

## **News consumption among South African youth**



## **Another struggle to racial harmony**

Media Master: Media & Journalism

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## 1. Introduction

The youth and the news is a worldwide discussed subject. The decline in news consumption among young people has been investigated all around the world. David Mindich (2005) even devoted a book to the subject. Mindich decided to interview young people around his country. Defining young people as anyone under 40, he went to Kansas City, Brandeis University, New Orleans, and Los Angeles in an attempt to interview different people from various backgrounds. In his book 'Tuned out' he tries to give an explanation why Americans under 40 don't follow the news. Mindich explores a number of reasons for this. Foremost among these is the frequent response that younger generations don't read newspapers because they're watching TV news instead (the Internet, he finds, "does not in itself drive news use"). Mindich shows that younger nonreaders are "the least likely to consume TV news," and he is most concerned with the loss of news consumers of print media. Mindich also presents an analysis of how national television news adjusts to young viewers with "news-as-entertainment" options. In the Netherlands, Irene Costera Meijer (2006) did similar research about 'the future of the news' initiated by the public news broadcaster NOS who felt that something needed to be done to keep their young population informed about the society. She questioned 452 young people in the age of 15-25 about their perception and use of the news media. As a follow-up Tanja Jadnanansing (2006) further investigated how young people living in the Netherlands would prefer to follow the news and how they perceive the current offer in newsmedia. One of the main results of Jadnanansing's research was that young people do find the news important for their general knowledge, but they expressed to be dissatisfied with the way the news is brought to them. Based on the findings of her research Jadnanansing invented 'NOS-headlines', an online news format that should live up to the needs and wishes of young people in the Netherlands. Nowadays, 2007 there still is a worldwide decline in news consumption among young people (Mindich, 2006 p. 5-6). Often, the media is accused for being incapable of listening to the needs and wants of their young target audience. Another reason that would be of influence on this decline is the growing popularity of entertainment media. With entertainment media one could think of for instance 'celebrity news' or other forms of newsmedia that primarily focus on entertainment instead of information provision. As described above, research has been done to unfold the needs and wished of young

people. Results are often used to improve the media offer in news consumption by creating new forms of newsmedia. Initiatives like *Vukani* newspaper<sup>1</sup> in South Africa, *Youth news*, (Jeugdjournaal) in the Netherlands and German newspaper *Welt Kompakt* are examples of this.

Within South Africa limited research has been done on the subject of news consumption among younger people. Not much is published about statistics of media or news consumption. According to the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE) Youth Survey 2000, 35% of the South African population are between the ages of 16 and 35. This accounts for approximately 14.4 million people. Youth in South Africa are defined as the segment of the population that falls within the 15-35 age bracket. (This definition is currently being redefined as 15-28.)<sup>2</sup> Youth therefore is a considerably big group of people in the country that forms an important part of the population. Besides that, the youth has an important function in South Africa's growing democracy. In paragraph 2.5 I will expand on the youth, living in target area 'the Western Cape'.

Although maybe less investigated, the problem of decline in news consumption exists in South Africa as well. The Print Media Association in South Africa spoke about 'the Youth' as the key to rising newspaper circulation. They invented a school project to encourage a reading culture. Most newspapers report that young readers are drawn to sports coverage and showbiz news (Fourie 2001: 63). This concern of a shift towards entertainment as main news medium for youth turns out to be very relevant for South Africa.<sup>3</sup>

What makes the question of news consumption in South Africa interesting is the tension between the different racial groups in the country that causes discrepancies in knowledge and differences in media consumption. As we will find out later in this report, in many fields, racial harmony has not been fully accomplished. In the field of education for instance, learners of different racial background often get unequal

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<sup>1</sup> See paragraph 4.12

<sup>2</sup> 'South Africa Addressing Youth Unemployment – the Most Pressing Post-Apartheid Development Challenge for Youth', YDN , 2004

<sup>3</sup> See chapter 6

chances. In reference to news consumption this means that access to information has not always been for granted and sometimes still isn't. South Africa's different racial groups fight an ongoing struggle for racial harmony.

Besides race, another important factor in this matter is the role that language plays in news consumption. Not all South African youngsters are able to consume the news in their native language.<sup>4</sup> In the next paragraph the relevance for newsmedia research in South Africa will be further explained.

### **1.1 Relevance**

In countries where the population is very diverse, for instance in the Netherlands and specifically South Africa, different racial and ethnical groups should be given sufficient attention within the media. When looking at a country's youth population various subgroups can be identified. These groups could be identified according to race, class, cultural background or ethnicity (Gillespie, 1995). In chapter two the South African youth culture will be discussed more broadly. In reference to news consumption the media should take into account differences within a youth population in order to reach out for all of its members. Various studies have been done to show that differences in media consumption and perception can be related to racial, ethnical or cultural background. (De Bruin, 2001; De Bruin & Bijeman, 2001; Cosquino de Bussy & Hermans, 2001; Gillespie, 1995, Jhally & Lewis, 1992). One of these studies is done by Liebes & Katz (1993). These researchers made an analysis of the perception of an episode of Dallas by arranging focus groups of different ethnic origins in Israel and the United States. Liebes and Katz's conclusion was that each ethnic group evaluates the program in their own manner. Differences in media consumption according to race were also found by researchers Aksoy and Robins (2000). They investigated the media preferences and uses of Turkish youth living in Germany. The Turks seemed to prefer media that originates from their own country and therefore primarily watch satellite television and Turkish spoken programs. It is important to make a distinction between research in media reception and media consumption. My research will be primarily focused on the consumption of

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<sup>4</sup> See paragraph 2.7

newsmedia and will focus limited attention to the reception of the newsmedia. However, reception of the media plays a crucial role in media consumption and will therefore be briefly discussed in chapter 3.

## 1.2 Central Question

Coming from the idea that differences exist within a country's youth population and that media consumption can be influenced by racial, ethnical or cultural background we can look at the type of media that needs to be investigated. To narrow the subject of media consumption down to a measurable variable, this research will focus on one specific part of the media, namely: news consumption.

News provides people with important information about local and global issues. According to Roscho: *"News is continually sought and offered in the course of social communication because it is a necessary, and therefore valuable, commodity of social exchange."* (1975: 10). Above all, the content of the news provided is aimed at all South Africans and could therefore be a common part of their everyday life. Furthermore, knowledge about the news can contribute to the strive for a well-informed society. South Africa's relatively young democracy is getting on its feet and the media is playing a crucial role in the process. Chapter 4 will expand on the subject of 'the news' and the value of news consumption in South Africa.

Based on former research discussed above one could expect different racial groups to have different ways of consuming and perceiving the media. This could have important consequences for their knowledge about the world and the society they live in. This leads to the following central question:

*To what extent does the former racial segregation influence media consumption, specifically news consumption? If there are differences in news consumption, do they relate to racial background, and how can they be explained?*

When looking at the consumption of newsmedia the focus will be on all different types of media; the press (printmedia), television, radio and to a lesser extent on the

internet.<sup>5</sup> To put the central question into perspective I will attempt to answer the sub questions below:

- *Do African, Coloured and White youngsters have a different use of the media?*
- *In what form and through what media would the South African youth living in the Western Cape prefer to follow the news?*
- *Can we speak of 'Black' and 'White' media when looking at the news consumption of South African youth, and how can this be explained?*
- *How important is following the news for South African youngsters?*

### **1.3 Chapter Ranging**

In this master thesis the following range of chapters will occur;

#### *2. South African Youth culture*

Chapter 2 will be focused on South African youth culture and the history of the different racial groups in the country. The current situation of the different racial groups will be discussed in order to put the central question into perspective. When writing about South African culture, the educational system will be discussed as well. In South Africa, for instance, high schools can still be separated according to race. This could be relevant for the results of this research. This chapter will consist of important background information to support the quantitative analyses.

#### *3. Media consumption*

The third chapter will form the theoretical framework. The Uses and Gratification theory will be used to explain the way in which people can use or consume the media. The role of the media in society is a key factor in this research, since 'the news' is an important source of information. Therefore the theories of the press, which explain the role the media plays in society, will be discussed. The

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<sup>5</sup> See chapter 4 for an description of SA-media and the role of internet in the SA society.



'Development Theory of the press' is applicable to South Africa and will be further explained in this chapter. Not only the consumption of media is relevant to this research, but also the role the media plays in the lives of South African youth. Their perceptions of the media and their look upon the media will be an influential factor within my field of research. The theories discussed in this chapter will later be used to formulate the conclusion. Media reception will be briefly discussed since this is a relevant subject within the field of media consumption as well.

#### *4. News consumption*

'The news' and newsmedia will be the field of research. Therefore it is important to give a clear definition of 'what is news' and what role does the news play in a democratic society. News provision in South African will be discussed and with that the offer of newsmedia for young people.

#### *5. Methodology*

An explanation for choosing a quantitative approach will be given. As a method surveys have been conducted at high Schools in the Western Cape province. Support for the chosen methodology will be given, as well as for the target population; young people between the age of 15 and 18. The questions in the survey will be analysed to give an idea about the expected answers. Furthermore, the research environment will be discussed.

#### *6. Empirical results*

This chapter provides and explains the outcomes of the survey.

#### *7. Discussion and Conclusion*

Answer to the central question will be given and the theoretical framework will be reviewed. Recommendations for further research will be discussed.

## 2. South African Culture

South Africa's culture is known for its diversity. Some people therefore call South Africa the 'rainbow nation' (Strelitz, 2004: 7). Due to the historical and current developments, the South African culture is a rich mixture of locals from different continents and cultural traditions (Marais, 2001: 106).

Referring to race as a basis of distinction, most often the following four groups are being distinguished: 'Africans', 'Coloureds', 'Indians', and 'Whites'. Max du Preez, former editor of *Vrye Weekblad*, as well as Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki during their election period, used these terms when talking about the South African population. Du Preez however, criticized the reference to 'Whites, Coloureds, Indians and Africans', which in his view 'implies absolutely that Whites and Coloureds can't be Africans' (*Daily News*, 17 June 1999). These different groups will form a crucial part of this research, therefore – despite of the controversy – I will adopt this categorisation when mentioning the four different population groups. However, to specify who is African, Coloured, Indian and White one can distinguish between the skin colour Black, Coloured or White, when talking about South African people. Thereby a Coloured person is of mixed race and has lighter skin than a Black person. Indian is also an important racial group in South Africa but is less prominent in the Western Cape. It is common for South African inhabitants to be asked about their racial background. Within the field of research people are often asked to point out their racial background by choosing between Black, Coloured, Indian or White.<sup>6</sup> In the survey the fifth option 'other' is used as well, to give respondents the opportunity to describe themselves.<sup>7</sup>

Race is still a measure of distinction in the quality of lives of South Africans. Statistical indicators support this: 'Race' is a good parameter of poverty and inequality in South Africa: 95 percent of the very poor are African and 5 percent are Coloured. Poverty has a rural dimension, with 75 percent of the poor living in rural areas (Strelitz, 2004: 4). However, things have changed after the apartheid was

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<sup>6</sup> Private communication with professor Herman Wasserman, Stellenbosch University, Department of Journalism.

<sup>7</sup> See chapter 5

abolished in 1994. African professionals, skilled workers and entrepreneurs benefited from the collapse of apartheid, making them the most upwardly mobile ‘race’ group. As a result, South Africa is currently witnessing the emergence of a differentiated class structure among the African population, which includes a strong middle class and professional stratum, and a tiny economic elite. In other words, the country’s income maldistribution is increasingly shifting from being ‘race’ to class-based (Marais, 2001: 106). After the apartheid things may have changed for African people, but the question that rises is if these changes did already influence their quality of life.

From the preceding it is clear that the South African culture is characterized by various differences. However, when talking about culture we need to define it in order to get a clear view on what it embodies. There are many different ways and often divergent definitions of culture, making it a contested domain. Popular definitions define culture broadly as including everything that occurs in a society, that is, all the customs, beliefs, values, norms, ideas and practises, as well as the material artefacts, objects and instruments handed down from one generation to another (Thompson 1990:129). This is the anthropological definition of culture and it illustrates that culture is not static. It changes and evolves as the historical, economic, political and social beliefs, values and circumstances of groups and individuals change. With this in mind preference is given to the following definition of culture, a definition that stresses the human interaction and community characteristics of culture:

*“The pattern of meanings embodied in symbolic forms, including actions, utterances and meaningful objects of various kinds, by virtue of which individuals communicate with one another and share their experiences, conceptions and beliefs.” (Geertz in de Beer 1998:44)*

Now that we know what culture embodies we can take a closer look at the situation in South Africa. An important part of culture is a shared system of meanings, conceptions and beliefs. Given the deep social divisions in South Africa – both historical and current – along lines of ‘race’, class, tradition and modernity, some

argue that South Africa doesn't have a national culture (Steenveld and Strelitz, 1998: 610). In order for people to communicate their common beliefs and conceptions they need to be able to speak the same language. The link between culture and communication is an important one (Fourie, 2001: 355). South Africa has 11 official languages.<sup>8</sup> With the creation of different languages people also developed different histories and have their own cultural descent. Language plays an important role in the South African society, as well as in this research. In the next paragraph 'language' in the context of media consumption will be further explained.

Another reason why it is thought that South Africa doesn't have a national culture is the influence of the apartheid ideologies and segregation in the past that stagnated the development of a shared culture. Presently many things are done to stimulate the development of a national culture. This process is often called '*nation building*' (de Beer, 2000: 22). Former president of South Africa Nelson Mandela tried to use the 1995 Rugby World Cup tournament, held in South Africa, to promote a vision of 'South Africanism' which transcended cultural and ethnic differences. Uniting all of South Africa behind the rugby team, it was felt, would provide the impetus for the creation of a common South African identity (Strelitz, 2004:8). However, researcher Larry Strelitz showed that these social divisions are still 'lived' by youth in South Africa. A random sample of his conducted survey on the Grahamstown campus of Rhodes University confirmed this. Seventy-two learners agreed with the statement that 'On Rhodes campus Black and White on the Grahamstown campus of Rhodes University learners lead separate lives' (Strelitz and Coetzee, 1998).

The developments of the different racial groups is best to be explained according to important and influential historical events. The most prominent one was the period of Apartheid. Today, the influence of the apartheid system is still present in all fields of the media. Due to decades of strictly segregating people according to their racial background, South African media is often judged to be an institution of racism (Berger, 2001: 57). The way the media reports and mentions racial background is an extremely sensitive and often criticised subject. The following paragraph shows some examples of this.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.ethnologue.com>

## 2.1 The Press and Apartheid

To understand the South African media and the consumerism of its people, one must understand developments the media has undergone. In South Africa, the media has developed along side with the segregation of races. The Apartheid system refers to this.<sup>9</sup> The Apartheid had his influence on all institutions in South Africa, including the media. It is clear that South Africa has not had a good role model of a healthy media system that can criticise the government. During apartheid, the press was strictly censored and controlled by those in power – in this case, a White government. During the so-called State of Emergency in the mid eighties, severe restrictions were put on the press and all other types of the media. The areas where political unrest was at its highest were off limits to the media. There was no freedom of the press and what the public had the ‘right to know’ was completely formulated and controlled by those in power (Jacobs, 1999:9). The press, particularly the alternative press<sup>10</sup>, which included papers such as *The Weekly Mail* and *The Guardian Weekly*, were suppressed and pressurised, as were the more mainstream editors who dared to criticise the government. The apartheid regime produced a 4000 page *Press Commission Report* that took 13 years to prepare, examining foreign press coverage of their country and rule. It was found that 67.25% of the coverage was negative and hostile to the government. The report suggested that there be some kind of ‘statutory control over the obviously wayward press’ (Hawthorne, 2000: TIME). There were those in the press, predominantly the English press, who opposed the government where possible, although censorship was strict and editors and journalists harassed. Much of the Afrikaans press had close ties with the government and these links were obviously for reporting only. Roelofse explains: “...*they did not expose or investigate graft of corruption, even when they knew something about it. They became victims of self-censorship in exchange for favours from prominent people in the government*” (Roelofse in Fourie, 2001:44).

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<sup>9</sup> The former political system in South Africa in which only White people had full political rights and other people, especially Black people, were forced to live away from White people, go to separate schools, etc (www.oup.com)

<sup>10</sup> The emergence of the alternative press tends to parallel the struggle against apartheid. Alternative press becomes active when the political, economic, social or cultural views of certain social groups are excluded from the popular media market, or when a group itself has no voice (Fourie 2004: 52).

The degrees to which the South African media was silenced depended mainly on which side they were standing. The right, in more ways than one, or the left. The government predominantly funded the broadcasting media and programming was controlled and agendas up front and clear. The government largely controlled television and radio, while this was not as easy within the print media. Newspapers were more difficult to control and much time, resource and energy was poured into keeping an eye on them. The government would not allow criticism from the mainstream press, and desperately squashed any criticism from various other circles within the border of its control (Fourie 2001, 45-46). The role of the media during the Apartheid regime is a vast study on its own and does not fall within the scope of my research, but it is however clear that there has not been an healthy example of free press in South Africa.

Today when the press criticises the ruling powers, which are predominantly Black ANC<sup>11</sup> leaders, the lines between healthy ‘watchdog’ criticism and racism is still not so clear. This is largely because some sectors of the media are still predominantly White-led, and the government is made up of mainly Black men and women. There has been no healthy role modelling of the *fourth estate* of the press being a part of society that is in good shape. It is easy to see how this can be misunderstood and light up discussions about racism (Zille, 2002).

About racism in the South African media, media expert from Durban, Kanthan Pillay makes the following statement:

*“Yes, racial stereotyping exists. Yes, the attitudes of both Black and White journalists do not always contribute to racial harmony. Yes, the media often, and without malicious intent – demonstrate racism in the manner in which Whites or Black are portrayed. But bad journalism underpins this”* (2000: 45)

In addition, Philip van Niekerk, previous editor of the *Mail and Guardian*, is quoted as saying *“When a White person says something, a Black person often hears something different and vice versa. People of different races do not even listen to each other”* (Faultlines, 2000).

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<sup>11</sup> The ruling political party; African National Congress.

Mainly as a result of Apartheid, the media industry in South Africa developed separately for each racial group. In practise this means that White Afrikaans people nowadays still give preference to reading Afrikaans-written and owned newspapers, whilst Black African people rather read English or IsiXhosa<sup>12</sup> written newspapers<sup>13</sup>. Their choice of media is not only influenced by the language they speak, but also depends on accessibility and habituation. Still today, people speak about the 'Black' or 'African' press and the 'English' and 'Afrikaans' alias 'White' press. A logical consequence of this press divisions is a division in media consumerism. To get a better understanding about the different forms of the press, a short summary of their histories will be discussed.

## **2.2 The Development of Black and White Press**

To understand the South African media I will discuss a few historical period in which the 'Black press' and the 'White press' developed separately. In this paragraph I will not yet make a distinction between the press, television, radio and internet because the historical development of the press largely represents the development of South African media as a whole. In chapter 4 I will give descriptions of the four different media types separately. Since the press in South Africa is the oldest form of the media, its development throughout the years characterize and influence the other forms of media.

Roelofse (in Fourie, 2001: 70-71) identifies five enduring themes that run through the history of the press in South Africa. These themes are as follows:

- The tension and conflict between government and the press
- Divisions in the press are based on language
- Further divisions in the press are based on race
- The state sees the press as a threat to peace and security
- Efforts by journalists to circumvent undemocratic laws

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<sup>12</sup> The biggest spoken language among Black people living in the Western Cape

<sup>13</sup> See Chapter 5

Concerning my research, specifically the third theme is important to discuss. According to Roelofse we need to divide the history of South African press in to four distinct strands, each of which follows its own development pattern. These strands are:

- The English press
- The Afrikaans press (also known as ‘White press’)
- The Black press
- The alternative press (also known as protest press)

When it comes to race as a factor of division, especially the Black, English and Afrikaans press are important to discuss. The division is as follows: We find the English press, initially in opposition to the Dutch, then the Afrikaans press, the Black press and the Indian press and so on. Roelofse (in Fourie, 2001: 85) writes: *“while race has since the beginning of our press history been one of the defining characteristics of the South African press, race and racism reached its zenith in the period 1948 to 1990 – the apartheid era”*. Given the close bond between the Afrikaans press and politics established during the first half of the twentieth century it is not surprising that, under apartheid, the Afrikaans press found itself in a unique and privileged position.

Newspapers for Black readers only appeared shortly after Ordinance No. 60 came into being in 1829, granting press freedom to the Cape Colony (Fourie, 2001:49). In Chapter 4 the developments of the different forms of the press will be discussed more extensively.

Hachten and Giffard (1984:145) identify four periods in the historical development of the Black press in South Africa. Briefly, the periods are as follows:

- 1830-1880: The missionary period
- 1880-1930: The independent elitist period
- 1930-1980: The White owned period
- 1980-1995: The multiracial period



The last two periods will be discussed. These two will explain the most recent tensions of media development according to race in South Africa.

The period from 1930 until 1980 is called the 'White-owned period'. Despite their important contribution to political awareness, most Black newspapers lacked capital, equipment, skilled workers and a reliable distribution network. Bertram Paver, an ex-farmer and itinerant salesman saw potential profits to be made from the aspiring Black market. Lacking enthusiasm from commerce, Paver decided that the only way to prove the viability of the Black market was from the inside, and this he decided could be achieved by becoming involved in publishing (Johnson in Fourie 2001: 21). The Bantu Press Ltd was formed and inaugurated a national newspaper *Bantu World* in April 1932. The establishment of *Bantu World* is important as it represents a move from a local to a national Black press, in addition to redefining the role and strategy of the press. *Bantu World* was modelled, as a tabloid, on the *British Daily Mirror*. While Paver tried to avoid the image of White control over a Black staff he was not always successful as a new controlling factor began to emerge, that of economics (Johnson in Fourie 2001:21). The period from 1980 till 1995 is known as the 'multiracial period'. With the urbanisation of Blacks, increasing numbers started reading whatever newspapers were available. In this manner, many of the so-called White newspapers found that they gained a substantial Black readership with the introduction of regular township editions. At the same time, most White newspapers had saturated their markets. In 1976 there were ten newspapers in a market of two million readers in the Gauteng area (Hachten & Giffard 1984:150). Black journalists who were originally hired for the township editions or as stringers (freelance newspaper correspondents) now began to move into more regular positions on the major newspapers.

## 2.3 South Africa's Educational System

Media consumption is not only influenced by language, but possibly also by the educational attainment of the media consumer. Education in South Africa has been and still is a topic of discussion. Some argue that education still suffers from the consequences of Apartheid and therefore doesn't give equal chances to all of South Africa's citizens. Below a brief historical overview of the education in South Africa and a description of today's situation is given.

In 1976, the '*Soweto student uprising*', a group of younger people led by South African high school students, turned violent because they were unsatisfied with the educational system in their country. They became a symbol for the movement to end apartheid. Today, South Africa's schools are still struggling to give every citizen an equal opportunity. During apartheid, South Africa's school system was segregated into four national departments: White, Brown (Coloured), Asian, and Black. The Black Education Department was plagued by inadequate funding, under-trained teachers, poor facilities (many schools had no electricity), and a high dropout rate, facilitated by the lack of a compulsory education law for Africans. The curriculum was also designed based on the assumption of African racial inferiority. Math and science were deliberately neglected in order to produce a dependable source of cheap labour (Educational Broadcasting Corporation 2005).<sup>14</sup>

Today, South Africa's schools have officially been desegregated, but counteracting the years of apartheid bureaucracy has been easier said than done. Under the new system, the schools in each province have a large degree of autonomy, putting poor regions, where community members are less educated and experienced in governing a functional school system, at a distinct disadvantage. Although the poorest students are exempt from escalating school fees, many who don't or do qualify for exemption still can't afford the additional costs: uniforms, materials, field trips, required to attend the better schools. In smaller towns, according to a BBC report, those Black students who do manage to get into the good schools still often find themselves in separate classrooms from their White classmates, because most Blacks speak English or

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<sup>14</sup> <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/shows/southafrica/info.html>

indigenous languages and most Whites speak Afrikaans. In general, Black students are still subject to subtle, if not overt, racism in a school system that is still primarily run by Whites (Educational Broadcasting Corporation 2005)<sup>15</sup>.

## **2.4 South Africa's School System Explained**

In order to get an understanding of the target population, more insight in the South African education system will be given. Compared to the researchers home country, the Netherlands, there are many differences. The South African system could be best compared to the American High School system.

South Africa's National Qualifications Framework (NQF) recognises three broad bands of education: General Education and Training, Further Education and Training, and Higher Education and Training (Department of Education 2006)<sup>16</sup>.

School life spans 13 years or grades, from grade 0, otherwise known as grade R or "reception year", through to grade 12 or "matric" - the year of matriculation. General Education and Training runs from grade 0 to grade 9. Under the South African Schools Act of 1996, education is compulsory for all South Africans from age 7 (grade 1) to age 15, or the completion of grade 9. Further Education and Training takes place from grades 10 to 12, and also includes career-oriented education and training offered in other Further Education and Training institutions - technical colleges, community colleges and private colleges. Diplomas and certificates are qualifications recognised at this level. This research will aim at learners in the age of 15-18 doing further education (often called High School or secondary school). Further education in the Western Cape represents grade 10 to 12. In this way the South African system is similar to the United States. Higher education and training in South Africa concerns the study life after finishing High School, it depends on a students grades if he or she is allowed to go to a university.

To make the overview of the school system more clear, table I below shows the South African educational life.

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<sup>15</sup> <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/shows/southafrica/info.html>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.gov.education.za>

<sup>16</sup> The word Matric stands for the exam that students need to finish after grade 12

*Table I The South African School System*

Band of education	Grade	NQF level <sup>17</sup>	Qualification
Higher		5,6,7,8	Certificate, Higher Certificate, First Diploma, Bachelor degree, Professional first degree, general degree, Post graduation degree, Honours degree, Master degree, Doctor's degree
Further	Gr 10-12	2,3,4	Diplomas, Certificates
General	Gr 0-9	1	Basic education

Source: Department of education<sup>18</sup>

This research will be aimed at learners in the age of 15-18 doing further education (known as High School or secondary school). In Chapter 5 the status of the different High Schools that have been visited for conducting the surveys will be discussed, as well as the social-economic environment of the schools.

As discussed in paragraph 2, statistical indicators prove the racial dimension of poverty and inequality in South Africa. But poverty also has an age dimension, with 45 percent of the poor being children below 15 (Jennings et al., 1997:8). Forty-nine percent of African youth live in households that at some point during 1994-5 were unable to feed their children. This applies to 35 percent of Coloured youth, 11 percent of Asians and 6 percent of White youth (Jennings et al., 1997: 23).

The youth in the Western Cape consists of 2 928 000 people. Concerning education, the following is known. Only 52% of the youth who start Grade 1, finish Grade 12 and

<sup>17</sup> NQF 'National Qualifications Framework'

<sup>18</sup> Department of Education: [www.gov.education.za](http://www.gov.education.za)

only 26.6% of those who passed matric<sup>19</sup> in 2003 got university exemptions, the overwhelming majority of whom were White and Indian.<sup>20</sup>

## 2.5 Language

Smit (1996:12) cited in Bekker (2003:64), maintains that: *“The two main structural criteria of any society are social identity and power. It is the complex relationship between language, social identity and power that explains why people have language attitudes.”* Language can therefore be a reliable indicator of group identity, because language is also often a symbol of group membership (Bekker, 2003:65). Thus a common language (or language varieties) can be used to create a positive social identity. As Hogg and Abrams (1988:57, cited in Bekker, 2003:66) note: *“...ethnic groups which consider their language to be of crucial importance can bolster and enhance their social identity by accentuating their language – that is striving for positive ethno-linguistic distinctiveness”*. In the context of my research this means that language is of crucial importance for youngsters when consuming the media. It both has an social and a linguistic side. Youngsters will tend to make choices that make the content of the news most easy to understand. At the other hand they can strive for a better understanding of another language when this language can benefit them in a way. Let us take a look at the role language plays in the Western Cape

South Africa is not called the ‘rainbow nation’ for nothing: The country has 11 official languages, six of which are spoken in the Western Cape. Out of 4,524,336 people living in the Western Cape, 55.3% speak Afrikaans at home, 19.3% speak English, 23.7% speak IsiXhosa, 0.2% speak Zulu, 0.7% speak Sotho, 0.1% speak Tswana, 0.4% of the population speaks a non-official language at home.<sup>21</sup> From these statistics it can be concluded that IsiXhosa, Afrikaans and English are the main languages in the Western Cape, with IsiXhosa being the main language for the

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<sup>19</sup> The word Matric is used in both the noun and adjectival form in some countries including India, Pakistan and South Africa to indicate a high school scholar's final year of school. This final year is more commonly known as grade 12, and was previously called Standard 10

<sup>20</sup> Western Cape Youth Commission bill 2004  
<http://www.capegateway.gov.za/eng/pubs/speeches/2004/aug/82892>

<sup>21</sup> Western Cape Language Policy  
<http://www.capegateway.gov.za/eng/publications/policies/W/99328>

'Blacks' or Africans, Afrikaans the main language for the Coloureds and Whites, and English is an important medium of instruction and the mother tongue of the Whites of British descent (Western Cape Language Policy 2004).

## **2.6 isiXhosa, Afrikaans and English**

Big numbers of IsiXhosa speakers have moved to the Western Cape from the Eastern Cape since 1994. Although their culture and language have managed to survive the periods of colonization and apartheid, there is some evidence of an emerging language shift towards English, particularly among the young, well-educated urban sectors of the community (Ridge, 2000:1).

Although most 'Coloured' people in the Western Cape now speak Afrikaans as their mother tongue, there are also signs of a language shift to English among the younger generation of the 'Coloured' middle class and elite (Anthonissen and George, 2003). The 'Coloured' middle class have adopted a largely Westernised lifestyle, and have maintained few of the cultural practices of the past. Many members of this group find it difficult to define their historical identity and culture, and some sociologists would argue that this problem lies at the root of the gangsterism, violence and the abuse of women and children that are so endemic in poor, working-class 'Coloured' areas (Battersby 2003:123).

The majority of the High Schools where I conducted research, were dual-medium (English and Afrikaans) schools. At the schools where Afrikaans was the medium of instruction, English was offered as a language course and the other way around. Only at the two township High Schools 'Intlanganiso' and 'Bulumko' IsiXhosa is offered both as a first language and an additional language. Most of the IsiXhosa speaking learners have been placed in a High School where the medium of instruction is English for the logical reason that there are generally no schools where IsiXhosa is the main medium of instruction, in as well as outside of the townships. Professor Richard Stanley, former senior advisor Afrikaans at the Education department of the Western Cape and current teacher Afrikaans at the University of Stellenbosch expresses his concern about the IsiXhosa speakers at High schools in the area. *"There is simply no study material available in IsiXhosa, so native IsiXhosa*

*speakers always have to learn English or Afrikaans to be able to receive good education. This sometimes is a problem since they are not all accustomed to English or Afrikaans.”* While conducting the surveys at the township High Schools I found out that learners often had a limited command of the English language. English served as the common language between the two main speech communities at the school and was the language used most frequently in class. However, I observed that on the playgrounds, and as soon as the learners left the classroom, they reverted to their mother tongues.

The issue of language as a barrier in the field of education is a known subject in the Western Cape province. In 2004 the government came with an initiative to improve the situation. After five-years of consultation, the Western Cape Language Committee has finalized the '*Western Cape Language Policy*', a first of its kind in South Africa. This policy will help create a '*Home for All*' in the province by ensuring the equal status and use of the three official provincial languages, Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa. It also supports and promotes South African Sign Language, the Khoi and San languages and the other official South African languages. This policy was passed by the Provincial Parliament in June 2004.<sup>22</sup>

## **2.7 Short conclusion**

From the above two important things have become clear. On the one hand there is the ongoing racism in the South African media as a consequence of the Apartheid era. On the other hand there is a development towards an upcoming, urban middle class mastering the English language. This makes the question about the differences in media consumption relating to ethnicity and racial background all the more pressing and interesting.

## **3. Media Consumption – Theoretical Framework**

When we speak about 'the news' and people consuming it, there are three forces that play a crucial role namely; government, society and the media (Fourie 2001:

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<sup>22</sup> Western Cape Language Policy  
<http://www.capegateway.gov.za/eng/publications/policies/W/99328>

463). There are various theories that affect the relationship between the government, society and the media. In chapter 2 we have seen how big the influence of the government on the media was during the Apartheids era. The relationship between the government and the media is a complicated one which would require a serious investigation that is beyond the scope of my research. Although we cannot look into it extensively, it is vital to briefly discuss it because of the fact that South Africa's democracy is still in the development process. The extent to which youngsters are nowadays able and willing to consume the news is partly determined by the political system of the country they are living in. In his book, Fourie (2001) describes four main Press Theories that more or less describe the role of the media in society and its dependence on the country's political system. The first theory, the Authoritarian theory applies to an oppressed community – and everything is done in the interests of the dictator. Extreme censorship is often implemented with the government being very sensitive to criticism. This theory points to the fact that communities do not have the right to choose what their interests are. Their interests are pre-determined for them by a dictator. On the other of the scale, there is the Libertarian theory which espouses the values of democracy and freedom of speech. The United States of America (USA) and the United Kingdom (UK) both subscribe to these press theories. Although supporters of this theory would claim it to be inclusive and suitable for all, critics have found areas where this theory is lacking (Fourie 2001: 262-269). The two theories which seem to be most applicable in South Africa are the Development Theory and the Democratic-Participant Theory. Because of the multi-layered nature of the South African media (independent media, mass media, government media and community media), it is difficult to define the country's media system according to one theory. A combination of the two theories is probably most suitable. Below the two theories that are applicable to South Africa will be further elaborated.



### 3.1 Democratic-participant Theory & Development Theory

The Democratic-participant theory developed as a reaction to the capitalist-controlled media and the centralisation and bureaucratization of the media (Fourie 2001: 265). This theory sees diversity in the media, small-scale media, community-media interaction and pluralism as being very important. In South Africa, diversity of the media is encouraged, and almost all language groups are represented by some form of media (but mostly newspaper). Community newspapers such as *Vukani* and community radio stations such as *Voice of the Cape* are important for promoting diverse media.<sup>23</sup>

This Development theory claims that the media has a role to play in the development of the nation, and that positive and helpful press coverage is vital to any developing country. Fourie defines it as: “...*the positive use of the media to promote national development, autonomy and cultural identity.*” He also states that “*common objectives are given priority over individual freedom*” (2001: 274). McQuail identifies the basics of this theory, which are helpful to understand some of the media and government debate that is growing in South Africa at present:

- The media should make a positive contribution to the national development process.
- The state should be able to restrict the media if economic interests and the development of society are at stake
- The media should give preference to information about national, cultural and language issues.
- The media should also give preference to information about other developing countries that are geographically, culturally and politically akin to one another.
- Journalists have both responsibilities and liberties in obtaining and distributing information.
- To protect development objectives, the state has the right to intervene by restricting and censoring the media. State subsidies and direct control are therefore justifiable (Fourie 2001: 274).

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<sup>23</sup> See Chapter six Empirical results

A possible downfall of the Development theory is the fact that it makes provision for the possibility of media restriction if economic development (or any other nation-building initiative) is threatened. The case of Snuki Zikalala, head of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) comes to mind. Zikalala Blacklisted a number of respected political commentators and journalists who spoke out against the conditions in Zimbabwe. They were banned from making any contributions toward the SABC. Is this a case of protecting South Africa's image (considering that their reaction toward the situation in Zimbabwe was critical) or is it plain censorship – leading to the degradation of a free media?

With this in mind it is helpful to take a look at the history of the South African media as it illustrates the country's lack of press freedom during the earlier years. This will be elaborated in the next chapter. Not only a media system determines what information people will actually receive and consume, people themselves, 'the public' are active in the process of media consumption too. In the next paragraph this subject will be further elaborated.

### **3.2 Uses and Gratification Theory**

Blumler and Katz's (1975) uses and gratification theory suggests that media users play an active role in choosing and using the media. Users take an active part in the communication process and are goal oriented in their media use. The theorists say that a media user seeks out a media source that best fulfils the needs of the user. Uses and gratifications assume that the user has alternate choices to satisfy their need (Blumler & Katz in de Beer, 1998: 21). As such the uses and gratification theory has its origins in psychology, more specifically, in the analyses of human motivation. According to this approach, the following assumptions are made about the media and media users:

- Members of the audience actively link themselves to certain media to satisfy specific goals and to gain gratification. Thus the use of media is goal directed.
- The media compete with other sources of information and entertainment in order to satisfy the needs of the audience.

- Audiences are able to alter the media in such a way that their needs are more easily met.
- Audiences are also aware of their needs and can therefore offer specific reasons for using a particular medium

The following four main kinds of needs can be identified:

- Diversion (escape from routine and the burdens of day-to-day problems, relaxation, fantasy and imaginative creation).
- Personal relationships (companionship and mediated social contact)
- Personal identity (personal reference values, exploration of reality, role models)
- Surveillance (need for information, keeping up to date, provision of subjects for conversation) (de Beer, 1998: 21).

When consuming the news, learners are expected to satisfy the fourth need discussed above, namely; 'surveillance'. One of the questions in the survey is: '*What is the main reason for you to follow the news*'? and '*Why do you follow the news*'?<sup>24</sup> The answer to these questions will give insight into the gratification that learners gain from using the news media. The answer to these questions will be given in chapter 5 and 6 where the results of the conducted surveys will be discussed.

Now that we have an idea what can drive people to consume the media and what kind of gratification they can get from media consumption, we can attempt to apply use and gratification to the main theme of this research: news and news consumption. This topic did get a lot of attention in the field of media and communication research. News is an important information provision and should therefore appeal to the masses and not only to a small group of the population. Former research on this theme often focussed on young people and the news, in paragraph 3.5 some examples will be given. However, it is important make clear what we understand and mean when talking about 'the news' and news consumption. The next theories will help with that.

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<sup>24</sup> See chapter 5

### 3.3 News Consumption

*“Media freedom guarantees your right to know what’s going on in your country, and participate fully in the decisions affecting you. Media freedom is **your** freedom. Insist on it.”*

The statement above comes from the South African Ethics Forum (SANEF).<sup>25</sup> Exactly this particular kind of freedom forms the basis of my research. Well-informed citizens can contribute to the developing democracy in South Africa. When we consider the freedom of the press in South Africa, we need to do so within the context that we cannot find absolute freedom of the press anywhere in world. What we can find, however, are degrees of freedom (Fourie 2001: 69). All forms of the media are somehow influenced by South Africa’s struggle for freedom and democracy. Important to take into consideration is that for many people in South Africa, having access to ‘the news’ guarantees a certain freedom and gives them a fair chance to shape opinions and make decisions about the world they live in.

From the above it becomes clear that being well-informed is important and that ‘the news’ can contribute to this. However, ‘what is news’ does not mean the same to everyone. In the scope of this research it is therefore important to define ‘the news’ and to create a frame of reference when discussing it. The next paragraph will deal with the subject of ‘the news’.

### 3.4 The News – a definition

When talking about ‘the news’ everybody seems to know what you are referring to. Actually, ‘the News’ itself doesn’t really exist (Burton, 2005: 275; Roscho, 1975: 5). What are we actually referring to when talking about ‘the news’? Is it information that somebody has obtained via the newspaper, television news or another news item?

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<sup>25</sup> SANEF came into being at a meeting of the Black Editors' Forum, the Conference of Editors and senior journalism educators and trainers, held in Cape Town in October 1996. Delegates decided to unite in a new organisation that recognised past injustices in the media and committed itself to a programme of action to overcome them. They also want to defend and promote media freedom and independence ([www.sanef.org.za](http://www.sanef.org.za)).

Mostly we don't ask for an explanation because we understand what is meant with 'the News', since it refers to a specific kind of media material (Burton 2005). However, it is difficult to come up with a satisfying definition. According to Roscho (1975) defining news is as hard as answering the question 'what is the truth'? When we try to define the News we will eventually end up with listing important news events. He also points out that the news already existed before the most prominent news distributors and news media did. Spreading the news and important information has always been an essential part within every social organisation: *"News is continually sought and offered in the course of social communication because it is a necessary, and therefore valuable, commodity of social exchange."* (Roscho, 1975: 10). McQuail (2005: 375) shares the opinion that it is problematic to find a definition for 'the news'. Van Ginneken (1998: 22) changes the question by stating that it is better to ask about '*nothing new*' instead of asking about '*news*'. By changing the question, the selectivity of the news is exposed. It shows what is worth mentioning and what is not. Although it is hard to find a satisfying definition, I will attempt to formulate one that makes the concept of 'news', and therefore 'news consumption' easier to understand. However, this does not mean that I pretend to know the 'right' definition of the news. During my conversations with teachers and learners at higschools I noticed that they tend to refer to the content of news, which means that they usually refer to events that recently happened. According to the Oxford dictionary 'the news' is:

*"reports of recent events that appear in newspapers or on television or radio." Or; "a person, thing or event that is considered to be interesting enough to be reported as news."*

Roscho (1975: 11) states: *"News is based on the announcement, 'It was just learned' rather than 'It just happened'.* When researchers discover historical events at the present, it could be that they refer to news facts that happened long ago, but what makes it 'news' is that they are discovered at this very moment. Combining the Oxford definition, the teachers' opinions and Roscho's description, I came to the following definition:

*‘Information about political, historical, social or cultural events that recently happened in the world, considered interesting enough to be distributed to the public via different newsmedia.’*

Knowledge about the news can contribute to the strive for a well-informed society. Fourie (2001) states in his book ‘Media Studies’ that *“Communication is viewed as a means for the free expression of ideas. But, in order to determine their own lives, people are also dependent on access to information and freedom to communicate”* This phrase is typical for people living in South African since the freedom of press and access to information has not always been for granted.<sup>26</sup>

The Youth are seen as an important target group for newsmakers. After all, they represent the future generation that will form opinions and will partly decide what will happen to their country. ‘The news’ and news consumption have been investigated often in relation to the youth. In the next paragraph this theme will be further discussed.

### **3.5 Young People and the News**

Various Studies focussing on youth and news consumption have shown that there is a worldwide decrease in interest in the news. Particularly the written press is losing its popularity among younger people. Although these studies don’t report on ‘race’ as a matter of distinction within the consumption of newsmedia, it is interesting in the scope of this research to have a look at the worldwide situation of ‘youth’ and ‘the news’. Below some of these international studies will be discussed.

According to researcher Irene Costera Meijer (2006), youngsters in the Netherlands think of the news as ‘important but boring’ (Meijer, 2006: 58). Meijer questioned 452 Dutch youngsters between 15 and 25 years old about their perceptions of the news. Although it was not the main goal of her research, results of her qualitative investigation proved that there are many differences in consumption between youngsters from different racial backgrounds. However, results of my quantitative

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<sup>26</sup> See paragraph 2.2

research among young people within the same range of age turn out to be different. The majority of youngsters find the news interesting and of vital importance.<sup>27</sup> In chapter 5 this and other outcomes of the survey will be discussed.

Research done by the Newspaper Marketing Agency proved that 77% (3,2 million) British youngsters in the age range of 16 till 24 read a newspaper everyday (Pecquerie & Burke, 2005: 87). The growing number of readers in Britain is said to be a consequence of the shift in news focus from hard, serious news to sensational, entertainment news that is being offered in free of charge newspapers (Koenderman, 2003: 57). During my research at the high schools in the Western Cape it was found out that the majority of younger people prefer 'celebrity news' above 'hard news' and are very up to date about the current events that happened in the lives of their role models.<sup>28</sup>

Studies about news consumption in the USA have proved that younger people have lost interest in reading newspapers. The Online Publishers Association (OPA) found out that only 17% of youngsters in the age of 18 to 24 years old are still interested in reading a newspaper (Pecquerie & Burke, 2005:90). The Pew Research Centre for People and Society in Washington, D.C. found out that 1 out of 5 American youngsters between 18 and 29 years old prefer online news consumption (Pecquerie & Burke, 2005:93). Also in Brazil there is a growing decrease in news consumption among younger people in the age of 10 to 29 years old. The Brazilian media organisations are trying to implement a strategy to improve the current situation (Kilman, 2005:3).

The medium of preference of younger people has changed alongside with the technological development of mobile phones and the internet. Research done by 'InsightExpress' (2004) found out that American youngsters prefer online news sources above television news. Only 8% consumes the news via newspapers. Since not all areas in the Western Cape of South Africa have experienced the same

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<sup>27</sup> See chapter 6 Empirical results

<sup>28</sup> See Chapter 5 and 6

technological developments as most parts of Europe and the States, results will be slightly different.

### **3.6 Short Conclusion**

From the preceding it becomes clear that media consumption cannot stand on its own. It needs to be investigated together with a country's media system, as well as with theories that explain why people consume the media, respectively the news. These theories will form a framework that will support the empirical findings and help to formulate the conclusion. Furthermore, the role of the media explains the media's responsibilities and the way 'the news' can function as an important source of information in a society. Finally the main subject of this research 'young people and their interesting relation to the news' has been discussed. The growing decline in news consumption turns out to be a worldwide concern. Young South Africans play the main role in this research. The way they consume the news media is partly dependent on the media offer they have. This offer and 'media environment' for South Africa will be extensively discussed in chapter 4.



## 4. South African Media: past & present

### 4.1 South African Broadcasting Environment

The historical development of broadcasting in South Africa is also largely the history of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), simply because the SABC held a monopoly on the airwaves until fairly recently as any other forms of broadcasting were not permitted (Fourie 2001:6). The penetration of radio and television receivers among the South African population can be considered as among the highest in the continent. The importance of radio and television as a medium in South Africa is clearly indicated by the high concentration of radio per one thousand inhabitants (see table II). Both radio and television are part of broadcasting in South Africa. I start with discussing radio.

*Table II: Radio receivers and televisions per 1000 inhabitants*

Year	radios	Year	televisions
1980	274	1980	274
1985	303	1985	303
1990	337	1990	337
1995	350	1995	350
1996	351	1996	351
1997	355	1997	355

Source: Fourie: 2001:24-25; United Nations 1997;2000

### 4.2 Radio

More South Africans own radio receivers than mattresses (Amner in de Beer, 1998: 151) This simple fact illustrates that radio is of primary importance as the most appropriate means of media communication in South Africa. However, whereas all White learners do have radio's, not all Black ones do. Again 'race' is a measure of

distinction when it comes to having access to information. The history of radio in South Africa is an interesting one to look into and explains the way it is today.

#### 4.2.1 History of Radio

The early development of broadcasting in South Africa followed a similar pattern to elsewhere in Europe and North America. Radio began with a few enthusiastic amateur radio hams, followed by several experimental broadcasts and only later by regular programming on a more organised basis. To organise broadcasting, the Broadcasting Act was founded in 1935. In short, this Act is the dominant piece of legislation within the broadcasting environment.

Although the Broadcasting Act made mention of special programmes for language groups other than English and Afrikaans, at no point was this ever given consideration by the government (Fourie 2001:10). Approximately ten years later, in 1949, a half hour programme was transmitted daily on the English and Afrikaans medium-wave services in IsiZulu, IsiXhosa and Sesotho. The SABC was interested in expanding the radio services to all townships, but was prevented from doing this by the government. Possible reasons for this were the expensiveness of the expansion and the image at that time was that townships would be something temporary. The first full-scale radio stations aimed at Black listeners only came into being with the introduction of FM transmissions. This service was collectively known as Radio Bantu. The first FM transmissions in Sesotho and IsiZulu were broadcasted on 1 January 1962. The content of the radio stations were limited to local news and excluded international events. The SABC made the presumption that an emphasis on local items best served the needs of Black listeners (Tomaselli et al 1989: 73). In 1960 the Bantu Programmes Control Board was created, through which all programme content was controlled by thirty-five White staff with knowledge of Black languages, in order to prevent any disparaging comments from being made on air regarding the government policies (Tomaselli et al. 1989:60).

#### 4.2.2 Radio Today

Magula Naxola (23) is studying Journalism at the Stellenbosch university in the Western Cape. She grew up in a township with radio as the main source of information. She claims that the majority of people living in townships only have access to the radio since they cannot afford a television set. Therefore the news on the radio is their main source of information about society. She says: *“Unfortunately a television set is still something that many people in our townships cannot afford. Sometimes one of our family members bought a national newspaper, all of us would read it from the first page to the last. Information is a powerful good in our communities. People view the news as something valuable and important, but they often don’t have the means to consume it.”*<sup>29</sup>

#### 4.2.3 Radio Channels

Deregulation in 1996 led to a proliferation of radio stations. Listeners in Johannesburg alone can choose from among some 40 radio services, from the national broadcasts of the state-owned South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) to community stations targeting local neighbourhoods or ethnic groups.

- SABC - state broadcaster with 20 regional and national services in 11 languages, including: national English-language network SAfm; contemporary music station 5 FM; national Afrikaans station Radio Sonder Grense; national Zulu station Ukhozi FM; Sesotho station Lesedi FM
- Channel Africa - SABC's external radio service, targeted at the African continent
- YFM - popular Johannesburg commercial R&B, soul and hip-hop station
- 702 Talk Radio - Johannesburg commercial news and talk station<sup>30</sup>
- Good Hope FM is a Cape Town based 24 hour, regional, Commercial Music Station, which broadcasts within a CHR (Contemporary Hit Radio) Rhythmic

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<sup>29</sup> Private Communication at the faculty of Journalism 29-4-2007

<sup>30</sup> [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country\\_profiles/1071886.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country_profiles/1071886.stm)

format and turns out to belong to the most popular radio stations among youngster in the Western Cape.<sup>31</sup>

Mister Chotia, principal of Glendale secondary school<sup>32</sup> in Mitchells Plain tells that newspapers are generally too expensive for the youth in the Coloured community. They do listen to the radio and therefore pick up the news by accident. He says: *“Youngsters don’t tune in on the radio because they want to listen to the news, but they will hear it by accident, in between the songs that they are listening to.”*

*Table III: Number of Radio Receivers in South Africa (Thousands)*

Year	Receivers
1980	8000
1985	10 000
1990	11 450
1995	13 100
1996	13 400
1997	13 750

Source: Fourie, 2001: 24 United Nations 1997;2000

## **4.3 Television**

### 4.3.1 History of Television

During the 1950s and 1960s, the Nationalist Government opposed to the introduction of television on moral and ethical grounds. In 1971 the Meyer Commission was appointed to investigate the possibility of introducing television in South-Africa. One of the findings of the Commission was that in a country with a diverse culture and multiplicity of languages, such as found in South Africa, television should be used *“to advance the self-development of all its peoples and to foster their pride in their own identity and culture”* (Fourie 2001:12). On 27 April 1971 the government announced

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<sup>31</sup> See results chapter 5

<sup>32</sup> See description of High Schools in chapter 5

that the SABC was to provide a television service. The service initially provided 37 hours of programming a week on one channel in English and Afrikaans. A second SABC service, TV2/3, began on 1 January 1982, splitting into two separate channels on 30 March 1985. Gradually additional stations came on air: Bop-TV on 31 December 1983, M-Net on 1 October 1986, Trinity Broadcasting Network (a religious television service) in the Ciskei (now part of the Eastern Cape) on 3 December 1986, and e.tv much later on 1 October 1998 (Fourie 2001:32).

#### 4.3.2 Television Today

After the coming of democracy in 1994, television in South Africa's underwent a radical change. The country's broadcasting became an independent regulator (Fourie 2001:97). Today, the television environment is made up of a three-tier system, consisting of public, commercial and community channels. To accommodate this challenging position, the SABC has been required to undergo an ongoing restructuring process. Regarding the number of considerable changes that have taken place, it can be said that the monopoly of the SABC has been broken. But, if we look at the number of television stations that the SABC continues to own and operate, then it is clear that the SABC is still the dominant operator (Fourie 2001:97).

#### 4.3.3 Television Channels

Today, South Africa has the following television channels: SABC1, SABC2, SABC3, M-Net, Bop-TV, Mmaboatho TV, TOTAL Satellite channels. M-Net is a subscription based television channel and therefore rarely accessible for people living in townships or other poor areas. Broadcasting the news is restricted only to the three SABC state channels. E.tv satellite channels offers South Africans a greater choice of channels, including international services like CNN, MTV, BBC World, BBC Prime, Discovery Channel, Sky News and ESPN, as well as channels such as Zee TV in Indian languages and RTP Internacional in Portuguese. There are also SABC channels aimed at viewers in the rest of Africa, a business channel, Summit TV, and

a music channel, called Channel O, while Kyknet for Afrikaans speakers (Fourie 2001: 32).

## **4.4 Internet**

### 4.4.1 History of Internet

Contrary to most European countries, South Africa has a very low percentage of internet users. The estimated population for 2005 was 48 861 805. Only 3600 000 people used the internet, which is 7,4% of the population.<sup>33</sup> Because of the large disparities in socio-economic levels, internet access is directly associated with economic access. As such, most Internet users in South Africa are relatively well-educated and relatively affluent. Of around 2.6-million Internet users measured by Media Africa, close to 1.4-million have dial-up access from the office, indicating that they are relatively well-paid White-collar workers. More than 800 000 have dial-up accounts at home or at small businesses (with many of these accounts providing additional access).

The first package, was introduced in August 2002 by national telecoms monopoly Telkom. Later, in response to growing demand for cheaper ADSL options, two more products were introduced. On 1 September 2005 Telkom released a new offering.

### 4.4.2 Internet Today

The growth in internet use in South Africa from 2000 until 2005 was 50% (Internet World Stats, 2006). According to Dr Sebileslo Mokona-Matabana, executive director of Sentech, the poor situation of broadband internet connection in South Africa, makes it the most expensive internet in the world (Technology news, 2004). World Wide Worx predicts a growth in internet access as soon as the monopoly in South Africa by Telkom is being broken through. (Internet World Stats, 2006).

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<sup>33</sup> Internet World Statistics: <http://www.internetworldstats.com/af/za.htm>

## 4.5 The Press (Print Media)

As discussed in paragraph 2.3 the South-African press developed under influence of the apartheid era. At the present, newspapers and magazines publish reports and comment critical of the government and the state-owned SABC is far more independent.<sup>34</sup> According to Fourie (2001), the South-African press can be divided into four strands, namely:

- The English Press
- The Afrikaans Press
- The Black Press
- The Protest Press

Below the history of each strand is briefly discussed. The information about the history of the South African press is formulated with help of the information found on the webpage from the *The International Marketing Council of South Africa*. (<http://www.southafrica.info/>). This council was established in August 2000 to create a positive and united image for South Africa.

### 4.5.1 The English Press

The history of the South African English newspaper industry is linked to the mining industry. Mining giant '*Anglo American*' established and acquired newspapers by doing business in Johannesburg. Johannesburg Consolidated Investments was a subsidiary of mining giant Anglo American.

South Africa's largest newspaper group: *Independent Newspapers*, traces its history back to 1889. At that time, Francis Dormer established the Argus Printing Company, which had close links with mining magnate Cecil Rhodes.<sup>35</sup>

Later, The name *Argus Printing Company* was changed into *Argus Newspapers Ltd* and taken over by Anglo American. Anglo American ended its connection with Argus

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<sup>34</sup> [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country\\_profiles/1071886.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country_profiles/1071886.stm)

<sup>35</sup> [http://www.southafrica.info/ess\\_info/sa\\_glance/constitution/971558.htm](http://www.southafrica.info/ess_info/sa_glance/constitution/971558.htm)

Newspapers in 1994 when it sold 31% of its stake to Tony O'Reilly, the present owner of Independent Newspapers and Media of Ireland.

*Johnnic Publishing*, formerly *Times Media Ltd*, also had its roots in mining.<sup>36</sup> Mining tycoon Abe Bailey, bought the *Rand Daily Mail* in 1902 and the *Sunday Times* in 1906. He added the '*Sunday Express*' to his collection in 1937. In 1965, out of these publications the South African Associated Newspapers was formed.

Anglo further reduced its involvement in newspapers when it sold 35% of its shareholding in *Times Media Ltd* - which it owned through *Omni Media Corporation* - to the National Empowerment Consortium, a grouping of Black businesses and trade unions.<sup>37</sup>

In 1990, after Tony O'Reilly's company had bought all of Argus Newspapers' shares, Independent Newspapers became a fully foreign-owned company. This still is the situation today.

#### 4.5.2 The Afrikaans Press

The Afrikaans press, on the other hand, was established mainly as a reaction to the liberal views expressed in some of the English papers, particularly relating to issues such as slavery, the tensions between the Dutch farmers and the IsiXhosas, and the work of the missionaries in the Cape (Fourie 2001: 37).

The editors of earlier Afrikaans newspapers were, in most cases, ministers of religion who were committed to strict Calvinistic ethics. The main interest of the Afrikaans newspapers was the position of the Afrikaners versus the British in a period of domination of the latter. Therefore, the papers were at that time far from commercially orientated (Fourie 2001:38).

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<sup>36</sup> [http://www.southafrica.info/ess\\_info/sa\\_glance/constitution/971558.htm](http://www.southafrica.info/ess_info/sa_glance/constitution/971558.htm)

<sup>37</sup> [http://www.southafrica.info/ess\\_info/sa\\_glance/constitution/971558.htm](http://www.southafrica.info/ess_info/sa_glance/constitution/971558.htm)



The press was seen as a cultural and political weapon for the promotion of the Afrikaans language and political independence, as well as for drumming up support against the perceived threat of Black nationalism.<sup>38</sup>

The first Afrikaans newspaper, '*Zuid-Afrikaan*' was started in 1830 by Christoffel Joseph Brand. This British advocate was unpopular with the British colonial authorities. '*Zuid-Afrikaan*' promoted the interest of the Afrikaners and the Dutch. In its third year its subscription base rose to 3 000 when Afrikaners from the other British-annexed parts of South Africa embraced it. This was due to the loss of its influential backers following in 1904, and its editor's support for Cecil Rhodes in the clash against the Afrikaner leader Paul Kruger (Fourie:37-38).

Today, the Afrikaner press, which has its roots in the political split among Afrikaners over participation in World War 1, has extensive interests outside of the newspaper industry. These include stakes in the telecommunications, information technology, entertainment and publishing industries.<sup>39</sup>

#### 4.5.3 The Black Press

The origins of the Black press in South Africa are linked to the establishment of mission stations in the Eastern Cape and the work between missionaries and indigenous people. The missionaries taught literacy to Black people and in the process transferred the skills and resources necessary for publishing (Fourie, 2001:49).

The first newspaper intended for Black readers, *Umshumayeli Wendaba* (Publisher of the News), was printed at the Wesleyan Mission Society in Grahamstown from 1837 to 1841. Many others followed, the most significant being *Imvo Zabantsundu* (African Opinion), started by John Tengo Jabavu in King William's Town in 1884 (Fourie, 2001:50).

Jabavu was the first person who took the initiative to start a Black newspaper, independent of missionary control. He resigned his editorship of a missionary-owned

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<sup>38</sup> [http://www.southafrica.info/ess\\_info/sa\\_glance/constitution/971558.htm](http://www.southafrica.info/ess_info/sa_glance/constitution/971558.htm)

<sup>39</sup> [http://www.southafrica.info/ess\\_info/sa\\_glance/constitution/971558.htm](http://www.southafrica.info/ess_info/sa_glance/constitution/971558.htm)

paper, *Isigidimi samalsiXhosa*, after convincing himself of the need to publish newspapers independent of missionary control. His paper was the first to be written, owned and controlled by Black people (Fourie 2001:49).

Other Black-owned newspapers that followed were associated with the establishment of political movements for Blacks, with editors more radical than Jabavu (Fourie 2001:50). The papers included *Izwi laBantu*, started in 1897 by AK Soga; *Ilanga lase Natal* (The Natal Sun), started by John Dube in 1903; the ANC's *Abantu-Batho*, formed in 1912; and the *Indian Opinion*, established in 1903 by Mahatma Gandhi, the founder of the Indian National Congress.<sup>40</sup>

But lack of capital, equipment, skilled workers and a reliable distribution network saw the entry of White capital into the ownership and control of the Black press.

This started in 1932 with the establishment of Bantu Press Ltd by an ex-farmer who saw the potential of profits to be made in the Black market. Bertram Paver inaugurated a national newspaper, *Bantu World*, a tabloid modelled on the British *Daily Mirror*, which represented a move away from a local to a national Black press.

Bantu Press was, 14 months after its establishment, taken over by the Argus Newspaper company, which controlled it until 1952. The Argus company soon became the first monopoly in the Black press, with 10 weekly papers in the southern African region, and handled advertising for 12 publications in 11 languages (Fourie, 2001:50-51).

Jim Bailey, the son of mining tycoon Abe Bailey, started *Drum* in 1951 and then *Golden City Post* in 1955, which were both aimed at Black readers. Both publications were run by White editors brought to South Africa from Fleet Street newspapers.<sup>41</sup> Although *Drum* was never banned, like many of its journalists, the newspaper was withdrawn only to reappear later in a milder form (Fourie, 2001:51)

The next phase in the development of the Black press came in the 1990s when Anglo American, through Johannesburg Consolidated Investments, sold some of its

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<sup>40</sup> [http://www.southafrica.info/ess\\_info/sa\\_glance/constitution/971558.htm](http://www.southafrica.info/ess_info/sa_glance/constitution/971558.htm)

<sup>41</sup> [http://www.southafrica.info/ess\\_info/sa\\_glance/constitution/971558.htm](http://www.southafrica.info/ess_info/sa_glance/constitution/971558.htm)

publication and newspaper companies, such as *Sowetan* and *Times Media Ltd*, to Black business groups in empowerment deals facilitated by the advent of democracy in 1994.<sup>42</sup>

#### 4.5.4 The Protest Press (Alternative Press)

South Africa had a huge number of opposition newspapers during the apartheid years; some lasted for only a few issues, while others are still in publication.

The more mainstream newspapers to specifically provide news and opinion in opposition to the Nationalist government policies included the *Weekly Mail* - founded after the liberal *Rand Daily Mail* was closed down, *Vrye Weekblad* and *New Nation* (Fourie 2001: 54).

These had a wider national readership and were able to secure advertising and distribution. The state nevertheless attempted to shut them down by banning and seizing specific issues, with serious financial consequences for the papers.<sup>43</sup>

The anti-apartheid press was also made up of smaller newspapers, produced by organisations and educational institutions. One of these was Sash, originally known as the Black Sash, produced by the Black Sash organisation from 1956 to 1994.<sup>44</sup>

The organisation, largely made up of middle-class White women, mounted petitions, protests, marches and vigils to oppose apartheid, all of which were detailed in the newspaper. It brought topic such as pass laws, migrant labour, the Group Areas and Bantu Education Acts, forced removals, detention without trial and land reform to the attention of White South Africans.

*Grassroots* was started in 1980, the first of a series of anti-apartheid community newspapers, with a circulation that grew up to 20 000. The paper struggled financially, but was helped by small donations and advertising sold to small Cape

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<sup>42</sup> [http://www.southafrica.info/ess\\_info/sa\\_glance/constitution/971558.htm](http://www.southafrica.info/ess_info/sa_glance/constitution/971558.htm)

<sup>43</sup> [http://www.southafrica.info/ess\\_info/sa\\_glance/constitution/971558.htm](http://www.southafrica.info/ess_info/sa_glance/constitution/971558.htm)

<sup>44</sup> [http://www.southafrica.info/ess\\_info/sa\\_glance/constitution/971558.htm](http://www.southafrica.info/ess_info/sa_glance/constitution/971558.htm)

Town traders. Eight months after Grassroots began its first organiser, Johnny Issel, was banned. The newspaper managed to survive until 1990 (Fourie 2001:54).

*Work in Progress* was a trade union publication, produced from 1977 to 1994 and founded by University of Witwatersrand postgraduate students. It both challenged a number of bannings and made inroads into Publications Act committees declaring its material undesirable. In July 1994 *Work in Progress* was incorporated into *Southern Africa Report*.

*Critical Health* focused on health issues in the context of the prevailing socioeconomic climate of unequal provision of health care in apartheid South Africa. It was published from 1979 to 1994 (Fourie, 2001:54-55).

*Contact* was the official publication of the Liberal Party, published monthly from 1954 to 1967. The Liberal Party was the only legal multiracial party in South Africa during this period, but was dissolved in 1968, when legislation made multiracial parties illegal in South Africa.<sup>45</sup>

#### 4.5.5 South-African Newspapers

Generally the following newspapers are currently known as the biggest Dailies in South Africa:

- The Star - Johannesburg-based daily, city's oldest newspaper
- The Sowetan - Johannesburg-based tabloid
- Daily Sun - mass-circulation tabloid
- Beeld - largest Afrikaans daily
- Mail and Guardian - weekly
- Business Day - daily
- Financial Mail - business weekly

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<sup>45</sup> [http://www.southafrica.info/ess\\_info/sa\\_glance/constitution/971558.htm](http://www.southafrica.info/ess_info/sa_glance/constitution/971558.htm)

The following four are specifically aimed at the Western Cape area:

- Sunday Times - South Africa's oldest Sunday newspaper
- Die Burger – Afrikaans daily
- Cape Times - British daily
- Cape Argus – British daily with strong local focus

An impression of South Africa’s newspaper circulation per 1000 inhabitants:

*Table IV South Africa’s newspaper circulation per 1000 inhabitants*

1980	1985	1990	1996	2000
51	47	39	34	31

Source: Fourie 2001: 56

#### 4.5.6 Local Press

Besides the national press, South Africa has a large rural and suburban press as well. The country has around 450 local, suburban and rural newspapers. Most of these are tabloids serving specific towns, districts or suburbs containing local news and advertising. Because of their local nature, suburban and rural newspapers tend to avoid national politics and are bilingual. Most of the newspapers that fall into this group appear once a week. These newspapers are distributed free of charge in certain suburban areas (Fourie 2001: 76-77). There has been a great increase in the number of these regional, township and suburban publications (Diederichs in Fourie 2001: 82). The smaller, local newspapers are so popular because they are able to carry news that is of interest and relevant to that community. The bigger daily newspapers cannot cover all local news for every area in the country. During my research at the High Schools in the Cape flat area, I noticed learners in township Khayalitha reading a community newspaper during their lunch break. This newspaper, *Vukani*, is distributed free of charge at the schools in the area. It is written in IsiXhosa and English and owned by Independent newspapers (South Africa’s biggest newspaper owner). Learner Bula Lungani about *Vukani*: “*Vukani is cool, it reports about events that happened in my neighborhood. It’s easy to*

*understand it and I can get it at school.*” This example illustrates the popularity of community news and local newspapers. The results of my quantitative research will illustrate this as well.<sup>46</sup>

#### 4.5.7 Free Newspapers

A strategy to make the consumption of news more attractive to younger people is the distribution of free youth newspapers. In Chapter 6 the findings of the survey will be discussed, one of them supports the popularity of free newspapers among young people in the Western Cape. Worldwide examples of free newspapers for youngsters are the *‘Chicago Tribune’* with their youth publication *‘Red Eye’*; *Boston Globe* its *‘Boston Teens in Print’* (a newspaper that is written for teenagers by teenagers). *The Hindustan Times* its *‘Hindustan Times NEXT* and the German half price publication of *‘die Welt’*, named *‘Welt Kompakt’*. During the past decade the readership number has increased from 0 to 12 million, this could be a result of the growing distribution of free newspapers (Pecquerie & Burke, 2005: 86). Examples of successful free newspapers in Denmark are *‘MetroXpress’* which has a readership number of 787.000 (Pecquerie & Burke, 2005: 89), Seoul its *‘Daily Focus’* with 2 million free copies every day (Pecquerie & Burke 2005: 93) and the French *‘20 Minutes’* of which 76% of its readers where non-readers before (Pecquerie & Burke, 2005:92).

#### **4.8 Short Conclusion**

In order to investigate the news consumption of the South African Youth, it is important to explore the offer in news media and to have some background knowledge about the media environment where South African’s can take part in. It has been said that South Africa has a strong local press, a high use of radio and, compared to Europe and the United States, less accessibility to the internet. As a consequence of the relatively recent abolishment of media monopoly, the majority of South African television channels are still owned by state broadcaster SABC. Furthermore, it has been illustrated that the print media can be categorised in four different strands, namely; the English, Afrikaans, Black and Protest press. Since each

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<sup>46</sup> See chapter 5

strand has developed along side the segregation of races in the Apartheids era, the consumption of print media nowadays still is not ad random. Finally, the popularity of free newspaper worldwide and in South Africa are discussed. The findings presented in chapter 6 will give more insight into the importance of free newspapers for the South African media environment.

## **5. Methodology**

From the beginning of April until the beginning of May six High Schools in various areas of the Western Cape have been visited to conduct surveys among learners in grade 10 and 11. In total, 300 surveys have been conducted at High schools; ‘Spine Road’ and ‘Glendale’ in the Coloured community of Mitchell’s Plain, ‘Bulumko’ and ‘Intlanganiso’ in township Khayelitsha, ‘Eben Donges’ in Kraaifontein and ‘de Kuilen’ in Kuilsrivier which will be discussed later in this chapter. When selecting the High Schools the main focus lay on their racial composition: Two High Schools with a majority of ‘Coloured’ learners have been selected, two with a majority of ‘African’, and one with a majority of ‘White’ learners. Finally, a sixth High School, Eben Donges, has been visited, which mainly consists of Coloured learners. The composition of racial groups in the conducted survey represents the population of the Western Cape: The racial composition of the Western Cape is Black/ African 27%, Coloured 54%, Indian/Asian 1%, and White 18%. Furthermore, attention has been paid to the ‘mother tongue’ and the ‘medium of instruction’ at the schools since these concepts are expected to be important in relation to the subject of this research as well. Later in this chapter all High Schools as well as the Western Cape will be discussed briefly in order to get an impression of the socio-economical environment of the learners. First, the methodology of this research will be further explained.

### **5.1 Quantitative research**

Surveys were used for gathering the data. All learners were asked to fill out a survey in class, consisting of 27 questions. During the time they were filling out the survey they had the possibility to ask questions to the researcher or their teacher. They approximately needed 20 minutes to finish the questions. The use of surveys for this kind of research was most effective, because:

*“Survey research can reveal correlations or associations between two variables. Unlike experimental research, surveys are usually generalizable to the larger society”* (Campbell et al. 2003: 523).



To answer the central question it is indeed necessary to unfold the correlation between 'race' and 'use of the (news)media'. The relation between 'mother tongue' and 'use of the news media' has been tried-out as well. Using this method gave the possibility to put the important key-concepts, discussed in the previous chapters, into perspective. Before discussing the questions from the survey, some of the strengths and weaknesses of conducting a survey as a research method will be discussed.

## **5.2 Strength of Survey-research**

Surveys ensure that confidentiality of respondents is respected. This is evident since respondents don't need to include their names in the surveys. This turned out to be relevant for learners filling out the question about their opinion of the government. No expertise is required when filling out a survey, a literate person understanding the purpose of the study can easily respond to the questions. When conducting a survey it is possible to quantify and easily summarize the results (Beer, 1998: 396-397).

## **5.3 Weakness of Survey-research**

Mostly, respondents respond to the survey without having any personal interaction with the researcher. Surveys are often difficult to design, they need a lot of reshaping and adjusting before they can be administered. It is also difficult to cover all issues concerning the subject. Responses to questions can be incomplete and therefore useless. This means as well that the researcher can manipulate the questions in order to elicit certain response in his/her favour. It is often difficult and time consuming to interpret the findings from the surveys (Beer, 1998: 400-401).

## **5.4 Research population**

This research concerns the news consumption of younger people living in the Western Cape. According to the Youth Commission bill of the Western Cape in South Africa, 65% of the Western Cape population of 4 504 609 is under the age of 35 and, therefore the province has 2 928 000 youngsters.<sup>47</sup> To get a better insight into the target population, the focus lies on the part of Western Cape youth that is attaining

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<sup>47</sup> <http://www.capegateway.gov.za/eng/pubs/speeches/2004/Aug>

High School education. This means that the target population of this research consists of younger people living in the Western Cape in the age range of 15 – 18. As discussed in paragraph 2.3, this age group represents High school learners in grade 10, 11 and 12 also called 'Further Education and Training'. In order to make a comparison with the international studies discussed in paragraph 3.5, this target population was most relevant to the topic (Meijer, 2006, Pecquerie & Burke, 2005). Furthermore, learners in this age group all attain High School education, therefore certain patterns of media consumption can be placed within the learners educational backgrounds and are easier to compare. Besides, from this age group it can be expected that they all have access to certain media like the internet, print media and broadcasting.

## **5.5 Survey**

To give answer to the central question, the use of the news media of learners in the aforementioned High Schools has been investigated. The questions of the survey will provide the core data necessary to give answer to the central question, and these will be discussed below.

### *1. How much time do you spend everyday?*

- *watching TV .... minutes*
- *listening to the radio .... minutes*
- *reading magazines or newspaper ... minutes*
- *surfing the Internet ..... minutes*

This question will show possible differences in media use between learners of different racial background. The difference in the amount of time spend on consumption of specific media can later be related to the extent to which learners follow the news and to their use of entertainment media.

### *2. Please name your favourite*

- *Magazine (if any):*
- *Radio show (if any):*

- *TV show (if any):*
- *Daily newspaper (which one)*
- *Website (if any)*
- *What is your default homepage on your browser*
- *What is your principal entertainment medium? - MTV*
  - *Celebrity news*
  - *Cartoons*
  - *Other (please specify.....)*

This question will, on the one hand, show how the media preference of learners differs according to racial background. On the other hand, it will unfold the balance between consumption of entertainment and mainstream media.

*3. With regard to the media, I am mainly interested in (more than one answer possible):*

- *the news*
- *soap series*
- *cartoons*
- *educational programs (discovery channel, national geographic etc)*
- *radioprograms*
- *internet*
- *newspapers*
- *other.....*

Again, the balance between mainstream and entertainment media will be investigated. Thereby the ranking of learners media interest and the importance of the news in this perspective will be shown.

*4. Do you follow the news?*

- *Yes*
- *no*

The findings of international studies relating to younger people and the news, discussed in chapter 1 and 3 proved that there is a worldwide decline in news consumption. It is interesting to find out if this is the case in the Western Cape of South Africa as well. Furthermore, it is relevant to investigate whether the extent to which learners watch the news can be related to their racial background.

*5. If yes, how often do you follow the news?*

- *Every day*
- *A few times a week*
- *Once a week*
- *Less than once a week*

These questions will show if the amount of time spend on consuming the news differs between the three racial groups. Besides, the frequency of following the news might relate to the answers that learners give to the questions in the open-question part and therefore relate to general knowledge.

*6. How do you prefer to follow the news?*

- *Television*
- *Radio*
- *Interne.*
- *Newspapers.*
- *I never follow the news*

These questions will show whether learners of the three racial groups use different media when consuming the news.

*7. Why do you prefer to follow the news in this way?*

- *I prefer it this way because*

Part of the central question is explaining the differences in news consumption according to racial background. This question will help in explaining possible differences.

8. *Why do you follow the news?*

- *Because I think it is important*
- *Because my parents tell me to follow it*
- *Because I don't want to be 'stupid' not knowing what's going on*
- *Because my teachers tell me to*
- *Something else*

Reasons for consuming the news can be different for each racial group.

9. *The main reason for me to follow the news is (select only one)....*

- *I want to be informed about sports*
- *I want to know what happened in South-Africa*
- *I want to know the weather forecast*
- *Other (please be specific)*

Expectantly, reasons for consuming the news will be slightly different for each racial group. Both question 8 and 9 go further into learners motivation for following the news.

10. *If you would be the director of a news program, what would you change to make it more interesting?*

Based on the findings of the international research discussed in paragraph 3.5 and in the introduction, news programs specifically designed for younger people are often successful. This question investigates the satisfaction of the current offer in news programming, as well as the issues that South African learners find important when watching the news.

11. *Do you discuss the news with your friends?*

- *Frequently*
- *Occasionally*
- *Rarely*
- *Never*

The social side of media consumption will be explored as well. By talking about the news with family and friends, learners could get a better understanding of the events that are happening around them. Question 11 and 12 are about this subject.

12. *Picture eating dinner at your family's home. How frequently did you discuss the news at dinner? (circle one)*

- *Frequently*
- *Occasionally*
- *Rarely*
- *Never*

13. *What kind of news do you discuss?*

This questions will unfold possible differences in subjects that learners consider as 'news', as well as what they find most important or interesting to discuss.

14 *Do you follow celebrity news? (circle)*

- *Frequently*
- *Occasionally*

- *Rarely*
- *Never*

Earlier, the balance of consuming mainstream and entertainment media was mentioned as an important part of investigation. This question will show if there are differences in the frequency of following celebrity news by learners of different racial background.

*15. If you use the internet, how often do you use it?*

- *Daily*
- *Weekly*
- *Once every two weeks*
- *Once a month*
- *Never*

In paragraph 4.4 internet use of South Africans was discussed extensively. However, the use of internet by learners of the Western Cape can differ according to racial background, since racial background still often relates to socio-economic class and therefore to access to information. Generally, question 15 and 16 will provide more information concerning the use of internet.

*16. If you use the internet, could you rank your most important uses?*

- *Email*
- *Chatting*
- *Education*
- *Meeting people*
- *Politics*
- *Other (please specify)*

The following questions will test learners' general knowledge. Learners' general knowledge is expected to be partly determined by their consumption of the news, since most of the answers of the questions are recent news facts. Question 17 and

21 are related to entertainment news, while question 18, 19 and 20 are general political questions. To make sure that the questions and answers are relevant to test learners general knowledge, they were examined by Herman Wasserman, professor in media ethics, media and society and arts journalism at the University of Stellenbosch.<sup>48</sup> Question 23 is about global warming which is a topic that often occurred in recent South African news items.<sup>49</sup> Question 24 is about learners opinion about the political situation in their country. It will be interesting to relate the outcomes of this question to racial background

*17. Who won South-African Idols?*

*18. Where does the letters ANC stand for?*

*19. Who is Jacob Zuma?*

*20. Who is the leader of the Democratic Alliance party?*

*21. Who is Beyoncé?*

*22. What happened to Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the MDC, when he held a meeting on a Sunday in March this year?*

*23. What is meant when talking about global warming?*

*24. Think about the political system in your country. Do you think that the government takes people's opinions into consideration? And do you think you can make a difference?*

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<sup>48</sup> Personal communication with Professor Herman Wasserman

<sup>49</sup> <http://www.news24.co.za>



25 .I am now going to name a list of some possible goals. Please rank the level of importance in your own life for each of the following goals: very low, low, medium, high, very high

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Living in an elegant house              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| • Owning a fancy car                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| • Staying political engaged               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| • Giving something back to your community | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| • Having a club membership (e.g. sports)  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| • Having friends                          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| • Raising a family                        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| • Keeping up with the news                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

This last question where learners have to rank specific values, it is mainly interesting to see where learners place the news in relation to other values. The information that is derived from the other values could be used for further research.

Are you (circle):

- Male
- Female

Do you think of yourself as being:

- African
- Coloured
- White
- Indian
- Other (describe yourself)

How old are you?

## 5.6 Selecting the High Schools

In South Africa, one needs to get permission of the government to get access to high schools for doing research. Via a teacher at the journalism department of the Stellenbosch university, I was put in contact with mister Richard Stanley. Mister Stanley works at the faculty for Afrikaans and Education. He was a former employee of the governmental department of education in the Western Cape. Thanks to his contacts at high schools in the region, I was able to get into the high schools more easily. I discussed my ideas with mister Stanley and together we decided which schools we could visit. At the same time, I did send in the admission forms that included among others a list of the schools I wanted to visit, a description of my research, my personal details, the conducted survey and a letter of recommendation of a university teacher.

The six high schools that have been investigated need to be discussed in order to get an impression of the environment where the research took place. Each high school operates in another socio-economic environment and has its own medium of instruction. Knowing that 'language' and 'socio-economics' are influential factors of living conditions in the Western Cape, it is important to take this information into account. Evaluating these key concepts could explain the expected differences in the result of the research. As explained in paragraph 2.3 and 2.4, high schools in South Africa can still be segregated according to race. Therefore, the high schools could be selected based on their racial composition. The first two high schools; Spine road and Glendale are situated in the community of Mitchell's Plain and represent the Coloured population. High school Bulumko and Intlanganiso are situated in township Khayalitsha where the majority of people are African (Black). De Kuilen and Eben Donges have a mixture of learners from different racial background, the latter merely has Coloured learners and the first mainly Whites. The spread in racial background corresponds to the composition of the population of the Western Cape. Below each high school will be discussed briefly.

### Spine road High School

Spine Road High School has 1359 learners and 40 educators. It is a Mathematics focus school, which implies that Mathematics is compulsory up to Grade 12 level. The medium of instruction is Afrikaans/English.<sup>50</sup> The majority of learners are Muslim and Coloured (there are no statistics available that inform about specific numbers on this).

### Glendale High School

Glendale Secondary School opened its doors in 1983. Since its opening the school has grown steadily in the number of learners it has enrolled each year. At the heart of their 'success' as a school in an underprivileged community is the principle that it is not what happens to you that matter, but how you react to it. The staff at Glendale Secondary strive to encourage the learners to believe in themselves and in their ability to achieve both academically and personally. The school has 1390 learners and 42 educators. The medium of instruction is Afrikaans.<sup>51</sup>

### Bulumko Secondary

This High School (also called 'Secondary School') is situated in township Khayelitsha and has 1545 learners and 44 educators. Bulumko Secondary is determined to improve their mathematics results. In order to do so, they felt that their learners required a broader range of learning experiences which would improve the possibility of them passing mathematics on the Higher Grade. Educators believe that the integrated approach of using different modes of learning such as the computer laboratory where learners can do self-study, distance learning classes and mindset will best bring about the desired result. The medium of instruction at the school is English.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Khanya schools: <http://www.khanya.co.za/schools/khanyaschool>

<sup>51</sup> Khanya schools: <http://www.khanya.co.za/schools/khanyaschool.php?emisno=0106493430>

<sup>52</sup> Khanya schools: <http://www.khanya.co.za/schools/khanyaschool.php?emisno=0106041121>

### Intlanganiso Secondary

Situated in the informal settlement of Khayelitsha, Intlanganiso Secondary serves the impoverished community of this sub-economic area and relies heavily on the support of the community through school fees. Despite their economic hardships, Intlanganiso Secondary has been very keen to establish technology at their school in order that their learners may use it to carve out a better future for themselves in a technology driven society. The school has 1452 learners and 43 educators. The medium of instruction is English.<sup>53</sup>

### Eben Donges High

Eben Donges High serves the multi-cultural community of Kraaifontein, a northern suburb of Cape Town. The government-funded school has 851 learners and 32 educators. The medium of instruction is English.<sup>54</sup> The majority of learners are Coloured.<sup>55</sup> The school is situated in an area of the town where the majority of people live in proper houses, knowing that 21% of inhabitants live in informal dwellings.<sup>56</sup>

### De Kuilen High

With a school population of over a thousand learners and the increased emphasis brought to bear by the Further Education and Technology (F.E.T) band which rolled out in January 2006 on the use of technology, De Kuilen High realized that they would have to increase the capacity of their existing computer laboratories if they were to cope with the increased demands. The school has mainly White and Coloured learners. The amount of students estimates 1140, and educators 41.

Not only educational attainment, but also the socio-economic environment plays a role when consuming the news media, since media consumption can be heavily dependent on having access to information. In chapter 2 it was argued that race in

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<sup>53</sup> Khanya schools:<http://www.khanya.co.za/schools/khanyaschool.php?emisno=0106041121>

<sup>54</sup> Khanya schools:<http://www.khanya.co.za/schools/khanyaschool.php?emisno=0106041121>

<sup>55</sup> See Chapter 6 'Empirical Results'

<sup>56</sup> Transformation research project: Kraaifontein and Brackenfell 2004

South Africa still is a parameter of poverty. Therefore it can be expected that not all respondents in the various area's of the Western Cape will have access to the same media.

The media consumption of parents will most probably also play a role in their media behavior, they partly determine learners accessibility to certain media. As discussed in paragraph 4.13, South Africa has a strong local press, therefore learners get different information dependent on the area they live in. These are important things that can relate to differences in media consumption. Below the environment where my research took place will be further discussed.

## **5.7 Research environment**

### Cape Flats area: Khayalitsha & Mitchell's Plain

Both Khayalitsha and Mitchell's Plain are situated in the Cape Flats area. The term *Cape Flats* refers to the sandy, low-lying stretched outskirts of the city of Cape Town. The area has been described as the "dumping ground of apartheid" and it is here that Black and Coloured people were relocated to.<sup>57</sup>

#### 5.7.1 Khayalitsha

Khayalitsha means 'new home' in isiXhosa and is home to between 500,000 and 1 million people, and runs for a number of kilometers along the highway N2. The ethnic makeup of Khayalitsha is approximately 90% Black African and 10% Coloured, with isiXhosa being the predominant language. Most people in the township live in 'houses' named 'shacks' made out of tin, wood and cardboard.

The *Group Areas Act*<sup>58</sup>, passed in the 1950s, prohibited Blacks from living in the cities. The discrimination and Black population control by the apartheid regime did not prevent Blacks from settling in the outskirts of Cape Town. After the scrapping of

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<sup>57</sup> <http://www.capeflats.org.za/>

<sup>58</sup> Forced physical separation between races by creating different residential areas for different races. Led to forced removals of people living in "wrong" areas, for example Coloureds living in District Six in Cape Town (Fourie, 2001: 55)

pass laws in 1987 many Blacks, mainly Xhosas moved into areas around Cape Town in search of work. By this time many Blacks were already illegally settled in townships (Black neighborhood). As the Black population grew, the apartheid regime sought to solve the problem by establishing new Black neighborhoods. Khayelitsha was established in 1985.

Since the ANC came to power in 1994, living conditions in the township have improved slowly, with new brick housing being built for residents, new schools being built, clean water taps on every street and electricity being provided to every shack. But unfortunately, there is still a lot of visible poverty in the township.

Learners in Khayalitsha are confronted with the same difficulties as many of the youth in the Cape Flats area: high crime and substance abuse being among these.<sup>59</sup> Street gangs, composed of unsupervised youths whose parents work miles away in the White-dominated city, first appeared in the Cape Flats area around 40 years ago and rapidly became well-organized criminal units. They set up drug, extortion, and international smuggling rings and built networks in neighbourhoods, prisons, and schools (Nyamnjoh, 2005).

Today, an estimated 150 gangs, with names like the Americans and the Hard Livings, operate freely in the Cape Flats townships. Their battles over turf and dominance have turned the area into a near war zone. Uzi and AK-47 assault weapons and hand grenades are common tools of the trade, and an estimated 70 percent of crime in the Cape Town area is believed to be gang-related (Christian Science Monitor 2001).

### 5.7.2 Mitchell's Plain

Mitchell's Plain is a largely Coloured township about 20 km from the city of Cape Town. It is located on the Cape Flats on the False Bay coast between Strandfontein and Khayelitsha. Conceived of as a "model township" by the apartheid government, it was built during the 1970s to provide housing for Coloured victims of forced removal due to the implementation of the Group Areas Act. Though Mitchell's Plain is no longer officially a "Coloured township," the residents remain overwhelmingly

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<sup>59</sup> Khanya schools: <http://www.khanya.co.za/schools/khanyaschool.php?emisno=0106324531>

Coloured. Mitchell's Plain has an estimated population of 2.2 million among many of them falling under the lowest demographic income spectrum.

Mitchell's Plain is said to be one of the most dangerous places when it comes to crime. The area has a murder rate of 7/10 000 people, compared to 59/100 000 in the whole of South Africa. There is reported violent crime of 193/ 10 000 compared to 10 000 crimes per 100 000 in the country. One of the symptoms of dislocation are the violent gangs, which have become an everyday part of Mitchell's Plain youth culture.

Learners in Mitchell's plain often drop out of school. Especially boys often give up their education to join one of the popular gangs. Educators at the school express their concern about this situation. "There is a lot of drug abuse in this area, it happens often that we see one of the drop-out walking around 'high' along the streets. Many younger people commit crimes and hang around the school to scare people," tells an educator from Spine Road High.

### 5.7.3 Kraaifontein

Kraaifontein is a town in the Western Cape province of South Africa and has a population of approximately 140.0077. Due to Cape Town's explosive growth north-eastward, the town has now been absorbed into the Cape Town Metropole and is now considered a suburb. That there are many poor areas in Kuilsrivier can be illustrated from the fact that only 56% to 64% of all people live in a house on a separate stand, while 21% live in informal dwelling. Of all people living in informal housing, 65% people have water in their dwellings, 21% piped water on site and 23% get water from a public tap.<sup>60</sup>

The population of Kuilsrivier is composed of Black (29%), Coloured (39%) and White (31%) people. The suburbs youth population is considerably big, 36% of all inhabitants are below the age of 19. The population groups always determine the dominant language in an area. Knowing that Coloured people and White mostly speak Afrikaans, 58% of all people in Kraaifontein has the language as their mother tonque. IsiXhosa is spoken by 26% of all people, and English by 14%.

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<sup>60</sup> Kraaifontein Transformation Research project: <http://academic.sun.ac.za/tsv/Centres/Egon/urdr.htm>

The percentage of adults (20 years and older) who did not have the opportunity to complete any schooling is 5.5%. This is below the provincial percentage of 5.8%. Although the overall percentage is low, there are areas in Kraaifontein with higher percentages. Kraaifontein East for example is the area where 45.2% of adults have not had schooling.<sup>61</sup>

#### 5.7.4 Kuilsrivier

Kuilsrivier is a suburb of Capetown and a growing community of approximately 1.320.9061 inhabitants.<sup>62</sup> The suburb consists mostly of Coloured people (78%), White people (14.4%) and Black people (6.5%) speaking Afrikaans (69.5%) and English (25.6%) as their first language. 38% of all inhabitant are under the age of 19, and therefore considered to form the youth population of Kuilsrivier.

The percentage for Kuilsrivier that are uneducated and above the age of 20 is 2.9% In a research report about the social development needs of local communities in Kuilsrivier, an inhabitant of the suburb expressed her concern about education in Kuilsrivier. “The schools only accept a certain amount of new learners each year. They would rather accept a learner from the ‘better areas’ like Belhar or Delft, which is far away than someone from poor area Kalkfontein, which is right next to one of the schools. In my opinion they take those learners whom they think will be able to pay all the school fees, instead of those from Kalkfontein whose parents are poor and can’t afford the school fees.”

#### **5.8 Short Conclusion**

In this chapter the advantages (strengths) and disadvantages (weaknesses) of using a survey as research method are discussed. In short, it can be concluded that for this quantitative research, using a survey is the best option. This is because one can more easily generalize conclusions based on a relatively large group of respondents. Secondly, the statistical possibilities of quantitative survey data allow for an extended

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<sup>61</sup> Kraaifontein Transformation Research project: <http://academic.sun.ac.za/tsv/Centres/Egon/urdr.htm>

<sup>62</sup> Socio-economic situation in Suburbs: [www.capetown.gov.za/reports/pdf/sociosuburbs](http://www.capetown.gov.za/reports/pdf/sociosuburbs)



analyses of expected correlations. Besides the method, the target population is discussed as well. South African youngsters living in the Western Cape in the age range of 15-18 form the research population. Although the central question of this research focuses on racial background as a basis of distinction, other variables are taken into account as well. In this context, socio-economical background, medium of instruction and type of the schools are given attention. From the description of the research environment it became clear that four out of six high schools that are visited were situated in a so called 'township' or urban area where poverty is still a crucial issue. This of course has an influence on the learning environment and, to a certain extent, to access to information. These variables will be taken into account in the discussion in chapter 6 and 7. They will however play a minor role in this research for the simple reason that the scope of this research would otherwise become too broad. In the next chapter the results of the survey will be discussed.

## 6. Empirical results

In the following chapter the results of the quantitative research will be discussed in order to give answer to the central question and sub questions formulated in chapter 1. With the help of the key themes discussed in this research, the results will be explained and interpreted. Above every graph, the question out of the survey will be mentioned and below it, significant or remarkable information will be discussed. The questions out of the survey are ordered according to a corresponding theme. When discussing the outcomes, some speculations and possible explanations will be given.

### 6.1 General Statistics

In total, 300 learners were questioned of which 101 were African, 121 Coloured, 69 Whites and 3 Indians. 6 learners choose the option 'other' to describe themselves. Three of them describe themselves as 'Muslim' and two as 'Asian' and one as 'Unique'. Out of all respondents, 129 were male and 170 were female. These numbers correspond to the educational composition in South Africa, were, according to teachers at Spineroad, Intlanganiso and Bulumko, the majority of learners are female. As described in paragraph 5.4, the target population consists of learners in Grade 10 , 11 and 12 representing the age range of 15 to 18 attaining High School education. The age composition turned out to fall a little beyond the scope of the actual target population due to the fact that the age of learners in Grade 11 and 12 sometimes varies. However, the original age range of 15 to 18 years old is still represented dominantly. Only one respondent was 13 years old, two were 14 years old, fifty-six were 15 years old, hundred and seven 16 years old, eighty five were 17 years old, forty-one 18 years olds, five 19 years olds and two 20 years olds.

### 6.2 Media consumption

Questions one and two cover the subject of media consumption. In the first question, learners are asked to point out their daily use of the different media in **minutes**. In question two, learners wrote down their favorite magazine, radio station, newspaper, website, homepage and principal entertainment medium. Below the results of these questions are shown.

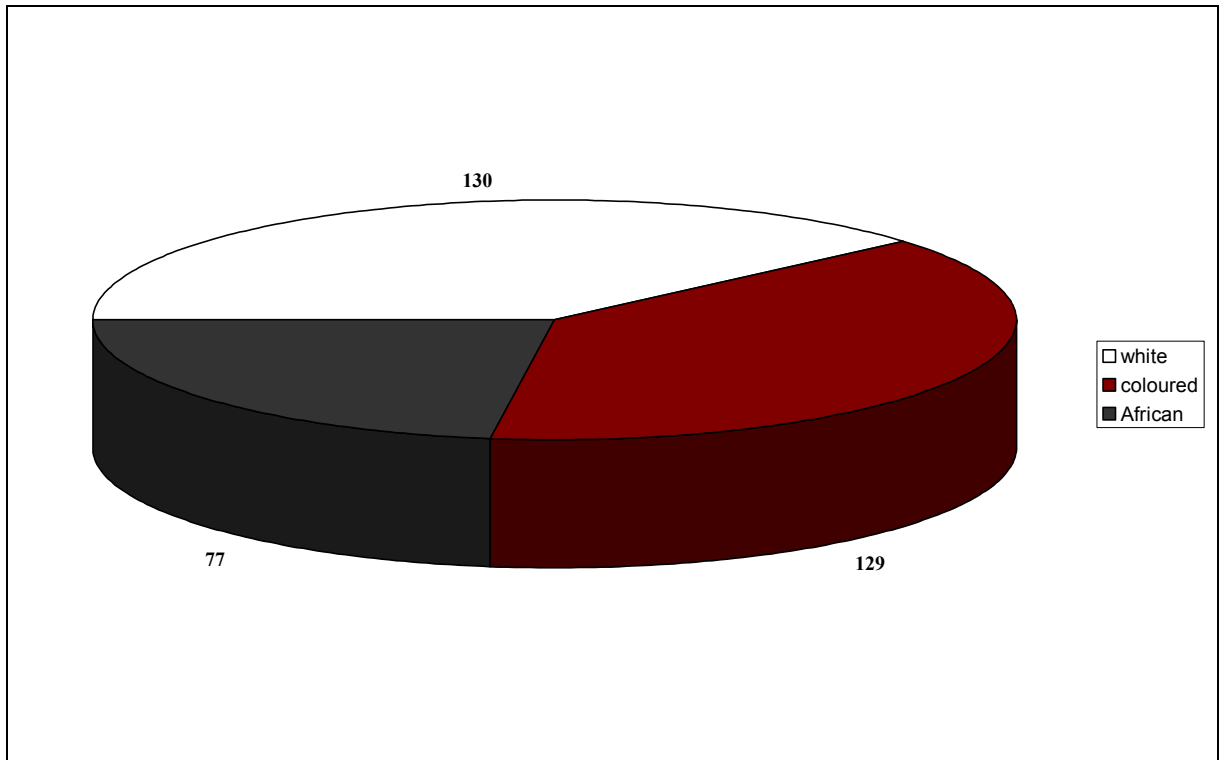


Figure 6.1 Time spend per day on watching television in minutes

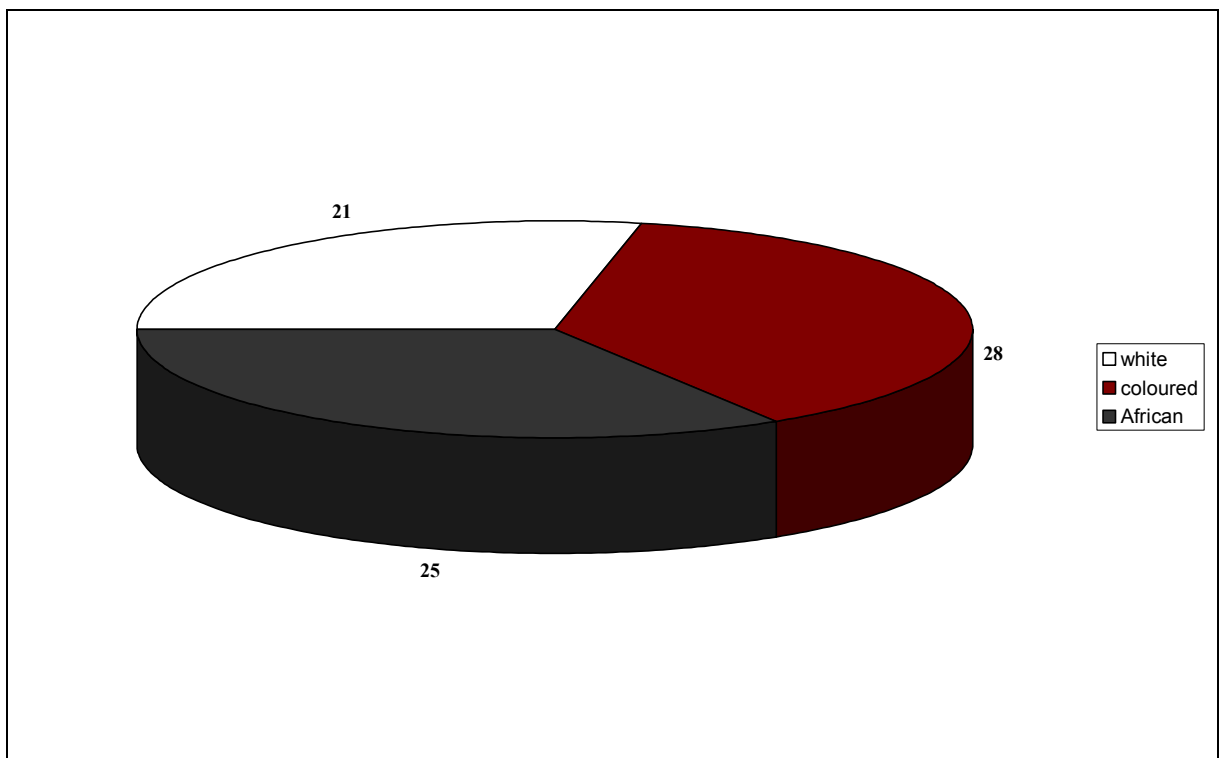


Figure 6.2 Time spend per day on reading Newspaper and Magazine in minutes

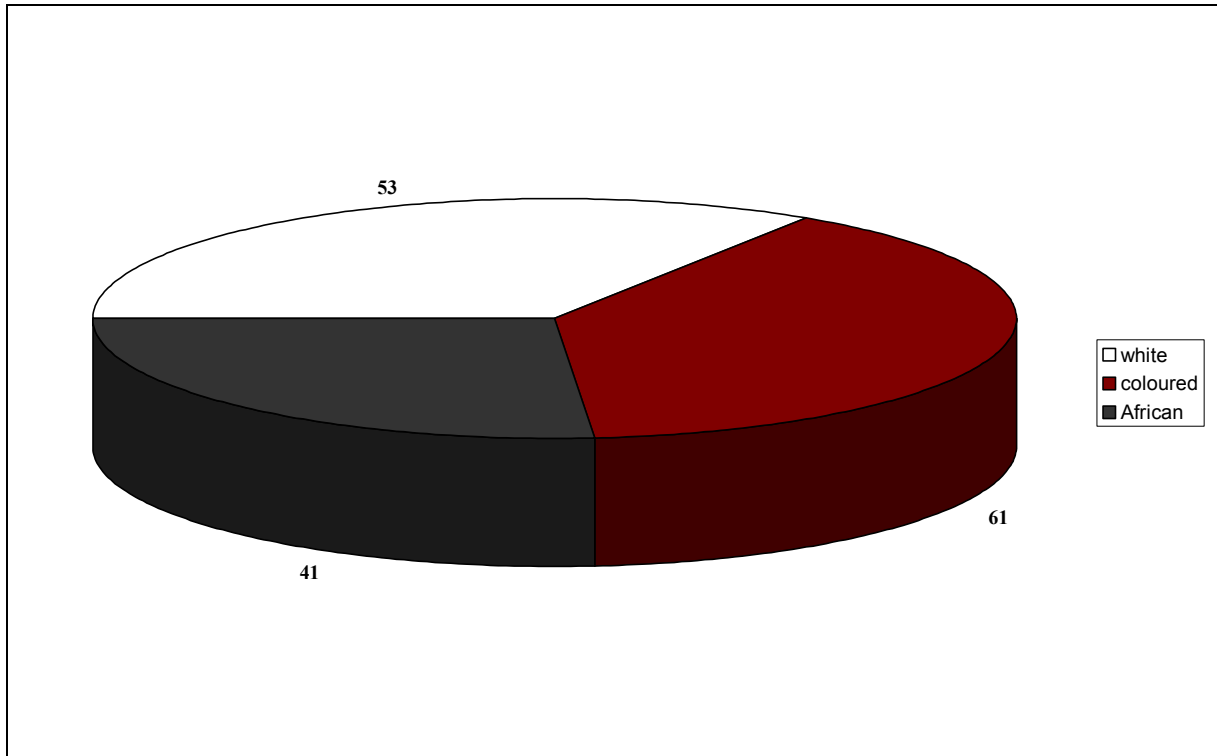


Figure 6.3 Time spend per day on listening to the radio in minutes

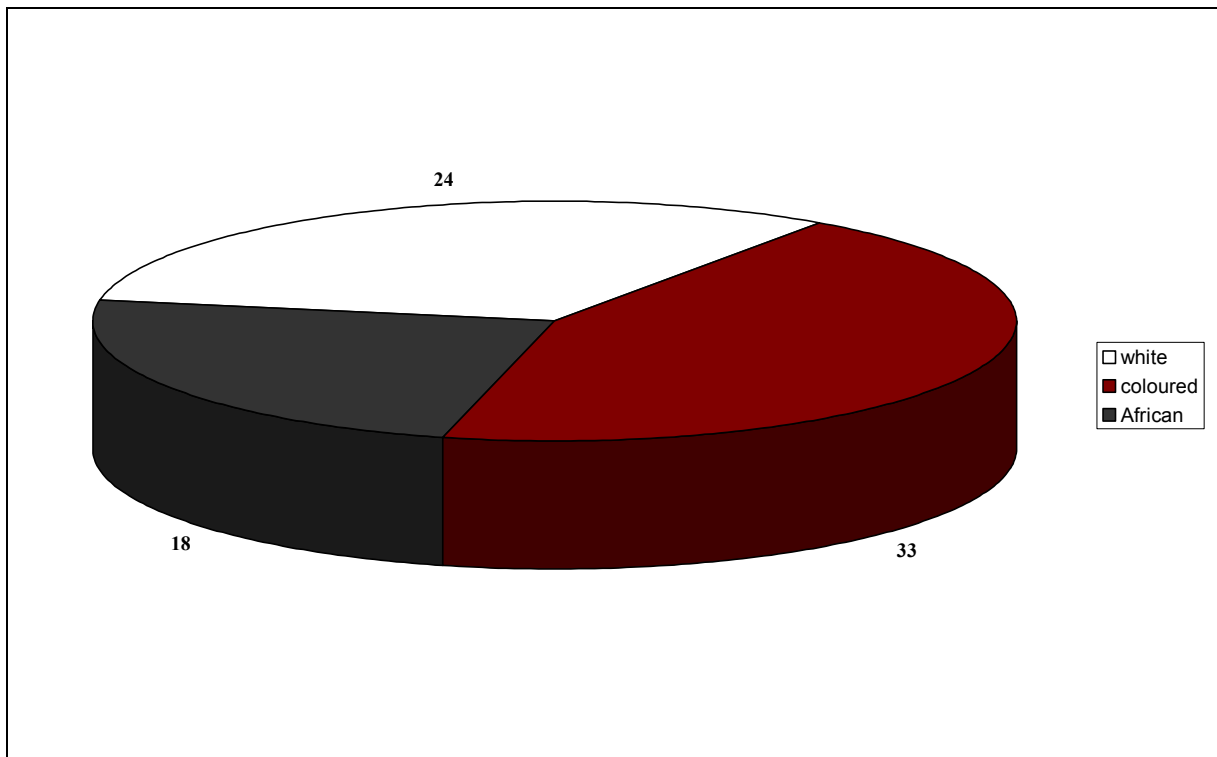


Figure 6.4 Time spend daily on using the internet in minutes

From the above it becomes clear that the overall use of the media does differ between the races. That is to say, there are no big differences in time spend on media in general per day in minutes. When looking at the use of the different media, it shows that differences according to racial background are statistically significant when it comes to use of internet, radio and television. African learners have an average use of the internet of 18 minutes a day, while White learners use the internet for approximately 24 minutes a day. Coloured learners use the internet longest, they have an average use of 33 minutes a day. Coloured learners are also spending most time on listening to the radio. On a daily basis they listen on average 61 minutes, while White learners only listen 53 minutes, followed by African learners who listen approximately 41 minutes. Television is the most popular medium among all respondents. However, Whites have the highest consumption of television in minutes per day and Africans the lowest. Africans approximately watch television 77 minutes a day, while Whites watch television 130 minutes and Coloureds 129 minutes. From the above it becomes clear that Africans consume all different media less than Coloureds and Whites. An exception can be found in reading newspapers and magazines. Whites read even less than Africans, 21 versus 25 minutes a day.

In question two, respondents were asked to name their favourite magazine, radio station, TV show, newspaper, website, default homepage and entertainment medium.

Below, all different media will be discussed separately.

## 6.2.1 Magazine

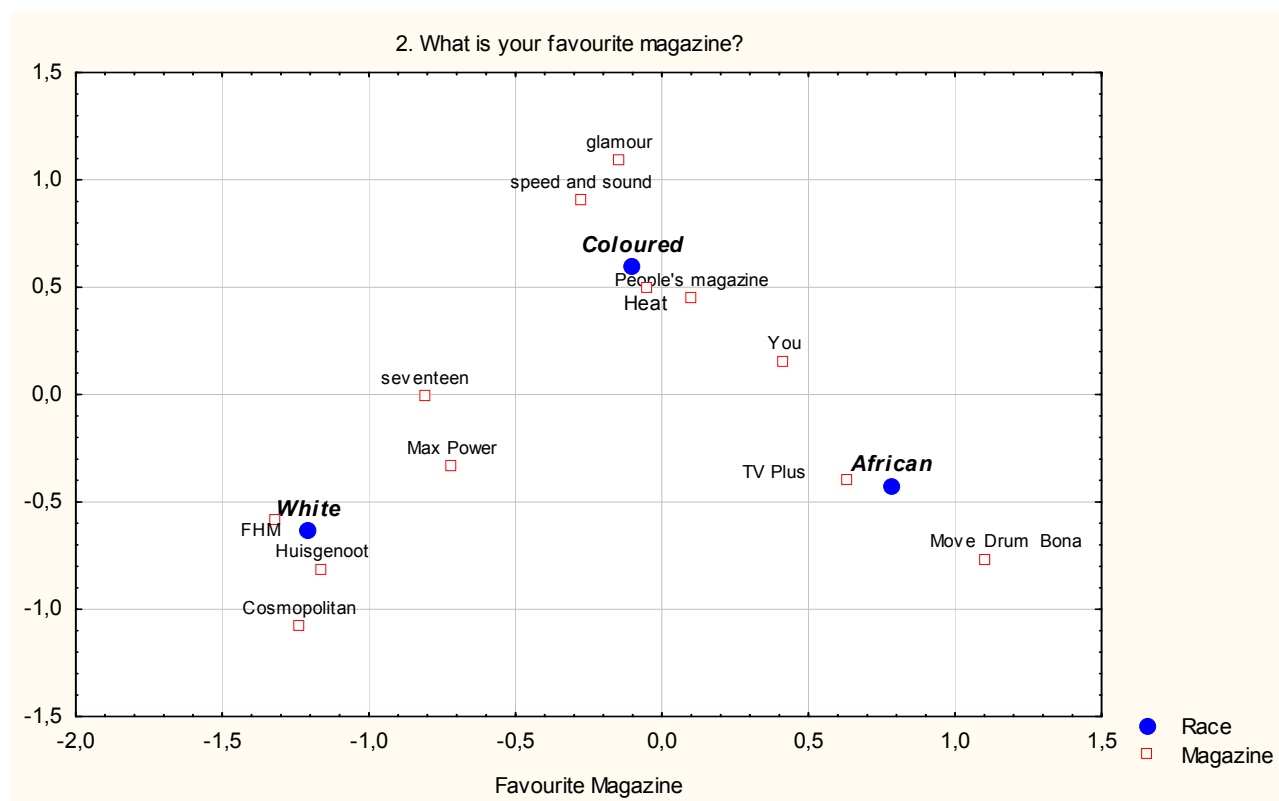


Figure 6.5 Favourite Magazine

From the above it becomes clear that White, Coloured and African learners all have their own preference when it comes to reading magazines. Out of all answers given, the names of magazines that occurred more than 6 times were included in this analysis. The magazines that are positioned closest to the name of the racial group, are most popular. The graph also shows the overlap in magazine preference by showing the magazines that are situated in between the racial groups. *You magazine* for instance, is placed in between African and Coloured which means that it is read by both racial groups. The visual representation of magazine preference shows that White learners most often read; *FHM*, *Huisgenoot* and *Cosmopolitan*. Coloured learners prefer *Heat*, *People's magazine* and *Speed and Sound*. African learners like *TV Plus*, *Move*, *Drum* and *Bona* the most. This finding is partly language related, since *Huisgenoot* is an Afrikaans written magazine that most probably cannot be understood by African learners who usually are isiXhosa speakers. All other magazines that occurred in the graphs are English written.

## 6.2.2 Radio Station

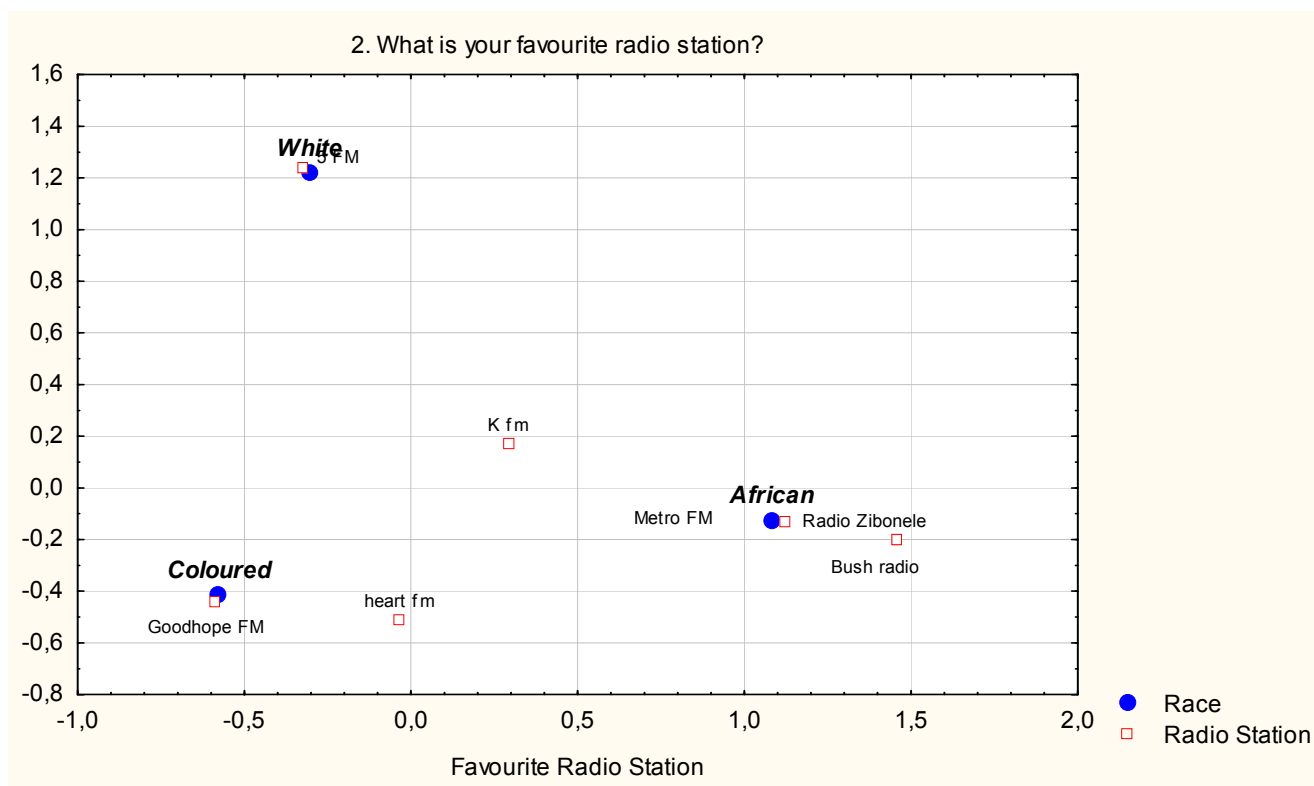


Figure 6.6 Favourite radio station

The preference in radio station shows the same division as the previous question about magazine preference. The three racial groups seem to listen to their ‘own’ radio stations. Radio station -‘K FM’ - is positioned right in the middle of the three racial groups which means that all racial groups listen to this radio station. This result is rather remarkable while the station describes itself as an ‘adult radio station’ playing ‘best hits and memories’ and is targeted at listeners in the age of 25 to 49 years old.<sup>63</sup> Most popular to White learners is radio station *5 FM*. Coloured learners listen mostly to *Goodhope FM* and *Heart FM*, while Africans usually listen to *Metro FM*, *Radio Zibonele* and *Bush radio*. *Radio Zibonele* is specifically popular among ‘Black people’ in Khayelitsha and it broadcasts in isiXhosa, the dominant language of the Khayelitsha community.<sup>64</sup> *Goodhope FM* broadcasts predominantly in English with English/ Afrikaans news, traffic reports and commercials. This could make the station attractive to Coloured people, as well as their offer of ‘popular’ music (mainly

<sup>63</sup> <http://www.kfm.co.za/who.asp>

<sup>64</sup> <http://www.comminit.com/africa/experiences>

R&B, Hip-hop, Funk and Soul). The station also has an entertainment program where the latest celebrity gossips are discussed. Later on in this chapter, the high consumption of gossip and celebrity news by especially Coloured people will be further discussed.<sup>65</sup> Radio station 5FM, most popular to White learners is owned by SABC. The manager of 5FM says about their target group: *"We deliver to a broad audience mostly aged between 20 and 29 (twenty-something), although beyond these boundaries on either side many consumers feel that they are 'cool' enough to listen"*<sup>66</sup>. On the website 'bizzcommunity.com', a news website for media, marketing and advertising, it is said that 5 FM targets mostly targets listeners of 'upper-income class'.

### 6.2.3 Television show

Again, the programs that occurred most often are included in this analysis. Most Coloured learners choose soap serial *'7de Laan'* as their favourite television program.<sup>67</sup> Without taking into account some exceptions, only Coloured and White learners at the target High Schools are Afrikaans speaking. And so are the characters in 7de Laan. Besides, most of the characters in 7de Laan are Coloured or White.<sup>68</sup> This is a possible explanation for their preference of this soap serial. White learners tend to have a preference for American soap serials that are very successful in Europe as well. Greys Anatomy for example, is the most popular medical drama on the most popular channel (NET5) in the Netherlands during the last two years.<sup>69</sup> Prisonbreak is popular in the Netherlands, it has averaged a solid 9.028 million viewers during the first four weeks, according to final numbers released by Nielsen Media Research. *Jika Majika* was chosen in the top three popular television shows for Africans. *Jika Majika*, broadcasted on SABC1, is a music show that shows the Mzansi's styles of dance. Mzansi in Zulu means "the South" and refers to South Africa. The show gives the South African youth a platform to showcase their dance moves and also highlight the top 10 local music songs of the week. The music dance show speaks to the current times, whilst acknowledging the history musically and

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<sup>65</sup> <http://www.goodhopefm.co.za/station/profile.jsp>

<sup>66</sup> <http://www.5fm.co.za>

<sup>67</sup> See Chapter 6 empirical results

<sup>68</sup> <http://www.7delaan.co.za>

<sup>69</sup> <http://www.net5.nl>



with the art of dancing.<sup>70</sup> As discussed in paragraph 4.13, there is a lot of attention for, and interest in local news, especially in the Cape Flats area. A program like *Jika Majika* supports the idea that local news, just like local music and local dance, plays an important role for the African youth.

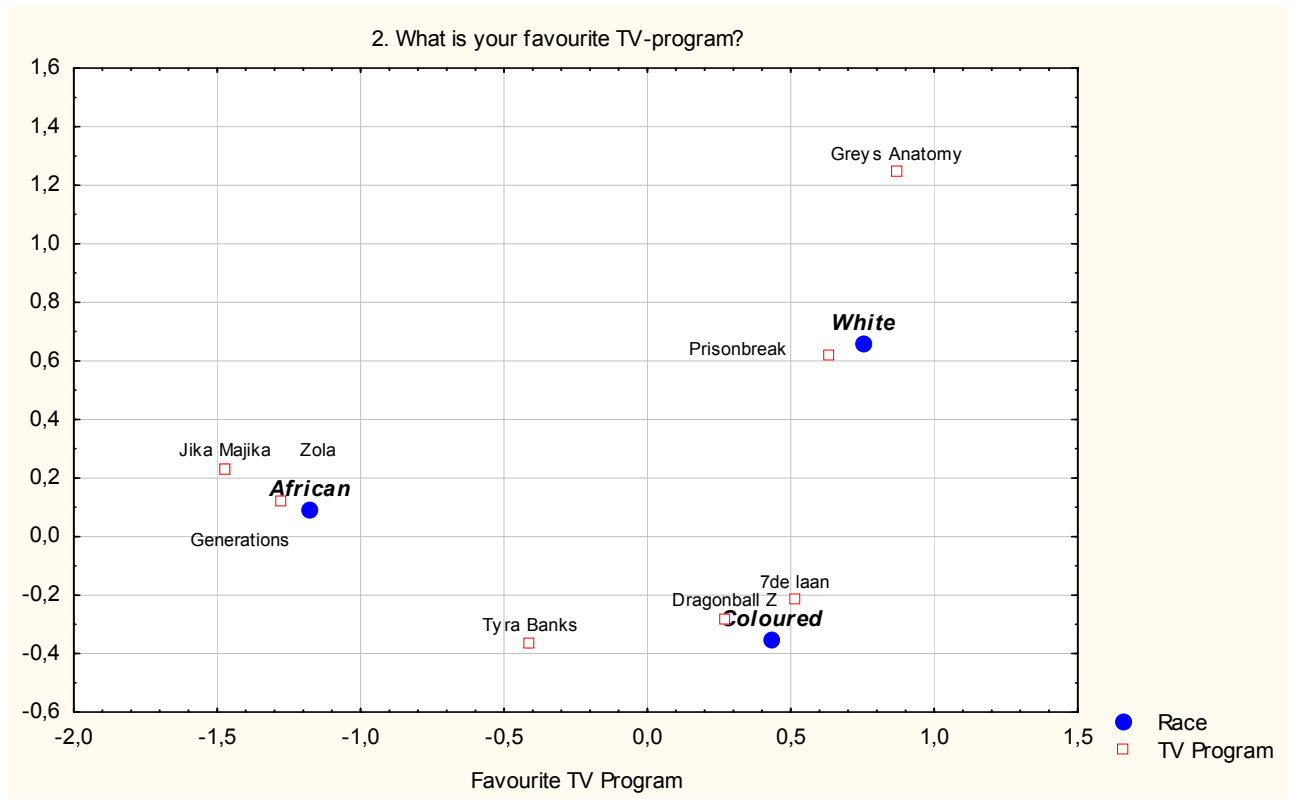


Figure 6.7 Favourite TV Program

<sup>70</sup> <http://www.tvsa.co.za/showinfo>

### 6.2.4 Newspaper

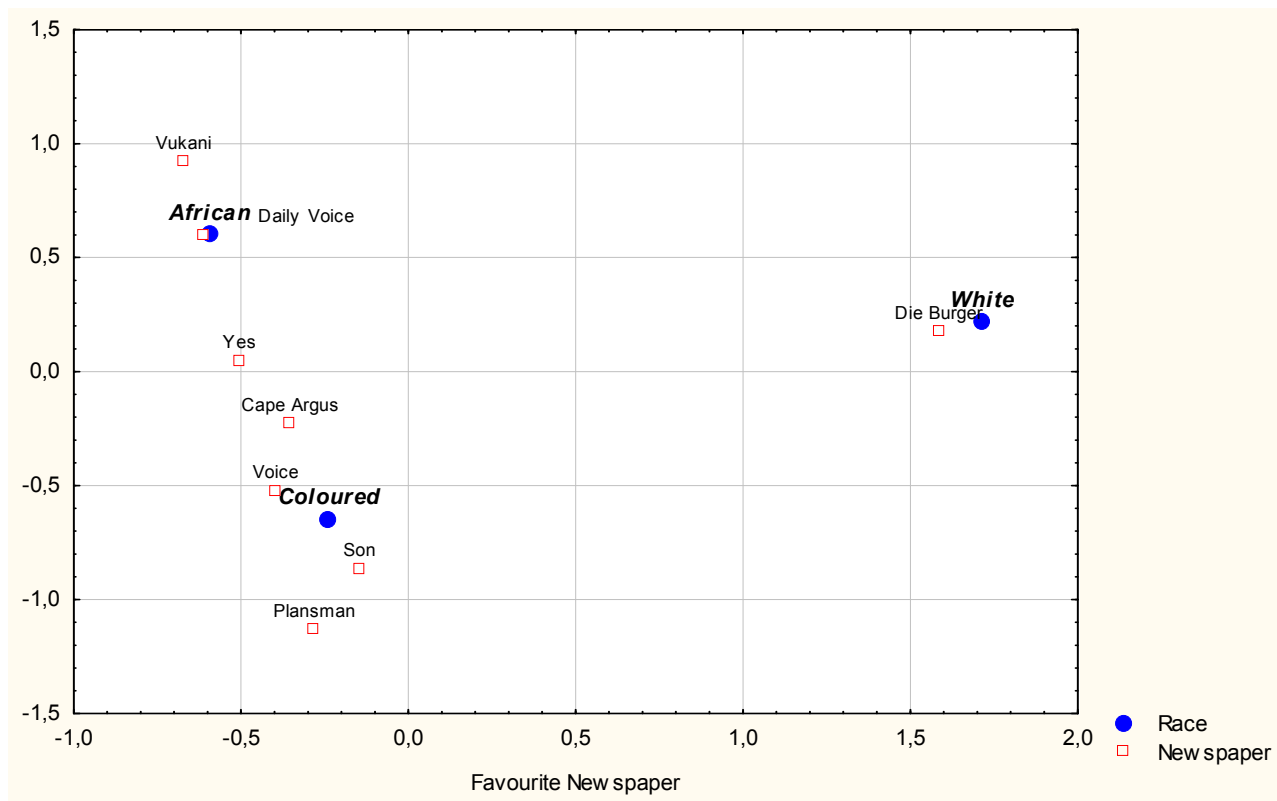


Figure 6.8 Favourite newspaper

Again there is a clear division between the preferences that racial groups have. Only this time, Coloured and African learners more often show similar media use. Newspapers *Yes*, *Cape Argus* and *Voice* are read by both Africans and Coloureds. Only White learners have a very distinctive taste compared to the other two race groups. White learners prefer reading Afrikaans newspaper ‘*Die Burger*’, while Africans mostly read tabloid *Daily Voice* or community paper *Vukani*. Coloured learners read *Voice* newspaper, *Son* or *Plansman*. In Chapter 4 the different South African press forms are discussed, as well as the prominence of the local press in the Western Cape. The following newspapers that appear in the graph are Afrikaans-written newspapers; *Son*, *Plansman* and *Die Burger*. *Son* is the first Afrikaans-language tabloid in South Africa. *Vukani* is an isiXhosa/English community newspaper targeted at the Cape Flat area. *Cape Argus* is an English Daily owned by Independent newspapers. *Daily Voice* is an English tabloid. Out of all newspaper that are mentioned, only die Burger and Cape Argus are dailies. The other newspapers are either community newspapers or tabloids.

### 6.2.5 Website and Default homepage

Learners were asked to point out their favourite website as well as their default homepage. Results of this question are not relevant enough to be included in this chapter. The majority of the respondents pointed out not to have a default website or favourite website. However, the three websites that were mentioned by a minority of respondents will be listed here. The three websites mentioned were: search engine *google*, homepage of chatroom '*mxit*' and *waptrick*. Waptrick is a website where you can download free content for your mobile phone. It is most often used for downloading songs and videoclips on your mobile phone.<sup>71</sup>

### 6.2.6 Principal Entertainment Medium

Remarkably, all racial groups had the same preference for an entertainment medium. The possibilities they could choose from were in order of occurrence: MTV, Celebrity news, Cartoons or Other. The most popular entertainment medium that respondents mentioned within the section 'other' was 'soap series'.

## **6.3 Main media Interest**

The following questions cover the subject of media interest of High school learners.

In question 3 respondents could choose from a list of different media items and rank the ones they were interested in the most. They could give more than one answers.

Out of all the answers to question 3; *the news, soap series and cartoons* were mentioned most often. These three will be discussed with help of the following graphs.

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<sup>71</sup> <http://www.waptrick.com>

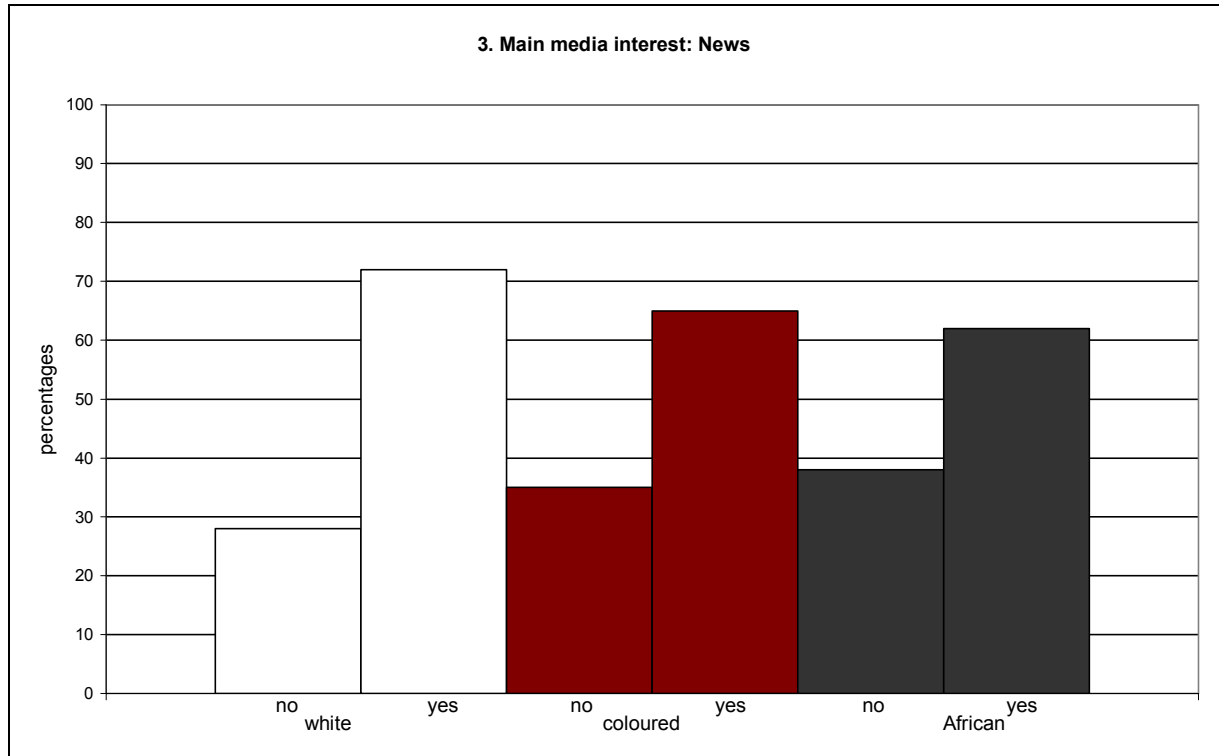


Figure 6.9 Main media interest: the news

The graph above shows that White people are mostly interested in following the news. 72% of all White respondents choose the news, compared to 65% Coloureds and 62% of Africans. However, the differences in news interest do not differ more than 13 percent between the racial groups, and additionally, the outcome of this question is out of synch with the outcomes that are discussed in the next paragraph.

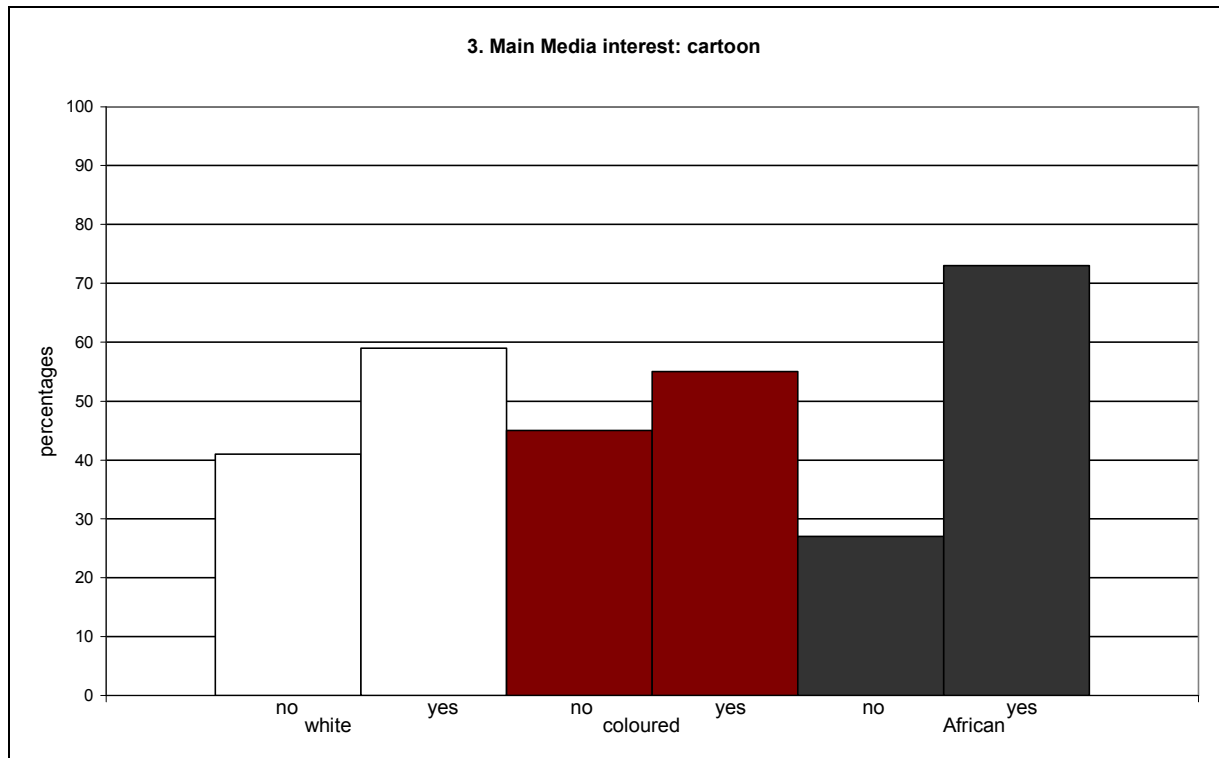


Figure 6.10: Main media interest: Cartoons

Cartoons turn out to be very popular among all respondents. The graph above shows that African learners are mostly interested in cartoons. 73% of all African respondents expressed to be interested in cartoons, followed by 59% Whites and 45% Coloureds.

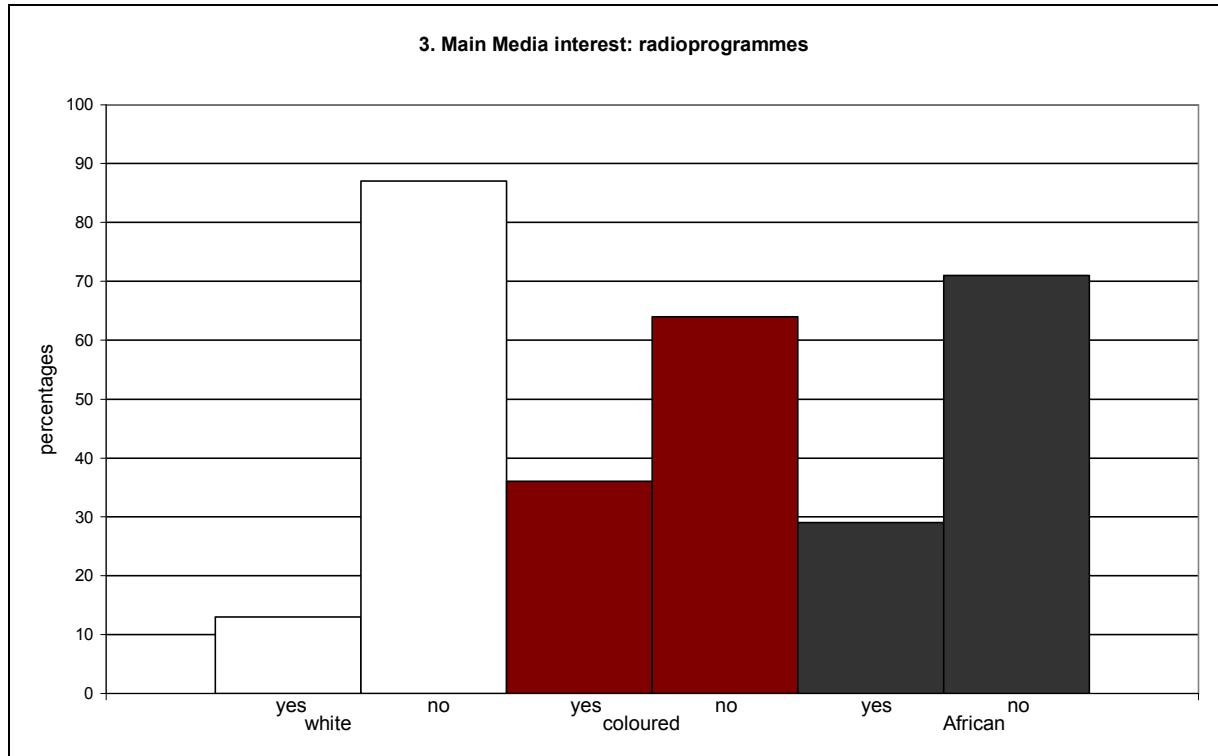


Figure 6.11: Main media interest: Radio programs

Although not chosen in the top 3 of media interest, radio programs turn out to be most popular among Coloureds (36%) and least among Whites (13%). An explanation for this could be the broader range of alternative media choices that Whites have, due to their higher socio-economical standard of living.

#### 6.4 News Consumption

Question 4 covers an important subject for this research. Respondents were asked to write down whether they follow the news or not.

In the first chapter and in paragraph 3.5 it was argued that there is a worldwide decline in news consumption among younger people. To be able to support this hypothesis and to see to what extent this is the case for South Africa, the answers to question 4 are analyzed.

### 6.4.1 Following the news

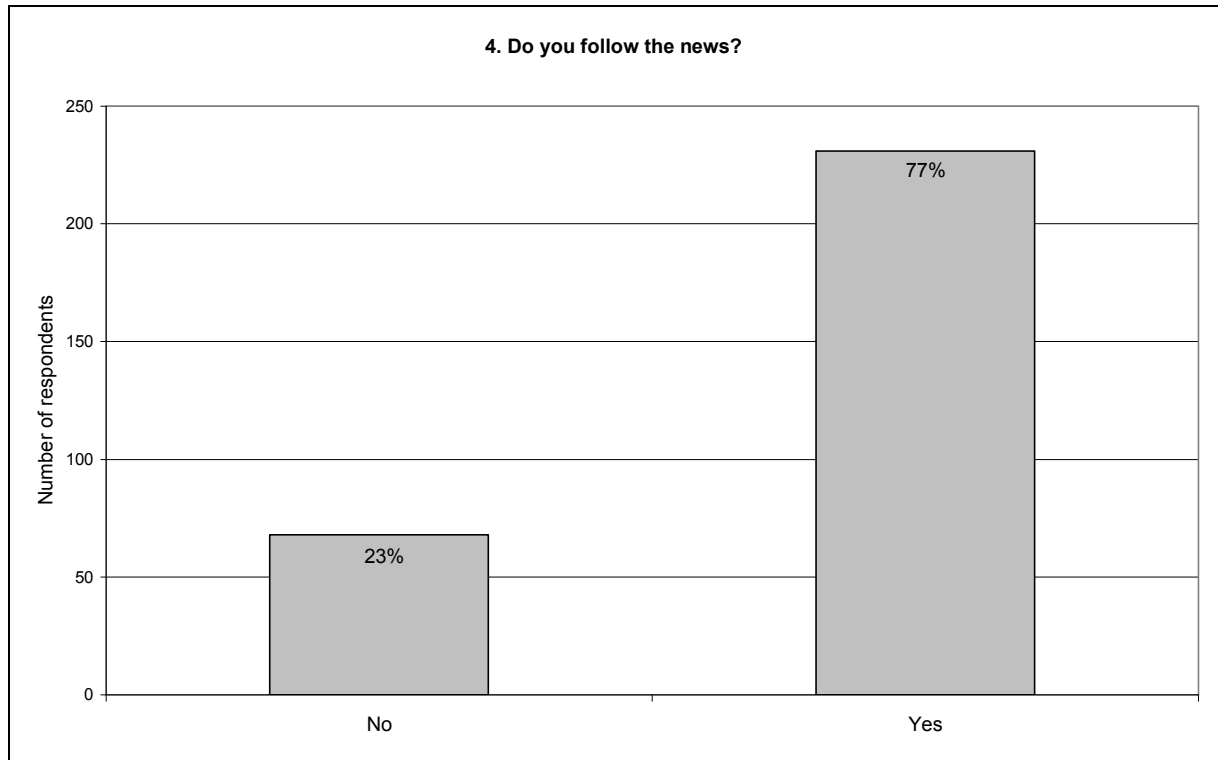


Figure 6.12 Following the news

The graph shows that the majority of all respondents, 77%, do follow the news in contrary to 23% that do not follow the news. In numbers this means that 231 respondents follow the news and 68 don't. In this sense, the worldwide decline in news consumption cannot be applied to South Africa. However, most research in news consumption is related to print media. This research does not only focus on consuming the news via newspapers but as well via other media. For this research however, it is important to analyse possible differences between respondents of different racial background. When looking at the outcome for each racial group, there were no significant differences. 82% Africans, 79% Coloureds and 77% of Whites follow the news.

### 6.4.2 Frequency of following the news

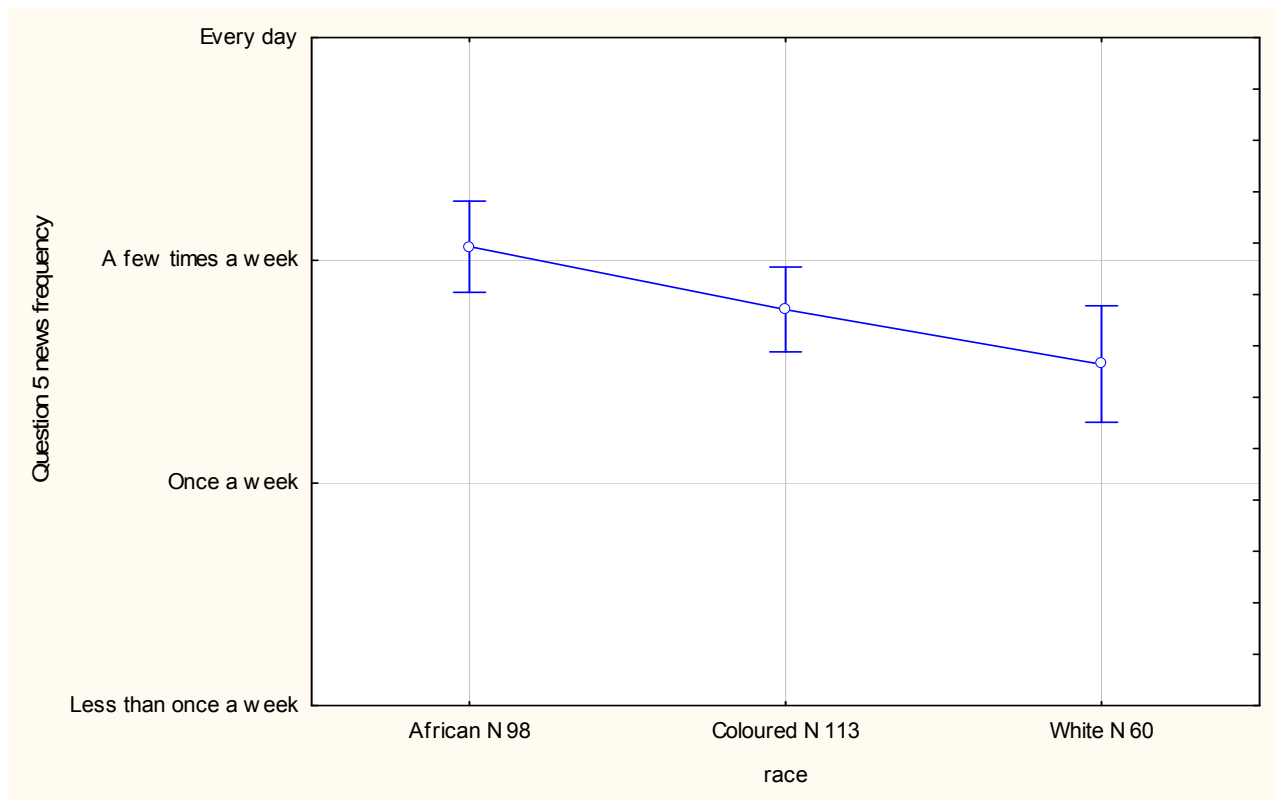


Figure 6.13 Frequency of following the news

The graph above shows a significant difference in the frequency of following the news by respondents of different race. Since respondents that don't follow the news at all could skip this question, the letter N represents the number of responses to this question.

Africans follow the news most often (every day or a few times a week) while White follow the news least often (once a week). The majority of Coloured learners follow the news once of week or a few times a week. These differences could possibly relate to the extent to which respondents feel attracted to/connected and included in the news. The political situation in South Africa currently prevails Africans above Whites as a consequence of the 'Black empowerment'<sup>72</sup> Coloureds don't fall

<sup>72</sup> Black Empowerment: a program launched by the South African government to redress the inequalities of Apartheid by giving previously disadvantaged groups (Black Africans, Coloureds and Indians) economic opportunities previously not available to them



completely into the characterisation of Whites, nor Africans and are therefore literally positioned 'in between'.

Important to take into consideration are the possible influences of other variables that can determine frequency of news consumption. Age for example could determine how often learners are willing to follow the news. To make sure that the differences in news frequency are dependent on racial background and not on age, the same analyses was done with 'age' as the dependent variable. No significant differences occurred, Whites still consumed news less often than Coloureds and Africans.

The balance between entertainment versus hard news is also of importance in the context of this research. When learners primarily consume entertainment news, this tells us something about their consumption of 'hard news'.

The graph below shows how frequent respondents follow Celebrity News. The answers to this question were slightly different for each racial group. Coloureds mostly answered frequently or occasionally while most Africans and Whites occasionally or rarely follow Celebrity news. The answers Coloured respondents gave in question two correspond to the answers they gave to this question. Coloured respondents expressed a preference for gossip newspapers (Son and Voice) and gossip magazines (Heat, People's magazine and Glamour). To refer shortly to *Question 21: who is Beyoncé?*<sup>73</sup> Not surprisingly 98% of Coloured respondents gave the right answer.

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<sup>73</sup> American Celebrity, Singer and Actress

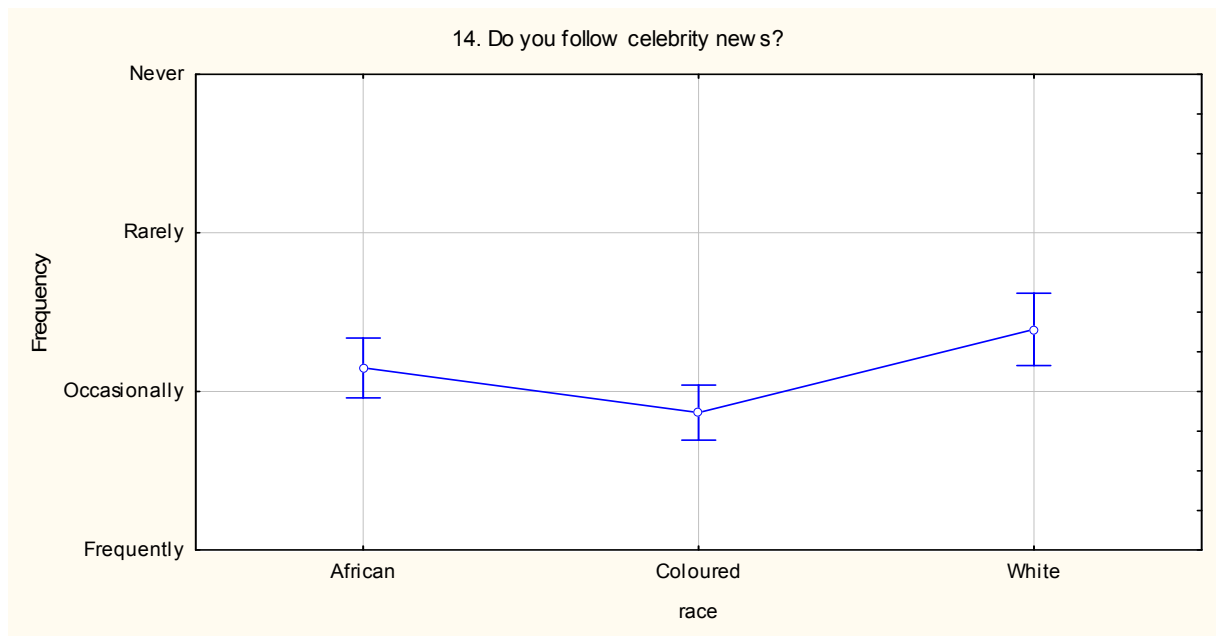


Figure 6.14 Frequency of following Celebrity News

As it's said, making a distinction between celebrity or gossip news and 'hard news' is important for this research to ensure a reliable outcome. It will also show the balance of learners' consumption between 'hard' and entertainment news. When comparing question 14 with question 5, the balance between hard and entertainment news can be drawn. To ensure that learners gave a reliable answer to question 5, it was pointed out that by 'following the news', 'serious' news about national or international issues was referred to. It shows that 42% of all respondents follow the news a few times a week, 29% of them follow the news every week. Moreover, 36% of all respondents follow celebrity news occasionally and 33% frequently. Since there are different values used to answer question 5 and 14, it is difficult to point out the exact balance. However, it is clear that there is no large difference in the frequency of celebrity and hard news consumption of younger people in the Western Cape: they consume 'hard' and entertainment news in almost equal amounts.

## 6.5 Favourite Medium

Respondents were asked about their favourite medium when consuming the news. They could choose from television, internet, newspaper or radio. The most favourite medium is television, followed by newspapers and internet. Radio is not discussed in this paragraph since it was rarely mentioned compared to the other mediums. When remarkable differences were found in answers coming from different racial groups the outcomes are discussed in the following paragraph.

### 6.5.1 News via Television

Out of all respondents the majority (87%) prefer to follow the news via television. However, respondents could choose several options when answering this question. When looking at the answers, only internet and newspapers showed different results between the racial groups.

### 6.5.2 News via Internet

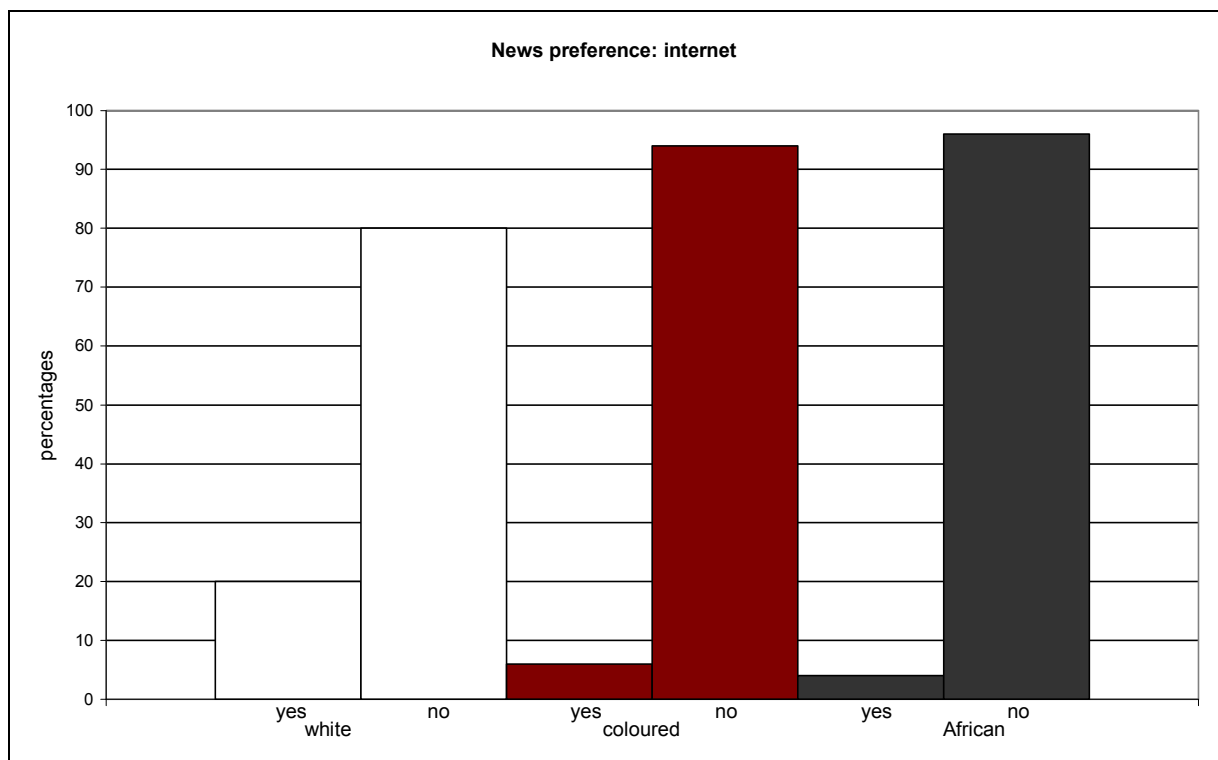


Figure 6.15 News preference internet

Figure 6.13 shows the percentage of students who choose internet as a favourite way of consuming the news. As expected, Africans hardly follow the news via the internet. The main reason for this is that they rarely have internet access at home. Only 4% of the African respondents chose this option, compared to 20% White and 6% Coloured respondents. Still today, the White people in the Western Cape have the highest socio-economic standard of living. Their preference of following the news via the internet can be a consequence of that, they simply have a broader access to the different media.

### 6.5.3 News via Newspaper

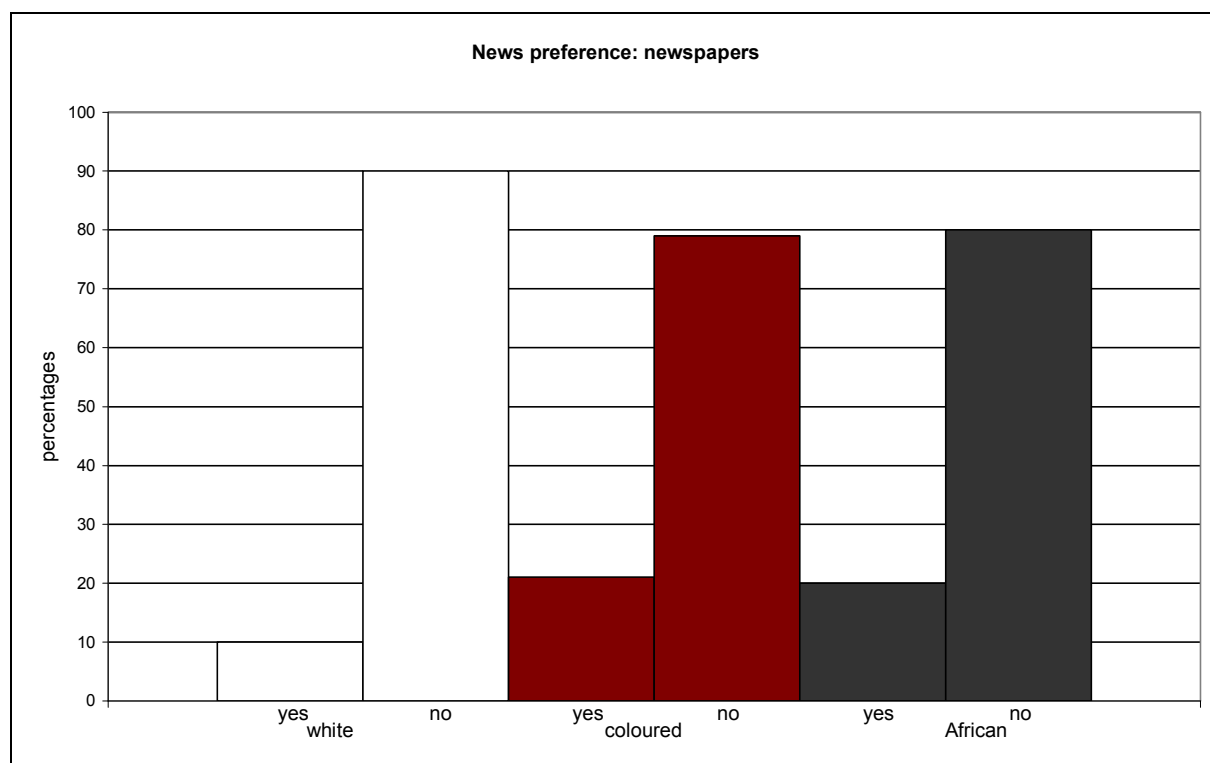


Figure 6.16 News preference newspapers

Figure 6.16 shows that there is 10% difference between African's and Whites when it comes to the amount of respondents reading a newspaper. Just 10% of the White respondents prefer following the news by reading a newspaper compared t to 20% Africans and 21% Coloured respondents. Since the African respondents generally are a bit older than most of the White respondents, this could influence the results,

assuming that the older youngsters are, the more value they attach to reading. However, age as a dependent variable didn't show any significant difference. The fact that African youngsters are generally a little older than the Coloureds and Whites has various reasons. A teacher at Bulumko High told that many female learners get pregnant at a relative young age. "Sometimes these girls stop going to school because of their pregnancy, after the baby is born they often return to school," the teacher said. Another possible reason for African learners to be relatively older is the language barrier discussed in paragraph 2.3. African often struggle with the schools medium of instruction. IsiXhosa is the mother tongue of most Africans, while Coloureds and White most often speak Afrikaans at home. Since there is no study material available in isiXhosa, Africans, instead of Whites and Coloureds, can rarely attain education or study in their mother tongue. This could slow down their study achievements and make that they need more time to keep up at school.

Figure 6.15 already illustrated that White respondents do consume the news via internet as well. Since most Africans don't have internet access they could be more dependent on newspapers for following the news. In this sense, Coloureds are in the same situation as Africans; not all of them have internet access and therefore less choice in media when following the news compared to Whites. Newspapers are a more accessible and affordable medium.

## **6.6 Importance of following the news**

A high consumption of news usually illustrates that people find the news important, otherwise; why would they follow it? However, finding the news important is only one of various reasons that people can have for consuming the news. Different reasons could lead to differences in news consumption, which makes this an interesting topic.

In two questions, learners were asked to point out their most important reason for following the news. They could choose between four options, or choose the option 'other' to describe their own reason. When answering the first question in this section, question 8, respondents most often choose the first option; they think following the news is important. Again there are differences in the answers from the different racial groups.

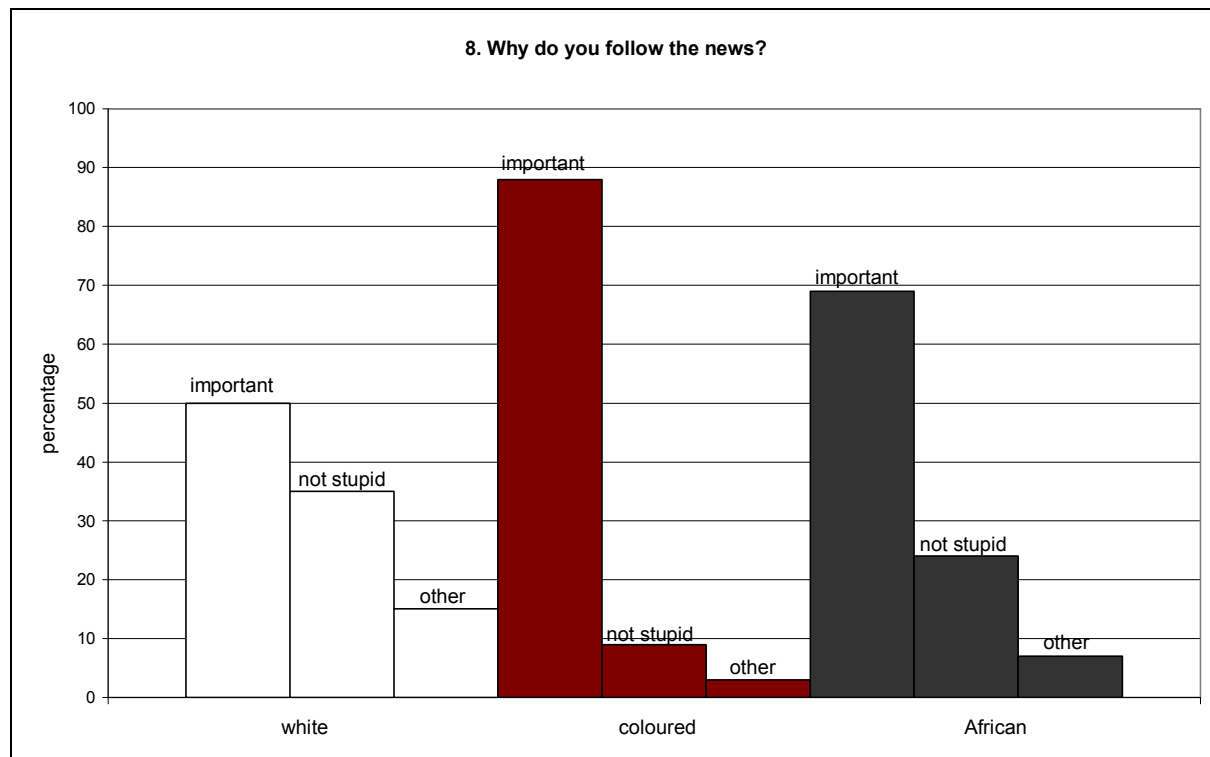


Figure 6.17 Reason for following the news

Again, White respondents answer differently as did Coloureds and Africans. Clearly, the majority of all respondents (70%) follow the news *because they think it is important*. When looking at the answers for each racial group, Whites give slightly different answers. 50% of White respondents follow the news because they find it important, compared to 88% of Coloureds and 69% of Africans. 35% Whites follow the news because *they don't want to be 'stupid' not knowing what is going on* compared to 9% Coloureds and 24% Africans. 15% of White respondents wrote down their own reason for following the news, while only 3% Coloured and 7% African respondents did so. It is remarkable that the most popular reason for following the news by White respondents under the option 'other' is *to keep up with the news in Europe and the United States*. Again, in correspondence with previous outcomes, Whites somehow seem to be less interested in events happening in their own country. When choosing 'other', Coloureds expressed to follow the news *to keep up to date about celebrity gossips*. Africans most prominent answer when choosing 'other' was because *they want to know what happens in the world*.

Question 9 asks respondents' main reason for following the news. Similar answers as in question 8 could be given. These questions functioned as a 'back up' of the previous question, to reassure a reliable answer. The possible answers respondents could give are more focussed on the content of the news than on the reason for following it. These were the options that were given:

- *I want to be informed about sports*
- *I want to know what happened in South-Africa*
- *I want to know the weather forecast*
- *Other (please be specific)*

The main reason for following the news for 71% of all respondents is their wish to know what happens in South Africa. No significant differences occurred in the answers of respondents of different racial groups, a large majority within each racial group choose the second option. Only 17% of Coloureds follow the news because they want to know the weather forecast, and 16% of them because they want to be informed about sports. Combining question 8 with question 9 it can be said that respondents find the news important because they want to know what happened in South-Africa.

Less relevant in the scope of this research, but anyway remarkable, were some answers African female scholars wrote down as a reason for following the news. Three anonymous girls, two from high school Bulumko, one from high school Itlanganiso, wrote down the following when describing their reasons for following the news;

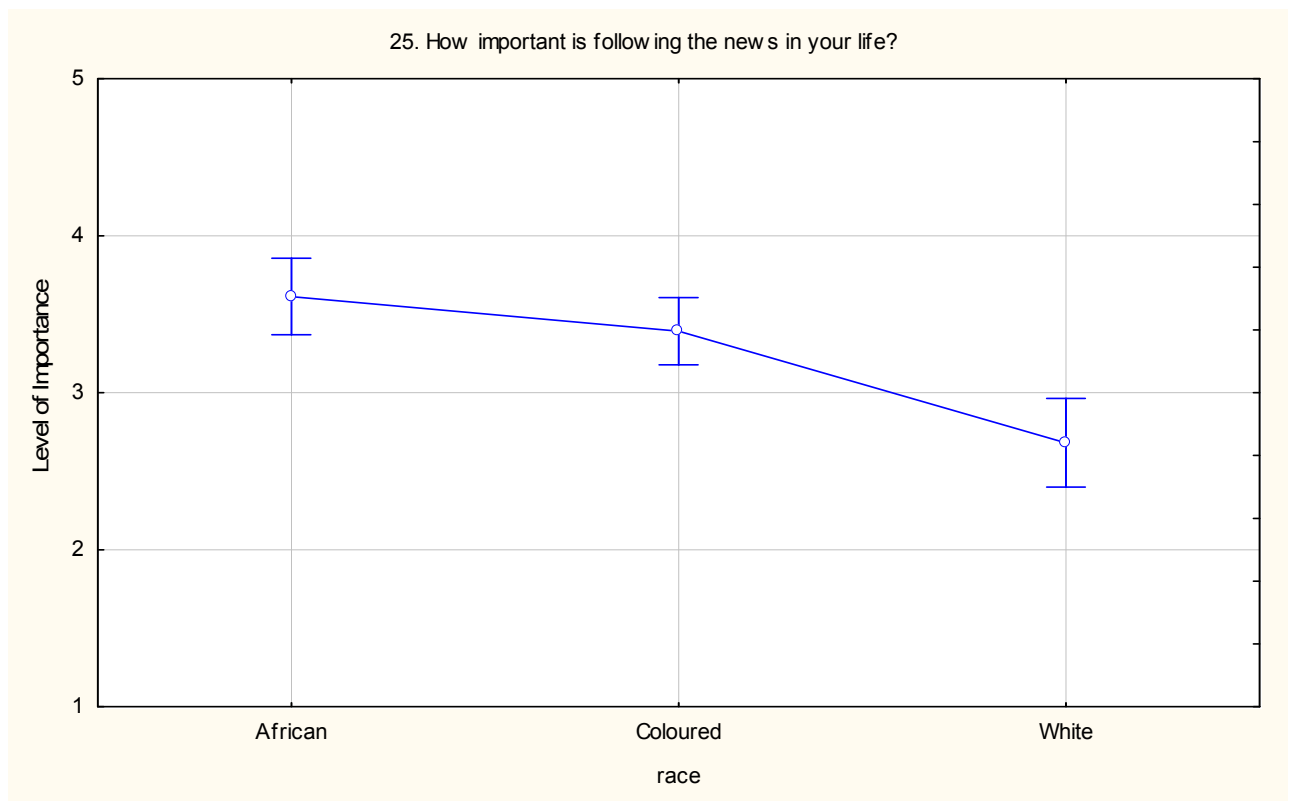
*"I follow the news because I want to keep up to date about rape issues so I can prepare myself when it happens to me."*

*"I follow the news via television so that I am able to see rapist's faces. This makes me able to recognise them and run away when I would see them on the street."*

*“I only follow news about rape and rapists because I want to prevent something like that to happen to me and my family.”*

In paragraph 5.7, the violence in specifically the Cape Flats area was described. It turns out that youngsters way of consuming the news does relate to the daily life in the area where they live.

In question 25 respondents could rank different values in their life with a corresponding level of importance represented on the Y-axis of figure 6.18. The values mentioned varied from having a nice car, raising a family and joining a club. When ranking ‘news’ as a value, a clear division can be found between the answers of the different race groups.



Y-axis variables

1. very low
2. low
3. medium
4. high
5. very high

Figure 6.18 Importance of the news in your life



## 6.7 Social Side of News consumption

Consuming the news is not only about actually watching a program, reading a newspaper or listening to the radio. It can also take part in a certain form of interaction. For instance, when something severe happened that had an effect on many people, it can often become a topic of discussion. This also works the other way around. A news topic people talk about a lot often gets more attention in the media. However, this topic of media influence and effect is a topic that stands on its own and goes too far beyond the scope of this research. Interesting in the field of news and media consumption is to what extent youngsters discuss the news with friends and family.

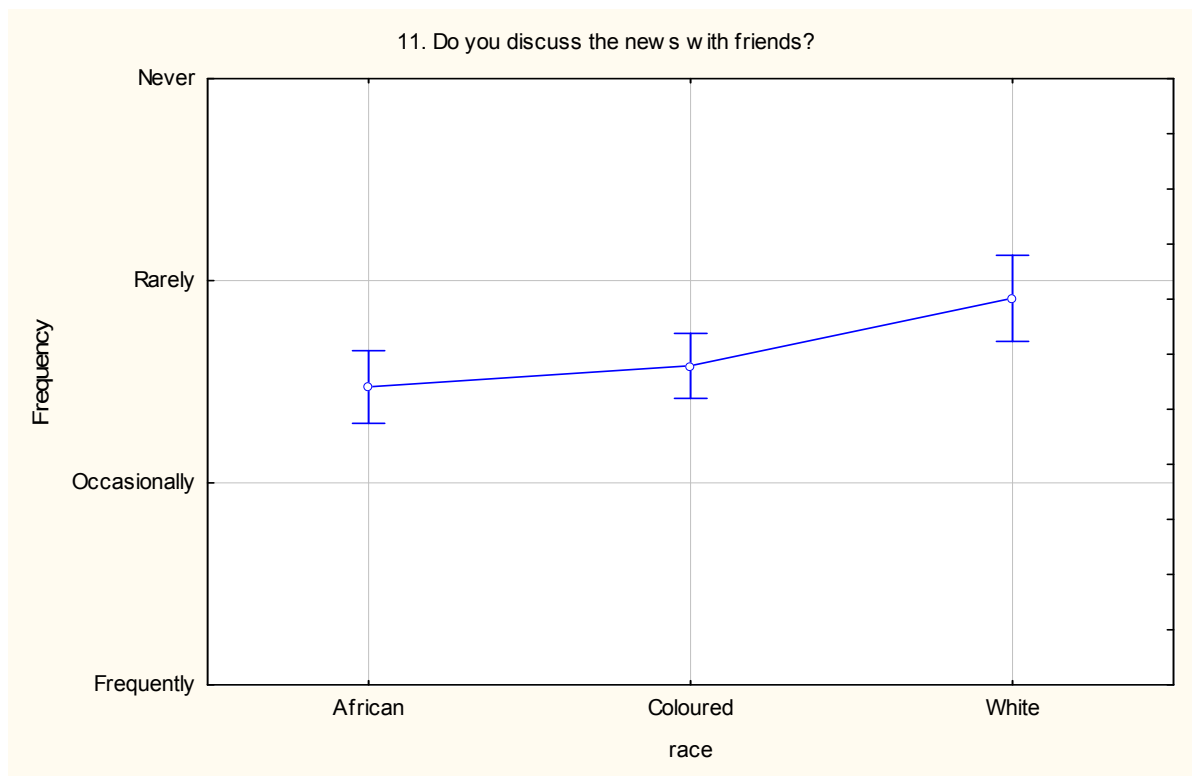


Figure 6.19 Frequency of discussing news with friends

Part of understanding and consuming the news is talking about it. Question 11 is about the frequency that learners' discuss the news with friends. Figure 6.16 shows that White respondents talk about the news the least. Coloured and African respondents vary in between 'occasionally' and 'rarely'. Again there is a relation between another question that is previously discussed. Namely, figure 6.12 showed

that White respondents follow the news less often compared to Africans and Coloureds. This could explain them discussing the news with friends less often than learners from other racial backgrounds.

In Question 7 respondents are asked to point out the frequency of discussing the news at home during dinner. They could choose from four different options. Below the results of this question are discussed.

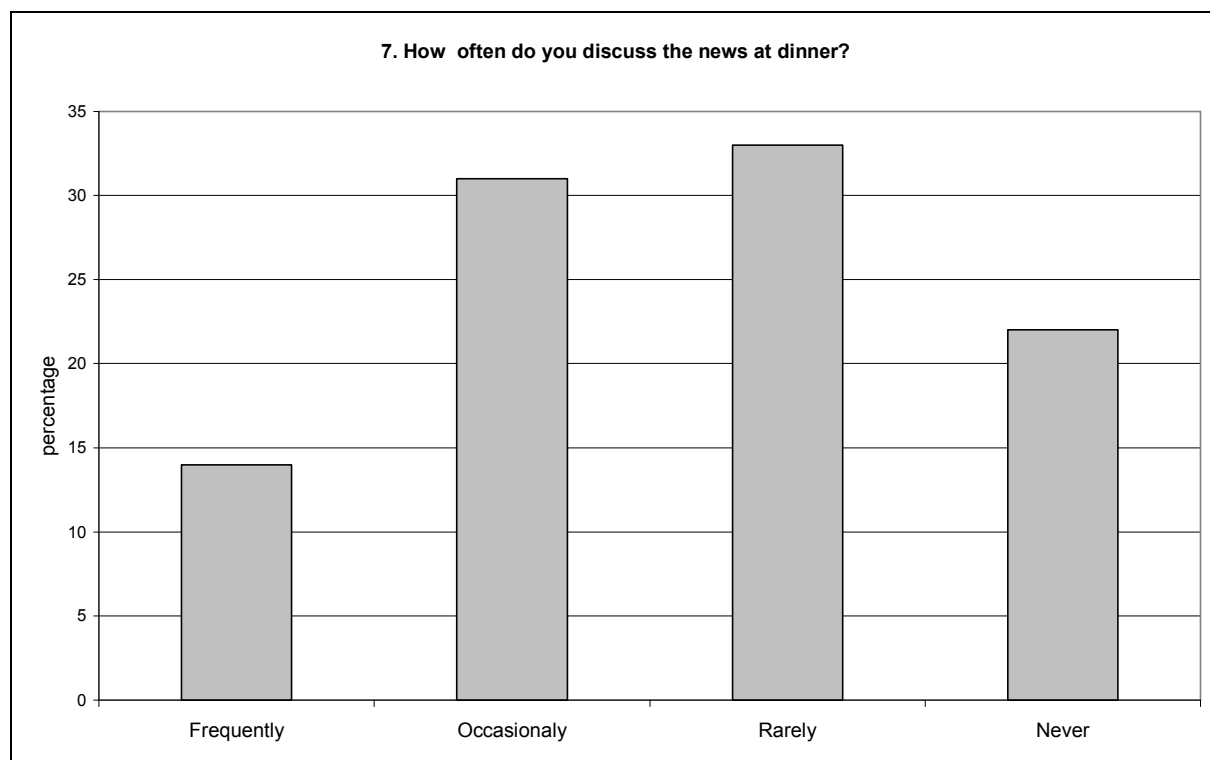


Figure 6.20 Frequency of discussing news at dinner (all respondents)

The graph above shows how often respondents discussed the news at home. Only 14% of all respondents discuss the news frequently with their family. There were no significant differences between the racial groups. It is remarkable that the learners discuss the news not often while parents could function as a stimulant for news consumption.

The kind of news that is being discussed at home also forms an interesting subject. Out of all answers an obvious top 5 could be listed. Overall, respondents mostly talk about 1. Crime, 2. Murder, 3. Rape, 4. Politics, 5. the Currency. The differences between race groups is that Whites tend to talk more about politics and crime, while

Africans talk more about murder and rape. Possibly respondents tend to talk more about subjects that they are confronted to personally.

## **6.8 Knowledge score**

To get an impression of the general knowledge of South African learners, seven general knowledge questions were included in the survey. Although the question of, and differences in general knowledge fall a little beyond the scope of this research, it was however interesting to look at the results. After all, general knowledge can somehow relate to differences in news consumption. For instance, it is interesting to see if the frequency of following the news (see paragraph 6.4.2) shows a correlation with the general knowledge score. Interesting as well, were the results to the last and open question in this part of the survey. In this question, learners were asked to express their opinion about the South African government and the role they can play to change things in their country. Some of the results will be used to support the conclusion and to give some suggestions for further research.

The outcomes of general knowledge questions that correspond to, or relate to the analyses made out of previous questions will be mentioned in this paragraph. All the questions that were used in the survey have to do with relevant news events and have been discussed with a South African professor at the institute for Education in Stellenbosch.<sup>74</sup> The questions were chosen in such a way that they could be easily evaluated as 'correct' or 'incorrect'. However, evaluating answers given to question 19 and 23 proved to be more complicated.

In Question 17 respondents are asked to name the winner of South African Idols. 85% of Coloured respondents gave a correct answer. 52% of the White respondents knew the correct answer, and 26% of the African respondents did. South African Idols could be categorized as 'entertainment media' and is, in correspondence with the outcomes of previous questions, a topic that Coloured respondents are highly interested in. Due to a difference in social class discussed in chapter 2 and

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<sup>74</sup> Private Communication with Richard Stanley

paragraph 5.7, the possibility of African respondents not having a television set at home is higher than Whites not having one. This again could explain Africans relatively low score. Important to mention is that Africans do not appear less often as potential popstars in the program.

Question 19 shows interesting results as well. Respondents had to write down who Jacob Zuma is. At the time the research took place, Zuma was the deputy president of South Africa. At the moment of writing he is the former deputy president. The reason for his dismissal are various rumours that circulated around him that have to do with HIV, rape and corruption. Remarkable was that 50% of all respondents mentioned one of this rumours that have circulated around him, without mentioning his political position. Since these rumours have never been proven right, I counted them as 'incorrect' when respondents didn't mention anything that related to his political position. The score of this question was as followed: Africans had the highest correct score of 85%, followed by 75% of Coloured respondents. Only 65% Whites knew the right answer to this question. The outcomes of this question, to some extent, relate to question 6 about the frequency of following the news. White respondents follow the news least frequent and have fewer chance of getting to know the news facts via friends or family since they hardly talk about the news (see paragraph 6.6.7).

The subject of entertainment versus hard news has been discussed earlier in chapter 5. The outcomes of the questions discussed in 6.4 all show that Coloured learners tend to have a specific focus on entertainment news. Question 21 illustrates that at least, all learners are up to date about entertainment business. 98% of Coloured learners gave a right answer when asked who American singing actress Beyoncé is. 88% of African learners know Beyoncé as well as 91% Whites. Although all learners had a high score, again Coloured stand out in having knowledge in, and interest in entertainment related subjects.

Remarkable is the high score of all learners to the question about Beyoncé, compared to the low score to question 23 'what is global warming'? Only 18% of African learners, 70% of White learners and 46% of Coloured learners could explain

more or less what it means. Not only the relatively low score of this question is remarkable, so are the differences in percentages of respondents of different racial background. All three race group vary heavily in their knowledge score about this subject.

The correlation between the frequency of following the news and the general knowledge score for each racial group turned out to be not as straightforward as expected.

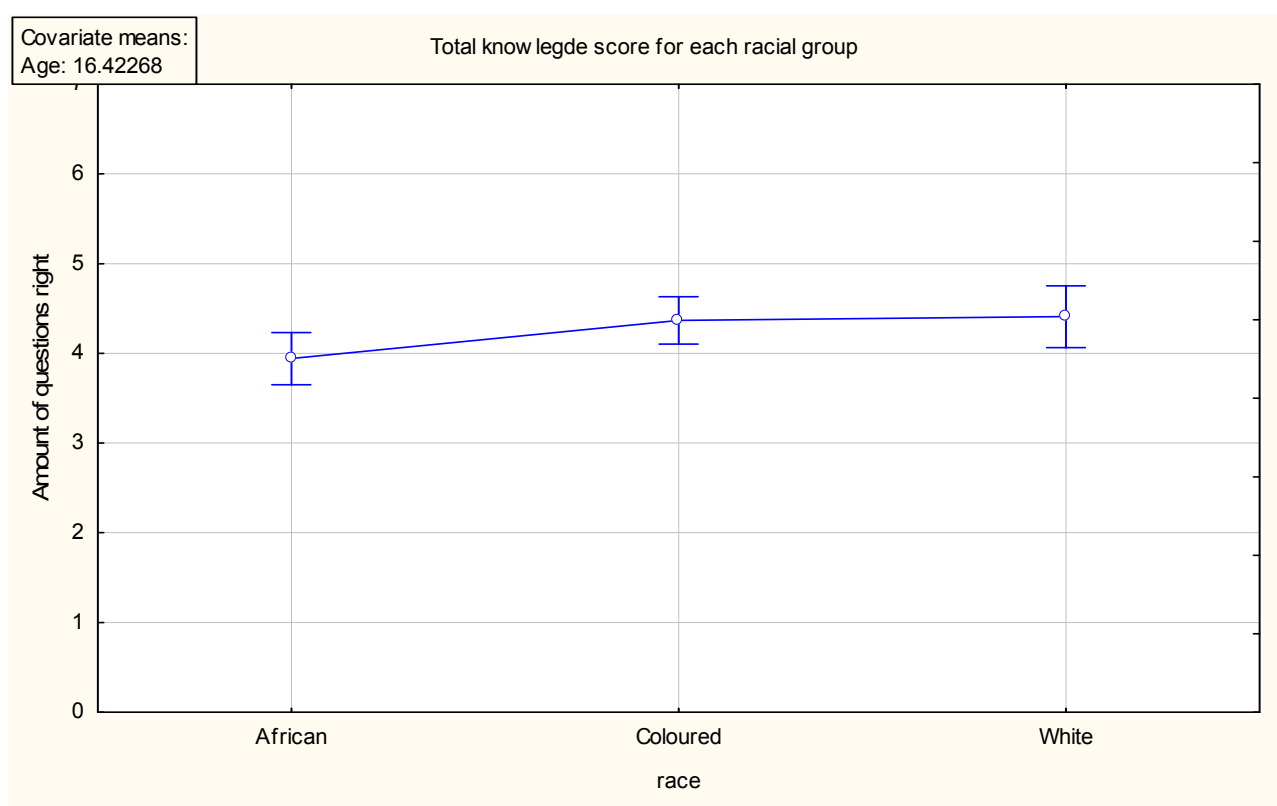


Figure 6.21 Total Knowledge score

From paragraph 6.4.2 it became clear that White learners follow the news least often, followed by Coloureds and Africans. This means that the latter follow the news most frequent. The graph above shows that ironically, the African learners had approximately 4 questions out of seven right. Coloureds and Whites scored a little higher than the African learners while they consume the news less frequent. Possible explanations could be found in education. In paragraph 2.3 and 2.4 the South African school system was explained. The socio-economical environment of

learners could also play a role in this. However, these are only speculations. In paragraph 5.7 these subjects have been discussed.

## **6.9 Attitude towards the government**

Valuable to mention because of its possible relation to the key subject of this research, is the overall negative attitude of youngsters towards the government. Out of the answers that learners gave to question 25 some ‘shocking’ conclusions can be drawn. Learners were asked to give their opinion about two government related issues. First of all, they could tell if they thought that the government takes people’s opinions into consideration. Secondly they were asked if they think that they could make a difference in their country. The following results arrived from these questions. 52% of all respondents think that their government does not take people’s opinion into consideration. These negative opinions are spread as followed: Whites 72%, Coloureds 59% and Africans 26%.

Of all White respondents, 61% think that they can not make a difference in their country when they are older. 38% of the Coloured respondents express a similar negative future prospect. Remarkable is that only 19% of African respondents are negative, the vast majority think that they can make a difference. A lower socio-economic standard apparently does not always influence learners view on the future in a negative manner. However, the overall negative attitude from specifically the White respondents can be related to the main outcomes of this research. This, and the other remarkable outcomes will be discussed in the conclusion.

## 7. Discussion and Conclusions

### 7.1 Introduction

As a consequence of the Apartheids Era, South Africa is facing an ongoing struggle for racial harmony. The segregation of races, forced upon by the ruling parties during the Apartheid, has influenced many systems in the country, including the media. The media have developed along side with the segregation of races and have operated under strict government control for a very long time. Therefore the South African media are sometimes still referred to as an institution of racism, or a mouthpiece of the government. According to Fourie (2001), the South African media system has a role to play in the development of the nation (2001: 273). The Development theory and the Democratic-Participant theory have been used to describe the role of the South African media today. The relatively young democracy in South Africa is still getting on its feet but certainly develops in a positive way.

In a society where freedom of the press and freedom of speech could not been taken for granted, the improved access to information should be used in a positive way. The process of democratization could and should be supported by well informed citizens who can add valuable contributions to the development of the country. However, the main outcomes of this research that will be discussed below, have proven that the media does not always contribute to the creation of 'one South African nation' but instead sometimes support segregation.

Becoming well-informed by consuming the news is one way to stimulate the democratization process. The extent to which people are willing, and able to consume the news depends on many different factors. It is said that "the future lies in the hands of the youth", which makes the South African youth an interesting target population. For this research, six different high schools have been visited to investigate the news consumption of South African youth living in the Western Cape. South African high schools today can still be distinguished according to race, as to say that at each high school visited during the period of research, one racial group was represented dominantly. In South Africa, not only the aforementioned racial

background often determines the socio-economic characteristics. Language and education also play a role in the ability to consume news.

## **7.2 Answer to the central question**

To what extent does the former racial segregation influence media consumption, specifically news consumption? If there are differences in news consumption, do they relate to racial background, or how else can they be explained?

The outcome of the 300 surveys conducted among learners attaining high school education, showed a series of remarkable results that have been extensively discussed in chapter 6. The expected differences in news consumption depending on racial background could indeed be found and all relate to that specific variable. The overall outcome of the quantitative data showed that there are indeed rather big differences in news and in media consumption in general among South African youth living in the Western Cape. The main outcome is that White respondents consume the news and talk about it the least often. They find the news less important than the other racial groups and consider the news of relatively low value in their lives. Despite this, they had the best score in general knowledge questions. Some results need some extra attention. Below each remarkable outcome of this research will be briefly discussed.

1. First of all, each racial group has its own media when it comes to consuming magazines, newspapers, TV-shows and radio stations. This means that clear patterns could be identified. The media that White respondents consume was strictly separated from the media Africans or Coloureds consume. Not only language, but taste plays a role in this as well. While White respondents tend to have more of a 'global taste', consuming for instance American soap series and magazines. Africans tend to have more of a local taste: they read community newspapers and watch programs that focus on local issues. Coloureds stand rather in between: they express a strong interest in celebrity news and entertainment media but they consume some 'local media' as well.



2. The second difference in news consumption was the nature of the media consumed. In the theoretical part of this research it was already argued that South Africa has developed different strands of press representing the most-spoken languages of the country. One of these strands is the Afrikaans press. Since most African respondents are not fluent in Afrikaans, the majority did not consume any kind of Afrikaans spoken or written media items. Coloureds and Whites did consume some Afrikaans written magazines and one Afrikaans newspaper. However, language was not the most dominant factor since the White and Coloured respondents, of which the majority speak Afrikaans, did not show a bigger interest in Afrikaans media than in English/British media. Based on the socio-economical standard of the Africans and Coloureds respondents, in comparison with Whites, a paid-for newspaper like 'die Burger' is less accessible.

3. The frequency of following the news did differ as well. From the three racial groups, Africans consume the news most often, followed by Coloureds and Whites. Contradictory but true is that Africans had however the lowest score in the general knowledge test. A reason for this could be found in them having access to a smaller variety of media than the other respondents. The quality of education could play a role as well.

4. Although all respondents follow the news because they find it important to keep up to date, there were some differences in the open answers that were given. 41 out of 69 White respondents said to find it important to keep up with the news in Europe and the USA. In correspondence with the differences discussed above, Coloureds mentioned as an important reason for following the news, keeping up to date with celebrity news. Africans want to know what is going on in the world.

From the above a specific pattern becomes clear. White respondents have more of a global taste in media and are more focused on happenings outside of South Africa. Hereby they express a certain distinction from local and South African culture by showing the least interest in news. The fact that 72% of White respondents think that

their government does not take their opinions into consideration illustrates this. The 61% of them who think that they cannot make a difference when they are older does not promise many positive things for the future. Although Africans and Coloureds are not all that positive about their country's politics either, the majority at least feel that they can make a difference when they are older.

### **7.3 Theoretical support**

As was argued in the Uses and Gratification theory discussed in chapter 3, people use certain media to satisfy their needs and to attain specific goals. This is supported by the outcome of the survey. Coloured respondents want to be informed about celebrity news and therefore consume tabloid newspapers, gossip magazine's and follow celebrity news. Africans however, read newspapers and listen to the radio because they find it important to keep up with the news– specifically concerning local issues. Whites generally do not feel the need to keep up with the news as do the former two racial groups. They show an interest in happenings in Europe and the U.S.A. This could stimulate them to consume the American media such as soaps series. The expected need for 'surveillance' as a gratification that is attained from the use of news media, could not be applied to all respondents. As stated above, White respondents hardly interact about the news and they do not specifically follow the news to keep up to date about what happens in their country.

### **7.4 Recommendations**

Since not all South African youngsters have permanent access to the internet, the use of this medium has been analyzed less intensively. Due to the high costs of internet it is not always easy for schools to use internet on a regular basis. It was obvious that White respondents generally had better access to the internet than Coloureds and Africans. During the conversations with teachers at the high schools it was found that many learners use the internet to chat in a specific chat room called 'Mxit'. Due to the relatively young nature and lower accessibility of internet in South Africa, the dangers and consequences of communicating via internet are generally unknown to the learners. This could be an interesting subject for further research.

The contradictory outcome between global versus local taste of youngster in South Africa could be further investigated. Research could focus on for instance 'identity' and 'media consumption' in South African Youth Culture.

The aforementioned variables, 'language' and 'socio-economics' are taken into consideration within this research, but they play a minor role since 'racial background' was taken as the most important variable. It could be interesting to pay more attention to these two variables in a research about media consumption.

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