An investigation into the sustainability of community radio. Campus radio as case-study

by

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This dissertation is dedicated to my parents for their ongoing support and patience. Also to Uncle Danny- a full life lived by a great man.

Abstract

There is a dearth of information on community radio in South Africa; although much attention has been given to the role of community radio in development, education and community representation, there has been very little focus on community radio's functioning within South Africa's current broadcast system. The researcher explored the viability of the current conception of community radio by means of a literature review, as well as an examination of the South African Advertising Research Foundation's listener figures for community radio stations across South Africa. The researcher then investigated how conducive the present broadcasting climate is to the growth of this medium through the use of a campus radio station as case-study.

Semi-structured interviews were held with the management staff of a campus radio station; a thematic analysis was then conducted on the completed interviews so as to extract the meanings inherent in the participant's experience. As such, the question of whether community radio can continue to survive within South Africa's three-tier system of broadcasting without a radical re-conceptualization of the broadcasting system itself, was addressed. .

The researcher explored what community radio gives to the world of broadcasting that commercial and public radio does not, and how these contributions can be compounded to ensure the long term sustainability of this medium. These arguments were then put forth in the creation of a hypothetical re-conceptualization of a new broadcasting system.

Key words: Broadcast environment, community radio, radio listenership, niche audience, public service broadcasting, sustainability, broadcast system.

Samevatting

Inligting oor gemeenskapsradio is geredelik in die literatuur beskikbaar. Hierdie inligting handel hoofsaaklik oor die rol wat gemeenskapsradio speel in ontwikkeling, opvoeding asook die verteenwoordiging van die betrokke gemeenskap vir wie daar uitgesaai word. Oor die rol en funksie van gemeenskapsradio binne die Suid-Afrikaanse konteks, veral binne die huidige uitsaaibedeling, is die fokus in die geraadpleegde literatuur egter nie duidelik nie. Die navorser het in hierdie studie die volhoubaarheid van die gedagte van gemeenskapsradio ondersoek deur 'n literatuurstudie en 'n ontleding te doen van die luistersyfers van die Suid-Afrikaanse Reklamenavorsingstigting. Voorts is die huidige uitsaaiklimaat vir die ontwikkeling van die plaaslike gemeenskapsradiosektor ondersoek deur 'n kampusradio as gevallestudie te gebruik.

Semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude is met die bestuur van die kampusradio onderneem, waarna 'n tematiese analise van die onderhoude betekenisse in die ervaring van die deelnemers geïdentifiseer het. Die vraag of gemeenskapsradio binne die huidige uitsaaibedeling kan oorleef sonder 'n radikale herkonseptualisering daarvan is vervolgens aangespreek.

Die navorser het die unieke bydraes wat gemeenskapsradio tot die uitsaaibedryf maak (in teenstelling met kommersiële en openbare radio) ondersoek. Voorts is aanduidings gegee hoe hierdie bydraes saamgestel kan word om die langtermyn oorlewing van gemeenskapsradio te verseker. Hierdie argumente is gebruik vir die skepping van 'n hipotetiese herkonseptualisering van 'n nuwe uitsaaibedeling in Suid-Afrika.

Sleutelwoorde: Uitsaai omgewing, gemeenskapsradio, radiogehoorsuifers, nisgehoor, openbare diens uitsaai, uitsaai-stelsel, volhoubaarheid.

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1 Motivation for study

There is a dearth of information regarding community radio in South Africa. Much attention has been given to the role of community radio in development, education and community representation, but very little focus on community radio's functioning within the current broadcast system in South Africa. The researcher explores the viability of the current conception of community radio, and how conducive our present broadcasting climate is to the growth of this medium through the use of a campus radio station as case-study. The researcher investigates what community radio gives to the world of broadcasting that commercial and public radio does not, and how these contributions can be compounded to ensure the long term sustainability of this medium. These arguments are put forth in the creation of a hypothetical re-conceptualization of a broadcasting system.

2 The Changing Broadcast Environment

2.1 The Current Situation

The South African broadcasting environment has altered significantly, and continues to change, since its conception in 1923; from 3 licenses issued, the environment is unrecognizable with a total of 123 licenses currently held by South African radio broadcasters (SAARF, 2005). According to the first release wave of the South African Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF) RAMS 2006, South Africans spend an average of 4 hours and 43 minutes listening to radio per day (SAARF, 2006)

Radio in South Africa, and globally, face new challenges posed by advances in cellular phone technologies, digital satellite stations, Ipods, mp3s and webcasting, which is the broadcasting of audio through the use of internet technology. This 'internet radio' has a similar content, style of broadcasting and programming format to that of traditional radio, but merely utilizes a different mode of transmission, one that overrides traditional distribution problems and moves from a centralized, frequency- based system to a decentralized system (Sawyer & Greely, 2000).

According to Sawyer and Greely (2000), the advantages of this new technology are:

- Internet radio is global
- There is very little legislative control over internet radio except for violation of copyright laws
- Internet radio benefits from the one – to – one communication format rather than the traditional one – to – many broadcasting format
- Internet radio can combine with other media and communications technologies found on the web
- Anyone can start their own internet radio station, unlike conventional radio stations where a broadcasting license and a large capital investment is crucial.

An example of this technology which is currently available in South Africa is Worldspace Systems. Worldspace Systems combine the use of satellites and digital transmission to create a new broadcasting medium that makes communication possible where previously it would have been limited; South Africans now have access to 40 global genres of music (SAARF, 2006).

In 2004, 80.8% of South African households had a radio compared to 59.2% of households which had a television set (Statistics South Africa, 2004). Radio penetration is markedly evident in the lower income brackets. According to the South African Advertising Research Foundation's Living Standards Measure, the LSM 1 category which accounts for 6.1% (1 895 000) of the adult population and consists of mainly rural females between 16 and 24 years of age or older than 50 years of age, who only have a primary school education, reside mainly in huts and receive an average monthly income of R 1003 rely on radio as the main mode of communication (80% of these households own a radio compared to just 7% who own a television). The SAARF LSM (Living Standards Measure) has become the most widely used marketing research tool in Southern Africa. It divides the population into ten LSM groups, 10 (highest) to 1 (lowest). It cuts across race and instead groups people according to their living standards using criteria such as degree of urbanization and ownership of cars and major appliances (SAARF, 2007).

The South African broadcast environment is unique, because, with a 30% illiteracy rate for adults over 15 years of age, radio is more accessible than print media (South Africa Yearbook, 2004/05). In July 2004, the public broadcaster, the SABC, consisted of 18 radio stations broadcasting in 13 languages, which when combined; reached an average daily audience of 19 million adults (South Africa Yearbook, 2004/05). Such a large and diverse audience has resulted in the transformation of radio into a growing economic concern, yet current legal constraints on a private media company's ownership of radio assets limits ownership to a maximum of two AM and two FM licenses (Laschinger, 2005).

As such, radio as broadcasting medium is an asset which must be nurtured and protected. According to Jansen (1995), community radio is a participatory form of communication which has the capacity to alter the balance of social and cultural power within communities. Olorunnisola (2002) believes that participatory communication should result in the restoration or installment of pride, self-esteem and identity in communities which have previously been disenfranchised.

Olorunnisola (2002) has categorized community radio stations into four distinct types, namely:

- Stations which serve a particular geographical area, for example, Bush Radio
- Campus-based radio stations that are active on university and college campuses
- Religious-based radio stations
- Radio stations which target cultural and ethnic communities

Coyer (2002) ascribes the following functions to community radio:

- To inform the community about community problems
- To produce a critical conscience within the community
- To generate community solidarity
- Develop communication networks within the community

It is within this context that community radio occupies a unique position within the broadcasting sector, and shoulders a heavy responsibility to fulfill its mandate potential.

2.2 Radio Listenership

The South African Advertising Research Foundation's (SAARF) RAMS (Radio Audience Measurement Survey) product is a useful tool for analyzing trends in radio listenership. RAMS utilizes a survey which gathers data on the listening habits of South Africans over a 7 day period (SAARF, 2006).

According to SAARF (2006), further objectives covered by the RAMS product are:

- Times listened to each station, for each day of the week, for each quarter hour of the day from 00:00 to 24:00
- Radio stations listened to in the past 4 weeks
- Favourite radio stations

Adults, aged 16 years or older, in all of the nine provinces, are given radio self completion diaries to complete in their own homes (SAARF, 2006).

According to RAMS 2006 (utilizing the 'past 7 days' methodology), total community radio listenership has increased from 6, 180 000 in November 2005, to 6, 362 000 in October 2006, an increase of 182 000 listeners. Non-community radio (which includes public and commercial broadcasters) has increased during the past 7 days from 27 269 000 listeners in November 2005, to 27 658 000 listeners in October 2006, an increase of 399 000 listeners (SAARF, 2006). The latest RAMS (February 2007) release reveal that total community radio listenership is currently standing at 6 618 000, while non-community radio is currently boasts 27 913 000 listeners (SAARF, 2007).

Currently, the top 5 largest community radio stations in terms of audience size are:

- Jozi Fm in Gauteng with 487 000 listeners
- UNITRA Community Radio in the Eastern Cape with 400 000 listeners
- Radio Tygerberg in the Western Cape with 318 000 listeners
- Sekgosese Community Radio in Limpopo with 298 000 listeners
- Radio Khwezi in Kwazulu - Natal with 206 000 listeners

(SAARF, 2007).

Comparably, the largest group of non-community radio station in terms of listenership figures is the South African Broadcasting Corporation's (SABC) Fusion 9 (ALS) public radio stations with 19 965 000 listeners (SAARF, 2007). As such, community radio stations are metaphorical ants in comparison to the giants in the rest of the South African radio broadcasting sector; struggling with a constant lack of financial resources while simultaneously battling these giants for listeners as well as their share of advertising revenue.

2.3 Legislation

Legislation is an important contextual variable affecting the sustainability of any media sector. As such, it is important to thoroughly examine the way in which community radio is currently legislated within South Africa's broadcasting system.

The South African broadcasting environment is heavily legislated through four distinct statutes, namely the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) Act of 2000, the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act of 1993, the Broadcasting Act of 1999 and the Telecommunications Authority Act no. 103 of 1996.

The ICASA Act of 2000 allowed for the establishment of the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) which took over the joint functions of the South African Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (SATRA) and the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA), and was tasked with the regulation and control of the radio frequency spectrum and the industry in its entirety.

ICASA's mandate includes:

- The licensing of broadcasters and telecommunications operators
- Formulating rules, policies and regulations that govern the broadcasting and telecommunications sectors
- The monitoring of the activities of the licensees and enforcing compliance
- Planning and regulating the broadcast frequency spectrum
- Receiving, hearing and adjudicating complaints
- Regulating the broadcasting and telecommunications industry as a whole

(South African Yearbook, 2004/5).

The Broadcasting Act of 1999 (Act 4 of 1999) and the Independent Broadcasting Act of 1993 (Act 153 of 1993) are aimed at establishing and developing a broadcasting policy to regulate and control South Africa's varied and multi-leveled broadcasting environment, and, to:

- Contribute to democracy, nation building, the provision of education, and the strengthening of the moral fibre of society
- To encourage the ownership and control of broadcasting services by people from historically disadvantaged communities
- To ensure fair competition in the sector

- Provide for a three-tier system of public, commercial and community broadcasting services
- Establish a strong and committed public broadcaster to service the needs of all South Africans

(South African Yearbook, 2004/05).

As defined by the IBA Act of 1993 and the Broadcasting Act of 1999, a three-tier system of broadcasting exists in South Africa. Community radio occupies one tier, the public broadcaster (the SABC) and commercial broadcasters occupy the remaining two tiers (Wigston, 2001). The SABC and commercial broadcasters are able to function as profit driven enterprises; the SABC in particular derives income from both licensing fees and advertising revenue. Community stations are run non-commercially as trusts, charitable organizations or Section 21 companies. It is in this competitive broadcasting environment that 94 community stations clamour to survive, thus, it is doubtful whether there is indeed fair competition in the broadcasting sector.

The primary aim of the Telecommunications Authority Act no. 103 of 1996 is to provide for the regulation and control of telecommunication matters in the public interest, and thus aims to:

- Promote the universal and affordable provision of telecommunication services;
- Promote the provision of a wide range of telecommunication services in the interest of the economic growth;
- Make progress towards the universal provision of telecommunication services;
- Encourage investment and innovation in the telecommunications industry;

- Encourage the development of a competitive and effective telecommunications manufacturing and supply sector;

- Promote the development of telecommunication services which are responsive to the needs of users and consumers;

- Ensure that, in relation to the provision of telecommunication services, the needs of the local communities and areas are taken into account;

- Ensure that the needs of disabled persons are taken into account;

- Ensure compliance with accepted technical standards in the provision and development of telecommunication services;

- Ensure fair competition within the telecommunications industry;

- Promote the stability of the telecommunications industry;

- Encourage ownership and control of telecommunication services by persons from historically disadvantaged groups;

- Protect the interests of telecommunications users and consumers;

- Encourage the development of human resources in the telecommunications industry;

- Promote small, medium and micro-enterprises within the telecommunications industry;

- Ensure efficient use of the radio frequency spectrum;

- Promote the empowerment and advancement of women in the telecommunications industry.

- Promote and facilitate convergence of telecommunication, broadcasting and information technology;

- Develop the Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) strategy in order to bridge the digital divide

(Telecommunications Act no. 103, 1996).

The Telecommunications Authority Act no. 103 of 1996 ensures the broadcasting sector becomes a vehicle for transformation and democracy in South Africa. As the

cornerstone of any democracy, it is crucial that there are structures in place to uphold freedom of the press. Freedom of the press enables the poor and marginalized members of society to access information and communication channels and thus enhances knowledge, information and empowerment (Media Institute of Southern Africa, 2005).

Brown (1996) argues that radio and television industries are among the most highly regulated industries in the world; the result of both the cultural and political importance of broadcasting in society well as the historical function of governments in managing the radio spectrum. The degree to which each broadcasting sector is regulated is, according to Brown (1996) the product of the historical, political and ideological forces in each country. The South African broadcasting environment is heavily legislated through four distinct statutes which allows for the regular and equitable functioning of the Broadcast sector. However, the very legislation which formulates the rules, policies and regulations that govern the broadcasting and telecommunications sectors can also stifle the growth and development of community radio stations.

2.4 The Broadcast Environment in the Sub-Saharan Region

South Africa, as a broadcasting environment, does not function in isolation; as part of the African continent it is subject to the ebb and flow of political, ideological and economic tides occurring in other African countries. As such, the researcher will now examine the broadcasting systems in other sub-Saharan African countries in an attempt to contextualize our current broadcasting system.

Sub-Saharan Africa is an area larger than the United States of America with an estimated population of 630 million people, or 10.5% of the worlds' population (Pitts, 2002). Of these 630 million people, there are only 161 radios per 1,000 people, compared to the United States which boasts 2,116 radios per 1,000 people (Pitts, 2002). This is a rather dire situation when considering that radio is imperative to the flow of information in Africa (Fardon & Furniss, 2000). Pitts (2002) states that access to information about health, economic and governance issues are one of the only ways available to Africans to overcome many of the obstacles they face. However, as Hachten (1971) believes, 'authoritarian' is an apt term to describe the media systems in Africa. Carver (2000) agrees, stating that the model of government control of the media which occurs throughout Africa exists in one of three forms, namely through a government information ministry, a government-organized corporation, or direct party control. As Pitts (2002) notes, it is the quantity and availability of information which are utilized in the production of power. South Africa's democratic broadcasting system must therefore bear the responsibility of being an example to the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Angola

There are approximately 815 000 radio sets and approximately 196 000 television receivers in Angola. Air waves are controlled and regulated by the National Radio of Angola with laws restricting the expansion of broadcasting to rural areas (Media Institute of Southern Africa, 2005). In 2004, UNICEF established the Youth Community Radio Programme to train young people between the ages of 12 and 18 years on enunciation, pronunciation, outdoor reporting skills, interviewing and dramatization; equipment and material for radio production was also provided (Media Institute of South Africa, 2005).

Botswana

The National Broadcasting Act of 1998 resulted in the creation of the National Broadcasting Board (NBB); however, the broadcasting sector is still under strict control of the government with radio programmes subject to censorship and cancellation. Botswana has 8AM, 13FM and 4 shortwave radio stations (Media Institute of Southern Africa, 2005).

Lesotho

Five commercial and one community radio stations were opened between 1993 and 2004 due to the creation of the Lesotho Telecommunications Authority Act of 2000. The Lesotho government has committed itself to the Southern African Development Community's (SADC) Protocol on Culture, Information and Sport, Declarations on Information, Communications and Technology, and Freedom of Expression (Media Institute of Southern Africa, 2005). In accordance with the mandate of the SADC Protocol, member countries agree to co-operate in the area of information in order to achieve the following:

- co-operate and collaborate in the promotion, establishment and growth of community, commercial, public, regional and global media for the free flow of information;
- Strengthen public information institutions to be effective gatherers and disseminators of information and news;
- Develop and promote regional culture, opinion and talent by increasing local content in the media such as magazines, radio, television, video, film and new information technologies;

- Take positive measures to narrow the information gap between the rural and urban areas by increasing the coverage of the mass media, whether private, public or community-based;

- Encourage the use of indigenous languages in the mass media as vehicles of promoting local, national and regional inter-communication;

- Ensuring that the media are adequately sensitized on gender issues so as to promote gender equality and equity in information dissemination;

- Build public faith and accountability in information institutions by enhancing local, national and regional ownership;

- Turn organs of communications into genuine and credible market places of ideas by encouraging diversity, breadth and professionalism in ownership and editorial policy;

- Place communication at the disposal of communities, nation-states and SADC for the articulation and development of a tolerant, multicultural, multi-ethnic and multilingual regional culture in the global context;

- Utilize communication to build and strengthen solidarity and understanding with other communities, especially those in the developing world;

- Co-operate in the protection of children from harmful information and cultural products, as well as in strengthening children's self-expression and access to means of communications

(Media Institute of Southern Africa, 2005).

Malawi

The Malawi Communication Regulatory Authority (MACRA) controls the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation, Malawi Television, community broadcasters, school broadcasters, the 9 AM and 5 FM stations, and all individuals involved in broadcasting in the country (Media Institute of Southern Africa, 2005). On the 4th of June, 2006, Malawian community radio stations were ordered by the government to stop airing news

reports, which include critical and investigative reporting (Afrol News, 2006). Government maintained that community broadcasters are not permitted to hijack the role of public broadcasters (Afrol News, 2006).

Mozambique

Mozambique, one of the world's poorest countries, has over the past ten years seen an increase in community radio stations; from 1994 when the first community station began to broadcast, to nearly 50 stations in 2005 (Jallov, 2005). The stations are owned either by the state, the Catholic Church, by the municipality or by a community association. The Government in Mozambique has been instrumental in the establishment of community radio stations in the country, yet the government is accused of using the state broadcasters as propaganda tools during the elections (Media Institute of Southern Africa, 2005). Mozambique bears the scars of almost 30 years of civil war with an infrastructure that has been heavily damaged, but more telling are the social scars which bear witness to a country whose socio-cultural identity is in crisis. According to the results of an impact assessment conducted by Jallov (2005) to determine the effects that eight community radio stations would have on their communities:

- The radio stations helped generate an increased awareness of cultural identity and created self-confidence within the community
- The community stations helped develop a space for the free discussion of HIV/AIDS
- The stations aided in the improvement of the dissemination of relevant information in the area of health-related issues

- The stations played an important role in maintaining security and stability amongst citizens by aiding the police through the dissemination of information regarding 'community policing'
- Several communities demonstrated an increased level of transparency in public administration, as well as an increased involvement of women in public life
- The stations helped create self-esteem, pride and empowerment within the communities

According to Jallov (2005) in post-conflict situations such as Mozambique, community radio stations are seen as an important factor contributing towards the healing of social tissue.

Namibia

The Namibia Broadcasting Corporation is completely under government control, and continues to be used as a governmental propaganda tool. Namibia has 2 AM and 39 FM radio stations but no public broadcaster (Media Institute of Southern Africa, 2005). In 1995 the Katutura Community Radio (KCR) station was launched by a number of non-governmental organizations. The station's goal is to provide a platform for participatory communication, education, debate, and to give marginalized sectors of the community an opportunity to be heard (Media Institute of Southern Africa, 2005).

Swaziland

The Swaziland Broadcasting Information Service broadcasts nationally and is under governmental control; dissenting political opinions are not permitted to be broadcast by either their 3 AM or 2 FM radio stations (Media Institute of Southern Africa, 2005).

Tanzania

The Tanzania Broadcasting Services Act (1993) regulates the broadcasting sector although a lack of policy has resulted in the domination of commercial broadcasters. Tanzania has 12 AM and 11 FM radio stations (Media Institute of Southern Africa, 2005).

Zambia

The Amendment Act of Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) and the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act (IBA) regulates the Zambian broadcasting sector and the 19 AM and 11 FM radio stations in the country; yet the government still has a lot of control over the industry (Media Institute of Southern Africa, 2005). According to a study done by Pitts (2002) on radio listening and news prominence in Zambia, radio listening occupied the greatest amount of respondents' time with 51.1% of respondents indicating that they spent the majority of their time listening to radio.

Zimbabwe

The Zimbabwe Broadcasting Holding controls all broadcasts in the country. The Broadcast Services Act (BSA) was established to prohibit the creation of new broadcasting services. No foreigner is allowed to own shares in any broadcasting service, and no Zimbabwean individual is permitted to own more than 10 per cent of shares in a broadcasting service. Zimbabwe permits community radio stations under the Broadcasting Services Act. However, the Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe is yet to issue an announcement for community license applications (Media Institute of Southern Africa, 2005).

2.5 Overview

The broadcast environments in the Sub-Saharan region seem to be burdened by restrictive political agendas; this has resulted in the continued marginalization of developing countries and their isolation from their more developed counterparts. The SADC Protocol on Culture, Information and Sport is a noble and admirable attempt to reform this situation and if strictly adhered to, would result in the liberalization of the airwaves. The South African broadcasting system by comparison, although heavily legislated, has become a vehicle for nation building and democratic growth in South Africa. It can be concluded that with a current total of 123 licensed radio broadcasters in South Africa, the radio industry is flourishing. However, in the face of pervasive global challenges to the radio medium, for example the advances in cellular phone technologies, digital satellite stations, Ipods and mp3s to name a few, the continued sustainability of the already marginalized community radio sector is highly questionable.

3 Research Outline

3.1 Research Problem

Can community radio continue to survive within South Africa's three-tier system of broadcasting without a radical re-conceptualization?

3.1.1   Research Aims

To evaluate whether community radio can continue to survive within South Africa's three-tier system of broadcasting

- To explore the psychological factors which contribute to sustainability within the broadcasting environment
- To explore some of the challenges faced by community radio management
- To construct a hypothetical conceptualization of a broadcasting system

3.1.2   Paradigmatic Point of Departure

The researcher will utilize the Eco-Systemic Paradigm, which is an integration of Systems Theory, Ecology and Cybernetics, as a point of departure for this study. According to the Eco-systemic Paradigm, all things are bound together in a complex but systematic way, and the goal of such an approach is to discover the communication networks that connect various systems, and the transactions which occur between systems. This paradigm is particularly pertinent to this study as the researcher's goal is to discover whether or not community radio, as a sub-system, can continue to survive within the South African broadcasting system without the restructuring and reorganization of the entire system (Meyer, Moore & Viljoen, 1997). As such, the

researcher's choice of a qualitative approach to this study fits well within the conceptual framework of this paradigm.

3.1 Research Methodology

Literature Based Research

3.1.1 Research Design

The researcher utilized a qualitative approach as the basis of an exploratory study on the sustainability of community radio within the South African broadcasting environment.

The triangulation method was utilized so as to give comprehensive coverage to the theme. Triangulation was originally adopted in the social sciences in the form of 'multiple operationalism' which is the use of multiple independent measurements as a means of minimizing any bias from the use of a single method as so increase the validity of a particular study. The researcher utilized 'data triangulation', a form of the triangulation method whereby different data on the same phenomenon are collected and analyzed (Heaton, 2004).

The triangulation method was achieved by means of:

1. An extensive literature review

The researcher has reviewed studies done on community radio in South Africa, with particular attention given to the challenges faced by this sector.

2. *Tuks Fm as Case – Study*

Tuks Fm was utilized by the researcher as a case-study so as to explore some of the challenges faced by community radio stations within our current broadcasting environment.

3. *South African Advertising Research Foundation's (SAARF) RAMS Data*

SAARF RAMS data was used to illustrate community radio listener trends across provinces and across Gauteng; and for the purpose of contextualizing Tuks Fm as a case-study.

3.1.2   Data Analysis

LeCompte and Schensul (1999) define 'analysis' as the process whereby a researcher reduces data to a story and its interpretation. A thematic analysis was conducted on the completed interviews so as to extract the meanings inherent in the participant's experience. In particular, the researcher utilized McCracken's (1998) 5-step method of analysis. McCracken's analytic method presumes that the researcher has utilized one or more theoretical frameworks to guide the development of the research question in addition to having completed a thorough literature review (Piercy, 2004).

The 5-step analytic process, with each step representing a higher level of generality, is as follows:

a. The first step is the reading and reviewing of each interview transcript twice, the first time for content understanding, and the second time for the identification of useful comments noted as observations (Piercy, 2004).

b. During the second step, observations are developed into preliminary descriptive and interpretative categories based on information provide in the transcripts, the literature review, and the theoretical framework used to guide the research (Piercy, 2004).

c. The third step of this process involves a thorough examination of these preliminary codes so as to identify connections and develop pattern codes (Piercy, 2004).

d. The fourth step is the determination of basic themes by examining clusters of comments made by respondents, as well as memos made by the researcher (Piercy, 2004).

e. The final step involves examining themes from all interviews so as to delineate predominant themes contained in the data. These themes then serve as answers to the research question/s and the basis for writing up the data (Piercy, 2004).

3.1.3 Philosophical Justification for use of Thematic Analysis as a Research Tool

Phenomenology can be utilized as a defense for the use of thematic analysis; as a paradigm, it seeks to explicate the essence and structure of both human experience and human behaviour through the use of descriptive techniques (Giorgi, 1971).

The following phenomenological assertions are of particular relevance to the defense of thematic analysis:

- The individual and his/her world co-constitute each other and are in perpetual dialogue, as such, a person is viewed as a 'being-in-the-world' (Giorgi, 1971)
- Individuals have situational freedom only as his/her freedom is constrained by a given situation which the world has thrust upon him/her (Giorgi, 1971)
- 'Lebenswelt' (life-world) is the beginning of all existence and is pre-reflective; it is independent of all knowledge but is also the starting point of all knowledge. Language is a reflective process and thus does not always give an accurate impression of the life-world (Giorgi, 1971)

According to Velthuysen (1985), phenomenology is not a theory but an attitude towards doing philosophy exemplified by the phenomenological method. The 'phenomenological method' according to Giorgi (1971), seeks to understand phenomena in their perceived immediacy and is not concerned with explaining, predicting or controlling them. Thus, the task of the researcher is to allow a description of the pre-reflective life-world to be brought to the level of reflective awareness where it manifests itself as meaning.

3.1.4   Objective

- To create a hypothetical new broadcasting model

The researcher has constructed a hypothetical conceptualization of a new broadcasting system which utilizes the strengths of existing broadcasting systems; this new model allows for the more equitable co-existence of commercial, community and public broadcasting elements within the South African broadcast environment. The new model allows for the continued sustainability, as well as growth, of the community broadcasting sector.

The researcher will now argue that community radio no longer serves a niche audience with niche interests due to the pervasive forces of acculturation, urbanization and globalization; and as such, community broadcasters are being forced to compete against public and commercial broadcasters for listeners and advertising revenue, but with far fewer available resources.

Chapter 2: <u>Niche Audience with Niche Interests?</u>

'The contradictory movement of globalization and the fragmentation of culture simultaneously involves the revitalization and world-wide extension of the local'

Martin-Barbero (2002), p. 236

South African broadcasting legislature, namely the Broadcasting Act of 1999, the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act of 1993 and the Telecommunications Authority Act, no. 103 of 1996, create nation-building objectives which stand in strong opposition to the current force of globalization (Duncan, 2000). In particular, broadcasting has been potentialized into a lucrative enterprise through the global economy's shift in emphasis from manufacturing to services. This world-wide shift has had an effect on the media sector, and in turn the micro-system of community broadcasting. In the face of such adversity, is it still apt to define community radio as a medium which serves a niche audience with niche interests?

Fine (1996) believes that 'culture' guides our understanding and behaviour; shapes how we approach the world. According to Schroeder (1992), Max Weber defined 'culture' as 'the endowment of a finite segment of the meaningless infinity of events in the world with meaning and significance from the standpoint of human beings' (p. 6). Schroeder (1992) explains that Weber's conception of cultural change involves a differentiation between the spheres of social life. According to Weber (1920), the religious and intellectual spheres are the predominant sites of social change. These spheres can

either overlap, in which case the beliefs in one sphere tend to reinforce those in another, or they may become differentiated and thus come into conflict with each other. Whenever the spheres come into conflict, there is a greater potential for the impact of ideas, whereas an overlapping of the spheres means that ideas remain part of the social fabric. The degree of conflict between the spheres of life is therefore an important indicator of how much scope there is for cultural change (Schroeder, 1992). Thus, a conflict between an individual's ethnicity and the rising tide of globalization would necessitate the need for a 'cultural change', whether that change is assimilation, or a birth of a new identity.

Riggins (1992) believes that 'ethnicity' is defined in a number of ways, but that there is a general consensus that it refers to a group of people who perceive themselves as constituting a community due to a common culture, language, religion, to name a few. A collective identity is then based on this symbolic commonality. However, according to Anderson (1983), 'ethnicity' is a social construction and is a negotiated self-identity which forms part of an 'imagined community'. Staino (1980) believes that because groups are constantly disappearing through assimilation and acculturation, and reforming, identity formation is a dynamic process. According to Riggins (1992), the mass media play a crucial role in this dynamic process of identity formation by preserving or weakening ethnic affiliations.

According to Smith (1990), the concept of a 'global culture' is a misnomer, as one can not refer to 'culture' in the singular. Instead, one needs to make do with a 'transnational culture/s', a collective of beliefs, rituals and perceptions which transcend national boarders. This 'transnational culture/s' is a constructed culture which creates, in a

sense, an 'imagined community' no longer constrained by geographic, ethnic, economic or racial limitations. This 'globalization of culture', according to Featherstone (1990), is a process whereby the exchange and flow of goods, services, people and information gives rise to communication processes which gain autonomy on a global level.

These communication processes become 'third cultures' which are conduits for diverse cultural flows.

Habermas (1999), states that a 'we-consciousness' initially becomes founded on an imagined blood relation or on a belief that a common origin is shared by a group of people. This 'we-consciousness' set individuals apart from their environment and became the core of every 'nation-state'. Thus, a 'we-consciousness' is fluid and transient, subject to the constitutive whims of a group of individuals who believe that commonalities are shared and should be held sacred. According to Smith (1990), a 'culture' is not bestowed upon a passive population who were hitherto a collective tabula rasa, and as such, an 'identity' refers to the shared subjective feelings and valuations of a group.

In particular, Smith (1990) believes that an 'identity' is comprised of:

- a shared sense of continuity between the past, present and future
- shared memories
- a shared destiny

Considering this definition of an 'identity', a 'transnational culture', unlike a national culture, is memory less, and 'shared memories' can be substituted with 'shared economic activities'.

'Transnational cultures' gain momentum through global market liberalism (capitalism) and free trade policies, which the researcher shall henceforth refer to as 'neo-liberalism'. Neo-liberalism refers to a political-economic philosophy which aims to intensify and expand all markets by increasing the number, frequency, repeatability and formalization of all market related transactions. Neo-liberalism champions two interconnected concepts, namely 'universal access' and 'universal appeal'; the cornerstones upon which the process of globalization rests (Duncan, 2000).

'Universal access' and 'universal appeal' makes redundant:

- the radio programming for special interest groups
- the concept of the existence of a niche audience
- vernacular-based radio stations
- nation-building as a goal of broadcasting

Featherstone (1990) agrees with Smith (1990), and claims that a process has occurred in which a series of 'cultural flows' has resulted in both a cultural homogeneity and cultural disorder whereby 'pockets' of homogenous cultures have become grafted onto each other so as to form 'transnational cultures' which exist beyond the scope of national boundaries.

Appadurai (1996) believes that there are five dimensions of this 'cultural flow', namely:

- *Ethnoscapes:* produced by flows of people
- *Technoscapes:* machinery and technology flows
- *Finanscapes:* produced by rapid flows of money
- *Mediascapes:* produced by flows of images and information

- *Ideoscapes:* produced by the flow of ideologies and beliefs

The media therefore creates and is created by this 'cultural flow', and becomes crucial in the construction of these 'imagined communities'.

Innis (1950) believes that communication networks impact upon social forms of organization and as such, restructures the parameters of time and space.

Any given medium of communication, as opposed to the message, is biased in terms of either space or time; space biased media – i.e. the press - facilitate the decentralization of authority whereas time biased media – i.e. broadcasting - help sustain centralized forms of tradition as the message is short lived and is only capable of traveling short distances at any given time.

McLuhan and Fiore (1967) built on Innis's work, but instead believed that the medium *is* the message. McLuhan and Fiore (1967) stated that the dominance of written forms of communication had cultivated a 'rationalized culture that was linear, uniform and infinitely repeatable'. However, McLuhan and Fiore believed that 'hot' media which disallows participation and is high in informational content, for instance newspapers, was gradually being replaced with 'cool' media which leave more room for audience participation, i.e. radio, which allows for the democratization of opinion.

Furthermore, McLuhan and Fiore (1967) stated that with the dominance of these 'cool' media, the co-ordinates of time and space will vanish, and the resulting global village will sweep aside the 'uniform and linear culture of print production' and replace it with a

culture of 'simultaneous happenings', communication networks with no connecting centre, for example, the internet.

Yang and Shanahan's (2003) research on economic openness and media penetration indicate a strong link between a global economy and the increasing levels of global media expansion. Based on the premise that media consumption is intertwined with social change, Yang and Shanahan concluded that as people become more invested in a global economy; they become increasingly driven to consume greater amounts of information so as to become better equipped to deal with a rapidly changing world. Additionally, the level of radio receiver penetration per country was found by the researchers to be positively related to literacy, levels of urbanization and GDP per capita.

What effect does this have on the concept of 'niche audiences with niche interests', the very reason for the existence of community radio stations? Considering vernacular based radio stations, Boloka (2006) conducted a random survey at the Durban Institute of Technology (DIT). The aims of the research were to determine the respondents' demographic profile as well as their patterns of media consumption. The results of the study were that although a number of DIT's campuses host a large number of black and Indian students, vernacular based stations like Lotus FM and Ukhozi FM did not feature in the top three most popular radio stations; instead, 36% listen to 5fm, 20% to East Coast Radio, and 16% to Metro Fm (three stations which broadcast predominantly in English). Boloka (2006) concluded that racial and ethnic affiliations are becoming less important in determining a listener's loyalty to a particular radio station.

Allow me to suggest a re-conceptualization of 'community' radio from a broadcasting medium which serves a niche audience with niche interests- whether they be religious, ethnic, geographic or any other,- to a medium which delivers a perspective on a 'transnational culture' ; a window onto a wider landscape. This re-conceptualization would greatly impact the hierarchical three-tier system of broadcasting. What would now separate community broadcasters from public broadcasters? According to Mpofu (1996), conceptions of 'public' and 'community' are highly contested in the South African environment, and as such, it is a difficult task to define a 'public service broadcaster'.

Chapter 3: <u>Public and Community- one and the same?</u>

Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) was established with the ideal of the cultural and intellectual enlightenment of society, with the main tenets being universality of service, diversity of programming, broadcasting provision for minority audiences, and the cultural and educational enrichment of society which can be traced back to documents prepared in support of the formation of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in 1927 (Museum of Broadcast Communications, 2006). The premise of the BBC was that it would be insulated from both political and commercial influences, and would obtain funding from license fees rather than from advertising revenue. This noble and pervasive broadcasting system developed with the guidance of the first Director General of the BBC, Lord Reith.

According to the BBC Evidence to the License Fee Review Panel presented on the 1st of March 1999, the purposes of the British Broadcasting Corporation are:

- to act as a civilizing force
- to become a benchmark for quality and innovation
- to provide support for democratic debate
- to provide support for domestic content
- to become the cultural 'glue' for the nation
- to exert an educational impact on society
- to create an information society for the masses

(Museum of Broadcast Communications, 2006).

Similar state-owned broadcasting systems which currently function either as a monopoly or as the dominant broadcast institution are:

- The Netherlands Broadcasting Foundation

- The Danish Broadcasting Corporation

- Radiodiffusion Television Francaise

- The Swedish Television Company

- Radiotelevisione Italiana

- The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

- The Australian Broadcasting Corporation

- The South African Broadcasting Corporation

(Museum of Broadcast Communications, 2006)

However, by the early 1990's, Public Service Broadcasting had lost some of its gilded edge as there was growing political and public dissatisfaction with the privileged position that the PSB's held; studies revealed that bureaucratic mismanagement, cost overruns and the misuse of funds were occurring on a regular basis (Museum of Broadcast Communications, 2006).

Public broadcasters have traditionally been associated with Keynesianism, where state intervention in the media was deemed necessary to ensure the fulfillment of public interest obligations (Duncan, 2000). However, Armstrong (2005) believes that although public intervention in broadcasting was justified in the past because of the scarcity of the broadcasting spectrum, the PSB model is no longer viable for the following reasons:

- the asymmetric treatment of broadcasters distorts the incentives of commercial broadcasters

- listeners have an increasing ability to avoid unappealing broadcast content which further weakens the rationale for public intervention in the broadcast sector

- one can no longer reasonably argue that Public Service Broadcasters would inform, educate and entertain in a way in which the private sector, left unregulated, would not do

Furthermore, Price and Verhulst (2001) argue that societies are moving towards an era of 'distributed public service' where obligations are not concentrated within a single institution; such an era risks weakening the Public Service Broadcasters, as entities which are currently classified as 'commercial' might have increased public service obligations in the future. As such, it is viable to suggest that the values of Public Service Broadcasting can be preserved and promoted by new institutions more befitting our dawning digital age.

Fourie (2003) believes that public service broadcasting entails the following:

- the provision of an impartial space for free expression and open debate
- provision for all interests and all tastes
- provision for the minorities
- concern for national identity and community
- universal accessibility

Based on the above, the main objectives of the SABC according to Mpofu (1996) are to address:

- inequality in infrastructure distribution
- inequality in resource allocation
- inequality in language, cultural and educational programming
- lack of diversity and choice
- lack of universal coverage and access

The SABC has to operate in a very complex media environment rife with competition, privatization, liberalization, commercialization and globalization; as well as a legal mandate to cater for eleven different languages and cultures. However, with its ever burgeoning market orientated approach, is it possible for the SABC to achieve these objectives, or has it become trapped between global economic pressures on the one hand, and the necessary pressures of a developing country on the other (Fourie, 2003) ?

'Globalization has made commercialization of aspects of the SABC inevitable'

(Mjwara, 1998)

Price and Verhulst (2001) interpret globalization to mean:

- the diminishing sovereignty of nation states
- the increasing integration of the world economy
- a technologically based shrinking of time and space
- the evolution of traditional ideas about identity
- the emergence of locally based global networks
- the emergence of a new form of global governance
- the lowering of cost barriers to the access of information across borders
- the development of new competitors to challenge the hegemony of Public Service Broadcasters

Public Service Broadcasters are mandated to put audiences before profit; however, the SABC has four main sources of funding: commercial (76% of revenue), licences (19% of revenue), government funding (1% of revenue), and other sources (4% of revenue) (Roberts, 2006). Thus, advertising revenue will necessarily have an impact on the SABC's programming content as it will be dictated by the tastes of an economically viable demographic. The SABC rakes in 62% of the total ad spend in radio and television, while community radio's share of ad spend amounts to 0.55%, despite the fact that it attracts 10.8% of listeners (Claasen, 2003). As media consumers, we are contributing to the SABC's funding in three ways: as a tax-payer, as a license-payer and through advertising as a consumer of goods (Roberts, 2006). The SABC announced at the end of their last financial year (31st March 2006) an after-tax profit of R 383 million, an increase of 97% on the previous period (Roberts, 2006).

Is the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) achieving true transformation, or is it merely leap-frogging from state broadcasting into the realm of private broadcasting? (Mpofu,1996). The SABC is now in the process of restructuring into a dual system as the Broadcasting Act provides for the SABC to be split up into a commercial and public service entity. The SABC will cease to be a parastatal, and become instead a publicly owned company with the government as 100% shareholder (Fourie, 2003). The SABC will then be comprised of eleven vernacular radio stations and two television channels (SABC 1 and 2); as well as a public commercial broadcasting service consisting of the commercial radio stations and SABC 3.

Considering the above arguments, what is the way forward? Public Service Broadcasters are increasingly being considered an outdated broadcasting system and

certainly not befitting an era so completely permeated by free choice as ours. Although public intervention in broadcasting may have been justified in the past, it can no longer be rationally argued that the continued existence of Public Service Broadcasters is justified by a hypothetical market failure scenario since it can be postulated that the private sector, if regulated, could sustain the weight of Public Service Broadcasting obligations. As such, it is reasonable to suggest that Public Service Broadcasters be replaced by commercial broadcasters with public service programming responsibilities.

Chapter 4: <u>The Psychological Factors which Contribute towards Sustainability within the Broadcasting Environment</u>

The psychological reasons for 'listening to the radio'- a seemingly passive activity, are many and varied. Mendelsohn (1973) stated that in general, radio functions as a diverting companion which fills the void created by routine and social isolation. This rather static view of radio is in stark contrast to Jansen's (1995) belief that community radio is a participatory form of communication which has the capacity to alter the balance of social and cultural power within communities. Coyer (2002) believes that community radio is more than just radio, that it is a means of social organization and representation based on shared interests and / or small geographic areas.

Political theorists, like David Truman, postulate that a society's political power is derived from community members' participation in many diverse groups- for example community radio stations (Kraus & Davis, 1976). It is thus Truman's belief that media institutions have the ability to affect politics through their very distinct roles as pluralistic interest groups. As such, community radio's function as a 'participatory form of communication' is imbued with the added potential of becoming an emancipatory and political role player within communities. This power is paradoxically heightened by the size and geographic constraints faced by community stations, and as such, it greatly exceeds the potential that may be harboured within our public and commercial broadcasters. Thus community radio needs to be viewed as a unique and valuable resource.

The researcher will utilize Friedland's theory of the Communicatively Integrated Community (2001), which is based on Habermas's Theory of Communicative Action, to explain the importance that a medium like community radio has within a community; and to answer the question as to whether, and how, the traditional concept of a 'community' still exists in our current post-industrial society. Friedland, assuming a definition of democracy as a deliberative and participatory activity, states that for democracy to work, community is necessary. Furthermore, democratic groupings are more likely to form in communities which are integrated through communication. The democratic self, according to Friedland (2001), is comprised of two separate but related entities. The first are publics of citizens, the second are the communities in which they live. The 'public' concerns the type of rule expected by democratic citizens, the 'community' concerns what kinds of selves are needed as the agents of this democratic activity. Thus community is an inextricable part of any democratic system.

However, a community is no longer the historical concept of a place where everyone knows everyone else personally, either through relation or civic activity; Friedland expounds on Habermas's (1981) two-level construction of life-world and system to substantiate the claim that 'community' is not lost, but has rather been transformed. Habermas's (1981) life-world represents the social arena, the area which is constituted through language and social interaction; the system level is where the autonomous institutions of power and money exist and exert an oftentimes disruptive influence on the life-world. At the seam of the life-world and the system, communities exist. Communities allow for the merging of these two distinct systems through the binding of

communication networks; these networks are the emergent form of social organization which replaces the traditional ties of place and civic duty.

As such, community radio can be viewed not only as a form of social organization, but also as a vehicle for democracy.

These additional roles of community radio need to be viewed within the greater context of the Uses and Gratifications theory which is based on the premise that the audience uses the media to gratify certain identified needs (McQuail, 1994).

McQuail (1994) defined four domains of individual needs which the media could gratify:

- the use of media as a form of diversion or escapism
- the use of media as a form of companionship for those who are socially isolated
- the use of media to understand and evaluate one's personal identity
- the use of media as a form of surveillance to provide information on the social world

These gratifications being sought thus translate into preferences for certain media and their content (Webster, Phalen & Lichty, 2000). Uses and gratifications research, in defining media audiences as 'active', broke away from the dominant paradigm of media effects in the 1950s, asking not what the media do to people, but what people do with media (Shroder,1999). The five elements of the Uses and Gratifications model as defined by Katz and Blumler (1974) are:

- the audience is conceived to be active and goal directed
- there is no straight line effect of media content on attitudes and behaviour

- the media competes with other sources of need satisfaction
- the goals of mass media can be derived from qualitative data supplied by individual audience members

Katz and Blumler (1974) summarize Uses and Gratifications research as *'a concern with the social and psychological origins of needs which generate expectations of mass media or other sources which lead to differential patterns of media exposure resulting in need gratifications and other consequences'* (p. 20)

Alasuutari (1999) states that media is an essential part of our everyday life; that it aids in our navigation of our social reality. In particular, Alasuutari (1999) believes that radio is an extension of ourselves with which we have immediate contact with our external world. In addition, radio has an invisible role as a 'mind-altering device'; we tune in to a station which corresponds to our current frame of mind thus enforcing or stabilizing our mood, or we may select a station which invokes an entirely different emotional state (Alasuutari, 1999).

As such, the listener audience has the power to shape any area of the radio sector, and is a resource which can be harboured to ensure the long-term sustainability of any medium. As such, this resource, the listener, will always be available, but what is being questioned is how best to organize a system so as to capture and keep this available resource. This question is especially crucial for the long-term sustainability of the marginalized community radio sector in a media environment characterized by increasing fragmentation and diversity.

3.1.5   The Active Audience

During the broadcasting era, the audience were viewed as 'masses', 'markets' and 'niches'. With the advent of the internet, the audience has been transformed into an interactive 'being' capable of independent decision making (Napoli, 2001).

Webster and Phalen (1994), have a three model audience conceptualization which is comprised of the following:

- the effects model whereby the audience is viewed as a submissive recipient of media which may or may not be in their best interests

- the marketplace model whereby the audience is viewed as a collection of rational individuals who will always act in their own best interests

- the commodity model whereby the audience is viewed as an economic commodity which must be capitalized upon

Today being part of an audience is a very complex process as the media environment is more cluttered than ever, with most of us using several different media simultaneously. As such, loyalty to any particular brand or media has become a rare - and fought over - commodity. Napoli's (2001) conceptualization of the audience is comprised of three interrelated components:

- the predicted audience, which forecasts the likely size and composition of the audience
- the measured audience, which is quantified through the process of audience measurement
- the actual audience which is the elusive totality of the actual audience

Napoli (2001) believes that the new media environment is responsible for the disconnection between the above components due to greater media fragmentation and diversity, and increasing audience autonomy. In particular, satellite radio, internet radio and low power FM services are resulting in the increased fragmentation of radio audiences.

Individuals will always be motivated, in one way or another, to seek out continued exposure to mass media so as to fulfill a multitude of social and psychological needs. However, the individual's expectation of media is changing; need satisfaction must be immediate, with a multitude of needs being satisfied simultaneously. As such, any existing broadcasting system needs to adapt to meet these changing expectations and adjust in readiness for future challenges. Although community radio listener figures continue to increase thus indicating an increasing affinity for the emancipatory and participatory opportunities offered by such stations, radio as a totality is, and will, face increasing pressure from a fragmented and diverse media environment. Tuks Fm will be utilized by the researcher as a case-study with the goal of exploring some of the existing challenges being faced by a community radio station trying to survive in our current broadcasting system.

Chapter 5: <u>Tuks Fm as Case-study</u>

Yin (2003) states that a case-study is an empirical enquiry that investigates a 'contemporary phenomenon' within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are blurred. The case-study is suited to inquiries where the aim is to discover contextual conditions of participant/s.

According to Yin (2003), the case-study as a research method is unique for the following reasons:

- there are many variables of interest which all converge in one context
- the case-study method relies on multiple sources of evidence
- the case-study method depends on theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis

Semi-structured interviews were utilized by the researcher. Yin (2003) believes that one of the most important sources of case-study information is the interview; according to Rubin and Rubin (1995), such an interview will appear to be guided conversation rather than a set of structured queries and as such the case-study interview is fluid rather than rigid.

Yin (2003) believes that the strengths of this interview method are:

- it is a targeted method as it focuses directly on the case-study topic
- it is an insightful method as it offers the possibility of making causal inferences

According to Yin (2003), the weaknesses of the research method are:

- bias due to poorly constructed questions
- response bias
- poor recall may affect the accuracy of the information given to the researcher
- the interviewee may give the interviewer what he/she wants to hear

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with Tuks Fm's management (of approximately 20 minutes each) so as to collect rich qualitative information regarding the experiences of working at a community radio station. The panel consisted of a total of 7 interviewees (5 males and 2 females between the ages of 18 and 28) who were selected because they comprise the management of Tuks Fm. The management positions of the interviewees are Station Manager, Programming Manager, Music Manager, Public Relations Manager, DJ Manager, News Manager, Technical Manager and Marketing Manager. The semi-structured qualitative interviewing methodology was chosen as it facilitates rapport between the interviewer and the participant, and allows for a greater flexibility during the interviewing process. Respondents' answers provide rich information which enables the understanding of their unique circumstances, and the meanings which the respondents attribute to these experiences (Piercy, 2004). A particular emphasis was placed on the challenges faced by the management of a community radio station as well as the resources available in such an environment. . The interviews were recorded on a mini tape-recorder, and transcripts of the interviews were made by the researcher after the completion of the interviews (see Appendix 2).

3.2 Tuks Fm in context using SAARF's RAMS data

3.2.1 SAARF RAMS Methodology

The objective of The SAARF RAMS survey is to gather information on the radio listening habits of the South Africans over a 7-day period as well as the times listened to each station, for each day of the week, for each quarter hour of the day from 00:00 to 24:00 (SAARF, 2007). Respondents enter details of their radio listening behaviour into the diary which is kept for a period of seven consecutive days. After a period of 7 days, the diaries and self-completion product questionnaires are collected, again by personal visits.

3.2.2. Community Radio in South Africa

The table below indicates the community radio station listener figures by province.

Province	Listener figures for the past 7 days		Average listener figures (Monday to Friday)				
	Wave 1 2006	'000	Wave 5 2004	Wave 5 2005	Wave 6 2005	Wave 1 2006	'000
Gauteng	3.6	1 096	1.9	1.7	1.9	2.0	606
North-West	1.5	475	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.0	296
Mpumalanga	1.4	427	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8	234
Limpopo	2.3	714	0.9	1.3	1.3	1.3	393
Free State	1.3	412	0.6	0.8	0.8	0.7	219
Western Cape	3.0	920	1.8	1.6	1.8	1.7	514
Eastern Cape	3.3	999	1.9	1.8	1.9	1.8	566
Northern Cape	0.5	161	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	90
KwaZulu Natal	3.5	1 074	1.5	1.9	1.9	1.8	550

(SAARF, 2006)

As is evident from the above table, Gauteng has the greatest number of community radio listeners with 1 096 000 (past 7 days), followed by KwaZulu Natal with 1 074 000 listeners (past 7 days).

3.2.2 Community Radio in Gauteng

The table below indicates the listener figures for all the community radio stations in Gauteng.

Community Radio Station	Listener figures for the past 7 days		Average listener figures (Monday to Friday)				
	Wave 1 2006	'000	Wave 5 2004	Wave 5 2005	Wave 6 2005	Wave 1 2006	'000
1485 Radio Today	0.0	14	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8
90.6 FM STEREO (VCR FM)	0.1	32	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	18
Chinese Community Radio	0.0	4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1
East Rand Stereo 93.9 fm	0.2	60	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	49
East Wave Radio 92.2 Fm	0.0	13	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4
IFM 102.2	0.2	62	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	33
Impact Radio	0.1	34	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	21
Jozi FM	1.8	552	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.9	282
New Pan Hellenic Voice	0.0	10	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2
Radio 1584	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0
Radio Islam MW 1548	0.1	35	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	24
Radio Pretoria	0.4	129	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	85
Rainbow FM 90.7 Community Radio	0.1	29	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	16
RAU Radio	0.0	1	-	0.0	0.0	0.0	0
Rippel 90.5 FM Stereo	0.1	25	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	16
Soshanguve Community Radio	0.6	179	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.3	85
TNG FM 96.2	0.1	29	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	7
TUT Top Stereo 93.6	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0
The Voice 95.4 FM	0.0	11	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3
VUT FM 96.9	0.2	46	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	18

(SAARF, 2006)

The Gauteng community radio station with the largest audience is Jozi Fm with a staggering 552 '000 listeners (past 7 days).

3.3 Tuks Fm as community radio station case-study

The table below indicates the listener figures for Tuks Fm which will be used by the researcher as a case-study.

Station	Past 7 days		Average Monday to Friday				
	Wave 1 2006	'000	Wave 5 2004	Wave 5 2005	Wave 6 2005	Wave 1 2006	'000
TUKS FM	0.1	41	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	21

(SAARF, 2006)

Currently, Tuks Fm has the largest audience of any campus radio station in South Africa with an impressive 41 '000 listeners (past 7 days). Other campus radio stations, for example RAU Radio (Rand Afrikaans Universiteit) with an audience of 1 '000 listeners (past 7 days) and Radio Puk (Potchefstroom University) with an audience of 2 '000 listeners (past 7 days); are struggling to build and maintain a substantial audience base.

3.4 Station History

Tuks Fm was established in 1980, broadcasting on landlines to the cafeteria only. This progressed to broadcasting to the hostels and finally, on April 24th 1995, Tuks Fm started broadcasting on 107.2 FM Stereo. Tuks Fm is a Community of Interest Broadcaster, licensed by ICASA. The license holder is the Principal of the University of Pretoria, and Tuks Fm operates as a service provider to the University. Broadcast times

are 00:00 – 24:00, 365 days per year; broadcast languages as stipulated by ICASA in the license agreement are English (60%), and Afrikaans (40%). The communities served by Tuks Fm are students of tertiary institutions in the greater Pretoria area, staff of such institutions, their prospective students as well as their beneficiaries and alumni .According to RAMS (SAARF, 2007), the demographics of Tuks Fm's total listenership of 41 000 are predominantly Afrikaans speaking, white female listeners in the age range of between 15 and 34 years and with a individual monthly revenue of between R1 501 and R 2 500.

Tuks Fm's top management consists of the Station Manager, Programming Manager and Business Manager. The combined duties of Tuks Fm's top management are:

- compilation and maintenance of job descriptions for managers and staff
- receiving and addressing internal complaints
- responsible for all strategic planning and implementation
- handling of all human resource issues, training and development at Tuks Fm
- submission of regular complaint reports to ICASA
- ensuring all disciplinary action is enforced as per the disciplinary policy of Tuks Fm
- ensuring the safety and security of the staff compliment of Tuks Fm
- overseeing all business and programming activities to ensure sound business and programming practice
- to assist other community sound broadcasters where applicable through the transference of knowledge and skills

3.5 Themes

The Tuks Fm Managers' accounts of working at a community station are centered on particular themes which were identified during the semi-structured interviews; figure 1) on page 55 is a diagrammatic representation of the extracted themes and the connections between them.

The themes identified are the following:

- **The Experience**

All the respondents highlighted the unique experience of working at a community radio station and described it as simultaneously rewarding, frustrating, energy intensive, as well as an amazing learning experience. It is such an experience which provides a community radio station with its' unique spirit and energy.

- **The Challenges**

The challenges described by the respondents were linked to community radio's current position in South Africa's three-tier system of broadcasting and includes the lack of financial resources, as well as the competition with commercial and Public Service broadcasters for ad spend.

- **The Rewards**

The rewards mentioned by the respondents highlights the unique position which community radio occupies within South Africa's broadcasting sector and is indicative of the fact that both commercial and community broadcasters would benefit from the reciprocal flow of information and expertise between the two sectors.

- The Solutions

The respondents confirmed that the solutions to the challenges faced by their community radio station could be eradicated through the re-organization of South Africa's three-tier system of broadcasting. Currently, South Africa's broadcasting environment cannot provide the support, both financially and otherwise, that the community radio sector so desperately needs if it is to capitalize and benefit from its' increasing listener figures.

3.5.1   Common Responses

What is your conception of Community Radio?

- *'I believe community radio is no different from commercial radio'*
- *'Community radio is in essence radio for the people, by the people'*
- *'Community radio is radio that is meant to serve the community'*
- *'Community radio should be the link between potential talent and commercial stations'*
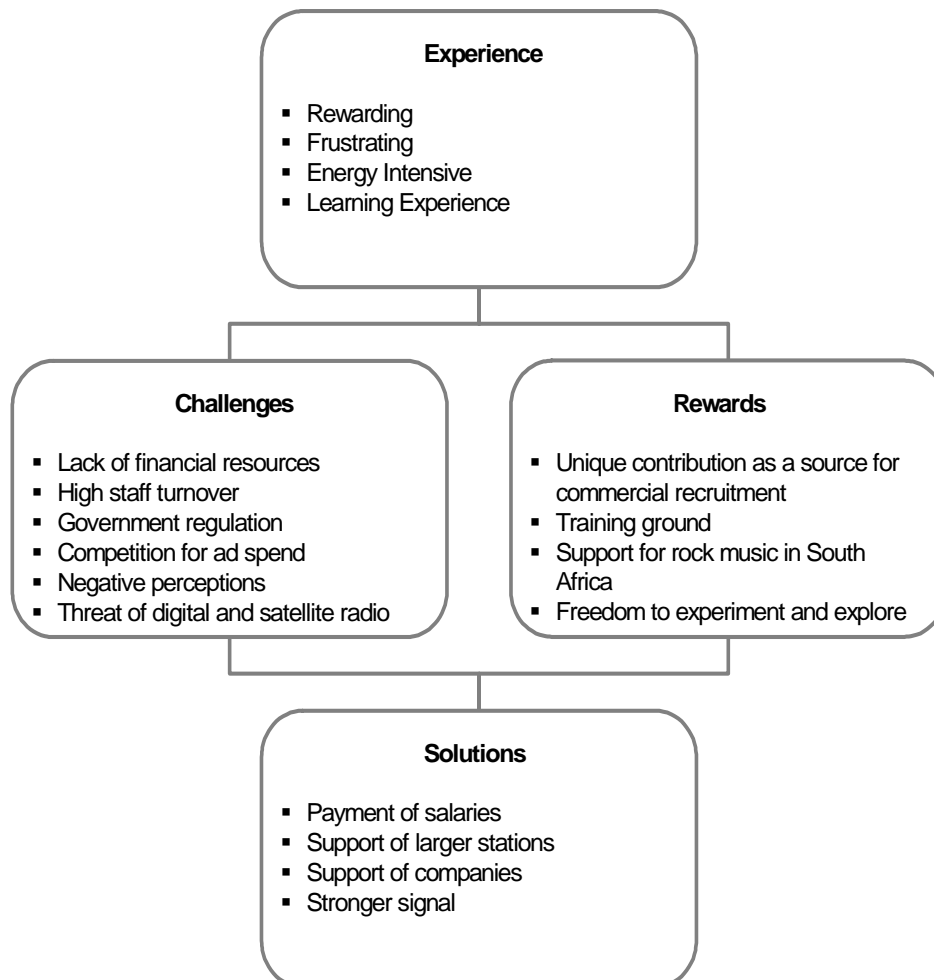- *'Community radio is more locally focused and serves a niche audience'*

Does Community Radio still serve a niche audience with niche interests?

- *'Tuks Fm does not serve a niche audience, it is more geographic based than community of interest based'*
- *'Tuks Fm serves a niche market with regards to rock and local music'*
- *'Tuks Fm serves a niche audience by providing community specific news'*
- *'Tuks Fm has a niche market which is mainly rock orientated youth'*

<u>Is there a future for Community Radio?</u>

- *'There is a future for community radio because of the vast amount of money available in the youth market'*

- *'There is a future for community radio because there is a huge youth market'*

- *'There is definitely a future community radio as there is more flexible music, news and entertainment and is a growing market'*

Figure 1: Themes identified by analyzing the respondents' responses during the semi-structured interviews

Experience

- Rewarding
- Frustrating
- Energy Intensive
- Learning Experience

Challenges

- Lack of financial resources
- High staff turnover
- Government regulation
- Competition for ad spend
- Negative perceptions
- Threat of digital and satellite radio

Rewards

- Unique contribution as a source for commercial recruitment
- Training ground
- Support for rock music in South Africa
- Freedom to experiment and explore

Solutions

- Payment of salaries
- Support of larger stations
- Support of companies
- Stronger signal

Chapter 6: <u>A New Broadcasting Model</u>

Current literature recognizes four broadcasting models which are utilized globally:

3.6 The American 'free market' model

This model dictates a 'free market' organization of the media and is evident in the American broadcasting sector. The goal of such a model is to maximize profit (advertising revenue) which necessitates the maximization of ratings. The government has no influence on broadcast content, with few restrictions placed on this sector; thus it is therefore referred to as an unregulated broadcasting system (CCMS Infobase, 2006).

3.7 The European 'public service' model

The European model is a form of media organization whereby the state regulates the broadcasting sector through a legislative framework within which broadcasters must operate. Broadcast content is thus tilted towards 'quality broadcasting' or 'social responsibility broadcasting'. South Africa's three-tier system of broadcasting falls within this category (CCMS Infobase, 2006).

3.8 The Soviet Model

This model refers to a system whereby the government exerts a more direct influence on broadcast content. The system is evident in North Korea, as well as the People's Republic of China (CCMS Infobase, 2006).

3.9 The Hybridization Model

Canadian broadcasting can be considered a hybrid of the above three systems; all broadcasting in Canada, according to the Canadian Broadcasting Act, is considered a public service essential to the enhancement of national identity and cultural sovereignty (Price & Verhulst, 2001). Canadian broadcasting is a single system comprised of public, private and community elements, and is owned and controlled by Canadians with foreign ownership being restricted to 20%. If a conflict arises between public and private elements, public service interests will prevail.

Skinner (2005) believes that this hybrid model was achieved through the following:

- The larger institutions within the broadcast sector worked together in complex and contradictory way so as to construct a unified and systematic response to undercapitalization and create a 'national' broadcast system
- The public sector worked both directly and indirectly to subsidize and promote the development of private broadcasters within the system

A consideration of the market ecology is crucial when considering the funding implications for any broadcasting system. There are three distinct funding systems which can be tapped; government sources, advertising revenue, and license fees, each of which have their advantages and disadvantages. In particular, advertising revenue tends to be volatile due to it's dependence on the business cycle with license fees being more stable and predictable and providing a direct link between the broadcaster and the public (Price & Verhulst, 2001).

3.10 Eco-systemic Paradigm

The Eco-systemic approach has been applied to the construction of the researcher's hypothetical broadcasting system.

The Eco-systemic approach began as a new theoretical perspective for research in human development wherein the ecological environment was viewed as a set of interconnected nested systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). According to this approach:

- One system is profoundly affected by events occurring in other systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The South African broadcasting system has, and continues to be, influenced by its socio-political climate, while simultaneously bearing the responsibility of having to cater to eleven different language groups and a variety of cultures.

- The capacity of one system to function effectively depends on the existence and nature of the social interconnections between systems which include joint participation and the constant reciprocal flow of information (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The effective functioning of the community radio sector depends on supportive connections with government, as well as other broadcasting sectors.

- The totality of nested, interconnected systems is viewed as a manifestation of overarching patterns of ideology which exists in the broader culture or subculture (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The existing South African broadcasting system reflects a national legacy of government influence; regulation of broadcast content so as to enhance national identity and cultural sovereignty.

Jackson (1991) states that organizations are self-regulating and self-organizing systems, and as such they are only viable if they are capable of responding to change. Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) developed a contingency model of organizational structure that considers how the system must adapt to changing environmental conditions. They

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assert that two processes exist which determine a system's ability to adapt to external changes, namely differentiation and integration. 'Differentiation' refers to the complexity of the organizational structure, and 'integration' is the amount and quality of collaboration between the various parts of the system.

4 New Broadcasting Model

The researcher's hypothetical broadcasting model integrates elements of the American Broadcasting Model and the Hybridization Broadcasting Model; while being firmly situated within an Eco-systemic Paradigm.

Figure 2: Hypothetical Conceptualization of a Broadcasting System: A Nested System
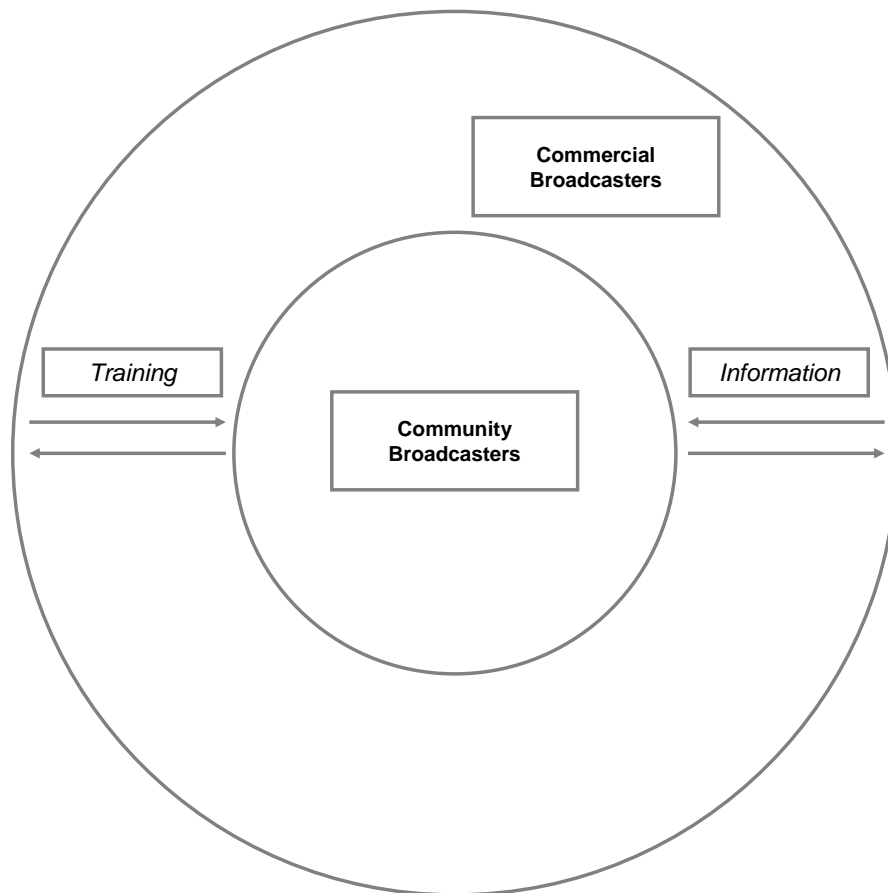
Features of the Hypothetical Nested Broadcasting System

- Existing Public Service Broadcasters become completely commercial, but retain certain public service programming responsibilities.

- License fees are split proportionally between commercial and community radio stations and will be administered by ICASA.

Government support for community radio stations in other industrialized countries typically takes one of three forms: a direct station operation subsidy; targeted support for specific station operations; or a combination of the two. Australia, for example, has 228 community radio stations and has an independent federal funding mechanism, namely the Community Broadcasting Foundation, which assists the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts in providing support to the flourishing community radio sector. The Community Broadcasting Foundation has various targeted grant programmes, each of which support a different aspect of community broadcasting and includes support for university community radio stations (Skinner, 2005).

- Community radio stations receive financial support from both government subsidies and a proportion of the license fees, but are however prohibited from utilizing any commercial funding sources i.e. advertising revenue

- Commercial radio stations receive a proportion of the license fees to fund their public service programming responsibilities but remain financially viable through the utilization of advertising revenue

- The equal treatment of both community and commercial radio stations by government and regulatory bodies

- The reciprocal flow of information and expertise between commercial and community stations
- Community radio stations become a training ground for future commercial broadcasters and technicians; commercial radio stations in turn host training workshops and mentoring programmes for community broadcasters and technicians

The South African broadcasting environment has altered significantly and continues to change as radio in South Africa, and globally, faces new challenges posed by advances in cellular phone technologies, digital satellite stations, Ipods, mp3s and webcasting; it is within this context that community radio faces increasing challenges to its continued survival. Against a radically altered broadcasting landscape, community radio needs to redefine itself as it can no longer be said to serve a niche audience with niche interests. As globalization blurs the lines between public service broadcasters and community broadcasters, South Africa's three-tier system of broadcasting struggles to adapt and respond to change.

It is pertinent to our current social climate that community radios' unique contributions to the broadcasting sector be harnessed and utilized to the full as community radio is a unique participatory mode of communication which has the potential to restore pride, self-esteem and identity in communities which have previously been disenfranchised. Tuks Fm as a case-study indicates that certain challenges faced by this community station would only be relieved through the significant restructuring of South Africa's three-tier system of broadcasting. The researcher has thus utilized the challenges and solutions identified by Tuks Fm management to conceptualize a hypothetical

broadcasting system which would allow for the more equitable co-existence of commercial and community broadcasters, as well as the growth and sustainability of the community radio sector.

The use within this study of a single community radio station could possibly be seen as a research limitation; results obtained through the interviews with Tuks Fm Management are not generalizable to other community radio stations within South Africa. However, this limitation presents interesting opportunities for further study; a pilot study could also be conducted with a number of commercial and community broadcasters so as to ascertain whether the researcher's hypothetical conception of new broadcasting system is indeed feasible.

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Appendix 1

1   Interview Schedule: Tuksfm Management

1.   What is your job description?

2.   How would you describe your experience working at a community radio station?

3.   What is your conception of community radio?

4.   In your opinion, does community radio still serve a niche audience with niche interests? How does this relate to Tuks Fm?

5.   What are the challenges facing your community radio station?

6.   Can these challenges be overcome, and if so, how?

7.   What are the resources available to your community radio station?

8.   In what way/s does your community radio station uniquely contribute to the broadcasting sector in South Africa?

9.   Do you believe that the SABC is fulfilling its public service mandate?

10.   Do you think South Africa's three-tier system of broadcasting is a fair and equitable one for public, community and commercial broadcasters? Why?

11.   In your opinion, is there a future for community radio?

12.   What is your opinion regarding the degree to which the community radio sector is regulated?

Appendix 2

2 Transcripts

Respondent 1

I oversee all happenings at the station; my main focus is to ensure that Tuks Fm is an ongoing concern of the University. I experience working at a community radio station as challenging, at commercial stations you have an unlimited budget and you don't need to fight with media buyers for ad spend. My conception of community radio is that it is no different from commercial radio, except community radio has become a training ground for dynamic talent. I believe that Tuks Fm does not serve a niche audience; it is more geographic based than community of interest based. Tuks Fm serves a small market defined by area, any area that is not served by commercial broadcasters. The challenges faced by my community radio station are budget related, especially to be able to do what I'd like within the market place; also lack of consistency due to a rapid staff turnover due to the students working for us. These challenges can be overcome by ensuring consistency of staff through the payment of salaries; this boils down to budget- using limited resources to generate interest. The resources available to us are the university- any department can be approached for assistance, thus university resources are available, but they must be justified. Tuks Fm uniquely contributes to the broadcasting sector in South Africa as it has become a source for commercial recruitment- a practical application of people studies. I don't believe that the SABC is fulfilling it's public service mandate as it still takes advertising, and is thus not wholly government funded, and has, in fact, become a government mouthpiece. I believe South Africa's three-tier system of broadcasting is a fair and equitable one for public,

commercial and community broadcasters if we followed the BBC model. In my opinion, there is a future for community radio because of the vast amount of money available in the market. Community radio which is regulated by financial concerns only creates a type of domino effect.

Respondent 2

My job is to troubleshoot for the business as well as for the on-air product. My experience working at a community radio station has been very rewarding and very tiring at the same time- frustrating and very energy intensive. Community radio is in essence 'radio for the people, by the people' which has become a cliché because in reality it is not like that. I believe that community radio does still serve a niche audience- especially considering religious based stations. Tuks Fm is a rock station, but is not a community station because a niche music market is not a community. The challenges facing my community station are financing and staffing- the university is not investing and we thus reach a ceiling for development. Community radio will never be as successful as it could be because there is not enough money and as such it is not viable. People are not going to spend money on us if we don't spend money on ourselves as it's all about perceptions. The staffing problem can be overcome with money as the day of the volunteer is over and more and more students are on student loans. Some staff get paid a salary, and others on a profit share basis so there is no equitable distribution. We face a shrinking pool of volunteers. There is no passion in staff or management. The resources available to community stations are the NCRF, but community stations that cater for a white market have a limited funding, especially if you do not have enough community programming segments. Tuks Fm has become a big

training ground compared to most other community stations which are run as secondary businesses. Tuks Fm also supports and gives air to the rock arm of South African music. I believe that the SABC is fulfilling its public service mandate because they get funding from the government. SABC news is government orientated and has become a state broadcaster. The mandate is followed because the SABC is the most accessible medium. I don't think South Africa's three-tier system of broadcasting is a fair and equitable one because government runs public and commercial stations on profit so community radio is stranded therefore community radio is not designed to succeed. There is a future for community radio because there is a huge market. Regulatory bodies are understaffed to enable them to do what they need to do. The problem starts in the licensing phase. Lack of expertise and knowledge is a problem. Legislation is not enforced therefore there is often non-compliance.

Respondent 3

My job is to compile play-lists, the Top 40, SA Top 10, organize interviews with local and international artists and liaising with SAMRO and ICASA. I find working at a community radio station to be a learning experience as well as a stepping stone into the music industry- you develop a lot of contacts and get to know everyone in the business. My conception of community radio is that it is the way of the future- record companies and local artists focus on community stations more than they do national ones which are vital for the growth of the rock genre. Community stations are seen as being more flexible with regards to playing different kinds of music. Tuks Fm serves a niche market with regards to rock music and local music. The challenges facing my community station are finances, finances, finances! Because of the lack of money, we can't bring

ideas to fruition. These challenges can be overcome by big companies not only pumping money into national stations, but also community stations- especially considering that community stations also have lower advertising rates. We only have the University as a resource, as such; larger stations need to provide training to community stations as well as financial backing. Tuks Fm uniquely contributes to the rock music genre as well as contributing to local music. Tuks Fm also informs people of what is happening in and around their community and as such has a strong community focus. Tuks Fm also provides market research to national stations. I would say that the SABC is fulfilling its mandate to a certain degree, although they cater for one market and not for everyone. I don't think the three-tier system of broadcasting is a fair as public and commercial broadcasters get all the financial backing as people are more willing to invest in them. Advertisers should distribute ad spend equally. There is definitely a future for community radio as there is more flexible music, news and entertainment, also vibier than other stations and as such is a growing market. I believe community stations are regulated in a similar fashion to the larger stations in terms of content, but it is much easier for ICASA to revoke community licenses than public and commercial broadcasters (for example- RAU campus station has to reapply for it's license every month) and you are required to cater for the entire demographic spectrum.

Respondent 4

I edit all the news as well as the training and selection of news-readers. I've found working at a community radio station allows you more freedom to experiment and explore, but I also find it very frustrating- it's a case of one step forward, two steps back.

We are always faced with a high staff turnover as well as budget cuts. I believe that community radio is radio that is meant to serve the community- the alternative rock community which is a marginalized form of music. Tuks Fm serves a niche audience by providing community specific news- however, you can't grow without losing your identity. The challenges facing my community station are budget constraints and high staff turnover, with one being linked to the other. Many people working at Tuks Fm see it merely as a 'hobby', and thus community radio needs more input. I don't think these challenges can be overcome; in fact, the situation may even decline with the threat of digital and satellite radio. In South Africa, the most successful stations cater to a broad spectrum and as such, the niche has to find its niche. The University is our biggest resource, but advertising will follow a good package. Our station is the only properly run youth/campus station and it gives a bigger voice to students. We have a specific music type, as well as personality driven jocks, and we are more in touch with community happenings. I believe the SABC is fulfilling it's mandate because they cover the entire spectrum, however, they are also at a disadvantage compared to commercial stations because they are restrained by their mandate. I don't think the three-tier system of broadcasting is fair to community stations because they don't get enough support. I believe there should be more community licenses awarded as competition breeds excellence. There is a future for community radio because the youth will always be a market. The youth are also a fluid audience which needs to be catered for. As communities merge, will the youth have a more distinct voice e.g. MTV? I believe community radio can be more effectively regulated as you can't have the same regulations for different entities therefore the license requirements need to be different.

Respondent 5

I am responsible for the selection process for DJ's, training them for 6 to 8 weeks, as well as monitoring their progress and setting up the DJ schedule. My experience working at a community radio station has been challenging- you can't buy talent, you have to source it. Ideally, community radio should be the link between potential talent and commercial stations, but this is hindered by financial struggles. Community radio stations need to start finding their niche. Tuks Fm has a niche market, namely rock orientated youth. The challenges facing my community radio station are financial, personnel problems, high staff turnover and government regulation. As such, talent falls through the gaps. These challenges, which are encountered by all volunteer associations, will always be there. Our members are a resource, especially those in the commercial sector; the University is also a resource. Our station uniquely contributes to the broadcasting sector because we serve a niche rock market; we also supply talent to commercial stations. I don't believe that the SABC is fulfilling its mandate because it is too profit driven. Ideally South Africa's three-tier system of broadcasting is a fair and equitable one, but realistically it is not because too much attention is given to the top tier and not enough to the bottom tier. There is a future for community radio if managed correctly as there are limited service providers for certain markets. I think that community radio is self-regulated through their license agreements.

Respondent 6

I am responsible for selling airtime, training new guys, planning the budget for next year as well as networking for new clients. My experience working at a community radio station is nothing like you learn in books- the theory is barely used, it's based on who

you know and what you know. We get watched more closely by the community than a bigger station would. Community radio is more locally focused; we cater to a niche market. Community radio is not so much about your beliefs, you have to subdivide and be objective as well as focus on your area. Yes, community radio still serves a niche audience as people still prefer to be associated with a certain group. Tuks Fm is divided at the moment between new students and loyal listeners (old students), we used to have the stigma of a 'student station'. Our challenges are that we have a whole lot of new competitors (on a smaller scale, for example the tecknikon), so our community of listeners has been split up. There are various ways of overcoming these challenges, for instance a bigger signal would be advantageous as we could focus more on the broader community, but people may not be as loyal if you don't stick to what they know. Our resources are money, as well as lots of talent which is directly available on campus, as well as knowledge and input from our brother and sister stations. Technology is also available as we're in touch with suppliers. We contribute to rock music especially; we still play what the listener wants to hear, as well as what he/she requests. We're also in touch with the bigger picture and community events, for example, Oppikoppi. I don't believe that the SABC is fulfilling its mandate, a lot of their stuff is still biased and they don't react quickly enough on mistakes made- just an apology, no change. Also, the SABC gives no support to smaller stations. The question whether the three-tier system of broadcasting system is an equitable one depends on opinion- if you've been around longer you should be on top because you know more. There is a future for community radio as guys come up with better, smarter and more entertaining ideas. With community radio, your ideas don't get suppressed as much, and people can relate to it.

The regulation of the community radio sector is falling apart, ICASA is hiring and firing, there is no board of directors so functionality is impaired. Charity starts at home.