, and a discussion detailing the data collection and preparation methods. Finally, the section will conclude with a description of the data analysis approach.

1.4.1 Research Approach, Design and Method

To address the proposed problem statement and associated objectives of this study, this research undertaking adopted an exploratory approach to the associated topic. More specifically, a media content analysis methodology was adopted, and analytical support was offered by the Leximancer text-analysis tool (www.leximancer.com). This research approach has been implemented in multiple studies in the tourism and marketing field (cf. Botha, 2014; Martin & Rice, 2007; Smith & Humphreys, 2006; Scott & Smith, 2005), as well as two recent studies in the field of mega-sporting events (cf. Swart *et al.*, 2013; 2012).

Leximancer software functions according to Bayesian theory (Reyneke, 2011), whereby it constructs a conceptual map that visually indicates the strength and direction of the relationships that exist between the different themes and concepts that lie within a data set (Crofts & Bisman, 2010). The web-based software suggests clusters of meaning by analysing the habitual proximity of terms according to word-incidence information, such as frequencies, locations and co-occurrence of verbs and nouns within the text (Kamimaeda, Izumi & Hasida, 2007; Young & Denize, 2008). In this context, the core features of the Leximancer software directly address the objectives of this study, in that: i) it facilitates an exploration for context and objective-reliant models of meaning in text documents; and ii) it offers an indication as to if and how these meanings shift over time (Crofts & Bisman, 2010). Furthermore, the automatic selection of these concepts and themes has been judged to accurately represent expert human intelligence (Rooney, 2005; Reyneke, 2011; Stockwell, Colomb, Smith & Wiles, 2009).

One particularly important consideration in the context of this research is the timing of the data collection, due to the temporal effects typically associated with mega-sporting events (Gibson *et al.*, 2014). In fact, several research papers have indicated the potential effects that event-related euphoria can have on the outcome of research conducted during a mega-sporting event;

and, as such, there have been multiple calls for an increase in the number of longitudinal studies which can properly account for these effects (Gibson *et al.*, 2014; Gursoy, Chi, Ai & Chen, 2011; Mair & Whitford, 2013).

Considering these observations, this study approached the research problem with a longitudinal research design, measuring several fixed data sources over several variable time periods (Weiten, 2007). More specifically, data was collected during five different intervals over an eight-year time period. The data collection schedule for the study was as follows:

Collection Point 1: 2-4 years prior to the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament

Collection Point 2: 0-2 years prior to the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament

Collection Point 3: During the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament

Collection Point 4: 0-2 years after the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament

Collection Point 5: 2-4 years after the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament

Temporal effects have been observed up to a maximum of three months before, and 8 months after an event (Gibson *et al.*, 2014). As illustrated in this collection schedule, the longitudinal design of this study far exceeded these parameters, ensuring that temporal effects were adequately accounted for. Furthermore, this research design has also been used in several other academic papers measuring a comparable scope of sample data (Swart *et al.*, 2012;2013), further attesting to its credibility.

1.4.2 Target Population and Sampling Procedure

The target population for this study was identified as: all of the off-field newspaper coverage of the 2010 FIFA World Cup published within the eight-year period extending between 11 June 2006 and 11 July 2014. Due to the impractical nature of conducting a census, this study extracted a representative sample of this target population (Macnamara, 2006).

In order to extract a truly representative sample, this study employed heterogeneous sampling with quota controls, as seen in the comparative literature (Swart *et al.*, 2012; 2013). Heterogeneous sampling is a judgement based, purposive sampling technique, which relies on the judgement of the researcher to locate and extract a fully encompassing range of perspectives relating to the subject of the study (Malhotra, 2010). In this context, heterogeneous sampling proposes to extract a wide variation of perspectives from the population data, including those that range from the more typical, through to those that are considered more extreme in nature.

Furthermore, to ensure that the composition of the study sample most accurately represents that of the target population, several quota controls were established with respect to publication source and approximate article length. Whilst this does not provide any strong assurance as to the representative accuracy of the sample, such quota controls, under specific conditions, have been shown to generate samples very similar to that of conventional probability sampling (Malhotra, 2010).

The sampling frame for this study listed eight South African newspaper sources, all of which published off-field coverage of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. For the purposes of this study, content was extracted from only four of these eight newspapers. These four newspapers were selected based on the fact that they reported the highest readership and circulation numbers for the pre-defined observation period. This resulted in the extraction of articles from the following four sources: The Star, The Business Day, The City Press and The Mail & Guardian.

Newspaper articles, in particular, were selected as the primary focus of this study for two reasons. Firstly, newspaper media generally offers readers more control over their consumption of the news, allowing them to review reports in different orders and at different times (Soroka, 2002); and secondly, print media, compared to radio or television media, is widely accredited as a source of more reliable information (Glynn, Herbst, O’Keefe & Shapiro, 1999).

More specifically, the research targeted a final sample size of $n=1000$. Between 175-225 articles per allocated time period were extracted from the sampling frame, all of which were distributed as evenly as possible across all selected source publications. This sample size is similar to that exercised in Swart *et al.* (2012) and Swart *et al.* (2013), where it was demonstrated to be significantly large enough to maximise objectivity, validity, reliability and generalisability. Articles were extracted until a suitable article resource base was achieved for each time period and each publication (Swart *et al.*, 2012). This approach to content sourcing ensured that variation across time periods could be ascribed to adjustments in content instead of disparity in editorial origin (Swart *et al.*, 2012).

1.4.3 Data Collection and Preparation

Data collection and preparation stage of a text-based content analysis study typically involves two clear steps: i) content sourcing – that is the identification of appropriate media forms, genres and dates of issue; and ii) content identification – that is the extraction of relevant content from those sources (Newbold, Boyd-Barrett & Van Den Bulck, 2002). Once the

selection of the appropriate set of source publications had been finalised, a list of relevant articles was identified and extracted in sets according to both their publication source and their associated time period. The greatest challenge that this study faced in terms of extracting relevant content in this regard was in the process of filtering out articles that reported only on-field coverage of the event (i.e. match reports, scores, player statistics, etc.). In order to assist with this process, the selection of relevant content from each of the publication sources was identified by a full-text author-specified keyword search (Crofts & Bisman, 2010). The scope of keyword search terms used to identify the relevant content was identified through a set of pre-extraction exploratory searches conducted by the researcher.

Lastly, before the final sample was extracted, the abovementioned collection procedures were pretested, along with the suitability of the measurement instrument, in a pilot study.

1.4.4 Pilot Study

The pilot study analysed a portion of the sourced content in order to confirm the sufficiency of: i) the problem definition; and ii) the necessary process to acquire the essential information (Malthotra, 2010). This pre-test approach also allowed the researcher to observe a portion of the sourced content and adjust the search terms accordingly to ensure: i) the capturing of any missing content; and ii) the elimination of any reoccurring themes that could potentially bias the findings of the study (Malthotra, 2010).

Following the successful outcome of this pilot study, several adjustments were made and the final sample was collected.

1.4.5 Data Analysis

Leximancer - an Australian, web-based concept detection and data mining tool - is the primary measurement instrument employed by this study. For many years, Leximancer has been commended for its simplicity and effectiveness; however, there are still several guidelines that must be reviewed to ensure the accurate interpretation of its outputs. For example, for each time period, Leximancer generates a unique conceptual text map which plots sample data according to the highest ranked concepts and themes observed within the associated text. The key constitutive concepts observed within the text are represented by small grey dots, several of which are enclosed by key associated themes, illustrated by the large coloured circles (Reyneke, 2011; Stockwell *et al.*, 2009).

In order to discover these key themes and concepts within the text data, Leximancer runs both relational (semantic) and conceptual (thematic) analyses (Reyneke, 2011). The software then presents these key themes and concepts in a unique conceptual text map, as noted above, in order to: i) indicate the interrelationships that exist between the concepts and themes; and ii) indicate their relative significance within the data set. In general, the more concepts that are enclosed within a theme, the more important that theme tends to be. Furthermore, for additional convenience Leximancer also applies heat mapping to indicate the varying levels of significance amongst the listed themes. In this context, the warmer colours (i.e. red, yellow and orange) are an indication as to the most important themes, and the cooler colours (i.e. blue, purple and green) are an indication of the less important themes.

In addition to the visual indications outlined above, Leximancer also generates a set of quantitative findings in support of the illustrated model. First, for example, Leximancer presents a 'Thematic Summary' for each conceptual text map, which indicates a connectivity score for each theme as a measure of its relative importance. This score is calculated by cross-referencing the level of connectivity for each concept within each associated theme, whereby the most important theme is ranked at 100%. Furthermore, Leximancer also presents a 'Ranked Concept List' for each conceptual text map. This list designates a measure of the comparative strength of a concept's rate of recurrence (Leximancer, 2015).

The following section underlines the importance of this study and justifies it in the context of the contemporary research agenda.

1.5 POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

The primary purpose of this study is to contribute to the theoretical and practical understanding of media signalling at mega-sport-events. Indeed, the importance of this contribution is shared on various levels amongst multiple stakeholders.

Firstly, within the broader context of mega-sport-events, the media signalling outcomes have been identified as forming a key rationale in the justification of bids for such events - especially from emerging states (Nauright, 2004). More specifically, Black (2007) argues that mega-sport-events are now one of the few ambulatory sources of potential competitive advantages still accessible to emerging states; whereby they provide the opportunity to reinforce strategic messages, to reimagine prevailing narratives, and to establish 'soft' power through the widespread media exposure that they attract for a host destination.

In terms of practical observations, at least, mega-sporting events can be seen to have had somewhat of a long and profound history of serving as critical vehicles of articulation through which host nations can project several positive messages and impressions surrounding their socio-economic state (Black, 2007). However, in terms of substantive empirical research, there appears to be very little published academic research that can substantiate these claims (Swart et al., 2012; 2013).

Therefore, it is in this broader context of mega-sport-events, that this study expects make its first important contribution. More specifically, the study will form one of the first empirical-based analyses conducted on the potential media signalling outcomes of mega-sport-events; and, as such, is expected to provide clarity to the widely cited practical observations often cited in the associated literature. In particular, with widespread ambiguity surrounding the scope of their socio-economic, socio-cultural and physical impacts, the findings of this study are expected to assist emerging states with their evaluations as to the overall benefits of mega-sport-events.

Furthermore, within the context of media signalling research itself, Morgan *et al.* (2010) tend to argue that the intrinsic link between the media, image-signalling and mega-sport-events is not always well understood. Indeed, it is clear that mega-sport-events are likely to generate significant media impressions surrounding a host destination (de Almeida et al., 2015). But what is the scope of these impressions? While supporters and advocates promote several socio-economic, socio-cultural and physical benefits for a host region, does the media accept this view, and to what extent does it endorse such activity, or does it tend to reflect more critically on the negative outcomes? Furthermore, to what extent do these impressions change in focus and sentiment over time, or do they remain consistent?

These are all important questions that appear to remain unanswered within the extremely narrow scope of existing academic literature in this field. In fact, it is to this study's best knowledge that the literature has only ever documented two empirical analyses that explore the media signalling outcomes of a mega-sport-event (cf. Swart et al., 2012; 2013), both of which have focused primarily on its tourism applications.

Subsequently, it is within this more focused context of media signalling at mega-sport-events that this study expects to make several further important contributions. More specifically, by conducting a longitudinal media content analysis of the news coverage surrounding the 2010

FIFA World Cup, this study expects to uncover patterns and shifts in both the focus and sentiment of media impressions surrounding mega-sport-events. Such findings are expected to be particularly useful for media managers and destination marketers, who will be able to identify important positive impression points that should be reinforced, alongside critical negative impression points that need to be mitigated.

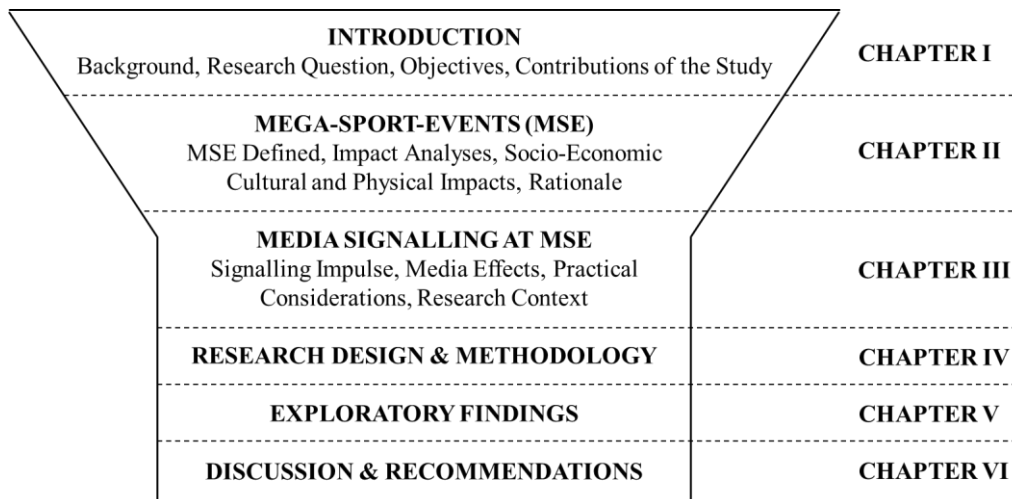
Finally, from a theoretical perspective, this study is also expected to make several important contributions to the progressive growth of this literary field of enquiry. Firstly, this study is expected to serve as an important dialogue which can guide future discussions within the space of media signalling at mega-sport-events. More specifically, the exploratory findings of this study are expected to identify several more intricate areas of interest, that can be marked for future research. In addition, this study is also expected to serve as an important benchmark and reference point for similar studies surrounding media signalling at other mega-sport-events. This will enable future research to identify important patterns and comparable dialogues, which will further improve media management at mega-sport-events.

In consideration of these proposed contributions and the steps required to achieve them, the next section present the overall layout of this study and offers some context to the upcoming chapters.

1.6 DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY

This study consists of six chapters. The first section of this study introduces the research topic, presents the primary contributions of the study and underlines key specifications with respect to the methodology. This chapter also includes a summary of the background to the study's research problem and objectives. The next two chapters analyse the associated literature and provide a space to present the areas in which the study will contribute. After this theoretical investigation, the methodology adopted by this study is outlined, and the execution procedures, processes and protocols are discussed. Lastly, the findings are presented, followed by the conclusions, recommendations, limitations and ideas for future research.

Figure 1: Outline of Chapters



Chapter 2 and 3 will present the theoretical background, and serve as justification for the objectives that guide the study. This will include the critical evaluation, organisation and synthesis of the important literature that surrounds mega-sporting events and the signalling impulse of the media. More specifically, each construct will be the basis of a discussion that critically analyses the set of available definitions, the scope of the relevant findings from previous research and the range of existing measurement approaches.

Chapter 4 will discuss the proposed research methodology which will be used to execute the study. This will include a detailed description of the media sampling and media content analysis process, as well as the data analysis process as outlined by Leximancer.

Chapter 5 will present the findings of the study in the form of a qualitative and quantitative analysis. This will include the presentation of the descriptive statistics that underpin the data, as well as an illustration and analysis of the frequency world cloud and the ensuing pathway analysis.

Chapter 6 will present a discussion on the recommendations, conclusions & managerial implications of the study, as interpreted from the findings presented in the findings section. Following this, the chapter will identify and justify any limitations to the study, and will offer several suggestions towards the direction for future research.

1.7 CONCLUSION

In recent years, the media signalling benefits of mega-sporting event have been identified as forming a key rationale in the justification of bids for such events - especially from emerging

states (Nauright, 2004). More specifically, Black (2007) argues that mega-sport-events are now one of the few ambulatory sources of potential competitive advantages still accessible to emerging states; whereby they provide the opportunity to reinforce strategic messages, to reimagine prevailing narratives, and to establish ‘soft’ power through the widespread media exposure that they attract for a host destination.

In terms of practical observations, at least, mega-sporting events can be seen to have had somewhat of a long and profound history of serving as critical vehicles of articulation through which host nations can project several positive messages and impressions surrounding their socio-economic state (Black, 2007). However, in terms of substantive empirical research, there appears to be very little published academic research that can substantiate these claims (Swart *et al.*, 2012; 2013). Furthermore, within the context of media signalling research itself, Morgan *et al.* (2010) tend to argue that the intrinsic link between the media, image-signalling and mega-sport-events is not always well understood. In consideration of this lack of clarity and understanding surrounding the potential media signalling outcomes of mega-sporting events, therefore, this study posed the question of: *How are mega-sporting events framed in the media?*

This chapter presented the six objectives targeted by this study to answer the associated research question, and offered a brief summary of the theoretical background to the study to establish a better understanding as to how it was constructed. The next two chapters analyse the associated literature and provide a space to present the areas in which the study will contribute. More specifically, Chapter II will first unpack the mega-sporting events concept and the associated impact analyses literature. After that, it will then conclude by discussing the rationales that underpin mega-sporting events, with a particular focus placed on their potential media-signalling benefits. Next, Chapter III will examine the theory behind the media signalling impulse, and will highlight the clear lack of empirical research that underpins the research field. Subsequently, the chapter will conclude by discussing several theoretical and practical considerations surrounding the study of media signals at mega-sporting events, and will outline the study’s direction of enquiry in this regard. Following this, subsequent chapters will illustrate the methods used to evaluate the proposed research question and objectives of this study. Finally, the findings and extracted implications will then be presented

CHAPTER II: UNDERSTANDING MEGA-SPORTING EVENTS AND THE MOTIVATION TO HOST THEM

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the six objectives targeted by this study to answer the associated research question, offered a brief summary of the theoretical background to the study, and outlined the study's methodological approach to its execution. In this chapter, the mega-sporting events concept is introduced and defined, and the associated impact analysis literature is reviewed. Finally, the rationales that underpin mega-sporting events will be discussed, with a particular focus placed on their potential media-signalling benefits.

In the context of today's post-industrial and highly globalised society, cities, regions and countries are increasingly being forced to compete with each other for the location of increasingly ambulatory sources of capital (Nauright, 2004). Indeed, the urban areas and regions that often prove to be better equipped in attracting and cementing capital are often described as 'global' or 'world' spaces (Duminy & Lockett, 2012). For many years, destination marketers and urban manager have relied on various forms of government interventions to stimulate traditional (industrial based) manufacturing activity as the primary driver of regional and urban economic development (Roche, 2003). But within this increasingly competitive and globalised market, such pursuits are no longer applicable; and, as such, new urban planning approaches and forms of state driven interventions are required to accommodate a commercial sector that is increasingly flexible, mobile and insistent of the very highest quality of urban spaces (Duminy & Lockett, 2012).

In this regard, consumption-based socio-economic development, often in the form of tourism-based initiatives, have now become the norm for urban development policies specifically, and national policies more generally (Nauright, 2004). In particular, mega-sporting events, which are closely linked to tourism and the development of world-class infrastructure, are now positioned as an increasingly popular means by which developing countries can reach for a 'global' status (Gratton, Shibli & Coleman, 2005).

This chapter serves to introduce, define and unpack the literatures contemporary understanding of mega-sporting events, and thereby position these events in the abovementioned context of strategies for development and growth. In particular, the impact analysis literature serves as a backdrop for discussions pertaining to the benefits and associated costs of these events in terms

of their socio-economic, socio-cultural and physical outcomes. Following that, the rationales that underpin these mega-sporting events will be discussed, which is where the potential media-signalling benefits of these events are first introduced and debated. The chapter then concludes by discussing the general need for further empirical research in the field of media signalling, which might be able to substantiate the contested benefits pinned to mega-sporting events in this regard.

2.2 UNDERSTANDING MEGA-SPORTING EVENTS

The study of events and their outcomes for a host destination has sustained the attention of the marketing research agenda for over fifty years now (Weed, 2009). Only in recent years, however, has this line of research gained significant momentum, as the status and international profile of events have grown to feature more contentiously in the public domain (Macnamara, 2006). In particular, major sports competitions such as the Summer Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup™ have captured a great measure of this literary interest, forming the basis of a unique line of discourse that is now documented as the study of ‘mega-sporting events’ (Getz, 2005, 2008, 2012).

Since its late introduction in the mid-20th century, the literary coverage of mega-sporting events has been remarkably dynamic. Initially grounding its roots in the tourism literature, the mega-sporting event concept is now explored in a wide variety of academic disciplines, and as such, has been linked to a broad scope of important outcomes (Malfas, 2004). Whilst this might suggest that the mega-event concept is well understood in the contemporary literature, however, this is not necessarily the case (Roche, 2000). As the production of events has grown increasingly diversified over the years, with each event projecting a nuanced attraction and outcome, the notion as to what exactly constitutes as a mega-event has become somewhat ambiguous (Muller, 2015).

The general distinction between a regular event and a ‘mega’ event is ultimately one of size; whereby mega-events are distinctively larger than regular events (Getz, 2012). Yet, Muller (2015) questions, the size of what? And where does ‘mega’ begin? It is here, specifically, where the literature tends to lack clarity; as, without an empirical set of parameters that formally confine the mega-event concept, the distinctions between regular and mega-events are largely objective (Getz, 2012).

Nevertheless, several attempts have been launched to define the concept in pursuit of a more coordinated understanding of mega-sporting events; and, as such, the literature lists several formal definitions of mega-events as seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Published Definitions of Mega-Events

Author	Definition
Ritchie and Yangzhou (1987: 20)	“Major one-time or recurring events of limited duration, which serve to change the awareness, appeal and profitability of a tourism destination in the short and or long terms. Such events rely for their success on uniqueness, status, or timely significance to create interest and attract attention.”
Roche (1994: 1-2)	“Mega-events are short-term events with long-term consequences for the cities that stage them. They are associated with the creation of infrastructure and event facilities often carrying long-term debts and always requiring long-term use-programming. [T]hey project a new [or renewed) and perhaps persistent and positive image and identity for the host city through national and international media, particularly TV, coverage.”
Jago and Shaw (1998: 29)	“A one-time major event that is generally of an international scale. [A major event is] a large-scale special event that is high in status are prestige and attracts a large crowd and wide media attention. They are expensive to stage, attract funds to the region, lead to demand for associated services, and leave behind legacies.”
Roche (2000: 1)	“Large-scale, cultural (including commercial and sporting) events, which have a dramatic character, mass popular appeal and international significance.”
Hiller (2000: 182-183)	“A short-term, one-time, high profile event. The mass media carries the event to the world, it has a significant and/or permanent urban effect.”
Home (2007: 81-82)	“Have significant consequences for the host city, region or nation [and] attract considerable media coverage.”
Gold and Gold (2011: 1)	“Cultural and sporting festivals that achieve sufficient size and scope to affect whole economies and to receive sustained global media attention.”

<p>Mills and Rosentraub (2013: 239)</p>	<p>“Significant national or global competitions that produce extensive levels of participation and media coverage and that often require large public investments into both event infrastructure, for example stadiums to hold the events, and general infrastructure, such as roadways, housing, or mass transit systems.”</p>
-----------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

There are several observations that become immediately apparent when reviewing the competing definitions presented in Table 1. Firstly, it is clear that mega-events are always considered multi-dimensional by nature; and, as such, they must be defined as so on multiple dimensions (Getz, 2012). Secondly, it is also made apparent here that the dimensions upon which a regular event is transformed into a ‘mega’ event can vary depending on the unique composition of that event (Muller, 2015). Therefore, not all mega-events can be considered ‘mega’ in the same exact same dimensions or to the exact same degree (Malfas, 2004). The most important insight from this analysis, however, is that whilst there is much definitional bickering that surrounds the mega-sporting event concept, for the most part at least, there seems to exist a collective understanding as to what a mega-event entails and how it is produced in the modern era (Muller, 2015).

Further building on these critical insights, a recent case study conducted by Muller (2015) has rigorously unpacked these existing definitions and the context within which they were published, and has identified four key dimensions upon which mega-events appear to be collectively understood in their modern format. He identified these four dimensions as: the tourism attractiveness, significant cost, mediated reach and transformative impact of an event. George and Swart (2015), in their later description of mega-sporting events, also list a similar combination of constitutive features.

From a theoretical perspective, therefore, it would appear that Muller’s (2015) definition of mega-events can be considered the most comprehensive and academically commanding of all published to date (George & Swart, 2015). In this regard, Muller (2015: 638) describes mega-events as “ambulatory occasions of a fixed duration that attract a large number of visitors, have a large mediated reach, come with large costs and have large Impact on the built environment and the population”. The definition includes commercial, cultural and sports events alike; but, because of their propinquity, it excludes recurrent events in the same location. Furthermore, what else is important to note here, is that this is a purposefully frugal definition which incorporates only the necessary constitutive components of mega-events (Muller, 2015). It

largely goes without mentioning that almost all mega-events also share several other common features, such as i) a fixed delivery date, yet an ambulatory nature; ii) temporary committees in charge of the planning; and iii) overarching organisational-bodies who own the rights to the event and set the rules of engagement (Gold & Gold, 2008; Hiller, 2000). Such characteristics, however, cannot be described as necessary constitutive components which turn events into mega-events (Muller, 2015).

Whilst, in theory, Muller's (2015) definition appeared to be comprehensive and coordinated, practically it still lacked proof and validity in application. To further qualify his definition, therefore, Muller (2015) then plotted the most recent editions of several large sport-events on the four dimensions of his definition, and in doing so forged the literatures' first empirical classification scheme for mega-sporting events. In general, the findings appeared to remain consistent with the contextual focus of much of the existing research on mega-sporting events, whereby, for the most part at least, they identified the Summer Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup as the only two events large enough across all dimensions to fit the mega-sporting event criteria (Getz, 2012).

In addition, and most importantly, however, Muller's (2015) results also indicated that whilst they are not technically 'large' enough to be classified as 'mega' events, there are also several other popular examples of sport-events, as displayed in other forms of independent literature, that had been found to regularly assume a sufficient size and composition to qualify comparability (Lorde, Greenidge & Devonish, 2011). These events included: the Rugby World Cup, the ICC Cricket World Cup, the Commonwealth Games and the Winter Olympic Games (Lorde *et al.*, 2011). It is for this reason that it is not unusual to find Muller (2015) and George and Swart (2015) mega-sporting events also more broadly studied within the context of other professional world-level regional sports competitions and 'world international-level' editions of these events in the modern literature. For, it is argued that irrespective of their status, all events that fall within these categories tend to generate similar challenges and organisational dynamics for the countries that host them (Malfas *et al.*, 2004).

Subsequently, with a comprehensive and coordinated understanding of the mega-sporting event concept, this study can now look at unpacking the primary topics populating the mega-sporting event research agenda. Ironically, it is within another common thread for most mega-sporting events that these topics present themselves, emerging as a result of the tremendous course of coordinated growth in both the size and popularity of most mega-sporting events in

the past decade. Bull and Lovell (2004) explain that this growth in the popularity of mega-sporting events has been driven by the forever growing perceptions amongst policy makers, and the political-elite, that the securing of such events present host nations with a valuable opportunity to improve their socio-economic state. Subsequently, it is within this wider ideological and political context that debates surrounding the perceived benefits and costs of hosting a mega-sporting event, and whether such an event can be safely understood as a catalyst for both economic and social redevelopment, have taken shape in an unparalleled form in the 21st century (Whitson & Horne, 2006).

The next section will look to unpack this field of literature, analysing the nuances of the debates surrounding the perceived benefits and costs of hosting a mega-sporting event; and will look to provide greater clarity to the question as to whether such events can be safely understood as a catalyst for both economic and social redevelopments within a host region.

2.3 THE IMPACT OF MEGA-SPORTING EVENTS

The study of the impact on mega-sporting events can be traced back now for almost half a century. It was first introduced in the late 1970's as part of the tourism literature, whereby event organisers first found means to promote the benefits associated with hosting a mega-sporting event - in this instance in the form of tourism and trade (Williams & Zelinsky, 1970). The emphasis placed on the role of mega-sporting events as landmarks to attract tourists in these early debates reflects as to how their study was – and in many cases still is – deeply rooted in leisure and tourism studies (Getz, 2008, 2012). Yet, as the task of hosting these events has grown in size, status and complexity over the years, and with travel (and the watching of these events in situ) no longer being the only way that these events can be consumed (Muller, 2015), so the scope of analysis has rapidly expanded to now cover a much broader range of topics (Malfas, 2004).

In general terms, it is agreed now that the Impact of a mega-sporting event may be apparent before the event takes place, during the event, after a short period, or can be more long-standing, and can relate to a broad scope of topics, including: destination image (Smith, 2005; Donaldson & Ferreira, 2007); urban regeneration (Davies, 2001); tourism development (Getz, 2008; Macfarlane & Jago, 2009); climate change (Delacy & Lipman, 2010); business development (Crompton & McKay, 1994); environmental awareness (Ahmed & Pretorius, 2010); social policy (Pillay & Bass, 2008); economic growth (Matheson, 2002); and political restructuring (Cornelissen & Maennig, 2010).

A great part of the associated literature tends to support the idea that, in these areas, mega-sporting events will have an immense and manifold effect on their host destination (Malfas, 2004). Furthermore, several scholars also believe that these Impact can primarily be positive (Bull & Lovell, 2007). Whether the events produce such net effects, however, has also been widely debated by several authors (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006). In the following sections, therefore, the Impact of mega-sporting events are analysed in succession, with specific focus being placed on the associated contradictory arguments. More specifically, this section will further unpack the impact literature according to the broader classifications of: i) socio-economic Impact; ii) socio-cultural Impact; and iii) physical Impact.

2.3.1 The Socio-Economic Impact of Mega-sporting events

There has been much written on the socio-economic Impact of mega-sporting events (Weed, 2009). In particular, it is the wider economic benefits of these events that appear to have been the most influential in guiding event policy over the years, and which have thus attracted most of the academic attention (Gibson *et al.*, 2014; Leopkey & Parent, 2012), with economic impact analyses now forming an almost mandatory measure of the event proceedings (Bull & Lovell, 2007). Horne (2007) explains, this is a focus typically driven by international sport organising bodies (i.e. FIFA and the IOC), and to a certain extent local organising committees, whom are especially enthusiastic to fund these types of studies; usually because of their confidence in that the results will: i) justify the considerable cost of the event to the public; ii) indicate the success of the event; and iii) prompt motivations for future bids (Mangan, 2008; Ritchie, Shipway & Cleeve, 2010).

According to Turco, Riley and Swart (2002: 53), the economic impact of a mega-sporting event is best defined as the “the net change in the host community’s economy as a result of the spending that is attributed to the special event”. In this sense, before reviewing the scope of the literature, it is important to draw attention to a key distinction here, in that, the direct revenue generated by mega-sporting events – that is, from sources such as sponsorship deals, broadcasting rights, and ticket sales – cannot be seen as contributing directly to the economic growth of the host country, for it is this type of income that is typically used to cover the cost of staging the event (Preuss, 1998). Instead, the economic impact of mega-sporting events should primarily be thought of in terms of the opportunities that these events provide for improving the awareness of the country or city as an attractive destination for: i) tourists; and ii) foreign investors (Malfas, 2004). It is in this regard that host nations will be able to attract

more visitors and investors; and, as a result, create new jobs and contribute significantly to the economic development of the country (Avison Young, 2003; Ference Weicker & Co, 2002)

It is on this basis, therefore, that the large majority of the academic literature covering the analysis of the socio-economic benefits of a particular mega-sporting event draws focus to the effects of: i) the event on the social status of the host nation's residents, and the impact that the event has had with respect to issues of social exclusion and poverty (Eitzen, 1996; Lenskyj, 2000); ii) visiting tourists and destination promotion on the host nations tourism industry (Kemp, 2002; Tudge, 2003); and iii) event-associated job creation and its effects on the host nations employment rates (Miguelez & Carrasquer, 1995).

When analysing the issues of job creation and event-related employment, it is difficult to contest the notion that mega-sporting events can generate a significant number of jobs in a host country (Getz, 2012). It is not only those that are connected directly to the planning and staging of the event that can be considered here, but also those that emerge in ancillary industries as a result of these events (Roche, 2003). In particular, as a result of the staging of a mega-sport event it is not unusual to see employment increase dramatically in the construction, retail and tourism sectors of a host nation as the infrastructural development requirements for the event are agreed and the country is called to handle the considerable increase in the volume of tourists, respectively (Malfas, 2004). In practical terms, Barcelona and Atlanta's hosting of the 1992 and 1996 Olympic Games, respectively, are useful examples of demonstrating the widespread employment growth opportunities presented by mega-sporting events. Barcelona, for example, during the six-year build-up period to their hosting of the Olympic Games saw employment rise from 81% in 1986 to 90.4% in 1992 (Brunet, 1995). Atlanta, hosts to the 1996 Olympic Games, had a similar experience, where a \$2 billion investment in event-related projects stimulated the creation of over 580 000 new jobs in the country between 1991 and 1997 (Stevens & Bevan, 1999).

The broad assumption that the hosting of a mega-sporting event will generate a significant scope of new employment opportunity in a host region needs to be treated with caution, whereby further attention needs to be paid to the duration and quality of these jobs. Several authors (Hiller, 2000; Miguelez & Carrasquer, 1995; Schimmel, 1995) have pointed out that many of the associated jobs would have typically been low-paying, part-time and short-lived. In fact, Miguelez and Carrasquer (1995) found that, although employment rose during the 1992

Olympic Games in Barcelona, this event only generated a small collection of new permanent full-time jobs.

Closely connected to the topic of employment and job creation in the wider economic development agenda of a mega-sporting event, is, of course, the growth in a host nation's tourism industry (Getz, 2008). It was reported, for example, that the 1998 FIFA World Cup in France attracted an additional 10-15 million domestic and international tourists to the country, whom were estimated to have spent almost \$750 billion on food, drink, travel and accommodation (Chaudhary, 1999). Morphet (1996) explains that it is the intense 'spectacle' of the event, as glorified by the media, that attracts the interests of the global public; and as a result, this generates acute awareness for, and intrigue towards, the host nation. Nauright (2004) further points out that such benefits form a compelling argument for developing economies in particular, when analysing the decision of whether or not to host a mega-sporting event. As such, it is within this promoted discourse of development and improved nation branding that the mega-sporting events industry has experienced a significant global increase in the number of bids received from developing nation states over the last two decades (Nauright, 2004).

Research in this regard shows that mega-sporting events can have a significant positive impact on the perceived image of a host destination, particularly in terms of its tourism attractiveness (Duminy & Luckett, 2012). Ritchie and Smith (1991), for example, in their study of the 1988 Calgary Olympics, found that event had a significant impact on the knowledge and awareness levels of the host city, particularly major tourism destination such as the United States and Europe. Similarly, Stevens and Bevan (1999) reported, based on their study of the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, that during the hosting period of the event, over two million people visited the host city and close to 3.5 billion people were exposed to the destination through international television coverage of the event.

There are also several examples presented in the literature, however, which would suggest that the hosting of a mega-sporting event does not necessarily always lead to positive responses from the media and amongst their visitors (Malfas, 2004). For example, in a study undertaken by Pyo, Cook & Howell (1998) between 1964 and 1984, it was found that the overall tourism impact of the six Olympic Games hosted during this time was negative. Similar results were also later presented by Kang and Perdue (1994), who criticised organisers of the 1988 Seoul

Olympics specifically, and mega-sporting event organisers globally, for their short-termism and overstated policy approaches.

On balance, therefore, whilst the preceding discussion tends to support the widely held belief amongst policy makers and the political elite that mega-sporting events have a positive economic impact on their host destinations; it also suggests that the overall economic impact of these events might only appear in a short impulse of increased activity during the event. Therefore, it is in this context, that several scholars (cf. Bull & Lovell, 2007; Hiller, 2000; Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006) have raised concerns as to claims that mega-sporting events can be of considerable benefit to a host nation.

In several instances, for example, it has been argued that the economic contribution of mega-sporting events might even make life more difficult for some low-income citizens (Malfas, 2004). In the lead-up to the hosting of a mega-sporting event, for example, it is not unusual to observe a considerable increase in local taxes (Deccio & Baloglu, 2002) as well as an increase in the price of goods, services and local property (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011). Furthermore, during the hosting period itself, mega-sporting events have also been linked to increases in crime (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011); hooliganism (Barker, 2004); anti-social behaviour (Wann, Hunter, Ryan, & Wright, 2001) and other disorderly conduct (Getz, 2005); a rise in traffic congestion (Dyer, Gursoy, Sharma & Carter, 2007); crowding out effects (French & Disher, 1997); and the general destruction or deterioration of historical, cultural, and natural resources (Nepal, 2008). Finally, stadium developments that become ‘white elephants’ and infrastructural debt are also often recognised after the hosting of a mega-sporting event (Horne, 2007). Barker, Page, and Meyer (2002) even found that, particularly in areas surrounding the main event location, mega-sporting events had disrupted the local culture (Dyer *et al.*, 2007), caused cultural commercialization (Cohen 1988); prompted cultural and social conflict by highlighting socio-cultural and socio-economic differences within the host community (Andereck, Valentine, Knopf & Vogt, 2005; Tosun 2002); and forced the displacement of local residents (Karadakis & Kaplanidou, 2012; Mangan, 2008). In this regard, such effects have also led more broadly to a significantly weakened image of the host destination on the international stage along with the diminishing attractiveness of nearby cities and regions (Pappas, 2014; Ritchie, 1984)

The 1996 Atlanta Games, in particular, highlighted the issue of the social ‘cost’ of mega-sporting events (cf. Beaty, 1998; Lenskyj, 2000). The coordinated research effort examining

the social impact of the Games found that between 1990 and 1995: over 15 000 residents were forcibly removed from public residences; \$350 million in state funds was diverted away from the funding of support services for low-income citizens and the homeless (Beaty, 1998); and 9 500 public housing units were reclaimed to host visitors to the Games instead of local residents (Lenskyj, 2000). Similarly, it was found that in the build-up to the 1998 Sydney Olympic Games, rents in areas primarily occupied by low-incomes residents increased up to 23% (Horin, 1999), and house prices rose to over 7% above inflation (Horin, 1998). In this regard, it could be argued that mega-sporting events serve to aggravate social problems instead of address them, and that they further deepen instead of close the fundamental divide between the financial elite and the global poor (Preuss, 2000).

These observations, therefore, add a particular sense of urgency to the question as to whether such incredibly expensive and largely privatised mega-sporting events should be funded by the use of public funds (Duminy & Luckett, 2012). Given that many of the event-related benefits have been found to be either impulsive in nature, or accruing primarily to the political elite, it would appear that the use of public funds would be largely inappropriate (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006). Yet, the answer is rarely that simple; with sports organising bodies (such as FIFA and the IOC) quick to draw our attention to the idea that mega-sporting events have several benefits and roles that extend far beyond their immediate socio-economic functions, several of which can be argued to form within the socio-cultural context of these event (Malfas, 2004).

2.3.2 The Socio-Cultural Impact of Mega-sporting events

Beyond their highly tangible socio-economic impacts, mega sporting events have also been found to generate a collection of socio-cultural costs and benefits for host regions. Such impacts have been described by the Environmental Institute of Research (1995) as both the positive and negative effects on human society of any private or state led action – that impact the means by which people interact, work, live, play, connect to each other, and generally function as a member of society. George and Swart (2015) suggests that the concept also encompasses the cultural impact of mega-sporting events, including any alterations to the beliefs, values and norms that individuals use to rationalise and guide their understanding of society and themselves. In general, these are typically more intangible in nature and are, therefore, usually not considered to be as publicly newsworthy as the more tangible figures presented by socio-economic reports (Bull & Lovell, 2007).

In the context of their socio-cultural impact, therefore, a preliminary business case for a mega-sporting event might document several less tangible outcomes, such as a celebratory atmosphere, social cohesion, national unity and civic pride (Bull & Lovell, 2007). For example, when Nelson Mandela was pictured holding the FIFA World Cup trophy in triumph after South Africa was granted the rights to host the 2010 FIFA World Cup, hundreds of thousands of Africans celebrated for what was promoted as a hugely symbolic and significant step in the restoration of the African continent (Malfas *et al.*, 2004). Shaw and Williams (2004) explain that such ideas are associated with the recent arrival of the ‘experience economy’, whereby local event organisers – harbouring the intention of producing multiple benefits for the host region – endeavour to construct a special atmosphere to surround mega-sporting events which, in the case of the Olympic Games or the FIFA World Cup, usually involves a sense of profound spectacle (Chalip, 2006). Moments, such as this, however, despite their immense impact, are typically immediate, unpredictable, and therefore often short-lived (Hiller, 1999).

On the other hand, mega-sporting events have also been linked to several longer-term socio-cultural outcomes (Horne, 2007). For example, several scholars have predicted that international sporting competitions the size of the FIFA World Cup and the Olympic Games can have a profound influence on local interest and participation in sporting activities within a host nation (Ritchie, 1984). Increased participation in sporting activities can be considered a significant longer-term contribution to the general health and lifestyle of host communities (Malfas *et al.*, 2004). More specifically, Hooper (2001) argues that improvements in sport participation generate an all-round feeling of well-being through satisfaction and fun, leading to accomplishment and self-fulfilment, and inspires greater social cohesion and engagement amongst those who might feel socially excluded from the community.

A particularly useful example of these participation impacts was observed at the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games, which was reported to have generated a significant growth in the participation of new collective segments of the host community in sporting activities, especially in the years directly after the event. Truno (1995) reports that, following the Barcelona Olympic Games, the city’s sports centres reported an increase of 46000 new members, with the proportion of women participants growing from 35% three years before the event to 45% three years after. Furthermore, in a national drive in sports participation in 1994, it was reported that over 300 000 residents of Barcelona took part in roller-skating and bicycle festivals, marathon runs and other sporting competitions (Truno, 1995).

Truno (1995) claims, in this regard, that this engagement in cross-community sporting activities was a direct result of the improved spirit felt within the Catalan community – an outcome triggered by the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games. More specifically, he reported to have found several compelling indications that civic pride had increased during the 1992 Olympic Games, suggesting that the host city's residents had converted its streets into the globe's largest stadium (Truno, 1995). In this regard, the mega-sporting event was also considered to invoke social unity and cohesion in the city by reinforcing and strengthening community ties (George & Swart 2015). de Guevara, Coller and Romani (1995) reports that, what was especially critical to boosting these developments was the media coverage surrounding the event, which presented the Spanish people as some of the most celebratory and festive in Europe.

Similarly, research conducted by Steven and Bevan (1999) on the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta confirmed that residents in the State of Georgia had experienced a significant increase in civic pride as a result of the event – with 94% of the respondents suggesting that the Olympic Games had a positive effect on the spirit of their community. Similar claims were also made about England's hosting of the 1996 European Football Championship, where the country endeavoured to generate a sense of national pride, unity and common purpose by employing a nostalgic 'football's coming home' theme to the event (Morphet, 1996). Such examples make a compelling case in support of the argument that mega-sporting events can afford local communities the chance to not only rouse international recognition for the host region, but also strengthen its community spirit and civic pride (Malfas *et al.*, 2004)

Furthermore, beyond the sports participation benefits, and the other intangible benefits associated with the celebratory atmosphere often experienced at mega-sporting events, these events have also been found to contribute significantly towards renewing the image of a host region (Knott *et al.*, 2013). For example, following the collapse of industrial manufacturing in the UK in the 1980's, the city of Sheffield – which, historically, served as a manufacturing hub for many years – employed tourism, leisure and sport as part of its regeneration strategy (Roche, 1994). Considering this approach, therefore, the pursuit of large international sporting events was understood to form a critical dimension of this strategy (Malfas *et al.*, 2004). Subsequently, the successful hosting of the 1991 World Student Games, alongside associated investments of over £130 million in sporting facilities and £590 million in related cultural and leisure amenities in the late 1980's, has generated a new focus for the city of Sheffield (Roche,

1994). In fact, in 1995 the city was formally recognised for its enduring commitment and contribution to sport, being elected as England's first 'National City of Sport' (Malfas *et al.*, 2004).

Finally, it has also been observed that various international ancillary events relating to attending mega-sporting events specifically, and international travel more broadly, have also generated several new challenges for mega-sporting event organisers (Malfas *et al.*, 2004). Since the terrorist attack on the Munich Olympic Games in 1972, for example, and more recently the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the US, safety and security concerns have formed the centre of attention during the hosting of mega-sporting events, as the need for more effective policing, security and crowd control has become of particular importance (FERENCE Weicker & Co, 2002). In this regard, however, it has also been suggested that event organisers need to be equally cautious of the negative psychological impacts that the deployment of too much security might have on a host region (FERENCE Weicker & Co, 2002). History would suggest, in this context, that while increasing the power of the police to detain suspects and remove activists, beggars and prostitutes from event areas often proposes good intent, this issuing of excessive power can serve to fundamentally undermine and underscore much wider issues of civil liberty (Malfas *et al.*, 2004).

2.3.3 The Physical Impact of Mega-sporting events

Finally, mega-sporting events have also been widely cited for their role in generating opportunities for host nations to build new infrastructure and sport facilities, and to commission overall improvements to the physical structure of their environment (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006). The development or upgrade of stadiums to handle the capacity crowds that mega-sporting events attract is typically one of the fundamental requirements set out by international sports organising bodies when qualifying potential host candidates (Nauright, 2004). Furthermore, another primary feature of any mega-sporting event bid book is the improvement of public transport systems and the construction of new roads, which are required to transport the huge number of participants, officials and foreign visitors to sporting venues throughout the hosting period of the event (Malfas *et al.*, 2004). Similarly, the development of infrastructure not immediately connected to the event - such as outdoor spaces, commercial office parks and leisure centres – also tends to occur, with the goal of regenerating the physical image of the host region (Knott *et al.*, 2012).

Subsequently, the strategy of using mega-sporting events to accelerate large-scale infrastructural development projects is becoming increasingly popular amongst contemporary hosts (Kitchen, 1996). Again, Barcelona's hosting of the 1992 Olympics Games serves as a good example of the role that mega-sporting event's play in this regard, whereby the city was seen to fund significant investments which drastically improved its public transport networks and completely rejuvenated much of its largely run-down coastal zones (Essex & Chalkley, 1998). The 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney was also observed to reflect the theme of infrastructural change in this regard, whereby the organisers of the event reported spending of over A\$1.5 billion on the development of sport facilities and A\$1 billion on other associated infrastructure (NSW Government, 2001). Similarly, the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens motivated the construction of a new airport costing £1.4 billion, as well as an extension of the city's underground train system costing over \$800 million. These developments were predicted to increase the regions trade and tourism capacity to 220 000 tonnes of cargo and 16 million passengers per year – thereby contributing to the creation of over 3000 full-time jobs (Malfas *et al*, 2004).

Whilst it is clear that the hosting of a mega-sporting event is likely to contribute significantly to infrastructural development in a host region, however, further attention needs to be focused on assessing the procedures involved in the tendering of these projects. Lenskyj (2000) points out, in this regard, that the accelerated deadline in the completion of infrastructure developments and the construction of stadiums is often a ploy used by political elites to justify a diversion from the standard tendering process surrounding national development projects – which typically includes public hearings, environmental and social impacts assessments, and so on. In this regard, numerous scholars have also reported that the touted benefits associated with such developments are almost always wrong (Horne & Manzereiter, 2006). The tendency of event organisers to purposefully overstate the prospective economic, as well as political and social, benefits of infrastructure development specifically, and mega-sporting event hosting more generally, has been documented by multiple event scholars (cf. Gratton & Henry, 2001). Such research findings conclude that supporters of infrastructure development and such applied trades, can often be seen to consistently, methodically and self-servingly deceive the public and policy-makers in order to ensure that certain projects are approved (Flyvbjerg, Bruzelius & Rothengatter, 2003).

Incidentally, what further compounds this problem, of course, is that while host nation governments cut back on spending on social welfare, the builders and designers of these projects are often granted access to public subsidies by host city governments (Malfas *et al*, 2004). It is in this regard, therefore, that mega-sporting events have been widely criticised for mobilising host politicians and corporate elites in highly lucrative alliances that usually disregard democratic procedures and local communities as growth is prioritised, and organising committees and corporations connect in the promotion of profit-driven objectives (Nauright, 2004). Lenskyj (2000) describes the dynamics of these alliances as ‘Place Politics’, which typically also include promotional campaigns aimed at convincing local residents that these mega-sporting event ventures will significantly contribute to transforming their communities in to ‘first-world’ cities – thereby rationalising the use of public funds. Yet, Swart and Bob (2004), through their analysis of Cape Town’s bid for the 2004 Olympic Games, claim that taxpayers inevitably always end up bearing a disproportionate burden when they agree to the funding of mega-sporting events using public money.

2.4 RATIONALIZING MEGA-SPORTING EVENT BIDS

It would appear that the perceived potential of mega-sporting events to generate significant benefits for their host cities, regions and countries remains highly contested. In terms of immediate observations, it is difficult to argue against the significant economic benefits that a mega-sporting event can offer a host region (Weed, 2009). However, in observing these benefits alongside the widespread pursuit of enhanced power and status by many contemporary businesses and politicians, several questions have been raised by critics as to the social distribution of such benefits (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006). Lowes (2002) points out that, which social groups are excluded, which groups ultimately benefit, and what scope exists to contest against such events, are three pertinent questions that are usually too easily dismissed by event organisers (Lowes, 2002).

It becomes evident that whilst mega-sporting events could often be found to generate several positive outcomes for their host nations, many of these events had also been linked to imposing several negative impact, especially on low-income residents (Black, 2007). Weed (2009) pointed out, in this regard, that almost every positive application associated with these events also generated some form of negative outcome – a key observation of the perpetual paradox which pervades much of the mega-sporting event research. In the United Kingdom, for example, several arguments and counter-arguments have been proposed, with the focus of

critics typically on the social costs, while advocates tended to promote the immediate economic benefits (Roberts, 2004). More specifically, urban redevelopment, job creation, economic growth and improved destination images have been witnessed together with terrorist attacks, threats to human rights, high inflation, and even the defamation of national brand after exposures of bribery and corruption (Horne, 2007).

Meanwhile, in North America and Australia, in terms of substantive material – based on works by, *inter alia*: Ritchie and Lyons (1990) on the 1988 Winter Olympic Games in Calgary; Kim *et al.* (1989) on the Seoul 1988 Summer Olympic Games; Brunet (1993, 1995) on the 1992 Barcelona Summer Olympic Games; Humphreys and Plummer (1995) and Baade and Matheson (2002) on the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games; Jones (2001) on the 1999 Welsh Rugby World Cup; Andersen (1999) and Madden (2002) on the 2000 Summer Olympic Games in Sydney; Papanikos (1999) and Balfousia-Savva *et al.* (2001) on the 2004 Summer Olympic Games in Athens; Horne and Manzenreiter (2004) on the 2002 Korea/Japan FIFA World Cup; Tyrrell *et al.* (2004) on the 2012 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver – an overwhelming collection of evidence has emerged in recent years which confirms that mega-sporting events play an important nation-building role for their host destinations. However, while the consequences of these-events were generally found to be positive in much of the above-cited research, the precise scope and nature of these consequences still remained fundamentally unclear (Weed, 2009).

Such observations, therefore, add an increased sense of urgency to the question as to whether these incredibly expensive and largely privatised mega-sporting events should be funded by the use of public capital – especially in emerging states such as South Africa (Duminy & Lockett, 2012). Given that many of the event-related benefits have been observed to accrue primarily to the political elite, as identified above, it could be suggested that the use of public funds is highly inappropriate (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006). Yet, the answer is rarely ever this simple. Indeed, the fact that predictions of the expected benefits are almost always wrong, and usually heavily overstated, doesn't seem to have done much at all to stifle the enthusiasm of prospective hosts (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006).

Black (2007) suggests that part of the reason for this paucity of accurate expectations and analyses surrounding mega-sporting events might be that they also endeavour to serve several other, intangible purposes. In particular, sport organising bodies together with media relations experts and commercial stakeholders, especially in recent years, have been quick to point out

several more intangible benefits of mega-sporting events that, on initial observation, are difficult to contest (Duminy & Luckett, 2012). Malfas *et al.* (2004) explain, in this regard, that mega-sporting events now promise to deliver something much bigger than their immediately observed socio-economic, socio-cultural or physical outcomes; and, as such, countries' growing enthusiasm to host such events is being driven in pursuit of something of much broader intrinsic value to a host nation. That is, the opportunity to reinforce strategic messages, to reimagine prevailing narratives, and to establish 'soft' power through the widespread media exposure that mega-sporting events tend to attract for a host destination (Black, 2007; Black & Van der Westhuizen, 2004). Black (2007) discusses these status-building strategies in the context of symbolic politics, whereby he points out that in today's increasingly competitive 'global' economy, mega-sporting events are now one of the few ambulatory sources of potential competitive advantages still accessible to emerging states.

The impulse to employ mega-sporting events in an endeavour to reimagine a nation – through symbols and signals of distinguishing characteristics or important trends and departures – is certainly not difficult to understand, especially in today's highly globalised era of the mass media and fiercely debated hosting decisions (Schriener, 2009). Farquharson and Marjoribanks (2003) explain that the proposed outcomes of mega-sporting events, in this regard, can be observed not only through the physical, cultural and economic processes relating to the event, but also through struggles in the socio-cultural and symbolic texts that narrate the event for the local and international audience. Similarly, Clarke and Everest (2006) suggests that regardless of how they are framed in official reports, mega-sporting events are – as are all central social-economic policy items - experienced and understood according to their underlying socio-cultural context; and, in today's post-industrial society, this context is largely provided by the information and entertainment observed within the mass media.

Importantly, for the purposes of this study, the literature has observed an increasingly close connection between sport, the nation and the media over the past decade, whereby the media has been shown to play a critical role in constructing, reconstructing and amplifying dialogues around the nation and sport (Blain *et al.*, 1993). However, despite the centrality of the proposed media signalling benefits to the contemporary hosting decision of a mega-sporting event - especially amongst emerging states such as South Africa (2010 FIFA World Cup) and Brazil (2014 FIFA World Cup and 2016 Olympic Games), there appears to have been little

coordinated effort in examining the role of the media at mega-sporting events – particularly in terms of any substantive empirical analyses (Swart *et al.*, 2012; 2013).

2.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter served to introduce, define and unpack the literature's contemporary understanding of mega-sporting events, and thereby positioned these events in the context of emerging nations' strategic pursuits for development and growth. In particular, the impact analysis literature served as a backdrop for discussions pertaining to the benefits and associated costs of these events in terms of their socio-economic, socio-cultural and physical outcomes.

Following that, the rationales that underpin these mega-sporting events were discussed. Here, it was determined that, the scope of existing literature presented clear evidence to suggest that mega-sport-events do, indeed, have a significant influence on their host destination. That being said, however, it was also concluded that the extent to which this influence was found to benefit the local population remained unclear. Subsequently, it was in this context that the concept of image signalling was introduced, which was presented as one of the less tangible, and therefore often less widely considered rationales behind contemporary mega-sport-event bids. Finally, it was at this point that the chapter drew to its conclusion, suggesting that research focusing on these less tangible benefits might offer some clarity as to the legitimacy of the claims surrounding the profound benefits that mega-sport-events provide for their host nation.

Subsequently, it is with these implied research intentions of this study that Chapter III opens with a comprehensive discussion of the media signalling impulse at mega-sport-events, and the scope of current research occupying the field. Throughout the chapter, several theoretical and practical considerations that might guide research in the field are also mentioned. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of South Africa's bid for the 2010 FIFA World Cup, which was selected to serve as the context for this study's exploratory research design.

CHAPTER III: SIGNALLING THROUGH MEGA-SPORTING EVENTS: THE 2010 FIFA WORLD CUP IN SOUTH AFRICA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter II it was found that, overall, mega-sport-events do have a significant impact on their host destination; yet, the extent to which this impact was found to benefit the local population remained unclear. It was in this context, then, that the concept of image signalling was introduced, which was presented as one of the less tangible, and therefore often less widely considered rationales behind contemporary mega-sporting event bids. The chapter then concluded by discussing the general need for further empirical research in the field of media signalling, which might be able to substantiate the contested benefits pinned to mega-sporting events in this regard.

Malfas *et al.* (2004) explain, that mega-sporting events now promise to deliver something much bigger than their immediately observed socio-economic, socio-cultural or physical outcomes; and, as such, countries' growing enthusiasm to host such events is being driven in pursuit of something of much broader intrinsic value to a host nation. That is, the opportunity to reinforce strategic messages, to reimagine prevailing narratives, and to establish 'soft' power through the widespread media exposure that mega-sporting events tend to attract for a host destination (Black, 2007; Black and Van der Westhuizen, 2004). Black (2007) discusses these status-building strategies in the context of symbolic politics, whereby he points out that in today's increasingly competitive 'global' economy, mega-sporting events are now one of the few ambulatory sources of potential competitive advantages still accessible to emerging states.

This chapter opens with a comprehensive discussion of the media signalling impulse at mega-sport-events, alongside an analysis of the scope of current research occupying the field. The associated theory suggests that, while mega-sport-events have a long tradition of serving as premeditated platforms to promote positive impressions regarding their hosts, the intrinsic link between the media, image-signalling and mega-sport-events is still not well understood. Subsequently, it is to this end that the need for additional research in this field is underlined.

In acknowledgement of this need, the chapter then proceeds to unpack several theoretical and practical considerations that would guide such research. First, the assumption of profound media effects in the contemporary period is examined and confirmed in validation of the proposed research agenda. Next, several practical observations are extracted from a collection

of case studies from the associated literature, which help further refine the scope and direction of the proposed research. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of South Africa's bid for the 2010 FIFA World Cup, which was selected to serve as the context for this study's exploratory research design.

3.2 BUILDING NATION IMAGE THROUGH MEGA-SPORTING EVENTS

The employment of mega-sporting events to signal arrival or graduation amongst the leading countries of the world, especially in recent years, has become an increasingly popular endeavour and ambition for potential hosts (Black and Van der Westhuizen 2004; Horne & Manzenreiter 2006). Primarily, Knott *et al.* (2012) explain that this impulse is about 'place promotion' and marketing; yet, beyond these obvious incentives, several scholars have suggested that it can also extend to dynamics of symbolism and legitimation (Black, 2007; De Almeida *et al.*, 2015; Farquharson & Marjoribanks, 2003).

In this regard, Farquharson and Marjoribanks (2003) suggest that the analysis of media signalling through mega-sporting events is best understood in relation to Benedict Anderson's (1991) proposal of countries as 'imagined communities' – imagined as both intrinsically independent and limited. In employing the theory of 'imagination', Anderson (1991) proposes that in a country of any size, status or demographic composition, while most residents won't actually know each other, they are intrinsically connected by the 'image of their community'. Furthermore, this notion of 'imagined communities' also implies that countries can be 're-imagined'; and, as such, fundamentally transformed in the minds of individuals.

Similarly, Anderson's proposition of an imagined community appears to run on an equal thread to Kotler and Gertner's (2002) idea of 'national image', which they define as: the sum of all impressions, ideas and beliefs that an individual holds of a country. Respectively, Govers and Go (2009) describe 'national image' as the "subjective interpretation of reality" made by an individual. Knott *et al.* (2012) explain that, in this regard, individuals typically reflect on the less tangible components of a country that represent impressions constructed directly through word of mouth, media advertising and customer experiences. Kotler and Gertner (2002) further conclude that while most national images are usually based on stereotypes – constructed on representations instead of facts, they are nonetheless clearly pervasive. Subsequently, Keller (2008:67) argues that the challenge for destination managers, therefore, is to generate "strong, favourable and unique" associations for their destinations; and Farquharson and Marjoribanks

(2003) suggest that media signalling through mega-sporting events can be an important platform from which to achieve this.

Black (2007) explains that media signalling through mega-sporting events can be observed even as early as the bidding process. Every prospective host is required to compile a convincing narrative as to why they might be both desirable and capable hosts (Malfas *et al.*, 2004). In this regard, Allen *et al.* (2013) explains that the audience for these early story-telling narratives can be both internal and external, domestic and foreign.

Externally, for example, the audience is likely to include international sport-organising-bodies (i.e. FIFA and the IOC) and prospective commercial sponsors. Considering the cosmopolitan self-perceptions of these international sport-organising-bodies, alongside the rather righteous and conceited ideological attraction of sport, it is unsurprising that potential hosts tend to construct a dialogue surrounding their bids that reinforces and mirrors these self-perceptions (Hoberman, 1995; Ogi, 2003; Roche, 2006). In fact, Black (2007) explains that these stakeholders usually hold their own, unique motivations to expand their attraction and power by closely connecting themselves to nations that propose to represent something more exciting than the simple vision of an efficiently-organised event (Black, 2007).

As self-proclaimed and largely unaccountable independent entities, the legitimacy of these organisations stems from their capacity to generate income without a doubt, but also from their image as curators of the acknowledged promise, nobility and universality of sport (Black, 2007). For the 2010 and 2014 FIFA World Cups, for example, FIFA introduced a new principle of continental variation, which was promoted through a dialogue of democratising and sharing the international game with all sections of society (de Almeida *et al.*, 2015). Yet, the truth of the situation was remarkably different. Whereby, Brazil and South Africa's bids for the 2014 and 2010 World Cups proved to represent highly profitable commercial decisions on the part of FIFA, ensuring substantial returns on investment for their commercial partners and profoundly extending their consumer markets (Jack, 2010). Furthermore, the prospect of using these events to tie suspicious executive board members to heroic international icons such as Pele and Nelson Mandela is a highly influential and attractive means of expelling negative perceptions of the Football Federation and its representatives (Jennings, 2006).

Furthermore, in a domestic context these promotional narratives tend to serve a similar purpose, whereby in the face of what are, invariably, extraordinarily expensive and intensive ventures,

bid committees must mobilise broad and enthusiastic public support for a country's decision to host a mega-sporting event (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006). de Almeida *et al.* (2015) explain here that such promotional narratives typically harness growth logic interspersed with emotion and romanticised ideologies to signal a more compelling argument. The general consensus that strong political and public support exists for a mega-sporting event bid is a vital ingredient for success in this regard (Black, 2007). Farquharson and Marjoribanks (2003) explain that, these narratives employ social imagery as espoused by local organising committees and their commercial partners, social and political elites, and mainstream media platforms to promote a variety of rationales for their bid. Nauright (2004) adds, this dialogue of growth and development is then linked to ideas of long term legacy in the public discussion, which are employed to formally justify the tremendous costs associated with staging a mega-sporting event in what he describes as the international sport-media-business complex. Such legacies, then, in turn become increasingly interpreted as catalysts for regional and national regeneration (Haferburg, 2011); and as key stakeholders and other political elites signal these ideas through the mass media more widely (Bourdieu, 1997), local residents, in turn, start to accept the romanticised dialogue and growth logic of mega-sporting events, and opposition to these sporting spectacles is considered unreasonable and unpatriotic (de Almeida *et al.*, 2015). Eventually, then, these motivations and justifications form a rhetoric, whereby the prospective host community lends support to fund these short-term ambulatory sporting competitions through the use of public resources (Hiller, 1999)

Beyond these early bidding incentives, there is also the more popular idea that mega-sporting events, in connection with the modern sports-media-tourism complex, offer unrivalled opportunities to build a universal spectatorship and provide international exposure (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006). This is certainly the case for a large portion of the world's countries that remain excluded from the traditional western centres of global power. Take a look at the final match of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, for example, which attracted a global viewership of over 1 billion, or the opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympics which was watched by around 900 million people (Muller, 2015). Hoberman (1984) explains that, it is in this context - whereby they can grip the attention of a widespread audience across multiple cities, countries and regions, and carry to them complex and highly symbolic impressions – that mega-sporting events remain inextricably linked to the pursuit of image, status and power. With their highly visible national symbols (outfits and flags), and the prospects they offer for advertisers and reporters alike to construe team and individual achievements as assessments of national will,

character and success, such sporting spectacles afford local leaders and their commercial partners with the opportunity to showcase their causes in a global society that must continuously compete for our attention. (Hoberman, 1984). In fact, it is often argued that the concerted and sustained focus of the global media, as provided by mega-sporting events, has never been consistently achieved through any other promotional means (Bernstein & Blaine, 2003).

In this regard, de Almeida *et al.* (2015) point out that the format of mega-sporting events - in particular those with elaborately staged opening and closing ceremonies - provides a unique opportunity to package and project an appealing (and inevitably stylised and simplified) narrative concerning the host. Furthermore, Black (2007) argues that the widespread deployment of volunteers, private sector interests, and state resources associated with staging a mega-sporting event is also likely to amount to a milestone 'pivotal moment' in the growth trajectory of a host nation. It signifies the prospect of a natural shift in a community's shared path – even, if in reality, the stability of this shift is unpredictable and the consequences uncertain (Black, 2007).

In terms of practical observations, at least, mega-sporting events can be seen to have had somewhat of a long and profound history of serving as critical vehicles of articulation through which host nations can project several positive messages and impressions surrounding their socio-economic state (Black, 2007). Although the classic format of mega-sporting events was intended to be largely disconnected from politics, modern mega-sporting events, with their medal counts (cf. 2008 Beijing Olympic Games), terrorist threats (cf. 2012 London Olympic Games), and public boycotts (cf. the 2014 FIFA World Cup) are anything but. The 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin are often considered to have started this trend (cf. Hart-Davis, 1986; Mandell, 1987), and the terrorist attacks of Munich, the widely publicised debts of Montreal, and the boycotts in Russia and Los Angeles have guaranteed its endurance (Booker 1981; Hazan, 1982; Hoberman, 1986). Furthermore, throughout the post- World War II period, multiple scholars have also documented several more positive applications of media signalling through mega-sporting events, including the use of the 1995 South African Rugby World Cup and the 1998 French FIFA World Cup to signal critical and widely needed social transformation (cf. Black & Van der Westhuizen, 2004; Marks, 1999); the use of the 1968 and 1988 Olympic Games in Mexico and South Korea respectively, and the 1998 Commonwealth Games in Malaysia to signal development and a type of 'graduation' for semi-peripheral

nations (cf. Manheim, 1990); and the use of the 1960, 1964 and 1972 Olympic Games in Rome, Tokyo and Munich, respectively, to signal the restoration of former Axis powers in global society (cf. Essex & Chaulkley, 1998).

As one begins to consider these critical discussions and practical examples in greater depth, therefore, what becomes increasingly clear is that mega-sporting events are highly likely to have a considerable impact on a host nation's 'imagined state'; and, thus far, much of the supporting evidence would lead one to believe that the associated impressions for a host nation are likely to be positive (Knott *et al.*, 2012). But to assume that the signals projected from hosting a mega-sporting event are always positive is almost certainly a mistake; as such high profile showcasing opportunities rarely come without risk (Dimeo & Kay 2004). Malfas *et al.* (2004), for example, point out how the widely publicised debts of the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal projected several negative impressions of the host city - especially in terms of its political and organisational legitimacy; and these impressions are still cited within sports literature today. Furthermore, Horne (2007) also discussed the coordinated terrorist attacks that occupied much of the media coverage surrounding the 1972 Olympics Games; which, for many years, left Munich with a legacy of safety negative impressions and associations surrounding the safety of the city as a tourist destination.

What Horne (2007) and Malfas *et al.* (2004) demonstrate here, then, is that when it comes to media signalling through mega-sporting events, all publicity is not necessarily always good publicity (Falkheimer, 2007). This is especially the case for host countries with emerging, or at least semi-peripheral, global status', where pre-existent media impressions are more likely to serve in colouring readings of success (Dimeo & Kay 2004; Mishra, 2012). Subsequently, then, while mega-sporting events may gain the image of a destination, it appears that they may just as well create a boomerang effect for the host nation, especially in the face of any political embarrassment surrounding the event (Falkheimer, 2007). Such boomerang effects are likely to be devastating for a host nation, certainly from a democracy perspective at least, as they would most likely serve in sinking the public trust in fundamental public institutions (Falkheimer, 2007).

It is within this context of largely conflicting theoretical observations, therefore, that Morgan, Pritchard and Pride (2010) tend to argue that the intrinsic link between the media, image-signalling and mega-sporting events is not always well understood. In terms of substantive empirical research, there appears to be very little published academic evidence that could

contest such claims. In fact, to this study's best knowledge, the literature has only ever documented two published empirical analyses that explore the media signalling outcomes of a mega-sporting event (cf. Swart *et al.*, 2012; 2013).

Manning (2001) explain, in this regard, that whilst the investigation into events as compelling media communication is popular in news management research, scholars in this field have largely focused on the political, crisis, and war propaganda, where the observed impressions are perceived to be of certain democratic importance (Jowett & O'Donnell, 2006). However, Hayashi, Curran, Kwak, Esser, Hallin and Lee (2015) argues that, when equated to mainstream political media coverage, the spectacle of 'sports-cum-politics' can be observed to provide media broadcasters with much greater freedom to intersperse the fact-orientated customs of reporting with nuances of national sentimentality and emotion; and, as such, he claims that sport-related media – especially in the context of any political decision making, as indicated above – is likely to hold equal, if not even greater democratic importance for a host regions (Hayashi *et al.*, 2015).

This repartee of claims and counter-claims, therefore, alongside the recently observed increase of signal, power and status driven mega-sporting event bids by emerging states, suggests that a clear need exists for further empirical research surrounding the media signalling role of mega-sporting events (Swart *et al.*, 2012). It was established above that mega-sporting events are likely to generate significant media impressions surrounding a host destination (de Almeida *et al.*, 2015). But what is the scope of these impressions? While supporters and advocates promote several socio-economic, socio-cultural and physical benefits for a host region, does the media accept this view, and to what extent does it endorse such activity, or does it tend to reflect more critically on the negative outcomes? Furthermore, to what extent do these impressions change in focus and sentiment over time, or do they remain consistent? These are all important questions that appear to remain unanswered within the academic literature.

Before launching directly into the examination of the media signalling role of mega-sporting events, however, there are several theoretical and practical considerations that first need to be discussed here. First, for example, in order to theoretically qualify this topic of research, the widely cited assumption of pervasive media effects needs to be discussed and confirmed here. This is a critical step that appears to be regularly overlooked by much of the research documented in the associated fields. In the interest of maintaining complete theoretical validity, however, the following section tests this assumption against the literature's fundamental

theoretical understandings of media effects in the modern period. After that, several practical considerations are also discussed, before the context of this study is introduced.

3.3 QUALIFYING THE ASSUMPTION OF PERVASIVE MEDIA EFFECTS

The study of culture, media and communications, as we know it today, is by academic standards a relatively new phenomenon (Hartley, 2012). Except for the sporadic presence of some World War I propaganda research during the 1920s, the subject of the media did not receive much attention until the 1950's, and only found a more methodical approach towards the end of the 20th century (Boyle & Haynes, 2000). Since the beginning of the 21st century, however, there has been a more established tradition of investigating the mass media, modern culture, and the role that the media plays in society (Brookes, 2002; Crolley & Hand, 2006; Rowe, 2003). In particular, these studies - for the most part at least - have been focused on exploring the psychological, cultural and social effects of the mass media, its content, and its different forms of use (Perse, 2001).

One of the primary issues in professional as well as academic discussions about the mass media is whether or not media exposure, by itself, significantly influences the behaviour and attitudes of its audience (Falkheimer, 2007). When it comes to the analysis of media effects in communication and media research, there are several conflicting theories that can be cited. These theories have shifted our understanding of mass media effects from a notion of force in the early 1920's (within the realm of propaganda), to limitation in the late 1950's (as governed by Klapper's law of minimal consequences), on to coercion in the 1960's (as implicated by a growth in organisational power in the late 20th century) and finally to consent towards the end of the 20th century (as part of the collective attraction to social governance) (Macnamara, 2006).

The next four sub-sections present several arguments for the respective schools of media effects thinking, with specific focus being placed on the associated contradictory arguments. Not only is the analysis of the arguments and evidence that underpins each of these competing theories useful in providing context to our contemporary understanding of media effects; but it also serves to substantiate both this study's theoretical and practical significance (Malhotra, 2010).

3.3.1 The Hypodermic School of Thought (Direct Effects)

The contemporary analysis of mass media effects officially began in the 1920s, largely driven by Mussolini and Hitler's infamous use of the media to circulate and promote their propaganda during the first World War (Lasswell, 1927). Based on the understanding that this early use of

the media implied, the associated research assumed direct effects, whereby the media and its contents was hypothesised to have a significant direct influence on its audience (Perse, 2001). Lippmann (1922), in this context, described the media as having the potential to become the basis for societies view of the world. Around the same time, Lasswell (1927) defined the mass media as a tool for social control and mass manipulation. This early focus and understanding of media effects sustained the attention of the academic community until the late 1950s, largely through the theoretical and applied research of the ‘Bureau of Applied Social Research’ – whose work ultimately commanded much of our thinking of media Impact for the first half of the 20th century (Macnamara, 2006).

This assumption of direct media effects, even in the context of the contemporary media, is not difficult to understand (Perse, 2001). It would seem to make perfect sense that a component of our society which consumes so much of our time and money must have some sort of significant impact on our lives (Rowe, 2003). It is also important to remember here that there is a significant scope of self-interest that underpins the endorsement of a belief in strong, or even direct media effects (Perse, 2001). Media companies, for example, derive considerable profits by promoting themselves as effective tools for advertising and marketing (Manzenreiter, 2006). Politicians also use the media, most famously in the USA, to rally support for their political campaigns and promote their policy agendas - justifying this expenditure based on the belief of strong media effects (Perse, 2001). Even the academic community have a vested interest in promoting the direct effects of the media. After all, it would hardly enrich the status of the academic field of media studies to find that the effects of the mass media are largely trivial (McGuire, 1986).

3.3.2 The Law of Minimal Consequence

Moving into the late 1950’s the abovementioned trends, alongside the perpetual pursuit of wealth and status by businesses and society in general, raised several questions for scholars as to the validity of much of the early media effects research. Results would soon reveal that such concern was well grounded, with the persisting ‘hypodermic’ school of thought failing to endure even the first round of serious empirical analyses (Perse, 2001).

It was around the same time that the political role of the media also began to come into focus, as the media became more frequently used by politicians for the promotion of their electoral campaigns (Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee, 1954; Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet, 1944). The primary findings of this research, however, suggested that instead of changing voters’

intentions, the media played a more significant role in reinforcing their prior dispositions (Perse, 2001). Soon after this, society saw the widespread adoption of the television and the rapid circulation of visual content (Macnamara, 2006). Similarly, the academic literature - largely comprised of experimental research - argued that while propaganda and advertisements circulated through television media would help people learn facts, they would not significantly influence individual attitudes (Hovland, Lumsdaine & Sheffield, 1949).

As detailed in Klapper's (1960) widely cited law of minimal consequences, such findings were in direct conflict with the ideas that both Lippmann (1922) and Lasswell (1927) had proposed much earlier. Klapper's (1960) research argued that the media demonstrated little evidence of having a significant influence over the attitude of its audience. Subsequently, it was from this collection of research that a new 'limited-effects' model for the media emerged in the early 1950s; which, to the disappointment of many media effects researchers, became the conventional wisdom of media thinking for the following fifteen years (Curran, 2002; Newbold *et al.*, 2002).

3.3.3 The Political School of Thought

Nevertheless, as society continued to rapidly grow throughout the 1960s, powerful financial, industrial and political organisations became increasingly invested in the mass media; eventually, to the point where a few corporations were either controlling, or at least largely managing much of the production, distribution and consumption of the global media (Newbold *et al.*, 2002). Subsequently, this gradual occupation of ownership led to another important scientific change in perspective, shifting media thinking away from Klappers' (1960) persisting law of minimal consequence with the introduction of the new 'political' school of thought. Notable research involved in orchestrating this shift included that of McCombs and Shaw (1972), whose work sort to reverse the thinking of media Impact once again, presenting findings that largely supported Lippmann (1922) and Lasswell's (1927) earlier research. The findings presented by McCombs and Shaw (1972) highlighted several important distinctions to Lippmann (1922) and Lasswell's (1927) earlier results. In particular, they were clear that whilst their research did not support the assumption of direct media effects, it did indicate that the media played a significant role in reinforcing the pre-existing beliefs of its audience (Newbold *et al.*, 2002).

3.3.4 The Cultural School of Thought

Whilst the school of political thought had attracted a wide subscription of followers by the end of the 1960s, the introduction of several more practical qualitative techniques (for example content analysis) in media studies during the 1970s generated much criticism for this persisting theory, exposing the somewhat tapered quantitative methodological approach of the pre-existing literature (Macnamara, 2006). This criticism, subsequently, paved the way for a final shift in media thinking towards the school of ‘cultural’ thought; which is the line of thinking that underpins much of our contemporary understanding of mass media effects (Perse, 2001). In this regard, ‘cultural’ theory offered further reservations about the ‘limited effects’ approach to media thinking by introducing the notion of cultural hegemony (Macnamara, 2006). This notion suggested that as society continued to develop an implicit willingness to be governed by a set of converging social policies (i.e. as society becomes increasingly globalised), the media would contrive an increasing degree of influence - based largely on its capability to report, share and frame said policies in a manner that could serve its best interests (Lull, 2000).

Whilst the school of ‘cultural’ thought supports the belief of strong media effects, an important distinction is made from earlier assumptions of direct effects, here, through the acknowledgement of several ‘mediating’ variables which are understood to limit the media’s power (Newbold *et al.*, 2002). Lazarsfeld *et al.* (1968), along with Atkin, Hocking and Block (1984), in this regard, argued that social groups (such as friends, family and co-workers) have a more significant influence than the media on an individuals’ voting decision and decision to drink alcohol respectively. Similarly, Rogers (1995) and Curran (2002) both identified that word of mouth was considered a more influential source than the media when deciding to adopt a new product, idea, or method.

In rebuttal, Macnamara (2006) argues that as a result of the increasingly widespread saturation of the media over the past two decades, the media has begun form a so-called ‘vicious circle’; which, he claims, largely undermines the power of the abovementioned mediating variables. Thompson (1995) explains, in this regard, that with the media now infiltrating almost all levels of modern society, from our social institutions (such as sport and culture) to our every-day lives (such as the televisions in our homes), it is likely that most of any one individuals’ potential ‘mediating’ variables would have, at some point, previously been influenced by the mass media, thereby largely limiting their mediating effect. Macnamara (2006) also pointed out that, with the growth in the number of monopolies across the media industry in recent years, along

with a global increase in socio-economic pressure, the influence of the media would likely be further inflated; as media content has become increasingly homogenised, and the influence of family, church and work as ‘mediating’ variables would be significantly reduced (Macnamara, 2006).

3.3.5 A Contemporary Understanding

Therefore, as the literature has evolved, media effects thinking has shifted back and forth between two extremities on the scale of social-influence (Macnamara, 2006). On the one end sits Lippmann (1922) and Lasswell’s (1927) early research, which proposes direct effects; and at the other end sits Klapper’s (1960) widely cited law of minimal consequences, which argues for the ‘limited-effects’ model. All things considered here, it would be premature to simply assume direct media effects – despite this being the optimal outcome for the academic field (McGuire, 1986). Yet, as Silverstone (1999) points out, it would be equally naïve to assume any laws of minimal consequence, especially when considering the established and growing salience of the media in the modern period (Allen, Duke, Davis, Kim, Nonnemaker & Farrelly, 2015).

Over the last decade in particular, Collins *et al.* (2006) note how the salience of the media has grown exponentially, especially with the introduction of the modern media formats, such as the internet and social-media. In this regard, the primary accelerant of media growth over the last century has been the evolution of human progress, whereby society has increasingly demanded more efficient ways to complete its daily activities (Herman & Chomsky, 2010). Ray (2014) describes modern society as an ‘economy of convenience’ in which the media rules. Supporting evidence for Ray’s (2014) hypothesis can be found in a recent Ofcom (2015) report, which maps media consumption trends across the entire globe. The report reveals that 92% of adults use a TV set on a daily basis (Ofcom, 2015). In addition, nine in ten adults were discovered to own a mobile phone device, with 67% of adults using their device to go online (Ofcom, 2015). Furthermore, the report revealed that on average adults spend 251, 174, 132, 87 and 17 minutes per day watching television, using a mobile phone, using a laptop, listening to a radio, and reading a newspaper respectively (Ofcom, 2015). Combined, these results suggest that any one individual will spend, on average, over half of their working day engaged with some form of media platform, highlighting how our daily operations are now effectively governed by movements in and out, and across local media spaces (Curran & Gurevitch, 2005).

Subsequently, it is in this context that the mass media has been described by several scholars to have completely revolutionised the way that society now gathers and shares information and facilitate connections between its constituents (Palen *et al.*, 2009). In particular, Silverstone (1999) notes, first it was with the invention of the radio, then the television, and finally the internet that the mass media has gathered so much of its popularity; whereby each platform has facilitated an increasing level of interactivity, simultaneity and instantaneity for viewers - features which were absent from earlier, more traditional formats of media (McGillivray, 2014). Media expert David Rowe (2009) uses the term “mediatisation” to describe this evolution process, suggesting that society itself has undergone an intense course of integration with the media. The result of this process, Roche (2003) argues, is that the media now filters and frames our everyday realities. It publishes diverse representations and provides obscure references, benchmarks and touchstones in which individuals use to guide the performance of their daily lives (Rowe, 2003).

Over the last 20 years, in particular, a considerable collection of research has emerged that supports observations of the enduring growth of mass media salience in the modern period (Edney, 2004). Falkheimer (2007), for example, discusses how the media now influences and infiltrates all ranks of our society – from our social institutions (i.e. sport and business) to our more conventional everyday lives (i.e. home appliances); and as such is able to deliver the world to individuals’ in a diverse range of contexts – some within which we hold regular, intimate knowledge; and others that lie far beyond our regular daily sensory and physical experiences (Curran & Gurevitch, 2005). Similarly, Clarke and Everest (2006) explain that, however understood, our everyday activities are experienced and recognized within a specific socio-cultural context; and in the modern post-industrial world, the most significant determinant of this context is the material and data distributed by the mass media.

Magazines, newspapers, movies, and television are now basic to life for individuals all over the world (Clarke & Everest, 2006). In fact, the reality for many of us is that we cannot evade the presence of the mass media (Silverstone, 1999). In our daily routines we move in and out and across media spaces; from one media connection to another (Rowe, 2009). From newspaper, to radio, to television, to the internet; at home, at work, in public, alone and with others (Silverstone, 1999). In this sense, the bulk of what we now experience in life is in some way mediated (Altheide, 2002). Silverstone (1999) observes how people now turn to the mass media for security and comfort, for information and entertainment, and for the continuity and

intensity of the experience. Macnamara (2006) points out that many people now depend on the mass media, as much, if not even more so than they do on their personal, professional and religious relationships.

As a result of this persistent growth in media salience, therefore, alongside our aggregated reliability on the media to perform our daily tasks, academics now describe the mass media as one of the most influential components of the modern period (Edney, 2004). It is within this context that the propagation of news and information through mass media has been shown to dramatically shift stock prices, expose high-profile misconduct, orchestrate commercial bankruptcy – and even take down Presidents (Macnamara, 2003).

Therefore, it is with these learned assumptions and practical considerations, that this study establishes its case for the importance of analysing the mass media – especially within the context of signalling, framing and positioning. More specifically, from the perspective of mega-sporting events, assumptions of strong media effects can now be entertained with much greater certainty here. Emery (2010), in this regard, explains that both local and international spectators depend on media impressions to engage with mega-sporting events; suggesting that the experience of such events, the interpretations of their value and success, and the understanding of their symbols and associated dialogues – and therefore the degree to which a host nation's message of modernity is effectively communicated – sits largely in the hands of the mass media (Black 2007; Dimeo & Kay 2004; Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006; Lepp & Gibson, 2011; Manzenreiter, 2010; Mishra, 2012, 2013).

3.3.6 Media Effects Theory and Mega-Sporting Events

Given the clearly strong connection between sport and the media, several criticisms can be found within the contemporary mega-sporting event literature that raise several questions as to the lack of existing research on the media component of mega-sporting events, especially when considering the centrality of the media outcomes to the very justification and rationale behind more recent mega-sporting event bids (cf. 2010 FIFA World Cup; 2014 FIFA World Cup; 2016 Olympic Games; 2018 FIFA World Cup). That being said, however, what needs to be taken into account here is that the concept of media signalling through mega-sporting events, and the signalling attraction of mega-sporting events more generally, is still a relatively new phenomenon (de Almeida *et al.*, 2015). In fact, whilst the signalling benefits of mega-sporting events have been linked to events as far back as the early 1960s (cf. the case of the 1960

Olympic Games in Rome), the first empirical research exploring the media signalling impact of mega-sporting events was only conducted in 2012 (cf. Swart *et al.*, 2012).

This late entry into the mega-sporting event literature is not difficult to understand; as it was only with the shift in the production of mega-sporting events into emerging states (cf. the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa; the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games in Brazil, and the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia) that the potential media signalling benefits of these events first came into focus (Nauright, 2004). More specifically, although the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany and the 2008 Olympic Games in China were both underpinned by several signalling objectives (Chalip, 2006), it was with South Africa's hosting of the 2010 FIFA World Cup that the potential signalling Impact of mega-sporting events first became widely apparent (Black, 2007).

In this regard, the literature highlights how South Africa has, for many years, been widely burdened by historically entrenched images of segregation and exclusion (Knott *et al.*, 2012), as well as contemporary perceptions of crime, unemployment and HIV AIDS (Allen *et al.*, 2013); and often suffers as a victim to several pervading global stereotypes and suppressive ideologies (i.e. Afro-pessimism, Afro-essentialism, etc.). The 2010 FIFA World Cup, therefore, was envisioned as a critical opportunity by the South African government to reverse these post-colonial narratives, and to re-imagine South Africa, and Africa, as a key 'global' destination for entrepreneurial opportunity, travel and foreign investment alike (Lepp & Gibson, 2011).

It is within this context, therefore, that South Africa's hosting of the 2010 FIFA World Cup presents an extremely compelling case for the study of media signalling at mega-sporting events (Black, 2007); and, as such, it is for this reason that it has tended to form the primary focus of the academic literature in this regard. This study intends to serve as an extension of this literature, whereby it proposes to reflect on both the implied narratives – as discussed in associated case studies – as well as the explicit policy objectives – as presented in the event planning documentation (See Appendix A) – attached to the 2010 FIFA World Cup, and conduct an empirical media-content analysis to explore the extent to which such narratives and intended impressions were reflected in the event-related media coverage. In construction of both an implicit and explicit context for this study, therefore, the next section of this chapter will unpack all the available case study research and planning documentation connected to the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

3.4 THE 2010 FIFA WORLD CUP IN SOUTH AFRICA

A review of the government planning documentation and press releases (See Appendix A), as well as the analysis of all 15 associated case study research papers surrounding South Africa's decision to bid for the 2010 FIFA World Cup, identified three broad narrative themes that were expected to have framed the majority of the event-related off-field media coverage surrounding the event. More specifically, these themes included: i) the Pan-African rhetoric of the 2010 FIFA World Cup; ii) the negotiation of African essentialism, Afro-pessimism and South African exceptionalism; and iii) the perceived benefits and costs of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. To provide further context to this study, the next three sub-sections will unpack these broad narrative themes.

3.4.1 An Introduction to the 'African' 2010 FIFA World Cup

Hosted for the first time in a developing country, and for the first time in Africa, the 2010 FIFA World Cup was hosted by South Africa between 11 June and 11 July 2010. From an African perspective at least, South Africa seemed to be the right choice, with the country representing the continent's most socio-economically developed society, boasting the most lucrative professional soccer-league structure in Africa, and hosting the continent's biggest media broadcasting companies (Knott & Swart, 2011). The triumph of South Africa in enticing the 2010 FIFA World Cup to its lands was, in itself, a remarkable achievement - especially considering its previous suspensions from international sport during the apartheid era (Ndlovu, 2010). Furthermore, with Nelson Mandela himself attending the final announcement, South Africa's hosting of the 2010 FIFA World Cup seemed to confirm the short restoration of the country from political outcast in the early 1990's to the leader of a new class of developing nations in the 21st century (Knott *et al.* 2013).

It was in early 2004 that FIFA President Joseph Blatter declared that the 2010 FIFA World Cup would be hosted by South Africa (Greeff, 2008). Meeting the significance of such a prestigious opportunity, therefore, South Africa wanted to make sure that the first ever Football World Cup hosted on African soil would serve as a benchmark for all future revisions of the competition. The objective was to place South Africa on the global map, but to do so, it would have to pull off the most expensive, intricate and ambitious mega-sporting event ever to have been staged on the African continent (de Almeida *et al.*, 2015). In addition to the organisational complexity of the event, there were also several other significant hurdles that South Africa would have faced in order to overcome its peripheral status in the global economy, perhaps one the most

challenging of which was the management of media impressions surrounding the event (Kim *et al.*, 2015). Schreiner (2009) points out, in this regard, the global trend when reporting on South Africa has been for the media to select a negative viewpoint, where most media reports reinforce suppressive ideologies and essentialist stereotypes (Berger, 2010; Hammett, 2011; Maguire, 2011). Importantly, therefore, the 2010 FIFA World Cup became a platform for South Africa and its host cities to prove their capabilities; whilst, as Pillay, Tomlinson and Bass (2009) and several others have suggested, at the same time providing the chance to challenge such negative ideologies and dispel outdated stereotypes about Africa (Allen *et al.*, 2013).

Right from the start, the event was sold as an 'African' World Cup, with reassurances that the benefits would extend far outside the borders of South Africa (Knott *et al.*, 2012). Van der Westhuizen (2008) explained that the 2010 FIFA World Cup sought to celebrate Africa's progress and modernity, consistent with president Mbeki's notion of a South African and African Renaissance. In the 2010 bid book, the local organising committee particularly underlined the Pan-African rhetoric underpinning the 2010 FIFA World Cup, which was embedded in the discourse of growth and modernity (de Almeida *et al.*, 2015). In this regard, Manzo (2012) talked about the 'outward-orientated development model' that the 2010 FIFA World Cup had planned to adopt, which underlined the visual components of the spectacle as well as 'African' infrastructure, and was aimed at promoting modernity, enticing international media attention, increasing tourism flows and foreign investment, and broadcasting positive impressions of Africa to the globe.

In terms of media signals, it is suggested that the South African press largely promoted the 2010 FIFA World Cup as a 'truly African' bid, whereby the resulting benefits would be experienced not only in South Africa, but also by all of her respective African neighbours too. In the case of both the South African and Moroccan bids, both nations promoted their respective proposals in terms of being 'true African delegates' and 'primary gateways to Africa' (Cornelissen, 2004). Furthermore, clearly linked to this was a specific focus in promoting South African modernity and urban imagery, with signals projecting as a functional, dynamic country, and a lively urban setting that can be considered reasonably safe (Knott *et al.*, 2012). May (2004) suggested that the choice to allow South Africa to host the 2010 FIFA World Cup placed a much needed vote of confidence in the abilities of both South Africa and Africa more generally.

The extent to which this Pan-African rhetoric was successful in projecting the perceived benefits of the 2010 FIFA World Cup to spaces beyond South Africa's borders remains largely unclear (Knott, Fyall, Jones, 2013). Several case studies suggested that the FIFA World Cup had successfully enhance images of both South Africa and Africa as modern spaces (Berger, 2010; Knott *et al.*, 2012; Lepp & Gibson, 2011). In this regard, Smith (2010) reported on how discussions surrounding the initial hosting stage of the competition praised the Pan-African feeling of civic pride and common identity, the racial cohesion and the unity of South African society (Hammett, 2011; Smith 2010). Several other scholars also suggested as to how the rising xenophobic tensions in South Africa might have also been observed to undermine this Pan-African rhetoric; leading several reports to query the true level of inter-racial tolerance and ubuntu in this post-apartheid South Africa (Desai & Vahed, 2010; Kelly 2010). In this regard, Lepp and Gibson (2011) and Hammett (2011) also both argued as to how impression of the Third World continued to play a fundamental role in both South Africa's and Africa's image, with xenophobic tensions likely reinforcing a largely Afro-pessimistic dialogue and historical impressions of the barbaric, primitive and dangerous African 'other'.

As a result, several questions were further raised surrounding the sensibility of employing a Pan-African rhetoric for the 2010 FIFA World Cup in the first place (Maguire, 2011). In this regard, several scholars noted that perceptions relating to Africa prior to the event projected impressions of a continent which is pre-modern, unsafe and riddled with corruption (Knott *et al.*, 2012); and, by association, it was argued that the Pan-African rhetoric not only reinforced doubts as to South Africa's capabilities, but also the suitability of FIFA's decision to grant the hosting rights for the event to a developing state (Darby, 2002; Jennings, 2007; Pillay et al., 2009).

As these debates further unfolded, Desai and Vahed (2010) explains that several stakeholders took the opportunity to introduce narrative threads of African essentialism, Afro-pessimism and South African exceptionalism to the discussion; and it was to this end that the 2010 FIFA World Cup also became an important moment in which these competing and conflicting ideologies could be further negotiated and discussed in the associated narrative.

3.4.2 Negotiating African Essentialism, Afro-Pessimism and South African Exceptionalism

As a continent, Africa has a decidedly 'dark' history that has largely been defined by colonialism, under-development, poverty and crime (Black, 2007); and it is popular images of

this selective history, largely dispersed through the media, that have tended to reinforce and maintain several suppressive ideologies and stereotypes surrounding the continent. Desai and Vahed (2010) explain that most of the representations of Africa amongst developed states in the modern period are typically constructed within the broader context of African Essentialist and Afro-Pessimistic beliefs.

It was to this end, therefore, that the South African government wedded the country's hosting of the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament to the notion of an improved South Africa, an improved Africa and an improved world, promoted on the back of the widespread employment of a sentimental and ideological posturing of Africa (Corneliessen, 2004). In particular, Desai and Vahed (2010) reported that impressions of Southern Africa were exacerbated, as the parallel utilisation of regional development arguments and discussions of Pan-African regeneration during the competition was employed to promote the idea of South Exceptionalism on the global stage. The extent to which the tournament was perceived to have expelled the suppressive ideologies and stereotypes, however, is still up for debate (cf. Hammett, 2011).

Hammett (2011), for example, reported on representations of South Africa, Africa and the 2010 FIFA World Cup from a UK tourist perspective; exploring how dialogues of an emergent democracy with themes of (neo-) colonialism, African essentialism and Afro-pessimism in the build up to the competition were presented. He reported that popular images of South Africa largely invoked essentialist notions of African primitivism and savagery (Hammett, 2011). In particular, he suggested that such images of South Africa had largely formed through the country's association with certain troubling aspects of the wider 'dark continent' – including crime, safety, development and poverty (Hammett, 2011).

Reporting in a similar context, Berger (2010) argued that the extent to which projections and images of South African exceptionalism would help to position South Africa as a beacon for the rest of the continent, and serve as a means to help dispel Afro-pessimistic beliefs about both the country and the continent, had been heavily romanticised. He did concede, however, that the coverage of the Cup was likely to have countered at least some of the negative stereotypes of South Africa, and possibly even Africa more broadly (Berger, 2010). Yet, he concluded that it was highly likely that such negative beliefs would have simply been replaced by other equally simplistic reductionisms (Berger, 2010).

Reporting from a far less diplomatic perspective, in this regard, Holtzhausen and Fullerton (2015) argued that the prevailing Afro-pessimistic narratives that surround South Africa are largely driven by poor African governance and leadership, which has exacerbated problems of HIV/AIDS, poverty, starvation and civil conflict across the continent. They also argue, that contrary to the exceptionalist belief, South Africa is not perceived as a sovereign state within the continent of Africa, but instead as a reflection of its crippling socio-economic conditions; and, as such, for South Africa to improve its reputation after its hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup, it needs to perceptually separate itself from other African states and actively communicate its competitive advantages within the African continent.

Overall then, conflicting narratives would suggest that the 2010 FIFA World Cup placed South Africa's global image in a fix between Afro-pessimist based essentialism and exceptionalism (Hammett, 2011). For example, Ndlovu (2010) explained that while the Pan-African rhetoric that promoted an 'African' World Cup had set out to tactically diminish impressions of South Africa as an essentialist state, such practices were also observed to simultaneously strengthen discourses of Afro-pessimism and African essentialism, ultimately further undermining the original Pan-African rhetoric. Berger (2010) suggests, in this regard, that between these two clearly conflicting images, it is equally likely that remote audiences could have adopted an active role in moving towards one reading or the other, or to merging the two extremes in an equally simplistic manner.

Further examining the claims and counter claims, in this regard, Maguire (2011), amongst several others, expanded this discussion to examine the more specific drivers of ideological change surrounding the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Finally, it was here, then, that several of the perceived benefits and costs of the 2010 FIFA World Cup were examined and discussed – largely in terms of the positive or negative impressions that they might have generated for the host region.

3.4.3 The Perceived Benefits and Costs of the 2010 FIFA World Cup

Case study reports suggest that both positive and negative narrative themes emerged from South Africa's staging of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Discussion of a cohesive and unified Africa, the claimed legacy outcomes surrounding stadiums, the friendliness of the South African people, widespread economic growth, national everyday flagging, and the heightened status of the nation were just a few of the positive impressions that were projected (Billig, 1995).

First, and perhaps most evidently, discussions surrounding the early stages of the tournament were reported to largely praise the Pan-African feeling of civic pride and common identity, the racial cohesion and the unity of South African society (Hammett, 2011; Smith, 2010). In this regard, Alegi (2008) argued that the objectives of expanding South Africa's global exposure, having a positive influence on tourism flows and inducing national unity had been central to the country's 2010 bid. More specifically, he explained, this largely involved ensuring that South Africa could rally around a common national goal (Alegi, 2008). In particular, Allen *et al.* (2013) identified South Africa's national football team – Bafana Bafana – as forming and important symbol in this regard; whereby several narratives discussed how South Africa had turned from a 'Rainbow' nation to a 'Yellow' nation (the colour of Bafana Bafana's kit) - signalling a critical breakdown in several racial and socio-economical barriers between residents.

Similarly, Allen *et al.* (2013) also linked the widely publicised support of the South African national team to the role of the 2010 FIFA World Cup in promoting patriotism and enhancing the country's image globally. The local branding improvements were also considered important dimensions and legacies of the event, and the image of South African citizens relishing enhanced social cohesion, national pride, and a sense of self-assurance in their capabilities and skills were widely observed (Allen *et al.*, 2013; Knott *et al.*, 2012).

Further permeating the positive narrative surrounding the outcomes of the 2010 FIFA World Cup was the more tangible economic benefits that South Africa observed as a consequence of the event; which Maguire (2011) noted as being particularly prevalent after the competition had ended. In particular, several case studies reported that there was a special focus on the infrastructural and service changes generated by the 2010 FIFA World Cup, which included: airport upgrades; upgraded public transport networks; improved roadways; and the new high-speed 'Gautrain' rail project (Knott *et al.*, 2012; Maguire, 2011; Manzo, 2012). Certainly, Maguire (2011) and Manzo (2012) argued that South Africa's successful staging of the 2010 FIFA World Cup was perceived to have highlighted the robustness of its infrastructure and its business acumen; which Manzo (2012) further suggested was aimed at promoting modernity, enticing international media attention, increasing tourism flows and foreign investment, and broadcasting positive impressions of South Africa to the globe. In this regard, Knott *et al.* (2012) and Allen *et al.* (2013) also made several interesting observations here. In particular, they suggested that the new stadium developments were not only framed as operational legacies

for the country, but also as iconic design landmarks that would enhance the way the country was perceived and understood (Allen *et al.*, 2013; Knott *et al.*, 2012).

Running closely to the image of the tangible economic benefits that South Africa observed as an outcome of the event, then, was also the idea that the 2010 FIFA World Cup could have significant status and branding effects for the nation (Lepp & Gibson, 2011; Maguire, 2011). More specifically, Maguire (2011) argued that a clear change in the event narrative, in this regard, was observed in the late post-tournament phase, where the justification for the event shifted from a focus on economic impact to the more intangible notion of nation-branding. For the most part, the associated case studies covering the event tend to agree that the 2010 FIFA World Cup had a profound influence on South Africa's brand (Allen *et al.*, 2013; Knott *et al.*, 2012, 2013; Lepp & Gibson, 2011). Lepp & Gibson (2011), for example, suggested that the competition led to a widespread increase in perceptions of South Africa as an attractive, modern destination. Similarly, Knott *et al.* (2012) suggested that the event narrative projected images of South Africa as a functional, dynamic country, and a lively urban setting with world class infrastructure. Moreover, Allen *et al.* (2013) suggested that the 2010 FIFA World Cup had placed South Africa on the international map, further supporting the notion that it was the nation's improved infrastructure and facilities that accelerated the development of South Africa's image.

Several scholars also questioned the cost at which South Africa's new image was achieved. This narrative primarily involved the consideration of the 2010 FIFA World Cup's financial cost (Allen *et al.*, 2013; Holtzhausen & Fullerton, 2015); but in several cases it was also observed to extend to the less obvious opportunity costs associated with the competition (Allen *et al.*, 2013; Burawoy & Von Holdt, 2012; Cronjé, van Wyk and Botha, 2010; de Almeida *et al.*, 2015). Allen *et al.* (2013), for example, discussed as to how several of South Africa's long-term developmental goals were sacrificed for the sake of simply enhancing the city's image. Similarly, Burawoy and Von Holdt (2012) noted how local organisers leveraged the spectacle of the competition to mask several underlying issues within South Africa at the time. One issue in particular that regularly surfaced, in this regard, was that of social exclusion. Bolsmann (2012), for example, highlighted that the 2010 FIFA World Cup was accessible only to a small proportion of South Africa's general population, with a large proportion of local residents unable to afford the official merchandise or purchase tickets to watch any matches.

Further extending this narrative, Cronjé *et al.* (2010) even went as far to suggest that the 2010 FIFA World Cup was seen to have reinforced prevailing inequalities in South Africa, as regions that already owned modern facilities received additional funding at the expense of other regions that remained marginalised and underdeveloped. In several of these instances, scholars also regularly observed criticisms as to FIFA's share in the economic benefits of the competition, with multiple reports complaining that FIFA had exploited the 2010 FIFA World Cup for its narrow commercial interests (de Almeida *et al.*, 2015; Maguire, 2011); subsequently leaving its legacy economically uneven and politically fractious (Allen *et al.*, 2013; de Almeida *et al.*, 2015)

In addition to the projected concerns about the social exclusion of many South African residents from the benefits of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, several other negative themes have also been noted by the associated case studies. In particular, attention appeared to focus on the more tangible matters connected to the event, including the cost and opportunity costs of the competition (Allen *et al.* 2013; Holtzhausen & Fullerton, 2015), the legacy issues of stadia as white elephants (Maguire, 2011), economic inflation as a result of the competition (Allen, *et al.*, 2013); crime and safety concerns for South Africa as a tourist destination (Allen, *et al.*, 2013; de Almeida *et al.*, 2015; Hammett, 2011; Knott *et al.*, 2012, 2013), and speculations of a post tournament hangover (Maguire, 2011).

The most predominant negatively threaded themes that were observed here included those relating to crime in South Africa, and the safety of the country as a tourist destination both during and after the 2010 FIFA World Cup (Allen *et al.*, 2013; Knott *et al.*, 2012). In particular, Knott *et al.* (2012) suggested that individual safety and security, as well as crowd control, were the most predominant themes. More specifically, de Almeida *et al.* (2015) and Hammett (2011) suggested that reports surrounding terrorism at the 2010 Africa Cup of Nations competition in Angola, alongside the suspicious death of Eugène Terre' Blanche, would have perpetuated the widespread concerns of safety, security and crime, that surrounded the event. In this regard, it was observed that much of the associated discussion tended to promote several populist narratives of under-development, racially-charged violence, insecurity and brutality as a means of intensifying these rising concerns of a possibly unsafe 2010 FIFA World Cup (de Almeida *et al.*, 2015; Hammett, 2011).

One of the key goals that underpinned the 2010 FIFA World Cup was to address the widespread concerns surrounding crime and violence in South Africa, and the safety of the country. In this

regard, several scholars observed discussions of the security measures that the country had taken to protect fans and teams (Hammett, 2011), including the provision of armed security and the placement of vast military resources across the country (Miller, 2010). Yet, instead of tackling safety and security concerns in this regard, Hammett (2011) suggested that these precautions might have only served to reinforce fears surrounding the competition. Nevertheless, throughout the hosting and immediate post-event phase of the competition, as the 2010 FIFA World Cup unfolded and few incidents were reported, concerns of crime and safety were observed to have been raised much less frequently (Knott *et al.*, 2012).

Finally, before the study proceeds to the execution phase of this exploratory research, first there are several practical and methodological considerations that need to be discussed, which will help further refine and focus the study's research question and objectives. These considerations are unpacked in the following section.

3.5 THE PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS SURROUNDING MEDIA SIGNALLING AT MEGA-SPORTING EVENTS: A LONGITUDINAL FRAMEWORK

It was identified earlier that, to this study's best knowledge, the literature has only ever documented two published empirical analyses that explore the media signalling outcomes of a mega-sporting event (cf. Swart *et al.*, 2012, 2013). Both of these studies, commissioned by the City of Cape Town, examined the signalling impact of the 2010 FIFA World Cup in foreign media markets, with the objective of gauging the likely effect on the country's tourism flows (Swart *et al.*, 2012, 2013). In this regard, both Swart *et al.* (2012) and Swart *et al.* (2013) reported that, overall, the media coverage of the event was favourable (Swart *et al.*, 2012), with the amount of positive impressions increasing from before to after the event (Swart *et al.*, 2012). Swart *et al.* (2012) also noted that the lead-up period, in particular was key for event signalling, especially in terms of addressing expectations; and Swart *et al.* (2013) suggested that the higher level of unfavourable media coverage during this period would likely explain the event's relatively poor attendance figures. In particular, Swart *et al.* (2012) identified safety and security concerns as the primary focus of most unfavourable media coverage; which, whilst was observed to decline significantly during the hosting period of the event, was suggested to likely remain a concern for tourists in the post-event phase.

Whilst the tourism application of media signalling at mega-sporting events is certainly considered as one important component for host destination marketers, the signalling theory discussed earlier in this chapter suggests that the media signalling reach of mega-sporting

events extends far beyond just its tourism applications, in both local and foreign markets (Allen *et al.*, 2013). An important collection of case studies surrounding the hosting decisions of contemporary mega-sporting events also tend to add to the premise of Allen *et al.*'s (2013) argument here; which, although remain limited to the extent in which they can make empirically grounded claims, have been particularly useful in driving a wider academic focus of media signalling at mega-sporting events (Duminy & Luckett, 2012). For example, several of these associated case studies have discussed the status (Billig, 1995; Maguire, 2011), investment (Allen *et al.*, 2013), nation-building (Black, 2007; de Almeida *et al.*, 2015), and travel-based (Hammett, 2011; Knott *et al.*, 2012) applications of media signals at mega-sporting events.

In addition to driving this expanded focus of the literature, these case studies – when analysed in the context of Swart *et al.*'s (2012; 2013) empirical analyses – also highlight several important practical considerations surrounding the study of media signalling at mega-sporting events. Perhaps the most important of which identifies the longitudinal nature of mega-sporting event driven media impressions. The longitudinal nature of mega-sporting events, more generally, has been widely observed and discussed by multiple authors (cf. Chalip, 2006; Gibson *et al.*, 2014; Hiller, 1999); and the idea that any associated impressions will adopt a similar nature makes practical sense here. More specifically, Swart *et al.* (2012; 2013) – based on Hiller's (1998) linkage model – suggest that the media impressions relating to mega-sporting events should be observed over three critical time periods – before, during, and after the event.

First, prior to the hosting of the event itself, Hiller (1999) explains that mega-sporting events are generally preceded by some form of social circumstance which is often reflected as the underlying issue that an event intends to change. In 2000 when it was announced that Germany would play hosts to the 2006 FIFA World Cup, for example, the German government suggested that the primary aim of the event was focused on dispelling the stereotypical 'unfriendly' image of their country (Kim *et al.*, 2015). Similarly, when it was announced that Beijing would play hosts to the 2008 Olympic Games, the Chinese government also suggested that the event was targeted at dissipating several of the negative impressions that Western society held of their country (Gibson, Qi & Zhang, 2008). From a media signalling perspective, therefore, pre-event bidding and lead-up periods can be considered particularly important areas of analysis in this regard, as they are likely to detail the extent to which an event is expected to be both invasive

and transformative in addressing such issues (Black, 2007). Furthermore, Swart *et al.* (2012) – in reference to Li, Hsu and Lawton (2009) theory of social representations and social exchange – also suggested that findings from pre-event analyses are also likely to serve as important reference points for post-event image revisions (Swart *et al.*, 2012).

Next, Hiller (1999) suggested that another critical moment in the production process of mega-sporting events is during the actual hosting period of the event; which, Gibson *et al.*, (2014) claim, is likely to generate the most positive impressions for a host nation. Hiller (1999) explains, in this regard, that the unique impulsive nature of mega-sporting events promotes spectacle, innovation and vision instead of bureaucratic accountability; and, as such, the narrative focus on these events during the hosting period tends to appeal more to the exciting and extraordinary rather than the dreariness and obstinacy of local problems. This means that whilst infrastructure development, tourism revenue and job creation might often form as immediately positive media impressions (Knott *et al.*, 2012); it is likely that several longer-standing issues also relating to the event - such as social exclusion, crime and price inflation, for example - remain underpinned to these projections (Jeong & Faulkner, 1996).

Finally, Hiller (1999) suggests that the third critical moment in the production process of mega-sporting events is during its post-event ‘legacy’ phase. For, as Malfas *et al.* (2004) explain, it is at this point where the overall Impact and legacies of mega-sporting events are typically signalled and experienced - primarily in terms of the short- and long-term changes that the event has imposed both on the normality and underlying social circumstances of the host region. In terms of media associations, in this regard, it is at this point that critical evaluations are likely to be made of the collective outcomes generated throughout the course of the event; and, in accordance with the pre-event expectations, is where the overall state of change will be determined (Swart *et al.*, 2013).

In the context of the abovementioned research, therefore, it is clear that the longitudinal nature of mega-sporting events and their associated media impressions is an important factor to consider when finalising the exploratory scope of this study. In particular, several scholars have warned of the ‘temporal’ nature of mega-sporting events, in this regard; whereby the euphoria and excitement experienced during the hosting of such events has been observed to heavily skew the findings of several associated research papers (cf. Gibson *et al.*, 2014; Kim *et al.*, 2015). As such, it is in consideration of these critical observations, alongside the broader call for an increase in the number of longitudinal studies on mega-sporting events more generally

(cf. Gursoy *et al.*, 2011; Mair & Whitford, 2013), that this study adopted a longitudinal-based research approach to explore this topic in the abovementioned context of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. More specifically, the following objectives were investigated:

1. *To explore how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 2-4 years prior to the event.*
2. *To explore how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 0-2 years prior to the event.*
3. *To explore how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press during the event.*
4. *To explore how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 0-2 years after the event.*
5. *To explore how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 2-4 years after the event.*
6. *To compare how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 2-4 years prior, 0-2 years prior, during, 0-2 years after, and 2-4 years after the event.*

The following chapter outlines how these objectives were measured in this study, but first, a conclusion of the chapter is provided.

3.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter opened with a comprehensive discussion of the media signalling impulse at mega-sport-events, alongside an analysis of the scope of current research occupying the field. The associated theory suggested that, while mega-sport-events have a long tradition of serving as premeditated platforms to promote positive impressions regarding their hosts, the intrinsic link between the media, image-signalling and mega-sport-events is still not well understood. Subsequently, it is to this end that the need for additional research in this field was underlined.

In acknowledgement of this need, the chapter then proceeded to unpack several theoretical and practical considerations that would guide such research. In review of these theoretical and practical considerations, there appeared to be three core areas in which this research field required further exploration. First, the importance of media signalling at mega-sporting events appears to be recognised and valued most by emerging state hosts, especially those that have

integrated mega-sporting events into their strategic growth plans (Nauright, 2004). Second, there appears to be very little empirical research that can confirm the media signalling potential of mega-sporting events – especially beyond their tourism-based applications in foreign media markets (Swart *et al.*, 2013). Third, despite the important insights that it would likely generate for event organisers, media managers and destination marketers, it appears that there is a lack of longitudinal research in this field - not only in the realm of media signalling, but surrounding most components of mega-sporting events (Weed, 2009). It is in this context, therefore, that this study proposed to conduct an empirical-based, longitudinal analysis of the media coverage surrounding South Africa's especially controversial hosting of the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

Extending the discussion one step further from the conclusions set out in this chapter, Chapter IV presents the specific objectives of this study and delineates the steps that this study followed throughout the execution process; describing and mitigating the implicated methods. First, the research question and objectives are revisited. Next the research approach and methodological design is examined. This is followed by a review of the target population and sampling procedure, and a discussion detailing the data collection and preparation methods. Finally, the section concludes with a description of the data analysis approach.

CHAPTER IV: METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The two preceding theory chapters explored the complex relationship between contemporary mega-sporting events and the media. First, Chapter II presented modern society's contemporary understanding of the mega-sporting event concept, and further reviewed the literature surrounding their perceived socio-economic, socio-cultural and physical outcomes. More specifically, it was found that, overall, mega-sport-events do have a significant impact on their host destination; yet, the extent to which this impact was found to benefit the local population remained unclear. It was in this context, then, that the concept of image signalling was introduced, which was presented as one of the less tangible, and therefore often less widely considered rationales behind contemporary mega-sporting event bids. The chapter then concluded by discussing the general need for further empirical research in the field of media signalling, which might be able to substantiate the contested benefits pinned to mega-sporting events in this regard.

Subsequently, moving into Chapter III, the discussion shifted onto the signalling impulse of mega-sporting event media. The associated theory suggested that, while mega-sport-events have a long tradition of serving as premeditated platforms to promote positive impressions regarding their hosts, the intrinsic link between the media, image-signalling and mega-sport-events is still not well understood. Subsequently, it was to this end that the need for additional research in this field was underlined. Next, the assumption of media effects was analysed to qualify the proposed research. Then, several theoretical and practical considerations were discussed surrounding the study of media signalling at mega-sporting events. Finally, the context of the study against the backdrop of the 2010 FIFA World Cup was outlined.

Extending the discussion one step further from the conclusions set out in the previous section, this section presents the specific objectives of this study and delineates the steps that this study followed throughout the execution process; describing and mitigating the implicated methods. First, the research question and objectives are revisited. Next the research approach and methodological design is examined. This is followed by a review of the target population and sampling procedure, and a discussion detailing the data collection and preparation methods. Finally, the section concludes with a description of the data analysis approach, before the findings of the study are presented in Chapter V.

4.2 RESEARCH QUESTION AND OBJECTIVES

The research question of this study aims to fully explore the potential media signalling outcomes of mega-sporting events. As the signalling frames are longitudinal, as different images and narratives are uncovered, this study proposes the following research question, which will guide its focus:

How was the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa framed by the South African National Press over an eight year pre- and post-event period?

The secondary objectives stemming from this research question focus on exploring the potential media signalling outcomes of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. As media impressions are longitudinal in nature (cf. Section 4 in Chapter III), several objectives are established for a better understanding of these impressions at five key time periods:

1. To explore how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 2-4 years prior to the event.
2. To explore how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 0-2 years prior to the event.
3. To explore how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press during the event.
4. To explore how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 0-2 years after the event.
5. To explore how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 2-4 years after the event.

Furthermore, there is little empirical research that tracks the longitudinal change of media impressions (Swart *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, this study adopts the following methods - as laid out in the next section - and proposes the primary objective of this study:

6. To compare how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 2-4 years prior, 0-2 years prior, during, 0-2 years after, and 2-4 years after the event.

In order to explore the proposed research objectives, a relatively new research methodology must be adopted. The intricacies of this methodology will be discussed in the next section.

4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

In general terms, academic research can be classified into either one of two broad categories of methodological approach.

4.3.1 Research Design

Research can either be conclusive or exploratory in nature (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2009; Malhotra, 2010). What distinguishes these two methodological approaches is the different purpose that they offer to the same research topic. Conclusive research, for example, involves testing a set of pre-defined hypotheses, with the intention of further understanding the relationships that exist between a set of constructs (Bradley, 2013). Exploratory research, on the other hand, often forms the foundation of conclusive research papers, with the intention of providing a comprehensive set of insights in to a research topic, from which several hypotheses can later be extracted (Malhotra, 2010).

Whilst it is clear that these two different approaches to academic research tend to serve very different purposes, however, it would be inaccurate to assume that they function entirely independently from one another. In fact, in several situations, these two approaches have been found to be inter-leading. As mentioned above, most often is the case, in this regard, that conclusive research papers are preceded by an extensive set of exploratory research which has previously worked to define the parameters of the research problem. It then becomes the job of conclusive researchers to extract and test a set of definitive hypotheses surrounding these research problems, so that conclusions can be drawn in an attempt to address them (Bradley, 2013). According to Malhotra (2010), however, conclusive research is typically characterised by: i) the hosting of a set of representative samples; ii) the execution of mainly quantitative data analysis; and iii) the formation of a formal and structured research process. It is in this context that this research approach appeared to be highly unsuitable for the purposes of this study.

Instead, this research undertaking adopted an exploratory approach to the associated topic. Malhotra (2010) further explains that this research approach is more suitable when: i) the proposed conclusions are loosely defined; ii) little knowledge is documented with respect to the research problem; iii) the process of analysis is expected to be predominantly qualitative in nature; and/or iv) the proposed sample is small and not fully representative. This is predominantly the case for this study, with little documented knowledge existing for the

proposed research problem, and much of the targeted data expected to be qualitative in nature. Several researchers have criticised the findings of exploratory research for being ‘tentative’ and ‘proposed without statistical certainty’ (Bradley, 2013). The academic community at large, however, tend to support this format of exploratory research, recognising the fundamental role that it holds in defining the parameters of all early developing academic research fields (Malhotra, 2010).

4.3.2 Longitudinal Data Collection Method

In addition to defining the methodological approach of this study according to its purpose, it is also important to discuss the spatial outlook of the study. In this regard, exploratory research can either be conducted using a cross-sectional or longitudinal research design (Malhotra, 2010). Cross-sectional research designs typically compare a collection of subjects that have been observed within a single time period (Weiten, 2007). This ‘snapshot’ -type of approach is particularly popular within the associated literature, due to the limited logistical and financial resources that it demands. However, in the context of this research, the timing of the data collection has been identified as a particularly important consideration, due to the temporal effects typically associated with mega-sporting events (see for example: Gibson *et al.*, 2014). In fact, several research papers have indicated the potential effects that event-related euphoria can have on the outcome of research conducted during a mega-sporting event; and, as such, there have been multiple calls for an increase in the number of longitudinal studies which can properly account for these effects (Gibson *et al.*, 2014; Gursoy *et al.*, 2011; Mair & Whitford, 2013).

In response, this study approached the research problem with a longitudinal research design, measuring several fixed data sources over several variable time periods (Weiten, 2007). More specifically, data was collected during five different intervals over an eight-year time period. The data collection schedule for the study can be seen in Table 2, illustrated below:

Table 2: Data Collection Schedule

Collection Number	Time Period
1	2-4 years prior to the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament
2	0-2 years prior to the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament
3	During the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament
4	0-2 years after the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament
5	2-4 years after the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament

Temporal effects have been observed up to a maximum of three months before, and 8 months after an event (Gibson *et al.*, 2014). As illustrated in this collection schedule, the longitudinal design of this study far exceeded these parameters, ensuring that temporal effects were adequately accounted for. Furthermore, this research design has also been used in several other academic papers measuring a comparable scope of sample data (Swart *et al.*, 2012;2013), further attesting to its credibility. The most salient advantage of adopting a longitudinal research approach for the purposes of this research is the ability that it offers to i) track changes at an individual level; and ii) subsequently ascribe those changes to a specific independent variable, namely the 2010 FIFA World Cup (Malhotra, 2010).

In order to execute the abovementioned research design and methodology effectively, several sampling and data collection considerations had to be taken into account. Ensuring that the sample of a study is truly representative of its target population is critical to certifying the generalisability of that study's research findings. In particular, several concerns are often raised as to the suitability of selected samples, especially in the case of qualitative research that employs complex measurement tools. In fact, the failure to address these concerns can have a devastating effect on the quality and reliability of a study's research findings (Bradley, 2013). That being the case, several careful design considerations were identified for the sampling approach of this study; these will be discussed in the section to follow.

4.4 TARGET POPULATION AND SAMPLING APPROACH

Theoretically, the most representative method of sampling for any research paper is a census (Macnamara, 2006); whereby all members of a population are measured in order to match an exact set of population parameters (free from any measurement or sampling error). Practically, however, this sampling method is completely impractical, as it requires close to perfect conditions to achieve, including unrestricted time and budget constraints (Macnamara, 2006). In response, researchers are often forced to adopt alternative approaches to research sampling. This typically involves analysing a representative sample of elements from the target population. Projections made from a set of sample statistics to a set of approximated population parameters, however, is highly dependent on the representative accuracy of that sample. This section discusses the sampling technique that was adopted by this study; which includes a description of the proposed target population, along with a detailed summary outlining the considerations taken in determining the final sample.

4.4.1 Target Population

The target population of a study is generally considered to be the collection of subjects or elements that retain the exact information required for the research (Bradley, 2013). Ultimately, then, it is on to this collection of subjects that the conclusions of the study are projected, as part of the final stage of this research process. In the context of this study, the target population for this study was identified as: all of the off-field newspaper coverage of the 2010 FIFA World Cup published within the eight-year period extending between 11 June 2006 and 11 July 2014. Due to the impractical nature of conducting a census, this study extracted a representative sample of this target population (Macnamara, 2006). The procedure that was adopted in order to arrive at this final sample is discussed next.

4.4.2 Sampling Procedure

In general, the selection of sampling techniques recognised by the academic community can be categorised into two distinct groups, namely probability and non-probability sampling techniques. The sampling procedure adopted by a study will largely determine the extent to which the findings of that study can be projected on to the broader target population (Malhotra, 2010). Typically, probability sampling is preferred when prioritising the representative accuracy of a sample. Researchers also generally tend to prefer engaging in probability sampling as it tends to issue the researcher with a greater authority to draw statistical inferences from his/her findings. Whilst inferable statistics are always preferred, however, probability

sampling is rarely found to be well-suited to exploratory based research, especially that which is longitudinal and qualitative in nature. Instead, this format of research is much better suited to the adoption of a non-probability sampling technique (Bradley, 2013). In order to place this argument in context, the processes related to probability and non-probability sampling will be discussed next.

Probability sampling involves the complete random selection of subjects from the target population, using probabilistic methods, to form a study sample. To be administered correctly, this means that every subject situated within the target population must have a fixed and equally probable chance of selection (Malhotra, 2010). In general, the literature lists several theoretical and practical advantages of using probability sampling, these include: i) it minimises sampling bias; ii) it maximises the representative accuracy of the study sample; and iii) it supports the provision of statistical inference (Bradley, 2013). Examples of probability sampling techniques include: cluster sampling, stratified sampling and simple random sampling (Hair, 2013).

Non-probability sampling, on the other hand, relies on the subjective judgement of the researcher (instead of probability) to select subjects from the target population. For researchers executing quantitative research, non-probability sampling is often considered a lesser substitute for probability sampling, as it restricts the capacity of the research to report any major statistical inferences. The objective of qualitative research, however, is often vastly different to that of a more quantitatively driven study; whereby the desire to make statistical inferences from the findings of a qualitative study is often more of a secondary consideration. In fact, for researchers following a qualitative research design, there are several strong theoretical and practical reasons for employing a non-probability sampling technique, whereby preference is shown to the selection of a sample based on theory (suggestions made by the literature) and academic practice (knowledge of the researcher). In particular, non-probability sampling is largely favoured in this regard for use in exploratory based research (Bradley, 2013).

As indicated above, based on the suitability of non-probability sampling to this format of exploratory and qualitative research, this study employed heterogeneous sampling with quota controls, as seen in the comparative literature (Swart *et al.*, 2012, 2013). Heterogeneous sampling is a judgement based, purposive sampling technique, which relies on the judgement of the researcher to locate and extract a fully encompassing range of perspectives relating to the subject of the study (Malhotra, 2010). In this context, heterogeneous sampling proposes to

extract a wide variation of perspectives from the population data, including those that range from the more typical, through to those that are considered more extreme in nature.

Furthermore, to ensure that the composition of the study sample most accurately represents that of the target population, several quota controls were established with respect to publication source and approximate article length. Whilst this does not provide any strong assurance as to the representative accuracy of the sample, such quota controls, under specific conditions, have been shown to generate samples very similar to that of conventional probability sampling (Malhotra, 2010).

Lastly, it should be noted that the sampling frame of this study was provided by SA Media (Via Sabinet Publications), a South African web-based local newspaper database to which the University of Cape Town holds a full subscription. The final considerations surrounding the sampling procedures for this study involved establishing an appropriate sample size for the selected research design. These considerations will be outlined next.

4.4.3 Sample Size

Determining the appropriate number of subjects to be included in a study sample is often a highly complex process, typically involving several quantitative and qualitative considerations. A non-exhaustive list of these considerations may include: i) normality and communality; ii) the action of comparative literature; and iii) the intricacy of the research design (Malhotra, 2010). The most pertinent considerations for the sample size of this study revolved around the longitudinal nature of the research, which imposed certain logistical restrictions.

Taking these considerations into account, this research targeted a final sample size of $n=1000$. More specifically, the research targeted a final sample size of $n=1000$. Between 175-225 articles per allocated time period were extracted from the sampling frame, all of which were distributed as evenly as possible across all selected source publications. This sample size is similar to that exercised in Swart *et al.* (2012) and Swart *et al.* (2013), where it was demonstrated to be significantly large enough to maximise objectivity, validity, reliability and generalisability. Articles were extracted until a suitable article resource base was achieved for each time period and each publication (Swart *et al.*, 2012). This approach to content sourcing ensured that variation across time periods could be ascribed to adjustments in content instead of disparity in editorial origin (Swart *et al.*, 2012).

With the size of the final sample established, the next section will detail the data collection and preparation procedures followed to construct this sample.

4.5 DATA COLLECTION AND PREPARATION

According to Newbold *et al* (2002), the data collection and preparation stage of a text-based content analysis study typically involves two clear steps: i) content sourcing – that is the identification of appropriate media forms, genres and dates of issue; and ii) content identification – that is the extraction of relevant content from those sources. The processes and procedures involved in each of these steps are outlined next, and specific details are provided as to how these procedures and processes were applied in the context of this study.

4.5.1 Content Sourcing

The sampling frame for this study listed eight South African newspaper sources, all of which published local off-field coverage of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. For the purposes of this study, content was extracted from only four of these eight newspapers. These four newspapers were selected based on the fact that they reported the highest readership and circulation numbers for the pre-defined observation period. This resulted in the extraction of articles from the following four sources: The Star, The Business Day, The City Press and The Mail & Guardian. As a concern, downloading articles from online media databases has been criticised as a method of content sourcing in previous research, as online editions of news articles have been found to omit portions of the content broadcasted in the original print document (Macnamara, 2006). In response, the SA Media database was selected as a sampling frame for this study as it only archives scanned copies of the original print articles. This limited the risk of any content published in the original newspaper print being omitted from the analysis stage of this study.

Furthermore, the analysis was restricted to mainstream print media (archived media articles of selected national newspapers that document the highest levels of daily readership and circulation) in order to produce comparable findings (Swart *et al.*, 2013). Newspaper articles, in particular, were selected as the primary focus of this study for two reasons. Firstly, newspaper media generally offers readers more control over their consumption of the news, allowing them to review reports in different orders and at different times (Soroka, 2002); and secondly, print media, compared to radio or television media, is widely accredited as a source of more reliable information (Glynn *et al.*, 1999).

Once the criterion for the selection of the relevant source publications was established, procedures for the extraction of appropriate content from these sources had to be determined. These procedures are outlined next.

4.5.2 Content Identification and Extraction

Once the selection of the appropriate set of source publications had been finalised, a list of relevant articles was identified and extracted in sets according to both their publication source and their associated time period. All articles were extracted from the sampling frame in a portable document format (pdf), and were converted into a text document using an optical character recognition program. The search and extraction process was documented in a spreadsheet which detailed the article's publication date, headline and content, as well as any related content variables (i.e. search term, access mode, category, search period, classification, article source) and audit variables (i.e. date of extraction, content limitations, extractor name, extractor comments) (Macnamara, 2006). The documentation of data in this format is designed to allow the researcher to manually test the integrity of the process, check for any duplicate captures, and identify the variables to be used as content parameters during the content examination process (Swart *et al.*, 2012). Neuendorf (2002) notes that this exercise is particularly important, as the variables that are identified generally tend to emerge as mediators of the content elements.

The greatest challenge that this study faced in terms of extracting relevant content in this regard was in the process of filtering out articles that reported only on-field coverage of the event (i.e. match reports, scores, player statistics, etc.). In order to assist with this process, the selection of relevant content from each of the publication sources was identified by a full-text author-specified keyword search (Crofts & Bisman, 2010). The scope of keyword search terms used to identify the relevant content was identified through a set of pre-extraction exploratory searches conducted by the researcher. This involved the researcher scanning multiple sources of information (e.g. 2010 FIFA World Cup planning documentation, associated journal articles and relevant scaling and measurement tools), which documented the material most frequently referenced in the off-field coverage of mega-sporting-events (Neuendorf, 2002). In order to account for inter-coder reliability, in this regard, the associated source documents were analysed by multiple authors, and an exhaustive list of appropriate search terms were collated according to the combined findings of both researchers (Macnamara, 2006).

Lastly, before the final sample was extracted, the abovementioned collection procedures were pretested, along with the suitability of the measurement instrument, in a pilot study. This pre-test forms a third additional step in the data collection and preparation section of this study, the details of which are discussed next.

4.6 PILOT STUDY

In addition to its pre-extraction exploratory work, this study also ran a pilot study to ensure that the specified search terms retrieved during the content identification process would produce the relevant content for analysis (Neuendorf, 2002). The pilot study analysed a portion of the sourced content in order to confirm the sufficiency of: i) the problem definition; and ii) the necessary process to acquire the essential information (Malthotra, 2010). This pre-test approach also allowed the researcher to observe a portion of the sourced content and adjust the search terms accordingly to ensure: i) the capturing of any missing content; and ii) the elimination of any reoccurring themes that could potentially bias the findings of the study (Malthotra, 2010). Furthermore, despite conducting a preliminary analysis of the 2010 FIFA World Cup Planning and Review documentation (See Appendix A), in order to identify the strategic imperatives that were positioned to underpin the event, the researcher chose to derive the content themes and sentiments through the analytical process. This was done to avoid biasing the analytical process by narrowing the collection of the content too hastily (Swart *et al.*, 2012, 2013).

Following the successful outcome of this pilot study, several adjustments were made and the final sample was collected. The final stage of the methodology involved data analysis. Before the analysis of the final sample data was conducted, however, there were several considerations that needed to be discussed in terms of the measurement procedures followed by this study. These considerations are detailed next.

4.7 DATA ANALYSIS

This section first looks at the software used, and thereafter the different analyses performed.

4.7.1 Software for Analysis: Leximancer

Leximancer - an Australian, web-based concept detection and data mining tool - is the primary measurement instrument employed by this study. Leximancer functions according to Bayesian theory (Reyneke, 2011), whereby it constructs a conceptual map that visually indicates the strength and direction of the relationships that exist between the different themes and concepts

that lie within a data set (Crofts & Bisman, 2010). The web-based software suggests clusters of meaning by analysing the habitual proximity of terms according to word-incidence information, such as frequencies, locations and co-occurrence of verbs and nouns within the text (Kamimaeda *et al.*, 2007; Young & Denize, 2008). In this context, the core features of the Leximancer software directly address the objectives of this study, in that: i) it facilitates an exploration for context and objective-reliant models of meaning in text documents; and ii) it offers an indication as to if and how these meanings shift over time (Crofts & Bisman, 2010). Furthermore, the automatic selection of these concepts and themes has been judged to accurately represent expert human intelligence (Reyneke, 2011; Rooney, 2005; Stockwell *et al.*, 2009).

Moreover, using Leximancer for relational text-based analysis, as opposed to alternative manual methods or other Computer Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS), presents several benefits (Crofts & Bisman, 2010). These include: i) an increased engagement with the research objectives; ii) a reduction in ‘stemming’ bias; iii) an ability to process all formats of text; and iii) an ability to process large threads of data (Botha & Reyneke, 2013; Crofts & Bisman, 2010). In addition, Leximancer has also been commended for its ability to avoid the typical coding pathologies associated with many of the other CAQDAS programs that are available - most of which require priori data scheming. Leximancer builds concepts instead of counting words, conjunctions and pronouns, all of which are words that hold low semantic value (Botha, 2014). In this context, then, the use of Leximancer as a measurement instrument dramatically improved both the replicability and transparency of this study (Crofts & Bisman, 2010).

For many years, Leximancer has been commended for its simplicity and effectiveness; however, there are still several guidelines that must be reviewed to ensure the accurate interpretation of its outputs. For example, for each time period, Leximancer generates a unique conceptual text map which plots sample data according to the highest ranked concepts and themes observed within the associated text. The key constitutive concepts observed within the text are represented by small grey dots, several of which are enclosed by key associated themes, illustrated by the large coloured circles (Reyneke, 2011; Stockwell *et al.*, 2009).

In order to discover these key themes and concepts within the text data, Leximancer runs both relational (semantic) and conceptual (thematic) analyses (Reyneke, 2011). The software then presents these key themes and concepts in a unique conceptual text map, as noted above, in

order to: i) indicate the interrelationships that exist between the concepts and themes; and ii) indicate their relative significance within the data set. In general, the more concepts that are enclosed within a theme, the more important that theme tends to be. Furthermore, for additional convenience Leximancer also applies heat mapping to indicate the varying levels of significance amongst the listed themes. In this context, the warmer colours (i.e. red, yellow and orange) are an indication as to the most important themes, and the cooler colours (i.e. blue, purple and green) are an indication of the less important themes. Furthermore, if concepts in the map are found to overlap, or appear particularly close together, they will also be found close together in the original text, with semantic links being illustrated on the map by relative distance.

In addition to the visual indications outlined above, Leximancer also generates a set of quantitative findings in support of the illustrated model. First, for example, Leximancer presents a 'Thematic Summary' for each conceptual text map, which indicates a connectivity score for each theme as a measure of its relative importance. This score is calculated by cross-referencing the level of connectivity for each concept within each associated theme, whereby the most important theme is ranked at 100%. Furthermore, Leximancer also presents a 'Ranked Concept List' for each conceptual text map. This list designates a relevance score for each concept; this serves as an indication as to the frequency percentage rate of text segments that are associated with that concept, relative to the rate of recurrence for the most frequent concept in the list. Simply put, this is a measure of the comparative strength of a concept's rate of recurrence (Leximancer, 2015). Lastly, Leximancer also presents a set of quantitative findings that further detail the relationships between a specific pair of identified concepts. In this regard, Leximancer displays a Likelihood score, which indicates as to the percentage of text segments inclusive of one concept that also contain the other concept. This measurement supports the more trivial 'count' statistic, also presented by Leximancer, to present both directions of conditional probability (Leximancer, 2015).

4.7.2 Analysis Performed

The analysis of the sample data for this study was performed in two parts. Firstly, descriptive statistics were drawn, shortly before a set of inferential statistics were also observed. The descriptive statistics were drawn to assess the representative accuracy of the final realised sample in terms of the abovementioned target population. Following this, several statistics were extracted to provide further insights into the research problem. Each step of this data analysis

process is discussed in further detail next, before a specific report on the actual outcomes are presented in the forthcoming chapter.

4.7.2.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics are typically presented as a summary, detailing the composition of the final realised sample collected during the execution stage of a research project (Bradley, 2013). Descriptive statistics for this study were presented in two sections. First, the final sample was assessed with respect to the relative frequency of sample elements that were extracted during each time period and from each sample source. Second, the sample was further assessed with respect to the relative count of ranked concepts extracted during each time period and from each sample source. These two measures were designed to confirm that any variations observed between time periods could be ascribed to adjustments in content, instead of disparity in editorial origin or article length (Swart *et al.*, 2012).

4.7.2.2 Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis

The debate as to the quantitative and/or qualitative nature of content analysis research has sustained the marketing research agenda for several years now, with each side presenting several compelling points on the matter. Some commentators (see for example: Harwood and Garry, 2003) argue that the frequency counts and rankings produced during a content analysis are ‘soft’ forms of quantitative research. While this argument can, in many ways, be justified to the extent that specific words and attributes of text are counted; frequencies are, nevertheless, often a critical indication as to the relative importance of elements within the text (Breton and Cote, 2006). The strictly qualitative nature of textual content analysis has also been questioned by several researchers; yet, it has been adopted by several hundred studies found in the marketing literature alone (cf: Botha, 2014; Swart *et al.*, 2012, 2013). In fact, both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis have received criticism for their approach when conducted in isolation.

In response to this deliberation, this study chose to conduct a number of both quantitative and qualitative analyses on the final sample set. In this context, this study proposed to adopt a dual measurement approach to the analysis of the final data set, as recommended by Hansen, Cottle, Negrine and Newbold (1998) and Shoemaker and Reese (2011). The primary advantage of adopting a dual approach to the measurement of the findings of this study is that it would allow the researcher to analyse both the manifest and latent content. This means more accurately

interpreting the meaning of the proposed quantitatively connected conceptual links (Macnamara, 2006). Qualitative research “focuses on meanings and the interpretation of text” (Sarantakos, 2005: 299); whereby “knowing the context of words, behaviours, and artefacts can be considered practically everything for determining meaning” (Brady, 2005: 982). Before the qualitative portion of this analysis is outlined in conclusion to this chapter, however, first the quantitative portion of this analysis will be discussed.

Quantitative Analysis

For the purposes of quantitative analysis, the final sample data was coded and tagged, and presented in a ‘word cloud’ according to an unstructured frequency count. This process illustrated the breadth of conversational themes found within the observed newspaper coverage, which were associated with the prescribed search criteria (Swart *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, Leximancer also applied a sentiment lens over the article content, which classified the favourability of the references made within each conceptual group. In this regard, the total count of favourable and unfavourable references gave an indication as to the sentiment of the associated media impression observed at different points across the eight-year collection period.

The issue with limiting exploratory research of this nature solely to quantitative analyses, however, is the degree to which quantitative indicators are often misinterpreted as an indication for the strength of meaning within text data (Newbold *et al.*, 2002). When, in fact, quantitative research is largely known for its inability to capture the context within which a text article might become meaningful (Newbold *et al.*, 2002). It is for this reason that this study also conducted several qualitative analyses of the final sample data, the steps of which are detailed next.

Qualitative Analysis

In general, there is a distinct lack of explicit guidelines for the execution of qualitative media content analysis (Macnamara, 2006). Advocates for this research methodology, however, often propose that research procedures for this format of investigation can be drawn from the work of Denzin and Lincoln (2011); Hijmans (1996); Mayring (2000; 2003); Patton (1990; 2002); Robson (1993); and Silverman (2011); which will assist in structuring a study that projects a high practical degree of validity and reliability. In this context, Leximancer was used in this study to i) organise the concepts and themes present in the sourced content into a cognitive

map (Smith, 2007); ii) run spatial and semantic analyses to identify significant semantic networks (Smith, 2003); and iii) identify clusters and information configurations of key themes and concepts relating to the off-field coverage of the 2010 FIFA World Cup (Crofts & Bisman, 2010).

Whilst much of the analytical process was completed by the Leximancer software, a number of manual interventions were also required, which is where the qualitative portion of this analysis emerges (Crofts & Bisman, 2010). This intervention prevailed most predominantly in the final interpretation phase of the research process, whereby the researcher analysed the relational quantitative links proposed by the Leximancer software in context of the original sample data (Crofts & Bisman, 2010). This enabled the researcher to further investigate and interpret the meaning of these quantitative links, whilst consciously accounting for the polysemic nature of text data. The advantages of adopting a dual (automated and manual) approach to content analysis in this regard, is that: i) it maximises the analytical accuracy and reliability of the findings; ii) it restricts the effects of ‘homography’ – an issue associated more fully automated approaches to content analysis (cf. Crofts & Bisman, 2010); and iii) it facilitates the extraction of more meaningful interpretations from the final dataset (Neuendorf, 2002).

4.8 CONCLUSION

To offer further context to the objectives set out in previous chapters, this chapter delineated the steps that this study followed throughout the execution process; describing and mitigating the implicated methods. First, the research purpose, approach, and design methodology was examined. Here it was identified that the study was constructed on an exploratory research design, whereby Leximancer - a concept detection and data mining tool - was employed to display a longitudinal outlook on the sample data. Next, review of the sampling procedure was conducted, and a discussion detailing the data collection and preparation methods was presented. Here it was identified that a non-probability, heterogeneous sampling technique with quota controls was best suited for the purposes of this study. Furthermore, three clear steps were identified for the data collection and preparation phase of this study, namely: i) Content Sourcing; ii) Content Identification and Extraction; and iii) Pre-test Pilot Study. Finally, the chapter concluded with a brief description of the measurement procedures pursued by this study, followed by a more detailed discussion outlining the associated data analysis techniques. More specifically, it was noted that the study had drawn both descriptive statistics

(predominantly in a quantitative format) and inferential statistics (primarily in a qualitative format) from its findings; which, collectively, would form the foundation of the ensuing findings chapter.

Following the execution of the study, as mapped out above, a set of findings were presented for interpretation. The next chapter conducts a comprehensive analysis of these findings, highlighting the key themes and constructs present in the sample data during each time period.

CHAPTER V: FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter detailed the methodology of this study; describing and mitigating, in detail, the implicated methods and procedures involved. This included a comprehensive examination of the proposed research design, sampling techniques and data analysis procedures. More specifically, it was the process of media content analysis that was identified as the most appropriate approach towards addressing the proposed problem statement and associated objectives of this study. Furthermore, the Leximancer text-analysis software (www.leximancer.com) was identified as the primary research tool, commissioned to provide critical analytical support for the analysis.

In this chapter, the focus is on presenting the empirical findings of this study. First, a summary of the descriptive statistics related to the data will be presented. This will be followed by a detailed description of the qualitative findings of the study, specifically in relation to each of its secondary objectives. This will provide a detailed account of the local media narrative for each identified time period. Finally, this chapter will conclude by addressing the primary objective of this study; presenting the qualitative findings – along with several supporting quantitative observations – that analyse the change in the media narrative over all associated time periods.

5.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

To assess the appropriateness of the sample drawn from the target population, this section presents and discusses the various descriptive statistics in relation to the final data set. In particular, this calls for an analysis of the spread and distribution of collected source articles across all of the associated time periods and newspaper sources. This information is presented in Table 3, illustrated below.

Table 3: Number of collected articles per time period and newspaper source

	The Mail & Guardian	The City Press	The Times	The Star	Total
2-4 Years Before	51	56	53	50	210
0-2 Years Before	70	68	45	51	234
During	49	52	65	65	231
0-2 Years After	45	63	52	43	203
2-4 Years After	47	44	47	56	194
Total	262	283	262	265	1072

In general, Table 3 illustrates that the collected source articles are distributed relatively evenly and consistently across all time periods and all newspaper sources. In total, 1072 articles were extracted from the SA Media Database. In terms of the distribution of sourced articles across time periods, 19.6% were published 2-4 years before the event, 21.8% were published 0-2 years before the event, 21.5% were published during the event, 18.9% were published 0-2 years after the event, and 18.1% were published 2-4 years after the event. These statistics appear to remain consistent with comparative sample populations reported in the corresponding literature (Swart *et al.*, 2012; 2013), and illustrates a relatively even distribution across all time periods. As expected, slightly more articles were collected during the lead-up (0-2 years before) and hosting (During) periods, as a significantly greater amount of content was published on the subject during these times. It was concluded, however, that these small discrepancies would have a negligible effect on the findings of the study.

In terms of the distribution of sourced articles across newspaper sources, 24.4% were published in The Mail & Guardian, 26.4% were published in The City Press, 24.4% were published in The Times, and 24.7% were published in The Star. These statistics also appear to remain consistent with the comparative sample populations reported in the corresponding literature (Swart *et al.*, 2012; 2013); illustrating a relatively even distribution of articles across all newspaper sources. Obtaining an even distribution in this regard was particularly important, as it ensures that variation across time periods can be ascribed to adjustments in content, instead of disparity in editorial origin (Swart *et al.*, 2012).

In addition to analysing the distribution of sourced articles across different time periods and newspaper sources, it is also important to examine the total concept count across these variables. This is to evaluate any potential influence that the length of the observed articles might have on the findings. The associated information is presented in Table 4, illustrated below.

Table 4: Total concept count per time period and newspaper source

	The Mail & Guardian	The City Press	The Times	The Star	Total
2-4 Years Before	2333	2538	2195	2351	9417
0-2 Years Before	3879	4058	3778	4147	15862
During	3371	3729	3412	3634	14146
0-2 Years After	2351	2702	2523	2540	10116
2-4 Years After	2042	2282	2073	2153	8551
Total	13976	15309	13981	14825	58092

Overall, Table 4 illustrates that the number of ranked concepts in the collected source articles are distributed relatively evenly and consistently across all time periods and all newspaper sources. In total, 58092 concepts were identified within the source articles. In terms of the distribution of ranked concepts across newspaper sources, 24.1% were published in The Mail & Guardian, 24.1% were published in The City Press, 24.1% were published in The Times, and 25.5% were published in The Star. This means that, in general, the observed length of each sourced article was relatively consistent across all newspaper sources, subsequently limiting the potential for any editorial bias within the findings of the study.

In terms of the distribution of ranked concepts across time periods, 16.2% were published 2-4 years before the event, 27.3% were published 0-2 years before the event, 24.4% were published during the event, 17.4% were published 0-2 years after the event, and 14.7% were published 2-4 years after the event. Therefore, as expected, a relatively greater number of concepts were identified in the collection of articles published in the lead-up (0-2 years before) and hosting (During) periods. This can be explained primarily due to the greater number of articles that were collected during these time periods, as discussed above. Furthermore, it was observed that the articles during these time periods were, in general, slightly longer in length due to the prevalence of the subject at these times. As a result, the number of both favourable and unfavourable mentions for each of these time periods is expected to be slightly inflated in equal proportions. The analyses concerning the sentiment of the observed articles will be presented in the sections to follow.

Given the descriptive statistics presented above, it can be concluded that the sample of articles extracted from the SA Media database is correctly aligned with the overarching target population. Furthermore, given that the selected newspaper sources hold the greatest readership and circulation figures across the country, it can be further concluded that this sample is suitable to report on the nation-branding context of this research. These conclusions are constructed on the fact that the collected source articles, and the number of ranked concepts in these articles, are distributed evenly and consistently across all time periods and all newspaper sources.

5.3 FINDINGS WITH REGARD TO THE SECONDARY OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In order to address the research question presented by this study, five secondary objectives and one primary research objective was identified and forwarded to guide the research process. First, the secondary objectives will be addressed, which presented the following tasks:

1. To explore how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 2-4 years before the event.
2. To explore how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 0-2 years prior to the event.
3. To explore how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press during the event.
4. To explore how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 0-2 years after the event.
5. To explore how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 2-4 years after the event.

This section addresses each of the abovementioned objectives by simultaneously isolating and analysing the associated source articles according to the specified time periods within which they were published. For each objective, a conceptual text map extracted from Leximancer will be presented, which plots this media narrative according to the highest ranked concepts and themes observed within the articles' text. The key themes observed within the text are represented by several large coloured circles, each of which encloses several constitutive concepts – illustrated as smaller grey dots (Reyneke, 2011; Stockwell *et al.*, 2009). In general, the more concepts that are enclosed within a theme, the more important that this theme tends to be.

Furthermore, whilst the size of a theme does not necessarily offer a good indication as to the importance of that theme, it does offer an indication as to the breadth of its scope. Instead, in order to indicate the varying levels of significance amongst the listed themes, Leximancer applies heat mapping, whereby the warmer colours (i.e. red, yellow and orange) are an indication as to the most important themes, and the cooler colours (i.e. blue, purple and green) are an indication of the less important themes. In general, the closer that a concept appears to another on the map, the greater the chance that these concepts will feature more closely together in the associated articles. Finally, for ease of reference, in each of the following sections the

themes extracted from the associated Leximancer maps have been italicised, the ranked concepts have been enclosed within a set of quotation marks, and full quotations extracted from the original source text have been coloured grey.

5.3.1 Objective 1: Evaluation of the Media Narrative 2-4 Years Prior to the Event

First, in order to explore the media narrative surrounding the initial preparation and lead-up stages of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, this section analyses the collection of sourced articles published 2-4 years prior to the event. Figure 2, illustrated below, maps the 100 highest ranking concepts observed within the media dialogue during this time period, and segments these concepts into 9 major themes.

Figure 2: Leximancer cognitive map of local media coverage 2-4 years prior to the event

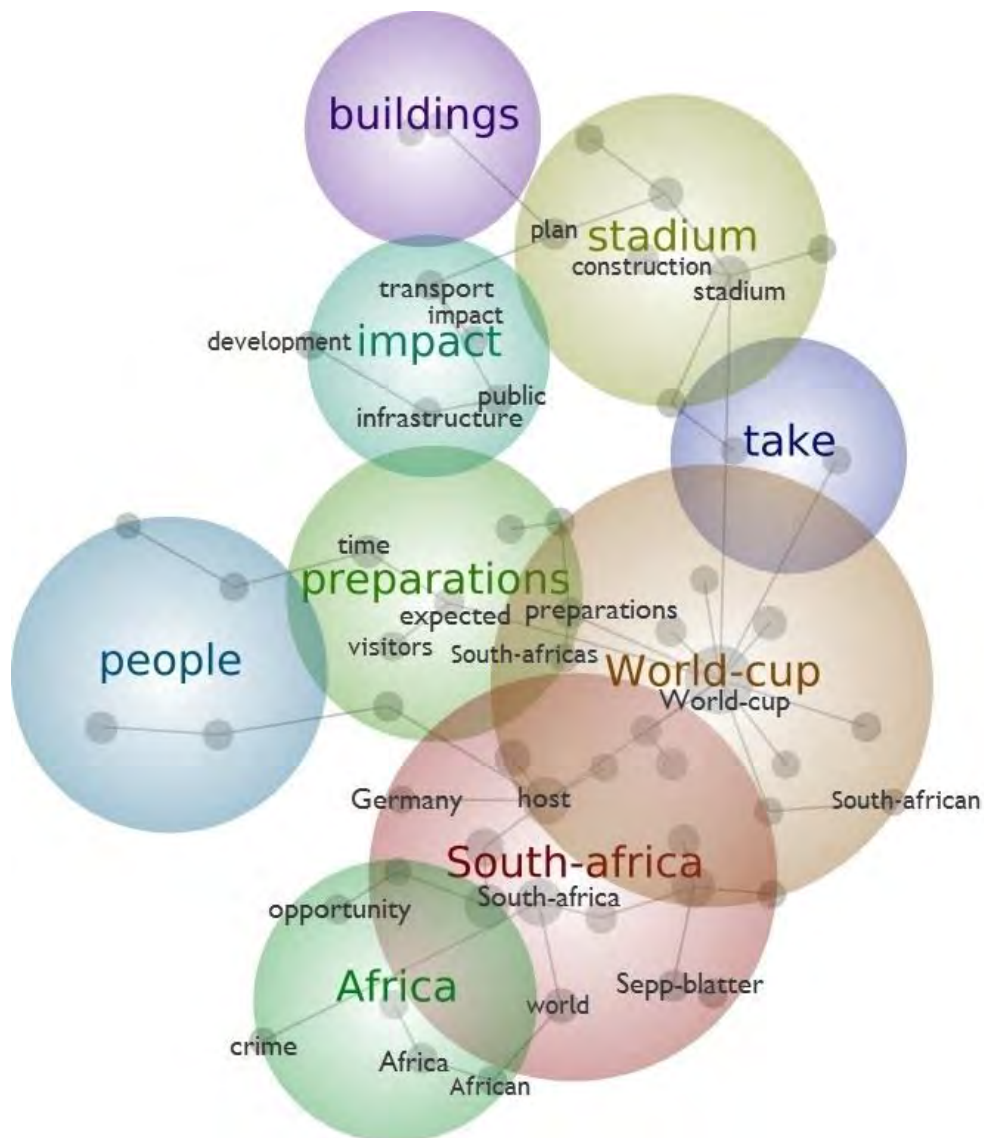


Figure 2 plots the media narrative captured by a total of 210 articles collected during the initial preparation and lead-up (2-4 years before) stage of the event. The major themes that emerged from the associated content include: *South Africa* (100% connectivity to the remaining themes); *World Cup* (67%); *Stadium* (35%); *Preparations* (23%); *Africa* (18%); *Public* (16%); and *People* (14%). More specifically, these themes converged around the following narrative threads.

The *South Africa* and *World Cup* themes proved to be central to the media coverage that was observed during this time period, as evidenced by their large size, their relative centrality and their warm colour. In particular, this narrative focused on the progress of “South Africa’s” *preparations* for the “hosting” of the 2010 “FIFA” *World Cup*. In this context, several conflicting discussions debated as to whether these *preparations* were “expected” to be ready in “time” for the start of the event. Examples as to the variety of media dialogue that expressed these views have been identified below:

“

“Concerns are mounting about South-Africa fulfilling its hosting obligations after this week’s announcement that the Port-Elizabeth stadium was unlikely to be completed in time”

- vs. -

“South Africa dismissed concerns it had fallen behind in 2010 World Cup preparations, saying it had made headway in modernising stadiums and making the streets safe for visitors.”

”

Underpinning this discussion was two conflicting perspectives that debated both the competency of *South Africa*, and the sensibility of its decision to “host” the 2010 “FIFA” *World Cup*. On the one hand, several discussions emerged highlighting the potential *Impact* and “opportunities” that the *World Cup* would hold for the country. One article, in particular, offered a useful summary of this discussion:

“

“Preparations for the World Cup are expected to provide a much needed opportunity for South Africa to improve its road, housing, electricity and telecommunications infrastructure and push the economy to a higher notch... We believe that hosting the World Cup also offers us an excellent opportunity to banish Afropessimism”.

”

The comment above highlights several favourable points frequently documented in the broader scope of literature, which projected a strong sense of belief in *South Africa* and its decision to host the *World Cup*. Key concepts reflecting these sentiments formed the foundation of several discussions debating i) the national benefit surrounding the “development” of “infrastructure” and “public transport” in the country; and ii) the “opportunity” that the *World Cup* would offer *South Africa* – and *Africa* in general – to rebrand the country on the “world” stage. Additional benefits also mentioned in the associated dialogue include the number of foreign “visitors expected” to enter *South Africa* for the *World Cup*, whom were forecasted to provide a major economic boost to the country.

Opposing this thread of positive observations, however, was an equally strong thread of negative observations, which tended to underpin a distinct sense of pessimism as to the competency of *South Africa* and the receptivity of its decision to “host” the 2010 “FIFA” *World Cup*. In particular, concerns surrounding “crime” and safety in *South Africa* featured several times within the associated narrative, with several references to the violence, civil unrest and xenophobic attacks that took place in South Africa in 2008. Examples as to the variety of media dialogue that expressed these views have been identified below:

----- “-----
“*The country’s ability to host the premier soccer showpiece has been called into question because of a perceived lack of preparation for the event, and rampant crime.*”

“*Further outbreaks of violence against immigrants [xenophobia] in South-Africa could lead FIFA to move the 2010 World-Cup elsewhere.*”

----- ”-----

As suggested in one of the comments above, the “crime”, violence, and civil unrest that occurred at that time led to several speculations that the *World Cup* would be taken away from *South Africa*, despite several statements from the organising committee insisting that: “the violence would not impact on the 2010 World-Cup”.

Other secondary discussions also saw several lines of comparison being drawn between the 2010 “FIFA” *World Cup* and a collection of other similar events hosted both locally (1995 Rugby World Cup) and internationally (2006 FIFA World Cup). In particular, various sections of the dialogue analysed how the *World Cup* in *South Africa* would compare to the previous

World Cup held in “Germany”, with several articles expressing: “*hope that the World-Cup would do for South-Africa what it had done for Germany - unite the nation*”.

Finally, the “construction” of *stadiums* in preparation for the *World Cup* was another key agenda item presented within this dialogue. In particular, several articles discussed the “construction plans” for the *World Cup stadiums* on a “city” by city basis. These reviews, however, for the most part tended to criticise the “plans” for these “projects”, highlighting how many of the *stadiums* were “*unlikely to be completed in time*” and were “hit by overruns in construction costs”.

5.3.2 Objective 2: Evaluation of the Media Narrative 0-2 Years Prior to the Event

Second, in order to explore the media narrative surrounding the final preparation and lead-up stages of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, this section analyses the collection of observed articles published 0-2 years prior to the event. Figure 3, illustrated below, maps the 100 highest ranking concepts observed within the media dialogue during this time period, and segments these concepts into 13 major themes.

Figure 3: Leximancer cognitive map of local media coverage 0-2 years prior to the event

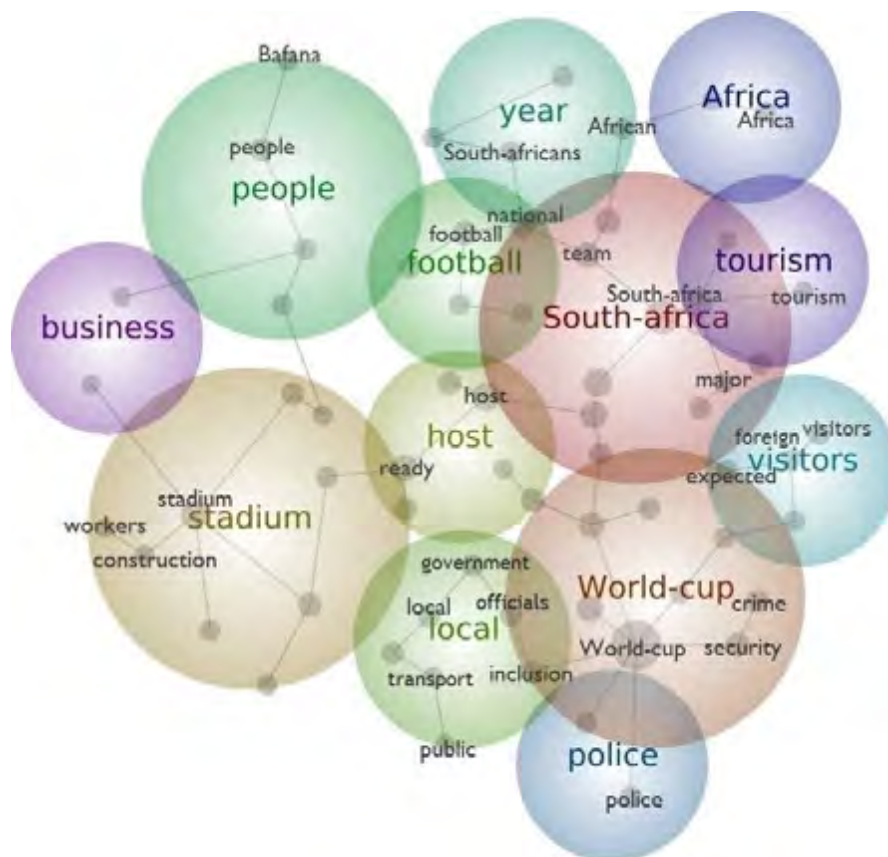


Figure 3 plots the media narrative captured by a total of 234 articles collected during the final preparation and lead-up (0-2 years prior) stages of the event. The major themes that emerged from the associated content included: *South Africa* (100%); *World Cup* (83%); *Stadium* (46%); *Host* (45%); *Local* (32%); *People* (19%); *Visitors* (14%); and *Police* (9%). More specifically, these themes converged around the following narrative threads.

The *South Africa* and *World Cup* themes proved to be central to the media dialogue observed during this time period. In particular, a distinct focus of this discussion was placed on the “readiness” of *South Africa* to *Host* the 2010 FIFA *World Cup*, with the majority of media mentions remaining positive in nature. Furthermore, the dialogue appeared to be underpinned by a tone of not only excitement, but also relief and reassurance. In fact, several articles appeared to focus specifically on addressing the concerns raised by event sceptics, almost to the point where the articles began to gloat. One article, in particular, captured this message, distinctly pointing out to readers that:

----- “-----
“You would have noticed also that the stadiums are ready, the host-cities are ready. South-Africa is ready!”
-----”-----

In particular, the successful “construction” of *Stadiums* featured as a key agenda point within this thread of dialogue, with several articles claiming that: “*The World-Cup-related infrastructure, such as roads and stadiums, had helped alleviate poverty and was likely to inject R4.9 billion into the country’s gross domestic product (GDP)*”.

Reinforcing this positive coverage, several articles also promoted the “expected” immediate benefits of the *World Cup*; focusing specifically on *World Cup* induced *tourism* and the attraction of “foreign” *visitors* to the country. In addition, a large collection of articles also projected that these infrastructural developments (specifically improvements to the “public” “transport” system) would also induce several longer term benefits for the country, particularly within the *tourism* sector. Examples as to the variety of media dialogue that expressed these two supporting views have been identified below:

“

“Foreigners will inject R13 billion into South-Africa’s economy during the World-Cup, helping the soccer spectacular boost economic growth by 0,5 percentage points.

“Because of the World-Cup, we have the Gautrain, wider highways, improved broadband, a bus transport system and world-class airports. Hopefully by the end we will have developed a world-class tourism industry and put South-Africa on the map for investment and trade.”

”

Heavily undermining the general sense of excitement and positivity expressed in the comments listed above, however, were several articles that projected concerns as to the sustainability and inclusivity of the event outcomes. In particular, *stadiums* appeared to attract a lot of attention in this regard, with many *stadiums* being labelled as ‘White Elephants’. Furthermore, several articles also speculated as to the restricted reach that the outcomes of the *World Cup* would hold, with many lines of discourse assigning blame in this regard to corrupt “government” “officials”. Examples as to the variety of media dialogue that expressed these two more critical viewpoints have been identified below:

“

“Revenue generated in South-Africa will not be enough to cover the costs of building new stadiums, likely to become white elephants once the party is over... Money that could have been spent on bringing water and electricity to impoverished townships, they argue, will instead go on first-class flights and hotels for foreign guests.”

“Only a greedy few corrupt officials and their friends are going to benefit.”

”

Furthermore, as indicated in the comments listed above, this critical dialogue subsequently led to several inquiries into the opportunity cost of *South Africa*’s decision to *host* the 2010 “FIFA” *World Cup*. In particular, a large number of articles adopted a distinctly pessimistic view of this event, arguing that the resources allocated to the event can be considered: *“a waste of money, that should rather have been put into water, housing, education and hospitals”*.

Finally, the issues of “crime” and “security” also appeared to feature extensively across this collection of articles, with two conflicting viewpoints emerging within the text. On the one hand, several concerns were raised as to the suitability of *South Africa* as a safe destination for

the *World Cup*, with much of this discussion fuelled by the murder of white supremacist leader Eugene Terre'Blanche in April, 2010. Articles expressing this view wrote: “*South-Africa counts down to the 2010 World-Cup, but with two months to go until kick-off, fears about violence and racial strife linger*”. Challenging this narrative, however, was several articles that opposed any speculations of risk to *World Cup* “visitors”, highlighting that: “*The security precautions taken by South-Africa in the run-up to the world-cup meet the highest standards*”.

5.3.3 Objective 3: Evaluation of the Media Narrative During the Event

Third, in order to explore the media narrative surrounding the hosting stage of the event, this section analyses the collection of observed articles published during the event. Figure 4, illustrated below, maps the 100 highest ranking concepts observed within the media dialogue during this time period, and segments these concepts into 11 major themes.

Figure 4: Leximancer cognitive map of local media coverage during the event

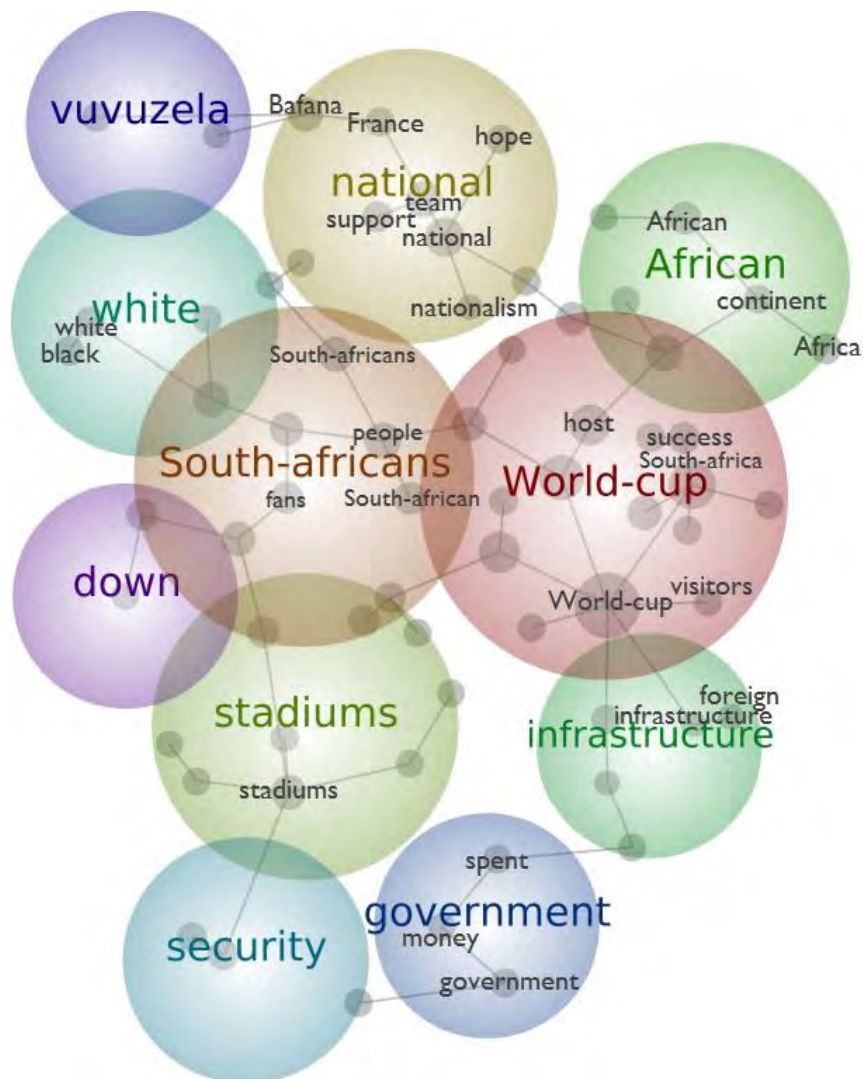


Figure 4 plots the media dialogue captured by a total of 231 articles collected during the hosting (during) stage of the event. The major themes that emerged from the associated content included: *World Cup* (100%); *South Africans* (46%); *National* (31%); *Stadiums* (19%); *African* (13%); *FIFA* (12%); *White* (8%); and *Security* (8%). More specifically, these themes converged around the following narrative thread.

The *World Cup* and *South Africans* themes proved to be central to the media dialogue observed during this time period. More specifically, the dialogue tended to focus on the impact that the *World Cup* was expected to have on the *South African* “people”. Underpinning this narrative was a clear debate as to the feasibility of the *World Cup*. The tenets of this debate can be broadly linked with references to three distinct time periods, namely before the event, during the event and after the event.

In terms of event feasibility, references linking to action before the event explored the history of the “South African” “people”, promoting the intangible benefits that the *World Cup* had offered “South Africa” in this context. Most noticeably, this dialogue plotted the apartheid era as a benchmark from which it could measure the “success” of the 2010 *World Cup*; highlighting that the *nation* had felt a resounding sense of unity and “hope” during the hosting period of the event. More specifically, several articles identified “Bafana-Bafana”, South Africa’s “national” football “team”, as an important symbol of “hope” for many *South Africans*. Examples as to the variety of media dialogue that expressed these views have been identified below:

----- “-----
“*With just days until the final, the tournament has gone off without major incident while sparking an outpouring of national unity that Archbishop Desmond Tutu has compared to the euphoria experienced at the fall of apartheid in 1994.*”

“*Many workers turned up for the office on Wednesday wearing their green and yellow Bafana-Bafana jerseys in a show of national unity seen as priceless in a country that is still trying to bridge racial divides.*”

----- ”-----

Furthermore, as indicated in both of the comments listed above, the distinct issue of racial tension between “black” and *white South Africans* was also addressed in this dialogue, further promoting the ideology that: “*The world-cup was uniting South-Africa, much like the 1995*

rugby world cup victory helped break down racial barriers, and it will leave a legacy for decades to come”.

In terms of references linking to “South Africa’s” situation during the event, however, the event feasibility dialogue focused more on promoting the immediate benefits of the *World Cup*. In particular, articles tended to highlight as to how the *World Cup* had been “successful” in attracting “foreign” “visitors, developing world-class *infrastructure*, and shifting the “global” image of “South Africa”. An example as to the variety of media dialogue that expressed this view has been identified below:

----- “-----
“There are expectations that the economic effect of the Cup will not be limited to tourist spending, and the global PR for brand South-Africa is expected to have a knock-on effect on investor perceptions.”

----- ”-----

Lastly, in terms of references linking to “South Africa’s” expected situation after the event, the event feasibility dialogue focused on the sustainability of the outcomes associated with the 2010 *World Cup*. However, this section of the dialogue proposed a distinctly less positive outlook for *South Africans*, with several articles making reference to the enduring inequality and social welfare constraints that continued to cripple the country. An example as to the variety of media dialogue that expressed this opposing viewpoint has been identified below:

----- “-----
“South-Africa’s World-Cup is a disgrace, when considering the spiralling poverty, inequity and the 13-year decrease in life expectancy since apartheid ended.”

----- ”-----

5.3.4 Objective 4: Evaluation of the Media Narrative 0-2 Years After the Event

In order to explore the media narrative surrounding the impact stage of the event, this section analyses the collection of sourced articles published 0-2 years after the event. Figure 5 illustrated below, maps the 100 highest ranking concepts observed within the media dialogue during this time period, and segments these concepts into 12 major themes.

Figure 5: Leximancer cognitive map of local media coverage 0-2 years after the event

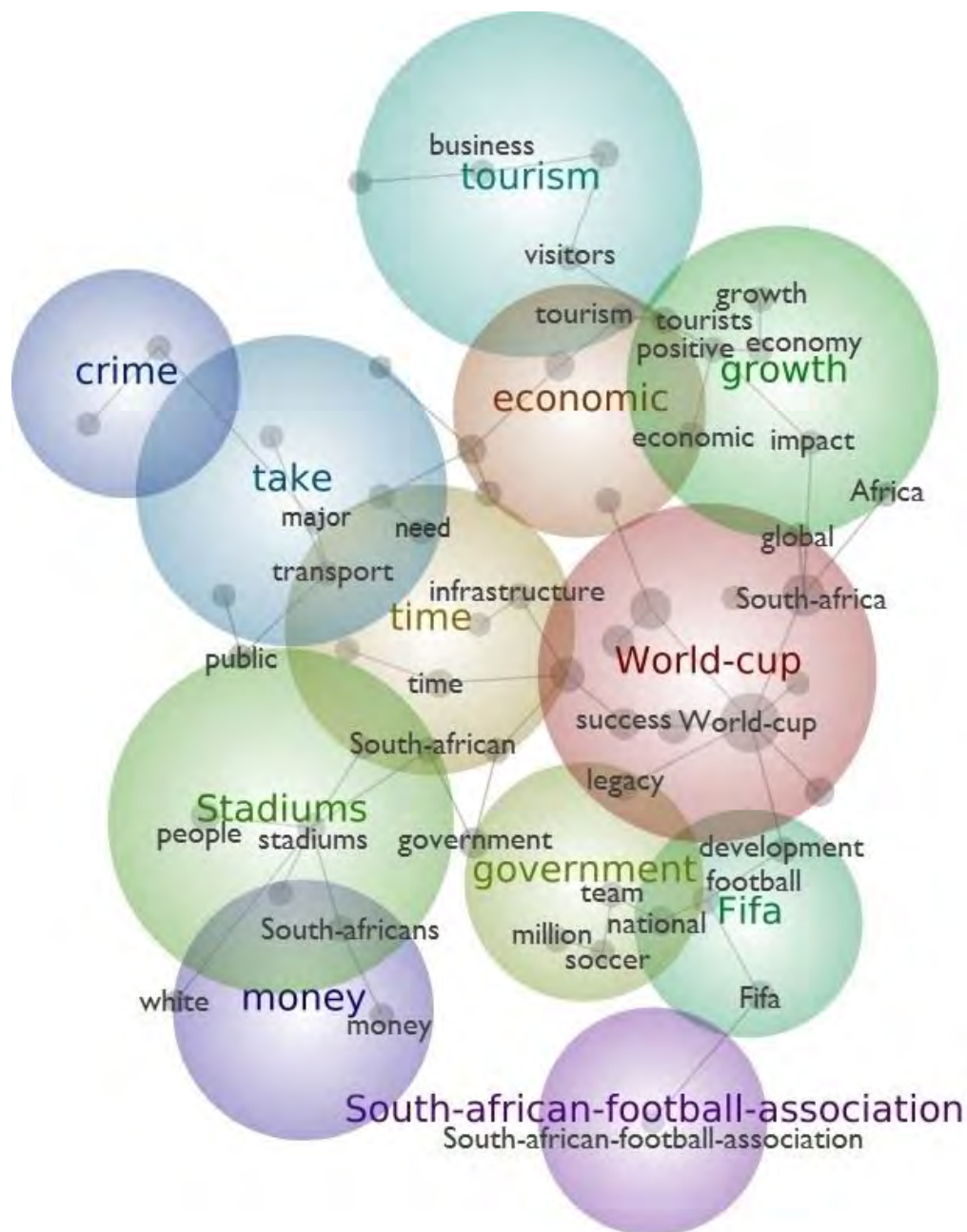


Figure 5 plots the media dialogue captured by a total of 203 articles collected during the impact (0-2 years after) stage of the event. The major themes that emerged from the associated content included: *World Cup* (100%); *Economic* (31%); *Time* (30%); *Government* (27%); *Stadiums* (23%); *Growth* (15%); and *FIFA* (14%). More specifically, these themes converged around the following narrative thread.

The *World Cup* and *Economic* themes proved to be central to the media coverage observed during this time period. In particular, the dialogue focused on the realised gains and shortfalls for *South Africa* as a result of hosting the event. More specifically, the *economic* “impact” of

the event appeared to dominate the discussion, with several articles reporting significant “economic growth” - especially in the *tourism* sector. The cause for much of this growth was attributed to improvements in both *Africa’s* and “South Africa’s” “global” image. An example as to the variety of media dialogue that expressed this view has been identified below:

----- “-----
“The increased positivity in global perceptions about the country would also provide a boost in tourism for the next three to five years.”

----- ”-----

In support of this positive line of discourse, many of the articles also promoted several other tangible benefits, typically in the form of “public transport” and “infrastructure” developments. More specifically, the *World Cup* was widely recognised for significantly accelerating the *time-line* within which many of these much “needed” projects were due to be completed. An example as to the variety of media dialogue that expressed this view has been identified below:

----- “-----
“The World Cup provided South-Africa with a lasting legacy of roads, major infrastructure and especially transport to townships isolated under apartheid, which would probably not have been built for decades without the World-Cup deadline.”

----- ”-----

Despite the widespread recognition that the *World Cup* had delivered several short-term *economic* “Impact” for “South Africa; much of the associated dialogue also speculated that the longer-term *economic* “Impact” of the event would be far less than initially expected. In this regard, several articles also made reference to the numerous underlying opportunity costs of the lost revenue associated with pursuing these Impact. Examples as to the variety of media dialogue that expressed these views have been identified below:

----- “-----
“The tournament, Africas first World-Cup, delivered an undoubted boost to national pride, but many are ruing the fact that it fell in the midst of the worst global economic recession in generations, which made the return on the countrys investment fall short of its potential.”

- - -

“Yes, the World-Cup provided South-Africa with an enormous burst of positivity, yet it is followed by exactly the same issues that preceded it - an exceedingly high unemployment rate, a worrying crime problem, serious hiv issues, etc, etc.”

”

On closer investigation, however, and as suggested by one of the comments listed above; for many, the disappointing level of longer-term *economic* growth was considered a result of the worldwide *economic* recession, not the *World Cup*. In fact, several articles even went as far as suggesting that the *World Cup* had formed a protective buffer for “South Africa” against the recession, proposing that the event’s *economic* shortfalls could be considered a justifiable cost for the social benefits that the *World Cup* had generated for “South Africa”.

Lastly, from a much broader perspective, it would appear that the *World Cup* also served as an important benchmark in *time* for “South Africans”; often referenced as a reminder of the capabilities that the country holds to host and deliver “major” projects. Yet, whilst in many instances it served as a positive benchmark, it has also often been used to highlight the major shortfalls of several post- *World Cup* projects. An example as to the variety of media dialogue that expressed this view has been identified below:

“

“South-Africa has already shown that we are capable of successfully driving massive infrastructure projects in preparing for the 2010 World-Cup and we will now build on that experience to drive further projects in housing and other social areas.”

”

5.3.5 Objective 5: Evaluation of the Media Narrative 2-4 Years After the Event

Finally, in order to explore the media narrative surrounding the legacy stage of the event, this section analyses the collection of sourced articles published 2-4 years after the event. Figure 6, illustrated below, maps the 100 highest ranking concepts observed within the media dialogue during this time period, and segments these concepts into 11 major themes.

sectors. Examples as to the variety of media dialogue that expressed these views have been identified below:

“

“Yesterday the government released the final report on the hosting of the 2010 World-Cup stating it had spent over R9 billion on building and upgrading stadiums alone. In return the World-Cup had left an intangible legacy of pride and unity among South-Africans and had changed the country’s image”

“Economically, the 2010 World-Cup only benefited the rich. The main impact of the 2010 World-Cup may have been psychological rather than economic.”

”

In this context, however, several articles also highlighted that the primary list of benefactors from the *World Cup* did not “include” the general “public” or the majority of the “local” population in general. Instead, as suggested by one of the comments listed above, several articles noted that, for many, the *World Cup* was more about establishing a greater sense of “national pride” and “unity” amongst “South Africans”. In fact, it was often these types of intangible benefits that were referenced as justifications for the huge amount of “money” that the “government spent” on *stadiums* and “infrastructure”.

Nevertheless, the “construction” of *World Cup stadiums* still attracted a lot of negative attention in this regard, with several articles questioning the sustainability of these multi-“million” rand “projects”. Further controversy surrounding the *World Cup stadiums* also emerged as leaked information revealed that “construction companies” had illegally colluded in their bids for these projects. An example as to the variety of media dialogue that expressed this view have been identified below:

“

“We have a government that, to this day, insist that by spending billions to host the World-Cup, South-Africa gained something of material value as well as an investment in the perception management of the country. They show us the stadiums we already had and others that have become white elephants, and label them our World-Cup legacy.”

”

Furthermore, several articles also chose to expand the dialogue beyond just the socio-economic Impact of the *World Cup*, to discuss the sporting “legacy” that it was expected to generate for *South Africa*. In particular, a number of articles discussed the “FIFA football development” fund that was granted to *SAFA*, which had been earmarked to “support” the development of “local” sport. In this regard, several discussions debated as to the significance that this funding would hold for the success of *South Africa’s* national, with multiple references stating the importance of youth “development” in the country. An example as to the variety of media dialogue that expressed this view has been identified below:

“

“South-Africans will now start to reap the benefits of hosting the 2010 World-Cup, the South-African-Football-Association said on Wednesday when it received R450million from global football body FIFA. It said the Legacy Trust would support a wide range of public initiatives in the areas of football development, education, health and humanitarian activity.”

”

Lastly, from a much broader perspective, it would appear that this dialogue reinforced *the World Cup* as an important benchmark in time for *South Africa*; with several lines of comparison being drawn between the 2010 FIFA *World Cup* hosted in *South Africa*, and the 2014 FIFA *World Cup* scheduled to be hosted in “Brazil”. More specifically, these discussions focused on reinstating the “importance of staging a World-Cup, and the benefits South-Africa had accrued as a result of hosting the 2010 tournament”; and concluded that “with the right management, the tournament could do the same for Brazil”.

5.4 FINDINGS WITH REGARD TO THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The previous sections provided a detailed analysis as to the findings of this study in relation to its five secondary objectives. More specifically, it offered a detailed account as to the major thematic threads of dialogue that populated the media coverage from 2-4 years prior to the 2010 FIFA World Cup to 2-4 years after. Each time period, in this regard, was analysed in isolation to identify the most popular segments of discourse for each time period, and to provide context to the broader media narrative that ran over the entire eight-year observation period.

Following on from the abovementioned line of analysis, this section proposes to address the primary objective of this study, which presented the following task:

To compare how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 2-4 years prior, 0-2 years prior, during, 0-2 years after, and 2-4 years after the event.

In order to achieve this task, all source articles published across all time periods were consolidated and analysed as a single collection of source data. Again, the findings are presented as a conceptual text map extracted from Leximancer, similar to those presented in the previous sections. However, the conceptual map in this section - by nature of the Leximancer algorithm - will present only the themes and concepts that were consistently observed in the event media dialogue across the entire eight-year observation period. Furthermore, the associated collection periods have also been plotted on the map to identify which themes and concepts are most frequently referenced at the associated observation periods. This will illustrate any distinct shifts in the narrative discourse over time. Finally, supporting quantitative data will also be analysed to indicate any changes in contextual sentiment. For ease of reference, the formatting procedures set out in the previous section will also be applied here.

5.4.1 Analysis of the Thematic Coverage

First, the media narrative will be analysed according to its scope of thematic coverage, and the themes and concepts that were discussed consistently throughout the entire eight-year observation period will be identified. Assisting in this task, Figure 7, illustrated below, maps the 100 highest ranking concepts observed within the media dialogue across all of the allocated time periods, and segments these concepts into 14 major themes.

Figure 7: Leximancer cognitive text map of local media coverage 2-4 years prior, 0-2 years prior, during, 0-2 years after, and 2-4 years after the event

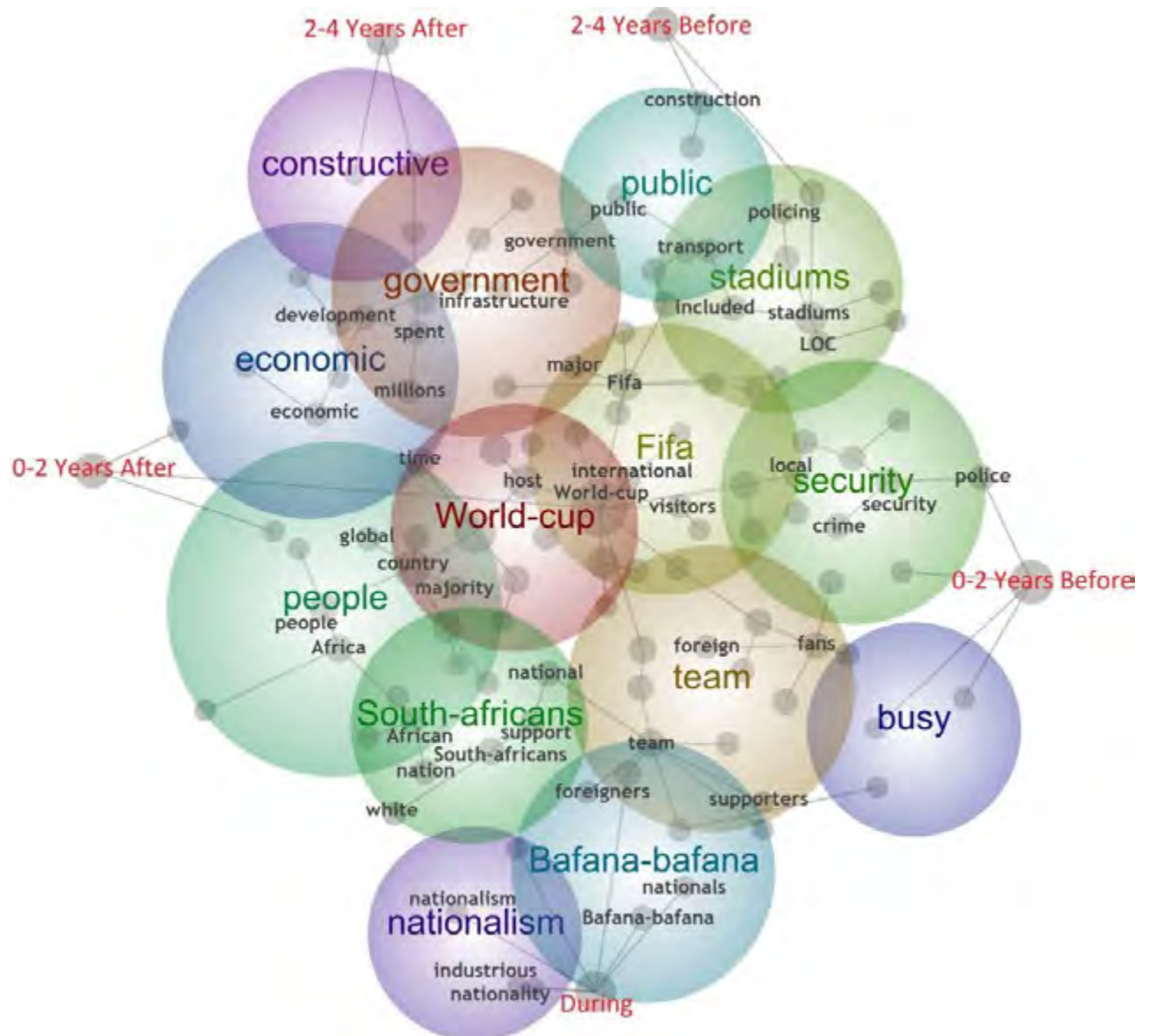


Figure 7 plots the media narrative captured by a total of 1072 articles collected during the initial lead up, final lead up, during, impact and legacy stages of the event. The major themes that emerged from the associated content include: *World Cup* (100%); *Government* (35%); *Team* (35%); *FIFA* (32%); *Stadiums* (29%); *Security* (22%); *South Africans* (20%); *People* (12%); *Public* (11%); *Bafana-Bafana* (5%); and *Economic* (5%). These are themes that appeared consistently throughout the entire eight-year observation period. Furthermore, Figure 6 also maps the associated observation periods as textual concepts. This illustrates the pertinence of the related themes at different stages of the event, and indicates as to how the conversation shifts over the entire observation period.

The conversation captured during the initial preparation and lead-up (2-4 years prior) stage of the event focused most predominantly on the “construction” of *World Cup stadiums* and local “infrastructure”, and the upgrading of *public* “transport” systems. In this context, the scope of observed articles projected both positive and negative viewpoints. For example, on the one hand, several articles focused on highlighting the opportunities that the *World Cup* would bring to “South Africa” in terms of “infrastructural” development; and on the other hand, raised concerns as to whether the associated projects would be completed in “time” for the *World Cup*, and could handle the capacity constraints imposed by the large number of “international visitors” and “foreign fans” that were expected to visit the country during the event.

Next, during the final preparation and lead up (0-2 years prior) stage of the event, the observed dialogue noticeably shifted its focus away from the “infrastructural” requirements and benefits of the *World Cup*, to discuss *security* provisions for the event, and debate the safety of “South Africa” as a tourism destination. This followed several reports that highlighted the “infrastructural” readiness of “South Africa” to host the *World Cup*. More specifically, several articles raised concerns as to the “crime” rate in “South Africa”, questioning the suitability of the existing *security* provisions that had been implemented to ensure the safety of “international visitors” and “foreign fans” during the *World Cup*. In particular, this thread of dialogue was fuelled by several cases of violence and civil unrest that had been documented in “South Africa” in 2008. Opposing this thread of critical coverage, however, was a number of articles which praised the *security* provisions that “South Africa” had set in to operation, especially with respect to the effort that had been made to tackle the threat of terrorism at the event.

Then, during the hosting (during) stage of the event, the focus of the observed dialogue shifted away from discussing as to how the *World Cup* would benefit “South Africa as a country, and instead analysed the impact it would have on the *South African people*. In this regard, the narrative became a lot more emotive as the more intangible benefits of the *World Cup* were discussed. In particular, outbursts of “national” pride and a growing sense of unity amongst *South Africans* in “support” of the “national team” were primary points of discussion. *Bafana-bafana* played an important part in this narrative, often forming a symbol of hope for many “South Africans”. Furthermore, apart from several expressions of *nationalism* that had been documented in certain parts of the country, there were very few mentions of stadiums or crime and security, as there had been during the stages leading up to the event.

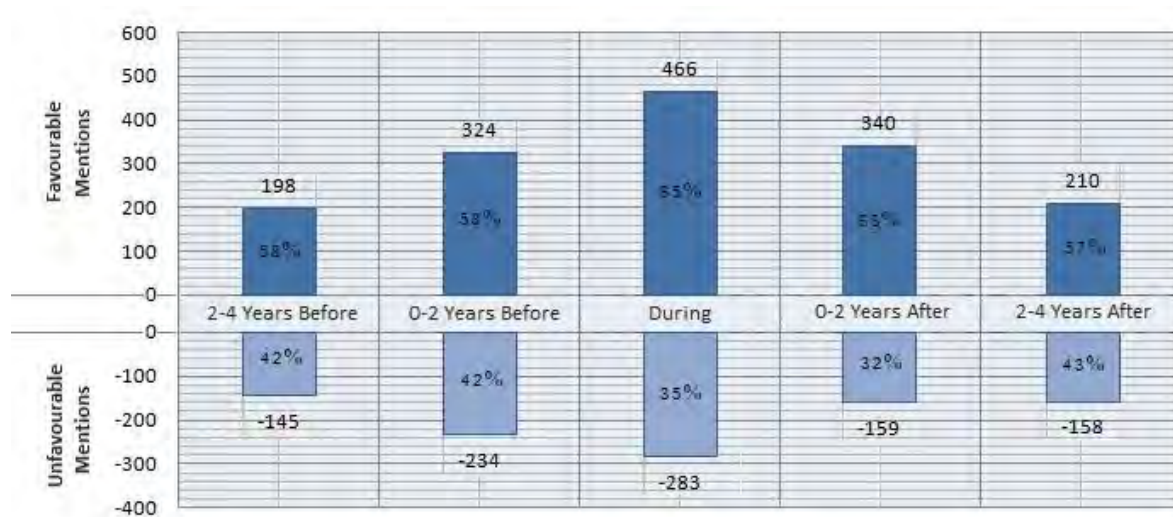
Thereafter, during the impact (0-2 years after) stage of the event, the observed dialogue experienced a more subtle shift away from discussing the intangible benefits of the *World Cup*, to analyse the image benefits that the event had generated for “South Africa”, and the subsequent *economic* implications that this would have for the country. In particular, several articles discussed as to how the *World Cup* had tackled the issue of Afro-pessimism and had changed the “global” image of the *South African people* and the *people* of “Africa”. The dialogue then linked this improvement in “South Africa’s global” image to several *economic* outcomes that the country had experienced, particular in the form of tourism and foreign investment.

Finally, during the legacy (2-4 years after) stage of the event, the focus of the observed dialogue shifted again. It was at this point, however, that the conversation appeared to revisit several of the issues discussed in previous time periods. In particular, the dialogue revisited the discussion surrounding the “infrastructure” and “public transport” “developments” that had been generated by the *World Cup*. In this regard, several articles raised “major” concerns as to the sustainability of these “developments”, with a number of projects being labelled as ‘White Elephants’. In response, however, a thread of dialogue also emerged in defence of the *government’s* decision to invest in these multi- “million” rand projects, suggesting that they were a justified cost for the number of intangible benefits that the *World Cup* had generated for “South Africa. Lastly, the issue of sports “development” within the country was also revisited, with several articles debating as to what areas of “development” should be financed from the *FIFA* “development” fund paid to “SAFA”. The majority of these articles highlighted the importance of youth “development” for sport in “South Africa”, and expressed frustration that this issue still had not been addressed.

5.4.2 Analysis of the Observed Sentiment

To provide greater context to the general focus of the dialogue analysed above, it is also useful to track the overall sentiment of the discussion across the five allocated time periods. Table 5, below, presents the total sentiment count recorded for each time period and presents it in a graph-type format for ease of comparison.

Table 5: Number of favourable and unfavourable mentions for each time period



In general, Table 5 suggests that the majority of the ranked dialogue was favourable in sentiment across all time periods, with the amount of both favourable and unfavourable mentions peaking during the hosting (during) stage of the event. Furthermore, it is observed that throughout the two periods leading up to the event, the ratio of favourable to unfavourable mentions remained constant, despite an increase in both types of mentions. Noticeably, the highest proportion of favourable to unfavourable mentions appeared in the impact (0-2 years after) stage of the event, indicating that it was at this stage that the dialogue was most positive throughout the entire observation period. Finally, it should be noted that the ratio of favourable to unfavourable mentions reached its lowest during the legacy (2-4 years after) stage of the event, but returned to a level that remains consistent with the ratios observed for the two time periods leading up to the event.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the empirical findings of this study. First, a summary of the descriptive statistics related to the data was presented. In this regard, it was concluded that the number of ranked concepts observed across all source articles were distributed evenly and consistently across all time periods and all newspaper sources, to remain consistent with comparative sample populations reported in the corresponding literature (Swart *et al.*, 2012, 2013). As a result, the sample of articles extracted from the SA Media database was considered to be correctly aligned with the overarching target population.

Next, a detailed description of the qualitative findings of the study was outlined. Firstly, the findings were presented in relation to each of the study's five secondary objectives, and

secondly in relation to its singular primary objective. Overall, five major themes were observed consistently across all five data collection periods. These included: *stadiums; safety and security; Bafana-Bafana; social impact; and economic impact*. Furthermore, it was also observed that the majority of the ranked dialogue was favourable in sentiment across all time periods, with the amount of both favourable and unfavourable mentions peaking during the hosting (during) stage of the event.

The final chapter of this study now analyses and discusses these findings in greater depth, and provides several recommendations as a result of this new knowledge.

CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter illustrated the findings from the media content analysis conducted by this study. This helped establish an understanding of the primary narrative themes observed in this study's dataset, along with the sentiment that was attached to each theme. In addition, these findings also indicated as to how the narrative focus shifted amongst different themes over time. This chapter examines the implications of these findings, both in the context of the existing literature and as a dialogue which can guide future discussions within the space of media signalling at mega-sporting events. More specifically, the chapter unpacks these findings according to how they relate to this study's research question and six underlying objectives - as mentioned in Chapter IV; as well as the practical and theoretical observations from the associated literature, as discussed in Chapters II and III.

To position this discussion of the study's implications, conclusions and recommendations in the context of the relevant theoretical and practical observations from the associated literature, a brief review of the preceding chapters is given. In Chapter II – the concept of mega-sporting events was introduced, defined and unpacked within the context of the associated impact analysis literature. In particular, the socio-economic, socio-cultural and physical Impact of mega-sporting events were discussed, with particular focus being given to the contradictory arguments. Overall, the scope of existing literature presented clear evidence to suggest that mega-sporting events do have a significant impact on their host destination; yet, the extent to which this impact was found to benefit the local population remained unclear. It was in this context, then, that the concept of image signalling was introduced, which was presented as one of the less tangible, and therefore often less widely considered rationales behind contemporary mega-sporting event bids. Finally, it was at this point that Chapter II drew to its conclusion, suggesting that research focusing on these less tangible benefits might offer some clarity as to the legitimacy of the claims surrounding the profound benefits that mega-sporting events provide for their host nation.

Subsequently, Chapter III opened with a comprehensive discussion of the media signalling impulse at mega-sporting events. The associated theory suggested that, while mega-sporting events can be seen to have had somewhat of a long and profound history of serving to promote positive impressions regarding their hosts, the intrinsic link between the media, image-signalling and mega-sporting events was still not well understood. Subsequently, Chapter III

underlined the need for additional research in this field, and proceeded to unpack several theoretical and practical considerations that would guide such research. First, the assumption of profound media effects in the contemporary period was examined and confirmed in validation of the proposed research agenda. Next, several practical observations were extracted from a collection of case studies from the associated literature, which helped further refined the scope and direction of the proposed research. Finally, Chapter III concluded with a discussion of South Africa's bid for the 2010 FIFA World Cup, which was selected to serve as the context for this study's exploratory research design.

Extending the discussion one step further, Chapter IV presented the study's research question and objectives, and introduced the methodology that would guide the execution phase of the study. It was at this point that the study justified its exploratory research approach, and introduced the media content analysis methodology that it adopted. Furthermore, Chapter IV also introduced the Leximancer text-analysis tool, which was employed to offer analytical support to the research. Finally, section three and four of Chapter IV outlined the data collection, preparation and measurement procedures, just before section five concluded with a description of the data analysis procedures.

Next, Chapter V unpacked the findings of the study, which included a discussion of both the descriptive statistics and inferential observations. The descriptive statistics unpacked the various demographics within the realised sample (n=1072), and confirmed its appropriateness in representing the overall targeted population. The inferential observations then moved to illustrate the primary narrative themes observed within this study's realised sample, along with the sentiment that was attached to each theme. Finally, the findings then indicated as to how the narrative focus shifted amongst different themes over the eight-year data collection period.

Subsequently, this chapter now extracts several conclusions, implications and recommendations from the findings presented in Chapter V, both in the context of the existing literature and as a dialogue which can: i) inform current managerial practice; and ii) guide future discussions within the space of media signalling at mega-sporting events. First, the specific conclusions that can be extracted from this study's findings are discussed.

6.2 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

This section examines the study's reported findings in the context of the existing literature. As this study is exploratory by design, however, this discussion will largely involve the contextualisation of this study's findings within the associated theory, and will offer a comparison to several more implicit practical observations. The section unfolds according to the six research objectives presented by this study; and, as such, lends itself to evaluate the relative success of the study in answering the underlying research question. First, the findings are unpacked according to the study's five secondary research objectives. The conclusions and implications formulated within the context of these five secondary objectives will then be collated and examined within a much wider context, which will allow for several conclusions to be drawn with respect to the study's sixth, primary objective.

6.2.1 Objective 1: Evaluation of the Media Narrative 2-4 Years Prior to the Event

Overall, the findings from the 2-4-year pre-event data collection period presented five major content themes within the associated media: *South Africa* (100%); *World Cup* (67%); *Stadium* (35%); *Preparations* (23%); *Africa* (18%); *Public* (16%); and *People* (14%).

In particular, much of this early coverage tended to debate the competency of South Africa, and the sensibility of its decision to host the 2010 FIFA World Cup. More specifically, the findings suggest that this early media coverage had narrated a struggle between the clear opportunity that the 2010 FIFA World Cup offered South Africa, and the capability of the country to seize such opportunity. These impressions tend to align with several case study accounts of the associated discourse during these early stages of the event (Glanville, 2010; Korth & Rolfes, 2010; Pillay *et al.*, 2009).

For the most part (58%) at least, the observed coverage was extremely optimistic about the impact and opportunities that the World Cup would generate for the host region. In particular, the findings observed two key positive impressions pertaining to: i) the expected infrastructural benefits in terms of improvements in public transport and national sporting facilities; and ii) the expected tourism related benefits of the event. Moreover, a clear Pan-African based rhetoric was observed within the findings, which set an expectation that the opportunities associated with the event were likely to extend far beyond just South Africa's borders.

Such findings tend to largely reflect the government event-policy agenda. Here, the local organising committee projected that the 2010 FIFA World Cup would generate R93 billion in

additional income for South Africa, which would be procured through direct investments in new infrastructure and sporting facilities (including stadia), as well as through event sponsorship, tourism and match ticket sales (Cornelissen, Bob & Swart, 2011). Similarly, the reference of a Pan-African rhetoric, embedded in the discourse of modernity and development, resonated not only with president Mbeki's idea of African Renaissance (Van der Westhuizen, 2008), but also with several other extended Pan-African discourses observed within associated case studies (de Almeida *et al.*, 2015; Knott *et al.*, 2012; Manzo, 2012;). Donaldson and Ferreira (2009), and Tomlinson *et al.* (2009), for example, argued that the 2010 FIFA World Cup would be a critical platform upon which South Africa in general, and the respective host cities more specifically, could prove their capabilities, and dissipate the challenge of Afro-pessimism and other popular stereotypes about Africa.

Ndlovu (2010) also warned of the risks associated with employing a Pan-Africanist rhetoric, explaining that while it would likely serve to tactically diminish impressions of South Africa as an essentialist state - through the promotion of an 'African' World Cup – such practices might also simultaneously strengthen discourses of Afro-pessimism and African essentialism. The findings of this study appeared to largely substantiate Ndlovu's (2010) projections in this regard, as several concerns of safety and security – largely in relation to crime and racially targeted violence – appeared to frame the remaining negative portion (42%) of observed coverage. In particular, this study identified the 2008 Xenophobic attacks in South Africa as having played a hugely symbolic role in simultaneously exacerbating safety and security concerns surrounding the 2010 FIFA World Cup, and reinforcing primitive discourses of African-essentialism. Similar to observations made by Lepp and Gibson (2011) and Hammett (2011), in this regard, the findings suggested that the xenophobic tensions in South Africa also undermined the Pan-African rhetoric that had been pinned to the event; which led to several impressions that questioned not only the true level of tolerance in South Africa, but also the country's deeper underlying capability to progress into a first world society (Desai & Vahed 2010; Kelly 2010).

6.2.2 Objective 2: Evaluation of the Media Narrative 0-2 Years Prior to the Event.

Overall, the findings from the 0-2-year pre-event data collection period presented eight major content themes within the associated media: *South Africa* (100%); *World Cup* (83%); *Stadium* (46%); *Host* (45%); *Local* (32%); *People* (19%); *Visitors* (14%); and *Police* (9%). The majority of this more immediate lead-up coverage, in particular, tended to discuss the readiness

of South Africa to host the 2010 FIFA World Cup. More specifically, the findings observed a narrative struggle between notions of excitement surrounding South Africa's successful preparation for the event, alongside impending concerns of safety and security, as well as the sustainability and inclusivity of the resulting event outcomes. Host readiness was identified as one of the primary objectives reflected in the government event-policy agenda. In this regard, attention was placed on tackling Afro-pessimistic discourses surrounding infrastructural development and sustainability (including stadiums, accommodation and transports), as well as safety and security concerns relating to South Africa's hosting of the World Cup.

For the most part (58%) at least, the observed coverage projected positive impressions in terms of South Africa's readiness to host the World Cup - especially with respect to the country's successes in the development of 'world class' infrastructure. In particular, the findings highlighted the contribution of event-related infrastructural development to the alleviation of poverty (through job creation) and the growth of the economy (through tourism); with the dialogue appearing to be underpinned by a tone of not only excitement, but also relief and reassurance. Further linked to these positive impressions of success, was a more specific focus on the Afro-pessimistic dialogue that circulated the event (Knott *et al.*, 2012). In this regard, the positive impressions observed in this study's findings largely reflected May's (2004) associated observations; whereby it was suggested that the decision to grant South Africa the 2010 FIFA World Cup would invoke a much needed boost of confidence amongst South Africans, and Africans more generally.

The remaining negative portion (42%) of observed coverage largely moved to directly contest these positive impressions. In this regard, the study's findings appeared to reflect several threads of the Afro-pessimistic discourse targeted by the event's local organising committee. In particular, concerns of crime, security and violence fuelled by racial tension were frequently outlined within the observed narrative. There was also an overwhelming collection of case studies that drew attention to the crime (de Almeida *et al.*, 2015; Glanville, 2010; Knott *et al.*, 2012, 2013; Korth & Rolfes, 2010; Lepp & Gibson, 2011), and safety and security (de Almeida *et al.*, 2015; Donaldson & Ferreira, 2009; Hesketh 2010; Knott *et al.*, 2012, 2013; Lepp & Gibson, 2011) concerns that surrounded the event in this immediate lead-up period.

More specifically, the findings of this study highlighted two ancillary events in this late preparation period that exacerbated these concerns - the 2010 terrorist attack in Angola on the Africa Cup of Nations competition, and the suspicious death of white supremacist leader

Eugène Terre' Blanche in April, 2010. Similar observations were reflected in several of the associated case study accounts on the 2010 FIFA World Cup. With respect to the murder of Eugène Terre' Blanche in early 2010, for example, scholars argued that the event would likely result in fears of security (Hammett, 2011) and racially-charged violence (Hughes, 2010), and would exacerbate claims of a possibly unsafe 2010 FIFA World Cup (de Almeida *et al.*, 2015; Hammett, 2011). Similarly, several scholars also tended to reflect on equal claims in their discussion of the terrorist attack in Angola on the 2010 Africa Cup of Nations (Ellis, 2010; Hammett, 2011; Lewis, 2010).

Further reflecting the Afro-pessimistic discourse feared by the 2010 FIFA World Cup's local organising committee, the findings of this study also observed several impressions raising concern to the sustainability and opportunity costs of the event. In particular, the findings observed several *stadiums* being labelled as 'White Elephants'; several discussions outlining the restricted reach that the outcomes of the *World Cup* would likely hold; and multiple impressions assigning blame, in such regard, to corrupt government officials. In the context of these concerns, several narrative threads also began to question the opportunity cost of *South Africa's* decision to *host* the 2010 FIFA *World Cup*, as negative impressions highlighted the immediate social needs of the country's residents, in terms of healthcare, education and water.

6.2.3 Objective 3: Evaluation of the Media Narrative During the Event.

Overall, the findings from the 0-2-year pre-event data collection period presented eight major content themes within the associated media: *World Cup* (100%); *South Africans* (46%); *National* (31%); *Stadiums* (19%); *African* (13%); *FIFA* (12%); *White* (8%); and *Security* (8%).

More specifically, the findings showed that much of this discussion tended to focus primarily on evaluating the Impact of the 2010 FIFA World Cup as the event unfolded, particularly in terms of the impact it had on the South African public. Overall, these findings align with several case study accounts of the associated signalling outcomes, which indicated that attributes such as people, heritage and culture appeared to be most prevalent in media coverage during this time period (Knott *et al.*, 2013). In terms of evaluating the Impact of the event, the findings suggest that the media narrative made use of three 'benchmarks' in time to gauge both observed and predicted progress – one pre-event, one during the host-period, and one post-event.

First, the observed narrative made several evaluations of the 2010 FIFA World Cup's unfolding Impact in the context of how South Africa had progressed from the Apartheid period - the pre-

event benchmark. In particular, the findings of this study suggest that the focus was placed on the intangible benefits of national unity, and national pride, with much of the conversation being interspersed with notions of breaking down racial barriers constructed by the Apartheid government, and a restored sense of hope for South Africa's future. In this regard these findings appear to align with several of the case study accounts of the associated signalling outcomes, which tended to highlight an increased sense of patriotism (Allen *et al.*, 2013), national and civic pride (Allen *et al.*, 2013; Hammett, 2011; Knott *et al.*, 2012; Smith, 2010), unity and common identity (Desai & Vahed 2010; Kelly 2010; Smith, 2010), and self-confidence (Allen *et al.*, 2013; Knott *et al.*, 2012) amongst South Africans.

In particular, several of the case study accounts of the associated outcomes identified South Africa's national football team 'Bafana Bafana', and the image that surrounded the team, as a key symbol for promoting the idea of all South African's sharing a common purpose and a common connection (Allen *et al.*, 2013). The findings of this study further confirm these literary accounts; identifying the significance of Bafana Bafana's yellow football jersey in promoting feelings of patriotism and national unity.

Whilst the majority of the narrative appeared to be positive in terms of the unfolding intangible Impact of the event, the findings of this study did note that there were also several discussions where these Impact were not reflected in an entirely positive light. In particular, the findings observed how an increased level of patriotism, in certain extreme circumstances, transformed into signals of nationalism, which were linked to provocation and reinforcement of xenophobic tensions in South Africa. These findings tend to align with several of the case study accounts of the associated outcomes, which suggested that the growing xenophobic tensions observed within the country brought to question the true degree of tolerance in post-apartheid South Africa (Desai & Vahed 2010; Kelly 2010;).

Next, the observed narrative also made several evaluations of the 2010 FIFA World Cup's unfolding Impact in the context of how South Africa would benefit immediately from the event - the host-period benchmark. In this regard, the findings of this study suggest that focus was placed on the unfolding success of the event in attracting foreign visitors, developing world-class infrastructure, and shifting the global image of South Africa. These findings appear to align with several of the case study accounts of the associated outcomes, which tended to highlight the new image (Allen *et al.*, 2013; Berger, 2010), infrastructural (Allen *et al.*, 2013;

Berger, 2010), and foreign investment (Allen *et al.*, 2013), benefits emerging from the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

Lastly, the observed narrative made several evaluations of the 2010 FIFA World Cup's unfolding Impact in the context of how South Africa was expected to benefit in the long-run - the post-event benchmark. In this regard, the findings of this study suggest that the focus was placed on the expected sustainability of the event's unfolding Impact, where several discussions signalled a distinctly less positive outlook for the South African people. In particular, the findings of this study suggest that focus was placed on how the 2010 FIFA World Cup had not solved the enduring issues of inequality, spiralling poverty and social welfare in South Africa. In this regard, these findings appear to align with several of the case study accounts of the associated outcomes, which specifically highlighted ideas of how the spectacle of the 2010 FIFA World Cup was used to mask the country's real situation (Burawoy & Von Holdt, 2012; de Almeida *et al.*, 2015), and how the benefits of the event in the long-run would flow to FIFA, not ordinary South Africans (Maguire, 2011)

6.2.4 Objective 4: Evaluation of the Media Narrative 0-2 Years After the Event.

Overall, the findings from the 0-2-year post-event data collection period presented seven major content themes within the associated media: *World Cup* (100%); *Economic* (31%); *Time* (30%); *Government* (27%); *Stadiums* (23%); *Growth* (15%); and *FIFA* (14%).

More specifically, the findings of this study show that much of the associated narrative tended to focus primarily on what tangible gains and shortfalls were realised for South Africa as a result of hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup. One thread of this discussion, for example, reviewed the infrastructural outcomes of the event; highlighting the significant benefits that the 2010 FIFA World Cup had generated for South Africa in accelerating the lead times on several much needed urban infrastructure and public transport projects. Overall, these findings appear to confirm several case study accounts of the outcomes, which indicated that a key aspect of the 2010 FIFA World Cup legacy included: the construction of the Gautrain railway; upgrades made to airports; the improvement of public transport systems; and the upgrade of national roads (Knott *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, Allen *et al.* (2013) suggested that the sport stadiums built and upgraded for the 2010 FIFA World Cup were presented as national landmarks that would enhance the way cities were perceived.

In addition to these immediate infrastructural gains, the observed narrative also predicted that the 2010 FIFA World Cup would generate several broader long-term economic Impact for South Africa, but admitted that these would likely generate far less of an overall benefit than initially expected. These findings appear to confirm several case study accounts of the outcomes, which further suggested the blame, in this regard, should be assigned to FIFA, which the narrative accused of harnessing the 2010 FIFA World Cup to generate benefits for itself, instead of South Africa (de Almeida *et al.*, 2015). Contradicting these extended claims, however, the findings of this study suggest that the observed narrative appeared to assign blame to the global economic crisis, which was observed to mitigate several of the expected economic Impact of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. In fact, the study found that the narrative even went as far as to suggest that the World Cup had formed a protective buffer for South Africa against the recession.

Nevertheless, within the context of the predicted long-term economic shortfalls that it associated with the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the observed narrative also appeared to question the opportunity cost associated with South Africa's decision to host the event, as it highlight the country's enduring HIV/AIDS problems, escalating crime rates and exceedingly high levels of unemployment. These findings confirm several of the case study accounts of the associated outcomes, which particularly emphasised the pervading issues of HIV/AIDS, poverty, hunger, civil strife, violence and disease (Holtzhausen & Fullerton, 2015), as well as the issues of crime and corruption (McKinley, 2011; Tolsi, 2010) that still faced South Africa after the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Furthermore, the case study accounts suggested that these concerns were further reinforced by the exclusion of lower-income South African residents from the 2010 FIFA World Cup (Alegi & Bolsmann, 2013; Bolsmann, 2012; Fletcher, 2013; Smith, 2010), as well as the clear lack of capable leadership in the country (Holtzhausen & Fullerton, 2015)

Lastly, from a much broader perspective, the findings of this study suggest that several discussions also emerged to discuss the 2010 FIFA World Cup as a benchmark in time for "South Africans"; whereby it was often found to serve as a reference of the capabilities that the country holds to host and deliver "major" projects. Similar observations were also made by several of the case study accounts of the associated outcomes, which suggested that this narrative projected the renewed confidence that the 2010 FIFA World Cup instilled for South Africa in terms of not only their hosting capabilities, but their more general capacity to improve the country's enduring issues (Knott *et al.*, 2012).

6.2.5 Objective 5: Evaluation of the Media Narrative 2-4 Years After the Event.

Overall, the findings from the 2-4-year post-event data collection period presented nine major content themes within the associated media: *World Cup* (100%); *South Africa* (50%); *Stadiums* (49%); *Football* (40%); *South Africa Football Association (SAFA)* (32%); *Public* (29%); *City* (16%); *Economic* (11%); and *Bafana-Bafana* (5%).

More specifically, this study found that the observed narrative appeared to debate the realised impact of the 2010 FIFA World Cup for South Africa. Its primary focus in this regard was on the 2010 FIFA World Cup stadiums, which appeared to attract a lot of negative attention in terms of their cost and financial sustainability. Furthermore, the observed narrative also suggested that such attention was exacerbated when it was revealed that construction companies had illegally colluded in their bids for these projects. Similar observations were also made in several of the case study accounts, which underline the enormous costs of these development projects, but a clear lack of understanding as to their associated long-term benefits (Allen *et al.*, 2013). Likewise, de Almeida *et al.* (2015) further suggested that with several stadiums being framed against the backdrop of tendering irregularities and corruption, it is unsurprising that they received such negative attention.

In this context, several of the case study accounts suggested that the event further reinforced negative attention with several claims of the World Cup being politically fractious and economically uneven (Alegi & Bolsmann, 2013; Allen *et al.*, 2013; Bolsmann, 2012; de Almeida *et al.*, 2015; Fletcher, 2013). This study reported similar findings confirming such speculations, further suggesting that the primary list of benefactors from the World Cup did not include the South African general public. More specifically, several of the case study accounts explained that the narrative identified unaffordable tickets prices (de Almeida *et al.*, 2015) and expensive supporters merchandise (Fletcher, 2013) as key drivers of economic exclusion.

In an attempt to both combat and rationalise the ideas of economic exclusion, however, the findings of this study suggested that the observed narrative appeared to strongly promote the intangible benefits of the 2010 FIFA World Cup for South Africa, which were mainly presented in the discussion of South Africa's national and international image. In this regard, this study found that the observed narrative tended to promote an increased sense of national pride and unity amongst South Africans, which it suggested had been critical in forming a more positive image of the country. The majority of the case study accounts tended to align with these

findings, suggesting that South Africa's post- 2010 FIFA World Cup image not only signalled a sense of self-confidence, social cohesion and pride amongst local residents (de Almeida *et al.*, 2015; Knott *et al.*, 2012), but also signalled South Africa as a modern, dynamic society with world class infrastructure (Allen *et al.*, 2013).

In addition to these intangible benefits, the findings of this study suggested that the observed narrative also appeared to promote positive sporting legacies in association with the 2010 FIFA World Cup. More specifically, the study found a number of articles discussing the FIFA football development fund that was granted to the South African Football Association (SAFA) to support the development of local sport. In this regard, several positive discussions highlighted the hope that this funding had generated for the success of South Africa's national team, with multiple references stating the importance of youth "development" in the country.

Lastly, from a much broader perspective, this study found that the observed narrative had employed the memory of the 2010 FIFA World Cup as an important benchmark in time for South Africa; with several lines of comparison being drawn between the 2010 and 2014 FIFA World Cups and how South Africa was much better prepared in 2010 than Brazil was in 2014. Similar uses of the 2010 FIFA World Cup concept were also identified by several case study accounts of the observed outcomes, which suggested that the 2010 FIFA World Cup was, overall, seen as an incredible achievement that placed South Africa as a landmark on the African continent (de Almeida *et al.*, 2015).

6.2.6 Conclusions Regarding the Primary Research Objective (Objective 6)

The primary research objective of this study focused on comparing how the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was framed by the South African National Press 2-4 years prior, 0-2 years prior, during, 0-2 years after, and 2-4 years after the event. More specifically, attention was placed on examining the change in narrative focus and associated sentiment across the eight-year data collection period, in order to determine both the context and extent to which the event generated both positive and negative impressions surrounding the host nation. To remain consistent with the reporting style adopted in Chapter V, these findings will be unpacked in two sub-sections. Firstly, key observations in terms of observed sentiment will be discussed; then the key drivers of thematic coverage will be reviewed within the context of these initial sentiment observations.

Conclusions Pertaining to Observed Sentiment

First, in terms of sentiment it was revealed that, over the entire eight-year data collection period, there were consistently more positive impressions extending from the observed content themes than there were negative. Although, the relative spread appeared to only favour the positive impressions by a small margin, with the findings illustrating (on average) a 60-40 split in favour of positive impressions.

In terms of an initial broader outlook in this regard, then, these findings seem to contest several blanket claims that promote the prolific positive impressions that a mega-sport-event is likely to generate for a host destination (cf. Black & Van der Westhuizen, 2004; Marks, 1999). Instead, these findings tend to more closely support critical observations made by media scholars such as Falkheimer (2007) and Dimeo and Kay (2004), who warn us of the potential risks of media signalling – especially for host nations with semi-peripheral status’.

Furthermore, focusing more specifically on the observed sentiment at different time points, the study observed that the relative frequency of positive media impressions peaked during both the hosting and immediate 0-2-year post-event period, but was at its lowest in the 2-4-year post-event phase. Indeed, such observations seem to align with Gibson *et al.*’s (2014) practical observations of the ‘temporal’ effects of mega-sport-events. Although, Gibson *et al.*’s (2014) observations suggested that these ‘temporal’ effects diminished within an eight-month post-event period; whereas the findings of this paper suggest that such effects might extend up to as long as two years after the event.

Conclusions Pertaining to Thematic Coverage

Overall, the findings from across the entire eight-year data collection period presented eleven major content themes within the associated media: *World Cup* (100%); *Government* (35%); *Team* (35%); *FIFA* (32%); *Stadiums* (29%); *Security* (22%); *South Africans* (20%); *People* (12%); *Public* (11%); *Bafana-Bafana* (5%); and *Economic* (5%).

Broadly speaking, the observed narrative focus appeared to shift cyclically across the eight-year data collection period. First, in the 2-4-year pre-event data collection period, this study found that the attention of the observed narrative was primarily focused on the highly-tangible long-term preparations and associated outcomes of the 2010 FIFA World Cup for South Africa. Next, in the 0-2-year pre-event data collection period, the narrative appeared to shift focus to the more intangible and immediate preparations and associated outcomes of the event. Then,

during the event-hosting data collection period, another subtle shift occurred as the unfolding intangible benefits appeared to occupy much of the focus of the observed coverage. Following that, in the 0-2-year post-event data collection period, focus shifted again, where the clearer economic and physical benefits, as well as the resulting image benefits, appeared to feature most predominantly in the observed coverage. Finally, in the 2-4-year post-event data collection period, the narrative focus appeared revisit the highly-tangible long-term outcomes of the event.

Critically, there have been no other longitudinal analyses of mega-sport-event media impressions, however, for the purposes of this discussion, these findings can be broken down and observed according to associated cross-sectional observations. Indeed, the focus on the highly tangible long-term preparations and associated outcomes of the event in the 2-4-year pre-event data collection period tends to largely reflect the strong emphasis of host readiness in the government policy agenda documents. Furthermore, the observed shift, in the 0-2-year pre-event data collection period, to a focus on the more intangible and immediate preparations and associated outcomes can be explained to a similar degree.

Similarly, the observed focus on the unfolding intangible benefits during the event-hosting data collection period aligns with several case study accounts of the associated narrative in this regard (Allen *et al.*, 2013; Hammett, 2011; Knott *et al.*, 2012). In particular, emphasis was placed on observations of unity, patriotism and pride amongst South Africans. Furthermore, the next shift from this focus on the intangible benefits to a focus on the clearer economic and physical benefits, as well as the resulting image benefits, directly aligned with Maguire's (2011) observations.

On a more refined review of the observed thematic coverage, there were three primary themes that either appeared to feature consistently or most predominantly across the entire eight-year collection period.

First, a clear extended narrative appeared to track the construction of World Cup stadiums and local infrastructure, and the upgrading of public transport systems over the entire eight-year collection period. In particular, this theme appeared to feature most predominantly in the early preparation phase (2-4 years before) of the event – where the opportunities that the World Cup proposed for South Africa in terms of infrastructural development were promoted – and the late review phase (2-4 years after) of the event – where more critical observations raised several

concerns as to the sustainability of the event-related infrastructure, with a number of projects being labelled as ‘White Elephants’. Indeed, similar impressions appeared in the associated case study accounts of the event (Allen *et al.*, 2013; Billig, 1995; Knott *et al.*, 2012); whereby the 2010 stadiums were explained to form highly tangible symbols of the ongoing narrative struggle between the Pan African promotion of modernity and success, and Afro-pessimistic outlook of sustainability and opportunity cost (Allen *et al.*, 2013).

Similarly, but from a decidedly less positive outlook, a clear extended narrative also appeared to track the safety and security impressions over a vast portion of the eight-year collection period. In particular, this theme appeared to feature most predominantly in the immediate lead-up phase (0-2 years before) of the event – whereby several concerns surrounding safety and security were exacerbated by three specific ancillary events connected to the 2010 World Cup (cf. the 2008 Xenophobia attacks, the 2010 AFCON Terrorist attack, and the murder of white supremacist leader Eugène Terre’ Blanche in 2010). Indeed, these insights appear to align with several observations in the associated case study accounts surrounding the event narrative (Allen *et al.*, 2013; Desai & Vahed, 2010; Hammett, 2011), which also highlights the influence of ancillary events.

The third and final most predominant theme observed across the entire eight-year collection period was that pertaining to outbursts of national pride and a growing sense of unity within the host nation. While this narrative did not appear to extend beyond the hosting phase of the event, its significant contribution to positive impressions during this period distinguished its importance. In particular, the narrative identified Bafana Bafana, South Africa’s national football team, as being an important driver of this positive discourse, where it was often positioned as a symbol of hope for many South Africans. Indeed, similar observations were discussed in the associated case study accounts of the event, whereby the 2010 World Cup was described to enforce a critical breakdown in several racial and socio-economical barriers between host residents (Allegi, 2008; Allen *et al.*, 2013). That being said, however, poor management of the SAFA legacy fund in the post-event phase appeared to critically undermine much of the goodwill and positive associations pinned to Bafana Bafana.

6.3 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

This study forms one of the first empirical analyses of mass media signalling in the context of mega-sporting events. In fact, to the best of this study’s knowledge, there have only ever been two other research papers (cf. Swart *et al.*, 2012, 2013) documented in the associated literature

to have explored the media signalling outcomes of a mega-sporting event. However, as both of these studies were commissioned by the City of Cape Town, their research agendas were largely confined to the tourism applications of media signals in foreign markets. Subsequently, this study was positioned to serve as an extension to this exploratory research, investigating the broader media signalling applications surrounding mega-sporting events.

More specifically, it is in the context of several implied narratives – as discussed in associated case studies and explicit policy objectives as presented in the event planning documentation (See Appendix A) – attached to the 2010 FIFA World Cup, that this study reports its findings. It is in this regard, therefore, that the study aimed to substantiate the media signalling discourse within its current context by offering key empirical insights and observations to the research field.

Clarke and Everest (2006) suggest that understanding the media impressions pinned to mega-sporting events is critical, especially in today's post-industrial society, for it is the information signalled through the media that provide the context within which these events are primarily experienced and understood. Subsequently, as this study's findings report and interpret this context of the media, it is expected to attract the interest of event media managers, destination marketers, and event organisers alike.

More specifically, event media managers and destination marketers are likely to be interested in any insights pertaining to the success of their media initiatives and campaigns, as well as any specific signalling trends or unexpected impressions that were overlooked, misinterpreted or poorly managed. In addition, event organisers are likely to be interested in the more practical applications of this study's conclusions, extracting insights from the manner in which key projects and operations are framed, with a particular focus on critical areas that highlight room for improvement.

In consideration of the key advantages of this study, and the context within which its findings have been reviewed and interpreted, the various managerial implications of this study can be further discussed.

6.3.1 Establishing Buy-in with Media Representatives

One of the key questions that this study has tackled from the very beginning is as to whether mega-sporting events have the potential to generate an overall benefit for a host destination. In

particular, this study focused on examining the media-signalling benefits that have more recently come to the attention of mega-sporting event hosts – especially for emerging states.

Overall, the findings tended to support the claims that mega-sporting events largely generate positive impressions and associations for a host destination. In particular, the findings suggest that the highly tangible outcomes, such as public infrastructure development and stadiums, are particularly susceptible to generating positive impressions of modernity and success. These findings also underline the clear risk with these events, where several negative impressions can also be found to form around the host. In particular, the findings suggested that the economic impact discourse might be particularly susceptible to generating less positive impressions in this regard, whereby positive economic revenues are often signalled to flow to the commercial sector and the political elites – thereby reinforcing ideas of social exclusion instead of discourses of growth and development. In fact, Schreiner (2009) claims, in this regard, that the media are often more inclined to frame the negative side of a story, especially when the topic is ambiguous or fiercely contested – as is often the case with mega-sporting events

What these findings suggest, therefore, is that while mega-sporting events can certainly be understood to generate positive impressions for a host region, these impressions are certainly not guaranteed, and in many cases might often need to be carefully coordinated and managed. In particular, this calls to task event organisers to assume a much more proactive role in the management of media impressions surrounding mega-sporting events.

One of the simplest ways that this can be achieved is to actively foster relationships with media representatives (Knott *et al.*, 2012). More specifically, Knott *et al.* (2013) suggests that the media should be treated as friends and adversaries so that they can be more easily convinced to buy-in to, and subsequently report, the positive discourses surrounding the event. In fact, Getz and Fairley (2004) suggest that the media need to be accommodated as VIPs to maximize their propensity for promoting positive impressions of the host region. Swart *et al.* (2013) also conclude, in this regard, that media representatives can become an event's biggest marketers when they buy-in to the concept.

6.3.2 Plan for the Future to Build Re-assurance of the Present

A primary feature in any mega-sporting event bid book and associated rationale is the improvements to public infrastructure and sports facilities that these events promise (Horne, 2007). The development or upgrade of stadiums and public transport systems to handle the

capacity crowds that mega-sporting events attract is typically one of the fundamental requirements set out by international sports organising bodies to qualify as a potential host candidate (Nauright, 2004). As such, mega-sporting events shift-up the timeline of these developments and contribute – in the form of ticket revenue, sponsorships rights and tourism flows – partly towards their cost (Malfas *et al.*, 2004).

Therefore, as one of the most highly tangible components of mega-sporting events, this study found that infrastructural developments and World Cup stadiums also form extremely important symbols of progress and success for host destinations. In particular, the World Cup stadiums were widely cited as projections of modernity and growth in the host region, and were also linked to serving several other ancillary causes, such as job creation and tourism generation. Whilst the positive impressions were profound here, however, they were critically limited and often undermined by reoccurring questions of opportunity cost, as a clear lack of prospects for long-run sustainability became increasingly evident.

The event management implications in this regard are largely self-explanatory – whereby the failure to have a long-run sustainability plan will fundamentally undermine this type of fixed asset investment (Swilling, 2006). Yet, whilst it might be argued that the opportunity costs are likely to be forgotten over time (Pizam, 1978); this study has found that World Cup stadiums can stand as critical landmarks and reference points that sustain these impressions.

Such findings, therefore, imply that if mega-sporting event related infrastructure can be linked to a comprehensive sustainability plan right from the bidding stage, it is likely to serve as a key symbol of success, modernity and capability not only during the event, but more importantly in the long-run post-event legacy stages. Beyond the promotion of positive impressions, this is also particularly important for mitigating critical thinking - especially in terms of opportunity cost.

One of the most effective ways of establishing a long-term sustainability solution for mega-sporting event related infrastructure is for the local government to partner with commercial clients who can take ownership after the event (Malfas *et al.*, 2004). A particularly good example of this was seen at the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester, as well as the 2012 Olympic Games in London, where parallel linkages were identified with local sports enterprises, who were interested in leveraging the commercial value of the venues.

6.3.3 Co-branding Considerations of Single Nation Hosted Mega-Sporting Events

Right from the very beginning, the 2010 FIFA World Cup was sold as an African World Cup; whereby organisers pinned a Pan-African rhetoric to the bid that was embedded in the discourse of modernity and development (de Almeida *et al.*, 2015). The primary objective, in this regard, was to leverage the positive impressions generated by the 2010 FIFA World Cup to dispel several negative stereotypes and suppressive ideological discourses about both South Africa and its African neighbours (Ndlovu, 2010).

Whilst the idea of an ‘African Renaissance’ was an attractive feature of the bidding books, however, the practical applications of this pseudo form of event co-branding was found to present several less favourable impressions in the observed coverage. For, whilst the Pan-African discourse was observed to actively dispel impressions of South African essentialism through the promotion of a more developed and modern Africa; in terms of the event’s failings, such efforts were also found to reinforce impressions of Afro-pessimism. These imagined linkages were also observed to work to an equal and opposite effect, especially with respect to the essentialised notions of Africa as a ‘dark continent’. In particular, the study found that the 2010 FIFA World Cup’s close connection to Africa heavily exacerbated safety and security concerns surrounding the event, especially following the terrorist attacks at the 2010 AFCON in Algeria.

In previous examples of co-branding at mega-sporting events (cf. the 2002 FIFA World Cup co-hosted by Japan and Korea), the potential negative impressions and associations shared between host destination were rationalised as a reasonable sacrifice in splitting the overall cost of the event (Kim & Petrick, 2005). Yet, this was not the case for South Africa, who footed the bill for the entire tournament. A similar case in this regard has also emerged in the context of the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil, which employed a Pan-American discourse to similar effects (de Almeida *et al.*, 2015).

South Africa’s attempted use of a Pan-African rhetoric at the 2010 FIFA World Cup, therefore, uncovers several important considerations for future hosts and the construction of their event bids. In particular, these findings warn event managers of trying to over-reach, in this regard, and highlight the potential ‘boomerang’ effects associated with co-branding in this format. In this regard, Getz and Fairley (2003) explain that, beyond the initial agreement, there is rarely any focused or coordinated strategy employed for co-branding events. Co-branding at mega-sporting events, however, is unusual; but as the event rhetoric appears to shift towards

signalling, this might become a more frequent occurrence. Xing and Chalip (2006) suggest that a particularly important factor to consider, in this regard, is the quality of fit between the destinations and the associated event.

6.3.4 Mitigating Negative Impressions Through Contingency Planning

In terms of practical observations, at least, mega-sporting events can be seen to have had somewhat of a long and profound history of serving as critical vehicles of articulation through which host nations can project several positive messages and impressions surrounding their socio-economic state (Black, 2007). But to assume that the signals projected from hosting a mega-sporting event are always positive is almost certainly a mistake; as such high profile showcasing opportunities rarely come without risk (Dimeo & Kay 2004).

Certainly, the findings of this study tends to support such conclusions. In particular, in the context of the 2010 FIFA World Cup it was primarily concerns surrounding crime, safety and security that occupied much of the negative sentiment in this regard. Such observations, therefore, clearly highlight how event managers need to be better prepared to deal with the threads of negative media coverage that will inevitably form around certain aspects of the event.

One particularly useful method that has been used to mitigate negative impressions in media is the use of contingency planning, whereby pre-prepared narratives tailored to specific situations are employed to combat negative discourses and manage disasters (Boin & Lagadec, 2000). In the case of the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa, for example, if contingency plans had been developed for the potential interference of several ancillary events, such as the murder of Eugene Terre'Blanche, it is likely that the local organising committees could have mitigated a considerable collection of negative impressions surrounding safety and security at the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

6.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As a largely unexplored field, the scope and associated need for research was extremely broad; and, as such, there were several parameters placed on this study which limited the utility of its findings and its definitive scope. More specifically, such limitations largely emerged amongst the methodological considerations for this study. These are discussed in the following sub-sections.

6.4.1 Loosely Defined Data Collection Points

Based on the methodological approach observed in previous studies (cf. Swart *et al.*, 2012; 2013), as well as considerations surrounding the temporal effects of mega-sporting events (Gibson *et al.*, 2014), this study chose to collect data at five critical points before, during and after the production of the event:

Collection Point 1: 2-4 years prior to the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament

Collection Point 2: 0-2 years prior to the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament

Collection Point 3: During the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament

Collection Point 4: 0-2 years after the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament

Collection Point 5: 2-4 years after the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament

What became immediately obvious in the analysis phase, however, is that collecting data in two-year increments was too inclusive for this research approach, especially when seeking to gauge specific changes in focus and sentiment over time. Therefore, whilst broad changes in narrative focus and impressions could be observed, the study was unable to report on more specific transitions.

It is likely that the study would have benefitted from condensing the data collection periods to at least one-year, if not six-months, to gauge more specific transitions in the event narrative. Although, given the exploratory nature of this study, and the clear lack of empirical research in the field, the study can offer insight to guide future research in this regard. In particular, the findings from the study are likely to prove useful in justifying research in more specific contexts of mega-sporting events, based on their prominent course of observation here.

6.4.2 Limited Relative Scope of Coded Concepts in Sentiment Lens

In order to report on the observed sentiment of news coverage, this study employed Leximancer - as a text analysis tool - to apply a sentiment lens over the article content. The lens classified the favourability of the references made within each conceptual group according to a predefined list of coded concepts. Subsequently, the total count of favourable and unfavourable references gave an indication as to the sentiment of the associated media impression observed at different points across the eight-year collection period. Furthermore, to identify sentiment surrounding a specific topic or narrative, manual qualitative research and interpretation was required.

For the purposes of methodological consistency with similar previous studies (cf. Swart *et al.*, 2012, 2013), the default list of pre-defined coded concepts was applied to the sentiment lens. It was only in the interpretation phase, then, that it became evident as to the relative exclusivity of the default list, which only measured sentiment for a relatively small portion of the associated content. As a result, it is likely that the sentiment analysis under-reported on the density of both positively and negatively coded narratives.

In this regard, it is clear that the study would have benefited from the use of list of pre-defined coded concepts in the sentiment lens that had been tailored to the context of mega-sporting events. This is an important consideration for future research in this field.

6.4.3 Confined to Reports on Potential Signalling Outcomes

This study found that over the entire eight-year data collection period, there were consistently more positive impressions extending from the observed content themes than there were negative. More specifically, the study observed that the relative frequency of positive media impressions peaked during both the hosting and immediate 0-2-year post-event period, but was at its lowest in the 2-4-year post-event phase. Furthermore, there were three primary themes that either appeared to feature consistently or most predominantly across the entire eight-year collection period: i) World Cup stadiums and local infrastructure; ii) safety and security impressions; and iii) outbursts of national pride.

Whilst these findings clearly indicate the projected media signals and impressions, however, what is not made clear by this study is the extent to which these impressions translate into actual perceptions amongst spectators. Certainly, the theory outlined in Chapter III would suggest that these media impressions are likely to have a profound influence on public perceptions. Yet, in this regard, Hall (1980) has suggested that media signals can be interpreted in three different ways: i) through negotiated readings where several dimensions are interpreted as intended, and several are not; ii) through dominant reading where the exact intent of the signal is decoded; or iii) an oppositional reading where the receiver completely re-encodes the intended signal.

Unfortunately exploring the connection between media signals and actual perceptions fell beyond both the scope and budgetary means of this study.

6.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Due to the exploratory based nature of this study and the relatively recent introduction of this research field to the academic research agenda, the scope for future research is both broad in spectrum and immediate in need. In order to refine the focus of this study to a realistic scope, there were several parameters placed on its objectives which limited the utility of its findings and its definitive scope. That being said, however, one of the primary purposes of this study has always been to serve as an important dialogue which can guide future discussions within the space of media signalling at mega-sport-events. The primary tenets of this dialogue are discussed in the following sub-sections.

6.5.1 Baseline for Future Media Signalling Research

This study serves as one of the first empirical-based analyses conducted on the potential media signalling outcomes of mega-sport-events. As such, the findings offered some of the first empirical observations surrounding both the focus and overall sentiment of media impressions at mega-sport-events. With a lack of previous empirical research for reference, the study's findings were unpacked within the context of several case studies and government policy agenda documents.

Subsequently, while several broader interpretations might be applied to other similar events, the core practical observations extracted here are largely context specific to the 2010 FIFA World Cup. A particularly valuable extension to this study, therefore, would be for future research to conduct a similar analysis of the media coverage surrounding another mega-sport-event in a different destination, and to compare the findings with those observations presented here.

Notably, this study's role in serving as an established benchmark and reference point, in this regard, will enable future scholars to identify important patterns and comparable dialogues. Indeed, the implications of research adopting this focus would be considered extremely valuable by media managers in particular, as they would have the validity to extend beyond just their context specific setting, providing insights into how impressions can be anticipated and therefore better managed.

6.5.2 Correlating Media Signalling Outcomes and Public Perceptions

Whilst the findings of this study clearly indicated the projected media signals and impressions surrounding the 2010 FIFA World Cup, what was not made clear by this study is the extent to which these impressions translated into actual perceptions amongst spectators. In acknowledgement of this limitation, therefore, it is here that this study presents further direction for future research.

More specifically, it is suggested here that future research coupling a media-content analysis and stakeholder media impressions survey would be extremely valuable in closing the conceptual gap between media signals and audience perceptions, whereby correlations and comparisons could be drawn between data sets. That being said, however, the extensive cost of such a research project, especially over a longitudinal time-period, makes its prospects unlikely.

A useful alternative option, in this regard, might be to conduct a media-content analysis on consumer and spectator generated media discussions surrounding mega-sporting events. For example, future researchers could analyse either Facebook or Twitter posts with specific hashtags or captions relating to a specific event. This might help in starting to close the gap between media signals and audience perceptions, as actual user interactions and responses to different media signals can be examined.

6.6 SUMMARY

The aim of this study was to better understand the media signalling outcomes of mega-sporting events, and more specifically understand how they change over time. This chapter, has outlined the conclusions, implications and recommendations extracted from the findings presented in Chapter V, both in the context of the existing literature and as a dialogue which can: i) inform current managerial practice; and ii) guide future discussions within the space of media signalling at mega-sporting events.

The overall findings suggested that over the entire eight-year data collection period, there were consistently more positive impressions extending from the observed content themes than there were negative. Although, the relative spread appeared to only favour the positive impressions by a small margin, with the findings illustrating (on average) a 60-40 split in favour of positive impressions. More specifically, the study observed that the relative frequency of positive media impressions peaked during both the hosting and immediate 0-2-year post-event period, but was

at its lowest in the 2-4-year post-event phase. Furthermore, on a more refined review of the observed thematic coverage, there were three primary themes that either appeared to feature consistently or most predominantly across the entire eight-year collection period. First, a clear extended narrative appeared to track the construction of World Cup stadiums and local infrastructure. Similarly, but from a decidedly less positive outlook, a clear extended narrative also appeared to track the safety and security impressions surrounding the event. Lastly the third most predominant theme observed across the entire eight-year collection period was that pertaining to outbursts of national pride.

Building on these findings, some of the managerial implications for event media managers and destination marketers include the reinforcement of the need for: i) proactive management of media impressions surrounding mega-sporting events by actively foster relationships with media representatives and constructing several contingency plans that can be positioned to combat negative discourses and manage disasters; and ii) partner with commercial clients to ensure mega-sporting event related infrastructure serve as key symbols of success, modernity and capability.

This chapter then outlined the limitations of the study, which largely emerged within its methodological considerations; although such limitations were concluded to not have significantly inhibited the findings of the study. Lastly, positioning this study as the foundations for further research in the field of media signalling at mega-sporting events, this chapter concluded by providing two broad directions for future research.

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APPENDIX A:

Review of the 2010 FIFA World Cup Planning Documentation

(Please Find Attached)