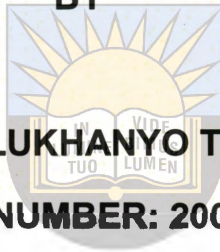




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**READER'S PERCEPTIONS OF IDIKELETHU NEWSPAPER AS A  
TOOL FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN ALICE, EASTERN  
CAPE**

**BY**



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**Submitted in fulfilment of the Master of Social Science Degree in  
Communication**

**to the Department of Communication,**

**Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, University of Fort Hare**

**SUPERVISOR: DR O.O. OSUNKUNLE**

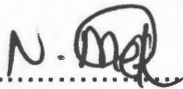
**June 2015**

*The financial assistance of the National Research Foundation (NRF) towards this research is hereby acknowledged. Opinions expressed and conclusions arrived at, are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the NRF.*

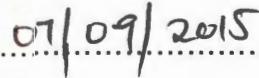
## DECLARATION

I, Nolukhanyo Theorida Metula, do hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work, that all the used or quoted sources have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references, and that this dissertation was not previously submitted by me or any other person at any other university for a degree.

Signed: N. Metula



Date: 07/09/2015



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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this Research Project to my grandmother, Mrs Thobeka Violet Metula for the endless support she offered to me during the entire study period. Despite of all ups and downs, she has been by my side to see me progress in my academic career. Thank you Bhelekazi for bringing me up.



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. O.O. Osunkunle for his tireless effort in reading my work and ensuring that I came up with a good dissertation. Without his patience and guidance this work could not have been successful.

I would like to also thank the readers of *Idikelethu* Newspaper and the Nkonkobe Local Municipality officials for ensuring that I received the needed information for this study. Their responses shaped this study. To the GMRDC and NRF, thanks for their financial support, without it; this project would not have been successful.

To my family and friends, thank you for your support and encouragement. I had some difficult times during this research, but you made it better for me. Most importantly, I want to thank God for everything, especially for giving me the strength to carry on when things were tough.

## ABSTRACT

Community newspapers play an important role in community development, especially within the communities in which they are produced. They play a huge role in lobbying people, empowering them and in ensuring that there is an active participation towards community development processes. Community newspapers are driven by democratic principles that are socially orientated and not profit driven. Hence, a number of people use them as a platform to share their views and ideas about anything that concerns them. In the light of the above, this study evaluates the reader's perceptions of *Idikelethu* Newspapers as a tool for community development, particularly in Alice, which is located within the Nkonkobe Municipality in the Province of Eastern Cape. This study used the mixed method approach as both qualitative research method through four focus group discussions in the areas where *Idikelethu* newspaper has high readership rates and quantitative research method through quantitative content analysis of the *Idikelethu* newspaper were conducted. The study revealed that community newspapers are socially responsible in nature, and this was ascertained through the views of the participants of the focus group discussions. This also confirms the views highlighted by the social responsibility and development media theories, which underpin this study. This study further revealed that the continuous readership of community newspapers depends on the satisfaction that people get from them and this was also established through the views of the focus group participants, which also underpin the views of uses and gratification theory. Based on the several findings and analysis of data, this study concludes that *Idikelethu* Newspaper contributes in many ways to the development of its readers and Alice community in general.

## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

|         |                                                                |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| AEJMC   | Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication |
| AIDS    | Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome                            |
| AIP     | Association of Independent Publishers                          |
| AMDJ    | African Media Development Initiative                           |
| BBB-EE  | Broad-Based Black Economic Development                         |
| C4D     | Communication for Development                                  |
| ECSECC  | Eastern Cape Socio Economic Consultative Council               |
| HIV     | Human Immunodeficiency Virus                                   |
| KZN     | KwaZulu Natal                                                  |
| LED     | Local Economic Development                                     |
| MDDA    | Media Development and Diversity Agency                         |
| NLM IDP | Nkonkobe Local Municipality Integrated Development Plan        |
| NEDA    | Nkonkobe Economic Development Agency                           |
| NGO     | Non-Government Organisations                                   |

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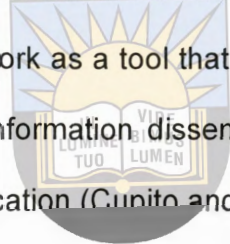
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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

#### 1.1. Introduction

Newspapers are one of the tools of communication and they have a significant role in promoting communal participation, community integration, and inclusion. They work as a tool that promotes voluntary decision making, and carry the responsibility of ensuring that social rights are disseminated while providing the news to the people. In this regard, newspapers work as a tool that performs a public service role which includes image and opinion information dissemination, and as a medium of both one-way and two-way communication (Cunito and Farrel, 2010).



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Newspapers also play an important role in ensuring change and the development of communities. They mobilise people and challenge them to participate in the decision-making processes of community development (Jim, 2013). The newspapers can adopt a democratic, free and pluralistic nature within the society in which they belong. They provide a platform whereby various groups of people can tell their own stories, in their own way, and develop their own voice in the public sphere. The newspapers can also support community initiatives with financial, technical and professional expertise (Combat Poverty Agency, 1995). O'Guinn *et al.* states that newspapers can be categorized by their target audience, geographic coverage, and frequency of publications (O'Guinn *et al.*, 2012). As a media class, newspapers provide an excellent means for reaching local audiences with informative advertising messages (O'Guinn *et al.*, 2012).

There are different categories of newspapers, namely *the national, regional, local, tabloid, and broadsheet*. The national newspapers contain some national and international news, but focus on news relating to a specific area of the country. The example would be the *Natal Witness* which is published at KwaZulu Natal. The regional newspapers contain some national and international news, but relatively focus on local news and headlines in detail. These newspapers are usually based around towns, cities or group of villages, and the example would be the *Forum Newspaper* which is published in Rosebank Killarney Gazette in Johannesburg North. The local newspapers cover the whole country, together with international news. The example would be the *Daily Dispatch* which is published at East London. Tabloid is the largest type of newspaper that covers all national and international news, often in a serious formal way. The example could be *The Times Newspaper* which is published at Johannesburg. Lastly, there is the broadsheet. This type of newspaper covers all national and international news and often contains a certain amount, or a column of gossip, scandalous news items, or personal stories. The example would be the *World Newspaper* which is published in Johannesburg (Teach it, 1999).

According to Moemeka (1994), locally based newspapers are more useful in development rather than the big urban newspapers as they provide balanced and critical reports of issues, processes and events in the community. Community newspapers further act as catalysts in improving people's living standards. Most importantly, locally based newspapers are useful in disseminating information and news aimed at the betterment of the society. In addition, locally based newspapers do not only play a significant role in the communities which they serve for their

betterment, but also contribute to national development. Their role in national development is to reduce the rural-urban dichotomy by using the concept of instrumentalism to disseminate information or ideas to the communities nationally (Moemeka, 1994). They moreover play a role in revealing how the national policy manifests itself in the local government, and documents how local policies emerge in response to a particular local reality.

Thus, in order to contribute to communal development, community newspapers should be published in a specific locality, all in the benefit of local communities, and the editorial thrust should consequently be able to meet the interests and needs of that particular locale (Moemeka, 1994). Community newspapers are therefore a highly accessible form of communication, which is relatively broad and yet so packed with a local in-depth appeal (Rausch, 2012). This study is therefore aimed at evaluating the reader's perceptions of community newspapers as a tool for community development, using *Idikelethu* newspaper as a case study. This was done with the view that *Idikelethu* newspaper is a communication tool that could be used for community development purposes in Alice and therefore a reflection of a local newspaper.

The *Idikelethu* newspaper is also known as the *Hope Community* newspaper. It is a community newspaper that is based at Alice, in the Nkonkobe Municipality, in the broader province of the Eastern Cape. The newspaper was established in 2007 and has about 8 years of service to the community of Alice. This newspaper entertains, educates and informs the Alice community, and presents the coverage of local news around the Nkonkobe Local Municipality and the surrounding areas (Charity SA,

2014). The Eastern Cape Province, according to Cadman (2007), is one of the nine provinces of South Africa and it covers an area of 169580sq km. It is the second largest province in South Africa, as it covers about 13, 9 percent of the South African landscape area and is one of the provinces that are underdeveloped. The population of this province is dominantly black (ECSECC, 2012).

According to Olivier (2001), Alice is one of the towns in the Eastern Cape that has a very rich history. One can mention the site that is well known as the first historical black institution, the University of Fort Hare, which contributed in the National political struggles against Apartheid and produced many political legends who includes the first black South African president, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela. Alice town is under the coverage of Nkonkobe local municipality. According to the NLM IDP 2012/2017, the Nkonkobe local municipality is the second largest local municipality under the Amathole district municipality and it covers the area of 3725 km<sup>2</sup> and takes about 16% of the surface area.

It must however be noted that the Alice LED strategy report (2000) stipulates that in Alice, there is a high population of people residing in villages. Alice has 79% of people living in rural and 21% of people living in urban areas (Alice LED Strategy, 2000). Census Community Profiles (2011) also highlighted that Alice also has 53% of females and 47% of males residing there and this shows a serious impact on poverty levels as the women are generally marginalised from economic opportunities. The majority of the people living in Alice are the youth and most are under the age of 15 years and 38 % live in rural.

This shows that there are large numbers of people depending on elder's grants or pensioners. This community has 21% of people having higher qualifications and there is a high rate of unemployment just like many other rural communities in South Africa. The main reason for unemployment is the lack of job opportunities (NLM IDP, 2012/2017) and because of this description, a sustainable local economic development for Alice is fundamental. Alice still needs to be developed and communication can be used as a tool for that development, with media playing a pivotal role. It is against this background that the researcher found it necessary to conduct this study.



## 1.2. The problem statement

The media plays an important role in society in terms of informing, educating, entertaining and facilitating developmental processes. To this effect, the media has to be democratic and pluralistic in nature, especially in the society in which it operates. It offers people the platform to tell stories about the issues that concerns them, within their social context, and this guides them towards their development (Policy Submission, 1995). The media therefore plays an important role in facilitating such development initiatives. Moreover, newspapers, like any other forms of media, are used to contribute to development and their role is to support community initiatives that impact positively on people's lives and by doing that, they meet the requirements of community development (Policy Submission, 1995).

With the presence of the *Idikelethu* newspaper in Alice, it is assumed that this newspaper is also playing a developmental role in the community; otherwise it would become a problem if the newspaper fails to meet the requirements of community development in this regard. But how relevant has the newspaper been in addressing

communal issues? Is the newspaper working as a tool that promotes community development? If so, what are the readers saying about the role and influence of the *Idikelethu* newspaper in Alice? These questions draw attention to the magnitude in which newspapers should be reviewed. It is therefore the aim and objective of this research to address such issues. This study therefore seeks to investigate whether the *Idikelethu* newspaper has any influence or a significant role in the development of the Alice community through its publications and from the perceptions of its respective readers.

### 1.3. Aim of the study

The aim of this study is to evaluate the reader's perceptions of the *Idikelethu* newspaper as a tool for community development at Alice, in the Eastern Cape.



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### 1.4. Objectives of the study

- To examine the relevance of the *Idikelethu* newspaper as a method of communication that can be used for developmental purposes
- To evaluate the extent to which the *Idikelethu* newspaper has stimulated the participation of members of the community in developmental issues
- To assess the reader's perceptions of *Idikelethu* newspaper as a tool for contributing towards community development in Alice

### 1.5. Research Questions

- What is the relevance of the *Idikelethu* newspaper as a method of communication for developmental purposes?
- To what extent has the *Idikelethu* newspaper stimulated the participation of people on issues concerning their own development?

- How do the readers perceive the *Idikelethu* newspaper in terms of its contribution towards community development in Alice?

## 1.6. Methodology

This study adopts a mixed method approach and qualitative research methods in the form of focus groups were used in gathering the data that is necessary for this research and a quantitative research method, such as the quantitative content analysis, was used to evaluate the relevance of the *Idikelethu* newspaper in disseminating development news at Alice, in the Eastern Cape. The researcher considered using the mixed method approach because the study sought to investigate the perceptions of readers concerning the role of the *Idikelethu* newspaper as a tool for community development at Alice, in the Eastern Cape. The study therefore utilised both the elements of the qualitative and quantitative approaches in collecting the data that was necessary for this research. Data were therefore analysed qualitatively. The methodology adopted for this study is fully discussed in Chapter 3.

## 1.7. Delimitations of the study

The study evaluates the reader's perceptions of *Idikelethu* newspaper as a tool for community development in Alice, in the Eastern Cape. Particular focus is placed to *Idikelethu* readers that stay in Alice community. The geographical area of this study is Alice and it is where *Idikelethu* newspaper is published. The target group are the *Idikelethu* readers only.

## 1.8. The significance of the study

Communication is one of the tools for development (Jim, 2013). The government needs to communicate with citizens to improve and promote participation and co-operation in development (Flint, 2013). Newspapers are one of the communication channels, so it is important to choose the best communication channel that will reach the targeted population (Jim, 2013).

Every community needs to be developed and the developmental process needs ideas from different people. It is important to note that the government cannot develop the community without consulting the community members. This is because people are more aware of the problems that affect them in the community and they must therefore be allowed to mention these problems and also suggest solutions. This, therefore, gives the people the opportunity to be involved in their own development. It is anticipated that the findings of this study will play an important role in assisting the *Idikelethu* newspaper to assess whether its content is in line with the requirements of community development or not. It is further anticipated that the findings of this research will assist the *Idikelethu* newspaper in functioning better as a tool for community development thereby leading to sustainable community development.

### Summary

This chapter looks at the introduction and background to this study and the problem statement. This chapter also clearly outlines the aim and the objectives of this study and the methodology to be used for the collection of data, presentation and analysis. In addition, the chapter also discusses the significance of the study as well as the

delimitation of the study. The next chapter will be focused on reviewing related literature and the theoretical framework that underpins this study.



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## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. Introduction

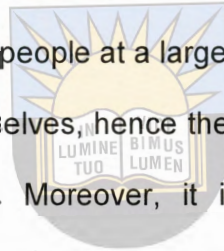
This chapter reviews the literature that is related to the role of community newspapers in facilitating community development processes. As such, the following aspects are adequately addressed: The role of media in society; Communication, mass media and development; Development; Community newspapers and development; South African experience; the role of media in community development; the role of newspapers in community development; categories of newspapers; and the role of community newspaper in community development. The researcher also discussed the theories that this study was built on which are the social responsibility theory, uses and gratification theories and development media theory.

#### 2.2. Role of media in society

The media is the communication channel that delivers messages to the public. According to the C4D (2014), the United Nations organisations identified media as a communication tool that can be used for developmental purposes. Hence it falls under development communication. The Media has been used to communicate for different purposes which include social change and strengthening of environmental communication. It is also used to develop messages and approaches that encourages and sustain positive behaviour towards, developmental actions. The Media also has the capacity to bring about social change by enabling the

participation of poor people in the national and communal empowerment programmes.

The media is quite useful in this regard since it stresses the role of people as the agents of change in the national and community development, and highlights the need to negotiate skills improvement systems and communal co-operations for developmental purposes (McCall, 2011). I concur with C4D (2014) and McCall's (2011) views that the media revolves around the role of people, as it takes people as the agents of change in terms of national or community development. The media is the easiest way to communicate with people at a large scale. In most cases it is used to persuade people to develop themselves, hence the C4D (2014) states that it falls under development communication. Moreover, it is used as an injection that influences people's behaviours for development purposes.



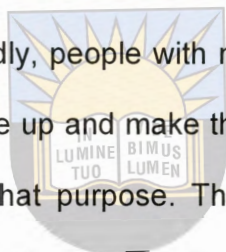
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McCall (2011) further noted the role and importance of media in society by pointing out that the media focuses on the ways in which people can overcome obstacles and identify ways in which people can get help in order for them to achieve the goals they set for themselves, such as personal and community development. This implies that the media focuses on collective community actions and on fostering a long-term social change. Another important role of media is that it enables a free, independent and pluralistic information process that serves the public interest, while ensuring the freedom of expression, where all groups will be able to voice out their opinions and participate in developmental issues and decision-making processes (McCall, 2011).

Islam (2002) points out that many poor people do not suffer from physical and human deprivation but from the fact that they lack a voice in national or communal decision making processes and that has a negative effect on them because they are

left out in many important issues that affect their lives. Corruption and feeble governance are in the midst of the issues that affect people's lives negatively but there is a steady progress made by the government to resolve these challenges.

Development is therefore a very comprehensive issue that needs a solemn involvement and an active participation from the concerned populace. One of the key tools of effective development strategies is the transmission of knowledge and its transparency; community newspapers execute that task. In order for a country to reduce poverty it must improve the access to information and also improve the quality of that information. Undoubtedly, people with more information cannot suffer because they are empowered to wake up and make their lives better; and the media plays an important role in fulfilling that purpose. The media is a tool that brings knowledge and communicates ideas with people (Islam, 2002).



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Islam (2002) however indicates that a free press is not a luxury because it is the central part of communication and determines whether a community newspaper does or does not develop the community. Therefore, its exercise of freedom in the society should come with responsibilities. In this regard, the media, as a tool that develops the community, should adhere to the Batho Pele principles. In a certain sense, its primary role is to inform, educate, empower, and develop people within the locale in which they live. It should therefore, be transparent, informative and educational to people.

The media should be responsible for its content, whether it is helping to market work better, from a small scale vegetable trading to a global foreign currency and capital markets. Its ability to transmit ideas, facilitate trade and share innovations across national boundaries should be guided by professional ethics. The media should

consider the importance of human development because human development includes educating people about health and informing them about their rights (Islam, 2002). It gives people the information that they need in order to develop themselves and their communities.

According to Choudhury (2011), the media has an important role to play in the communication of developmental programmes seeing that it circulates knowledge, creates forums for the discussions of issues, transmits ideas and skills for the betterment of individuals, and creates the bases for consensus towards the stability of the state (Choudhury, 2011). I am aligned with this perspective because if the media were to fail its duty of circulating knowledge, transmitting ideas and sharing skills for the betterment of individuals, there would be no community development, since the majority of the people would be clueless about the developmental programmes that are taking place in the country, and in their respective communities. The media is needed to intervene under these circumstances.

Since the role of the media is to entertain, educate and inform the general public, through the use of televisions, radios, the internet, billboards, and newspapers (Musah et al, 2012), all kinds of media are therefore used to pursue development communication. For instance, according to the Right2know Media Discussion Document (2011), the media is regarded as having a potential to play an important role in deepening democracy and advancing the socio-economic rights of people. It is therefore linked to the democratic system which enables social change that reaches the national and international stakeholders.

The media is also capable of giving people the opportunity to exercise their constitutional rights and their freedom of speech, so that their voices may be heard.

Subsequent to the 1994 democratic break-through in South Africa, the state has enforced some legislation which makes available the people's right to freedom of expression and access to information, and this right has since been documented in the 1996 Constitution. This highlights the government's desire for a free press and the importance of media in society. This is an important initiative in terms of development communication because it gives people the platform to share their views and ideas about the issues that concerns them regarding the aspect of community development.

By offering a platform for people to share their views and ideas on social issues, the media merges people with their government, and allows both to work together in transforming communities (Choudhury, 2011). The significant role played by newspapers in this regard was highlighted by the former United States president, Thomas Jefferson, who was in office since March 1801 to March 1809. He remarked that he would rather live in a country with newspapers and without government than in a country with a government but without newspapers (Lobulu, 2011). He also noted that during his time (1801-1809), the newspapers were the only source of information which was easily available, as television and radio were not yet invented.

President Jefferson therefore drew attention to the importance of newspapers as the necessary means of mass media that is extremely informative in nature, which without; the society would remain uninformed and undeveloped. This is due to the role that the media plays, which is to inform, interpret processes, educate, socialise, mobilise and to entertain people. This is linked to the fact that the media uses its influence to persuade people into following a particular path. Therefore, the media plays an important role in changing the perceptions of the society through its media

content, whether it be news or advertising; it affects people and influences the public's opinion to a certain extent (Lobulu, 2011).

It is also important to note the important role of the media in shaping the democratic process of any nation. The media generally mobilizes people to participate in the decision making processes about issues that affect their lives. But there was a time when the economic challenges of African countries were not progressing. Big institutions were falling apart due to poor governance and the lack of accountability to those governing at the national level. This was a time when the media had not right to freedom of speech, and could not fulfil its role because they were controlled by the state. The media at that time could not also promote public debates and cultivate democracy. In many African countries, the majority of people, especially the poorer that lived in rural areas could not participate in the decision making processes of their respective countries because their voices were ignored.

The local media, such as community newspapers, were therefore the only alternative to serve as the voice of the voiceless, especially those that were ignored (Lobulu, 2011). The media played a decisive role in many of these African countries. For example, an independent branch of media in Tanzania contributed in the development of a politically active society, as the media increased its public call for good governance, accountability, the freedom of speech, respect of human rights and the reformation of media laws. This shows that the media was able to spread the voices of the people and the people's need for democracy in that country. The media, in this case, ensured the flow of information to the public.

The role of the media is therefore valuable in transforming the society. The media is a tool that investigates the problems of the society, in order to come up with ideas

that will persuade the people into making positive changes in their communities, which will contribute to development (Lobulu, 2011). The media is therefore a very powerful tool that can influence people in many ways. It informs, persuades, educates and interprets the socio-economic and political issues that take place in society. Therefore, whenever the media takes part in developmental issues, there will be positive results because people get influenced to take charge.

According to Oso (2011), the media reproduces the challenges of the environment in which it is situated, and this helps the people to grapple with the gravity of their social issues. The historical accounts state that Sierra Leone is the first country to publish a newspaper and it was The Royal Gazette that was published in 1801. Ghana followed in 1822 with its newspaper publication called the Royal Gold Coast Gazette. Later the British Colony, first African editor Charles Bannerman published the Accra Herald, a year before the *Prohin* was published by Henry Townsend in Abeokuta, South West Nigeria. Since then, the Nigerian media has become the most robust and vibrant media to be acknowledged in the African continent (Oso, 2011).

It must also be noted that, South Africa first published a newspaper back in the 1800. That was the time when the governor of the Cape Colony initiated the publishing of the government controlled Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser. In addition, the first privately owned newspaper in South Africa was the South African Commercial, published in 1824. Its editors were Thomas Pringle and John Fairbairn. Furthermore, in 1830, the first Dutch language newspaper called De Zuid-Afrikaan was published. Then, followed the first African language newspaper called Umshumayeli Wendaba in 1837 and also the Afrikaans language newspaper called Die Afrikaanse Patriot, in 1876 ([www.world-newspapers.com](http://www.world-newspapers.com)).

The dichotomy between demographics and publishing languages can be explained by different literacy levels, the widespread popular use of the English language, as well as South Africa's history of censorship, which curbed the development of a culture of newspaper readership. There are also a large number of free (advertising-funded) local and community newspapers in several different languages that includes the *Idikelethu* newspaper ([www.world-newspapers.com](http://www.world-newspapers.com)).

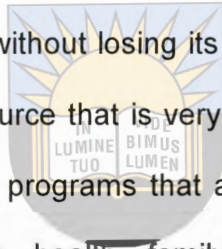
The researcher agrees with the above statements that in every country there is media that is responsible for circulating the news to the people of that country. The researcher also noted that there are different communication tools in every country and they vary in language use. They use different languages in order to cater for every citizen in the country. English is the most used language in media, specifically in the South African media because English is the national language. But in cases of community media, it is good to use the language that is used by people of that specific locality.

### **2.3. Communication, mass media and development**

Communication has continuously played a significant role in national development right from the olden days of modernisation, in the later 1950s to 1960s. The focus in those days was not just on democracy but on the socio-economic developments of the day. There was a belief, back then, that democracy would be feasible, if the society can be modernised. The mass media served as an important link in the modernization process, because it helped to communicate ideas to people and transformed the society (Leslie, 2003). This is further supported by Ravi (2012), who noted that communication is part of every society and that the media is a tool that

communication uses to disseminate information, to entertain and to educate societies.

Communication therefore takes an integral and essential role in the society because it ensures the interaction and interplay of emotions and the information given to people. The society therefore needs communication as much as the communication depends upon the society. The society is nothing without communication because the society cannot co-exist if communication falls short. It must also be noted that every medium of communication has its important role in development but it differs from one cultural identity to another without losing its effectiveness. Over the years, the radio has been regarded as a source that is very important in educating people and for development because it has programs that are related to social problems, civic matters, agricultural programs, health, family planning and other related programmes.

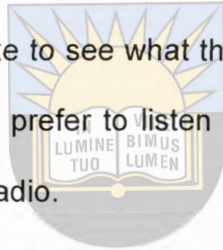


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In terms of broadcasting, the radio still enjoys its accessibility and cost effectiveness and it reaches more people than a television (Gupta, 1999). According to Gupta (1999) the media is relevant, meaningful and vibrant in development needs of the people. The Frequency Modulation broadcasting has been expanded and its expansion resulted prioritization of media. As a tool for development, the radio has been regarded as a medium that is easily accessible, cost effective and localised. The television focuses more on advertising and market forces; as a result, the objective of using it as a tool for development has long been abandoned. Moreover, its stage has reached where the pretence of the use of television for development is not maintained. But on television, there are soaps, films and songs that contain some form of awareness about social issues, such as science programmes,

environment programmes, songs designed for charitable acts that are used as the simple means of development (Gupta, 1999).

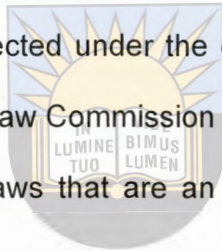
The researcher also noted that all types of media played a role in development but in different ways. For example, the radio plays its role in development with its programmes and the television also uses televised programmes but they differ in the way in which they broadcast their programmes. Furthermore, the radio is audible, and the television is both audible and visual. The researcher therefore noted that people get development messages in every medium but it depends on how they like to receive the news. Some people like to see what they are being told about, hence they prefer the television and others prefer to listen while they are busy with other things, hence they prefer to use the radio.



The chapter 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) identifies the freedom of expression as a basic human right, in which everyone exercises their freedom. Section 16 of the Bill of Rights contains detailed provisions with regard to freedom of expression, stating that “Everyone has the right to freedom of expression, which includes freedom of the press and other media; freedom to receive or impart information or ideas.” That means every South African has a right to express their ideas and receive information in any media, including the *Idikelethu* newspaper. Kondowe (2008) second that statement by stating that the media in Malawi shows the degree of freedom as it operates fairly freely, since the adoption of the 1995 Republican Constitution. The Republican Constitution of Malawi provided positive provisions on issues relating to freedom of expression. According to Section 35 of the constitution “every person shall have the right to freedom of expression”. Section 36 of the constitution states that media has to operate without hindrance locally and

elsewhere. On the other hand Section 37 provides that “every person has a right to access information held by government as long as it is for the exercise of his right”.

Kondowe (2008) stipulates that there are a number of institutions that have an impact on the operation of the media and those institutions were established in line with the requirements of a democratic system of government. Their purpose is to protect and promote human rights. The Malawi Human Rights Commission is one of those institutions and the aim is to promote the freedom of expression as one of the human rights. It must be highlighted that media is where people get to exercise their freedom of expression and it is protected under the constitutional provisions of the Malawi Human Rights Commission. Law Commission is another institution that offers media the opportunity to have the laws that are an obstruction to media freedom amended.



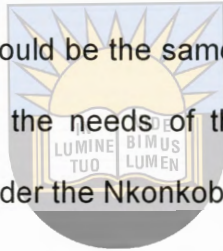
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I also want to note that if any medium does not go in line with any country constitution therefore it violates people’s rights. Hence every medium has to give people the platform to express themselves on issues concerning them and also provide them with the information that they need. In that way, people are exercising their rights. The researcher, again, wants to highlight that if the *Idikelethu* newspaper does not align its content within the bounds that are set by the South African Constitution, it means that it therefore violates the rights of people living within the Alice communities.

Jankowski (2002) therefore argued that the concentration in investigating the relations between media and community started in Chicago School in the 1920s and 1930s. He argued that the scholars were interested in the role that the community press play regarding identity formation among immigrant groups. He argued that

according to the observation, the newspaper reading is more characterised among residents in cities than in rural areas. He also found that news reading is different in the city than in the country and there are different kinds of news that are being read in the cities than in the country. In the cities, people became more interested in the news from outside region and the country readers preferred local news (Jankowski, 2002).

This therefore means that the media content must be suitable for the consumers. The media houses must have the interest of their readers or viewers at heart when developing media messages. This should be the same for the *Idikelethu* newspaper. It must be geared towards meeting the needs of the Alice community, including those distant rural villages that are under the Nkonkobe Local Municipality.



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#### **2.4. Development**

Development is an event constituting a new stage in a changing situation or it is the process of change. It is also implicitly intended as something positive or desirable. When referring to a society or to a socio-economic system, development usually means improvement, either in the general situation of the system, or in some of its constituent elements. It may occur due to some deliberate actions carried out by a single agent or by some authority pre-ordered to achieve improvement (Gregory, 1995).

It is also important to note that development is a critical aspect of individuals, groups, communities or nations. Community development is even more important because it decisively leads to self-reliance, hence huge amounts of funds, time, and resources, are being invested towards community development initiatives. A lot of resources have been continuously channelled towards communities over time in a bid to

facilitate community development (Human Development Report, 2014). It is however worth mentioning that the Alice community development also needs more funds and resources to facilitate their community development. Within the Nkonkobe Local Municipality, it would be good if the *Idikelethu* newspaper and other relevant stakeholders would co-operate, try to organise some funds to develop the Alice community.

It is therefore argued that community development is a process conducted by community members. It is a process where local people cannot only create more jobs; incomes and infrastructure, but also help their community become fundamentally better able to manage change. However, the concrete benefits of community development, such as employment and infrastructure, come through local people changing attitudes, mobilising existing skills, improving networks, thinking differently about problems, and using community assets in new ways. Therefore, community development improves the situation of a community, not just economically, but also as a strong functioning community in itself (Gary and Rhonda, 2013). The Alice community needs to follow in this pattern, as this will benefit the residents and their local communities. It will be best for them to take their community development programmes into their hands because they are aware of what their community needs, and how development can transform people within their communities. It is also important to note that community development builds the five capitals of a community which are physical, financial, human, social and environmental. Therefore, it is worth to mention that through people's participation in their communities, people rethink problems and expand contacts and networks. They develop new economic options and also improve their environment (Moscardo, 2008).

According to the Nkonkobe Annual Report (2013/2014), Nkonkobe Local Municipality established the entity called Nkonkobe Economic Development Agency with the purpose of transforming local development by unlocking opportunities in Agriculture in their areas including Alice community. This shows the role government took in developing, the Alice community. Moreover, the municipality ensures that the local businesses receive full support and participate in decision makings that yield empowerment due to small businesses, entrepreneurs and micro farmers. They also focus on empowering the local businesses on the advanced BBB-EE new approaches for effective local development in Nkonkobe areas, including Alice.



## **2.5. The role of media in community development**

One of the crucial tools for development is communication. Communication may be in a form of dissemination, guidelines, prescriptions, recommendations, advocacy, promotion, persuasion, education, conversation, roundtables, consultations, dialogue, counselling or entertainment. This is because it is assumed that providing information is a powerful strategy for the development purposes. It must be noted that the information is a tool that helps people to hold government accountable towards ensuring transparency, participation and empowerment. It should also be pointed out that communication is not just a tool to provide information but also a medium that helps in fostering social awareness and facilitating public democratic dialogue. This is because communication has the ability to share understandings that can lead to social change and also contribute to evidence-based policies. It also creates a platform for the voices of the poor to be heard and so distributes the power to all people (Hovland, 2005).

In the light of the above, I want to argue that transparency; participation and empowerment are the major weapons to fight with underdevelopment. In this democratic world, everyone has to be responsible for their own development and that could not just happen without the knowledge of how to develop themselves, hence media has to take charge of empowering people. According to Soola (1995), community participation is one of the important development approaches as it gives community members or citizens the opportunity or platform to suggest and contribute to their own development through various development initiatives.

In order for community participation in development process to occur and come up with good results, there is a need to shift from big to small participatory community media. Communication in this regard is will be directional and involve a linear flow of dynamic information, recursive, and transactional, in which people can share experience. In this process, everyone is therefore an active participant of development (Soola, 1995). Exchanging ideas about community development is much better than using one or the same idea for several times. Using the same idea could be inappropriate for other communities because of different cultures and needs. Therefore, it is important to empower people from that specific community to raise their ideas on how they think their community could help to transform.

For community development purposes, the role of communication must be a first preference. Cultural, socio-economic and political milieu of the media receivers and beneficiaries has to be researched. While audience has to be understood and audience understanding has to be drawn, media message has to be taken seriously. It is therefore important to choose a medium that is based on what is needed, a medium that is available to inform people and also consider the costs to deliver messages through that particular medium. This will help the audience in being

involved and to participate in every stage of media planning process, in decision making about message, type, design, delivery and reception (Soola, 1995). The media should therefore try its best to deliver messages that satisfy the community and messages that cater for the needs of the community.

Still looking at the role of media in community development, the African Media Development Initiative Research by King (2006) notes the need to foster strong media that is capable of tackling poverty and improving development. He then states that media in Africa should be effective and serve as catalyst for debates, protest, and prompting concerns that emerges. There was a little understanding and appreciation that the media in Africa itself can help in advancing countries' economic and social development and that they have a critical role to play in the betterment of the African society. The media is also expected to play a role in aiding good governance, transparency and accountability. The media must also ensure that all voices in society are heard and it also gives a platform of debates to everyone to raise their views about issues concerning them. It is also an important tool for supporting health and educational development (King, 2006).

A community media is therefore given a role in providing a voice to rural or marginalised poor communities, especially those without access to media. The community media was also given a community role to deliver the content that is part of development agenda (King, 2006). The researcher noted that people from rural communities lack the knowledge because of poor access to media. Community media should seriously take charge of the communities where they are situated. They should be easily accessible and at a low costs so that everyone could easily get community development messages and get the platform to share their ideas also.

According to Right to Know Campaign Discussion Document (2011), South African Media still operates in a complex environment. Although the Apartheid era collapsed more than 20 years, there are still many challenges that South Africans are still facing. Those challenges include massive unemployment, HIV/AIDS epidemic, high levels of rape and other gendered violence, limited agrarian reform, deepening rural poverty, and increased urbanization, under investment in social services (e.g. education, health, and the criminal justice system), and environmental degradation. Importantly, all these trends confirm that social change is required and it needs wide spread popular mobilization that includes media playing its role in this regard. As already discussed, the media acts as a catalyst for debates and engagement that will lead to development.

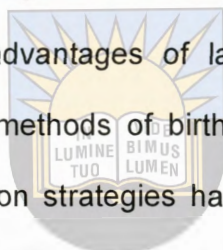


Right to Know Campaign Discussion Document (2011) states that despite the obstacles that South Africa is facing, the fight against equality has been made by introducing democratic dispensation which has been seen as the transformation of the institutions of governance. The transformation of governance institutions includes the ability whereby all South Africans have to participate and be consulted. This is influenced by the 1996 Constitution that offers South Africans the opportunity to access the basic human rights as well as socio-economic rights. According to Right to learn campaign, lobbying the state has been prioritized by many organizations that were seeking more than social orders. This happened in the engagement with those who are affected by poverty.

According to Berrigan (1979), the mass media were used to support development initiatives and it is called development communication. The development communication was borrowed from marketing approach which is a form of persuasive communication. Mass media supported development by beaming

information or messages encouraging people to participate and support their own development. The broadcast and the print media therefore took a role in informing people about development projects and highlighting the benefits of those projects. The media also urge people to participate in those projects. For instance, the media or community newspaper can focus on development initiatives like family planning.

The communication is usually in a form of posters or leaflets. These communication mediums were used to inform people about the availability of family planning methods and tell them where they might be obtained, illustrate the advantages of small family together with the disadvantages of large families, and attempt to persuade people to practise some methods of birth control so that their families cannot be large. Other communication strategies have been used to educate and support audience about health and nutrition schemes, agricultural projects and better education (Berrigan, 1979).



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The community media still believe that there is a necessity in the continuation of all these functions of media because there is still a need to inform, educate, and persuade people about various development programmes. But there is also a belief that media could play more in the development than just being used as the message transmitter from one source to another (Berrigan, 1979). The researcher therefore wants to note that with the *Idikelethu* newspaper is using a persuasive approach to lobby the Alice residents for community development; therefore development is highly possible in the Alice community.

Community media therefore works as a two-way platform to exchange information and it works on broadening the public sphere by opening spaces for dialogue and debate. Its functions are critical in the state, especially when bringing transitions to

democracy. Community media has a potential to be easily accessible for information and entertainment in cost effective and culturally relevant manners, in that they are in close contact with the communities they serve (Hopke, 2003).

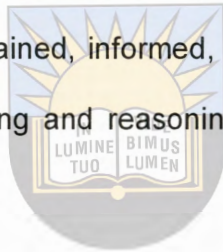
## **2.6. The role of newspapers in community development**

According to Babalola and Obafemi (2002), newspapers are the instruments to build literate communities because of their invaluable functions that are to inform, educate, and entertain, and bring the activities of government nearer to the people. Newspapers are regarded as common and popular tools of communication that can be used by both adults and children. They also promote literacy through learning, writing and through dialogues. These are the pillars of effective and efficient use of language. Babalola and Obafemi (2002) states that newspapers are capable of motivating readers; as a result, in most parts of the country, you will find people standing around reading newspapers or and congregating in the morning to discuss the contents of the newspapers. I agree with these views as that show the capability of newspapers in promoting critical thinking, retention of information, problem solving and questioning of information sources.

Babalola and Obafemi (2002) continued by saying that, newspapers are published to disseminate news about issues that are of interest to the public and they are targeted to both young and old. They further note that in Nigeria, there are Nigerian newspapers called The Guardian, The Nigerian Tribune, This day and Punch, that contains various topics about different issues that are of interest to a broad spectrum of audiences. The targeted audience include school children, youths in impressionable years, elites and educated adults, semi-illiterates and stark illiterates. These newspapers have columns having news of different areas of life. Those

columns include local news column, sports column, entertainment column, and arts column, advice column which can be divided into personal, medical, automobile, household and educational.

They further argued that the layout of this Nigerian newspaper, by virtue of what they publish and the flexibility of their publication simply shows that this newspaper is really a catalyst to literacy development in the Nigerian community (Babalola and Obafemi, 2002). With my understanding from the above discussion by Babalola and Obafemi (2002) newspapers also take part in literacy development of a person. That means a person does not get entertained, informed, persuaded only, they are also developing in terms of writing, reading and reasoning in which it is the best thing especially for young children.



According to Africa Ignite (2012), *Ithubaletu* newspaper is one of the newspapers that contribute to the rural development in KwaZulu Natal. This newspaper is published in isiZulu and its role is to give voice to rural communities across the province and provide people with information, sources and opportunities in a reader friendly format and hence it is regarded as an important tool for transformation. Africa Ignite (2012) continued to state that according to the followed-up survey conducted by MDDA the newspaper focuses on addressing the needs of rural readers and it gave a clear indication of who the rural readers are and what they want to read in their newspaper. This newspaper offers enterprise development opportunities to local correspondence.

These opportunities include training, support and payment for the stories and photos that have been published. They also connect them with their district stakeholders and other media to help them with their own establishment of district journalists,

story tellers and researchers. Another important thing to note about Ithubalethu newspaper is that it focuses on these areas: rural rights watchdog, rural women protection health and career guidance. It focus on rural rights' watchdog with the aim to protect the basic human rights together with consumer rights of rural communities because they discovered that those rights are routinely abused because of isolation and lack of information, resources and bargaining power.

On the other hand, when focusing on rural women protecting their own health they provide women the access on the information that is accurate and trustworthy that focuses on how to protect themselves and their children from lifestyle-related problems. Ithubalethu rural newspaper focuses on career guidance by providing students with information about careers and study opportunities (Africa Ignite, 2012).

The researcher believes that if the *Idikelethu* newspaper has similar characteristics with Ithubalethu newspaper that would mean it contributes to the Alice community development in many ways.

Rural communities' newspapers therefore play a role as a forum for local issues including promoting development (Emke, 2007). These newspapers are regarded as tool that operates like glue, oil and web. When the newspapers operate as glue, they help to hold the community together and enable talks as they connect the community members. When they communicate as oil, it shows a vibrant communication process that acts as a lubricant for development of social cohesion. That means they assist in economic trade, patterns of communication and social relations because of its trust and co-operation. The web implies that communication can be seen in the lines of influence; therefore newspapers can help in building and maintaining the connection of trust necessary to link members of their community (Emke, 2007).

A newspaper is therefore regarded as an important medium that is easily accessible and it affords a reader the time to understand and digest the news item. The newspaper is also good enough for future references because it can be kept by the reader and that does not need complicated and expensive technology (Kundowe, 2008). The researcher therefore wants to mention that if the *Idikelethu* newspaper can work as glue, oil and web, the Alice community therefore would stand to develop. It needs to assist the Alice community to develop through the dissemination of economic trade and social relation messages. It also needs to help the community by holding it together as it connects Alice community members together by influencing them to participate in community development programmes.



## 2.7. Categories of newspapers

There are different categories of newspapers, namely: the national, regional, local/community, tabloid and broadsheet. National newspapers contain some national and international news, but focus on news relating to a specific area of the country, for example, the South West Mercury newspaper. The regional newspapers contain some national and international news, but focus on fairly local news. These newspapers are usually based around towns, cities or group of villages, for example, the Bath Chronicle newspaper. Tabloid is the largest type of newspaper that covers all national and international news, often in a serious formal way, for example, The Times newspaper.

Lastly there is the broadsheet. This type of newspaper covers all national and international news. It often contains a certain amount of more gossipy or scandalous news item, or more personal stories, for example, World newspaper. The focus of local/community newspapers is on local news. They also cover the whole country,

together with international news with the aim of putting the national news at local level for the benefit of the community, for example, The Sun newspaper (Teach it, 1999). The *Idikelethu* newspaper forms part of the community newspapers. It covers news of the whole country together with the international news but they put it at a local level for the benefit of Nkonkobe areas, including the Alice community.

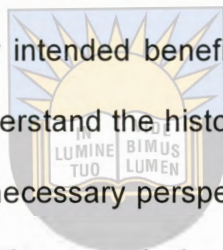
## 2.8. The role of community newspapers in community development

World Press Freedom Day Report (2014) stipulates that even though many media outlets have made provisions for audience participation and have therein become more accessible to the people they serve, nowhere is accessibility and specificity of purpose so well defined as with community media. Therefore, community media will often fill the void left by larger corporate media entities that operate under different imperatives that may not include the underrepresented or marginalized populations in a society. The researcher believes that since the *Idikelethu* newspaper is a community newspaper, it is more accessible to Alice residents and it also serves the interests of the Alice community. It is also worth to mention that women and young people find a home for their issues and encouragement of their participation within the community media framework.

The inclusion of women remains a challenging development issue because they are habitually excluded from the decision-making processes within their own societies, whilst being the first point of contact on many health and educational issues. Similarly, more attention should be given to the inclusion of youth within the media and to developing their media literacy skills (World Press Freedom Day Report, 2014). Women and youths should be given more attention by media because they are mostly marginalized from developmental issues. For instance, women are

always violated and abused in a number of ways, like rape or teenage pregnancy in young girls. The youth are always associated with drug abuse, unemployment and criminal acts. Those are serious problems which impose negative effects on community development.

Another important thing noted by World Press Freedom Day Report (2014), was that, local media can create a coherent narrative of a region's development and help people formulate goals and plans on how to improve their situation. The media can help contextualize national development programs within community frameworks and bring these goals closer to their intended beneficiaries. Furthermore, effective local media can also help people understand the history and evolution of oppression or discrimination and give them the necessary perspective to make rational choices to emerge from it. With this information, people have the means to participate in democratic processes and shape their own futures locally and nationally.



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AEJMC Report (2008), states that with the advent of the democratic era in South Africa, media has transformed people and that community media has been the tool to foster change, makes media accessible to everyone, and consequently give opportunities for everyone to raise their voice in the media. Local information is therefore available because of the growing transnational media, together with the community media. It must be noted that the availability of information in media helps to build, and community media plays a vital role in responding to communities' informational needs that are relevant to their everyday lives, promotes civic participation and socio-economic rights, and enhances community relations.

It is therefore important to point out that the South African newspapers, like any other forms of community media market, are thriving and their function is to reflect the

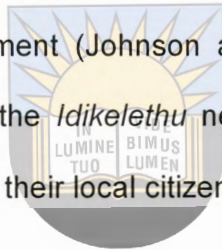
audiences' growing need to access localized and relevant information. Another important thing to note is that if community newspapers play their role to the fullest, their content would reflect their respective community demographics. There are however situations when the South African newspapers fail in this regard, it is when their contents focuses more on advertisers and public relations and they do not respond to community interest and needs. Moreover, most of them ignore the issues of local government. One of the reasons that contribute to that is the lack of skilled management among first-line newsroom managers.

There are four functions that management have to play in any industry in order to achieve the goals and the functions of that particular industry. Those goals are: planning, organizing, activation and control. If the editors of community newspapers can follow these functions they can fulfil their newsroom responsibilities (AEJMC Report, 2008). In this regard, the researcher believes that the *Idikelethu* newspaper should take note of issues of local governance, the Nkonkobe Local Municipality, meanwhile they focus on developmental news that are relevant to minority or low-income groups. In that they will meet the community newspaper's functions of responding to communities' information needs relevant to their everyday lives, promotes civic participation and socio-economic rights, and enhances community relations.

According to Johnson and Menichelli (2007), like any other community media, community newspapers have to allow individuals to tell their stories. It has to allow citizens to have necessary conversations about their own self-directed development. Community newspapers must be able to allow participants to experience talking publicly about issues concerning their own development and also describe their experiences. There are four characteristics that described the community media,

including community newspapers, and they are: localism, diverse participation, storytelling, deliberation and empowerment. These are the four characteristics that are expected from the *Idikelethu* newspaper.

It must also be noted that community media are usually created where residents are, at a specific geographical place, and the duty of community media is to explore local issues. It also helps to differentiate and define places where people live and how other people relate to others. Culture and local values are part of the issues that community media are likely to reflect on. Community newspapers therefore stimulate localism and local citizen empowerment (Johnson and Menichelli, 2007). In this regard the researcher believes that the *Idikelethu* newspaper should also explore Alice community issues and stimulate their local citizen to empowerment.



Diverse participation is therefore necessary and it is when community media has to accomplish certain mission by driving and servicing the broader community. The inclusion of diverse voices within the community must therefore be insisted in order to emphasize community participation. They must also represent a range of demographics of citizens in their programmes, including social, economic, ethnic, age, cultural and political. Community media must also see themselves as being accountable and accessible to the people they serve (Johnson and Menichelli, 2007).

Community media is therefore allowing for storytelling and deliberation where the audience tell their stories as well as those stories they have observed in the community. They put themselves in someone else's shoes. They always allow the audience to come with broader meanings of their personal experiences and also come up with in-depth coverage of issues. Story telling comes from the inner part of

their heart, subjectively and it results in critical civic discussion and the information is relevant, bold and raw. In that, community media is seen as the platform to share information and it is a dialogue (Johnson and Menichelli, 2007).

Empowerment in community media is about ensuring the role of communication tools in community building and putting communication tools in the hands of the individuals, thereby ensuring the support of self-expression. Ethnic expression and community and development are therefore the core issues that community media focus on (Johnson and Menichelli, 2007). The researcher therefore wants to mention that inclusion of diverse voices within the Alice community must therefore be insisted by the *Idikelethu* newspaper in order to emphasize community participation.

According to Jankowski (2002), one of the scholars in Chicago School in 1920s conducted a study looking at the community and media. In his study, he stressed on the local newspapers, use and the role of community structure. The interest of this researcher was on finding out the role of newspapers in integrating individuals into a community. His findings revealed that local newspapers have helped to contribute to consensus within a local community. He also investigated the role of family and community participation in community newspaper readership and found out that community integration and community involvement are the issues that get more focus to local newspapers (Jankowski, 2002).

He also states that another researcher contributed to the relations between media and community and conducted a study of newspaper use and community ties. This study developed a model whereby community ties viewed consequences of community media use. He argued that newspaper readership is associated with individual's tie of place such as length of residence, membership of local

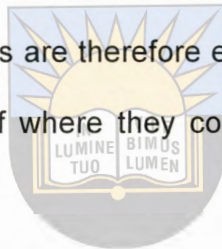
organizations and participation in local activities. According to that model, community ties contribute to newspaper use and at the same time, community newspaper readership contributes to establishment of community ties. That shows the use of newspaper across time (Jankowski, 2002).

Print media therefore has a role to play in sustainable development by empowering local communities in that process of development. Local media has to build a participatory democracy by representing a diversified opinion and experience at a local community through empowerment of communities at a local level. The editorial content of the newspapers is usually locally sourced and when it fails to do so, they try to be at least locally relevant. Newspapers also act as the ears of the people by supplying people with information from municipalities, government, NGOs and other organization projects and programmes. By doing so, they also assist community members to address the problems they face (Milne, et.al, 2006). The researcher also believes that the *Idikelethu* newspaper should work on this regard in order to assist the Alice community to development.

Milne *et.al* (2006) further stipulate that although access to information is a basic human right, there is still a problem in South Africa as newspapers encounter problems when sourcing information from government officials. It must be noted that the press has a right to publish about under-functioning public administration, corruption and service delivery challenges but the majority of community newspapers avoid reporting on those issues. However, some of those community newspapers publish those issues regularly. It must further be noted that the objectives of community media including community newspapers are articulated with a strong input from stakeholders within the community, irrespective of the legal

structure and various policies that may want to stand against its operations (Mhagama, 2004)

Still looking at the role of newspapers in community development, Soola (1995) provided details on how community newspapers should participate on development. He argued that community newspapers usually publish current events and issues for rural people in their own locale. He also states that development process in community media involves a give and take mutual communication relationship for development process and understanding of the villagers. Soola (1995) also stipulated that community newspapers are therefore expected to always be part and parcel of the villagers irrespective of where they come from and that is what the *Idikelethu* newspaper expected to do.



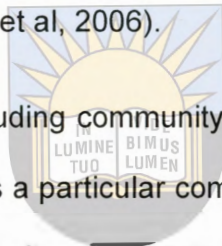
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## **2.9. Community newspapers and development: South African Experience**

According Milne *et al.* (2006), six community newspapers were analysed in order to see how they operate in the communities they serve and which role these newspapers play in communities. According to this report, these six local newspapers are successful South African newspapers serving their local communities and they were selected from twenty newspapers that were nominated as successful ventures by the Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA) and the Association of Independent Publishers of South Africa (AIP) (Milne, et al., 2006). The selected successful community newspapers are KZN Community Newspaper, Southern and Soweto Globe, North Coast Courier, Eastern Free State issue, Ikhwezi news and Limpopo Mirror.

This report states that these newspapers, as a form of South African community media, have been useful to counter state propaganda, inform, mobilise and educate

the masses about their rights and also facilitate the building of strong community organisations (Milne, et al., 2006). It must be noted that during the apartheid era, community media grew and were active too. For instance, ever since the era of the struggle community media has development. Its developments include: Independent Media Association formation, non-profit organisations and Black print enterprises which emerged as the new comers in the publishing field. Lastly, community letters also gained prominence as they promote the cooperation between community and the government because they are a two-way flow of communication between government and communities (Milne, et al, 2006).



The values of community media, including community newspapers, is highlighted by the fact that this form of media serves a particular community, even if it is a localised geographical community or a community of interest. It is also considered that they are those small media organizations that are growing to the extent that they serve regional community and the content of community journalism is informed by community needs, as issues that affect the community are addressed by bringing development to that community. In addition, media promotes participation, strengthens civil society and also promotes sustainable development and this means that community media diversity should be promoted by geographical coverage, language and class (Milne, et al, 2006).

The researcher noted that community newspapers can easily promote participation in community development, as they are accessible to all people, and can easily give communities a platform to raise their ideas. The fact that they work at a local level helps local rural communities to be well informed about issues concerning them and that is what the *Idikelethu* newspaper is expected to do within the Alice community.

## 2.10. Theoretical framework

This study is built on social responsibility theory, uses and gratification theory and development media theory. This study is therefore viewed in the light of the fact that newspapers have a social responsibility role to the society and that the readers also have a right to feel gratified as the read community newspapers and that at the end, the newspaper or media must be able to contribute to the development of the readers.

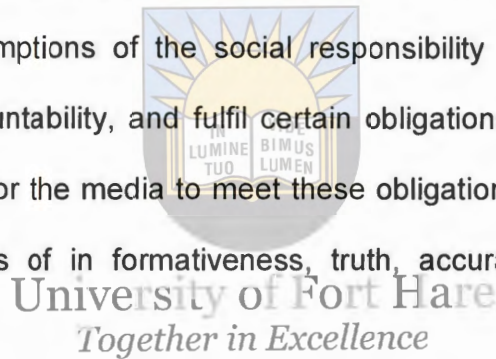
### 2.10.1. Social Responsibility Theory

According to Rubenstein (2012), social responsibility theory is considered to be an extension of libertarianism as it seeks to protect free expression. It is also considered as the reaction to the abuses that occurred under libertarianism during the 1890's in United States, in the era of yellow journalism. There are many issues that gave rise to social responsibility theory. One of these is the development of the chain ownership of the press. This ownership decreases the ability of people to express their opinions and ideas through press. The second issue was that those few people who had access to the press did not provide any services that meet the needs of society. The last issue was that those who directed the machinery of the press engaged in practices condemned by society.

The social responsibility theory therefore shifted its emphasis from press freedom to press responsibility (Rubenstein, 2012). According to this theory, press therefore has a responsibility to report accurately and truthfully. For instance, it has to monitor ads to safeguard against false claims and it has to engage in self-censorship. Another responsibility of the press is to ensure the society's well-being and national security (Rubenstein, 2012). According to Ravi (2012), social responsibility theory therefore

posits that the media like the *Idikelethu* newspaper has a responsibility to resolve conflict through discussion and to promote public opinion, consumer action, private rights, and important social interests.

This theory puts freedom as the issue that press is obliged to deal with. The press is therefore obliged to be responsible for the public and that if the press fails to do that, the public should enforce it. This also means that media outlets like the *Idikelethu* have a social responsibility role to contribute to the development of the community by promoting public opinion, and creating platforms for development. Ravi (2012), notes that the basic assumptions of the social responsibility theory are that the media should accept accountability, and fulfil certain obligations to the society. He further notes that in order for the media to meet these obligations, it has to set high and professional standards of informativeness, truth, accuracy, objectivity and balance.



The media, like the *Idikelethu* community newspaper, should therefore accept these obligations and have contents that should address societal ills like crime, violence, civil disorder or any harm that is inflicted upon the minority groups. This therefore means that the media has to serve the interests of the public by informing, educating, and entertaining the society. It also means that the media must recognise the expectations of the society which include the forum discussions, watchdog function, and leadership to the community, empowerment and many emerging functions of the press, and that is what the *Idikelethu* newspaper is supposed to do within the Alice community (Ravi, 2012).

Unlike the libertarian theory, which assumes that the media works well without the government's interference, the social responsibility theory advocates that the

government have an oversight on the media to ensure that it works in line with the society's interests (Van Blerkom Indd, 2008). It is therefore the responsibility of the media like the *Idikelethu* to be socially responsibly to the society by focusing on empowerment and developing the readers and the community at large; hence the researcher is evaluating the perceptions of the *Idikelethu* readers on issues that concern their community development.

### **2.10.2. Uses and Gratification Theory**

Ruggiero (2000) noted that uses and gratification theory began in 1940s. In this period the researchers were interested in finding out why audiences engaged in various forms of media and what do they get from that particular media and this included reading the newspaper. He argued that the researchers came up with the list of social and psychological needs that are satisfied by mass media. He took an attempt on uses and gratification theory by suggesting that certain basic needs interact with personal characteristics and social environment of an individual, in that a particular individual produce perceived problems and perceived solutions. This means therefore that media use produce gratification and that gratification has an impact in an individual or society. In addition, the researcher believes that the *Idikelethu* newspaper should have an impact in the development of Alice but that depends on the gratifications it produces or how Alice community gets satisfaction from it.

Uses and gratification theory therefore focuses on asking about what media does to people and what people do with media and that is what this study seeks to know by analysing the content of the *Idikelethu* newspaper and also by evaluating its reader's perceptions. As noted earlier, the theory emerged in the 1940s as a notion that was

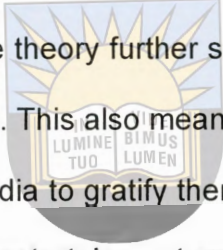
against “magic bullet” approach advocated by the Frankfurt School in the research stream. It must be noted that the Frankfurt view of media as being powerful has been criticized and undermined. Also the view that media has direct influence on individual’s behaviour has also been heavily criticized and people undergo selective perception, individual differences and social processes when dealing with media contents. This stipulates that media users are active in selecting the content and messages from mass media.

The communication researchers therefore became much more interested in examining the way in which audiences used various media such as radio music, radio soap operas and daily newspapers in 1940s (O’Donohoe, 1993). According to O’Donohoe (1993), there are four assumptions outlined for uses and gratification approach. Firstly, the audience is regarded as active therefore using much media is their goal. Secondly, media choice depends on need gratification of the user therefore it lies on audience. Thirdly, media is in competition with other sources of need satisfaction, therefore it depends on audience to choose media as a source that satisfies the needs. Finally, the gratification that audience get from media includes diversion and entertainment as well as information.

These will differ according to the social roles and psychological roles that media plays on the audience. Furthermore, the researchers suggested that mass media needs may be cognitive, affective, or both and that it has to orientate towards an individual’s sense of self or social environment (O’Donohoe, 1993). This theory looks at how the media user’s utilizes a certain media and what do they get from using that particular media and this is what this study looks at with the *Idikelethu* newspaper. Use and gratification theory is a conceptual framework rather than a theory and it is

used for the description and the classification of the audience behaviour rather than product it (Deuze, 2011).

Deuze (2011) also stated that there are various basic uses and gratifications that people receive from using the media products which are decision making, entertainment and diversion. The use and gratifications have been used to understand the media-use behaviour but it is also applied as a framework for understanding consumer's use of new media technologies and products. According to the use and gratification theory everyone choose mass communication that satisfies him or her (Wood, 2012). The theory further says that we use the media for the fulfilment of our needs and desires. This also means that the people are active in a fact that they are able to choose media to gratify themselves. For instance, people use media to gain information, for the entertainment and to find out how to overcome their problems (Wood, 2012).



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Another important thing to point out is that uses and gratification theory focus on the audience instead of the media content itself (Zha, 2008). This theory does not blame the audience for not using a particular media but it promotes the ideas that the audience have that negativity on that particular media. Also the use and gratification theory says that the audience challenges the media producers to produce the products that satisfy the needs and desires of the audience (Zha, 2008). Interestingly, researchers consider the use and gratification theory to be a suitable theoretical framework because they want to know why people choose a certain media and what do they get from that particular media, that satisfies their needs and desires, or what kind of satisfaction do they get from using that particular media. The audience therefore decides on how to use a particular media, in a way that would be best in fulfilling their needs and desires (Zha, 2008).

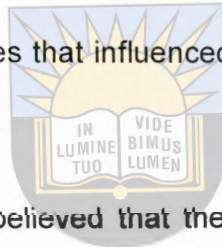
This is the same for this study, as the researcher seeks to know the use and importance of the *Idikelethu* newspaper to the Alice residents. This theory helps the researcher in knowing whether the Alice residents see the *Idikelethu* newspaper as an ideal tool as a community based newspaper in meeting the needs of the readers or consumers, and as to why the readers make use of this media. Zha (2008) identified that the audience's needs could focus on strengthening of information, knowledge and understanding and the use and gratification theory has been successfully used in studying users mediated communication motives.

According to Ruggiero (2000), uses and gratification theory should be always included as an attempt to speculate any future directions of mass communication theory because it is a cutting edge theoretical approach in initial stages of any communication medium including the newspaper. This is because Uses and gratification theory is associated with media effects. With a focus on gratification that attracts audiences to different kinds of media and also the satisfaction of the audience in their social and psychological needs that are the results of the media content that they use.

According to Cho (2009), uses and gratification theory therefore became useful in understanding the effects of media use. With the aim of exploring process and influences that happens between people and the media. Ballard (2011) also noted that the use and gratification theory puts power in the hands of the audience and it is helpful when trying to understand media usage, its exposure, and effects. This theory has been used in explaining why people use a particular media as well as the gratifications they get from that particular media. That is why this theory was used to explain the use of the *Idikelethu* newspaper by the Alice residents as well as to

establish the level of gratifications that they get from it in terms of community development.

It must also be noted that historically, the mass media effects have been a controversial topic that scholars wanted to research over the past century. With the origin of radio and film in the 1900's, communication researchers became interested in finding out the effects the media messages have towards people who receive them. The focus of these researchers was to portray the media as a hypodermic needle. Looking at a hypodermic needle, they had a belief that media sent direct, standardized, and deliberate messages that influenced massive audiences and they yield effects.



However, there were scholars who believed that the audience have the power to select and filter messages. Those scholars opposed the ideology of media as being the hypodermic needle. They contested the powerful-effects that the society held regarding media messages. Ultimately, the notion of magic bullet was falsified and they expanded the understanding of the media use and media effects by introducing uses and gratification theory (Ballard, 2011). This also means that the readers of the *Idikelethu* may want to read about issues that benefit them or focus on their own development and not unrelated issues. This, according to Emnyeonu (1995), means that uses and gratification theory looks on the receiver as an active and discerning member of the audience who select the communications and media which are mostly like to fulfil his/her communication needs.

He further argued that in an era of rapid rate of media saturation, the mass media could not afford to be homogenous in structure. The selections could therefore be made between the newspaper and another type of medium which includes gossip

magazine and the elite news magazine, between two or more radio stations, between radio and television and the audience can also choose among different television stations, looking at its locality on the content of that medium. The researcher therefore wants to stress that it is worth evaluating how the *Idikelethu* readers perceive the newspaper as a tool that satisfies them and their developmental issues.

### 2.10.3. Development media theory

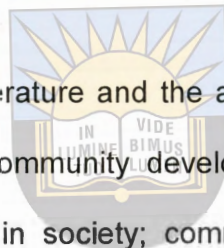
McQuail (2003) stipulates that the mass media, in developing countries, has been characterized by many circumstances. Those circumstances include a little or no freedom and media is obliged to follow the dictates of ruling elites or actual rulers. Therefore, several writers have identified a variant of media development theory in which it takes the requirement of a collective effort towards national and social development. By doing so, they pressed that media like *Idikelethu* newspaper ought to accept development tasks in line with the government policy. This implies active support for government informational and educational campaigns, the promotion of development goals, and supporting national, regional, and local cultures. In news, media should be careful not undermine the authority of the government and its agents by irresponsible criticism and that is what *Idikelethu* newspaper also expected to do. These ideas also express a version of social responsibility (McQuail, 2003).

McQuail (2010) also stated that, according to development media theory, wherever the media exerts influence, it causes change. There are two kinds of change, and they are: the options of social centralization or dispersal. However, there are many potential questions about social change but this theory focuses mostly on issues of

technological determinism and the potential to apply mass media to the process of development. Those questions were referring to the effects of communication media in changing the society. They also referred to whether or not mass media might be applied to economic and social development as it is an engine of change or the multiplier of modernity. This theory depicts media as a progressive force because of its ability to link democracy and the freedom of expression, as well as the media with other opening of markets and liberalization trade (McQuail, 2010)

### Summary

This chapter reviewed the related literature and the available knowledge about the role of community newspapers in community development. The following issues were discussed; the role of media in society; communication, mass media and development; development; community newspapers and development: South African experience; the role of media in community development; the role of newspapers in community development; categories of newspapers and the role of community newspapers in community development. The theories that this study was built upon are social responsibility theory, development media theory and uses and gratification theory, which were also discussed in detail above. The next chapter will discuss the methodological aspects that are employed in this study.



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## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on and discusses the methodological aspects of this research. As such, the following components will be discussed: research methods, research paradigm, research approach, research design, data collection methods, research instrument, research domain, the population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, data analysis, methods of data verification and ethical considerations. For the reason that this study uses both the elements of qualitative and quantitative research, the researcher adopted a mixed method approach.



#### 3.2. Research methodology

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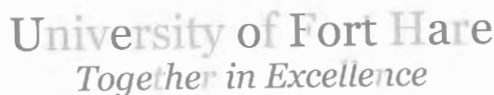
Research methodology refers to a systematic way of solving research problems. It provides a way in which we can understand how the study has been scientifically conducted. It is also important to note that research methodology has a number of steps that needs to be followed in order to address the research problem and these steps create the logic behind every action undertaken in conducting a research. Every researcher has to know which meticulous research technique is needed in a specific study, and as to what they mean and why they are relevant in that particular study. By implication, this means that methodologies vary depending on the aims and objectives of that particular research (Sprague, 2005; Kumar, 2005).

The aim of research methodology therefore is to provide the researcher with a research plan. Rajasekar further states that research methods assist the researcher in “describing, explaining and predicting the phenomena under study” (Rajasekar *et*

al, 2013). Moreover, the term research methodology has been used to collectively indicate the three aspects which are research design, data gathering and data analysis (Strydom *et al*, 2011). It is therefore the method or the strategy the researcher used to conduct and pursue the study of evaluating reader's perceptions of *Idikelethu* newspaper as a tool for community development in Alice, Eastern Cape.

### 3.3. Research paradigm

A paradigm is a world view from which a phenomenon is understood (Strydom *et al*, 2011). A paradigm is a framework of interpretation which is guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about how the world can be understood (Strydom *et al*, 2011). The study was informed by both the qualitative and quantitative paradigms.



#### 3.3.1. Qualitative paradigm

When a researcher embraces qualitative paradigm, it means that the study uses constructivist approach (naturalistic) which implies that reality can be constructed. It implies that human beings are able to construct their own ideas and mould them into reality because reality is not stagnant (Neuman, 2006). Human beings generate and construct their own knowledge and understanding from their interaction with the world around them. Therefore, the study used an interpretative approach which means reality can be interpreted in one's own way or ways, hence the researcher decided to adopt qualitative paradigm in this study (Cresswell and Plano, 2007).

Qualitative research follows the naturalistic paradigm based on the assumption that multiple realities exist and such realities are constructed by research participants. This study focused on the *Idikelethu* readers who are concerned about development

issues in Alice community. The method of data collection in qualitative research focuses mostly on people's experiences, feelings and attitudes (Hennik, Hutter, and Bailey, 2011). The use of a qualitative paradigm implies that the study embraces a qualitative approach which refers to the informal, subjective systematic processes. In this approach, the researcher made use of life experiences, which were social and historical to interpret the meaning of data (Cresswell and Plano, 2007). The researcher therefore explored and tried to understand the perceptions of the *Idikelethu* readers about the relevance of newspaper as a tool for community development at Alice.



The qualitative research approach maintains that data should be systematically gathered, organized, interpreted, analysed and communicated in order to address social concerns. Since social actions are always changing, it is therefore good to use a qualitative approach, as it is suitable for examining questions about morals and values, while trying to explain meanings that are needed to make an on-going sense of the data collected (Tracy, 2013).

This means that since qualitative researchers get involved in interpretative, naturalistic approach of the world, they study things in a natural settings and their aim is to make sense of the phenomena under investigation. In qualitative research, people bring out the meaning of a phenomenon then researchers interpret it with an attempt of make sense to those meanings (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2009). A qualitative research also assists the researcher in acquiring in-depth knowledge from the participants about the study, as Wimmer and Dominick, stipulates that using this method often involves participant observation (Wimmer and Dominick, 2011). In order to maintain the standards of qualitative research, the researcher held four

focus group discussions to gather the information about the reader's perceptions of the *Idikelethu* newspaper as a tool for community development.

### 3.3.2. Quantitative paradigm

A quantitative paradigm assumes a common objective reality across individuals. It is based on positivism. Thus, the study embraces quantitative research paradigm (positivism) to understand the underlying causes of natural phenomena (Neuman, 2006). Quantitative researchers (positivists) value objectivity and attempt to hold their personal beliefs and biases in check to avoid contaminating the phenomena under study (Cresswell, 2009). Also, the traditional, positivist scientific method refers to a general set of orderly, disciplined procedures used to acquire information. Therefore, a quantitative study makes use of deductive reasoning to generate predictions that are tested in the real world (Cresswell and Plano, 2007). Moreover, quantitative study is designed specifically for the identification and description of variables with the views of establishing the relationship between them (Strydom *et al*, 2011).

When a researcher follows a quantitative research paradigm, they are dealing with measurements or the amount of characteristics displayed by people or events in their studies. Measurements include more or less, larger and smaller, often and seldom, similar and different. Researchers make use of what is already measured and analysed by other researchers because they are easily replicated. They always seek something to generalise to other people and places, whether its explanations or predictions. Their sampling strategies and experimental designs are often aimed at generalizing results. The role of the researcher in this research approach is to observe and measure (Thomas, 2003; Clough and Nutbrown, 2012).

The researcher's ideas about the dimensions and categories which constitute the central focus are implicit within the procedures of quantitative studies (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2009). It must be noted that the results in quantitative approach are always in terms of numbers (Black, 1999). Therefore, this study also embraces qualitative paradigm, hence the quantitative content analysis was adopted as a research strategy used to collect data in order to identify community development orientated messages in the *Idikelethu* community newspaper.

### 3.4. Research approach



#### 3.4. 1. Mixed method approach

A mixed method study employs a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methodological tools that are necessary and relevant for conducting a particular research. Thus, the researcher can use a mixed method approach to answer the questions of the research under study. This approach is called a “third research paradigm” because it follows the qualitative and quantitative research methods which are the first research developments (Cresswell and Clark 2011; Teddie and Tashakkori, 2009).

Neuman (2006) articulates that qualitative and quantitative researches have philosophical roots in the naturalistic and the positivist philosophies, respectively. Virtually all qualitative studies, regardless of their theoretical differences, reflect some sort of individual phenomenological perspective. However, most quantitative research studies, regardless of their theoretical differences, tend to emphasize that there is a common reality on which people can agree on (Strydom *et al*, 2011).

In addition, Neuman (2006) from his phenomenological perspective, argued that multiple realities exist and multiple interpretations are available from different individuals that are all equally valid, and that reality is a social construct. However, Strydom *et al* (2005) articulates that qualitative naturalistic approach is used when observing and interpreting reality with the aim of developing a theory that will explain what was experienced. He further explains that, quantitative approaches are used when one begins with a theory and tests for confirmation or disconfirmation of that hypothesis.

Neuman (2006) contends that, what is true for quantitative methods is also true for qualitative methods. To the extent that these assumptions withstand the scrutiny of scientific inquiry in which the methods can be supported. Quantitative and qualitative approaches are based upon the differences in assumptions about reality, including whether they are measurable (Cresswell and Plano, 2007).

Furthermore, a mixed method approach is used to establish the extensiveness and the intensity of a research by corroborating the two methods and bring them to a single qualitative and quantitative understanding. Mixed methods provide a rich context whereby words, pictures and narratives can be combined and used to add meaning to numbers. They also enable the researcher to use a range of methods in order to enhance the credibility of research findings (Hesse-Biber, 2010; Ridenour and Newman, 2008). The mixed method approach also allows the researcher to collect data, analyse it, integrate the findings and draw inferences using both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques (Hesse-Biber, 2010).

For the purpose of this study, the researcher has used a mixed method approach. Qualitative research methods, such as focus groups, were used in gathering the data

that is necessary for this research and a quantitative research method, such as the quantitative content analysis, was used to evaluate the relevance of the *Idikelethu* newspaper in disseminating development news at Alice, in the Eastern Cape. The motivation for using the mixed method approach is that the researcher sought to investigate the extensive and intensity perceptions of readers concerning the role of the *Idikelethu* newspaper as a tool for community development at Alice, in the Eastern Cape.

### 3.5. Research design

The research design is the plan that shows how the research is going to be conducted, indicating who or what is involved, and where and when it will take place (Du Plooy, 2009). Burns and Grove (2003), define research design as the consideration and creation of means of obtaining reliable, objective, generalized and valid data by means of which formal announcements about the phenomenon may be confirmed or rejected. Terre Blanche *et al*, (2006) further stipulate that research design is a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of the research. In this study, the researcher employed a mixed method approach.

Therefore, this research used a qualitative research approach which allowed the researcher to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings it brings from the participants. The researcher took few aspects of population, formed focus group discussions and investigated them using their thoughts, insights and knowledge in doing the research (Neuman, 2006). This study also adopted quantitative approach in which the researcher analysed the content of the *Idikelethu* newspaper to see the

extent in which this newspaper contributes to community development at Alice. This was done by doing using quantitative content analysis in the *Idikelethu* newspaper.

This study utilised both the elements of the qualitative and quantitative approaches in collecting the data that was necessary for this research. The researcher further employed qualitative approach when analysing the information gathered from the participants in order to evaluate the reader's perceptions of the *Idikelethu* newspaper as a tool for community development. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2011), when a researcher adopted both the qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, they are adopting a mixed method approach, which is discussed in detail below.



### **3.6. Methods of data collection**

According to Alston and Bowles (2003), data collection methods are the tools that social scientists use to obtain the required information. In this study, there are two methods that were used to gather information, namely; quantitative content analysis and focus group discussions.

#### **3.6.1. Quantitative Content Analysis**

Content analysis is a research method that measures the amount of something (i.e. violence, negative portrayal of women, level of crime, etc.) found represented by a mass-mediated popular art forming (Du Plooy, 1996). On the other hand, content analysis is defined as a research method that focuses on setting procedures to valid inferences from text. The valid inferences are made from the message itself, the sender of a message and the audience of a message (Weber, 1990).

This research method can be used for many purposes, including the following: disclosing international differences in communication analysis; to compare media or levels of communication; to audit communication content against objectives; code open-ended questions in surveys; to identify the intentions and other characteristics of the communicator; to determine the psychological state of persons or groups; to detect the existence of propaganda; to reflect cultural patterns of groups, institutions or societies; to reveal the focus of individual, group, institutional, or societal attention and to describe trends in communication content (Weber, 1990).

Content analysis is an idea of classifying many words of text into much fewer categories but it also depends on whether each category consists of one, several or many words. When words, phrases, or other units of texts are presumed to have a similar meaning, they are classified in the same category. Synonyms can be grouped together or several words implying a concern with a concept can be grouped together, depending on the purpose of a research. It is therefore important that a classification be reliable, to the level of consistency, so that the researcher can make valid inferences from the text.

It does not matter if the texts were coded by different people, but they should be coded the same way. Valid variables must be generated by the classification procedure. A valid variable measures or represents what the investigator intends to measure (Weber, 1990). Quantitative content analysis should therefore give precise and accurate results. Its data is always indicated through numerical values, or frequencies. Quantitative content analysis should be systematic, objective and be able to maintain a level of generality to any particular text, whether it is a newspaper article, a book, a television clip or an advertisement. Generality means that the

findings of communication quantitative content analysis are to be regarded as meaningless unless they can be related to other datum (Du Plooy, 1996).

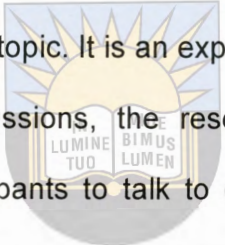
The quantitative content analysis technique is about counting things, e.g. how many articles in a given period of time; how many instances of a particular word, etc. It always allows the researcher to apply the same criteria in each instance when analysing a greater number of examples of particular type of texts (Davies and Mosdell, 2006). Therefore, the researcher employed quantitative content analysis in order to analyse the content of the *Idikelethu* newspaper. The researcher collected relevant data from copies of the *Idikelethu* newspaper published in May and June last year (2014), because it is a newspaper published monthly. The story headlines and story content were the main source of data to see if the newspaper covered development orientated topics. The stories that were having same meanings were grouped together to form one category. The content was then coded, each category given a code, aiming to identify some dominant themes.

The code book was essential in coding all the data in a standardised manner. A code book is defined by Weston *et al*, as a tool for the development and evolution of a coding system which is an important means for documenting the codes and procedures applying to them (Weston *et al*, 2001). The researcher therefore used quantitative content analysis to analyse the content of the newspaper in order to discover its relevance to community development.

### **3.6.2. Focus group discussions**

Focus groups are a distinctive qualitative research method (Stewart and Shamdasani, 2014). Focus group refers to a group of selected individuals that are formally discussing a particular topic, and it is a research method that involves more

than one participant in each session of data collection ((Barbour and Kitzinger, 1999). The aim of focus group discussions is to gain an understanding of a specific issue from group participant's perspectives and this involves 6-12 people having similar experiences or people that come from similar social and cultural background (Liampottong, 2011).

The researcher is therefore in control of the flow of discussion in a focus group, as he or she is the one who sets the parameters and also defines the interview protocol (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis, 2013). Focus group discussions allow participants to discuss issues relating to the research topic. It is an explicit group interaction used to generate data. In focus group discussions, the researcher does not only ask questions but also encourages participants to talk to one another; ask questions, exchange anecdotes and comment on each other experiences or point of views (Barbour and Kitzinger, 1999).  **University of Fort Hare**  
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In order to evaluate reader's perceptions of the *Idikelethu* newspaper as a tool for community development at Alice, in the Eastern Cape, four focus groups were held in four selected locations at Alice. The discussions in the four focus groups were recorded and later transcribed for analytical purposes. The locations that were selected include the following: Ntselamanzi, Gqumashe, Mavuso and Dyamala Location. Two of these locations are distant from the town where the *Idikelethu* newspaper is situated and two of them are closer to the town. These locations were chosen because of their high readership rate of the *Idikelethu* newspaper as indicated by the publisher. This method assisted the researcher in exploring the perceptions of respondents regarding the role of the *Idikelethu* newspaper as a tool for community development at Alice.

### 3.7. Research instrument

A research instrument is any tool that is used in data collection. Babbie (2010) defines a research instrument as a tool that is used for collecting data needed to find solutions to the problem under investigation. The study used focus group discussion and a questionnaire guide was used (see Appendix B). The focus group discussion guide consisted of unstructured and non-directive questions. This was to guide the research respondents. The researcher also used an audio recorder to record the discussions.



### 3.8. Research Domain

The research domain was Alice, a town in the Eastern Cape. The researcher chose the place because of its underdevelopment. Alice is one of the towns in the Eastern Cape that has a very rich history. One can mention the site that is well known as the first historical black institution, the University of Fort Hare, which contributed in the National political struggles against Apartheid and produced many political legends who includes the first black South African president, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela. Alice town is under the coverage of Nkonkobe local municipality (Olivier, 2001). According to the NLM IDP 2012/2017, the Nkonkobe local municipality is the second largest local municipality under the Amathole district municipality and it covers the area of 3725 km<sup>2</sup> and takes about 16% of the surface area.

It must however be noted that the Alice LED strategy report (2000) stipulates that in Alice, there is a high population of people residing in villages. Alice has 79% of people living in rural and 21% of people living in urban areas (Alice LED Strategy, 2000). Census Community Profiles (2011) also highlighted that Alice also has 53%

of females and 47% of males residing there and this shows a serious impact on poverty levels as the women are generally marginalised from economic opportunities. The majority of the people living in Alice are the youth and most are under the age of 15 years and 38 % live in rural. This shows that there are large numbers of people depending on elder's grants or pensioners. This community has 21% of people having higher qualifications and there is a high rate of unemployment just like many other rural communities in South Africa. The main reason for unemployment is the lack of job opportunities (NLM IDP, 2012/2017).



### 3.9. Study population

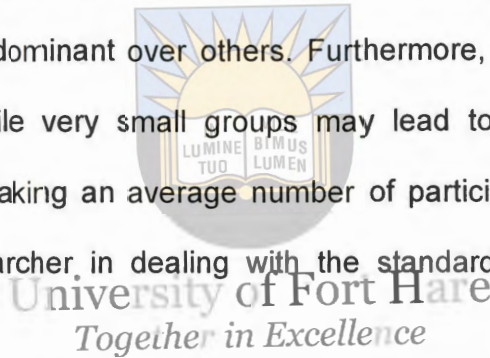
Study population refers to the larger pool from which the sampling elements are drawn and to which the researcher generalises the findings and points the difficulties of studying the whole population instead of a sample (Terre Blanche *et al*, 2006). The study population must have the same characteristics of the population from which a sample has been selected because they represent the whole population (Babbie, 2007). Strydom *et al*, (2011) contends that the study population refers to sample in which the researcher is required to draw conclusion from. The population of this study is the Alice community residents, which are comprised both of male and female readers who make use of the *Idikelethu* newspaper or those who have some form of knowledge about the newspaper.

### 3.10. Sampling frame

The research's sampling frame is the actual number of people selected from the entire study population or the accessible population for data collection (Wimmer and Dominick, 2011). For the purpose of this study, the researcher found it appropriate to use four focus groups within the Alice community. The participants were selected

from the following locations: Ntselamanzi, Gqumashe, Dyamala and Mavuso. For this study, although the researcher had no specific number for each focus group, he/she considered to use not less than eight and not more than ten participants. Therefore, a sample of 35 participants was selected within the Alice community.

Breakwell, Smith and Wright (2012) advise that an ideal focus group should range between six to twelve participants. They also noted that taking an average of eight participants gives the researcher an advantage in terms of managing the groups and gives each participant a chance to express their views unlike a situation whereby some participants become dominant over others. Furthermore, large focus groups are difficult to manage while very small groups may lead to inaccurate results because of limited views. Taking an average number of participants as a sample, therefore, assists the researcher in dealing with the standards of accuracy and effectual results.



### **3.11. Sampling and sampling technique**

Sample is the subset of population (Lohr, 2009) that the researcher will examine and where inferences will be made. Sampling can only be selected by using a sampling method which can be able to select those sampling units that will provide the required estimates. Its purpose is to provide various types of statistical information which may be qualitative and quantitative in nature (Som, 1995). A good sample would be a scaled-down version of a sample. It has the characteristics of interest in the population that can be estimated from the sample (Lohr, 2009).

Yates (2003) asserts that sampling needs an essential control in order for the final results to be all representative. The researcher therefore has to choose the best sampling techniques that will provide a better understanding of the population from

which the sample has been drawn: “The more controlled and accurate the sampling method, the more representative and reliable the results should be” (Yates, 2003). Larger samples accurately represent the population. Larger sample also decreases the error of statistical results (Newman and McNeil, 1998). This study therefore adopted a non-probability sampling technique.

### **3.11.1. Non-probability sampling**

A non-probability sampling is a kind of sampling that is not based on statistical rules. The unit in this technique do not have an equal chance to be selected for a particular study (Strydom *et al*, 2011). When a researcher uses this kind of a sample technique in a study, they have to make sure that the results are interpreted with caution. Using non-probability sampling can result in the limitation of inferences that the researcher can establish from the gathered data. The researcher has to make sure that data is collected and interpreted under the right conditions so that the data collected could be useful (Cunningham, 2010).

Non-probability sampling techniques are quicker and easier to apply. Randomisation is not possible and the researcher does not have to have a complete knowledge about the population to be studied (Vito, et al, 2008). Therefore, a non-probability sampling technique which is judgemental or purposive sampling technique was employed by the researcher in this study.

### **3.11.2. Judgemental or purposive sampling technique**

The judgemental sampling technique is one of the non-probability sampling techniques. It is also known as a purposive sampling. This type of sampling deals with elements that has the most of characteristics or attributes of the population that

is particularly of interest of the researcher. It strictly excludes those elements that fail to meet the characteristics needed for the study (Wimmer and Dominick, 2011). The researcher selects the sample from the population according to their judgements (Strydom *et al*, 2011). This is the kind of sampling that is usually used regularly in mass media studies, where the researcher has to select the audience that uses a specific medium, and asks specific questions that could not be answered by any respondents using a different medium (Wimmer and Dominick, 2011).

The researcher therefore used this type of sampling because she believes that this kind of sampling will provide the necessary data without complications, as it is stipulated above that this sample is quicker and easier to draw. The researcher chose people that read the *Idikelethu* newspaper, so that they provide answers to the questions posed in this research study. The selection of the four focus groups within the Alice locations and the two publications of the *Idikelethu* newspapers were guided by the judgemental or purposive sampling technique because the researcher supposed that the relevant individuals who could provide the necessary information had the required characteristics. The judgemental or purposive sampling technique was found to be appropriate in identifying a group of participants that provided the researcher with the necessary data for this study.

### **3.12. Method of data analysis**

Data analysis involves the process of analysing, interpreting, with illustrations, all the information gathered from respondents (Wimmer and Dominick, 2011). The purpose of analysing is to reduce data into tangible and interpreted forms, so that a relationship can be established between the research problem studied, tested hypothesis and the conclusions drawn (Goddard and Melville, 2001). Strydom *et al*.

(2011) states that a qualitative data analysis involves the non-numerical examination of, and the interpretation of observations for the purpose of discovering the underlying meanings and patterns of relationships. The collected data in this study was analysed qualitatively by using thematic analysis for the examination and interpretation of readers' perceptions of the *Idikelethu* newspaper.

### **3.12.1. Thematic analysis**

Thematic analysis is pertinent to this study in that it seeks to identify latent themes, which rose in the focus group discussions about the role of the *Idikelethu* newspaper as a tool for community development at Alice and when reviewing the content of the *lidikelethu* newspaper publications. When using the thematic analysis technique, the researcher has to decide, know and understand exactly what the categorised themes represent when analysing the collected data, and those identified themes should be linked to the research questions (Willig, 2013). Additionally, the thematic analysis technique involves transcribing the collected data so that it could be placed into its own particular context. It also helps the researcher to objectively analyse the perceptions of participants and to become more familiar with the data just collected (King & Horrocks, 2010).

### **3.13. Research validity and credibility**

In research, validity refers to the process whereby the researcher checks the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures (Cresswell, 2009). According to Krefting (1991) the worth of any research endeavour, regardless of the approach, is evaluated by peers, grant viewers and readers. The data could be

verified by looking at credibility, applicability, consistency and transferability which are discussed below.

### ➤ **Credibility**

Rossouw (2003) states that credibility in research refers to the amount to which findings and implication methods that are used to generate the findings can be trusted (Rossouw, 2003). Strydom *et al* (2011) further states that credibility is the alternative to internal validity; the goal is to reveal that the investigation was conducted in such a manner as to make sure that the subjects have been truthfully identified and explained.

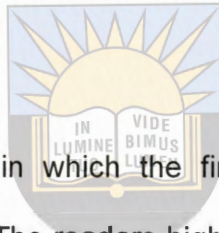
The researcher looked whether is a correlation between participants' views and the meanings they reconstructed in order to make a representation of them (Strydom *et al*, 2011). The researcher made use of triangulation of different methods to increase the credibility. Cohen *et al* (2007) define triangulation as the way of using more than two methods of collecting data in the study (Cohen *et al*, 2007). To improve the credibility of this study the researcher used quantitative content analysis and focus groups in order to verify the consistency of the data presented by both methods.

### ➤ **Applicability**

According to Krefting (1991), applicability refers to a degree in which findings can be applied to other context and setting or with other groups. It is the ability to generalise from the findings to larger populations. Applicability is established through the strategy of transferability. Krefting (1991) also highlights that, transferability is more the responsibility of the person wanting to transfer the findings to another situation or population than of the researcher of the original study. Hence, the researcher presented sufficient descriptive data to allow comparison by other researchers.

### ➤ **Consistency**

Consistency is another criterion of trustworthiness that considers the consistency of the data, that is, whether the finding would be consistent if the inquiry were replicated with the same subjects or in similar context (Krefting, 1991). Consistency is defined in terms of dependability. The researcher described the extract of data gathering, analysis and interpretation used in the study. Such a dense description of methods provided the information as to how repeatability of the study would produce the same results.



### ➤ **Transferability**

Transferability refers to the degree in which the findings of this study can be transferred to others similar contexts. The readers highlight the specifics of the study situation and then contrast them to the specifics of surroundings or situation where there are similarities. If the similarities are enough between the two situations, then readers may be able to assume that the outcomes of the study would be the same or comparable in their own situation. This means that they “transfer” the results of a particular study to another situation (Writing@CSU, 2011). Mertens (2005), states that the researcher should provide an adequate or thick description about the case so that readers can understand the background variables that are operating in the study. Therefore, the responsibility of generalisation lies with readers, as they are assumed to be able to generalise personally or individually from the study in question to their own personal experiences (Mertens, 2005).

### 3.14. Ethical considerations

Singleton *et al.* (1993) notes that ethical issues are bound to arise in social research when conflicts occur between societal values such as freedom and privacy, and scientific methods aimed at obtaining the highest quality of data. The ethical principles of social research were therefore upheld and followed, at all times, during the processes of this study. In line with the ethical requirements of research, the researcher consulted all relevant authorities to gain access to the research components. As a result, an ethical clearance was also sought and obtained from the University of Fort Hare's research and Ethics Committee (see Appendix A).



According to Strydom *et al* (2011), obtaining informed consent means that all information on the aim of the investigation, the procedures, advantages, disadvantages, dangers will be rendered to their legal representatives. The most fundamental principle for ethical acceptability is informed consent. The involved participants had to be informed of the nature and the purpose of the research, its risks and benefits and must be consent to participants without coercion. The researcher informed the participants about the purpose of the research, its risks and its benefits and the participants were not forced to participate in the study.

To observe the principles of confidentiality and anonymity means handling information about subjects in a confidential manner. It places strong obligation on the researcher to guard jealously against information that he/she is confident in by the respondents (Strydom, 2005). The researcher ensured the participants that the information they share was not to be disclosed to anyone for whatsoever reasons. Strategies to sustain confidentiality eliminate the risk of harm and embarrassment to

those studied. The researcher's promise to protect the participant's rights and decisions was to be upheld in an effort to research others (Bless and Smith, 2000).

### **Summary**

This chapter described and justified the choice of methodology and design for this study. The researcher outlined the scope of the research which intended to evaluate the reader's perceptions of the *Idikelethu* newspaper as a tool for community development at Alice, in the Eastern Cape. This chapter discussed the population and procedure, data collection and data analysis used for this study. Quantitative content analysis and focus group discussions were highlighted as useful instrument used for this study. The researcher therefore explained and justified the select these methods and how they assisted in achieving the aim of this study. The next chapter focuses on the analysis and interpretation of the data collected for this study.



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## CHAPTER 4

### DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher analyses, interprets and discusses the data collected through quantitative content analysis and focus group discussion. The data was collected to evaluate the reader's perceptions of the *Idikelethu* newspaper as a tool for community development in four selected locations at Alice, which are two locations that are far from the town where the *Idikelethu* newspaper is located, and two that are closer to the town. Some of the data was collected from the newspapers themselves. The main themes were identified in the data collected and detailed descriptions of information provided through in depth examination. Where the data was quantified, tables were used to present that quantifiable information. The researcher also interpreted the organized data into general statements and understandings. This process was followed in order to fulfill the aims and objectives of the study.

#### 4.2. Quantitative Content Analysis

The researcher looked at how the readers perceive the *Idikelethu* newspaper as a tool that contributes towards community development and therefore, only the *Idikelethu* newspaper publications were selected and used in this study. The *Idikelethu* newspaper has therefore been quantitatively analyzed to evaluate its relevance to community development at Alice, in the Eastern Cape. The purpose was to fulfill the aim of this study. Two *Idikelethu* newspaper publications were selected as a sample of this study. These two newspapers were published on the months of May, and June. The *Idikelethu* newspaper is monthly publication.

To answer the first research question: what is the relevance of the *Idikelethu* newspaper as a method of communication for developmental purpose? A systematic analysis of collected data was conducted (see the codebook at the table number 4.3.1). The codes were given to the categories. Categories include articles that have same meanings in content and they grouped together to form one category and they were given a specific number. The articles were coded into one of the following 23 categories; Prostitution; Socio-economic development; Politics; Royalty; Corruption; HIV/AIDS; Violence; Poverty; Unemployment; Crime; Community Developments; Agriculture; Housing; Government; Education; Sport; Rape; Justice; Religion; Drugs; Tradition; Youth Developments and Nation building. This will help the researcher to know if these articles have an impact on community development or not.



| Code | Categories                  |
|------|-----------------------------|
| 1    | Prostitution                |
| 2    | Socio-economic developments |
| 3    | Politics                    |
| 4    | Poverty                     |
| 5    | Corruption                  |
| 6    | HIV/AIDS                    |
| 7    | Violence                    |
| 8    | Poverty                     |
| 9    | Unemployment                |
| 10   | Crime                       |
| 11   | Community developments      |
| 12   | Agriculture                 |

|    |                    |
|----|--------------------|
| 13 | Housing            |
| 14 | Government         |
| 15 | Education          |
| 16 | Sport              |
| 17 | Rape               |
| 18 | Justice            |
| 19 | Religion           |
| 20 | Drugs              |
| 21 | Nation building    |
| 22 | Traditions         |
| 23 | Youth developments |

**Table 4.2.1 Code Book**

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Every article in every publication was analyzed to find out if it has something to do with community development. The researcher jotted down every detail of a story including the date of the newspaper, the page taken from, the language written with and the title of the story.

➤ **LANGUAGE USE**

The languages that are used in both issues of May and June are IsiXhosa and English. The articles that were written in IsiXhosa were 14 and those that were written in English were 13 when counting both the May and June articles. In May, the articles that were written in English were 7 and those that were written in isiXhosa were 5. In June, the articles that were written in English were 6 and those that were written in isiXhosa were 9. The table below illustrates the use of language in the *Idikelethu* newspaper.

|                              | MAY | JUNE | TOTAL # OF ARTICLES |
|------------------------------|-----|------|---------------------|
| Number of articles           | 14  | 13   | 27                  |
| Articles written in English  | 7   | 6    | 13 (48.2 %)         |
| Articles written in isiXhosa | 5   | 9    | 14 (51.8 %)         |

**Table 4.2.2 the language use of the *Idikelethu* newspaper articles**

There is not much difference in language use in this community newspaper. Both languages are being used, although according to the statistics IsiXhosa is the most used language in the *Idikelethu* newspaper. Therefore both languages are being used irrespective of the topic or the content of the article. There is therefore no specific language used for specific type of article. Hatcher (2013) asserts that the media landscape that is owned mostly by white people poses a number of challenges in journalism because there is still a large gap in language representation on the under-served groups. However, the South African government has been explicitly mandated to break down all the racial tensions so that all groups may be represented by media.

If we look at **table 4.2.2**, the table presents the use of language in the *Idikelethu* newspaper. According to this table there are two languages that are being used in this newspaper, which are IsiXhosa and English. IsiXhosa articles make 51.8 % and English articles make 48.2 %. According to the Statistic South Africa (2010), the Alice community has a majority of black people. The second largest populations in this community are coloured people but there is also a minority of white people. The IsiXhosa articles were used to cater for the majority of the residents of Alice, as we can see that the IsiXhosa articles are more in number than those written in English.

The articles that were written in English, even though they are less in number compared those written in IsiXhosa, were written to cater for the white minority and for those residents who can write, speak or understand the English language. This stipulates that there is a balance in languages because all the races in this community newspaper are catered for.

➤ **FRONT PAGE**

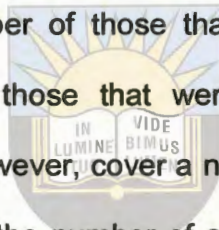
The front page of the May issue has one article and it is coded 3, meaning that the contents expressed political views. The front page of the June issue also has one article and it has been coded 10, 15 and 17, meaning that it focuses on rape, education and crime in its contents. These articles that appear in the front pages of May and June publications are written in different languages: one is written in English and the other in isiXhosa. Both of these issues have something to do with community development. The front pages of the *Idikelethu* community newspapers on both issues therefore topically focus on community development.

➤ **TARGET AUDIENCE**

The *Idikelethu* newspaper targets the Nkonkobe Local Municipality areas, as it is indicated in the front page of these two selected newspapers, and the Alice community is one of the communities that are situated within the jurisdiction of the Nkonkobe Local Municipality. It must be noted that the areas of the Nkonkobe Local Municipality are predominantly occupied by IsiXhosa speaking residents. Oso (2011) states that the media should cover the news of the environment in which a particular media is situated, the *Idikelethu* newspaper therefore adheres to that role by catering for all groups within the Nkonkobe Local Municipality, including the Alice community because it is situated at Alice.

➤ **IDIKELETHU NEWSPAPER NEWS COVERAGE IN RELATION TO  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

As specified by Soola (1995), the role of media must be a first preference in order to fulfill community development purposes. King (2006) further supports this statement by highlighting that the community media has been given a role in the community to deliver the content that is part of the development agenda. In the sample of two selected *Idikelethu* newspapers, that are used in this study, the researcher found 27 stories that address a number of different social issues. As the stories were coded, the researcher looked at the number of those that were relevant to community development and the number of those that were not relevant to community development. A single story can, however, cover a number of different categories in its content. The table below shows the number of stories that are under the same category, and these are the stories that are relevant to community development.



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| COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STORIES  | NUMBER OF ARTICLES<br>=(36 STORIES) 93.8 % |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Socio-economic developments    | 2 (5.5 %)                                  |
| HIV/AIDS                       | 2 (5.5 %)                                  |
| Poverty                        | 1 (2.7 %)                                  |
| Unemployment                   | 3 (8.3%)                                   |
| Community developments         | 6 (16.6 %)                                 |
| Agriculture                    | 4 (11.1 %)                                 |
| Housing                        | 1 (2.7%)                                   |
| Government                     | 6 (16.6%)                                  |
| Education                      | 6 (16.6%)                                  |
| Sport                          | 3 (8.3%)                                   |
| Youth development projects     | 1 (2.7%)                                   |
| Nation building                | 1 (2.7%)                                   |
| <b>TOTAL NUMBER OF STORIES</b> | <b>36 (100%)</b>                           |

**Table 4.2.3 Community development stories**

The researcher also noticed that there are stories, in the *Idikelethu* newspaper, that do not directly focus on the aspect of community development but touch upon community underdevelopment issues in their content, and that is how the people get

to see that they need development in their communities. The Right to Know Campaign Discussion Document (2011) does indicate that the South African media operates in a very complex environment, where there are many socio-economic and political challenges. These challenges include the issue of underdevelopment in communities that have massive numbers of unemployment, HIV/AIDS, inadequate agrarian reform, intensified rural poverty, increased urbanization, and under investment in social services. The stories, therefore, which the researcher picked up, relating to community underdevelopment issues in the *Idikelethu* newspaper, are shown on the table below.



| COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT EFFECTS STORIES | NUMBER OF ARTICLES<br>=(9 STORIES) 88.8 % |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Prostitution                          | 1 (11.1%)                                 |
| Politics                              | 3 (33.2%)                                 |
| Corruption                            | 1 (11.1%)                                 |
| Crime                                 | 3 (33.2%)                                 |
| Drugs                                 | 1 (11.1%)                                 |
| <b>TOTAL NUMBER OF STORIES</b>        | <b>9 (100%)</b>                           |

**Table 4.2.4 Coverage of community underdevelopment effects stories**

The researcher also picked up articles that are not focusing on community development in their topics and content. The table below shows those articles that are not categorized under community development articles, as they are not focusing on community development with their topics and content.

| NON-DEVELOPMENT STORIES | NUMBER OF ARTICLES<br>= (8 Stories) 75 % |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Royalty                 | 2 (25 %)                                 |
| Rape                    | 1 (12.5 %)                               |
| Justice                 | 1 (12.5 %)                               |
| Religion                | 2 (25 %)                                 |

|                         |            |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Tradition               | 1 (12.5 %) |
| Violence                | 1 (12.5 %) |
| TOTAL NUMBER OF STORIES | 8 (100 %)  |

**Table 4.2.5 Stories that are not topically directed on community development**

The above tables reveal that communication is very important in community development. They also reveal that community newspapers can be used for community development purposes. Lobulu (2011) has highlighted the importance of newspapers as a form of mass media that can drive people towards community development. Media has the capacity to influence people to follow a particular path due to its persuasiveness. Choudhury (2011) concurs with assertion when he states that the media is used to further development plans and strategies through communication, and yet, the media also carries the responsibility of providing the community with the information that they can use to develop themselves and their communities.



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Also, according to the data presented in the tables above, the *Idikelethu* newspaper contributes to community development. The tables above show many articles contributing to community development. Some of them show stories that focus on community underdevelopment issues.

**Table 4.2.3** shows the articles that focus on community development, while **table 4.2.4** shows those articles that focus on community underdevelopment issues. When we look at **table 4.2.3**, we can detect that the community development articles that were published in the *Idikelethu* newspaper are as follows:

HIV/AIDS 5.5 %; Poverty 2,7 %; Unemployment 8.3 %; Community developments 16.6 %; Agriculture 11.1 %; Housing 2.7 %; Government 16.6 %; Education 16.6 %; Sport 8.3 %; Youth development projects 2.7 % and Nation building 2.7 %. This

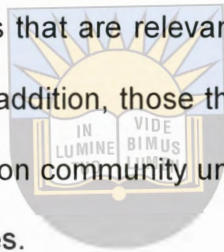
makes these articles take a majority of 93.8%. These statistical figures indicate that the majority of articles that are relevant to community development are: community developments, government and education articles, at 16.6%. A percentage that is slightly less than 16.6% goes to agriculture (11.1), with an average of 8.3% in sport and a low of 2.7 % to articles focusing on poverty, youth development projects and nation building.

**Table 4.2.4** illustrates those articles that are not directly focusing on community development but focuses on community underdevelopment issues. Those articles are about politics, corruption, crime and drugs. According to the researcher's perception, a weak political engagement and structure can lead to underdevelopment in many communities. Corruption can also ruin development. In addition, when communities are underdeveloped, the rate of crime increases and people end up using drugs which can also ruin their future. These stories are seen as having negative impact on community development but they inform the public about dangers caused by underdevelopment and factors that contribute to underdevelopment. The statistical figures are as follows:

The articles that focused on politics rated 33.2 %; Corruption 11.1%; Crime 33.2 % and Drugs 11.1 %, and that makes a total of 88.8%. The majority of reported articles are those focusing on crime and politics at 33.2 % and the least are those focusing on drugs and corruption at 11.1 %.

**Table 4.2.5** shows other topical articles that are not topically directed on community development. Those articles include: Rape 12.5 %; Justice 12.5 %; Religion 25 %; Tradition 12.5 % and Violence 12.5%, which makes a total of 75 % of presented stories.

The articles that directly related to community development in the *Idikelethu* newspaper are more than other articles that are focusing the community underdevelopment issues and those that are not focusing on community development with their contents and topics. This shows the extent to which the *Idikelethu* newspaper contributes to community development. According to the data that has been presented, this newspaper takes a leading role because it contributes to community development like any other forms of media. It therefore meets the function of informing people about developmental issues, be it negative or positive, as we can see that there were stories that are relevant to community development, and these make a total of 93.8 %. In addition, those that are not directly focused on community development but focusing on community underdevelopment issues made a total of 75 % on the published articles.



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It is also worth mentioning that the social responsibility theory highlighted that the press is obliged to be responsible for the public and it has to be informative, truthful, accurate, objective, and balanced (Ravi, 2012). In this regard, the *Idikelethu* newspaper does exactly what the social responsibility theory expects the media to do in developing people together with their communities.

### 4.3. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Focus group discussions were held in four locations at Alice, namely: Ntselamanzi, Dyamala, Mavuso and Gqumashe. The two locations that are closer to town, from where the *Idikelethu* newspaper is situated were Mavuso and Ntselamanzi locations. The other two locations that are distant from the town, where the *Idikelethu* newspaper is situated were Gqumashe and Dyamala. Both of these distant and closer locations have high percentage of readership, as noted by the author of the

Idikelethu publications. The aim was not to compare the results but to get a rich and detailed description of the data. The aim was to give the participants the opportunity to reflect on the role and contribution of the *Idikelethu* newspaper, as to whether it contributes to community development or not. For that purpose, the researcher made use of a recorder to record the discussions that were transpired in the focus groups, which were later transcribed for analysis. The recorder therefore enabled the researcher to remember the discussions so that there could be no information left out.

#### **4.3.1. Distribution of participants according to their age and gender**

The participants were the youth and adults. Both males and females were participating in the discussions. People should be given a chance to participate in their community development, irrespective of their gender or age. The National Youth Policy Document (2009-2014) states that there should be no discrimination in development initiatives. Everyone has to participate irrespective of gender, age, race, sexual orientation or disability. There should be no any other form of discrimination in development as enriched in the constitution of the country. The NYPD (2009-2014) further stipulates that the principles of a non-racial society, if acknowledged, can have a positive impact on the aspect of socialization and promote respect for human rights.

The community of Alice is however made up of 53 % of females and 47 % of males residing in this community (Stats S.A, 2010). This has a serious impact in the community as it contributes to the escalation of poverty, as women are generally marginalized from economic opportunities, community development activities and from any other opportunities that can influence developmental initiatives in their

communities (Sibiya, 2010). Therefore, the participation of women in focus group discussions in this study gave them hope in that they were consulted and asked to share their perceptions social issues. They were therefore willing to co-operate and work towards the development of their communities through communication.

#### **4.3.2. Report of 1<sup>st</sup> focus group discussion: Ntselamanzi (close to the town)**

The first focus group discussion was held in Ntselamanzi, at Alice. This location is one of the locations that are closer to the Alice town, from where the *Idikelethu* newspaper is situated. The participants were Ntselamanzi residents, who were the *Idikelethu* newspaper readers. They were all adults. The group was made up of eight participants, with two males and six females. The participants included the readers who read both issues of the *Idikelethu* newspaper that were selected as a sample for this study, and these are the May and June issues. The readers highlighted the following matters in their discussions:

##### **➤ Accessibility of the newspaper**

The participants were asked to comment on whether the *Idikelethu* newspaper was easily accessible to them or not, as readers of the newspaper. They noted that the *Idikelethu* newspaper is not easily accessible to the Alice communities, although it is a community newspaper. One of the respondents said:

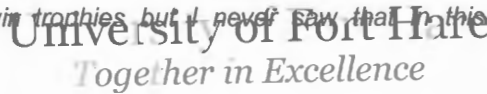
*"Although I am living close to the town where Idikelethu newspaper offices are situated, I've never saw this newspaper. It's my first time to see it close and I've never saw any Idikelethu journalist around this community". The other one added by saying; "I usually see this Idikelethu newspaper once or twice in a year, even then it's rare to see it around Ntselamanzi".*

The *Idikelethu* newspaper seemed to be a not easily accessible publication at Ntselamanzi, hence it is not popular in the eyes of many participants.

➤ **Coverage of newspaper**

The participants said that the *Idikelethu* newspaper is located at Alice and so, those that distribute the newspaper should be visible all over the Nkonkobe communities. They also mentioned that the *Idikelethu* newspaper should cover all the communities that are around the Nkonkobe Local Municipality. They viewed the *Idikelethu* newspapers as a newspaper that is not well circulated.

*“Idikelethu newspaper has favoritism because it covers certain places and certain individuals. For instance, when there is an event at Fort Hare, you’ll see them but they never came here in Ntselamanzi. We do have developments in this community. For example, children usually play football tournaments and they always win trophies but I never saw that in this newspaper”* said the participant.



The participants remarked that the newspaper only covers certain places and certain people, and does not cover all the areas under the Nkonkobe local municipality. Their reason was that they do not see any of their community development programmes appear in this newspaper, during the time of its publication. They also noted that they only see people that they do not know on the newspaper, so that does not give them the interest to read the newspaper.

*“We only see Mamngwevu’s funerals of which we had many funerals here but they never get published by this newspaper. We have many old age homes here, co-operative projects and youth development programmes but we never saw them published”* the other participant added.

In their view, in order for them to be interested on other community development programmes published in the *Idikelethu* community newspaper, they need to see

their community programmes published first. Seemingly, this newspaper fails to cover their stories because they only mention the programmes that are conducted in other areas of the Alice community, while theirs are being ignored by the newspaper.

*“Idikelethu doesn’t publish news that the community needs to know. They only publish news of their interest”* said the participant.

The participants argued that there is a lot of selectivity in this newspaper when it comes to news coverage, and at some point, there is a lot of propaganda according to what is written in some of the articles. The participants also argued that the failure to cover all the Nkonkobe communities result from the immobilization communities for community development. They noted that since some of them became members of community development projects in their community, they have never seen any journalist from the *Idikelethu* news coming to their development programmes or any meetings that they have.

*“Maybe they come but we didn’t notice and besides that, we never saw any publications of our programmes that we can make an example of as their work”* said the participant.

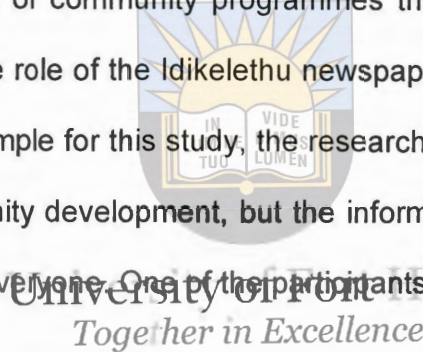
They further stated that if there were some of their programmes published, they would say that the *Idikelethu* newspaper is taking a role in mobilizing people to participate in development programmes.

The participants noted that their community has many community development programmes such as the farming projects, sports, old age projects, where old people make beads and clothes, old age schools, where old people get education, and old age homes. Above all, the youth programmes, especially sport is one of the programmes that are mostly getting recognition in their community and those programmes are successful and are growing. The participants indicated that the

*Idikelethu* newspaper has to play its role, especially in those programmes that looks to mobilize and motivate more young people to participate in developmental programmes. But this has not been happening because the participants claim to have never seen any publications of the *Idikelethu* newspaper that addresses the issue of youth development programmes.

➤ ***Informing Alice community about development programmes***

The perceptions of the participants of the *Idikelethu* newspaper inform the researcher about the nature of community programmes that are run at Alice, and how the readers perceive the role of the *Idikelethu* newspaper. By looking at the two issues that are used as a sample for this study, the researcher discovered that these articles do focus on community development, but the information provided by these articles is not accessible to everyone. One of the participants said;



*"This community newspaper informs people but their information does not reach us as we are called the target audience because this newspaper is not popular in our eyes".* Another participant added by saying *"You'll only see this newspaper when you are in town, not around here"*.

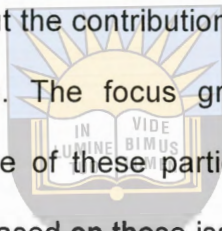
The participants also claimed that the inaccessibility of the newspaper was caused by the lack of visibility on the part of those that are responsible for the distribution of the newspaper, more especially in their community.

One of them said *"We can see there are development stories in this newspaper like this one of Masakhane project but the information does not reach us because it's rare to see this newspaper around here"*. Another participant also added by saying *"We are interested to read this newspaper especially when we can get to see our programmes published here but some of us cannot go to town to buy it as you can see I use a walking stick"*.

Some of the community members stated that they are interested in reading this newspaper but also mentioned that they cannot go to town as they are old to walk to town. Therefore the lack of the accessibility of the newspaper results in the failure to persuade, inform and educate other communities, such as Ntselamanzi.

#### 4.3.3. Report for the 2<sup>nd</sup> focus group: Dyamala (far from the town)

The focus group discussions were held in Dyamala location. This is one of the locations that are far from the Alice town, where the *Idikelethu* newspaper is situated. Readers were allowed to discuss about the contributions of the *Idikelethu* newspaper to community development of Alice. The focus group was made up of nine participants, who were all adults. Five of these participants were males and four were females. Their discussion was based on these issues:



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##### ➤ **Accessibility of the newspaper**

The readers reported that they don't always see this newspaper and even not in their location.

*"I know this newspaper but I never saw it here. I usually see Idikelethu in town and University of Fort Hare"* said the participant. They never saw any one selling it in their village. Another participant added by saying *"We usually ask ourselves why the Idikelethu officials don't circulate this newspaper in our villages or maybe it's because we are not educated so they think we can't read?"*

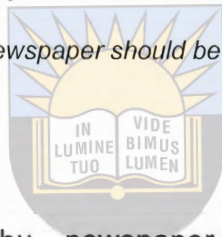
According to what these participants said, it looks like they have been undermined by this community newspaper, as if they cannot read the paper, or as if the information carried by the newspaper is not meant for them but for a other people.

*“This newspaper should be sold in schools so that our children can be able to bring them at home for us”* another participant added.

The readers indicated that they take the *Idikelethu* newspaper as a community newspaper, which is based in disadvantaged communities, therefore, insisted that the newspaper should be free. Some participants said that they expected the newspaper not to be sold because it is a community newspaper and it sometimes publishes some outdated stories.

*“They usually publish old stories, we cannot buy that. Even if the stories could be helpful to us but we cannot buy newspaper with old stories. This newspaper should be free”* said the participant.

➤ **Coverage of the newspaper**



The readers agreed that *Idikelethu* newspaper contributes to community development based on the articles they see, although they are few. They perceive the newspaper as a newspaper that covers the stories that only take place at Alice stories, since much of its content focus at Alice. Even within the scope of the Alice community, some argue that it only covers those stories happen in the Alice town because the paper rarely talks about development programmes that are happening outside of Alice, in rural communities.

*“This newspaper only covers stories of the events held in town by our municipality and those happening at Fort Hare, especially when there are ministers”* said the participant. *“Our location is developing in sport. “We usually play tournaments here but we never see them published”* other participant added.

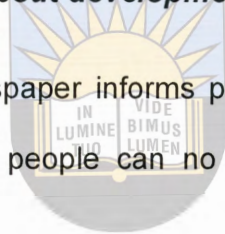
The participants noted that the readers that are staying very far from Alice, in rural areas and villages, do not get to develop interest in the newspaper because there is nothing written that focuses on them. They complained that the *Idikelethu* newspaper

is a community newspaper that is based in the Nkonkobe Municipality; therefore it should not only accommodate people living in the Alice town.

They also questioned the relevance and the role of the newspaper by asking that: what does the newspaper say about those people who are developing in their communities, but cannot find the means or tools to interact with other people in other communities, to share their ideas and developmental issues? They said that the newspaper needs to change its strategy, especially on how it covers their stories.

➤ **Informing Alice community about development programmes**

The participants noted that this newspaper informs people about previous events, launches and conferences of which people can no longer attend to know what information was given.



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*"As we can see here, now, that this newspaper publishes old stories. The events published here are very important to us and I believe we should have gained a lot but we never got any notice to attend them" said the participant. Another participant added by saying "This newspaper should be published weekly so that we can get notices on time because they publish forums that already seated in which they would have helped to voice out our concerns about community development issues"*

Publishing outdated stories is one of the problems they encounter because the Municipality sometimes post notices for meetings in that newspaper but people they do not get that information on time since the newspaper is published monthly. The readers always get the notices after the actual events have happened. The participants also noted that the Idikelethu newspaper does not publish jobs like other newspapers do. One of the participants raised that when she was saying:

*"We are unemployed youths staying around Alice community but we never get any call from Idikelethu newspaper for job opportunities like what other newspapers do. In many cases, you'll meet a person saying there were vacancies at Nkonkobe but you never hear about them. The Alice community employers do not publish vacancies, they rather tell their friends and relatives and we would like the Idikelethu to look for jobs and publish them for us".*

The participants highlighted one of the critical issues that are facing the South African youth, and that is unemployment. In this regard, the *Idikelethu* newspaper should be playing a significant role, so that the youth's transformational processes may take place.



#### **4.3.4. Report of the 3<sup>rd</sup> focus group discussion: Mavuso (closer to the town)**

The focus group discussions were held at Mavuso Location. This is one of the locations that are closer to the Alice town, where the *Idikelethu* newspaper is situated. The participants were youth and there were 5 males and 5 females which made 10 participants. The participants discussed the role of the newspaper, the discussions went as follows:

##### **➤ Accessibility of the newspaper**

The participants claimed that they rarely see the newspaper. Some said that they have never seen the newspaper and still, others said that they have only seen the newspaper in the shops that sell newspapers.

*"I usually see the Idikelethu newspaper but once or twice in a year. In many times, I see it in town when I'm coming from school" said the participant. The other one added by saying "This newspaper should be free because in these villages they are people who don't have R2 to buy it and also they should circulate this newspaper around our communities because there are those people who can't go to town to buy it"*

The participants argued that this newspaper must be free, so that it can be available to all the communities around Alice, at all times. Therefore, it should cater for all people regardless of who can or cannot afford it. Furthermore, some said that the newspaper should cater for all races, as there are Afrikaans, English and Xhosa speaking people at Alice, so it should be written in those three languages.

*"Idikelethu newspaper is written in Isixhosa and English. However, there are Afrikaans speaking people around the Alice community and some of them only know Afrikaans. Therefore it should be written in three languages, which are English, Isixhosa and Afrikaans" said the participant.*

➤ **Coverage of the newspaper**



The participants indicated that the *Idikelethu* newspaper does cover their local stories because they usually see the newspaper around their location. Some of them get it from town, as they are living close to town. The participants also noted that the *Idikelethu* newspaper covers a number of stories from other communities within the Nkonkobe municipality. They also said that they would like to read about events happening in other places, besides the Nkonkobe local municipality.

*"I usually buy this newspaper in town when I'm coming from school and sometimes there are people selling it around this community" said the participant. "We would also like to see the stories from around the country especially in sport because they inspire us" the other one added.*

➤ **Informing Alice community about development programmes**

The participants indicated that the newspaper does publish stories that are focusing on community development, but those are more of local issues. They said that they want to see the stories of other communities, so that they can learn more about what

is happening in other towns or communities that a far from Alice. The participants said that the information provided by the *Idikelethu* newspaper is relevant to community development. But they said that they want to see what is happening outside and around Alice, because they know the events happening in their location.

*"We usually see what is happening around Alice hence we lose interest when we see them published in Idikelethu"* said the participant. The other participant said *"Their stories are relevant to community development because we can see here the government assisting the agricultural projects with tools like wheelbarrows and water pipes"*.

They also said that the stories about prostitution have something to do with development because poverty can make people become prostitutes and make them contract HIV/AIDS. They also indicated that the lack of development leads to strikes, which is one of the stories published in the newspaper.

*"Publishing prostitution stories could be wrong depending on how others interpret or understand the message. Some of us can think prostitution can solve their financial problems. However, the aim of the publisher was to educate and inform the public about its consequences hence I am saying stories like that don't develop us in some cases"* said the participant. The other one said *"when people see strike stories published they think it's the best way to solve their problems, hence I am saying stories about strike do not develop us also"*.

The participants noted that the role of newspapers is to inform them about sports articles which represent community development because youths are more vulnerable, and can easily be involved in crime, drugs and corruption, but with the information they get from this newspaper, youths can learn something on how they can spend their time wisely and keep healthy.

#### 4.3.5. Report of 4<sup>th</sup> focus group discussion: Gqumashe (far from the town)

The focus group discussions were held at Gqumashe Location. This is also a location that is far from the town, where the *Idikelethu* newspaper is situated. The focus groups were made up of 8 participants, 2 young people and 6 adults, with 4 males and 4 females. The participants shared their perceptions about the role of the *Idikelethu* newspaper and its contribution to community development at Alice.

##### ➤ **Accessibility of the newspaper**

The participants said that they rarely see the newspaper in their community and said that this is probably because they are living far away from town. They however indicated that they usually see the newspaper in town and that it is difficult for those living in rural communities to get hold of this newspaper. They said that the distributors of the *Idikelethu* newspaper must also come to their location and other rural communities to distribute the newspaper, so that it cannot only be found at Alice.

*"Idikelethu newspaper journalist should also come to us but I never saw them here except in town and we do not know where to find them when we have problems"* said the participant.

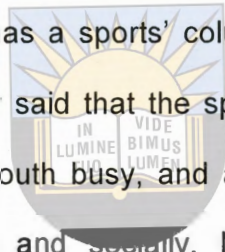
The participants also noted that the newspaper can help them establish an interaction between them and the municipality, but if the *Idikelethu* newspaper journalists can come to look for stories in their community. The other participant argued that the *Idikelethu* newspaper should not just cover events when Ministers or government officials are coming to attend social or community event, but should cover stories that affect them, as it is difficult at times for them to get in touch with Municipal officials.

➤ **Coverage of the newspaper**

The participants stated that the *Idikelethu* newspaper does contribute to community development, although it does not cater for Alice community as a whole. The participants also indicated that their community needs to be developed, but unfortunately, the newspaper does not publish any of their stories.

➤ **Informing Alice community about development programmes**

The participants said that the newspaper contributes to community development. They indicated that the newspaper has a sports' column which informs the youth about sport and its importance. They said that the sport contributes to community development because it keeps the youth busy, and away from crime. It therefore develops them physically, mentally and socially. It is also a part of youths' entertainment.



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*"As we can see they are sport stories here and I think they try to inspire the youth to participate in sport as some of them can take it as their professions and make them busy at all times"* said the participant. Other participant said *"We do have problems here like roads but we never saw them published. Our clinic is very far from us and it's difficult to find transport to take us there because of these roads. There are stories of rape in this community because people walk to the clinic and they have to pass the forests but we don't know how we can access Idikelethu to report those issues"*.

The participants also noted that this newspaper contributes to development in some ways and that it does not only cater for the Alice community as they can see stories from other communities. Other participant said

*"Alice community is really underdeveloped and there is a failure of interaction between us and our local government. We would like Idikelethu newspaper to take our problems seriously and publish them so that our government can see that we are living in a bad situation"* Other participant

added by saying “We see there are a lot of development stories published in this newspaper but they are not ours. *Idikelethu* take news around Alice town although Alice is a huge community. Even us in these villages, we need to be informed and we also want to share our grievances to our government through *Idikelethu* but they never came to us”.

The participants remarked about the lack of interaction between them, the newspaper and the Nkonkobe Local Municipality, as they said that the *Idikelethu* newspaper should be publishing their stories, so that the local government may be aware about what is happening in the communities around Alice. Thus, by publishing community stories, the *Idikelethu* would be empowering the community.



#### 4.4. DISCUSSION

According to the four reports of the focus group discussions, the participants seem to have understood what development is all about. They also expressed the need to participate in community development initiatives hence they indicated that it is important for them to interact with government about issues that affect them. Babalola and Obafemi (2002) asserted that newspapers are an instrument that is designed to build literate communities. Their invaluable function is to inform, educate, entertain and bringing the governments developmental programmes nearer to the people. The AEJMC Report (2008) further asserts that if community newspapers were exclusively playing their role, their content would reflect their community demographics.

There are however situations where local newspapers fail to cover local stories but instead focus more on advertising and in public relations. In such cases, they do not respond to community needs and social interests. Moreover, some even ignore the issues of local governance but focus on how developmental initiatives are hard to

maintain in low-income groups. Whereas the government should be challenged to institute programmes that could be communally developed, sustained, and managed. It is also the role of local newspapers to publish such communal challenges, so that the local government may be under-pressure to perform its duties for the benefit of communities. This is what the participants noted about the *Idikelethu* newspaper.

The participants stated that they need the *Idikelethu* newspaper to take their stories to their local government because they see it as a suitable platform in which they can voice their grievances concerning communal issues and developmental programmes. The AEJMC Report (2008) underscores the role of community newspapers by stating that they are a suitable tool for communities to communicate with each other and their respective government. This report indicates that since the dawn of democracy, in South Africa, the media has transformed many communities, and continues to do so. The media has been a tool that fosters change, and informs the public about various social and community development programmes.

The media delivers and makes the public knowledge accessible to everyone and subsequently gives everyone an opportunity to voice their opinions. The Constitution of South Africa (1996) in the Bill of rights portrays the freedom of expression as one of the human rights that are afforded and preserved by the South African Human Rights Commission. Therefore, the social media, including community newspapers like the *Idikelethu* newspaper, subscribe under the people's exercise of the freedom of expression.

The participants seem to understand that the *Idikelethu* newspaper has to inform them about any developmental issues that the local government has planned for

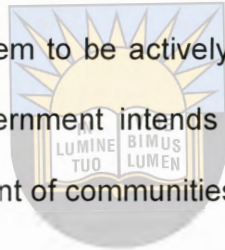
communities, so that they can be aware of the developments that will be taking place in their communities. In their discussions, they noted that the *Idikelethu* newspaper does disseminate the needed information but this information does not reach the communities on time. They remarked that even though the newspaper is designed to cater for the rest of the Nkonkobe community, and its surrounding areas, some communities rarely see or receive this newspaper in their communities.

Some indicated that there are developmental programmes in their communities that need to be covered so that other communities may benefit from them but those programmes are never published by the newspaper. This restricts their capacity to communicate with other communities about the progress they have made, and how they are developing as the community. The AEJMC Report (2008) also notes that the function of community newspapers is to reflect the audience's growing need to access the localized information. Ravi (2012) supplemented this assertion by stating that it is the social responsibility of the media, including community newspapers, to meet the needs of the communities that they serve, and this includes the need for development.

The participants also noted that the time the *Idikelethu* newspaper takes before publishing its next issue, is also problematic. In the case of municipality notices, the participants noted that they cannot meet the deadlines because they get notices late and they do not attend the municipal meetings and events because they do not get the needed information on time. The participants also indicated that they need to build an interaction between their communities and their local government as it is necessary for community development purposes. But they mentioned that they cannot interact with the local government because they get the necessary municipal

notices, which are relevant to them, very late and sometimes after the local municipality has finished addressing community developmental strategies.

They stated that they do get messages from their local government but those messages do not reach them in time and therefore they are not able to send a feedback to their local government due to the lack of interaction between them and their local governance. Howley (2010), commenting on the role of media, states that community newspapers should be locally generated and distributed to all their constituents. This will assist the community in getting hold of the necessary information in time, and challenge them to be actively involved in all the processes and programmes that the local government intends to implement for the greater good of the public and the development of communities.



The participants also recommended that the *Idikelethu* newspaper should be free because it serves the people that are living in disadvantaged areas and some of them cannot even afford that small amount of money needed to buy the newspaper. Endorsing this opinion, McCall (2011) stipulates that the media should provide and facilitate free, independent and pluralistic information that will serve the public interest. For accessibility, some participants remarked that the *Idikelethu* newspaper should be circulated around schools, so that the newspaper may get better chances of distribution, as their children will bring the paper home after school.

This will also assist those who cannot go to town due to various disabilities, or old age to get an access to the newspaper. By circulating the newspaper around the schools, the *Idikelethu* publishers would be encouraging learners to read, and to expand their knowledge about social matters that concerns their communities. Babalola and Obafemi (2002), emphasizing this issues, contend that newspapers

can play an important role in the development of a child, as they promote literacy through learning, writing and through dialogue, and these are regarded as the pillars of effective and efficient use of language. In this regard, the availability of the *Idikelethu* newspaper in schools will not only make it easier for communities to access the paper but will assist in developing the mental capacity of children.

In terms of bringing change, the participants indicated that the newspaper does bring change with the information that it sends to people, but also mentioned that the information does not reach everyone. Those that benefit more are the people who live closer to town, where the markets are. The participants also observed that they need to be informed in a language that they understand so that they can appreciate the message that has been sent by the newspaper. They stated that the community of Alice is made up of three races, which are namely, the Xhosa, White and Coloured. These people speak three different languages, like IsiXhosa, English and Afrikaans.

They stated that they like the fact that the *Idikelethu* newspaper is normally written in two different languages, isiXhosa and English, but they would like to see some of the articles published in Afrikaans in order to cater for those who can read, write and speak Afrikaans, who may not understand isiXhosa and English. Intensifying this assertion, Hatcher (2013) states that the South African government, with its local governance has been mandated by the people of South Africa to ensure that all racial groups are equally represented by the media as we have different races and eleven official languages in South Africa.

## Summary

This chapter focused on data presentation, analysis and discussions. The researcher employed two selected methods to collect data. These methods were quantitative content analysis and focus group discussions. The tables were used to quantify the data in order to make it understandable. The data was thereafter interpreted and discussed to evaluate the extent to which the *Idikelethu* newspaper contributes to community development.



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## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1. Introduction

The preceding chapter focused on the presentation of data that was collected from the content of 2 articles that were published by the *Idikelethu* newspaper on the months of May and June, and from the 4 focus group discussions that discussed the role and contribution of the *Idikelethu* newspaper in community development at Alice. The researcher used both the qualitative and quantitative data analysis procedures to present, interpret and make the collected data about the role of the *Idikelethu* newspaper in community development understandable. This chapter focuses on drawing conclusion and making some recommendations for the future studies.

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#### 5.2. CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

This study has come to a conclusion that community newspapers can be used as a communication tool for developmental purposes, provided that the readers are satisfied with the content of the newspaper, can be able to read it in a language or languages that they understand although the newspaper is not quite accessible to everyone in the targeted communities. The findings of this study reveal that community newspapers do have the capability to promote social or communal participation, mobilize people, and inform them about the processes that are taking place in their respective locations, and this is what the *Idikelethu* newspaper is doing at Alice. But, even though the newspaper meets the needs of the people, there are still some challenges that hinder its effective functions in the Alice community.

These factors include aspects like: its time of publication, the lack of availability of the newspaper in all the Alice communities, its distribution price to those who cannot afford it, the lack of Afrikaans publications, as one of the languages that used at Alice, and that the newspaper dominantly publishes the stories that happens within the Alice vicinity and does not cover all the communities under the Nkonkobe Local Municipality. The other significant findings of the study are discussed below:

### 5.2.1. Idikelethu news coverage

#### ➤ *Front pages*

Based on the two publications that were taken as a sample and analyzed, this study has revealed that the *Idikelethu* newspaper, contributes to community development. Some of the developmental issues that the newspaper covered include crime, education, politics and rape stories. However, these listed topics fall under the category of hard news stories. According to Rich (2009), hard news stories include stories of an opportune nature about events or conflicts that have just happened or about to happen, such as crimes, fires, meetings, protest rallies, speeches, and new testimonies in court cases. This category of news is set against another category of news which is known as the soft news stories.

The soft news stories include those stories that inform or entertain people. Their emphasis rests upon the issue that sparks the human interest to buy and read newspapers. They usually include stories about human development, the effectiveness of dieting or the people's need for living healthy life styles (Rich, 2009). The *Idikelethu* newspaper should therefore try to write more of soft news in their front pages in order to draw the attention of readers on their feature stories rather than hard news stories.

➤ ***Idikelethu newspaper article's relevance to community development***

One of the objectives of this study was to examine the relevance of *Idikelethu* newspaper as a method of communication that can be used for developmental purposes. Chapter 3 of this research indicates that the data was collected through the use of the quantitative content analysis in order to fulfill this objective. In the data that was collected, there were 27 stories that were published in the two selected issues. In those 27 stories, each story covered one or various issues, hence the researcher decided to code the articles. According to the coded categories, the stories that focused on community development were 36, which made 93.8 percent of the overall stories that concerned community development at Alice.



The code categories included issues such as socio-economic developments, HIV/AIDS, poverty, unemployment, community developments, agriculture, housing, government, education, sport, youth development projects, and nation building. In the categories of community development stories, the categories of education, government, and community developments made the majority of 16.6 % on the overall percentage (93.8%) of community development stories at Alice. This shows that issues like education, government and community developments are the major areas of community development that the *Idikelethu* newspaper focuses on.

According to the Census Community Profiles (2011) community of Alice has only 21 % of people having higher education qualifications. That shows that a very high number of people living with the Alice community are not educated. Hence the newspaper publishes a considerable amount of stories that seeks to empower the community to pursue education. Education is the key to development. The government, more especially the local governance, also plays a significant role in the

transformational processes and developmental programmes of the community. The *Idikelethu's* role in promoting education and the role of the local governance is therefore within the bounds of developing communities.

With a majority of 93.8% of publications focusing on development, this newspaper indicates that it is fulfilling its role to the Alice community, as far as community development is concerned. This clearly indicates that the *Idikelethu* newspaper does contribute to community development by disseminating the necessary information, empowering the community and by promoting community development at Alice. The stunning role that the *Idikelethu* newspaper plays within the Alice community is highlighted by Moemeka (1994), who contended that community newspapers should be published within a specific locality to benefit those communities in which they are produced, and that the editorial thrust should meet the interest and needs of those local communities. Thus, the newspapers should develop the capacity to inform people about issues that concerns them and their personal and communal developments.

Another issue that the *Idikelethu* newspaper focused on is the government. Stories about the government in the articles made 16.6% of the overall percentage (93.8%) of stories focusing on community development. Referring to this issue, Islam (2002) stated that the media provides the means of interaction between the government and the people, and lets the people voice out their ideas, concerns and grievances about their governance, and lets them talk about everything that can bring positive change in their society. The findings of this study indicate that the *Idikelethu* newspaper does play a role in assuring an interaction between the people and their government.

Agriculture was the second dominant feature on the *Idikelethu* two selected issues. This also shows a huge role taken by this newspaper to empower people in developmental initiatives. Agriculture is needed and encouraged by many development practitioners in the world especially in rural areas where there is a large scale of vacant land, as a result the Nkonkobe local municipality established an agency called NEDA that focuses on agricultural projects in the various communities of the Nkonkobe Local Municipality, including Alice (Nkonkobe Annual Report, 2014). The Alice LED Strategy reports (2000) further states that Alice has a great number of people living in rural areas and the majority of these people are youth.

The *Idikelethu* newspaper is taking that role of encouraging people towards agricultural practices because Alice has many large vacant spaces of land in rural area. Agriculture can therefore develop many communities, especially those that are composed of rural villages. If the readers can use the information that they get from the *Idikelethu* newspaper and make use of it, the Alice community can be developed. Furthermore, the newspaper reports and announces some sporting events that take place in various communities. The other topical issues that are covered by the *Idikelethu* newspaper, which focus on community underdevelopment issues, include the following: health related issues like HIV/AIDS, prostitution, politics, corruption, crime and drug abuse which made the overall of 88.8 percent.

### **5.2.2. Informing Alice community about development programmes**

Islam (2002) states that development is a multifaceted issue that needs an active participation and involvement of the people from the local populace in order to be achieved. This involves an effective development strategy that can be adopted by people in their communities and covered by the media as it transmits knowledge with

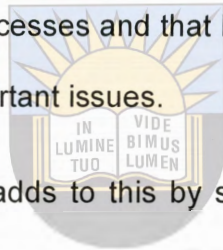
transparency to the general public. In order for a country to reduce poverty, it must improve its access to information and improve the quality of that information. People with more information find various ways of develop themselves because they are empowered. According to the four focus groups discussions the *Idikelethu* newspaper does inform people about the necessary development initiatives. It disseminates the relevant information although it does not reach all the communities because of its lack of accessibility and its publication time frame. When the people are informed, they get the courage to gather together for community development.

The study also discovered that even though the *Idikelethu* newspaper disseminates the necessary information, it does not however make that information accessible to everyone as it only distributes the paper to the locations that are closer to the town. The participants mentioned that some of the people that live in rural areas cannot afford to buy the newspaper, so they suggested that the newspaper be free. This shows that people want to read the newspaper, and if it were a free newspaper, it would be easier for people to get hold of it. This would assist the people to use the newspaper as a medium they trust to come up with community development initiatives that will improve their locations.

Commenting on the role of media, Jim (2013) states that newspapers have a public role to play, and it is that of ensuring social change, while developing local communities at the same time. People need to be mobilized in order for them to participate in decision making processes in terms of community development. Cupito and Farrel (2010) concurring with Jim, further states that newspapers are important in promoting participation, community integration, and inclusion. They function as a tool that facilitates social decision making in developmental agendas and ensures that the social rights of people are not undermined while disseminating the news.

### 5.2.3. Ensuring interaction between government and citizens

The focus group discussions revealed that the *Idikelethu* newspaper fails to ensure the interaction between the government and its people. They reported that they do get the information from the local government that deals with community development issues but they are unable to send back their messages to the government about the same developmental issues through the *Idikelethu* newspaper. Islam (2002) addressed this issue when he stated that many poor people do not suffer from physical and human deprivation but from the fact that their voice is lacking in decision making processes and that has a negative effect on them because they are left out in many important issues.



The Combat Poverty Agency (1995) adds to this by stating that the media should provide a platform where the various groups can tell their stories, in their own way, so they can develop their own voice in the public sphere. This means that the *Idikelethu* newspaper needs to do more, in its integration role, by functioning as a medium that can bring the local government closer to its people. It should further strive to be a community newspaper that provides an ongoing platform for community members to engage with the local government on policy making issues.

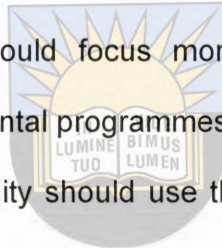
### 5.2.4. Ensuring change in Alice community

It was discovered in this study that the *Idikelethu* newspaper, with its content, does bring about social change and improvement in the Alice community. Jim (2013) indicated that newspapers have to adhere to the task of ensuring change, and this is what the *Idikelethu* newspaper is doing within the Alice communities. The study further shows that this newspaper stimulates participation, informs people, and mobilizes readers, even though it does not reach all the communities at Alice.

### 5.3. Recommendations

Having analyzed the data that was collected from the participants, and the content of the two selected issues, this study has come up with the following recommendations:

- The *Idikelethu* newspaper should be sold to all the communities under the Nkonkobe Local Municipality in order to reach all the targeted audience.
- The *Idikelethu* newspaper should be published weekly.
- The *Idikelethu* newspaper should focus more on the issues that concerns the whole of the Nkonkobe community as it is meant to serve this community.
- The *Idikelethu* newspaper should focus more on developmental issues, especially the youth developmental programmes.
- The Nkonkobe Local Municipality should use the *Idikelethu* newspaper as a tool to communicate with the Alice residents about issues concerning their development.
- For easy access, the *Idikelethu* newspaper should be found online because in most cases many people especially the youth prefer online publications.



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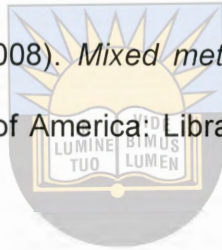
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## APPENDIX A



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### **ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE** **REC-270710-028-RA Level 01**

Certificate Reference Number: OSU061SMET01

Project title: **An evaluation of reader's perception of Idikelethu newspaper as a tool for community development in Alice, Eastern Cape**

Nature of Project: Masters

Principal Researcher: Nolukhanyo Theorida Metula

Supervisor: Dr OO Osunkunle

Co-supervisor:

On behalf of the University of Fort Hare's Research Ethics Committee (UREC) I hereby give ethical approval in respect of the undertakings contained in the above-mentioned project and research instrument(s). Should any other instruments be used, these require separate authorization. The Researcher may therefore commence with the research as from the date of this certificate, using the reference number indicated above.

Please note that the UREC must be informed immediately of:

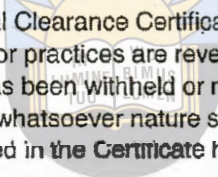
- Any material change in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the document
- Any material breaches of ethical undertakings or events that impact upon the ethical conduct of the research

The Principal Researcher must report to the UREC in the prescribed format, where applicable, annually, and at the end of the project, in respect of ethical compliance.

**Special conditions:** Research that includes children as per the official regulations of the act must take the following into account:

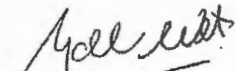
Note: The UREC is aware of the provisions of s71 of the National Health Act 61 of 2003 and that matters pertaining to obtaining the Minister's consent are under discussion and remain unresolved. Nonetheless, as was decided at a meeting between the National Health Research Ethics Committee and stakeholders on 6 June 2013, university ethics committees may continue to grant ethical clearance for research involving children without the Minister's consent, provided that the prescriptions of the previous rules have been met. This certificate is granted in terms of this agreement.

The UREC retains the right to

- 
- Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance Certificate if
    - Any unethical principal or practices are revealed or suspected
    - Relevant information has been withheld or misrepresented
    - Regulatory changes of whatsoever nature so require
    - The conditions contained in the Certificate have not been adhered to
  - Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project.
  - In addition to the need to comply with the highest level of ethical conduct principle investigators must report back annually as an evaluation and monitoring mechanism on the progress being made by the research. Such a report must be sent to the Dean of Research's office

The Ethics Committee wished you well in your research.

Yours sincerely



Professor Gideon de Wet  
Dean of Research

23 September 2014

## APPENDIX B

### Focus Group: Discussion Guide

I am Nolukhanyo Theorida Metula, studying towards Master of Social Science in Communication. I am conducting a study that focuses on evaluating readers perceptions about *Idikelethu* newspaper as a tool for community development in Alice. Therefore, I welcome and thank you for taking part in this focus group discussion. I realize you are busy and I appreciate your time.

Please note, despite of being taped, the participants will be assured that the discussion will be anonymous. The tapes will be kept safely until they are transcribed word for word, then they will be destroyed. The transcribed notes of the focus group will contain no information that would allow individual subjects to be linked to specific statements. Participants will be advised to answer and comment as correctly and honestly as possible. Furthermore, participants will be encouraged to refrain from discussing the comments of other group members outside the focus group and try as much as possible to participate during the discussion.

#### **Guiding questions**

1. *Does Idikelethu newspaper articles focused on community development?*
  - Are Idikelethu newspaper articles promoting participation in community development?
  - How do you perceive the impact of these articles on readers?
  - What changes can be made to improve these articles?

2. *How do Idikelethu newspapers articles influence participation of readers in community development issues?*

- Are articles well balanced in terms of considering gender, race and age groups of readers?
- How would you evaluate the effectiveness of *Idikelethu* newspaper development articles for behavioural changes towards promoting community development involvement among readers?

3. Does *Idikelethu* newspaper cover all Alice communities?

- How often do you see *Idikelethu* newspaper around your community?
- What changes can be made to improve the accessibility of this newspaper?

4. Of all the things we've discussed today, what would you say are the most important issues you would like to express about *Idikelethu* newspaper articles?



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***I thank you for your participation in this focus group discussion. This has been a very successful discussion and your opinions will be a valuable asset to the study. I hope you have found the discussion interesting.***