

## CHAPTER 4

### COMMUNITY RADIO

I would like to suggest that everyone involved in community radio ask themselves at the start of each day, “What can I do to make my community’s life just a little better than it was yesterday?”

Zane Ibrahim 1999:15.

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The main subject of this thesis is to establish a functional basis for the development of a community radio station in a National Game Park. The researcher is of the opinion that any indifferent government response will be counterbalanced by the importance government attaches to tourism and the income it is expected to generate, as well as the prospect of giving a voice to previously disadvantaged communities. Since community radio shares the same features that characterize radio as broadcasting medium, this chapter will begin by exploring the characteristics of radio. Furthermore, it also proposes to look at the aims and objectives of community radio and examine the benefits it holds for the community, including the problems that can be expected and possible solutions to those.

Orlorunnisola (1997: 242) mentions that radio is often the only electronic device in many homesteads in rural Africa. Moreover, according to Bogue (1979:1)<sup>12</sup> (and cited by Orlorunnisola ([sa]:5) radio is generally recognised as one of the best ways to reach marginalized or neglected communities since it can be found in most homes. Even in remote and hard to reach areas, “there is at least one transistor radio in working order” (Bogue 1979:1). As Bogue points out if one has to inform large scores of rural, semi-literate or illiterate people that are distributed over large areas “radio has the ability to reach people who cannot or do not read, whom it would be difficult or expensive to visit personally, yet who urgently need to

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<sup>12</sup> The researcher wishes to thank Orlorunnisola ([sa]:3) for drawing attention to Bogue 1979.

be informed of and motivated to participate in programs that will bring about improvements in their personal lives, their communities, and their nations” (Bogue 1979:1).

According to the Community Radio Association (1987:2-3), a community radio station comes into existence, and develops, in answer to the needs of a community, serving the geographically recognizable community or community of interest and should therefore be run by the community, which it serves. This view is shared by Knipe (2003:52) who argues that the station is owned by the community and must therefore address their needs via its programmes. Community involvement means the local community members must be involved in the station’s operation and decision-making since “once a station has stopped consulting with its community and stops meeting its needs, it has no reason to exist.” As Knipe (2003:52) points out, a community’s importance does not end with its petitions to obtain a licence - it “needs to be consulted on the direction the station will take, and should ensure that the station is meeting its mandate by keeping the best interests of the community at heart” (see 3.1). Because it is regarded as participatory communication it is seen as having the advantage of installing cultural pride, identity and self-worth (Olorunnisola [sa:5] citing Melkote 1991).

On the subject of ‘participation’ White<sup>13</sup> (1993:16-17) notes that getting people to participate at grass roots level is not an easy task. White differentiates between ‘pseudo-participation’ where the only participation is the people being present to hear what is planned *for* them while genuine participation means the people are empowered to control the action that is being planned. White’s view coincides with that of Katz (1996 cited by Olorunnisola [sa: 5]), who points out that community participation implies members of the community become “actors whose voices are included in the in the content” instead of merely being “passive recipients of information.” Citing Gumucio Dagron (2001) Olorunnisola [sa:5] refers to the fact that when participatory communication involves community radio, access is

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<sup>13</sup> The researcher wishes to thank Olorunnisola ([sa]:3) for drawing attention to White (1993) and (2000).

outweighed by ownership. “The argument is that a communication process that is owned by the community tends to provide equal opportunity to members” (Olorunnisola [sa:5]) since it is the right of every person to ‘speak their word’ either collectively or individually and not the privilege of only a few according to Freire (1983:76), cited by Servaes (2000:15).

A community radio station must strive toward the empowerment of the members of the community “who would also be CO (sic)-owners, CO (sic)-planners, CO (sic)-producers and CO (sic)-performers in the statement of communal issues” (Olorunnisola [sa:9]) While centralized broadcasting deals with a mostly passive audience, participatory community radio “interacts with actors whose voices are included in program content and radio station administration” (Olorunnisola [sa:9]). The interplay between a passive and active audience translates into ‘hot’ and ‘cold’ when McLuhan refers to a medium that requires less or more participation (see 4.2.1) Furthermore broadcasting in a participatory environment will allow a community to re-establish its cultural pride, self-worth, and identity (Olorunnisola [sa:9]).

In the instance of a community radio station in a National Game Park there will be ethnic and tourist community members who will be referred to as PERCs. This will result in shared interests prompted by what the ethnic - and tourist communities have to offer each other, be it payment for services rendered or for handicrafts offered for sale (to mention but one).

Before concentrating on community radio as such, it is necessary to examine the background and commencement of community radio in South Africa. “The advent of community radio in South Africa is one of the less publicized but direct outcomes of the country’s transition to multiracial democracy in 1994” according to Olorunnisola [sa:1].

In a study aimed at analyzing the impact caused by delays in the issuing of licenses to community radio stations Tleane ([sa]:4) mentions that community radio “is fairly new” in South Africa and that the “first stations were granted licenses to broadcast in 1995.” In 1994 the Independent Broadcasting Association

(IBA), the predecessor of ICASA, was founded as an autonomous body with the task of issuing broadcast licenses, amongst others, “thus breaking the tradition of the apartheid regime where the Postmaster-General was responsible for the granting of licenses” (Tleane [sa]:4).

According to Tleane ([sa]:5) the two main incentives for the community radio sector was borne out of a need to end the monopoly held by the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) up until 1994 and in the second instance to follow international trends in broadcasting, which meant, “diversification of media ownership and encouragement of plurality of ideas and views.”

By the end of 1999 there were 65 community radio stations in South Africa broadcasting to communities that resided in areas ranging from rural and semi-rural to urban (Olorunnisola [sa]:1 citing Siemering, Fairbairn and Rangana 1998). Based on the number of applications under consideration, Siemering et al (1998) estimated that there could soon be more than 250 community radio stations. Ibrahim (1999:15) on the other hand is sceptical about the dream of having 200 community stations in the country. Based on the fact that there were at least 65 stations on air at the beginning of the twenty first century led Nell and Shapiro (2001 cited by Olorunnisola sa:1) to proclaim that South Africa had the biggest as well as the most vibrant community radio sector on the African continent.

Community radio has traditionally evolved from experiences that were socially and politically repressive and therefore the evolution of community radio stations in South Africa is not ‘peculiar’ according to Olorunnisola [sa:2] citing Siemering et al (1998). Marginalized communities adopted community radio “as a tool for highlighting their fundamental rights.” [sa:2] Community radio is also referred to as peoples’ radio in Latin American countries, since it has become “the voice of the poor” (Olorunnisola [sa]:2). Although marginalised communities share similarities such as poverty, in South Africa the ‘non-white,’ politically repressed and marginalized communities were peculiar in the sense that they also happened to be the majority and not the minority as is usually the case.

According to Olorunnisola ([sa]:2) the foregoing demographic information is a

reminder of the fact that in South Africa the majority was governed by the minority until the first multiracial elections in 1994. This can be regarded as a peculiarity in the sense that it was the majority and not the minority that was being discriminated against. In Europe, Australia and North and Latin America for instance, community radio grew out of the repressive socio-political experiences of minority groups.

Olorunnisola [sa:3] citing Giffard, de Beer and Steyn (1997) points out that the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) controlled radio and television broadcasting by the beginning of the 1990s. The SABC controlled radio with a network of 30 radio services which broadcast over 500 FM transmitters linked by Intelsat satellite, until the reforms of the early 1990s. De Villiers<sup>14</sup> (1993:130-133 in De Beer and also cited by Olorunnisola [sa]:3) refers to the fact that there were national outlets (such as Radio South Africa, Afrikaans Stereo, Radio 5 and Radio Metro) and regional outlets covering the four regional provinces of Transvaal, Cape, Natal and Free State (namely Highveld Stereo, Radio Algoa, Radio Port Natal and Radio Oranje). There were also a number of outlets aimed at indigenous groups such as Radio Sesotho for the Sesotho speaking people, Radio Venda for the Tshivenda speaking people, Radio Swazi for the Siswati speaking people, and Zulu Stereo for the IsiZulu speaking people.

Due to political changes instigated by former President F.W. De Klerk, the broadcasting system entered a phase of transformation and democratization. By 1991 a negotiating body, the Council for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) placed the need to reform the broadcasting sector on the agenda of the political stakeholders, which according to Olorunnisola (sa:3)) marked the commencement of the struggle for the freeing or 'liberation' of the South African airwaves.

The ruling National Party of the time issued community radio licences to stations of their choice without involving other political parties. In defiance of the government's actions, two radio stations in Cape Town, Bush Radio and Radio Zibonele, went on air. Bush Radio, targeting the Cape Flats area was shut down immediately. Radio Zibonele with its focus on health, broadcast to a section of

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<sup>14</sup> The researcher wishes to thank Olorunnisola ([sa]:3) for drawing attention to De Villiers 1993.

Khayelitsha and generally kept a low profile and was therefore not considered to be a threat (Olorunnisola [sa:3] citing Gumucio Dagron 2001 and Siemering et al 1998).

On account of pressure from political parties as the first multiracial elections in South Africa drew near, CODESA drew up the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) Act in order to break the South African Broadcasting Corporation's (SABC's) monopoly of the airwaves. The 1993 act launched the IBA who had the responsibility of making broadcasting policy, issuing broadcasting licences and regulating and scrutinizing broadcasting conducts in South Africa (Olorunnisola [sa:3]).

The Act allowed the IBA to oversee the airwaves without intervention from the government. More importantly, they acknowledged a three-tier broadcasting system, namely public, commercial and community instead of the monopoly previously held by the SABC. The IBA Act allowed broadcasting services to cater to all language and culture groups and stressed the importance of protecting a national and regional character. As Barnett (1999:651) explains, the directive of the IBA "is to 'open the airwaves' to previously excluded voices and opinions..." Furthermore they (IBA) limited cross-media, ownership, imposed local content quotas and probed into ways of funding broadcasting (Barnett<sup>15</sup> 1999:651 and Giffard et al 1997 cited by Olorunnisola [sa:3]).

One of the reasons for enforcing local content quota is to ensure "the promotion of a national and provincial identity" and also "the need to broadcast programs to cater to the wide-ranging languages spoken by the peoples of South Africa" (Olorunnisola [sa:3]). Apart from catering to the different languages, community radio stations were expected to implement local music and to have a 55 % local quota by 2000 (Olorunnisola [sa:3]). After the 1994 multiracial elections the IBA regarded community radio as top priority and by August 1995 had issued 82 community radio licences. Only temporary licences were issued at first which

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<sup>15</sup> The researcher wishes to thank Olorunnisola ([sa]:3) for drawing attention to Barnett (1999).

meant that they had to be renewed every year. A four year community radio licence was introduced in 1996 (Olorunnisola [sa:3]).

In the new democratic atmosphere community radio came to include four distinctive types. Stations that served geographical areas ('geographic' community radio stations) formed the first category, such as Bush Radio and Radio Zibonele (Olorunnisola [sa:4]). Campus-based radio stations on university and college campuses form the second category such as Durban Youth Radio on the campus of the then University of Durban Westville or Radio Matie FM on the campus of the University of Stellenbosch. Religious stations, serving Christian, Muslim and Hindu faiths were also issued licences and form the third category. The fourth category of community radio stations serves cultural and ethnic communities such as Afrikaans, Portuguese, Greek and Chinese communities (Olorunnisola [sa: 4]).

In a statement made by Khanyi Mkhonza, the chairman of the National Community Radio Forum in November 1999, in excess of two million people listen to community radio stations every day, which underlines the "need for relevant and constructive rural programming" (Shongwe 1:2005). As an example, at that time Mkhonza ascribed the Moutse Community Radio Station's growth in listenership (which rose by 5000 people within four months) to the way in which the station served its community and pointed out that a community radio station's programming was a manifestation of a community's aspirations and aggravations (Shongwe 1:2005).

This view is reflected in more depth by the Community Radio Association (1987:2-3) namely that a community radio station comes into existence and develops "in answer to the needs of a community, serving the community of interest and run by the community which it serves". However when one considers the instance of a community radio station in a National Game Park, one will encounter both ethnic and tourist communities. This will result in shared interests prompted by what the ethnic - and tourist communities have to offer each. As argued in chapter two (see 2.2.3) their mutual reliance on (and benefit to) each other, originally prompted the researcher to consider the term 'tribalised' community, based on McLuhan's (1967a:302,304) reference to radio's ability to "tribalise" mankind (see 4.2.5).The

term 'tribe' however proves to be socially frowned upon , therefore 'merged' or 'shared' communities or PERCs will be used when referring to the combined tourist and ethnic communities, as it is socially more acceptable (see 2.2.2).

Although a community radio station can be an important influence and source of communication to its listeners, in Africa it seldom carries weight where the higher echelons of radio and government are concerned. According to Ntab (2001:2) governments only pay lip service to community radio. She blames this on the fear that governments may have of the empowerment that radio can offer to groups who previously had no voice. The stations are usually located in regions where corruption and unequal access to land and resources are at the heart of food insecurity, yet Ntab firmly believes that the microphone changes lives.

Community radio is a professional broadcaster that has to conform to many of the standards required from a commercial radio station. It is also different from a commercial one because it has no shareholders. "It has a different obligation to the community it serves," which is evident from the content of its programming (Van Zyl 2003:6). Community radio distinguishes itself in essence by being participatory as argued in the introduction to chapter four. Van Zyl (2003:9) therefore finds community radio to be fundamentally democratic, since it aims to be broadcast by the community and not for or to the community. He acknowledges however that it may be easier said than done.

The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) has laid down strict rules to try and guarantee community participation and ensure that the needs of the community comes first as far as community radio is concerned. However such rulings can be problematic at times. As an example Van Zyl (2003:9), referring to the ruling that the newsroom must have a community committee to advise on the nature and content of the news that is broadcast, points out that the knowledge and training of what constitutes news is not always accessible in the communities. He therefore suggests that a more practical way must be found in which to incorporate the intended community cooperation. This aspect will feature in greater detail in chapter five that deals more specifically with community radio programming.

At the time of going to print, Van Zyl (2003:9) estimated that there were about 120 community radio stations scattered throughout South Africa. It forms the first part of a three-tier broadcasting system, introduced by South Africa's new democratic government. The commercial sector forms the second tier and includes stations such as Five FM, Highveld, Khaya FM, Classic FM, Radio Algoa and 702 to name but a few. The third tier is the public broadcaster, which refers to the SABC's seven language radio stations.

Since community radio, commercial radio and the public broadcaster all share a common denominator in radio as medium, it is important to examine radio's characteristics.

## **4.2 The characteristics of radio**

Crisell (1994:3-16) points to many factors that can be construed as characteristic of radio in the medium that it operates:

- it is a blind medium;
- it relies on the imagination;
- it offers companionship;
- it is a listening experience;
- it has much in common with tribal folklore where the speaker becomes the authority and the listeners, the recipients;
- it is a dualistic medium;
- it has a sense of immediacy and reality;
- It caters to different listener categories;
- It caters to listeners' lifestyle and age which dictate their listening habits;
- it relies mainly on talk and music for programming,
- it has a far greater reach and staying capability than other media.

### **4.2.1 Radio is a blind medium**

The first and probably most obvious definition of radio is that it is a 'blind' medium, since its broadcasts cannot be seen with the naked eye, as, for instance, a stage -

or television production can. “We cannot see its messages, they consist only of noise and silence ...” (Crisell 1996:3). Since radio is an auditory medium, it is also perceived to be live and immediate. However as radio does not provide one with visuals but only with auditory stimuli, far greater demands are made on one’s imagination than for television (Crisell 1994:9). In other words an acoustic stimulus triggers a visual response situation. Only in this instance the visual response will be less controlled than if it had been a visual stimulus. One can therefore assume that a visual-to-visual stimulus as in television will require less effort from the receivers than in an acoustic-to-visual response situation such as radio, as the listeners will have to ‘work harder’ to complete the ‘picture’ in their minds.

This resonates with McLuhan’s (Marshall McLuhan [sa]:11) reference to ‘hot’ and ‘cold’ media where the amount of data provided by a medium, such as radio or television for instance, forms the basis of his distinction between ‘hot’ and ‘cold’ media. The principle McLuhan adheres to is that a ‘hot’ medium will extend one of the senses in ‘high definition’, so that it is packed with information and will therefore require very little participation from the audience. A ‘cool’ medium will need more participation or input from the audience on account of being less supplied with information. To illustrate McLuhan (Marshall McLuhan [sa]:11) compares the radio medium to the telephone. Since the telephone can only offer a very limited amount of information to the ear, it requires more input from its users than radio does and is therefore regarded as a ‘cool’ medium. Radio is able to use sound effects to establish mood and create an awareness of the surroundings. It can create illusions of distances being near or far through fade-ins and fade-outs and use different voices to portray different characters, which makes it a ‘hot’ medium, which needs less participation from its audience than the telephone does for instance. Similarly, television is a ‘cool’ medium when compared to a ‘hot’ medium such as movies that are visually and acoustically higher in definition and do not need much to be filled in or completed by the audience. In other words McLuhan is comparing media that extend one sense in ‘high definition’, such as acoustics when comparing radio to telephone, or visuals in the case of television and movies.

Far from regarding Crisell's (1996:3) reference to radio's blindness as a drawback, Cory (1974 cited by Crook 1999:67) sees radio's blindness (due to its lack of visual stimulus) as advantageous, since radio's auditory/acoustic stimulus may guide and inspire the listeners' imagination to visualize what they hear without other people's visual interpretations hampering their minds' picture at any time. This does not mean that no amount of editing or selection takes place prior to the broadcast but only that it is less restrictive (in a visual sense) to the mind's eye. The bounds caused by realistic physical dimensions are no longer a problem since they are replaced with imaginary ones and time can jump or telescope forward and backward in time within a matter of seconds.

It can therefore be said that radio's acoustic stimulus is well capable of stimulating a visual (mind's eye) response from the listener, but that it is less controlled or compulsory than if it had been a visual-to-visual stimulus as in television. Radio's acoustic-to-visual response situation will therefore require more effort from the listener than television's visual-to-visual situation, which will involve far less input/work from the receiver.

Regarding radio's 'blindness' and reliance on sound and hearing, Ong (2002:71) mentions the advantages of sound over sight. He points to the fact that whereas sight 'isolates,' sound, 'incorporates.' He reasons that sight places the viewer at a distance or 'outside' of what he is seeing, while sound "pours into the hearer" (Ong 2002:71). Furthermore, vision comes to a person "from one direction at a time," since one must move one's eyes "from one part to another." However when one hears, one is gathering sound "simultaneously from every direction at once" which means one is able to immerse oneself in hearing and in sound. A similar immersion is not possible in sight. Ong (2002:71) believes vision is a 'dissecting' sense while sound is a 'unifying' one. While clarity is a typical visual ideal, Ong regards harmony or "putting together" as the auditory ideal (2002:71). Since sound incorporates instead of isolates it is also indicative of radio's unifying or "tribalising" effect (McLuhan 1967a:302,304) and will be referred to later in this chapter (see 4.2.5) when radio's likeness to 'tribal' folklore (McLuhan 1967a:302,304) and its unifying possibilities are discussed.

#### 4.2.2 Radio relies on imagination

The distinctiveness of radio lies in imagination being involved to a different degree than in other media. Visual media, such as television (that provides both visual and auditory stimuli) are perceived as being live and immediate and do not require their audience/viewers to make as much use of their imagination as radio does (Crisell 1994:9). One is reminded of McLuhan's (1967b:22-23) 'hot' and 'cold' theory in this instance (see 4.2.1). For when one compares radio to television, radio requires more audience participation which makes it a 'cool' medium. These distinctions are also implied in the introduction to this chapter where it is mentioned that centralized broadcasting deals with a mostly passive audience (Olorunnisola ([sa]:9), which may therefore be regarded as 'hot' in McLuhan's (Marshall McLuhan [sa]:11) terms while participatory community radio "interacts with actors whose voices are included in program content and radio station administration" (Olorunnisola [sa:9]) and can therefore be considered as 'cool'/'cold' according to McLuhan's (Marshall McLuhan [sa]:11) theory.

Imagination is regarded as the faculty by which "we re-create for ourselves any impressions that we would experience at first hand through one, some or all of our five senses" (Crisell 1994:7-8). It might also be argued that the images, which we recall with our imagination, rely on images that we have collected from past experiences, which have remained latent in the mind. They are made 'real' or come to life again by the stimuli provided by the radio, which implies that radio relies on the past experiences of its listeners to 're-create' the impressions they may have experienced.

The main function of imagination according to Crisell (1994:7-8) is visual:

... for in replicating the functions of our senses it seems also to replicate the hierarchy into which they appear to arrange themselves, with sight at the top: ... We may hear, smell or touch an object, but it is not until we have seen it that we feel we really 'know' it.

As far as radio is concerned, the auditory stimuli will trigger images, which although the stimuli are shared, may develop in different ways and may be clustered around the shared images of each community. In actual fact most of the

members of the community have never met and will always remain unknown to each other, although they may have an image of their primal unity at the back of their minds. On these grounds they become the “imagined community” referred to by Anderson (1993:6). This ties into McLuhan’s (Marshall McLuhan [sa]:11) ‘hot’ and ‘cold’ theories again where ‘hot’ turns ‘cold’ and ‘cold’ turns ‘hot’ referring to a medium that is well filled with data and one that is less so. The same stimulus or programme will have different responses from its shared tourist and ethnic communities. The reason for this will be that the station’s programmes will often be running simultaneously in both the ethnic language of choice and English and not sequentially in the sense of catering to either the ethnic or tourist community separately.

It must be remembered that radio also stimulates visual images in the mind, which may not be part of the imagination, but are latent and triggered by past experiences made ‘real’ by the stimuli coming from the radio. Radio relies on its listeners to recognise its sound-images in order to stimulate their imagination. A far more exciting experience is achieved by creating sound pictures that entice the imagination of the listener. Since the images only occur in their heads and cannot be seen by anyone else, it allows them an unlimited scope of imagination. Crisell (1994:8) refers to horror movies as an example, where the villain hides just off screen and viewers can only see the terrified expression of the victim.

The point Crisell wishes to make is that one’s imagination is stimulated far more by what cannot be seen than by what is shown. In the instance of the horror movie, the terrified expression of the victim looking at a villain that is not visible to us, causes us to imagine a far more fearsome villain (in many instances) in our mind’s eye, than can be shown. In radio imagination can be triggered by sound effects, relying only on what can be heard. For example the sound of an owl hooting, while a door slowly creaks open, is enough to create a scary picture or image in the mind, of darkness and something sinister about to happen. It can therefore be expected that radio, dealing only with what cannot be seen, should be capable of invoking the audience’s imagination far more than theatre, television or film.

When one compares radio to the printed word, it is obvious that both of these

media rely on imagination and are high on participation or completion by their audience or readers. As far as literature is concerned, everything must be imagined, since one's only reference is the printed words as pointed out by Crisell (1994:9). Similarly one may argue that radio's only reference is sound, and therefore, everything must be imagined.

A point the researcher wishes to raise here concerns the fact that as far as printed matter is concerned, the reader can always go back and 're-read' a sentence, paragraph or page, in order to understand better or to refresh the memory. But for radio this is not so. Once a message has been sent and received, one cannot go back at will to 're-listen' or 're-imagine' what one has missed out on, which again underlines the fact that radio is 'immediate,' since sound is only audible while ceasing to exist (Ong 2002:70). Writing, on the other hand, has an infinite capacity, and can literally put down ideas and store them without having to rely on the limited powers of memory. It therefore provides one with the potential to consider ideas that are not of immediate relevance (The Walter J. Ong Project [sa]:3). Although this is a comparison between the printed word and radio as far as imagination is concerned it also serves as a reminder of the immediacy and reality of radio that will be engaged with (see 4.2.7).

McLuhan (1967a:86-88) blames literacy for distancing people from their "imaginative, emotional, and sense life." McLuhan maintains literacy has taught people to hold back their feelings and emotions while allowing them the "personal freedom" to detach themselves from "clan and family." This becomes an important factor in a community radio station's bid to merge or, to use McLuhan's terms (1967a:304) "re-tribalise" the ethnic and tourist communities of a National Game Park. It implies that the literate tourist community can dissociate themselves from their own background to merge with the ethnic community and thereby become members of a 'new' community ('tribe') namely PERCs for the duration of their stay in the park.

One can foresee that a community radio station, catering for both the ethnic and the tourist members of the community of a National Game Park, will regard imagination as one of its key ingredients. The researcher is of the opinion that the

imagination of the listeners will not only be triggered by sound effects or stories but by many other sounds and accents as well. For instance, the accents of local presenters will suit the informal presentation style of the news and other programmes. It will also serve as a reminder to the visitors that they are now part of the new Parks Emergent Radio Community. Together with the sound of indigenous music, tribal folklore, stories of the African bush, wildlife profiles, and the crackle of two-way radios, a whole new ambience will be created, conducive to setting the tone for the kind of holiday the visitors had chosen for themselves.

Since nothing is overtly visual on radio, but almost everything is covertly visual, greater demands are made upon the imagination, than those made by the visual media, excluding literature. Again one recalls McLuhan's (Marshall McLuhan [sa]:11) distinction between a medium that is well filled with data ('cool') and one that is less so ('hot'). The role that imagination plays is of greater consequence to the listener and reader than to the viewer, since the listener forms a bond with the person "as imagined from the words and sounds of radio or from the words of books," and not with the person largely pre-realized for him or her (Crisell 1994:10-11 and Chantler & Harris 1997:5). The images presented on television are all pre-realized, since the viewers have to buy into what is being presented to them. On the other hand if it were true that the community constructs the stimuli so that the radio listeners can construct their own images, then construction in this sense would suggest that it is pre-realised. For a community radio station this implies that the programmers will have to pre-realise the required stimuli of both the ethnic and tourist communities where possible, so that the required 'images' will be forthcoming. Which means one will have to draw on the double community and more particularly on the "imagined communities" referred to by Anderson (1993:6).

Radio is "an inward, intimate medium" with imagination as an integral part, as "its basic ability to communicate" (Crisell 1994:10-11 and Chantler & Harris 1997:5). It is therefore hardly surprising that radio is regarded as the best medium to stimulate the imagination, since listeners are always trying to imagine what they are hearing and what is being described to them (Crisell 1994:10-11 and Chantler and Harris 1997:5). Furthermore "radio pictures" can be any size the listener chooses, since they are not limited by the size of the screen (Chantler and Harris

1997:5). Imagination is not restricted to fiction alone, but can also be applied to reality, such as current affairs for instance. “It is largely upon the listener’s ability to imagine matters of fact that radio’s distinctive ... sense of personal companionship seems to depend” (Crisell 1994:10).

#### **4.2.3 Radio offers companionship**

The personal companionship that radio offers, which various authors (Crisell 1994:10; Fleming 2002:13; Hargrave 2000:13) refer to, is the pleasure the listeners take in the company of those they ‘meet’ via the medium, which is why the presenter needs to have a good voice and articulation as well as a pleasant personality.

The person whose voice is heard describing real or imaginary worlds, allows listeners to ‘form a picture.’ Crisell (1994:10) sees the listener’s own anonymity as a further advantage, since it frees each one of them from “the obligations imposed by ‘real life’ relationships” as they do not have to talk back to their radio companion nor have to continue listening should they no longer wish to do so. Radio can therefore be regarded as an undemanding companion since it also allows you to “experience it while doing other things” (Fleming 2002:13).

Hargrave (2000:13 cited by Fleming 2002:13) claims the majority of people listen to the radio when they are alone. According to research done by the Broadcasting Standards Commission and the Radio Authority in the United Kingdom, one of the main uses of radio was to change the mood of the listener. It helped them relax before going to bed; energised them before going out for the night; stimulated them and gave them something to think about and lightened their mood (Fleming 2002:177-178).

In similar fashion a community radio station operating in a National Game Park will provide both the ethnic and tourist members of the community with company by becoming part of the community in which it is operating and dealing with matters of interest and concern to PERCs.

The listeners may find comfort in the shared-community radio provides them with. It allows them to become part of a specific group of people residing in the same place for a period of time, sharing in their knowledge, skills and experience without being obliged to interact or stay with the company that is being provided.

#### **4.2.4 Radio is a listening experience**

According to Crook the listening experience “depends on either a choice or manipulation of the hierarchy of perception. Our sense of the world through hearing is a continuous spatial environment” (Crook 1999:65). He describes the listening experience as a “variation between physical position, imaginative spectacle and acoustic space” (Crook 1999:64). One of the advantages of radio is that it has virtually no physical limit, which means it can be taken practically anywhere. It also does not require the listener to be in a specific physical position (such as sitting down), or in a specific place (like a television-/living room) to listen to radio.

Unlike television, or reading matter, radio does not demand the listeners’ undivided attention to be understood or enjoyed. Instead of being watched, radio relies on creating an imaginative spectacle. The “auditory codes of radio exist physically as speech, music, sounds and silence which are framed by time, so the experience is ephemeral” (Crook 1999:64). It is true that the listening experience (which depends on auditory codes), lasts for only a short time namely as long as the sound/silence carries/lasts, and cannot be prolonged/recalled as is the case with printed matter, which can be reviewed/read repeatedly. The physical act of sound is one of the reasons why radio has such an impact as a medium that is immediate. It functions in the here and now, with the announcer live on air. Even if the programme is pre-recorded, the listener still experiences the immediacy of hearing the spoken word, song, music and sounds, creating for the listener, the feeling of having immediate company.

#### **4.2.5 Radio has much in common with ‘tribal’ folklore**

When mentioning tribal folklore the orality of radio is implied, and will repeatedly

feature in this section. Ong (2002:6-7) points out: “It would seem inescapably obvious that language is an oral phenomenon. Human beings communicate in countless ways, making use of all their senses, touch, taste, smell, and especially sight, as well as hearing.”

Human society, according to Ong (2002:2), “first formed itself with the aid of oral speech” and only became literate much later in its history and then only in certain groups. Ong (The Walter J. Ong Project [sa]:3) finds that early or “primary oral culture” only consisted of vocalised sounds. He therefore regards primary orality as being group oriented, for, unlike the written text, many people can hear a speaker at the same time. As Ong (2002:73) explains: “When a speaker is addressing an audience, the members of the audience normally become a unity, with themselves and with the speaker” (2002:73). Conversely this unity disappears if the audience is asked to read a leaflet handed out to them, but is restored again when oral speech is resumed. This means that unities are formed ‘on a large scale’ by the spoken word. Ong (2002:73) warns however that it is difficult to maintain national unity where multi-lingual countries are concerned.

Although Ong may be right in so far as ‘national’ unity is concerned, the researcher is of the opinion that as far as the ethnic and tourist members of the community in a National Game Park is concerned, the ‘imagined community’ referred to by Anderson (1993:6) will be nearer to the mark. Since one will be dealing with a group of people in a very unique set-up, who, (although they may be from different nationalities, backgrounds and speak different languages), are united by an imaginary bond of kinship that cannot be shared by anyone outside of their immediate ‘community.’ Furthermore, the issues at stake regarding national unity are of a far more serious nature and have more far reaching implications than would be the case for the community in a National Game Park.

According to Ong (2002:133-134) the telephone, radio, television and similar electronic technology has taken us into the age of ‘secondary orality.’ Secondary oral cultures are capable of reaching even larger audiences than primary orality since on radio or television many more persons are able to hear what is being said simultaneously (Ong :The Walter J. Ong Project [sa]:3). The fact that the electronic

media was instrumental in extending the range of the speaking voice by making it audible to people far further away than those in the immediate vicinity, is also referred to by McLuhan (1995) cited by Crook (1999:64).

Ong (2002:133-134) finds this new orality closely resembles the old because just like 'primary orality' it is participatory, promotes a communal sense and focuses on the present moment. Secondary orality produces a strong group sense that is similar to that of primary orality, since it turns those listening to the spoken word into a true audience just as reading printed or written material does the opposite by turning individuals 'in on themselves.'

This is why Ong's comparison of primary orality to secondary orality is so important. It allows the tribal customs of the ethnic community, which are mostly based on orality or the verbal passing down of information and traditions, to remain verbal. Only this time they will be heard by far more people than was previously the case. It will mean that not only the local ethnic community but the visitors as well, will get to hear the stories, traditions, superstitions and history of the ethnic communities in and around the park. For the ethnic community it means their oral traditions will be kept alive. For the tourists it will open up a whole new world and introduce them to a different way and outlook on life as well as promote a group or communal sense similar to that of primary orality. All of this is made possible on account of electronic technology and the age of secondary orality.

As far as 'group sense' is concerned, Ong (2002:134) perceives that secondary orality (which includes radio) will create an even larger and stronger 'group sense' than 'primal oral culture' was capable of, on account of being able to broadcast to a far larger audience. For, as Ong (2002:134) sees it, by listening to spoken words, hearers are formed into a group, 'a true audience,' as in similar vein, the readers of written texts are turned in on themselves as individuals.

One may again draw a parallel here with Anderson's (1993:6) reference to an "imagined community" (see 4.2.2), since he regards all communities, even small villages and nations as 'imagined.' He argues that one should distinguish communities by the style in which they are imagined. As an example Anderson

(1993:6) mentions Javanese villagers “who have always known that they are connected to people they have never seen, but these ties were once *imagined* particularistically - as indefinitely stretchable nets of kinship and clientship” [emphasis added].

Before writing existed, oral communities were ‘group-minded’ and therefore turned ‘outward’ because they did not have any other option. But in today’s age of so-called ‘secondary orality,’ people are ‘group-minded’ not only on account of listening to the spoken word but also self-consciously so. Ong (2002:134) is referring to modern day individuals who, on account of opportunities presented by being literate for instance, have turned ‘inward,’ and now feel they should become more ‘socially sensitive’ and turn ‘outward’ so to speak.

Ong’s (2002:134) theory regarding ‘secondary orality’s’ ‘group-mindedness,’ is echoed by McLuhan’s (1967a:302,304) reference to radio’s ability to ‘tribalise’ or ‘merge’/ ‘unify’ mankind by reverting from ‘individualism’ to ‘collectivism.’ As an example McLuhan refers to the teenager, to whom radio grants privacy while it simultaneously provides the “tribal bond of the world of the common market, of song, and of resonance.” McLuhan (1967a:299) argues that radio has the inherent power to “turn the psyche and society into a single echo chamber.”

McLuhan (1967a:299-300) further reiterates his reference to radio’s power of ‘tribal’ bonding by referring to the pandemonium caused on 30 October, 1938 by Orson Welles’ hoax broadcast about a so-called “Mars invasion.” McLuhan describes the mass hysteria it caused as an example of “the all-inclusive, completely involving scope of the auditory image of radio.” These two examples by McLuhan, underscoring radio’s ability to unify or ‘tribalise,’ (1967a:302,304) as he terms it, will feature again (see 4.2.6) when referring to radio’s apparent duality.

Anderson’s (1993:6) ‘imagined community’ concept also confirms radio’s ability to, ‘turn outward,’ as Ong (2002:134) terms it and become tribal in the process. For, as McLuhan (1967a:301) points out, while “literacy had fostered an extreme of individualism ... radio had done just the opposite in reviving the ancient experience of kinship webs of deep tribal involvement.” In other words, where

literacy caused people to focus inward and thereby distance themselves from the community, radio has done the opposite by involving and including listeners in the same unified / 'tribal' community, as in PERCs.

One may ask how does this affect the tourist and ethnic communities in a National Game Park? The answer can be found in the fact that it illustrates radio's capability to merge people from different backgrounds into one audience or, using McLuhan's (1967a:302,304) term, to "tribalise" them. To underscore the point, the researcher refers to van Zyl's (2003:17) finding that radio's interactivity is a 'community-creating' tool that enables a community radio station to **"create a 'community' where there was not one before"** (2003:17 [emphasis in original]). Interactive participation can take place via phone-ins or by locals entering the station as part of an open-door policy, to take part in discussion programmes or by entering their comments in a convenient posting box. Furthermore a radio station generally commands loyalty from its listeners and the presenters are usually well known within the community. Creating a community that did not exist before can be seen as "tribalising" (McLuhan (1967a:302,304) although the term is socially frowned upon (see 2.2.2).

In the instance of a National Game Park, both the ethnic and tourist communities will merge into a new family of radio's making and become PERCs. For, as McLuhan (1967a:82) points out: "Because of its action in extending our central nervous system, electric technology seems to favour the inclusive and participational spoken word over the specialist written word." McLuhan is referring to the fact that a technological medium such as radio, relies on participation and the spoken word, thereby almost reverting back to the principles of the pre-literate oral community.

In comparing radio to literacy McLuhan (1967a:301-302) implies radio's close ties with folklore. McLuhan points out that while literacy promoted individualism, radio did the opposite by restoring "the ancient experience of kinship webs of deep tribal involvement" (1967a:301-302). McLuhan therefore regards radio as a "profound archaic force, a time bond with the most ancient past and long-forgotten experience" (1967a:301-302).

According to McLuhan (1967a:77-78) less literate cultures have a more intense/'sensuous' involvement with language since the spoken word "involves all of the senses dramatically." Highly literate people on the other hand, are inclined to speak as "connectedly and casually as possible."

To illustrate how the spoken word may also have a similar sensuous / intense effect on radio, McLuhan (1967a:77-78) refers to a transcript from a popular disk-jockey show, commenting on the way in which the disk-jockey "moves entirely in the spoken rather than the written area of experience," and sees it as the way in which audience participation is created. For a community radio station this implies that the presenters should strive to talk to their audience and refrain from sounding as if they are reading pre-prepared copy to them.

McLuhan's (1967a:77-78) reference to the spoken word once again underlines radio's unifying capability. Since a community radio station will make use of presenters and disk jockeys, the use of the spoken word becomes an important issue to ensure that the audience respond by participating. However the spontaneity that accompanies the spoken word may be lost in reading from pre-prepared scripts, and result in less audience participation. Part of the training of presenters will be to read material so that it sounds natural. Different programmes will require different types of presentation, for instance reading the news will require a more formal delivery (since the subject matter is of a more serious nature) than presenting a music request programme, which relies on sounding spontaneous in order to be popular. One may therefore conclude that 'voice dynamics' are associated with specific types of presentation modes.

Referring to tribal folklore in the broadest sense of the word, it is possible that the tourist members of the community may not instantly recognise the sounds and stories the ethnic community are familiar with, yet they will nonetheless be able to enjoy its ethnicity. One of the allures of going away on a holiday is to get away from the mundane and the everyday way of life. Experiencing something different to what one is used to will only add to the excitement and enjoyment of the visit. This is underscored by Littrell's (2001:2-3) views (see 2.2.3) regarding tourists who

want to experience the 'real thing' first hand. These tourists (classified as 'culture consumers') want experiences that are authentic to the culture they are visiting. The strong contrast this presents to what they are used to at home only adds to their enjoyment.

Although Littrell is referring to shopping and cultural experiences, one may assume the same will be true of community radio. Listening to the radio will form part of the different experiences the visitors are being exposed to. The fact that it will differ considerably from what they are used to listen to is also bound to add to the attraction of their experience in the wild. In a sense the tourist community will be learning from the ethnic community by being exposed to new material and sounds. For the ethnic community a community radio station will mean having a voice on air and programmes that matter to them as well as being exposed to new and sometimes foreign material, such as classical music, that many visitors will be familiar with and programmes that deal with nature.

Furthermore McLuhan (1967a:79) points to the fact that the spoken word "does not afford the extension and amplification of the visual power needed for habits of individualism and privacy." In this last instance, one would relate 'individualism' or 'privacy' to a literate person who is reading for instance. But as far as the spoken word is concerned, the tendency is to 'react' to circumstances that arise and again McLuhan (1967a:79) differentiates between orality and literacy by referring to the literate person as someone who is able to act with "detachment from the feelings or emotional involvement that a non-literate man or society would experience" (1967a:79).

As McLuhan (1967a:83-89) sees it, literacy means one exchanges the ear for an eye and in so doing frees oneself from "the web of kinship" and the magic of the spoken word. Whereas oral cultures "act and react at the same time," (1967a:86) "phonetic" culture (which implies being literate in this instance) provides people with the means of repressing their feelings and emotions so that they are able act without reacting or involvement. However, if literacy causes one to distance oneself from one's inner senses and emotions it also includes the freedom to dissociate oneself from "clan and family" (1967a:86).

In similar fashion, Ong (2002:12) finds that even though words may stem from oral speech, once they are written they become perpetually locked into a visual field, which is comparable to McLuhan's (1967a:83-84,301) 'ear for an eye' exchange. The result is that a literate person loses the ability to recapture a sense of what the word is to people who are entirely oral which in a sense also refers to some form of 'dissociation' as mentioned by McLuhan (1967a:83-84). Ong (2002:45 citing Havelock 1963:145-146) points out that learning or knowing implies an "empathetic, communal identification with the known" for an oral culture. Whereas writing "separates the knower from the known" which allows for personal distancing or 'objectivity.'

This is an important factor as far as the tourist (mostly literate)<sup>16</sup> community of a National Game Park is concerned. It implies that being literate will enable the visitors to distance themselves from their own kinship ties and allow the community radio station of the park to incorporate them into a new community or family together with the existing ethnic community. On the other hand, van Zyl (2003:28) points out, most black communities are 'information-poor' since a "high rate of illiteracy keeps people from reading" which is why a community radio station can be regarded as a source of information.

Oral cultures include 'tribal folklore,' which in turn relies on memory. Ong (The Walter J. Ong Project [sa]:3) regards orality and literacy as modes of both thought and activity. On account of the 'performative' nature of oral language, oral cultures pass down knowledge, to suit the present situation. One can therefore regard memory as being tied to the community as it forms an important part of oral cultures. In this regard radio, on account of the oral nature of the medium, will be well suited to pass down immediate information that is of interest to the community. It can also pass on the memories (and imagination based on memories collected) the ethnic community may have of different matters ranging

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<sup>16</sup> Mabunda 2004:117,131 refers to a survey conducted on a sample of 836 tourists visiting Kruger National Game Park between December 2002 and January 2003 (2004:17) which shows the majority of visitors to the park are "highly educated" with 49,90% of the tourists indicating a tertiary qualification of four or more years, while 79,50% had completed three years of study for a diploma or degree (2004:131).

from folklore and superstition to the behaviour patterns of animals.

Ong (The Walter J. Ong Project [sa]:3) argues that writing changes language from an act to a thing and ascribes this transition to the alphabet since it allows a whole word to be present all at once and for it to be cut out or divided into smaller pieces or to be pronounced backward, as in 'pat' that becomes 'tap' when pronounced backward. Should one try to repeat the procedure sound-wise by reversing the same, recorded word on tape, a totally different sound, quite unlike 'pat' or 'tap' emerges. The sound of a word, unlike the written word, is not capable of being present in its totality, since sound can only exist while it is going out of existence. By the time one gets to the last part of a word, the sound of the first part of the word has already ceased to exist. This is why the sound of the spoken word can be looked upon as an event and not as a thing. Ong's argument concerning the 'eventness' of sound also implicates the 'eventness' of radio, since there is the 'event' or act of making sounds, or speaking, accompanied simultaneously by the 'event,' or act of listening (Ong on the eventness of sound [sa]:1 )

Crook (1999:8) refers to communication in the preliterate tribal era, or "primary oral culture" as described by Ong (2002:133-134) as reliant upon the spoken word and the human ear. Similarly "messages in radio consist primarily of speech" which are "words expressed in voices" which helps to establish the "reality of the radio station and the broadcasters themselves" (Crisell 1994:6). Ong (2002:133) regards all kinds of electronic devices that produce acoustic sound such as radio and television as secondary orality. Since radio is such a primarily acoustic medium it can be seen as reverting back to the tribal art of storytelling. Ong seems to underscore this by claiming that primary orality's characteristics such as its communal wisdom that can be found in often told stories, sayings and formal addresses are enhanced in secondary orality, since the electronic media allows it to be heard by a far larger audience (The Walter J. Ong Project [sa]:3).

Crook (1999:64) cites McLuhan and Zingrone (1997:303) when referring to the fact that the radio medium also forbids that "many should speak" as in 'tribal folklore' where a speaker becomes the authority and the audience the receivers. Since the speakers would not be visibly identifiable, too many voices could make it difficult

for the listeners to distinguish between the different speaking voices. This indicates a further similarity between radio and the tribal art of storytelling where one speaks and others take on the role of listeners. In both instances the speaker becomes the author / authority and the others / listeners, the recipients (Crook 1999:8 citing McLuhan & Zingrone 1997:chapt. 8).

While radio is totally invisible on a physical level - McLuhan (1967a:302) refers to its “cloak of invisibility” - it can be heard by far more people than the tribal storytellers, who could be physically observed while telling tales. Since sound, sound effects and the human voice are the basic ingredients of both radio and “tribal folklore,” McLuhan (1967a:303), also referred to by Crook (1999:64), regards radio’s similarity to “tribal folklore” as a “technological breakthrough of radio/sound communications” that “retribalised the acoustic space of storytelling.”

Radio’s similarity to “tribal folklore”, as argued by McLuhan (1967a:303) is its reliance on one person speaking, while the audience (members of the ‘tribe’ according to McLuhan) listen. The researcher regards this similarity to be instrumental in promoting the radio station to both the ethnic and tourist communities in the National Game Park. McLuhan’s (1967a:304) reference to radio’s power to ‘retribalize’ mankind refers to its ability to almost instantly revert from a very private and intimate person-to-person directness to collectivism that captures the attention of the masses. The tourist ‘family’ (‘tribe’) suggested here is similar to Anderson’s ‘imagined’ community (see 4.2.2) where “the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their primordial communion” (Anderson 1993:6). It is to be expected that most of the members of PERCs hardly ever get to meet or hear or know the fellow members of their community although they may carry an image of their close association in their minds.

The researcher regards the ethnic community in and around a National Game Park as comparable to the ‘primary oral culture’ that Ong (2002:133-134) describes, since illiteracy (in the sense of being unable to write formally on paper) still prevails among many ethnic communities in rural areas, as previously

mentioned when citing van Zyl (2003:28) in this regard (see 4.2.5.) and referred to by Bogue (1979:1) as well (see 4.1).

Van Zyl (2003:28) mentions that even newspapers are often not accessible to many communities “simply because people are too poor to buy them.” This underscores Barnett’s (1999:649) observation that a daily newspaper is only read by less than five % of the South African population. On the other hand Barnett (1999:649) points out that most households, 89.5 %, own a radio. However with regard to being able to react to the particular information needs of each community, van Zyl (2003:28) believes the national broadcaster is not flexible enough to do so. Which is why the community radio station is so important, as it “provides the community with access to information” (Van Zyl 2003:28).

The radio medium can therefore be seen as having recouped or, according to McLuhan (1967a:304), “retribalised” the acoustic space of storytelling since many more of the listeners can now be regarded as ‘family’ (‘tribe’) members, listening to the same broadcaster / storyteller. To a certain extent a community radio station in a National Game Park will be fulfilling the ancient function of the ethnic, tribal storyteller, since it will incorporate ‘storytellers’ / announcers, songs and music from the ethnic community; in other words regrouping the community, according to McLuhan (1967a:303). Furthermore the station will serve an imagined community that shares a “horizontal comradeship,” creating equality on account of sharing at the “tribalised” (McLuhan 1967a:303) level regardless of existing inequalities, which is similar to Anderson’s (1993:7) perception of a nation as an ‘imagined’ community.

McLuhan (Marshall McLuhan [sa]:5) reminds one not to consider only the ‘content’ (which often blinds one to the character of the medium) but the medium as well as “the cultural matrix within which the particular medium operates.” To illustrate this McLuhan (Marshall McLuhan [sa]:3) gives the example of the electric light, which in itself is not regarded as a communication medium since it does not have any ‘content’, but as soon as it spells out the name of a product for instance, it is the content, which is actually another medium, and not the light that is noticed. Therefore, as McLuhan (Marshall McLuhan [sa]:3) sees it, it is the medium that

shapes and controls the scale and form of human association and action.

As a point of interest, having referred to McLuhan's use of the term 'media', when for instance referring to 'hot' - and 'cold' media, Ong (2002:172) on the other hand avoids the term media or medium and is of the opinion that:

... the term can give a false impression of the nature of verbal communication, and of other human communication as well. Thinking of a 'medium' of communication or of 'media' of communication suggests that communication is a pipeline transfer of units of material called 'information' from one place to another.

Ong (2002:172) illustrates by describing the mind as a box from which one encodes a "unit of 'information,'" by fitting it to the shape and size of the pipe, which is the medium, from where it proceeds to the other end where someone decodes it by restoring it to its proper shape and size and puts it in his or her own box. The medium is therefore "something in the middle" between the encoded - and decoded units of information. Although it has to do with human communication, Ong (2002:172) considers it to be insufficient since "it distorts the act of communication beyond recognition."

Ong's (2002:173) main argument against the 'medium' concept is based on the fact that human communication needs "anticipated feedback" to take place. In the medium model the message simply gets moved from one position to another (from sender to receiver) while in actual human communication the sender must be in both sender - and receiver position before sending anything. Ong is referring to the fact that before one starts to speak one's mind one must already be "in communication" with the mind one wishes to address. For human communication not only asks for response, "but is shaped in its very form and content by anticipated response" (Ong 2002:173). This refers to the fact that one must be able to imagine what the other person/s reactions are likely to be on what one proposes to say. Ong (2002:173) sees it as "the paradox of human communication," which means communication is inter-subjective, whereas the media model is not.

Although 'orally managed thought' (The Walter J. Ong Project. [sa]:3) can be found in often told narratives, formal orations and proverbs, orality cannot be regarded to be as analytically precise as writing is with its accompanying thought processes. It must be remembered however that in the case of 'written analysis,' based on the stop-start idea, time is not a factor and in this instance differs from an 'orality analysis' which is bound into "disappearance and time demands" (The Walter J. Ong Project. [sa]:3). Ong suggests that there are different forms and strategies of being 'analytically precise,' just as there is a fundamental difference between reading a play and viewing a performance. To sum up, different strategies are brought to bear in the 'specific analysis,' but one is not inferior to the other.

Oral thinking results from the limited spread of literacy. Because oral societies have no writing technology to distance them from the lived experience, they must verbalize their knowledge, thereby incorporating the unfamiliar, factual world to the more immediate, customary interaction of human beings (Ong 1988:36 cited by Ze 1995:7 -12). In an oral society, people depend on real situations in order to understand abstract things. This means they "tend to draw conceptual analogies from real situations and use them in other situations as standards." (Ze 1995:9) However as far as a community radio is concerned, it must be remembered that orality is a positive dimension, since it is its concepts and not the particulars that will be used. It is on the grounds of its concepts, such as one person speaking while others listen and thereby uniting the listeners, as previously referred to by Ong (2002:73) that orality becomes a unifying factor for a community radio station. Furthermore, since community radio will also make use of literacy and the written word it can also be used as a learning source of science and technology.

It has been noted that secondary orality has a preference for groups that exceeds that of primary orality. This is borne out by the fact that typical radio programmes in this age of secondary orality, are hardly ever as analytically prearranged as are written dissertations (The Walter J. Ong Project. [sa]:3).

The unifying effect of radio is also illustrated by McLuhan's (1967a:306) reference to radio's ability to 'contract' or shrink the world to village size, and in so doing

create village tastes for gossip and rumour, which resonates with Anderson's 'imagined communities.' Since radio appears to be the obvious choice for the ethnic community on account of the latter's primary oral culture, programmes of interest to the tourist community will assist in cultivating a new unified community. For the tourist community, this implies sharing their particular backgrounds such as traits, folklore, beliefs, peculiarities, recipes, traditions and music that depict their own nationalities, with their ethnic 'neighbours.' Furthermore they (the tourist community) will be learning more about the traditions, beliefs, music and so forth of their ethnic neighbours, thereby gaining more insight than before into the community they have bought into. In this manner their stay in a National Game Park can become a far more enlightening experience than would previously have been possible. To a certain extent, knowledge of the traditions of their ethnic neighbours, afford the tourist community a kind of family / clan or McLuhan's (1967a:303) "tribal" status as well, since they will be capable of greater awareness and consideration of the customs and the like, of the ethnic community. From an ethnic point of view, radio is perhaps the best-suited medium to carry the traditions that have been handed down through the ages by word of mouth only, into the new millennium.

At the same instance, as mentioned, the tourist community will be gaining valuable insight into the community they have bought into. To a certain extent the tourists (because of their visiting status) are on the outside looking in, eavesdropping, so to speak, on the ethnic community out of curiosity - exploring the 'exotic.' To be part of a community means sharing resources, living space and traditions. In this instance both the ethnic and tourist communities will be sharing not only living space but also knowledge of each other's roots, traditions and the like. A community radio station will play an important part in unifying the community, by not only promoting programmes that feature the ethnic community but also by making use of what the tourist community has or are prepared to offer. This would imply the creation of a new family / clan ('tribe') in which the ethnic and tourist communities become 'amalgamated' / unified ('tribalised') so to speak.

As has been explained in chapter two (see 2.2.2) the word 'tribal' presents a problem of being regarded as being socially unacceptable, although the sense in

which it is referred to in this thesis merely implies the unification of different members of the community to become PERCs.

#### **4.2.6 Radio is a dualistic medium**

It may initially be argued that the researcher is not comparing radio with the medium itself in order to establish its duality. However, orality is its trademark and since radio is regarded as 'secondary orality' it can therefore be compared to 'primary orality' on the grounds of their close ties / resemblances, which is one of the cornerstones regarding the characteristics of radio. It is in their very similarity that some subtle differences or dualities become apparent.

One of these dualities concerns spontaneity. Although both primary- and secondary orality promote spontaneity, it is for different reasons. In the case of primary orality, spontaneity is promoted since the "analytic reflectiveness" (Ong 2002:134) brought about by writing, is not available to them. Secondary orality promotes spontaneity since it is through "analytic reflection" that the people of today have come to realise that spontaneity is "a good thing" (2002:134).

According to Ong (2002:134): "We plan our happenings carefully to be sure that they are thoroughly spontaneous." One can therefore, when comparing the medium with itself, refer to radio's 'spontaneity' as being dualistic in the sense that the listeners perceive its messages to be spontaneous while in actual fact they are often carefully contrived to appear so.

Although with the electronic age of radio and television, orality has come into its own far more than before, since it is able to reach a far larger audience than in a 'primary oral culture', Ong (2002:134-135) points out, it is no longer the same old style oratory resulting from 'primary orality.' It is clear that although 'secondary orality' is still communication based on sound, it is artificial sound made by machines such as radio, which, in turn, originated with the help of writing (The Walter J.Ong Project [sa]:3).

McLuhan (1967a:302) provides a further example of radio's duality by explaining that radio "comes to us ostensibly with person-to-person directness that is private

and intimate, while in more urgent fact, it is really a subliminal echo chamber of magical power to touch remote and forgotten chords.”

The duality lies in radio's ability to be both a private - and a collective experience. According to McLuhan (1967a:299) the “immediate aspect” of radio is a “private experience”. But this is only seemingly so, since radio is also able to “tribalize mankind” by an “almost instant reversal of individualism into collectivism” (McLuhan 1967a:304). Referring to the teenagers of the 1950s, McLuhan (1967a:302) throws some light on this apparent duality by stating that while radio offers the teenager privacy it is, at the same time, providing “the tight tribal bond of the world of the common market, of song, and of resonance” (see 4.2.5) which concurs with Anderson's ‘imagined communities.’

In its most simplistic form, radio's duality can be described as being both physical and psychological. It is physical since it uses sound and psychological, because it relies on the imagination as a means to create a picture in the mind (Crook 1999:8 and McLuhan & Zingrone 1997:292-293). Radio's duality however does not end there. ‘Thinking’ presents another of radio's paradoxes. In order to understand the auditory message better, radio makes us think about what we are hearing, but as Guralnik argues, what we think does not necessarily mean things are so (Crook 1999:63 citing Guralnik 1996:100).

One only has to remember the pandemonium caused on 30 October 1938 when millions of listeners in America tuned in to a popular radio program featuring plays directed by, and often featuring, Orson Welles. It was the day before Halloween and, in what could only be described as a feat of ‘trick’ rather than ‘treat,’ Welles had arranged for a hoax radio programme to be broadcast as if it were real. At the beginning of the broadcast a brief explanation was given that it was a radio play and not reality, but if members of the audience failed to hear it the first time, the next explanation only came 40 minutes into the program. Under Welles' direction, the play, based on HG Wells' 1898 science fiction novel, *War of the Worlds* was adapted and performed to “sound like a [live] news broadcast about an invasion from Mars.” False news bulletins reported a ‘huge flaming object’ had dropped on a farm in New Jersey and an actor, playing a newscaster, even described the

emergence of an alien from its spacecraft. This simulation of a news broadcast, together with sound effects, led a portion of the audience to believe that they were hearing an actual news account of an invasion from Mars. In an attempt to defend themselves against the aliens, people hid in cellars, packed the roads, loaded their guns, and even wrapped their heads in wet towels to protect them from Martian poison gas. In doing so they were confusing fiction for fact, since they did not realise that they were, in fact, acting the part of the panic-stricken audience that belonged in the radio play. This demonstrated the power of radio as a mass communicator, and proved how effectively voices and sound effects could be used to convince people of the unreasonable and the fantastic. Some listeners reacted purely on what they heard thinking and believing it was true, though it proved not to be. People were stuck in “a kind of virtual world in which fiction was confused for fact” (War of the Worlds [sa]:1-2). Although there were real examples of panic it must be remembered that the effect on most of the listeners was entertainment. Even McLuhan (1967a:299-300) mentions the famous ‘Mars invasion’ broadcast by Orson Welles when referring to radio’s ability to completely involve its audience in its auditory images (see 4.2.5) when illustrating radio’s ability to “tribalise” (McLuhan 1967a:299-300) humankind.

To a certain extent (Marshall McLuhan [sa]:11-12), inadvertently addresses the argument of radio’s duality by referring to ‘hot’ and ‘cold’ media and differentiating between the two on the grounds of less or more audience participation (see 4.2.1). Suffice to recap here that a ‘hot’ medium needs less listener participation / attentiveness, since it provides a substantial amount of data, such as film, whereas a ‘cold’ / ‘cool’ medium provides only scant information and relies on more listener participation / attentiveness, such as the telephone that only has limited information.

The researcher is particularly interested in McLuhan’s ‘hot’ and ‘cold’ theory since it can also be applied to radio programming and listenership. Although McLuhan (Marshall McLuhan [sa]:11-12) defines radio as a ‘hot’ medium, the researcher finds that the degree of attention or ‘participation’ with which the audience listens to a broadcast, allows for a further duality. In order to understand radio’s messages, all that is required from the audience is to listen. On the one hand,

radio relies on attentiveness, which implies that one has to think about what one is hearing in order to understand the auditory message. According to McLuhan's (Marshall McLuhan [sa]:11-12) 'hot / cold' media theory, attentiveness would imply participation, thereby making it a 'cool' medium. On the other hand radio seemingly invites inattentiveness, since it allows listeners to busy themselves with other activities such as driving a car or weaving a basket while listening. Should these activities result in less attentive listening and radio become mere background accompaniment, it would indicate less audience participation, and make it a 'hot' medium according to McLuhan's principles.

This means the moments of active ('cool') or inactive ('hot') participation will vary according to personal or group interest. As an example, the tourist community may be inactively involved (and therefore regarded as 'hot') while listening to classical music playing over their car radio while out on a game viewing drive. For them it is mere background sound, at best only conducive to creating a tranquil environment while driving. Should the exploding crackle of a two-way radio interrupt the music programme, to warn against an expected flooding of a low water bridge, and suggest an alternate route back to camp, the game-viewing visitors will, in all probability, immediately become actively involved ('cold') and listen with far more interest than before. They may even actively respond or 'participate' by turning the volume dial louder to be able to hear the reporter / ranger's voice more distinctly. Depending on how close to the scene they are, they may look up their position on the park's roadmap, change direction in order to avoid a potentially dangerous situation. For them the broadcast no longer merely fills airspace but has their undivided attention.

If the programme is 'hot' for the ethnic community, their inattentiveness or lack of participation could be the result of being over-familiar with the subject or having no particular interest in what they are hearing. The sound of classical music will in all probability not inspire much attentive listening from them and will therefore classify as 'hot.' However, should the signature tune of a popular radio serial or any other well-liked programme be played, chances are that those listening will either turn the sound on louder, or move closer to the radio, or even take a break from what they may be busy doing in order to pay more attention to what they are listening

to, implying more active engagement and participation and will therefore classify as 'cold.'

It seems likely that the two grids (one 'hot' and one 'cold') will operate simultaneously. To illustrate, the ethnic community who are in no danger of being flooded, will take far less notice of the breaking news warning, than the tourists who may be in danger. In this instance the ethnic community on one end of the grid may be regarded as 'hot' or unresponsive, while on the other end of the grid, the tourist community can be regarded as 'cold' or responsive. Similarly listener involvement will be reversed if the broadcast is of more interest to the ethnic members of the unified community, such as a popular radio serial for instance, while less so to the tourist community who are not its regular listeners and have not been following the plot for a length of time.

This pattern of active ('cold') and inactive ('hot') listener involvement is bound to occur throughout each day's programming. The challenge for the community radio station will be to present programmes in such a manner that they will have most of the listeners actively listening for most of the time, although there will be a constant ebb and flow between 'hot' and 'cold' listening experiences. At times the announcer might even advocate the inactive / 'hot' experience by instructing listeners to sit back and relax. Of course this may also mean the opposite - "sit up and take notice!"

Due to the fact that radio invites both attentive and inattentive listening, it can be expected to have different outcomes. Crisell (1994:14) defines radio's duality along quite similar lines as McLuhan's (Marshall McLuhan [sa]:11-12) 'hot' and 'cold' media theory, by referring to its complimentary or positive nature on the one hand, which is suggestive and imaginative and relies on the listeners' attention. This is a positive outcome and 'cool' according to McLuhan's principles. On the other hand Crisell mentions the conflicting nature of radio, which he regards as a negative aspect since it offers listeners the flexibility to be doing something else while listening. By allowing much of the message to be ignored, it practically condones inattentiveness, which may result in the listener not fully understanding the message. It can be regarded as a conflicting and negative outcome, which can

also be considered as ‘hot,’ according to McLuhan’s definition.

Further grounds for radio’s duality can be found in its capability to revert from individualism to collectivism (see 4.2.5). McLuhan (1967a:299) refers to radio as a seemingly “private experience” for the listener but points out that at the same time it is capable of unifying people by an “almost instant reversal of *individualism* into *collectivism*” [emphasis added] (McLuhan 1967a:304), which reverberates with Anderson’s ‘imagined communities’. As mentioned earlier (see 4.2.5) McLuhan (1967a:302) gives the example of teenagers of the 1950s to whom radio offered listening privacy, while at the same time providing a universal bond of the world of song and lifestyle.

Ong (2002:8-9) pertinently refers to the fact that people in primary oral cultures “learn a great deal and possess and practice great wisdom, but they do not ‘study’.” He is referring to their practice of learning by apprenticeship, listening, repeating what they hear, and assimilating formulary materials, which is not study in the literacy sense.

#### **4.2.7 Radio’s duality includes a sense of immediacy and reality**

According to Ong (2002:70): “Sound exists only when it is going out of existence.” This refers to the immediacy of sound. As previously mentioned (see 4.2.6) one of the aspects of ‘secondary orality’ such as radio is that it closely resembles ‘primary orality.’ Among their similarities is the fact that both are focused on the present moment (Ong 2002:133-134). McLuhan (1967a:86) also refers to the ‘immediacy’ of oral cultures when he notes that they “act and react at the same time. ‘Secondary orality’ refers to sound produced by a technological machine like radio, that can be heard by a far vaster and mostly invisible audience and is therefore regarded as ‘artificial.’ Since its audience is invisible, one may therefore argue that ‘secondary orality’ deals with an ‘imagined’ community, as pointed out before (see 4.2.2 and 4.2.5), given that Anderson (1993:6) regards all communities, even small villages, as ‘imagined’, since they never get to know all their fellow members.

Against the background of McLuhan’s (Marshall McLuhan [sa]:11-12) ‘hot’ / ‘cold’

theory, as well as Crisell's (1994:14) reference to the 'complimentary'(positive) and 'conflicting' (negative) nature of radio (see4.2.6), one can view radio's 'concentration on the present moment,' (Ong 2002:133-134), as one of its positive aspects and regard it as a medium that can be both responsive and immediate. This is illustrated by the fact that listeners can make their requests and comments by telephone and have it broadcast almost immediately in a programme, which makes it 'real'. Phone-in discussions in particular are regarded as venues for listeners to air their views immediately (Fleming 2002:14).

A community radio station in a National Game Park for instance, can have live talk shows featuring topics of interest to both the ethnic and tourist communities in the park such as culling or poaching to name but two. Members of both the ethnic and tourist the community can serve on a discussion panel, the studio audience and listeners (*via* phone-ins), are invited to ask questions, make suggestions, and air their views. This will require the skills of a firm but unbiased host who is able to control the situation by allowing a fair amount of airtime to all the parties concerned and is able to work in two languages.

Radio's immediacy and sense of reality is also "ideal for keeping people informed about breaking news stories" (Fleming 2002:14). For instance when the newsreader interrupts the news item he is reading to announce a message he has 'just received' and proceeds to read it, the listeners are at once confronted with the reality and immediacy of the medium.

Adding to radio's sense of immediacy is its portability which means it is immediately accessible - in the workplace, while driving a car, carried around as a portable set or ferried about by bicycle or listened to on headsets. Furthermore a community radio station is able to be of immediate assistance to its community, through being able to interrupt a broadcast and call for assistance in the case of a small child that is lost, or to warn against a bushfire that is bearing down on people's crops for instance. These matters will be of little concern to a commercial station trying to please the broad spectrum of its extended audience.

Radio's 'present tense' sense and 'liveness' result from the fact that its codes are auditory and exist in time (Crisell 1994:5). This means that on the one hand radio is similar to theatre, film and television, in reporting what *is* happening, rather than what *has* happened. To illustrate, contemporary remarks by broadcasters on the traffic or happenings and the like, establish the reality or 'liveness' of the radio station, proving that they are not just "voices in the ether" but one of us, the listeners (Crisell 1994:5-6). Again Anderson's (1993:6) reference to the invisible imagined community comes to mind (see 4.2.2) as well as McLuhan's (1967a:306) reference to radio's ability to 'contract' the world to 'village size' and thereby create village tastes for gossip and rumour.

On the other hand what *has* happened is regarded as information, such as radio news bulletins and the like, which have been edited / pre-recorded, yet are still considered to be part of the immediateness and liveness of radio. Pre-recorded programmes on health matters, education, and so forth are introduced by a 'live' announcer and may include a retrospective remark, or an address or telephone number afterwards, fostering the present tense / live illusion while the programme is past tense strictly speaking. However it is the fusion between the immediate present and pre-recorded past that helps to promote the illusion that radio is immediate and real. By 'balancing' the sound quality so that the announcer and the interview has the same sound quality, will suggest that they have just 'changed seats' so to speak, to the listener.

A community radio station functioning in a National Game Park will incorporate both pre-recorded programmes as well as actuality/live broadcasts that are happening at that moment in time, for instance an on the spot reporting of a river that has begun to flood its banks. This duality caused by radio's sense of being in the 'present tense,' although some of its programmes may be edited and pre-recorded, and therefore technically in the 'past tense', has already been referred to (see 4.2.6).

Just as the past tense is inadvertently tied to the immediate present tense of radio, so does it extend to the ethnic and tourist communities of a National Game Park. What McLuhan (1967a:300) describes as "tribal peoples" would indicate the ethnic

community of a National Game Park, and what McLuhan (1967a:300) refers to as the “detrilledised and literate West,” namely the tourist community. This implies that the ethnic communities around the park can be regarded as part of the history or past of the park on account of having resided in its vicinity for generations, being accustomed to the folklore and traditions that have been passed down for generations. In that sense they become the triggers of the information that needs to be passed on. On account of their visitor status and relatively short stay at the park, without any deep-rooted links to its past, the tourist community represent the ‘present.’ During their visit they will become the recipients of information passed down by the ethnic community, creating a fusion so to speak between the past and the present. For example an evening programme on radio about the plants in the area may include knowledgeable members of the ethnic community, who will explain their traditional uses and cures. In this way knowledge and information from the past gets passed on to the present.

One of the main advantages therefore, of community radio is its ability to deal immediately with the so-called ‘trivial matters’ that affect the community it serves as well as the real relationship it is capable of having with its listeners (Crisell 1994:13 and Crook 1999:67). When it comes to being aware of what is happening in the near neighbourhood, the researcher is of the opinion that community radio has a definite gain over commercial radio and the public broadcaster. Crisell (1994:13) sees the fact that community radio may be of much more practical importance to the listener, as “the greatest achievement of local radio,” which is further underscored by the fact that radio “is probably at its best when it is ‘live’ or reacting to an event happening ‘now’” (Chantler & Harris 1997:4). A community radio station may for instance, broadcast an urgent appeal to help find a child that has just gone missing and provide instant and important information on what the child was wearing, where it was last seen and so forth. It can provide important information such as where to take the children for inoculations or where to register for up coming elections. It may also offer warnings on matters such as rivers flooding their banks and which low water bridges should be avoided, or alert listeners of the danger of runaway bush fires.

#### 4.2.8 Radio's duality implies different listener categories

As pointed out previously (see 4.2.6) when referring to radio's duality and McLuhan's (Marshall McLuhan [sa]:11) 'hot' / 'cold' theory, radio allows for a wide range of attention that causes Crisell (1994:15) to distinguish between different audience categories, namely those that *hear* and those that *listen*. For the *hearers* the radio functions unobtrusively in the background and becomes mere "acoustic wallpaper" (Crisell 1994:15). For the *listeners*, the radio has a predominant function and becomes 'an object of concentration' and therefore a 'cold' medium by McLuhan's standard.

Trethowan (1970:7 cited by Crisell 1994:14) touches on the different listener categories by referring to those listeners who view radio as a source of entertainment and those who regard it as accompaniment to other activities or mere background noise. Crisell (1994:14-15) presents a similar view (see 4.2.6) on the duality of radio. He blames radio's 'positive' and 'negative' nature for creating two different listener categories, namely those who listen with attention and those who are inattentive and do not fully understand or ignore the message. However since the medium allows its listeners to be otherwise occupied while listening to its broadcasts, like driving in the park while on the lookout for animals or preparing food and the like, may also contribute to the 'positive' / 'negative' nature in some instances.

These categories will no doubt be in a constant state of fluctuation, since attention span and the content of programmes will dictate who will be listening and when. No doubt the form and content of programmes, as well as the contrast between programmes that are informational and those that are entertaining, will appeal to different audiences. For instance, while informational programmes on different animal - and bird species in the park may interest the visitors, the ethnic members may pay less attention. On the other hand an entertainment programme in the form of a game show, where the audience may participate for prizes, may appeal more to the ethnic members of PERCs.

As previously mentioned regarding radio's duality (see 4.2.6), its flexibility may have a possible 'negative' effect. Crisell (1994:14) fears that allowing listeners the freedom to pursue other activities while listening, may distract them from fully understanding what is being conveyed. It may also be argued that radio's subdominant role is to cement community attachment - based on mere recognition and therefore inattentive listening. Its dominant role might be new knowledge gained in extending the community, and thus calling for attentive listening. This is important for two reasons - it assists in cementing the "imagined" communities Anderson (1993:6) refers to and furthermore provides a shared vocabulary.

Crisell (1994:15) refers to the fact that people have always had the opportunity to treat radio as a "service element" since it allowed them to do something else while listening to it. However he hastens to point out that it merely illustrates that "much more than in any other medium a whole range of attention is possible" which does not imply that the greater part of the listeners' attention is not focused on the radio. In the case of a community radio station in a National Game Park, its subordinate role could include audience activities such as game - or bird watching, basket weaving, crafting, and the like. In a predominant situation, there would be greater listener participation, such as phone-ins and the like. Since the purpose of the community radio station is to set up one station, without having two sets of time slots for the two different communities, interweaving and overlaying the content of the programmes becomes a necessity.

As mentioned, a community radio station in a National Game Park will be one station. Programmes will therefore have to be interwoven and overlaid. The tourist and ethnic communities are forged into a unit on the grounds of having each of them gain insight into the world of the other. A community radio station in a National Game Park will, on account of its unifying role, be instrumental in forming a new culture in a sense. Schein (1992:52) compares the process of culture formation to the process of group formation - "tribalisation" in other words, to cite McLuhan (1967:299-300). Group identity in Schein's view, relies on shared experience and learning, resulting in what he refers to as "the *culture* of that group" (1992:52) [emphasis added] which, in this instance, will be portrayed by the community radio station in a National Game Park. Note that "culture" as it is used

here, refers to the 'identity' of the group.

Schein (1992:211-212), also cited in Kung-Shankleman (2000:15), argues that cultures originate from three sources, namely the assumptions, beliefs and values of the group; its learning experiences as it evolves; and new beliefs, assumptions and values brought in by new leaders and members. Although Schein is referring to the founders of organizations the same can be said for communities. It is for instance reasonable to expect that both the tourist and ethnic members will enjoy new learning experiences and being exposed to each other's values and beliefs as a result of the programmes featured on the proposed community radio station.. This creates unity and is conducive to the formation of a new identity, in this instance, the Parks Emergent Radio Communities. Programmes will have to be composed in such a way that the pleasure to be derived from it can be anticipated.

#### **4.2.9 Radio listeners' lifestyle and age dictate their listening habits**

The IBA Triple Inquiry Report 1995 states that the lifestyle and age of listeners dictate their listening habits (Collie 1999:17). For instance, working people and students tend to listen to the radio whilst driving to and from work or class in the morning and late afternoon. People who are not working or retired are inclined to want the radio playing in the background during most of the day. According to the 1995 report (Collie1999:17), black listeners stay tuned in for social and entertainment purposes and prefer interactive programmes such as talk shows and phone-ins. The report found news reports to be important to all listeners. For a community radio station in a National Game Park to succeed, the lifestyle and listening habits of the ethnic and tourist community will have to be taken into consideration, when planning programmes. Since interactive programmes have proved to be popular with black listeners, they should appeal to the ethnic communities living in and around a National Game Park, assuming they have access to the technology to phone in. It will therefore be an aspect to consider as the planning of programmes progresses.

One may expect the tourist members of the community will enjoy programmes on nature and game watching, wildlife photography, the history of the park and its

neighbouring communities, stories told by field guides about harrowing encounters with wild animals, information on visits to cultural villages, where to purchase handcrafts, or golf enthusiasts may find it interesting to listen to the experiences of other golfers playing golf on the unfenced golf course at Skukuza for example. All in all the visitors' main interest will be to enjoy their experiences and stay in the park while the ethnic communities will have more mundane matters in mind such as finding employment, advertising their services, getting information about matters of concern to them, and being able to voice their opinions on important issues. However one must remember that radio remains a source of entertainment and will therefore also feature music and sport programmes, quizzes, phone-ins and talk shows, soapies, dramas and interactive programmes allowing the tourist and ethnic communities to share their experiences and views with each other. Advice or information may be swapped on matters of interest to all parties. The overall effect of these interactive programmes with its emphasis on sharing with each other will contribute to the strengthening of community ties.

#### **4.2.10 Radio relies mainly on talk and music for programming**

The distinction between hearer and listener or background and predominant functions of radio is useful since talk and music radio often form the only programming of the majority of stations (Crisell 1994:15). It will be important for both the audience-researcher and the programme-producer of a community radio station in a game park, to identify whom the listeners of the station are going to be, since it is the listeners who will determine the type of programmes to be aired as well as the time slots for the different programmes, the ethnic and tourist members of PERCs will be interested in. A great deal of consideration will also go into music programming since it will have to cater to the taste of a tourist as well as an ethnic community. Due to the detail involved in the programming of a community radio station this input will be discussed in the next chapter.

#### **4.2.11 Radio has a greater reach and staying capability than other media**

Radio's strength has always been "that it opened up the world to people. It was no longer necessary to 'be' somewhere in order to experience an event" since your

radio brought it to you (Fleming 2002:12). The fact that radio is capable of staying with an individual in a far greater variety of circumstances and physical environments than other media is another advantage, since this allows for a much bigger space in which the message can be “absorbed and evaluated” (Crook 1999:65). Part of radio’s staying power has to do with the fact that it is small enough to be easily portable, works on batteries as well as electrical power and can therefore accompany the listener almost anywhere. Furthermore, listening to a radio leaves the ethnic community free to carry on with their crafts or chores, while tourists on game drives are also free to observe and watch out for the animals while listening to the radio, something that visual media such as television and books cannot offer (Crisell 1994:11).

Having established the general characteristics of radio and how it functions, it is necessary to develop the specific demands of the community radio station. The next section will explore what the aims and objectives of community radio ought to be, based on the findings of organizations that have been seriously involved with community radio in South Africa and Africa.

#### **4.3 The aims and objectives of community radio**

A working description for a generic community radio station so far, points to a medium that does not rely on sight but on imagination and listening. It incorporates the art of the storyteller of old and in this set-up, strives to synthesise / unify the tourist and ethnic members of PERCs to become a unit. One of the first arguments presented in this study set out to prove the interface that exists between the ethnic communities that surround a National Game Park such as the Kruger National Park and the tourists that visit the park. The case was made that the tourists become tourist members of these communities on account of their coexistence with the ethnic communities bordering the park.

Immediacy and reality are the main attributes of community radio and it can cater to different listeners with different lifestyles and listening habits. Its programmes will predominantly feature talk and music and it will rely on its portability to reach individuals in various circumstances and physical environments.

Apart from defining the characteristics of radio, which includes the community radio station in a National Game Park, the aims and objectives of the proposed community radio station are also important. The researcher will consider the aims and objectives proposed by recognized organizations concerned with community radio in Africa. The three organizations chosen by the researcher have been involved with community radio in South Africa for quite some time or have been seriously involved with community radio in Africa. They are:

- The National Community Radio Forum (NCRF);
- The World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) and
- South Africa's IBA Triple Inquiry Report, 1995.

#### **4.3.1 The National Community Radio Forum (NCRF)**

When the National Community Radio Forum was launched in Orlando, Soweto, in 1993 its purpose was to foster a dynamic broadcasting environment in South Africa through the establishment of community radio stations. The National Community Radio Forum (NCRF) consists of a national association of community radio stations. The radio station members are independent, non-profit, community-based organizations. Diverse local communities own and run the stations and actively participate in developing programming activities for sustainable, non-discriminatory local development. According to the vision of the National Community Radio Forum (NCRF [sa]:1):

A sustainable and independent community radio sector in South Africa builds grassroots democracy by mobilizing all communities to engage in their own development (and enables the expression of the diverse voices of civil society) through access to the airwaves and participation in the programming of radio stations.

The National Community Radio Forum (NCRF [sa]:1) strives towards the following aspirations and goals:

- To endorse the principles, ideals and function of community radio, as an essential part of the broadcasting milieu of a democratic South Africa;

- To encourage the involvement of historically disadvantaged communities in all areas of community radio;
- To assist the organization and growth of community radio stations all over the country;
- To promote networking and collaboration between community radio stations;
- To support the role of community radio within organizations responsible for legislating and controlling broadcasting principles, as well as popularise the importance of community radio within the rebuilding and development of South Africa;
- To encourage the production of excellent and innovative programming from different sources to assist local programming objectives;
- To encourage democracy, growth and employment of communities through community radio.

The objectives of the National Community Radio Forum regarding community radio stations can also be applied to the advantage of a community radio station in a National Game Park such as PERCs. In the first instance, community radio has to become part of the broadcasting environment in South Africa. This will be to the advantage of the community radio stations, since it will allow them to draw on the experience and advice of an established broadcasting service. By encouraging the local ethnic members of the community who may have been previously disadvantaged, to take part in all the aspects of community radio will not only ensure their interest but also their cooperation, both of which are needed for a community radio station to operate successfully. The tourist members of PERCs should also be encouraged to participate and in this instance tour operators may be contracted to assist in encouraging visitors to become involved with the station.

Establishing a community radio station in a National Game Park will also help fulfil one of the aims of The National Community Radio Forum, which is to establish community radio stations throughout the country. It would no doubt benefit a community radio station to cooperate with other community radio stations, as It would allow for the exchange of knowledge, interesting subject matter and the like, and in so doing help promote the general well being of the station. Encouraging

innovative programs of high quality would not only serve the objectives of the National Community Radio Forum but also help to popularise the community radio station with regard to both the ethnic and tourist members of PERCs residing in and around a National Game Park. This will entail the cooperation of tour operators working with the community radio station to promote its programmes to visitors as well as publicity by word of mouth. Furthermore, democracy, development and the employment of ethnic members can be achieved through community radio, as envisaged by the National Community Radio Forum.

The possibility of employment that a community radio station holds for the ethnic members is also considered to be a very important factor by van Zyl (2001:4), as it will contribute to the development of the community. The tourist members also need to have an input as a possible source of innovative programming. Tour guides / operators can play an important role in this regard as mediators between the tourist members and the programme manager of the community radio station. The challenge will be to find material that suits the station's programming goals. This will have the further benefit of cooperation between the tourist members and their ethnic host radio station.

#### **4.3.2 The World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC)**

The World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) is a global non-governmental organization, created in 1983, that serves the community radio movement. The World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters has its international headquarters in Montreal and Quebec in Canada, as well as regional coordination in Europe, North America, Latin America, the Caribbean, Oceania, Asia and Africa. At present it has nearly 3,000 members in 106 countries. Its goal is "to support and advocate the development of community and participatory radio on the principles of solidarity and international cooperation." (AMARC [sa]:2) In this context 'participatory' may refer to the participation of different community radio stations regarding the exchange of information, programmes of interest and so forth as proposed by the National Community Radio Forum (NCRF [sa]:1). It can also refer to the participation of PERCs where the community radio station is situated. This can imply input regarding programme contents, station policies, as

well as participation by the community in the form of talk shows or phone-ins, allowing members of the community to air their views or concerns on matters of interest or concern to them. Both the tourist and ethnic community residing in and around a National Game Park will be encouraged to participate in this.

The World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters' African Network (AMARC [sa]:2) aims to implement the following plan of action:

- Develop a political, legal and cultural environment that will encourage participatory broadcasting in the community;
- Develop available human resources in the community regarding the management, production and technology of a community radio station;
- Encourage African women to access and participate in all the different aspects of community radio Broadcasters.

In order to distribute information, transfer skills and bring African affiliates to the International Solidarity Network, a regional network of radio broadcasters, must be built up and coordinated (AMARC [sa]:2).

The plan mentioned here will also stand a community radio station in a National Game Park in good stead, since the points they underwrite will be to the benefit of the community. By developing a legal, political and cultural environment that encourages participatory radio broadcasting, both the ethnic and tourist members of the community are far more likely to become involved, in one way or another, with the community radio station. Van Zyl's (2001:6) view that community radio stations "must buy into the project, and feel they own the concept" underlines the importance of the community participating in the broadcast. This implies that all the members of the community will have to buy into the project to make it work.

However, given the transitory nature of its tourist members, it will be useful to make use of travel agents as surrogates for the administration. Getting the tourist community to 'buy into the concept' will depend on the station letting them feel part of the Park Emergent Radio Community. This can be achieved by, playing their music requests, having phone-in programmes and utilising mobile studios

deployed within the community. Sport enthusiasts may for instance be invited to assist in hosting events such as teaching the children of the neighbouring ethnic communities the basics of golf, tennis or cricket or friendly soccer and matches between the visitors and the home sides can be arranged, advertised and broadcast on the proposed community radio station. These are but a few examples of how the tourist community can be made to feel part of the 'new' radio community and contribute towards its programmes. At the same time the station will be making use of the available human resources in the community and helping to develop others.

With regard to developing a legal, political and cultural environment, van Zyl (2001:2) points out that "community radio is the voice of civil society. It is an essential part of the maintenance of democracy" and its main function "is meeting the needs of all the citizens of the country and being accountable to all the citizens." This implies that the needs of both the tourist and ethnic components of the community must be met. For the ethnic sector, human resources can be developed through training, enabling them to take care of the management, production, programming and technology involved in running a community radio station. It is important that the tourist members are also made to feel part of the 'imagined' community with programmes that will encourage their participation and catch their interest. In this regard van Zyl (2001:4) sees community radio as a "national resource" that has to be developed and regarded "as a source of programming and information" by the national broadcaster.

Van Zyl also describes community radio as "a tool to address the crisis in education, particularly adult basic education and training" since it would strengthen the role that community radio could play in relieving poverty and unemployment (2001:4). ABC Ulwasi resulted from a merger between the Applied Broadcasting Centre, a research unit at the University of the Witwatersrand, and Ulwazi Radio Productions. The word for 'knowledge' in IsiZulu is *ulwazi*. ABC Ulwasi is at present involved in the community radio sector in South Africa and in the SADC region as a whole, with training, production and consultation (Van Zyl 2003:ii). ABC Ulwasi hosts three to five day training courses for community radio station presenters and producers, providing trainees with the opportunity to become better

informed about topics they may never have studied and are being asked to broadcast. It also trains presenters in writing and producing their own versions of programs, suited to local needs (Van Zyl 2003:ii).

African women, and especially those in rural areas, have in many ways been disadvantaged before, due to customs and politics as referred to by Ntab (2001:2). Becoming involved and trained in the different aspects of community radio, including broadcasting, will not only provide them with new work opportunities but with empowerment within the community as well. They may for instance be used to compile, report and present programmes presenters that deal with issues of concern to women in the ethnic and tourist communities.

#### **4.3.3 South Africa's Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA)**

(The previous licensing body responsible for issuing broadcast licences to community radio stations, currently ICASA)

The IBA Triple Inquiry Report 1995 (Collie1999:10) indicates that a community radio station should aim to:

- Promote and reflect local culture, character and identity;
- Assist in creating a diversity of voices and opinions;
- Encourage individual expression;
- Become training grounds for new voices (presenters);
- Be responsive to the needs of the community, and where appropriate
- Lead to job creation (benefits);
- Encourage members of the community to participate in the programming and production matters of the station.

Van Zyl (2001:4) sees community radio as a “national resource” that has to be developed and regarded “as a source of programming and information” by the national broadcaster.

#### **4.4 A work description for a generic community radio station**

In order for a community radio station to be sustainable it will need 'stakeholders.' Collie cites Blair and Buesseler (1998) who describe stakeholders as any individuals, groups, or organizations that have a stake in the decisions, and actions, of an organization - which in this instance happens to be a community radio station. According to van Zyl (2003:13) a community radio station is a 'non-profit' organization and that means it "may not have shareholders, and therefore cannot distribute any profits to them." Profit must not be the station's main aim. This has caused confusion since people believed that ICASA insisted that community radio stations were not allowed to make money. Van Zyl (2003:12) points out that this is not so: "What is meant is that a community radio station should not regard being commercial and making a lot of money as more important than serving the community."

##### **4.4.1 The link between culture and organizations**

According to Küng-Shankleman (2000:17), culture can also be linked to organizations. In a National Game Park, where culture refers to both the tourist and ethnic members of the community, the community radio station becomes the 'organization' they will be linked to. The community radio station's economic survival and growth will depend to a large extent on the input and involvement of its listeners. Keeping Schein (in Küng-Shankleman 2000:19-20) in mind one can, to a certain extent, compare the merged community of a community radio station to the stakeholders of an organization, since in both instances they all share a legitimate interest in its activities and have the ability to affect its performance.

Generically the stakeholders in the proposed new community radio station will play out as the employees of the station who get paid for their services and expertise, and members of the board of directors. They represent the internal stakeholders, while the audience, consisting of ethnic and tourist members of PERCs can be regarded as the external stakeholders (by way of being the customers who pay for the services, albeit indirectly on account of encouraging revenue through advertisements and the like).

Furthermore, as far as a community radio station is concerned, it is important to remember that the tourist members (the external stakeholders so to speak) are not only the consumers of that which the local ethnic community has to offer, but that they as fellow members of the Park Emergent Radio Communities (albeit temporarily) will also be contributing to the programs (whether by phone-ins or by participating in talk shows or the like).

Concerning clear work and role descriptions, Knipe (2003:35-40) refers to the relationship between a community radio station's board of directors and staff and provides checklists that describe the roles and responsibilities of board members, station manager and programme managers.

Apart from relying on a strong and committed board of directors as one of the important factors regarding the sustainability of the community radio station, (Nkalai 2003:99) the success of a community radio station depends to a large extent on the aims and objectives the station strives for.

#### **4.4.2 Important issues for a community radio station**

Instead of relying on a single organization for guidelines, the researcher sought out those aims and objectives that appeared to be similar and were reflected by the aforementioned three reputable organizations, concerned with community radio in South Africa and Africa, namely the National Community Radio Forum (NCRF [sa]:1), the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC [sa]:2) and South Africa's IBA Triple Inquiry Report 1995 (Collie1999:10). Based on their concurrent aims, all three organizations emphasized:

- The importance of community participation in programming and production, and in particular, the participation of the previously disadvantaged. The World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters for instance has a woman's programme (WIN) that concentrates on the place and role of women in the community radio sector and how gender issues should be addressed in community radio.

- Another point of mutual agreement among the organizations concerned the need for local culture to be reflected in and form part of the programming goals.
- All the organizations agreed that job creation / benefits must feature in the form of community development and employment.
- All the organizations saw the training of new voices, and transferring of skills within the network as another important aspect, further implying that there should be cooperation between the different community radio stations. In this regard the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters offers training workshops in radio production, technical training, management and the development of legislation favouring community radio, networking, fundraising and marketing.
- And lastly, all regarded responsiveness to the needs of community as a vital element for a successful community radio station. To achieve these goals it would be prudent to start with a training course at a reputable training centre such as ABC Ulwazi for instance, not only to acquire all-important broadcasting skills, but also to gain awareness of the other aspects mentioned here.

#### **4.4.2.1 Community participation in radio programming and production**

There seems to be a general consensus amongst those involved with community radio, such as the National Community Radio Forum, the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters and South Africa's IBA Triple Inquiry Report of 1995 (Collie1999:10) that the members of the community must be encouraged to participate in the programming and production matters of a community radio station. The many cultures included in PERCs of a National Game Park, underlines the importance of acknowledging the ethnic as well as tourist members by encouraging them to participate in the decision-making processes of the station on matters of socio-cultural sensitivity.

Although one is referring to a merged community consisting of tourist and ethnic members in this instance, the ethnic members, on account of their permanent residence status, will be the obvious choice for managing the community radio station and for producing and presenting the programmes. Since the visitors only have a brief stay-over, they are in danger of having only a passive role to play, that

of being listeners only. In order for them to have more permanent representation one may consider tour operators as their possible representatives or surrogates. It is important that the tourist members also have the opportunities that are similar to those of the ethnic members to participate in programmes by expressing their views or sharing their game watching experiences for instance. On account of having a less permanent status in the community, the visitors' input will most likely be in the form of phone-ins or as talk show guests. Tour operators will be instrumental in recruiting visitors to become involved and partake in such programmes since they have direct contact with many tourists through their agencies and are likely to be aware of their needs, preferences and interests. Their input can be invaluable regarding programming and content of material. To ensure their continuous cooperation and make it worth their while tour operators should be rewarded for their contributions. By accommodating the needs and interests of its tourist and ethnic members in joint programming, the community radio station stands to be enjoyed by all the members of PERCs.

Another reason for taking the tourist members into consideration is the fact that they can be expected to generate considerable financial contributions towards the running of the community radio station. As has been mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, they present a lucrative prospect for advertisers who might otherwise be less enthusiastic to invest money to advertise on a community radio station.

#### **4.4.2.2 Promoting and reflecting local culture**

A year into the new millennium van Zyl (2001:1) reported that 98 % of the population has radio access. On these grounds the researcher is of the opinion that radio is the most accessible medium to the majority of South Africans. It is therefore an excellent choice as a means to promote and reflect the community's culture, character and identity. Furthermore the researcher foresees that radio will remain the long-term provider of information and education for a considerable time yet, given its access and affordability.

Culture however, is an abstract concept that is difficult to define as pointed out in chapter two. A community radio station in a National Game Park will provide its

merged tourist and ethnic communities with new as well as familiar messages. In this manner the station becomes the catalyst or creator of a new society and culture, which is instrumental for unifying the tourist and ethnic members.

Promoting and reflecting 'local' culture therefore refers to the merged tourist and ethnic communities and implies that the community radio station must educate, entertain and inform in a way that will reflect the cultures of the merged communities.

Furthermore, as far as promoting and reflecting local culture is concerned it must be remembered that community radio "is essentially democratic. The main idea is that it should be broadcast *by* the community, not to or for the community" (Van Zyl 2003:9) [emphasis added]. It is for this reason that ICASA lays down rules to make sure that the needs of the community are put first. Van Zyl suggests that "programme managers should be shown how to include community groups" like the local ratepayers association for example, in discussion programmes, or by giving them airtime "to run their own interest programmes" (2003:9). According to van Zyl, one way of ensuring that "everyone has a say in the content of programming" is to create a listeners' club (2003:9).

According to Collie (1999:23), and referred to earlier in this section there is a general consensus that local culture, character and identity must be part of the community radio station's programming goals. In this instance 'local' will refer to the Parks Emergent Radio Communities of a National Game Park. Its tourist and ethnic members should be encouraged to participate in the programming and production matters of the community radio station.

In practice it implies predetermined local content quotas for programmes. Since in this instance, 'local' will refer to the tourist and ethnic members of Parks Emergent Radio Communities of a National Game Park, it will mean that the contents of the programmes will not be 'geographically local' only but interwoven to include issues of interest to both the tourist and ethnic elements of the community. These will include matters of ethnic content such as storytelling and folklore, which can be translated simultaneously, for the sake of the visitors. This will have the further advantage of keeping old traditions alive. News bulletins and community issues

that are of interest to the communities residing in and around the park, will also feature, since according to Collie (1999:59) the term “local content” should include all issues and not only the music that is broadcast on the station.

A further service to the community will be supplying information that both the tourist and ethnic members will be interested in. It may for instance provide the latest fluctuations in the exchange rates; disclose flight times and departure times for tours; provide updates on the latest game sightings; or give updates on local weather and road conditions; supply information on local stalls and markets that sell produce and handicrafts; advertise the services and skills of the local ethnic members which may include anything from laundry services to guides for nature trails, or information on local cultural village tours and tribal performances and so forth. While these matters may interest the tourist members more, the ethnic members especially stand to benefit from information on health matters such as HIV / AIDS and malaria, as well as agricultural and building advice and, as van Zyl (2001:4) suggests, the crisis in education and adult basic education can also be addressed.

The proposed community radio station in a National Game Park, although twofold in nature (since it will cater simultaneously for tourist and ethnic members) should concentrate on creating a unique listener profile, providing the visitors, (*via* radio) with a “personal park ranger” in their vehicle. Products, services and programs must focus on the needs, tastes and preferences of this generally affluent group, in order to attract advertisers and sponsors. In this manner a community radio station in a National Game Park can once more become “an extremely effective advertising vehicle” (*Saturday Star* 1996:21). In actual fact, the ethnic community and the tourist community *are* the advertisers and the buyers - it is almost a closed financial system!

#### **4.4.2.3 Job creation and other benefits**

The ethnic members of PERCs in a National Game Park stand to gain more than their tourist counterparts from its accompanying benefits like production and technology, community development and employment. This seems fair if one

takes into account that they are the only permanent members of the merged communities and are therefore entitled to gain more. The benefits to the tourist members will no doubt entail better and improved services and programmes, on account of the socio-economic benefits of tourism and ecotourism, community based tourism and pro-poor tourism (see 3.9 - 3.12), which in the long run will account for a more agreeable stay.

Being a communication tool, a community radio station can motivate community tourism, as well as inform a community how to go about acquiring the skills to do it, while benefiting financially from advertising and sponsorships that result in economic development. South Africa has the added advantage that community radio licences are issued freely, unlike elsewhere in Africa, making community radio a unique resource. It can also provide a similar service to alternative public broadcasting regarding developmental and educational programs. However, despite these apparent advantages, it must be remembered that community radio stations do not benefit from state subsidies or licence fees and are usually under-utilized, under-financed and under-trained (Van Zyl 2001:3).

According to van Zyl (2001:4) one of the objectives of community radio in community tourism is to raise awareness of job opportunities amongst the youth of the community. In this regard radio has proved to be excellent for making listeners aware of issues and for increasing the listeners' general knowledge of issues.

The youth of the tourist community can also become involved by for instance by being encouraged to take part in essay competitions with their ethnic fellow students, on matters of concern to the youth. Van Zyl (2003:11) suggests essay competitions for schools as an example of how a community radio station "can enrich the learning that takes place with educational programmes."

A community radio station serving the Park Emergent Radio Communities of a National Game Park may opt to incorporate inspirational success stories told by members of the community. If possible van Zyl (2001:4) even suggests monitoring them through follow-up programmes. No doubt tales may vary from how one may prosper from growing one's own vegetables to describing successful game

photographing techniques.

#### **4.4.2.3.1 Training courses in micro business practice**

Another objective is to provide individuals or groups that have been reached by community radio, with training courses in micro business practice. This will be of great value to a radio station in a National Game Park, since they will need these skills in order to function effectively. Training courses for the ethnic members of PERCs are especially important if the station wishes to receive an income from advertising, special events and sponsorships (Van Zyl 2001:4). The tourist members stand to gain in various ways from the skills acquired by the ethnic members in these training courses, such as more effective programming by making use of marketing research for instance.

#### **4.4.2.3.2 Community ownership**

The communities of a community radio station must regard themselves as owners of the concept and buy into the project. If they become sustainable, community radio stations “can transform communities, create employment and relieve poverty.” (Van Zyl 2001:3). In order to function well, a community radio station should have some knowledge of community-based sustainable tourism (CBST) as well as be able to generate it. Simply producing developmental radio will not be good enough. Transforming communities, creating employment and relieving poverty are probably the main arguments in favour of using community radio for the development of community tourism.

South Africa is fortunate that the National Community Radio Forum (NCRF) and ICASA view community radio in a serious light. Furthermore, according to Van Zyl (2001:5), the National Broadcaster should see community radio as a source of programming and information since it is a national resource in need of development and not a threat. In his view community radio can be regarded as a tool that can be used to address the education crisis in adult education and training and thereby combat unemployment and poverty.

Community ownership also extends to include the tourist members of the community since they are part of PERCs. The visitors will have the advantage of being able to phone in with questions or information regarding the wildlife in the park, take part in discussion programmes, voice their opinions, and send in requests that will help to create a sense of ownership. A sense of having a field guide in the vehicle, as was the case with Radio Safari (see 4.6) will be an ideal to strive for as far as the station is concerned.

#### **4.4.2.3.3 The need for volunteers**

Van Zyl (2001:4) foresees that a community radio station will need volunteers to do research, find local news items and present programs. He suggests that unemployed, bright, matriculated youth and those motivated by radio programmes could be considered as possible recruits for such a project. However this may be regarded as cheap labour by the trade unions, for one should not lose sight of the fact that without incentive, these young volunteers will not be motivated to do the research. Some kind of financial imbursement, pertaining to their input, would help to ensure that their research / presentation is thorough and dependable.

In order to get the tourist community to contribute toward the imbursement of volunteers the station needs to present them with an incentive, such as an open vehicle game drive for contributors whose names are drawn in a lucky draw for instance, and a special prize, such as a full / half day safari accompanied by a field guide, for those who contribute most generously. Mementos like caps, shirts, bags, mugs and the like, with the emblem of the community radio station and mottos printed on them can be sold in aid of the 'volunteers fund' or given away as prizes for other contributions made toward it.

#### **4.4.2.4 Training grounds for new voices (presenters)**

In his survey Collie (1999:104) found there was a need for an accredited training facility to be established so that potential entrants into the radio profession may be trained. Zane Ibrahim (1999:15) the Managing Director of Bush Radio, a community radio station, outside Cape Town, shares Collie's view for the need of

an accredited training facility, and is sceptical about the development of the community radio station sector while there is no institution that provides a complete / comprehensive training course in preparation of entering the broadcast industry. In Collie's (1999:104) view a community radio station needs to consider short courses on managing the station and to train management in the daily running of a radio station, which is necessary as radio is a very specialized field.

Although he commends the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism (IAJ) and Ulwasi / Classic FM (ABC Ulwasi) for their short courses, it is not enough as far as Ibrahim (1999:15) is concerned. It is on account of having so few training facilities that community radio stations "are turned into jukeboxes because they don't know how to develop programmes" (Ibrahim 1999:15). In Ibrahim's view practitioners in the field of community radio have the ideal opportunity to give their people a voice. "A voice filled with vibrancy and hope. A voice that, for too long, has been crying to be heard" (Ibrahim 1999:15). Apart from referring to the need for training facilities, Collie (1999:104) cautions against training more recruits than the industry can absorb, since it will create false hopes and expectations in the local community.

In order to function competently a community radio station requires specific skills training, from management to operating the equipment to being a broadcaster. This means integrating multiple streams of technologies, which will involve many individuals (Küng-Shankleman 2000:1-2). Again as has been mentioned previously, a credited training facility such as ABC Ulwazi comes to mind, as a possible solution. Better training results in better management, innovative programming and competent presenters which it is reasonable to expect will result in more listeners tuning in. This is especially true of visitors to the park who will merely tune to another station if the station broadcasting from within the park, appears to be incompetent and lacking in originality.

It is to be expected that skills training for radio will require funding. During interview sessions with (community radio) stakeholders it was suggested to Collie (1999:74) that the public broadcaster help fund the training of new broadcasters or students lacking the necessary skills and experience. It was also proposed that commercial radio stations adopt a community radio station to assist with the

training, funding and developing of such a station, as part of its community development programme. This will assist a community radio station to get started and become self-sufficient (Collie 1999: 74).

At a training session in Central Benin, Issiaka (Rural Radio in Africa:1998) found that national and international donors and sponsors financially supported the equipment and the operational costs of rural radio. Regarding a community radio station in a National Game Park, the stakeholders referred to by Collie (1999:14-15,74) will be both economic and cultural stakeholders. This will include all individuals or groups that have a stake in the decisions, and actions of the community radio station. The idea is for the local population to provide the premises while the state only provides part of the professional staff - a technician or a programme producer - training personnel with better equipment and with a vision on broadcasting strategy in the new African constellation (Radio Boost to Economy 2000:1).

As a point of interest one needs to mention here that there seems to be little difference between the terms 'community radio' and 'rural radio' since both cover a relatively small range. The only difference may lie in the programming. Rural radio often also refers to 'farm radio' in rural areas in Africa, and mostly caters for the farming community (Rural Radio Workshop Prospectus 2002:2).

As far as South Africa is concerned, very little farm radio programming exists on community radio stations. In his abstract on community radio and farming Stone ([sa]:4) sees the fact that community radio stations were mostly urban based until fairly recently, as a possible reason for this. He also mentions that more pressing issues such as health, education, water, electricity, crime, and unemployment overshadowed farm radio programming.

#### **4.4.2.5 A community radio station must service the needs of the community**

The aim of ICASA's regulations is to ensure that the needs of the community are put first and that the community participates. Although Van Zyl (2003:9) regards community radio as "essentially democratic" and then goes on to point out that the

idea that it should be broadcast 'by' and not 'for' the community is easier said than done. It requires training, planning and strategising to succeed.

The importance of serving the community has already been pointed out. Suffice to mention once again that the needs of both the ethnic and tourist segments of PERCs need to be addressed. These needs may differ greatly, considering their respective origins and backgrounds, but are bound to have definite tangential points on account of their shared space, economic interdependence and social interaction. As set out in chapter two (see 2.2) a community radio station for a National Game Park will be catering simultaneously for both the ethnic and the tourist members of PERCs. For the ethnic members, the opportunities for educational programmes are enormous, since most rural and urban households have access to a radio. For the visitors, radios will be easily accessible whether portable or in their vehicles.

Apart from being portable and easily accessible, the community radio station in a National Game Park, given its unique locality and being twofold in nature, can concentrate on creating a unique listener profile. It can provide the visitors, (*via* radio) with a 'personal park ranger' in their vehicle. Products, services and programs must focus on the needs, tastes and preferences of this generally affluent group, in order to attract advertisers and sponsors. In this manner a community radio station in a National Game Park can once more become "an extremely effective advertising vehicle" ('Personal ranger' station 1996:21).

Küng-Shankleman (2000:2) refers to the fact that the capacity of the broadcasting channel is becoming unlimited, and that it has the potential to create channels for niche audiences. The community radio station in a National Game Park will be catering for a specific niche that comprises PERCs with its tourist and ethnic members. Therefore it has in a sense become a specialist channel where the specialisation revolves around the new community.

The community radio station of a National Game Park will have the immediate and competitive advantage of a unique location that caters to a specific niche audience. It is also exceptional when compared to other community radio stations,

since it can adapt to and exploit nature, which is the main feature of the park, by interrupting a programme to report the location of rare game sightings that is of immediate interest to the visitors. This provides the community radio station with an opportunistic way to meet the challenge of keeping the listeners tuned in.

#### **4.5 The benefits of a community radio station in a National Game Park**

It is important for a community radio station to 'satisfy a need within the community' according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (2001) and Collie (1999:51). The need for education for example, is a need that can be satisfied by a community radio station on account of its effectiveness as a medium for distance learning, especially in developing countries, where it is often their only access to education (Elmahdi [sa]:1). According to van Zyl (2003:11) community radio has a high rate of success in educational programming because of its accessibility to its community. A further advantage of a community radio station is that it gives its members a 'voice' by providing members of the community with the opportunity to exchange ideas on matters that affect their lives (Tadesse 2002:1). Van Zyl (2003:11) mentions that community radio can change the conduct of its communities and result in 'growth of knowledge' on account of effective educational programmes while Tegegne (2002:2) observes that being informed allows members of society to educate themselves especially in areas with hardly any access to newspapers or television. For Rivard (2002:1) and van Zyl (2003:25, 27) the benefit of community radio is that it is an instrument that can be used to manage conflict and disputes and help to restore the moral order. Van Zyl (2003:25) mentions that community radio can be instrumental with regard to spreading an understanding of human rights and help to 'rebuild civil society.'

All the benefits mentioned so far seem geared to the advantage of the ethnic members of PERCs. In the instance of a community radio station operating from a National Game Park, the benefits will have to extend to the tourist community as well. For instance, 'democratisation' as referred to by Rivard (Benefits of Community Radio in the Horn Stressed 2002:2) could imply social equality. This will mean that all nationalities visiting the park will have representation or recognition on air since it may be argued that, as tourists, they all share similar

values and interests. For the visitors the advantage of having a community radio station in the National Game Park means having access to a station that will provide them with immediate and important information on a variety of subjects from road conditions in the park to advising on alternate or scenic routes, warning against bush / veldt fires and wildlife programmes geared to make their experience of the park more enjoyable.

Apart from the informing and educating its listeners, one of the important focus areas of a community radio station in a National Game Park will be the park itself, since the park is the reason why tourists come to visit, why members of ethnic communities bordering on the park work and stay there, while others rely on visitors to the park to make use of their services, buy their handcrafts or visit their cultural villages. The interests of the park and its promotion will therefore feature prominently on the proposed radio station. Furthermore, as the station will cater to both tourist and ethnic members of PERCs, a much broader spectrum of programming will apply than for other rural community radio stations where the main focus is on educating the community.

Community radio will be the ideal vehicle to disseminate information about community tourism. Being a communication tool it can motivate community tourism, as well as inform a community how to go about acquiring the skills to do it, while benefiting financially from advertising and sponsorships that result in economic development. As van Zyl (2001:3) points out, community radio stations “can transform communities, create employment and relieve poverty” If made sustainable. This last point is one of the main benefits and argument in favour of using community radio for the development of community tourism.

#### **4.5.1 Creating a diversity of voices and opinions**

According to the IBA Triple Inquiry Report 1995, the membership, management, participation, operation and programming of a community broadcasting service, should primarily be provided by the members of the community that it serves as well as reflect the needs and special interests of the listeners it is licensed to serve (Collie 1999:23). In the case of a community radio station in a National Game

Park, this has to do with the manner in which the proposed station is supposed to operate. The ideal would be to create a diversity of voices and opinions coming from both the ethnic and tourist members residing in and around the park.

The one advantage a community radio station has above a commercial station is that it is always within reach of its community, making it highly interactive. It is this 'open-door' approach which ensures that listeners can talk to the presenters, either by phone, postcard or by dropping by the station (Van Zyl 2003:12). Having the freedom of speech (Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights cited by van Zyl 2003:28) as well as a community radio station that is open and accessible to all its listeners allows for a diversity of views and opinions. It is reasonable to expect that the tourist and ethnic members of PERCs will have diverse opinions which they will be encouraged to share on account of the stations' interactive approach, providing the community it serves with the facility to be heard.

#### **4.5.2 Encouraging individual expression**

The interactivity which is the trademark of a community radio station not only encourages people to voice their different opinions and views, it also encourages individual expression at the same time. Van Zyl (2003:21) points out that communication led to democracy in South Africa. "The Bill of Rights reminds us that the right to communicate is both an individual freedom and also a collective freedom." Van Zyl (2003:28) also mentions that people "are becoming tired of being deprived of their right to contribute to discussions about their wellbeing, and of authorities thinking and planning for them instead of with them." As Van Zyl indicates, citing Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, individuals not only have the right to speak but also the right to expect to be heard and "to be given the facilities to make themselves heard" (2003:28). As referred to in 4.4.2.3.2, a community radio station is required to be accessible to its listeners, thereby encouraging individual expression.

Disadvantaged empowerment not only needs to take place in big business but at community level as well. Therefore more effort should be put into empowering

communities who do not have a wide range of radio stations to tune in to (Collie citing Langa 1999). As far as the ethnic members are concerned, a community radio station that encourages individual expression would be a step in this direction. It would also be in keeping with the White Paper on Broadcasting Policy (1998 and Collie 1999:11-12), which mentions among others that community broadcasting caters for diversity, and is not controlled by the State. Collie cites the White Paper on Broadcasting Policy (1998 and Collie 1999:11-12), which states that a community radio station must represent all the people in the community in matters regarding control, ownership and decision-making. In this way it becomes more sensitive and responsive to the needs of the people it is catering for. This implies the inclusion of the tourist members, which would simultaneously provide the station with a further source of individual expression. These are matters that will be confronted in chapter five which deals with community radio programming.

Since a community radio station for a National Game Park and nature tourism both share common denominators such as nature, ethnic communities and tourists, it can also be assumed that nature tourism's emphasis on local participation will be valid as well for a community radio station in a National Game Park. One of the first steps will be to gather audience information. The programmers then discuss the knowledge gained during the information-gathering period, with the community. Only after this information has been "disseminated" can the process begin whereby representatives of different groups are involved. Gathering and sharing information naturally leads into a design phase. Discussing the plan within a broader community forum should strengthen it and lead to its implementation (Brandon in Lindberg & Hawkins 1993:140).

#### **4.5.3 Innovation and experimentation**

Regarding innovation and experimentation, Meadows (in Riggins 1992:98-99) refers to broadcasting in Aboriginal Australia. He explains how successful Aboriginal radio programs, such as the Murri Hour Collective, operating from Brisbane on 4ZZZ FM, experimented by adopting a format based on intimacy and informality. He recalls that there would often be a number of people in the studio simultaneously, discussing issues of concern, interspersed with mostly Aboriginal

music. Their stated aims were to inform, educate and entertain; aims that have also been echoed by Prinsloo (2001:l) of the Development Bank of Southern Africa for a community radio station to be successful.

Speculatively this can take on the form of a programme of cultural exchange in a National Game Park. The actual contents will be determined by consultation. For instance, a local ethnic band playing their traditional music and telling tribal folklore, can be joined by a visiting group of German, Dutch, or Japanese tourists for instance singing / performing some of their traditional songs, and explaining the folklore associated with them (for instance the tale told in the German song about the “Lorelei.”) This is an example of how the cultural ties between the tourist and ethnic members of the Park Emergent Radio Communities can be strengthened as well. Such programmes not only provide entertainment but also inform and educate both elements of the tourist and ethnic community at the same time. The intimate and informal form adopted by the Murri Hour Collective (Meadows, in Riggins 1992:98-99) will be an ideal format for such a programme.

#### **4.6 The viability of a community radio station in a National Game Park**

To prove that such an endeavour is possible, the researcher refers to Radio Safari as a case study. When it was launched in November 1995, Radio Safari 94.4FM became “a world first in conservation radio,” with a unique listener profile. Its dual target audience included about 3,500 daily visitors to Kruger National Park as well as one point nine million residents adjacent to the park. It had the reputation of being one of the most successful community broadcasters, promoting environmental awareness among tourists and neighbouring residents alike, “spreading the word in six different languages”. It was further lauded for its immediacy and described as a “potent synergy in communication”. The station provided visitors with an in depth look at the local flora and fauna and was compared to “having one’s own personal game ranger in one’s car” (‘Personal ranger’ station ... 1996:21).

The educational potential of radio, with its message of conservation also started to influence the local population. Advertisers such as Eskom, South African Airways

(SAA), Telkom, Volkskas, Tiger Wheel and Tyre, First National Bank (FNB), Sappi and Mondi reacted positively, ensuring “Radio Safari 94.4 FM’s viability as broadcasting medium” (‘Personal ranger’ station...1996:21). According to research at that time, the station established a reach of 49 %, of which 31 % had household incomes of 14, 000 rand plus per month. Products and services aimed at this affluent group were assured of “a captive audience in a relaxed and therefore highly receptive environment, making this twofold media package an extremely effective advertising vehicle” (‘Personal ranger’ station...1996:21).

In 1998, Radio Safari became the first environmental community radio station to procure a station sponsor. Vodacom, a cellular network, sponsored them, providing them with financial stability. A new transmitter on 101.1 as well as their existing 94.4 FM allowed Radio Safari to reach beyond Kruger National Park, as far west as Belfast and as far north as Thohoyandou. It maintained that a programme revision was necessary on account of the larger “footprint”. The station provided 12 hours of live broadcasts, containing both information and entertainment. Radio Safari pledged to “serve the conservation community, and enhance communication with disadvantaged communities in its newly increased range” (Vodacom to sponsor...1998:21).

Research on topics for disadvantaged communities was a further goal of the station. Radio Safari marketer, Mike Glover said the station saw an opportunity to reach far wider audiences to become “the true voice of the Lowveld” (Vodacom to sponsor ... 1998:21). But by 2001, Radio Safari had ceased to exist. An indication of what could have gone wrong can be found in the article in *Business Day* (Vodacom to sponsor...1998:21), where much is made of Radio Safari expanding in order to reach far wider audiences and in so doing becoming the “voice of the Lowveld”. It is possible that this very act may have cost them their niche market of tourists and neighbouring residents that assured them of their very unique listener profile and success in the past (‘Personal ranger’ station...1996:21). If this is the case, then valuable insight can be gained from these two articles. It would seem as if branching out instead of sticking to their original unique profile did not pay off in the long run. If a community radio station is to cater successfully for the tourist

members of a National Game Park, the same mistake (of trying to reach a wider audience) must be avoided.

On 10 November 1999 the following comment was posted on the internet:

Radio Safari is a Lowveld based enviro community radio station which has been broadcasting to the Lowveld region for the past 4 years. They recently had a hearing with the IBA who decided not to grant them a 4 year broadcast licence. In the interests of the community and democracy we ask all the people of the Lowveld to stand up and voice their opinions as well as sign the petitions supplied courtesy of the link Africa group on their websites (Radio Safari 1999:1).

The reasons why the IBA did not grant Radio Safari a further four year licence is not explained in the cited document, although it seems to imply that this decision did not meet with the approval of a certain section of the community.

André Walters (2005), founder and instigator of Radio Safari, brought the following matters to light concerning the closure of the station. In the first instance Walters points out that the station was not suited to the time era in which it was created. The year 1995 was a time when there was still a great deal of uncertainty in the country regarding its future in the new political setup of the post apartheid era. In a sense the station Walters had in mind was years ahead of its time and not specifically suited to the climate of transformation that prevailed in the country at the time. These were the transformation years during which a regime based on segregation that privileged the white minority in the country was replaced by a democratic regime that aimed to benefit the previously disadvantaged.

In the second instance Walters (2005) commented that the station proved to be too professional to be regarded as a community radio station. Firstly, the station had two instead of one transmission tower, which meant they could reach a far larger audience than an ordinary community station with only one transmission tower would be able to do. Secondly, although the station employed black members on their staff, they were professional people and not selected by the community themselves but chosen for their skills instead. According to Walters this presented a problem to the IBA who wanted the ethnic community represented as

broadcasters regardless of the fact that they did not have any training to do so, or any expertise in preparing scripts or programmes.

In the third instance, Walters (2005) refers to the fact that because of Radio Safari's extended range their programmes catered to a variety of people and featured programmes on nature and conservation that proved to be very popular, especially with visitors to Kruger National Park. Although its conservation message was also aimed at the local population, with broadcasts in six different languages, it was still perceived as catering more to an upper class white market which cast a shadow over its future existence. It was not seen as radio by the people, for the people - which is one of the main criteria for a community radio station according to the IBA and their Triple Inquiry Report of 1995 (see 4.3.3) on community participation in radio programming and production.

In all probability the fact that Radio Safari operated from a building in Hyde Park, a suburb of Johannesburg, and not from Mpumalanga (the Lowveld) where its programmes were being broadcast, was also frowned upon. Walters (2005) further mentions the fact that he had to go to Nelspruit the main city of Mpumalanga in order to present his case before the IBA each time the station had to apply for a licence. In one instance he had gone to a great deal of trouble that involved choirs and members of the ethnic community as well as the African National Congress (ANC) youth league with petitions to support the continued existence of Safari Radio, since it enjoyed the goodwill of the majority of the ethnic community. Unfortunately for Radio Safari, this scene was never witnessed, since the meeting with the IBA was cancelled at the last moment. Radio Safari can be added to a growing list of people and instances that were dissatisfied with the way the IBA operated (see 4.7.4).

In the fourth instance Walters (2005) mentions the fact that Radio Safari had to operate for a large portion of the year (up to five months) without knowing whether it would be granted a licence to broadcast for that year. It was a situation that lasted for four years and finally led to the closure of Radio Safari. André Walters (2005) explains: "We broadcast for four years on a twelve month licence" which meant the station was not granted a four year licence but had to reapply each year

for a twelve month's licence which in turn was only granted after a long delay of up to five months, as mentioned. This uncertainty about whether the station would be granted a licence each year made it virtually impossible to obtain a bank loan to pay for much needed equipment, running costs and the like, since the station had no assurance that it would be granted permission to operate the following year<sup>17</sup>.

The station closed after only four years by which time it had cost its founder and producer André Walters his home, insurance policies, and car to pay for debts incurred by the station. It appears that once the sponsors realised that the station was struggling to obtain loans to cover costs, they became reluctant to continue with their contributions. After a costly four year struggle to keep the station on the air, Radio Safari was not granted a four year broadcasting licence by the IBA and was forced to close down. The problems Walters experienced are not unique in community radio. Some of the problems are encountered by other community radio stations as well (see 4.7.5).

Although Radio safari may have been too professional to be regarded as a community radio station in the true sense of the word it was “a world first in conservation radio” (‘Personal ranger’ station...1996:21). At the time of the interview Walters (2005), C.O.O. (Chief Operating Officer) of Enviro World, which specializes in radio, television and corporate video production, was busy with a series of programmes on CBNRM (Community Based Natural Resource Management) (see 3.11). As Walters (2005) points out, Enviro World is doing what Radio Safari set out to do.

#### **4.7 Problems generally encountered by community radio stations**

Three of the most inhibiting factors regarding community radio stations are a lack of available funding, the lack of support from advertising agencies and unnecessary rules and regulations by the previous regulator, IBA and currently ICASA (Collie 1999:72) and licensing delays.

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<sup>17</sup> These issues are current in the community radio sector and licencing delays are threatening the sustainability of the sector (Tleane [sa]:2) (see 4.7.5).

#### **4.7.1 Lack of available funding**

Lack of money causes many stations to be understaffed since they do not have enough funds to pay staff. The implications are that community radio stations do not attract experienced staffers while the drainage of staff moving to commercial radio stations may stunt the growth of community radio stations. This can be blamed on the fact that community radio mostly serves the poor, resulting in very little financing from the private sector. Furthermore since community radio stations cannot be an association for gain, investors are not encouraged to invest money into the business, making it difficult to obtain loans. For these reasons management are often forced to invest their own funds in the business resulting in community radio stations eking out a 'hand-to-mouth' existence. Other community radio stations elsewhere in Africa face similar problems with very little invested in the broadcasters themselves. Training and career opportunities are therefore key ingredients of the strategic plan (Collie 1999:75, 87 and Sathekge and Bennett [2001:sp]).

#### **4.7.2 Other finance related problems**

Finance related problems similar to those pointed out by Sathekge and Bennett ([2001:sp]), Collie (1999:72) and Walters (2005) can be expected to be one of the main concerns of a community radio station in a National Game Park. In most instances the ethnic members of PERCs will be regarded as people without financial clout and therefore less likely to be targeted by advertisers wanting to reap the dividends of their financial input. However should the ethnic members be linked to their tourist counterparts consisting of tourists who normally represent considerable financial clout, the advertisers may be more inclined to target the prospective listeners of a community radio station in a National Game Park. As it is, the ethnic and the tourist communities are the advertisers and the buyers - it is almost a closed financial system!

If a community radio station is to have any constructive impact on their ethnic - and tourist listeners, the need for proper financing and commitment from the private sector and advertisers is obvious. Apart from financing, training

broadcasters will be crucial for a community radio station functioning in a National Game Park, especially since listeners of different nationalities will be co-existing in the same community. The success of the community radio station will depend, to a large extent, on how well broadcasters and programmers are trained, to deal with the needs of both the tourist listeners (mainly interested in pleasure and matters enhancing the enjoyment of their stay) and the ethnic listeners (whose interests evolve around more basic needs).

Community radio stations are not renowned for having strong financial management teams, which explains why there seems to be a lack of confidence from financial institutions, in the financial management of community radio stations when they apply for funds and loans (Collie 1999:87). Collie quotes an 87 % consensus among the 30 stakeholders in the industry that he interviewed, which agreed that funds from financial institutions were hard to come by. Another factor that can be blamed for the lack of funds is the strong competition for listeners and advertisers among community radio stations (1999:87-88).

#### **4.7.3 Lack of support from advertising agencies**

Profit is essential for the growth and sustainability of the proposed community radio station as is the case with any business. Since community radio is still perceived to be the fledgling of the industry or as “poor radio for poor people,” it only attracts about one percent of the total advertising budget (Collie 1999:85). It must be remembered that the financial survival of a community radio station in a National Game Park will rely on advertisers marketing the affluent tourists visiting the park. Abroad, as in South Africa, the future survival of most radio stations in the private sector is problematic. This can be ascribed to the fact that they address a ‘restricted’ audience most of the time, while seeking an income from advertising. However in the instance of a community radio station in a National Game Park the *niche* audience is such that it will be more of an advantage than a liability as is the case with a ‘restricted’ audience. It does none the less remain extremely difficult to “reconcile a credible commercial strategy and an audience that is inevitably small” (Cheval 1992:165–195 cited by Riggins 1992:193).

According to Cheval (1992:165-195) two conditions are required for community radio stations that broadcast to regional cultural minorities. A first priority is that their mode of financing and operation must be rooted in their environment. For this they need to be “trusted by active and motivated listeners” (1992:165-195), the number of which seems not to be important. The second condition requires a real identity and cultural life as well as a regional political claim.

#### **4.7.4 Unnecessary rules and regulations**

According to Collie’s (1999:86) survey, the IBA over-regulated the broadcasting industry by inundating it with too many rules and regulations. This has caused them to be seen as “a watchdog organization waiting to find irregularities” (Collie 1999:86). The Voice of Soweto (87.6Fm) was one of the first community radio stations in South Africa. Although it had always been a model station it was taken off the air since the station was based in the city centre of Johannesburg and the regulator argued it was too far away from its constituency. Doms ([sa]:2) points out that the management of the Voice of Soweto disputed this on the grounds that most Sowetans are “migrant community” who are in town during the day where the station was situated. The argument failed to convince the regulator and the station had to relocate to a new venue in Soweto. In the process the Voice of Soweto lost a lot of airtime and some of its best presenters and will probably have to start from scratch training new people” (Doms [sa]:2-3).

#### **4.7.5 Licensing delays threaten the sustainability of the community radio sector**

Tleane ([sa]:1) examines the impact that licensing delays have on community radio stations in South Africa in a research report based on the findings of the National Community Radio Forum, in collaboration with the Freedom of Expression Institute (FXI). According to Tleane’s ([sa]:5) report the majority of community radio stations blame the regulator for the licensing delays.

The overall view from the community radio sector is that licensing delays threaten the sustainability of the sector (Tleane’s [sa]:2). For on-air stations with four-year

licenses the waiting period caused by licensing delays influenced their ability to draw big advertisers. Many potential advertisers lost interest in the process and backed out of any potential dealings with these stations with the result that stations have to depend, for the most part, on local small business advertisers who are unable to provide enough revenue to run the stations and satisfy requirements such as paying 'acceptable wages' to the staff. Tleane ([sa]:4) points out that these stations are mostly from the disadvantaged communities.

Research showed that stations with one-year licenses are in a worse situation than those with four-year licenses. Just like their four-year license counterparts, they find it difficult to attract advertisers, donors and sponsors and are often unable to plan or budget accurately or build long-term relations with donors and sponsors since "their existence is not guaranteed beyond the duration of the one-year license" (see 4.6) (Tleane [sa]:4). These stations also find it hard to maintain highly skilled staff members since they are susceptible to offers from commercial stations and other media instances. This means "stations keep on losing money by training new staff members or they remain 'beggars' who would always approach funders for more training grants" (Tleane [sa]:4). Stations with a one-year licence also find the yearly renewal process very taxing since stations are informed at the last minute when the hearings will take place, placing an organizational and financial burden on already "understaffed and cash-strapped" stations. Furthermore licence renewals are often late, causing stations to broadcast illegally at times (see 4.6). There are also instances where stations did not receive information about the four-year hearings or renewals of temporary licenses or were not informed that they had been granted a licence (Tleane [sa]:2-4).

Stations that are off-air while waiting for licences, mention that training, production equipment and other resources that have been channelled into the sector and are being wasted. Licensing delays have also meant that many off-air stations have run into debt on account of being unable to attract ongoing funding and advertising, while the delays have also made it almost impossible for new community radio stations to set themselves up (Tleane [sa]:3). Overall it was found that continuous licensing delays does not create stability in the sector and affects advertising and donor confidence. Tleane ([sa]:3) mentions there is general

agreement among all stakeholders that “licensing delays have had adverse effects on the willingness and enthusiasm of the donor community to avail more resources for the sector.” In a supporting letter for the community activists’ demonstration to the portfolio committee, the Open Society Foundation of South Africa, one of the main donors for community radio, mentions that licensing delays have cost millions of rands (Tleane [sa]:3).

Overall the IBA, the previous regulator, was not seen to be facilitating the development of community radio. They were slow in processing licence applications and inconsistent in their treatment of community radio stations and by enforcing racial staffing quotas hampered the development of listener numbers (Collie 1999: 87). According to Tleane’s report, most community radio stations believe that ICASA (and the IBA before them) is not well organised. As Tleane explains:

Part of the problem is that the regulator does not involve community radios when doing their planning. Some stations felt that there is no evidence of commitment towards community radios on the side of the national government to give capacity to ICASA so that it can be in a better position to facilitate the licensing process (Tleane [sa]:5).

Tleane ([sa]:5) mentions that it is necessary for ICASA to evaluate the regulation that community radios should not be profit-making and refers to a number of stations that believed that, seen in the light of minimal support from the government, they must be allowed to be more profit-making in order to compete with commercial stations (Tleane [sa]:5).

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

To summarize, in this chapter the thesis interrogated the concept of communication by radio and examined radio’s characteristics to underscore its suitability as a communication medium in a National Game Park, taking into account its accessibility to all people, especially those in marginalized communities with little or no literacy.

Amongst others the chapter drew on the work of Walter Ong and in particular his

work on 'primary' and 'secondary' orality. In essence Ong (2002:2) argues human society "first formed itself with the aid of oral speech" which he describes as 'primary' orality. 'Secondary' orality refers to sound produced by a technological machine like radio, that can be heard by a far wider and mostly invisible audience. Since its audience is invisible, the thesis argued that 'secondary orality' deals with an 'imagined' community, given that Anderson (1993:6) regards all communities, even small villages, as 'imagined', since they never get to know all their fellow members.

The chapter also referred to the work of Marshall McLuhan (Marshall McLuhan [sa]:11) and specifically his concepts of 'hot' and 'cold' receivers, which refers to a medium that is either 'hot' and well filled with data, requiring less audience input (such as television) or 'cold' which is less filled and requires more participation (such as the telephone). The thesis argued similar 'hot' and 'cold' concepts apply to audience response on radio programmes, as the same stimulus or programme will evoke different responses from its tourist and ethnic communities.

The chapter further incorporates McLuhan's (1967a:299-304) theories on 'tribalization' referring to radio's ability to unify people and its ability to revert from a seemingly "private experience" for the listener to unifying people by an "almost instant reversal of *individualism* into *collectivism*." McLuhan (1967a:302,304) echoes Ong's (2002:134) theory on 'secondary orality's' 'group-mindedness,' by referring to radio's ability to 'tribalise' or 'unify' mankind by reverting from 'individualism' to 'collectivism.'

Since the purpose of the proposed community radio station is to set up one station, without having two sets of time slots for the two different communities, interweaving and overlaying the content of the programmes is a necessity. This relies on the tourist and ethnic communities becoming a unit on the grounds of having each of them gain insight into the world of the other. It is argued that a community radio station in a National Game Park will, on account of its unifying role, be instrumental in forming a new 'tribe' / identity in a move that McLuhan (1967a:303) has called 'retribalisation' but which is adapted into a developed concept called the 'Parks Emergent Radio Community', or PERCs.

The chapter considered the aims and objectives proposed by recognized organizations<sup>18</sup> concerned with community radio in Africa and South Africa and investigated a working definition for a generic community radio station keeping in mind that a community radio station is a 'non-profit' organization. It also dealt with the benefits and viability, of a community radio station in a National Game Park with special reference to Radio Safari and looked at problems generally encountered by community radio stations. This section investigated the way that radio may be used to exploit and develop the synergy between the ethnic and the tourist communities. In essence this section argued the potential *form* of the Community Radio Station.

Since all community radio stations generally seem to experience the same problems, the researcher argued that it stood to reason that a community radio station broadcasting from a National Game Park would not be exempt from similar problems. In the last instance the chapter looked at how some of the main problems could possibly be avoided or solved. This prompts the next chapter that will deal with the programming of a community radio station in a National Game Park .

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<sup>18</sup> The National Community Radio Forum (NCRF); The World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) and South Africa's Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) Triple Inquiry Report, 1995.