

**ADVERTISING REDEFINED BY NEW MEDIA: A CASE STUDY OF VODACOM  
SOUTH AFRICA**

**MASTER OF ARTS IN MEDIA STUDIES**

**S. MURIDZO**

**AUGUST 2014**

**ADVERTISING REDEFINED BY NEW MEDIA: A CASE STUDY OF VODACOM  
SOUTH AFRICA**

**by**

**SEARCHMORE MURIDZO**

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**SUPERVISOR: PROF S. O. MMUSI**

**AUGUST 2014**

## **DECLARATION**

I declare that the **ADVERTISING REDEFINED BY NEW MEDIA: A CASE STUDY OF VODACOM SOUTH AFRICA** dissertation hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo, for the degree of Master of Arts in Media Studies has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that it is my work in design and in execution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

**Muridzo, S**

.....  
**Surname, Initial**

**11 August 2014**

.....  
**Date**

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We are no one and nothing without GOD. Thank you my GOD for your grace and mercy. You know what is best for us and have a plan for us, most of the times we do not know how we get to achieve anything but you made this all possible. **MAMBO MAKANAKA, MAKARURAMA!!!.....MWARI HAADI KUTI TIPARADZWE!!!!**

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## **DEDICATION**

To Cletos and Meddie Muridzo, my parents, all I do is for you and to make you proud in recognition of all your hard work! And also to Molly Mtangi, my other mom;

“Ndiye, anosimudzira marombe achivabvisa kuguruva, anosimudzira vava vasina chiro, anovabvisa padurunhuru ramadota, achindovagadza pamwe chete namachida, uye anovaisa pazvigaro zvorukudzo. Nokuti mbiru dzenyika ndedza TENZI, ndiye akagadzika nyika pamusoro padzo” 1 Samuiri 2:8

**MWARI HAVADI KUTI TIPARADZWE!!!!.....MAMBO MAKANAKA MAKARURAMA.....ISU TINOVIMBA NAMAMBO NEKUTI NDIYE WAKASIKA DENGAPASI!!!!!!!**

**PSALM 20; PSALM 121; PSALM 116; PSALM 138, PSALM 124!!!!**

## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to explore if new media have redefined Vodacom SA's advertising and if so to what extent. The research employed Vodacom SA as its case study. Quantitative and qualitative descriptive and explorative research was conducted to determine whether the new media had redefined advertising culture and if so to what extent. Data collection was collected through structured questionnaires, the administration of an intensive interview and secondary data. The structured questionnaires were filled in by 200 conveniently randomly selected University of Limpopo students who represented media audiences and their perceptions. The intensive interview was carried out with Vodacom SA's Senior Communications officer Ashleigh Dubbelman. The secondary data was collected from Vodacom SA's official documents.

The research findings revealed that audience interactivity, due to the new media, has become an important aspect of Vodacom SA's advertising process. The uses and gratifications theory proved relevant as the research showed that it is not always how the media influences an audience but what the audience responds to media content or messages. Audience preferences and medium selection proved decisive. Social networks, proved to be the new dominant platform for new media advertising. Furthermore, the findings showed that traditional media TV still possess great influence. The digital divide amongst and within audiences were influential in the limited usage of new media in advertising in the Vodacom SA context. In terms of legislation; no explicit laws on new media and advertising have been enacted yet. On advertising expenditure, budgets have remained largely unchanged but allocation increases tilted towards new media.

Conclusively; the research observed that new media has redefined Vodacom SA's advertising culture, though the redefinition is still minute and is to a small extent.

### **Key Words**

**New media, Vodacom SA, advertising culture, interactivity, digital divide, audience, social networking sites, redefinition, traditional media, uses and gratifications.**

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>3D:</b>	<b>Three-dimensional space</b>
<b>CEO:</b>	<b>Chief executive officer</b>
<b>GSM:</b>	<b>Global System for Mobile Communications</b>
<b>HD:</b>	<b>High-definition</b>
<b>ICT:</b>	<b>Information and communications technology</b>
<b>MMS:</b>	<b>Multimedia Messaging Service</b>
<b>SA:</b>	<b>South Africa</b>
<b>SMS:</b>	<b>Short Message Service</b>
<b>TV:</b>	<b>Television</b>

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1. INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Advertising the world over is one of the biggest facets and catalyst of the media industry (McQuail 2010). It is a multi-billion Rand business. It therefore becomes an integral part of economics, since it is responsible for propelling commodification. An institution; advertising is widely regarded as having created and maintained multi-national companies such as Coca-Cola, Microsoft and Mercedes Benz (Kotler 2006b). South Africa is no different, large sums of Rands are spent every year by companies in order to have an advantage over their competitors and strengthen their brand. It is estimated that in 2013, over R50.8 billion was spent on advertising (AdReview.com 2013). This figure stated above may even be more; given that these are approximations and that companies do not explicitly disclose their exact expenditure. The spending of such amounts may significantly imply that advertising is big business. Subsequently, advertising becomes a huge component of media economics. Advertising is also regarded by some scholars as the most powerful aspect of the media industry; as the biggest source of revenue (McQuail 2010). Consequently, with all these attributes of advertising; it is a medium, a practice, an employer and/or a business.

But perhaps the culture of this “powerful apparatus” is being redefined by the advent of the new media. Salman, Ibrahim, Abdullah, Mustaffa and Mahbob (2011:2) state that “The advent of new media has posed a challenge to conventional media.” New media, it is argued, have influenced traditional media processes such as advertising.



This implies that traditional media practices, such as advertising may have been redefined due to the influence of and use of new media by advertisers. This potential redefinition or reorganisation of advertising due to the influence of new media, if any, was the focal point of this research study. The study probed whether there is change in Vodacom South Africa (SA)'s advertising culture and if so in what ways. The research investigated if Vodacom SA's advertising's: effectiveness, media strategies, audience responses, structure, participation, audience involvement, medium choices and/or preferences, legislation, practice, advertising revenues and expenditures, advertising campaigns, concepts formulation, execution and general influence on business and the media industry has or has not been redefined or reorganised in any way due to the introduction of the new media, and if so to what extent. The research study aimed to determine if South Africa's advertising culture, through the Vodacom SA case study, has been impacted by the new media and if so to what extent and in what ways. The paradox of whether the new media has redefined the advertising establishment was the basis of the research.

## **1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

In order to fully comprehend the study, it is imperative to briefly discuss and chronicle the current state of advertising in South Africa, the telecommunications industry and Vodacom SA. This aids in the comprehension and exploration of the state of advertising at Vodacom SA and South Africa in general.

### **1.1.1 Advertising in South Africa**

The importance of advertising in South Africa is reflected in the enormous sums advertisers spend on promoting their products and services (Adbrands.za 2012). Advertising in South Africa involves the use of media platforms such as television

(TV), radio, print, billboards, mobile phones and the Internet. Advertising is a central part of South Africa's economic activity, emerging as a multi-billion Rand industry. In 2010 alone, South Africa is said to have spent approximately R30.1 billion as total advertising and publicity expenditure on all mediums. This figure increased incredibly over the years and was said to be at R50.8 billion by the end of 2013 (AdReview.com 2013). According to Maggs (2006), it is estimated that an average South African is exposed to 80 commercial messages a day. The author's estimate might even be higher today, with the prominence of new media advertising and technological advances that have taken place from the time Maggs (2006) was published to the current environment.

South Africa boasts of international as well as local advertising agencies and media houses that conduct advertising campaigns. Examples of advertising agencies in South Africa include: Ogilvy Mather and BBDO Group. Advertising agencies in South Africa earned approximately R7.5 billion in 2012 and were expected to have amassed over R10 billion in 2013 (AdReview.com 2013). Advertising agencies provide advert creation expertise, among a host of other services. There are also media houses in the South African advertising landscape. The media houses provide, amongst other services, studio services for shoots and mediums to advertise on. The media houses also earned in the region of R7 billion in 2012, just like the advertising agencies (Adbrands.za 2012).

Major companies have advertising and media departments. These deal with marketing, branding, media publicity and public relations. Vodacom SA has its marketing department, which includes an advertising team. These company marketing departments are part of the advertisers. South Africa's business

community pumps large sums of money, into adverts, to get buyers for their products and increase their brand power. South Africa's population is approximately 50 million and this provides the audience and consumer base for the advertisers.

In terms of legislation, advertising is governed by various marketing media and media related laws. Advertising is mostly regulated by: The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa Act, The Consumer Protection Act, The Public Service Broadcasting Bill, as well as the Telecommunications Act. The regulations outline definitions of terms, layout responsibilities of the advertiser, consumer protection, guides complaints procedures, competition regulations and advertising and media interactions. For example, in South African law, an advertisement is material of 2 minutes or less, it would be an infomercial if it were longer than 2 minutes (South Africa 1996). The South African Advertising Regulations Body is a self- regulatory organisation that monitors and regulates the country's advertising activities. It is very important to note that South Africa's media and more specifically advertising laws are some of the most liberal and relaxed laws in Africa.

### **1.1.2 History of South African Mobile Telecommunications industry**

History will show that South African Posts & Telecommunications held a monopoly in the postal and telecommunications services. It was known as the Post Office and run by the state (Telkom.com 2012). In an effort to privatize and streamline the haziness of being a regulatory body and provider, the government decided to award contracts, initially to two, mobile phone providers in 1993. The first contract was given to Telkom who signed a partnership deal with the UK based Vodafone and Rembrandt Group of South Africa. The new company was called Vodacom SA (Vodacom.com

2012). By September 1993, the government announced the awarding of the second contract to MTN (Mtn.com 2013).

With increase in consumers and technological advances, telecommunications service providers have increased over the years. There are now five cellular providers, these are: Vodacom SA, MTN, Cell C, Virgin Mobile and 8.ta. Vodafone and Telkom have parted ways and have become separate competitors as Vodacom SA; with the red branding and 8.ta, respectively. Virgin mobile joined the market in 2006 (Virginmobile.com 2013). In recent years, more South Africans use mobile phones than radio, Television (TV) or personal computers (Nielsen.com 2011). It is estimated by Nielsen, a research institute, that over 30 million South Africans have and use a mobile phone; this figure is higher than usage or ownership of a TV, radio or personal computer by South Africans (Nielsen.com 2011). South Africa has one of the largest telecommunications markets on the continent. Although more than half of South Africa's 50 million population are thought to live below the poverty line, more than 75% among those in low-income groups who are 15 years or older own a mobile phone (finweek.com 2013).

### **1.1.3 Vodacom SA story**

In 1993, Vodacom SA was granted one of two GSM network licenses in South Africa (Vodacom.com 2012). In October 1993, Knott-Craig, then CEO of Vodacom, convinced his shareholders to spend millions of Rands on advertising campaigns which promoted a product that would only be available in seven months' time. He was evangelical in his belief that the first network to establish its brand name would become the generic brand, he was proven right (Vodacom.com 2012). The cellular networks officially started commercial operation in 1994 and within the first month

Vodacom SA had attracted 50 000 subscribers. By the end of October 1994, Vodacom SA had raced even further ahead and had doubled its subscriber base to 100 000. At that stage, Vodacom SA was the fastest growing network in the world and one of the busiest in terms of call volumes (Vodacom.com 2012). Vodacom SA was the first network globally to offer a commercial cellular fax/data service and the first to offer a cellular pay-as-you-use access to the Internet with Yebo!net. Vodacom SA has over the years launched Vodacom SA sister companies with various investors in Tanzania, DRC, Mozambique and Lesotho. This was done in order to widen business prospects on the African continent (Vodacom.com 2013). Vodacom SA claims that it had 30.3 million active customers by the end of 2013 (Vodacom.com 2013a).

Vodacom SA's advertising has been recognised for excellence, in its creativity and effectiveness, at events such as the Annual AdReview Awards and South Africa's campaign of the Year in 2008. It was also awarded four Loerie Awards, including Gold, for "Dictator" in 2008. Such success is a continuation of the brand leadership accolades achieved by Vodacom SA in the media such as Sunday Times Ipsos/Markinor Brand Survey, as the top-rated telecommunications brand and one of South Africa's Most Loved Advertiser. In the new media domain, Vodacom SA was named the best corporate brand on social media in South Africa (Vodacom.com 2013a). It was also honoured in the Prism awards: Social media for public relations, top honours in the Telecommunications category at the 2012 Times and Sowetan Retail Awards (Vodacom.com 2013a). Vodacom SA has been over the years getting recognition for its advertising ventures. It has been a trend setter, as well as innovative.

Understanding Vodacom SA helped the research study with purposes of evaluation in matters such as business strategies, marketing, media relations and company philosophies that obviously affect its advertising culture. The history and structure of the company inevitably has bearing on its advertising philosophy.

## **1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM**

The case study research on Vodacom SA sought to answer the question of whether the new media has redefined the company's advertising culture and if so to what extent and in what ways. Advertising is viewed as a traditional and well-structured system that has a well laid out procedure and protocols. It is regarded, in some quarters, as a system that shows the media authority, one directional communication and one that illustrates the persuasive and dominant capabilities of the advertiser.

However, the research investigated whether this view of advertising still holds water in this era of modernisation and globalisation where there is new media. New media is accredited for making communication more interactive; through content producers and providing feedback, enhancing convergence of various mediums; be they traditional or new and alienating the element of space and time, inter alia. The research sought to investigate whether Vodacom SA's advertising: legislation, content, audience behaviour and execution have been reorganised by the arrival of the new media. Kolker (2009:89) argues that "...for one thing, advertising provides us with a history of the way technology looks." Thus the study sought to assess the influence of new media on Vodacom SA advertising.

The same paradox is rife in the media world, with regards to just how new media has impacted it and if so to what extent. It is from this interest that the research used, the telecommunications giant, Vodacom SA, as the case study in order to evaluate

contrasting views on the, or none of, influence of the new media on the company's advertising. Curiosity was intrigued by the need to answer the question of whether advertising has been redefined by the new media and if so what would be the extent of this redefinition.

### **1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

#### **1.3.1 Aim of the study**

The aim of the study was to investigate and explore if the new media has redefined Vodacom SA's advertising culture and if so in what ways and to what extent.

#### **1.3.2 Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study were:

- i. To assess the effect, if any, the new media has made on, advertising structure, advertising norms, advertising content, advertising expenditure and form of Vodacom SA.
- ii. To investigate the position and role advertising audiences occupy with regards to new media and Vodacom SA's advertising culture.
- iii. To compare traditional media and new media usage in Vodacom SA's advertising culture.
- iv. To establish whether the new media has redefined the general advertising establishment in South Africa, using the Vodacom SA case study.

## **1.4 DEFINITION OF OPERATIONAL CONCEPTS**

The research employed various media concepts that can be used interchangeably in various contexts. Thus it was necessary to have working definitions of these concepts to appropriate them to the study.

### **1.4.1 Concept of the new media**

McQuail (2010:39) notes that “the concept of the new media has been in use since the 1960s and has had to encompass an ‘expanding’ and ‘diversified’ set of applied communication technologies.” Lievrouw and Livingstone (2006) point to the difficulties of saying just what the “new media” comprise. They choose to define them in a composite way, linking information communication technologies (ICTs) with their associated social context that bring together three elements: first being technological artefacts and devices, second consisting of activities, practices, uses and social arrangements and thirdly being organizations that form around the devices and practices. McQuail (2010:39) states that as the essential features of new media are concerned, the main ones seem to be: their “ ‘interconnectedness,’ their ‘accessibility’, to individual users as senders and/ or receiver, their ‘interactivity’, their ‘multiplicity’ of use and open-ended character, and their ‘ubiquity’ and ‘delocatedness.’” New media are highly associated with digitalisation and Internet usage and connectivity. Examples of the new media devices include, inter alia; the Internet, Smartphones and mobile devices; such as iPods and iPads, emails, computers and social networking sites such as Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter.

The new media are differentiated from the ‘traditional media’ such as contemporary television, radio and print, through the latter not having the above mentioned



characteristics of the former. The traditional media such as a standard TV are generally described as having very low or no levels of interactivity of the audiences and being largely one directional. A huge demarcation that is used to distinguish traditional and new media is the Internet. The mediums that are before the advent of the Internet are mostly categorised as traditional media. The mediums that come after the Internet are usually grouped as new media. The new media take their name as being more recent to its users as a comparison to the traditional media, that is also referred in certain contexts as 'old media', that would have been used prior to the arrival of a new medium to user/s. It is from this definition and exploration that the study distinguished new media and traditional media in order to have working definitions. Coming up with these working definitions assisted the study in setting up well-defined categories of new media and traditional media. These categories were applied to investigate whether the new media has redefined the advertising culture at Vodacom SA.

#### **1.4.2 Defining the digital divide**

The digital divide approach seeks to illustrate the disparities or inequalities between individuals, societies, regions, countries and/ or institutions with regards to access, availability or skill in the use of digital technology. Such disparities in access to and usage of new media have been associated with South Africa. Gunkel (2003:499) states that the digital divide is commonly defined as the gap separating those individuals who have access to new forms of information technology from those who do not. In this study, the digital divide will mean the gap of those with access to new media and those without. A more detailed analysis and influence of the digital divide,

on the relationship between new media and advertising, is given in chapter two, under literature review.

### **1.4.3 Defining media interactivity**

The term interaction is used as a broad media concept that covers processes that take place between and amongst receivers on the one hand and a media message on the other. It is the relationship between the text and the reader, but also focuses on reciprocal human actions and communication associated with the use of media as well as (para-social) interaction via a medium (Kiousis 2002). Jensen (1998) elaborates that “Interaction is a style of control and interactive systems exhibit that style.” In interaction, synonymous usage that is in connection with the arrival of new media has also become widespread in the field of media studies (Kiousis 2002). Interactivity is also peculiar by operating in real time. Real time remains central in many conceptualizations of interactivity, although this might not always be the case. A more detailed analysis and influence of interactivity, on the relationship between new media and advertising, is given in chapter two, under literature review.

### **1.4.4 Definition of advertising, branding and advertising culture**

This section is concerned with defining and deducing working definitions of advertising, branding and advertising culture. These concepts are widely used in the study and as such a brief comprehension and exploration of the terms is paramount.

#### **1.4.4.1 Advertising**

The concept of advertising can best be understood by borrowing the work Kotler (2006). The scholar argues that huge sums of money are expended in the creation and delivery of campaigns to widely diverse audience of varying ethnical, social,

economic and political orientations; by means of a host of various media and channels of mass communication. Kotler (2006) emphasises the persuasive element of advertising by expounding it:

as a vast apparatus of persuasion, by which the eyes and ears of public are assailed with cunning inducements to do this, or buy that or to think favourably of the other. (sic)

Kotler (2006) further mentions the Chairman of American advertising; articulating that:

To exercise true freedoms of choice we have got to know that we have got a choice...We do not have a choice of religion unless there are people preaching various religions. We do not have a free economic choice unless there is some way in which our alternatives can be brought forcibly to our attention. Advertising presents in the best possible way, the best possible case of an economic decision to buy certain products and services. (sic)

Wilson (2009) argues that “advertising is the pathway through which brands address the consumers.” Kolker (2009:89) states that advertising is the; “engineering of desire.”

#### **1.4.4.2 Branding**

According to The America Marketing Association, as cited by Kotler (2006):

A brand is a name, term, sign, symbol or design or a combination of them intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of their competitors. (sic)

Kotler (2006b) further states that “a brand is essentially a seller's promise to consistently deliver a specific set of features, benefits and services to the buyers.”

Kotler (2006b) goes on to say that a brand can convey up to six levels of meaning and these are:

- Attributes- Explains that a brand has to bring to mind certain positive and unique qualities or characteristics.
- Benefits- Suggests that a brand is more than a set of attributes. The argument here is that customers are not buying attributes; they are buying benefits.
- Value- The brand also says something about the producer's values that are simultaneously apparent in the company brand. Thus the brand reveals the values of the company.
- Culture-The brand may additionally represent a certain culture about the company.
- Personality- Points to how a brand may also project a certain personality. The author suggests that if a brand were a person, an animal, or an object, there would be something that would instantly come into mind as representing that brand.
- User- Suggests a brand reflects the kind of consumer who buys or uses it.

According to Kotler (2006), a company brand is a complex symbol and a company should not treat a brand only as a name, as this would be missing the point of branding. The challenge in branding is to develop a deep brand. A deep brand is when a brand is complete with the six levels, given above, and is easily recognisable (Kotler 2006). The brand is what the advertiser promotes to persuade the audience to act favourably towards that advertiser.

#### **1.4.4.3 Advertising culture**

Advertising culture relates to the concept of advertising as a custom. Having come up with the definition of advertising and branding, it is important to understand what advertising culture is. Williams (1985) views culture as “a whole way of life.” Williams

(1985) is convinced that at the end of the day culture is not easily the best that has been thought and said, but really how we live, how we speak, how we dress and indeed culture becomes a whole way of life. The author elaborates that “culture is located in the minds and hearts of men” (Williams 1985). Williams (1985) adds that “A society's culture consists of whatever it is; one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members.” Mosco (2009), in his discussions, argues, using various classical scholars, that culture is made up of the energy systems. Mosco (2009), goes on to state that culture also relates to the objectives and specific artefacts, the organizations of socio- economic and political relations. In defining culture, the models of thought, the ideologies and total range of customary behaviour are further aspects that Cohen (1974) identifies. Culture is transmitted from one generation to another by a social group and that enables it to maintain life in a particular habitant (Cohen 1974). Hall (1959) states that “communication is culture and culture is communication”. The author argues on the fact that the communication process of a particular entity can reflect its makings through its communication approach (Hall 1959).

Therefore; in this study, advertising culture is the complete being of advertising. Its ‘whole way’ of existence and operation. Advertising culture the systems, regulations, shape, structure, the objectives, medium usage and specific artefacts of advertising as an organization, as well as, social, economic and political relations. Advertising culture, in this study, represented the models of thought, the ideologies and total range of customary behaviour. Simply put, it is anything and everything about advertising. For the purposes of this research study, the term advertising culture meant any activity that leads to Vodacom SA's advertising; promotions, competitions, public relations or brand awareness and any other such communication activity

which is paid for to increase awareness or sales of Vodacom SA. Advertising culture in this study is how Vodacom SA relates and carries out its advertising activities, their routines and the various decisions and preferences that are predetermined.

## **1.5 MEDIA AUDIENCES, MEDIA EFFECTS AND PERSUASION IN ADVERTISING**

Theorisation, exploration and investigating of media audiences, effects and persuasion helped in the evaluation and analysis of consumers' perspectives in determining the research study of whether Vodacom SA's advertising culture has been redefined by the new media and how the audiences fit in Vodacom SA's advertising culture.

### **1.5.1 Media audiences**

McQuail (2010:398) explores the concept of audiences by stating that the word is a very familiar expression as a collective term for the “receivers” in the simple sequential model of the mass communication process; which involves source, channel, message, receiver and effect, as deployed by pioneers in the field of media research such as Schramm (1954). Nightingale (2004) classified audiences into four types of audiences. However for the purposes of this study, only two types will be referred to as advertising audiences. These are audiences as “the people assembled” and “the people addressed” (Nightingale 2004). The group ‘the people assembled’ is an aggregate measured as paying attention to a given media presentation or product at a given time, they are also known as “spectators” (McQuail 2010:399). The second group, the ‘people addressed’, refers to a group of people imagined by the communicator and for whom content is shaped. This is otherwise known as the “inscribed” or “interpellated” audience (McQuail 2010:400). Understanding media audiences is essential to the research study in that it helped in

knowing the audience's: making, its preferences and relation to Vodacom SA's advertising. It also helped in understanding the relationship the audiences have with the new media.

### **1.5.2 Media effects**

There are basically two broad types of media effects approaches on its audience and these are “the direct effects” and “the limited effects” theories (Severin & Tankard 1997). The direct effects theories are those that portray the media as the all-powerful communicator that has the ability to influence its audience without dispute. The most referred to of these direct theories is the magic bullet theory, also known as “hyperdemic needle theory” (DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach 1989). The limited effects models stresses that the media does not affect or influence audiences alone but that there are other factors that influence human perceptions other than the media. Klapper (1960) argues that effects on audiences are combined and the media does not “unilaterally” influence the audience. One such theory on limited media effects is the spiral of silence proposed by Noelle-Neumann (1973). Understanding and evaluating the media effects on audiences was vital in that it helped indicate on the advertising culture of Vodacom SA and thus helped gauge if advertising still has a direct or limited effect on advertising audiences, due to the new media, on Vodacom SA's advertising culture.

### **1.5.3 Persuasion in advertising**

Advertising is part of the art of persuasion. Olson and Zanna (1993:135) define persuasion as “attitude change resulting from exposure to information from others.” This means that advertising audiences are persuaded to have their beliefs and norms altered in order for them to view the advertiser's brand in good light. The

definition by Olson and Zanna (1993:135) bring about the important element of attitude. Attitude is defined by Murphy, Stevens and McLeod (1997) as primarily a way of being “set” toward or against certain things. There are various means of persuading an audience to buy or act favourably towards your brand. McQuail (2010) discusses attitudes, drawing from various scholars, as the aspects of positive or negative evaluations, emotions, feelings and ‘pro or con’ action tendencies with respect to a social object. There are various ways that are applied in advertising to persuade audiences to act favourably towards the advertiser. These include humour, pictures and or sex appeal; inter alia. The research was interested in persuasion forms and how specific mediums, be it traditional or new mediums, are used for an advertising campaign. Such a comprehension aided in evaluating any redefinition of Vodacom SA's advertising culture. This was done through assessing either the use or neglect of new media, for persuasion, in Vodacom SA's advertising.

## **1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Case studies are criticised for narrowing scope and thus neglect other important revelations that are not included. Although this case study of Vodacom SA was a typical case study; which can be used to generalise South Africa's entire advertising landscape, it was also a deviant case study which is peculiar and can only be used to explain Vodacom SA's advertising culture. Thus, the study did not cover all advertising policies and strategies of other advertisers and so may, in that regard, not be used to generalise the entire industry. Yet the expenditure and awards for advertising by Vodacom SA made the telecommunications giant, which is also South Africa's fifth overall advertiser, made it an appropriate case study.



Moreover, having the youths as the respondents for the audiences meant that other age groups may have been neglected. Thus perhaps a comparison of audience's perceptions in terms of age was overlooked. However, studies show that the youth are the most knowledgeable and use the new media the most (Kreutzer 2009; worldwideworx.com 2013). This is also supported by Kumar and Rani (2013:422) who acknowledge “younger people's preference for text messaging and communicating through social networks.” Thus the youths seemed as the most appropriate section of the audiences to be the respondents of the questionnaires.

## **1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH STUDY**

McQuail (2010:218) points out to how the media is “an economic enterprise” that is immensely financed by advertising. Kolker (2009:88) further notes that:

None of the popular media we are discussing is free from advertising. Commercials appear in, next to, in between the news, television, movies, radio, and websites. Advertising is a medium itself, even as it mediates other media content, with its own conventions and genres, a complex methodology for influencing its audience. (sic)

Kolker (2009:88) further indicates that “....there is an indication of the ‘pervasiveness’ of advertising throughout the media.” McQuail (2010:224) suggests that the media is almost entirely financed by mass consumer advertising. The media, generally heavily depends on advertising for income.

Conversely, Mackenzie (2010:203) argues; in the broader context of new media and society studies, by stating that:

Many accounts of the Internet, information or network society, new media, and digital cultures address changes in global politics, media, civil society, publics, audiences, representation, identity, power, law, space, time, and embodiment. (sic)

The argument here is that new media brings about redefinition to traditional processes or institutions. This new media influence and usage is also showing to be on the rise in South Africa (SAFA.com 2012). Both audiences and media producers such as advertisers have adopted a level of new media usage.

It was paramount to embark on this study because the advertising industry is a multi-billion Rand business. This, therefore, makes advertising inherently a huge potential employer and integral facet of the media industry and the South African economy. It is essential to understand how the business world handles its media relations, more specifically advertising. The study will assist media practitioners and other stakeholders understand the economics of the advertising industry and its influences. Knowledge on entrepreneurial ventures together with creative advances and effectiveness in advertising were also gathered. Furthermore, the influence and effect of new media in or daily lives and media processes such as advertising cannot be ignored (McQuail 2010; Severin & Tankard 1997). Globalisation and modernisation have brought about technological advances, which cannot be ignored, in the form of new media. The importance of advertising for the media industry; in terms of revenue, as well as the emergence of new media cannot be disregarded. An investigation of the relationship of the two is of crucial importance to not only the media world and its audiences but also equally so to the business community.

An understanding of advances in technology and modernisation help effective execution of media products and in this case effective advertising. The study findings can help advertising and media organisations understand new media usage in the advertising sector. The study findings can also help in understanding the role played by the audiences in new media advertising.

## 1.8 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The research focused specifically on the advertising culture of Vodacom SA. For the purposes of this study, advertising culture meant all forms of paid for advertising, publicity, promotions, competitions, sponsorships and public relations initiatives carried out by Vodacom SA. The case study approach is an effective research method in mass communication studies. Yin (1989:23), defines a case study as an “empirical inquiry that uses multiple sources of evidence to investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context”. The term case study has to do with the fact that a limited number of units of analysis, often only one, such as an individual, group or an institution, are studied intensively (White 2005:105). Joosub (2006:34) further highlights that Vodacom SA's advertising has gained momentum over the years; with increased media efficiencies and high liking scores resulting in highly effective communications by stating the South African mobile communications industry and Vodacom in particular is very much alive. Vodacom is the leading mobile network operator in South Africa and is largely responsible for the rapid growth of the market with its innovative strategy and creative advertising. Even though this statement was made almost a decade ago; it is still relevant and evident (ujuh.co.za. 2013).

The study also focused on media audience and their perceptions on whether new media has redefined Vodacom SA's advertising culture and South Africa's general advertising culture. Media audiences are perhaps the most important element of any media process because any media process is created for the audiences.

## **1.9 CONCLUSION**

The advent of the new media in the media process in general and in particularly in advertising brings about curiosity that leads to a need for research to help determine the direction in which advertising is headed. It also helps determine the position that audiences have in the 21<sup>st</sup> century modern world. Advertising is important to media studies in that it is usually the main source of revenue for any media enterprise. Understanding its current standing is of great and paramount importance. The study of the use of new media and its upsurge cannot also be underestimated in advertising research.

The chapter provided the introduction of the study, its background, the study's problem statement, aim and objectives of the study, the research's operational definition of key concepts and outlined the significance of the study. The chapter employed use of academic arguments that validate the research's relevance. The following chapter, chapter two (2); literature review, explores and expounds existing literature and theories on advertising and the new media.

# CHAPTER TWO

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature review in this study has both contemporary and modern media theories and or concepts that can aid arguments for or against in determining whether new media has redefined Vodacom SA's advertising culture and if so to what extent. The study also makes use of previous academic and institutional research that ponders on advertising and new media.

The arrival of new media has landed the creation of new media theories and arguments. Yet there are those classical theories that are also useful to the study. As a result, the approaches employed in this study may be orthodox or current media theories that enrich the research's arguments. These theories either bring new thoughts or discard or agree with existing media theories and arguments. The literature review is or was be used to either concur with or disagree with the arguments for or against the influence of new media on Vodacom SA's advertising culture.

It is not astonishing that modern media theories focus on audiences and their role, because audience participation is central in new media capabilities. Modern new media theories emphasise circular communication models, an active media audience and limited direct media influence. Some contemporary media theories emphasise more on one directional media influence, a passive audience and an undisputed powerful media. Technology and its influence on society also plays a pivotal role in this study and is extensively expounded on in this section. This is so because one of

the major differences between traditional media and new media is the level of technological capabilities. Such capabilities are outlined, explained and illustrated to show how they have either redefined Vodacom SA's advertising culture or have not thereof. The chapter discusses the technological determinism theory, the diffusion of innovations theory, the global village theory, the concept of interactivity, the uses and gratifications theory, the concept of the digital divide and the cultivation theory. These theories and concepts are thus outlined and discussed below.

## **2.2 TECHNOLOGICAL DETERMINISM THEORY**

The technological determinist view is a technology-led theory of social change. In this context, the word technology is variously used to refer to tools, instruments, machines, organizations, media, methods, techniques and systems (Lawson 2004). Benthall (1976:22) notes that virtually any one of a wide range of technical innovations can stand symbolically for the whole of technology and that the symbolic field of technologies is interconnected.

Technological determinism theory stipulates that technology is regarded as the prime mover in history and shaper of society. Technological determinism; according to Facchina (2003:39) discusses the belief that technology is not humanly controlled but that on the contrary it controls humans and shapes society. Determinists argue that each worthwhile discovery addresses some aspect of our nature, fulfils a basic need or extends our faculties. Technological determinists maintain that particular technical developments, communications technologies, media or most broadly technology in general are the sole or prime antecedent causes of changes in society. Chandler (1995) regards technology as the fundamental condition underlying the pattern of social organization. Fourie (2007:153) states that technological

determinists view technology as being “a magic wand” and as having the ability to have a mystic and powerful influence over society.

Technological determinists interpret technology in general and communications technologies in particular as the basis of society in the past, present and even the future. They argue that technologies such as writing, print, television, the computer or the Internet changed society and shaped how the world is today (Facchina 2003). In its most extreme form, technological determinism claims that the entire form of society is seen as being determined by technology. They claim that new technologies transform society at every level, including institutions, social interaction and individuals. To extremist technological determinists; political, economic and social arrangements are seen as secondary influencers in comparison to technology in shaping society's destiny. At its least form, technological determinism states that a wide range of social and cultural phenomena are shaped by technology. The technological factor, according to technological determinism proponents, is therefore the determinant of a cultural system as a whole. They argue that it determines the form of social systems. To these advocates, technology, more than any other factor, greatly determines the content and orientation of philosophy.

Lawson (2004) acknowledges that the central point is that technology itself is not neutral. Gunkel (2003:509) is adamant that, for instance, the computer redefines man's role in relation to nature, producing a change in the way humans in the electronic age think about themselves and the world around them. Technological determinists insist that the technology or device used as a medium is invented in such a way that it alters the communication process and is biased towards a certain approach that the audience should perceive a media message. A simple illustration

of such an argument is how radio is biased towards centralising the ears to listening as the core means of communication to the audience. This theory is mostly credited and associated to one of its most vocal advocate and propeller; McLuhan (1964:8) who stated published a book and put across the argument that: “The medium is the message”. Lawson (2004) declares that artefacts have the ability to enhance, or intensify, or make possible or accelerate how a message is to be perceived and can be more intense on selected human senses, thereby seconding the claims by McLuhan (1964).

McLuhan and Fiore (1967) coined one of the most unique concepts, that of “hot and cool media.” McLuhan and Fiore (1967) distinguish “hot” and “cool” media by the criteria of sense participation. Hot medium, as McLuhan (1967) puts forward; is a high definition channel of communication and is usually beamed at a single sense receptor. To McLuhan and Fiore (1967), data in hot media is packed in a way that requires little work on the part of the receiver. Radio is a good example of a hot medium. It targets a single human sense; that is hearing and requires very little user action except listening. Cool media on the other hand is defined as low definition displays that draw a person in, requiring high participation to fill the blanks in the media process (McLuhan & Fiore 1967). Television is an example of a hot medium where the sense of sight and hearing was involved and the user is much more engaged. The argument by McLuhan and Fiore (1967) is that media technology can be tailor made for specific human senses and may have varying levels of interactivity and participation. High Definition (HD) applications, for example, are technology tailored initiatives that target enhancement of sound and audio. They are an example of cool media in that they draw the audience and require them to put special emphasis on auditory and visual senses (qualities). On the other hand a newspaper,



for example does not require any large work from the reader, except reading the content, an illustration of hot media with minimal or no interactivity.

There is an element of rationality in the notion by McLuhan and Fiore (1967) that “we’ become what we behold” and “we’ shape our tools [technology] and thereafter our tools [technology] shape us.” Facchina (2003:3) states that this famous phrase practically summarizes McLuhan and Fiore (1967) and their entire paradigm on technological determinism. McLuhan and Fiore (1967) state that technology shapes the way we behave, the way our systems work and our entire culture. This would imply that even in advertising, the culture may be altered or redefined by the new media or new technology and that the technology we create may dictate how we carry out our advertising. This substantiates the argument that the emergence of the new media can “redefine” advertising culture and so perhaps this shaping would be in the form of altering, challenging Vodacom SA's traditional norms and redefining the entire landscape and audience involvement.

Facchina (2003:74) states that in 1967, Time- life Corporation used Daniel Yankelovich, a writer for Fortune Magazine to test the ideas of McLuhan and Fiore (1967). This was done by exposing audiences to both television and print advertisements. The central insight that emerged from these tests was that people acquired far more information from the print form than from the television and that television form conveyed a far more visual appeal than print advertisement. Television viewers were much more aware of the surge of the salt spray, the foam on the beer, but they had far more knowledge of what the product services were from the print. The tentative hypothesis Yankelovich (ibid.) drew was that, in print advertising one ought to focus on products whose sale required consumers to have

more information rather than products whose sale depended on visual appeal. More recent research has also shown that the very same findings and themes are still relevant (Binet & Field 2009).

However, there are various other disagreements with regards to the technological determinism theory. Anti-technological determinism scholars view the theory as naïve, linear and too simplistic. Facchina (2003:43) mentions that “Humans may not have much of an influence over technology once created, but they remain the creators and so at least, indirectly have some control over the ecology of the media.” Lawson (2004) brings up the argument that the point to emphasise is that not everything is strictly determined or that choice is precluded. This statement brings out a very important argument that it is difficult and irrational to state that technology totally influences humans and that there are no options. In this argument, it would be rather too vague a theory when technological determinism simply disregards other forces that can influence humans in everyday life and in the media process.

Grosswiler (1998) mentions Williams (1967) in criticising the work technological determinist in its formalist analysis of the media lacking in its ability to account for the workings of power, political economy, institutional organization and everyday life. It is evident that McLuhan and Fiore (1967) and technological determinist theory devotees fail to mention and acknowledge other factors that can have a huge bearing on media processes. These other factors, mentioned by Williams (1967) are social, economic and political influences. Regulations, beliefs, policies and social structures play a major role in the media process and can therefore, influence audiences and the technology itself and an entire media process. In some instances,

it can be noted these other factors can exert significant influence, perhaps even more than the influence of technology.

Technological determinists often seem to be trying to account for almost everything in terms of technology. Gunkel (2003:512) states that the theory of technological determinism although persuasively deployed in the rhetoric of theoretical studies of the media, remains an inadequate explanation of the problem and risks of oversimplifying a situation that is obviously more complex. Facchina (2003:37) argues against, the technological determinism theory, by maintaining that “Technology is a means to an end, and media technology are mere hardware whose primary function is to make life easier and to represent (extend, amplify reality)” (sic). This proclamation marshals a powerful point, that technology is just a sheer facilitator in media processes and as such human beings are still the sole influencers of that media process. The statement is in direct disagreement with the McLuhan and Fiore (1967) and their “the medium is the message” declaration.

In contrast to McLuhan and Fiore (1967), Gunkel (2003) insists that the message remains the same and intact, regardless of the medium or technology applied. There is partial validation in this argument because in a media process the medium can be solely used as facilitator for communication. Technology's role may be to convey a media message and nothing else. Feenberg (1996:29), in Facchina (2003:34) further consolidates this view by stating that “the people served are the content of any service environment whatever.” The meaning of the service is the relationship that it forms with the person served. The message of the service as a man-made medium is the totality.

Facchina (2003:39) even goes to quote McLuhan (1964:11), who on more than one occasion, concedes and states “*any technology can do anything but add itself onto what we already are*” (own emphasis). This statement by the chief advocate of technological determinism shows scepticism that from McLuhan (1964) that recognised and acknowledged that technology does not have absolute control, over human and specifically media audiences. Facchina (2003:3) deliberates that, the forms of communication dictate the subjects and substance of their content and effects individual and social behaviours by creating and shaping distinctly different physical, psychic and social environments.

Chandler (1995:19) postulates that people are active agents and not helpless “automatons” that are influenced by sociocultural or technological circumstances. The audience are not passive, but active and aware of their environment (McQuail 2010). The arguments of an all-powerful technology here would be ridiculed. There is need for respect to the audiences of the media, who are not mere spectators but strong influencers, something technological determinism theory fails to acknowledge. The medium is the message declaration tends to downplay the significance of societal, cultural and individual factors in the influence of technology on society. It is virtually impossible to ignore socio-economic and political factors on the position technology takes up in a community.

When one weighs, the arguments on technological determinism, one cannot help but think of the legitimacy in both camps. On the one hand, McQuail (2010:143) quotes the Toronto School as stating: “one need not be a technological determinist to agree that the medium maybe a fundamental variable in the communication process.” Technology really does have a bearing on our daily lives. We are constantly

becoming dependable on technology. From the time we wake up, technology is surrounding us. We use the shaving machine or hair blower, use the toaster, use the car to go to work, use our phones to communicate, use Google to search information and plug in the iPad during the jog and turn on the TV for movies. Then we go back to sleep. It is evident that technology has become part of our everyday life, part of our ordinary, a facet of our culture. In terms of communication technology; TVs, radios, newspapers, the Internet, social networks such as Facebook and mobile phones, just to mention but a few, have become hallmarks of our everyday life. It is fair to state that in certain contexts, technology even dictates how we live. Social media advertising and ownership of Facebook and Twitter pages are examples of how the state of technology can influence Vodacom SA to employ new media in its advertising mix.

Fortunati (2005) mentions about the “social presence” that the new media gives users, elaborating on “media richness.” 'Media richness' can be expounded as the extent to which the new media can bridge ambiguity, provide more cues, involve more senses and be more personal (Fortunati 2005). Today, for instance, the technologies of 3G and HD on Smart TV can greatly enhance sound and picture. Such technologies give the audience a far richer experience. In advertisements, specific sound and pictures are made vivid and exaggerated, in such a way that the medium becomes a part of the message. This brings about a change in interpersonal dynamics that the innovation brings with it. It alters and even redefines the nature in which a message was created and subsequently received.

We, as media audiences sometimes tend to fail to notice and acknowledge changes, even slight changes that unfortunately we often tend to disregard as insignificant.

Yet, these changes have the ability to alter the entire landscape of an advertising process or experience. The ability to alter original work, into a new or an enhanced product; by digitalised technology through applications and features is very evident in new media. New media can for example enhance colour, through HD technology. Although this can be viewed as minute, it may not be. Imagine how enhanced colour may cause a huge difference in the image of an advert. It could be the difference between a highly popular advert and one despised. In this light, technological determinism theory would be viewed as applicable, as far as the new media are concerned in redefining the advertising world. The applications, abilities or features new media possess are sometimes regarded as insignificant by the audiences, but may in actual significantly affect how an advert turns out.

McLuhan (1964) views digital devices as very shrewd because they fascinate those who use them and often turn those users into dependants and into a state that such gadgets become idols (Facchina 2003:24). Issues of cyber addiction, together with the obsession with mobile phones suddenly takes focus. Addiction or over dependence is rife with certain technological gadgets. The fact that technology becomes depended upon, can lead to the medium dominating its user and so have the ability to manipulate the choices and preferences of that very user can be a form of technological determinism. In such scenarios, the claim that 'we shape our tools and they in turn shape us' is justified. This is so because the obsession to the new technology that leads audiences to being idols, can lead the user to surrender their control over to that device.

On the other hand, although technological determinism theory may have valid points, there is a real problem regarding the element of absolutism. Fourie (2007) is of the

view that technological determinism theory overestimates the power of the media. Although a medium or technological artefact may have an influence on a media process, it is too simple and rather naive to declare that this is the only element that can influence media processes (Fourie 2007). This is so because it has been proven now and again that a single element cannot influence a phenomenon alone. And as such, media relations are not only being influenced by technology but by various other social, economic and political forces. It is an arrogant and insulting view towards media audiences that technological determinists make. Although new media may alter the advertising landscape, other factors such as the economy, audiences and laws; inter alia, impact the media processes. An advert, for example, with enhanced HD may not necessarily sell just because it has enhanced images to a consumer who has the abilities to scrutinise product features and pricing. Besides high tech adverts carried out by advertisers such as Vodacom SA, audiences still consider other factors besides the technology involved in the making of an advert or the technology on offer, before purchasing or preferring the brand.

It is therefore important to note that there are elements within the technological determinism theory that support technology influence on audiences. These elements identify instances when the new media influence an advertising process. Fourie (2007:153) states that technological determinism also often underlies much of the hype about new communication technologies. However, it is also equally essential to accept that technology is not the only effect on media relations, but there are other influencing forces. Furthermore, the level of technological determinism may vary within different contexts. As such, there are very evident signs of technological determinism, caused by the new media on advertising culture in South Africa.

Subsequently, the same can also be assumed with regards to Vodacom SA's advertising culture.

The technological determinism theory's academic contribution to the study is to explore and deduce whether technological developments, in the form of new media, have influenced Vodacom SA's advertising culture. This also helps conclude the role of new media as advanced technology on Vodacom SA's advertising culture.

### **2.3 DIFFUSION OF INNOVATIONS THEORY**

The actual availability of technology is a driving force to why society, business included, would start using that particular new invention. It is only when the majority of the population owns or has access to and use technology and the new media that companies such as Vodacom SA can redefine their advertising culture to keep up with trends. The diffusion of innovation theory is widely used as the near perfect illustration of how society takes up innovations.

Diffusion of innovations theory seeks to explain how enhancements are taken up in a population. An innovation is an idea, behaviour, or object that is perceived as new by its audience (Robinson 2009). The theory seeks to explain how, why and at what rate new ideas and technology spreads through cultures that is; societies and countries. Diffusion of innovations theory spans through multiple disciplines. These disciplines include political science, public health, history, economics, technology, education and media communications. Advertising is no exception as it is widely indicated as using diffusion of innovations theory to execute campaigns (Sahin 2006). The media and new technology usage are also covered by this theory and have also employed it in adaptation strategies. Diffusion of innovations manifests



itself in different ways in various cultures and fields and is highly subjective to the type of adopters and innovation-decision process.

Rogers (1995) is largely acknowledged as the propeller of the modern diffusion of innovations theory. The author states that “diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system” (Rogers 2003:5). This theory is widely used as a theoretical framework and blueprint in the area of technology diffusion and adoption (Sahin 2006:14). Rogers (2003) espoused the theory and outlined that there are four key elements that influence the spread of a new idea as: the innovation, communication channels, time and a social system. Sahin (2006:14) stresses that as expressed in this definition, innovation, communication channels, time and social system are the four key components of the diffusion of innovations. The makings and meaning of the four segments is discussed below.

### **2.3.1 Innovation**

Rogers (2003:12) offered the following description of an innovation: “An innovation is an idea, practice, or project that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption” (sic). An innovation may have been invented a long time ago, but if individuals have not yet encountered it, then it may still be an innovation to them.

### **2.3.2 Communication channels**

For Rogers (2003:5), communication is; “a process in which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding.” This communication occurs through channels between sources. Rogers (2003) states that “a source is an individual or an institution that originates a message. A channel is the

means by which a message gets from the source to the receiver” (Rogers 1995:204). Rogers (1995) states that diffusion is a specific kind of communication and includes these communication elements: an innovation, two individuals or other units of adoption and a communication channel. Mass media and interpersonal communication are the two communication channels. Media channels include mediums such as TV, radio, newspaper or the Internet. Interpersonal channels consist of a two-way communication between two or more individuals. “Diffusion is a very social process that involves interpersonal communication relationships” (Rogers 2003:19). Thus, oral media are powerful in creating or changing strong attitudes held by an individual (Sahin 2006:15). In interpersonal channels, the communication may have a characteristic of “homophily” or “heterophily” (Rogers 2003). To Rogers (2003:19), 'homophily' is; “the degree to which two or more individuals who interact are similar in certain attributes, such as beliefs and education. 'Heterophily' is; “the degree to which two or more individuals who interact are different in certain attributes” (Rogers 2003:19). In fact, “one of the most distinctive problems in the diffusion of innovations is that the participants are usually quite 'heterophilous’” (sic) (Rogers 2003:19).

### **2.3.3 Time**

According to Rogers (2003), the time aspect is ignored in most behavioural research. Rogers (ibid.) argues that including the time dimension in diffusion of innovations research illustrates one of its strengths. The innovation-diffusion process, adopter categorisation and rate of adoptions all include a time dimension (Rogers 2003).

### 2.3.4 Social system

The social system is defined as “a set of interrelated units engaged in joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal” (Rogers 2003:23). Since the diffusion of an innovation takes place in the social system, it is influenced by the social structure of the social system. For Rogers (2003:19) structure is “the patterned arrangements of the units in a system.” Rogers (2003:19) further claims that the nature of the social system affects individuals' innovativeness, which is the main criterion for categorising adopters. Diffusion of innovations researchers believe that a population can be broken down into five different segments, based on their propensity to adopt a specific innovation and these are: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards (Robinson 2009). Below is the diagram of the different innovation segments as suggested by Rogers (1995).

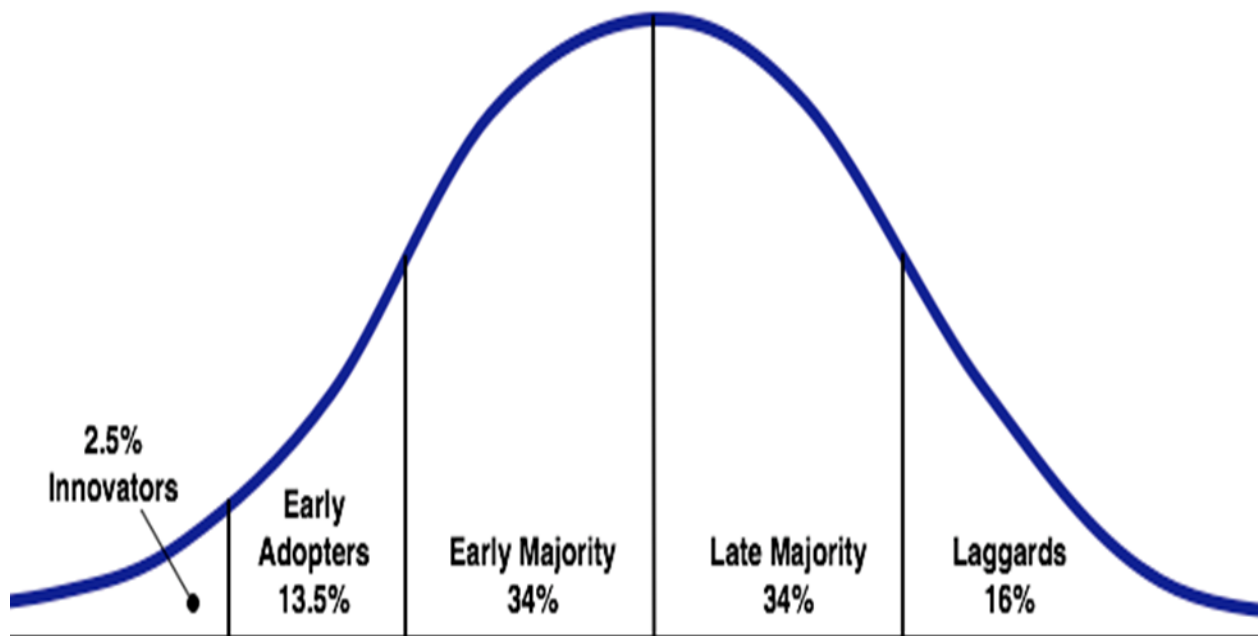


Figure 2.1: Diffusion of Innovation segments by Rogers (1995)

- **Innovators**

For Rogers (2003), innovators are willing to experience new ideas. Thus, they should be prepared to cope with unprofitable and unsuccessful innovations and a certain level of uncertainty about the innovation. Innovators are the gatekeepers bringing the innovation in from outside of the system. They may not be respected by other members of the social system because of their 'venturesomeness' and close relationships outside the social system. This 'venturesomeness' requires innovators to have complex technical knowledge. This group constitutes about 2.5 per cent of the entire social structure (Rogers 1995). Robison (2009) deliberates on innovators by stating that:

The adoption process begins with a tiny number of visionary, imaginative innovators. They often lavish great time, energy and creativity on developing new ideas and gadgets. And they love to talk about them. (sic)

- **Early adopters**

This is perhaps the most important segment in the adaptation of an innovation. Rogers (2003:283) declares this assertion and notes that “early adopters put their stamp of approval on a new idea by adopting it.” Early adopters' leadership in adopting the innovation decreases uncertainty about the innovation in the diffusion process (Rogers 2003:283). Rogers (2003) argued that since early adopters are more likely to hold leadership roles in the social system, other members, of the social system, come to them to get advice or information about the innovation. Thus, as role models, early adopters' attitudes toward innovations are more important.

Early adopters' subjective evaluations about an innovation reach other members of the social system through the interpersonal networks. Sahin (2006:19) points out that

compared to innovators, early adopters are more limited outside the boundaries of the social system. Robinson (2009) characterises this segment as “more economically successful, well connected and well informed and hence more socially respected”, with a group size of roughly 13.5 per cent of the population (Rogers 1995).

- **Early majority**

In terms of their portion of the entire population, early adopters constitute around a third; 34 per cent, of the concerned society (Rogers 1995). Early majorities are pragmatists, comfortable with moderately progressive ideas, but will not act without solid proof of benefits (Robinson 2009). Robinson (2009) observes that early adopters want to get approval of an innovation from “industry insiders” and for the innovation to be “endorsed by normal, respectable folks.” This group waits for approval by the early majority as well as the media. They act only positively when they see others approving. As Rogers (2003) stated, they are deliberate in adopting an innovation and they are neither the first nor the last to adopt it. Sahin (2006:20) detects that the early majority's innovation decision usually takes more time than it takes innovators and early adopters.

- **Late Majority**

Similar to the early majority, the late majority includes one-third; 34 per cent, of all members of the social system (Rogers 1995). This group waits until most of their peers adopt the innovation (Sahin 2006:20). Although they are sceptical about the innovation and its outcomes, economic necessity and peer pressure may lead them to the adoption of the innovation (Sahin 2006:20). Rogers (2003) expounds that to reduce the uncertainty of the innovation, interpersonal networks of close peers

should persuade the late majority to adopt it. Then, “the late majority feel that it is safe to adopt” (Rogers 2003:284). Robinson (2009) defines this group as one of conservative pragmatists who minimise risk and are uncomfortable with new ideas and that practically; their only driver is the fear of not fitting in and the economic and social landscape forcing them to adopt.

- **Laggards**

As Rogers (2003) stated, laggards have the traditional view and they are more sceptical about innovations and change agents than the late majority. As the most localized group of the social system, their interpersonal networks mainly consist of other members of the social system from the same category. Laggards are projected to constitute 16 per cent of the social structure (Rogers 1995). Moreover, laggards are described as not having leadership roles in the social structure. Because of the limited resources and the lack of awareness-knowledge of innovations, they first want to make sure that an innovation works before they adopt it (Sahin 2006; Robinson 2009). Thus, laggards tend to decide after looking at whether the innovation was fully successfully adopted by other members of the social system in the past. Due to all these characteristics; laggards' innovation-decision period is relatively long (Robinson 2009; Rogers 1995).

The diffusion of innovations theory is highly connected to and favoured by advertisers and marketers (Shoeb 2014). Advertising involves trend setting and following trends. It can help advertisers come up with a media mix, as well as market segmentation. A specific segment of the market may be reached through a specific media different from one used for another segment. This theory is relevant to the study in three very distinct and unique ways. The first way is that it can help show if

Vodacom SA, as an advertiser, has or has not become an adopter of new media advertising. The second is that if there is a diffusion of innovations in new media advertising within Vodacom SA's advertising culture, the diffusion of innovations theory will help indicate which segments the innovation is at, in various contexts. The third way diffusion of innovation theory can assist the study can be through examining segments the audiences may be at with regards to Vodacom SA's advertising culture. Diffusion of innovations can show whether Vodacom SA and South African in general are adopters of new media advertising or not.

However, the diffusion of innovations theory is often criticised as being too simplified and being more of an ideal unrealisable in the real world. Scholars criticise the theory for disregarding the complex societal, cultural, economic and political factors that determine how the product is adopted into society. Most sociological studies on this subject analyse how technology adoption is affected by the characteristics of society in which potential users are embedded (MacVaugh & Schiavone 2010; Selwyn 2003; Slowikowski and Jarratt 2007). Haggman (2009) notes that studies have shown that understanding the relationships between users may be more critical than factors relating to the product itself.

Nevertheless, the diffusion of innovations theory helps hugely explain advertiser's choice of a medium as an advertising tool. It also helps gauge how far Vodacom SA's advertising culture would have been influenced by the public and industry's intake of new media. It could assist measure the level at which a new media has infiltrated society and to what extent an advertiser should pay attention to that medium. Although it has flaws, the diffusion of innovations theory is a handy tool in

the advertising industry and was thus applied to determine if Vodacom SA's advertising culture was redefined by the new media.

## **2.4 THE GLOBAL VILLAGE THEORY**

If we are in position of technology, have diffused it as an innovation; throughout society and have the ability to be in large numbers, then we are a technologically savvy community. Because of technology, we can do this on both micro and macro scales; from a small local number, of say 2, to a worldwide base. In this regard, be it on a local or global scale, we are thus a society, a community; a global village. The global village term was coined by McLuhan (1962) under the scholar's broad globalisation paradigm. McLuhan (1962) was convinced that technology has made people become closer as if they stayed in a village, as neighbours do. "We now live in a global village...a simultaneous happening" declare McLuhan and Fiore (1967:63). "The electronic age has sealed the entire human family into a single global tribe" (McLuhan 1962). Laughey (2007:36) defines the basics of a global village as follows:

we no longer live in tribal villages in the literal sense, but in the metaphorical sense electrical media have expanded our horizons to such an extent that we feel a vicarious intimacy with people and places all over the world. (sic)

The global village theory argues that because of technological capabilities, such as digitalisation and instant reciprocity, the world has become one "community", a "single village" McLuhan (1962). The definition of "community" emphasizes; supportive and sociable relations that provide a sense of belonging (Wellman 2002). McLuhan (1962) states that the audiences in these communities are united by communication technology and these audiences assume a heterogeneous identity. To McLuhan (1962), there is a sense of interdependence and oneness when we use



information technology. McLuhan (ibid) stated that: “Electric technology... would seem to render individualism obsolete and... corporate interdependence mandatory” (McLuhan 1962:1). Global village theory translates that altered material condition into a hitherto unrealized condition of proximity, intimacy and interrelatedness; the ultimate basis for a singular intimacy, cooperativeness and familiarity (McLuhan 1962). This McLuhan and Fiore (1968:11) compare the global village theory to a “little home town”, where everyone knows each other and where everyone communicates with anyone.

The global village is linked by what McLuhan and Fiore (1968) termed the “information highway” and “information society.” The argument is that a global village not only brings the world to us, but takes us to the rest of the world; yet the body [our physical being] will remain in one place but the mind will float out into the electronic void, being everywhere at once (McLuhan and Powers 1989:97). The information highway is a metaphor relating to how the electronic technology is like a huge highway whereby everyone uses modern technology. This information highway is compared to a community; a village; where most the people are able to access information and where the closeness of the users has been reduced to the size of an example of a village, where the whole world population can be part of one community. This global village is where everyone knows each other, if they desired to and where everyone communicates and is in contact with each other. This further suggests that the whole world, because of globalisation; a result of technological advancements, has become one, a small 'home town' village where contact is near and immediate among all the world inhabitants. The global village theory greatly bases its argument on the fact that the whole world can have a conversation together. Okigbo (1995:107) notes:

From a social perspective, one quickly notices how the information highway has linked major parts of the world. It has enhanced interpersonal, intergroup and international communication. This has furthermore brought the world so close as one community within which individuals and groups could exchange information and ideas directly, in 'a global conversation.' (sic)

McLuhan (1962) observes that "'Time' has ceased, 'space' has vanished"; an important aspect of globalisation is the fact that time and space have been made irrelevant and information sharing has become instant with no territorial limitations. Van Alstyne and Brynjolfsson (1996:2) second this by stating "the global village- a virtual community of neighbours freed of geographic constraints" (sic). As Van Dijk (2006:157) points out, societies of the past have been based on the ability to interact with people in close proximity of one another, being bound by space and time but the societies of the global village are no longer bound by these restrictions. Although McLuhan's global village theory was coined in the 1960s and used in reference to relatively less digitalised technology such as a standard TV, many scholars believe that this argument was more of a prophesised theory for the future in new media; the Internet age (Okigbo 1995). Many scholars believe that the Internet and web-based applications are the foremost modern technologies that are a complete manifestation the concept of a global village. Nash (2009:2) concurs and notes that:

The term 'global village' has become almost infamous in the information age. Its originator, Marshall McLuhan, is regarded by some as the most important scholar in media studies and his work is widely known to be ahead of its time. Often his work is even thought of as prophetic, including his discussions of the global village. (sic)

The new media are the driving force and major enhancers of interactivity (Feldman 1997). The Internet is a major enhancer of interactivity and the biggest component of the new media (McQuail 2010). McQuail (2010:138) continues, on the influence and status of the Internet in the new media paradigm, by stating:

It [the Internet] transgresses the limits of the print and broadcasting models, amongst other: enabling many to many conversations and enabling the simultaneous receptions, alteration and redistribution of cultural objects. (sic)

The statement by McQuail (2010) above shows that Internet and web based applications can reach a wide range of people and disregards the forces of time and space with simultaneous communication abilities. Furthermore, Livingstone (1999:65) expounds:

What is new about the Internet maybe the combination of Interactivity with its features which were innovative for mass communication. The unlimited range of content, the scope of audience reach, the global nature of communication. (sic)

The above statements show that the Internet and web based applications fit perfectly with the description by McLuhan (1962) and the characteristics of the global village or global tribe or information highway or also known as the information society in the broader globalisation paradigm. Van Alstyne and Brynjolfsson (1996:5) note that because the Internet makes it easier to find like-minded individuals, it can facilitate and strengthen fringe communities that have a common ideology but are dispersed geographically. Nyamnjoh (1996) sums it up by stating; “The Internet.... epitomizes the information superhighway” (sic). The Internet and web based applications are a big indicator, symbol and expression of the global village and new media paradigm.

Fleras (2003:25) believes this to be true of the Internet by declaring that:

Everything we used to do, we do differently because of the Internet. Internet communication is redefining how people relate to the world out there, both physical and human, by radically defining how information is processed and distributed. (sic)

Interactivity, on time response, social networks and convergence are some of the examples of huge indications of indicators of a global village theory manifesting. Furthermore, mobile phones, through broadband and Internet capabilities are also

offering the same services. South African audiences are more active and involved in the media process on the mobile phone compared to any other medium (effectivemeasure.com 2013).

The Internet and web-based applications, such as Social Networking Sites (SNS) and Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS) are mediums that seem to promote the idea of an integrated global community. Audiences air their views, interact and can even create their own media products. In terms of communities, SNS themselves can be compared to true reflections global villages. Facebook, WhatsApp, Skype and Twitter are some of the many examples of Internet web-based applications where audiences are in communities and coexist as though they are in a “little home town. This all happens in real time where, for example, a Facebook friend in Harare chats with their friends in Perth, Den Haag, Hong Kong and Kentucky, all at the same time, making the time difference and geography a mockery. Borders and time are lip flogged as these two become non-factors in communication processes. With the state of the globe, in terms of its technology status and the many possibilities available in innovation; it is very difficult for one not to agree with, perhaps to a certain extent, with the global village theory by McLuhan (1962). Social networks and blogs offer the audience the ability to give feedback, criticise and create their own adverts; making an advertiser take note and try and tap into the opinions of the client base. Audiences can share information in discussion forums and blogs on advertising. These forums are the makings of common interests and are an example of yet another form of a global village. Discussion forums for audiences are a type of enhanced interactivity brought about by the new media. Thus audience communities can be formed and play a pivotal role in the advertising and media process. Van Alstyne and Brynjolfsson (1996:4) concur by observing that:

The general argument is fairly simple. If IT [new media] provides a lubricant that allows for the satisfaction of preferences against the friction of geography, then more IT can imply that people increasingly fulfil their preferences. Thus, we examine critically the claim that a global village is the inexorable result of increased connectivity. Improved technologies have increased information transmission speeds and bandwidth across all distances except the last 12 inches-between the computer monitor and the brain. (sic)

Take into consideration that the telecommunications, together with construction, agriculture and mining are singled as key, highly successful and growing industries in Africa (Runge 2012). According to Ncube in Roper (WAN-IFRA Blogs.com 2012) Africa is the second largest mobile market in the world and the continent is undergoing a massive deployment of submarine fiber optic cables. South Africa is no different and is in the mist of this expansion. The mobile telecommunications industry in South Africa has had a huge impact on the country's economy and the technology world. The mobile phone has great potential in providing convergence to media users. Its ability to incorporate other mediums such as Internet services, TV and radio, as well as its applications and reach to remote areas makes the prime source of Internet access and perhaps therefore increased interactivity. It is vital to indicate that most of the Internet use in South Africa is through mobile phones and the mobile broadband Internet use is increasing by the day (effectivemeasure.com 2013; Vodacom.com 2013). To illustrate the extent of the growth of the telecommunications industry and its expected influence in Africa, Ncube in Roper (WAN-IFRA Blogs.com 2012) states; "In the not so distant future, more people [in Africa] will be connected via a mobile phone than have electricity at home."

Such prospects indicate the potential the new media via technology such as a mobile phone, has as a dominant advertising form, as well as the use of the global village phenomenon as an advertising strategy. One is tempted to see the possibility of

Vodacom SA's advertising culture leaning towards mobile phone advertising, when such arguments and facts are put into consideration. The concept of the global village can help Vodacom SA tap into the virtual audiences and communities on social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. These communities are mostly accessed via the mobile phone in South Africa (effectivemeasure.com 2013).

However, the global village theory has its own downside. An important aspect ignored is the fact that even in a village, not all the neighbours communicate with each other, not all share the same communication interests or not all of them are united by that village and actually there are cliques within the village. Thus it is rather too simple to assume that the entire cyber world is one big happy and united family. Fragmentations in the cyber world maybe as pronounced or even more distinct than in the real world. Furthermore, as long as human information processing capabilities are bounded, electronic media are unlikely to dramatically change this total. Van Alstyne and Brynjolfsson (1996:4) note that when geography no longer narrows interaction, people are able to select their acquaintances by other criteria such as common interests, status, economic class, academic discipline or ethnic group; as in the real worlds. The result can easily be a greater social disunity (Van Alstyne & Brynjolfsson 1996:4). This is so because one of the major shortcomings of the global village theory is the ability to encourage conservatism. As Van Alstyne and Brynjolfsson (1996:4) note that:

The Internet can provide access to millions of other users and a wide range of knowledge sources, but no one can interact with all of them...It would take over five years to read just the new listings added each month. Even if people were to do so, creating a global community which depends on individuals consuming vast amounts of disparate and topically unrelated information would simply be infeasible. (sic)

There is a general sense of sensationalism and romantic rhetoric by the global village theory (Van Alstyne & Brynjolfsson 1996). Buxton and Bardini (2012) are highly critical of the global village theory, which they argue is based on a number of highly untenable assumptions about the nature of village life. As mentioned above, although the World Wide Web can have a billion- plus users, not everyone can be in contact with each other and an advertiser may not be able to reach all these users. The practical implication of bounded rationality in this context is that a citizen of cyberspace still has a finite set of neighbours with whom he or she can meaningfully interact with (Van Alstyne & Brynjolfsson 1996:4). This creates a localization effect rather than globalization, generating much regional connectedness but limited international interaction (Geist 2007). On the Internet, the number of neighbours with whom one interacts with is unlikely to exceed a few dozen in a typical day, even in a lifetime; few people have significant relationships with more than a few hundred others.

Global villages might also prove destructive to the advertisers due to over-specialisation (Van Alstyne & Brynjolfsson 1996). Such specialisation can lead to very small target markets that are too small to attract advertisers. Fischer (1982) mentioned in Wellman (2002:20) calls these communities “diverse subcultures in the modern urban environment”. Increased fragmentation can result in smaller global villages that do not make economic sense to target as a marketing segment for advertisers. Rather, the traditional media, such as TV, would offer advertisers a more united, less complex and better to reach audience segment. Using the above argument by Wellman (2002), an advertiser such as Vodacom SA may opt to use the traditional media that would not have too many communities to target; such as the various the Internet may offer.

The digital divide, the gap in terms of the technology haves and the have nots in South Africa, shows that a global village may not be realised or is highly limited in such circumstances. Okigbo (1995:120) argues that the concept of an information superhighway can hardly be understood in Africa, because the highway is yet to be travelled by enough Africans and/or Africa-based users. This is a real setback to the global village theory. Although these observations are not the most recent, the situation is still true today. The levels of Internet use of most South African; both in terms of access and skill is still very low, at about 30 per cent of the population (effectivemeasure.com 2013) to have significant communities that can be prime targets for advertising. McLuhan (1962) fails to acknowledge the fact that it cannot be a given that the users of a particular medium can access and use it at the same levels. A large portion of the population of the world that does not have access to the Internet is located in Africa. In the global village, not all may have the same resources, not all have the same communication tools (Zembylas & Vrasidas 2005:68). If there are disparities within society, then there is no unity. Then there is no communion. Thus there be would no society or village to talk about or target.

McLuhan (1962) seems to assume that the entire population of the globe is plugged in to communications technology at the same pace. That we are capable of being involved in a single global communication event at any time we choose. Indeed it is increasingly difficult not to hear of world events or information, but we cannot yet connect with anyone we wish anywhere in the world and get the information at the same time. There are sweeping generalisations in the theory that are not practical in everyday life. Political, economic and social forces have barriers that retard the realisation of the global village and McLuhan (1962) ignores these concerns.



Nonetheless, the global village theory can be used as a barometer of audience activeness and their choices for media use. It can also be used to show how new media facets such as Social Networking Sites can be a form of market segments for Vodacom SA, as they can show the sort of audiences that use them and thus show what sort of “community” they frequent on.

## **2.5 THE CONCEPT OF INTERACTIVITY**

It is only after society has adopted an innovation; such as new media technology that it can utilise the new media capability of enhanced or amplified interactivity. The concept of interactivity has become so synonymous with the new media that it is considered as a cornerstone and prime attribute of the new media (Feldman 1997). It is one of the major qualities that separate the new media from the traditional media. Interactivity relates the degree to which users of a medium can influence the form or content of the mediated environment. Traditional media, unlike new media which amplifies audience influence, vaguely or totally does not provide the audience room to significantly participate in media processes and make a great impact. McQuail (2010:40) comments that “traditional mass communication was essentially one-directional [non-involving], while the new forms of communication [media] are essentially interactive.” Kiousis (2002) notes that generally, we will find that “interactivity is associated with new communication [media] technologies.” Severin and Tankard (1997:287) reveal that “many of these technologies [new media] have the dramatic effect of giving the user much more control over the communication process and the information received.”

Jäckel (1995) has pointed out that “the concept interactivity extends, perhaps not surprisingly, from the concept of interaction. A concept which generally means:

“exchange’, ‘interplay’, and or ‘mutual influence.’” Jensen (1998) continues by borrowing from Wörterbuch der Soziologie whose work dwells on the social bearing of interaction, noting:

Interaction is the most elemental unit of social events, where people adapt their behaviour to each other, whether or not they follow mutual expectations or reject them. As coordinated action is not pre-programmed, a minimum of common meaning and linguistic understanding is necessary. (sic)

Feldman (1997:18) strongly suggests that interactivity is when participants in a communication process have control over and can exchange roles in, their mutual discourse. The shift to digital; a major characteristic of new media, means a move from passive to interactive media (Feldman 1997). The above statement is significant in that it gives the audience a new role, from merely recipients or minor activists who are very subdued; who are rather passive, to participants, who are active in the media process. It can be noted that the concept of interaction in media and communication studies is often used to refer to the actions and participation level and form of an audience or recipients in relation to the media process. The ability for media audiences to respond to message senders and also create their own content have developed into core components of the concept of interactivity.

Scholars note that interactivity is a variable; some communication technologies are relatively low in their degree of interactivity, for example television, while others such as computers and mobile phones are more interactive. This implies that interactivity maybe both present in new and traditional media but its level of intensity is used as a yardstick to distinguish new from traditional media. McQuail (1994) argues that the “convergence” of new technologies is skewing the boundaries involved in traditional mass communication theories.

Steuer (1992:84), mentioned by Kiousis (2002), notes that; “the extent to which users can participate in modifying the form and content of a mediated environment is central to the makings of interactivity.” Kiousis (2002) further observes that interactivity is “more technologically determined.” This implies that technologically advanced and digitalised devices, usually new media, are the ones that offer more enhanced interactivity to media audiences (Kiousis 2002). A similar technologically-driven communication definition is given by Jensen (1998:201), who submits that "Interactivity may be defined as: a measure of a media's potential ability to let the user exert an influence on the content and/or form of the mediated communication." These characteristics, functions and definitions of interactivity mentioned above point out to the fact that media structures have been altered by new media's enhanced interactivity ability. This would mean that media processes may have been redefined. Such alterations may also be present in advertising. The very fact that the new media has the ability to give a new perspective to how audiences participate in an advertising process would infer that the audience would have a new redefined place in advertising cultures. Salman et al. (2011) state that:

With the coming of the new media, people who have long been on the receiving end of one-way mass communication are now increasingly likely to become producers and transmitters. (sic)

They (ibid.) further go on to make a very daring statement when declaring, “This warrants an important adjustment to media hegemony theories” (Salman et al. 2011). Feldman (1997:13) agrees by stating that:

Interactivity, the argument goes, offers the potential to create a new era in information, entertainment and education. Through interactivity, once dull, passive experiences will be transformed into something infinitely richer and more compelling. Interactivity, it is said, opens a new door in human experiences, one that may even eventually supplement traditional linear media. (sic)

Examples of various forms of interactivity includes, but not limited to, social networking sites such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, MySpace, users advert creation, emails and blogs. These provide the audience with opportunities to comment, criticise, appreciate, reject, review and/ or create adverts and brands. The Internet and its nowadays free software have also made the audience creators and producers of adverts. Internet sites such as YouTube have complemented interactivity by being the mediums and platforms to post such creations. All this is interactivity and it is evident that its capabilities would surely redefine the advertising culture of the day.

However, McQuail (2010:140) cautions these thoughts and notes and prompts one to seriously gauge the role, relevance and influence of interactivity as he stipulates: "Interactivity and choice are not universal benefits, many people don't have the energy, desire, need or training to engage in such processes" (sic). The argument of the above mentioned statement denotes that even if enhanced interactivity via, new media, offered control, participation and freedom to the audience, that very audience may be too indolent, limited in influence, ignorant or unwilling to exercise the process of interactivity. The new media may offer interactivity but the audience may not be interactive. This would result in no alterations on the part of advertisers because the conventional approach would still be relevant and be the most effective. Where the linear or one directional communication model would be applied.

It does not necessary mean that if something is new and advanced then people automatically like or move to it or that it gives them total emancipation. So perhaps interactivity may not be as big a phenomenon as assumed. It might not influence the

media and especially advertising audience because the audiences may not use it as intensely or effectively as it was intended or are limited in their control by advertisers or media owners. Furthermore, such high tech gadgets are expensive and are not easily available to the ordinary man. Audiences may resort to maybe the cheaper traditional media. A radio in terms of costs is one of the cheapest media (Mmusi 2002). In comparison to say a tablet, the convectional radio is cheaper (Game.za 2013). It is therefore important to classify that interactivity of the majority of the advertising audience base is to date largely an ideal in South Africa. This would imply that the new media would not significantly influence the media processes and so not redefine the media and in the instance of this study, an advertising culture.

Another important aspect is to question how far audience can influence an advertising culture. Indeed there may be feedback, there may be audience involvement and adverts maybe created. But the question is whether the advertiser, such as Vodacom SA lets its audiences influence its advertising culture. Feedback and adverts created by audiences maybe in total contradiction to industry standards or of low quality and not beneficial to the company brand. Audience involvement may also be in conflict with company strategies, policies and ethos. Additionally, interactive participation may be plural and varied. Various voices and contributions may be created. One wonders how an advertiser such as Vodacom SA would accommodate the influence of all these voices.

Yet it is equally essential to take note of such a paradigm shifts caused by new media interactivity. "We can already conclude that the 'communication revolution' has generally shifted the 'balance of power' from the media to the audience" McQuail (2010:40) notes in a shift in argument. The word "generally" indicates a shift,

however with caution and the words “communication revolution” prophesied a shift in paradigm in terms of the media process. It shows that elements of change, challenge, alteration and redefining are synonymous with the new media and interactivity. Hitherto, not taking away the fact that the advertisers also still yield significant, if not the bulk of the influence.

McQuail (2010:140) even suggests that “the term ‘audience’ is in need of supplementation with the overlapping term of ‘user’.” Such a proclamation would totally change the media process landscape and that of advertising. Thus the concept of enhanced interactivity, brought about by new media was employed by the study to help determine the influence, involvement and or control audiences had over Vodacom SA's advertising culture and thereby help determine if new media has redefined Vodacom SA's advertising culture and if so in what ways.

## **2.6 USES AND GRATIFICATIONS THEORY**

Although all the conditions of the prevalence of new media are available, such as interactivity, a shared community in the global village, as well as a technology that has diffused within that entire community; use and uptake of the new media can be a result of none of those factors but the audiences' preferences and satisfactions derived from medium choice. The uses and gratifications theory expounds this point.

Uses and gratifications approach in the study of communication was first formally outlined by Katz, Haas and Gurevitch (1973). Katz et al. (1973) suggested that communication research should reverse the traditional question of what the media do to people and ask instead what people do with the media. The foundations of uses and gratifications theory laid down by Katz et al. in (1973) are still the basis of the approach to this day. Sundar and Limperos (2013:506) concur by stating that

“This original outline of U&G [uses and gratifications] from the 1970s governs scholarly research on media gratifications to this day” (sic). Traditionally, mass communication theorists focused their attention on a linear effects model of communication; where the audiences are perceived as passive. However, Rubin (2009) stipulates that the uses and gratifications theory “is an audience-centered approach”, which posits that individuals have particular needs that drive selection of certain types of media. O'Donohoe (1994:52) states that the uses and gratifications theory is an antidote to the “magic bullet” approach advocated by the Frankfurt School since the turn of the century. The Frankfurt School's view of the media as exerting powerful and direct influence on individuals' behaviour and beliefs, in the direct media effects paradigm, regarded the audience as passive and the media as an uncontested disseminator of content on its audiences. However, other scholars began to turn their attention to a different model of mass communication; the uses and gratifications model, which viewed the audiences as active and decisive. The theory turned the dialog from how media affects the audience to how the audience actively choose media to satisfy their own needs (Littau 2009). Friedman (2013:4) notes that:

According to the [uses and gratifications] theory, if a medium provides a satisfactory outcome for the user, the user will return to it again and again. If it does not meet those expectations, the user will move on in search of another means to experience the satisfaction of met needs. (sic)

In attacking the traditional image of the mass media as a powerful manipulator of the audience, uses and gratifications repelled the view that the media dictate to a powerless audience (Houghton-Larsen 1982:42). The uses and gratifications theory argues that media audiences are active in the communication process and are goal

oriented in their media use. The uses and gratifications theory maintains that media users seek out a media source that best fulfils their needs.

Central to the uses and gratifications perspective is the concept of an active audience (McQuail, Blumler & Brown 1972:1). It is the audience member who is seen as taking the initiative in seeking out a medium and media content which will fulfil the particular gratification sought. According to this perspective, it is the people who use the media and not the media who use the people (Houghton-Larsen 1982: 43). This approach stresses individual choice and how "people intentionally participate and select media messages from communication alternatives . . . what people do with the media, instead of what the media do to people" (Rubin 1994:421).

The uses and gratifications theory assumes that the user has alternate choices to satisfy their need. It further assumes that audiences actively seek out the media in a goal-directed way that provides them with the means of gratifying a wide variety of needs. In other words, people use media strategically. The argument here is that media users employ different media for different purposes and more importantly, they select among media choices based on how well each option helps them meet specific needs or goals (Katz et al. 1973). Cho, De Zúñiga, Rojas and Shah (2003:48) state:

so rather than asking how media use influences users, a uses and gratifications perspective asks how users' basic needs influence users' media choices. It is important to note that the media choices that people make are motivated by the desire to satisfy a wide variety of functions: entertainment, diversion, social connection, personal identity, information and the like. (sic)

The main perspective of the uses and gratifications theory is based on the view that the argument is not "what do the mass media do to people?" but rather "what do



people do with the mass media?" (Katz et al. 1973:2). Katz et al. (1973) offer a typology of needs of media users that can be expressed as:

- Cognitive needs - for information, knowledge and understanding of our environment.
- Affective needs - for aesthetic, pleasurable and emotional experiences.
- Personal integrative needs - for credibility, confidence, stability and personal status.
- Social integrative needs - for contact with family, friends and the world.
- Escapist needs - for escape, diversion and tension release.

The uses and gratifications theory is used in general media terms, but O'Donohoe (1994:52) stipulates that uses and gratifications can also be used in advertising study when he states that:

There is growing recognition of consumers' advertising sophistication and the complexity of the relationship between advertisements and their audience. In this context, various practitioners and academics have argued that research should address what consumers do with advertising, rather than what advertising does to them. According to uses and gratifications theory, the mass media constitute a resource on which audiences draw to satisfy various needs. In its conception of an active, goal-directed audience, it is consistent with emerging views of the advertising consumer (sic).

O'Donohoe (1994) further insists that advertising applications of the uses and gratifications approach are to be viewed in the light that "the consumer is not [a] passive, helpless advertising fodder". It might be more useful to think less about what advertising does to people and more about what people do with advertising (O'Donohoe 1994:52). The consumer is not passive, but rather chooses to pay attention to an advert and that an advert's only value is that which the consumer

gives it (O'Donohoe 1994). Consumers expect advertising to provide aesthetic, emotional or intellectual rewards. Advertising is consumed for at least seven kinds of satisfaction, namely; product information, entertainment, implied warranty, value addition, post-purchase reassurance, vicarious experience and involvement. Vicarious experience is the opportunity to experience situations or lifestyles to which we would not otherwise have access (O'Donohoe 1994).

However, the uses and gratifications perspective has been challenged on various grounds. More fundamentally, uses and gratifications research has been criticized for being vague and non-theoretical. It has been accused of simply restating some aspects of selective influence theories and offering little more than a data collection strategy and lists of reasons why people attend to the mass media. First, while it assumes that the audience is active and in control; Lometti, Reeves and Bybee (1977) argue that uses and gratifications are mediators of, rather than substitutes for, media effects. Moreover many scholars question the view that there are no “hidden messages” in media content. Research on uses and gratifications approach often fails to allay the fears of many that the mass media exert a powerful hold on their audiences. In fact, the findings sometimes give additional cause for alarm about what the media are doing to people (Shaw 1979:99). To sum it up, Ruggiero (2000:12) argues that “U&G [uses and gratifications] researchers attach different meanings to concepts such as motives, uses, gratifications, and functional alternatives, contributing to fuzzy thinking and inquiry” (sic).

It is naïve to ignore the direct effects traditional theories of the media, such as the magic bullet theory and the agenda setting theory. Severin and Tankard (1997:297) state that the view in the magic bullet theory is that of “strong and more or less

universal effects of mass communication messages on all audience members who happen to be exposed to them.” Although the magic bullet theory may be simplistic and too absolute, there is that the media can affect its audience and that it sometimes disregards audiences’ uses and gratifications needs. Agenda setting theory refers to the idea that there is a strong correlation between the emphasis that mass media place on certain issues; based on relative placement or amount of coverage and the importance attributed to these issues by mass audiences (McCombs & Shaw 1972). Advertising is persuasive and pays a lot of attention on emphasis on driving its point home.

The argument is the more one advertises and the more a brand is given importance, the more it is most probable that it will be considered as important and wanted by the audiences. Vodacom SA creates an advert and chose a medium it feels fits its intended audience, without really finding out if that audience feels gratified with the advert or whether they desire using the specific medium. It may choose to use traditional or new media; stick to its tried and tested advertising culture or adopt a new one without being influenced by the audience, the audience's perceived bias towards the new media or lack of thereof. Vodacom SA admits that it spends millions of Rands on its advertising to increase emphasis (Vodacom 2013.com). Instead of paying attention to audience use of their preferred media use, it may simply apply the agenda setting or and the magic bullet theory to reach its end of consolidating its brand and getting more sells.

Such is the notion put forward by Palmgreen, Wenner and Rosengren (1985) who argue that there is still much to learn about the relationship between gratifications sought and those obtained; the antecedents of such gratifications and the ways in

which they relate to media behaviour. It is not always the case that audiences' uses and gratifications sought after are what they want or what they get.

The uses and gratifications approach is criticised for its tendency to provide lists of reasons for attending to the media, unaccompanied by systematic explanation. The cornerstones of uses and gratifications theory, the notion of an active audience and the validity of self-report data to determine motives, are assumed by researchers, and that assumption may be “a little simplistic or naive” (Severin & Tankard 1997:335; Friedman 2013). In the case of advertising, the uses and gratifications needs of a user do not tally with the conventional wisdom of advertising models which privilege the sender's intentions over the receiver's interpretations and assume a passive rather than active audience. It is true that adverts are created on the basis that Vodacom SA assumes they know what their audience want. Advertising is about trend setting and creating emotional connections. It is safe to suggest that, for example Vodacom SA and not the audience have more to do with choosing which media and the frequencies an advert is aired on that particular medium and not the audience. So it can be entirely up to Vodacom SA to decide if they use traditional or new media in their advertising campaign and not the audience; as suggested by the uses and gratifications theory.

The uses and gratifications theory also fails to observe and reveal who comes up with the list of choices for the audiences. Inventors and advertisers are the ones who give the most choices and priorities for what is to be consumed by audiences. It is they; the advertisers and media owners, who start the process of selection of which mediums audiences can pick from. Already, this sets the motions of restraint on the audiences. Subsequently, audiences may be given choices that are limited and that

eventually lead to the advertisers' preferences. Thus in essence, audiences mostly assume that they have made independent choices, when media producers can tamper with the choices made available. In this instance, audiences are cheated off the belief of self-destiny when in actual fact advertisers would have applied hegemonic influence on them.

Nevertheless, uses and gratifications research offers a valuable alternative perspective to our understanding of the audience's role in the advertising process. It has called attention to audiences' varying expectations of the several media. The question held by advertisers and media producers of: which medium, which channel, which program can best adequately satisfy my audiences' specific and dynamic needs. Equally important, the uses and gratifications theory suggests how the varied social contexts, in which different kinds of people; are exposed to, can affect their usage of and satisfaction with the media (Shaw 1979:99).

In business, one survives by making the customer king. Advertising is a purposive act that tries to entice the audience. The truth of the matter is that the audience of today can be active, although this role varies in different contexts. Uses and gratifications approach provides some empirical support for the academics and practitioners who have long argued that audiences are active, selective and sophisticated in their consumption of advertising (O'Donohoe 1994:71). Advertisers cannot afford not to listen to the audience. In this day of competition and a thin line between company services, Vodacom SA is obliged to consider audiences when they chose the mediums they will use for adverts, be it traditional or new media. O'Donohoe (1994) clarifies this by stating; "If advertising serves similar functions to

the rest of the media, this in turn suggests that advertising is well integrated into the mass media and indeed the lives of its audience” (O'Donohoe 1994:71).

When a new medium is used for the same purpose as an older medium, the new medium potentially functions as an alternative to the older one. Audiences may choose between them by determining which one better satisfies particular needs (Rice 1993). Thus, Vodacom SA has to identify the social and psychological needs audiences derive from the media and then assess whether or not the traditional media or new media can satisfy those needs.

The uses and gratifications theory is applicable to the study in that it helps explain various phenomena associated with advertisers' media choices and more so Vodacom SA's advertising culture. The uses and gratifications theory also helps the study put into consideration that it is not only the advertiser, Vodacom SA, who chooses the medium best suited for the audience, but that the audience themselves have that ability and onus as well.

Additionally, the fact that mediums give various benefits to the audience may lead to Vodacom SA having a media mix characterised by a blend of both traditional and new media. Since uses and gratifications needs are put into five categories, being: cognitive needs, affective needs, personal Integrative needs, social integrative needs and escapist needs (Katz et al. 1973), these needs may be sought by the audiences in various mediums; be it traditional or new media. Thus a member of the audience may access Vodacom SA adverts on numerous mediums from both the traditional media and new media. The consumption rate may also not be equal but Vodacom SA would try and accommodate such uses and gratifications needs and thus create adverts in both traditional and new media.

Uses and gratifications theory helps the study in explaining active audience behaviour and different medium choices. The opposing arguments from magic bullet theory and agenda setting theory give us the perspective of a passive audience. These help in understanding the choices that Vodacom SA would make in their media mix due to the audiences' choice and preference of a particular medium over the other.

## **2.7 THE CONCEPT OF THE DIGITAL DIVIDE**

Although, theoretically modern society is believed to be in access to basic new technology, interacts and has the basic knowhow to operate this technology; far is this from the actual situation on the ground. The digital divide concept best explains this scenario. It is sometimes assumed that information technology was routinely celebrated for creating a new world of limitless opportunity that was liberated from problematic sociocultural determinants, such as race, gender, age, access and geography. The digital divide supplies a critique of these often unquestioned presumptions; showing that this utopian rhetoric remains oblivious to the fact that access to technology is limited by specific circumstances. The digital divide theory argues that the availability, access and skill to operate new technologies is not an automatic or universally applicable scenario. A distinction is commonly made between a digital divide within a country and one between countries (Campbell 2001:120). Chen and Wellman (2004:42) indicate that the digital divide seems to be bearing along the lines of income and education.

Mphidi (2004) discusses the digital divide as disparities based on economy, status, gender, race, physical abilities and geographic location between those who have or do not have access to information, the Internet and other information communication

technologies (ICTs) and services. Guichard (2003:1) further notes that the word 'divide' suggests a separation between people who have access to digital technology and the others; those who do not have access to digital technology. The digital divide definition induces the idea of a barrier, where one side is much more comfortable than the opposite one.

Van Dijk (1999) is highly accredited with creating a blueprint of distinguishing four kinds of barriers to access of new technology and the type of access restricted:

- Lack of elementary digital experience caused by lack of interest, computer anxiety and unattractiveness of the new technology - "mental access."
- No possession of computers and network connections - "material access."
- Lack of digital skills caused by insufficient user friendliness and inadequate education or social support - "skills access."
- Lack of significant usage opportunities - "usage access."

This notion is further supported by McQuail (2010:140) who states that "interactivity and choice are not universal benefits; many people do not have the energy, desire, need or training to engage in such processes." This statement shows that political, social and economic factors play a pivotal role in the perpetuation of the digital divide.

The first categories of a lack of "mental access" can be best illustrated on the basis of the digital gap between age groups. Huge use and attractiveness to the new media is greatly associated with the youth; younger generations than the elderly (Kreutzer 2009). With regards to Internet use, Lodges and Jung (2001:543) state that there is less Internet connectedness among seniors than younger people. Smart phones, the Internet, high tech video games, social networking sites, blogs and



media productions are the playground of the young more than the elderly. This is a digital divide; where there is a disparity between senior citizens and the youth with regards to access to, desire and even ability to use digital technology. Where the latter shun digital appliances and applications and the former consume and make digitalisation part of their everyday life. South Africa is no different where the young access the Internet more and have more of the gadgets that enhance digitalisation than the older generation (Kreutzer 2009; worldwideworx.com 2013).

It is surprising that the advocates of the concept of globalisation and digitalisation fail to recognise and mention the issue of variations in desire. There is this misconception that since digitalisation is available; all media users will employ and utilise it. It is very important to note that even if media digitalisation offered control, participation, better efficiency and freedom to the audience, that very audience may not be willing to be interactive (McQuail 2010:140). The new gadgets may offer all sorts of digitalisation aptitudes but the audience may remain be uninterested. Van Dijk (1999) terms the behaviour of the grownups and those who despise using digital applications as “information want-nots.”

The second group of a lack of “material access” can be a digital divide amongst individuals, organisations or even countries. In South Africa, for example there is a serious lack of digital resources amongst the population. Marked inequalities persist in South Africa's access to and usage of these technologies to this date (effectivemeasure.com 2013; Kreutzer, 2009). To be more specific, out of an approximate population of 50 million people, 15 million have access to the Internet (effectivemeasure.com 2013). Yet Effective Measure states that of this population; most use the Internet for the basic emailing services (effectivemeasure.com 2013).

The very study also states that the number given of Internet users may be much lower due to the fact that they counted Internet access points and therefore a single user may have multiple access points such as a smartphone and computer. Other research states that the Internet usage number in South Africa is in the region of six million users (worldwideworx.com 2012). This shows a type of digital divide. Another example is the fact that Africa has the lowest internet use compared to other continents (effectivemeasure.com 2013). In 2011; only 5.7 percent of the population of Africa had access to the Internet. On a global scale, while Africa, the home of South Africa, accounts for 14 percent of the world population, only 3.6 percent of the global Internet subscribers are Africans (Motlanthe 2012). This shows how lack of resources is a form of digital divide.

The digital divide can be on an individual or institutional level. Suping, Edmunson and Alberts (2006) state that in South Africa, there is a severe backlog in the level of penetration of technology and take-up of new service offerings is low as most of the South African population still has very limited access or no access to the new media. The prices of the digital gadget are also a contributing factor. High prices in Africa in general; South Africa included, of new media products and gadgets, such as smart phones, PVR decoders, HD TVs and iPads, make it very difficult for the general public to access them. This leads to a lack in resources.

Interactivity is enhanced by products such as the Internet, smart phones, satellite services and applications and software such as HD, 3G, Bluetooth and mega pixel abilities. These gadgets, software, applications and products are considered as high end products for the well off. The amount to purchase these high tech gadgets is beyond the reach of the general masses in South Africa.

A lack in “skills access” entails media or and educational illiteracy. According to McQuail (2010:140); “Now individuals must make more choices, must have prior knowledge, and must put forth more effort to integrate and make sense of the communication” (sic). The digital world demands that its users have skills and knowledge to use its artefacts. ICTs, even in the form of new media, demand that there be skill and knowledge of them. It also demands more involvement from the user. Alas, not every individual acquires such knowledge or skills. Others do however acquire the relevant education and abilities. This can be through professional media training, exposure to new media and /or educational or practical learning. Thus because of inequalities of the knowhow in usage and understanding of the digital world subsequently lead to a: “skills access” digital divide.

The element of knowledge is an essential part of digitalisation. In order for one to be digitally capable and efficient; they have to have prior knowledge or exposure to the devices and applications that accords them such privileges. Issues of media literacy, journalistic skills, media protocols and procedures and creativity are necessary ingredients for one to be able to utilise digitalisation. One has to be able to have a set of knowledge based attributes that enables them to be digital. Research indicates that the ordinary individuals, the world over, have deficiencies in adequate media literacy. Ordinary individuals lack knowledge on protocols, standards, ethics, laws and standard layouts of media products. Media literacy means understanding how mass media work, how they construct reality and produce meaning, how the media are organized, and knowing how to use them wisely (Jacquinot-Delaunay, Carlsson, Tayie & Tornero 2008). However, the majority of South Africa is not media illiterate but also do not have basic reading and writing skills and so lack the above

mentioned attributes (ICT Indaba.com 2012). This would mean that the majority of South Africans are not capable to fully utilise new media.

Even on a global scale, it is important to acknowledge that the media are a profession. Elements such as journalism, creative designing, film making, sound engineering and mastering, to mention but a few, are intellectual faculties that one has to acquire in formal schooling institutions. So, although laymen may attempt in engagement in media processes; most of them will have their efforts made inferior by those with the technical knowhow and experience. Amateur media products are usually not of the same grade and quality as the professional media practitioners'. As such, the efforts of the ordinary audience members, in media processes, are usually generally disregarded in favour of the experts'. Production of films, newspapers, books, adverts or even ratings are usually executed by industry experts. Unprofessional media products are seldom regarded in high esteem. This is the state of the advertising creation landscape in South Africa, where adverts are created by advertising practitioners and audiences are simply consumers.

The last classification of an inequality in “usage access” is where not everyone has the equal access to digitalisation. This is usually caused by socio- economic disparities, where the well-off use more of new and advanced technology than the underprivileged. Campbell (2001:119) states that ICT use proves to be associated with economic gains. That is, those economically accomplished are bound to have more digital usage than those economically challenged. Norris (2000) argues that as a result of economic and social disparities, poorer societies can become increasingly marginalized at the periphery of communication networks and the Internet.

In South Africa, the case of usage access is also seen between urban and rural areas. South Africa has a 50-50 ratio of its population between urban areas to rural areas (Akinsola, Herselman & Jacobs 2005). Trusler (2003) states that in South Africa, there is a high level of Internet use inequality between urban and rural areas. Where the latter has state of the art digital infrastructure and the former has a weak ICT infrastructure. There is a more recent research by Effective Measure that bears testimony to this imbalance that shows a high level of Internet usage in South Africa (effectivemeasure.com). For example, there is poor or no mobile phone reception in rural areas, something unknown in urban areas. Thus urban folk have better user access to applications than their rural counterparts. This is a type of digital divide. Van der Merwe and Bohler-Muller (2013:115) quote a one William Gibson, in their study, who notes that “The future is already here – it’s just not evenly distributed.” Thus the scholars note that the wide acknowledgement of new media such as the Internet has been realised and is being utilised; alas sparingly and unequally so. Internet usage is very much present in South Africa. However, this usage is more pronounced in urban areas and lowly or non-existent in rural areas of the republic.

A worrying fact and trend that was picked up is that very few South Africans use the Internet (worldwideworx.com 2013; effectivemeasure.com 2013). As previously mentioned, the Internet is a major component of the new media paradigm and also largely utilises digitalisation (McQuail 2010:137). Yet Internet usage is sparsely accessed or used by the majority of South Africans. In contrast, the traditional media fare very well in terms of usage compared to for example the Internet. In 2012, South Africa had 28 million radio users and 27 million TV users (New Media Trend.com 2012). Most of the Internet users in South Africa use the Internet for mostly the simple task of emailing services (effectivemeasure.com 2013).

However, various economic, social and political factors that lead to the digital divide in South Africa; there is a steady and healthy increase in awareness of and use of new technologies by South Africans. The mobile phone has become a huge substitute for the computer for Internet access. Chen and Wellman (2004:41) declare that while most countries are lagging behind the U.S.A in PC-based Internet use, those other countries are quickly adopting mobile phones as alternatives. South Africa is one such country. The country's mobile phone usage is higher than that of any other medium in the country; be it traditional or new media. In 2012, more South Africans used mobile phones more than radio, TV or a personal computer. The mobile phone users were 29 million users (New Media Trend.com 2012). Aker (2008) is convinced that mobile phones provide an alternative and cheaper search technology in Africa. The penetration of mobile phones in South Africa is extensive, with over 90 per cent of rural inhabitants connected by mobile technology (Van der Merwe and Bohler-Muller 2013:124). Norris (2000) argues and observes that mobile phones offer a relatively cheap and efficient service. Thus, in terms of sheer user base; mobile phones are a medium that has been credited with increasing Internet access and therefore the digital divide in South Africa and Africa in general. Van der Merwe and Bohler-Muller (2013:119) argue that "...very important dimension of digital communication and the usage thereof in the South African context is the use of mobile phones to access the Internet and social media platforms." Furthermore, various scholars are convinced that the digital divide is narrowing and that the new media will be used more in the future, as Mphidi (2004) forecasted. Because of the high level of mobile phone connectivity in South Africa, currently at 88.1 percent in 2011 (Statistics South Africa.za 2011) ; there is an opportunity to build on existing ICT platforms to increase access even more (Van der Merwe & Bohler-Muller

2013:120). With regards to the South African context, Van der Merwe and Bohler-Muller (2013:118) reveal that:

The South African Social Media Landscape 2012 report released in October 2012 found that social networking in South Africa has crossed a few gaps, barriers and divides mainly in terms of age, relationships and urban and rural areas. (sic)

Consequently, the digital divide theory assists the study in that it helps gauge new media usage and levels as well as ICT usage by advertising audiences and advertisers such as Vodacom SA. The haves are the ones who have access to mostly the digital new media and the have nots are the ones who do not have access or do not use the new media. These groups provide information on the reason why Vodacom SA may chose a more accessible and used medium than the other for its advertising. McQuail (2010:137) stipulates that one of the major characteristics of new media, one the traditional media does not possess, is that it is digitalised. Thus the digital divide theory illustrates why Vodacom SA might opt not to use or neglect the new media in advertising culture, since some of the targeted clientele may be left out or why it would use it if audiences have access to it.

## **2.8 CULTIVATION THEORY**

Even if the digital divide was solved as a problem, audiences were connected as global village; it is no guarantee that the existence and influence of a traditional media, such as television, can be displaced by the new media. Cultivation theory argues such a case. The cultivation theory is a socialization theory that emphasizes, in broad terms, how people, learn about the world; for example; sex roles, age stereotypes and cultural values, through cumulative exposure to television (Zhang, Harwood, Williams, Ylänne-McEwen, Wadleigh & Thimm 2006:3). The theory was put forward by Gerbner, Gross, Signorielli, Morgan and Jackson-Beeck (1979).

Cultivation theorists argued that television has long-term effects on its viewers which are gradual and indirect, but cumulative and significant (Chan & Cai 2009:7). McQuail and Windahl (1993) remarked that the cultivation theory presents television as not only a window of the world, but a world in itself.

The cultivation theory suggests that exposure to television messages can be an important factor influencing the behaviour of individuals who spend a significant amount of time with the medium (Hammermeister, Brock, Winterstein & Page 2005:254). Gerbner, Gross, Morgan and Signorielli (1986:2) insist on the fact that television is a centralized system of story-telling and is part and parcel of our daily life. Its drama, commercials, news and other programs bring a relatively coherent world of common images and messages into every home (Gerbner et al. 1986:2). The argument is that television cultivates from infancy the very predispositions and preferences that used to be acquired from other "primary" sources (Williams 2006).

Williams (2006:70) further argues that:

In making the case for cultivation theory, Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, and Signorielli (1994:18) laid out the reasons why television is thought to be so influential: 'its drama, commercials, news, and other programs bring a relatively coherent system of images and messages into every home. Transcending historic barriers of literacy and mobility, television has become the primary common source of socialization and everyday information (mostly in the form of entertainment) of otherwise heterogeneous populations.' (sic)

The cultivation theory suggests that TV is responsible for shaping, or 'cultivating' viewers' conceptions of social reality. Although the cultivation theory's original focus was on how TV may influence the perpetuation of violence and crime, the theory has evolved to look at TV's effect on advertising. Cultivation theorists argue that television has long-term effects which are small, gradual, indirect but cumulative and



significant. An important aspect of the cultivation theory is the level at which TV is viewed. According to the 1984 Nielsen Report, in the typical home the television set is in use for about seven hours a day and actual viewing by persons over two years old averages over four hours a day. Such patterns are also relatively similar to the viewing patterns in South Africa (worldwideworx.com 2013). With that much viewing, there can be little selectivity. And the more people watch the less selective they can and tend to be. Most regular and heavy viewers watch more of everything.

Saito (2007:512) quotes Morgan (1990:244) who stipulates that people who spend a great amount of time watching television are likely to be exposed to a more centralized, consistent, standardized ideology and world view; hence, they should be more like each other than they are like the members of their groups who watch less. Television is seen as dominating our “symbolic environment” (Chan & Cai 2009). Chan and Cai (2009:7) note that compared to light television viewers; heavy television viewers are more likely to perceive the world in ways that more closely mirror reality as presented on television than objective measures of social reality.

There are two types of cultivation effects. These are referred to as the first-order effects and the second-order effects of cultivation (Hawkins & Pingree 1982). Chan and Cai (2009:8) elaborate on the two types by stating that the first-order cultivation effect represents the relationship between television exposure and the quantitative estimates of frequency or probability of events in the social reality. Second-order effect represents the relationship between television exposure and value judgments or general attitudes about the state of the world at large.

First order cultivation effects concern general views about the state of the world and public opinion. First order effects, according to Rossler and Brosius (2001), are of

two types: estimates of real world occurrences of events and estimates of popular opinion distribution. Media events can evoke change in general cognitions about the world and viewers' beliefs about the real world.

Second order effects focus on the effects of television content on viewers' beliefs and general attitudes (Rossler & Brosius 2001). Rossler and Brosius (2001) further argue that research is concerned that programs make abnormal events normal, cause viewers to trivialize complex social issues and fail to offer solutions in most cases.

The Cultural Indicators project of Gerbner et al. (1979) also found that heavy watching of television affected viewers through “mainstreaming” and “resonance.” Mainstreaming is the process by which heavy viewing of television resulted in a similarity of perspective among viewers who varied in education and economic class (Gerbner et al. 1979). The argument is that heavy television consumption contributes to a homogenised view of the real world, referring to this process as “mainstreaming” (Gerbner et al. 1986). Television sought a broader audience which it homogenised so that heavy viewers had similar views which they self-identified as “mainstream.” “Resonance” is the process by which heavy viewing of television affects viewers who have first-hand experience of images and views. Gerbner et al. (1979) argued that the portrayal of images and views causes viewers to relive the experience over and over again. The congruence of the television world and real-life circumstances may resonate and lead to markedly amplified cultivation patterns.

The research was first concerned and focusing on the influence television had on violence and crime (Gerbner et al. 1979). Television viewers were put into two categories. Heavy watchers are those over 4 hours per day and light watchers; those

below two hours per day (Gerbner et al. 1986). But it soon developed into how television influenced various facets of humans and human activities, advertising included. Television advertising does not claim to mirror reality as it is but reality as it should be (Schudson 1984:12). Chan and Cai (2009:21) correspond that the theory shows that one particular part of the television contents, that is the advertising part, was able to demonstrate cultivation effects on viewers' belief about television reality as well as general attitudes toward the state of television reality; that is attitudes toward material possessions in this context. Zhang et al. (2006:3) support this notion by stating that the major premise of cultivation theory is that the more time individuals spend consuming television, the closer their views are to the "world" created by that television. In other words, repeated and extensive exposure to media images influences viewers' perceptions of social reality in the direction of the world constructed by television (Gerbner et al. 1979). Adverts on TV have also been a major feature in showing the state of the world.

There is an element of actuality from Gerbner et al. (1979). Television really is entrenched in our normal everyday life. It really has become a part of who we are. The news, the soaps, the favourite programmes, the drama and more so the adverts are embedded in who we have become and they are part of our day to day routines. We seem to have television within our ordinary, our culture. Television today serves that function of telling most of the stories to most of the people most of the time. (Gerbner et al. 1986:3) It seems to stand the taste of time and has the ability to reinvent itself and keep with the times regardless of the new wave of new mediums and technology. It is safe to assume that anyone who has television set dedicate some time to watching it every day. Television has become like a member of the family whose presence we sometimes ignore but is forever felt (Gerbner et al.

1986). Television seems like the traditional guard in the media that does not age. The mass ritual that is television shows no signs of weakening its hold over the common symbolic environment into which our children are born and in which we all live out our lives (Gerbner et al. 1986:1).

Furthermore, new technology and media integrate television and its functions into their scope; to make what is now referred to as Smart TV. Regardless of the new media and technology that come along; television stays relevant and part of mainstream media. For example, the Internet, mobile phones, iPads and social networks such as YouTube all use television as the mainstay of their characteristics. What they simply do is digitalise and stretch television's functions. Here is a true testimony of sheer influence; new media shaping themselves up on the premise of television. One could argue that some of these inventions are television; only moderated. Thus digitalisation, interactivity; together with the other characteristics of the new media can be assimilated into television.

Gerbner and Gross (1976:175) have noted that television “is an agency of the established order and as such serves primarily to extend and maintain rather than to alter, threaten, or weaken conventional conceptions, beliefs, and behaviors” (sic). This view supports Klapper (1960) concludes that the main effect of mass media is reinforcement of the status quo. The mechanism for this phenomenon, have asserted that television's main function is social control, stability and maintenance of the status quo. Advertising is a feature of capitalism and consumerism. It is used as an apparatus for maintaining the status quo of consumerism. Add this to the fact that radio is traditionally consumed in South Africa, makes one view new media as

ineffective in Vodacom SA's advertising culture. For example in 2011, 76.5 per cent of South Africans listened to radio (Statistics South Africa.za 2011).

However, the euphoria of television as a central figure in South Africa's media culture should be taken with a pinch of salt. Although television is popular, new media's mobile phone; a new medium, is also highly popular, and one could argue that it has its own cultivation story to be discussed about. The mobile phone has many attributes that can threaten television's dominance. The fact that its reach has access to where television cannot reach, through satellite connection, is one such advantage. For instance, public television signals in South Africa cannot be connected everywhere. Take My Darling village in Bochum District of Limpopo Province, South Africa where some public channels cannot be accessed. On the contrary, Vodacom network is available in such a rural setting. Thus one can get adverts through the phone and not on their television set. This encourages Vodacom SA in such instance to pick mobile phones, not television; favouring new media over traditional media due to factions and capabilities to be able to reach an intended audience.

The cultivation theory can help explain how and why television could still be one of the prime forms of adverting media and why it could be expensive to do so. The cultivation theory also assists in explaining why, in this study, traditional media can still be relevant in Vodacom SA's advertising culture and so help deduce whether Vodacom SA's advertising culture has been redefined by new media and if so what extent.

## **2.9 CONCLUSION**

The theories and concepts that were discussed in this chapter indicate that the use of new media or traditional media by Vodacom SA in its advertising culture is highly influenced by several social and economic forces. These forces do not work individually but instead work collectively. These factors help determining which set of media; that is traditional or new captures the most audiences, helps enhance Vodacom SA's brand, is cheaper, targets specific market segments, enhances adverts, is more accessible and one which the audiences prefer the most. The subsequent result would assist conclude if Vodacom SA's advertising culture has been influenced by the new media and if so to what extent. The next chapter, chapter three (3) will outline the research methodology that was employed in the study.

# CHAPTER THREE

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes how the researcher collected data and the methods that the research design employed in the study. This study used the qualitative and quantitative research methods in order to discover and have a clear understanding of whether the new media has redefined Vodacom SA's advertising culture and if so to what extent and in what ways.

### 3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Babbie and Mouton (2004:72) a research design is the planning of a scientific inquiry; a strategy for finding out a phenomenon. Wimmer and Dominick (2006) describe a research design as a plan for the proposed research work. They further argue that, in essence; it is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data (Wimmer & Dominick 2006). This research was an explorative case study. A triangulation approach was applied where both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were employed in this study. Qualitative and quantitative research approaches are different in the way knowledge is accessed and developed (Morse & Richards 2002). Qualitative research methodologies are methodologies which deal with data that are principally verbal while quantitative research methodologies focus on data that are mainly numerical (White 2005:80). Thus the research employed a triangulation design to obtain different knowledge and thus ensure validity. Mathison (1988:13) is adamant that:

Good research practice obligates the researcher to triangulate that is, to use multiple methods, data sources, and researchers. Regardless of which philosophical, epistemological, or methodological perspectives an evaluator is working from, it is necessary to use multiple methods and sources of data in the execution of a study in order to withstand critique by colleagues. (sic)

The usefulness of a triangulation research design is further expounded by Patton (2001:247) who argues that “triangulation strengthens a study by combining methods. This can mean using several kinds of methods or data, including using both quantitative and qualitative approaches.” The different characteristics of both qualitative and quantitative were useful to the attainment of the research's objective (see section 1.3.2). This resulted in the study being both data rich and descriptive. The different characteristics of qualitative and quantitative research methods are show below on fig 3.1, as outlined Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009:68).

Quantitative	Qualitative
Numbers	Words
Point of view of researcher	Point of view of participants
Theory testing	Theory emergent
Researcher distant	Researcher close
Static	Process
Structured	Unstructured
Generalization	Contextual understanding
Hard, reliable data	Rich, deep data
Macro	Micro



Behaviour	Meaning
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**Figure 3.1: The characteristics of qualitative and quantitative research (Saunders et al. 2009:68)**

The two methods complemented each other and so gave a thorough and exhaustive outcome. The choice to use both quantitative and qualitative approaches was necessitated by the need to capture numerical value coupled by behaviours and attitudes that respondents provided in assessing whether the Vodacom SA's advertising culture has been redefined by the new media and if so to what extent and in what ways.

### **3.2.1 Qualitative approach**

A qualitative research approach in the form of an intense interview was carried out with Vodacom SA's Senior Specialist in Corporate Communications Division. The purpose of conducting the intense interview was to ensure that precise and reliable information was acquired from the case study; Vodacom SA. A supplementary qualitative technique was used in the form of Vodacom SA's official documentation that focused on the company's advertising activities. The use of this technique is well expounded by Denscombe (2003:124) who observes that the advantage of qualitative research is that it offers the prospect of authentic accounts and facts of a particular phenomenon. In qualitative research, individuals are regarded as active agents in constructing and making sense of the realities that they encounter (Mouton & Marais 1990).

The benefit of qualitative research to the study was that it provided an appropriate tool to examine the case study; Vodacom SA. Du Plooy (2002:83) notes that

qualitative research is appropriate in the description of behaviours, themes, trends, attitudes, needs or relations. All these aspects were under investigation in the Vodacom SA case study, thus further justifying the employment of the qualitative approach. Furthermore, the study was a qualitative research approach in the sense that it employed the use of a case study; Vodacom SA. Babbie (2004) designates a case study research as the use of a holistic individual person, group or institution to make sense, in depth, of a study of an unknown or misunderstood phenomenon.

### **3.2.2 Quantitative approach**

The quantitative research approach for the study employed a survey where 200 University of Limpopo students completed structured questionnaires. Leedy and Ormrod (2004) define a survey research as the acquiring of information about one or more groups of people, perhaps about their characteristics, opinions, attitudes or previous experiences by asking respondents questions and tabulating their answers.

Surveys are recognised as indispensable for establishing socio-economic trends in the South African population and are frequently used in advertising research (Babbie & Mouton 2004:230-231). This suited the study, as it sought to conduct an inquest in trends in Vodacom SA's advertising culture and its new media usage. The survey of the 200 students had the chief aim of investigating the audiences' perception on whether the new media has redefined Vodacom SA's advertising and if to what extent. The reason for choosing youths for the survey was because numerous previous studies have found out that the youth and university students are the biggest users of the Internet and new media in South Africa (worldwideworx.com 2013; effectivenessmeasure.com 2013; Kreutzer 2009). There is further evidence that

university students are the biggest social media and new media users compared to other age groups (worldwideworx.com 2013; effectivenessmeasure.com 2013).

As such, the university students provided a perspective of audiences for a barometer on perceptions on the influence new media has on advertising, as they are regarded as the most active group in society with regards to Internet and new media. In any media research, audiences cannot be excluded from inquiry because they form part of the media process. In advertising, adverts and branding are made to lure audiences. The justification of a survey on the audiences in a media research is argued for by Severin and Tankard (1997:410) who state that:

Any listing of research in mass communication contains a great deal of overlap. One cannot separate media effects from message content, or communicator analysis from message content. Communicators, messages, audiences, and effects are all interrelated. (sic)

A major benefit derived from the use of quantitative research is that quantitative methods rely on measurement to compare and analyse different variables (Wimmer & Dominick 2006). Quantitative research helps in learning more about a huge population from a smaller sample of that very population. Leedy and Ormrod (2004:184) credit quantitative survey research as a simple methodology that is cheaper in terms of cost compared to other research methods. All these benefits were realised by the research in the use of the self-administered survey.

### **3.3 TARGET POPULATION**

The research used University of Limpopo students were employed by the study as its target population. Polit and Hungler (1999:232) describe the target population as “the totality of all subjects that conform to a set of specifications, comprising the entire group of persons that is of interest to the researcher and to whom the research

results can be generalised.” The University of Limpopo students represented the audiences' take on whether the new media has redefined Vodacom SA's advertising and if so to what extent. The university students were convenient for the researcher, as the researcher was based at the University of Limpopo. The target population of the university students was also appropriate for the study as they are the youths. Various studies, such as Kreutzer (2009); have shown a huge consumption for and about new media by the youths. This target population was for the quantitative part of the research. As for the qualitative approach, the target population for the study was a senior media official at Vodacom SA.

### **3.4 SAMPLING**

A sample is a portion of the population selected by some clearly defined procedures. A sample is a finite part of a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole (Wimmer & Dominick 2006). Babbie (2010) states that a sample is a finite part of a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole. A case study of Vodacom SA's advertising culture was conducted. According to Yin (2009:7) the case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events. He further states that the distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena (Yin 2009). Thus out of various advertisers, the research sampled Vodacom SA's advertising culture as the case to be investigated.

#### **3.4.1 Sampling technique**

For the purpose of this study, the researcher adopted purposive sampling technique and convenient random sampling technique. Tongco (2007:147) defines purposive

sampling technique, which is also referred to as judgmental sampling, as the non-probability sampling that makes the deliberate choosing of an informant or informants who are solicited to act as guides to a particular culture. The informants observe and reflect on the culture under investigation by virtue of knowledge or experience (Tongco 2007:147). Purposive sampling was applied in the qualitative approach of the research. The decision to conduct an intense interview with Vodacom SA's Group Senior Specialist in Corporate Communications Division; manager of social media and Public Relations officer was reached through a purposive sampling technique. The choice to use the official was based on her decision making influence, involvement and knowledge of Vodacom SA's advertising culture. The University of Limpopo respondents were also chosen through purposive sampling technique in the quantitative approach. This choice served the role of selecting students; the youth, who had a general awareness of what the case study; Vodacom SA, is and the services it offers.

Kent (2007:235) defines convenience sampling technique as a probability sampling technique in which respondents are chosen from a designated sample through their ability to answer the research questions. Convenience random sampling technique was employed in the quantitative questionnaire survey that was conducted at the University of Limpopo. Convenience random sampling was used together with purposive sampling technique in the quantitative approach. The self-administered questionnaire respondents in the survey were university students who were opportunely accessible on campus during the day from morning to afternoon and who could complete the form on the spot and give the questionnaires back immediately after so as to ensure that no questionnaires were lost. Thus convenience was achieved.

### **3.5 DATA COLLECTION**

The study sought to establish whether, and if so to what extent, Vodacom SA's advertising culture has been redefined by the new media through triangulation; that is use of qualitative and quantitative approaches. For the qualitative approach; an intensive interview of a high ranking Vodacom SA media personnel was conducted, as well as the use of Vodacom SA official documentation. For the quantitative approach; a survey of self-administered questionnaires were distributed and completed by University of Limpopo students who represented the media audiences.

#### **3.5.1 Intense interviews**

The qualitative approach employed an intense interview and use of Vodacom SA official documentation. The intensive interview was the prime qualitative tool that was applied in the research. This was an intense face to face interaction with an individual, whom the researcher selected as having influence over Vodacom SA's advertising culture. The focal theme of the intense interview was to help determine whether Vodacom SA's advertising culture has been redefined by the new media. As such, the researcher interviewed Vodacom SA's Senior Specialist in Corporate Communications Division Ashleigh Dubbelman. According to White (2005:143), an interview instrument "provides access to what is inside a person's head, makes it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge or information), what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences) and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs)" (sic). Before the actual interview was carried out, it is important to mention that the researcher together with the supervisor and University of Limpopo Media Department head wrote emails to Vodacom SA to set up an appointment for the intense interview. The emails had information such as; who the researcher is,

what the entire research entails and asking for permission to set up a meeting and organising a date for the intensive interview. Official telephone calls were also made to confirm the intense interview. This process took approximately six months to secure an intense interview with the Vodacom SA official.

Eventually, the interview was held at the state of the art Vodacom SA headquarters; the Vodacom Boulevard Vodavalley, Midrand; Gauteng on 15 July 2013. The intense interview was conducted in the staff coffee room. The environment was very quiet and relaxed. The room was very open and spacious. The interview was to last a duration of a maximum of two hours. We had coffee while the intense interview was being carried out. The conversation and the theme of the discussion were guided by the objectives of the research study (see section 1.3.2). The intense interview was also guided by questions that were compiled and had been requested by Vodacom SA, prior to the intense interview (see Annexure D). However, the intense interview was not fixed to these questions only. Rather, the discussion evolved on the responses that were given. This ensured that issues could be raised through answers provided during the intense interview. To ensure that the entire intense interview was captured, the researcher recorded the intense interview on an iPad. This ensured the providence of the ability for replay in the data analysis. The intense interview lasted approximately the two hours allocated by Vodacom SA.

As a complementary secondary qualitative data collection technique, the research also used official Vodacom SA company documents that focused on Vodacom SA's advertising activities. These included company financial statements, company Chairman's reports and company integrated reports. The documents were accessed on Vodacom SA's official company website. The benefit in this is that records in

various institutions can provide detailed information for the study of specific cases (Masuku 1999:58).

### **3.5.1.1 Advantages of an intense interview**

The beneficial use of an intense interview is supported by Wimmer and Dominick (2006) who state that the intense interview provides the respondents' "opinions, values, motivations, relocations, experiences and feelings" (Wimmer & Dominick 2006:135). They further state that an intense interview provides "a wealth of detail" (Wimmer & Dominick 2006). Babbie and Mouton (2004:290) praise intense interviewing by characterising it as "much like normal talk" where rapport is created and in depth detail is captured. Wimmer and Dominick (1994) support this by stating that the face to face situation lends itself easily to questioning in greater depth and detail; with this possibly helping get replies to sensitive questions that would remain answered in non-face- to- face encounters. This can help a researcher grasp even the most basic and obvious aspects of a situation (Babbie & Mouton 2004:290).

The intense interview was beneficial to the research in that sensitive information was gained. The face- to- face discussion made it possible for Ashleigh Dubbelman to "open up" about company information that she would have not have otherwise divulged had there been a non-personal tool used. Another advantage of the intense interview is that issues that had been overlooked by the researcher, which had a huge bearing on the study, surfaced up in the discussion and were explored; becoming part of the intense discussion.



### 3.5.2 Self administered questionnaires

Two hundred University of Limpopo students were convenience randomly selected to fill self-administered questionnaires. The self administered questionnaires contained 25 questions that were closed-ended. The main theme questions included enquiry of:

- Whether the respondents comprehend the concept of the new media and interactivity;
- If they think Vodacom SA's advertising culture has been redefined by the new media;
- If they think that as an audience they are now more involved in advertising cultures; as a result of the features of the new media; and
- If they think advertising is still a powerful persuasive tool that business can rely on with the advent of the new media ( see Annexure C)

The self administered questionnaires contained a cover letter that outlined the purposes of the questionnaires, the main reason for the research and instructions to the respondent (see Annexure C). Below are the procedures that were carried out in the designing and execution of the questionnaire as stipulated by the work of Kent (2007:152):

- Specifying the information needed
- Determining of the method of questionnaire administration
- Determining of the content, format and wording of each question
- Crafting of a draft of the complete questionnaire
- Pre-testing the questionnaire

After the pre-test, it took 8 weeks to distribute and have all the questionnaires completed. All 200 questionnaires were completed and none were spoiled or missing. In order to ensure that the questionnaires were not lost, the researcher asked the respondents to answer and complete the questionnaire on the spot and return them. It took an individual respondent a maximum of 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The researcher did not use assistants in the distribution of the questionnaires. This was done to ensure that the sampling techniques employed; of purposive sampling and convenience sampling techniques, were adhered to. The researcher carried stationery to ensure that respondents that were deemed suitable were not lost due to the unavailability of stationery to complete the questionnaires.

The questionnaires were distributed around The University of Limpopo campus randomly. This was administered from morning to afternoon during the working days of the week; Monday to Friday. The criteria used to choose a suitable respondent was to ensure that the individual conveniently knew what Vodacom SA is and the services it provides. The researcher moved about various locations around The University of Limpopo campus to ensure a random sample. University entrances, cafeterias, sport fields and the library were some of the locations that the researcher moved about in the distribution of the questionnaires. There was no sampling based on the gender of the respondents. Thus the self administered questionnaires were distributed randomly in that respect.

### **3.5.2.1 Advantages of self administered questionnaires**

Self administered questionnaires have several advantages. Wimmer and Dominick (1994:37) point out that questionnaires, self-administered type included, as part of a survey; have a huge benefit to research in that large amounts of data can be

collected with relative ease from a variety of people. This assertion is further supported by Babbie and Mouton (2004:263) who state that questionnaires “make large samples feasible.” In media studies, probing and getting responses from the audiences is of paramount importance and a necessity. Precisely what the study employed in the use of 200 respondents for the self administered questionnaires self administered questionnaires are especially useful for collecting information on audiences in media research (Wimmer & Dominick 1994:37).

The self administered questionnaires were beneficial to the research in that it is a cost effective tool to capture a huge amount of data. The survey was conducted where the researcher is based; The University of Limpopo. Consequently, the costs were significantly reduced. Moreover, the survey provided a large pool of respondents of the target population. This was useful in that the 200 self-administered questionnaires were all completed, hassle free. Furthermore, the self administered questionnaires were suitable for the target population; The University of Limpopo students, whose education level made it easier and easy to complete the questionnaires without the researcher having to constantly be explaining.

### **3.6 DATA ANALYSIS**

The Statistical Package and Service Solutions (SPSS) version 21 was used for data analysis in the research for the 200 questionnaire respondents. This was to assist in answering the questions that help determine whether new media has redefined advertising, and if so to what extent; via Vodacom SA as the case study. This would be from an audiences' point of view. The research also sought and acquired the services of the University of Limpopo's resident research statistician. This was done to ensure that qualified expertise assisted with solving statistical problems.

The qualitative and quantitative data that was tallied was analysed and presented in various forms which included rich descriptions, creation and use of general categories; abstracted from the questions, theming, numerical representation and conceptualising. Morse and Richards (2002:131) state that there is need for abstracting. They further argue that “categorizing is how we understand and come to terms with the complexity of data in everyday life. It is our normal making-sense activity, and it is efficient” (sic) (Morse & Richards 2002:131). Conceptualising helps the research move from being merely descriptive to being a higher level understanding of themes and meaning from the data. In terms of results presentation, diagrams and descriptive themes were applied. These included tables and pie charts which show variations and conclusions.

### **3.7 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY**

Validity and reliability in research are paramount to ensuring a genuine and replicable research. The two concepts are concerned with issues such as evidence, objectivity, truth, actuality, deduction, reason and fact; inter alia (Winter 2000).

Joppe (2000:1) provides the following explanation of what validity by stating that:

Validity determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are. In other words, does the research instrument allow you to hit "the bull's eye" of your research object? Researchers generally determine validity by asking a series of questions, and will often look for the answers in the research of others. (sic)

On the other hand, Joppe (2000:1) goes on to define reliability as:

...The extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable. (sic)

To make sure that the study was reliable and valid, the entire research methodology was documented, in a research diary, to ensure that replication to test the research can be conducted. Research sources citation was also carried out in both the references of literature as well as the Vodacom SA sources. A pre-test of the self-administered questionnaires was run to ensure that the objectives of the research were the guiding principle in the study. The use of triangulation also aided in ensuring validity and reliability of the study in that the results could be compared between the two methodologies. Triangulation strategy assists in improving the validity of research or evaluation findings and can be employed as an important methodological issue in the evaluation of literature as well (White 2005:17; Mathison 1988:13).

### **3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

According to Bryman and Bell (2007:47) there are four main concerns regarding ethical considerations to researchers when they are conducting a study and these are:

- Lack of informed permission;
- Privacy invasion;
- Physical or emotional harm to participants; and
- Manipulation of the results

Subsequently, the research adhered to research and moral standards that require that respondents are informed on the reasons of the research and their consent is asked for in order to gather information from them. The research also respected individuals who refused to take part in the research and did not force or bribe them.

The research used the information provided for specifically the intended purposes of the study. It did not exaggerate data or alter information. Vodacom SA also indicated that the information be used for solely the purposes of the research study. As such, the researcher utilised the information provided by Vodacom SA exclusively for the purposes of the research study and no other purpose. The study did not falsify the results. It respected and did not divulge company secrets or information it was advised to keep confidential. Plagiarism was avoided by noting all scholars or sources of information that the study utilised. The Harvard referencing style was employed, throughout this research study.

### **3.9 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this chapter focused on the research design and the methods used to collect data, the population and sampling procedures. The descriptions of both quantitative and qualitative research methodology were discussed and justified. The selection of data collection techniques and the limitations to the study were also elaborated on, together with limitations of the study, validity and reliability and the ethical considerations. The importance and advantages of questionnaires, an intense interview and company documents as data collection tool for this study were also discussed. The following chapter, chapter four (4) deals with presentation of results obtained from the data collection.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section deals with the presentation of the research results that were gathered through the research design employed by the study (see section 3.2). The data were collected to evaluate if the new media have redefined Vodacom SA's advertising culture and if so to what extent. The data collected, focused on new media's influence on Vodacom SA's advertising culture with regards to; audiences, interactivity, advertising structure, advertising content, company advertising policies, advertising norms, advertising laws and advertising expenditure. These categories were chosen in order to help address the problem statement, as well as fulfil the objectives of the study (see section 1.3). These same categories were used as themes for data presentation. These themes were also, in certain instances, broken down into sub themes in order to dwell on certain details bring out deeper insight. Descriptions of the research findings were presented on illustrative graphs and rich reports.

On the questionnaire, the second set of questions were general those that inquired on a broader take the respondents have on the relationship between advertising and new media in general. The questions also investigated the position audiences feel they occupy in that relationship. The second set focused specifically on the relationship between Vodacom SA and the new media. The questions probed Vodacom SA and the audiences' take on the relationship between Vodacom SA's advertising culture and the new media and how they also fit in that relationship.

## **4.2 QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS**

The audiences were presented with a set of questions on a questionnaire on the relationship between advertising culture and the new media. The questions were both general and specific to Vodacom SA. In this section, the word audiences will be used in place of the University of Limpopo students, who were the respondents.

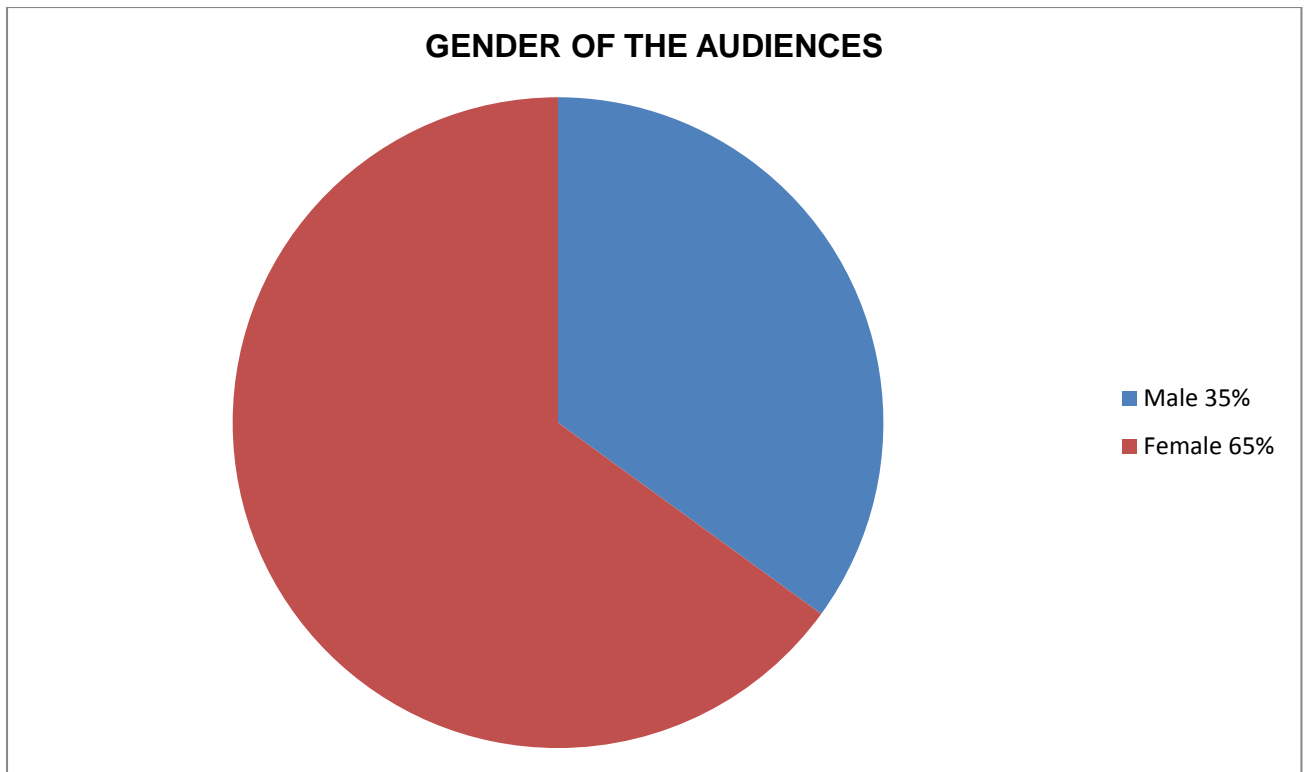
### **4.2.1 The Demographics of the audiences**

There were some similarities among the 200 respondents. There were responses that had a unanimous response from all the respondents. In these aspects; all the 200 respondents had akin responses. Most of the similarities focused on demographics; that is age, social standing and education. Moreover, other parities were noticed with regards to the knowledge of what advertising is and its influence on their buying habits. All the Participants were in the age category of 18-30 years. All the participants were higher education students, at least undergraduate students. All the participants reside in a semi- urban area.

### **4.2.2 Gender of the audiences**

Out of a total 200 respondents, 70 were male and 130 were female. Statistically represented; 35 percent were male and 65 percent were female. This is shown on the graph in figure 4.1.





**Figure 4.1 Gender of the audiences**

### **4.3 AUDIENCES' COMPREHENSION OF DEFINITIONS, PREFERENCES AND KNOWLEDGE OF TERMS AND PRACTICES**

#### **4.3.1 Audiences' general knowledge of advertising and its influence on their purchasing behaviour**

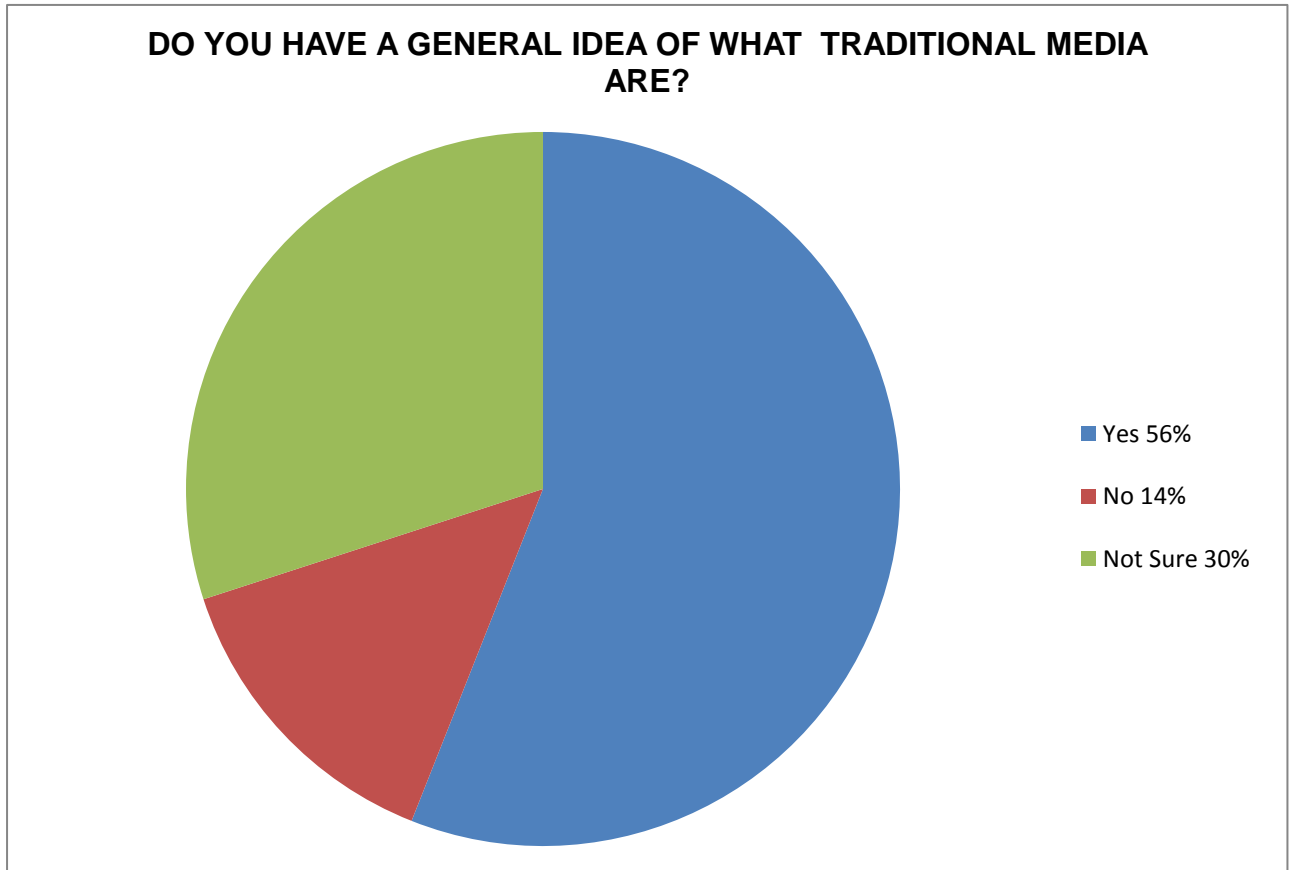
All the audiences affirmed that they knew what advertising is. All the audiences affirmed that advertising influences them to buy products.

#### **4.3.2 Audiences' general idea of what the two media types are; that is traditional and new media**

##### **4.3.2.1 Audiences' awareness of traditional media**

The respondents had disparities in their level of understanding traditional media and new media are. With regards to knowing what traditional media is; 112 (56 percent)

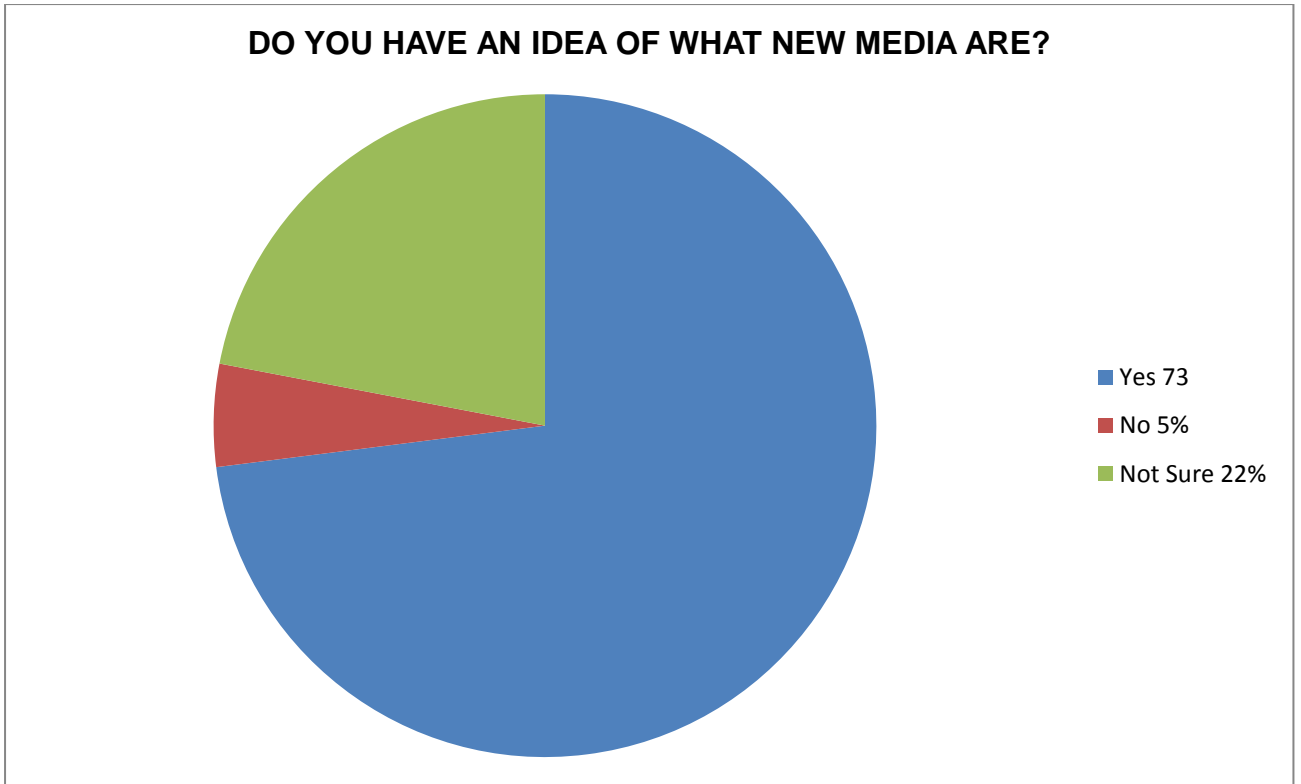
of the audiences affirmed that they knew what traditional media is, 28 (14 percent) stated they did not and 60 (30 percent) indicated that they were not sure. Figure 4.2 illustrates this revelation.



**Figure 4.2: Audiences' awareness of traditional media**

#### **4.3.2.2 Audiences' awareness of new media**

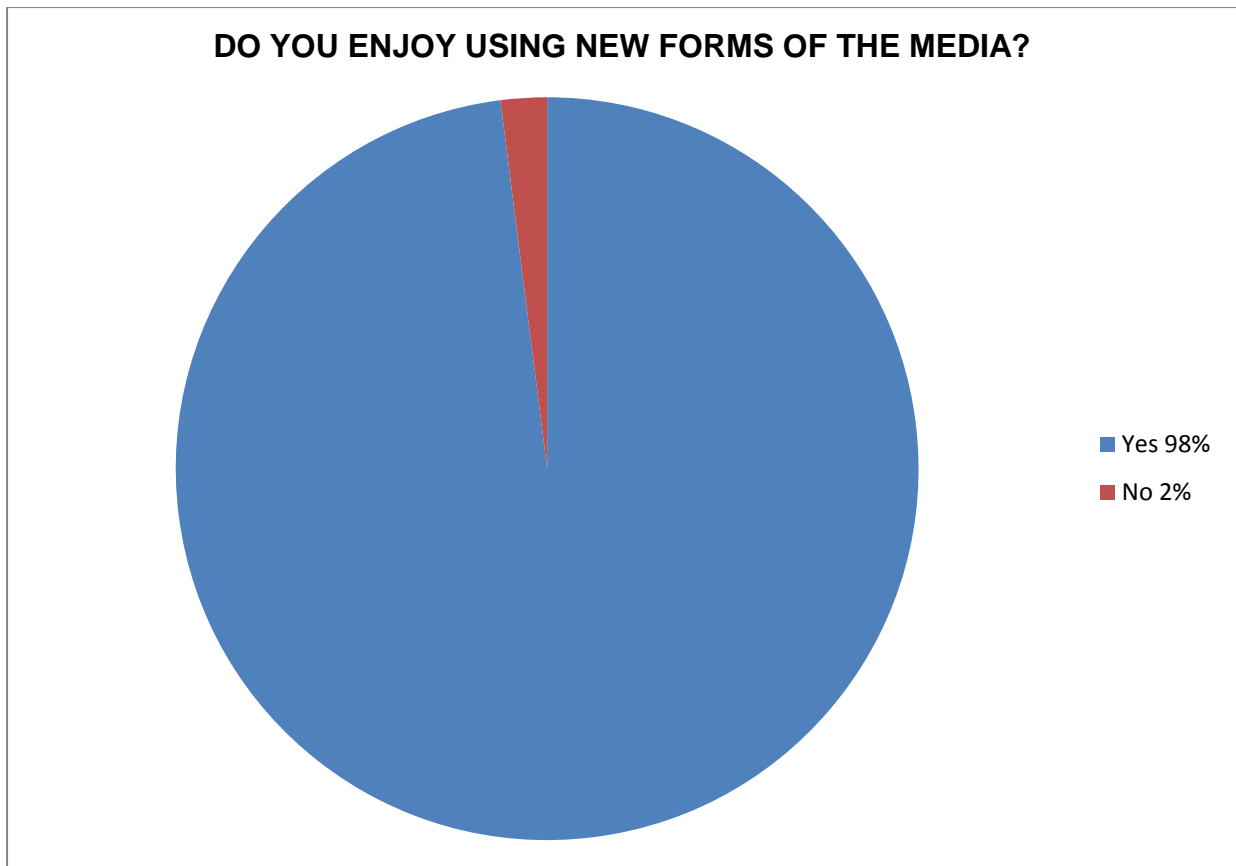
As for knowing what new media is; 146 (73 percent) of the audiences affirmed that they knew what new media is, 10 (five percent) stated they did not and 44 (22 percent) indicated that they were not sure. The representations are shown in Figure 4.3.



**Figure 4.3: Audiences' awareness of new media**

#### **4.3.3 Audiences' enjoyment of the use of new media**

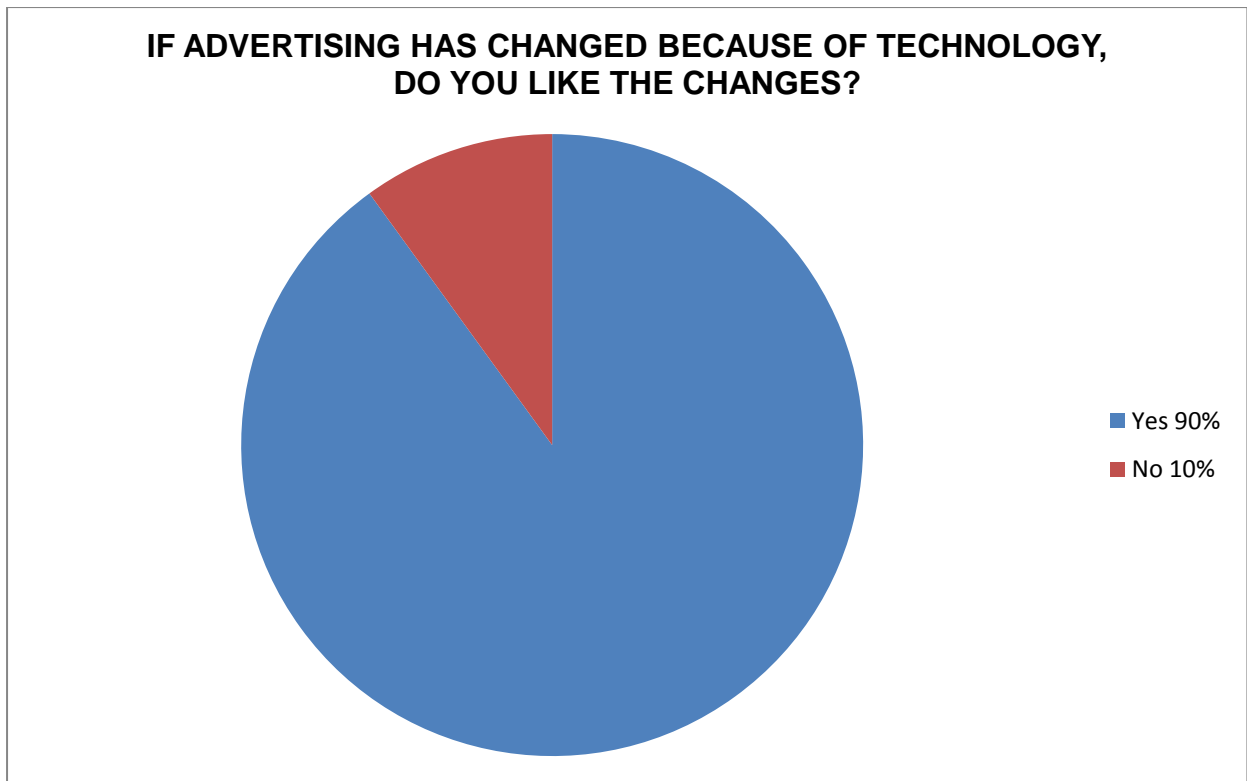
Audiences were asked whether they enjoy using new media. An outstanding 196 (98 percent) confirmed satisfaction and four (two percent) expressed dissatisfaction. This is shown below on Figure 4.4.



**Figure 4.4: Audiences on whether they enjoy using new media**

#### **4.3.4 Audiences' take on changes, if any, technological advances have made on advertising**

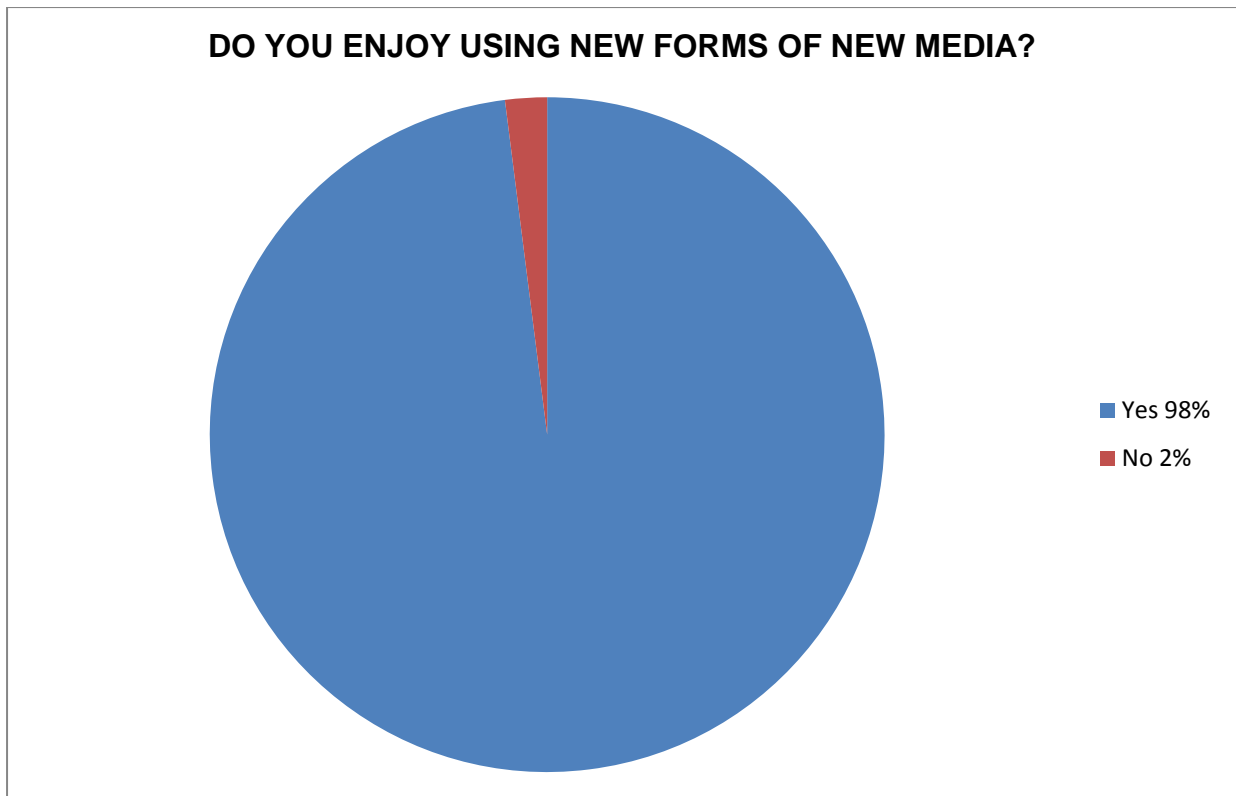
All the audiences thought that advertising has changed because of technology. The audiences went on to show a belief that technological advances had caused changes in advertising. They also showed huge liking for changes that technology have brought about in advertising. Testimony of this was 180 (90 percent) liking and 20 (10 percent) disliking. The levels of preferences are shown in Figure 4.5.



**Figure 4.5: Audiences on liking changes brought about the new media, if any**

#### **4.3.5 Audiences' delight derived from use of new media**

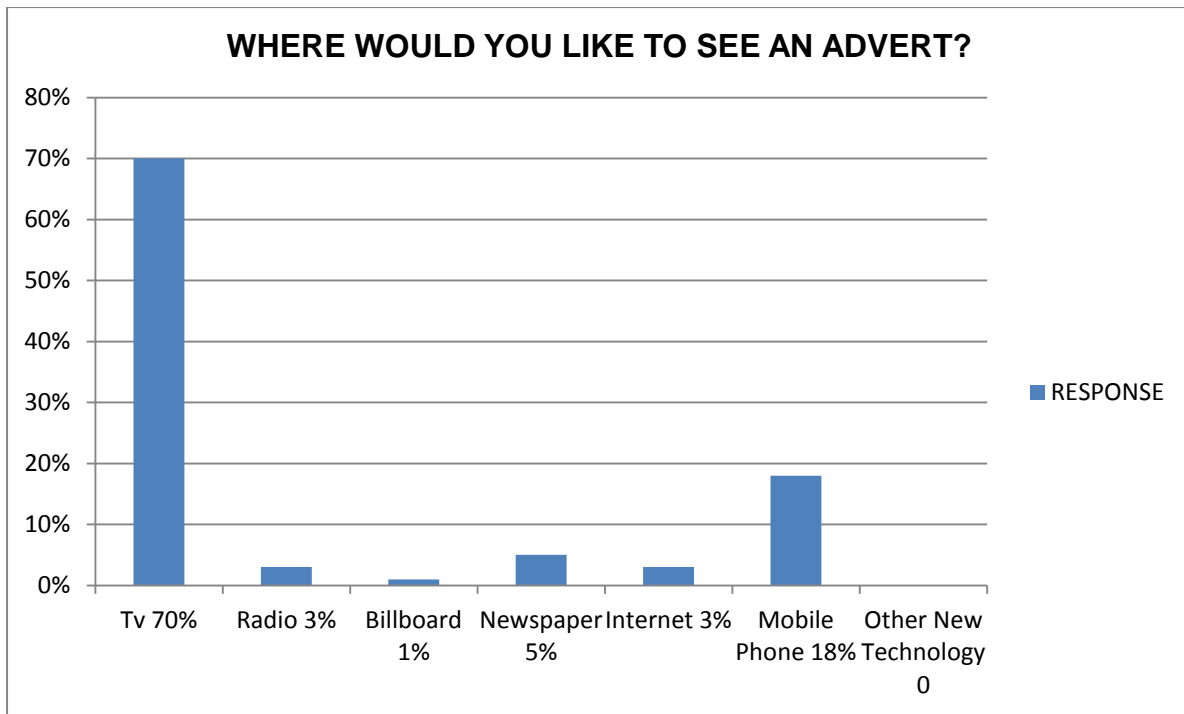
Audiences were asked to state if they found delight in using the new media. The majority said yes with 184 (92 percent) and a minority 16 (eight percent) stated that they did not. Figure 4.6 illustrates this.



**Figure 4.6: Audiences' satisfaction with using new media**

#### **4.3.6 Audiences' most preferred medium where they would like to consume adverts on**

Audiences were asked to specifically choose which medium they fancied the most as their most favoured medium to consume an advert on. The poll exposed that; 140 (70 percent) of the respondents want to see adverts on TV, six (three percent) preferred radio, two (one percent) for billboard, 10 (five percent) for newspaper, six (three percent) on the Internet, 36 (18 percent) for mobile phones and 0 for other technologies. The slants are shown in Figure 4.7.

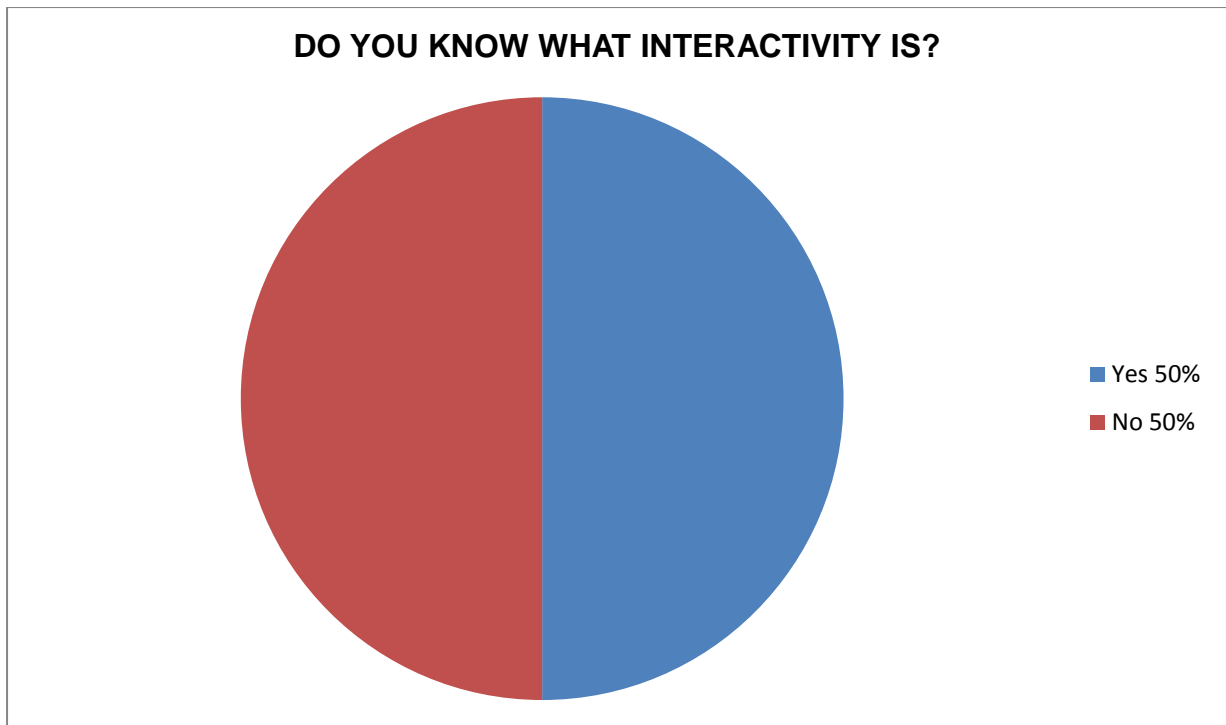


**Figure 4.7: Audiences' preferred medium to consume advert on**

#### **4.4 AUDIENCES' TAKE ON ADVERTISING; FEEDBACK AND INTERACTIVITY IN NEW MEDIA**

##### **4.4.1 Audiences' awareness of the concept of interactivity**

Audiences were asked if they knew what interactivity is. The results showed that the audiences are split on the issue equally. One hundred (50 percent) said yes and 100 (50 percent) said no. This is show on Figure 4.8.

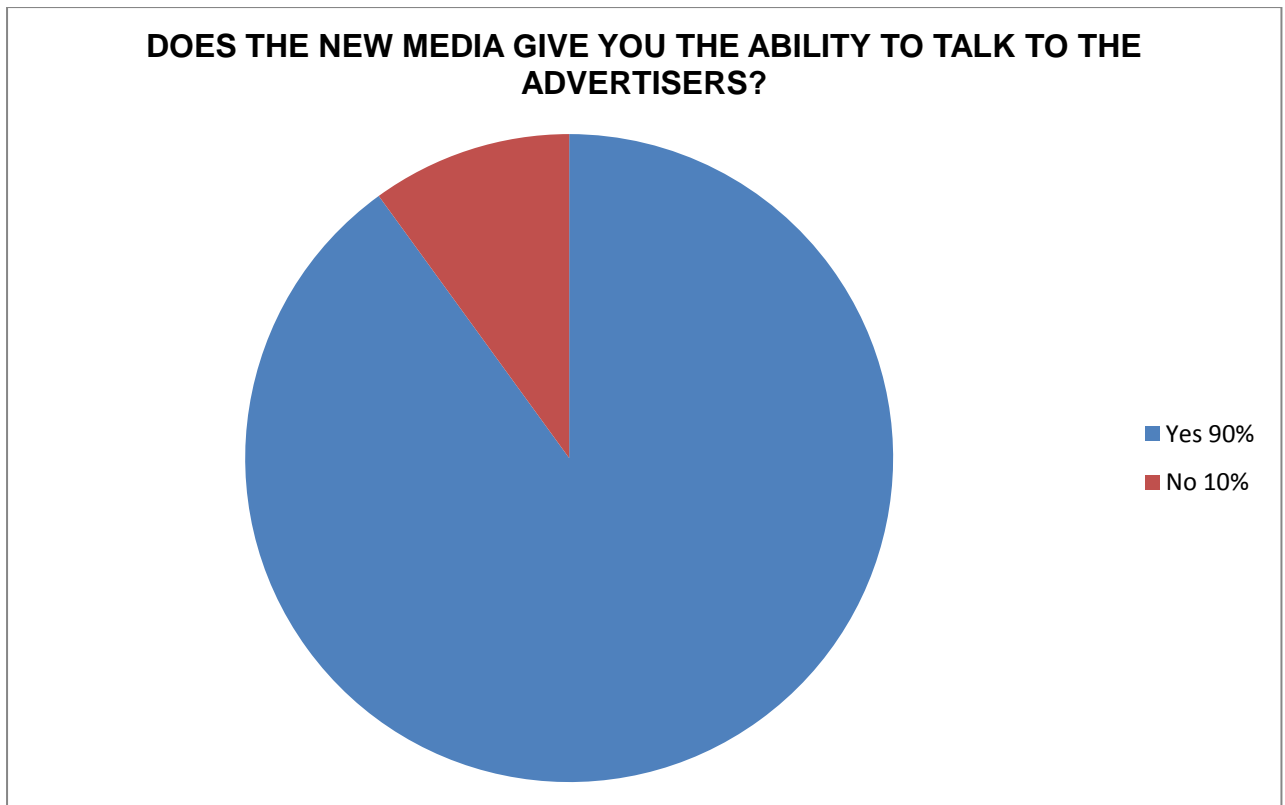


**Figure 4.8: Audiences' awareness of the concept interactivity**

#### **4.4.2 Audiences' view of their level of interactivity in the advertising media process**

The theory that the new media is more audience involving was put to the test. The question that investigated this asked the audiences whether they felt that they had the ability to talk back to the advertiser, using the new media. A hundred and eighty (90 percent) felt that they are interactive, through the new media and 20 (10 percent) felt they were not. Figure 4.9 demonstrates these findings.



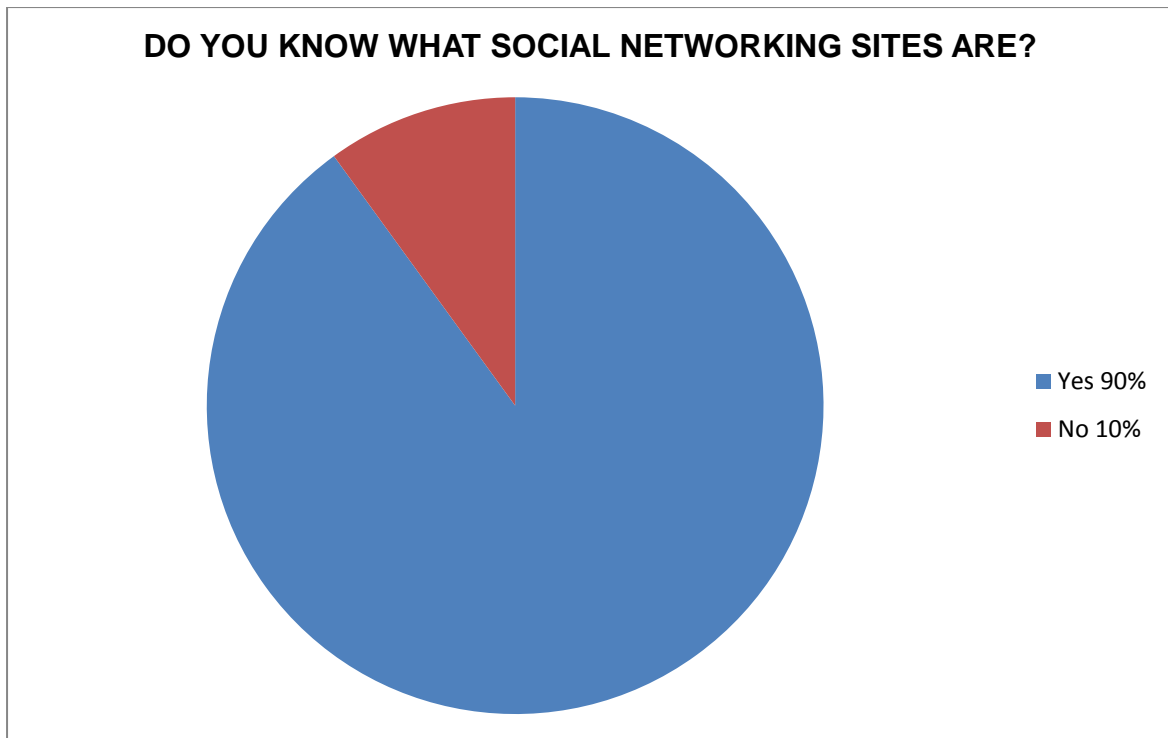


**Figure 4.9: Audiences' view of their level of interactivity in the advertising process**

#### **4.5 AUDIENCES' RELATION TO SOCIAL MEDIA**

##### **4.5.1 Audiences' awareness of what social networking sites are**

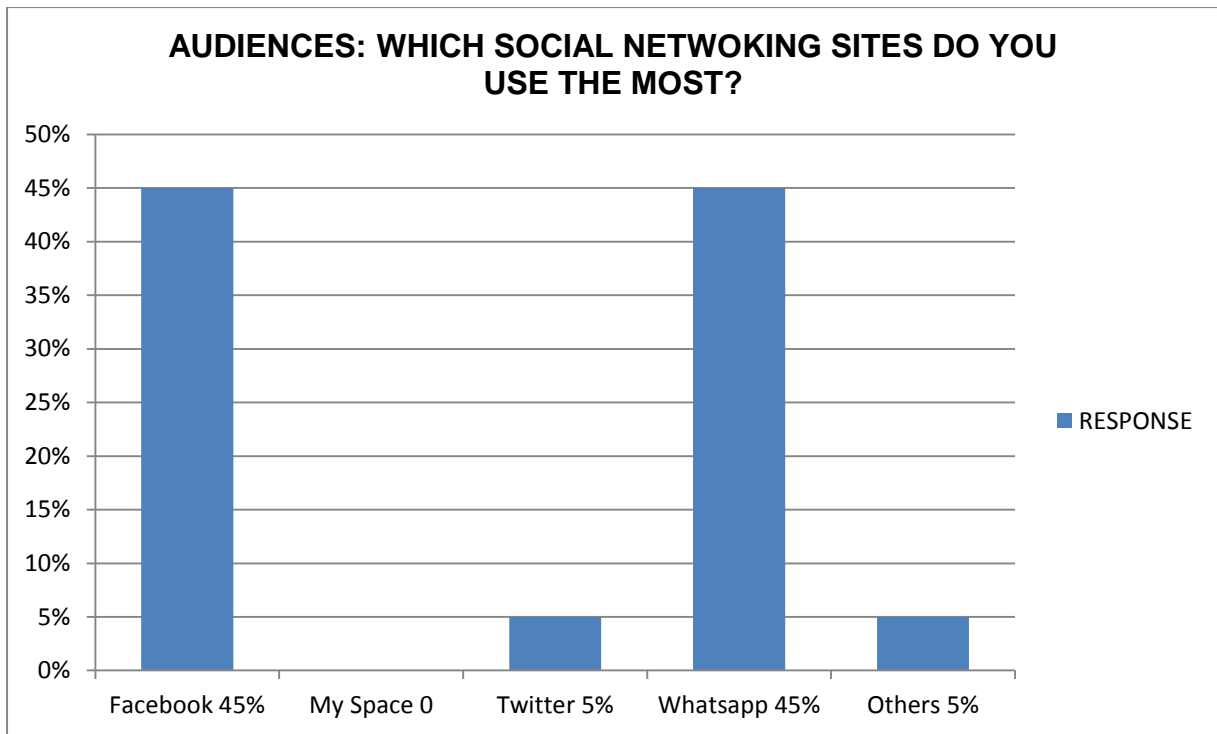
Audiences were asked if they knew what social networking sites are. The majority, 180 (90 percent) confirmed that they knew what social sites are and 20 (10 percent) said they did not. Figure 4.10 shows this.



**Figure 4.10: Audiences' awareness of what social networking sites are**

#### **4.5.2 Audiences' most utilised social networking site**

Audiences were asked which social networking sites they used the most. Ninety (45 percent) said they used Facebook most, 0 said the use Myspace, 10 (five percent) used Twitter the most, 90 (45 percent) used WhatsApp and 10 (five percent) used other social networking sites. This representation is shown in Figure 4.11.



**Figure 4.11: Social networking sites most used by respondents**

#### **4.6 QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS**

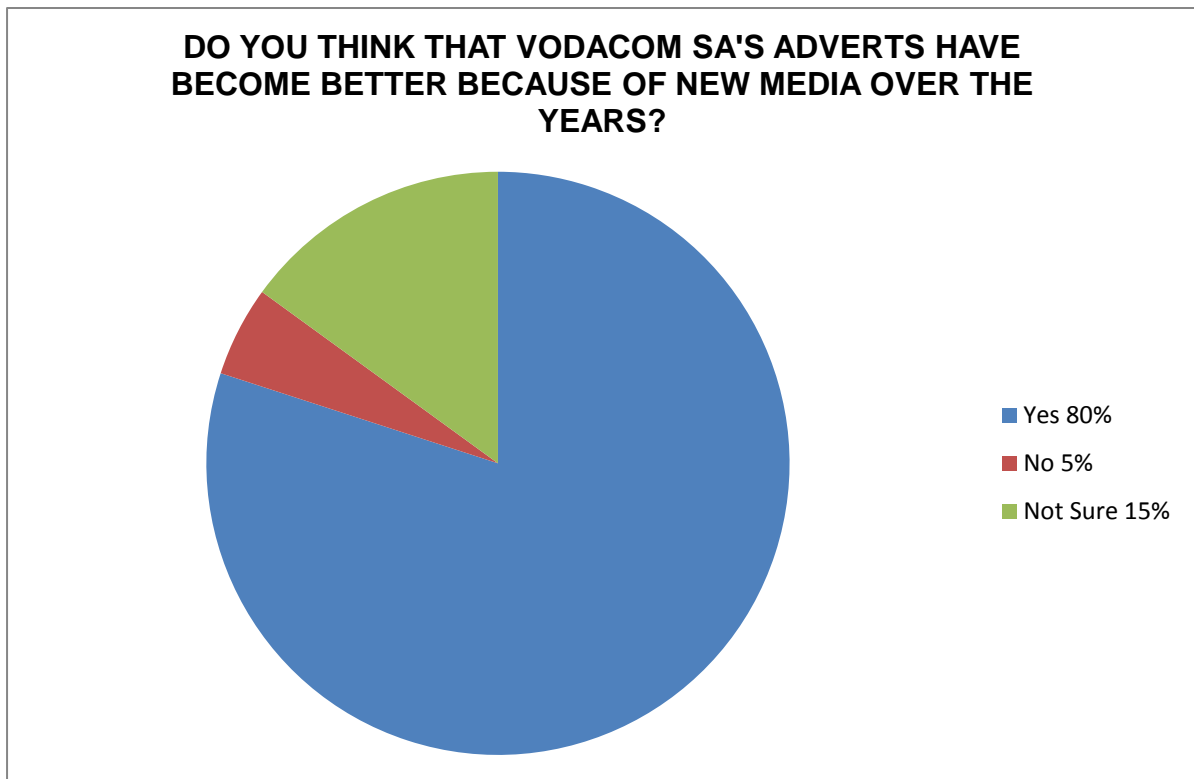
This section deals especially with the case study of the research study; Vodacom SA's advertising culture. The results are derived from Vodacom SA itself and the data gathered from the audiences' responses specifically on Vodacom SA.

##### **4.6.1 Has Vodacom SA's advertising culture changed over the years because of new media?**

Vodacom SA's Group Senior Specialist in Corporate Communications Division; manager of social media and Public Relations officer stated that the culture of advertising has changed and has had to become: *“a lot more innovative and now has to be engaging, it has become a lot more interactive.”*

With regards to whether new technologies had influenced Vodacom SA's adverts for the better, the audiences were largely convinced that this was the case. The polls

bear testimony to this; as 80 percent said yes, five percent said no and 15 percent were not sure. These revelations are show in Figure 4.12.



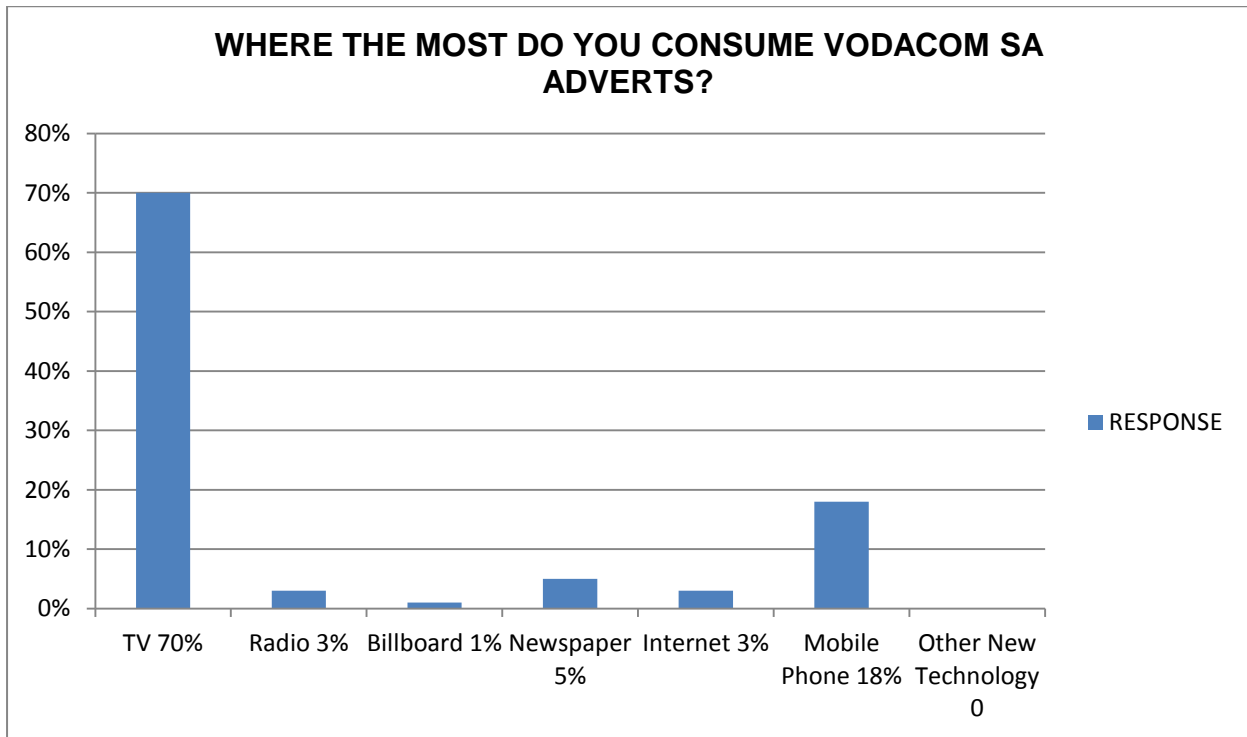
**Figure 4.12: Audiences' thoughts on whether Vodacom SA' adverts have improved because of the new media over the years**

#### **4.6.2 Preferred medium for Vodacom SA's adverts**

With regards to the preferred medium for Vodacom SA's adverts, Vodacom SA stated that: *"It depends on an actual product or promotion we are selling."* They went on to mention that: *"the audiences being targeted also affect the medium."* To sum it up they noted that *"a more general advert will use TV, newspaper and radio."* These, Vodacom SA states would be aided by social media hash tags of a Twitter or Facebook link.

Audiences were asked to specifically choose which medium they fancied the most as their most favoured medium to consume a Vodacom advert on. The poll exposed

that; 140 (70 percent) of the audiences want to see adverts on TV, six (three percent) preferred radio, two (one percent) for billboard, 10 (five percent) for newspaper, six (three percent) on the Internet, 36 (18 percent) for mobile phones and 0 for other technologies. The inclinations are demonstrated in figure 4.13.



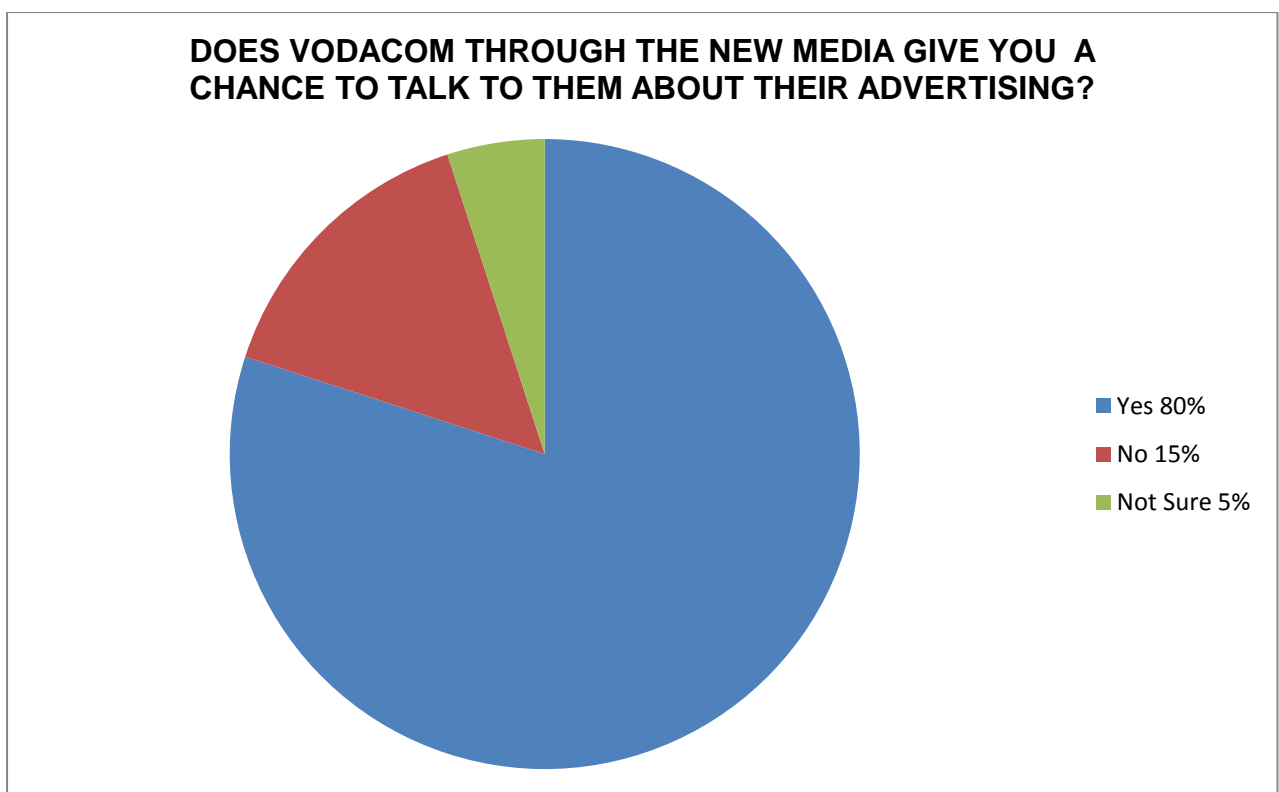
**Figure 4.13: Medium where audiences consume Vodacom SA's adverts the most**

#### **4.6.3 The question of whether audiences have more say on Vodacom SA's advertising, through the new media**

Vodacom SA stated that: *“We are always looking for people's views, if they are on social media and if they are talking to us we feed that information into the business.”* It goes on to point out that. *“Sometimes we run polls on social media [Facebook, YouTube and or Twitter] so that people can rate our adverts and what they think of them and what they liked. We take into account what they say.”* *“A lot of what we do*

on social media is find out what people like and what they don't like and feed that in to the business” (sic), Vodacom SA declares.

With regards to whether new technologies had made audiences have more say (and thus more interactive) with regards to Vodacom SA's advertising culture, the majority of the respondents felt they could have a say if they wanted to; as 160 (80 percent) said yes, 30 (15 percent) said no and 10 (5 percent) felt they were not sure. Demonstrations of these findings are seen in figure 4.14.



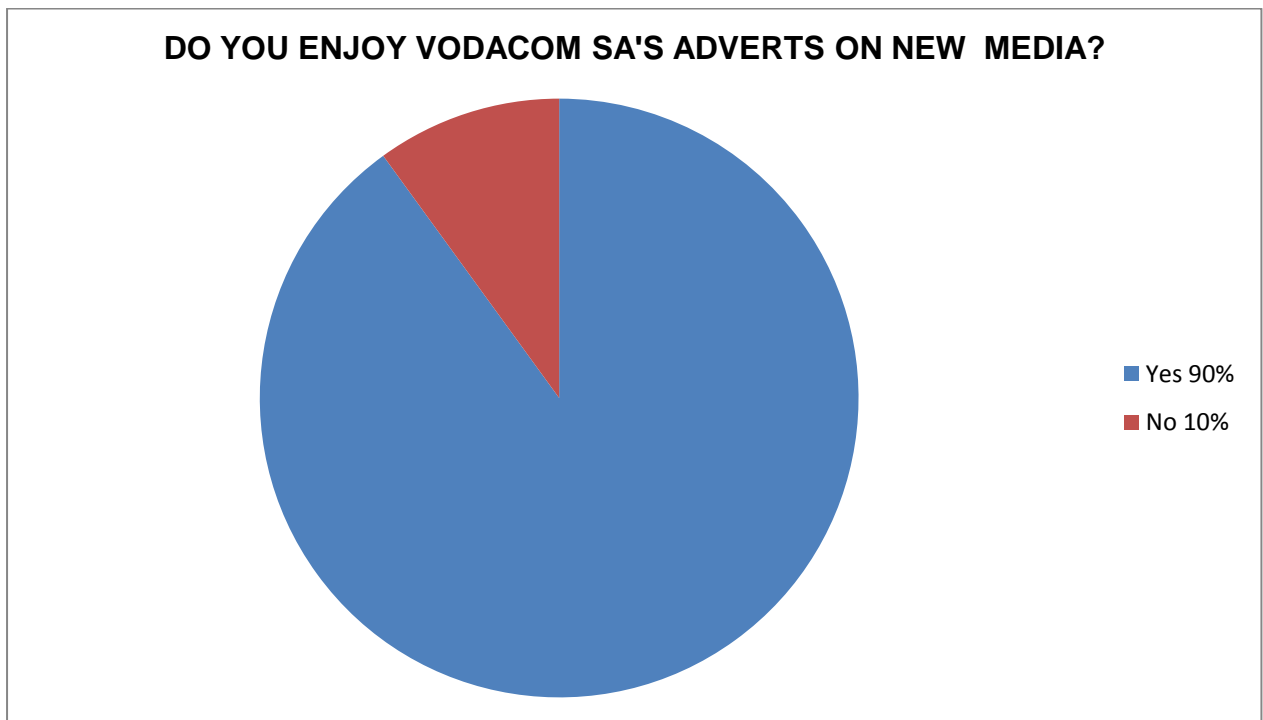
**Figure 4.14: Audiences' thoughts on whether they can give feedback on Vodacom SA adverts to, through the new media**

#### **4.6.4 Audiences' level of enjoyment of Vodacom SA's adverts influenced by new media**

In terms of enjoyment, Vodacom SA stated that; *“What we are doing with social media is creating ‘touch points’ for the customers, ‘touch points’ that they enjoy*

using. It is no longer like in the old days you used to have a brand talking down to you, from a TV or a **billboard**, you now have a brand essentially like a person you can talk to.” (sic)

Most of the audiences showed they enjoyed Vodacom SA's adverts that were linked to new media. Testimony of this was 180 (90 percent) liking and 20 (10 percent) disliking. The levels of preferences are shown in Figure 4.15.



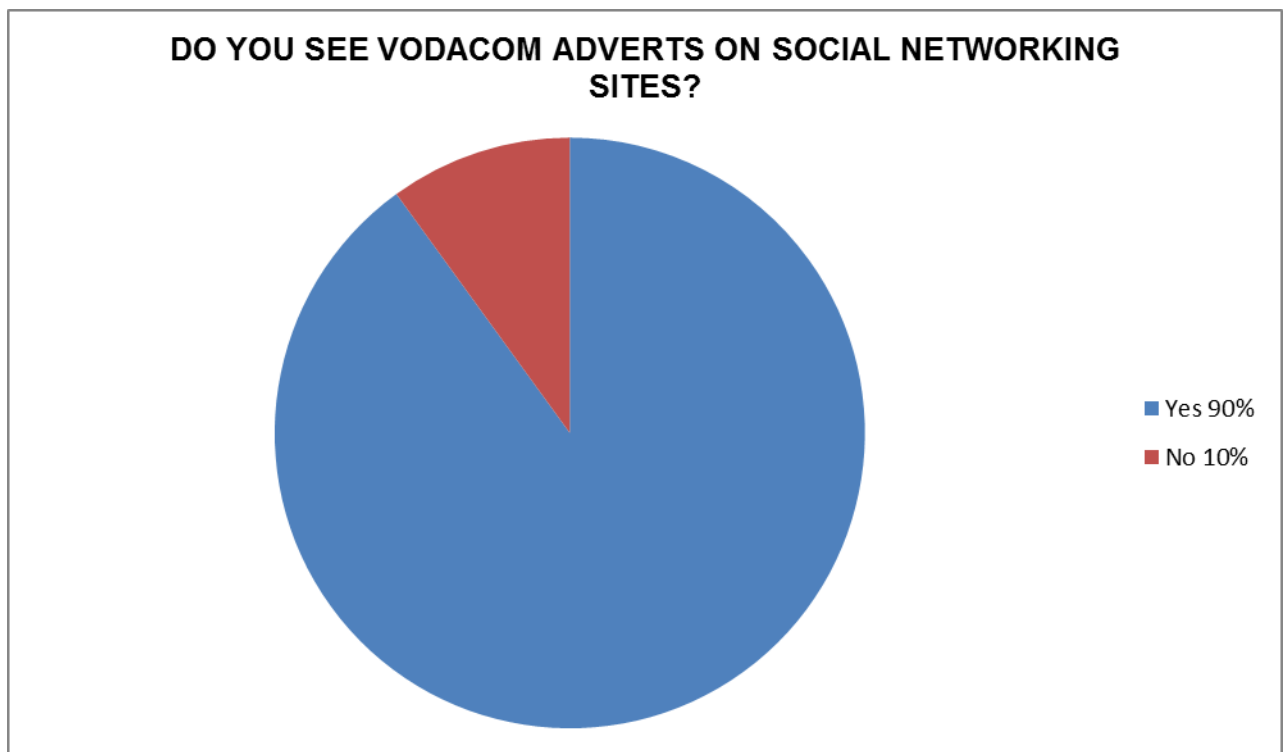
**Figure 4.15: Audiences' satisfaction with Vodacom SA adverts via new media**

#### **4.6.5 Vodacom SA and its advertising on social networking sites**

Vodacom SA revealed that they started their Facebook and Twitter accounts in 2010. The Vodacom SA online team stipulates that: “we have been tasked to advertise; getting hold of us through our E- Shop or online on our Twitter and Facebook pages.” Vodacom SA's Group Senior Specialist in Corporate

Communications Division; manager of social media and Public Relations officer thus declares; ***“anything we say on social media is a mini press release.”***

Audiences were asked if they see Vodacom adverts on social networking sites. The majority of them confirmed that they had seen Vodacom SA adverts on social networking sites and a few said they did not. A hundred and eighty (90 percent) said they did see Vodacom SA adverts on social sites and 20 (10 percent) said they did not. Figure 4.16 shows this aspect.



**Figure 4.16: Audiences' testimony of Vodacom SA adverts on social sites**

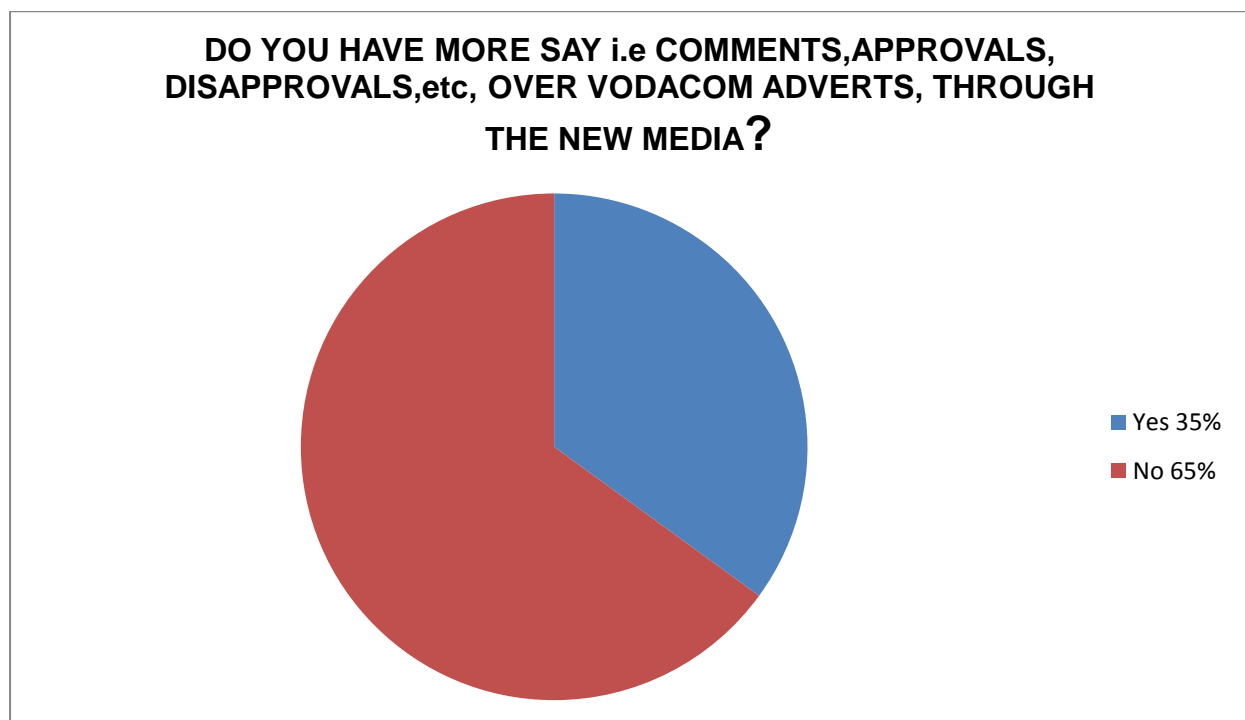


#### 4.6.6 Vodacom SA adverts and interactivity

##### 4.6.6.1 Feedback; more say - comments, approvals and/or disapprovals by audiences over Vodacom SA adverts, through the new media

Vodacom SA's Communication department said this about audience feedback; “we listen to social media, we follow it all the time; everyone who mentions Vodacom we looking at it” (sic). They go on to say that: “Social media is the first place where you get feedback...” “That is how it has been effective, the consumers are having a bigger say in what we do, which is how it should be” adds the Vodacom SA official.

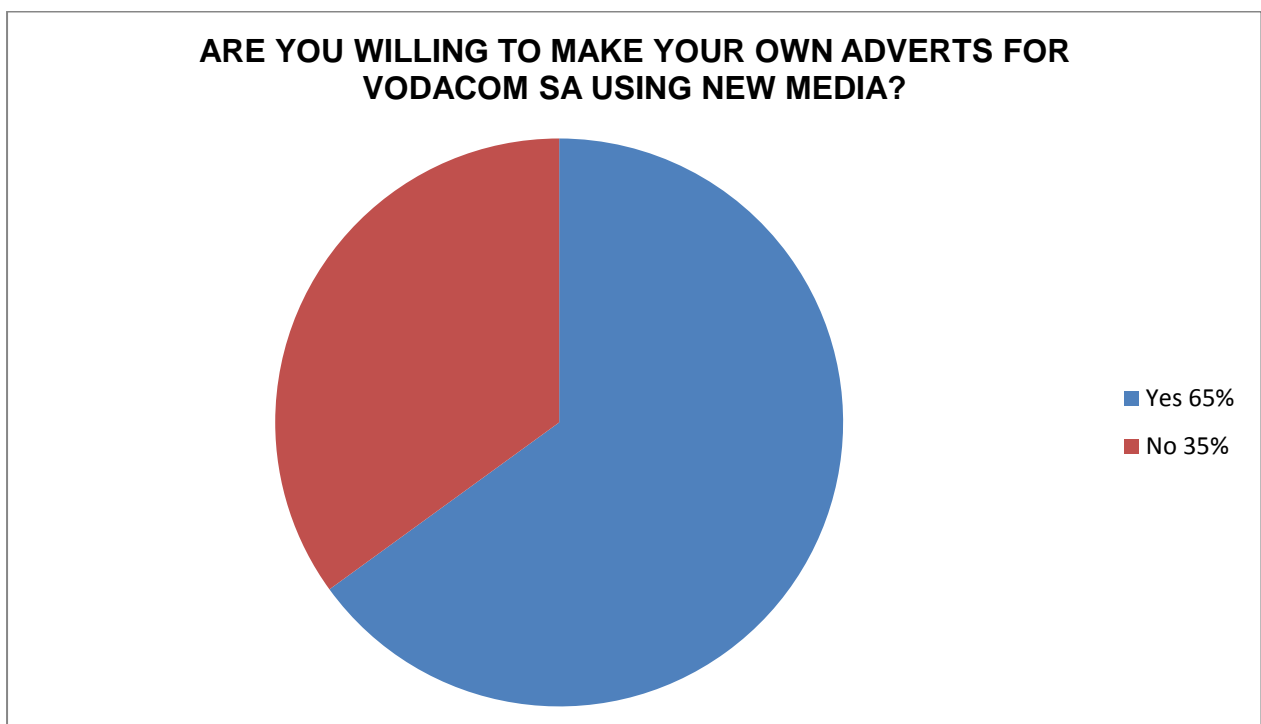
Audiences were asked if they felt that they were influential with regards to Vodacom SA adverts. To the contrary to Vodacom SA's sentiments, the majority of the respondents; 130 (65 percent) felt that they were not influential on Vodacom SA's adverts and 70 (35 percent) thought they were. Figure 4.17 shows this.



**Figure 4.17: Audiences' thought on whether they have more influence on Vodacom SA adverts through feedback via new media**

#### **4.6.6.2 Vodacom SA's advertising process and new media**

Vodacom SA was asked whether it lets its customers make adverts for them; since the new media makes this possible. Vodacom SA responded by saying that: *“there is space for this.”* They further elaborated; *“with advertising and videos there is a lot of stuff you can do, a lot of it would be awful because people do not have the skills and you have to remember that a lot of people would not like to watch an awful advert”* (sic). *“I like the idea and it is exactly what social media brings”* notes Vodacom SA's Group Senior Specialist in Corporate Communications Division; manager of social media and Public Relations officer. The respondents were also asked if they were willing to make their own adverts for Vodacom SA and they seemed quite keen to create adverts. A majority 130 (65 percent) said yes they were willing and 70 (35 percent) declined. This is shown by the pie chart on Figure 4.18.



## **Figure 4.18: Audiences' willingness to create adverts for Vodacom SA**

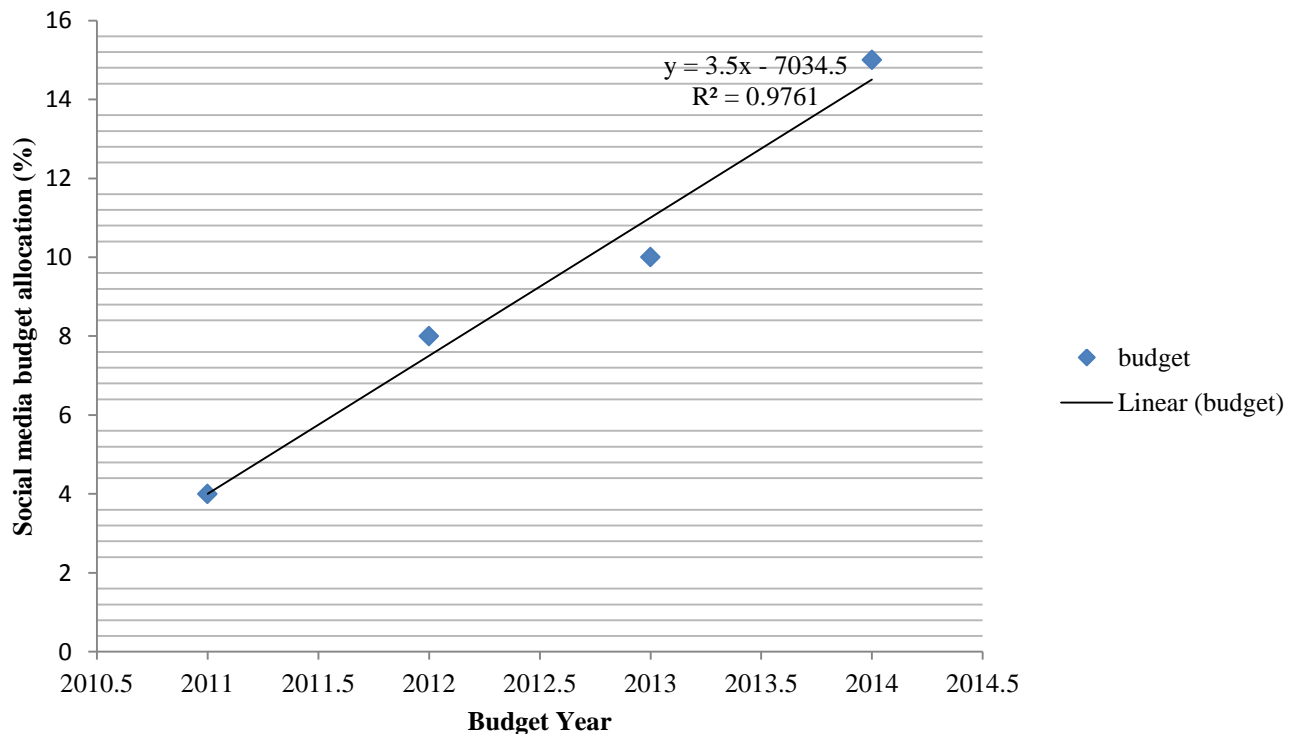
### **4.6.7 Vodacom SA's advertising culture and new media on: advertising agencies and roles in the media process**

Vodacom SA stated that they have a social media agency that *“handles content that goes out via social media.”* They also said that advertising briefs now include a *“social media plan.”* In terms of ownership of the medium Vodacom SA indicated that: *“our audiences own those pages [social media page], we look after them and make sure they are happy.”*

### **4.6.8 Vodacom SA's advertising culture and new media on: expenditure, budget allocations and costs**

Vodacom SA was asked if finances, budgets and expenditures have been affected by the arrival of the new media. They said: *“Of all advertising budget, eight percent goes to social media and online advertising. We are hoping to get it to 10 percent this year and to 15 percent next year. Last year it was four percent. You can see how huge it is and it is growing.”* They further state that; *“We are spending more money on social media and not less on advertising [as a whole] but there is a need to spend more on social media.”* They go on to single TV and reveal that *“TV takes a lot of money, it is just expensive!”* On another note they disclose that they have been tasked to advertise Vodacom SA through their E-Shop or online pages of Twitter and Facebook. The logic behind this was explained by Vodacom SA's Senior Specialist in Corporate Communications and Group Public Relations officer who said: *“why we do that is to pull traffic off our call centres so we get people online rather than call centres because it is actually cheaper for us online.”* The expenditure increase of

advertising budget allocation to social media by Vodacom SA is illustrates in Figure 4.19.



**Figure 4.19: Vodacom SA social media annual budget allocations since 2010**

#### **4.6.9 Vodacom SA's advertising culture and new media on: norms, policy and legislation**

##### **4.6.9.1 Advertising norm**

In terms of if Vodacom SA's advertising policies, norms and legislative structures had been affected, Vodacom SA said everything on their brand, from logos to the colour and everything *“has had to be developed through social media and new media.”*

##### **4.6.9.2 Advertising policy**

Vodacom SA stated that they created a *“brand voice”* with regards to what their employees can and cannot say online. This is what they referred to as *“how you can*

*Speak as Vodacom.*” Vodacom SA's Senior Specialist in Corporate Communications and Group Public Relations officer summed up the policy with regards to new media and advertising by stating that: *“On social media that means that you can be not not formal, but a lot more relaxed about it”* (sic). *“What we doing is actually cool, we trying to stay on top of the game”* (sic), she continues. She also said that they have a Communications policy, with a social media policy within it that: *“gives guidelines on what you can or cannot say on social media for our staff.”* *“Everything we put out is essentially a press release, whether it is an advert; whether it is a message from the CEO, whatever it is”,* she concludes.

#### **4.6.9.3 Advertising legislation**

When it comes to advertising laws that may have been necessitated by the new media, Vodacom SA felt that new media: *“is still a developing industry.”* She further states that *“I think it is going to change as things happen, you know as something happens in one instance, that will be a law around that then they will think about putting it in place, at the moment I think it is still relatively new and it still the same and as the Advertising Regulations Body will regulate against that and how it works. I think the one thing to look into is the PCA [The Consumer Protection Act], you know which kind of talks about how we can engage with people online, you know we cannot talk to them directly, unless they invite us to talk to them , unless they give us that permission”* (sic). She gives an example and says: *“It is like when you send those promotional SMSs, you have to opt into those, you have to say yes I want this and you have to do it twice”* (sic). To summarise she notes; *“It is an interesting one and I think there are going to be a lot of changes in that area”* (sic).

## **4.7 CONCLUSION**

This chapter presented the research findings. In the data presentation, the study employed narratives, descriptions and illustrations. The illustrative charts were necessitated by the availability of quantifiable data collected. The data was presented and arranged in themes and categories as data presentation methods. The themes and categories were discovered by the use of the research's objectives (see section 1.3.2). The next Chapter (5) will be a discussion of the research results that have been presented in this chapter.

# **CHAPTER FIVE**

## **5. DISCUSSION**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the results that were outlined in chapter four (4). The chapter discusses and interprets the results of the data gathered. Phenomena are either explained through valid research done previously by researchers and scholars or and through literature or theoretical conclusions. The data discussion focuses on how the new media has a redefined, or not, Vodacom SA's advertising culture with regards to; audiences, interactivity, advertising structure, advertising content, company advertising policies, advertising norms, advertising laws and advertising expenditure. Each outcome is explained individually and the chapter uses the same themes and categories used in Chapter four (4).

### **5.2 QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS**

Most of the similarities of the 200 respondents focused on demographics; that is age, social standing and education. However, other parties were noticed with regards to knowledge of advertising and its influence. The similarities observed were: all the audiences were in the age category of 18- 30 years, all the audiences were higher education students; at least undergraduate students, all the audiences reside in a semi- urban area.

The reason for this is that the questionnaire respondents were University of Limpopo students. University students are mostly the youth and so they are mostly at the age

of 18-30. The University of Limpopo is located in Mankweng; which is a semi urban area.

The gender of the audiences showed that 30% were male and 70% were female. The questionnaires were distributed using convenient sampling. Therefore, randomly; more females than males got hold of more questionnaires.

### **5.3 AUDIENCES' COMPREHENSION OF DEFINITIONS, PREFERENCES AND KNOWLEDGE OF TERMS AND PRACTICES**

All the audiences affirmed that they knew what advertising is. Furthermore, all the audiences affirmed that advertising influences them to buy products. The academic status of the respondents; higher education students would make them perhaps quite aware of the basic definition of advertising.

As for the influence of advertising on the audiences' purchasing power, this validates Kotler (2006b) and McQuail (2010) who assess that advertising is pervasive within our daily lives and that it is very persuasive and has a huge bearing on our buying behaviour.

With regards to knowing what traditional media is data showed that; 57% of audiences knew, 14% did not and 30% were not sure. As for knowing what new media is; 73% of the audiences knew, 5% did not and 22% were not sure.

The audiences seem to know more of what new media is than traditional media. Given their age of between 18-30 years, it perhaps they who use the new media than any other category (effectivemeasure.com 2013). This is supported by Kreutzer (2009) whose research in South Africa showed that the youth are the most frequent users of the new media. As for those audiences who stated they did not know or



were not sure of the terms, the reason for this may be the audiences' lack of knowledge of industry and technical terms. Since these are largely media technical terms, not everyone would know them, but that does not mean that the audiences do know the specific mediums in each category or that they do not use those very mediums.

An outstanding 98% showed satisfaction and 2% expressed dissatisfaction as the audiences were asked whether they enjoy using new media or not. The results show that the qualities that new media possess may have brought about more satisfaction to the audiences. This is to validate the study by Kerr, Kücklich and Brereton (2006:78) which detects out that “the findings of our study indicate that the pleasures of new media are indeed manifold and heterogeneous.” McQuail (2010:39) states that as the essential features of new media are concerned, the main ones seem to be their “ ‘interconnectedness,’ their ‘accessibility’, to individual users as senders and/ or receiver, their ‘interactivity’, their ‘multiplicity’ of use and open-ended character, and their ‘ubiquity’ and ‘delocatedness.’ ” These features may offer the audiences what the traditional media offered little of or did not offer and so increase satisfaction levels of the audiences.

All the audiences thought that advertising has changed because of new media. Moreover, the audiences also showed huge liking for changes that new media has brought about in advertising. Testimony of this was 90% liking and 10% disliking.

The unanimous view that advertising has changed because of technology can be based explained by the technological determinism theory (McLuhan 1962). Thus because of technological developments, advertising has had to adopt and keep with pace with these technological advances.

This huge indication can be attributed to the fact that advertisers have tried to make audiences more involved in their advertising campaigns (Jensen 1998). Furthermore, the new media has the ability to enhance senses (McLuhan 1969) such as that of sight and hearing; an example is High Definition (HD) and Dolby Surround Sound. Such changes can get the audiences excited and enhance their experiences.

The majority of audiences, 98% found delight in using new media and a minority 2% did not. The defining features of new media, as argued by (McQuail 2010), of their “interconnectedness”, their “accessibility to individual users as senders and/ or receiver”, their “interactivity”, their “multiplicity of use and open-ended character”, their “ubiquity” and their “delocatedness” make the audience more active and thus makes them more involved. This can lead to delight and amusement and can explain the 98% node. As for the 2%, there is evidence that not all audiences are interested in being active and be involved in media processes (McQuail 2010:140).

The audiences indicated that 70% of them want to see adverts on TV, 18% mobile phones, 5% for newspaper, 3% preferred radio, 3% on the Internet, 1% for billboard and 0 for other technologies. The huge preference for TV is shown by Saiganesh, Parameswaran and Pharm (2013:13) in their study as they state their finding “indicates the importance of television medium by the amount spent on TV advertisements, usefulness of television advertisements in making purchase decisions and the benefit of television advertisements felt by the audiences.” This also concurs with a study conducted by Jamhourri and Winiarz (2009:227) which reports that “...we simply observed no evidence to support ‘the-demise-of-TV’ school of thought.” This huge preference for TV can also be attributed to the cultivation theory (Gerbner et al. 1979). All these findings on TV validate and echo the remark

by McQuail and Windahl (1993) that television is not only a window of the world, but a world in itself; where audiences want to consume the most of their media content from. Jamhuri and Winiarz (2009:227) in their research on assessing the enduring influence of TV state that “The data [gathered] show that TV retains its clout among target audiences. Increased digital media influence has not caused a decrease of TV influence.” Binet and Field (2009:132) observe that “More surprisingly, the effects of TV seem to be getting bigger over time.” Sharp, Beal and Collins (2009:14) declare that “TV, as a whole, remains the ultimate ‘mass medium’ capable of reaching vast numbers of viewers.” Gerbner et al. (1986:2) insist on the fact that television is a centralized system of story-telling. It is part and parcel of our daily life. Advertising is a form of persuasive storytelling. Thus the audiences show that TV withstands the taste of time and is a dominant advertising medium regardless of online advertising.

As for the 18% for Internet, the fact that Internet usage, although growing, it is still low and quite still very expensive to access in South Africa Pule (2012) brings this to light. The digital divide on Internet usage in South Africa is still apparent and so most ordinary folk do not have access to the Internet. Gunkel (2003:499) states that the digital divide is commonly defined as the gap separating those individuals who have access to new forms of information technology from those who do not. Mohammed and Alkubise (2012:214) whose research on Internet advertising in developing countries, such as South Africa, explore the issue of Internet advertising, digital divide and developing countries; “Moreover the analysis revealed that income, Internet skills, Internet usage per day, advertisement content and advertising location are significant factors that affect the effectiveness of online advertisement” (sic).

Yet the fact that it is higher than radio, newspaper and billboard shows a rapid growth. This is echoed further by Mohammed and Alkubise (2012) who acknowledge Internet advertising as “becoming gradually a standard advertisement platform” (sic). This reason also applies for the 0% on the other technologies, which are new media and so the digital divide forms comes into play. As for the 3% preferred radio, 1% for billboard, 5% for newspaper, 3%; this can be explained by the nature of the respondents. Studies have shown that the youth do not prefer to consume adverts from the radio, billboards and newspapers. Listening attentively and reading a billboard or newspaper is uncommon to the youth; who were the respondents of the research.

Therefore, TV had a lot of advantages over the other mediums, ranging from social to economical. Kumar and Patra (2012:20) agree as they claim that “TV is more effective media than other media at generating awareness and also generating familiarity towards products.” Jamhuri and Winiarz (2009:227) note that “While the influence of digital media has grown, it has not caused a corresponding decrease in TV influence.” Empirical observations relating to the influence of TV showed that TV is influential with the young demographic (Jamhuri & Winiarz 2009:229). This would be consistent with the respondents' response to a majority preference for TV advertising; as they are the youth. It has always been thought that the youth are in the category that of “those who are said to be tuning TV out.” Yet research shows that they are for TV advertising more than any form of advertising, such as new media advertising, even though they are the biggest users and consumers of new media (Jamhuri & Winiarz 2009:230).

#### **5.4 ADVERTISING FEEDBACK AND INTERACTIVITY IN NEW MEDIA**

A total of 50% of audiences knew what interactivity is, as 50% did not. This result on the concept of interactivity can best be described by the diffusions of innovation theory. Diffusion of innovation theory seeks to explain how innovations are taken up in a population. An innovation is an idea, behaviour, or object that is perceived as new by its audience (Robinson 2009). Thus the fact that there is a 50-50% response can mean that interactivity as an innovation is approaching the “early majority” stage. This is the segment where there have been two other segments have come before; the innovators and early adopters segments. For Rogers (2003), innovators were willing to experience new ideas and first use it and early adopters follow after and authenticate the innovation (Rogers 2003:283). As Rogers (2003) stated that early majority are deliberate in adopting an innovation and they are neither the first nor the last to adopt it. Therefore the statistics show that there is growth in knowing what interactivity, yet there can still be growth. The other 50% represents the “late adopters” and “laggards” who are last to adopt innovations after everyone else has.

A majority 90% of audiences felt they had the ability to talk back to the advertiser, using the new media and 10% felt they did not. Khang, Ki and Ye (2010:283) christen participatory audiences: “prosumers or producers.” The fact that the audiences felt that they more involved is best explained by Severin and Tankard (1997:287) who are of the opinion that “many of these technologies [new media] have the dramatic effect of giving the user much more control over the communication [advertising] process and the information received.” Thus, the audiences feel more involved. The 10% are those that feel that regardless of feedback, their voice is still irrelevant and ignored.

## 5.5 AUDIENCES' RELATION WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

The majority 90% of audiences confirmed that they knew what social sites are and 10% said they did not. The influence and significance of social media is here shown. It shows that 21<sup>st</sup> century has turned into a global village (Okigbo 1995). McLuhan and Fiore (1967) are convinced that technology has made people become closer as if they stayed in a village. "We now live in a global village...a simultaneous happening" (McLuhan & Fiore 1967:63). McLuhan (1962) further comments that "'the electronic age' has sealed the entire human family into a single global tribe" The global village theory is an argument that because of technology, the world has become one "community". The definition of "community" emphasizes supportive, sociable, relations that provide a sense of belonging. Another reason for this is that the youth, mostly university students; are the biggest users and consumers of social media in South Africa (effectivemeasure.com 2013; Kreutzer 2009). The 10% who said no are those who may not know the technical term but actually use social media or those in the digital divide stage of a lack in what Van Dijk (1999) terms "mental access." This is a stage where individuals have a lack in elementary digital experience (Van Dijk 1999).

Audiences showed that in terms of social media; 45% use Facebook most, 45% WhatsApp, 5% Twitter and 5% used other social sites and 0 Myspace. The huge vote for Facebook is supported by a study by Effective Measure South Africa (effectivemeasure.com 2013), a research institute, which showed that about 45% of social site users, in South Africa, use Facebook the most. The 45% high for WhatsApp can be accredited to it being a no cost platform. This fact is revealed in research studies by Church and de Oliveira (2013) that reveal the popularity of

WhatsApp due to its relatively low operational costs. Myspace with between 0-5%, Twitter with 5%-10% and 5% for others is validated by a research by Effective Measure which shows that this is the level of usage of these social sites in South Africa (effectivemeasure.com 2013). However, there are various other studies in South Africa, which showed the popularity of Twitter, a contrast to these findings.. However, Mybroadband shows that the huge users of Twitter in South Africa are from the white race of the South African population (mybroadband.com 2013). Therefore, this explains a low 5% by the respondents; as they were all from the black race of the South African population; the race that uses twitter less. It is also important to show that the social site/ application MXit was also popular on online research that were conducted (effectivemeasure.com 2013). And although it was not included in the study, it is worth considering.

## **5.6 QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS**

This section deals especially with the discussion on the case study of the research study; Vodacom SA's advertising culture. The discussion focuses on Vodacom SA's advertising culture and new media and how this reflects to the current status and why this is so.

Vodacom SA's Senior Specialist in Corporate Communications Division officer stated that the culture of advertising has changed and has had to become: *“a lot more innovative and now has to be engaging, it has become a lot more interactive.”*

An illustration of this is that The Vodacom website has an online digital magazine, *Vodacom Now Magazine*. This magazine is a brand enhancement project which appeals to the audiences and showcases developments at Vodacom SA and why Vodacom is better than its competitors. This is advertising using the Internet and so

new media advertising. Another example is that Vodacom has an online TV channel through YouTube; VODACOMTV (Vodacom.com 2013a). VODACOMTV, just like Vodacom Now Magazine advertises Vodacom SA's uniqueness through online broadcasting and social network YouTube. Also, audiences can access the services and the different advertisements that Vodacom SA makes on YouTube. To add on to this, Vodacom is also on social networks Facebook and Twitter. The mandate of these is to complement the mission of enhancing the company's brand. These mediums also get feedback from the general public, through interactivity capabilities. This is a new type of advertising where feedback measurement uses interactivity. This shows that Vodacom SA has adopted some level of new media advertising.

With regards to whether new media had influenced Vodacom SA's adverts for the better, the respondents were largely convinced that this was the case. The polls bear testimony to this; as 80% said yes, 5% said no and 15% were not sure.

The stance by Vodacom SA to conditionally allow its advertising culture to be redefined by the new media is the realisation that South African business and brands realised that there was a new market segment and audience on the Internet and via new media. Digital Media and Marketing Association (DMMA) says South Africa's Internet population stands at 14 million people, representing 39% of adults in South Africa (themedialonline.com 2013). This is a huge sector of the population, with perhaps the biggest buying power amongst the rest of the sectors. Therefore brands had to find ways to advertise to these segments via digital advertising. Vodacom SA thus implemented this in 2010 with Facebook, YouTube, Twitter accounts. To show a new media oriented advertising culture at Vodacom SA, Peter Moyo Vodacom SA board Chairman in Vodacom integrated report for the year ended 31 March 2013



Chairman's report states that *"We've embraced social media in particular as a highly effective channel to communicate one-on-one with our customers and other stakeholders, and have built one of the largest followings of any South African company"* (sic) (Vodacom. com 2013b). This shows that even at the highest level of decision making, Vodacom SA's advertising culture has been redefined by the new media. The redefinition of the advertising industry and companies' advertising cultures is shown by a research, on the evolution of advertising due to new media, conducted by Spurgeon (2006), whose findings conclude and detects that companies are now engaging in online and new media advertising activities.

As for the variations on the audiences; of 80% yes, 5% no and 15% not sure, they can be explained using the diffusion of innovation theory where the audiences' level of accepting innovation of a redefined new media oriented advertising culture has reached "the late majority stage" (Rogers 2003). This is a stage in accepting an innovation to be now part of life, yet there will always be those who do not see it or adopt to it or are not sure of it, "the laggards" (Rogers 2003). In this case, the 80% may represent those who see the change; what Rogers (2003) categories as the innovators, the early adopters, the early majority and the late majority. The 5% and the 15% would be the laggards, whom Rogers (2003) names the "sceptics."

With regards to the preferred medium for Vodacom SA's adverts, Vodacom SA stated that: *"It depends on an actual product or promotion we are selling."* They went on to mention that: *"The audience being targeted also affects the medium."* To sum it up they noted that: *"a more general advert will use TV, newspaper and radio."* These Vodacom SA states would be aided by social media hash tags of a Twitter or Facebook link.

Audiences were asked to specifically choose which medium they fancied the most as their most favoured medium to have a Vodacom advert on. 70% of the audiences want to see adverts on TV, 18% mobile phone, 5% newspaper, 3% Internet, 3% radio, 1% for billboard and 0 for other technologies.

Vodacom SA's response shows a purely marketing strategy where they try to have a media mix for advertising products (Kotler 2006). Media mix entails the use of various mediums for an advertising campaign to try and draw attention from a large pool of audiences. Yet here the dominance of the traditional medium, TV is very evident. Vodacom SA justifies this by saying that: *"we still have some traditionalists for example TV and radio and there is still a lot of people that are not reached by the new media, especially in South Africa so it is important to have those."* A study by Govender (2013) on the effect of TV advertising for tyres, conducted in South Africa, proved that TV advertising is not only very useful, but the most used advertising form in South Africa. Vodacom SA's acknowledges the existence of the digital divide in South Africa and amongst its audiences and the general South African public. There is online advertising yet the apparent dominance of TV advertising cannot be missed.

Audiences' huge preferences for TV advertising can be attributed to the cultivation theory, where the argument is that TV has a special emotional connection to people and that visuals play a central role in people's senses (Gerbner et al. 1986) , a major component of advertising. Draganska, Hartmann and Stanglein (2013) in a research discover the dominance of TV advertising amongst audiences. As McQuail (1976:347) notes that TV: "is said to 'stimulate', 'involve', 'trigger off', 'generate', 'induce', 'suggest', 'structure', 'teach', 'persuade', 'gratify', 'arouse', 'reinforce',

‘activate.’” Even though these descriptions were uttered almost 30 years ago; it seems that nothing has changed and TV still commands influence and priority from the media audiences today. The 3% for Internet may be as a result that there is a huge digital divide in South Africa (Suping et al. 2006), where only 39% of the population has access to the Internet; most of whom are the well-off white population. The prices for Internet access are also relatively high for a developing country (effectivemeasure.com 2013) and so students, who were the respondents of the study, cannot be frequent Internet users (effectivemeasure.com 2013). The 18% for mobile phones is a modest response. Tsang, Ho and Liang (2004) in their research on mobile phones advertising, observe a lukewarm response by the audiences for mobile phone advertising. The digital divide argument can also help explain this outcome. The fact that although an estimated overwhelming adult majority population of South Africa has a mobile phone, not all have a Smartphone that enables advanced adverts consuming. Furthermore, perhaps not everyone opts in to SMS adverts. The 5% for newspapers can be accounted for a general decline in the newspaper business. Audiences are slowly turning away from the newspaper and digitalisation is making it even less significant. A research by Kirchhoff (2009) proves how global newspaper readership has dramatically dwindled with fewer readers, especially amongst the youth.

A 3% preference for radio is surprising; given the influence of radio in South Africa and the listenership and establishment of the medium (Mmusi 2002). South Africa has very diverse and numerous radio stations (Mmusi 2002), with huge listenership, a 3% poll by the respondents did not represent this fact. 1% for billboards may be best explained by a research by Chaney, Lin and Chaney (2004) that has shown that audiences have problems recalling messages on billboards and so generally distaste

them. The 0 for other technologies may be a result in the digital divide where the respondents simply do not have those new devices to consume adverts on (Suping et al. 2006). A more general explanation for these results is the uses and gratifications theory. It is important to note that the media choices that people make are motivated by the desire to satisfy a wide variety of functions: entertainment, diversion, social connection, personal identity, information and the like (Cho et al. 2003:48). Thus the medium preferences may vary due to different uses and gratifications by the respondents.

Vodacom SA stated that: *"We are always looking for people's views, if they are on social media and if they are talking to us we feed that information into the business."* It goes on to point out that: *"Sometimes we run polls on social media (Facebook and or Twitter) so that people can rate our adverts and what they think of them and what they liked. We take into account what they say."* *"A lot of what we do on social media is find out what people like and what they don't like and feed that in to the business"* (sic), Vodacom SA declares.

With regards to whether new media had made audiences have more say (and thus interactive) with regards to Vodacom SA's advertising culture, the majority of the respondents 80% felt they could have a say if they wanted to, 15% said no and 5% felt they were not sure.

The 80% who feel they are more interactive are those that are proactive in Vodacom SA's advertising. It is argued that the term audiences should therefore be now also not just mean receivers but users as well (Jensen 1998). The research by Cover (2006) observes that audiences have become more active and involved in the media process due to the new media. As for the 15% negative and 5% not sure Vodacom

had this to validate their claims of interactivity; *“the respondents are school [university] students, this is one section of the population, we take into account 50 million subscribers that we try to please plus new subscribers. It’s a very tricky one and that is the great thing about social media; is that everyone is got a voice suddenly and your brands are trying to find out about those voices.”* Vodacom SA argues that It is difficult to listen and implement and satisfy everyone’s will. Also it has to be understood that Vodacom SA, as a private entity, has its own advertising strategies that fit in the company brand that it may not compromise on, even if some clients disagree with them. Furthermore, Schultz (2000) in a research study, on interactivity and online forums, states that: “Apparently interactivity has hardly any threatening meaning to elites.” Huge companies are part of the elites and as such may choose not to listen to audiences. This perhaps explains the 15% respondents who disagree and 5% who doubt the notion of Vodacom SA listening to their feedback and not being bothered by their feedback; something that is a possibility. Another factor for the 15% and 5% no and not sure is that “many people don’t have the energy, desire, need or training to engage in such processes [interactivity] (McQuail 2010:140). These respondents may be unsure because they do not know how interactivity works and also say no because they are not interested in being interactive in Vodacom SA’s advertising culture.

In terms of enjoyment, Vodacom stated that *“What we are doing with social media is creating ‘touch points’ for the customers, ‘touch points’ that they enjoy using. It is no longer like in the old days you used to have a brand talking down to you, from a TV or a billboard, **you now have a brand essentially like a person you can talk to”*** (sic).

Audiences showed they enjoyed Vodacom SA's adverts that were linked to new media. Testimony of this was 90% liking and 10% disliking by the audiences. In a study, on user generated media, by Shao (2009), there is evidence that new media generates amusement and pleasure for its audience this should naturally transmit to new media adverts; as enjoyment is an essential component of advertising, thus a satisfied 90%. The audiences' huge 90% amusement of new media use by Vodacom SA can be a case of technological determinism. Technological determinism theory stipulates that technology is seen as the prime mover in history and shaper of society (McLuhan and 1967). It is possible that interactivity and benefits brought about by new media technology have shaped society to like these developments and have also forced Vodacom SA to create a platform for these new media platforms as part of their advertising culture because the world has become a global village because of technological developments. With regards to the 10% that is not amused, a study by Porter and Golan (2006) show that new media advertising can be provocative to some audiences. Perhaps the 10% can be the ones regarded as agitated. The 10% can again be validated by McQuail (2010:140) who argues that not everyone derives satisfaction from the use of new media. Therefore the audiences who do not enjoy may not be impressed by new media; as it is not given that all Vodacom SA audiences would be amused by it.

Vodacom SA revealed that they started their Facebook and Twitter accounts in 2010. They also have a YouTube online TV channel. The Vodacom SA online team stipulates that: *"we have been tasked to advertise getting hold of us through our E-Shop or online on our Twitter and Facebook pages."* Vodacom SA's Senior Specialist in Corporate Communications Division goes on to declare that **"anything we say on social media is a mini press release"** (sic).

Audiences were asked if they see Vodacom adverts on social networking sites. The majority of them 90% confirmed that they had seen Vodacom SA adverts on social networking sites and a few 10% said they did not.

Vodacom SA's Chairman; Peter Moyo's statement in the Vodacom SA integrated report of March 2013, concedes to the realisation of the huge influence that social media plays in today's 21 century global world. This shows that the "*task*" or "*mandate*" given to the Communications department to launch Twitter and Facebook accounts are also a result of technological determinism (Vodacom. com 2013b). The fact that Vodacom SA was forced to set up social media sites was caused due to technological developments that had created social networking sites and had thus created a new market segment that Vodacom SA could not ignore. 90 % testimony by the respondents proves this and also showed that those very respondents were themselves pushed by technological developments of the emergence of social media and thus became part of it to keep up with trends of the time. A research by Bakshy, Eckles, Yan and Rosenn (2012) proves that companies are now adapting to social media advertising, a result of the growth of social networking sites and therefore a market segment. The 10% who state they did not see Vodacom SA on social networking sites may not be on social sites or may use different social sites that Vodacom SA is not on. This inclines to the uses and gratifications theory. Rubin (1994:421) argues that the uses and gratifications theory assumes that "people intentionally participate and select media messages from communication alternatives." This leads to individual deriving the required comfort and needs they desire from specific mediums.

### 5.6.1 Vodacom SA adverts and interactivity

Vodacom SA's Communication department said this about audience feedback; *"we listen to social media, we follow it all the time; everyone who mentions Vodacom we looking at it"* (sic). They go on to say that *"Social media is the first place where you get feedback..."* *"That is how it has been effective, the consumers are having a bigger say in what we do, which is how it should be"* adds Vodacom SA.

Audiences were asked if they felt that they were interactive with regards to Vodacom SA adverts. Audiences were asked to state if they found delight in using the new media. Contrary to Vodacom SA's sentiments, the majority of the respondents, 65%, felt that they were not influential on Vodacom SA's adverts and 35% thought they were.

The contradiction of 65% view of the audiences and Vodacom SA's assertion can be best explained by perhaps a contradiction of company philosophy and audience needs. The audiences may feel they are not listened to because what they desire may be in contrast to what and how Vodacom SA would like to be perceived , as a brand and how they want their advertising to represent their brand. Vodacom SA also argued that: *"it is a very tricky one and that is one of the great things about social media; is that everyone is got a voice suddenly and your brand is trying to find out about those voices."* Doubts and questions have been raised as to whether advertisers are truly cultivating meaningful relationships with consumers or audiences by using templates handed down from social-media sites (Mulhern 2009). In advertisers, such as Vodacom SA, defence, it is hard, if not impossible to please everyone as they mention that *"we take into account 50million subscribers that you are trying to please plus new subscribers."* However, Cover (2006) discusses and



describes interactivity as a “buzz-word, a consumer sales motif, an intellectual concept and technologically-constituted feature of new media that has for some time now been considered a cliché, an overkill term, a marketing concept media owners exercise” (sic). Mulhern (2009) further observes, in a research on online marketing, that that marketing communication approaches in social networking contexts do not reflect the views of the advertisers. These arguments can be how advertisers, such as Vodacom SA can use interactivity as a marketing smoke screen tool but do not take the audiences' feedback seriously and not feel obliged to change how they run businesses. Perhaps this is what 65% of the respondents feel about Vodacom SA's advertising culture and how interactive they are in that culture.

There is 35% who feel more influential on Vodacom SA's adverts and who Vodacom SA believes have become more influential. These are signs that there is interactivity in Vodacom SA's advertising culture for example exchanges and dialogues on the company's Facebook and Twitter pages. . Interactivity is associated with the new media (Kiouisis 2002) and so it would not be surprising that 35% of the audiences feel more involved in Vodacom SA's advertising Feldman (1997:18) strongly suggests that interactivity is when participants in a communication process have control over, and can exchange roles in, their mutual discourse. These audiences believe that they are both receivers and senders in Vodacom SA's advertising culture, a factor largely enabled by the new media. It is also important to note that the levels of interactivity may vary amongst individuals.

Vodacom SA was asked whether it lets its customers make adverts for them; since the new media makes this possible. Vodacom SA responded by saying that: “*there is space*” for this. They further elaborated; “*with advertising and videos there is a lot*

*of stuff you can do, a lot of it would be awful because people do not have the skills and you have to remember that a lot of people would not like to watch an awful advert*" (sic). *"I like the idea and it is exactly what social media brings"* notes Vodacom SA's Senior Specialist in Corporate Communications Division officer. Audiences were also asked if they were willing to make their own adverts and they seemed quite keen to create adverts, 65% said yes and 35% declined.

The fact that Vodacom SA is willing and realises the benefit of the idea of letting audiences create adverts for them but with a need for quality products is discussed by Gensler, Völckner, Thompkins and Wiertz (2013:246) who note that "brands can benefit from consumer-generated ads under certain circumstances." The "certain circumstance" that Gensler et al. (2013:246) include high end adverts by audiences; what Vodacom SA explicitly mentions as a prerequisite in letting audiences create adverts for them. Napoli (2010:511) observes that "the creative work of the audience is an increasingly important source of economic value for media organizations [advertisers]." With new media, audiences can be part of what O'Hern and Kahle (2013:24-25) term: "co-communicating and/or "co-creating. "Co-communication initiatives typically begin with an open call or contest that encourages consumers to develop innovative new promotional collateral that the firm can utilize in a future advertising campaign" (sic) (O'Hern & Kahle 2013:24). "Co-creating is a process defined as when users create their own novel product designs (innovation-focused user activity) and share these designs directly with a firm (C2B knowledge flow) for the purpose of enhancing the firm's new product offerings" (sic) (O'Hern & Kahle 2013:25).

The response by Vodacom SA shows that technological determinism has influenced the advertising culture at Vodacom SA. The company's realisation that media audiences are now also producers of media content is evident. They realise and accept this as a new dynamic to their advertising culture. O'Hern and Kahle (2013:29) suggest that "A paradigm shift is now underway in marketing, whereby firms are devolving significant amounts of power away from their own centralized control towards millions of creative consumers around the world who are interested in sharing their opinions, inventions, and insights"(sic). The 65% are the media audiences who would like to take full advantage of interactivity by the new media which allows them to be advert producers. Being social media consumers and users, the respondents being the youths and students, enthusiasm and interest shown is validation that this age category is mostly associated and interested in social media and new media usage (effectivemeasure.com 2013; Kreutzer 2009). Several companies have reportedly bought adverts by producers via new media sites such as YouTube or advertising blogs and used them for their companies. Hanna, Rohm and Crittenden (2011:265) observe and argue that "Consumers [Audiences] are no longer merely passive recipients in the marketing exchange process. Today, they are taking an increasingly active role in co-creating everything from product design to promotional messages" (sic). (Gensler et al. 2013:253) mention that social media reflect and amplify the participative, multi-vocal nature of brand authorship. Fournier and Avery (2011:194) use the metaphor of "open-source" branding, which implies "participatory, collaborative, and socially-linked behaviours whereby consumers serve as creators and disseminators of branded content." These active audiences who are co- creators and give feedback are referred to as "prosumers or producers" (Khang et al. 2010:283).

Vodacom SA also mentions that it has the: “*Vodacom face of the day promotions*” where its customers send pictures that are used to be the face of Vodacom SA on its official website or social networks for a day. Bowman and Willis (2003) in their work bring out the notion of “[the] customer as [the] innovator.” “The rise in interactive digital media has catapulted company and consumer contact from the traditional Web 1.0 model to the highly interactive Web 2.0 world, where consumers are dictating the nature, extent, and context of marketing exchanges” (sic) (Hanna et al. 2011:265). This shows that now, because of the new media, customers can now generate adverts and how they are keen on their new role; as witnessed in the 65% interest. Harrison and Barthel (2009) in a study expose this high level of audience interest to be producers. This keenness is also naturally transmuted into advert creation and as such the subsequent confirmation of a 65% interest by the respondents. Napoli (2010:505) in a research refers to: “the work [role] of the audiences”; where the researcher observes that audiences have become involved in media production, advert creations included. The fact that Vodacom SA mentions the amateur products of audience producers is what McQuail (2010:140) argues over as the downside of interactivity by stating; “Interactivity and choice are not universal benefits; many people don’t have the energy, desire, need or training to engage in such processes.” Not everyone has the expertise to make quality adverts, a concern Vodacom SA laments. The same thought by McQuail (2010:140) helps explain those 35% who do not want to make adverts for Vodacom SA. It is not everyone who will love to or invest oomph in being a media producer and make quality or standard adverts.

### **5.6.2 Vodacom SA's advertising culture and new media on: advertising agencies and roles in the media process**

Vodacom SA stated that they have a social media agency that handles content that goes out via social media. They also said that advertising briefs now include a “*social media plan*.” In terms of ownership of the mediums Vodacom SA indicated that: “*our audiences own those pages [social media pages], we look after them and make sure they are happy.*”

Technological determinism would explain why Vodacom SA now has a social media agency handling its online advertising and a “social media plan” within its communications structures. The growth and development of technology in new media has determined or influenced companies and brands to have social media pages, a social media plans and hire social media agencies. It is not only Vodacom SA which has been pushed to reorganise the strategies and makeup of their advertising culture and the media process and the roles involved. Vodacom SA's competitors, MTN, Cell C and others have also done the same. Technology has determined how Vodacom SA's advertising culture has evolved in terms of the media process, plans and strategies and the type of agencies to employ.

There is a notion of Vodacom SA social media pages being referred to as being under the ownership of Vodacom SA audiences. Steuer (1992:84), mentioned in Kiouisis (2002), discusses how audience “can participate in modifying the form and content”, precisely what Vodacom SA's social media pages of Twitter and Facebook are claimed to offer the audiences. However this statement has to be taken with caution and reservations. It is logical that since Vodacom SA is the creator of the Vodacom Twitter and Facebook pages, they do naturally exert most of the influence

on those pages; perhaps the biggest portion of that influence. Censorship, removal of audience views as well as agenda setting by Vodacom SA cannot be ruled out. Cover (2006) terms this as “permitted forms of interactivity”; whereby audiences or users are still limited in how they can own or control a medium’s functions and audience participation levels. There is no doubt that there is censorship as well as themes being largely set by Vodacom SA; this would make the claim that the audiences own the social media as only an ideal that is far from the reality. Perhaps these are the sentiments by the 65% of the respondents who think they are not all that interactive, if they are at all interactive. An important point to note is that although it may be difficult to completely gauge how much influence audiences have on Vodacom SA’s social media platforms, it is evident that they are not passive anymore and can in actual fact exert some form of influence with regards to Vodacom SA’s advertising culture especially on the social networking sites such as on Vodacom SA’s official Facebook, Twitter pages and a YouTube account.

### **5.6.3 Vodacom SA’s advertising culture and new media on: expenditure, budget allocations and costs**

Vodacom SA was asked if finances, budgets and expenditures have been affected by the arrival of the new media. They said: *“Of all advertising budget, 8% goes to social media and online advertising. Last year it was 4%. We are hoping to get it to 10% this year and to 15% next year. You can see how huge it is and it is growing.”* They further state that; *“We are spending more money on social media and not less on advertising [as a whole] but there is a need to spend more on social media.”* They go on to single TV and reveal that: *“TV takes a lot of money, it is just expensive!”* Sharp et al. (2009:211; 218) discuss and observe that TV advertising is “more

expensive than other form of adverting.” On another note they disclose that they have been tasked to advertise getting hold of Vodacom SA through their E-Shop or online pages of Twitter and Facebook. The logic behind this was explained by Vodacom SA’s Group Senior Specialist in Corporate Communications Division; manager of social media and Public Relations officer who said: *“why we do that is to pull traffic off our call centres so we get people online rather than call centres because it is actually cheaper for us online.”*

The increase in Vodacom SA’s advertising budget allocation to social media and online advertising is a complete response to the increase of Internet and social media usage by South Africans. It is important to note that in 2012, there were 6 million Internet users in South Africa (Pule 2012). This increased to 15 million users in 2013 (effectivemeasure.com 2013). Thus as the online audience increase, Vodacom SA increases its budget allocation for its social media and online advertising. This is also an indication that the digital divide in terms of Internet use is constantly shrinking mainly due to Internet access on mobile phone by most South African (worldwideworx.com 2013). The thought that new media advertising has reduced advertising expenditure seems to just be an ideal as Vodacom SA clearly state that although they are spending more on social media; they have not trimmed their overall advertising budget. Thus new media has not entirely redefined with the advertising expenditure with regards to Vodacom SA.

With regards to Vodacom SA’s high TV costs and expenditure; the South African audience landscape can be the reason for this. Vodacom SA notes that with regard to TV advertising; *“there is still a lot of people that are not reached by the media [new media such as social networks], especially in South Africa, so it is important to have*

*those [traditional mediums such as TV]*” The levels of the digital divide in South Africa, although shrinking, have seen most of the people in South Africa still not having access to new technology such as Internet usage. Thus TV has proven to be a medium where most of the population can be accessed by advertisers (effectivemeasure.com 2013). The preference also shown by respondents bear testimony to the liking audiences for TV. In explaining the Cultivation theory, Severin and Tankard (1997:299) argue that “the television set has become a key member of the family, the one who tells most of the stories, most of the time.” Thus those who own TV stations and channels would make TV advertising space expensive and those who advertise on TV would be frequent in doing so due to high TV viewership ratings. This would subsequently help explain Vodacom SA’s having high costs and expenditure on TV advertising.

#### **5.6.4 Vodacom SA’s advertising culture and new media on: norms, policy and legislation**

In terms of if Vodacom SA’s advertising policies, norms and legislative structures had been affected, they said everything on the brand; from logos to the colour and everything “*have had to be developed through social media and new media.*”

Vodacom SA stated that they created a “*brand voice*” with regards to what their employees can and cannot say. This is what they referred to as “*how you can speak as Vodacom.*” Vodacom SA’s Group Senior Specialist in Corporate Communications Division; manager of social media and Public Relations officer summed up the policy with regards to new media and advertising by stating that: “*On social media that means that you can be not not formal, but a lot more relaxed about it*” (sic). “*What we doing is actually cool, we trying to stay on top of the game*” (sic), she continues. She



also said that they have a Communications policy, with a social media policy within it that *“gives guidelines on what you can or cannot say on social media for our staff.”* *“Everything we put out is essentially a press release, whether it is an advert, whether it is a message from the CEO, whatever it is”*, she concludes.

It can be argued that technological determinism has changed the norms of advertising at Vodacom SA. The new technology has the ability to make quality designs, in both quality and visually. Companies have had to use them to have an upper hand over their competitors. Vodacom SA has also been included in this new technology wave in their norms on their advertising culture. Proof of this is their revelation that all their branding and logo development and or improvement are done via the new media and social networking sites.

Technological determinism has also influenced policy at Vodacom SA's advertising department. Vodacom SA's Chairman explicitly states that: *“We've embraced social media in particular as a highly effective channel to communicate one-on-one with our customers and other stakeholders, and have built one of the largest followings of any South African company”* (sic). Vodacom's Group Senior Consultant on Communication and Public Relations constantly used the phrases such as: *“we were tasked”* or *“we were mandated”* or *“we were given the go ahead”*. This shows that Vodacom SA's policy making structures have realised the significance of new media in modern day advertising and so made policy that accommodated that new media in Vodacom SA's advertising policy. The social media policy and how it, for example, made conversations less formal or that anything put on social media is regarded as a press releases and publicity are such policies that have been adopted by Vodacom SA in its advertising culture due to the advent of the new media.

When it comes to advertising laws that may have been necessitated by the new media, Vodacom SA felt that new media *“is still a developing industry.”* She further states that *“I think it is going to change as things happen, you know as something happens in one instance, that will be a law around that then they [lawmakers] will think about putting it in place, at the moment I think it is still relatively new and it still the same and as the Advertising Regulations Body will regulate against that and how it works. I think the one thing to look into is the PCA[The Protection of Consumers Act], you know which kind of talks about how we can engage with people online, you know we cannot talk to them directly, unless they invite us to talk to them , unless they give us that permission”* (sic). She gives an example and says: *“It is like when you send those promotional SMSs, you have to opt into those, you have to say yes I want this and you have to do it twice”* (sic). To summarise she notes; *“It is an interesting one and I think there are going to be a lot of changes in that area”* (sic).

The vagueness of the response on specific legislation on the new media is an interesting note. McQuail (2010:136) observes that the Internet has a low degree of regulation and up to date on new media. The author goes on to state that many countries struggle to have a developed framework of regulation. The reason for this can be that the Internet is so flexible, extendable and forever developing and changing; that a law enacted today maybe invalid tomorrow and it is difficult to determine a culprit, as Lesame, Mbatha and Sindane (2012) stipulate that the Internet “belongs to everyone.”

## **5.7 CONCLUSION**

This chapter carried out a data analysis and interpretation process. The chapter focused on a thematic discussion and analysis of data gathered in response to

specific questions regarding distinct but interrelated new media and Vodacom SA's advertising culture. The questions were evaluated in the light of specific objectives highlighted in the background to the study (see section 1.3). The data gathered facilitated an explorative discussion in investigating whether new media has redefined Vodacom SA's advertising culture and if so to what extent.

Data discussion was done in a narrative and argumentative manner. The main themes addressed in the chapter were Vodacom SA's advertising culture and its relationship with new media: audiences' perceptions, interactivity, advertising structure, advertising content, company advertising policies, advertising norms, advertising laws and advertising expenditure. The next chapter, chapter six (6) is the conclusion and the recommendations of the study.

# CHAPTER SIX

## 6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 RESEARCH CONCLUSION

This chapter summarises and concludes the research study. It takes stock of the entire chapters and outlines a synopsis of the findings. It will wrap up by making recommendations to Vodacom SA, advertising audiences, media practitioners, media researchers, advertisers and the South African government. This chapter is an autopsy of the entire study and the conclusion.

The data collected, in this study, showed that Vodacom SA's advertising culture has been redefined by the new media. A major aspect observed is that Vodacom SA's advertising culture has had to recognise and acknowledge the fact that new media has become so significant as a medium that top management "mandated" the communications team to incorporate online and new media advertising in the company's advertising mix. The influence and importance of social media advertising was also highlighted. All this shows that Vodacom SA's advertising policy and norms have been altered.

With regards to audiences, it is important to note that the majority of the participants showed awareness of the concept of the new media, social media and interactivity. The audiences also realise and are keen to exercise their new role of being a more involved and participatory part of the advertising process by proving feedback and being content producers. Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy and Silvestre (2011:250) note that customers or advert audiences; "no longer want to be talked at; instead, customers want firms to listen, appropriately engage, and respond" (sic). Even

Vodacom SA, the advertiser concedes to this and acknowledges the important fact of feedback and possible advert makers and how now audiences influence decisions and choices more, because of the new media; especially via social media. There was disagreement on the level of interactivity, advert quality, or effective of the feedback. The level of interactivity was a highly argued issue. Vodacom SA felt that audiences were listened to but contrary to this; the respondents they were not listened to. Yet, there was consensus that audiences had become more active and interactive and now possess considerable influence in Vodacom SA's advertising culture. This control and influence seemed to come from social media the most. Instead of a linear communication model where Vodacom SA would send adverts to audiences, there is a circular model where audiences and Vodacom SA have a dialogue. Audience and amateur advert making by the audiences was an issue of interest that audiences and Vodacom SA pondered on with regards to interactivity. The majority of audiences were regardless keen to be content creators in the form of advert producers. This showed a new aspect in terms of the advert creation process. The possibility of the audiences making adverts for Vodacom SA was taken up by Vodacom, but with caution due to issues of skills and quality. This can be attributed to a form of the digital divide of a lack of adequate skills by audiences to create high quality adverts.

It is also important to mention the resilience of preference for traditional media TV by the audiences over all other mediums, new mediums included. Huge TV preference by Vodacom SA and the respondents as the main advertising medium were observed in the study.

A new type of advertising agency has been established due to new media and social media advertising. Vodacom SA revealed that the social networks agencies were to offer expertise on social networks and digital marketing. The Vodacom SA communications team now also has a social media plan. This is a new concept in terms of briefs and advertising structure. This is how Vodacom SA's advertising structure has been redefined where the advertiser's attention is also now being channelled, to advertising and branding on social networking sites. Vodacom SA now has an official company Facebook page, official Twitter account, a digital online magazine and a YouTube channel. All this shows inclination towards online or Internet advertising.

The legislative side of advertising has not largely changed due to the role of social media and new media. Vodacom SA pointed that regulating the new media has proven difficult and also situations with regards to new media are never static but are forever changing and so it becomes near impossible to have relevant legislation on new media and advertising. Because of the dynamic nature and uncertainty of technological advances, it was also vague as to how advertising and the relationship with new media can be regulated. The fact that inventions are forever being improved and new advances are made frequently; makes it difficult to have legislation on new media advertising. As new media is highly linked to the Internet; the research validates other studies that have observed the difficulty and complexity of regulating the Internet

The advertising budget of Vodacom SA has been altered in terms of the allocation to an increase towards new media advertising. The new media, in the form of mostly social media; has become a new huge beneficiary of the budget split. However, the

high expenses of advertising at Vodacom SA have neither have been reduced or increased; it has not been affected. It is only the allocation for new media that has increased.

The study was conclusive in answering the problem statement of whether Vodacom SA's advertising culture has been redefined by the new media and to what extent. The research showed that Vodacom SA's advertising culture has been redefined by the new media. However, the redefinition is still to a small extent. It is perhaps safe to state that the redefinition of Vodacom SA's advertising culture redefined every single facet of that culture, although still having a limited effect with regards to Vodacom SA's advertising culture. The redefinition was observed on Vodacom SA's advertising: structure, mediums, budget, policy, norms and audience relations. One can state that using the budget allocation given to new media; new media advertising at Vodacom SA constitutes 15% of Vodacom SA's advertising. This can also be used as the level of redefinition; at 15%.

Yet it is essential to mention that although new media has redefined the advertising; traditional media still holds a central and important place in Vodacom SA's advertising culture. TV in particular was a dominant medium to both the audiences and Vodacom SA's preference. Sharp et al. (2009:18) conduct a research on television advertising and witness that "In the face of great changes and the emergence of competing advertising [new] media, TV remains the preeminent advertising medium, even if it is more complex and expensive." It is because that TV has proved its persuasive power in influencing human behaviour from time to time through its creativity and impact, attention and captivity, selectivity and flexibility (Belch & Belch 200). "The shift away from TV advertising appears to be misguided.

TV is actually becoming more effective, not less” (Binet & Field 2009:133). Rubinson (2009:220) notes that “...TV advertising appears to be as effective as ever, even possibly increasing in effectiveness. Jamhour and Winiarz (2009:230) cap up the longevity, influence and dominance of TV advertising from the past to the present by commenting that:

In conclusion, TV appears to be as influential today as it always was. The influence of digital [new] media has grown, particularly in technology and electronics categories, but that did not cause a corresponding decrease in TV influence. Digital contacts [media] only added to the media clutter. The bottom line is that TV advertising is still indispensable for most large Brands-it remains the most potent contact in the mass media group. (sic)

Radio and newspaper mediums were also hugely used by Vodacom SA, although the respondents did not show great interest in them. This aspect proved that although new media has become influential, it would be detrimental for Vodacom SA to disregard the traditional mediums. In light of social and economic factors. This thus brought perhaps another important revelation of media convergence. Vodacom SA's advertising culture has adopted the use and mixture of both new and traditional media in its advertising culture. Audiences, technology advances, preferences, products and target markets, digital divide and expenses are some of the reasons that have caused the need to have media convergence; the use of various mediums to advertise; be they new or traditional mediums.

The digital divide was also a huge and determining factor in the study. South Africa still has gaps in the have and the have nots in terms of new media; possession access, use and necessary usage skills. The fact that not all of South Africans have access to the Internet, Smartphones, social media and various other forms of new media devices leads to advertisers using new media advertising with caution because it is not all consumers who would have access to new media adverts. Thus



the digital divide retards the pace and growth of new media advertising. Usage ability and skill would also limit new media advertising; as the research unearthed.

Social media and social networking is an aspect of new media advertising that cannot be ignored. The importance of social media as a major new media advertising tool was outlined and observed by the research study. Both the audiences and Vodacom SA showed the relevance and influence of social media advertising and branding. The creation of a Vodacom SA YouTube channel, a Vodacom SA Facebook and a Vodacom SA Twitter page coupled with an annually increasing social networking budget is also testimony to this. To Vodacom SA, this is perhaps the most important form of new media advertising at the moment. Social media proved to be a real force and its growth and continued influence is something to be on the lookout for in the future of new media advertising research.

## **6.2 SUMMARY**

The study was insightful providing useful information on the status of the relationship between advertising culture and the new media, through the Vodacom SA case study. It was successful in reaching its objectives and confirmed or disagreed with previous studies and theories on related aspects. The research concludes that Vodacom SA's advertising culture has been redefined by the new media and this is at the moment to a lesser extent, although the redefinition grows constantly. Technological developments and the evolving of ICTs cannot be predicted and further and regular research can help gauge the state of the relationship at a given time.

Although the research study was highly effective in meeting its objectives, it did have its own limitations. For instance it was a case study and although respondents were

asked general questions regarding the advertising industry, the study mainly focused on Vodacom SA's advertising culture. Thus, generalising the entire industry can lead to disregard for specific situations and scenarios that were not within the scope of the study but can be determinants.

Furthermore, the fact that the respondents of the questionnaires were University of Limpopo students, this may have caused a discrimination of other social groups. This may have affected the study by restricting the research's responses to one particular homogeneous group of people. Thus it may have limited diversity as well as other demographic groupings. Yet the research study's justifications of the use of the sample technique and design ensured that bias was significantly reduced.

The Vodacom SA case study results show that the study becomes a typical ad deviant case study (Yin 2009). It is a typical case in that it shows that advertising has redefined advertising; as an entire culture and that the study can be used to generalise industry trends. It is a deviant case in that it contradicts assumptions regarding new media. It shows the continued significance of TV in the 21 century, even among youths something puzzling because of the youth's huge usage of new media. It also shows that, it is not always the case that new media lowers costs. Thus it is a deviant case study that contradicts previous studies and has new insight in the phenomenon of new media and advertising. Yet it is paramount to note that there is need for Vodacom SA to accommodate, acknowledge and respect audiences' interactive capability, because of the new media. This would lead to effective new media advertising. Mulhern (2009) notes that new media's amplified interactive nature dictates a participatory and communal advertising landscape and so in using new media advertising new forms of communication practices and more

dynamic advertising content is required; a sharp contrast to traditional media, which is less interactive. Hennig-Thurau, Malthouse, Friege, Gensler, Lobschat, Rangaswamy & Skiera (2010:324), from a study on new media advertising and customer relations note:

...new media require a shift in marketing thinking as consumers have become highly active partners, serving as customers as well as producers and retailers being, strongly connected with a network of other consumers. (sic)

### **6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

As proven by the extensive discussion and consideration of the divergent circumstances and viewpoints that lead to the intricate relationship between new media and advertising, it is essential to notably underscore that there is no immediate and overall method in the comprehension of the subject matter. Henceforth, the given recommendations are not exhaustive but and may be improved on. The recommendations are directed at various stake holders in advertising and these are; Vodacom SA, audiences, researchers, advertisers and the South African government.

#### **6.3.1 Recommendations to Vodacom SA**

##### **6.3.1.1 Conduct collaborative research projects with research and tertiary institutions such as universities.**

The researcher recommends that Vodacom SA invests in creating research collaborations with tertiary institutions such as universities. Universities are hubs of research and provide highly dependable, diversified and unique forms of research. Because of the nature of media studies, that integrates various disciplines such as

media studies, sociology, law, psychology and many others, a joint research of such disciplines is recommended.

#### **6.3.1.2 Integration of all new media facets not only social media**

The discussions that were held with Vodacom SA's top brass on communication and the official company reports showed that there was a huge inclination to social media as the only form of new media advertising. There is almost a sense of neglecting the other forms of new media and what and how they can contribute to Vodacom SA's advertising culture. Therefore the researcher recommends Vodacom SA implements an integrated new media mix and not just using social networking sites.

#### **6.3.2 Recommendations to advertising audiences**

##### **6.3.2.1 Take advantage of new media's interactive capabilities**

For long, media audiences had been regarded as passive and seldom involved by advertisers. However, the new media offers audiences an increased active role in the advertising process. Feedbacks and content production, via new media, creations are some of the capabilities that make the audience have significant influence. Audiences are sometimes reluctant to take this role in the media process. The researcher recommends advertising audiences to take advantage of interactivity in advertising and empower themselves.

##### **6.3.2.2 Invest in new media literacy initiatives**

McQuail (2010) states that as much as the new media gives more capabilities to the audiences, it also requires that very audience to do more. Thus even though new media offers audiences advantages such as interactivity, the audiences have to put more effort, have more skills and be more knowledgeable than before. Media skill and

understanding features and capabilities is what is broadly termed media literacy. The ability and training of use of the new media is a prerequisite for effective new media utilisation. This is defined as being new media literate. Being new media literate helps audiences become more active in properly and fully use the new media. The only way for audiences to do this is invest time and resources in comprehension of how to fully use new media. Thus the researcher recommends audiences to invest in new media literacy activities. This includes computer literacy and constant and up to date usage of the latest ICTs.

### **6.3.3 Recommendations to media researchers**

#### **6.3.3.1 Carry out frequent research on the relationship between new media and advertising**

It should not be surprising that perhaps a year or less from the completion of this study, there can be a different outcome in the same study. The dynamic and fast pace of technological advancement brings about new developments and scenarios that can alter the status of the whole industry. Consequently, the researcher recommends that it is imperative that researchers constantly conduct studies that enquire the status of the unpredictable relationship between new media and advertising.

#### **6.3.3.2 Integrate intertwined disciplines to gain better understanding**

Media studies are affected by various other studies such as sociology, philosophy, information studies, marketing, business management and law; just to mention but a few. These disciplines can impact new media and advertising research. The researcher recommends that researchers integrate the various disciplines that can

affect advertising and new media to optimise the quality of results and deepen understanding.

### **6.3.4 Recommendations to the advertisers**

#### **6.3.4.1 Practice media convergence of traditional and new media in advertising campaigns**

Companies need to consider both new and traditional media as part of an ecosystem whereby all elements work together toward a common objective: whether to launch and promote a new product or service, to communicate a new company initiative or to simply further engage customers in a rich, meaningful and interactive dialogue (Hanna et al. 2011:273). The study showed that although new media has gained significant influence and will perhaps grow in that influence traditional media is still relevant in an organisation's advertising culture. Audience preferences as well as socio and economic forms showed that traditional media are necessary mediums in advertising. The research showed that use of both traditional media and new media; convergence of the media is the best strategy to have optimum advertising outcomes. It also showed that more than one medium, be it traditional or new, provides optimum results. Consequently, the researcher recommends that advertisers practice media convergence of traditional media and new media in their medium selection for adverts. Advertisers should recognize and understand their social media landscape, using the honeycomb framework. The honeycomb framework is a tool that finds out if and where conversations about a firm are already being held and how these are enabled by the different functionalities (Kietzmann et al 2011:249).

#### **6.3.4.2 Acknowledge and accept audiences' new interactive role**

The research showed that new media has given audiences more room for feedback, participation and thus more influence and has created a new role of media producers. The audiences themselves are keen on these new roles and intend on utilising them. It is wise for advertisers to pay heed to the opinions, roles, demands and preferences that audiences exercise in the new in advertising process. Being ignorant or in denial of this new interactive audience, brought about by the new media, will lead to the demise of any advertiser. The researcher recommends that advertisers acknowledge and accept audiences' new interactive role and control and put this into consideration in their advertising cultures.

#### **6.3.5 Recommendations to the South African government**

##### **6.3.5.1 Implement relevant legislation on new media**

Although it is apparent that it is difficult to enact laws on new media, due to technological changes by the day, governments should nevertheless try and implement relevant legislation. The new media, if left unchecked; can bring about problems such as competitors infringements, consumer identity theft and limited consumer and advertiser protection. Therefore the researcher feels it is imperative that government enact relevant legislation on new media, within specific contexts.

##### **6.3.5.2 Expose and encourage the nation to new media usage**

Full comprehension of the new media requires audience skill and exposure to the new media. The South African government is advised to embark on creating new

media conscious nation and generations. The digital divide threatens societies in their full and beneficial usage of the new media, not just in advertising but the entire media landscape. Introducing new media and media education in schools, putting incentives on prices of new media technology and providing poor societies with new media, such as computers and Internet access, as well as encouraging the public to embrace new media usage are some of the ways government can raise awareness to public and assist it in its new media usage. Accordingly, the researcher recommends that the South African government expose the general public to new media.



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# ANNEXURES

## ANNEXURE A: LETTER SEEKING CONSENT FROM VODACOM SA

The Head, Media and Communications  
Vodacom Corporate Park, 082 Vodacom  
Boulevard, Midrand 1685  
South Africa

University of Limpopo  
School of Languages and Communication Studies  
Department of Media Studies  
Turfloop Campus  
Private Bag X1106  
Sovenga  
0727

01 May 2013

Dear Sir/ Madam

**RE: APPLICATION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY ON YOUR  
ORGANISATION**

I am a Master of Arts student at the above mentioned university and my studies are a full time research project. As such, I wish to conduct a research with the topic titled: **ADVERTISING AS REDEFINED BY THE NEW MEDIA: A CASE STUDY OF**

**VODACOM SOUTH AFRICA.** I am an ardent fan of the new media and would like to explore if your institution has been influenced by it in its media and more specifically advertising culture. I have chosen your company over your competitors because I feel that you are the most innovative and are the generic brand of the South African telecommunications industry. My study is to be specific on Vodacom advertising and its scope would be your advertising culture.

I therefore seek permission to conduct interviews with key figures at Vodacom in the advertising and managerial levels. The interviews are to be recorded and they are to be carried out only once.

Perhaps for you to fully understand the purpose and intended method of study; I can set up an appointment with you and have a meeting, in order for you to fully comprehend my plea. I have thus attached my approved project proposal.

It is my hope that I hear from you in the immediate future and that we develop a relationship that benefits all the parties involved. If you have any information you desire to know, you can contact me on the media department line on 015 268 3083, through my personal number: 0794671245 or my email [smuridzo@gmail.com](mailto:smuridzo@gmail.com).

Regards,

Muridzo, Searchmore

## **ANNEXURE B: LETTER OF APPROVAL: VODACOM SA**

**The Dean Faculty of Humanities University of Limpopo**

**Dear Dr Rampedi**

This email serves as a confirmation that Searchmore Muridzo, an MA student; at The University of Limpopo's Faculty of Humanities, School of Languages and Communications; Department of Media Studies will be conducting an interview at Vodacom SA Headquarters in Midrand on 15 July 2013.

The interview is part of his research topic: **ADVERTISING AS REDEFINED BY THE NEW MEDIA: A CASE STUDY OF VODACOM SOUTH AFRICA**

Mr Muridzo will conduct a two hour discussion with a member of the communications department and a member of the online team. Please be advised that Vodacom will only provide information that is in accordance with company regulations.

Kind regards,

Ashleigh

**Ashleigh Dubbelman**

**Senior Specialist: Corporate**

**Communications**



Landline: +27 82 277 7027

Cell: +27 79 490 6367

Vodacom Corporate Park, 082 Vodacom

Boulevard, Midrand 1685 South Africa

## ANNEXURE C: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MEDIA AUDIENCES

Department of Media Studies  
University of Limpopo  
Private Bag X1106  
Sovenga 0727  
South Africa.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a Master student in the above named Department and University. I am undertaking a research study on the topic: **ADVERTISING AS REDEFINED BY THE NEW MEDIA: A CASE STUDY OF VODACOM SOUTH AFRICA** The aim of this study is to investigate and explore if the new media has redefined Vodacom SA's advertising culture, and if so, to what extent and in what ways. To this end I kindly ask that you complete the following questionnaire regarding your experiences and options as an audience of advertising products and also your familiarity with Vodacom SA advertising. Completing this questionnaire should not take you more than 30 minutes of your time. Your response is of utmost important to this study.

Please do not enter your name or contact details on the questionnaire. It remains anonymous. A summary of the result of this research will be used to produce a dissertation thesis and publication of academic articles in scholarly journals. Should you have any queries or comments regarding this survey, you are welcome to call 0794671245 or email [smuridzo@gmail.com](mailto:smuridzo@gmail.com)

Yours faithfully,

Muridzo, Searchmore

## AUDIENCES' QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BY CROSSING (X) IN THE RELEVANT BOX.

### 1. Gender

Male	1
Female	2

### 2. What is your age category?

Less than 18 years	1
18-30 years	2
30-45 years	3
45-65 years	4
Above 65 years	6

### 3. What are your highest educational qualifications?

Completed Matric	1
------------------	---

Bachelor degree	2
Post graduate	3

**4. How will you describe the area in which you are residing presently?**

Urban	1
Rural	2
Semi- urban	3

**5. Do you know what advertising is?**

Yes	1
No	2

**6. Do adverts make you buy?**

Yes	1
No	2

**7. Do you think advertising has changed because of  
new media over the years?**

Yes	1
No	2
Not sure	3

**8. Do you have a general idea of what  
traditional media are?**

Yes	1
No	2
Not sure	3

**9. Do you have a general idea of what the  
new media are?**

Yes	1
No	2

Not sure	3
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**10. If advertising has changed because of new media  
do you like the changes?**

Yes	1
No	2

**11. Where would you like to see an advert on?**

TV	1
Radio	2
Billboard	3
Newspaper	4
Internet	5
Mobile Phone	6
Other new technology	7



**12. Do you enjoy using new forms of media?**

Yes	1
No	2

**13. Does the new media give you the ability  
to talk to the advertisers?**

Yes	1
No	2

**14. Do you think Vodacom SA's adverts have changed  
because of new media over the years?**

Yes	1
No	2
Not sure	3

**15. Where the most do you see Vodacom's adverts?**

TV	1
Radio	2

Billboard	3
Newspaper	4
Internet	5
Mobile Phone	6
Other new technology	7

**16. Do Vodacom adverts make you purchase their products?**

Yes	1
No	2

**17. Do you think Vodacom SA's adverts have become better because of new media over the years?**

Yes	1
No	2
Not sure	3

**18. Does Vodacom through the new media**

**give you the chance to talk to them about their**

**advertising?**

Yes	1
No	2
Not sure	3

**19. Do you enjoy Vodacom SA's adverts with**

**new media?**

Yes	1
No	2

**20. Do you know what social networking sites are?**

Yes	1
No	2

**21. Which social networking site do you use the most?**

Facebook	1
My space	2
Twitter	3
WhatsApp	4
Other	5

**22. Do you see Vodacom adverts on social networking sites?**

Yes	1
No	2

**23. Do you know what interactivity is?**

Yes	1
No	2

**24. Do you have more say i.e. comments, approvals, disapprovals etc., over Vodacom adverts, through the new media?**

Yes	1
No	2

**25. Are you willing to make your own adverts using the new media?**

Yes	1
No	2

## **ANNEXURE D: QUESTIONS FOR INTENSE INTERVIEW**

Welcome Note:

Good day, my name is Searchmore Muridzo and I am a MA student in Media Studies, at the University of Limpopo. I am doing a research study with an interest in new media and advertising.

The research topic is: **ADVERTISING AS REDEFINED BY THE NEW MEDIA: A CASE STUDY OF VODACOM SOUTH AFRICA**

You were selected because the researcher felt that being Vodacom SA's top management and being directly involved in the company's advertising culture you can assist in determining if the new media has influenced Vodacom's advertising culture, and if so to what extent.

**The discussion's Guidelines are:**

- There is no right or wrong answer, only differences on views points.
- We shall be on a first name basis.
- My role as moderator will be to guide the discussion with regards to the study's objectives. For further comprehension and clarity, I shall use probes such as:
  - "Would you explain further?"
  - "Would you give an example?"
  - "I don't understand."
- Before we start we will ask you to briefly introduce yourself and your position in the company.

## Questions:

- Has the new media redefined the advertising culture of Vodacom SA, over the years?
- If yes, how have things been redefined in Vodacom SA's advertising culture?  
Paying particular attention to:
  - i. Audiences
  - ii. Advertising structure.
  - iii. Company Policies and Norms.
  - iv. Content.
  - v. Expenditure.
  - vi. Advertising laws.
- How may one describe the nature of the redefinition, if any, in terms of effect; is it gradual or an immediate effect on Vodacom SA's advertising culture?
- Has the redefining of Vodacom SA's advertising culture by the new media, if any, produced any kind of benefit or detriment to Vodacom SA itself and the audiences, if yes what are those benefits or detriments?
- Of all the things we discussed, what do you think is the most important aspect to note about the relationship between the new media and Vodacom SA's advertising culture?
- Have we missed anything and would you like to add on anything else?