



Midlands State University

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

**RETHINKING THE ROLE OF POLITICAL ECONOMY IN THE HERALD'S
CONSTRUCTION OF FACTIONAL FIGHTING IN ZANU-PF POST 2013**

By

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(R124850T)

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR HONOURS DEGREE IN MEDIA AND SOCIETY STUDIES**

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APPROVAL FORM



The undersigned certify that they have supervised the student Takunda Maodza`s dissertation entitled: Rethinking the role of political economy in The Herald`s construction of factional fighting in Zanu-PF post 2013 submitted in partial fulfilment of requirements of Honours Degree in Media and Society Studies at Midlands State University.

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DECLARATION

I, Takunda Maodza, do hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is entirely my brain child with only the exception of quotations or references which have been attributed to their sources. I further declare that this work has never been previously submitted and is being submitted in partial fulfilment of Honours Degree in Media and Society Studies at Midlands State University.

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...../...../.....

Takunda Maodza

Date

DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my parents Clara and Runesu Maodza for their material and moral support to my educational pursuit. To my kids, Brendon and Clara, you are my source of strength. Cecilia Kanyowa, my late wife, you were a rose in the garden. We miss your tenderness. Abigail Mawonde, you are my pillar of support and soul mate.

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Takunda Maodza

May 2015

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1 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 1.0 Introduction

Political economy is one of the many important factors that shape the content and dissemination of news the world over. Political economy is the study of social relations, particularly power relations and how these influence production, distribution and consumption of resources including communication resources (Mosco 1995). In this study, the researcher looks at political economy largely from the traditional Marxian perspective having considered that political economy is broad subject. Marx and Engel, cited in Curran et al (1982: 22) are of the view that the class “which has

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Political economy is one of the many important factors that shape the content and dissemination of news the world over. In this study, I look at political economy entirely from the traditional Marxian perspective having considered that political economy is broad subject. Marx and Angel, cited in Curran et al (1982: 22) are of the view that the class ‘which has the means of production at its disposal has control at the same time of the means of mental production’. The statement speaks volumes about the extent to which political economy determines media content. Scholars like Golding and Murdock (1991) reinforce this argument and posit that political economy focuses “on the interplay between the symbolic and economic dimensions of public communication which sets out to show how different ways of financing and organizing cultural production have traceable consequences for the range of

discourses and representations in the public domain". Schudson (1989: 266) suggests that 'political economy relates the outcome of the news process directly to the economic structure of the news organizations'. According to Herman and Chomsky (1988), those who own the media and fund them 'serve as the primary definers of news'.

These viewpoints are supported by Miliband (1994), cited in Manning (2001), who posits that, "The point is rather that the views which the controllers of the main means of communication find obnoxious will have to run an obstacle course, which some survive, in a more or less battered condition, and others do not." Louw (1984: 35) summarizes the deterministic role of ownership in news production by claiming that, 'A liberal capitalist press represents no one but the owners of the press'. Rusike (1990) concurs and posits that, "No philanthropist starts a newspaper; only people who want to make money or change the world through their own ideas start newspapers". The assertions by these scholars seem to suggest that political economy or ownership plays a crucial role in the creation of media content. When media content appears to defy the political economy, it provides an interesting field for research.

This study is an investigation into why *The Herald's* political news content in the post 2013 period appears to defy this logic. Having been associated with Zanu-PF since Zimbabwe's independence from Britain in 1980, *The Herald* has religiously reported positively about the ruling party. Editors who failed to **tour** the Zanu-PF line were unceremoniously dismissed, demoted or "promoted" to less influential and non editorial positions. He who pays the piper dictates the tune. It has been easy for Zanu-PF to determine news content in *The Herald* as the ruling party appoints the Minister of Information, Media, and Broadcasting Services. The minister in turn appoints editors for *The Herald* largely believed to be Zanu-PF sympathizers. This brings in the aspect of control. Through its controlling shareholding in Zimpapers, the Zanu-PF government determines *The Herald's* editorial stance on crucial issues.

There was notable change in *The Herald's* coverage of events in Zanu-PF in the period after 2013. For the first time, *The Herald* attacked, exposed, dared and vilified some hitherto 'untouchables' in Zanu-PF whom for years the newspaper had deified when the privately owned newspapers appeared to soil their image. This flies in the face of theoretical assumptions about the political economy's determining influence on news content and

inspired my interest in finding out the relevance of this theory in understanding the operations of the media in general, and of *The Herald* in particular.

Background

The re-appointment of Professor Jonathan Moyo to the Ministry of Information, Media, and Broadcasting Services in September 2013 after he was sacked from the same post in February 2005, and the entrance of First Lady Dr Grace Mugabe into politics in 2014 as the Zanu-PF Women's League secretary, introduced new dynamics in the way *The Herald* covered Zanu-PF politics. *The Herald* which reported positively about Zanu-PF became highly critical of some high-ranking Zanu-PF officials accusing them of moral decadence, corruption and even witchcraft. Among the senior Zanu-PF officials negatively reported on by *The Herald* were then Vice President Joice Mujuru, ousted secretary for administration Didymus Mutasa, dismissed Zanu-PF secretary for information and publicity Rugare Gumbo, former Zanu-PF Mashonaland West provincial chairperson Temba Mliswa, Politburo members Dzikamai Mavhaire, Engineer Munacho Mutezo and Tendai Savanhu.

The Herald's change of tone angered Zanu-PF officials whom the newspaper constantly reported on negatively. Justifiably so because throughout their political careers in Zanu-PF *The Herald* had sanitized them when soiled by the privately owned newspapers giving the Zanu-PF officials a sense of ownership of the newspaper. It, therefore, came as a shock for the affected Zanu-PF officials and readers of the newspaper when *The Herald* abruptly started reporting very negatively about the high-ranking party officials delegitimizing their political and social standing. For many within and outside Zanu-PF, it appeared strange for *The Herald* to report negatively about Zanu-PF officials as high-ranking as Vice President Joice Mujuru let alone to accuse her of corruption and witchcraft. Worse still, it was unheard of for *The Herald* to undermine the Zanu-PF secretary for administration Didymus Mutasa whom in one of its editorials it referred to as "a dwarf in giant robes" ([The Herald...date](#)) or to dismiss the party's secretary for information and publicity Rugare Gumbo as a liar. Through its controlling stake in Zimpapers, the Zanu-PF government had all along ensured that *The Herald* reported positively about the party's rank and file. It became a trend that Zanu-PF officials reported negatively on in the privately owned media would be afforded a platform in *The Herald* to plead their innocence. One such a case was when then Finance Minister Christopher Kuruneru was arrested on allegations of externalizing foreign currency

to South Africa where he acquired properties. Under the headline “*My Hands are Clean*”, (*The Herald* of 25 March 2004), *The Herald* exonerated the minister from any wrongdoing claiming he had genuinely acquired the properties through hard work. Kuruneri was later convicted and jailed for externalizing foreign currency.

The Herald's negative portrayal of some Zanu-PF officials in post 2013 caused the ruling party's First Secretary and President, Robert Mugabe serious discomfort and he rebuked Information, Media, and Broadcasting Services Minister Professor Jonathan Moyo on June 6, 2014 for using *The Herald* to fan factionalism in Zanu-PF. Mourning the former Zanu-PF secretary for information and publicity and Minister of Information and Publicity Nathan Shamuyarira at the deceased's Borrowdale home in Harare, President Mugabe said of Professor Jonathan Moyo:

*The view that Shamuyarira put across in the paper (The Herald) was the view of the party that appealed to the people. I am saying this in light of what is happening now where you have your Minister of Information wanting to put people against the other... You do not do things like that. Intellectuals do not try to use your intellectual knowledge to deceive people. We are simple people. We want honest leadership, the truth. Ndirikutaura izvi nekuti vese vakomana vakanga vakatungamirira mumapaper vakatandwa kuchinotorwa veMDC vachiiswa kuti imi mukati tonho muchifunga kuti tine munhu arikutiitira zvakana, the devil incarnate. (I am saying this because the editors that we had appointed (at *The Herald and Chronicle*) were chased away and were replaced by MDC activists (*The Herald* 06 June 2014).*

President Mugabe was to attack Professor Jonathan Moyo again on 08 June 2014 calling him a weevil bent on destroying Zanu-PF from within. Speaking at the burial of Shamuyarira at the National Heroes Acre, he said:

*Shamuyarira had a people oriented direction when he was Minister of Information and not these little ideas of how I can get so and so...MuZanu munezvipfukuto woye. Manje kana chipfukuto chapinda mutsanga ingava nyemba kana chibage wotoda chidokohori. (Zanu is full of weevils. Let us do away with these weevils. And get rid of them because they make the seed inedible (*Daily News* of 7 June 2014).*

The condemnation of Professor Moyo brought a sigh of relief to senior Zanu-PF officials like Didymus Mutasa who cynically suggested the usage of *Gamatox* to “exterminate the weevils”. *Gamatox* is a pesticide for killing weevils. This marked the beginning of name-calling with *The Herald* playing a key role in framing and representing some Zanu-PF officials as “*Gamatox*” while those believed to be *Zvipfukuto* (*weevils*) were seldom vilified by the newspaper. Essentially, Zanu-PF officials that were labelled *Gamatox* were those believed to be aligned to then Vice President Joice Mujuru while *Zvipfukuto* was used to describe officials like Professor Jonathan Moyo, Saviour Kasukuwere, Oppah Muchinguri said to be in the Justice Minister Emmerson Mnangagwa’s faction. The belief being that there are two factions in Zanu-PF battling to succeed President Mugabe on retirement.

Significance of the study

The purpose of the study is to probe why and how *The Herald* changed its tone and stance when reporting on some senior Zanu-PF officials in post 2013. The research is an investigation into the normativity and relevance of the political economy theory in understanding news production processes at *The Herald*. It is hoped the findings of this research can contribute a more nuanced appreciation of how political economy as a factor operates to influence news content in Zimbabwe.

Statement of the problem

For decades *The Herald* had been largely regarded as a mouthpiece of Zanu-PF but this seems to have dramatically changed after the party’s 2013 resounding electoral victory in the national harmonized elections when the paper seemed to turn on some sections of the ruling party contrary to classical political economy’s account on how media work. This study interrogates the validity of the often taken for granted assumption that the owners of the media unproblematically influence the content of the media using the case of *The Herald*’s coverage of internal political fights within Zanu-PF post 2013.

Research Objectives

The study seeks to:

- Find out how *The Herald* managed to produce negative stories about some sections of Zanu-PF party.

- Describe how language and discourse were used to vilify some prominent members of Zanu-PF.
- Explore newsroom practices and routines responsible for the production of news content at *The Herald*.
- Determine who “the owner” of *The Herald* is.

Research questions

What factor (s) determined the way *The Herald* reported negatively on some sections of Zanu-PF?

Sub questions

Does political economy still determine news content and values at *The Herald*?

How was *The Herald* used as a tool in Zanu-PF factional fights?

Assumption of the study

This study is based on the assumption that *The Herald* as a media organization is run along professional lines and that *The Herald* is a publicly owned newspaper and therefore publishes news in the public interest.

Limitations of the study

Some journalists at *The Herald* were reluctant to grant me an interview given the sensitive nature of the issue under investigation. However, to counteract any weaknesses in the study as a result of this limitation, I triangulated the interview method with participant observation and archival research.

Scope of the study

This study focuses on the period after the July 31 2013 harmonized elections following Zanu-PF's watershed victory over the Movement for Democratic Change led by Mr Morgan Tsvangirai. It extends to January 31, 2014 covering the Zanu-PF December 2013 National People's Congress and the appointment of the appointment of Justice Minister Emmerson Mnangagwa and Ambassador Phelekeza Mphoko to the vice presidency dislodging Joice Mujuru and replacing the late Vice President John Nkomo, respectively. It is hoped that

period covered by this study will expose *The Herald's* central role in Zanu-PF faction wars. It will focus on political content that portrayed some section of Zanu-PF in negative light.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

Literature Review

Skene (n.d) defines literature review as a survey of everything that has been written about a particular topic. Literature analyses information about key issues and provides background for the larger work or may stand on its own. Skene notes that literature review uncovers what has been written already about a topic. It identifies contradictions in the written works and determines gaps or unanswered questions.

Political economy of *The Herald*

Barret and Newbold (1995), Golding and Murdock (1991), and Schudson (1989: 266) posit that political economy determines what we read in newspapers. When I refer to political economy in the context of *The Herald*, I strictly mean ownership and control. I exclude other economic factors that under normal circumstances impact on news content like advertising, the perception of the audience as a market and treatment of news as a product in a free market. Advertising determines news content in some privately owned newspapers in Zimbabwe with some publishers largely not willing to report negatively on some companies that advertise with them for fear of losing advertisements which are the source of their livelihoods. The same cannot, however, be said of *The Herald* whose news content is exclusively determined by Zanu-PF through the Minister of Information, Media and Broadcasting Services. By the time of writing this study, that Minister was Professor Jonathan Moyo. Written experiences by former Zimpapers managing director Mr Elias Rusike in his book *The Politics of the Mass Media: A personal experience* and revelations by former editor for *The Herald*, Mr Ray Mungoshi, in an interview with the United States embassy in Harare leaked by whistleblower *Wikileaks* shed light into the operations of *The Herald* while Richard Saunders' *Dancing Out of Tune* also gives insight into how ownership determines news at Zimbabwe's largest and oldest newspaper – *The Herald*.

Historically, political economy (ownership) has always determined news output at *The Herald* even before independence when the newspaper was then known as *Rhodesia Herald*. This is noted by Rusike (1990: 22) who asserts that,

The political system determines what the media are used for, what control is imposed on them and who own them and who has the right to use them.

Frederikse (1982: 27) unpacks the ownership of the *Rhodesia Herald* noting that Cecil John Rhodes “himself had direct financial interest in that South African based publishing firm and its subsidiary, the Rhodesia Printing and Publishing (RPP), which maintained an effective monopoly from settlement until independence”. Rhodes’ stake in RPP is also confirmed by Gale (1962: 2). According to Gale, the RPP was an affiliate of the Argus Printing and Publishing Company of South Africa, “a newspaper based company launched in 1892 with capital from Cecil Rhodes and with view to promoting Rhodes’s political and financial ambitions in the cape”. Thus, Rhodes bought shares in the newspaper company so he could influence its reportage via ownership. In a paper titled “The consequences of government control on the work and practices of journalists: A case study of Zimpapers , 1980 - 94,” Dube (1995) states that the content in the Argus newspapers in Rhodesia “proved beyond reasonable doubt that the papers were owned and controlled by South African companies whose interests they served and backed”. Dube (1995) observes that the press “took a distinctly white flavour” as the news coming from the Rhodesian press was “gathered and doctored by the South African news agencies to highlight and emphasise issues that were important for their class and racial view of the world”. Dube (1995) says it is therefore clear that the Rhodesian press represented the mining and agricultural interests of the newly established capitalist economy in Rhodesia which promoted the positions of whites while eroding the rights of the blacks.

The blatant slant in reportage by the *Rhodesia Herald* continued even after independence in 1980 when Ian Smith of the Rhodesia Front lost power and a black Zanu-PF government led by Prime Minister Robert Mugabe took office. This attracted the wrath of Zanu-PF politician Dr Eddison Zvobgo. Zvobgo slammed Zimpapers saying,

Zimpapers publications were suffering under bourgeoisie domination, being run by pseudo editorial professors who had not been in the war and were allowing Zimpapers to be used to mobilize sections of the public against government (Herald 1980).

That the *Rhodesia Herald* was highly biased in favour of its ownership is confirmed by none other than Ivor Benson, a leading Rhodesia Front chief propagandist, who worked for the Ministry of Information in the Smith regime. In his words, he said:

The press must be free – no one denies that – but it must be OUR press, promoting OUR values and OUR interests. Only such a press has any claim to the freedom to govern itself in OUR society (Saunders 1999: 6)

Creation of the Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust (ZMMT)

Saunders (1999:14) states that the continued ownership of the mainstream media, in particular the RPP newspaper chain, by the Argus Media Group caused the new government serious headache. Renamed Zimbabwe Newspapers (1980) Limited (Zimpapers) in 1980, it remained under the control of apartheid South Africa, a scenario the new black government considered unacceptable. Consequently, government sought to transfer the ownership and control of Zimpapers – publishers of *The Herald* – into black hands and wanted to do so without sending a wrong signal to the international community and potential foreign investors that it was grabbing private property. This is confirmed by Rusike (1990: 65) who observes that “The new government, rather than take over the newspaper company lock, stock and barrel from the Argus Group of South Africa, decided a unique experiment The Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust”. The ZMMT, according to Rusike, took over 45 percent South African ownership of the newspaper company. The remaining shares were left in private hands – Old Mutual and other companies are shareholders in Zimpapers. Saunders (1999:14) notes that the ZMMT was established in January 1981. Using a \$6 million grant from the Nigerian government, the Zanu-PF government bought the Argus shareholding and placed them in the hands of the ZMMT. The ZMMT initially got a 45 percent stake and later increased the shareholding to over 50 percent. Acquired under the same deal was Zimbabwe Inter-African News Agency (Ziana). The ZMMT was an independent organization serving as a “buffer” between the public owned media and government and its founding deed explicitly stated that it would act independently of government and would not be answerable to politicians (Saunders 1990). To achieve this goal, an independent board of trustees drawn from different sectors managed the affairs of the ZMMT. The trust as the dominant shareholders in Zimpapers had direct say in management of the newspaper company and provided policy direction. It insulated editors at *The Herald* from political interference by the ruling Zanu-PF.

The ZMMT collapses

Saunders (1990) believes the Zanu-PF government deliberately strangled the ZMMT by denying it funding. The ZMMT was a non profit-making organization whose survival depended on government grants. Saunders observes that the trust had little money to operate and did not have skilled workers to lead it. Government, through the Ministry of Information, took advantage of these loopholes and high-jacked the trust by providing policy input and guidance undermining the ZMMT's autonomy. Notes Saunders (1990):

The ZMMT was forced to rely increasingly on government grants and subsidies... This gave government considerable indirect power over what Ziana covered and how this coverage was portrayed. At Zimpapers senior ruling party politicians soon came to play an important role in the appointment of staff for senior positions in the company.

The breaking of the "Willowgate" corruption scandal by the *Chronicle*, a sister paper to *The Herald*, worsened the situation for the ZMMT. The Willowgate scam was an illegal buying and selling of vehicles from the government owned Willowvale Mazda Motor Industries by senior Zanu-PF ministers. Then Minister of Information Witness Mangwende used the *Chronicle's* coverage of the scandal as a scapegoat to interfere in the operations of the ZMMT warning that government was "rethinking the whole structure and role of the ZMMT "because of the ZMMT's failure to properly supervise Zimpapers" (Saunders (1990: 21). The ZMMT's Deed of Trust was eventually revamped cementing government control of the trust.

Rusike (1990: 75) traces political interference in the operations of *The Herald* to the day when government decided to reconstitute the Zimpapers board and for the first time it included the permanent secretary in the Ministry of Information, a senator and a member of Zanu-PF central committee – Mrs Sarah Kachingwe, Senator David Zamchiya and Don Muvuti, respectively. This, Rusike argues, marked the death of the ZMMT and the genesis of political control of *The Herald*. Zimpapers has now come under the direct control of the Ministry of Information yet the idea of trustee ownership was aimed at insulating the press from direct government control Rusike (1990). The ZMMT was dissolved in 2001, a year after the appointment of Professor Jonathan Moyo as Minister of Information and Publicity. This left the public press, in particular newspapers under Zimpapers like *The Herald*, under direct state control.

The Herald under Zanu-PF

The collapse of the ZMMT exposed *The Herald* to political manipulation to an extent that the Minister of Information became “more and more involved in the hiring and firing of newspaper editors – although the actual firing was done in the name of management” Rusike (1990). Rusike posits that the structural relationship between Zimpapers and the Ministry of Information influenced news content with editors often summoned by the ministry to explain “why that story was published and why the President’s story was not on front page”. Rusike concludes that,

Zimpapers is now effectively under the daily control of the Ministry of Information. The recent appointment of Mrs Sarah Kachingwe, the permanent secretary in the Ministry of Information to the board of Zimpapers is ample evidence that the original concept to insulate the newspapers from government has been reversed. Zimbabweans should now accept that Zimpapers are owned and controlled by government and therefore now serve government interests.

When the Zanu-PF government took over the *Rhodesia Herald* and renamed it *The Herald*, Saunders (1999) notes that like the Rhodesian Front “ruling party politicians soon came to play an important role in the appointment of staff for senior positions in the company”. One such appointment was Elias Rusike, a Zanu-PF member and former official outside the country, appointed Zimpapers managing director. Saunders (1999) argues that Rusike gave Zanu-PF direct access to the management and control of editors at Zimpapers. Rusike (1990) confirms this describing the relationship between the Minister of Information and the newspapers as “special with editors being able to consult with him more or less on a daily basis”. Saunders (1999) posits that political appointments undermined not only the content of the media but the financial and management viability.

Revelations by Ray Mungoshi in an interview with the United States embassy in Harare leaked by whistleblower *Wikileaks* in 2001 further buttresses the argument that political economy, and in particular media ownership, dictates what gets published by the media, in this case *The Herald*. The Minister of Information, Media and Broadcasting Services Professor Jonathan Moyo (Zanu-PF) literary runs *The Herald* dictating what he wants published and going as far as planting stories in *The Herald* without the editor’s knowledge,

thus according to Mungoshi. Mungoshi claims Minister Moyo would call him “almost on daily basis” and described the calls as “angry diatribes about *The Herald*’s lack of support for the Government”. Mungoshi further alleges that Minister Moyo used the calls to tell him “what the next day’s editorial should be or what story he wanted to see on the first page”. Mungoshi also claims that Minister Moyo would “send ready to print stories to the paper and expect to see them published without question or alterations”. Minister Moyo, adds Mungoshi, would work directly with sub-editors behind his back and plant stories in *The Herald*. Mungoshi told the American embassy in Harare that,

I became accustomed to finding stories in the newspapers that I had never before seen or approved. Minister Moyo went directly to sub-editors and production staff to have stories placed in the paper.

Literature by Rusike (1990), Mungoshi (2001) and Saunders (1999) reflect on how Zanu-PF has over the years used the Ministry of Information as the pseudo editor of *The Herald* by determining the newspaper’s news content. This literature reveals that the government through the Ministry of Information used *The Herald* to buttress its hegemonic rule over the people of Zimbabwe. *The Herald* achieved this through uncritical coverage of Zanu-PF as a party and Zanu-PF as government. In short, *The Herald* was Zanu-PF’s official propaganda mouthpiece that extolled the party’s virtues and goodness ignoring its shortfalls.

While the literature by Rusike (1990), Saunders (1999) and Mungoshi (2001) says a lot about how Zanu-PF has over the years systematically used *The Herald* for hegemonic purposes, it is silent on the post 2013 scenario when the same newspaper that supported Zanu-PF in its totality as a political party turned the tables against some ruling party heavyweights in a fashion never before experienced. It is this about turn by *The Herald* that prompted this researcher to generate literature interrogating and explaining the shift in editorial stance by *The Herald*. It is this gap that this researcher has exploited by questioning the efficacy of the theory of political economy as propounded by Karl Marx as it relates to how those who own the cultural industries like the media determine the editorial output. Could Minister Jonathan Moyo have used his grip at *The Herald* to generate news content that painted perceived factional opponents in Zanu-PF in bad light? Has Zanu-PF, as a party, lost its control of *The Herald* or is it a classic case of political economy failing to determine news content?

Theoretical Framework

The news production process is affected by a number of factors some internal, others external. In my theoretical framework, I explore the various theories that impact on the production of news with special focus on those that apply at *The Herald*. These theories are Political economy, Gate-keeping and Agenda Setting. I examine Schudson (1989)'s sociological views about news production and a claim by Tuchman (1976) that "news is constructed reality".

Political Economy Theory

Driving this study is the theory of political economy in the traditional Marxian context. Babe (2009) defines political economy as scholarly discourse studying power relations affecting the production, distribution, and consumption of wealth, income and resources including information and communication resources. Barret and Newbold (1995) assert that political economy "shows greater awareness of the need to demonstrate precisely how the political economic formation of the media is related to content and to the discourse of public debate and private consciousness." This view is buttressed by Golding and Murdock (1991) who posit that political economy focuses "on the interplay between the symbolic and economic dimensions of public communication which sets out to show how different ways of financing and organising cultural production have traceable consequences for the range of discourses and representations in the public domain and for audience access to them". Political economy assesses how making and taking of meaning is shaped at every level, what Golding and Murdock (1991) term "structured asymmetries" in social relations. Golding and Murdock argue that media owners "can determine the editorial line and cultural stance of the papers and broadcast stations they own" while Schudson (1989: 266) argues that "political economy relates the outcome of the news process directly to the economic structure of the news organisations". Media scholars maintain that ownership largely determines news output with McQuail (2010) tracing this belief to the Marxian concept.

According to Marx and Angel cited by Babe (2009), the mass media "are means of production which in a capitalist society are in the ownership of the ruling class." They argue that the mass media are an extension of the ideological arena where class views are fought and these wars waged within the dominance of certain classes. Marx and Angel claim that

journalists “are socialized into and internalize the norms of the dominant culture and the media as a whole relay interpretive frameworks consonant with the interest of the dominant classes”. They view the mass media from an economic determinism point of view in which it “simply disseminate the ideas and world views of the ruling class, and deny or defuse alternative ideas”. Marx and Angel cited in Curran et al (1982:22) assert that,

The class which has the means of production at its disposal has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it.

Marx and Angel further argue that production and distribution of ideas is concentrated in the hands of the “capitalist owners of the means of production, their ideas receive much greater prominence and hence dominate the thoughts of subordinate groups”. Owners of the cultural industries, who happen to be the ruling class in a capitalist society, ensure that what the mass media publishes and circulates, is consonant with its interest. Marx and Angel suggest that the structure and control of the mass media determine what is circulated by the cultural industries. Cited in Curran et al (1982:22), Marx and Angel view the mass media as “monolithic expressions of the ruling class values which ignore any diversity” It is Marx and Angel’s argument that the mass media are locked into power structure and resultantly act largely in accord with the dominant institutions in society.

The assertion by Marx and Angel fits well into the operations of Zimpapers and in particular *The Herald*. As the ruling party Zanu-PF, through the Ministry of Information, Media and Publicity influence the generation of news content especially of a political nature at *The Herald* by virtue of government’s majority shareholding in Zimpapers. Literature by Rusike (1990), Saunders (1999) and revelations by Mungoshi (2001) show how media ownership or political economy determine what we read in *The Herald*. It is this researcher’s conviction that readers did not expect *The Herald* to report negatively about some senior Zanu-PF officials in the manner it did in post 2013. This is what prompted this researcher to probe the shift in the editorial stance.

Some scholars do not agree that political economy or ownership singularly determine news content pointing to various other factors that influence news production processes. Murdock

and Golding (1977) argue against suggestions by Marx and Angel that control over material resources or the economy is ultimately the most powerful “of the many levers operating in cultural production”. It is their argument that “the economic state of the media organizations does not always have an immediate impact on their output”. This line of thinking is supported by Strinati (1995) who argues that “one type of media institution which does not appear to obey the logic of economic determinism is the public sector broadcasting” and cites the British Broadcasting Corporation as an example. Smythe (1994) looks at the material aspects of communication differently. He restricts the economism argument to the commoditization of the audiences sold in a similar fashion as goods to advertisers and is more interested in aspects of surplus value generation within media organizations than the ideological effects of the message. Smythe wants the media analyzed more in terms of surplus value than in terms of manipulation as suggested by Marx and Angel and their disciples. Reinforcing this argument is Garnham (1990: 30) who advocates a shift of attention from treating the media as ideological tools to looking into their role in surplus value generation and advertising. He does not want the mass media treated as “vehicles of ideological domination”. This stance is embraced by Hall (1983:84) who argues against Marx and Angel’s economic reductionist approach. He views economic dynamics as “defining the key features of the general environment within which communicative activity take place but not as a complete explanation of the nature of that activity”.

Gatekeeping Theory

Gatekeeping is a theory propounded by Kurt Lewin in 1947. It emanated from Lewin’s social psychological theory on how people’s eating habits can be changed. Shoemaker cited in Jorgensen and Hanitzsch (2009) define gate-keeping as the process of “selecting, writing, editing, positioning, scheduling, repeating and otherwise massaging information to become news”. They note that a gate-keeper controls how information passes the channel and what its final outcome is. Shoemaker posits that the gatekeeping process takes many forms and may include company policies. At newspapers like *The Herald* the editorial policy is a form of gatekeeping as it guides what ought to be written and what not. Prior to the entrance of First Lady Dr Grace Mugabe into politics and to the re-appointment of Professor Jonathan Moyo as Information Minister, the editorial policy of *The Herald* was to write glowingly about Zanu-PF or anyone within the rank and file of the ruling party. Negativity was a taboo.

The gatekeeping tradition implies that newspaper stories pass through what White (1950) terms complex series of “gates” before they are published or rejected. According to White, the gatekeeping model “includes room for a number of decision makers along the path of selection”. Breed (1955) claims newspaper publishers are the “defacto gatekeepers who operate through indirect means to ensure that only news consistent with organizational policy gets through”. Breed notes that “policy news may be slanted or buried so that some important information is denied the citizenry”. Breed argues that the gatekeeper “may not be the one who is most immediately involved in the selection (of stories) but may reside elsewhere within more influential levels of the organization”. This again reminds us of Minister Jonathan Moyo’s involvement in *The Herald* editorial as enunciated by Mungoshi (2001). Lewin (1951) suggests that there are “forces” at the gate that determine which items must become news and which items must be discarded. The term “force” implies the existence of pressure exerted on the gatekeeper to choose which item should be published and which item must be rejected. Shoemaker cited in Jorgensen and Hanitzsch (2009) notes that hegemonic elites “may exert power over the journalism field. The arguments by Breed (1955), Lewin (1951) and Shoemaker as cited in Jorgensen and Hanitzsch (2009) settle well in the operations of *The Herald* especially during the period under study. This researcher observed that in the run up to the Zanu-PF 2014 National People’s Congress and well after the event, Information, Media and Broadcasting Services Minister Professor Jonathan Moyo was the gateman determining the nature of political stories that *The Herald* published. Internal gatekeepers, that included *The Herald* editor’s gatekeeping role was usurped by the minister. The active involvement of Minister Moyo in the production of news at *The Herald* has been earlier in this study highlighted by Mungoshi in an interview with the American embassy in Harare leaked by whistleblower Wikileaks as earlier indicated in this research. There is close intercourse between the gatekeeping theory and agenda setting.

CONSIDER FRAMING THEORY

Agenda Setting Theory

This study is also grounded in McComb and Shaw’s Agenda Setting Theory. The mass media make some issues more important than others by determinedly and frequently zooming on them. In so doing, the mass media focus public attention on a particular issue or topic. This is called Agenda Setting. According to Lang and Lang, cited in McComb and Shaw

(2006), the mass media “present objects suggesting what individuals in the mass should think about, know about, have feelings about”. It is a case of the mass media telling the audience or readers what to think about”. They set the agenda and try to influence attitudes in a certain way. The emphasis the media place on an issue drive readers or audience into attaching importance to the issue. Lang Lang cited in McCombs and Shaw (2006) notes that newspapers provide a host of cues about the importance of an issue. They do this through a number of tricks like placing the story on the front page, banner, or using bold and large headlines. Repeated day after day, the cues effectively communicate the importance of the topic. It is argued by Lang Lang that “the agenda of a news organization is found in its pattern of coverage on public issues over some period of time, a week, a month, an entire year”. Juxtaposing this assertion to the manner in which *The Herald* reported on then Vice President Joice Mujuru and some senior Zanu-PF officials reportedly aligned to her faction, especially in the period towards the elective Zanu-PF December 2014 National People’s Congress, appears to suggest that the newspaper was pushing an agenda and wanted to manipulate its readers to think about the Zanu-PF officials in a certain way.

Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007), argue that the media influence how public figures are viewed and judged by paying attention on some matters while ignoring others. They suggest that even the tone of a newspaper’s reportage on an event or individual greatly influences readers’ attitude or perception of that which has been reported on. Think of *The Herald* constantly referring to some Zanu-PF bigwigs like then Vice President Mujuru and those we were told were aligned to her as the “cabal”. Of importance to note, however, is the fact that audiences are not gullible. Scheufele and Tewksbury argue that the news media “has no way overturned the basic assumption of democracy that the people at large have enough wisdom to determine the course of their nation”. They further posit that the media only successfully set an agenda “only when citizens perceive their news stories as relevant”. Understanding the environment around recipient of news also determines the success or failure of agenda setting by the media. What kind of environment was there to understand *The Herald*’s negative coverage of Mujuru and some senior Zanu-PF officials? This researcher notes that *The Herald* became combative towards some Zanu-PF heavyweights towards the Zanu-PF 2014 elective National People’s Congress as if to assassinate the characters of those written negatively about well before the decisive event.

Reflexivity

I was involved in the production of texts that condemned some Zanu-PF officials in my capacity as an Assistant News Editor (Responsible for Investigations) at *The Herald*. That, I use as an eye opener rather a handicap. While I could have been biased in the news articles I wrote on the subject because of the newspaper's editorial stance at the time, in this research I try as humanly possible to be objective as I demystify the theory of political economy. Davies (2008) cited in Ncube (2014) underscores the importance of reflexivity in ethnographic research. According to Ncube (2014), reflexivity "assists readers in exploring the ways in which a researcher's involvement with a particular study influences, acts upon and informs such a research."

CHAPTER 3

Intro

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is qualitative in nature. I adopt qualitative research in this study as it is concerned with explaining, interpreting and understanding a phenomenon (Joubish 2011). In this study I explain the news production process at *The Herald* with particular attention on how and the extent to which political economy influences content. While some scholars have dismissed qualitative research as subjective, Cluett and Bluff (2000) argue that it is an honest research method. According to Gunter (2000) there are three major schools of thought within the social sciences that influence media research. These are the positivist approach, the interpretive social science and critical social science paradigm.

The positivist tradition is rooted on the early 19th century philosophical school of thought that was founded by Auguste Comte. It was later inherited and developed by Emile Durkheim. The positivist approach disqualifies itself from this study as it is quantitative in nature. As earlier indicated, this study is qualitative. Gunter (2000) notes that positivists use quantitative methods of data gathering like experiments, surveys and statistics. Gunter posits that “positivist empirical researchers search for objectivity in measurement and use numerical forms of measurement to understand social phenomena. Positivism is concerned with explaining media usage and effects but is hinged on quantitative research methods.

The interpretive social science approach is traceable to Germany sociologist Max Weber. Gunter asserts that the interpretive social science paradigm is related to hermeneutics, a theory of meaning rooted in humanities. It advocates detailed reading of the text. The texts could be a conversation, written words or pictures in order to discover the embedded meaning (Neuman 1994: 61). Its belief is that people relay subjective experience through texts and an interrogation of the texts will expose the hidden motives. Forms of interpretive social science

include hermeneutics, ethnomethodology and qualitative social research. Researchers who follow the interpretive social science paradigm often use participant observation or field research (Gunter 2000). The researcher has to spend time in direct personal contact with those being studied. Of importance to note is that data collected through qualitative research methods are “impressionistic rather than numerically defined”. Gunter (2000) says the raw data may include media texts and the researcher uses “rigorous and detailed methods to gather large quantities of qualitative data in the form of specific details” unlike a positivist researcher who depends on pre-structured techniques that restrict the way people respond verbally or behaviourally but often obtain data from large number of individuals or greater amounts of media output than would the follower of the interpretive tradition. Gunter further notes that an interpretive researcher “may spend a year living with a dozen people to get an in-depth understanding of their lives” while a positivist use “ quantitative empirical methods and would rather obtain data from 1 200 individuals in an interview taking a few minutes”. The assumption by the positivists is that everyone shares the same meaning while the interpretive paradigm assumes multiple interpretations of human experience.

The third school of thought that influences media research is the critical social science. It is traceable to the thinking of Karl Marx, Gunter (2000). Critical social science is therefore underpinned by the idea of class struggle. The critical social science researchers are critical of positivists for their failure to “adequately represent personal interpretations people place upon social phenomena”. Gunter asserts that the critical social science “adds a socio-economic and political dimension by identifying specific socio-political motives with positivism, which is regarded as an approach to scientific inquiry aligned with dominant political and socio-economic forces in society.” The critical social science researchers condemn the interpretive research approach for “being too subjective”. According to Gunter, the principal goal of the critical social science researchers is to reveal, explain and understand power structures and relationships within society. Gunter notes that,

The media are identified as powerful sources of social control, themselves controlled by social, cultural and political elites...Such establishment institutions can utilize the media to promulgate specific values, beliefs and opinions maintaining their own position vis-à-vis less powerful groups within society.

The critical social science researchers argue that the media always provide stereotyped representations. Critical social science also use Marx's notion of false consciousness to explain its position on common sense. The tradition claims that people are fooled and act against their interests.

This study adopts the interpretive and critical social science approaches. I use participant observation or ethnography, as do the interpretive social science researchers, to gather information on the news production process at *The Herald*. Through participant observation, I take note of how *The Herald* gathered, processed and published news of a political nature about a section of Zanu-PF that it reported on negatively. The critical social science dimension comes in as I analyze media usage by the powerful in society. That is, how the powerful elites or ruling class makes use of the means of production that they own like the media, to promulgate and propagate specific beliefs and opinions. The critical social science paradigm takes us back to the political economy of the media theory upon which this whole study rests.

Methods of Data Gathering

Personal observation, also known as ethnography, archival research and interviews were used in the gathering of data for this study. Document analysis is another method that this researcher used in interrogating the news production processes at *The Herald* during the period under scrutiny.

Ethnography

Ethnography, as a research tool, relies substantially on participant observation (Denzin and Lincoln 1994). Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) cited in Denzin and Lincoln (1994), posit that all social research is a form of participant observation "because we cannot study the social world without being part of it". They argue that ethnography and participant observation represent a "uniquely humanistic, interpretive approach" to a study unlike the scientific and other methods.

Having worked for *The Herald* as a senior political reporter from 2007 to 2013 before being elevated to the position of Assistant News Editor (Responsible for Investigations) towards the Zanu-PF December 2014 National People's Congress, I re-look at how *The Herald* reported

on some Zanu-PF bigwigs negatively and in defiance of the basic tenets of the political economy theory. I wrote extensively on then Vice President Mujuru and “her allies” before and during the period under study. My appointment to the Assistant News Editor’s position brought me closer to the editor for *The Herald* Mr Caesar Zvayi. Critics outside Zanu-PF consider Mr Zvayi a Zanu-PF activist under whose editorship *The Herald* viciously attacked a section of the ruling party while exempting the other. I worked closely with Mr Zvayi and this enabled me to understand the news gathering and production process at *The Herald* for the benefit of this research. Ethnography became an important research tool. My elevation to the Assistant News Editor position saw me attending crucial gatekeeping meetings. These include what is referred to in the newsroom as the “diary meeting”. It is a platform which begins with the news editor or his or her assistant recording story ideas each and every reporter would be working on that day for publication the following day in *The Herald*. As the first gatekeeper, the news editor, his or her deputy may accept or reject story ideas from reporters for various reasons. Under normal circumstances story ideas critical of Zanu-PF are automatically discarded or if they are not rejected the stories never get published. The news editor and his or her deputy then take the recorded story ideas to a round table meeting of editors where they are discussed. It is this meeting that then decides on the nature of stories for publication the next day. It accepts, panel beats, or rejects some story ideas from reporters. It can also suggest on stories to write. This meeting is traditionally chaired by *The Herald* editor. While the round table editors’ meeting debates the story ideas, especially which articles must be on the front page, *The Herald* editor has a final say on what gets published. My focus on the diary meeting is meant to shed light in the news making process at *The Herald* from a personal experience perspective.

Archival Research

Philips (1997) defines archival research as that which is carried out by someone who uses data or information they did not participate in collecting. Newspapers provide an important source of information in archival research. Stories that were published by *The Herald* about some senior Zanu-PF officials including former Vice President Joice Mujuru during the period under study help provide an insight into how the newspaper set an agenda against the senior Zanu-PF officials. According to Shultz et al (2005), archival research is used to dig past events so as to get a complete picture and address issues of change over time. Shultz et al (2005) contend that archival research gives the researcher in depth information and evidence

than any other data collection method. But archival research has its own weaknesses. Philips (1997) argues that the researcher might be affected by bias that may have taken place during data collection. This study is insulated from any such limitations as no one can undo what has been written and published.

Editorial gatherings like diary meetings also produce important documentation in the form of the recorded story ideas which in turn become useful archival material. The recorded story ideas are an essential component of this study. I collected the recorded story ideas as they were noted by the news editor or his assistant. As an Assistant News editor I frequently convened a diary meeting and recorded story ideas from reporters. These documents show story ideas as they were presented by reporters. While the news editor collects story ideas from reporters in the morning daily, he or his (her) deputy prepares yet another list of stories for the afternoon editors' diary meeting. It is this meeting that has a final say on what gets published in tomorrow's edition of *The Herald*. This means that two lists of story ideas are produced everyday; one in the morning and the more decisive one in the afternoon. These provided important archival material for this research.

In this study my interest is in stories of a political nature, in particular suggested story ideas about some senior Zanu-PF officials including ex-Vice President Joice Mujuru, Rugare Gumbo and Didymus Mutasa, recorded by the news editor or his or her deputy during the period under study. These suggested story ideas of yesterday are juxtaposed with stories published in *The Herald* the following day. The intention is to identify if they were any story ideas that were suggested by the political reporters about the Zanu-PF officials that did not see the light of the in the next edition of *The Herald*. These are stories that were not published even though they were written by reporters. If there are such story ideas, this research will strive to explain why? Cross-checking with the list of story ideas recorded the previous day, I analyse if there are stories of a political nature about the said Zanu-PF officials that were never suggested in diary meetings the previous day but found their way into *The Herald* of the following day without the knowledge of the editors' diary meeting. This implies that some stories by-pass the traditional gatekeeping processes and get planted in the newspaper. All this was done to light up the dark corners in *The Herald's* news production processes.

Face to Face Interviews

This is face to face interaction. Face to face interview involves two or more people in a face to face situation who purposeful discuss and obtain valid information that helps the interviewer achieve his/her objectives (Kahn and Cannel, 1957; CACC, 1998). Selected senior political journalists at *The Herald* and the editor are interviewed on news production process at the newspaper especially with regards to the coverage of the former Vice President Joice Mujuru and some senior Zanu-PF politicians we were made to believe by *The Herald* that they were her close associates. The intention is to establish whether the selected political reporters gathered the stories on their own volition. Were they assigned to do the stories? If assigned, by who? *The Herald* editor is interviewed on why there was persistent focus on the selected Zanu-PF politicians for negative publicity toward the party's crucial December 2014 congress. The researcher also establishes the nature of relationship between *The Herald* editor and the Minister of Information, Media and Broadcasting Services Professor Jonathan Moyo. The interviewees are asked open ended questions.

Population

A "population" consists of all the subjects you want to study...A population comprises all possible cases (persons, objects, events) that constitute a known whole (Yount 2006). Fourie (2009; Bryman (2012) define population as a pool of units from which a sample is selected. It refers to the units that a researcher is interested in. It can be journal articles, people or newspaper articles. In this study population comprises diary meetings that decided on stories about some senior Zanu-PF officials that were written negatively by *The Herald* during the period under study. Senior political reporters at *The Herald* who contributed in the writing of the articles as well as the editor and the chief sub editor also make up my population. Records of story ideas compiled by the news editor or his or her deputies and the final stories that were published by *The Herald* on the subject are an integral component of population in this thesis.

Unit of analysis

Trochim (2006) defines unit of analysis as the "who" or the "what" that a researcher is analysing in the study. It could be an individual, newspapers or a programme. Torres-Reyna (2005) concurs saying unit of analysis is the "core entity that one analyses in their study while Long (2013) defines unit of analysis as "the subject of the study". My research is an investigation into how political economy appeared not to influence news content at *The*

Herald judging by the nature of stories published by the newspaper about a section of senior Zanu-PF officials. My unit of analysis becomes the negative stories that were written about the said ruling party politicians.

Research paradigm

There are two research models namely qualitative and quantitative methods. This study, as earlier indicated, is premised on the qualitative research paradigm. According to Bryman (2012), qualitative research is descriptive in nature unlike quantitative research whose focus is on numbers. Qualitative research is an ideal investigation tool in this study as it is premised on discourses around newspaper ownership and how some senior Zanu-PF officials were represented and framed by *The Herald* in negative light.

Research design

A research design, according to Ncube (2011), describes what the research intends to gather, from whom, how and when to collect data and how best the data can be analysed in manner that answers the research questions. It is more of a guideline a researcher uses in data gathering and analysis (Bryman 2012). In this study data was collected through face to face interviews, archival research and ethnography.

Sampling

Loosely defined, sampling is the selection of some members of units to represent the entire population. Latham (2007) defines sampling as a “subgroup of the population” or a “representative test of a group.” Haralambos and Holbourn (2004) define a sample as a segment selected from an entire population for analysis. While there is no uncontested answer as to the size of a sample, the size of a sample is subject to a number of factors among them time and financial constraints (Fourie 2009; Bryman 2012). A large sample is encouraged when carrying a research. (Fourie 2009; Bryman 2012) note that a large sample reduces sampling error. There are two categories of sampling namely, probability and non probability sampling. In probability sampling every unit has an equal chance of being selected (Fourie 2009). With non probability sampling not every unit is likely to be selected. In this study I use purposive sampling and non probability sampling.

Purposive sampling

Babbie (2001) posits that in purposive sampling, specific units from the entire population are chosen by the researcher. Of importance to note is that purposive sampling is embarked upon with a purpose in mind and objectives of the study are considered in choosing who to include or not include in the sample. In this study, I carefully chose journalists in *The Herald* newsroom for interviews. I selected senior political scribes who wrote negatively about some senior Zanu-PF politicians during the period under study. I also included the chief sub editor and the editor for *The Herald*, Rosenthal Mutakati and Caesar Zvayi, respectively. From the pool of political reporters at *The Herald*, I interviewed Herbert Zharare, Lloyd Gumbo, Zvamaida Murwira, Felex Share and Farirai Machivenyika. Mutakati was deliberately chosen as he is the ultimate man who puts the stories on the pages and knows how some articles ended up on the pages. Stories that were published by *The Herald* that were blatantly negative about selected senior Zanu-PF officials were also purposefully chosen by this researcher for analysis. The stories were written within the period under study.

Methods of data analysis

There are a number of methods used to analyse data in research. In this study I use Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). I chose CDA as my research is of a qualitative nature and augurs well with CDA. Wodak and Busch cited in Downing (2004) note that there is a growing interest in applying qualitative research methods to the study of social sciences. This is a shift from the traditional oriented approach to media texts that were largely quantitative in nature. McQuail (2000: 235) asserts that while quantitative research is widely used in social and cultural studies, scholars like Jensen and Jankowski (1991) speak of “qualitative turn” in media studies. Downing (2004) observes that the shift “is not a question of preferences for particular methodologies but corresponds to conceptual and theoretical frameworks distinct from traditional sender to receiver model”.

CDA, according to van Dijk (2006:252), is primarily motivated by the “desire to understand pressing social issues”. In this study, CDA will help scrutinize how and why *The Herald*, a newspaper widely considered to be the official propaganda mouthpiece of Zanu-PF turned against its own by selectively choosing to write negatively about some ruling party bigwigs like former Vice President Joice Mujuru and other party officials like Dzikamai Mavhaire, Didymus Mutasa, Rugare Gumbo, just to mention but a few. Lucke (1996:12) posits that

“texts position and construct individuals making available various meanings, ideas and versions of the world. Locke argues that CDA,

“Aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between discursive practices, events and texts, wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes, to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power”.

Van Dijk (2006: 279) and McGregor (2010: 2) argue that the role of CDA is to “provide an account of the role of language, language use, discourse or communicative events in the production of dominance and inequality. CDA attempts to comprehend the relationship between the actual texts and the processes involved in producing the text. CDA analyses, criticises and interprets the text. In this study, CDA interrogates how and why *The Herald* produced texts that were highly critical of some senior Zanu-PF officials. It tries to understand why the texts were especially produced towards the Zanu-PF elective national people’s congress held in Harare in December 2014 considering the fact that *The Herald* is being run by a Zanu-PF Information Minister, Professor Jonathan Moyo. Lucke (1996: 20) asserts that the role of CDA is to critique texts and to critically investigate issues related to texts in order to expose what is going on behind our back. McGregor (2010:14) states that the main aim of CDA is to “uncover the ideological assumptions that are hidden in the text”. CDA tries to understand what McGregor terms “the larger social context that bears upon the texts” while Van Dijk (2006: 259) believes that CDA “focuses on the structure of the text and talk, namely the power enactment and discourse production.” That is, understanding and explaining power. The purpose of CDA, according to Blommaert and Bulcaen (2000: 448) is to analyse “opaque and transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language” Therefore, CDA works as some kind of enlightenment tool on receivers of media texts. Language is the heart of CDA and CDA is necessary for describing, interpreting, analyzing and critiquing social life reflected in the text. Of importance to note is the fact that CDA takes particular interest in the relationship between language and power. Bryman (2012) posits that CDA is heavily borrowed from the theories and approaches of the French postmodernist scholar, Michel Foucault. Foucault argues that discourse is a game of power. Discourse sets parameters of what can be said and

cannot be said about a particular topic. It imposes itself as truth and is concerned with knowledge and power.

Methods of Data Presentation

A thematic approach was used to present findings. Braun and Clarke (2006:82) note that, “a theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within data set”. There are several themes that came out from the texts produced by *The Herald* about some Zanu-PF officials that happen to contradict the basic tenets of the political economy theory. Thematic approach is largely used in qualitative data; this study is premised on qualitative research making this method of data presentation perfect for this particular study.

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