MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA AND SOCIETY STUDIES

The film industry in Zimbabwe- Growth and Production challenges: a case of Gona raMachingura and Checkmate

BY

R141081B

LEVEL 4.2

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFIMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BACHELOR OF SOCIAL SCIENCES HONOURS DEGREE IN MEDIA AND SOCIETY STUDIES

NOVEMBER 2016

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Abstract

This research scrutinised the film services sector and the value chain in film production in Zimbabwe. This was in a bid to assess the practices and divulge challenges that are faced by film players and the way these hinder growth of the sector. The research used case studies of two films, *Checkmate* and *Gona raMachingura* as it was impossible to look at the sector in its entirety. Qualitative methods were employed in the research. The findings from the two cases complimented each other and were analysed in themes. There was a disorganisation and high level of unprofessionalism in the production of these two films. These findings, were concluded, are reflective of the generality of the industry and have a hindering effect on the growth prospects of the industry as a whole.

Acronyms

BAZ- Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe

BEKE-Bantu Educational Kinema Experience

CAFU- Central African Film Unit

Etv-South African television Station

EX3- A professional Sony camera model

HD- High Definition

NACZ- National Arts Council of Zimbabwe

NGO- Non Governmental Organisation

P2- A professional Panasonic camera model

SABC-South African Broadcasting Corporation

SD-Standard Definition

UNCTAD-United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

UNESCO- united Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organisation.

USA-United States of America

ZBC-Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation

4K-4000 lines of resolutions

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Chapter 1: General Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The world is witnessing an impressive proliferation of the film industries outside the traditional dominance of the Hollywood industry (Geiger, 2008; Schultz, 2012). The growth is in terms of quality of productions, return on investment, employment opportunities, access to training as well as access to new technologies to produce impressive movie effects (Schultz, 2012). Not only has this development happened in developed countries, developing countries such as India , Nigeria and South Africa are leading in the rate of growth, fast catching up with the likes of Hollywood and the British film industry . Nigeria leading the pack as it has become the world's largest mass producer of film products, with over 1500 productions in a single year.

The increasing importance of this sector to the economies of various countries has been widely mentioned in previous studies (UNCTAD, 2008; UNESCO, 2006; Scott, 2004). However, despite the potential economic contributions of the film industry, little attention has been given by scholars from other disciplines other than those from culture and media studies. Also, most research concerns the cultural effects on the third world audiences (Pawanteh, 2006; Rampal, 2005; Scott, 2004; Sinclair, Jacka and Cunningham, 1996) as a means of cultural preservation and looking for a place in the global arena, developing countries are struggling to promote and develop their own indigenous film industry. Economically, developing countries recognize the opportunities brought about by the globalisation of the film business and strive to benefit from it (Rosenan2012). These developments become also important for the film industry in Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe has a history of a film culture that is impressive. This dates back to the colonial era with the suggestion that the Colonial government established a film unit in order to make sure that the Africans become a source of loyal and cheap labour in their mining or farming activities (Burns2011, Hungwe (200)5 ,Mboti 2010/2014 and Mhiripiri 2000). Hungwe (2005) points the establishment of the Central African Film Unit(CAFU) which was used for the production of educational (instructional) film materials. While Mboti(2014) highlights on the earlier establishes (1939) Bantu Educational Kinema Experience (BEKE) which he said was funded by several companies that were involved in mining activities as well as wealthy individuals.

When the country gained its independence there was a surge of film productions in the 1980s through to the 1990s (Mhiripiri, 2010; Mboti, 2014 and Hungwe, 2005). In the years after 2000s, the industry turned for the worst, there was literally the "death" of the culture. However, films are still being produced but there are reasons why these current productions are not being talked about in the same manner as the likes of *Neria, Yellow Card, Jit* and *Everyone's Child* among many other productions to come out of Zimbabwe.

The aim of this research is to interrogate practices in the film sector using the two film productions *Gona raMachingura* and *Checkmate*. This is in a view to make known the current production trends in the sector in a view to understand current and future prospects. The film industry can be a viable source of employment for thousands of people as is the case in other markets such as the USA and emerging markets like Ghana , Nigeria , India and South Africa were one can lend a carrier as an actor , script writer, cinematographer or editors, for among many other prospects that the industry can potentially offer.

A quick search on the internet, especially so on social media like Facebook and YouTube will give an indication that the industry is active and individuals or groups are on different stages of production. As a player in the industry myself, I am interested in understanding were the industry stands at the moment. My special interest is on the production process, I would like to enquire if the players are matching best practices, and to also see if the country has the propensity to also enjoy the growth that is being witnessed in other markets.

1.2 Background to the Study

The film industry in Zimbabwe has generally passed through four phases which are essentially divided into pre-colonial stage and three stages in the post-independence Zimbabwe (Hungwe2000, Mboti2014). These stages are the 1980s (with government and Hollywood striking deals), the 1990s (when there was a great deal of NGO activity), and the 2000s, an era when the industry was "orphaned" from funding. Industry players have not stopped producing since the drying-up of funds; they have employed some survival strategies. This led to an era that Mboti(2014) titled the "dollar –for –two" era of the 2000s and beyond. After the said era the industry needs to be scrutinised in an aim to see the practises currently employed by the players in the context of the economic circumstances of Zimbabwe.

In this research I chose to use two film productions for my study, these are *Gona raMachingura* and *Checkmate*. *Gona raMachingura* has been at the planning stage of going on set since March 2016 and filming began in September 2016. It is being produced by Hamfrey Chidawaenzi, originally he had a co-producer Collins Mukosi (known for the series *Small House Saga* on ZBCTV) who unfortunately passed away before production commenced, (29 June 2016). Chidavaenzi then started working with Aaron Chiunduramoyo as a script writer after the passing of Mukosi. The film is about a family who solicit the use of a "*Tsikamutanda*". This is an individual with special spiritual powers and known for exposing witches and other ills in society. A few of the family members were implicated in shoddy dealings and there are some disastrous consequences, leading to death in the worst case scenario. The film is setup in the idealistic traditional society before the society was "tainted" by colonisation. This is the kind of society similar to that depicted in Chiunduramoyo's other project which is serialised on ZBCTV, *Tiriparwendo*. The production house whose resources are being used is Bigshow Productions on a profit sharing agreement as the producer has no funds to pay cash for the production.

Checkmate is a re-creation of one that was titled the same produced in 2014, about a young lady who had to choose between a promising airline career and an unborn baby and after a dangerously executed abortion, the job turned out to be a hoax. The first film was not a financial success but received a significant following online as it currently has more than 500 000 views on Youtube. The producer/writer, Itayi Kakuwe insists his idea was good but executed wrongly among a cocktail of other problems. He believes that a second coming of a better executed film will give it a better chance in the market. He is also inspired by the prospects of digitalisation that he believes will give a platform for people as talented and creative as him. The film will be produced under a company called Fig Multimedia based in Highlands Harare.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The world is witnessing an abundance of film industries with multi-million dollar films being produced in Hollywood alone (Schultz, 2012 and Plate, 2014). The growth has been in terms of quality and quantity of productions. The growth of the film industries in Zimbabwe does not match that of other world film producers as well as third world producers such as Nigeria, Ghana and South Africa. The quality of productions coming out of Zimbabwe from the period post 2000 to date has been described as generally pathetic partly because the film

producers are facing a number of challenges (Mbewe 2013, Mboti 2014). The research aims at finding the practices in the production processes of two films and how these affect the aesthetics and therefore the growth of the film industry in Zimbabwe. The two cases to be used are *Checkmate* and *Gona raMachingura*.

1.4 Objectives

The Objectives Of The Study Are To:

- To investigate how practices in the film services sector in Zimbabwe affect the production process of *Gona raMachingura* and *Checkmate.*

- Chart the shape and characteristics of the Zimbabwe film industry as reflected by practices in *Gona raMachingura* and *Checkmate*.

- Examine the policy framework and its effects on the film services sector in Zimbabwe as witnessed in the production of *Gona raMachingura* and *Checkmate*.

1.5 Main research question

What are the film production challenges in the case of *Gona raMachingura* and *Checkmate* that have a growth hindering effect in the Film industry in Zimbabwe?

1.5.1 Research Sub questions
- What are the characteristics of services and service providers along the value chain of film production that shape the size and shape of the film industry in Zimbabwe?
- In what ways does the policy environment affecting the growth of the film sector in Zimbabwe with reference to the two film productions, *Gona raMachingura* and *Checkmate*?

1.6 Significance of the Study

Fisher (2010) went into depth about finding, ideology and the aesthetics of developmental films in post colonial Zimbabwe. The literature goes into detail on how film productions have attempted to polarise a film type that is more didactic that entertainment and has its roots in colonial era. Hungwe (2005) had initiated the study of the film industry by looking at the film types that were coming out of Zimbabwe, complaining about the donor prevalence in the creative process. The dominance of western donors in the financing of film projects may

inhibit the development of alternative African film narratives (ibid). Studies on the origins and development of the film industry have been carried out by various scholars including Mhiripiri(2010), Hungwe(1991,1992,2005), Mboti(2014),Mbewe(2013) and Manhando-Makore(2000), however what seems common in the studies is that they all glorify the past and bemoan the "death" of the film sector, especially so in the years past 2000 (Mboti2014) even went to the extent of labelling the current period that the industry finds itself in as the 'dollar –for –two' era whereby he describes the industry as so pathetic that for a dollar one can actually get a choice of two movies from a street corner.

Mbewe(2013) gathered all the evidence he could find to show that the film industry in Zimbabwe "suck", in his own words, however he is one of the few who speak about the production of the films , mainly talking about the poor quality of films being produced, he does not get into the detail of how such poor quality come by. Hence he was only looking at the films from an audience's perspective and not from a production point of view, which makes this study significant. Mhiripiri(2010) is also guilty of the same , he talks of the content of the short films that are being produced, he even goes further to describe the aesthetics of some o the camera shots and angle in the films , valorising the creativity of those producing the short films, but again this was done from a content analysis point of view, whereby the writer looks at a finished product and does not bother on the production process of that product.

Manhando-Makore(2000) bemoans the openness of the industry where she says that the industry has so much informalised that there is now so much liberty of entrance into the industry. She touches on policy in which she advocates government to have a way of regulating the industry in order to have limited access only to genuine professionals. In her article ,s he is far from talking of how limiting entries o the industry will assist in the production process of the products of the industry, this research will be concerned with the production process hence these issues will be talked about.

Scannell(2001) conducted a study on the production processes and prospects of the radio and music recording industry. This study highlighted the challenges and prospects of the particular industry, the industry has its own dynamics that are different from those of film and television recording industry, therefore there is that gape in his literature. Literature on film production therefore is lacking as none of these scholars have taken the time to understand

the dynamics of what exactly goes on when a film is being produced, the studies are not linking to the production process including the technical elements which should be the most critical aspect and is going to be addressed by this research.

1.7 Delimitations

The research is going to scrutinise the production process in Gona raMachingura and Checkmate in the aim of mapping the way forward for the film industry in Zimbabwe which is in a comatose state. These two are films that are going to be at different stages of production during the period of my study, which is September and October 2016 enabling me to interact with different production levels in a limited period of time. I aim to understand the normative in t-he industry and then carry out interviews and observations in order to ascertain what are those things that they say they do and what I observe them doing in the production of the films affect the growth and prospects of the film industry in Zimbabwe and how.

1.8 Limitations

Film theory and political economy theory are western conceived theories. The film services approach is an idea that came up to explain the American industry and the products that come out of that industry. These theories might fall short in explaining the industry as it stands in Zimbabwe, for example the way in which genres are determined in the US market may not conform to the same in the African and Zimbabwean market. The later may develop their own way of telling their stories that is unique to Africa in the same manner as Sungura music might not conform to any of the genres of music that is found in western countries but is very popular locally (Scannell2001).

There are problems with the case study approach (Rose2015), one technical issue what is known as selection bias whereby the choice of cases biases the findings of the research, particularly with respect to excluding cases that contradict favoured theory. Another challenge of case study research is that it can be very demanding to carry out. One reason for this is the need for in-depth access to case sites in this case the film sites. Another is the requirement it places on the researcher in terms of dealing with the complexity of field research if multiple data collection methods are used.

Purposive sampling may result in poor results and lacks intellectual credibility (Marshall1996). With purposive sampling there is a high probability of researcher bias, as each sample is based entirely on the judgment of the researcher in question, who generally is

trying to prove a specific point. The same is also possible with convenience sampling as other population groups may not be represented therefore bringing incomplete conclusions.

The data collection methods also have their own flaws, interviews can have the weakness that people can misrepresent facts or lie. The tendency of saying things that the interviewee thinks the interviewer wants to hear. While observations have one key weakness in that people normally act out when they know they are being watched, (Marshall1996) called it the Hawthorne effect and as well observation can be time consuming.

1.9 Assumptions of the study

- I assume that there is film production taking place in Zimbabwe and it is worth the time to study this industry.
- I also assume that the players will give me accurate information as it is of their interest as well to have information in the public domain as that will likely have an effect on their own personal growth. I assume as well that the people I will choose to give me the information are best placed to do so and are will best represent the industry.
- *Gona raMachingura* and *Checkmate* are reflective of the current status of the industry therefore the findings and conclusions will be representative of the industry as a whole.

1.10 Structure of the study

The research consists of six chapters with chapter one focusing on the introduction of the study outlining the background of the study, research questions, and research objectives, scope of the study and significance of the study among others. Chapter two provides the literature review and theoretical framework. The third chapter explores the research methods and data collecting instruments which were used in carrying out the research whilst chapter four gives an analysis of the organizational structures of *Bigshow productions and FIG Multimedia* respectively. The research findings and data presentation will be presented in Chapter five and the sixth chapter sums up the study by providing conclusions and recommendations.

1.11 Definition of Key Terms

Film/ Video–

- Capture on film as part of a series of moving images; make a movie of (a story or event):
- The recording, reproducing, or broadcasting of moving visual images.
- A recording of moving visual images made digitally or on videotape.

Cinema- the production of movies as an art or industry: or a movie theater.

Frame- A single complete picture in a series forming a movie, television, or video film.

Editing-is the process of manipulating and rearranging video shots to create a new work. Editing is usually considered to be one part of the post production process

Sequence- a particular order in which related events, movements, or things follow each other: a part of a film dealing with one particular event or topic

Set(On-Set)- this is the location where the actual acting and filming takes place. It can be a house, street, forest stadium etc. Sets can be artificial whereby walls are built for the purpose, trees and rivers constructed for a particular film scene.

Production- This refers to the tasks that should b completed in or executed in shooting or filming. It is the stage that comes after the pre-production stage and roles into the post production stage followed there after by exhibition of the film.

Digitalisation- This is the process of changing the broadcasting line from production, transmission to decoding/receiving from analogue to digital.

1.12 Chapter Summary

This chapter introduces the topic under study by providing the introduction of the research, background of the study, statement of the problem, significance of study, research objectives, research questions, delimitations, limitations, assumptions and ethical considerations of the study.

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

An industry value chain represents those activities as carried out within a single company, and a value system represents those activities being carried out by a series of different businesses, employees or freelancers, acting together to create and deliver the product (Bloore2008). The value chain and system has already been applied by business academics and consultants in various sectors, including for example the automobile industry or food processing and retail sector (Lynch 2006: 203-6). It can also be applied to the film industry. This chapter aims at exploring the various aspects (by way of literature review) of the film value chain as well as looking at the theories that best explains the normative functions of the film services sector, zeroing in to in Zimbabwe.

2.2 Literature review

Literature review is a process of reading, analysing, evaluating and summarising scholarly materials about a specific topic. According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995) the purposes of a literature review are to, familiarise the researcher with the latest developments in the area of study and to find gaps in knowledge as well as weaknesses i previous studies and what is yet to be studied or improved.

2.2.1 Government Policy in relation to film production in Zimbabwe

Like any other industry, film production operates within the frame work and confines of the laws of the land. Law makers can be the breakers or builders of an industry depending on their wisdom or lack of. Gadzekpo (1997:34) asserts that there is a relationship between development and communication needs. Citing Schramm (1964) posits that there is a link between adequate flow of information and social change and development. A fully developed country is that which has no regulated flow of information, (Roxborough1979).

The basic purpose of a national communication policy (Nnaemeka1989) is using the mass media to achieve accelerated growth and transformation of the society, in different spheres and at different levels of national life. He further states that a deliberate and coherent mass communication policy is important for the media to play a distinguished role in the establishment and furtherance of a desirable new social order in post-Colonial Africa. This

writing, however does not say how to grow the film industry, it goes deep in explaining how beneficial a flourishing film sector is to a post colonial country like Zimbabwe, however the article does not propose how to grow the sector, what steps the third world countries should take in order to achieve such a growth which gives this research relevance.

According to Mboti(2014), two Zimbabwe Film Industry Stakeholders' Consultative meetings were held in Harare in 2010 and 2011. A task force namely the Zimbabwe Film Development Committee, was set up to look into film policy and to lobby the government for an Act of Parliament that specifically addresses the film industry, this has not come to fruition. Zimbabwe currently does not have any bilateral agreements with any other countries to co-produce film content, as one of the issues that came out of the indaba was the facilitation of such bilateral agreements to enable co-productions. Neither does it have an actual film policy. A similar meeting held in Nigeria attended by media scholars and other stakeholders, recommendations were drawn which became the document known as the Nigeria National Mass Communication Policy, (Oguchi and Alao2013). In Zimbabwe there is lack of follow up and general seriousness in implementation of issues. The comparison with Nigeria is important in that Nigeria is generally regarded as a growth example of a film sector, the question remains that is it only the fact that there is a film policy that lead the country to where it is currently or there are certain practices that the film makers undertake to compliment the policy. If Zimbabwe was to have a film policy today will this automatically mean growth or there are other fundamental issues that still need to be addressed? This research aims to answer this question.

After a few other initiatives came into being and failed, the Zimbabwe Film and Television School in Southern Africa (ZIFFTESSA) was to open its doors in 2008 and trains prospective film makers, the ones deemed to have the necessary qualifications. ZIFFTESSA is an arm of the Ministry of Media, Information and Publicity. To Mbewe (2013), it is the film school in partially to blame for the death of the film industry in that it produces "misguided" individuals who wait for everything to be present on set, for example state of the art cameras and costumes, he suggests that these individuals go to the film school thinking that they will then become "cleverer" film makers by simply attaining a certificate, to him the solution is practice, "makes perfect". While others see the positive in such an initiative by government, like (Fisher 2010) gives credit to the film school for being a launch-pad for various film

projects. He argues that this is the least government can do given the economic situation they find themselves in financially.

In accounts for the history of the film sector,(Mboti2014,Mhiripiri2000, Fisher2010) do not envisage and do not explain why the sector has not grown to heights such as that if countries like Nigeria, South Africa and Ghana whose history is more or less the same as ours. The history shows that there have been some policy efforts by the government towards the growth of the sector but then why has the film sector remained at infancy? There should be other influencing factors that require exploration.

In comparison to South Africa (Hungwe2005), private sector and government support of the film industry in Zimbabwe is still way below paltry. In South Africa, the broadcasters such as SABC, Mzansi and Etv are core funders of film projects such as series and documentaries. The Zimbabwean government has not identified the film industry as one of the catalytic vehicles for job creation and economic growth in what (Mboti2014) describes as a major policy flaw in its newly reformed economic policy known as Zim-Asset, launched in 2013. Mano(2003) agrees on the need to compare with other countries such as South Africa and take some notes of how they make the industry exist and flourish, even though he is more oriented towards radio and music production in his literature, he thinks these industries can easily mirror each other.

The suggestion that the Colonial government established a film unit in order to make sure that the Africans become a source of loyal and cheap labour in their mining or farming activities is a point that is generally agreed upon (Burns2011, Hungwe2005 ,Mboti2010/2014 and Mhiripiri 2000). With Hungwe(2005) pointing out to the establishment of the Central African Film Unit which was used for the production of educational (instructional) film materials. While Mboti(2014) highlights on the earlier establishes (1939) Bantu Educational Kinema Experience (BEKE) which he said was funded by several companies that were involved in mining activities as well as wealthy individuals.

The writers agree to the fact that historically, films were used for particular agendas and there was quite some activity in the sector, for example the use of film for development, while currently the government does not seem to recognise the power of the industry to archive such. When Ian Smith declared independence from British influence, the film industry was then used for propaganda purposes; it was under the watchful eye of The Department of

Information and Publicity. (Mhiripiri2000, Hungwe2005 and Mboti2014) all agree to the fact that the films produced were mainly focused on undermining the efforts of the freedom fighters and portraying them as a terrorist movement and a source of problems that the country could have been facing at the time.

From independence the new government is said to have marketed the country as a Hollywood set and several films were shot in Zimbabwe with great names in Hollywood cinema coming into the country for productions. Mhiripiri(2010) described this period as the "golden age". This was a great achievement (Mboti2014), the phase presented a good launch pad for a film industry, in that there was exchange of skills from Hollywood stars to locals. Mhiripiri(2000) does not entirely agree to this accession in that he points out that he roles that the locals were allocated in these films were minimal, for example extras and assistance. Therefore the coming in of Hollywood was never really an opportunity for locals; however what is important is that the government had a hand in such bilateral agreements, making it a good policy initiative. In agreement with (Mboti2014) that the government saw potential to earn revenue and the creation of employment in film production. With this lavish account of film in Zimbabwe from the pre-colonial period, the writers do not explain the current situation that the industry finds itself in. After the "golden era" what then happened to the industry?

Mboti(2014) notes a positive in the current situation as there is non-interference, in that the film industry has been debunked from being an elitist industry to one that has many more smaller players. There is also the fact that film is now also accessible in areas traditionally alienated by the elitist film players, places such as *Mbare ,Kambuzuma , Mufakose* among others. On this aspect, Mhiripiri(2000) suggests that legislation that enforces local productions on television and radio has driven the local film industry to become active and independent hence production of films because of their aesthetics and the art of storytelling other than the didactic nature as were in the NGO era. However Riber(2001) bergs to differ, he suggest that a shift in the new Government's national and political priorities lead to reduced budgets for film production. This had a serious negative impact on the Central Film Laboratory (CFL), marking the demise of the industry. The gap in these writers is that they do not answer the question, why is the film sector still not blooming, they dwell on explaining what the current situation is in the country, they agree the situation gives the younger players an opportunity to grow, the question then is why is there no growth despite the fact that a lot of videos are being produced daily? Why is there no or little return on

investment (Mbewe2013)? Why are the local products invisible on channels on DSTV, for example? Why does the local product not have the slightest of dent on the international market? This research seeks to answer these questions.

2.2.2 The history of funding in film production

The main and primary thrust for post-colonial donor driven film project in Zimbabwe was "message rather than profit". The films and documentaries produced in the region including those in Zimbabwe centred on issues such as HIV Aids, orphans, teenage pregnancy among such common topics that were more of lectures than actual entertainment,(Hungwe1999/2005, Mboti2014),. These projects were funded by American and European based Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs). In contrast to this not-for – profit setup, (Wasco2003) highlights the fact that the sole reason for the existence of movie studios is profit making. This raises questions on the NGO setup in Zimbabwe, how then was this to be sustained? Was it ever a business model to grow and maintain a proper film industry?

Ukadike(1994) suggests that the use of "developmental films" is a glaring instrument for western continued control and intervention in the African continent. Mahoso(2000) weighs in and calls it neo-colonialism, in which colonisation continues by way of ideas and ideologies. Roxbrough(1979) in agreement suggests that for the so called first world, civilisation is the total adaptation of western ways of doing things. Hence film in Africa and in Zimbabwe particularly was being used as an agent to westernise and "modernise" the locals whose "primitive" ways was detrimental to them. Fisher (2010) concurs in that there is a clear relationship between the original Central African Film Unit (CAFU) and films that were done in the 1990s such as *Neria* and *Everyone's Child* both which contain panoply of strategies to interpellate the local audience into a certain "civilised" way of life. A narrative that (Burns2002) summed up in three ways "Mr wise meets Mr foolish", "crime does not pay" and "urban perils".

The exploitation of local film makers by the donor driven projects is noted by (Mahoso2000) and (Fisher 2010), in which they highlights that the funders do not really prioritise the local talent, the locals almost always gets pitiable deals. In contrast, (Wasco2003) and (Moul2005) suggests that the movie industry is there to make profits, that is the sole reason they exist, therefore they disagree with (Mahoso2000) and (Mboti2014) in that the so called "bad deals"

could be the best given the circumstance that the setup was not for profit, that was the best the industry could offer for a loss making venture, from this point of view, the locals were actually receiving a favour and besides this, the locals would have signed contracts in agreement.

In projects in the 1980s exploitation was also rife, even though the Zimbabwean government chipped in with money, the big brother, Hollywood was in charge of production in return for skills transfer (Fisher2010 and Mboti2014),. Universal Pictures and the government of Zimbabwe closed a deal of 5.5 million for the production of *Cry Freedom(1987)*. In such projects local actors were typically second fiddle, acting as extras and other small silent roles.

Zimbabwe is known a boasts for one of the Seven Wonders of the World, the Victoria Falls, among other landmarks. It is however ironic that these are clearly absent in Western donor funded films, especially so in the period after 2000. An argument put across by Fisher(2010) is that he who pays the piper calls the tune, the same sponsor would want to portray Zimbabwe as a no go area for tourists and other visitors from the "civilised world". He also notes the absent of the second Chimurenga narrative in donor funded films except in the film *Flame (1996)* which sparked intense opposition from the War Veterans Association because of its portrayal of how women were treated during the war.

The trend has been that the funders in the industry would have an agenda to fulfil at the particular period of their funding. This raises genre and thematic concerns in the industry in Zimbabwe. Mhiripiri(2000) and Mboti(2014), when they chronicle the history of the film industry in Zimbabwe, are clear to the fact that film categorisation seems to follow a paten depending on the period of time it was produced, for example the period before 1980, film was used for education as well as propaganda. The period of the 1980s, the genre was determined by, Hollywood, then in the 1990s, the NGO funded films adopted the didactic type of films and then came the era of short films, after the establishment of the Shot Film Project by Ziff. Riber (2001) concurred in this by remarked that "Most productions being made in Zimbabwe today are either advertisements or short, educational video programs for donor funded projects".

The popularisation of short films by film producers in Zimbabwe in recent years was a cause for concern for (Mhiripiri2000). He argues that this scenario is not necessarily caused by

aesthetics of film making in such short minutes but by the issue budget whereby the film producers cannot afford feature length films even if they would have preferred that. To produce a block-buster feature length film a big budget is needed (DeWaard(ed)2008). The question therefore arises that is it possible for a film producer in Zimbabwe to come up with a film that fit, compete and impress in a particular genre, for example, if *Gringo* is categorised as a comedy, is it possible for it to compete with other comedies from Bollywood or Hollywood and put a mark given the financial situation and options available? This research aims to look into film genre and divulge the production process that is involved in coming up with a genre and how the producers categorises their films.

The way in which different cultures express different issues may be different from the way the Hollywood industry expresses it. There are disadvantages in telling stories that conform to genres (DeWaard(ed)2008), genres trade in stereotypes and clichés, constriction of creativity within a formula as well as the elimination of narrative suspense or surprises. Mbewe, (2013) suggests the "formulation of new Genre names that describes the products coming out of the industry" in a more relevant manner as the products do not necessarily conform to what is coming out of Hollywood, for his independence to occur, there is also need for independent money.

Available literature suggests a strong link between successful productions and good funding. Much of the literature however bemoans interference by financiers on the production process as they are almost always having strings attached aside a straight business approach. Mahoso (2000) even celebrates the exiting of donors from the sector as he explains that this will help locals tell their own story. By this he means there would be production of scripts that are independent of donor interference. This is not the solution (Wasco2003), it is not all funders who interfere. The movie industry is a business and should be treated as such. Funders need to be convinced of the viability of a project and they will fund it.

2.2.3The processes in Pre-production that shape an ideal film

This is one of key production process that can make or kill a film and in this research this is one key area of concern. The entire production process for a motion picture from development to theatrical release typically takes from one to two years (Bloore2009). During

this time, raw materials and labour are combined to create a film commodity that is then bought and sold in various markets. Film production has been called a ``project enterprise,'' in that no two films are created in the same way. Nevertheless, the overall process is similar enough to permit a description of the process for a ``typical film.'' (Wasco2003). In their literature, (Bloore 2009) and (Wasco2003) agree to the fact that pre-production is where it all starts from, however (Wasco2003) only dwells on the film aspect and (Bloore2009) suggests a parallel approach in that the preparations that take place in the 'auxiliary value chain" is also part of pre-production. The "auxiliary value chain" comprises of market research, public relations ad publicity, marketing and advertising that involve also the print aspect.

For production of film to take shape there is need to carry out research prior to the writing of the script,(Wasco 2003,Moal 2005 Miller and Stam2004). A script should be backed by an "audience endorsement" of the concept, it is just like getting into a business, one has to do market research first otherwise this will become a futile exercise. Smith and Smith(2000) , on *Yellow Card,* are in agreement as they indicated that such a viability research was conducted and they went into the project with full prior knowledge that," it was not possible to make a profit out of Zimbabwe with such a project , except if it was a robust economy like that of South Africa..." bottom line is they knew what they were getting into prior to commitment.

Furthermore, pre-production research informs you even how to package and release the film and informs on ways to make the most out of a, in the case of *Yellow Card*, the film was to be release via different media. First, the film was shown in the cinemas. The plan was also to have it distributed to five other countries than Zimbabwe. In addition, five versions in other languages, such as French and Swahili were to be made. Originally, there were plans to make the film in a local language of Zimbabwe (Shona), but pre-production research showed that most of the target group preferred English.

Strategies to counter of piracy and distribution solutions are prepared at his stage, in Zimbabwe to blame for the demise of the industry is the failure by stakeholders to deal with the issue of piracy decisively. Mbewe(2013) suggests that the government is the one responsible for the "death" of the film industry by letting piracy flourish, the traditional distribution channels such as Ellite*7, Liberty, Rainbow and Sterkinekor* went broke and theatres turned into trinket shops and churches. Chihombori(2013) in an interview blames

piracy for failure of his project *Gringo Trouble The Trouble Maker*, he claims to have spent five years and $48 000 planning and coming up with the film and it only took "two minutes" for someone to get a copy and duplicate en-mass. In contrast, Joe Njagu, the producer of *Lobola* saw piracy as an opportunity to the film's distribution and he made the DVDs available on street corners for a dollar, being distributed by newspaper vendors.

The pre-production stage is when the budgets are set; (Smith and Smith 2000) remarked that at this stage they raised $1.2 million towards the production of *Yellow Card.* Wasco(2003) articulates that during development, a line producer is hired to oversee physical production of the film, which includes preparing the budget and other preliminary material. Generally, motion picture production is labour-intensive, meaning the largest part of the budget is spent on labour. The cost of key talent (especially actors/actresses) is a significant part of the budget for a typical film. Film financing can be in-house (by the parent company), in the case of Hollywood, Bollywood or the South African market, whereby the studio finances a product and solely owns it. However the Zimbabwean situation has gone through various stages of financing, from government, to donors to individuals, (Mhiripiri 2000, Mboti2014, Hungwe 2005). There has not been activity between the financial institutions and the film industry (ibid).

It is at the planning stage that the purpose of a project is established and projections are made, identification of talent and employment of staff is done at this stage as well as identification of equipment and machinery that is needed. While actors and directors receive much of the attention and publicity, the workforce includes a wide range of labourers, from carpenters and office workers to artists, and lab technicians, 582,900 people were employed in the USA motion picture industry alone in 2007 (Bloore2009).

An idea or concept for a film or an original screenplay may originate with a writer, producer or director, who may work with an agent/manager to interest a producer in the property. The process of selling the idea or script may include a pitch, that is, when a writer (typically) verbally describes a project or story to a development executive or other potential buyer (Moal2005, Miller and Stam2004,Wasco2003). Pitching has been in play (Mano2008) in his description of the *Short Film Project*, whereby the best script would get the necessary funding, this helped in the emerging of the likes of *Brighton Tazarurwa, Allan Muwani, Joe*

Njagu, TawandaGundaMupengo, Patience Tawengwa, Solomon Maramba, TafaraGondo, RumbidzaiKatedza and YeukaiNdarimani as a film makers.

Many scripts are written in hopes of purchase by a producer or studio and are referred to as "spec scripts", (Wasco2003). The sale of spec scripts boomed throughout the 1990s, as did the prices paid for them. After Shane Black (*Lethal Weapon*) sold *The Last Boy Scout* for $1.75 million in 1990, the ``million dollar script'' became commonplace. Then, only a few years later, Black received $4 million for *The Long Kiss Goodnight*. Despite attempts by the studios to hold script prices down, at the end of the 1990s, million-dollar scripts were `almost routine' and even unknowns succeeded in selling spec scripts. For instance, when M. Night Shyamalan was basically a Hollywood newcomer, he received $2.25 million for *The Sixth Sense* "spec script", with a green light (a go-ahead for production) on its purchase Taylor(1999). This literature and statistic pokes a hole in the industry in Zimbabwe, the entire film budget for *Yellow Card* was $1.2 million, according to Smith and Smith(2000), if the production of the film was an epitome of film production in Zimbabwe and the entire budget cannot pay for one script in Hollywood then there is a problem.

Levy (2000), finds the spec script model problematic in that most of the spec scripts need rewriting before production, he also points out that many are especially weak and the selection process is often irrational. One of the alleged problems is that everyone is looking for the next big hit, the next blockbuster, or the next franchise (a movie that spawns merchandising and sequels). Since no one knows what will actually work, decisions are not based on quality, but the money making potential of the material. In other words, a ``bottom-line mentality'' prevails. As one producer notes: ``I would say 90 percent of the screenplays are purchased based on financial concerns and . . .what it's going to bring the studio. It really starts at the financial end'' (Taylor, 1999, p. 58). Moul(2005) notes that Pre-production begins when a developed property is approved for production and may take from two to six months, with the usual provision that every film is different. Many film ideas or scripts never reach the production stage for example in the US up to 400 to 500 films are released in the USA each year by Hollywood companies, this would have seen thousands of ideas and scripts being turned down or shelved.

After a film is given the green light, various elements are assembled that are necessary to manufacture the film. Locations are scouted and selected, final casting is done, and key production personnel are hired, (Bloore2009) in his paper on the value chain of the film industry. On *Nyaminyami And the Evil Eggs,* Dangarembga had to hire a Director Of Photography (DOP) from Poland. The Sound Engineer and the Director Of Photography (DOP) on Y*ellow Card* were both foreign nationals (Smith and Smith2000). The literature does not say specifically why this was the case, but the obvious assumption is that foreign talent is better. However films are being produced currently with a 100% local staff compliment, what does this say about the industry and the quality of current productions? This research will strive to answer this question and more.

2.2.4 Normative Processes in Production and Post-production of Film

Principal photography is usually the most costly part of manufacturing a film and typically takes from six to twelve weeks. Again, there are always exceptions. Film productions are organized as short-term combinations of directors, actors, and crews, plus various subcontractors (the film services) who come together to construct a motion picture (Chressanthis2016). However (Wasco2003) suggests that the production part of film is the "fun" part and can be the shortest period in a film production; while the post-production she described as the "magic" in making of film.

In essence, (Wasco2003,Grlic2003,Finney2010, Mcvin2012, Chressanthis2016, Aft and Renault2012) agree the roles and duties of people employed on set to do the work in film production, they may differ in terminology in some instances though(for example the term cinematography as opposed to Director Of Photography). The Producer is the one that manages and oversees the entire production process; often their duty may overlap with that of the Director, whose duties are inclined towards the creative aspect of the film, calling shots on set. The Cinematographer (or Director of Photography) is the one who interprets the Director's vision into shots using cameras; they choose the best camera angle possible as well as the necessary movements to meet this vision. The Cinematographers work closely to the gaffers and grips whose job is to prepare the lighting of the set and come up with the best mood possible for a film product. Mcvin(2012) suggests Cinematographers must be creative and imaginative, as they determine what the audience will see on the big screen. They also need good technical skills to operate complex camera equipment. And being detail oriented is important, because Cinematographers must ensure continuity for each take, with the lighting,

props, and actors in precisely the same places. Of cause there are other key functions in film production such as the sound and boom swingers, wardrobe, make-up and continuity people. Finney(2010) suggests the existence of a B-team of cameramen/women, whose job he says is for shooting "B-Role" footage, this is footage that will be used in the main film as bridging and establishing of scenes, the footage includes street shorts, landscapes ,wide shots of building and cities among other creative shots.

There is always the issue of adhering to the budget, and the problems that may lead to over-budget productions (Wasco2003). Creative decisions inevitably will be influenced by the availability of funds. In addition, the clout or power of various players has enormous influence on decision-making on the set for example, the involvement of producers, investors or studio representatives (collectively called The Suits) is said to have a chilling effect on the creative process. In agreement (Smith and Smith 2000) suggest that there was not enough money for post release research on *Yellow Card* as the entire budget was blown-out during the production.

A key role in production is that of the actor(s) a great actor is determined by their ability to switch roles and be different person in different films or different projects (Fenney2010). However (Mcvin2012) suggests, in contrast, that good directing produces good acting as some directors nowadays are often a time encouraging their actors to remove their own personal "skill" and become more natural so that the camera may discover the person that they are, from little things such as a smile or a stride when walking. It is not only about being photogenic (ibid) but also the trust that can be built from speech to wardrobe among many other issues. It is imperative for this research to review how actors themselves are selected and put into character and also to assess if the local directors really are what they claim to be. Once it is discovered what actors did well, how their physical and emotional presence best imprinted on the screen, directors and companies tended to stick with that quality.

Poor acting and absents of talent has been pointed out as one of the issues stifling the growth of the film industry in Zimbabwe (Mbewe2013) . However contrary to this sentiment on why the industry 'suck', there are a lot of Zimbabwean actors who have made strides in the biggest film market in Hollywood and have won awards and accolades along the way. Here are some of them and the roles they have played in some Hollywood blockbusters. Their

success is simply because they are good; Danai Gurira is the main act on *The Walking Dead,* Tongai Chirisa (*Mr Bones 2, NCIS Loss Angeles*, *Robinson Crusoe, Crossroads, Upside Down, American Horror Story, Barak Obama's Cousin Whitney),* Lucian Msamati(*Game of Thrones),*Aloise Moyo(*Iron Sky), * Kelvin Mambo (*Family Matters*, *Law and Order*, *The covenant)* among others, available on www.newsvyb.com/13-actors-flying-zimbabwes-flag-high-internationally/.

Given some of these names, one cannot deny the existence of a Zimbabwean talent. Therefore the accession that there is no acting talent in Zimbabwe falls away, therefore this research aims at looking for the problems that leads to the poor show of the Zimbabwean story.

Production experience is an indispensable component of a filmmaker's artistic and career development (Bean2014). It is generally not possible to direct a feature film successfully without any experience directing productions on a more manageable scale. There are two main reasons for this: A feature film requires a highly developed ability to tell a dramatic story over 100 minutes or more using footage shot under great pressure of time and cost, working with many people you have never worked with before. Secondly, rarely do feature films are availed to inexperienced film makers. Mano(2008) agrees to this by saying allocating a large proportion of national production capacity and finance to inexperienced filmmakers is not in the interests of the long-term success of the industry. These issues can be addressed by providing filmmakers with the opportunity to make (that is, write, produce or direct) shorter films on smaller budgets. In doing so they not only learn to handle the production process but they also experience firsthand the creative challenge of turning an idea into a film. However ,(ibid) bemoans the lack and dwindling of opportunity for the film maker as less and less money is being put towards film making in Zimbabwe, less and less NGO money, no government grants as well as menial or non-participation of the private sector.

Golmith and O'Regan (2003) posits that in the US, what they termed "The Cinema City" are organised in a way to solely to provide production and post-production services to feature films, tele-movies, and international TV series. Some of these complexes provide full services through their own range of services; while most rely on attracting and retaining a

range of tenant companies to provide the 'one stop shop' primarily for drama production, an example such as Warner Roadshow. Riber(2001) bemoaned lack of facilities in Zimbabwe, however there was an inventory at this period in time(2001) one can at least tell who owns what. Today with technology and many growing small players, it is possible that facilities are there but there is no inventory or a database of provisions such as equipment. Companies to note in Zimbabwe are the likes of Mighty movies, Nyerai Films, Chihera Films, FIG Multimedia, Big Show productions among others.

Editing usually begins during principal photography (the actual filming), it continues after shooting concludes, as other elements of the film are added: scoring, mixing, dialogue, music, sound effects, and special effects. Post-production may take four to eight months (Bean2003). The use of music and special effects in African film productions brings a uniqueness that brings a pleasure that is centrally Africa (Dovey2010) ,this is in reference to effects that are encompassed in Nigerian and Ghanaian films in their portrayal of evil and the imminent defeat of it, the effects portray the imagined world of good against evil as seen in the lenses of the Pentecostal church in these countries. It is in post-production where the selection and production of music and effects is done. The editor puts together the film using the footage recorded during production (Wasco2003, Grlic2003, Finney2010, Mcvin2012, Chressanthis2016). He or she works closely with the Director to determine which take of each scene best reflects what the director vision. Editors must be creative, organized, and detail oriented to craft a cohesive story from the raw footage. They also need computer skills to use complex editing software. They work along with Visual Effects Artists whose job is to generate computer generated visual effects such as explosions, lightning or magic. Editors also work alongside the sound editors and designers whose job is to create new sounds as well as to edit those that are recorded on set for adding to the visuals.

Production of Hollywood films attracts a good deal of attention from the press, academics, and the public. It also attracts a good deal of capital. The same cannot be said about the Zimbabwean films, one will be shocked to find the number of films that are on you-tube from a simple search, contrary to an otherwise popular sentiment that nothing is happening on the local film scene (Mbewe2013),not much attention is given to the local industry, partly because people are more focused on day-to-day survival in a harsh economy, and the last thing on their mind is entertainment.   Dovey (2010) however suggests that the two areas –

African Cinema and African video studies – currently remain quite discrete in the academia. Many scholars are more concerned with the parallels in video making using celluloid against making them using video cameras, while others are concerned with the comparison and situating Africa against the likes of Hollywood and Bollywood, not much academic work is being done on individual productions and the production process. The same can be said about the press that literally ignores the area in preference, for example of musical shows or musical artists releasing.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

According to Devito(1986) a theoretical framework is a collection of interrelated concepts, it guides what things the researcher will need to measure. According to Fourie (2007) a theoretical framework formulates the goals of theory, meaning that before one can be able to comment on how something functions, one must give a clear narrative of the process first. This study will benefit immensely from borrowing various media theories and concepts for guidance to ensure that the study will become a sound piece of academic work. The most relevant theories for this study is the Film Theory that will also delve into the Film Services Approach, secondly it is The Political Economy of communication.

2.3.1 Film Theory

Film theory officially began in what is named the "silent era", (Andrew1984, Pantinga 2001,Cohen 2009). This is a time when film was made in just pictures and there was absents of sound. In this period it was mainly concerned with definitions of the crucial elements of the art form. The works of directors such as Sergei Eisenstein and Dzinga Vertov were central to the development of the theory. These directors were mostly concerned with defining film as an art form and distanced from what one may call 'reality'. However according to Andrew(1984), a theorist named Andre Bazin was against this approach, emphasising that film is an art form that reproduced reality mechanically.

Sergei Eisenstein brought in the idea of Marxism in film. He told a motion picture story that was propelled by the mass (group), in the process undermining the protagonist. The theory is used to explain power relations and contestations in film as would be in a society.

He invented the montage, which was the use of clashing images one after the other to tell a story. What is known as a film today is not reality by a series of clashing images that construct an idea or a sequence; hence a film can safely be said to be a montage.

There are various approaches to film theory from studies and researches that have been carried out into periods in the 1990s. It is also key to note that these approaches to film theory are largely studies done in the Western nations were Film art started, therefore a vacuum is there to develop film theories and approaches that are relevant for developing markets such as that of Zimbabwe, therefore the use of film theory is relevant in my research as there is a vacuum of theory.

The film product can be viewed from various perspectives, firstly the apparatus perspective, (Pantinga2001 and Cohen2009), they suggest that film represents reality therefore are ideological. The mechanics for this creation of reality are centred on the camera and editing. These apparatus are used to place an audience's ears and eyes as closed as possible to reality. These cinematic apparatus are said to disguise how the images are put together to produce meaning, frame by frame. The processes involved in producing a film, affects the reality being represented, camera angles, sound effect.

The approach posits that the central role of the audience is also ideological; the cinematic experience affects the audience deeply. It suggests that the ordinary viewer cannot distinguish between reality and fiction. The audience become susceptible to the ideological positioning of the characters on the screen because they believe they are real. It likens movie or film viewers with people who are in a dream, this happens when someone is deprived of outside light in a movie theatre then they experience the film as if they are the ones taking part i the action.

Pantinga(2001) and Cohan(2009) speak of the "screen theory" approach to film theory, this describes the cinematic apparatus as a version of Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) (Althusser). According to Cohan(2009) , "it is the spectacle that creates the spectator and not the other way round. The fact that the subject is created and subjected at the same time by the narrative on screen is masked by the apparent realism of the communicated content".

The auteur approach according to (Cohen 2009), tables that film is a reflection of the director's thinking, vision and creative abilities. The word auteur is French for author

therefore one can safely call it the author approach to film theory. Even though a film is a collective effort, the director's voice is strong and distinct enough to outshine everyone in the production process. The author under the UN law is considered the holder of copyrights. Directors are so important in film that their names may actually outshine the movies themselves or a movie can have its title prefixed by the director's name.

2.3.1.2 The Film Services Approach

The resurrection of interest in the studio and international production among policymakers around the world is part of emerging film services approaches to policy development and support (Goldsmith and O'Regan 2005) this is what (Yakavone 2008) titled "Film World" .The target of intervention is not the film product but the variety of inputs and organizational arrangements and expertise associated with the processes involved in developing film projects. Film services approaches are fundamentally concerned with the capabilities that is skills, infrastructures, and networks that support the capacity of a film industry in a locality to create and innovate. Film service support the building of a centre of excellence rather than focus on individual talents and individual potentials.

Film service approach has a number of advantages; firstly these provide a vehicle for the location interests of particular places promoting locally the tasks of international film services provision. They assist in pitching for international projects by foregrounding the provision of services by a range of providers to footloose international production. Second, a film services perspective implies an orientation toward servicing an increasingly differentiated and fragmented market. It encourages the identification of identifiably different market segments or niches and therefore focuses attention on: where gaps exist; the ways such services can productively supply both international and local production, and how supplying these different market segments might be better facilitated through connections between the different production sectors.

Film services orientation encourages government and industry to see the various inputs into production as having their own trajectories, deficits, and opportunities. Film services frameworks have provided useful recognition of the creativity and innovation of diverse production inputs that would otherwise go without acknowledgement were the focus to be on individual production and consequently on its content, director, writer, producer and so on.

These approaches allow governments and interest groups to promote the film industry on the basis of the services provided through production and infrastructure to other industries and sectors of society.

The film industry becomes the provider of valued inputs into other creative industries, the service sector, and ICT industries – variously urban entertainment businesses such as theme parks. For Bloore(2009) film services frameworks are friendly to emerging creative industries policies concerned with coordinating, integrating, and facilitating connections among the different parts of the film industry and other arts-related industries. They also facilitate the rethinking of the relationship between the local and international film market as the local market becomes unpredictable as it would be a more organised and professional entity.

I will use the film theory and the film services approach and its various approaches in my own research as guidelines to try and unpack the film industry in Zimbabwe and understand if it conforms to these. If not, then I would aim to come up with a more relevant approach that the sector may conform to or an approach(s) that may best describe the uniqueness of the sector. If it does conform to these or some of the approaches then I aim to have an understanding of why then the sector does not blossom.

2.3.2 Political Economy of Communication

Political economy, according to Moscow (1996, 2009) is the study of social relations, particularly power relations that mutually constitute production, distribution and conception of media products including communication products. The concept of political economy came about in the 18th century largely determined by social change and historical transformations.

Two dimensions of political economy of communication were identified by (McChesney 2000). First it examines how media and communication systems influence, reinforce or challenge existing social relations and social classes. The second dimension looks at how media ownership, political factors and policies, support mechanisms such as advertisements influence media content and behaviour. This line of thought emphasises on the processes in production (labour for example) as well as the distribution and consumption of these media products. I am going to be guided by these to do my research as the main focus of this

research is going to be in the processes involved and how they may lack and by how much in comparison to those who are accomplished.

According to the base superstructure model by Marx (1818-1886), it is those who own the means of production who determine what is in the superstructure. The base in this case in point is the means of production, in the days of Marx were the bourgeoisies and the social in situation is the superstructure. Therefore in the film industry, it therefore translates that content is influenced by people with the money, advertisers for example, or owners or the government through laws.

There are three distinct concepts in political economy (Curran and Gurevich2000), these are political economy as it is described above. This is a broad analysis of the relationships at a macro level. The relations that are focused on are the relations between the media and government, advertisers and the market. It is said the advertisers are the later day licensing authority; they follow what the advertisers prefer because those are the life blood for their survival. The media can also not escape from their ownership structure, what is shown on particular media outlets is reflective of the owners of that media outlet, the same as in film , there is no way a film can be produced with content that can be harmful to the owner of such a production.

The second is classical political economy; these are pure economics and deals with the market at a micro level. The initial scholars of this studied how the means of production was organised in a society that was industrialised. They believed that the market is a vital factor in ownership and control of the media. They were neo-liberalists who believed in market forces and completion hence freedom of the media from the government grip. This according to Waterman and Lee(2000) is part to the success of the Hollywood industry as it is funded by private investors therefore competitive, in the belief that the media should be a source of amassing wealth and power as well as a pinnacle for trade.

The third according to Curran and Gurevich(2000), is critical political economy, this disputes the effects tradition theory. It emphasises that media products affect individuals differently, drawing similarities with cultural studies in that there are different types of readership to a text.

The political economy of film incorporates those characteristics that define political economy generally, namely social change and history, social totality, moral grounding, and praxis according to (Moul2005). Fundamentally, the political economy of film analyzes motion pictures as commodities produced and distributed within a capitalist industrial structure. As Pendakur(1990) notes, film as a commodity must be seen as a "tangible product and intangible service" (Pendakur1990, pp. 39–40). Similar to other industry analyses, the approach addresses questions pertaining to market structure and performance. However, political economists analyze these issues as part of the larger communications and media industry and within a wider social context. Indeed, the focus on one medium or industry, such as film, may be seen as antithetical to political economy's attempt to go beyond merely describing the economic organization of the media industries.

The political and ideological implications of these economic arrangements are also relevant, as film must be placed within an entire social, economic, and political context and critiqued in terms of the contribution to maintaining and reproducing structures of power. The political economic study of film must involve not only a description of the industry, but also explained as, "a theoretical understanding of these developments, situating them within a wider capitalist totality encompassing class and other social relations offering a sustained critique from a moral evaluative position" (Mosco 1996, p. 115).

Some of the key distinctions between political economy and other models are the recognition and critique of the uneven distribution of power and wealth represented by the industry, the attention paid to labour issues, the role of the State, the alternatives to commercial film, and the attempts to challenge the industry rather than accepting the status quo. For instance, why are Hollywood films popular with audiences all over the world? Some might argue that American films are just better than other nations' productions. Rather than celebrating Hollywood's success, political economists are interested in how U.S. films came to dominate international film markets, what mechanisms are in place to sustain such market dominance, how the State becomes involved in this process, how the export of film is related to marketing of other media products, the consequences for indigenous film industries in other countries, and the political/cultural implications.

For a political economist, Hollywood works as an industry that manufactures and markets commodities. Although these commodities are often engaging and exciting entertainment products, it is still important to understand the process by which they are produced and distributed. The process involves film concepts that become film commodities, passing through the production, distribution, and exhibition/retail stages. Most recently, Hollywood films have become more commercial through product placement, as well as spawning new commodities such as merchandise and other media products.

Herman and Chompsky (1988) came up with what they termed the propaganda model, film is also not spared by this model. I aim to scrutinise the level of how this affects the film industry in Zimbabwe to go global. They allude to the fact that media content, film included, passes through five filters, these are: ownership and control, source, flak, advertising and anti-communism. The theory seeks to explain how people are manipulated and how consent is manufactured by the media by use of this propaganda. This theory was focused on the American media, but (Herman and Chomsky 1988) believes that it is applicable to all media and situations. I will endeavour to dig into this model to understand if it is also applicable to Zimbabwe, in particular in the film services sector.

On ownership, (ibid) posit that news organisations are normally large conglomerates and have diverse interest in the financial world. The news therefore that the world is given by the media organisations is likely to be news that is not harmful to the owner's financial interests. It is therefore that to maximise profits, even if it means compromising on news objectivity, news organisations may not show certain issues of interest. This is also applicable to film in the same manner, a film script that has the potential to expose or damage the reputation of owners of the media house or organisation will not see the light of day. I will investigate to come up with conclusions if ownership is one of the hindering factors to growth of the Zimbabwean film industry. I will also need to find out the ownership structures as compared to those of the Hollywood industry which are largely oligopolistic.

The second filter, (ibid) is funding generated through advertising. The media has to attract advertisers to survive; advertisers are the lifeblood of the media sector. In order to attract advertisers, there has to be the correct audience consuming the product hence it has to be as attractive to lure as many advertisers as possible even if it means forgoing other 'truths'. In the 1990s in Zimbabwe, the film industry was being funded largely by NGOs hence the

general agenda of such films was the NGO agenda, (Mhiripiri, 2000; Mboti, 2014). I aim to unpack how this is an effect to the growth of the film sector in Zimbabwe, given also the background of the economic crisis the country finds itself in at the moment.

The third filter relates to the sourcing of mass media news: "The mass media are drawn into a symbiotic relationship with powerful sources of information by economic necessity and reciprocity of interest." Even large media corporations such as the BBC cannot afford to place reporters everywhere. The fourth filter is flak, this being the negative feedback or lawsuits that are received in news organisations and the media. The fifth being war on terror also known as anticommunism, this is mainly related to fear. In the film sector one may not risk producing a film that challenges the status quo, for example or they risk being labelled, rebels or sell-outs. Mhirirpiri (2000) pointed out the absence of films that speak to the economic and political state of the nation; no film maker seems to have the guts to do this.

2.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter touched on available literature that is relevant to the study and the researcher managed to identify some gaps to be filled by this research and future researches. Theories relevant to the study have also been touched on the hope to inform this study or guide in formulation of new and more relevant theories.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is aimed at explaining the research methods that are used in this study. It gives clear insights into the processes and procedures that the researcher employed to conduct the research. According to Cram (2013), research methods are the tools, techniques or processes that are used in research these maybe, surveys, interviews or participant observation ,for example. The chapter will also explore the methods that are used to analyse the collected data. Methods and how they are used are shaped by methodology.

3.2 Research Methodology

Research methodology is the framework that relates to the entire process of the research. Harding (1987:2) states that research methodology refers to the theory and analysis of how research should proceed. It is a process of arriving at dependable solutions to problems through planned and systematic collection analysis and interpretation of data.

For the purpose of this research, a qualitative approach was employed. Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. The idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants, sites or documents that best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question (Creswell2003). In this research there was use of in-depth interviews and observation in the quest to investigating feelings, perceptions, attitudes and beliefs. Two films were used as case studies, for the reason that findings from one can be confirmed by the other.

3.3 Case Study

A case study is used to carry out an in-depth investigation on an issue at a specific instance and location. According to (Gomm et al. 2000, Yin 2009)the word 'case' means 'an instance of' and the central feature of case study research design is the investigation of the one or more specific 'instances of' something that comprise the cases in the study.

In this research the case study was used to find out the attitudes, perceptions and beliefs of the people working on the two film projects; *GonaraMachingura* and *Checkmate*. A case study involves collection of in-depth information in a limited area and usually includes some

social science tool such as surveys and demographic information. Bromley(1990) posits that it is a systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims at describing the phenomenon of interest.

3.4 Population

A population consists of all the units of analysis for a particular study (Traskin and Small2015).In this study the population is made up of film practitioners, these include directors, producers, camera people, sound operators, actors, set designers, graphic designers, production houses, film distributers, editors, script writers among others who took part in the production of the two cases; *GonaraMachingura* and *Checkmate.*

3.5 Sampling

In this research sampling will be used because it is impractical to use the whole population, neither is it possible to focus the study on the entire film industry as there are too many players. Kumar (2005: 164) defines sampling as the process of selecting a few (a sample) from the bigger group (the sampling population) to become the basis for estimating or predicting the prevalence of an unknown piece of information, situation or outcome regarding the bigger group. A sample is thus a subgroup of the population a researcher is interested in (Kumar 2005: 164).

This research is a qualitative hence non-probability sampling is most suitable for the study. In non-probability sampling, random selection is not used. Rather, the method of obtaining a sample is reliant on the discretion of the researcher and the type of research they are conducting (Hek and Moule2006). Therefore for this research, the sample that was used is that of media practitioners: in particular those who are practicing in Zimbabwe and worked on the two films under study; *Gona raMachingura* and *Checkmate*.

3.5.1 Purposive/Judgemental sampling

The primary consideration in purposive sampling is the judgement of the researcher as to who can provide the best information to achieve the objectives of the study, this method is also strong in providing viable and factual results (Kumar2005). this is what then prompted this choice. The individuals were drawn from experts or non-experts in the film industry and in particular from the two productions under study, these are *GonaRamachingura* and *Checkmate*.

Purposive sampling signifies that one sees sampling as a series of strategic choices about with whom, where and how one does one's research (Palys 2008). Furthermore the researcher's sample must be directly tied to their objective(s) of the study. Because of this direct link between the study and the nature of individuals who are to be interviewed, purposive sampling was the most appropriate for this research.

Purposive sampling is often criticized for containing biased views from the researcher because of the nature of subjective choice that the researcher is often prone to do. It is also criticized as not necessarily being representative of an entire population or group. However, since this study is streamlined and is directly based on cases *GonaraMachingura* and *Checkmate*, purposive sampling remains the most appropriate method of sample selection.

3.5.2 Convenience sampling

Convenience sampling can be referred to as a technique which is more about availability of individuals rather than selection of the entire population (Rutman 1984). Convenience sampling is however associated with a lot of errors but is cost effective, time saving and can yield good results as well. The mentioned reasons are what informed my choice of this sampling technique as I had limited resources and time for the research. Black(1999) suggests that convenience sampling involves hand-pick subjects not only on the basis of specific characteristics but also on their availability.

A film project involves a lot of people, therefore it is easier, less costly and saves time for me to go on set and observe as well as interview the people who I judged as best placed to answer to my objectives and were available on that particular day rather than look for some individuals who were off set on the particular day(s). The selection was based on their proximity and ready accessibility. Chances were also good that the people who were readily available on set were the key team and were the best for the purpose of the research.

3.6 Methods of Data Collection

Methods of data collection or research instruments are the tools used for the collection of information and data required to find out solutions to the problems being studied (Kripperndoff 1999). This is a qualitative research hence calls for qualitative methods of obtaining data. There was the use of a mix of methods of data collection, known as triangulation. According to Huberman (1994) triangulation in social science research refers to a process by which a researcher wants to verify a finding by showing that independent

measures of it agree with or, at least, do not contradict it. Methodological triangulation, according to Denzin (1970) cited in Yeasmin(2012) is using more than one research method or data collection technique. In this research there will be the use of interviews and observations to collect primary data.

3.6.1 One on one in-depth interview

Interviews vary considerably in terms of their degree of structure. In general terms, unstructured interviews (e.g. non-directive or informal) lend themselves to qualitative analyses, whereas structured interviews lend themselves to quantitative analysis. For this purpose I used non-directive interviews, I asked open ended questions so as to be able to gain the most out of the individuals being asked and I believe those who I interviewed were well versed and gave out useful information about the industry. Open-ended-questions allow respondents to formulate responses without prior conceptions. My prior knowledge of the industry as a practitioner in the industry assisted me to ask relevant questions.

As Coolican(1994) points out, there are various skills that interviewers need in order to obtain valuable data. These skills involve establishing a good understanding with the person being interviewed, adopting a non-judgemental approach, and developing effective listening skills. I carried out my interviews in the most comfortable places and manner that I believed were best to have the interviewee say out what they really felt. I would let the interviewee go on with their answers before posing another question or interjecting. I would use my phone to record the interviews in case I needed a playback to listen to in the case that I missed some aspects of the interviews.

This study made use of interviews as the main means of gathering data because of its engaging abilities were issues can easily be discussed and clarified immediately. According to Shrivastava (2010), interviews are particularly useful for getting the story behind a participant's experiences. The interviewer can pursue in-depth information around the topic. Therefore in this case I would observe behaviours of my sample and raise some questions from the exact behaviours they would have displayed. For example when I noticed a conflict between the director and cameraman of *Checkmate,* I let the whole event unfold and then asked both of them about the incident and how they thought the production would be affected. To confirm this strategy, McNamara(1999) posits that interviews may be useful as a

follow-up to certain responses of say observation to further investigate their responses. He goes on to say that interviews are a more personal type of data and are likely to give a deeper insight into the knowledge and experiences of the participant.

Interviews are usually carried out in person, that is face-to-face but can also be administered by telephone or using more advance computer technology such as Skype. Sometimes they are held in the interviewee's home, sometimes at a more neutral place. In this research the interviewees were contacted on set (while at the actual location of production), for the editors I did the interviews at their work stations and those for company owners I carried them out at their respective offices. Interviewees include the following, producers, directors, cinematographers, editors, actors, script writers, partners (Fig and Bigshow company owners).

3.6.2 Observation

I visited the sets of production as well as editing facilities because this study was looking at the production process. I used observation to validate and complement the interviews' findings as well as to come up with news issues for questioning. Mulhall(2003) posits that often the primary reason for using observational methods is to check whether what people say they do is the same as what they actually do. However what people perceive that they do and what they actually do are valid in their own right and just represent different perspectives on the data, therefore in my research I used both methods in collecting the data.

Observation has the advantage of capturing data in more natural circumstances. It provides insight into interactions between groups; it illustrates the whole picture; captures context/process and also gives information about the physical environment and its influence if any. I looked at the actual actions, decisions and executions on-set of both the productions as I visited their sets on different and regular occasions.

The Hawthorne effect is a likely drawback in collection of data using the observation method, this is when participants act unnaturally because they know they are being watched or observed, however (Mulhall2003) argues that the effect is over exaggerated. Once the initial stages of entering the field are past most professionals are too busy to maintain behaviour that is radically different from normal. As Frankenberg (1980, p. 51) notes, albeit in a wider cultural context, 'I do not think that a single observer in, say, a village or tribe is going to change custom and practice built up over years or even centuries'. In my observation i did not

notice people acting unnaturally, this is attributed to the fact that most of the people are individuals that I have been interacting with prior to the productions hence I was not a stranger to them.

Observation also captures the whole social setting in which people function, by recording the context in which they work. Observation is also an ongoing dynamic activity that is more likely than interviews to provide evidence for process – something that is continually moving and evolving. Therefore this is an appropriate data collection method to this research and triangulates with interviews well.

3.7 Methods of Data Analysis

This is a stage in research where the researcher attempts to make sense of large volumes of information that were gathered during the research. This process is reductionist in nature, meaning the researcher reduces the bulk information (raw data) and processes it into meaningful data and statistics. According to Bryman (2012) it can be taken to be the application of statistical techniques to the collected data. Bryman (2012) states that the main difficulty in qualitative research data analysis is that there is no prescribed way or set of standards to analyze collected data, stating that there are few well established and widely accepted rules for the analysis of qualitative data. The cardinal principle of qualitative analysis is that causal relationships and theoretical statements be clearly emergent from and grounded in the phenomena studied. The theory emerges from the data; it is not imposed on the data.

3.7.1 Thematic analysis

This study made use of thematic analysis as a means through which collected data was analysed. Thematic analysis is a qualitative analytic method for: 'identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). They proceed to state that it minimally organises and describes one's data set in (rich) detail. However, frequently it goes further than this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic. A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set.

A researcher, according to Coolican(1994), first of all gathers together all the information obtained from the participants. The researcher then arranges the items of information (e.g. statements) into various groups in a preliminary way. If a given item seems of relevance to several groups, then it is included in all of them, this is the first step I took in mw data analysis. In the next I took account of the categories or groupings suggested by the participants themselves in the interviews I carried out. Finally step I formed a set of categories based on the information obtained from the previous steps. When new information comes to light I would often change the themes or add new ones to the existing ones. My major concern was in the variety of meanings, attitudes, and interpretations found within each category. This makes the analysis of the data in themes the most relevant method of analysing data in this research.

There are some problems involved in interpreting interview information (Coolican1994). First, there is the problem of social desirability bias. Most people want to present themselves in the best possible light, so they may provide socially desirable rather than honest answers to personal questions. This problem can be handled by the interviewer asking additional questions to establish the truth. Second, the data obtained from an interviewer may reveal more about the social interaction processes between the interviewer and the person being interviewed (the interviewee) than about the interviewee's thought processes and attitudes, this was countered by distancing myself as much as I can from my personal relations to the people I interviewed. Third, account needs to be taken of the 'self-fulfilling prophecy'. This is the tendency for someone's expectations about another person to lead to the fulfilment of those expectations. For example if the researcher's attitude is to blame government for all ills of society, he/she may lead-on the interviewee to end up sounding as if they also have the same thinking.

There are various ways in which qualitative researchers try to show that their findings are reliable (ibid). Probably the most satisfactory approach is to see whether the findings obtained from a qualitative analysis can be replicated. This can be done by comparing the findings from an interview study with those from an observational study. Alternatively, two different qualitative researchers can conduct independent analyses of the same qualitative data, and then compare their findings; in this case the two findings from the different

productions *GonaraMachingura* and *Checkmate* will save this purpose. When qualitative researchers report their findings, they will often include some raw data (e.g. direct quotations from participants) as well as analyses of the data based on categories,(ibid). In addition, they often indicate how their hypotheses changed during the course of the investigation; hence in the analysis of my data, some quotations were picked for the purpose of data presentation.

3.8 Chapter Summary

This brought to the fore methods used to collect and analyse data, it also attempted to clarify the population and how it was sampled by the researcher. On the methods, the chapter attempted to bring about possible advantages as well as disadvantages to each method and how such can be countered, justifying the final choice.

Chapter 4: Organisational analysis

4.1 Introduction

For one to understand the dynamics of media content, it is imperative that they understand the context in which they are produced (Perenti 1986: 32). Checkmate and *Gona raMachingura* are two films that I chose for this research. They are productions being done with the involvement of two separate companies; Big Show and FIG Multimedia in what seems to fulfil the film services approach (Goldsmith and O'Regan 2005). *Gona raMachingura* is produced by independent producers Hamfrey Chidaenzi and Collins Mukosi but has enlisted the use of BigShow Productions facilities(cameras, editing and crew), as they do not own such equipment. *Checkmate* is an in-house production of FIG Multimedia, filmed and edited by the company's employees while the writer is an external. This chapter will introduce these two media organisations, showing their structure and functions.

4.2 Historical Background of Big Show Productions (BSP)

Big Show Productions (Private) Limited is situated at number 17 Mon Repos, Newlands in Harare, it was established in 2005 under the Companies Act (Chapter 24:03). The Act provides that a company, in legal terms, is an association of people who undertake or carry out business with each having the right of assigning his/her shares to any other person, subject to the articles or constitution of the company.

The company was formed by Denis Hwata who incorporated Tinashe Hwata as a Non Executive Director in 2005. Hwata had left Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) where he had become a Chief Technical Operator, his experience at ZBC dates back to 1996 specialising in production technical aspects like camerawork, technical directing, vision mixing, sound, VTR operations and lighting.

Big Show Productions is endowed with ambitious individuals who are dynamic towards Television broadcasting, professional video production, and distribution of such productions, consultancy and events, the company is involved in productions that include news, advertisements, short films, photography and musical videos, claiming its own space in the production film and video services sector (Bloore2009). An industry value chain or system could be summarized as a connected series of activities that combine to create and deliver a product (or value) to customers (Hesmondhalgh2002), .

Yakavone(2008) suggests that the film services approach is when a company provides a one stop shop in terms of services and productions happen and largely rely on the particular company for all their requirements. Bigshow provides hiring services for High Definition equipment for television production and other television and events for example the company hires out public address systems and projectors.

The producers of *Gona raMachingura* Hamfrey Chidawaenzi and Collins Mukosi approached BSP to partner them as a services provider on the implementation of the film project. This happened in March 2016, a deal was sealed to shoot the film in July into August 2016. Unfortunately this did not kick-off at the scheduled time because one of the producers and the writer, Collin Mukosi, collapsed and died at his home on June 29 2016, leading to the postponement of the shoot to September and October as the remaining producer sourced the assistance of one of Zimbabwe's most renowned writers Aaron Chiunduramoyo.

4.3 Administrative structure and Organogram

4.3.1 Directors

Directors' responsibility is to supervise management. They are responsible for the maintenance of accounting records and the preparation of the financial statements and related information. The Directors are responsible for the systems of internal control. Gans (1979) asserts that directors focus more on financial and managerial decisions while the editors determine the content of the publication. Denis Hwata, Executive Director, has over 20 years experience in television production having worked for Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, before resigning to start Big show productions. Tinashe Hwata, Non- Executive, Qualified as a banker with a Degree in Banking and Finance from the National University of Science and Technology (NUST). Denis is the one who decided to assist in the production of the film and sealed a deal with the producers, the company will be credited and receive a share of the film income.

4.3.2 Management Structure

Clara Murwira, Finance and Administration Manager, has worked in the banking sector since 1996 to date, joined Big Show Productions in 2005 on part time basis. She holds a Masters in Banking and Finance NUST (2006). Her department consists of admin officers, salaries, drivers and cleaning services. They assure smooth running of productions and are also there

to solve problems such as hotel accommodation, airtime, allowances for staff, fuelling and repair of production vehicles. The department is also there for payments to service providers and staff salaries. She is instrumental in structuring any deals as they will be sealed, she handles the finances including those that will potentially be realised by *Gona raMachingura.*

Christine Rudo Makunike, Public Relations and Marketing Manager, joined Big Show Productions in 2013, Holds Masters Public Relations holds several posts in different organisations including being administrator at women's law society. Bloore(209) suggests that for a successful film there is need for publicity, public relations and advertising, therefore she would be instrumental in this regard.

The public relations department manages the image of the organisation and in this case, of the film. This department is the communication hub of the company. They are involved in client relations, maintenance of old clients as well as looking for new clients. Basically the expertise of the public relations and marketing managers allows them to allocate company resources to maximise collaboration, efficiency and creativity in the building and maintenance of consistent branding.

Elizabeth Ganda, Production Manager, joined Big Show Productions in 2012. A qualified journalist with a Diploma in Journalism and Mass Communication trained at the Harare Polytechnic. She started off working at Mighty Movies as producer from 2009 to 2012. As a production manager she coordinates the production, people, places and time management for the interest of the production (Wasco2003) , she works along with the director and producer of the film.

Production department is responsible for the logistical planning on how a production will be executed. It is the production department that point out at the human resources needs for a production. For example if it is a film production, it is the duty of the production manager to come up with needs like the script writer, director, driver, cameraman or soundman.

Lawrence Chinembiri, Chief Technical Operator- He oversees the technical aspect of production; this includes production and post-production equipment and staff. The key personnel being he cinematographers (cameramen). Mcvin(2012) suggests cinematographers must be creative and imaginative, as they determine what the audience will see on the screen. They also need good technical skills to operate complex camera equipment. And being detail

oriented is important, because Cinematographers must ensure continuity for each take, with the lighting, props, and actors in precisely the same places

Video editors are key staff at Bigshow because every project or assignment requires editing. The roles of editors involve dubbing footage to different tapes or disks, organise footage for distribution, archiving and convert formats from Pal to NTSC or high definition to standard definition depending on the client's requirements (Wasco2003). Mostly editors work closely with the director or producer and they assist with the technical expertise of operating the editing machine which nowadays are mostly digital. At Big Show Productions, editors use Adobe Premiere Pro and Final Cut Pro software. They also work closely with the graphic guys in post production.

Aaron Chiunduramoyo Script writer-Scripting is an important role were by the production is carefully laid down in detail on paper. Even if someone did not watch the particular production, it should be possible to follow / visualise what exactly transpired on the particular production just by reading this running order (Miller and Stam2004). The script has to easily interpreted by the technical operators, cast and telling the story which the client would have requested. A basic script can be turned into picture, sound and graphic without much challenges and it stands as a guideline in production. A script can also easily inform what content should be in the production, for examples questions to be asked to an interviewee, a speech, acting lines and actions among others. However on *Gona raMachingura*, there is no script writer from BSP involved, there is hope for learning from the bigger talent in Chiunduramoyo.

Chidavaenzi-Producers are involved in pre-production, production and post-production research. The see the production from conception through production to post-production and distribution, they can also be involved in the marketing of the film product (Moul2005). One can safely say a producer owns the production as it as well will become his/ her baby.

4.4 Organisation's Core Business

Big Show Productions was set up to provide services in the television and film industry. Its core business is video production; this involves the organising, filming, editing, graphic design needs, animation needs as well as distribution of such materials. The focus of BigShow Production is wide; it does outside broadcasting productions, studio productions,

field productions. In field productions, these include news, corporate videos, weddings, television commercials, corporate events, films and documentaries.

4.5 Funding Mechanisms

Big Show Production is a commercial entity hence it is driven by the need to make profits. Its main source of income is its clients. To start with, Denis Hwata used is retirement package and a small bank loan to procure the very first equipment that started the production house. Rentals where at their minimal as the company worked from home, hence there was no separation from home rentals. Newer channels of souring finances are being pursued, for example the experimental partnership with Gona raMachingura production in the hope to get advertising revenue when the film is aired or in the hope that the film is bought.

4.6 Organisational Goal, Mission and Core Values

4.6.1 Goal

To be the leading media house in Zimbabwe and providing world class services. In my findings in Chapter 5, the goal is analysed to understand if the company is in line with this goal

4.6.2 Mission

To grow the business in all aspects whilst delivering the most satisfactory services to the market.

The film services concept as proposed in the writing of (Tomaseli and Mboti2013) following (Goldsmith and O'Regan 2005) is what the industry should aim at achieving. The Film services approaches are concerned with capabilities, for example skills, infrastructure and networks that underwrite the capacity of a film industry in a locality to create and innovate. The Analysis of data in Chapter 5 will review if this approach can be comparable t what Bigshow is actually doing in practice.

4.7 Links with other organisations

The trends in the film production industry are that there has been integration because the industry in order to achieve more cannot stand alone hence the need to integrate with other organisations. According to Lorenzeen(2008), there is horizontal integration, vertical integration and the resultant internationalisation f film products whereby film products are sold cross borders I order to maximise on profits for organisations.

By their production services needs to have linkages with as many other organisations as possible in order to be profitable (Baker and Faulkner 1991). Some of the links can be a once off and others can be a "lifetime". Big show has linkages with Super Sport South Africa, it facilitates the productions that are carried out in the country by the company such as soccer and cricket.

Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation ZBCTV is Zimbabwe's sole television station; another linkage being the provision of content to the national broadcaster, excitement has been generated in the prospects of digitalisation, prompting independent producers to sought the services of companies like BSP so as to produce content that can possibly be bought by ZBCTV. This is the basis of the partnership between Chidawaenzi and BSP in the project *GonaraMachingura*.

FIG Multimedia is a production house based in Highlands, there are some levels of synergies with this production house in terms of, for example IT solutions, equipment hire and sharing of ideas. BSP is also involved in news production for international clients such as ZoominTV, cricket for Dimension TV, corporate documentaries (for example Delta) among other clients.

4.8 FIG Multimedia

This part of the chapter takes a close look into FIG Multimedia as an organization and aims to give a deeper understanding of its structure as well as its operations. It outlines FIG Multimedia history, fundamental structure and the nature of its operations as well as the role it takes on the Zimbabwean filmmaking scene. FIG Multimedia partnered with Vincent Kakuwe to produce the film Checkmate, they initially had the idea of making it an ones-off project but later decided to serialise it and make at least thirteen episodes (a typical television season). The main inspiration was the prospects that are expected to be brought about by the digitalisation of the broadcasting sector; they were inspired to produce content for the prospective growth of the industry as more channels are licensed.

4.8.1 Historical Background of FIG Multimedia

FIG Multimedia was founded in 2007 and is a wholly Zimbabwean owned film, television and radio production company. It is registered under the Zimbabwe companies act and is involved in productions such as films, news, advertisements and documentaries. FIG multimedia prouds itself of owning production equipment such as Sonny XDCAM EX1, Panasonic P2 HD cameras with impressive standard and wide lenses, top of the range audio

equipment as well as some wireless microphones, LED lights. There facilities include a large studio with the capacity to withstand a panel discussion. They also have a final cut based editing suit, a setup that also conforms to an ideal film services (De Vany2004 and Bloore2009).

William Chingombe, the Managing Director and co-founder has several years working experience as an editor and production manager. He started off at ZBC and lager joined Mighty Movies before he left to co-found Fig multimedia, he received funding and other enabling assistance from his pastor and partner Gurupira of FIG Ministries, where they then assumed the name Fig Multimedia.

William was involved in the production of the initial Checkmate in his personal capacity as editor together with Itai Kakuwe who wrote and produced it. A search on Youtube shows that the film has been viewed more than 500 000 times. This gave Kakuwe the idea of reading it, this time with some flair so that it becomes a feature length film. He partnered with FIG who then is the financier and equipment (production and post-production) and personnel providers in return for co-ownership of distribution rights. The film was a very small budget film with only a provision of 1100 being offered on the plate for an allowance for actors and other expenses such as food and other accessories needed.

4.8.2 Mission statement

To provide a professional product, on time, within budget and at a competitive price.

A mission statement is a statement used to communicate the purpose of an organisation, (Hobday2000), therefore for Fig multimedia the emphasis is on affordability of the product they offer.

4.8.3 Organisational Structure

Managing Director

William Chingombe- He is also a co-owner and director of the company. He has vast experience as editor and production manager. He has presided over various types of productions, from documentaries, films, news corporate videos and talk shows. With

Checkmate, just as in most other deals he is the face for the company as he was involved in sealing the deal with Kakuwe.

4.8.3.1 Human Resources and Administration

Nelson Tapfumanei- He holds an accounting degree from the University of Zimbabwe and started off working at Fig at its inception in 2007. The head of production reports to him and he reports directly to the Managing Director. Ideally, he should handle the publicity, advertising and marketing of *Checkmate*.

4.8.3.2 Head of Production

Astern Zeleman- He has worked as cameraman and editor on several productions including the famed *Gringo The Trouble Maker.* He started off at ZBC and left to pursue some interests in Botswana before he returned to join. He then moved on to FIG Multimedia when it was conceived. He has the production staff, production assistant, interns and freelancers reporting to him. He is the technical face of the company and he go-to person when it comes to the production of Checkmate.

4.8.3.3 Producer /Reporter

Farai Mwakutuya- Farai worked for AB Communications as a production manager, he then moved to Uganda where he became a news anchor on Uganda Television before he came back into Zimbabwe were he clenched a deal with China Central Television(CCTV) who are his current employers, he then sources the technical services of FIG as they are the providers of the equipment that he uses as well as necessities like camera people and editors.

4.8.4 Links with other organisations

A production company has to have links with other companies as they are a service provider hence their core business is to link with other businesses, the key client being China Central Television (CCTV). FIG has links to a large base of clientele including corporate and individuals that include Itai Kakuwe the producer and writer of *Checkmate*. They also have links to other production houses such as Mighty Movies and BIG Show productions as they hire their equipment or hire out theirs to them on demand. Fig are an ideal arrangement for the film services, this is a one stop shop for all needs of a production (Bloore2009). Its links to other productions says it all.

4.9 Chapter Summary

Th chapter looked at the organisations involved in the productions of the two cases *Checkmate* and *Gona raMachingura*. It looked at the extent to which they can be equated to an ideal film services. The chapter looked at individual employees in the company and their roles in the production of the two films.

Chapter 5: Data Presentation and Analysis

5.1 Introduction

This chapter gave a detailed account of the findings from the two cases, *Gona raMachingura* and *Checkmate*. The data was analysed and presented in themes that emerged from the interviews and observations. Appropriate literature and theories were used to analyse the data. It was found that there are production problems and these emanate from the setup of the film services sector and the disregard to best practices. Film services approaches are fundamentally concerned with the capabilities: skills, infrastructures, and networks – that underwrite the ability of a film industry in a locality to create and innovate (Goldsmith and O'Regan2003).

5.2 Findings

5.2.1 The deals were informal and ended with a handshake

In the two films in this case study, *Gona raMachingura* and *Checkmate* I observed this worrying common factor whereby there is no written agreement or contract except for the word of mouth. An written agreement or a contract has to be one of the first things to be done when such an undertaking is to be done (McDonald 2000). I concluded that for both the parties the perception is that they have nothing much to lose as they are engaging in a try and error. However in the event that the projects become a success, there is a high chance of serious wrangles.

The film sector is a form of employment or deals: in the same manner as any other industries (Kent1991). There are reasons for individual parties to sign contracts when a deal is sealed. McDonald (2000) posits that contracts provides description for duties and responsibilities and binds the agreed parties to the duties and responsibilities. Furthermore contracts work in providing time frames for delivery and if there are payments involved, contracts can assure payments are made and lastly a contract provides recourse in the case of a deal faltering.

In my observation on set discord was at hand from what they said they have agreed when I interviewed the writers and the company representatives (the owners). One of the discontinuities in the agreements includes the role of the director, for example. In the case of *Checkmate*, Kakuwe who is the writer of the film was too involved in the directing aspect and

yet the agreement they say was that he is only going to be the writer and producer. Often a time would they have a clash of ideas with the DOP on how to execute certain scenes or handle an issue on set.

The writer own argument when I interviewed him was that this was just an agreement to get things going but it was best for him to involve himself in the directing of the film because he knew his story and he had a mental picture of what had to be done and he knew how best to execute the plan. Therefore in a way he was confirming that he never intended to be bound by the verbal agreement as he felt he needed and deserved more recognition than he received in the agreement because he had a strong belief that the project belongs to him. The proposal by (Wasco2003) that a writer would produce a script and sell it from the director and producer to work with it on their own could be a more viable option; however that can also work when the money to buy-out the writer is available. Otherwise projects do suffer because of the over inflated self importance of the writer, who holds on to the project because they believe it is their baby. Therefore the ideal film services approach by (Goldsmith and O'Regan 2005) then falls on the wayside because there is disregard by players in the sector.

A peruse on the documents for *Checkmate* reviewed there was a typed list of roles to be played by each actor. However there was nothing for the crew therefore leading to the collision in roles. In the case of *Gona raMachingura*, the only written down aspect of the production were the equipment booking forms and the script, nothing else. There was no written budget, no written agreement, no contracts nothing, all was word of mouth. This led me to conclude that there is serious lack of seriousness in the approach to the industry. There is a casual approach to issues, maybe because the industry players really believe the industry has nothing to offer.

5.2.2 Lack of originality as part of the problem

The general lack of appetite for Zimbabwean film products was attributed by one of my interviewees to lack of originality as we tend to imitate and try to reproduce other people's work. As Zimbabweans we generally lack originality, this can be attributed to our fear of taking risks, this seemed to confirm (Tomaseli2013) in his sentiment that, "Zimbabweans are copycats". He said, for example it is unnatural for a Zimbabwean film to have shootouts, car chases and erotic sex scenes as these things are too distant and serine from the realities on the ground: This below is an interview except

> *We are very unnatural, first we go to extremes in trying to speak in English in our films moving away from the natural us, this is what then drains the acting talent out of the actors as they will now be more concerned with getting the lines right instead of acting...*

On *Checkmate*, they used English; I observed the actors struggling and making a lot of mistakes with their lines. They would memorise lines, which definitely would affect the naturalness of the actor in acting. The worst case scenario would be a complete change of the line because an actor keeps on repeating the same mistake and a resolution would be made to get rid of or change to suit the said actor. The same problems recurred in *Gona raMachingura* were they used Shona. The language was such that the depth was unnatural to most if not all the actors. The setup of this film is in the distance past where one can safely say the cultural values including the language has since been lost, however with Chiunduramoyo (the writer), this past is a world that he can imagine. There is a conflict of the past and the present, the way people naturally speak now is completely different from what was in the script therefore actors could find it very hard to memorise their lines.

The issue of lack of originality is not confined to the language only. The interviewee above mentioned that, "*there is too much beautifying of the set*". He bemoaned that those in charge of productions go at length to look too good it loses the truth, for example people going at length to look for fancy props that are otherwise unavailable ordinarily. Producers want to look for the best looking house in a residential area as a location. Yakavone(2008) posits that the Americas use their otherwise naturally available monuments and buildings to insist on their identity, a thing that is not done a lot in third world cinema.

The script itself is setup in such a way that it strives to resonate itself with an American setting. There are few or no localised and contemporary issues in the scripts; it is more like a fantasy. *Checkmate* as about an airliner called *Pentagone Airlines*. To start with there is no such thing in Zimbabwe, there is only one national airliner, it is a given films are fiction but the imagination needs to be a little closer to home. The choice of names such as *Pentagone* is a betrayal to originality and creativity. When one thinks of *Pentagone* the mind quickly races to a building in America that was attacked on September 11 2001 by terrorists, hardly would people associate it with Zimbabwe.

When filming *Checkmate* the director/producer would avoid those busy streets with vendors and are untidy in preference to more affluent areas. The argument from the director/producer, in an interview I carried out with him is that as he targets the international market, these "*dirty street shots*" are not a good image hence the use of more affluent suburbs like Borowdale and Highlands.

5.2.3 Planning of the Production fell short

At the conceptualising stage, (Moal 2005, Miller and Stam2004) suggest that research be carried out to ascertain the buy-in of the idea, therefore a research needs to be carried out and resources allocated towards this goal. This is one stage that displayed poor execution from both the productions in question. When I asked them, for example, how many people they expected to buy or view their film, the question was not answered satisfactorily in both cases. The answer however was that of optimism, with one producer saying, his self confidence and optimism is what will drive the success of the production, otherwise," *I would not engage in a thing that I have doubts on...".* They do acknowledge there are small domestic markets as well as low disposable incomes in the country. They hope to clench deals outside of the borders by engaging the likes of Mzansi Magic on DSTV. However Chiunduramoyo is pessimistic about this route because he failed to establish such a slot with his own product, *Tiriparwendo* because of several issues.

Ideally a thorough research should have been carried out prior to the production taking place, (McDonald2000, Bloore2009). There was general lack of thoroughness if at all any was carried out on the pre-production. Both film productions were inspired to take off by the prospects that were supposed to come with the digitalisation and subsequent licensing of new television stations. The promise by politicians was that the process was supposedly complete by the end of March 2016, only to disappoint as it will most unlikely finish any time soon. This confirms the issue of inconsistent government policy raised by (Hungwe2005). The digitalisation prospect was hyped by the government as if it was going to b a major success in a very short time. There were advertisements being aired on radio and television that claimed the success of digitalisation was an indicator of the success of Zim-Asset. This is another government policy that (Mboti2014) suggested had a major flaw as it was silent on the aspect of film production in the country.

What the producers do not want to acknowledge is that they are stuck with a product that might not have a market that will give them a financial gain at the end of the day. The options in distribution are getting narrower and narrower and pointing towards the use of Youtube and other social media platforms only. This is in my findings one area that the film sector lack and seriously so. There is no planning, if it is there it is shoddy, rushed and does not answer the fundamental questions.

Pitching is said by Moal(2005) to be the process whereby different script writer come to verbally describe their story line in a bid to get approval and eventually turn it into a film when resources are unveiled or the script is bought. In both the cases, the scripts do not go through a pitching process, a writer comes in with an already made script for *Checkmate* which he believed was perfect and was not willing to compromise on it except changes brought by himself, while in the case of *Gona raMachingura*, Chiunduramoyo was given the leeway to create his own story using his own discretion and writing skills after just being guided by the producer.

5.2.4 Poor casting and its ultimate affects film production

There were some complaints about the casting of actors which came out of interviews and at the same time I observed some of the incidences. One of the complains was the absence of an actor profile on the script. An actor profile is a description of what the best person to fill in an actor's role to look like; it describes some of the traits also in character of the individual (Jin2006). This in my observation led to convenient picking of those people who were available at that given time to just fill in the gapes. It is normally not a viable way of picking actors as they may not fill the role in the best way as expected. Some roles were even filled in by some of the crew members which is not an ideal situation because the role that person is supposed to carry out on the production will be compromised as they will be on set doubling up roles.

There were some allowances being allocated to the participants and actors, in the case of *Checkmate*. They had budgeted USD1100 for these allowances and other expenses for the production of *Checkmate*. At the end of the shoot, the budget had gone up to USD1600. This is a menial budget for doing a film by any standard; however the jump is an indicator that is reflective of how funds can be handled on a bigger scale. When I asked why the budget grew

to that, the reason was that the producer would create some slots and some scenes," *to accommodate his friends...".* Now I can imagine if the same people are asked handle a million-dollar production, the whole village will be called to fill in some roles that were never there in the first place. If they could not respect such a small budget then how will they respect a big one, I believe not.

The actors who were cast for *Checkmate* never got the chance to get into character as some of them had to be picked up and given a script on their way to the shoot. Unlike with *Gona raMachingura*, they got the scripts prior to the production and there was time to read and acclimatise with it. However there was still a problem with the setup as there was never a real time to rehearse the acts, therefore instances would arise when, for example one would forget his lines because they are now engaged into the acting simply because they never anticipated to act in the manner they were now being instructed to.

The cast faced an acting dilemma in both productions as most of them were first timers. Bringing in the aspect of training, none including the ones who had acted before were ever trained to act. This is a huge gap in the industry, very few entities provide the opportunity for training in arts and in particular acting. Acting is generally not viewed as a carrier but a part time hobby in countries like Zimbabwe. According to Baker and Faulkner (1991), in countries like USA there are schools and classes established to train acting in various disciplines for example theatre arts, classical art, television, film, musical among others.

This drives me to the other point to note, since acting is regarded as a casual and part time hobby, most of those involved in the two productions behaved in a manner that portrayed the casual approach. They would disrespect call-times, one would switch off their phone at a critical time, and there was general lack of commitment. Call-times are meeting or starting times for productions (Bloore2009). One of the actors told me in an interview that the project was not going to feed his family so he would prioritise the things that will bring him some income. Therefore this would lead to the producer giving key roles to commitment rather than talent therefore compromising the whole production. It would also lead to rushed shooting as time would run out before scenes are completed just because people did not gather on scheduled time.

5.2.5 Financing and its relation to film production

Films are a high capital venture, there is a direct link between a successful film and the money poured in to produce it (Bloore 2009,Aksoy and Robins1992). Lack of finances and financial support for the local film industry is endemic and is probably the most talked about as the biggest problem hindering progress. There is no cent allocated to the film industry in the local national budget by the ministry of finance. There is however some pittance that goes the way of the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe (NACZ) which is supposed to cut across the whole cultural sector including music, dance theatre, the result is that none of that money ever finds its way to film production. On its website, NACZ(2016) claims that in 2003 it managed to lobby for duty free importation of public address system in the interest of promotion of arts, it goes further by exclusively stating that," ...there are still two arts and culture sectors that NACZ would like to ensure they enjoy the same privileges namely film and literary arts."(ibid).

I asked why both the production houses in my cases never applied for the funding from the National Arts Council. The producer of *Gona raMachingura* Chidavaenzi's answer was that of hopelessness, he alluded to the poor organisation and lack of funding on NACZ's own baby the National Arts and Merit Awards (NAMA) and the discontinued NACZ sponsored programmes and events, late alone for the organisation to part with some cash towards a project that is not even their own, to him it was a non-starter to even consider that route. To Chidawaenzi it was also hopeless and a waste of time to think of the government as a source of any funding because they are also broke and cannot even pay their own workforce in time.

I questioned the involvement of the private sector, the producers indicated there was no hope in institutions like banks as these institutions do not even understand the dynamics of the film industry' late alone be convinced that their loans will be returned if given out. Other companies are generally broke or struggling in their businesses because of the macro-economic environment hence the last thing on their mind would be to sponsor the arts when they are struggling in their day-to-day endeavours. The only private companies that can involve themselves in film productions are those that already have existing interest in the sector such as the two in this case.

In the defence of the private sector, I concluded from interviews that given the fact that the producers did not have an actual and convincing plan to market and distribute the products they were producing, how then they were intending to convince the banks that their project

would be worth investing in. Why would the banks or private sector invest money or loans into a business with no proper and laid down plans and a convincing model of return in their investment? The owners of the productions are as well generally irresponsible; to the extent that one producer creates some scenes in the film just to accommodate his friends so they can receive an allowance. Banks could then be justified in not trusting such individuals with their money. According to Mbewe(2013) and Mboti(2014), how can banks dish out money to people whose hands are dripping in blood, they claim there have been a history of misappropriation of funds in the history of industry.

Therefore the problem may actually not necessarily be that the private sector does not have the money. After all in the past the private sector would be involved in some productions, however the problem now is the general dishonest with handling of funds by those in public offices. Productions like the *CBZ A-Academy* produced by Garry Thompson were over-subscribed with sponsorship while other productions would struggle to secure even one (Fisher2010).

With unavailability of funds, the production is adversely affected in several ways. First the production will not attract the best personnel in terms of crew and actors. In the case of *Gona raMachingura* for example, there was no dedicated cameraman for the production as the cameramen would only go there when they are free from other commitments. Secondly there was lack of consistency as the production would change crew too often, every person has their own unique style, hence the changing of personnel would result in different styles in one production. This had an overall negative effect on the quality of the production as some of the crew members would not pay attention to detail and there was general poor workmanship.

This all was as a result of inadequate funding; the simple matter is that the best will not commit to productions that do not pay them, only the second best and those learning will be seconded to such a production. In *Checkmate* some of the crew members also doubled up as actors, the cameraman Jason Seremwe (Boss1), production assistant Vannessa Moosa(Boss2), Desire Chingombe(Driver) and Tawanda Maputsa(who was on attachment) are all crew members who featured in the film.

Funding with conditions is still a worrying factor in the industry. Most of the interviewees I spoke to allayed fears that when the industry opens up and financing is availed, whoever does provide the finance will likely have conditions for accessing the finances. If it is the

government, for example it is likely that for one to access such funds they have to be politically correct including having a script that is pro a certain government stance or a government policy. Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are actually known for attaching conditions, (Mhiripri2010, Mboti2014, Hungwe2005) as they sponsor films that support their programmes and agendas. This confirms the political economy theory in that those who owns the means of production can determine the outcome of communication sources, they can choose to withhold their resources and this can spell doom for the industry. Political economy is the study of social relations, particularly power relations that mutually constitute production, distribution and conception of media products including communication products (Moscow2009).

Below is a list of provisional expenses for the production of *Checkmate*

Item	Description	Quantity	Total Price
Consumables			**10**
Fuel			**90**
Airtime			**20**
Cotton Wool			**2**
Tissue			**3**
Tables			**2**
Towels	Face towel and Bath sheet		**10**
Night Dress		1	**10**
Water Glasses	Set of 6	1	**6**
Refreshments	Water, drinks, mazoe, snack		**20**
Cleaning	Domestos and mutton cloth		**5**
Make-up	Blood		**50**
Donations/Extra requirements	Bicycle, Transport etc		**50**
Catering	Breakfast @ 2 and lunch@ 2 each	3days	**200**
Actors			**630**
TOTAL			**1108**

Provisional Payment Schedule For Cast

1	Biswork David	Boyfriend	30
2	Chido Chigurira	Christine	30
3	Faith Mapiya	Stella	30
4	Gamuchirai	Rumbi	40
5	Gamuchirai Dube	Extra-airplane	20
6	Gibson Nhema	Extra-Jogger	20
7	Grace Madzivanyika	Main Actress-Netsai	50
8	Jason Seremwe	Boss1	40
9	Nhlanhla Moyo	Boss3	70
10	Rumbdzai Mapako	Extra-Airplane	20
11	Samatha Kareya	Eneres	30
12	Tawanda Mupatsi	Police 1	30
13	Tendai Gwekwe	Police2	30
14	Vannessa Moosa	Boss2	40
15	Kudzai Marindire	Newsreader	30
16	Patience	Makeup	90
17	Desire Chingombe	Runner	30
	Total		**630 USD**

Looking at the figures in these tables is a huge cause for concern; one can safely conclude there is no industry to speak of if this is the best that there is to offer. The exploitation is still existing even though (Mahoso2000) and Fisher 2010) believed it existed only during the era of donor driven films. The exploitation of the current film makers is even worse as the credit only goes to a few people after paying virtually nothing to the people who would have propelled them.

Given the fact that production budget for one American film run into hundreds of millions of dollars, for example Avatar $425 million, Star wars 6 $306 million and Pirates Of The Caribbean $300 million,(Box Office 2016). While in the British film industry, the average was 6.5 million pounds from high to bottom end films and in Nigeria they can go as high as $15 thousand dollars (even though there are many zero budget films). On the set there is general shortage and scarcity of resources, be it food, props or transport. The scarcity is to the

extent that my own vehicle end up participating in errands and no fuel would be allocated towards that, despite the fact that I was only a researcher and not a participant.

5.2.6 Production trends in the world and how they are reflected locally

A number of interviewees attributed the slack in development of the industry to lack of adoption to current trends in the production. One particular aspect he pointed out was the source of film ideas, most Hollywood blockbusters from around 2007 were either adopted from existing property or a follow up to an existing successful film (Eskilsson2012). This is because the Hollywood industry has become very risk averse as consumers do not have to be sold new concepts but rather the old ones that they know already. This is because to make a Hollywood Movie has become so expensive that as far back as 2007 to produce one film would average $106.6 Million. Eighteen of the top 20 highest-grossing movies of 2011 were based on pre-existing intellectual property – either books, previous movies or, in the case of Pirates of the Caribbean 4, previous movies based on a fairground attraction. Only two movies, Bridesmaids and Rio, were written directly for the screen (ibid).

The Zimbabwean sector as well should realise the value of films based on pre-existing properties. There are well known book authors such as Chiunduramoyo (writer of *Gona raMachingura*), Dangarembga, Hamutyinei, Mutsvairo among many others to emerge out of Zimbabwe. There are also known folktales that have emerged out of Zimbabwe. There are current and historical trends that would be of interesting viewing to Zimbabweans. One interviewee gave me the examples of stories of colonisation, independence, Gukurahundi, racism, corruption, unemployment and economic woes as potential story lines that can make a wave as uniquely Zimbabwean stories. He however bemoans that this has highly been disregarded in the wish by many film producers wanting to look foreign. Here is an extract from the interview;

> *I still wonder why we have not yet made a film about Mbuya nehanda and Sekuru Kaguwi. We have stories that have only happened in Zimbabwe and are unique to the country. It is not only HIV and AIDS stories that we should be known for, but these stories that shows our rich heritage. A controversial film on Gukurahundi will surely sell... imagine a film set up in the 1960s called Kusasana Kunoparira, adopted from that novel that everyone loved so much?...*

The Zimbabwean film producers also need to be wise enough to see what can sell and what cannot sell. Dangarembga, for example did a film about *Nyami Nyami and the Eggs of Witchcraft*. It is a folktale about a serpent (water god) that emerged from the Zambezi River and allows itself to be chopped off by hungry villagers who had been ravaged by persistent droughts. It managed to capture some people across the borders as the story was very unique, it is however a common folktale and a mirth among the Tonga people. It was selected to compete in the Luxor African Film Festival in Egypt 2012. The film was premiered at the 10th edition of the International Images Film Festival (Panorama Magazine 2012). Dangarembga also shined at the Durban Festival, she had also shown the film at the African New York Festival. The film was also slotted at the Samsung International Women's Festival before going for the Zanzibar Film Festival. An original idea can certainly go places if the treatment is done professionally. The success of this film is also in part because of the success of Dangarembga as a professional artist.

This point further confirms the need for local artists especially so the writers, directors and producers to be original in their conceptualisation of ideas. They should refrain from reproducing tired ideas from the west; audiences would simply go for the original ideas if it is the case. This further affirms the need for third world countries in particular Zimbabwe to come up with their own versions of the film theory or approach to film in a way understandable by them.

5.2.7 Scripting has the power to make or break a film

Scriptwriting should be kept well in advance of film-making, Wasco(2003). One interviewee had this to say," *I have been guiding the production of films for several years, and in the course of this I have reached the conclusion that the making of good films presupposes good scriptwriting."* He has been involved in some production that came on ZBCTV working with the late Collin Mukosi, some of the productions include *Small House Saga, Estate Blues* and *Magudu Gudu.*

Scripts are artistic works of a peculiar character different to that of novels or dramas however they form the ideological basis for films. Therefore, it is impossible to produce good films without giving priority to scriptwriting over film-making (De Vany2004). Many Zimbabwean film producers and writers rush to film before being thorough on the script; this is visible in *Gona raMachingura* and *Checkmate*. Despite Chidawaenzi (producer) preaching it, he fell short in practice as there was change in some things on the script even on the first

day of shooting which to me indicated lack of thoroughness in the scripting despite using a veteran as Chiunduramoyo. On *Checkmate* a number of things had to change as well mostly because some of the required props were not available, the producer wanted to accommodate some additional individuals and also the fact that what the script was proposing was simply not telling the story properly.

Making films is no easy job, but there is nothing mysterious about it either. With good scripts there will be a possibility to make many good films (Hobday 2000). When the script is bad, there is no chance to make a good film, it can have good pictures and sound but will never be a good film. The best way to go about it is to adopt the pitch system so that the best script wins the day and get a green light (Wasco2003).

5.2.8 Co-productions and Solidarity among film producers

To come of the interviewees, one of the biggest problems is that there are weak or non-existent co-productions and there is no solidarity among film producers and production houses. Producers are mostly working for self aggrandisement and not for the general good of the entire industry. On co-productions, there are few if any existing ones between locals and foreign companies most are in documentary productions. One of the interviewees had this to say;

> *Co-productions only happens in the area of documentaries and news whereby foreigners would come with their ideas and source some locals to execute them or worse still they will just be fixers in the productions. Sometimes the foreigners would even bring their own equipment and not hire locally available resources...*

Another one had this to say:

> *I enjoyed watching Flame, seeing he scenery of Nyanga and other beautiful places around. I saw Gweru in a Hollywood movie, when are these productions going to resurrect in Zimbabwe?*

5.2.9 Equipment and the choices made by film makers

A result from the interviews revealed that, equipment availability or lack of it is one reason that has dented the professionalism of those in the industry in Zimbabwe. It is now a free for all (Manhando-Makore 2000) because of the readily available digital equipment that can be

sold for as little as one hundred dollars, anyone has easy access to it. Therefore, there is now a growing tendency to just point and shoot and then publish straight to DVD (Mboti2014).

The more professional film makers are trying to counter this phenomenon by purchasing state of the art, expensive and loud equipment, they are then overdoing it. One example that was given by an interviewee, is what was done by the Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe (BAZ) with the Ministry of Information and Publicity, they bought expensive cameras with impressive specifications like 4k, HD and other high-end specifications. However the downside is that when one shoots in 4k, the format will not be compatible to a lot of available editing software and even the hardware as it also requires a lot of storage space that most, if not all editing suits in the country are not capable of. The solution to this problem is downgrading the quality to that which can be handled by the available editing suites.

> *You find someone owns a Red or a Black Magic here in Zimbabwe, fine that is impressive but I assure you that that piece of equipment will be obsolete before the owner realises the full potential. Now that is investment coming to waste. At times you would have modest equipment like the Panasonic P2 or the Sonny EX3, but you then find that your edit suite has software that is 10 years old.*

Editing software is generally expensive to acquire, therefore most media houses do not regularly upgrade the software as long as the older version is still working, hence even with the most recent cameras and sound gears in the market, the best quality will not be realised because there is a maximum to which an old software can arrive at and handle in terms of quality. Most media houses only upgrade when there is a largely and noticeable difference, for example most have upgraded from Standard Definition (SD) with an aspect ratio of 4:3 to High Definition (HD) with aspect ratio 16:9. This is because a lot of people now have wide screen televisions in their houses hence even a wedding should be in that aspect ratio and quality.

There is discord in this area of production, which is the key area of production because without knowledge of equipment capabilities you are in for surprise at the end of the production. On one of the days of filming *Checkmate,* there was no boom microphone to swing and the crew just brushed the problem aside by proposing the use of the on-board

camera microphones. It is this kind of casual approach that I believe has a massive ripple effect to the quality of products that come out of Zimbabwe.

5.2.10 Onset and post-production behaviours and their impact on film production

The "*one-man-band*" mentality, according to (Manhando-Makore2000) is what is problematic in the film industry in Zimbabwe. This is a situation whereby one person does a lot, if not all the key duties onset and in post-production. One of my interviewees gave the example of the television comedy series *Timmy na Bhonzo*:

> *You will look at the credits and you find that one man did everything there, Camera Bhonzo, Director of Photography Lawrence Simbarashe, Director Kule Kule, Editing Supervisor Lawrence The Khule Khule. Meanwhile we all known it is the same person and he is also the main actor in the drama. This right there is what kills our productions.*

When I observed the two productions on set and in post production (in the case of *Checkmate*), I noticed conflicts. Every individual on *Checkmate* wanted to be some sort of the knowledgeable one and ended up assuming directorship. This included the actors, they also had an opinion or two besides the fact that some of them had their first experience on this particular production. One of them, for example came up with an idea that for the film to be very interesting they need to incorporate a scene she saw in a Nigerian movie were the aborted Child eventually raised from the dead. The idea however was turned down, "politely".

Jason who was a cameraman on the production, had his own ideas of execution which were not in tandem all the time with the writer/producer come director Kakuwe. Jason has more experience with camerawork and Kakuwe as a writer but often they would clash on how to execute certain scenes and shots to transform the script to picture. Kakuwe also lost the plot in that he would also often change some scenes or create new ones that were not in the script, a scenario that added up to everyone on set believing they can also do the same. The reason for changing the script was because he can and he had the power to do so as this was his story and he can accommodate or exclude anyone he can.

In post production, the editor of *Gona raMachingura*, Owen Nguwo, was still at the rough-cut stage. This is the initial stage of editing where the editor compiles he shots he/she deems useful and eliminate those that are definitely useless. The producer insisted that he should be

present along with the editor during the edit. This is the ideal scenario, unfortunately with limited time I did not have time to observe this part of the execution. My observation with Checkmate gave me a different story, Kakuwe travelled to Mozambique for a commitment and left the editing to Hesting Zeleman of FIG, Jason who was the cameraperson was just not going to be available. Zeleman would use shots in a manner he judges fit in his own opinion. The sequences that would have been verbally agreed upon by those who were on set would drastically change. The film suddenly becomes a one-man-band and everyone else wants to see a finished product.

The problem goes back in part, to contractual agreements and role allocation, on *Checkmate* there was no dedicated director which is a very unusual scenario because the director is the one who translate the script to pictures. The absence of a dedicated director then led to the situation of conflict because someone had to fill in that slot and it happened at the expense of the entire production.

Director should be patient in meeting his real goal and work together with the writer to produce a good film (Moal2005). Directors should also give effective guidance to crew, actors and actresses in their execution of duty. They should maintain control over them and make strong demands on them until their directing purposes are achieved, even though they may be accused of being too tough and heavy handed. To give proper guidance to the team, directors should have their own opinions. If they lack these opinions they cannot work properly to produce films. Directors should also improve their artistic ability, for example, once the major plots of a work have been framed, they should insert details of lives into them and press on with the creative work in accordance with the purposes of the demarcation. These are aspects that are completely absent in the two cases, more so in the entire film industry. An excuse can go back to finances, in the sense that how a director can be tough on someone who they are paying $30, they are likely to just quit.

5.3.1 The absence of Press coverage, publicity and academic studies

Part of Hollywood productions is the presence of the press and the creation of a hype on the film, actors, directors and others involved, (Aksoy and Robins1992). The creation of side shows like *Hollywod on Set* or *Behind the Scenes Nigeria* are a part of the ways to create a media presence. Disney creates theme parks for film fanatics to visit and have a feel of the

sets, costumes and gadgets like cars that are used on their favourite films; this is in a bid to create publicity. Press conferences are held to allow reports to talk and ask their directors and actors questions and interact with them.

I observed that one of the media friendly events has been done on the two cases I researched on. It was never a priority as their main concern was to get over with the production and try to publicise it when it is done filming and editing, only a few individuals would post some random pictures and comments on social media, nothing official. They painted a gloomy picture of this approach labelling it as more of a fantasy than actual reality in the Zimbabwean industry.

It is unthinkable to even imagine calling for a press conference on a film production,*" To call for a press conference is actually laughable because none will come, no publication is interested in the story*", said Hwata the director at Bigshow. He goes on to say unless there is some form of bribe paid out then the journalists will give some coverage for small newspapers like H-Metro and never for TV. He would rather take that route when the film is finished in order to assist the sales. As for academic studies mine was the first of such a kind to the producers and they both share the common sentiment that it will be the first for them and the last.

5.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter looked at the findings of the research of the two cases, *Gona raMachingura* and *Checkmate* and it explored several of them in detail. These are findings from the two cases that were studied but are reflective of the bigger scheme of issues in the industry. Data was presented in a thematic form and its interpretation was done with reference to relevant literature and theory.

Chapter 6: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will look at the problems as outlined in chapter 5 and suggests possible recommendations to confront them in the interest of raising the film industry bar high. The aim of the research was to look and expose the problems in a bid to map the way forward. In this Chapter there will also be some recommendations on possible future research that can be carried out in this area of study.

6.2 Summary

The research looked at the film industry in Zimbabwe- Growth and Production challenges. A case study approach was used to achieve the objectives of the study. The cases that were used are that of *Gona raMachingura* and *Checkmate*. These are two productions that were done with two production houses, Bigshow productions and Fig Multimedia respectively. The research was carried out in Harare which is the location for the two production houses , hence the two films.

The objectives if this research were laid down in the first chapter and these were together with the introduction of the study and the background to the study and the research questions. The second chapter gave a comprehensive literature review as well as the theoretical framework. These gave the research a direction to work on as well as provision of a study gape.

The third Chapter outlined the methodology to be used. It also gave the sampling method and the data collection methods. In this case I used triangulation in that observations complimented interviews. I then outlined the relevance of using thematic analysis of data. Chapter four gave the background and the current standing of the two production houses involved in the research, in a chapter titled Political Economy.

Chapter five gave the findings of the study in themes as well as the analysis of these findings. The findings concluded that there are problems in the production value chain and the film services framework of the sector in Zimbabwe. These problems are reflective and an eye opener to the state of the film industry as a whole.

6.3 Conclusions

The problems that were exposed and laid down in Chapter five were particular for the two cases in this research. They are however reflective of the entire industry; they explain the

slow growth of the film industry in Zimbabwe. There are films that are coming out of Zimbabwe on regular bases. A visit to the Zollywood website and Youtube social site will reveal that this is the case. One can easily see glaring problems in the productions of these films when watching them for example *Sabhuku vara Zipi, Dystopia paruzevha and Fly in the ointment.* They generally have poor sound quality, poor camerawork and the story is poorly told one can safely conclude there is no script to refer to.

This calls for a holistic solution to the cocktail of problems. Suggestion is that those in the film sector themselves should start treating the sector with respect, this rest follows. The industry will not prosper if people in treat it as a casual pastime. Those in-charge of productions should also have their hands clean as allegations of misappropriation of funds is rampant. Funds can possibly start flowing if the funds are put to good use and the investers have something to show for their investment.

There is need for those in the academia to carry out studies in a bid to conceptualise theories that are relevant to the local industry in order for future studies to have a framework and a reference point. This particular research was treated using western conceptualised ideas and theoretical framework.

6.4 Recommendations

6.4.1 Recommendations to the production houses

The two production houses that were involved in this research were Fig Multimedia (*Checkmate*) and Bigshow production (*Gona raMachingura*). It is plausible that they took the leap of faith and engaged in a territory they are both not familiar with and one that they both treat with pessimism. It is also understandable that they may view this area of business as an area of possible loss making. However there are some things that they can do differently or better without increasing margins for risk. The first thing that I recommend they do is that whenever they get into a deal the companies should have agreements in writing and never conclude deals with a handshake. This will help in future, for example when they want to claim credit or ownership or as a reference point in case better deals depend on that.

The names and reputations of companies depend on their works, therefore it is in the companies' interest to treat any deal they involve themselves with uttermost respect and professionalism (Hesmondhalgh2000). In this regard it was important for Bigshow productions to involve all its staff members so they do their job as they are contracted to do

by the company. Of note was the absents of the Public Relation and Marketing person, she was supposed to give her plan for publicising and marketing the film despite the circumstances and she was supposed to execute it with the same energy that she gives to their cash cows.

There is need to coordinate within the industry with other players in order to ascertain who can provide what equipment so that people do not end up buying obsolete or equipment that is too advanced for the local industry and put scarce resources to waste. There is also need from thorough research from those in the know before purchasing equipment, in the case of BAZ who purchased 4k cameras that need to have the footage downgraded to suite locally available edit suits and as well the format consumed too much space that there is need to upgrade the hardware as well. The industry should be abreast with newer versions of software whenever they can upgrade. Riber(2001) recommended a constant evaluation of the industry, had an inventory of the players in the industry and all that they can offer.

I recommend construction of a central registry were people in the film services sector can input their equipment into a register or a web based database and users can simply visit this database to lookup for equipment or services that they may need. If a person needs lights, for example, they go to the central register and lookup for lights and they can narrow down the search by looking up for specifications of the lights they need and all the names of the people who have registered these appear, making it easy for equipment to be accessed. This is because some people with the equipment do not know where to use it and those who want to use it do not know where to get it.

It is important to be a script writer because this is where the whole process starts (Moal2009). However it is also critical for script writer to know their limitations, not all scripts are pro-filmic, and not all script writers are directors. Therefore script writers in Zimbabwe should be able to relinquish their scripts into the hands of those they can entrust in executing in transferring it into motion picture.

There is need to carry out a thorough research prior to writing a script, the methods of such a research will depend on the scripter. The reason for such a research is to ascertain the uptake of the particular idea, not all stories will be taken by consumers because they are not gullible, it is therefore wise to work from the audience backwards and not try to impose on them. This will help in allocation of resources towards an idea that can potentially sell. De Vany(2004)

posits, it is impossible to produce good films without giving priority to scriptwriting over film-making.

Originality is one of the major areas for concern; it is fundamental as far as film scripting is concerned. There is no merit in reproducing work from Nigeria, South Africa or America no matter how interesting that may sound. When someone watches a film and feel they have encountered it somewhere else they simply will dismiss it and rather go for the original work. However scripts can be written form existing intellectual property such as novels and folk tales, this is an area that the script writers are not realising the potential.

I recommend that film makers choose their venues carefully and be as natural as possible. When doing environmental sots , it is recommendable that the producers use those streets that best depicts and reflects on the current situation in the country, for example it is only natural to see shot of streets with vendors in them depicting the current economic situation. It becomes serine to have a shot of a very clean street because it hen appears the film is not current. I also recommend that film makers take advantage of monuments and other unique land marks and features in a bid to localise their films.

Producers of films need to be professional in their conduct and treatment of the industry. Part of the reasons why finances has been evading the industry is because most of the producer's hands are dripping with blood (Mbebwe2013). They are dishonest and are known for misappropriation of funds. Those willing to finance then shy away from such people because of this reason at the end of the day affecting the entire industry. It is therefore advisable to hire a finance person when a film production is underway and avoid the situation whereby one individual handles both the finances and the production.

I would like to recommend that when there is a production to be tackled, producers do find those individuals who have had success before in the industry and partner hem for their expertise. People like Dangarembga, Chiunduramoyo and Chigorimbo. It is also my recommendation that whenever possible, the producers factor in foreign partners whose productions have been successful before, for example those from Ghana, Nigeria or South Africa. This may even help in the bid to expand the consumer market because the partner could have their own ideas of marketing that they bring in to the production.

6.4.2 Recommendations to policy makers

There are fundamentals that can be contributed towards the film sector by those in the power to make policies. It is not always about availability of money that an industry fails to take off or thrive but because of certain policies and lack of, even though some financial resources need to be channelled directly towards the industry from government.

It is critical for the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe (NACZ) to afford the film industry the same privileges they have advocated for and provided towards music and public address sectors. They are allowed to import equipment duty free since 2003; the same should be afforded to the film industry and those in the film services sector.

The government and those with the powers need to recognise the film industry as a potential employment and revenue earner and facilitate for dialogue towards a vibrant industry. The dialogue can involve universities, colleges and art organisations such as NACZ and Makhosi productions and those who are already venturing into the industry such as Bigshow and Fig Multimedia. The dialogue can include issues of how to form a national film policy that can actually work for the good of the industry.
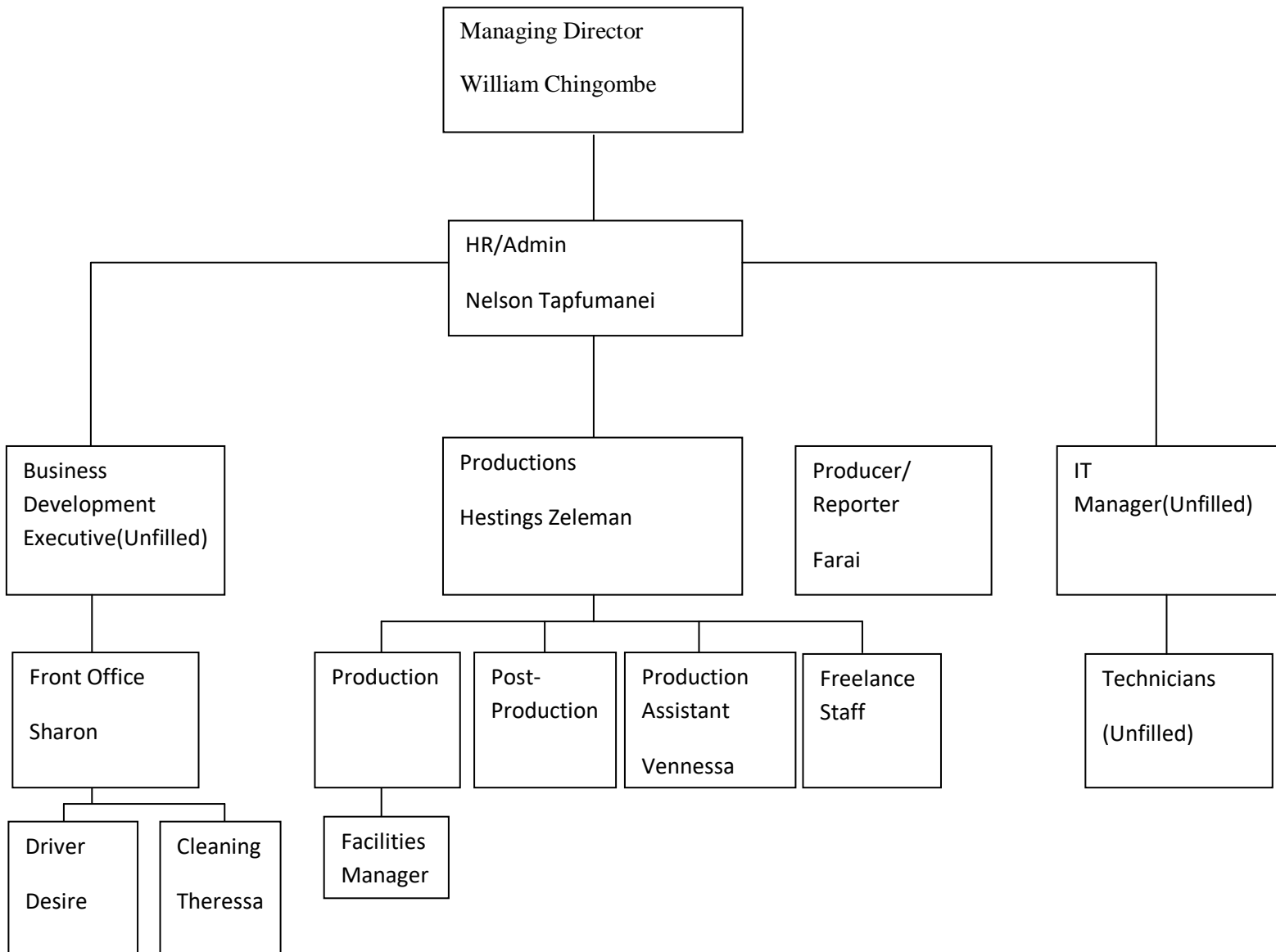
6.4.3 Recommendation to the academia

I would like to recommend there be a study that focuses o the audiences of film culture in Zimbabwe, this is because for people to make films it is for the audiences therefore it is fundamental to understand them and their dynamics therefore this is an essential area for future studies. Another area of study is the distribution of film and unveiling the possibilities that can be available in the country as this is one dilemma that the film producers seems to be facing, they do not know where to go with their finished product. A third area of research can be the use of technology in video productions and how the local industry can best utilise and maximise the use of emerging technology such as drones.

6.5 Chapter Summary

This is the closing chapter for this research; it was looking at some recommendations to the problems that surfaced in Chapter 5. It also looked at the summary of the research as well as some conclusions. There chapter closed by recommending some possible area of future studies in the film sector.

Appendix 1

Organogram for Fig Multimedia

```
                          ┌──────────────────────┐
                          │  Managing Director   │
                          │                      │
                          │  William Chingombe   │
                          └──────────┬───────────┘
                                     │
                          ┌──────────┴───────────┐
                          │     HR/Admin         │
                          │                      │
                          │  Nelson Tapfumanei   │
                          └──────────────────────┘
```

| Business Development Executive(Unfilled) | Productions Hestings Zeleman | Producer/ Reporter Farai | IT Manager(Unfilled) |

| Front Office Sharon | Production | Post-Production | Production Assistant Vennessa | Freelance Staff | Technicians (Unfilled) |

| Driver Desire | Cleaning Theressa | Facilities Manager |

Appendix 2

Organogram for Bigshow Productions

```
                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │ Executive Director. │
                    │    Denis Hwata      │
                    └─────────────────────┘
                              │
              ┌───────────────────────┐
              │ Secretary Owen Nguo   │
              └───────────────────────┘
```

| Finance and Administration Clara Murwira | Public Relations and Marketing Christine Rudo Makunike | Production Department Elizabeth Gandah | Technical Operations Lawrence Chinembiri |

| Drivers, Cleaning services, Administrators | | Producers, Floor Managers, Script Writers, Graphic Designers | Camera persons, Audio Operators, Vision Operators, Riggers, Editors |

Question Guide

Why do films coming out of Zimbabwe considered being of an inferior quality?

Elaborate on the issues that you consider as causing problems in the production of this film? Do you think there are mirroring the entire industry in Zimbabwe?

In terms o the production process where do you consider to be the issues that affects the eventual quality of the product emanate from?

Are people playing and respecting their roles along the film value chain of these productions?

Elaborate on how government policies aid your production or not.

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