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The Changing Landscape of Broadcasting in Sierra Leone: Past, Present and Future

Abstract

This Thesis investigates the changing landscape of broadcasting in Sierra Leone from government monopoly to the institutionalisation of broadcast pluralism. It posits that political pluralism facilitates broadcast pluralism. The research places emphasis on community radio broadcasting because of its role in sensitising a mass illiterate society like Sierra Leone. It analyses the process of change through the development of broadcast regulatory policy framework, independent of government control. The thesis examines the role of politics and government in media development. The anchorage is on media and democracy: democratic governments encourage media pluralism while authoritarianism restricts it. Most emergent democracies in Africa are experiencing this media evolution as part of the democratisation process.

The thesis utilises Habermas's theory of the public sphere to discuss public participation in the sphere of broadcasting, media pluralism, change in broadcast regulatory policymaking framework, and the emergence of the grassroots sphere of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. The research uses the four theories of the press to analyse the independence of broadcasting from government control. The political economy approach elucidates the phenomenon of commercialisation and sustainability in Sierra Leone broadcasting. The data for analysis are policy documents and in-depth interviews, which will provide evidence of broadcast evolution.

This research succeeds in documenting the evolution of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. The outcome of this development is the proliferation of community and regional radio stations, which created the grassroots sphere of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. The use of local languages in broadcasting enhanced grassroots participation, education, and information in the society. The aftermath of the war, international interventions, political and media pluralism, and change in media regulatory framework facilitated this development. The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) limits the public sphere to government information but the state is working towards its political independence. This thesis has contributed to the body of broadcasting knowledge both in theory and in practice, by analysing these new developments in Sierra Leone.
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Dedication

To my children Rowlandson, Annie and Juliet, and all disadvantaged children in Sierra Leone...that they may know.
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List of Abbreviations

AFRC – Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
APC – All peoples Congress
PSB - Public Service Broadcasting
SLPP – Sierra Leone Peoples Party
SLBS - Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service
IMC - Independent Media Commission
CORNET – Community Radio Network
SLAJ - Sierra Leone Association of Journalist
NCP - National Commission for Privatisation
NPRC – National Provisional Ruling Council
INFORMOTRAC - The Initiative for Mobile Training for Community Radio
DFID – British Department for International Development
RNTE - Radio Nederland Training Centre
TMT – Transitional Management Team (SLBS)
USAID - United States Agency for International Development
SFCG-SL - Search for Common Ground- Sierra Leone
TDS-SL - Talking Drum Studio-Sierra Leone
OSIWA - The Open Society initiative for West Africa
BFBS - The British Forces Broadcasting Service
UNAMSIL - The United Nations Mission to Sierra Leone
BBN - Believers Broadcasting Network
VOH 96.2 - Voice of the Handicapped
WADR - West Africa Democracy Radio
RUF – Revolutionary United Front
Chapter 1

Thesis Introduction

The topic for this research is the changing landscape of broadcasting in Sierra Leone, focusing on the past, present and future development of the broadcast industry in the country. This subject presupposes three significant questions that need answering in this research. These are as follows; (1) Why are these changes taking place in the Sierra Leone broadcasting system? (2) How are these changes taking place? (3) Why are policymakers developing regulatory policy frameworks for the new media environment? At the end of the research, the thesis will establish that the Sierra Leone broadcasting landscape has been de-monopolised and that there is the institutionalisation of broadcast pluralism, nurtured by political pluralism. According to Carver (2006:9), a pluralistic broadcasting system has a variety and multiplicity of broadcasting channels, these include publicly owned and funded broadcaster, community broadcasting stations and a variety of private commercial broadcasters, with diversity of ownership. It also involves a diversity of views, a variety of voices being given access to the media and a variety of information and viewpoints being heard. The emphasis is on broadcast pluralism because, as Carver puts it, the past ten years have seen a dramatic growth in broadcast pluralism in Africa. From a broadcasting scene overwhelmingly dominated by government-controlled media, the landscape has evolved considerably with the licensing of many independent private commercial and community broadcasters. (Broadcasting Pluralism and Diversity Training Manual 19, 2006)

The new broadcasting landscape consists of independent community radio stations, government regional stations and international rebroadcast stations. The government
is making efforts to change the status of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) from government-owned, to public service corporation and also the state has developed a new regulatory policy framework for media pluralism. These media developmental efforts have broadened grassroots participation in the public sphere of broadcasting in Sierra Leone.

The anchorage of the thesis is on media and democracy, regulation and deregulation of broadcasting. According to Curran (2005: 152), democratic media regulation takes five main forms: (1) public service broadcasting, which seeks to ensure that the public is adequately informed, reporting is fair and to sustain programme quality and diversity; (2) social market policies aim at media pluralism and (3) social responsibility seeks to restrain market excess through self-regulation and the professional education of journalists; (4) economic democracy aims at improving the media and (5) an equitable balance between the media’s freedom of expression and the protection of human rights. All of these approaches are to ensure that the media service the needs of the society.

The evolution of broadcasting in Sierra Leone from government monopoly to media pluralism has significantly contributed to media development in Sierra Leone. The change in the regulatory framework from a government ministry to the Independent Media Commission (IMC) has significantly reduced direct government control and political influence in regulating broadcasting. The proliferation of government regional stations and independent community radios has increased access of broadcasting to the majority of Sierra Leoneans who were excluded in the communication process due to inadequate broadcasting services in the country. The multiplicity of radio channels and the variety of messages have empowered and
prepared the citizens to participate effectively in the political and socio-economic development in the emergent democratic state of Sierra Leone. There is a sustained argument to change the status of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) from direct government control to PSB so that it would serve the public interest and promote national unity, developmental goals, and aspirations of the states more effectively. The opening of the media public sphere was not possible in an authoritarian politically unstable Sierra Leone but with the introduction of democracy, the country is taking advantage to liberalise its social institutions including broadcasting. Almost all developing countries in Africa are experiencing this phenomenon (Tam-Baryoh, 2006:18; Fatoyinbo, 1999:1). These are the issues for debate in this thesis.

1.2 Contextualising the problem of the Thesis

This thesis investigates the evolution of the Sierra Leone broadcasting system from a state-owned, to a two-tier system of government-owned and independent broadcasting. Evidence is provided to indicate that the broadcasting system has been de-monopolised. The thesis emphasises that there is a connection between broadcast pluralism and political change in the wider society. The country has experienced about thirty years of authoritarian rule and ten years of civil conflict, but it is now transforming itself into an emergent democratic state through constitutional reforms. This has made provision for popular participation in politics, voting in presidential and parliamentary elections and instituting an independent judiciary, the rule of law and accountability. There is a relationship between democratic transformation and the evolution of broadcasting.
In discussing the media in democratic and non-democratic regimes, Gunther & Mughan (2000:4-5) say that the defining characteristic of the authoritarian model is strict government control of the media. They maintain that the characteristics of democratic media systems are that the constitution guarantees freedom of the press, it protects the media from the arbitrary exercise of government power and media pluralism is institutionalised. The institutionalisation of media pluralism through the democratisation process is the focus of this thesis. In Africa, nation states have undergone years of authoritarian regimes and media control, but in recent history, most countries are now transforming themselves to democracy and the liberalisation of the media. According to Sotunmbi (1999:214), authoritarian regimes created the atmosphere for political and economic instability, crystallized in the form of civil conflict and a restrictive media environment. He says, “widespread rebellion,…… has occurred in many African states thereby impeding the development of democratic institutions….in a number of African countries, opposition groups were denied outlet whether in the electronic or in print media”.

Presently, the political wind of change is blowing in most of these countries. They are transforming themselves into democracies and the media is evolving with this transformation. According to Tanjong (1999:311), the democratisation that is prevalent in West and Central Africa has resulted in a series of constitutional reforms in the sub-region. These reforms, he stresses, did not only affect the political landscape, but also the media landscape, as the state recognises the media as a ‘veritable instrument of democratic pluralism’.

Democratic principles and media pluralism are positive in African developing countries commencing in the mid 90s onwards, when most African states started to
reintroduce political and media pluralism. Before this period (1960s-1980s), the media was mainly government controlled, utilised to promote national development and to manage the unstable political climate in the continent. This suggests that there is a paradigm shift from monopolistic state-owned media to media pluralism in emergent democratic African states. McQuail (2002) and Mwakawago (1980) believe that newly independent African states need government-controlled media to promote national development, unity and integration. Mwakawago (1980:85) states that in a country that has as its top priority the creation of nationhood, the government must control the mass media with no exception. He stresses that central authorities will formulate and transmit educational and developmental programmes which have as their primary objective the reason of national consciousness. McQuail (2002:155) says a more positive version of media theory is needed which focuses on national and developmental goals. In the circumstances, he says, it may be legitimate for government to allocate resources selectively and to restrict journalistic freedom in some ways. He argues that social responsibility comes before media rights and freedom, maintaining that in practice, many media systems in the developing world still qualify for the authoritarian label.

In Kenya for example, the independent government changed the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation to state-owned *Voice of Kenya*. According to Nguru (1980), this was to promote national integration and unity. He argues that the *Voice of Kenya* through its programmes, news bulletins, and statements from national and local political leaders has forged the spirit of national unity by the condemnation of tribalism and sectionalism. He believes that radio and television have been in the forefront in promoting national unity and national integration, emphasising that the President of
Kenya as the head of state is the symbol of national unity, therefore the media should prioritise his activities in national news broadcasts. He says that the development, or guided/paternalistic theory of the press, mobilizes the press to achieve goals of third world development. In this system, the government owns and supports the media to focus on good news, promote a positive outlook for the country, and stress development.

In a paradigm shift, scholars such as Nwosu (1999) and Tanjong (1999) have been critical of this approach to media and development. Tanjong (1999:312) says in the 1970s and 1980s media in West and Central Africa lacked media pluralism. He stated that in most of these countries the media seem to function principally to serve the needs of the dictators in promoting and sustaining their regimes. Consequently, the ownership and control patterns of the media under such authoritarian governments have been a case of state monopoly with far reaching consequences on media content. He says governments determined the quality and quantity of news broadcast which reflect their personal desires and interests at the expense of the public. Nwosu (1999: 509) rejects aspects of theories that imply that the mass media should, when considered necessary be forced or made to be socially responsible by other institutions outside the media such as politics. “We reject this position because it will ... tamper with or negatively affect the operational freedom or autonomy of the mass media as social institutions.” This thesis is set within the period of the 1990s when according to Tanjong (1999), about a third of the twenty-three countries in West and Central Africa has attempted to implement multiparty democracy leading to media pluralism. In contemporary Africa, the discourse on democratic participation and media pluralism is inevitable as part of its new developmental dispensation but not
without problems. Tettey (2006:2) says the media have had a positive impact on
democratization in Africa as conduits for political education, watchdogs of political
accountability and forums for civic engagement. He maintains that despite these
developments, some critics describe the media as less positive, highlighting attitudes
that portray them as irresponsible, self-serving, unaccountable and a threat to the
credibility and sustenance of the democratic process. In Sierra Leone's 2007
presidential and parliamentary elections the two major parties, the APC and SLPP
established their own radio stations for negative political propaganda. According to
*Standard Times* online (2007), in a desperate attempt to counter propaganda in the
opposition All Peoples Congress (APC) party radio station FM 88.8, the ruling Sierra
Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) has opened FM 94.9 Radio Unity. Tam-Baryoh (2007)
says

> In a short while, the APC Radio and the SLPP radio have created more panic,
more incitement and even embarrassment to the government, more than the
role and performances of the entire independent media over the last five years.
That a political party-owned news organ could go out of its way to attack
international friends of the Government, is enough example of how not to run
a political party media. This has increased acrimony on the airwaves.

President Kabbah (2007) in a speech to calm down the tension of the election urged
people to "desist from making provocative and inflammatory statements against each
other" particularly on politically partisan radio stations. This shows that there should
be some form of control and accountability on the media. Tettey (2006:2) argues that
state-controlled mechanisms of accountability are not always conducive to
democracy, because they could be subject to abuse. There is, therefore, the need for
the media themselves to put in place procedures and demonstrate attitudes and levels of performance that ensure the highest standards of professionalism and levels of probity and accountability.

Governments in developing countries in Africa are currently in the process of developing regulatory policies to cope with changes in the new atmosphere of a liberalized broadcast environment for professionalism and accountability (Rowe, 1998; Strasser-King, 1995; Sisay, 2005). The significance of this politics-media evolution is the institutionalisation of media pluralism through the media policymaking process. According to McQuail (2000), politics can change the media by regulations and policies, which politicians or governments create for the industry. He stresses that change in the media is a process of policy formulation for the liberalization of the press and independence of broadcasting from political and economic control. Mtimde et al (1998:2) uphold that democratic governments in most developing countries in Africa are deregulating the broadcast media by freeing the airwaves. This has led to the development of a new phenomenon of a pluralist, populist medium of community radio, used in developing countries by grassroots movements for communal participation on good governance, development, and the expression of local aims and aspirations.

In discussing the changes in Sierra Leone broadcasting, Holmes (1999: xxxvi) argues that, despite the fact that the country was drowning in the ‘abyss of political, social, and economic disasters’, it has been working to change its broadcasting image. The significant point of this change was that the government has opened up the industry to the private sector, major western television networks, other international governments, agencies, and religious organizations. She maintains that presently, the
government has granted ownership and operation of FM stations throughout the
country to independent investors. The change in politics and media is a widespread
phenomenon in many developing countries. Discussing The limits of media
democratization in South Africa: politics, privatization, and regulation, Barnett
(1999:650) says that the 1994 democratic election in South Africa witnessed an
evolution of the broadcast environment. This involved the transformation of the South
Africa Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) from a state-controlled broadcaster to an
independent public service broadcaster, the establishment of a new independent
regulatory body, the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA), and the entry into
the field of a number of new private broadcasting houses. He says that the apartheid
state controlled broadcasting, but the democratic government aimed at media
privatisation and liberalisation.

Holmes (1999), Rowe (1998) and Strasser-King (1995) acknowledge media-
democratic change in Sierra Leone, yet others took exception and countered this
argument. In his paper entitled The Evolution of Mass Media in Africa, Fatoyinbo
(1999:1) acknowledges the media transformation that is currently prevalent in Africa
but excludes Sierra Leone and other countries that were experiencing political crisis.
He says that the strongest government monopoly broken in the last ten years has been
that of radio broadcasting; radio and television were governments’ preserve. Now, in
almost every country in Africa, private radio stations are booming, most of them are
broadcasting on frequency modulation (FM). He states that the tremendous growth in
the media system in Africa over the last decade has missed only those countries
undergoing serious social and political crisis like Sierra Leone, Liberia, Congo-
Kinshasa, Congo-Brazzaville and Somalia.
Fatoyinbo (1999) argues that, the proposition that change has taken place in the Sierra Leone broadcasting landscape is false, whilst Holmes (1999) contends that the same proposition is true. A proposition cannot be both true and false; a proposition can only be true or false (Morgan, 2000; Lodge, 2000). It is the aim of this thesis to investigate the truth of this proposition that the Sierra Leone broadcasting landscape has changed from monopoly to pluralism. The truth of this proposition will be evaluated in the transformation of politics and broadcasting regulatory policy framework, coherent with other institutional changes in the society, argued through consistent logical presentation of evidence. According to Lodge (2003:236), Plato says the philosopher is in love with truth, not with the changing world of sensation, which is the object of opinion, but with the unchanging reality, which is the object of knowledge. This thesis will discount opinions and strive to provide verifiable evidence to substantiate its position in order to contribute to knowledge.

1.3 Change in Broadcasting

Broadcasting in Sierra Leone started in 1934 by the British Colonial authority as a wired re-diffusion system. It was the first broadcast institution launched during colonial rule in the sub region. According to Holmes (1999:48), the colonial government established broadcasting to service the interest of the empire. At independence in 1961, the government took over the station. Since then the national broadcaster remained a government-owned monopoly. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting administered the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) (Findlay, 1974). In the interim, Palmer (1969) and Strasser-King (1995) attempted to develop a national broadcasting policy for Sierra Leone to give political
independence to the SLBS a public entity. The main thrust of the debate was to incorporate SLBS as a PSB in line with other broadcasting systems in the Commonwealth of Nations. Successive governments have rejected these broadcast regulatory policies, thinking that it will lose a propaganda machine, which is effectively disseminating government information and policies.

The early 90s witnessed a wave of community radio stations into the media system in Sierra Leone. The reasons for this are both internal and external.

Internally, at some point in the rebel war, there was a communication gap, which the SLBS was unable to fill because of poor transmission capacity, so the government had to register private community radio stations to fill that gap (Holmes, 1999; Kromah, 2004). In 1997, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) overthrew the democratic government and captured the SLBS for propaganda purposes. The exiled government also established a Radio Democracy to counter AFRC propaganda. At this point, both the junta and the democratic government were using radio as a war propaganda machine (Rowe, 1998; Spencer, 2004). The external factors are the financial and technological contributions made by foreign governments and international NGOs to broadcasting development in Sierra Leone. At the end of the war, many international NGOs assisted the establishment of independent community radio stations because of its democratic functions in the society (Nicol, 2004; Massaquio, 2004). Nearly all the international peacekeeping organizations such as the British Forces, the United Nations Mission to Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and the Search for Common Grounds (SFCGSL), either started to operate radio stations, or financially and technologically, supported community radio stations (Dallas,
The research notes the BBC's expansionist policy of establishing local FM radio stations in the world over.

The changes in the media environment have made it impossible for the government to control information dissemination. Therefore, it had no alternative but to liberalize the broadcast industry. Through policy document recommendations, the government passed the Independent Media Commission Act in Parliament in March 2000, which gives the Independent Media Commission (IMC) the mandate to promote media pluralism. This regulatory policy change institutionalised media pluralism and divested the media of government control (Rowe, 1998; Strasser-King, 1995).

Currently, the IMC has registered about 30 independent community radio stations in the major cities and towns. To meet with the challenge posed by these independent radio stations, the government has established five regional stations. This change has brought about two models of broadcasting institutions: government-owned and independent community radio stations (Maura et al., 1998:20). Phiri (2000) argues that the situation in Zambia is analogous to Sierra Leone's, where instead of government privatising state broadcasting, it liberalized the airwaves making room for other independent radio stations. Khumalo (1999), Ntuane (2000) and Tsiang (1989) argue that similar changes are taking place in Kenya, Botswana, Zimbabwe, South Africa, and Ghana.

The effect of the media evolution is the institutionalisation of media pluralism. Discussing the proliferation and democratic transition in Africa, Andriantsoa et al. (2005:40) say that the curtailment of funding for public broadcasts has created opportunity for a diversity of alternative information and entertainment sources. At the same time, growing political pluralism has fuelled demand for a government that...
is more accountable and a free media. The international environment had supported these developments with the fall of the Berlin Wall, the demise of the Soviet Union and the rise of multiparty democracies in Eastern Europe. International and local developments brought diversity and pluralism in the broadcast industry in developing countries. According to McQuail (2000), media diversity relates to structures of ownership and control, to content as produced and transmitted, and to audience composition and content choices. Diversity is associated with access, freedom, choice, change and equality. It stands as a positive value in opposition to monopoly. Curran (2000) says media pluralism includes competing media outlets and a commitment to extending freedom of expression, self-determination, promoting equitable outcomes informed by awareness of opposed opinions and interests, and accepting a greater degree of conflict played out by the media.

1.4 The Rationale behind Researching the Subject

The research will contribute to the corpus of knowledge in mass communication for developing countries. Sierra Leone is a small country, yet there are very significant changes that are taking place in media and politics, which academics and other professionals can build upon for research. Such development is the institutionalisation of democratic principles and media pluralism. Most international donor agencies such as the World Bank and United Nations have made democracy conditional for financial assistance to third world countries (Uche, 1999:533). This means that information on emergent democracies should come to the attention of these institutions accordingly (Onuoha, 1999; Obilade, 1999). This thesis provides a reservoir of such information.
Holmes (1999) wrote the most recent literature on broadcasting in Sierra Leone. Since then, several changes have occurred in broadcasting in the country which, if investigated and critically assessed, will contribute to a new corpus of knowledge that have not yet been explored. These are new regulatory policies formally liberalizing the media. This, and all subsequent development of broadcasting in Sierra Leone, will be a major contribution to this body of knowledge.

Rowe (1998) drafted a National Communication Policy document under the aegis of the Sierra Leone government and the United Nations Development Programme (UNPD). The SLPP Government accepted its recommendations for the expansion of the SLBS and media pluralism in Sierra Leone, unlike other policy proposals, which other governments have rejected (Palmer, 1969; Strasser-King, 1995). The implementation of these recommendations is significant to the development of broadcasting policy for Sierra Leone. In acceptance of Rowe's (1998) recommendation for pluralism, in 2000, the government enacted the Independent Media Commission (IMC) Act, to promote media pluralism and regulate all media institutions. This divested such responsibility from the government to an independent commission. An evaluation will be done on the Independent Media Commission through its sub-committees - the Application, Complaints, and Advisory Committees. The Applications Committee has registered a number of independent radio stations, the Complaints Committee has developed a code of conduct for media practitioners, and the Advisory committee has developed a policy framework under which the media can operate in Sierra Leone. The government established regional radio stations with the help of the British Department for International Development (DfID); these are located in the regional headquarter towns of each region and
strategic towns of economic and political significance. The introduction of regional radio stations by the government was to respond to the proliferation of community radio stations in the country. Broadcasters established the Community Radio Network (CORNET) in 2003 to coordinate the affairs of community radio stations. A study will be conducted on other organisations and foreign governments currently assisting the development of radio in Sierra Leone. These are the Open Society Initiative West Africa (OSIWA), Search for Common Ground (SFCG-SL), the Dutch, British, and US Governments. Therefore, this thesis is significant at global, regional, and local levels.

This thesis emphasises the importance of radio broadcasting over all other forms of mass communication. Head (1974:3) summarises the importance of radio broadcasting over television and newspaper for Africa;

Radio is the only medium in Africa able to scale the triple barrier of illiteracy, distance, and lack of transportation; broadcasting uses scores of local languages, most of which never appear in print; radio and television continue to grow, while daily newspapers decline.

This implies that, to read the newspaper requires a certain amount of education, which is not effective in a mass illiterate society. On the other hand, broadcasting needs no formal education, as local languages give vital information and education in a mass illiterate society. Television could be effective, but very expensive for poverty-stricken Africa. It is an elitist medium and the carrier of western cultures inimical to local cultures (Stevenson, 1988). On the other hand, radio is a grassroots medium because it is inexpensive, easily powered, and scales the triple barrier of illiteracy, distance and lack of transportation (Head, 1974:3; Mytton, 1983:5). This
was summarised by Stevenson (1988:68-69), when he says "... Of all the mass media, radio has the greatest potential for easy and inexpensive adaptation to the needs and interest of Third World audiences..." Secondly, scholars have manifested more research interest on African newspapers than in broadcasting. Head (1974:4) explains why "Broadcasting in Africa is almost universally under direct government control, while a few news publications still retain degree of freedom from official supervision." Since colonial times, the newspaper industry has enjoyed some of autonomy from the government while broadcasting was under government control. Presently, democratic governments in developing countries have started to create a pluralistic broadcast environment; therefore, it is now time to investigate the place of pluralistic media in developing countries (Tanjong, 1999:305).

1.5 The Question of relevant literature

The research will use relevant literature from both developed and developing countries. The most recent, if not the only publication on the Sierra Leone Broadcasting system is, ‘Broadcasting in Sierra Leone’ written by Holmes (1999). It is the most comprehensive documentation of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. It will be utilised as a secondary documentary source for this research (Deacon et al, 1999). A comparative analysis is feasible between Sierra Leone and other African broadcasting systems modelled on the United Kingdom’s public service model of broadcasting. Sierra Leone, like Ghana, Botswana, Nigeria, Kenya, and South Africa share a similar political and broadcasting history (Banda, 2003; Barnett, 1999; Karikari, 1994).

Negrine (1994:82) describes the foundation of the British model of the PSB. He says that the Crawford Committee recommended in 1926 that the state should conduct
broadcasting as a public corporation acting as trustee for the national interest and its status and duties should correspond with those of a public service. He says this is the foundation of the British public service broadcasting with its emphasis on public duty, universality of service and providing information, education, and entertainment for all. Negrine (1994:83) says the BBC’s first Director General, John Reith’s vision of broadcasting was based on four major principles; assured sources of funding, the brute force of monopoly, the public service motive, and a sense of moral obligation. The 1954 Television Act set up the Independent Television Authority to supervise commercially funded television with the same public service mandate.

According to Katz et al., (1978:42) in Africa all the national broadcasting systems are government-controlled. In countries like Ghana and Nigeria there are independent public corporations modelled on the BBC which are formally independent of government in their daily operations but this independence is largely imaginary and that the original BBC principles of PSB as distinct from government broadcasting, have been adjusted to fit the less politically stable climate of Africa. The political independence of the national broadcaster is a cause for concern for Africa scholars like Karikari (1974), Palmer (1969) and Strasser-King (1995). They argue that the independence of the national broadcaster as a PSB will reduce government interference in broadcasting so that it will serve the public interest. Karikari (1974) says the government mandated the Ghana Independent Media Commission to protect the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation from political interference. Strasser-King (1995) argues that the best way the government of Sierra Leone can insolate itself from directly interfering at the SLBS is to ‘partially or completely’ withdraw from regulating broadcasting. Palmer (1969) says SLBS public service corporate status is
appropriate for the efficient administration of an important and powerful medium of communication. As the political climate of African countries becomes more stable with the introduction of political pluralism (Tanjong, 1999), the argument for national broadcasters to be PSB has been intensive. The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (2000) documented that states should transform government-controlled broadcasters into public service broadcasters, accountable to the public through the legislature rather than the government.

The situation in Ghana is analogous to that of Sierra Leone; political transformation leading to media evolution. According to Alhassan (2005:215-217), “This thinking about the media [in Ghana].......has been drastically revised in current policy practice, with the national constitution categorically insulating the state media from state control and guaranteeing freedom and diversity of thought.” This constitutional reform facilitated change in broadcasting. Karikari (1994) says Ghana created the Independent Media Commission to regulate the new media environment as a provision of its 1992 constitution - Chapter 12 of the 1992 Ghanaian constitution entitled the “Freedom and Independence of the Media” Article 166. The government created the IMC to promote media pluralism and to monitor political influence on the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation. Sierra Leone enacted the Independent Media Commission Act 2000 after a constitutional reform. This commission, to a certain degree, is similar to that of the Ghana National Media Commission.

Banda (2003) and Barnett (1999) state that the South Africa broadcasting regulatory framework of public service and community radio broadcasting are worthy of emulation. Barnett (1999:649) says the role of the mass media in post-apartheid
South Africa is to act as the medium of national unity and democratic citizenship. According to Banda (2003:102), the Broadcasting Act 1999 assigned the responsibility of media regulation to the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA), whilst the government retains the power and responsibility of policymaking. Teer-Tomaselli & Tomaselli (2001) argue that the streamlining of the South African Broadcasting Corporation and the formation of the IBA were the defining moments in South Africa’s new broadcast environment (Banda, 2003). Exploring the operation of community radio stations to understand its function and role in building a democratic south Africa, Bosch (2003:26-27) says that the emergence of community radio in the 1990s was a radical opposition to both state and commercial media representation of critical issues in the country’s media environment. This research will extensively exploit the South African regulatory framework, particularly the South Africa Broadcasting Act 1999.

Whilst most African countries adopted the public service model of broadcasting, most countries in Latin America adopted the American commercial broadcasting system. Lewis (1989:165-166) states that “In Latin American countries...the model of broadcasting introduced in the 1920s was.... overwhelmingly commercial. Other areas of American influence such as the Pacific and Asian regions have similar commercial dominance.” According to Head (1985:62), most Third World governments own their broadcasting systems with the exception of Latin America. Shortly before independence, the British colonial government created statutory corporations on the model of the BBC in some countries in an attempt to insolate broadcasting from direct government control such as the Kenyan Broadcasting Corporation. Some of these survive presently without their political independence.
The postcolonial government changed the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation to the *Voice of Kenya*, which increased government control of the organisation (Marami, 1980:187).

Most African countries inherited either the British or the French public broadcasting systems. According to Head (1985:33), the French and British colonial powers introduced broadcasting in Africa. The policies of adapting broadcasting to their colonies were different; the French government used radio principally as a means of disseminating the French culture. The British government on the other hand was more inclined towards localising the medium and encouraging the preservation of local culture. Holmes (1999: xxxvi) says the colonial powers exclusively created broadcasting for receiving news and information from their homeland. She argues that during the early days of broadcasting, colonial governments denied Africans the opportunities to participate actively in broadcasting or hear programmes about their own culture and in their languages. Holmes believes that these colonial governments developed the broadcasting system for the propagation of either the British or the French empire. Head (1985:33) says the World War II made it necessary for the British colonial power to embark on Africanisation. It had to communicate to Africans in their own languages in order to maintain the morale of African troops and their families. Holmes (1999:20) states that the Ghanaian broadcasting system was decades ahead of Sierra Leone in African languages and programmes because of the British governor Sir Arnold Hodson who started the system in 1935, was there until 1941 to oversee this objective. In Sierra Leone, the Public Relations Officer Mathews showed little inclination to embrace Sierra Leone culture and its people. Head (1985:33) says the French tend to centralize broadcasting, installing regional stations
to serve several colonies with a common signal and relying heavily on programmes originating from France. He gives the example of Algeria where French colonial power broadcasts only to the French colonists and the few Algerians who have adopted the French culture. No local material was broadcast in television until independence.

The type of broadcasting these empires introduced in Africa was quite different from those in Latin America. This research may refer to Asian or Latin American broadcasting but will not directly compare them to Sierra Leone because most of them copy the American commercial broadcasting system, whilst broadcasting in Africa are examples of the public service broadcasting. Fox (1988:13) argues that in many countries in Latin America, the idea of public service goals and government ownership and subsidy of broadcasting inevitably crashed in the face of stiff competition from powerful national and international forces behind commercial broadcasting. America established industries in Latin American countries, which serve the need of commercial broadcasting in these countries. Africa was bereft of such development.
1.6 Outline of the thesis

1.6.1 Chapter two- Media theories for developing countries: A Review of Relevant Literature

This chapter is divided into two sections. Section 1 assesses relevant theories for this thesis through a review of literature. There will be a great contest between theories such as cultural imperialism, dependency theory and development theories, which scholars have used to explain the development of the media in developing countries (Sreberny, 2000; Tomlinson, 1991). This is in contrast with theories such as the four theories of the press, Habermas’s theory of the public sphere and political economy theory, which scholars have utilised to discuss development of broadcasting in western democratic societies (Dahlgren, 1995; Thompson, 1993). The first set of theories is very important but, for the purpose of this thesis, the second set, are the most appropriate theories. The author proposes an alternative way of examining institutional development for developing countries by looking at three aspects of development, namely the preventative, the preservation, and the progressive approaches to development. Section 2 explicates relevant concepts in broadcasting, these are - (1) regulation, (2) deregulation, and (3) policy-making. This will reflect on how politics or governments affect broadcasting through policymaking.

1.6.2 Chapter three - Methods of Analysis

Chapter 3 investigates the most appropriate methods for this research. Most scholars like Barnett (1999), Holmes (1999), Ntuané (2001) and Tarwen (2000) who have done comparable research, utilise the method of policy document analysis and indepth interviews. There will be a critical examination of these two methods to evaluate the appropriateness to the purpose of the research. Policy documents will
provide substantive evidence for discussing the development of regulatory and policy framework of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. The recommendations of these policy documents reflect the evolution of broadcasting (Palmer, 1969; Rowe, 1998, Strasser-King, 1995). In-depth interviews will be most appropriate for discussing the latest development in broadcasting. Documents are not available for some of these recent developments as they unfold. The author will collect vital empirical evidence by interviewing key players such as policymakers, broadcasters, and journalists who are actually participating in the transformation process. Therefore, there will be a triangulation of policy documents with in-depth interviews.

1.6.3 Chapter four – Government-Broadcasting Relationship in Sierra Leone
The aim of this chapter is to establish the link between broadcasting and politics in Sierra Leone. McQuail (2000) argues that politics affects broadcasting through policymaking, which can have repercussions on the development of the industry (Hansen et al, 1998). This means that the policymaking process can create meaningful change in broadcasting. Authoritarian regimes are restrictive to press freedom, while democratic governments liberate the media (Gunther & Mughan, 2000). Free media allow for a diversity of ideas and the media are not subject to centralised control. The media are also free from political interference. In broadcasting however, it is widely believed that there is a need for some regulation in the public’s interest (Street, 2001). This chapter is divided into three parts. The first part discusses the profile of the country highlighting its geographical location, its people, ethnic groups, and languages, its political history and socio-economic development (Alie, 1990; Fyle, 1981). The aim of this is to give the background of the country, so that when the
author discusses certain issues such as the regional spread of broadcast organisations and the use of local languages in broadcasting, the reader can easily navigate. The second part examines media and politics in Africa to show that the phenomenon of government-broadcasting relationships is not exclusively Sierra Leonean (Imobighe, 1999; Nwachuku, 1999). The third part deals with broadcasting and government relationships in Sierra Leone, examining the role played by various Sierra Leone governments in broadcasting policymaking. Authoritarian regimes such as, the All Peoples Congress Party (APC) one-party government and the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) junta did not accept liberalising the broadcast media (Palmer, 1969; Strasser-King, 1995). On the other hand, the democratic Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) Government, accepted media pluralism in Sierra Leone by enacting an independent media regulatory body (Maura et al., 1997; Rowe, 1998; Sisay, 2005).

1.6.4 Chapter five - Developing a Policy Framework for Broadcasting in Sierra Leone

The research scrutinises the principal policy documents contributing to the broadcasting regulatory policy framework in Sierra Leone. These are the 1969 Commonwealth Consultant’s Report on Broadcasting, the 1995 workshop on Broadcasting, the 1998 Broadcasting Policy document, the 2000 KPMG report on Broadcasting Restructuring and the 1998 Report on the Rehabilitation of the media in Sierra Leone (Maura et al., 1997; Strasser-King, 1995). This is to demonstrate understanding on how and why broadcasting evolved to take its present form. The recommendations of these policy documents are twofold: the change in status of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS), and the institutionalisation of media pluralism. The government accepted media pluralism. It introduced an independent
media regulatory system to promote media pluralism (Rowe, 1998). The change in status of the SLBS from government-owned to PBS was rejected (Palmer, 1969; Sisay, 2005; Strasser-King, 1995). The thesis will analyse the reasons for governments' acceptance or rejection of policy proposals in this chapter, but it is self-evident that governments can significantly affect broadcasting through the media policymaking (Hansen et al., 1998; McQuail, 2000).

1.6.5 Chapter six - Change in Broadcasting: the rise of independent and regional radio

Chapter 6 provides evidence of the change in broadcasting from government monopoly to pluralism. This change was because of recommendations made by policy documents for media pluralism (Strasser-King, 1995; Rowe, 1998). This took the form of the rise of regional and independent community radio stations (Rowe, 1998; Holmes, 1999). Specifically, there are two main reasons for the rise of independent community radio stations, the internal factors (the war) and the external factors (international interventions). During the war, there was the absence of radio, which created an information gap. The government and the people could not communicate effectively in a volatile situation because of the ineffectiveness of the SLBS; the government had to register independent stations to fill-in the gap (Holmes, 1999; Cole, 1995). Secondly, during the war, both the SLPP government and the AFRC junta in 1997 used radio as war propaganda tool. The government used Radio Democracy FM 98.1 to reinstate itself in power and therefore felt constrained to control the radio station (Holmes, 1999; Rowe, 1998), hence the start of the proliferation of FM stations.
To rise up to the challenge posed by the proliferation of community radio stations, the government established regional stations through the assistance of DfID as a new development in the media landscape (DfID, 1999). Government established the regional stations in the provisional headquarter-towns of the country: these are Bo, the headquarters of the south, Makeni, the headquarters of the north, and Kenema, the headquarters of the east. The government also established two other stations for economic and political interest - one in Kono, the diamond-mining district, and the other in Kailahun, former headquarters of the rebel force. The research will examine the significance of these developments.

1.6.6 Chapter seven - Attempts at regulating the new media environment

The thesis analyses the new regulatory policies to institutionalise the change in the broadcasting landscape in chapter 7. Broadcast pluralism actually took place before the development of a media regulatory policy framework. This development facilitated the institutionalisation of media pluralism (Rowe, 1998; Holmes, 1999). The intention of this new regulatory framework was to divest government control of the media and grant it to an independent body. The defining moment of this new system was the enactment of the Independent Media Commission (IMC) Act 2000. The IMC's mandate is to regulate the media and promote media pluralism (IMC Act, 2004). A study of the Commission's activities will be conducted through its specialised sub-committees. These are the Applications, Complaints, and Advisory committees. The Applications committee has registered about 30 new independent radio stations (IMC Status of Radio Report, 2004). The Complaints Committee has set up a code of conduct for broadcasters (Final Radio Policy Document, 2004), and
the Advisory committee has developed a final media regulatory policy document for Sierra Leone.

The Government has handed over the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) to the National Commission for Privatisation (NCP). It is a new attempt at deregulating the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) (NCP Document, 2003). The contentious issue is whether to privatise or incorporate SLBS as PSB. The outcome of this debate was that SLBS should be a public service institution (TMT Document, 2005). The NCP, in conjunction with international partners, have set up a Transitional Management Team (TMT) to supervise the transition of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service to PSB.

1.6.7 Chapter eight - Summary and Conclusion

The summary gives an overview of issues and major arguments of this thesis. The author will revisit each chapter to evaluate their contributions to answering the question posed in investigating the changing landscape of broadcasting in Sierra Leone, why and how the changes in broadcasting occurred. The argument that political pluralism facilitated media pluralism will be reiterated (Gunther & Mughan, 2000). The change in the media regulatory framework from government to independent regulation is manifest in the enactment of the Independent Media Commission Act 2000 (Rowe, 1998; Strasser-King, 1995). The Act mandates the Independent Media Commission (IMC) to regulate and promote media pluralism in Sierra Leone (IMC Act 2000).

The conclusion reflects on the application of theories, methods and major themes of the thesis. Habermas’s theory of the public sphere is relevant to highlighting public participation in the sphere of broadcasting. The four theories of the press are utilised
in discussing the independence of broadcasting from government control and the political economy theory investigates commercialisation and sustainability of broadcasting (Siebert et al, 1974; Thompson, 1993). The methods of analysis are policy document analysis and in-depth interviews (Holmes, 1999; Barnett, 1999). It will be shown that the landscape of broadcasting has changed from government monopoly to the institutionalisation of media pluralism (Rowe, 1998; Strasser-King, 1995). The government is still making efforts to give the state broadcaster its political independence (NCP Document, 2003; TMT Report, 2005). There is the question of broadcasting sustainability and its effects on public participation in the broadcasting sphere (Tam-Baryoh, 2006). In this respect, the thesis has contributed to the knowledge of broadcasting in Sierra Leone.
Chapter 2

Media theories for Developing Countries: A Review of Relevant Literature

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to study relevant literature with comparable research interest to ascertain the most appropriate theories and concepts for this research and evaluate its contributions to the corpus of knowledge on broadcasting in Sierra Leone. This chapter is divided into two sections; section 1 evaluates theories used by scholars with similar research interest, with the hope of locating the most appropriate theories for this thesis. Section 2 examines relevant concepts such as regulation, deregulation and policymaking within the context of broadcasting. There will be contestation between theories specifically designed for media development in developing countries such as cultural imperialism, dependency, and development theories (Sreberny, 2000; Sutcliffe, 1999; Tomlinson, 1991). As oppose to theories for media development in western democracies, such as the four theories of the press, Habermas’s theory of the public sphere and political economy theory (Golding, et al., 2002; Garnham, 1986). The author will present justification why the second set of theories is most appropriate.

Section 2 focuses on the main concepts of broadcasting relating to the major objectives of this thesis. The concepts of policymaking, regulation, and deregulation are key elements of this debate. This is primarily because presently Sierra Leone is developing a regulatory policy framework for broadcasting (Palmer, 1969; Strasser-King, 1995; Rowe, 1998). This means that policymakers are developing strategic plans for the independent regulation of broadcasting resulting in a new regulatory
policy framework for broadcasting in Sierra Leone. Out of the new regulatory policy, emerged the rationalisation for this research.

2.2 Section 1 - Assessment of relevant theories

There are two sets of theories relevant to this thesis. The first set explains the phenomenon of media development in developing countries (Katz et al. 1978; Schiller, 1992; Sreberny, 2000). The second set examines media development in the developed world (Habermas, 1974; Garnham, 1986; Golding et al., 2002). These are their classifications:

1. **Media Theories for Developing Countries**

2. **Theories of Media for Western Countries**

There will be great conflict between these two sets of theories, as the investigation for an appropriate theory unfolds.

2.2.1 Media Theories for Developing Countries

Scholars such as Head (1974), Holmes (1999), Katz et al., (1978) and Sreberny (2000) use one or more of these theories to analyse media development in developing countries. These theories consider developing countries as problem, which need western solution. They are characterised by the injection of western ideas of modernisation to the underdeveloped situation in the third world. Scholars like Sutcliffe, (1999), Sreberny (2000) and Schiller (1992) argue that, if developing countries follow the development patterns of the west, they too would be modernised. There is the predisposition to discussing third world development as influenced by western standards. The tendency is to exclude the consideration of the specific developmental goals in developing countries. Western standards mould these new nation-states, regardless of their own unique socio-political specificity (Sreberny,
2000). These theories are the cultural imperialism theory, the dependency theory, and the development theory. The author examines these theories to evaluate their appropriateness to this thesis. The fundamental problem of this research is to study political pluralism in relation to media pluralism in Sierra Leone. These theories therefore, cannot effectively provide the framework for such dissertation.

2.2.1.1 The cultural imperialism theory/Dependency theory

In *Broadcasting in Sierra Leone*, Holmes (1999:125) uses technological dependency to explain the improvement of broadcasting infrastructure and facilities for both radio and television. She also uses what she describes as ‘cross-cultural broadcasting’ to evaluate international organisations’ involvement in the Sierra Leone broadcasting landscape. She argues that Sierra Leone broadcasting depended on the west for programmes and equipment. Holmes (1999:81-83) says that foreign television programmes reflected the values and priorities of certain societies disproportionately, with the dominant countries acting as gatekeepers of information in and between the poorer developing nations at the periphery. She originally directs this at the United States, but later included other developed countries in the west such as the United Kingdom. Curran (2005), Fox (1988), Schiller (1992) and Sreberny, (2000) share her views on the dependence of the Third World on western industrialised countries for technology and cultural products. According to Maura et al., (1997:9), Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service Television set up a policy to broadcast 60% of local programmes and 40% of foreign programmes. However, SLBS did not meet this challenge due to lack of production equipment. The station still depends on the west for equipment and programmes. According to Holmes (1999:125-138), the
international organizations assisting the development of broadcasting in Sierra Leone are; British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the Union of National Radio and Television Networks of Africa (URTNA) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Holmes (1999) describes cross-cultural broadcasting as part of the cultural imperialism theory. According to McQuail (2000:493), Sreberny (2000), and Shiller (1992), cultural imperialism implies the inclination of global media industry exporters, especially from the USA, to dominate the media consumption in developing countries, and in so doing, enforce their own cultural and other values on the audiences in underdeveloped countries. The West exports the content, technology, production values, professional ideologies, and ownership. According to Tomlinson (1991), the cultural imperialism thesis claims that the indiscriminate dumping of large quantities of commercial media products, mainly from the United States is battering the authentic traditional culture, in many parts of the world out of existence.

2.2.1.1.1 Criticism of theories

Cultural imperialism and dependency theories are part of the reality in developing countries, but they will not holistically serve the theoretical framework for this thesis. According to Sreberny (2000:107), the cultural imperialism theory tends to suggest a 'hypodermic needle' model of international effects on countries at the periphery. Schiller (1992) assumes that there is an injection of American values, lifestyle, and culture into the Third World, through foreign programmes and western media which threaten to destroy local cultural heritage of countries at the periphery. Thompson
(1995:170) disputes this argument to say that most types of culture in the world are hybrid cultures in which different values, beliefs and practices are interwoven. According to Peet et al., (1999:107), the fundamental principle of the dependency theory is that the Third World is not developing along the path previously taken by European countries, but that it is a subsidiary part of Western capitalism. The theory was supposed to provide an alternative vision for the modernisation theory, but Tucker (1999:12) argues that the dependency theory failed to address the cultural dimension of domination, maintaining that while criticising the modernisation theory, it did not question the interest of development in terms of economic growth, industrialisation, and liberal democracy.

2.2.1.2 The Development theory

This is another theory frequently used by scholars to discuss developmental issues in developing countries. Rowe (1998), Sutcliffe (1999), Sreberny (1999), and Taylor (1980) argue their positions from the development theory approach. Taylor (1980) who was discussing *Broadcasting and Development in Sierra Leone* supposes that broadcasting could contribute to national development through programme production and dissemination. His emphasis was on the pedagogic nature of programming for effective public participation in societal development. He describes the educational programmes of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) such as school’s broadcast, health and agricultural programmes, as catalysts for development in the society. Taylor relates development in Sierra Leone to economic development as predicated by western standards. He examines the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and terms Sierra Leone as one of the least developed countries in the world.
According to Sutcliffe (1999:135), the prevailing idea of development is that it is an experience of nations, which all start from the same place and progress by the transfer of labour from low-productivity agriculture to higher-productivity industry and modern services. All nations end up at more or less the same destination, where high consumption matches the high productive capacity. Other developmental achievements such as economic progress, technology, education, and health services, democracy and human rights fall in place in the process of modernisation.

Sreberny (2000:95) states that for the third world, development thinking started as a post-second-world-war phenomenon, precipitated by anti-imperialist movements leading towards the political independence of many new states. This brought about debates as to the nature of development and the obstacles within these new independent states, which prevent development. The obstacles, she argues, are lack of capital investment, entrepreneurial skills, and trained workers. The traditional values of developing countries were the central obstacles to political participation and economic activity. The solution was the promotion of the use of communication media to alter attitudes and values and the promotion of training.

Maura et al. (1997:2) say that after the euphoria of independence in 1961, Sierra Leone’s economy deteriorated, and by the end of the 1980s, GDP growth turned negative. There was systematic erosion of the gains of the first decade after independence, leading to a sharp deterioration in living standards of the majority of the population. There are extreme high incidents of poverty, physical underdevelopment, marginalisation, and social instability in the country.
Peet (1999:5) argues that an alternative measurement of development theory considers social and cultural variables rather than just economic growth, as reflected in the Human Development Index (HDI) calculated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This conception of development incorporates people’s choices, especially in terms of increasing access to knowledge, nutrition and health services, security, leisure, political and cultural freedom. The HDI measures development in terms of life expectancy, knowledge, and income sufficiency. Sreberny (1999:290) states that the significance of the growing acceptance of such indices is that, they move from crude economic measurements, to a range of factors that shape development on the needs of people. Secondly, by including measures of participation and deprivation, they suggest that development is an ongoing process. Thirdly, such indices revealed the real continuing scope for national policy-making and setting of social priorities. Fourthly, they help to distinguish inequalities within national contexts, concerning class, gender, urban divide, region, or ethnicity. Fifthly, they also document the possibilities of economic regression and decline.

The importance of the development theory is worthy of note. McQuail (2000) observes that the media could effectively spread the message of modernity, and help transfer the institutions and practices of democratic politics and market economics to economically backward and socially traditional nations of the world, and can teach literacy and other essential skills. This is what Head (1974:10) calls the ‘hortatory’ function of the media in developing countries. Nevertheless, it did not provide enough room to discuss the political transformation and media pluralism in Sierra Leone.
2.2.1.2.1 Criticism of the theory

Sreberny (2000:94) writes about the failed attempts of western academics and policy-makers to solve the obstacles of development in new independent states in Africa and Asia. She says “Some arguments focused on the lack of capital for investment, prompting practical solutions as the world bank and interest-bearing loans, under which results many developing nations are still groaning” meaning that the practical solution introduced by the World Bank brought more suffering to developing countries than solutions. This was because the west failed to consider the internal workings of developing countries. They had wanted to implement development programmes based on western principles, foreign to the socio-cultural and national developmental aspirations of underdeveloped countries.

Tucker (1999:2) presents a more radical perspective of the development theory shortcomings. He says that the development theory is a theory in which the west seeks to dominate other people and shape their destinies according to their ways of conceiving and perceiving the world. The development discourse is part of the imperial process in which the developed countries manage, control, and create the Third World economically, politically, sociologically, and culturally.

Whatever the shortcomings of the development theory, it still has its positive values. After all, when we talk of development, underdeveloped countries have a lot to learn from developed countries, yet it will not serve the purpose of this thesis holistically. This research is predisposed to discussing the regulatory policymaking process of broadcasting in relation to the contributory factor of political pluralism. The development theory cannot fully satisfy this objective.
The development theory lacks consideration of new nation states as individual entities with their own internal developmental specificity. There should be a development theory that would accommodate Rowe’s (1998) dissertation on the constitutional development of Sierra Leone leading to political and media pluralism. McQuail (2000:155) argues that there is a need for a category of ‘development theory’ among others, which would identify the reality of those societies undergoing a transition from underdevelopment and colonialism to independence. He emphasises that these countries needed a more positive version of media theory, which focuses on national developmental goals. This lack of consideration of developing countries aspirations was responsible for the failure of the west to solve developmental problems in poor countries (Sreberny, 2000). This thesis presents an alternative to the development theory as a way of contributing to the corpus of knowledge.

2.3 The Three Ps Theory - A contribution to the development theory discourse

Stevenson (1988:104) in developing an alternative model of the development theory focuses on three words - equity, appropriateness, and independence. He says that equity places emphasis on the sharing of the nation’s resources, appropriateness is the preservation of traditional culture and values, and independence means the ability of nations to control their own destinies. The author of the thesis will not digress much from this typology, but will create innovative ways of looking at alternate perspectives to development. There are three approaches to understanding development theory for developing countries. These are

1. The preventative development approach
2. The preservative development approach
3. The progressive development approach

International organisations have utilised some of these approaches, particularly the first and second in assisting developing countries for poverty alleviation in the form of material and financial assistance (Sreberny, 2000; Stevenson, 1988). Development experts seldom apply the third, but this approach leads to economic recovery for developing countries.

2.3.1 Preventative development

The preventative development is the first step of development for developing countries. In this case, governments and partners identify and treat the causative agents for underdevelopment. These problems relate to political and economic instability or extreme cases of poverty (Nababa, 2004; Tam-Baryoh, 2006). The governments and experts are to carefully study and find the root cause of the problem and develop remedies to stop underdevelopment in an institutional manner by creating economic, social, and cultural institutions to addressing these problems. This approach takes cognisance of the bottom-top approach and devolution in which local institutions are involved in the process of developing a strategic plan of action.

2.3.2 Preservative development

This leads to the second stage of development, which is the preservative development. At this stage, the country should strengthen the capacity and capability of political, social, cultural, and economic institutions to react to tensions, which might disrupt the developmental process (Obilade, 1999; Tanjong, 1999). These institutions should preserve whatever developmental gains the country has achieved. They should include, but not limited to, an independent judiciary, independent media,
strong literacy and functional educational programmes, strong civil society movements, interest groups and representative government.

2.3.3 Progressive development

This is an effort to build sustainability and elasticity, so that the whole system will not collapse in the face of future challenges and pressures. There should be an examination of national endowment of natural resources, which can trigger off economic activities as the starting point to progress (Onuoha, 1999; Stevenson, 1988). The country should examine its resources and make a developmental plan in concert with interested partners. The aim of this is to provide a strong economic base in developing countries to take care of infrastructural improvement, the service delivery system, and social amenities. This is better than depending on the west forever for financial assistance and aids (Holmes, 1999; Schiller, 1992; Sreberny, 2000). It aims at building a producer economy instead of consumer economy. Countries in the periphery may not experience an industrial revolution, which was an essential part of western modernisation, but by following this aspect of development, they can create their own industrial foundation on which to build their own modernity (Sutcliffe, 1999). The international communities can support every stage of these developments but this time, the focus and centre is the periphery, not the core countries. The proposed development theory is at its formative stage and needs to develop academic sophistication before application. Therefore, the author will discuss the second set of theories to evaluating its appropriateness to this research. This is entitled 'The theories of media for western societies'.

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2.4 Theories of Media for Western Countries

These theories are the 'Four Theories of the Press', the Habermas's theory of the public sphere and the political economy theory. It is ironical, if not paradoxical, that the next move was to look amongst western theories for a solution to the problem. The big difference is, these theories considered media development against the backdrop of the wider society, the relationship between the media and socio-political and economic structures.

Scholars like Habermas (1974), Garnham (1986), Golding et al. (2002), Siebert et al. (1971) and Thompson (1993) utilise these theories to discuss the development of the media and society in western democracies. These scholars focus mainly on the media and its relationship to politics, economics, and social institutions. They study the dominant factors in the wider society and evaluate their relationships and impositions on the regulation and deregulation of the media. This approach correlates with the main objective of this thesis, which is to study the political and socio-economic transformation in Sierra Leone and show its relationship to broadcasting evolution.

This section will firstly critically examine the four theories of the press as the foundation of media freedom from government control. It also examines types of governments in relationship to media development (Seibert et al., 1971). There will be a discussion on the Habermas's theory of the public sphere, examining its history, democratic and media relevance, and its criticism. Scholars like Dahlgren (1995), Garnham (1986) and Herman et al. (1997) use this theory to talk about the media as a public sphere, media pluralism, and policymaking, and to defend public service broadcasting. The political economy theory provides grounds to discussing the phenomenon of media commercialisation (Golding & Murdock, 2002). These
theories set the framework to discussing key issues in this thesis. The freedom of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) from government control, the relationship between authoritarian and democratic governments to broadcasting policymaking, the broadcast media as a public sphere, the institutionalisation of media pluralism and the broadcast media dependency on advertising are key themes for this thesis; hence the appropriateness of these theories.

Scholars like McQuail (2000), Picard (2003 and Hallin & Mancini (2004) investigate other theories to discuss media and developing. McQuail (2000) and Picard (2003) explicate the fifth theory of the press. In his paper 'Democratic socialism: Toward a fifth theory of the press' Picard (2003) says state interventions in the structure and operation of the press are encouraged to counteract effects of private control and to support the role of the press in the democratic process by promoting democratic control of the press. The theory proposed alternative ownership and management forms that would make the press public utilities to be used as tools by the people to disseminate their aspirations, ideas, and opinions. The theory states that freedom of the press is a right accorded to citizens in a democracy and not a privilege reserved only for those who own and control the media. The theory holds that economic and social pressures on the press must be eased if press freedom is to be preserved. This means that state interventions are to liberalise the media through democratic control for the public interest. The focus here is on the relationship between the media and political systems. Hallin and Mancini (2004) compare three models of media and political systems; these are the liberal, democratic corporatist, and polarized pluralist models. According to Hallin & Mancini (2004:11), the liberal model is symbolized by the dominance of market mechanisms and of commercial media. The democratic
corporatist model is a system where there is coexistence of commercial media and other media tied to organised social and political groups with legally limited role of the state. In the polarized pluralist model, the media are integrated into party politics, and there is a weaker historical development, fragile commercial media and a strong role of the state. The scholars argue that comparative analysis makes it possible to conceptualise issues and forces scholars to clarify the scope and applicability of concepts employed in analysis. It protects researchers from false generalisation and provides a basis for systematic critique of work that falls into these patterns of 'overgeneralization and conceptual narrowness' (Hallin & Mancini, 2004:3-4).

Hallin and Mancini (2004:6) limit their study to North America and Western Europe because they were dealing with systems that have relatively comparable levels of economic development and much common cultural and political history. They admit that the models developed in the west would not apply to most other areas of the world without considerable adaptability. This weakness of the theory makes it difficult to apply the theory directly to African developing countries' situation. The theory focuses on western industrialised economic and democratic political development and the media, which is far from what is operating in African developing countries. It ruled out the soviet/communist theory of the four theories of the press, which to some extend, is relevant to the government-owned media in the African countries. In the polarized pluralist model, the media are integrated into political parties but in Africa, broadcasting is normally government-owned, which is slightly different from the Mediterranean countries in southern Europe of political party ownership. Before we 'give a decent burial [to the four theories of the press] and move on to develop a more sophisticated models based on real comparative
analysis (Hallin & Mancini, 2004:10), we need to think how developing countries could be conceptualised within contemporary media theoretical framework. It is in this regard that the thesis utilises the *four theories of the press*, to conceptualise the government owned and controlled media in Africa developing countries, which is slowly evolving to media pluralism.

This evolution of political and media pluralism in Africa makes it possible to employ the public sphere theory but some scholars like Calhoun (2005) and Goode (2005) dispute this position. According to Calhoun (2005), a central weakness of the *Structural Transformation* was that it does not treat the bourgeois public sphere as the post-transformation public sphere of organised capitalism symmetrically. This suggests that the application of the public sphere theory to countries with different political and economic development of Western Europe would be problematic. This means that the theory is asymmetrical to developing countries in Africa, which did not experience the democratic industrialised capitalist development of the West (Goode, 2005:30). According to Goode (2005:31), Habermas tells us that the public sphere was from its inception, built on certain exclusionary mechanism such as the exclusion of women and the plebeians, but maintained that Habermas's narrative of exclusion may be flawed. Berger (2006:2) says scholars have comprehensively used theories of media and democracy, entailing concepts like the 'public sphere' in western societies. In contrast, analysis of the role of Africa's media in democratisation has been lacking in theoretical foundation. He warns against lifting concepts like media and democracy from western conditions and applying them to the African situation. He says the quest is for universally applicable concepts, which are relevant and explanatory for media and democracy in Africa. Berger outlines the
developmental stages to the application of the public sphere theory in Africa. He says after independence, much academic writing on Africa, including on African media, focused on development concerns. It was only in the 1990s that democracy surfaced in the political agenda and registered significantly in scholarly analysis of media’s role on the continent. In this, only a small body of writing emerged which theorized the ‘democratization decade’ in ways outside the liberal pluralist paradigm, although still drawing on concepts from western theory. These writings go a lot further in analysing democracy to include the interplay of various social institutions such as the media. They draw attention to ongoing processes whereby democratically relevant politics should go beyond elections and serve the needs of the societies. In particular, the concepts of ‘civil society’ and ‘public sphere’ have been put to work here, stressing that concepts that are taken over into Africa, reflect their origins in societies extremely different to most of those in Africa. He however concedes that with some rethinking, scholars could apply the public sphere theory to African emerging democracies and its media development. From this discussion, one can say that the public sphere theory and the *four theories of the press* are relevant for this analysis.

### 2.4.1 The Four Theories of the Press

The freedom of the press relates to the Four Theories of the Press presented by Siebert et al (1956). It determines the freedom of all media including broadcasting. Negrine (1994:20) asseverates that,

> Of all the existing means of mass communication, it is only the press that has spawned a set of ‘theories’ to explain its actions.....and purposes. Means of communication that have developed since the inception of the press.....
notably, television and radio have tended to adapt these theories to suit their own special requirements.

This means that the four theories of the press discuss the purpose and freedom of other mass media such as broadcasting. Similar pattern will be followed to discussing government control and the liberalisation of broadcasting in Sierra Leone.

McQuail (2000:153) focuses on the two primary strands of the four theories of the press - the authoritarian and the libertarian theories. In Africa, the authoritarian theory identifies with the one party state and government-controlled media. The libertarian theory relates to emergent democracies and independent media (Obilade, 1999). There is evidence of this in the development of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. The one-party government, the All Peoples Congress (APC) was an authoritarian regime. It operated a government monopoly of broadcasting, the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) controlled by the Ministry of Broadcasting of Information. This is in contrast to the libertarian theory, in which there is multiparty democracy, such as the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) government and independent media regulatory body. This is manifest in the legislation of the Independent Media Commission (IMC) Act 2000, which brought into being the IMC to regulate the media. It was an attempt to divest the government's regulatory function of the media (Nwachuku, 1999; Nwosu, 1999; Onuoha, 1999).

According to Siebert et al (1971), the four theories of the press include the authoritarian, the soviet communism, libertarian and social responsibility theories. The whole argument of these theories is that the press takes the colouration of the political and social system in which it operates. Nerone (1995) limits these theories to one, which is the libertarian as in the American system, but added the authoritarian
theory to represent the soviet model (McQuail, 2000:154). The authoritarian/soviet theories outlined the control of the press by various repressive governments. The press is normally state-controlled and the right of the society is above the rights of the individual citizens. The soviet theory is a positive theory of the media because the main goal of the media was to spread and reinforce the Marxist truth and the attainment of a classless society.

According to Obilade (1999:241) and Mytton (1983:65-66), the authoritarian theory is based on the idea that the government has absolute power and the press is subject to legal control and is simply an instrument for government information. The soviet-communist theory is similar to the authoritarian theory and is more prevalent in African countries. In this theory, the ruling government and party declare state ownership and control of the media. According to Siebert et al. (1971), the libertarian theory is a struggle for press freedom, democratic rights and constitutional rule. Its main principle is the emphasis of the negative freedom of the press that is, absence of government control. The press is under no external constraint except that which is necessary to safeguard the basic interest of members of society. The libertarian theory identifies with western liberal democracy based on a high level of productivity and education in an industrialised society. The social responsibility theory suggests that there should be some form of social and governmental control of the media to ensure access and diversity of viewpoints. This theory also stresses the self-righting process on the free market of ideas (McQuail, 1994; Obilade, 1999; Siebert et al, 1971).
2.4.1.1 Criticisms of Four Theories of the Press

This theory has faced serious criticisms because of its uncritical nature. Critics like McChesney (1992) and Schiller (1992) aver that it is not only the government, which controls freedom of the media or expression but private ownership as well. Mytton (1983:66) says the four theories of the press typology do not adequately fit the African situation. He argues that elements of the authoritarian theory are in some parts of Africa, stressing that it did not apply to the whole of Africa. The soviet-communist theory, with state ownership of the media, is applicable to many African countries. He says that none of the industrialised and democratised conditions of the libertarian theory is prevailing in Africa because Africa lacks the capital base to support an independent press. Obilade (1999:241) counter-argues that the libertarian theory fits the depiction of transitional or emergent African democratic societies. He argues that the transformation encourages the development of democratic principles such as constitutional rule, freedom of expression and a free media.

Another criticism of the theory was that it relates to the press and not broadcasting (Williams, 1995). Since broadcasting is the subject for this thesis, the identification of a theory that is more apposite to discussing broadcasting is most significant. Dahlgren (1995), Garnham (1986) and Herman et al. (1997) make several references to the theory of the public sphere and its relationship to democratic principles and broadcasting.
2.4.2 Habermas's Theory of the Public Sphere

Habermas (1974), Dahlgren (1995), Thompson (1995) and Williams (2003) utilise Habermas's theory of the public sphere in discussing the development of the media in western democracies. This theory and the thesis share similar interest - the socio-political transformation of the west and the evolution of the media. The situation is not exactly the same for developing countries yet they are comparable. Since the 1990s, most African states have been transforming themselves from authoritarianism to constitutional rule recognising media freedom, the rule of law and representative government (Imobighe, 1999; Nwachuku, 1999). This research intends to examine the transformation of Sierra Leone from authoritarianism to constitutional rule in relationship to media development. Another aspect of the public sphere that is relevant to this research is its relation to broadcasting with specific reference to public service broadcasting (Dahlgren, 1995; Garnham, 1986; Herman et al., 1997). There is an on-going debate on the transformation of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) from government-owned to public service broadcasting. Tsiang (1997) subsumes this argument with the utility of Habermas's theory of the public sphere. He exploits Habermas's theory of the public sphere as the framework to investigate the evolution of the Botswana broadcasting system from government monopoly to broadcast liberalisation.

According to Webster (1995), the public sphere is a forum that mediates between the state and society. It is a place where private individuals debate public issues, criticise public authorities and call public officials to be accountable and responsible for their actions. This public sphere is independent of government or economic interest and is accessible to all citizens (Williams, 2003:68). In this society, according to Hermann
(1998), information is essential to citizen participation in community life. The significance of the concept is that democratic society depends on an informed population making political choices. Thompson (1989) adds that the public sphere is a space in our social life in which the formation of public opinion takes place. The public sphere works most effectively for democracy when it is institutionally independent of the state and society's dominant economic forces. Although such autonomy is difficult to develop and maintain, the point of democratic communication policy-making is to strive toward this goal.

In his theory, Habermas (1974) makes a clear distinction between the public and the private. He separates the public "polis" from the private "oikos." The public life constituted the market place "agora" where citizens assembled to discuss critical issues. Habermas argues that in the Middle Ages, a distinct public sphere did not exist. 'Publicness' was a quality of the kings and nobility, which he called 'Representative Publicity'. It consisted of the royalties exhibiting their political power before the common people. Calhoun (1992) says there were no critical political debate and no public in the modern sense of the word. The development of the capitalist economy and the changing institutional political power, created a condition for the emergence of the public sphere in Europe.

Thompson (1995:99) argues that the meaning of public authority began to change from courtly monarchical system to state verve, which has legally delineated spheres of jurisdiction and monopoly on the legitimate use of force. At the same time, the civil society emerged as the private sphere of production and the economy. The theory separates social institutions that form the private space from the state. The state is responsible for the welfare of its citizens and for creating the right
environment for business. It creates administrative and bureaucratic structures to facilitate its functions. Robert (1991) enunciates that between the state and the civil society, there developed a new public sphere known as the Bourgeois public sphere. This consists of private individuals who come together to debate on the regulation of the civil society and the conduct of the state. This new public sphere was there to confront and subject the state to criticism.

The rise of the periodical press and the coffee house facilitated the emergence of the Bourgeois public sphere. Habermas (1974) attributes great significance to the critical journals, which were devoted to literary and cultural criticism, but later became critical of political issues. The coffee houses and saloons became social places of discussion, in which the educated elites could interact with one another on equal footing. Dahlgren (1995) says the periodical press became a key element as private individuals engaged in critical discussion about the activities of parliament and the crown. He argues that the critical discussion stimulated by the press, gradually had a transformative impact on the state, including the development of modern constitutional states in which certain basic rights and freedom such as freedom of speech and expression are entrenched. This makes the political role of the public sphere formally recognised in the law.

The decline of the public sphere was due to the breakdown of the separation between the state and the civil society. Thompson (1989) argues that the state assumed an interventionist character and took more responsibility of managing the welfare of citizens and organised interest groups became more assertive in the political process. Institutions such as the press and the coffee houses declined in significance because the press was organised as part of a range of media institutions with commercial
concerns. The commercialisation of the media altered the character of the press from being a form of rational critical debate to another domain of cultural consumption. The Bourgeois sphere collapsed when the media went into the service of commerce and politics.

According to Garnham (1986), Habermas calls the demise of the Bourgeois public sphere, the "refeudalisation" of the public sphere. This involved the merging of the state and civil society, public and private, and the return of elements of representative 'Publicness'. The media promotes public authorities like royal figures as in the feudal period. It excludes the mass of the citizens from the public discussion and the policymaking process. He stresses that the significance of Habermas's theory of the public sphere is its focus on the political element of the media and their relationship with democracy and the political process, which is a central theme of this thesis.

2.4.2.1 Criticism of the Public Sphere

According to Williams (2003:69), the theory idealises and perhaps romanticises an elite and male dominated world. It overlooks the history of the radical working class press. Habermas did not cater for the plebeian public sphere, popular social movements, and the grassroots in his liberal model of the Bourgeois public sphere. The public sphere was restricted to the educated and propertied elites. It was male preserve to the marginalisation of women (Thompson 1990). It is also over-pessimistic in its assessment of the rise of the mass media. Newspapers, radio and television clearly do still serve as a forum for discussion of issues of public interest among people who are knowledgeable, interested, able to speak on behalf of broader social interests and whose discussion have the potential of being of political influence.
The theory has also been criticised for its use of reception analysis of media products and techniques to manipulate the audience. It exaggerates the passivity of the audience and the way media institutions work. McQuail (1983) propositions a category of theory under the caption ‘democratic-participant’ to account for alternative or grassroots media (McQuail, 2000:160). This will be of interest later to analyse local and rural community radio.

Habermas (1992) revises most of his stances and the original theory has relevance and usefulness to this research. In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, he reconstitutes public sphere in contemporary terms. Habermas argues that the Bourgeois public sphere had certain principles, which are still relevant today. The first one is the “Critical Principle of Publicity” which is different from publicity in terms of products advertising. It means that the personal opinions of private individuals would evolve into public opinion through the process of rational critical debate, which is open and free to all citizens. Thompson (1990) affirms that the principle maintains its value as a normative ideal, a kind of critical standard that assesses the inadequacies of existing institutions. This critical principle of publicity is the core concept of a theory of democracy and the democratisation process. The others are restricting and controlling the bureaucratic decision-making processes of the state and investigating structural conflicts of interest according to the standard of a universal interest everyone can acknowledge.

In contemporising Habermas’s theory of the public sphere, Dahlgren (1995), Garnham (1986) and Herman (1997) envisage the usefulness of the theory in the relevance of public service broadcasting, this is one of the reasons for using the theory. This is crucial to this research, which investigates the transformation of the
Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) from government-owned to public service broadcasting.

2.4.3 The Public Sphere and Broadcasting

There are implications of the public sphere theory in relation to the structure and function of the mass media. According to Herman et al (1997), the media are instruments of the public sphere. They are the most excellent vehicles of communication through which the public participates in the political process. The quality of their contribution to the public sphere is an important determinant of the quality of democracy. If their performance is poor, people will be ignorant, isolated and depoliticised, resulting in small elites to capture and maintain control over decision-making on society's most important political matters. Garnham (1986:45) appreciates the link between the public sphere and the public service broadcasting. He says that in Europe, the clearest example of Habermas's public sphere theory is within the British debate, where it is a defence for public broadcasting. Commercial broadcasting is a serious threat to it. The public service broadcasting is the embodiment of the principles of the public sphere. He argues that the PSB attempts to develop its practices on a set of socio-political rather than economic relations.

According to Dahlgren (1995), policy issues around media institutions and their output are the most tangible expression of political attention to the public sphere. Such policy issues include the organisation, financing, and legal framework to include ownership, control and procedure for licensing, rule for access and freedom, and constraints on communications such as broadcasting. The development of a broadcasting policy framework is imperative to this research as part of the public
sphere theory. Herman et al (1997) enunciates that a public sphere can work well where there is a wide range of media, independent of state and commercial control. The media should engage in public affairs and journalism with objectivity. There is a distinction between public service programmes, which nourish the public sphere, and entertainment programmes by commercial stations to amuse, distract and pull large audiences. Broadcast media pluralism will form a critical point of debate for this thesis. Sierra Leone will learn from this debate as it transforms its broadcasting from government monopoly to pluralism.

2.4.4 Definition of Public Service broadcast

This thesis engages in critical debate on the transformation of the Sierra Leone Service (SLBS) to PSB. According to McQuail (2000:156), public service broadcasting is an organisation set up by law and financed by public funds. Its funding is from licence fees paid by members of the public who own television sets, and the state gives a large degree of editorial and operating independence. The general justification for its operation is that they should serve the public interest by meeting important communication needs of the society and citizens. According to the Peacock Report (1989:55-57), the public service is instituted because broadcasting is a national asset which should be used for the national good rather than for the benefit of interest groups. Seymour-Ure (1999) and Negrine (1995) share similar position.

A royal charter established the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) as a public service broadcaster in 1927. This corporation grew out of recommendations of the Crawford committee which recommended that “broadcasting service should be conducted by a public corporation acting as Trustee for the national interest and its status and duties should correspond with those of a public service” (Negrine,
Public service broadcasting's main function is to educate, inform and entertain the public. There is also the universality of service and diversity and quality of programmes. According to Crisell (1999), the philosophy that informed British broadcasting is that of public interest regulation because of the scarcity of wavelengths.

Seymour-Ure (1999:60-65) holds that public service principles refer to the goals of broadcasting and form of organisation and identifies six principles in the British public service broadcasting system formulated by various broadcasting committees such as the Crawford, Peacock and Pilkington committees. He argues that the PSB should be a monopoly controlled by the government as trustee for the public interest, but independent from government pressure - it is trustee of the national interest. This means that it should serve the interest of everyone in the country. Funding the PSB is by charging a flat rate annual license fee to the consumer. Geographically, it should offer universality of service; the audience must have equal right to receiving programmes.

Seymour-Ure (1996) and Wheeler (1997) argue that competitive commercial era of broadcasting began in Britain in 1954, with the creation of a second television channel financed by advertising revenue, but commercial television is to observe the idea of public service broadcasting. The state recognised commercial television as Independent Television (ITV) regulated by the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA). Prior to this, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) had the sole monopoly for radio and television in the United Kingdom. The BBC/ITV duopoly structure is still in operation. The various broadcasting Acts and Authorities impose the public service principles on the commercial broadcaster. According to Negrine
"Funding ITV as an advertising-support channel had one important advantage, it brought into existence an institution which was not in direct competition with the BBC for revenue." The competition was for the audience fostered by good quality programme production.

The stress on audience competition was to avoid the fierce commercial competition and poor quality in American commercial broadcasting. McChesney (1999:189) declares that it is a core presupposition that commercial firms attempting to maximise profit through the sale of advertising have possessed US broadcasting. The privatisation and commercialisation of US broadcasting is associated with the American way of life in promoting democratic values and free market. He argues that this was at the expense of public service, which could not withstand lobbying campaigns of the strong powerful proponents of commercial broadcasting. He asserts that commercial interest has frustrated the public sphere in US broadcasting landscape. The typology of broadcasting practised in most African developing countries is government controlled broadcasting.

2.4.5 Government-Controlled broadcasting

The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service is government-owned. Hendy (2000), Katz (1978) and Holmes (1999) convey that in Africa and other developing countries, state-controlled broadcasting is predominant but the British model of the PSB is the founding principles of these stations. Hendy (2000:14-15) says that state-controlled broadcasting is a system where there is direct government finance and operational control of the broadcast organisation. He maintains that its dominance has been lost with the disintegration of Soviet communism but that it still exists in three different ways. Firstly, under authoritarian governments in parts of the developing world,
where there is widespread poverty and people cannot afford to pay license fees and there is lack of advertising revenue. Secondly, Hendy believes that many trans-national broadcasting services such as the BBC's World Service receive funds from the governments for cultural or political reasons. The third kind of state-controlled broadcasting is state-run broadcasting monopolies, which are public corporations but the state still stipulates the regulatory framework for the media.

Katz et al., (1978:42) argue that in countries such as Ghana, Malawi, Mauritius and Nigeria, autonomous public corporations modelled on the BBC, are formally independent of government in their operations. It is however clear that their independence is largely 'notional' and that the original BBC principles of public service are absent. There are some adjustments in these broadcasting organisations to fit the less stable political climate of Africa. In Asia, broadcasting has similar interpretation of government control. According to Moses (1978), government departments nationally control broadcasting organisations in Asia but this does not mean that they are non-commercial. He says where there are privately owned broadcasting organisations obligated to national responsibilities (Lent, 1978:5). Katz et al., (1978:43) say almost all of the radio broadcasting services in Asia are government controlled and operated maintaining that where there is variation, it tends towards the American pattern of multi-operated commercial broadcasting. They gave the examples of the Philippines and to some degree Indonesia, South Korea and Thailand where some broadcasting stations operate on commercial bases; however, these are additional services to the national government services. In all other Asia countries, the government through a government department controls on broadcasting.
Holmes (1999) says that the reason why most African developing countries adopted
the state-controlled broadcasting was colonial legacy. She stresses that government
control of broadcasting either by a colonial or African government has always been in
existence in Sierra Leone. The colonial legacy of state broadcasting monopolies has
continued in postcolonial Africa under the guise of nominal autonomous
corporations, in which the state interfered in policy, appointments, management, and
programme decisions in the name of nation building and development. She concludes
that broadcasting is the most restricted of all media in Africa.

Khumalo (1997) says the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) is under the
Ministry of Information, Posts and Telecommunications. The Minister appoints
members of the Board of Governors after consultation with the president. This
situation, with some variations, is true for most developing countries in Africa, like
South Africa, Kenya, Ghana and Nigeria, in which the formal independence given to
broadcasting is imaginary (Alhassan, 2005; Barnett, 1999; Karikari, 1994; Ojo,
2003). These countries are by far better than Sierra Leone where the Sierra Leone
Broadcasting Service (SLBS) is still under the direct control of the Ministry of
Information and Broadcasting (Palmer, 1969; Strasser-King, 1995). The
transformation of the SLBS from government-owned to a PSB is one of the primary
investigations of this thesis. Preliminary investigation showed that the SLBS has
changed only in terms of expansion, not in terms of political independence.
Independent community radio stations are now challenging the dominance of SLBS.
Mtimde et al. (2003) say community radio stations are emerging in developing
countries because the grassroots find themselves left out in the dominant system of
broadcasting. McQuail’s (2000) ‘democratic participant’ will come into play in this
analysis. Habermas's theory of the public sphere is a critique of commercial broadcasting, as opposed to political economy theory, which accommodates the discussion of commercial broadcasting.

2.4.6 Political Economy Theory

Addressing the prevalence of advertising in the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service, Taylor (1980) says he was examining the political economy of advertising. He agrees that most of the theory of political economy is not applicable to the Sierra Leonean situation but acknowledges the fact that advertising constitutes a very strong element of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. Almost all of the scholars (Holmes, 1999; Tarwen, 2000; Taylor, 1980) whose literature is under review, report that all forms of media in various African countries, depend on advertising as the major source of revenue. This thesis will chip into the political economy to explain the economy of broadcasting in Sierra Leone.

Herman (1990) outlines some of the main characteristics of political economy. These are the size, concentrated ownership and profit orientation of mass media firms. Advertising is the principal source of income for the mass media. There is the dependence of the media on information provided by the government and business. According to Boyd-Barrett (1995:186), political economy looks at processes of consolidation, diversification, commercialisation, internationalisation, profitability, and the hunt for audiences, advertising and its consequences for media practices and media content. Broadcasting in Sierra Leone is incomparable to western liberal industrialised democracies where there are big media commercial enterprises free from direct government control (McChesney, 1992; Schiller, 1992). In Sierra Leone, there is widespread poverty, political and economic instability and the government
still has direct control of public broadcasting. Maura et al. (1998) and Utomi (1999) lament the poor financial conditions of the media houses in Africa, which have made them desperate for advertising revenues and thus, susceptible to manipulation by advertisers.

Despite these shortcomings, the political economy theory is every effective in discussing media commercialism and advertising. There are two main strands of the theories of political economy these are the liberal pluralist and the Marxist/neo Marxist theories. Curran (2003:346) states that the liberal theory has four functions of the media - informing the public, scrutinising the government, staging public debates, expressing public opinion, and exposing wrongdoings. This is a theory on liberal democracies, which opposes government control of the media, maintaining that the media should act as watchdog, bringing out the ills in society. The media should recognise the concept of consumer sovereignty that is, providing the audience with what it needs; they are to determine media use and consumption.

In commercial broadcasting, the main product of the media is the audience sold to the advertiser as commodities. According to Smythe (1995:222), the audience commodity is a non-durable producer good, bought and used in the marketing of the advertiser’s product. The work, which audience members perform for the advertisers, is to buy goods and to spend their income on consumption. Sometimes, it is to buy any class of goods but most often, it is a particular brand of consumer good. In short, they work to create the demand for advertised goods, which is the purpose of the capitalist advertisers. According to Curran (2005:227), the Marxist/ neo Marxist opposed the liberal pluralist approach. It claims that the audience do not always have
the same resources to make their choices in the market place of ideas, because there are information rich and information poor in a society, affluent societies have more access than poor countries. McChesney (1992) and Schiller (1992) believe that free market media can limit widening diversity due to concentration of ownership and conglomerations, maintaining that commercial control could be worse than government control.

McQuail (2000:83) and Curran (2005:178) say the significance of the political economy theory has greatly increased in the current discussion of media commercialisation and technological developments. Firstly, there has been a growth in media concentration worldwide, with more and more power of ownership being concentrated in fewer hands and with tendencies for mergers between electronic hardware and software industries. Secondly, there has been growing global information involving an increasing convergence between telecommunication and broadcasting. Thirdly, there has been a decline in the public sector of mass media, and in direct public control of telecommunication under the banner of deregulation, privatisation or liberalisation.
2.4.6.1 Criticism of Political Economy

According to Boyd-Barrett (1995), the consequences of commercial broadcasting in political economy theory, are the reduction of independent media sources, concentration on the largest markets, avoidance of risks, and reduced investment in less profitable media programmes, such as investigative reporting and documentary filmmaking. McChesney (1992) argues that there is also the neglect of smaller and poorer sectors of the potential audience and often a politically imbalanced range of news media. The effects of economic forces work consistently to exclude those voices lacking economic power or resources. Schiller (1992) maintains that the voices, which endure, would belong to those least likely to criticise the prevailing distribution of wealth and power, and those most likely to confront these arrangements are unable to publicise their opposition because they cannot command resources needed for effective communication to a broad audience (Boyd-Barrett, 1995; McChesney, 1992; Schiller, 1992).

The criticisms of the political economy approach are tenable but it provides a sure foundation for the policy of commercial broadcasting. In Sierra Leone, policymakers are developing a policy framework to regulate broadcasting after years of government monopoly. These pluralist policies aim at liberalising the airwaves to accommodate independent broadcasters both private and public. Freedman (2006) says the pluralist policymaking process should account for a variety of stakeholders and categories of broadcasting.
2.5 Section two - Broadcasting Policy Analysis and the Concept of Regulation

2.5.1 Introduction

Policymaking to regulate broadcasting is a substantial component of this study. This is the first time in the history of Sierra Leone that the country is developing a media policy framework to meet with prevailing challenges facing the industry. Policymaking for broadcasting is the preoccupation of nearly all African governments experiencing political pluralism (Fatoyinbo, 1999; Imobighe, 1999). Therefore, this section scrutinises the need for broadcasting policymaking in a developing media landscape. It analyses the meaning of communication policy, puts forward arguments for broadcasting policy in developing countries, reasons for media policy change and the examination of the concepts of regulation and deregulation.

In his paper, Dynamics of power in contemporary media policy-making Freedman (2006:907) says there is the need to focus on the policymaking process in media study. This is because of rapid change in the global media environment where new actors and technologies are emerging and creating conflicts. He describes the western approach to media policy making as the pluralist model of policymaking. He classifies this process as 'sub government' in the case of the US and in the UK 'policy community'. These classifications found expression on the openness of the policymaking process, which he expounds as democratic. He cites the triangular arrangement in which the legislature, the executive, independent bureaus and agencies, and interest groups contribute to decision-making in a decentralised fashion.

In his paper Media and Democracy: the Emergence of Commercial Broadcasting in the United States, McChesney (1992) reviews this so-called openness of
policymaking in the US. He says that the commercial basis of the U.S. broadcasting system did not emerge as the result of consensus. He claims that the debate was not open to the degree that the commercial broadcasters successfully kept the public and Congress oblivious to their right to establish fundamental broadcast policy. He summarises that the Communications Act of 1934, which laid the foundation of broadcasting, lacked open debate. However, McChesney (2003:126) softens his criticism on the pluralist policymaking approach, when he observes that the policymaking process in democratic societies is generally characterised by widespread public participation. He maintains that the wider the public participation, the more likely the policy would serve the interest and need of the people. He warns that once a nation deregulates to private interests, it is difficult to maintain public involvement in policymaking.

Sustaining his argument on a pluralist model of media policy Freedman (2006:910) says policymaking in the west does not rest with a single government department. In the US, both the House of Representatives and Senate sub-committees work with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the Department of Justice on media policymaking. In the UK, the state divides the responsibilities amongst the Department of Media, Culture and Sport, the Department for Trade and Industry, the Foreign Office and the Treasury in consultation with media regulating agencies such as the Office of Communication (OFCOM). Sierra Leone can study one lesson from this openness and transparency of media policymaking which used to be vested in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to the exclusion of other major stakeholders.
2.5.2 Communication policy

Cuilenburg & McQuail (2003), Hansen et al. (1998) and Lorimer (1994) have successfully used communication policy documents in comparable research. According to Hansen et al., (1998:66), communication policy analysis seeks to examine the ways in which policies in the field of communication are generated and implemented, as well as their repercussions or implications for the field as a whole. It addresses a wide range of contemporary concerns regarding the structure and organisation of communication systems. It focuses on the convergence of communication and telecommunications systems and the different forces that play a part in the policymaking process.

Cuilenburg & McQuail (2003:182) say that the beginning of policymaking lies in the interface, between the exploration of national interests by states and the operations of commercial enterprise. Policies refer to conscious public plans for achieving some goals within a proposed means and timeframe. The content of government policies replicates the agreement made between government and industry. The scholars identify three phases of communication policy; these are (1) the emergence of the communication industry, (2) public service media policy phase, and (3) the new communication policy paradigm. The notion of the public interest, which democratic states are to pursue on behalf of their citizens, guides the policymaking process.

Policymaking for broadcasting is a worldwide phenomenon. Lorimer et al. (1994) argue that the media operate within certain legal and policy constraints. Whilst every country has a host of laws and policies that are relevant to media functioning, he outlines nine types of laws that are directly relevant. These are:
1. The freedom to communicate, covering both ownership of media enterprises and the gathering, receiving and imparting of information;

2. Acts regulating broadcasting, telecommunications, and in some countries, press entities, these statutes govern the operations of broadcasters in exchange for using a limited resource, for instance, the radio spectrum;

3. Industrial support policies directed by governments specifically at cultural industries;

4. Freedom of, or access to, information legislation, designed to make government gather information available for public scrutiny;

5. Laws limiting free speech, such as libel law intended to protect the good reputation of individuals. These differ considerably from country to country;

6. Copyright laws, designed to protect intellectual property, which are increasingly being applied to the creation of television news and documentary programmes;

7. Law governing public disclosure, which usually applies to 'public' companies;

8. Laws governing the dissemination and use of technology;

9. In addition, Contract and company laws.

Lorimer (1994) maintains that these laws and policies both facilitate and constrain the structure and funding of both national and international mass media.

2.5.3 Argument for broadcasting policy in developing countries

In Sierra Leone and other African countries such as the Gambia, the policymaking process is state-centric rather than pluralistic. Holmes (1999) says that the organ responsible for broadcast policymaking in Sierra Leone is the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Barnett (1999:650) argues that during the apartheid regime in
South Africa, the policymaking process was government focused. It is of particular interest therefore, that media policy process should be democratic to include a range of stakeholders. The evolutionary trend of broadcasting should encourage the development of effective media regulatory policies. Rowe (1998) who argues for a media policy framework in Sierra Leone maintains that without a policy guideline, media changes would be meaningless and disorderly.

Findlay (1974) explains that Sierra Leone does not have a Broadcasting Act. However, the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) adheres to an unwritten fairness doctrine and code of ethics. The SLBS did not clearly define this unwritten code of ethics, and it was clear that there was no strong policy framework for broadcasting. Rowe (1998) supposes that there was no policy framework to govern the operations of the media in Sierra Leone and this was influencing negatively on its performance. He further observes that the total absence of a regulatory policy framework for the operation of the media has led to a virtual ‘free-for-all’ situation with severe consequences for professionalism. This is the argument of other developing countries’ scholars (Ntuane, 2001; Tarwen, 2000; Tsiang; 1997). The socio-economic and political challenges facing policymakers in Kenya, in modifying rules for the new situation of broadcasting was the main concern of Tarwen (2000). In discussing change in the Zimbabwe Broadcasting System from government monopoly to a dual system of public-private mix, Khumalo (1997) argues that it was the right time for Zimbabwe to liberalise its broadcasting sector, through the processes of deregulation and de-monopolisation of the public broadcaster, with a view to eventual privatisation. With the introduction of new technology and new political dispensation in African countries, the status of government-owned national
broadcasting service was raised as to whether government should privatise or incorporated SLBS as PSB. According to Barnett (1999) and Karikari (1974), South Africa and Ghana transformed their national broadcasters into PSB. In Sierra Leone, the government handed over the national broadcaster SLBS to the National Privatisation Commission for Privatisation (NCP) as one of government institutions to be privatised. The Transitional Management Team (TMT Report, 2005) states that after a series of workshops and deliberations, participants agreed that the SLBS should be incorporated into a PSB. This is in line with the African Charter on broadcasting (2000) and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (2001) which states that African national broadcasters should be transformed to PSB. Sierra Leone has developed a media policy to address challenges posed by the new media milieu. This is the enactment of the Independent Media Commission Act 2000 to regulate media (Rowe, 1998). This development liberalises the broadcasting system into a duopoly of government-independent mix. The introduction of rural regional stations and independent community radios opened the grassroots sphere of broadcasting as opposed to the dominant commercial and state broadcasters. This point will be elaborated in chapter six.

2.5.4 Reasons for change in Policy framework

Broadcasting policymaking is shifting from a regulated public service to big competitive commercial private enterprises. According to Hamelink (1994:94-95), this was in response to the economic and technological developments which prompted many countries the world over to revisit their communication policies and structures. The emphasis is “more market, less state” and the key concepts are
privatisation and liberalisation, commercialisation, regulation and deregulation, monopolization and de-monopolization. Schiller (1992:10-11) argues that these concepts were born in the US when powerful big private companies took over the media industry which is governed by the principle of free market, stressing that this idea spreads to other parts of the world. He cites the European example of the privatisation and liberalisation of national corporate interests and state broadcasting liberalised. He maintains that Africa, Asia and Latin America are all engaged in similar transformations. He stresses that private commercial interest has eroded the public interest and obligations of the media.

2.5.4.1 Technological development

Inglehart, (1997), Golding & Murdock (2002), Seymour-Ure (1996), and Wheeler (1997) affirm that technological development sets in motion for the transformation of media policy. Crisell (1999:62-63) asserts that the British public service duopoly was disturbed by a succession of technological developments which compelled the government to devise a new statutory framework. He speaks of “niche” broadcasting or “narrowcasting” which started when BBC2 and Channel 4 doubled the number of networks for viewers. The other significant development was the videocassette recorders (VCRs) that enabled viewers to use their television outside conventional broadcasting. Wheeler (1997) says these technologies created a further fragmentation and specialisation of the mass audience and so weakened the old public service rationale of universal broadcast. The next two major developments were Direct Satellite Broadcast (DSB) and cable TV. Seymour-Ure (1996) argues that the significance of cable technology is its enormous potential to offer services parallel to
broadcasting with interactivity. Golding & Murdock (2002) say cable and satellites have not only offered more channels than conventional broadcasting but have also included the sophisticated subscription and pay-per-view facilities. In digital transmissions, audiences can receive hundreds of channels delivered by cable, satellite and terrestrial means.

Schiller (1992) and Sreberny (2000) argue that a serious implication for technological development for developing countries, is that the capital costs of setting up and running these services are so huge that only large corporations can sustain it. Satellite broadcasting is a trans-national and global business; both its transmissions transcend national frontiers, of which developing countries have no control. This has made it difficult for governments to regulate the access, content, and conduct of satellite broadcasting. Evaluating the effect of technological advancement on developing countries, Schiller (1984) maintains that technological development and its function is an operating imperialist strategy on the part of the United States designed to maintain economic and political dominance. African countries are trying to grapple with the new global media environment. In Kenya, Tarwen (2000) believes that in the 1990s the advent of new communications technology such as satellite and cable pushed the government to formulate broadcasting policies for regulation and deregulation to herald in a new era of globalisation and commercialisation in broadcasting. Khumalo (1997) argues that satellite transmission has rendered obsolete government regulatory control and therefore it needs to de-regulate the broadcasting sector and formulate a new regulatory framework that will make it more competitive.
2.5.5 The Concept of Regulation /deregulation

McChesney (2003:126) opines that it is inaccurate to say that the choice of media policy is government regulation versus deregulation. He claims that all media systems are the result of explicit government regulation. Government monopoly rights on broadcasting were because of scarce frequencies. The competitive market in media requires extensive government regulation. He disputes that the issue is not regulation versus free markets but regulation in the public interest versus regulation in private interest. According to Swann (1988), there are two categories of regulation; departments of state or external state bodies, and agencies specifically created by the government to regulate the industry may impose self-regulation created by the regulated body itself and external regulation.

Self-regulation is a wide variety of bodies and government departments but more often by agencies that enjoy a degree of independence from government such as commissions, boards, corporations and the courts. According to Shoemaker (1996), broadcasters use self-regulation as a defensive mechanism against criticism and other forms of pressure. Broadcasting adheres to certain principles that govern the profession. Professionalism involves the concepts of objectivity, impartiality, accuracy, truth and balance. External regulation is in three forms these are antitrust, economic and social regulations. According to Cave (1989) and Swann (1988), antitrust regulation forces market competition and regulate ownership, mergers and restrictive business practices. Economic regulation limits competition by creating natural monopoly. In the past, water, gas, electricity and telecommunications are natural monopolies and therefore the government regulated them in the public interest. The most apparent has been broadcasting, where the electromagnetic
spectrum has set limits to the number of broadcasting stations (Curran, 2005). Economic regulation could also be identified where competition is feasible but it is decided that a completely free market is not acceptable because it will lead to excessive competition, for example, UK commercial broadcasting (Lorimer, 1994).

2.5.6 Deregulation

According to McChesney (2003:126), deregulation is to regulate for private interest and market forces but it is misleading to think of it as a term for ‘unabashed and unacknowledged regulation’ on behalf of powerful private interests. He maintains that private media is sanctioned because the society determined that such a system would best serve the needs of the citizenry. Spitzer (1993) and Demac (1990) say the concept is sometimes misleading as deregulation tends to mean re-regulation and often implies more rules rather than fewer. The concept of un-regulation may not be right as it means that the government has the burden of proof to show that regulation is necessary. Deregulation tends to refer to state withdrawal from very special social areas. It is concerned with the total abolition, the reduction in scope and intensity, and the modification of state system of control (Hamelink, 1994; Spitzer, 1993; Swann, 1988). Deregulation is a concept of free market for the benefit of everyone but leads to a concentration of capital, growth of trans-national corporations and forms of industrial oligopolies (Hamelink, 1994). In deregulation, the leading strategy is more ‘market less state’, has become the key policy orientation of the 1980s. This decade witnessed a wave of telecommunication deregulation founding expression in privatisation and liberalization (Demac, 1990; Hamelink, 1994; Golding et al, 2000).
According to Herman et al. (1997) and Inglehart (1997), the strong trend towards deregulation, privatisation, and commercialisation of media has opened up global commercial broadcasting in a manner that represents a startling break with past practice. Throughout the world, the commercialisation of national television systems is an integral part of economic liberalisation programmes. Golding & Murdock (2002) say the commercialisation and deregulation of national television systems worldwide began in the 1970s and 1980s, but it reached full speed in the 1990s. It has taken place at the expense of the previously dominant state-operated broadcasting system. Policymaking, regulation and deregulation of broadcasting will form a major part in this discussion. With reference to various media policies and legislations, the research will analyse the policy framework of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. It is the analysis of the broadcasting regulatory policymaking process that gives latitude to this thesis to contribute to the body of knowledge.

2.6 Summary

In this chapter, the author consults relevant literature to locate theories and concepts that are useful for this analysis. There was a categorisation of two sets of theories to determine their appropriateness to this research. These were 'Media theories for developing countries' and 'Theories of Media for Western Societies'. In the first category, 'Media theories for developing countries' the author gives reasons why these theories are relevant but not the most appropriate for the research. These theories are the dependency, cultural imperialism and development theories (Schiller 1992; Sreberny, 2000). The crux of the argument was that these theories partially address aspects of the reality of media development but did not holistically explain
media development in relation to key social institutions within the society such as politics, economics and culture (Sutcliffe, 1999; Tucker, 1999). These theories consider underdevelopment as a problem, which needs western models of development for solution (Sreberny, 1999; Tucker, 1999).

The evaluation of these theories leads to the conclusion that they are extremely relevant but not the most appropriate for this research. Cultural imperialism discussed how western media products are affecting local and national cultures in developing countries (Schiller, 1992; Sreberny1999; Holmes, 1999). The dependency theory explains how countries in the periphery depend on core countries for technological development. The development theory uses western standards to evaluate development in developing countries but fails to address specific internal factors associated with positive development (Sreberny, 1999; Taylor, 1980; Tucker, 1999).

As a way forward, the thesis proposed three approaches to development. These are the preventative, the preservative and progressive approaches (Stevenson, 1988). The preventative approach investigates the causative agents of underdevelopment and prescribes short term plans to stop deterioration. The preservative approach is to put social structures in place to act proactively to underdevelopment and preserve growth and development. These institutions should include an independent judiciary, representative government, an independent media, financial and economic institutions, pressure and interest groups and civil society movements. The progressive approach is strategic, long term plans to transform the economic, social and political fortunes of developing countries from a dependency to producer, self-sustaining economy.
Since this theory is at its developmental stage, the thesis scrutinised the other set of theories, the 'Theories of Media for Western Societies'. Reasons were given why this set of theories is most appropriate for discussing issues in this research. These theories explain development of the media within the context of the wider society; how dominant institutions such as politics, economics, and other social institutions affect the development of the media. Theories identified in this category are the four theories of the press, the Habermas's theory of the public sphere and the political economy approach (Golding, et al 2002; Habermas, 1974; Siebert et al., 1971; Thompson, 1993). Arguments were advanced for the utilisation of the four theories of the press, which allows for the discussion of media freedom from government control (Negrine, 1995). There is the provision to discuss both the authoritarian and libertarian systems of government-media relations (Siebert et al., 1971). Although some aspects of this theory are unsuitable for developing countries (Mytton, 1983), yet it suits the argument of the two types of government media relationship.

Habermas's theory of the public sphere discussed the transformation of politics and media pluralism (Dahlgren, 1995; Herman et al., 1998). There is political transformation in Sierra Leone from authoritarianism to democracy; this political pluralism facilitated broadcast pluralism (Holmes, 1999; Rowe, 1998; Strasser-King, 1995). Secondly, scholars like Dahlgren (1989) and Thompson (1989) link the Habermas' theory of the public sphere to public service broadcasting. It is applicable to discussing the transformation of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) from government-owned to PSB. The public sphere theory disfavours commercialisation but broadcasting in Sierra Leone uses advertising for sustainability. Therefore, the political economy theory is employed to explain the idea
of increasing commercial broadcasting in Sierra Leone (Golding & Murdock, 2002; Maura et al., 1998).

The second section of the chapter discusses the regulatory policymaking for broadcasting. In developing countries, governments are trying to formulate policies to regulate and de-regulate broadcasting to meet with new challenges in the media (Khumalo, 1997; Tarwen, 2000; Tsiang, 1997). The research applies the western pluralist model of media policy for regulation and deregulation (McChesney, 1992; Freedman, 2006). The next chapter focuses on the methods of analysis for this research.
Chapter 3

Methods of analysis

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter identifies the most appropriate theories for this research. These are (1) the public sphere theory (2) the four theories of the press and (3) the political economy theory (Golding, et al 2002; Habermas, 1974; Siebert et al., 1971; Thompson, 1993). The intension of this chapter is to identify the most appropriate methods that will fulfil the objectives of this research.

This chapter is divided into two sections. Section 1 examines the most appropriate methods for application to this research. It evaluates analogous research, with the aim of identifying the most appropriate methods. The second section is a report on the fieldwork, which was an attempt at collecting empirical evidence to substantiate the main propositions of the study. The methods of choice will depend on the aim and expected outcome of the investigation. Comparable research showed that scholars like Holmes (1999) use policy document analysis to trace the organisational development, regulation and deregulation of media institutions (Negrine, 1998; Seymour-Ure, 1996; Wheeler, 1997). In-depth interviews were utilised to triangulate documentary data (Kvale, 1996; Silverman, 2001). It is the intention of the author to consider the utility of these methods.

Section one

3.2 Similar Research on Documentary Analysis

Scholars who have studied the institutional development of broadcasting in the United Kingdom and the United States utilise policy documents as the primary source
of data. In studying the development of the British media, Crisell (1990), Negrine (1998), Seymour-Ure (1996) and Wheeler (1997) base their research on policy documents data. They utilise policy documents such as; Committee Reports on broadcasting, Green and White Papers and Broadcasting legislations. These include the 1926 Crawford Committee Report, the Beveridge Committee Report (1949), the 1954 Television Act which the Independent Television (ITV), the Independent Television Authority (ITA), and Pilkington Committee Report to review broadcasting in the country. This is the UK example of how scholars use policy documents to assess the development of broadcasting. The US media landscape exhibits similar examples.


These are some of the policy documents that shaped the institutional development of broadcasting in the US and UK. It could be observed that without the utilisation of policy documents, it would have been very difficult for the researchers to fulfil their objectives. The government mandates regulatory agencies and committees to review
broadcasting and come up with solutions to problems for media transformation. Broadcasting depends on the legislature to enact laws that will create an enabling environment for broadcasting to operate and the judiciary adjudicates in areas of conflict.

The author maintains that policy documents are the most important data to investigate media development in Sierra Leone. This position correlates with scholars from developing counties who have done comparable research (Banda, 2003; Holmes, 1999; Khumalo, 1997; Tarwen, 2000; Thapisa, 2003). Holmes (1999) utilises historical and policy documents data for her research *Broadcasting in Sierra Leone*. She spends time collecting policy documents from various sources; she takes permission to use documents at the BBC’s archives and Her Majesty’s Stationery Office. She amasses policy documents from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in Sierra Leone and analyses policy documents from international organisations working to develop broadcasting in Sierra Leone. These are the United Nations (UN), United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the Union of National Radio and Television Networks of Africa (URTNA), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Voice of America (VOA). Holmes (1999) studies programme schedule documents to determine the type of information and education programmes disseminated by broadcast organisations. She examines policy documents such as the 1949 West African Broadcasting Survey and the 1969 Commonwealth Committee of Broadcasting Consultant Report on Sierra Leone.
Holmes (1999) did not record any broadcast legislation document for Sierra Leone; this was because there was none (Findlay, 1995). Other African developing countries such as Ghana, South Africa and Kenya have legislated for broadcasting. Tarwen (2000) consults the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation Act 1988 and Kenya Communications Act 1998, the two legislative instruments that shaped broadcasting regulatory policy in the country. In the ‘Independent Broadcasting in Ghana: implications and challenges’, Karikari (1994) assesses the 1992 Ghanaian constitution, which made provision for Ghana’s National Independent Media Commission. The mandate of the commission is to promote media pluralism and insulate the state-owned media from arbitrary power. Researching ‘Community Radio Broadcasting in Zambia: a Policy Perspective’, Banda (2003) argues that analysis of policy documentary sources was a key data generation method. He collects policy and legal documents, such as the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation Act 1987 and 1994, which provides for the ZNBC to be the radio and television licensing authority. He compares that with the South African Broadcasting Authority (IBA) 1994 and the Broadcasting Act 1999, which assigned the responsibility of media regulation to the IBA. The study of these researches implies that the author can use similar data. To add to the body of knowledge, the author will study new legislation, which the government enacted to regulate the media in Sierra Leone. This was the Independent Media Commission (IMC) Act 2000, which created the IMC to regulate and promote media pluralism in Sierra Leone.

3.3 Reasons for Document Analysis

Policy document analysis is the most appropriate method for this research because it will provide the opportunity to locate policy documents that contribute to
broadcasting regulatory policy in Sierra Leone. Deacon et al. (1999: 19-30) and Wimmer et al. (2006:127) argue that documents are a productive source of data for the qualitative researcher. They identify two types of documents obtainable for analysis these are public and private documents. Public documents include police reports, newspaper stories, communiqués, agenda and reports of meetings, administrative documents and formal reports. Statistical data, sound recording like radio programmes, records and tapes, visual media including painting, engravings, posters, photographs, moving images like films, television programmes, videos and digital media including computer files, CD ROMs and websites are all part of public document. Mason (2002) and Pole & Lampard (2002) add acts of parliament, congressional papers, insurance policies, bank statements, accounts and balance sheets, company reports, wills, minutes of meetings, books, manuals and other publications. Private documents include personal letters, diaries, appointment books, and telephone logs. Yin (2003) and Stokes (2003) focus on organisational archives or records, such as organisational charts and budgets over a period of time, maps and charts of the geographical characteristics or layouts of a place, lists of names and other relevant items, survey data, such as census records or data previously collected.

3.3.1 Selection of documents

The method of sample selection of policy documents will be non-random sampling. This type of sampling is the judgemental or purposive sampling. The author intentionally, consciously and deliberately selects and uses policy documents for the research (Deacon, 1999:50; Wimmer et al., 2006). The primary data for this thesis will comprise of all official policy documents, which contribute to the development
of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. The aim is to ascertain the development of a broadcasting policy framework in Sierra Leone (Palmer, 1969; Rowe, 1998; Strasser-King, 1995). The author purposively selected these documents; he uses his discretion to identify all policy documents relating to broadcasting development in Sierra Leone. The criteria for selection were that these documents must have contributed to the broadcast policy framework in the country and that these documents are authentic. To ascertain that these policy documents are unbiased and credible, the author selects those documents approved by official and professional sources. Various governments in Sierra Leone have authorised the review of broadcasting, independent national and international experts produce the outcome of these reviews in the form of policy reports, and these reports are part of the national archive of documents. The author collects these documents from the following institutions: Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS); Ministry of Information and Broadcasting; the Independent Media Commission (IMC); community radio stations; the National Commission for Privatisation (NCP); Media Related NGOs; and Government Printing Department. After careful examination of all available policy documents, the author concludes that the following policy documents effectively contributed to the development of a media policy framework over and above all other documents:


3. The National Media and Communication Policy for Sierra Leone (1998),
4. The Report on the Rehabilitation of the Sierra Leone Broadcast media (1997),

5. The KPMG Report on the Restructuring of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (2000),

6. The National Commission for privatisation (NCP) documents on the privatisation/incorporation of the SLBS (2003),


The National Media and Communication policy for Sierra Leone is a main policy document for analysis in this thesis drafted by Rowe (1998) under the auspices of the UNDP. His Excellency Ambassador Sylvester Ekundayo Rowe is a Sierra Leonean writer, broadcaster and expert in international law. He is the Deputy Permanent Representative (Political Affairs) in the Permanent Mission of Sierra Leone to the United Nations (Sierra Leone Mission UN online, 2007). In April 2007 he was given the national award of Grand Commanders of the Order of the Rokel” (GCOR). According to the Government’s Citation (2007), this was in recognition of his distinguished service to the nation in the fields of communication and diplomacy. He served in the Ministry of Information and broadcasting, contributed in the establishment and coordination of the operation of Radio 98.1 for the restoration of democracy in Sierra Leone. He drafted the national media policy for Sierra Leone in 1998, which is a main policy document for analysis in this thesis.

There will also be an examination of legal instruments, which effect changes in the Broadcasting landscape. These legal documents are:
1. The Independent Media Commission Act 2000,

2. The Independent Media Commission Documents,

3. The Code of Conduct for Broadcasters,

4. The 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone,

5. General policy reports on Broadcasting on the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Records.

3.3.2 The Advantages of document Analysis

Document analysis has certain strengths as a research method, which this author will exploit. Deacon et al. (1999:15-16) argue that documents could be used as primary and secondary sources of data collection. They state that there are situations where research might focus mainly on existing documents. These include where access to people under study is restricted, denied or no longer possible. The re-analysis of materials previously collected by other researchers and textual analysis where the organisation and meaning of the material itself is the major focus of this research. According to Wimmer et al. (2006) and Mason (2000), primary source is the material that makes up the object of analysis and it comprises what one is actually going to study. Secondary sources are to find out about research on that particular subject, to check government, parliamentary and legal files, to investigate decisions and debates on the topic, to check data and to track contemporary events. Pole & Lampard (2002) and Stokes (2003) argue that the line of dichotomy between the two is not so clear,
because a primary source could also be a secondary source depending on the object of analysis of the document.

There are two types of documentary analyses, source-oriented and problem-oriented. Yin (2003) and Stokes (2003) explain that source-oriented document research is undertaken when the investigation of the source material motivates the research. In this kind of research, the researcher begins from the position of having access to an archive or set of resources, which one wishes to investigate. Problem-oriented document research takes as its starting point, a problem that one has developed out of reading other accounts or secondary sources. Here, the documents are the object of analysis but the research generates questions because of reading secondary sources, and not the documents themselves. Mason (2002:73) says the ontological position of using documents, suggests that documents are meaningful constituents of the social world in themselves. The epistemological position suggests that documents can provide or count as evidence of these ontological properties.

### 3.3.3 Limitations of Document Analysis

Notwithstanding the advantages of documents, there are some limitations to document analysis. Scott (1990) stresses the importance of checking the quality of documents. He argues that the perimeters of such examination are on the authorship, access, credibility, authenticity, and representativeness of the documents. According to Deacon et al., (1999:26) and Punch (1998:191), authorship refers to the origin of the document; access means the availability of the document for use; authenticity refers to the genuineness of the document; credibility examines the accuracy and partisanship of the document and representativeness investigates whether the sample documents represent the total class of documentary data. Deacon et al. (1999) say it is
important to scrutinise documents because people can fake them; misrepresent facts, bias to a particular frame or are simply false.

The limitations of document analysis point to problematic areas, which the researcher should take into cognisance whilst collecting documentary data. Some scholars use documents with other research methods to validate their research findings. Scholars like Freedman (2006), Holmes (1999) and Khumalo (1997) triangulate documents with interviews in their research. Punch (1998:190) says "...documentary data may be collected in conjunction with interview and observations. In combination with other data, documents can be important in triangulation ..." therefore, documents will be triangulated with interview.

3.4 In-depth Interviews

Most scholars in the North and South (Banda, 2003; Da-Wariboko 2005; Freedman, 2006; Holmes, 1999; Khumalo, 1997; Tarwen, 2000) who share similar research interests with this thesis use documentary analysis with in-depth interviews triangulation. Researching the *Dynamics of power in contemporary media policymaking* Freedman (2006:907) uses documentary sources in conjunction with in-depth (off the record) interviews. His aim is to illuminate the media policymaking process in the US and UK. He interviews a variety of contributors to the policymaking process. He argues that these interviewees would throw more light on the practicalities of policymaking where documents are lacking. The object is to get an insight into the experiences and personally observe policymakers and stakeholders at work, of both the United States and the United Kingdom. Freedman (2006:908) interviews regulators, congressional staff, civil servants, special advisers, corporate lobbyists, public interest advocates, think-tank researchers, academics, and trade
officials. He attempts to study the US and UK policy-making systems to demonstrate the similarities and differences (Freedman, 2006:908-909). This analysis shows that without these interviews it would have been very difficult to comprehend the practicalities of the policy making process, which might not be reflected in the policy documents of both the US and the UK.

Scholars in developing countries (Andriantsoa et al., 2005; Da-Wariboko, 2005; Khumalo, 1997) successfully use document-interview triangulation. Investigating 'the effects of the proliferation of commercial Broadcasting on Public service broadcasting: The case of Rivers state of Nigeria Broadcasting Corporation' Da-Wariboko (2005) uses documents in triangulation with in-depth interviews. He selected policymakers, broadcasters, and government officials for in-depth interviews because of their data-generating ability. Researching Media Proliferation and Democratic Transition in Africa: the Case of Madagascar, Andriantsoa et al., (2005) select a cross-section of 30 individual enterprises for in-depth interviews. The organisations selected, represented a cross section of the print media, radio and television at both national and regional levels as well as a mixture of religious, commercial and political media outlets. They interview managers of each establishment in person. Nine principal topics were addressed in the interview guide; the establishment of the organisation, marketing strategies, programme content, data source, staff number and qualifications, equipment and investment cost, advertising strategies, profitability and marketing dynamics. Khumalo (1997) finds himself in a similar situation when investigating the development of the media in Zimbabwe. He uses documentary evidence and interviews to collect relevant data. He interviews:

1. The Minister of State in the president office responsible for parastatals,
2. The Director of Information in the Ministry of Information, Posts and Telecommunication,

3. The Deputy Secretary in the president’s office responsible for privatisation of parastatals,

4. Compiler of UNESCO Report on Commercialisation,

5. Head of Mass Media Studies Department, Harare Polytechnic,

6. Lecturer Mass Media Studies Department, University of Zimbabwe,

7. Director of programme, news and current Affairs ZBC.

From the analysis one can observe that in developing countries most interviewees regarded as influential in media policymaking are ‘those in authority’, while in the western countries, policymakers are more diversified. Another issue that is worthy of note is the issue of confidentiality in the interview process. Freedman (2006) did off-the-record interviews to protect the identity of his interviewees because of the sensitive positions they were holding at the time of his research. In developing countries like Sierra Leone, to protect the confidentiality of interviewees is very important, as some of the interviewees are government officials who might suffer consequences if the government was displeased with their comments. In spite of this shortcoming, in-depth interviews are the most appropriate method for triangulation.
3.4.3.1 Reasons for using in-depth Interviews

There are several reasons why interviews will be invaluable to providing empirical evidence for this thesis. During the rebel incursion in the city of Freetown in 1999, rebels burnt down the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) Library and vital documents were lost. It is the assumption that some of the documents which are significant to this research may be among those documents. Therefore, interviews will provide substantive resource materials to supplement the available documents. However, it is envisaged that copies of documents destroyed by the fire could be located elsewhere such as the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the Government Printing Department.

Interviews will help to investigate current issues and new developments that are unfolding. Most of the new developments in Broadcasting are evolving; new stations are being set up, communities are taking advantage of the new media environment, NGOs are evaluating communities’ needs for radio stations and lots more scenarios. Researchers have not documented most of this information on these new developments. One way to get this information is to interview key players who are participating in the transformation process. In-depth interviews are also appropriate to cross check information from documents.

3.4.3.2 Sample selection of Interviewees

The non-random sampling was applied for the selection of interviewees meaning that the author deliberately select interviewees to satisfy the objectives of this thesis. The author uses his discretion to select interviewees according to their contribution to the
broadcasting policymaking process based on their data generating ability. Hence the following category of interviewees were selected; key media policy-makers, such as ministers of government, government officials, representatives of media regulatory agencies, heads of media educational instructions, representatives of media related NGOs, and representative managers for broadcast organisations. The Minister and Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting are responsible to supervise the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service and to present media bills in parliament for legislations. Media related NGOs are responsible for the establishment and coordination of community radio stations' activities. Community and regional radio stations’ managers can give information on the administrative and social functions of their organisations. Heads of media institutions can provide information on training programmes for media professionalism.

The author selects representatives from the three main organisations assisting in the establishment of community radio stations. These are Search for Common Ground Sierra Leone (SFCG-SL) supported by USAID, the Community Radio Network (CORNET) sponsored by Open Society Initiative West Africa (OSIWA) and ‘The Initiative for Mobile Training for Community Radio’ (INFORMOTRAC) assisted by Radio Nederland Training Centre (RNTC). These will provide a reservoir of information on all the community radio stations they support. The author selects representatives from the two media regulatory bodies, the Independent Media Commission (IMC) and the National Commission for Privatisation (NCP). The managers from established independent community radio stations were interviewed these are Radio democracy, KISS 104 Bo, Radio Maria, VOH 96.2, Radio Mankneh, and Radio Trinity. Media related NGOs would provide information on the rest.
Managers for Regional stations; SLBS Freetown, SLBS Bo, SLBS Kenema and SLBS Makeni are represented, that is four out of six regional stations.

In-depth interviews are utilised in triangulation with policy documents to capture the latest development of broadcasting to augment the empirical data of this research. The evolution of broadcasting in Sierra Leone is progressively unfolding and scholars have not yet documented some of these developments. One of the many ways to collect this information is to interview key players actively involved in the evolution process. These are media regulators and government officials, media related NGOs and broadcaster of both independent and government stations. The questions posed to interviewees are to elicit qualitative empirical information to substantiate the argument of this thesis. The questions are open-ended questions, which serve as interview guide; the author may ask subsequent questions for clarification or illustration.

The Independent Media Commission (IMC) is the media regulatory body for both print and electronic media in Sierra Leone. Interview with the executive secretary of the IMC provides vital information on the regulatory functions and activities of the organisations. This information generated is very significant to discuss the new regulatory framework of broadcasting in chapter 7.

1. What is the function of the Independent media commission?
2. What are some of its achievements since its inception?
3. What are some of its failures?
4. How is it dealing with the teething problems and the issue of political interference if any?
5. Explain the functions of the different sub committees of the commission.
6. The type of broadcast/print media commission is regulating

7. What are some of the weaknesses of the Act which brought the Commission into being?

8. How are some of these being addressed?

Government officials such as the Minister of Information and Broadcasting and Permanent Secretary are responsible for supervising the national broadcaster, the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS). They are also responsible to introduce legislation in parliament concerning the development of the media in Sierra Leone. A central argument of the thesis is the political independence of SLBS, which is the transformation of the national broadcaster from government control to public service broadcaster. These interviews would assist in discussing the status of the SLBS and the development of the media environment in general. This information is very useful for the discussion of the development of broadcast regulatory policy and the new media regulatory framework in chapters 5 and 7. The author drafted similar questions for the National Commission for Privatisation (NCP), which the government mandated to privatise the SLBS.

1. Why have separate policies for the national broadcaster and independent broadcasters?

2. How are you addressing the issue of the independence of the national broadcaster?

3. How are you going to strengthen the capacity and capabilities of the national broadcaster to cope with existing competition from community and commercial radio?

4. How is the issue of nation wide broadcast being address?
5. What plans are there for the development of the broadcast industry in Sierra Leone?

6. When and how these plans are to be executed?

7. The Independent Media Commission Act 2000 does not cater for the different types of broadcasting organizations, which is creating some confusion in the media industry what is being done about that?

Media related NGOs are sponsoring the establishment of community radio in Sierra Leone. They have a quantum of information on the latest development of community radio stations both existing and potential ones. The questions asked are to elicit information on these community radio stations and their relationship with these organisations. This information becomes very useful when discussing the rise of community radio stations in chapter six.

1. What is your organisation’s interest in broadcasting in Sierra Leone?

2. What kind of assistance do you give to community broadcasters?

3. What are the criteria for support?

4. What do you stand to benefit from this?

5. You have a whole media component in your programme of activity would you like to talk about that?

6. Why do you do programmes for broadcast in community radio stations?

7. What is the scope and nature of programmes you produce? (Copy of programmes)

8. What do you hope to achieve by broadcasting these programmes?

9. How do you solicit financial support for these stations?

10. How are you addressing the issue of sustainability?
In-depth interviews with Broadcasters from both government and independent radio stations provide vital information on the organisation, structure, programmes and source of revenue and sustainability. It draws out information on news priorities and programme preferences. This information is vital when discussing the programme schedule analysis, the economy of broadcasting, content analysis of news, types of educational and informative programmes and audience participation in programming in chapter 6.

1. What is the background of your organization: how and why it was set up?
2. What is the type of organization?
3. Methods of licensing and registration
4. How is the organization administered/run?
5. What is the level of community/government participation?
6. Its structure, management and control
7. What is the level of government’s involvement in your station?
8. Explain the method and type of news production priorities, gathering and editorial control
9. How do you prioritise the news items in the bulletin by order of importance? (Copy of news bulletin for a week from each station)
10. What is the type of specific programmes you broadcast?
11. How do you determine the level of importance of a programme in your station? (Programme schedule for a week)
12. How would you determine the level of government’s influence in your decision making exercise?
13. What are the process of feedback and response from the public?
14. How would you evaluate the impact of your organization to the community or the nation as a whole?

15. What are the sources of Revenue for your organization?

16. What are the type of commercials/advertising you broadcast and from which industries/organizations? (Copies of advertising schedule and account if possible)

17. What programmes are sponsored and by which organization and for what reasons?

18. Is the money accrued from adverts enough to sustain the organization?

19. What other source of funding/assistance do you receive?

The author interviews these specific categories:

1. The Minister of Information and Broadcasting-Former and Present,

2. Director of Information/Permanent secretary,

3. The Director General of the SLBS,

4. Officials at the Independent Media Commission,

5. Officials at the Sierra Leone Journalist Association,

6. Managers of Independent Community and Commercial Radio Stations,

7. Managers of Regional Radio Stations,

8. Historical figures who participated in broadcasting,
9. Head of Department, Mass Communication Department University of Sierra Leone,

10. Media Related NGOs working with community radio stations. These would give ample information to providing empirical evidence that the Sierra Leone Broadcasting has evolved to pluralism, diversity of information and variety in choice of channels. The only historical figure interviewed was Professor Eldred Durosimi Jones. He is professor emeritus and former principal of the Fourah Bay College University of Sierra Leone. According to University of Birmingham Buzz (2005:3), he was the first person to write on Africans in Shakespeare, now a large research field of postcolonial studies. For 35 years, he was the founder and editor of African Literature Today, which has played a crucial role in the consolidation and dissemination of African literary studies. He has been active in peace-making initiatives, remaining in Sierra Leone at great personal risk when he could have taken prestigious appointments in North American or British universities. Holmes (1999) and Findlay (1975) quote Professor Eldred Jones on the history of Sierra Leone broadcasting system particularly the "rediffusion" system. He was one of the members of the Advisory Committee set up in 1955 to advise government on broadcasting.

3.4.3.3 Advantages of In-depth Interview

According to Punch (1998:178) and Kvale (1996:14), the in-depth interview is a powerful research tool that is ‘capable of producing rich and valuable data’ and a ‘construction site for knowledge’ in social research. This means that an in-depth interview can provide a researcher with an invaluable source of information, which
can contribute to knowledge. Mason (2002:63) and Mason (1996:39-40) argue that
the ontological position of in-depth interview suggests that people’s knowledge,
views, understandings, interpretations, experiences, and interactions are meaningful
properties of social reality, which research questions are designed to explore.
Interviewing has an epistemological position that allows a meaningful way to
generating data on these ontological properties; talk interactively with people, ask
questions, to listen to them, to gain access to their accounts and articulations or
analyse their use of language and construction of discourse.

According to Silverman (2001) and Kvale (1996:19-20), interview as a research
method is a conversation that has a structure and a purpose. It is a careful questioning
and listening approach with the purpose of obtaining thorough tested knowledge. The
research interview is not a conversation between equal partners because the research
defines and controls the situation. The author who critically follows up on the
subject’s answers to questions introduces the topic of the interview. It is a
professional interview, a systematic questioning technique different from
conversation of daily life.

Pole & Lampard (2002) and Silverman (2001) agree that in-depth Interviews do not
make use of a rigid schedule of questions and there is the capacity for the interviewer
to explore issues as they arise. It provides accounts of social phenomena with the
interviewer and interviewee having close relationship based on conversation rather
than interrogation. It searches for a deeper understanding of a specific reality. Mason
(2002:62) and Kvale (1996:5-6) describe the characteristics of qualitative interview.
They say it adopts a relatively informal style based on conversation. It is thematic and
topic-centred in which the researcher may have a number of themes or issues to cover. The researcher is unlikely to have a complete script of questions and will have fluidity and flexibility in the interview. The interviewer seeks to interpret the meaning of central themes in the life world of the subject and seeks a descriptive and qualitative knowledge expressed in normal language.

Kvale (1996:14) summarises the seven stages of interview. He says the researcher should formulate the purpose of the investigation, describe the concept and theme of the topic before the actual interview. The researcher should ask the “why” question of the investigation before the “how” question. He should design and plan the study, develop an interview guide and conduct the interviews. There is also transcription, analysis and verifying the reliability and validity of the interview, and reporting the findings of the study. In addition, ethical questions such as, seeking the consent of the interviewee and keeping confidentiality are very important.

### 3.4.3.4 Limitations of Interview as research methods

Kvale (1996:279-295) divides the main limitations of interview into two categories, external and internal. For the external limitations, he argues that in-depth interview is not scientific but replicates common sense that it is subjective rather than objective, that interview results are bias and therefore untrustworthy, that leading questions could affect the results, and the interpretation could lead to different meanings. He also maintains that interview is explorative, person dependent and findings could not be generalised. Kvale (1996) and Wimmer et al. (2006) say the internal limitations are that the method is individualistic in nature, because it focuses on the individual, ignoring his interaction with his social environment. It is idealistic in the sense that, it
ignores human experience within the context of the social and material world. The scholars argue that in-depth interview could produce trivialities with boring collections of interview quotes and lack linguistic approach. It focuses on thoughts and experiences to the detriment of action and it is too intellectualistic.

In-depth interview is vital to the fulfilment of the ambitions of this research. It gives the author opportunity to collect data on the latest development of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. This method brings the research in currency and adaptability to the evolutionary trend of broadcasting development. In combination with documents, in-depth interview will give the research synthesis and cohesive whole. These are the justifications for using documents analysis and in-depth-interview for this research.

The second section of this chapter is the fieldwork report.

Section Two - Field work Report

3.5 Introduction

The author conducts the research within a three-month period, from June to August 2004. The Robin Williamson Trust sponsors the research by providing a travel bursary for the fieldwork and a grant for the writing-up phase. The aim of the fieldwork was to collect adequate data as evidence to support the argument that the broadcasting landscape in Sierra Leone has changed from government monopoly to media pluralism. The author sufficiently prepared for the fieldwork by identifying the theories and methods of data collection. He selected a sample of policy documents and interviewees and prepared an interview guide outlining interview themes/questions. The aim of this section is to provide an assessment of the fieldwork based on the chosen methods of data collection.
3.6 Documents

The author starts on the assumption that warring factions burnt most of the broadcasting policy documents when rebels razed to the ground the SLBS library during the 1999 incursion into the city. Relevant documents were found in the SLBS Director General’s office and archives of organisations such as the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the Government Printing Department. The Independent Media Commission (IMC) has storage of electronic files of all recent broadcast legislatures. The National Commission for Privatisation (NCP) and the SLBS Transition Management Team (TMT) have a reservoir of broadcast policy documents. Therefore, during the fieldwork the research problem was not the availability of the documents but accessibility.

Accessibility to policy documents was a serious problem for this research. The author conducts the fieldwork at a time when policymakers were developing a policy framework that will account for the political independence of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS). The Government handed over SLBS to the National Commission for Privatisation for deregulation. In this respect, policymakers were engaged in the utilisation of various policy documents to shape the future of the national broadcaster. The SLBS rejected the author’s application to use documents because the Director General and senior management were using the same documents in the policymaking process. After cutting through a series of red tape and bureaucracy, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting allowed access to the documents on the condition that they should not be removed from the building. This means that the author had to take notes and photocopy all the relevant original documents. At the Independent Media Commission, this problem was minimised.
because the institution has a digitalised system and electronic version of all documentation. The author uses the USB Drive to collect these documents. It was realised that the lack of access to these policy documents would have inhibited this research.

3.7 Interviews

The categories of respondents were stakeholders, ministers, government officials, policymakers, representative managers of broadcast media and media related NGOs. The selection was non-random sample meaning that the author intentionally selected interviewees according to their roles in broadcasting policymaking. The author developed an interview guide to facilitate the interview process. The questions addressed five major areas; these are the background to organisation establishment, type of broadcast organisation, type of programmes, advertising and financing, and policymaking process. The author conducts twenty-five interviews each took approximately took thirty to forty minutes.

The former Minister of Information and Broadcasting Dr. Julius Spencer (1998-2002) was the driving force for broadcast pluralism in Sierra Leone. He convinces the government to accept Rowe's 1998 proposal for the institutionalisation of broadcast pluralism. He assists the government to set up Radio Democracy FM 98.1 that helped reinstate the exiled democratic government. The present Minister Prof. Septimus Kaikai, the Director of Information Ade Bell, and the Permanent Secretary Patrick Nalo in Ministry of Information and Broadcasting are responsible for implementing new policies of broadcasting and supervising the SLBS. The Executive Secretary of the IMC Hassan Kamara is regulating the new media environment and all the other respondents are effectively involved in broadcasting or policymaking process. The
Public Relations Officer Cyril Juxon-Smith of the National Commission for Privatisation (NCP) is responsible for the privatisation of the SLBS. These are all the personalities and institutions that are responsible for media regulatory policy in Sierra Leone and are vital sources of information for this thesis.

The research fairly represents the community radio broadcast managers in the sample. There are about 34 community radio stations in Sierra Leone; the author takes respondents from the two largest community radio stations KISS 104 FM Bo and Radio Democracy 98.1 FM. The author was unable to personally visit and observe all community radio stations because of financial and logistic constraints. This did not significantly affect the outcome of the research because the author obtains data for these radio stations from media related NGOs sponsoring their establishment. These organisations are the Open Society Initiative West Africa (OSIWA), which operates through the Community Radio Network (CORNET), Search for Common Grounds Sierra Leone (SFCG-SL) also known as Talking Drum Studio (TDS-SL) and Radio Nederland Community Radio Project. The author therefore obtains information of all radio stations either directly or indirectly. He interviews the managers of religious stations because he cannot contact their sponsoring agencies locally. He also navigates the websites of these international agencies. There are six regional stations in Sierra Leone out of these the author conducts interview with four; SLBS FM 99.9 in Freetown, SLBS FM 93.1 in Kenema and SLBS FM 88.0 in Makeni north and SLBS Bo 95.1 south of Sierra Leone. The remaining two stations, SLBS Kono and SLBS Kailahun were at the embryonic stage of development with little information to offer but have similar administrative structure and programming to the other regional stations.
The personal observation of the author was that there are similarities and differences between community radio stations and SLBS stations. In terms of programme genre, they are similar but the approach to broadcasting is completely different. Local radio stations use the local language of the community to broadcast whiles the SLBS use more of the official language. All regional radio stations have government involvement in their establishment, organisational structure and government direct interference in programme making and management structure whilst community radio stations are independent from government control. The meeting point for the two systems was in funding; all depend on advertising the difference is government stations receive government subsidies while independent stations do not. There was also the absence of registered commercial stations in the register of the Independent Media Commission. IMC recently upgraded KISS 104 FM and FM 98.1 Radio Democracy stations to commercial status. The diagram that follows is just a demonstration of the travelogue of the research rather than the number of stations covered.
Radio Stations

South
Bo - 1 government rural, 1 religious & 1 community
Radio 1
(one TV)

East
Kenema: 1
Government rural
*Kailahun, Kono.

North
Makeni: 1
government station, 1
community and 1
religious stations
*Kabala

West
Freetown 8
1TV

My research took me to the Capital city in the West, the
Headquarter-towns of the South Bo, Kenema in the East, and
Makeni in the North.

The author collects information for community radio stations that are not in the sample from their sponsoring agencies. Those that are marked with stars or dotted lines are stations that the author did not interview because they replicate the same information.

The major problem was the difficulty of respondents keeping appointments for interview. The author conducts the research at the time when the Electoral Commission announced the results of the 2004 Local Council Elections. Broadcasters in community and regional radio stations were very busy conducting interviews, producing current affairs programmes, analysing the results and evaluating the political stance of new heads of municipalities and town councils. The author had to book and rebook appointments to get one interview done because of their busy schedule. The policymakers too were unavailable. The opposition party seemed to have won the election in some of the most important municipalities, like the capital city Freetown. Some of the policymakers, with the political leaders, were trying to consolidate their position at the time of the research.

According to Kvale (1999), time, cost and transcription time were all constraints. Most of these community and regional radio stations are in various parts of the provinces and the high cost of transportation was a major constraint. It was also time consuming to transcribe the tapes after interviews. It took almost eight months for the author to complete the transcription and computerisation of the information before analysis.
3.8 Summary

This chapter was divided into two sections. The first section investigates the most appropriate methods for this research. There was a critical assessment of literature by scholars who have done similar research. The finding was that almost all of them opted for policy document analysis and in-depth interviews. After the perusal of this literature, the author concludes that the same methods would best serve the purpose of this research. Data from policy documents were used as primary and secondary sources triangulated with in-depth interviews to give more insight into the study. Negrine (1998), Seymour-Ure (1996), and Wheeler (1997) base their research on policy documents when discussing the development of broadcasting in the UK. Freedman (2006) and McChesney (1992) agree that policy documents data are useful in discussing broadcasting development in the USA. The research considers media texts as documents (Aarva, et al., 2006) but not appropriate for this research. Banda (2003), Holmes (1999) and Thapisa (2003) are representatives of scholars from developing countries who effectively utilise documentary data to evaluate the development of broadcasting. The merits and demerits of policy document analysis were scrutinised. The author concludes that document analysis was appropriate for this thesis.

Policy documents analysis was triangulated with in-depth interviews to give more insight into broadcasting evolution in Sierra Leone. Banda (2003), Da-Wariboko (2005) and Freedman (2006) triangulate documents with in-depth interviews in their research. They interview major stakeholders in the policymaking process of the United States, the United Kingdom, and Africa, arguing that interviews will throw more light on the practicalities of policymaking where information was lacking in
documents. The advantages and disadvantages of in-depth-interviews were examined. Non-random sampling was used for the selection of documents and interviewees.

The second section outlines the successes and problems of the fieldwork. Accessibility to documents was a problem for this research. This was because policymakers were using these same documents to develop a policy regulatory framework for Sierra Leone. All interviewees responded to the interview, policymakers, Ministers, government officials, stakeholders, Media Related NGOs, and broadcasters cooperated with the research. There was a problem of adjusting interviews to fit with the busy schedule of broadcasters and policy makers. This was due to the political climate at the time of the interview.

The next chapter evaluates the historical contextualisation of this thesis comprising of the political and the socio-economic development of the country juxtaposed with the historical development of broadcasting focusing on government broadcasting relationships.
Chapter 4
Government-Broadcasting Relationship

4.1 Introduction

It has been established that policy documents analysis and in-depth interviews are the most appropriate methods for this thesis. The contextual framework for the evolution of broadcasting is of great significance to this research. It was propositioned that political pluralism facilitated the evolution of broadcasting. Authoritarian regimes lack the political will to liberate the media, whilst democratic regimes promote media pluralism and freedom. Sierra Leone and other African countries such as Ghana, Nigeria, and South Africa are in a period of transition from authoritarianism to democracy, corollary to media transformation. According to Nwachuku (1999:28), the political trend in Africa is moving away from authoritarian regimes to multiparty democracy, which is having ripple effect on freedom of speech and the media.

4.1.2 Aims and Objectives

This chapter aims at studying the political history of Sierra Leone adjacent to the history of broadcasting to evaluate the relationship between politics and broadcasting. Sierra Leone has experienced two types of regimes in its political history, authoritarian and democratic rule. Authoritarian regimes are colonial rule, one party system, and military juntas. Democracy is associated with presidential and parliamentary elections and majority rule (Imobighe, 1999:79; Tanjong, 1999:305). This analysis is divided into three sections. The first section discusses the profile of the country to give an overview of the country’s political history, its people, geography, and socio-economic background. This background will assist the
comprehension of the more specific themes of this thesis such as the languages of broadcasting, the geographical distribution of media organisations and the political economy of broadcasting. The second section examines government media relationships in Africa aiming at giving a generic picture of media and politics. The third section evaluates the relationship between broadcasting and government in Sierra Leone. There will be an identification and analysis of major governments and their contributions to broadcasting. The aim is to show how politics affects media through policymaking. The analysis will spotlight the following within specific timeframes.

❖ 1808-1961  Broadcasting and Colonialism
❖ 1967-1985  Broadcasting and the All Peoples Congress (APC) Government (President Siaka Stevens)
❖ 1985-1992  Broadcasting and the APC Government (President Major-General Joseph Saidu Momoh)
❖ 1992-1996  Broadcasting and the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) Junta (Reintroduction of Democracy-SLPP)
❖ 1997-1998* Broadcasting and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) Junta (Political interregnum)
❖ 1996-2007  Broadcasting and the SLPP Government (Reinstated Democracy)
This is a primary investigation on the governments' role in the development of broadcasting through policies and legislations. A detailed critical analysis of policy documents will be done in the next chapter.

4.1.3 Theory and methods

The theoretical framework for this chapter is the Habermas's theory of the public sphere and the four theories of the press. Habermas contextualised the public sphere theory within the political transitional phase of Western Europe from authoritarian to constitutional rule; the anchorage was on media and democracy. Sierra Leone is at the transitional phase of authoritarianism to democracy. As an emergent democratic state, it needs the media to inform its citizens and to encourage diversity of opinion and public participation in politics. Sierra Leone is presently developing a media regulatory policy framework to liberalise broadcasting to give it its political independence and facilitate wider access and public participation. In this respect, the public sphere theory is very useful. The application of the four theories of the press focuses on the freedom of broadcasting from government control. The government controls and regulates the Sierra Leone broadcasting system through the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) is a state-controlled organisation; therefore, the political independence of broadcasting is a critical aspect of this thesis.

The data for this analysis are policy documents. The author selects policy documents that contribute to the development of a regulatory policy framework of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. Various governments commissioned the review of broadcasting leading to reports and policy recommendations proposed by experts in the field of communication. Relevant historical and policy documents relating to broadcasting
development will form part of this analysis. The following historical documents will be utilised:-

1. Findlay, J.W.O (1975) *Forty years of Broadcasting in Sierra Leone* Sierra Leone: Government Printing Department

The policy documents are itemised as follows: -


Other researchers such as Holmes (1999), Khumalo (1997), Negrine (1998), Seymour-Ure (1996) and Tsiang (1997) use policy documents to analyse media development in the UK, Sierra Leone, Botswana, and Zimbabwe.

### 4.2 Section 1 - The profile of the country

The profile of the country gives an overview of the country’s history, its people, geography, and socio-economic development. This background will aid the
comprehension of the more specific themes of this thesis, the type of governments, the problem of multilingualism and broadcasting, the geographical distribution of broadcast organisations and the economy of broadcasting. The political transformation in Sierra Leone from one-party state and military juntas to democracy created a platform for democratic institutional development such as the media. There is a link between the development of broadcasting and the political development of the country.

4.2.1 Geographical location

According to Alie (1990) and Fyle (1981), Sierra Leone has a land area of 27,925 sq miles or 73,326 km. It lies between 6° 55’ and 10° 0’ north and 10° 16’ and 13° 18’ west, bounded in the north and northeast by the Republic of Guinea, west and southwest by the Atlantic Ocean and east and southeast by the Republic of Liberia. It has three main relief-regions, the Freetown peninsula mountains, the lowlands and the highlands of the east and northeast. Alie (1990:1) says there are seven main river systems, evenly distributed over the country. They flow from the northeast to the southwest into the Atlantic Ocean. On the coastal and southern parts of the country, lies the tropical rain forest. The northern part of the coast is swampy. Towards the north of the country, there is a savannah mixed with farm bush. Fyle (1981:1) describes the two major seasons in Sierra Leone as the rainy and dry seasons. The dry season begins in November and ends in April. During this period, temperatures can rise as high as 32 degrees centigrade (90°F). In December and January is the harmattan, the cold, dry, and dusty wind from the Sahara Desert. The rainy season begins with rain and thunderstorms sweeping westwards across the country from the highlands, and ends with long periods of rain from May to September.
According to Alie (1990:4), the country derives its name from a Portuguese sailor, Pedro da Cintra, who called the Freetown peninsular mountains “Sierra Lyoa” (Lion Mountain) in 1462. Originally, the hinterland was not included; it was only referring to Freetown, the British colony for freed slaves in 1787 and the seat of colonial administration. In 1808, this colony became a British territory. In 1896, the colonial government declared a British protectorate over the hinterland; hence, the colony and the protectorate become one political entity named Sierra Leone. Alie (1990:14) and Fyle (1981:3) say the government divided the country administratively into three provinces and an area – north, east, south, and the western area. This area constitutes the Freetown peninsular and its environs. The provincial headquarter towns are as follows: Makeni for the north; Kenema for the east; and Bo for the south. The provinces are composed of 12 districts sub-divided into chiefdoms.
Fig. 4.1: The Map of Sierra Leone the political divisions of the country

4.2.2 Population, Ethnic groups and languages

The country has a population of approximately 5 million. It has 17 ethnic groups (Alie, 1990:6) or 16 ethnic groups (Fyle, 1981:3). The largest of these tribes is the Mende in the southern and eastern provinces. The second and third are Temne and Limba in the northern province, followed by the Kono in the eastern province. The other tribes are the Koranko, Yalunka, Loko, Soso, Mandingo, and Fula in the north. On the coastal north to south are the Bullom and Sherbro, followed by much smaller groups of Krim, Via, Gola, with the Kissi further in the eastern province. The western area has a mixed population, but it is the home of the Creole group. According to Alie (1990:6) and Fyle (1981:5), these tribal groups have three language categories, Mande, Mel and others. The Mende, Vai/Gallinas, Kono, Loko, Koranko, Soso, Yalunka, and Mandingo belong to the Mande classification. The Temne, Bullom/sherbro, Kissi, Gola, and Krim form part of the Mel group. The others are Limba, Fula, Creole, and Kru.
Fig. 4.2: Map of Sierra Leone Showing Ethnic Groups

4.2.3 The Economic and Social development in the country

Economically and socially, Sierra Leone has suffered a decline that spanned from the colonial period to over forty years of independence. According to the United Nations Human Development Reports (2002 & 2003), Sierra Leone is the least developed country in the world. The standard of living is low, the cost of living is high, and the illiteracy rate is high. The 2004 UN Human Development Report manifests the extent of poverty amongst the population, particularly in the rural areas. About four-fifths of the population is living in abject poverty. According to Human Development Report (2004), the infant mortality rate (IMR) is about 182/1000, while life expectancy at birth is about 38 years. In comparison in other countries in sub-Saharan Africa it is 45 years. National statistics estimated that the adult literacy rate is 30%, while the population with access to safe drinking water is about 34%. Health facilities are neither accessible nor affordable. However, the country has great potential and prospect for development; there are large deposits of mineral resources, large marine deposits and good climate and soil for agriculture.

The country is potentially rich but ironically, if not paradoxically, it is the poorest in the world. According to Alie (1990:266) and Fyle (1981:134), platinum, gold, diamonds, iron ore, chrome, bauxite, and rutile are the mineral resources in the country. Sierra Leone has the largest known reserves of rutile in the world. According to Fyle (1981:135), the mining industry was contributing 72% of the total exports in 1957, 1½ times the value of agricultural exports. Diamonds alone contributed 60% of the total mineral exports and 43% of all exports. Presently, diamonds are still the main foreign exchange earner in the country.
Sierra Leone is rich in natural resources such as good rainfall, fertile soil, fresh-water rivers, streams and swamps, all of which are very good base for agriculture but the country imports its staple food, rice, and almost all other foodstuffs. According to Alie (1990:268), the agriculture sector provides employment for about three-quarters of the adult population and provides about 20% of the country’s exports. He explains that the main cash crops are cocoa, coffee, palm kernels, ginger, and piassava, while the crops for domestic consumption are rice, cassava, millet, maize, and tobacco.
ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

AGRICULTURE AND FISHING
- Coffee
- Ginger
- Cocoa
- Piaassava
- Palm oil
- Livestock raising
- Main trawler area

MINING
- Iron
- Rutile
- Bauxite
- Diamonds

4.2.3.1 Social situation

The country has about 70% illiteracy. As part of its education reform, the government introduced a new system of education, the 6-3-3-4 system of education. The formal education consists of 16 years of schooling; six years of primary school, three years of junior secondary school, three years of senior secondary school, and four years of university education with emphasis on the nine years of basic education. The new education project aimed at moving away from a predominantly academic programme, which did not take the varied talents of the pupils, or the socio-economic needs of the country into account (Education policy document, 2000:6; IPRSP, 2001: 19; Tam-Baryoh, 2006).

In terms of health, Alie (1990:260) reports that in the 1960s, the government puts a national health plan into action. It called for a rapid expansion of medical services and training of ancillary staff. The government planned to improve the main hospitals in Freetown and Bo, and they were to serve as pilot hospitals for provincial areas; Government provided health centres for the chiefdoms. The country should make greater efforts to control communicable diseases and malaria and to intensify the immunisation of pregnant mothers, infants, and young children. It embarked on a rural water supply and sanitation schemes.

As Alie (1990:271) says the country’s socio-economic situation is deplorable. Unemployment is high and there is scarcity of foreign exchange. The efforts of the IMF to salvage the economy by de-linking the Leones from the British pound sterling and attaching it to IMF Special Drawing Rights in 1978 only made the situation worse. Until serious efforts are made to control mismanagement, smuggling and
corruption, the standard of living of the people will continue to deteriorate (Lappia, 2000; Tam-Baryoh, 2006).

4.2.4 Political History

Sierra Leone gained independence from the British on 27th April 1961. The constitution merged the colony and the protectorate into one single polity. In 1896, the colonial powers divided the territory into these two administrative units. The crown colony was the British seat of administration, while the government ruled the protectorate with the system known as 'Indirect Rule'. Sir Milton Margai, who was the leader of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP), became the first Prime Minister. He was also the first provincial medical officer, elected leader of government affairs and later Chief Minister under the British administration. Other parties in existence include the United Progressive Party (UPP), The National Council of Sierra Leone (NCSL), and the Sierra Leone Independence Movement (SLIM).

Wyse (1989) says Sierra Leone’s political problems started just before independence. The SLPP began to disintegrate because of personality conflict between the leader, Sir Milton Margai and his brother Albert, who appeared to be successfully challenging his brother’s leadership. Another dimension of the problem was the disgruntlement of the Northerners with the rule of the Southern dominated SLPP. According to Alie (1990) and Wyse (1989), the disgruntled members first collaborated under the joint leadership of Albert Margai and Siaka Stevens to form the Peoples National Party (PNP). Stevens joined the United National Front to Britain for independence in April 1960, but objected to Sierra Leone’s defence agreements with Britain. He came back and launched the ‘Elections before Independence movement’ in July 1960. Siaka Stevens break away from the PNP to form the All Peoples Congress (APC).
At the death of Sir Milton Margai, his brother Albert Margai succeeded him as Prime Minister but his deliberate attempt at tribalism and his efforts to impose a one-party republican state created widespread public disillusionment for the SLPP government. On 8th February 1967, just before the general election the government uncovered an alleged coup plot and arrested eight officers including Colonel John Bangura the Deputy Force Commander who was a Northerner. Alie (1990:233) says in the March 1967 election, political parties fiercely contested; however, the electoral commission wrongly informed the Governor General that the result of the poll was SLPP 32, APC 32, and independents 2, when the true results were SLPP 28, APC 32, and independents 6. He named Albert Margai as Prime Minister, which led to another coup by Brigadier Lansana. The National Revolution Council (NRC) took power and handed over to Siaka Stevens, leader of the All Peoples Congress (APC).

Wyse (1989) and Alie (1990) believe that Siaka Stevens’ government had to contend with serious problems in the first three years. There was a steep economic decline, inflation, scarcity of essential goods, the SLPP threat of a mercenary invasion, and the discontented elements in the army, which manifested itself in attempted coups. The government hanged Brigadier Bangura who attempted a coup in 1971, together with his collaborators. Since then, the Stevens government appeared to become more authoritarian. Alie, (1990) and Wyse (1989) say the government curtailed the freedom of expression, the press, and the freedom of speech. Siaka Stevens later introduced the one-party system of government to silence the opposition and despite the protests of many people declared a republic in April 1971, and elevated himself to executive president. Alie (1990) agrees that his 17-year rule was characterised by widespread corruption, over centralisation of power and bad governance.
Siaka Stevens handed over power to the then head of the army Major General Joseph Saidu Momoh. He came up with the philosophy of *Constructive Nationalism*, which means putting the interest of the country first. Momoh initiated some constitutional reforms but did not address the immediate problems of corruption, tribalism, and nepotism. In March 1991, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) lead by Corporal Foday Sankoh launched a rebellion in the country. According to the "*Footpath to Democracy: toward a New Sierra Leone*" (1995) published by the rebel movement, the rebel incursion was launched due to widespread corruption of the APC government and political over centralisation. "We can no longer leave the destiny of our country in the hands of a generation of crooked politicians and military adventurisms...It is our right and duty to change the present political system in the name of national salvation and liberation" (RUF Footpath, 1995:1). The war, which lasted for ten years was characterised as the most brutal in the world’s recent history (Sierra Leone News online, 2004).

27-year-old Captain Valentine Strasser overthrew Major General Joseph Saidu Momoh in 1992. He formed the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) government as the youngest head of state of the country. Captain Maada Bio later overthrew him in a palace coup, organised an election in 1996 and handed over power to Ahmed Tejan Kabbah under the SLPP ticket. The junior ranks of the army headed by Major Johnny Paul Koroma overthrew Kabbah in 1997. The military wing of the Economic Community of West African State (ECOMOG), the British forces and the United Nations Mission to Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) re-instated Tejan Kabbah in 1998 (Cole, 2004). All these developments were within the backdrop of several
ineffective peace talks and agreements including the Abidjan, Abuja and Conakry Peace Accords.

According to the National Recovery Plan (NRP, 2002:17) the damage caused by the civil war extended to the destruction of the social and physical infrastructure of the country. There was extensive burning of public buildings, factories, schools, hospitals, as well as private property particularly private houses both in urban and rural areas. The Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (IPRSP, 2001:26) states that there was a large-scale displacement of the population and hundreds of thousands refugees in neighbouring countries. Those that left the country included many highly trained professionals further depleting the limited number who had remained following the first exodus in the early 1980s as the country’s economic decline persisted.

The Transitional Support Strategy For Sierra Leone (2002:1-3) and the Sierra Leone Vision 2025 Document (2003) state that the successful implementation of the 1999 Lomé Peace Accord required the deployment of about seventeen thousand five hundred (17,500) United Nations Peace-keeping troops, which took over from the ECOWAS peace-keeping force (ECOMOG). The government and partners initiated a disarmament and demobilization programme to begin the restoration of authority and stability throughout the country (Maura et al., 1997). In September 2002, the United Nations Security Council agreed to a gradual phased withdrawal of the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) in line with the strengthening of the national security framework. Political stability has returned to the country with the restoration of constitutional rule and the rule of law. The government has instituted the United Nations sponsored Special Court to try all those who are
most responsible for crimes against humanity and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was working to reconcile the people (Special Court online, 2006). The new 1991 Constitution entrenched the fundamental rights of the citizens including freedom of speech. Chapter 111 Section 25 deals with the protection of freedom of expression and the press “...freedom to own, establish and operate any media for the dissemination of information, ideas and opinion...” the Constitution subjects this freedom to certain conditions such as authorisation and other regulations for the establishment of television and wireless.

The political history of Sierra Leone is characterised by instability, civil strife, military coups and economic decline. The role of the media was very significant in these developments. For example, all the military coups that have taken place seek legitimacy by using the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service. Broadcasting was also used as a propaganda tool by legitimate governments to explain government’s policies to the people.

4.3 Section 2 – Government/Media Relationship in Africa

The aim of this section is to demonstrate that politics can affect the development of the media through policymaking, which can have consequences for the industry. The focus is on the freedom or political independence of the media sphere from government control. Autocracy and democracy have divergent effects on media policymaking and regulations. This section is divided into four parts: types of governments in Africa; the role of politics in media transformation; media and autocracy and; media and democracy in Africa.
4.3.1 Types of governments in Africa

The opening of the public sphere of broadcasting depends on the type of government; authoritarian governments restrict the public sphere while democratic regimes open the public sphere. Tanjong (1999), Imobighe (1999), Maduka (1999) and Pinkney (1993) study the types of government prevalent in Africa which ranged from authoritarianism to emergent democracies. Studying democratic pluralism in West and Central Africa, Tanjong (1999:303-306) explores the types of governments and democracies in the 23 countries in the sub-region. He divides these into two broad categories, democratic and military regimes with three sub categories namely, democracies, authoritarian democracies, and quasi-democratic/military. He says some countries fit into what he describes as ‘emergent’ democracies; these countries conduct periodic elections for local/regional and national representatives, and institute democratic institutions. Tanjong (1999:304) states that authoritarian democracies are forms of autocratic regimes where there is violation of human rights, police state, and no separation of power amongst states organs and extreme concentration of power on the presidency. There is also the appearance of multiparty rule but in actuality, one party dominates that political scene. Quasi-military democracies start as military dictators and slowly change their leadership to civilian presidency and legitimise their power through elections. Military regimes leaders come into power through coups and most of the time they are reluctant to hand over power to civilian government (Tanjong, 1999).

Imobighe (1999) and Maduka (1999) were worried about authoritarian democracies practising undemocratic principles and values. Imobighe (1999:78-79) says that democracy is not only about elections but also serving the needs of the people in the
country. He defines the concept as government of the people, by the people and for the people. This means that democracy symbolises popular government with public participation and acclamation centred on the independent authority of the people. He says that the problem with democracy in Africa is that governments totally disregard the people centeredness of democracy. It is limited to the election of representatives who go into government to fend for themselves and not necessarily to carry out the will of the people. This means that African politicians seek political power for personal aggrandisement at the expense of democratic values.

Maduka (1999:207) describes democratic values to mean a whole range of freedoms which include freedom of speech and of the press, religion and political opinion, the rule of law, rule by majority which upholds the right of the minorities and treating people with equality and dignity, and public participation in the decision making process.

Pinkney (1993) and Street (2000) went further to classify democracy under five headings. This comprised the following - Radical, Guided, Liberal, Socialist, and Consociation Democracy. They argue that the closest type practised by African nations is guided democracy, which borders on authoritarianism. This type of democracy is associated with the repressive handling of the press by some democratically elected governments of Africa. This means that despite the introduction of democracy some African governments are still authoritarian by nature; they are oppressive to the press and discourage media pluralism.

### 4.3.2 The role of politics in media transformation

The main objective of this analysis is to show that change in broadcasting is not isolated from the political and socio-economic realities in a country. Governments and
politicians can affect change in the sphere of broadcasting through regulatory policymaking. McQuail (2000) says the political system negotiates and implements laws, regulations, and policies in every country relating to the media. These regulations guarantee rights and freedom and set obligations and limits even to the freest public media. In this light, he affirms that politicians decide the necessary changes. He concludes that broadcasting has generally abstained from open political involvement but cannot help being potential political player and should take care of its political relationships.

The type of political system in a country can greatly affect the development of the media. McQuail (2000) maintains that the social and political structure of the country affects the way the media develops through developing regulatory framework rather than the media shadowing the political system (Siebert et al., 1971).

4.3.3 Media and autocracy

Authoritarian regimes' restriction of the media relates to the authoritarian or soviet communist theories of the four theories of the press as presented by Siebert et al., (1971). At independence, most British colonies started with the Westminster type of government but later degenerated to authoritarianism. According to Imobighe (1999:82) during the transitional period to independence, colonial authorities introduced various forms of western representative democratic practice to African states. At independence, these African states adopted western democracies, principally multiparty models. He maintains that independent governments found these to be impracticable and they abandoned these political systems for the one-party type of governance. In Sierra Leone, Alie (1990:214-215) says at independence Sierra Leone was practising multiparty democracy with seven political parties in existence.
According to Cole (1995:22) the Westminster style of government was practised in the sense that the system of government and opposition worked reasonably well with the SLPP government respecting the rights and privileges of the APC opposition and the opposition demonstrating a reasonable sense of responsibility and willingness to participate in parliamentary democratic politics (Foray, 1988). Cole (1995:22) says democratic principles started to deteriorate when Albert Margai succeeded his brother as leader of the ruling SLPP government, which people considered as nepotism. He attempted to declare Sierra Leone as a one party republican state, which the APC opposition vehemently opposed. APC gained power in 1967 and repeated called for one-party politics. After the legislation of the one party constitution in parliament in and a national referendum, with a 98.7% in favour, Sierra Leone became a one-party state under the APC government of Siaka Stevens in June 1978. Imobighe (1999:77-79) says that one-party-ism degenerated into political personality cults and dictatorship. Authoritarianism succeeded in destroying democracy through muzzling of the press, erosion of the independence of the judiciary, human rights violations, and uncontrollable corruption.

Diamond (1988), Sotunmbi (1999) and Nyamnjoh (1999) enunciate on a number of reasons to explain the rise of authoritarianism in postcolonial Africa. According to Diamond (1988) these include political insecurity, ethnic division, weak political institutions, and low sense of nationhood, inadequate managerial and technical skills, extreme economic dependence, unfulfilled popular expectation and abuse of power. Nyamnjoh (1999:320) stresses that autocracies consider broadcasting as a government-owned propaganda machine. Sotunmbi (1999:214) says that given the authoritarian nature of the African political system national institutions such as
government-owned electronic media have very little autonomy even when they have formal independent status. He stresses that in most African countries broadcast organisations exist as statutory corporations but in practise, government interference was rampant. He maintains that where broadcasting operates within the Ministry of Information as in the Gambia and Sierra Leone there is no question of independence and impartial service.

Concluding his thesis on authoritarian regimes and the media, Tanjong (1999:312) says, “...in most countries of the region, the media seem to function principally to service the needs of the dictators........ it is therefore safe to say that media pluralism is an unattainable goal in authoritarian regimes. We might only expect that situation to change if the wind of democracy actually impacts on these regimes.” This means that in autocracy, the media is government controlled and there is the lack of media political independence. On the other hand, media pluralism and deregulation are possible with democratic change.

4.3.4 Media and Democracy

Democracy opens the media public sphere with independent regulation of the media and the encouragement of alternative opinion. The political trend for most African countries in the 1990s was the transformation of autocracies to democracies. According to Nwachuku (1999:289-290), this is evident in the number of African nations holding multiparty elections. He attributes this development to external and internal factors such as civil conflicts and IMF conditionality. Zakaria (1997) stresses that it is exigent for fledging democracies in Africa to embrace certain conditions that is relevant to the democratic process. He outlines two of the conditions as freedom of speech and freedom of the media (Nwachuku, 1999:289).
This political transformation has some positive implications for the media. Democratic regimes are making policies to deregulate media. According to Tanjong (1999:310), there was "...a spate of democratisation that pervaded the West and Central Africa resulting in a series of constitutional reforms in the sub-region. These reforms did not only affect the political landscape but also the media is recognised as a veritable instrument of democratic pluralism." Media pluralism has some positive effects on Africa’s ‘emergent’ democracies. Sotunmbi (1999:218) believes that the deregulation of broadcasting is a positive development as it is likely to progress freedom of expression and accountability. He cautions that the liberalisation of ownership of broadcast media might not necessarily lead to better democratic expression for the majority of the people.

4.4 Section 3 – Broadcasting-Government Relationship in Sierra Leone

The third section of analysis examines the relationship between broadcasting and the government in Sierra Leone, the government's broadcast policymaking and its impact on the industry. These governments are the colonial government, the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) government, the All Peoples Congress (APC) government, the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) military government, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) junta and the SLPP reinstated democratic government.
4.4.1 Broadcasting and Colonialism 1808 – 1961

The colonial administrators introduced broadcasting in Sierra Leone in 1932 but it was an authoritarian regime that limits the public sphere of broadcasting to government control and political information. Holmes (1999) says colonial powers created African broadcasting systems solely for receiving news and information from their homeland and denied Africans the opportunity to participate in broadcasting even though later development includes local content. This is cultural imperialism wherein the western media and countries inject their contents into the periphery countries thereby dominating the culture of weaker nations (Schiller, 1992; Sreberny, 2000). Colonial rule exhibited a strong form of authoritarianism. Holmes (1999:8) remarks that

It seems inevitable that the whole concept of colonialism, where one nation extends its control over another would carry over into the RRS in Freetown....it demonstrates how those in authority can use broadcasting to perpetuate their power and control over the people. The control of broadcasting, either by a colonial or African government, has always existed in Sierra Leone.

According to Head (1985:33), the British colonial authority was more inclined towards localising broadcasting and encouraged the preservation of local culture but at the early beginnings of broadcasting, it was entirely operated and administered by the British for the empire. However, this approach was by far better than the French system, which insisted that Africans should assimilate the French culture until independence.
According to Head (1985:33), the French and British colonial powers introduced broadcasting in Africa. The policies of adapting broadcasting to their colonies were different in the sense that the French government used radio principally as a means of disseminating the French culture. The British government on the other hand was more inclined towards localising the medium and encouraging the preservation of local culture. Holmes (1999: xxxvi) says the colonial powers exclusively created broadcasting for receiving news and information from their homeland. She argued that during the early days of broadcasting, colonial governments denied Africans the opportunities to actively participate in broadcasting or hear programmes about their own culture and in their languages. Holmes believes that these colonial governments developed the broadcasting system for the propagation of either the British or the French empire. Head (1985:33) says the World War 11 made it necessary for the British colonial power to embark on Africanization that is it had to communicate to Africans in their own languages in order to maintain the morale of African troops and their families. Holmes (1999:20) states that Ghanaian broadcasting was decades ahead of Sierra Leone in African languages and programmes because of the British governor Sir Arnold Hodson started the system in 1935 and was there until 1941 to oversee this objective. In Sierra Leone, the Public Relations officer Mathews showed little inclination to embrace Sierra Leone culture and its people. Head (1985:33) says the French tend to centralize broadcasting by installing regional stations to serve several colonies with a common signal and relying heavily on programmes originating from France. He gives the example of Algeria where French colonial power broadcasts only to the French colonists and the few Algerians who have adopted the French culture. No local materials were broadcast in television until independence. In Africa,
both the colonial masters and independent governments owned and controlled broadcasting, which they utilise for the dissemination of government information.

4.4.1.1 Wired Radio Service

According to Findlay (1975:3), Holmes (1999:8) and Head (1974: 104) the colonial authority set up Sierra Leone’s Rediffusion Relay Service (RRS) as one of the first broadcasting houses in British Africa. Sir Arnold Hudson the then British colonial governor of Sierra Leone introduced it after his first attempt in the Falkland Islands. A British radio Engineer F. W. Byron was responsible for the installation at the Military Barracks Tower Hill. Commenting on the technical make-up of the Rediffusion system Holmes (1999:9) says the system connects telephone lines to loudspeakers located in homes, restaurants, hospitals, in front of law courts, in community meeting places, hotels and other public places. Findlay (1975:6) states that during the early years of the service not many people had those boxes in their homes. The colonial government arranged to install loudspeakers in front of the Law Courts at Siaka Steven Street to broadcast very important news events relating to Britain such as the abdication of King Edward the VIII in 1936 relayed through the BBC. Holmes (1999:9) maintains that it was set up with the BBC Public Service Model but without its political independence. According to Graettinger (1977) and Head (1974: 104), subscribers pay installation fees and rental of loudspeakers and the government charged Freetown residents a fee based upon the applicant’s request for domestic or commercial use. License fees for home loudspeakers were $13 per year and $1.26 for each additional speaker. The cost to install a loudspeaker in a public establishment was $26.21. According to Holmes (1999:8), the Rediffusion Relay Service (RRS) was
under the management of the Railway Department, which operated it for the colonial government as an independent undertaking with its own separate budget. Taylor (1980:79) believes that this was probably the only time the service was a quasi-public corporation with its own funds. The service later lost its independent status and the government split it into two with the Post and Telegraph Department taking responsibility of the engineering and technical control while the Public Relations Department of the colonial administration took over local programming (Holmes, 1999).

The service outlived its usefulness by 1960 and it ended in 1963. According to Jones (1974),

The coverage of the Re-diffusion service embraced only Freetown until its demise in 1963. During its heydays of 29 years, it provided much needed information and entertainment for the Freetown Community. It became rather unreliable because of overloading, resulting in frequent breakdowns and silent boxes. Sometimes one had to give those boxes violent slaps, to make them squeak out some items of the news, which become suddenly inaudible (Findlay, 1975:29).

Findlay affirms that the service was vulnerable to climatic conditions resulting in frequent disturbances in transmission to the frustration of listeners. Members of the public also violated the system during periods of unrest (Holmes, 1999).
4.4.1.2 Frequency Broadcasting

According to Head (1974:104), wireless broadcasting started when the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) was inaugurated on Wednesday 19th October 1955 with the British Welfare Grant of £23,000 to establish a studio and the acquisition of a 5kw transmitter in Freetown. The government created SLBS as a civil service department under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. According to Palmer (1969:2) and Holmes (1999:67), in 1963, the government discontinued the RRS and organised a scheme to make radio available to listeners in Freetown and the Western Area. The public could buy radio on hire-purchase basis for a down payment of $2.40 plus a maintenance charge of $0.48 and a license fee of $2.40. The government spread payments over a period of 17 months and it extended this scheme to the provinces in 1966.

Holmes (1999:47) says the government established the Broadcasting Advisory Board with the Public Relations Officer as its Chairman that same year. Its function was to advise the government on plans for developing broadcasting in the country, monitor standards and professionalism, and develop an ethical code of conduct for broadcasters to account for public interest. The committee membership included the Director of Education, the Postmaster-General, a professor, one clergyman, one Muslim leader, a medical doctor, two women and other private citizens. A member of the Board and Professor emeritus Fourah Bay College Jones in Findlay (1975:23) says,

I was involved tenuously with broadcasting administration by serving as a member of the Broadcasting Advisory Board Committee. (What happened to that one?) I had hoped that this committee would have grown into a publicly
supported but independent corporation to provide free and fair broadcasting.

Perhaps this may yet come.

This means that the demise of the Advisory Board was a disappointment as it was the first step towards creating independent broadcasting in Sierra Leone. Findlay (1975:6) explains that from the start broadcasting had problems, which include inadequate staff and poor condition of service and lack of equipment. There were problems of lack of money and training, and government red tape. The colonial Development and Welfare Grant enabled it to start a basic gramophone library, studios, the purchase of an outside broadcast unit and engineering equipment. The organisation sent members of staff to the BBC and the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation at Lagos for training.

4.4.2 Broadcasting and the SLPP Government 1961 -1967

The Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) was the first independent government in Sierra Leone. It did not pass any legislation for broadcasting but continued broadcasting as structured by the colonial authority. Holmes (1999: xxxvi) says

> When scholars argued that Africa suffers from government-owned and controlled broadcasting systems, they fail to consider that initially, British colonial governors did little to push for public corporation systems similar to the BBC format, which operate outside government.

This means that the independent government inherited an authoritarian type of broadcasting system that was government-controlled.

One of the principal contributions of the SLPP Government was the introduction of a television service in Sierra Leone. Findlay (1974) states that the government did not develop radio sufficiently to cover the whole country before it embarked on this
ambitious project of introducing television, which he describes as 'an elitist medium accessible only to the rich'. Graettinger (1977) says the government hastily pushed to create a television service in Freetown as opposed to providing a vital national radio service that could serve the entire nation. The Minister of Information and Broadcasting inaugurated television in Freetown and its environs known as Sierra Leone Television in 1963. According to Head (1974:104) and Holmes (1999:72), television was set up as an independent service supported by the government under a consortium of management and training agreement with America's National Broadcasting Company (NBC), Radio Corporation of America (RCA) and Thompson Television (International) Ltd. The Foreign companies held 60% of the capital while Sierra Leone controlled the remaining 40%. The foreign companies acted primarily as purchasing agents abroad for spare parts and for syndicate programme materials. The first General Manager was Vance Hallack an American. Lengor (1980) remarks that the station was a pilot station covering the western area. Its monochrome signals were reaching viewers in almost two-thirds of the country that is the Moyamba district, Bonthe, parts of Bo, Tokolili, Bombali, Kambia and Port Loko.

To cater for the grassroots access to television Holmes (1999:73) says local officials provided community centres at Victoria Park, Brookfield Playing Ground, Cline Town Playing Field, Regent Community Centre, and the Connaught Hospital but they did not last long. She contends that the government purchased cheap quality equipment and within three months after inauguration, the TV service closed down until engineers came from the UK to solve the problem. Taylor (1980) discloses that in 1978 SLTV programmes for transmission were mostly cheap American imports. Out of five hours of broadcast time these programmes occupied four. The rest of the
time was devoted to news programmes, discussions, and local features that ranged from family planning programmes to variety shows on cultural and traditional dances.

4.4.3 Broadcasting and the APC Government – Siaka Stevens 1967-1985

Siaka Stevens and his All People’s Congress party (APC) took control of the government after the 1967 elections with its aftermath of coups and counter coups. It was an authoritarian government and rejected to open a public sphere of broadcasting as a PSB. During the Military rule of the National Revolutionary Council (NRC), the junta made the decision to merge the two services of radio and television. The merger did not prove effective and within a relatively short period, the administration of the two services reverted to separate operations. Later in 1974, the government merged the management again. There was great animosity between radio and television staff. Many of the television employees had been radio broadcasters who were enticed by lucrative salaries and the promise of better working conditions at the TV station. This created a vacuum at SLBS radio and a spirit of jealousy ensued (Holmes, 1999:77).

The APC Government introduced colour television in the country. According to Taylor (1980), the government introduced colour television transmission for the first time in 1979 but the cost of a television set was very high for the local people. There was a leasing system costing about $30 per month but this was also very expensive for the average person. Sierra Leone Television broadcasts on VHF channels two and seven both running the same programmes, later the government transformed channel seven to the colour scheme. The government completely funded television from the national consolidated funds. The Ministry of Post and Tele-communications was responsible for collecting the annual licenses fees of $20 but the Ministry did not
record any payment this shows that it did not pursue the fee collection robustly. Holmes (1999:85) and Palmer (1969:6) say that the introduction of television was premature and questioned the wisdom of continuing to support television when radio was the primary medium of communication. SLBS television collapsed in the midst of economic chaos and total electricity blackout throughout 1980 coupled with all its financial problems, lack of equipment and mismanagement.

In the interim, the government was trying to develop the broadcast industry. Rowe (1998:1) and Palmer (1969:2) recall that in 1969 the government realised that Sierra Leone had lagged behind other West African nations in the development of its broadcasting facilities. The government appointed a top-level Commonwealth Association Committee of broadcasting consultants to survey broadcasting and offer advice on how best to develop the service. According to Palmer (1969:8), one of the major recommendations of the CBA consultant Report was that SLBS should receive a corporate status. The government rejected this recommendation saying that the timing was 'premature'. This is indicative of an authoritarian regime, which seeks to own and control broadcasting. This will be one of the principal points of analysis to assess the implications of the government’s rejection of ‘setting up an independent public corporation in place of the existing government broadcasting department’ (Head, 1974:105) as revealed in the government’s white paper.

According to Findlay (1973 & 1972), the SLBS offered 16 hours of radio broadcast a day with a short break between 10.00 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. About 60 to 70% of the programmes were in English that is the official language of the country. Other national languages such as Krio, Limba, Mende and Temne occupied the rest of the broadcast time though weekly news summaries in nine of the local languages are also
The station also has four 20-minute school broadcasts scheduled on weekdays during school term. An unusual feature of the Sierra Leone radio programming was the rebroadcast of daily news from BBC, VOA and Radio Moscow. The government attempted to improve the infrastructure of SLBS. According to Holmes (1999), the government entered into negotiations with the Swiss Electronic Firm of Brown Boveri to construct and install a 250-kilowatt short-wave transmitting station with enough power to cover the whole country and beyond. It inaugurated the station in Waterloo on 15th October 1974 and later sold the station in 1982 because of lack of maintenance culture. Rowe (1998) states that in connection with the 1980 conference of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in Freetown the government in co-operation with a German Agency (GTZ) embarked on an ambitious television development programme including the acquisition of new outside broadcasting equipment. These equipments break down in less than a year due to lack of maintenance and spare parts. The government abandoned the project to construct a large broadcasting facility at New England due to inadequate funds in 1984.

4.4.4 Broadcasting and APC Government - Joseph Saidu Momoh 1985 - 1992

Joseph Saidu Momoh’s tenure of presidency was from 28th November 1985 to 29th April 1992. This government started the process of political transformation to democracy which facilitated the development of the public sphere of broadcasting. Momoh was a professional soldier who rose from the enlisted ranks to the highest position in the Sierra Leone Military Forces Major-General. He succeeded President Siaka Stevens as the sole candidate in a one-party election under the auspices of the All Peoples Congress (APC) (Alie, 1990:246). Tucker (1991:4) says that under the
presidency of Momoh the country embarked on some constitutional reforms, which had positive implications for the media. He sets up a National Constitutional Review Commission to review the 1978 One Party Constitution. The mandate of the commission was to review the constitution with a view to broadening the existing political process by enhancing a fairer participation of the citizens and to guaranteeing fundamental human rights, freedom and the rule of law. Tucker (1991:1) who was the chair of the Constitutional Reform Committee says, “One of the most powerful arguments that weighed most with the commission in favour of political pluralism was that it was the best way of guaranteeing the fundamental human rights of the citizens and the freedoms of association, the press and political opinion.” He stresses that it was the best way of ensuring the broadest participation of the citizens of Sierra Leone in political pluralism, which will facilitate media pluralism and freedom.

The Constitutional Committee recommend the institution of the new 1991 Multiparty Constitution of Sierra Leone. This new constitution removed all references to one-party and made provision for the unrestrictive registration of political parties and provision for presidential and parliamentary elections (Tucker, 1991). This constitutional reform was part of the fulfilment of conditionality imposed by western donor countries to support developing countries. Cohen (1990) states that the western governments were only providing assistance to countries which were strengthening democratic institutions and values such as accountability and transparency, free press, an independent judiciary and rule of law (Tucker, 1991:6).

Chapter 11 section 25 of the 1991 Sierra Leone Constitution makes provision for the protection of Freedom of Expression and the Press. According to the constitution, “...no person shall be hindered in the enjoyment of his freedom of expression
and...freedom to own, establish, and operate any medium for the dissemination of
information, ideas and opinions...” This freedom to established broadcasting is
subject to executive authorisation. The government can curtail freedom of the press in
the interests of defence, public safety, public order, and individual freedom.

In terms of development the APC regime under the leadership of Momoh did not
make any significant change to broadcasting. The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service
(SLBS) was still government-owned that is it was under the supervision of the
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting as a department of government. In 1985 the
Canadian Broadcasting Corporation engineer Graves was seconded to UNESCO as a
broadcasting consultant to SLBS to advise and assist on technical matters. Graves
says the broadcasting system was in a state of collapse, buildings were in dilapidation,
standby generators were not working, there was scarcity of electricity supply,
equipment, and other facilities were in disrepair. Holmes (1999:152) describes the
station as ‘an ineffective shell of a radio system’. The SLBS broadcasters were unable
to perform their duties because of financial and logistical constraints; there was
chronic short supply of electricity, fuel, spare parts, and frequent transmitter failures
that made it extremely difficult for SLBS to transmit. It was only covering Freetown
the capital city and its environs, and television was completely off the air. The
government started to register private FM commercial stations under the Ministry of
information and Broadcasting; there was no change in the regulatory framework.
According to Holmes (1999:52), the government registered the Atlantic Broadcasting
Corporation (ABC) FM 94 as the first commercial and privately owned by
individuals. The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) started its rebellion in March
1991 and the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) over threw the APC government in 1992.

4.4.5 Broadcasting and the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) Government 1992-1996

The National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) led by 27-year-old Captain Valentine Strasser overthrew the APC Government in April 29 1992. These young military officers came to Freetown to complain about logistical supply and poor condition of service in the war front but they ended up overthrowing the government. Holmes (1999:145) says a group of junior officers fed-up with low pay and poor conditions staged a bloodless coup against the bankrupt regime of president Momoh. Troops loyal to Momoh put up some resistance and tried to explain the government’s position on the government-owned SLBS but the military officers captured ABC FM 94 and announced the takeover.

The major achievement of the NPRC government in the media was that it facilitated the technological development of broadcasting. According to Head (1974:8), African domestic broadcasting systems depended on shortwave signals, which are subject to ionosphere interference. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and broadcasting experts believe that the solution to Africa’s problem of radio broadcast was the adoption of the Frequency Modulation (FM) broadcast. Holmes (1999:154) says that the NPRC government applied to the International Frequency Registration Board of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) for 42 FM radio frequencies. The Board approved the application; the government was to distribute the frequencies, six each for Freetown, Kabala, Kenema, Lunsar, Makeni, Moyamba, and
Sefadu. This technological development was utilised by both the public and private sectors.

In 1992, the government seeks to re-establish broadcasting service from the national broadcaster SLBS. It established FM 99.9, a popular commercial service for Freetown with limited coverage in the rural areas. The government launched the station under a questionable government-private agreement. According to Kamara (1992), shareholding in the station was split between a foreign firm and local individuals and the state was not benefiting from the shares even though the radio station was using state personnel, equipment and finance (Holmes, 1999:153). In 1993, the government restored television service at a considerable cost after ten years of hiatus. The government and the Hong Kong based Lorens Sebo Holdings Ltd. launched a 1000 watts colour TV UHF/PAL television station in Freetown to restart the service (Holmes, 1999:154).

According to Holmes (1999:154) it was in 1993, the military junta opened the 'floodgates' for the development and proliferation of FM stations in Sierra Leone. The government through the Ministry of Information and broadcasting registered four local FM/AM stations, established by religious organisations and community-based private individuals. It also registered international rebroadcast stations, Radio France International (RFI) FM 89.9 and BBC FM 96 radio stations. Chapter 6 will give a more detailed analysis of this media evolution in Sierra Leone.

The NPRC government was anxious to develop broadcasting to improve communication during the war but it was unwilling to give independence to broadcasting. According to Holmes (1999: 154-55), the military junta knew the importance of radio communication. She says, “The young military government
realised the importance of setting FM systems around the nation not only for national projects but also to reach the masses in occupied areas controlled by rebel forces.”

The war in Sierra Leone was one of the main causes why the government decided to open the airwaves. The SLBS was ineffective and could not reach the vast majority of the people registering FM stations assist the government to bridge this information gap.

The Wesleyan Church of Sierra Leone in partnership with the American Wesleyan Church opened an AM/FM station in Makeni in the northern region. Warring factions burned down the station during the war but later re-established itself as Radio Mankneh. Grace International set up FM 93 another Christian religious station in Freetown now known Believers Broadcasting Network (BBN). The military government also gave Andrew Kromah permission to set up KISS 104 in Bo south of Sierra Leone and SKYY FM 106 as a commercial wing to the Bo station. There was also the Al-Quran Al-Karim broadcasting station at Waterloo. A group of young Muslims from Kuwait privately owned and operated the Al-Quran Al-Karim broadcasting station at Waterloo near Freetown. They purchase the 250kW shortwave transmitter from the government in 1988. The government had stopped operating the stations due to shortage of spare parts and high cost of fuel for generators. According to Graves (1985), the transmitter and the associated antenna system were not performing as domestic service but as an external service, which could be heard in other West African countries but not in many parts of Sierra Leone. He suggests that the antenna system be modified to enable it to perform as a domestic national service with coverage to the entire country (Holmes, 1999:135). The rebel forces destroyed the transmitter during the 10-year civil war.
The military government was determined to play an active role in broadcast development in Sierra Leone. According to Strasser-King (1995:1), in December 1995 the government organised a workshop on developing a National Broadcasting Policy for Sierra Leone. The main recommendation was for the government to withdraw from controlling and operating the broadcast media. The government did not respond to this recommendation before a palace coup took place. According to Cole (1995:9), the Deputy Chairman of the NPRC Captain Maada Bio overthrew the head of state. He later organised a democratic election which brought the SLPP government to power in 1996 but in less than a year the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) junta led by Major Johnny Paul Koroma overthrew the government to the chagrin of both the national and international community.


The AFRC government was very unpopular with the people of Sierra Leone and the international community. This was because after three decades of authoritarian rule a democratic election was organised in the midst of the war. Sierra Leone installed its democratic government in power in 1996 but the junior ranks of the military forces overthrew the government in 1997. The people refused to recognise the government and declared nationwide civil disobedience and the international community demanded the junta hand over power (Cole, 2004; Tam-Baryoh, 2003).

The AFRC says that one of the reasons for overthrowing the government was the introduction of the Newspaper and Media Practitioners Acts 1997 to curtail press freedom. This Act (1997) was an attempt by the democratically elected government to legislate for the regulation of the print and electronic media in Sierra Leone. It would
have established a Press Council, which would have been responsible for the licensing and regulation of the media. It stipulated levels of qualifications for editors and media practitioners and code of conduct proposed by the government for all media practitioners. According to the media Practitioners Act (1997 second schedule 2&3), a media practitioner owes a duty to the state, to maintain its integrity and they [media practitioners] should maintain a respectful attitude towards the head of state, parliament and the judiciary. This means that the act prioritized the state and respect for political authorities over individual rights and the freedom of the press. It was suspected that the educational requirement for practicing journalist was to eliminate those with dissenting voice as most of the senior journalists were experienced but lacked educational qualification. It was widely believed that the renewable Journalist Practicing Certificate was to create loopholes to muzzle the press, meaning that the license of media practitioners critical of the government would not be renewed. Parliament enacted the Bill but it failed to receive the Presidential Assent because of strong public opposition. According to Cole (2004), the 1997 Newspaper Act was a cause for concern but not a sufficient reason for the military to takeover the democratically elected government.

According to Maura et al. (1997), when the AFRC saw that it was losing legitimacy, it captured the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) and used it as a propaganda machine. When the exiled democratic government realised the fierceness of AFRC propaganda it appealed to the British government and the American government for a radio transmitter to counter the AFRC propaganda. The government installed the transmitter of FM 98.1 at the West African Peace Keeping Forces ECOMOG base,
which was militarily fighting for the re-instatement of the elected government. This was the time warring factions used radio as a war propaganda instrument.

Rowe (1998) says the pro-government station was a clandestine station pioneered by a drama lecturer at the University of Sierra Leone Julius Spencer who later was appointed as the Minister of Information and Broadcasting. The exiled government called the Station SLBS 98.1 but later changed it to Society of Radio Democracy 98.1. It was very effective in its propaganda campaign and played a great role in the re-installation of the exiled democratic government. After all negotiations failed, the ECOMOG ousted the AFRC junta and re-instated the SLPP Government in 1998. The United Nation Peace keeping Forces and the British Forces assisted in consolidating this effort.


Broadcasting played a significant role in the reinstatement of the exiled government therefore it could be posited that the 10 years of civil conflict in Sierra Leone ended on the airwaves as pro-government and the pro-junta stations battled to win the propaganda war. At the end of the day, the pro-government station won the propaganda war. The government with the support of the international community was able to restore relative peace in the country. The broadcasters too had a price to pay and award to win for their participation. Those whom the government considered as pro-junta broadcasters were subject to a series of investigations. The government charged some of the senior staff at the SLBS including the Director General with sedition. The government appointed broadcasters on the pro-government side as ministers of government (Tam-Baryoh, 2006).
The democratic government institutionalised media pluralism to create greater access of the broadcast media to the majority of the population and encourage public participation in the media. According to Rowe (1998:2), the government commissioned the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and a Sierra Leonean Consultant Rowe to draft a Media and Communication Policy for Sierra Leone. Rowe's report (1998:10) recommends that the government should create the Independent Media Council to regulate the media in Sierra Leone. This institution would be responsible for promoting media pluralism. On the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service, the report was negative, it states that it was not a 'priority' to incorporate SLBS as PSB but it encourages the decentralisation of the SLBS by suggesting the creation of regional stations.

The government accepted the key recommendations of the report by enacting the Independent Media Commission (IMC) Act 2000, which brought into legal existence the IMC to regulate and promote media pluralism. To this end the commission has registered a number of community radio stations and developed a code of conduct for professionalism and programme diversity. According to a DfID Radio project Document at the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (1991:1), the government has also set up five regional radio stations in each of the headquarter towns in Sierra Leone; Bo, the second capital, and also the headquarters of the south, Kenema the headquarters of the east, and Makeni, headquarters of the north. Kono the diamond-mining district and Kailahun that was headquartering the rebel movement also have regional stations. This is part of the decentralisation of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service.
The government handed over the SLBS to the National Commission for Privatisation (NCP). The Commission in consultation with the IMC, DfID and UNDP organised a series of workshops on the privatisation and/or incorporation of the SLBS. These workshops recommended the incorporation of the SLBS as PSB (NCP Document, 2003). The NCP handed over the stations to the Transitional Management Team (TMT) for a period of 18 months to map out modalities for its eventual incorporation (TMT Document, 2005:1).

The government is making efforts to liberalise the broadcast media but there is room for improvement for press freedom in the country. The government is yet to repeal the 1965 Public Order Act that makes provision for the criminalisation of journalists practising their profession (Cole, 2004; Tam-Baryoh, 2006). The act gives the government power to declare a state of emergency; libel and defamation are criminal offences.

4.5 Summary

A principal argument of this thesis is to show that the government can affect broadcasting through regulatory policymaking. Authoritarian regimes are restrictive to media freedom while democratic regimes are encouraging media pluralism. This chapter was divided into three sections: the profile of the country; the media and politics in Africa; and government-broadcasting relationship in Sierra Leone. Habermas’s theory of the public sphere and the four theories of the press were employed to explain the subject matter of this chapter. The data for analysis was policy documents.
The profile of the country addresses the political history, the economic and social situation of the country as main points of analysis. This background aided the comprehension of the more specific themes of this thesis such as the type of governments, the problem of multilingualism and the geographical distribution of broadcast organisations, political instability and the economy of broadcasting. Alie (1990), Fyle (1981) and Wyse (1989) affirm that Sierra Leone is a potentially rich country yet it is the poorest in the world (UNPD Report, 2004). It has a reservoir of languages with 17 ethic groups that is affecting the languages used in broadcasting. The political instability lasted for about four decades later political pluralism enhanced the political and economic stability, which facilitated media pluralism (Rowe, 1998; Strasser-king, 1995).

Media and politics in Africa demonstrate that the relationship between politics and broadcasting in Sierra Leone is comparable to other African states. It was pointed out that politics indeed affect the development of the media through government regulatory policymaking. Authoritarian regimes such as one-party system and military rule seek to own and control the media whilst democratic regimes like the SLPP government in Africa promote media pluralism and free press (Imobighe, 1999; Tanjong, 1999).

Government-broadcasting relationships in Sierra Leone aimed at illustrating the type of governments and their relationships with the media through regulatory policymaking in Sierra Leone. The chapter analyses all the major governments in Sierra Leone to assess their contributions to developing a broadcast policy framework. Authoritarian regimes rejected recommendations for broadcast media pluralism (Palmer, 1969; Warritay, 2001) while democratic regimes accepted recommendations
for broadcast media pluralism. This discussion will be expanded in the next chapter
by providing an in-depth study of the regulatory policy documents referred to in this
chapter.
Chapter 5

Developing a Broadcasting Policy Framework for Sierra Leone

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter analyses the political and broadcasting history of Sierra Leone. It specifically examined politics and the media in Africa, the profile of Sierra Leone and the government-broadcasting relationship in the country. This chapter aims at analysing the various policy documents as the trajectory to change in the Sierra Leone broadcasting landscape. The recommendations of these documents contribute to the transformation of the broadcast industry and the public sphere. Governments have been attempting to develop a broadcasting policy framework (Rowe, 1998; Holmes, 1999). This chapter attempts to answer the questions how and why broadcasting transformed from monopoly to pluralism. These policy documents will also reveal the process of transformation of the SLBS from government-owned to public service broadcasting. This attempt is in conjunction with the main intentions of this thesis that is to investigate the evolution of broadcasting in Sierra Leone.

In 1969, the All Peoples Congress Party government (APC) invited a Committee of Broadcasting Consultants through the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association to conduct a comprehensive study of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service and make recommendations for its development (Palmer, 1969:1). In 1995, the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) military junta organised a three-day workshop on the National Broadcasting Policy for Sierra Leone (Strasser-King, 1995:1). In 1997, the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) government requested the study on the Rehabilitation Needs of the Communications and Information Media. The United Nations Development Programme UNDP and UNESCO conducted the study together
with local experts (Maura et al., 1997:1). In 1998, the SLPP government also requested the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to develop an Information and Communication Policy for Sierra Leone (Rowe, 1998: i-ii). The same government commissioned the KPMG to propose on the Restructuring and Reorganisation of the SLBS in 2000. The recommendations of these policy documents contribute towards developing a national broadcasting policy framework in Sierra Leone. These are the most important regulatory policy documents that account for change in broadcasting during independence. These policy documents are part of the national archives of Sierra Leone broadcasting they are:

1. The 1969 Commonwealth Broadcasting Association Committee of Consultant (CBA) Report
3. Report of a study on the rehabilitation needs of the communications and information media, Sierra Leone (UNDP/UNESCO 1997)
4. Report on The Information and Communication Policy for Sierra Leone 1998
5. Restructuring and Organisation of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service 2000

5.1.2 Method

The author spends three months in Sierra Leone to locate these policy documents and the criterion for selection was policy documents’ contributions to the broadcasting regulatory policy framework in the country. The recommendations of these documents shaped the present broadcasting policy framework in the country (Maura et al., 1997; Rowe, 1998; Strasser-King, 1995).
Palmer (1969) recommends for the change of status of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service from government control to PSB. This means that the 1969 Commonwealth Broadcasting Association Committee of Consultant (CBA) Report significantly contributed to the development of broadcasting. Rowe (1998) and Strasser-King (1995) recommend for the institutionalisation of media pluralism through the legislation of an independent regulatory agency therefore, the reports on the 1995 national workshop on a National Broadcasting Policy of Sierra Leone and the Information and Communication Policy for Sierra Leone 1998 contributed to develop a regulatory framework of the media. The KPMG Report on the Restructuring and Organisation of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service 2000 document also contributed to the development of broadcasting training and professionalism.

The authenticity and credibility of these documents rest in the fact that local and international experts in mass communications proposed the recommendations on these documents. The Sierra Leone government commissioned these experts with the responsibility to examine the broadcasting industry and come up with recommendations for its improvement. The author identifies all of these documents during the fieldwork in various institutions such as the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, the SLBS, IMC, NCP, the Government Bookshop, Government Printing Department and Public and University libraries.

The originality of this work is that some of the documents are original documents appreciated for the first time at this level. Those documents that have already been discussed by scholars like Holmes (1999) will be revisited and re-interpreted in the light of new information partial to the objectives of this thesis. Holmes (1999)
examines the history of these documents but this research evaluates the politics of these documents.

5.1.3 Theories

The Habermas's theory of the public sphere is the main theory for this analysis. The government and communication experts in Sierra Leone are presently developing a regulatory policy framework to regulate broadcasting independent from government control. The development of a broadcasting policy framework in Sierra Leone aims at the institutionalisation of media pluralism as a major part of this analysis. The introduction of broadcast pluralism improves access, variety, political independence, and public participation in broadcasting. The policy framework seeks to transform the SLBS to public service institution. According to Nguru (1986), the policy of the broadcasting is to educate, inform and entertain. Most former British African colonies such as Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria and Gambia have adopted the same public service tradition with strong political influence.

The four theories of the press is utilised to explain the undertone of the independence or freedom of broadcasting from government control. White (1999) speaks about the libertarian tradition of the free media, the social responsibility, and public service tradition, the national sovereignty and democratisation and the current tradition of deregulation and pluralism. The political economy approach examines policy documents' suggestions for the sources of income for both government and private stations.
5.2 Main characteristics of policy documents

This analysis focuses on the main features, the origin, recommendations, and governments' response to these policy documents. These elements worked towards developing a broadcasting policy framework in Sierra Leone. The analysis of these documents is divided into three parts - the origin, recommendations and government response. (1) The origin of these policy documents is very important to ascertain credibility and authenticity. (2) The recommendations will be sub divided into two sections (a) the change of status of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service to PSB focusing on the expansion, funding, professionalism and management structure of the SLBS and (b) the recommendations on broadcast pluralism from government monopoly to a multiplicity of channels and diversity of programmes. (3) The government's response to the recommendations is a contributory factor to change in the landscape of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. These responses could be negative, positive, or non-response. This table represents this analysis.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Documents/ Government</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>Government Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Status of the SLBS</td>
<td>Pluralism</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
| 1969 CBA consultants report (APC government) | (1) To incorporate SLBS as PSB  
(2) Central Expansion of the SLBS  
(3) Standards and professionalism  
(4) Funding | Negative – premature for SLBS to be a PSB |
| 1995 Report on Workshop on Broadcasting policy (NPRC government) | (1) Partial or complete withdrawal of government control on the SLBS  
(2) Standards and professionalism  
(3) Funding | National Broadcasting Authority to regulate broadcasting for pluralism  
Non-Response: - the government did not react to the proposal |
| 1997 Rehabilitation report (SLPP government) | (1) To incorporate SLBS as PSB  
(2) Decentralised expansion of SLBS  
(3) Standards and Professionalism  
(4) Funding  
(5) Other Media | Supports media pluralism  
Rehabilitation on-going |
| 1998 Rowe Report (SLPP government) | (1) Incorporation of SLBS not a priority  
(2) Decentralised expansion of SLBS to regional stations  
(3) Other media | Independent Media Council to regulate pluralism  
Positive response of the government on Pluralism - set up the IMC  
Negative on SLBS - ‘Not a Priority’ |
| 2000 KPMG Report (SLPP government) | (1) Improve the Management structure of the SLBS – commercial orientation  
(2) Standards and professionalism | Non-Response |

5.2.1 Origin of policy documents


The origin of the documents is evaluated within the political and economic context of Sierra Leone. The APC government commissioned the 1969 Committee of Consultant Report three years after it won the 1967 general election. Cole (1995:25) says few hours after Siaka Stevens was sworn-in a Prime Minister the head of the army Brigadier David Lansana declared martial law and proclaimed that the military had overthrown the government. Twenty-four hours later junior officers of the army, the National Reformation Council (NRC) ousted him. On 18 April 1968 there was a counter-coup by the non-commissioned officers of the army. A week later the Governor General invited Siaka Steven to reassume the office of the Prime Minister. The re-appointment of Stevens as prime minister and the APC party brought new hopes for progress and democracy but the hope was short lived when the APC declared Sierra Leone a one party republican state in 1978. Cole (1995:30) concludes, “With the opposition extinct, and through the use of the state of emergency laws and other authoritarian measures to suppress dissidents, Stevens weathered several storms. Consequently upon these factors the socio-political climate was characterized by political and economic stagnation...”
Holmes (1999; 144) says the economic malaise afflicting the country was attributed to Stevens who was seen as corrupt, manipulated by a small group of Lebanese businessmen who monopolized the country's export and foreign exchange. Economists laid part of the blame at the world market with its unfavorable terms of trade, robbing Sierra Leone of respectable prices for its coffee, palm kernels, cocoa and cassava. In addition, the revenue from diamonds the main export commodity plummeted as smuggling increased unchecked. President Momoh (1985) stated the economic challenges that faced his administration these are scarcity of fuel, limited availability of drugs in the hospitals, shortage of rice the staple food, frequent electricity power cut, inadequate transportation, the malpractices of smuggling, tax evasion, profiteering and hoarding of vital commodity, black-marketeering and poverty (Alie, 1990:288-289). The 1969 committee of consultant report was conducted in this political and economic climate.

The National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) organised the 1995 workshop on the national policy for broadcasting three years after it overthrew the APC government of the Joseph Saidu Momoh and four years into the civil conflict in Sierra Leone. Captain Valentine Strasser says Sierra Leone has been misruled for the over twenty-three years by an oppressive, corrupt and exploitative regime, which has brought permanent poverty and deplorable life for most Sierra Leoneans (West Africa, May 11 1992 in Cole, 1995; 32). According to Holmes (1999:145), the NPRC sets itself a dual task to end the war and return the country to multiparty democracy. In his address on the second anniversary of the NPRC Revolution, Strasser (1994:1) says the year had witnessed some progress and setbacks on the rebel war. The government captured all major towns in the rebel held territories and the army was
controlling border towns to Liberia but by the end to the year, the rebel forces re-
captured all major towns and were about to take Freetown the capital city. The NPRC
government hired the services of the Executive Outcome, a South African military
group which ‘helped turn the tide of the war back to the army’s favour’ (Holmes,
1999:146). With regards to returning the country back to civil rule, the NPRC
government formally invited James Jonah the under secretary for Political Affairs for
Africa, the Middle East and Global Election Monitoring at the UN to return home
and facilitated the transition from military rule to multiparty democracy as chairman
of the Interim Electoral Commission (INEC). In an astonishing political maneuver,
the deputy chair of the NPRC Maada Bio, in a palace coup, overthrew Strasser. On
the 26th and 27th of February 1996, the INEC organized a presidential and
parliamentary election, which Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and the SLPP party won. The
Revolutionary United Front RUF made several attempts but failed to disrupt the
election.

During the reign of the NPRC, the economy was non-functional, the RUF had
captured all the diamondiferous areas in the country and the war disrupted all
agricultural activities. Strasser (1994:1) says the disruption of economic activities in
the potentially rich agricultural and diamondiferous regions of the country, has
deprived the country of much needed revenue from the export of cocoa, coffee and
diamonds for nearly three years. He says the government was pursuing the
IMF/World Bank programme of economic stabilization and reconstruction to improve
the standard of living of the people. The 1995 national broadcasting policy workshop
was organised in this economic and political climate.
The Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) government commissioned the rest of the policy documents at the re-introduction of democracy and towards the end of the ten-year-old civil conflict. The policy documents are the Report of the study of the Rehabilitation Needs of the Communication and Information Media in Sierra Leone (Maura et al 1987), the National Media and Communication Policy Document (Rowe, 1989), the 2000 KPMG Report on SLBS Reorganisation. According to Holmes (1999:147), the government conducted the 1996 election in the midst of the war but it gave Sierra Leoneans the first chance in nearly 30 years to engage in the democratic process. Rebel forces disrupted voting by attacks in Freetown, Bo in the south and Kenema in the east and they killed 27 people. Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, the leader of the SLPP party won the most votes in the presidential elections but was not enough for an outright victory. The United National people's party (UNPP) led by John Karefa-Smart came second and the People's Democratic Party (PDP) took the third place. In the parliamentary election, the SLPP took 36.1% of the vote, UNPP 21% and PDP came third with 15.3%. The presidential run-off election was between Ahmed Tejan Kabbah SLPP and John Karefa-Smart UNPP and the SLPP leader won. Holmes (1999:150) says one year into civilian rule the Armed forces Revolutionary Council (ARFC) led by Johnny Paul Koroma staged a military coup which forced Kabbah to take refugee in the neighboring country of Guinea. The international community opposed the coup and demanded that the country be returned to civilian rule. The exiled government set up FM 98.1 as a pro-democracy radio station to counteract SLBS junta-run broadcasts. On February 14 1998, the Nigerian led ECOMOG troops captured Freetown, overthrew the AFRC and restored democratic rule. On the 10th of
March, Kabbah returned and was re-instated. Kabbah gave 70% credit to 98.1 FM for the efforts made for the restoration of democracy and constitutional rule (Rowe, 1998)

In terms of its economic climate after the war, (Dauda, 2002:15) says it is estimated that real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth will reach 6.6 percent in 2002 up from 5.4 percent in 2001. Government estimates agricultural output to have grown by 6.0 percent, facilitated by the return of the displaced people to their rural communities and the provision of agricultural tools, and planting materials. Similarly, mining and manufacturing output will grow by about 6.6 percent and 6.0 percent, respectively in 2002. Growth in the services sector is estimated at 4.0 percent. Flynn and Manson (2007) say in the five years since the end of its 10-year civil war, Sierra Leone's economy has recovered painfully slowly. Mining companies, the main foreign investors, are producing rutile and diamonds in the interior but Sierra Leone's diverse mineral reserves remain largely untapped. The country's $1.5 billion economy grew by 7% in 2006 but it needs much faster expansion to recuperate from a war that slashed two-thirds off its value. With unemployment at 60 percent, most Sierra Leoneans earn under $1 a day. Foreign executives in Sierra Leone complained about onerous taxes and endemic corruption. Anti-graft watchdog Transparency International ranked Sierra Leone as 14th most corrupt in the world in 2006. The cancellation of $1.6 billion of Sierra Leone's foreign debt late last year gave the government some breathing space, but it still relies on aid for much of its budget. 90% of commercial enterprises used to be run by the Lebanese, now it is less than 60% (Reuters Africa online, 2007). The policy documents will be assessed presently to point out their significance to broadcasting development in the country.
5.2.1.1 The 1969 Committee of Broadcasting (Commonwealth Broadcasting Association) Report

According to Palmer (1969:1-2), the study aims at evaluating the shortcomings of the SLBS and to suggest improvements that will transform SLBS from government service to PSB. The government believes that broadcasting in Sierra Leone is lagging behind its contemporaries in other African states and this study will help redirect its course. The consultants were Hugh Palmer from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation as the chair, Tom Chalmers from the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and Bill Coleman from the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC).

At the end of its investigation the Committee of Broadcasting consultants recommended that.

1. Television and radio services be merged;
2. The government incorporate school broadcasting into the system
3. A public corporation be created and the proposed construction of a Broadcasting House should begin with television facilities upgraded in order to provide adequate properties storage
4. A separate news organization be established in which broadcaster would be allowed to organize and run its own news service;
5. Advertising be confined to spot announcements with revenues directed back to the corporation;
6. A provision be made for telecine and videotape replay facilities, where no television studios existed in the Sierra Leone provinces; and
7. The government should allocate funds for a comprehensive training programme for staff members.

According to Graettinger (1977:83), the total cost for rehabilitating the system was $8 million. The government embarked on the rehabilitation programme of both radio and television. The major problem of the government was raising funds to finance the rehabilitation programme, which was far above the budget of the country. When funds were available, the government installed new equipment and purchased an outside broadcast vehicles. The government signed a contract with Pye TVT Ltd. to supply equipment for two television studios. It hired Findlay as Director of Broadcasting in 1972 and his staff continued to receive training from the BBC, West Germany, Holland and United States. In the absence of a public corporation, the government merged radio and television services in 1971. The government discontinued and never resumed the educational broadcasting, which started in 1965. It started the construction of the broadcasting house in 1974 but halted work because of lack of funds. The government also purchased a shortwave transmitter installed in Waterloo near Freetown. It developed plans to transfer the news writing service to SLBS; it was the Government Information Service (GIS) that was writing news for broadcasting (Holmes, 1999:81).

According to Head (1974) and Holmes (1999:80), "The Sierra Leone Government accepted the Committee’s Report almost in its entirety... the Sierra Leone officials rejected the recommendation to form a corporation as premature." This means that the government rejected the recommendation that should transform SLBS to public service corporation. The emphasis of this analysis is on the government’s rejection to the overall development of broadcasting. SLBS continued to remain government-
owned since this recommendation. The other recommendations on the SLBS deal with funding, expansion, management structure and professionalism.

5.2.1.2 The Report on 1995 Workshop for a National Broadcasting Policy for Sierra Leone

The 1995 workshop on the national broadcasting policy was organised by the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) government through the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in response to 'the revolutionary challenges of positive change' in the broadcast media. The former Principal of the Fourah Bay College University of Sierra Leone Professor Strasser-King chaired the workshop. The organisers of the workshop selected participants from different sectors of the civil society and interested international organisations.

According to Strasser-King (1995:2), the significance of this workshop was that it was one of the first times in the history of broadcasting that local people and civil society were involved in policymaking for broadcasting in Sierra Leone. Freedman (2006:908) and McChesney (2003:126) describe this as the pluralist approach to policymaking. In the past, the government usually contracted international consultants to propose broadcasting policies. Most of these policies were unsuccessful because these experts do not understand the special peculiarities of the socio-cultural and economic situation in the country; a national contribution would have reflected the needs of the society.

The workshop aimed at examining Sierra Leone radio and television, diagnosed its problems, and recommended a meaningful developmental plan for broadcasting. This was to be the initial step towards the emergence of a national broadcasting policy (Strasser-King, 1995: 1-2). It was the consensus of the workshop that there should be
a “partial, if not complete withdrawal of the state in the control and operation of the broadcasting media...and the setting up of an independent authority to regulate broadcasting.” In other words, the government should divest from regulating broadcasting and institute broadcast pluralism. Other recommendations related to professionalism and quality of programming.

5.2.1.3 The 1997 Study on the Rehabilitation Needs of the Communications and Information Media in Sierra Leone

The SLPP government commissioned the study on the rehabilitation needs of the communications and information media. International consultants from UNESCO and the UNDP Peter Maura and Amadu Mahtar Bah, and a UNDP National Consultant Joseph W. O. Findlay conducted the study. One of the aims of this document was to transform SLBS to a public service institution. According to Maura et al., (1997), the consultants produce the document towards the end of the conflict in Sierra Leone to evaluate the effective role of the media in the peace process. Whilst evaluating the media the experts raised the issue of SLBS status. They again conclude that the SLBS should be a PSB. This policy document supports the argument that the introduction of political pluralism facilitated media pluralism. It also raises the issue of SLBS funding. The specific mandate of the study was:

- To identify the weaknesses, as well as the strengths, of the different media in the country;
- To recommend ways and means of strengthening the media in the short, medium, and long term, so that it can play its rightful role in the social and economic recovery of the country;
To recommend ways and means of harnessing the news and information gathering function of the media in support of the National Rehabilitation Reconstruction and reintegration Programme (Maura et al., 1997:2).

This means that the remit of the study extends to all the mass media organisations in correlation with the Rowe (1998) report. These include government-owned print media such as the Sierra Leone Daily Mail and the Sierra Leone News Agency (SLENA). They recommend that the Sierra Leone Daily Mail “could be improved by overhauling its management...by removing its bureaucratic civil service control” (Maura et al., 1997:25; Rowe, 1998:10). This means that the Daily Mail should be independent from government control. The recommendation for the Sierra Leone News Agency (SLENA) was “An Act of Parliament should be sought for change of status for SLENA as an independent body operating under the guidance of a Board of Directors” (Maura et al., 1997: 20; Rowe, 1998:11). In other words, the government relinquish state control of the media. For the private media the scholars articulate on the problem of lack of advertising, “It is a buyer market in which advertisers are able to dictate the advertising price they are willing to pay.” They affirm that, “Advertising is not given to newspapers that carry unfavourable stories about advertiser” (Maura et al, 1997: 33; Rowe, 1998:12). This means that media houses do not attract advertising due to lack of an industrial base, which makes them economically and politically vulnerable. More of this analysis will emerge when discussing the economy of broadcasting in Sierra Leone.
5.2.1.4 The 1998 Report on the National Information and Communication Policy for Sierra Leone

The Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) government requests the UNDP to assist Sierra Leone prepare a national information and communication policy. This was to open the public sphere of broadcasting to independent radio stations to increase access of the service to majority of the people. The Sierra Leone communication expert Rowe (1998) compiles the report. The government specifically requests the UNDP to do the following

1. Reviewing and harmonising the various recommendations made in earlier studies and workshops relating to the information sector in Sierra Leone, and producing a draft Information and Communication Policy for Sierra Leone.

2. Study the operations of the various arms of government involved in the information dissemination both locally and internationally and making recommendations to the government for a more efficient structure (Rowe, 1998: iii).

According to Rowe (1998:iv), the proposed information communication policy for Sierra Leone envisages the establishment of a new information and communication order to correct existing imbalances in communication flows, communication infrastructure and communication services between the urban and rural areas of the country. It suggests a partnership between the people, the government, and the media to ensure that the media promote national development. Rowe (1998) recommends "the establishment of a single statutory body known as the Independent Media Council (IMC) for regulating and monitoring the operations of both print and electronic media" (Rowe, 1998: 10). The SLPP government accepts its
recommendation and the House of Parliament enacted the Independent Media (IMC) Act 2000, which brought the IMC into existence to regulate and promote media pluralism. This divests media regulatory functions of the government to an independent body. The report was not positive on changing the status of SLBS. Rowe (1998: 11) states that "changing its [SLBS] status to that of a corporation at this time is not a priority," hence, the report completely left out the Sierra Leone broadcasting service in the deregulation to media pluralism.

Rowe (1998) also recommends the establishment of an independent statutory body known as the Telecommunications Services Authority (TSA) for regulating all telecommunication services including mobile cellular telephony, cable TV and Internet Service Provider. He makes similar recommendations to Maura et al., (1997) on the government print media such as the Sierra Leone Daily Mail, the Sierra Leone News Agency (SLENA and the Government Information Service (GIS). The recommendations gear towards restructuring and liberalisation. The focus of this thesis is on the recommendations affecting broadcasting.

5.2.1.5 The 2000 KPMG Report on the Restructuring and Re-Organisation of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service

The SLPP government initiated the KPMG report on the restructuring and re-organisation of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service 2000. The aim was to create a professional SLBS to contribute meaningfully to the public sphere. The firm carry out a review on the financial practices of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS). It also examines the competence and suitability of current personnel to work in a broadcast environment. In carrying out the review, the KPMG requests all employees to furnish the firm with copies of their Curriculum Vitae and detailed job description.
The report states, "Most of the organisation's employees lack the relevant qualification and adequate experience and ability to meet the requirements of a dynamic and financially viable national public broadcasting institution" (KPMG Report, 2000:1). It observes that professionalism at the SLBS was questionable due to lack of relevant qualifications and standard practise. Qualified staff may have left because of poor condition of service and political interference. The significance of the KPMG report is that it addresses the organisational management of the SLBS to determine an effective administrative structure. SLBS has been a government department structured on the civil service model of management. The document addressed the major issue of transforming the SLBS into an independent corporation.


### 5.3 Recommendations

The recommendations of these policy documents are twofold - the change in the status of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) and the introduction of broadcast pluralism. These recommendations contribute to the development of the
broadcasting policy framework for Sierra Leone. Seymour-Ure (1996) and Wheeler (1997) analyse recommendations of various committee reports, White papers and Acts, such as the Crawford Committee Report, Annan Report, 1986 Peacock Report, the 1990 Broadcasting Act and other documents which influence the policymaking process of the British broadcasting system.

5.3.1 Change in the status of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service

Recommendations on the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) proposed a change in the Status of the SLBS from government-owned to public service corporation. The concern was that the sphere of SLBS was limited to government information meaning that the SLBS should serve public interest. The analysis specifically looks at the following

1. SLBS from Government-owned to PSB
2. Sources of funding for the SLBS
3. Expansion of the SLBS
4. The problem of professionalism

Crisell (1997), Seymour-Ure (1996) and Wheeler (1997) raise similar issues when discussing the development of the BBC in the UK. The essence of such recommendations was the economic and political independence of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) (Maura et al., 1997; Palmer, 1969; Strasser-king, 1995).

5.3.1.1 SLBS from Government-owned to PSB

Almost all of the policy documents under review recommend a change of status of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service from government-owned to public service
broadcasting (Maura et al., 1997; Palmer, 1969; Strasser-king, 1995). In the (CBA) Committee of Broadcast Consultants report, Palmer (1969) concludes that the PSB would best suit the need for the orderly development of a broadcasting service in Sierra Leone. The consultants study the collective experience of thirteen commonwealth countries with PSB. Palmer (1969:11) therefore propose that

Corporation status befits an organisation that needs to attract and develop some of the most creative and dynamic minds of the nation and which should have its own salary scales and a hiring and promotion policy based entirely on merit. It is also appropriate for the efficient administration of an important and powerful medium of communication, which has developed its special traditions and its own professionalism (Palmer, 1969:11).

The corporation should be composed of a Board of Governors headed by a Chairman with responsibility to parliament through the appropriate Minister. The Order-in-Council appoints the chair and members of the board but that the board makes the appointment of the Director-General (the Chief Executive Officer) of the radio and television services (Palmer, 1969:12). The consultants emphasise that the SLBS should be independent from the civil service system and develop its own hiring and promotion policy based on 'merit'. The main objective of this recommendation was to give political independence to SLBS. This is akin to the BBC model of public service broadcasting. According to Crisell (1997) and Seymour-Ure (1997), the British government sets up the BBC by a royal charter regulated by a Board of Governors. The Director General is the professional head of the corporation. This was to guarantee political and economic independence of the BBC.
According to Head (1985:70-71) the Crawford committee recommended a public corporation that although subject to parliamentary control would nevertheless be invested with the maximum freedom which parliament is prepared to concede. Accepting the committee’s recommendation, parliament chose to authorize the new corporation by means of a Royal Charter. This relatively unusual means of authorizing a corporation meant that the BBC would have maximum autonomy and a certain status by virtue of its association with the throne even though parliament was the actual grantor. The BBC charter establishes the corporation, defines its goals and outlines its constitution. A second legal instrument, the License and Agreement spells out in more detail the BBC’s relation to parliament and the responsible cabinet minister grants the license. This document spells out the technical regulations and the extent to which the government may control BBC finance and programmes. According to Negrine (1994:83) to reconcile the need for accountability of the broadcasters and their need for a maximum degree of autonomy so that they will carry out their work without political and other constraints, the state delegates power to broadcasting authorities to run the service along the lines decreed by parliament. This would ensure that broadcasting institutions was ultimately accountable to parliament but at the same time free from direct government control in its daily activities. Each authority, such as the BBC Trust and Office of Communication, has a duty to provide its radio and television service as public services for the dissemination of information, education and entertainment, and ensure high standards and quality of programmes but they do not exercise executive control over broadcasting. Negrine (1994: 82) says the decision to finance broadcasting out of a license payable by all those in possession of radio/TV sets rather than advertising was to avoid the
'chaos on airwaves on the American scale and to guarantee an efficient and satisfactory service'. Head (1985) says parliament controls the financing of the BBC and can remove members of the BBC Board of Governors from office. The proceeds of the receiver license fee collections do not automatically go to the BBC. Parliament must authorize both the level of the fees and their payment to the BBC, although this will now be index-linked to the rate of inflation. This license fee is to protect the BBC from commercial pressures so that it can carry out its public service function. The 1954 Television Act set up the Independent Television authority to supervise a federal structure of commercially funded television companies. To offset the allegedly harmful effect of relying on major advertisers or sponsors, the state introduced a system of spot advertising. The ITV companies rely on advertising revenue and the BBC on license fees, so that competition was not commercially motivated but was for the audience (Negrine, 1994; Head, 1985).

In the rehabilitation needs of the communication and information media in Sierra Leone Maura et al., (1997) call for the change of SLBS status from government to public service broadcaster. The report stressed that SLBS can only effectively perform its role on the National Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Programme (NRRRP) as a PSB. Maura et al., (1997:11) recommend that 'Parliamentary legislation should be encouraged to change the current status of the SLBS by establishing an Independent Public Broadcasting Authority operating under the guidance of a Board of Directors'. The recommendation of creating an Independent Broadcasting Authority implies that the whole of the broadcasting system should be politically independent. This is akin to the South African Independent Broadcasting
Authority IBA, which the state enacted in parliament to regulate broadcasting in the country (Banda, 2003; Barnett, 1999; Jjuuko, 2005).

All the other policy documents have similar recommendations for the SLBS except Rowe (1998:2). He states, “The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) has lost its monopoly in radio broadcasting in the country and has become more independent and commercially oriented. Changing its status to that of a corporation at this time is not a priority.” It is true that the SLBS has lost its monopoly of broadcasting but not quite true that it has become more independent. The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service is still a government department, there is no legislation like the royal charter of the BBC which gives it its political independence (Seymour-Ure, 1996; Wheeler, 1997) or the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) Act 1999 which made the South Africa Broadcasting Corporation a public service broadcaster (Barnett, 1999). Therefore, the SLBS is not politically autonomous.

The political economy approach of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service is that it is engaged in commercial activities but pays a large percent of that money to the national consolidated fund. According to the Financial Management Act and the Public Budgetary Act (1994), the SLBS has two accounts the national consolidated revenue funds and the FM Accounts. According to the Permanent Secretary Information and Broadcasting Nalo (Interview: 2004),

The payment modalities are separated into two: (1) the public notices, obituary announcements and other revenue heads as dictated by the government go to the Consolidated Revenue Fund for national use; and (2) the studio charges and other professional charges go into the FM account with an independent voucher system used for emergencies (Nalo, 2004).
This means that SLBS is not using its entire revenue collection to improve its services. Therefore, SLBS is not free from political and economic pressures. In this respect, Rowe’s report was a reversal of the strong argument built up for an independent public service SLBS. The Consultant who was appointed by the government to restructure SLBS Waritay (2001:1-3) on evaluating the Rowe report says it has need for a slight review on the stance that “changing the present status of the SLBS into a corporation is not a priority. This is in contradistinction with other reports presented so far and not in line with the development of broadcasting policy and the implementation of such policy in most countries the world over.” He states that SLBS could serve the public interest while maintaining the corporate status. Waritay’s position was that the Rowe’s (1998) report “has turned the hand of the clock of broadcasting backwards” (Waritay, 2001:4).

This is a contradiction because almost all the policy documents recommended that SLBS should receive a corporate status with the exception of Rowe (1998). He says that it is not a ‘priority’ for SLBS to gain a corporate status. In this case, Rowe’s report was a reversal to the strong argument built up for SLBS as PSB. The former Minister of Information and Broadcasting who worked with Rowe on the 1989 Information and Communication policy for Sierra Leone, Spencer (Interview:2004) says “I disagree with him [Rowe] violently on that point, when he says that it was not a priority for SLBS to receive a corporate status. But even if that document had stressed the corporate status of SLBS it would not have made any difference because there was this negative attitude within government circles not to incorporate SLBS as PSB.”
5.3.1.2 Expansion of the SLBS

There are two contrasting recommendations for the expansion of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service; one argues for a centralised expansion and the other a decentralised system. Palmer (1969:9) recommends a centralised form of expansion of the SLBS with an installation of a 10 Kilowatts transmitter in Magburaka (approximately the centre of Sierra Leone) for countrywide coverage. Palmer proposes the acquisition of short wave and medium wave transmitters to improve SLBS coverage and suggests the setting up of small studio centres for the collection of radio materials from various centres in the provinces such as Bo, Port Loko, Bonthe, Sefadu, Kabala, and Makeni (Palmer, 1969). This recommendation gears towards developing the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) as a single unit to broadcast to the rest of the country.

On the other hand, Maura et al., (1997) and Rowe (1998) propose a decentralised SLBS. According to Maura et al., (1997:10), “SLBS should establish regional radio and television stations in each of the provincial headquarter-towns to effectively cover the entire country including the most remote rural areas,” This means that there should be horizontal decentralised development of the SLBS to cater for both national and local interests. This proposed SLBS wants to develop regional broadcasting to disseminate government information to the grassroots. The BBC developed regional broadcasting to cater for diverse interests in the society (Seymour-Ure, 1996; Wheeler, 1997). Maura et al. (1997:12) suggest that the country should conduct a technical feasibility study to ascertain the needs of national broadcasting. According to Rowe (1998:2), “Emphasis should be on expanding its services in the form of regional and community broadcasting. Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation would
not be economically viable to undertake such expansion which is long overdue." The SLBS was covering about 25% of the country this means that 75% of the population had no access to broadcasting (Holmes, 1999; Strasser-King, 1995). The recommendation for the creation of regional stations was to increase the coverage area of the SLBS to cater for the majority of the population. The SLBS expansion will be a major subject for discussion in the next chapter.

5.3.1.3 Assured Source of Funding

All the policy documents investigate the sources of funding for the SLBS as part of the political economy argument. Palmer (1969:12) recommends that the SLBS should sustain itself through spot advertising,

The corporation be empowered by statute to sell time over it radio and television stations and that the revenue from such sale of time accrued directly to the corporation... that such radio and television advertising should be restricted to the sale of spot announcement.

This suggests that the SLBS should broadcast commercials, which means that it will be under economic pressure. The BBC model is completely different according to Wheeler (1997), the 1926 Crawford Committee recommended that the BBC should be divorced from political and economic interest and be funded by members of the public with an annual license fee. Palmer (1969) stresses that the state should pay money accrued from commercials 'directly to the corporation'. According to Holmes (1999), the SLBS normally pays the money accrued from commercials to the national consolidated fund this means that SLBS was not in a position to take full advantage of its revenue.
Maura et al., (1997:11) propose for public funding they state that every household or enterprise likely to own a radio and television set should fund the SLBS. "A mandatory public Broadcasting Media Tax should be reintroduced to provide additional revenue to SLBS in order to help it fully achieve its public service role."

The government can achieve this through a tax voted every year by Parliament. The proposal maintains that one of the most effective ways to collect this tax was to divide it by twelve and add every month of the total tax to the National Power Authority (NPA) bill. The report assumes that those who have access to electricity supply are likely to possess at least one radio and/or a TV set. The first attempt at introducing license fees for the SLBS failed. According to Holmes (1999:52-53), SLBS adopted the BBC's method of funding its system through receiver license fees. The Post and Telecommunications Office was responsible for collecting license fees, which went directly into the government's treasury and not to the SLBS. The problem was finding a viable way of collecting the fee throughout the country. Collecting license fees for wireless receiver sold within the country was a problem but for those bought outside the country or in the black market was nearly impossible. The post office never devised a systematic method to determine the actual number of radio sets in Sierra Leone, therefore collecting license fee was never efficiently pursued, and at no time in its history could SLBS independently collect its own fees. Taylor (1980) reported that out of the estimated 2,500 TV sets in the country in the early part of 1970s no annual license fee of $20 was ever recorded paid.
5.3.1.4 Standards and professionalism of Broadcasting

All of the reports made recommendations for good standards and professionalism in broadcasting. According to Kasoma (1999), professionalism means the observance of the duties and responsibilities that make press freedom meaningful. He asserts that a cause for concern in Africa was the assumption that the absence of professionalism was due to lack of training and that if the industry trains journalists it will reduce the occurrence of professional misconduct. Palmer (1969:12) recommends that SLBS commence a comprehensive production and technical training programme as a matter of priority. Strasser-King (1995:8) proposes human resource development through training and staff development. Maura et al., (1997:30) proposition to upgrading the quality of human resources by properly addressing the training needs of the SLBS staff members. The KPMG Report (2000:1) gives reasons for lack of professionalism at the SLBS “Most of the organisation’s employees lack the relevant qualification and adequate experience and ability to meet the requirements of a dynamic and financially viable national public broadcasting institution.” There was no local training available for broadcasters in Sierra Leone. Broadcasters receive some form of professional training through bilateral relationships with western governments such as Germany, Holland, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America (Holmes, 1999). India, China, and Egypt also contributed to the training needs of the media. Cole (2004) who is the Head of the Mass Communication Department FBC University of Sierra Leone says that the Department introduced the broadcasting module of the course in 1998.

All the policy documents recommend that SLBS improve its management structure. Palmer (1969:4) recommends, “In the interest of efficiency the two services radio and
television be merged under one administration.” In the merger, senior supervisors were responsible for the administration of both media. It suggests merging areas such as news, administration personnel and accounting, which can operate for a ‘more efficient service’. This idea came from the BBC model of the PBS that is running radio and television services (Crisell, 1997; Seymour-Ure, 1996; Wheeler, 1997). Holmes (1999) argues that the merger brought disparity between radio and television staff, which resulted in the demise of the institution because television staff seemed to be receiving more benefits.

KPMG (2000:4) recommends changing the old management structure. The old management structure is the civil service administrative structure as demonstrated by this organogram.
Fig. 5.2: Organogram of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS Radio/TV)

Minister

Permanent secretary

Director General
SLBS Radio/TV

Head Administration
Head Engineering & Operation
Head Television
Head Radio Services
Head News & Current Affairs
Head Commercial & Presentation
Head Finance
Head Facility & Equipment
Coordinator Regional

In this diagram, the SLBS is a department of government and the Minister of Information and Broadcasting is in charge. Other African countries share similar administrative structure. Marami (1986) says the Voice of Kenya is an arm of Kenya's Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, which is in charge of broadcasting. Lubinda & N'Gombe (1986) say that the Zambia broadcasting services is a government department that falls under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

The KPMG Report (2000:3) devises an alternative management structure for a new SLBS. The proposed structure consists of a six-man management team supported by departmental managers and various professional and technical staff. These are the Chief Executive or General Manager, Director of Commercial Services, Director of Programmes Television, Director of Programmes Radio, Director of Finance and Information Technology and Director of Engineering. The significance of the KPMG's alternative management structure is that the Minister of Information and Broadcasting is no longer in charge of the SLBS which removes the station from the civil service structure. This reduces government's direct control and interference in the day-to-day activities of the SLBS. However, the SLBS would be answerable to parliament when the state incorporates it as a PSB (Maura et al., 1997). This diagram represents the new structure.
Fig. 5.3: The Proposed Organisational Chart SLBS

The requirement to become the chief executive is that the person should have ‘extensive management skills and professional expertise in the field of engineering and/or management’ (KPMG Report, 2000:3). The report suggests excluding all programme staff without management and engineering skills from heading the establishment. This could be de-motivating for those aspiring for higher heights. According to Wheeler (1997), the first Director General of the BBC John Reith was an engineer, but several programme and broadcasting personalities have taken the directorship and administered effectively (Negrine, 1997; Seymour-Ure, 1996; Wheeler, 1997).

The KPMG recommendation is commercial in orientation which suggests that the type of PSB in Sierra Leone would take the form of the ITV in the UK. Negrine (1994:85) says the ITV is an advertising-supported channel in which spot advertising was introduced as the main source of funding unlike the BBC which depends on annual public license fees but each has PSB obligations. The new SLBS management structure has two directors relating to commercials and finance. According to the KPMG Report (2000:4-5), the Director of Finance and Technology ‘acts as financial adviser on all corporate finance, operational and other areas incidental to the activities of the institution’. In addition, the Director of commercials ‘is responsible for developing marketing strategies to increase the institution’s market share in the face of competition. He is responsible for preparing pricing for all advertisements, jingles and other income generating activities’. This sounds more like a commercial service in the nature of the ITV in contrast with the PSB recommendations (Maura et al., 1978; Palmer, 1969; Strasser-King, 1995). The posture of the KPMG report 2000
therefore, was one of a commercial as oppose to license fees public service broadcasting.

This was not the first report for staff reorganisation for professionalism and standards. According to Massaquoi (2003), the Staff Audit Report 1998 conducted by the Thompson Foundation recognised that SLBS is overstaffed, under-resourced, and poorly managed, and urged the urgent reform of the SLBS to PSB. Consultant Owen (1998) who conducts the study notes that SLBS members of staff hoped for an independent corporation with new conditions of employment and a clear programme philosophy. The SLBS staff made two demands these are to establish the new corporation and to make all appointments competitive (Staff Audit Report, 1998). This was to avoid political patronage in the appointment procedure.

5.3.2 Recommendation for Broadcast Media Pluralism

The recommendation for media pluralism normally takes the form of a proposed Independent Media Body to regulate and promote media pluralism. The composition, functions and activities of this body are relevant to this analysis. Strasser-King (1995:3) recommends,

The best device, by which the government can insulate itself from the necessity of intervening in the day-to-day affairs of its broadcasting stations, is the creation of an independent broadcasting authority, which should have the general overseeing of the broadcasting activities of the nation. Such a body would be representative of the society.

This is compared to the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) of South Africa which the government established by an Act of Parliament to regulate and promote media pluralism (Banda, 2003; Barnett, 1999; Jjuuko, 2005). It is also comparable to
the British Office of Communication (Ofcom) which replaces the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) and the Independent Television Commission (ITC) as broadcasting regulatory body (Negrine, 1994:94).

Rowe (1998:20) recommends

The establishment of a single statutory body known as the Independent Media Council (IMC) for regulating and monitoring the operations of both print and electronic media.... an Act of Parliament shall create the Independent Media Council (IMC) subject to the provisions of the Constitution.

The Ghanaian situation influenced the proposal for the Independent Media Council in Sierra Leone. According to Karikari (1994), the 1992 constitution created the Ghana National Media Commission under chapter 12 the Independence, and Freedom of the Media, to regulate the media and promote media pluralism in the country. This is akin to the American regulatory system of broadcasting. Freedman (2006:907), McChesney (2003:125) and Engelman (1999) say the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is the independent broadcasting regulatory body in the US. Uche (1999) argues that this system of media regulation does not properly fit into the African system of broadcasting after examining the privately owned media in the USA broadcast industry as opposed to African state-owned broadcasting. He concludes that to apply the American model of media regulation in Africa is to introduce a state of confusion. By implication, this means that the African State-owned stations could be out of the jurisdiction of an independent media authority. This state of confusion is presently in Sierra Leone where government-owned broadcasting is outside the independent regulatory framework.
Strasser-King’s (1995:3) recommendation stresses the significance of the ‘civil society’ in media policy-making. According to Nyamnjoh (1999:318), civil society refers to independent and politically active groups such as trade unions, religious, professional, cultural, and other interest groups that fall outside the structure of government. Freedman (2006:907) and McChesney (2003:126) argue that the trend in policymaking in modern democracies geared towards a transparent process involving a variety of stakeholders engaged in negotiation on the future of the industry. He describes this as the pluralist model of policymaking.

5.3.2.1 The Function of the Independent body

The African Charter on Broadcasting (2000) states that the function of a media regulatory body is to promote media pluralism which is conceptualised within the public sphere theory and the libertarian theory of encouraging media pluralism in a democratic society (Siebert, et al., 1971; Habermas, 1980; Garnham, 1995). Rowe (1998) and Strasser-King (1995) outline similar functions for the Independent Media Authority or Council. The key mandate of the Authority/Council was to promote pluralism - the IMC should “promote free and pluralistic media” (Rowe, 1998:9(1)). According to Curran (2000), pluralism includes competing media outlets and a commitment to extending freedom of expression, encouraging alternative opinions and accepting a greater degree of conflict played out by the media. This was the same mandate given to the Ghana National Independent Media Commission (Karikari, 1994) and the South African Independent Broadcasting Authority (Barnett, 1999). According to Rowe (1998) and Strasser-king (1995), members of the public should have a variety of choice of channels, programming and allow for competition.
The recommendation proposed different categories of license but did create the different broadcasting organisations that should operate within the country. "To establish categories of licenses and grant such licenses to media organisations, companies and other entities for the establishment and operation of the electronic media, newspapers and magazines for the dissemination of public information" (Rowe, 1998:9(4)). The South African Independent Broadcasting Act 1999 in contrast clearly spells out categories of broadcast organisations that should operate within the country these are public service broadcasting, commercial, and community radio broadcasting. In comparison to Ghana, there is no need for license categories because Karikari (1994&2000) states that interested parties can establish media organisations without the payment of registration fees but have to fulfil financial requirements to the Frequency Distribution Board.

Strasser-King (1995:4) says that the function of the independent authority was to enhance a competitive atmosphere in the broadcast industry. The emphasis here was commercial in orientation, and less public service. The function of the authority was the "Regulation of the broadcasting media to enhance competition and promote a free market of ideas." The authority should encourage private investment in the electronic media and create a healthy business climate for the industry. This is injecting the American commercial system broadcasting. Commercial broadcasting develops fast in a country where there is a large industrial base and a viable economic environment. Most Latin American developing countries adopted commercial broadcasting because American companies were interested in creating an industrial base for them. According to Stevenson (1988:133), "the one thing that separates Latin America from the other third world regions is the high level of media development, a product of
private ownership even in broadcasting and US influence.” He notes that in the development of the media there were the manufacturing industries created by American investors, which created the need for advertising to sustain the growth of the media. In Africa, the situation is completely different; broadcasting depends on the government’s sponsorship because there is no industrial base to support it (Head, 1974; Hendy, 2000).

Three specialised committees execute the functions of the body “The council should have three specialised Committees: License Applications Committee; a Public Complaints Committee; and an Advisory Committee” (Rowe, 1998: iv). This is to make room for the efficiency of the council. The License Applications Committee scrutinises all applications for the establishment of media in Sierra Leone and apportion appropriate registration fees. The Complaints Committee adjudicates on any public complaints against any media and the Advisory Committee advises the government on the development of the media.

5.3.2.3 Membership of the independent body

According to African Charter on Broadcasting (2000), the media and its regulatory agencies should be politically independent and free to carry out their functions as trustees of the public interest. Strasser-King (1995:3) recommends that ‘the qualification of membership to the board/authority is clearly spelt out in the policy and that the arbitrary power of Minister in the appointment of members be minimised.’ This calls for transparency in the membership appointment procedure emphasising on the curtailment of the Minister’s power. It suggests that the independence of the authority should not be a caricature of itself indirectly
manipulated by politics. Strasser-King (1995:5) recommends that the membership should be ‘a representative of the society’. He did not spell out who these representatives are but White (1999) says it meant partly or wholly representatives from influential groups within the society like opinion leaders, religious groups, interest groups, pressure groups and campaign organisations and professionals such as doctors, teachers, lawyers and ordinary citizens. This is the introduction of the pluralistic broadcasting policymaking process (Freedman, 2006; Horwitz, 1989; McChesney, 2003).

5.3.2.4 Self-Regulation and Public Service mandate

Self-regulation is part of the libertarian theory (Siebert, et al., 1971) in which the media is subject to certain professional conduct in the interest of the public. The public sphere theory says the PSB is to serve the interest of the public by providing quality education and informative programmes. The Independent Broadcasting Authority or Council is “to supervise and monitor implementation of and compliance with legislation on media activities in the interest of the nation” (Rowe, 1998:9(2)). The authority adopts regulating broadcasting in the ‘public interest’ from both the American and British traditions. According to McChesney (2003:82), the government established the FCC to regulate broadcasting in the interest and convenience of the public. Negrine (1994) says that the Crawford Committee recommended a public corporation should operate broadcasting acting as trustee for the public interest.

The functions of the authority suggest that the media should abide by public service principles. The Independent Media Authority should “prescribe a minimum percentage of the total number of broadcast hours to be devoted to public service programmes by the various categories of broadcasters” (Rowe, 1998:9 (3)).
follows the British tradition that all broadcast organisations maintain some public service principles these are quality informative educative and entertainment programmes plus universality of service (Negrine, 1997; Seymour-Ure, 1996; Wheeler, 1997).

The Authority/Council will be responsible for setting up a code of conduct for broadcasting (Rowe, 1998; Strasser-King, 1995). The Media Practitioners Act 1997 proposed a code of conduct for media practitioners in Sierra Leone but the Act failed to receive Presidential Assent. According to the Act, “A journalist or media practitioner shall uphold at all times the standards of the profession of journalism, maintain and preserve its dignity and honour, and refrain from conduct that may discredits or tends to discredit it” (Media Practitioners Act, 1997: 12(1)). The Act referred to the ‘standards of the profession’ but failed to clarify these standards. Shoemaker (1999), Street (2000) and Curran & Seaton (1997) state that professional standards involve media practitioners conforming to certain rules of the profession such as objectivity, balance, accuracy, truth, morality and privacy laws. The Act focuses on prioritising the state and the government, emphasising that media practitioners owe a duty to the state to be respectable to the President, the Judiciary and Parliament. This Act kills the watchdog function of the media and promotes the authoritarian/soviet communist principles of the four theories of the press (Siebert et al., 1971).

5.4 Government’s Response

Government’s response to policymaking is very crucial to the public sphere when it is positive it opens and creates access to the media sphere but when it is negative, it limits the media to certain restrictions. Most scholars like Negrine (1997) and
Wheeler (1997) who study the policymaking process of the BBC analyse the government’s response to policy recommendations. In response to Crawford Committee’s recommendation Negrine (1997) says the BBC royal charter was legislated to transform the BBC from a company to a PSB. This was a positive response to broadcasting policy but at times, the response could be negative. Curran & Seaton (1997:162) say “the recommendations of the Beveridge Report were ignored by the Conservatives after they beat the Labour Party in the 1951 general election...nevertheless Beveridge’s findings influenced the form of British commercial broadcasting”. This means that the government’s response is crucial to the implementation of media policies (Hansen et al., 1998). The government’s response to recommendations on policy documents in Sierra Leone is divided into three levels:

- Negative response
- Non-response
- Positive response

According to Gunther & Mughan (2000:5), authoritarian regimes like the APC one-party government or the NPRC military junta are restrictive to media development whilst democratic governments such as the SLPP government encourage media pluralism. Rowe (1998:3) says democratic government should encourage, facilitate, and promote appropriate conditions as well as creating appropriate media legislation consistent with the new policy. Among other things it should encourage private investment in the media industry and encourage education, training and countrywide coverage of the media.
Most of the policy document recommended that the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service and the broadcasting system should be independent from government control mainly to avoid government's direct interference in broadcasting. Strasser-King (1995:7) says the best way for the government to insulate itself from directly interfering into the day-to-day activities of broadcasting was a partial or complete government withdrawal from regulating broadcasting. He suggests the creation of an independent authority to regulate broadcasting. Negrine (1994:83) says in the UK the state delegated power to regulate broadcasting to various authorities with reference to parliament. He argues that this would ensure that broadcasting would be accountable to parliament but free from direct government control; in this light, Strasser-King (1995) Rowe (1998) and Palmer (1969) recommend independence for broadcasting in Sierra Leone. Cole (1995:39) gives a catalogue of illustrations of government interference in the print media and broadcasting since independence. She says in 1965 the SLPP government and Prime Minister, Albert Margai recognized the power of radio with its potential to reach most of the population in their local languages, hence Margai sorts to gain recognition through the medium. The government almost replaced the SLBS theme song with the praise song of the Prime Minister and hardly a day passed without some mentioning of his activities on radio and television. The SLPP government also directed the SLBS not to give any publicity to the opposition party. According to Cole (1995:48), since Momoh assumed office in 1985 as president of Sierra Leone under the APC one-party system, his information ministers had been subtle in their interventions to influence programmes on radio. The most obvious was the banning of two popular radio discussion programmes — Way Dem Say (what the people say) and Nar We All Yone (it belongs to all of us) by the
information minister in 1991. On the other hand, government may want to control broadcasting for political and developmental purposes. Mwakawago (1980) believes that newly independent African states needed government controlled media to promote national development, unity, and integration. In the case of Sierra Leone as demonstrated by Cole (1995), the government used radio to promote over centralisation of power, political hegemony, limit public participation, and silencing of the opposition. On the other hand, when we study the unstable political history of Sierra Leone, the government may want to control broadcasting to consolidate the fragile economic and political progress of the state. Since independence, the country has experienced series of coups and counter-coups, 30 years of one-party rule and 10 years of rebel war (Alie, 1990; Cole, 1995). In this regard, government may reject granting political independence to broadcasting. According to Holmes (1999:143), each decade after independence brought some form of political unrest, which served to wreck the country’s economy, and served to thwart the country’s broadcasting system. Sierra Leone moved from a multiparty system in the 1960s to one party republican states in the next two decades with series of coups and counter coups. The country then went back to a multiparty system in 1996 and again a brief military takeover; in 1997, the Nigerian-led ECOWAS forces removed the military junta, and civilian rule was re-established in 1998.

5.4.1 The Negative Response to Change

Palmer (1969:9) says, "with reference to the corporate status of SLBS government considered the recommendation but holds the view that the establishment of a corporation at this time is premature." The government upheld all the other recommendations but rejected SLBS as a PSB. It was not clear why the APC
government felt so strongly about SLBS public corporate status. The white paper did not offer any explanations except that the timing was ‘premature’. The main reason for this rejection was the lack of political will meaning that the government wants to retain SLBS as its own and thinks that an independent SLBS will act irresponsibly. Palmer (1969) consulted the PSB type of broadcasting in thirteen other African developing countries before arriving at this conclusion. The Broadcasting systems of Ghana, South Africa and Nigeria have gained a PSB corporate status but are still working in partnership with the government in developmental activities (Ansah, 1986; Barnett, 1999; Uche, 1999). The BBC is a public service corporation and not one of the scholars under review reported that the BBC was anti-government. The government’s rejection is responsible for the backwardness of broadcasting in the country. This negative response “has enormously held back the hands of the broadcasting-clock in Sierra Leone” (Waritay, 2001:2).

5.4.2 Non-Response to Change

There was no indication that the NPRC government responded to the recommendations of the 1995 broadcasting policy workshop by way of acceptance or rejection. It recommends that the government should withdraw from media regulation. The National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) government did not respond because the country was in political transition. This was manifest in the overthrow of the Head of State Captain Valentine Strasser by Captain Julius Maada Bio in a palace coup in 1995. Captain Bio later handed over power to the democratically elected President Tejan Kabbah (Holmes, 1999). This political transition was against the backdrop of a raging civil conflict because of this, it was very difficult for the then government to implement a broadcasting policy in such an unstable political climate.
5.4.3 Positive Response

The democratic government of the Sierra Leone Peoples' Party (SLPP) responded positively to the Rowe Report (1998) on the Information and Communication Policy for Sierra Leone in the following manner: -

1. The Minister of Information and Broadcasting drafted a proposed law (Bill) entitled "The Independent Media Commission Act" which he presented before Parliament for enactment

2. The government called a British Consultant to give technical and professional advice as to the final document described as the National Information and Communication Policy for Sierra Leone

3. The government drafted from Rowe Report a proposed policy framework for the media in Sierra Leone. The government gazetted this regulatory policy as a public instrument.

4. In 2000, the Sierra Leone House Parliament enacted the Independent Media Commission (IMC) Act which brought into legal existence the IMC with the responsibility to regulate the media and encourage media pluralism

The Independent Media Commission Act 2000 and the Independent Media Commission will be subject to elaborate evaluation in the next chapter of this thesis.

The democratic government was willing to encourage media pluralism but was unwilling to give a corporate status to the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS). The government's unwillingness to change SLBS was because of Rowe (1998) recommends that it was not 'a priority' for the SLBS to receive a corporate status. It is the assumption that if the recommendation were positive the government would have responded positively. The governments that rejected the recommendation for the
transformation of the broadcast media were authoritarian regimes such as the one-party government of All Peoples Congress (APC) and the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) government. The democratically elected government the Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP) government encouraged media pluralism therefore, political pluralism leads to media pluralism (Gunther & Mughan, 2000; Street, 2000).

5.5 Summary

This was an analysis on the development of a broadcasting policy framework for Sierra Leone. The focal point of the analysis was the policy documents’ recommendations for change in the broadcasting landscape (Maura et al., 1997; Palmer, 1969; Rowe, 1998; Strasser-King, 1995). This analysis was to facilitate understanding of why and how the broadcast media developed in a unique and dynamic way. The synopsis of the policy documents revealed that these documents were authentic and credible. The change suggested was twofold; the corporate status of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) and broadcast pluralism in Sierra Leone as recommended of the various policy documentations.

Most of the documents recommend the incorporation of the SLBS into a PSB. The new organisation should be legislated in parliament. This recommendation aimed at creating an autonomous SLBS to serve public interest and open the public sphere. The only policy document that did not prioritise change for the SLBS was Rowe (1998). The SLBS funding recommendation was two-pronged; (1) SLBS should have elements of commercialism by selling advertising slots and, (2) public taxation/license fees (Maura et al., 1977; Palmer, 1969).

The recommendation on SLBS expansion was two-fold - (1) a centralised SLBS as a single unit broadcasting to the rest of the country and (2) a decentralised SLBS with
regional stations. Maura et al., (1997) and Rowe (1998) recommendations on standards and professionalism identified the need to train unqualified staff of the SLBS and the improvement of its management structure.

The recommendations on media pluralism aimed at the de-monopolisation of broadcasting from government monopoly to pluralism. This aims at divesting government’s regulatory function of the media and grants it to an independent authority. The recommendation takes the form of creating an independent media regulatory body established by law to promote media pluralism (Rowe, 1998; Strasser-King, 1995). The main functions of this body are to regulate and promote media pluralism and encourage free market principles in the media. The selection procedure should carefully scrutinise membership of the independent body to avoid political infiltrations.

Government response to the recommendations was either positive or negative. On the transformation of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service the APC government response was negative (Palmer, 1969). The NPRC government was non-responsive (Strasser-King, 1995). On the introduction of media pluralism, the SLPP government was positive (Rowe, 1998) it introduced the Independent Media Commission to regulate and promote media pluralism. The state developed the transformation and policy framework for broadcasting on these perimeters. The discussion concluded that political pluralism supports media pluralism. This is the background leading to the change of broadcasting which is the main theme for this research. The next chapter will assess the broadcast transformation and institutionalisation of pluralism.
Chapter 6

The Change in the Media landscape in Sierra Leone: the rise of Independent Community and Regional Radio Stations

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter extensively examines policy documents that contribute to the development of a broadcast regulatory policy framework as part of the evolution of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. The recommendations aim at the political independence of broadcasting to serve the needs of the public. In this respect, the documents suggest change in the status of the SLBS to PSB and change to media pluralism. The government’s response was to accept media pluralism by establishing the Independent Media Commission (IMC) to regulate and to promote media pluralism. Part 111(8:1a) of the revised IMC Act 2004 states that “the object for which the commission is established is to promote a free and pluralistic media throughout Sierra Leone” Rowe (1998) affirms that the IMC Act 2000 was to institutionalise media pluralism but Holmes (1999) argues that before the institutionalisation of media pluralism there was some form of media plurality in Sierra Leone. She says that the APC government sets up the first commercial station the Atlantic Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) in 1991. The NPRC government also registers KISS104 and SKYY 106 in 1993. It introduces SLBS FM 99.9 and re-establishes television with the help of Hong Kong based Lorens Sebo Holdings Ltd in 1992. Other stations in operation were the Al-Quran Al-Karim a Muslim Kuwait shortwave station and the FM 93 Believers Broadcasting Network (BBN) (Holmes, 1999). The International Telecommunication Union’s (ITU) approval of the NPRC’s application for 42 FM frequencies in 1992 facilitated the proliferation of FM stations.
6.1.1 The Aims and Objectives

The main objective of this chapter is to provide evidence for the institutionalisation of broadcast pluralism as a significant development in the sphere of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. According to Onuoha (1999:120),

> Media pluralism refers to free and unencumbered ownership, existence, and functioning of the mass media houses; the unrestricted multiplicity of mass media organisations; and the growth of mass communication agencies, which represent diverse groups, interests and views in a political system.

Media pluralism is a major component of the theory of the public sphere. This chapter is divided into five sections to demonstrate that broadcast pluralism has taken place in Sierra Leone.

The first section evaluates the new broadcast landscape in Sierra Leone to ascertain the multiplicity of channels and access to the public. A regional and national radio distribution table will assist to assess the spread of radio stations. The second section deals with the factors responsible for the rise of independent broadcasting why and how the proliferation of broadcasting stations. There are two reasons for the proliferation the FM stations these are the external and internal reasons: (a) internal reasons are the war situation (information gap), political pluralism and change in regulatory policy; and (b) the external reasons are foreign interventions assisting the development of broadcasting in Sierra Leone.

The third section focuses on the analysis of radio programme schedules to determine pluralism that is the variety and diversity of programmes and the role of broadcast programmes in the public sphere as part of democratic culture. The fourth section investigates the economy of broadcasting in Sierra Leone to analyse the level of
advertising or commercialisation and the implications of this to the public sphere. Section 5 examines the limitations and advantages of the proliferation of radio stations in Sierra Leone.

6.1.2 Method of analysis

The data for this analysis are policy documents, programme schedules and in-depth interviews. Policy documents for this investigation are from the Independent Media Commission (IMC) such as the Status of Radio Report 2004, the Final Radio Policy Document 2005, the IMC Act 2000, & Revised 2004. Other policy documents are from media related NGOs including their websites and available documents from community and regional stations. Africa Media Development Initiative Sierra Leone 2006 by Tam-Baryoh is a very useful document to the analysis because it captures some of the latest development of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. There will be a comparative analysis between these documents and the 1992 Ghanaian Constitution on the establishment of the Ghanaian National Independent Media Commission and the South African Independent Broadcasting Act 1999. Programme schedules are the main source of evidence to substantiate arguments for audience participation in the public sphere and diversity of programmes. Taylor (1980) and Holmes (1999) use SLBS programme schedules to examine the types of programmes broadcast. An evaluation will be done on available radio programme schedules from both independent and government stations. In-depth interviews will elicit background information on programmes and policy issues. The broadcasters of community and state regional radio stations have a reservoir of information on their stations. The broadcasters interviewees are
Table 6.1: Broadcasters Interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Tam-Baryoh</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Citizen Radio Kissy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gina Banda Thomas</td>
<td>Director General</td>
<td>SLBS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah Foullah</td>
<td>Station Manager</td>
<td>Radio Democracy FM 98.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onesimus Lambert</td>
<td>General Manager</td>
<td>Radio Democracy FM 98.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Kromah</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>KISS 104 Bo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwo Cullen</td>
<td>Station Manager</td>
<td>VOH FM 96.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheila Dallas</td>
<td>Head of Radio</td>
<td>Radio UNAMSIL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam Sio-Kamara</td>
<td>Station Manager</td>
<td>SLBS FM 93.1 Kenema</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Halfner</td>
<td>Station Manager</td>
<td>KISS 104 Bo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Sandy Gander</td>
<td>Acting Station Manager</td>
<td>Radio Trinity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklyn Kamara</td>
<td>Station Manager</td>
<td>Mankneh FM 95.1 Makeni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Turay</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Radio Maria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdul Kamara</td>
<td>Station Manager</td>
<td>SLBS FM 88.0 Makeni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kape Koroma</td>
<td>Station Manager</td>
<td>SLBS Bo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Radio stations in Sierra Leone (2004)
Policymakers are engaged in developing a broadcasting regulatory policy framework in Sierra Leone. The policymakers interviewees are

Table 6.2: Policymakers Interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Septimus Kaikai</td>
<td>Minister</td>
<td>Information and Broadcasting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julius Spencer</td>
<td>Former Minister</td>
<td>Information and Broadcasting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick Nalo</td>
<td>Permanent Secretary</td>
<td>Information and Broadcasting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hassan Kamara</td>
<td>Executive Secretary</td>
<td>Independent Media commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernadette Cole</td>
<td>Chairman/Head of Department</td>
<td>Independent media</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Three media related NGOs are assisting the development of community radio stations in Sierra Leone. The representatives of these organisations interviewed are

Table 6.3 NGOs Interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joshua Nicol</td>
<td>Coordinator</td>
<td>INFORMOTRAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaac Massaquoi</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>CORNET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gibril Foday-Musa</td>
<td>Head of Public Relations</td>
<td>Talking Drum Studios</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis will apply a triangulation of policy documents, the Programme Schedule Analysis with interviews. A content analysis on available news scripts to assess news priority. Most community/regional radios have not developed proper sound archives and recorded programme tapes are recycled due to shortage of materials.

6.1.3 The Theoretical framework

The public sphere theory and the political economy theory are applicable to this chapter. The development of broadcast pluralism and the opening of the broadcasting sphere to all citizens in the country are recent developments in Sierra Leone. Broadcasting was just limited to the capital city and its environs excluding the majority of the population. With the proliferation of community and regional radio stations the ordinary citizens are now included in the broadcasting sphere (Tam-Baryoh, 2006). The use of local languages by local community and state regional stations has opened public participation in the broadcasting sphere. The lack of education as a limiting factor to participate in the media sphere in Sierra Leone is no longer the case for the 85% illiterate population. Presently ordinary people are receiving information and education in their own language in their own community through radio (Maura et al., 1997). Studying the programme schedule statistics it demonstrates that 85% of local radio broadcast is in the local languages. This has widened public participation in the public sphere it is the highest level of access and public participation in the public sphere of broadcasting since 1937 before this local language broadcast was just 20% (Holmes, 1999). The political economic theory is utilised to discuss the issue of sustainability as broadcasting houses are becoming more commercial in orientation pinpointing the conflict of public interest versus profit-making objectives. The programme schedule statistics shows that 50% of the
broadcast time is dedicated to commercials and music. Tam-Baryoh (2006:18) argues that the dependence of community radio stations on commercials would reduce the democratic functions of broadcasting. The practical situation is that broadcasting is a very expensive venture to run. Maura et al., (1997:7) say the high cost is because of the lack of electricity supply which makes broadcasting depends on standby generators and the purchase of fuel. This has reduced broadcast time and increased commercial interest with serious consequences for the public sphere. Furthermore, media related NGOs are winding up their activities in Sierra Leone this means that the stations have to find alternative means of generating revenues.

6.2 Section 1 - The New Media Landscape in Sierra Leone
The new media landscape in Sierra Leone reveals that there is media pluralism in terms of the multiplicity of independent community and government-owned radio stations. The government-owned regional stations are limited to government information in the public sphere on the other hand independent community radio stations create local public access and participation in the public sphere (Tam-Baryoh, 2006:19). According to Kasoma (1999:445), independent media means that private individuals, organisations or communities and not the government should own the media. The following diagram shows the new media landscape.
Fig. 6.4: The New Media Landscape

The new Media Landscape

Twenty-nine Independent Radio Stations
- 23 Community radio
- 2 commercial
- 4 International

Six Government stations
- FM 99.9 Freetown
- SLBS Bo
- SLBS Kenema
- SLBS Makeni
- SLBS Kono
- SLBS Kailahun


In the diagram, the four international radio stations are one peacekeeping radio (Radio UNAMSIL) and three international re-broadcast stations these are BBC, VOA and RFI. It shows that independent radio stations outnumber government stations 29 to 6. Community radio stations are 24 while regional stations are five the ratio is approximately 5:1. The implication is that community radios cover a greater percentage of the country than regional radio stations. This means that the ordinary people have more access to the public sphere of broadcasting which has excluded them for a long period. According to Tam-Baryoh (2006:16) as recently as the early 1990s there was very little radio service in Sierra Leone with the state broadcaster Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) maintaining only a small radio operation covering 25% of the population meaning that 75% had no access to radio services. Since the mid-90s, there is the proliferation of FM radio stations. There are about 31 domestic radio stations on air in 2005 - 6 state stations and 25 non-state stations serving a large percent of the population.
6.2.1 Classification of Stations

In the Final Radio Policy Document (2005: 5-6) the IMC mainly registered three categories of broadcasting organisations these are community, commercial and public service. All categories pay registration fee with the exception of public service broadcasting. This PSB category refers to SLBS and its regional stations and the United Nations’ Radio UNMASIL. The IMC Status of Radio report (2005:2) regards these stations as ‘unregistered’ this suggests that government-owned stations are outside the jurisdiction of the IMC. On the other hand, the Final Radio Policy Document (2005:7) considers the registration of these stations as ‘gratis’ meaning that they are under the IMC but it decides to wave their registration fees. The table below illustrates the stations with gratis.

Table 6.5: Government and International stations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Station</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SLBS Freetown</td>
<td>New England</td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>Public Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLBS, Bo</td>
<td>Bo</td>
<td>95.0</td>
<td>Public Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLBS, Kenema</td>
<td>Kenema</td>
<td>93.1</td>
<td>Public Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLBS Makeni</td>
<td>Makeni</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>Public Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLBS, Kono</td>
<td>Kono</td>
<td></td>
<td>Public service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio UNAMSIL</td>
<td>Aberdeen</td>
<td>103.0</td>
<td>Public Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio RFI</td>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>Rebroadcast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>International</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Radio France International (RFI) is within the same category of gratis. According to Holmes (1999:156), the agreement between RFI and the SLBS was a barter scheme in which SLBS traded off part of Leicester Peak (SLBS transmitter site) for the installation of RFI FM 89.9 for some technical assistance. Some of the addresses of these stations are located in Freetown; Aberdeen is a seaside village, Leicester is in the mountain district and New England Ville is the location of SLBS and some
government offices west of the city. Bo and Kenema are the headquarter-towns of the south and eastern regions and Kono is the diamond-mining district in the east.


6.2.1.1 Community Radio

The IMC Final Radio Policy document (2005:6(1)) states that, "A community radio/television station is one which is for, by and about the community whose ownership and management is representative of the community, which pursues social development agenda and which is not for profit." This characteristic of community radio is similar to the South African Broadcasting Act 1991, which states that a board democratically elected by members of the community should manage a community radio. The programming should reflect the needs of the community and highlight grassroots and developmental issues such as health care, information, education, and entertainment. Mtimde et al. (1999:26) say community broadcasting refers to a not-for-profit service, owned and controlled by a community under an association, trust, or foundation. NGOs working in local communities can own radio stations. Community is a geographically based group of persons or collective of people sharing common character or interest. They maintain that community radio is a potential agent for social change and an engine for democratisation. Groups that have no access to mainstream media can express themselves through community radios. In countries with totalitarian governments, community radio is often the voice of the opposition. The World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) states that
community radio is the active participation of the community in programme making and radio management. The ethos of community radio is to stay independent of economic and political control (AMARC online, 2003; Realradio online, 2003).

6.2.1.2 Commercial Radio

Commercial stations prioritise profit-making interest over public interest but should serve the interest of the public. The Final Radio Policy Document (2005:6(ii)) states, “A commercial radio/television station is one that is broadcasting for profit but is not exempt from public service responsibility. This is recorded under the Independent Media Act and Media Code of Practice.” According to the IMC Radio Code of Conduct (2005), it is an obligation that all broadcasting media carry out PSB services by providing informative and educational programmes and promote national unity. According to the South African Broadcasting Act 1999, commercial broadcasting operates for profit and broadcast programmes in South Africa’s official languages addressing a wide section of the South African public. McChesney (2003:127) says commercial broadcasting in the US is a profit orientation of mass media firms depending on advertising as the principal source of income. Most Latin American countries established commercial broadcasting because the Americans set up industries, which support broadcasting with advertising (Fox, 1988:7-8). Africa is not so privileged Maura et al., (1997:31) aver the inadequate or complete lack of advertising support of the media houses in Sierra Leone which has made them desperate for advertising revenues and thus susceptible to manipulation by advertisers.
6.2.1.3 Public Service Broadcast

According to the IMC Final Radio Policy document (2005:6(iii)),

A public radio/television station is one set up by legislation, accountable to the public through an independent board, protected against interference of a political or economic nature, with editorial independence and adequately funded in a manner that protects it from arbitrary interference. Its transmission should cover the whole country with politically balanced programmes. It should abstain from engaging in commercial activities.

This means that the PSB should have its political and economic independence. Palmer (1969) and Strasser-King (1995) made similar recommendations for the SLBS to become a PSB. According to the South Africa Broadcasting Act 1991, public service broadcasting should reflect both the unity and diverse culture, and multilingual nature of South Africa. It should strive to provide quality news and public affairs programmes, which should meet high journalistic standards including unbiased coverage, impartiality, balance and independent from political and private interests. A significant amount of its time should be dedicated to educational and informative programming and consider minority interests.

According to McQuail (2000:156), public service broadcasting is an organisation set up by law financed by public funds and given a large degree of editorial and operating independence. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) grew out of recommendations of the Crawford Committee which recommended that “broadcasting service should be conducted by a public corporation acting as Trustee for the national interest and its status and duties should correspond with those of a public service”
Public service broadcasting’s main function is to educate, inform, and entertain the public. Seymour-Ure (1999:60-65) affirms that the PSB should offer universality of service and the audience must have equal right to receiving programmes.

### 6.2.1.4 Rural Broadcast

Rural regional broadcasting limits the broadcasting sphere to government information at the local level. The IMC Final Radio Policy (2005) did not give any definition for rural broadcasting and the South African Act 1991 did not make provision for rural broadcasting. This is because the definition of rural broadcasting is analogous to community radio broadcasting with slight variations. Mtimde et al. (1999:26-27) state that rural radio is an effective means of communication by the government with rural people stressing that state involvement in rural radio reduces its ability to reflect the concerns of the community. Issiaka (1998) believes that the process of democratisation that has occurred almost everywhere in Africa has led to the demonopolisation of the airwaves including rural radio (Basisradio online, 2003). Officially, the government calls provincial radio stations regional stations but by definition, they are rural radio stations. Holmes (1999:144) says the Ministry of Agriculture and the SLBS coordinated rural agricultural broadcasting but until recently, no rural radio stations exist.

### 6.3 Distribution of Independent community radio and regional radio

The examination of the distribution of radio stations is necessary to determine the spread of broadcasting this suggests that the wider the spread the more public access and participation in the public sphere. According to Holmes (1999) and Maura et al., (1997), the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service was a government monopoly covering
less than 25% of the country but with the introduction of broadcast pluralism (Rowe, 1998) the coverage of broadcasting is approximately countrywide. Talking about the distribution of the Ghana broadcasting system Ansah (1986) says the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation operates a three-channel radio service these are GBC-1, GBC-11 and an external service. He speaks about GBC regional, independent community and commercial radio networks to give an indication of the spread of broadcasting. This analysis compares regional radio stations’ distribution to that of the independent radio stations.

6.3.1 The distribution of Regional Radio Stations

The Regional Radio Stations are established in the headquarter towns of each of the regions. Sierra Leone is politically divided into three regions and an area. The headquarters of the northern region is Makeni, the southern region is Bo and the eastern region is Kenema. The capital city of Freetown is located in the western area, which is not regarded as a region. The distribution of the regional radio stations is as follows:
The north and the south have one regional station each whilst the east has three, one each in Kailahun, Kono and Kenema. This shows that there is an uneven distribution of regional stations in the country. The reason for this was that the east was targeted for post war trauma healing and peace messages - the two extra towns with regional radio stations Kailahun and Kono were captured and devastated by fighting forces; Kailahun was used as the RUF rebel base and Kono was captured for its diamond resources. According to the Ministry of Information document for the establishment of regional stations (1999:1), it is the government's policy to allocate one regional station in the headquarters of each region. Kenema is the headquarter town of the east therefore it should have a regional station. According to the Report on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2005:Vol.3A), when the Revolutionary United Front
(RUF) launched its rebellion in Sierra Leone it captured Kono to mine and sell diamond for ammunition. It was through this blood diamond trade that it was able to prolong the war therefore, the government targeted Kono for peace sensitisation campaign.

According to the Report on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2005:Vol.1), Kailahun is a border town between Liberia and Sierra Leone; it was the military base of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). The town was one of the last liberated at the end of the war hence the government established the regional station as part of the trauma healing process. Other International governmental organisations are targeting the same community for example USAID helped to establish Radio Moa in Kailahun for the same purpose (Foday-Musa, 2004).

6.3.2 Distribution of Community Radio Stations

Community radio stations by far outnumber regional radio stations in the country. This distribution means that the ordinary people have more access to the public sphere. DfID fully supported the setting up of regional radio stations while a large percentage of donor agencies are supporting the establishment of community radio stations (DfID Radio Document, 1999; Nicol, 2003). Independent community radio stations are receiving more support because of their democratic potential of grassroots’ empowerment and participation in the public sphere (Mtimde et al., 1999:4).
The stations in the Western Area outnumber those in the other regions with nine community radio stations these are; Radio Believers Network, Citizen Radio, Radio democracy, Education Radio, Radio Life Venture, SKYY, Radio Mount Aureole, Voice of Peninsular and Voice of the handicapped. As oppose to six each in the north and south. The radio stations in the south are Radio Bontico, KISS 104, Radio MODCAR, Radio New Song, Education Radio, and Trinity Radio. The six stations in the north are radio Bitumani, Radio Gbaft, Radio Gbonkonlenken, Radio Maria, Radio Kolenten and Radio Mankneh. There are only three stations in the east these are Eastern Radio, Radio Moa and Radio Nongowa (IMC Status of Radio Report, 2004). In the west is the capital city of Freetown the seat of government administration and the location of most service provider and small-scale industries. This is a very good environment for broadcasting which largely depends on
advertising for its sustainability. It is also easy access to political information for newsgathering.

The east is the most disadvantaged in terms of community radio distribution it has only three community radio stations. According to the Report on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2005; Vol.1), it was occupied by the rebel forces during the war and was one of the last regions liberated after the war. These are some of the debilitating factors, which contributed to the slow introduction of community radio stations in the region.

Community radio stations are evenly distributed in the north and south with six in the north and six in the south. There was no access in the east during the war but some parts of the south and the north were accessible for most part of the ten-year civil conflict. For example, two years into the war Andrew Kromah established KISS104 in Bo the capital of the south. When the rebels captured Makeni the headquarters of the north the radio station (Radio Mankneh) re-established itself in Mile 91 in another community in the north that was accessible (Kromah, 2004; Kamara, 2004).

In the IMC Annual Report the Chair, Cole (2006) says that IMC is keeping with its mandate to promote media pluralism by registering seven (7) new newspapers, twelve (12) new radio stations, five (5) new television stations and three (3) DSTV agencies. This brings the total number of newspapers operating in the country to thirty-nine (39), radio stations to thirty-one (31), international radio relay station to four (4), DTH/DSTV agencies to four (4) and television stations to six (6) although only three of them are operational. This radio distribution analysis shows that there is broadcast pluralism leading to greater grassroots access and participation through the introduction of independent community and regional radio stations. The next section
discusses how and why these changes take place the factors that are responsible for
the proliferation of broadcasting in the country.

6.4 Section 2 - Reasons for the change in the broadcasting landscape in Sierra Leone

The proliferation of independent community radio stations was to create access to the
public sphere by the ordinary people in Sierra Leone. Internal and external factors are
responsible for the change in the broadcast landscape. The internal reasons are the war
(the absence and presence of radio), the introduction of political pluralism and change
in broadcasting regulatory framework. The external reasons are the foreign
interventions that contributed to the development of broadcasting. These are foreign
governments, international NGOs, Peacekeeping Missions, religious involvement, and
International rebroadcast. These points are going to be fully analysed for greater
comprehension of the situation.

6.4.1 Internal Factors

The internal factors for media development in developing countries are hard to
conceptualise within available theories. McQuail (2000:155) states that there is a need
to have a category of ‘development theory’ among others, which would identify the
reality of those societies undergoing a transition from underdevelopment and
colonialism, to independence. Mytton (1983:66) says that there is no coherent agreed
philosophy for media in African countries. Most African countries started to gain
independence in the 60s and began to form their own political and socio-economic
culture but this was fraught with economic and political instability (Imobighe:
1999:77). The internal factors will be analysed from three perspectives - the war
situation, political pluralism and change in regulatory framework.
6.4.1.1 The War Situation

One of the internal reasons for the change in the media landscape in Sierra Leone was the war situation. According to Tam-Baryoh (2006:13), the decade of war was disastrous for the media but it also helped to bring ‘revolutionary changes’ for media pluralism. The aftermath of the war and political pluralism facilitated media evolution in Sierra Leone. Therefore, the period of analysis will be during the war and its aftermath. The war situation could be analysed from two perspectives (1) the absence of radio stations which created an information gap and (2) the presence of radio, which was utilised as a war propaganda machine.

According to Holmes (1999:134) and Rowe (1998:7), the ineffectiveness of a radio station during the war created information gap; the SLBS was covering about 25% of the country. Maura et al., (1997:6-8) attribute this problem to faulty short wave transmitters, lack of electricity supply and maintenance culture. This information gap resulted in war mongering, disinformation and rumour mongering. Holmes (1999:154-157) argues that “....SLBS salvation arrived in the form of local and private FM broadcasting stations, scattered around the country to fill the void that SLBS struggled with throughout its existence.” The first station established under these circumstances was Radio Nongowa FM 95.3 in Kenema headquarter-town east of Sierra Leone. Holmes (1999:154) says it was set up to allow people trapped behind rebel lines to receive messages from concerned relatives and the government.

In an analogous situation Andrew Kromah with the backing of the community established KISS 104 FM in Bo headquarter-town south in 1993. Kromah suffered great loss during the war; he lost his mining and farming equipment and rebels killed several of his workers. Kromah (Interview: 2004) avows, “It hurts me most when I
could not send messages to families and friends. If there were radio stations, it could have helped. This information gap was frightful particularly for the people most affected by the war in the rural areas.”

The government was determined to reach thousands of Sierra Leoneans who found themselves behind rebel lines cut off from the rest of the country. Holmes (1999:154-155) declares that “the young military government realised the importance of setting up FM systems around the nation not only for national development projects but to reach the masses in occupied areas controlled by rebel forces”. This means that relevant information was not available to the people in rebel-controlled areas. There was disruption in the traditional forms of communication during this period; oral transmission of information was tainted with misinformation therefore, radio was the most reliable means of communication. Towards the end of the war, the country was faced with a new set of problems resulting in warring factions using radio as an instrument for war propaganda (Holmes, 1999:146). In 1996, the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) handed over power to Ahmad Tejan Kabbah leader of the Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP) after a parliamentary and presidential election. The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) overthrew this government on 25 May 1997 but this military junta did not gain de-facto or de-jure recognition. According to Holmes (1999:148), the junta captured the SLBS to disseminate propaganda to gain legitimacy. The exiled government in Guinea a neighbouring country to Sierra Leone acquired Radio Democracy 98.1 FM as a pro-government/pro-democracy radio station to oppose the junta. Rowe (1998:9) says the station was set up to counter SLBS junta-run broadcasting its main objective was to propagate the reinstatement of the exiled government. Radio Democracy known as SLBS 98.1
started broadcasting on 7th July 1997 from the headquarters of ECOMOG the Nigerian-led Peacekeeping Forces. According to Spencer (Interview: 2004), “Funds were raised from the Sierra Leone Mission in New York to buy a small transmitter. The British government through DfID agreed to fund its expansion with a bigger transmitter and equipment. The station transmits for ten or more hours a day despite intermittent attacks from the military regime.” Rowe (1998:10) and Holmes (1999:149) vent on the international support the government had to set up Radio Democracy to promote the cause of democracy.

Julius Spencer a journalist and senior drama lecturer at the Fourah Bay College (FBC) University of Sierra Leone pioneered the setting up of the station. Its broadcast was partial to the exiled government’s position. Spencer (Interview: 2004) says,

Radio Democracy was broadcasting on behalf of the legitimate government, as it was the legitimate voice of the people. SLBS was broadcasting in favour of the military regime. It was clandestine because it was in hiding. If the junta caught the broadcasters, they would have killed them and destroyed the equipment. Its function was to counter the propaganda of the junta and provide hope for the people of Sierra Leone for the reinstatement of the government and that the coup should not succeed.

This means that Radio Democracy was set as a pro-government station to counter propaganda from SLBS. Rowe (1998) and Tam-Baryoh (2006) account for the establishment of Radio Democracy and its political functions during the war. They agree that the junta captured the SLBS because as a government-owned station whichever government comes to power whether democratic or military considers the station as its personal property. Maura et al., (1997:8) assert that this problem can be
resolved if SLBS is incorporated as PSB. In this case, both parties used radio as war propaganda instrument. Holmes (1999:150) and Tam-Baryoh (2006:5) affirm that the ECOMOG peacekeeping forces re-instated the legitimate government in March 1998 and returned the country to democratic rule. It also ushered in a period of relative peace with the support of the United Nations and the British government. Spencer who became the Minister of Information and Broadcasting pushed for independent control of broadcasting because he did not want FM 98.1 to be under government-owned SLBS.

6.4.1.2 Aftermath of the War - Political pluralism

After the war, there was the restoration of stability, relative peace and political pluralism in Sierra Leone. The 1991 Constitution replaced the One-Party Constitution. The government lifted the ban on multiparty politics, re-instituted the Interim National Electoral Commission and conducted parliamentary and presidential elections in 1996 during the war and 2000 after the war, the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) won both elections. This political transformation evolved with the development of broadcasting leading to the institutionalisation of media pluralism. Habermas conceptualises the theory of the public sphere within political pluralism and media pluralism. According to Stevenson (1988), authoritarian governments reject change of broadcast but democratic governments accept media pluralism as this diagram shows.
According to Palmer (1969), the All Peoples Congress (APC) one party rule rejected the 1969 Commonwealth Consultant’s report to make SLBS a PSB. The government did not give any reason except that the country was not ready for that type of broadcasting system. Strasser-King (1995) recommends the partial or complete withdrawal of government from broadcasting but the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) did not respond to this suggestion. Rowe (1998) recommends the introduction of broadcasting pluralism and the legislation of an independent media regulatory body. The SLPP government accepted the recommendation by creating the Independent Media Commission (IMC) with the mandate of promoting media
pluralism in Sierra Leone. This shows that as the country moves from authoritarian to democratic regimes broadcasting changed from government monopoly to pluralism. The change in the media regulatory policy is significant to the public sphere of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. If the media are government-controlled, they will not be able to perform their democratic functions as a public sphere but if they are free and open, there will be diversity of opinion and critical public participation in politics. In the old regulatory system, the government regulates media so that it can determine which media can or cannot operate. This means that the government can easily refuse to grant license to media that are critical of it. The government can also pass restrictive laws that will make it impossible for alternative media to operate. In such situation, there is no question of media political independence or an opened public participation in the media. In the new regulatory framework, the Independent Media Commission (IMC) is now responsible to regulate the media with the mandate to promote media pluralism and encourage diversity of views and opinions, and public participation in the media sphere. These are the internal reasons for the introduction of media pluralism media in Sierra Leone.

6.5 External Agencies support media pluralism after the war

The dependence on international donor agencies for the development of the broadcast sphere in Sierra Leone is worthy of note. It raises the issue of the political economy of broadcasting and the sustainability of broadcasting after donor funding. Western democratic countries recognise media pluralism as an integral part of democratic culture which explains their willingness to assist Sierra Leone to develop its media as an emergent democracy. Donor agencies have made democracy and free media conditionality for support. This was to encourage a free, open, and transparent public
sphere for accountability in the socio-political system that nurtures public participation in the democratisation process (Nyamnjoh, 1999). It was not surprising therefore, for Sierra Leone to receive assistance for media development. The external factors involve foreign institutions providing financial and technical support for the establishment of stations. These are the British Department for International Development (DFID), the Dutch Government’s Department for International Cooperation and United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Holmes (1999:125) and Schiller (1992) describe this as technological dependency in the sense that Africa depends on the west for the acquisition of media technology. They cite examples of international organisations assisting broadcasting in developing countries these are the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). There are also the Union of National Radio and Television Organisations of Africa (URTNA), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Dutch government through the Radio Nederland Training Centre (RNTC), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

6.5.1 Foreign Governments’ Intervention

Maura et al., (1997:3) holds that the international community was very sympathetic to the plight of Sierra Leoneans during the war. The British government assisted with troops in bringing the war to an end and effect regime change. At the end of the war, Sierra Leone considers radio broadcasting as the principal media for sensitising the people about peace and post war rehabilitation. This realisation encouraged the international community to assist the country establish its broadcast industry. An in-depth analysis on foreign government contribution to broadcasting development in
Sierra Leone will contribute to understanding the situation. These are the British, the Dutch, and the United States of America governments.

6.5.1.1 British Government’s Contribution

The former Minister of Information and Broadcasting Spencer (Interview: 2004) says

After the 1997 coup, the then British High Commissioner in Sierra Leone, in concert with the Sierra Leone government, convinced the British government that the only way to reduce disinformation in the country was to ensure the establishment of SLBS Regional Radio Stations for effective government communication.

According to the DfID Regional Radio Document (1999:1) and Tam-Baryoh (2006:19), these stations will be utilised to service the people and administrations in the regions with public information. The British government through DfID established the first regional station in Kenema as a pilot station in the east. The government opened the second station in Bo in the south and the third in Makeni in the north, and in the Kono district the diamondiferous area in the country. DfID acquired the equipment and trained the local personnel. This was in fulfilment of Rowe’s (1998) and Strasser-King’s (1995) recommendations that the government should establish regional stations to strengthen the capacity of the SLBS. This was an attempt to strengthen the state broadcaster to be more effective in performing its public service responsibility by catering for the majority of the citizenry. In other words, this development has opened the public sphere of the SLBS to the grassroots in the local communities.

The government established regional stations to respond to the proliferation of independent community radio stations countrywide. The government argues that “the
regional station project was part of the government’s plan to decentralise the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service so that the service would be more available countrywide” (DFID Project Document, 1999:2). This was to bridge information gap between the urban and rural areas, and broadens the public sphere by extending state broadcasting to the ordinary people.

6.5.1.2 Dutch Government Assistance

The Dutch government through its International Development Department and the Radio Nederland Training Centre (RNTC) initiated ‘The Initiative for Mobile Training for Community Radio’ (INFORMOTRAC) for three countries in West Africa; Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau and Senegal. It was part of the Dutch government’s strategy to enhancing democracy in these countries. Mtimde et al., (1998) say community radio empowers the ordinary people to participate in the political, social and economic policymaking in developing countries. This is within the context of the public sphere, which encourages public participation in the democratisation process through the media. The official website of INFORMOTRAC shows that the package for Sierra Leone involves assisting ten existing community radio stations and to establish six more. The project includes the provision of transmitters, antennae systems and broadcast equipment. According to the coordinator of the programme Nicol (Interview: 2004),

The project is assisting existing community radio stations. These are Radio Democracy 98.1, Voice of the Handicapped VOH 96.2, Voice of the Peninsular (Tombo Radio), Radio Gbaft in Mile 91, Radio Mankneh in Makeni, and Radio Kailahun, and the government regional stations. The
project will establish stations in five communities, Kono, Kabala, Bumbuna, Kenema, and Bonthe Island.

Tam-Baryoh (2006:31) utters that INFORMOTRAC focuses on establishing community radio stations with the supply of basic equipment and training of local broadcasters for professionalism. He also numbers the community and public radio stations the programme supports as Nicol (2004) mentioned above.

6.5.1.3 The USA government Support

The US government through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) West Africa Programme sponsored Radio Moa in Kailahun. Kailahun is a war-devastated area in the east of Sierra Leone near the Guinean-Liberian border. It is the farthest district from the capital Freetown and the political system neglected it concerning social development. This is a case of a local community empowered by a radio station to participate and contribute to the public sphere of debate. Mtimde et al., (1998:15) say community radio should represent the voice of the voiceless in the public sphere of broadcasting. USAID worked with Talking Drum Studio Sierra Leone (TDS-SL) to execute the project (USAID-SL online, 2004). The Public Relations Officer of TDS-SL Foday-Musa (Interview: 2004) says,

The decade-long rebel occupation of this area during the civil war traumatised the people. The station addresses the particular psychological needs of the population and is very successful, because it airs uncensored public opinion, gives out good information and news.

The radio station started operations in December 2003 and broadcast local news and announcements in three local languages Krio, Kissi and Mende.
Community members who wanted relevant information about local and national events built Radio Moa station (USAID SL Online, 2004). Local landowners and members of the community gave the land, provided labour and donated local construction materials. USAID provided the transmitter, basic studio equipment, tape recorders and bicycles for mobility. Tam-Baryoh (2006:18) states that with financial assistance from USAID and implementation driven by Search for Common Ground Sierra Leone (SFCG-SL), the organisation supported community radio stations such as Radio Moa to empower local communities with information and education through radio.

6.5.2 International NGOs Assistance

International NGOs are interested in opening the public sphere in Sierra Leone by contributing to developing the local media aimed at empowering local communities to engage in the democratisation process. Some of the main financial contributors to media development in post-conflict Sierra Leone are media related NGOs such as Search for Common Ground (SFCG-SL) and Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA). Presenting a paper on 'The establishment and operation of media related NGOs in Sierra Leone', Tam-Baryoh (2003:30) asseverates that “Media related NGOs enhance the capacity building for media in Sierra Leone by providing training, giving technical support and funding, and advocacy.” He cites the examples of Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA) and Talking Drum Studios (TDS-SL).

6.5.2.1 Search for Common Ground (Talking Drum Studio)

Search for Common Ground Sierra Leone (SFCG-SL) known locally as Talking Drum Studio (TDS-SL) is an international NGO based in Washington established in
Sierra Leone in 2000. It aims at peaceful negotiated settlement of conflicts by using the media as the medium for communication. Through its radio programmes, it has created a platform for national debate pertinent to post-war peace sensitisation campaigns. The TDS-SL Head of Media and Public Relations Foday-Musa (Interview: 2004) says, "Since its inception TDS-SL has assisted to establish community radio stations in five communities. These stations are Radio Moa in Kailahun, Radio Bintumani in Kabala, Radio Gbafth in Mile 91, Radio Peninsular in Tombo and Radio Mankneh in Makeni." It is acting as an advocate organisation for community radio stations. Tam-Baryoh (2006:30) states that since 2000, TDS-SL has done much work in media advocacy and institutional capacity building through the provision of funds and equipment for the operation of community media. This is to empower the local community to discuss community development and to reflect on peace and reconciliation.

Talking Drum Studio has established partnerships with local radio stations by producing peace-building programmes broadcast on all radio stations in the country. Foday-Musa (Interview: 2004) says "TDS-SL does not pay radio stations to broadcast programmes but it compensates them with studio equipment, stationery and running costs such as purchasing fuel. It signs a six-month memorandum of understating with each radio station it is dealing with." The memorandum is renewable after it expired avowing that radio stations are free to reject or participate in the programme. According to Tam-Baryoh (2006:46), as incentive to individual stations that air its programmes, TDS-SL gives fuel, batteries, stationery and minimal financial assistance to buy cassettes and other items. He confirms that various NGOs that are establishing community radio stations are producing programmes for these stations to
broadcast. He maintains that TDS-SL designs its education programmes to promote a culture of peaceful resolution to conflict, which community radio stations broadcast across the country.

6.5.2.2 The Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA)

The Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA) provides a grant to community radios in Sierra Leone to secure transmitters and equipment. OSIWA sent this money to the Community Radio Network (CORNET) a recently formed organisation that coordinates the activities of community radio stations in country. CORNET purchased these transmitters from Broadcast Solutions in South Africa and government waived custom duty of 70 Million Leones (about a thousand dollars (US)) to clear the equipment. CORNET contracted an engineer from South Africa to install and do test runs before the transmitters were handed over to the communities (CORNET Document, 2000). Tam-Baryoh (2006:75) says the Open Society Initiative of West Africa (OSIWA) an affiliate foundation of George Soros’ Open Society Initiative (OSI) of New York funded CORNET with US$ 1 million to pay licence fees for smaller CORNET stations across the country, supply radio and studio equipment, train CORNET staff on new broadcast technologies and allocate funds for initial expenses. He says the government of Sierra Leone waived the import duty of US$38,000 to CORNET to clear radio equipment from customs.

The Secretary of CORNET Massaquoi (Interview: 2004) says, “The funds from OSIWA were expended like this; each radio station had US$75,000 approved. Ten of these stations are purely community radio stations and three are SLBS regional radio stations.” The organisation assisted the regional stations because of the role they are
playing in educating and sensitising the local communities on government information. Massaquoi (Interview, 2004) says the communities to benefit are Bonthe mainland south of Sierra Leone, Punehun in the southeast on the border of Liberia, and Kambia that is in the northwest on the Guinean border. In Freetown, the communities are the Mass Communication Department Fourah Bay College University of Sierra Leone, Kissy on the outskirts of Freetown, and Tombo a fishing community in the Freetown Peninsular. Tam-Baryoh (2006:75-76) says CORNET is assisting 11 community radio stations which are also members of the organisation and 2 affiliate stations. These stations are Voice of Women in Matru Jung (south), Radio Wane (south), Radio Gbafth-Mile 91 (north), Radio Mankneh (north), Radio Kolenten-Kambia (north), Voice of the Handicapped (west), Radio Peninsular (western rural), Eastern Radio (east). SLBS Makeni (north) and SLBS Kailahun (east) are affiliate stations because they are state regional stations that are benefiting from the project.

6.5.3 Peacekeeping Missions Initiative

The British Forces, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Forces ECOMOG, and the United Nations Mission to Sierra Leone assisted in ending the war. Some of these established their radio station for peace messages. The United Nations established Radio UNAMSIL and the British Forces initiated the British Forces Broadcasting Service (BFBS). In his paper Star Radio: A case study of peacekeeping efforts through radios in Liberia, Okoli (2001) says peace media are perfect tools for spreading the spirit of reconciliation. They are so termed because they are set up to promote peace and disseminate truthful information to alternate negative viewpoints towards a peaceful resolution of conflict (PCMLP online, 2006).
According to the Head of Radio UNAMSIL Dallas (Interview: 2004), Radio UNAMSIL was established in 1999 by the United Nations as part of the Public Information Section of the United Nations Mission to Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) to promote peace in the country. “The radio station of the United Nations Peace Mission in Sierra Leone is fully dedicated to getting the word out about the peace process and counteracts negative stories on the peace mission, strengthening state institutions and socio-political reforms through effective programming.” Tam-Baryoh (2006:18) affirms that Radio UNAMSIL programmes emphasise peace building, neutrality and support democratic values. It has about seven transmitters located in Freetown, Koidu, Kailahun, Kenema, Magburaka, Bo and a shortwave transmitter in Goderich Freetown.

Maura et al., (1998:25) avouch that the British Forces Radio came into being when the British forces arrived in Sierra Leone to help with the war. The main aim of the system was to broadcast messages and entertainment to the British troops fighting in Sierra Leone. In the process, Sierra Leoneans were able to catch the signals and benefited from this station. Since it was a security issue, no one knows the location of the station from beginning to end of its transmission.

6.5.4 Religious Intervention

International religious groups also helped to establish Christian religious stations to propagate the word of God and serve the needs of various communities. Holmes (1999:155) states that in 1993 the Wesleyan church (Makeni) in partnership with the American Wesleyan Mission opened the Wesleyan Broadcasting Station. Grace International established another Christian religious station Believers Broadcasting
Network (BBN) FM 93. There was also the Al-Quran Al-Karim a shortwave Muslim radio station at Waterloo operated by a young Muslim group from Kuwait. The IMC Final Radio Policy document (2005:6(IV)) makes provision for the registration of religious stations. "A religious broadcasting/television station is one that is set up purposely for religious broadcast but which is not exempt from public service responsibility under the Independent Media Commission Act and Media Code of Practice and is not for profit." In Nigeria, it is not acceptable to open religious stations. According to Uche (1999:537), Nigeria's National Broadcasting Decree prohibits the registration of religious organisations. He suggests that this was because of an increase in religious fundamentalism in the country. Sierra Leone consists of both Muslims and Christians (Alie, 1999; Wyse, 1989) but there is no evidence of religious extremism.

The new stations are Radio Maria and Radio Trinity. The Director Radio Maria, Turay (Interview: 2004) utters, "Radio Maria Sierra Leone was sponsored by Radio Maria International. It funded the Makeni Catholic Diocese to acquire the transmitter, equipment, and technical facilities to establish station." Radio Maria International is a worldwide association operating in over forty countries aiming to evangelise and bringing Christ to people and promote human and social development through the media (Radio Maria International online, 2006). According to the Acting Station Manager Gander Radio Trinity (Interview: 2004), "Radio Trinity was sponsored by Gal-Com International a Christian organisation in Canada which aims at helping Christian or Para church organisations to set up broadcasting houses donated this station." The organisation gave the radio station as a free donation to the Christian
community of Bo. The Bo community formally launched Radio Trinity on November 2003 (Gal-Com International online, 2006).

### 6.5.5 International Broadcast Organisations

International Broadcast Organisations are establishing local FM stations in Sierra Leone to facilitate easy access to their channels. The IMC Final Radio Policy Document registers rebroadcast stations (2005:6); “A rebroadcast station (radio or television) is set up by international radio/television stations to rebroadcast their programmes in Sierra Leone.” These stations were using shortwave transmitters but access to Africa was proving difficult. To solve this problem, international stations are using local FM stations as an effective means of communication. These stations are the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Voice of America (VOA), and Radio France International (RFI).

Voice of the Handicapped (VOH) 96.2 FM is an example of a local station working in partnership with the BBC. According to Maura et al. (1997:36), Voice of the Handicapped (VOH) was established on April 24 1996, pioneered by the disabled associations in Sierra Leone and mainly operated by the blind and deaf people at both production and administrative levels. VOH shares its frequency with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), which provided equipment and training for the operation of the station. Each of the two partners has twelve hours of the 24 hours of daily broadcasting service (Maura et al., 1997; Cullen, Interview: 2004).

The BBC has its own FM station running 24 hours. According to a memorandum submitted by the BBC World Service to the House of Common (2001), The BBC World Service is increasingly establishing a presence on FM, either on its own or in
partnership with a local station in many countries. It is now present on FM in 120 of
the world's capital cities. Although short wave remains essential in reaching many
areas, local FM stations have made a massive impact in many developing countries
(Parliament Publication UK online, 2007). Across the African continent, the BBC is
opening FM Stations at two levels: (1) by setting up FM relay stations which provide
a continuous crystal-clear signal to audiences in the major African cities and (2) by
going into partnership with local FM stations, which re-broadcast BBC's news and
general programmes. Apart from establishing stations in the English speaking African
countries such as Sierra Leone and Ghana, the BBC is also targeting French speaking.
The BBC set up its first French speaking FM station in Ivory Coast in 1994. The
second and the third were established in Congo Brazzaville and Dakar Senegal
respectively.

To challenge the domineering presence of the BBC in the region Radio France
International (RFI) set up its transmitters in Sierra Leone. According to Holmes
(199:156) on November 12 1994, Radio France International (RFI) established a
powerful 24-hour broadcasting service on FM 89.9 relay station at the Leicester Peak
building site in Freetown Sierra Leone. RFI networks its English programmes to
Sierra Leone via satellite from Paris. It’s English programmes are also broadcast on
FM in Ghana, Uganda, Namibia, Cameroon, Liberia, Tanzania, South Africa, the
Gambia, the Seychelles, the Caribbean region, Taiwan, Ukraine, Rwanda and Kenya
(RFI online, 2007). The Voice of America also operates FM 101.1 as an international
rebroadcast station.

This analysis demonstrates that there is multiplicity of radio channels in Sierra Leone
meaning that a large percentage of the population have access to the public sphere of
broadcasting. The focus was on local community radio stations as a form of empowerment to the ordinary Sierra Leonean empowering the grassroots to participate actively in broadcasting in an informed manner is in congruence with the public sphere debate. These stations also provide a variety of programmes for the citizens the international radios produce international content, local community radios produce local content and state radios broadcast on national government issues. This means that there is diversity of messages received by the audiences this diversity of programmes is part of the public sphere debate in which radio stations produce a variety of programmes to educate and inform citizens empowering them to be functional in society. The objective of this analysis is to document the development of programme diversity and public participation in the media sphere in Sierra Leone. Programme schedule is one of the best ways to familiarise with the type of programmes broadcast (Holmes, 1999:112; Taylor, 1980:155).

6.6 Section 3 - Programme Schedule Analysis

The Programme Schedule Analysis aims at providing evidence that broadcast pluralism has broadened access and public participation in the public sphere of Sierra Leone. According to Herman et al., (1997), a public sphere can work well where there is a wide range of independent media engaged in public affairs and journalism with objectivity. They make a distinction between public service programmes that nourish the public sphere and entertainment programmes designed to amuse and pull large audiences. According to Curran (2003:346), the pluralist theory has four functions of the media, informing the public, scrutinising the government, staging public debates, expressing public opinion and exposing wrongdoing. It opposes government control of the media, maintaining that the media should be free from government control and
should act as watchdogs bringing out the ills in the society. Holmes (1999) and Taylor (1980) study the programme schedule of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service to evaluate diversity of programmes. Holmes (1999:122) discovers that SLBS broadcasts informative and educative programmes while Taylor (1980:155) believes that the SLBS programme schedule reflects programmes that are pedagogic by nature aiming at contributing to national development.

The data for this analysis are the weekly programme schedules of community and SLBS stations. It involves studying the content of these schedules to identify similarities and differences between community and state radio stations. A superficial study of these programme schedules shows some similarities of the programmes broadcast by different types of stations but an in-depth study demonstrates many divergences. All SLBS stations have similar programme schedules and all community radio stations have similar schedules. The divergence is the level of public participation in the public sphere of broadcasting - community radio stations tend to encourage public participation because local language is predominantly the medium of communication unlike state radio, which utilises the official language English limiting participation by the majority illiterate population in broadcasting. Another difference is the level of critical debate independent radio stations produce programmes that encourage critical public debate while government stations are restrictive. There are also differences in news content state broadcasters concentrate on national/government issues while community radio focuses on local community issues. The programme schedule analysis will be cross-fertilised with other existing programme schedule analysis. Kerina & Tam-Baryoh (2000) study the weekly schedules of the major radio stations in Sierra Leone as shown in the Radio
Monitoring Report Sierra Leone sponsored by the International League for Human Right (ILHR) and carried out by the Centre for Media Education and Technology (C-MET). The author contributed to this research (ILHR online, 2007).

According to the radio schedules (2004), programmes broadcast by both strata of stations are informative, educational and entertainment programmes. These manifest themselves in news and current affairs programmes, children and women’s programmes, foreign programmes, health and agriculture, religious and entertainment programmes. According to Findlay (1973:7), the mission of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service is to inform, educate and entertain. This is a typology of Reith’s Mission of the PSB, Seymour-Ure (1999) and Negrine (1989) say the public service broadcasting mission is to educate, inform and entertain. The programme schedule of the SLBS is taken as standard for all SLBS stations and the schedule of Radio Democracy is taken as standard for all community radio stations. The reason for this is that these are the two most established radio stations; local community and regional stations are yet to develop proper scheduling and classification of programmes but the SLBS and Radio Democracy are models of programme schedules for both strata of organisations.
Table 6.9: Programme schedule statistical summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service SLBS</th>
<th>Radio Democracy FM 98.1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hours daily</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Affairs / Phones- ins</td>
<td>1 6%</td>
<td>2 11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informative News</td>
<td>3 17%</td>
<td>4 22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational</td>
<td>5 28%</td>
<td>3 17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>English 14 78%</td>
<td>English 2 11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>4 22%</td>
<td>Local 16 89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial/music</td>
<td>9 50%</td>
<td>9 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Hours of Broadcast</td>
<td>18 100%</td>
<td>18 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


This statistical table was designed by finding the percentage of the hours of broadcast of a particular variable against the total hours of broadcast. These variables will be analysed against the broader picture of the public sphere theory and the political economy approach.

6.6.1 Broadcasting use of Local Language increases Public Participation

A major difference between the SLBS stations and Radio Democracy 98.1 is the percentage of local languages used in broadcasting as opposed to the English language. SLBS broadcasts 78% in English and 22% local language. Radio democracy on the other hand, broadcasts 89% local language and 11% English. The English programmes are BBC Africa News and Current Affairs programmes such as Focus on Africa and Network Africa transmitted live daily, all other programmes are in Krio the Lingua Franca. There is a slight variation in this statistical figure in relation to other sources. According to Kerina et al., (2000:3-5), approximately 98%
of all programming of the Radio Democracy is in Krio the lingua franca and 2% in English whilst SLBS broadcasts approximately 80% in the English language and 20% in the national or local languages the scholars admitted that these were estimated figures. Despite the variation, the argument still stands that a large percentage of broadcast time for Radio democracy is in the lingua franca while a high percentage of broadcast time for SLBS is in English. According to Kerina & Tam-Baryoh (2000:6), it is the general trend for community radio stations to use local language for wider grassroots participation. They say that KISS 104 Bo broadcast the majority of its programmes in Krio and Mende, which appeal to the broadest range of citizens in the community. Believers Broadcasting Network (BBN) broadcasts exclusively in Krio the lingua franca. Radio Moa broadcasts local news and announcements in three local languages, Krio, Kissi, and Mende, the local languages used in the community (USAID Sierra Leone online, 2004). All community and regional radio station interviewees admitted that community radio stations predominantly broadcast in the language of the local community.

Holmes (1999:112) and Findlay (1975:10) confirm that the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) broadcast daily in the four major national languages (Mende, Temne, Limba and Krio) and weekly in the minority languages. Fyle (1990) and Alie (1990) say Sierra Leone has about 17 ethnic groups with their individual languages and four national languages which member of the minority tribes can speak and understand (Fig.4.2). Most of these African languages are in the written form but the majority of the people use the oral form. Religious organisations and educational institutions have assisted to develop most African languages into written form but the use of these languages are still limited to oral forms because of the high level of illiteracy in the
continent. According to Chimhundu (1998:10), scholars have done many studies to develop African languages for use in education and as tools for both material and cultural uplifting. He emphasises that African languages should not be confined to oral communication but play an important role in development. In Sierra Leone, out of the 17 Sierra Leonean languages, 15 have been developed in written form (SIL online, 2007) but the majority of the population use the oral form of these languages because only 20% can read and write, and less than this percentage can actually read in their local languages. Salawu (2006:55) argues that indigenous languages have been introduced in both print and broadcasting in Africa but maintains that these languages fare better in the broadcast media than in the print media, indicating that African culture still remains largely an oral culture.

Broadcasting in the local languages has proven to be very beneficial to the mass illiterate society of Sierra Leone but the large number of languages is problematic. Ansah (1986) describes this problem as linguistic pluralism and multilingualism, or linguistic diversity (Mytton, 1983). These scholars were defining the phenomenon in which there are many indigenous languages spoken in different countries in Africa. Head (1973) outlines an incomplete list of over 175 indigenous African languages used in radio broadcasting (Mytton, 1983). In Ghana, the estimate is 44 languages out of which the government selected nine as official national languages for broadcasting (Ansah, 1986).

To solve this problem, Sierra Leone community radio stations are broadcasting in the local language predominantly spoken by the local community of transmission but this is not without problem. The Manager of the SLBS Kenema station Sio-Kamara (Interview: 2004) says a typical case of the problem is in the eastern region which is
predominantly a Mende region but the people would not allow broadcasting in Temne
the second largest tribe from the northern region. There is a large Temne presence in
the region as Kenema the headquarter town of the east is a cosmopolitan town. Radio
democracy initiated the idea to broadcast in the lingua franca Krio. This may partly be
the solution to the problem of language because about 95% of the population can
understand and speak Krio fluently (SIL online, 1996-99f) but Krio is a language of
ex-slaves (the Creoles) and might not be acceptable to many indigenous people.

The Creoles are descendants of freed slaves living in the Freetown peninsular now
capital city of Sierra Leone as a Province of Freedom purchased by the British from
local chiefs. Alie (1999:49) accounted for the first settlers who came from Britain. He
says that after the American War of Independence, many of those black slaves who
fought for the British went to Nova Scotia in Canada, but a large number of them
found their way to Britain but were repatriated to Sierra Leone due to poor conditions
of living. Their repatriation to Africa is associated with the name of Granville Sharp
and his group who founded Freetown in 1787. The Nova Scotians joined them in
1792 as the second group of ex-slaves to come to Sierra Leone. The Maroons came in
as the third group in 1800 - they were blacks from Jamaica who revolted against
slavery, but the British conquered them in 1796. At their request, the government
deported some 500 to Sierra Leone. The largest of the groups, which formed the
Creole community, were West African Recaptives, slaves rescued from slave ships by
the British Navy at the absolution of slavery between 1807 and the 1860s. These are
mostly of Nigerian Yoruba descent. According to Alie (1999:184) Krio, the language
of the creoles has offered an easily accessible channel of communication. It is not
only a medium of daily speech between the creoles but is a lingua franca for trade and
communication in Sierra Leone and it is the only language that is common to all Sierra Leonean. About 4 out of 5 million Sierra Leoneans of other ethnic groups speak Krio as a lingua franca. According to SIL (1996-99f, online), 10% of the population are L1 speakers of Krio and 95% of the remainder are L2 speakers of Krio, this means that Krio is the first language of 10% of the population but understood by 95%.

The use of local languages as the medium of communication for community radio stations has implications for the application of the public sphere. The new broadcast landscape has widened citizen’s participation and utility of the public sphere. The grassroots can receive information and education programmes in their local languages, education is no longer a requirement to contribute to critical debate or advocate for local interest. Head (1994) says the significance of African radio broadcasting is that it cuts across the problem of illiteracy by communicating in the indigenous languages of the people. Mtimde et al., (1998:17) call this the empowerment of the people they say, “Community radio is central to the success of development and democracy. It is particularly an effective means of communication in communities where most people cannot read or write.”

The use of local languages has increased the democratic participation in the public sphere. The programme schedule analysis in table 6.9 shows that 6% of the total time of broadcast of SLBS is for current affairs and phone-in programmes while for Radio Democracy it is 11%. The current affairs programmes are an extension of the news bulletins for example SLBS’ People and Event broadcast in concert with all regional stations at 07:30 hours and repeated at 09:00 every day except weekends while Radio Democracy broadcasts We tin di Bi at 21:00 hours and repeated at 07:30 hours. The
stations designed phone-in programmes to discuss current issues of the day with public participation aiming at transparency and accountability in the political and economic process. SLBS focused on standard current affairs programmes and less phone-in but radio democracy focused more on phone-in programmes. SLBS has two current affairs programmes daily People and Event and News File. It has one weekly phone-in programme Ask you Question. Radio Democracy on the other hand, has one current Affairs programme Wettin di Bi, and one-hour daily phone-in programmes. The daily use of phone-in programmes in community radio stations in the local languages is the major difference between government and community radio stations. community radios use more public participation programmes while SLBS use less. According to Kerina & Tam-Baryoh (2000:3), Radio Democracy has weekly and daily public participation programmes. These are as follows:

- **Bizness na Salon**: 45 minutes
- **Blow Mind** (letters on issues of interest), 45 minutes
- **Book tok**: 45 minutes
- **Leh wi tok** (Issues of the day) 45 minutes /now 1 hour
- **Patient, Beatrice and Elfreda**: 1 hour, (daily)
- **Well bodi bizness**: 45 minutes
- **Wetin di bybul say** 45 minutes

According to Foullah (Interview: 2004) **Leh wi tok** (let us talk/discus) is a one-hour discussion and phone-in programme enabling studio guests to interact with members of the public on a wide variety of topics ranging from good governance, law reform and other topical issues. The Programme seeks to promote democratic culture and dislodge all forms of restrictive elements responsible for underdevelopment. Another
concern of the programme is accountability so that politicians and public officials will be responsible for their actions.

Maura et al., (1997:35) avow that 90% of VOH 96.2 local programming is public discussion/phone-in programmes. The scholars believe that VOH appeared to be one of the most dynamic private radios in the country, with extremely popular programmes such as *In Touch*, where listeners phone-in to discuss current issues affecting their daily lives. They maintain that the popularity of the station lies in the fact that it communicates with the people whereas other stations inform the public.

Tam-Baryoh (2006:18) reports that phone-in programmes are public participatory programmes for Community Radio Stations in all major towns in the country. Kerina & Tam-Baryoh (2000:5) report that SLBS broadcast one phone programme weekly *Ask You Question* in which the producers invite government ministers, parliamentarians and other public officials to the studio to answer questions from the audience on matters relating to activities of their individual ministries or agencies. Independent community radio stations encourage more public participation than government radio stations because the government cannot accept public criticisms on its own radio stations therefore phone-in programmes are few and in-between schedules (Interviews: Cole, 2004; Massaquoi, 2004).

Local language has given the opportunity to ordinary citizens to participate in critical debates in the public sphere, which is a significant contribution to democracy. Tanjong (1999:313) explains how this critical debate takes place in Africa "on the one hand, we observe the tendency of the independent media to pursue an adversary relationship with the government. On the other, government owned media tend to promote a cordial relationship with government." This statement to a certain extent is
true in the case of Sierra Leone some independent media tend to be adversarial while pro-government media tend to be supportive of government. This is part of the pluralism concept with diversity and variety of information and participation. Voice of the Handicapped VOH (96.2) tends to be adversarial in its phone-in programmes. According to the Station Manager, Cullen (Interview: 2004),

One of these programmes is ‘Link’, a programme on political issues of the day. The public will phone and express their opinion on diverse issues, which they are not pleased with; what government officials, public officials or the business community are doing, which might not be in the interest of the country through corruption or bad government. These issues come from the public and listeners for open critical debate. The programme gives the audience the opportunity to make their own contribution to policymaking and allows policymakers to respond as a process of transparency and accountability. It opens a critical sphere of debate and makes suggestions for improvement in the democratic state.

This suggests that the proliferation of regional and community radio stations in Sierra Leone have created greater access of broadcasting service to the majority of the ordinary people. Community radio stations are using phone-in programmes to encourage the ordinary people to participate in critical debate relating to good governance and the socio-economic development in the country. According to the Station Manager of VOH 96.2 Cullen, about 90% of Voice of the Handicapped (VOH) FM 96.2 programmes is phone-ins. One of these programmes, Black and White Dimension is a one-hour phone-in programme on political issues of the day in which members of the audience phone-in to express their concerns on the
performance of government and public officials. Issues affecting development such as corruption, misappropriation of public funds and over-centralization of power, lack of health and social facilities and poverty are openly discussed. One edition of this programme broadcast on the 20th May 2001 was based on corruption of public officials. It was alleged the Minister of Trade, Transport and Communication was engaged in corrupt practices and illicit diamond mining activities. This issue was hotly debated and the Minister was forced to defend himself on that SLBS’s phone-in programme Ask you Question. According to the Anti-Corruption current court cases (2001:Ref2001-113), the former Minister of Trade, Transport and Communication Momoh Pujeh was convicted in October 2003 to 12 months imprisonment for possession of diamond in Magistrate Court No. 1. He appealed against the conviction in the High Court; he won the appeal and was acquitted, and discharged (ACC/SL online, 2007). It was widely believed that the investigation and conviction of the minister was largely instigated by the extensive public debate on radio phone-in programmes on the issue.

The Director KISS 104, Kromah (Interview: 2004) says Community Radio is a phone in programme in which the phone line is opened for people to evaluate and assess critically the activities of government. Subjects for discussion include political issues of the day and the socio-economic situation in the country. It could be very provocative and confrontational as it assesses the performance of government and public officials to monitor the level of corruption and bad governance, and suggest ways of improvement.
The pro-government stations like Radio Democracy 98.1 on the other hand, tend to be cordial and amiable in its participation in the public sphere. According to General Manager, Lambert (Interview: 2004),

What we have done in radio democracy, is to behave responsibly; we do not sensationalise our news and current programmes. Even when we criticise the government’s policies, we do so in measured terms. We do not whitewash issues; you can criticise in firm and an unmistakeable language without being rude or offensive.

The radio station is supportive of the government rather than outright criticism. Sesay & Hughes (2006) say that in spite of the increased diversity of content and ideas heard on radio non-state stations are still wary of completely open critical debates for fear of antagonising the state but assert that critical debate is part of the media landscape in Sierra Leone (Tam-Baryoh, 2006:17).

The public sphere of broadcasting is opened and accessible to citizens for public participation and the performance of the watchdog function of the media. The public participation in community radio stations is unrestricted it empowers the ordinary people to take part in the decision-making process by giving their views and opinions on certain public issues. They assess the performance of both local and national political leaders and utilise the opportunity to advocate for the improvement of local social amenities. The SLBS on the other hand, provides limited space for public critical debate in one phone-in programme weekly guided by the government. This limits the public participation in the broadcasting public sphere in Sierra Leone.

Local language has facilitated comprehension of informative and educative programmes as an empowerment to the ordinary person to function well in the
society. There are differences between state and community radio programming in terms of the local interest versus the national interest divide. According to Mtimde (1998:28) community radio stations are set up to promote the interest of the local community and to use the medium for developmental and advocacy. Hendy (2000) argues that government-owned radio stations are to inform the audience about government policies.

6.6.1.1 News programmes

There are differences in the news programmes between state radio and local radio stations. According to the programme statistics on table 6.9, 17% of SLBS broadcast is news while that of Radio Democracy is 22%. This means that the percentage of the daily news bulletin for Radio Democracy is slightly higher [a difference of 5%] than that of the SLBS. There are major newscasts for both stations SLBS broadcasts its national news in English at 20:00 hours and repeats at 22:00 hours daily on national issues. Radio Democracy 98.1 broadcasts news at 07:00 hours, 09:00 hours and 19:00 hour, plus five minutes news on the hour every hour in Krio on both national and local issues. Radio Democracy 98.1 broadcast local and international news exclusively in the lingua franca Krio called *Salon en some international yus*. SLBS on the other hand, broadcast national news in English the official language and News Summaries in the four national languages Mende, Temne, Limba and Krio. It does weekly newsletter in minor languages on Tuesdays, the languages are Kurankor, Sherbro, Susu, and Yalunka and on Mondays, it is in Fula, Loko, Kissi, Kono, and Mandingo. Holmes (1999) says SLBS was trying the impossible to communicate in all of the languages in the country in a limited way while Radio Democracy is very effective in using just one local language.
The divergence between community radio stations and state radio is the introduction of Community News by community radio stations on local interest in the majority language of the community. According to the Station Manager KISS 104 Halfner (Interview: 2004) the station broadcasts community news, Independent Radio News every day at 9:15 to 10:00 in the evening and News Beat at 8:00 in the morning. Issues and events covered are local and community issues such as chiefdom and village developmental activities, the land tenure system, local workshops offered by service providers in the community and current issues affecting the lives of people in the community.

SLBS broadcasts news in the national languages (Mende, Temne, Limba, and Krio) but on national government issues while community radio stations prioritise community information. Evidence of this claim could be seen in the newscasts of both community and government stations. The selection of the news bulletins was at random because of availability. It was difficult to collect news scripts from the community and regional radio stations because of poor filing system. The dates of the news items cited are different but within the same year and timeframe (June to August 2004).

Community radio focuses on political issues and activities at the local level while SLBS focuses on national political issues there is a national and local variety of political reporting. Head (1974:11) states that in Africa, “Politics colours much of the programming. Explicit political material comes in the form of frequent public speeches by major government personalities... activities of the head of state or other important political figures receive extensive priority coverage.” According to Utomi (1999:526), the dominant nature of government in African countries has several
implications for newsgathering. He argues that most of the news sources are government officials and that this problem is compounded with limited resources result in problem of ‘over dosage’ of government news in the media.

On 19th July, the national news of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service had as its headline/first item the Vice President.

‘Vice President Solomon Berewa has told members of the Sierra Leone Union on Disability Issues SLUDI that the government is creating avenues for the provision of disabilities issues in the PRSP’. The emphasis of this news item was the Vice President making a statement on an issue. The political angle was on national government official functioning in his official capacity.

On 31st July, the Radio Democracy’s news headline was on the chair of the Freetown City Council. This is a translation of the original news script, which was in Krio the lingua franca.

‘The Mayor of Freetown City Council Winstanley Bankole Johnson expressed concern for the poor standard of living of the people in Sierra Leone. This is why the country is described as the least developed country in the world according to the United Nation human index development report.’ This is local news with emphasis on local political figures as the major news item for the day. Its focus was on the concern of local leaders on the plight of the ordinary people.

On 25th June, the headline news and first item for KISS 104 BO was the President and Vice President of Sierra Leone inaugurating twenty local government councillors. This was a handwritten script reproduced on this thesis.

“Twenty-two Pujehun district local government councillors have been inaugurated by the President Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah accompanied by the Vice President Solomon
Berewa and high profile ministers of government in a well attended ceremony chaired by the Resident Minister South Dr. S.U.M Jah.” This leading news items was interesting because it looked at the national politicians in relation to local politicians. The President was inaugurating recently appointed local officials in the south of the country.

This analysis demonstrates that the audience are receiving news from the local and national perspective. Both perspectives are political but the national stations focused on the activities of government officials at the national level while community radio stations concentrated on government officials at the local level. This priority runs across the rest of the news items local versus national.

Interviews with broadcasters supported this evidence. The Station Manager SLBS Makeni, Kamara (Interview: 2004) says,

> We are not completely autonomous, we do carry the national news; we link with the national service... The district officers and provincial secretary are reflected on the news, because they are the stakeholders in the community; most meetings, most workshops, they are in the forefront, so when you are reporting such news, whether you like it or not, you will carry something about them.

The independent community radio stations use both human interest and government stories but they are not obligated to the government’s stance. Their news priority is more or less community sensitive. The Director of Radio Maria, Turay (Interview: 2004) says his focus is on human-interest stories.

> For us, issues such as poverty, lack of education, poor health facilities are news, what is affecting the grassroots is news ...most people, when they say
news, it is to cover government stories or seminars in big towns, but you can
go to the villages to do that as part of news.

He did not deny that government stories are part of his newscast but emphasises the
significance of community interest. He also accepts the constraints of getting news
from remote communities such as high cost of transportation.

6.6.1.2 Educational programmes

According to the programme schedule statistics on table 6.9, 28% of SLBS daily
programmes consist of educational programmes while Radio Democracy broadcasts
17% educational programme out of its total output. One of the reasons for this is that
SLBS claims to be a PSB and one of the missions of public broadcasting is to educate
the citizenry as part of the public sphere. Radio democracy is a community radio
station fast becoming a commercial station with less priority for educational
programmes. Tam-Baryoh (2006:17) says there are signs that some of the so-called
community radio stations might change to commercial stations due to high running
costs. SLBS has more professional staff than local community radio so they have the
expertise to do standard educational programmes. Community radio educational
programmes are sometimes not classified as such they are broadcast in the form of
discussions or phone-in programmes without proper categorisation therefore a
researcher who has not listened to the live discussion or phone-in programmes cannot
tell whether they are educational or not. This means that there are a large percentage
of educational programmes not recorded as such in the programme schedules. These
types of programmes are health, agriculture, children’s and women’s magazines and
documentaries. Holmes (1999:109-116) identifies similar programmes as educational
programmes. She avers that SLBS School broadcast was to supplement the lessons at
primary and secondary schools. The SLBS produces health programmes such as Health Talk and agricultural programmes called Farming Magazine. Head (1974:10) says Africa programming has "relatively high percentage of time devoted to educational and hortatory material discussing subjects as literacy, civics, public health, agricultural improvement, cultural traditions, political commentary, and social guidance." He argues that this was part of the nation building efforts of the country.

Educational programmes are relevant to Sierra Leone, which is experiencing high levels of disease, poverty and illiteracy. According to the UN Human Index Development Report 2004 Sierra Leone has a low life expectancy and high child mortality rates while endemic diseases especially malaria and HIV/AIDS are widespread. About four-fifths of the population is living in abject poverty. The infant mortality rate (IMR) is about 182/1000 while life expectancy at birth is about 38 years in contrast to 45 years for Sub-Saharan Africa. The report estimated adult literacy rate at 30% while the population with access to safe drinking water is about 34%.

According to the Sierra Leone Vision 2025 (2003), it is the policy of government to improve this situation and implores the broadcast media to support this move by doing relevant educational programmes.

Media-related NGOs are supporting community radio stations produce these educational programmes. According to Tam-Baryoh (2006:30), media related NGOs are aware of the need for high-quality relevant information to the general population via diverse broadcast media and are using the media to sensitise the uninformed populace. He says Talking Drum Studio (TDS-SL) is producing educational programmes designed to promote social development and the culture of peaceful resolution to conflict and that these programmes are broadcast across the country.
Tam-Baryoh discloses that 13 radio stations are broadcasting a ‘popular’ TDS-SL programme called *Golden Kids News*. The programme engages children of mixed backgrounds who serve as producers, reporters and actors, and who identify issues for and about children and advocate on their behalf. It creates a forum for children to discuss their hopes and fears, and advocate their issues and present events important to them (TDS-SL Programme document, 2004).

Tam-Baryoh (2006) says TDS-SL programmes extend from youth and children to the women’s magazine programmes targeting grassroots youth and women for its programming. According to TDS-SL Head of Public Relations Foday-Musa (Interview: 2004),

> Every radio station produces woman’s programme centred in the city and big towns. Women’s voices were only coming from the metropolitan areas and these are normally educated or elite women. TDS initiated *Salone Uman* (Sierra Leone Women) aiming at going down to the illiterate women in the rural areas and local community, identify issues and allow them to tell their story.

The programme discusses economic issues like micro-credit, women’s empowerment, enlightenment and women’s developmental issues. Talking Drum Studio also produces educational-entertainment programmes for peace and reconciliation. According to Lartique (2004), *Atunda Ayenda* (Lost and found) is the first radio soap opera ever broadcast in Sierra Leone produced by Talking Drum Studio (TDS-SL). This 15 minute-programme she says has become the ‘most popular and most wide listened to programmes on the air’. The programme uses a common form of
'edutainment' to help people understand political and social events that have unfolded as the country's years of civil conflict ended, to facilitate the peace process.

According to Tam-Baryoh (2006:19), many radio stations are producing their own educational programmes as well as broadcasting programmes produced by media related NGOs. These are youth, women, health agricultural and public sensitisation programmes.

According to the Station Manager SLBS Bo, Koroma (2004),

We organise live quiz competitions for schools. We go to school locations organise and select educationists to draw up questions, find prizes for winners, and then broadcast. We ask educational questions dealing with different subjects such as Biology, Chemistry, English, Mathematics, and Sierra Leone history. The pupils and parents are very happy about the programme, because it is very educative.

This programme aims at school-going children. Broadcasters design other programmes for youths and children outside the school system. Station Manager KISS104, Halfner (Interview: 2004) says

'Youth radio' focuses on disadvantaged youths who are either drop out from the school system, or did not have the opportunity to go to school like the Bike Riders, the Car Wash Boys, the Garage Boys and the Apprentice. This programme aimed at trying to inculcate good morals and advise on vocational and technical training.

The format of the programme is usually youth issues, discussion and testimonies from youths on life experiences worthy of emulation or restitution.
All stations have health and agricultural programming in their schedules. These include ‘Aids Sensitisation’, ‘Health Talk’, and ‘Food Security’ programmes broadcast at various times in the schedules. These are to support national development and to improve the lives of the citizens. Food Security is a government-sponsored programme to create an environment for food self-sufficiency by the year 2007. According to the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper Sierra Leone (IPRSP-SL, 1999), the war destroyed the rural areas where 85% of the inhabitants are farmers and disrupt agricultural activities. To revitalise agricultural activities and increase food production, government allocated Le 8 billion to the agricultural sector in 2003 compared to Le 4 billion in 2002. Key activities in this sector include crop production, veterinary services, land and water development, planning, evaluation and monitoring, forestry conservation and support to agricultural institutions. Kaangai & Ndhlova (1980) say health programmes are vital for the wellbeing of the people particularly in the rural areas, which have endemic cases of health problems. Aids sensitisation is a programme designed to create awareness of HIV infection and educational materials for prevention. Health Talk addresses issues of general health care and disease (Programme Schedule, 2004).

6.6.2 Section five- The Economy of Broadcasting: commercials and entertainment programmes

According to the programme schedule statistics (table 6.9), 50% of the total output of programmes is music and commercials for both state and independent community radio stations. This means that radio stations in Sierra Leone both public and private depend on advertising for sustainability. It demonstrates that the primary source of income for broadcasting is commercials. This has some serious implications for the
public sphere in Sierra Leone. Tam-Baryoh (2006:18/64) says increasing commercial
imperatives are eroding the commitment of many stations to public interest
programmes stressing that this is true for stations like Radio Democracy which, as
funding disappears is becoming more reliant on commercially-driven advertising. He
holds that commercials have helped sustained the Sierra Leone media but considers
that this could compromise the independent public interest role of the media as
business begins to determine media content. Such influence could have negative
effect on the public sphere as broadcasting will start to avoid critical debate and issues
that may not serve their business interest. Commercialism is a challenge to the quality
of public educational and participation programmes (Thompson, 1993). Wheeler
(1997) describes this as tabloidisation, sensationalism or dumbing-down of quality to
attract audience. IMC recently upgraded KISS104 FM to a commercial station.
According to the Director, Kromah (Interview: 2004), the station focuses on

    Things that should not have happened, such as rape, moral and financial
corruption, and ludicrous behaviour of public officials ... these kinds of stories
affect the community and therefore the audience is interested. If the audience
is interested, it makes for good business for the station, because the more
quality audience you have, the more adverts you get.

Nwosu (1999:507) says one of the paradoxes of media organisations is that they have
to survive by making profit as a business institution and at the same time should not
compromise their responsibilities as social institutions. African broadcasting whether
private or public confronts the problem of advertising.

Lubinda & N'Gombe (1980:238) say a broadcasting service is either fully sponsored
or raises some of its funds from advertising. They argued that it is important that
enough funds be raised to support the running costs. In Sierra Leone, Holmes (1999:53) says that the colonial government in 1959, introduced commercial broadcasting with the hope that it would help increase revenue and offset government expenditure as broadcasting was considered a very expensive venture. Though advertising produced some revenue, it was not enough to supplement operations or pay SLBS staff and artists. This is where the political economy becomes relevant to this thesis. It brings into fore the question of sustainability of these radio stations. Tam-Baryoh (2006:16-17) articulates that some community radio stations are turning into commercial stations due to financial pressures despite community licence. He affirms that community radio stations are not supposed to accept advertising in the same way as commercial radio stations but the community radio broadcasters argue that it is the same running cost to operate both commercial and community radio stations that is the high cost of fuel and standby generators is the same. Therefore, the community radio stations argue that they have the right to broadcast advertising to support their small radio stations. The argument on high running cost and fuel is that every station depends on standby generators because of lack of electricity supply. The interviewees all confirmed that they are doing advertising as the main source of revenue for broadcasting. Big independent community radio stations like KISS 104 and Radio Democracy are very successful in advertising in this regard, IMC upgraded them to commercial status. The General Manager KISS 104 FM Bo, Halfner (Interview: 2004) says, KISS 104 makes money on obituaries and public service announcements. It does jingles for the advertisements of public events, commodities, and diamond dealers. Most of the adverts are shows and diamond adverts. The
Station advertises for big organisations like the State lottery, UNICEF and World Food Programme (WFP); it does sponsored programmes as well. The advertisements are all domestic information from small-scale businesses, private individuals and service delivery organisations. Small community radio stations in deprived areas do not benefit from advertising. The Managing Director for Citizen Radio Kissy, Tam-Baryoh (Interview: 2004) says

We do not advertise much, because there are very few industries, not only in the Kissy area, but also in the whole of the country. Some advertisers feel that in an impoverished society like Kissy, people do not have the purchasing power, so advertisement does not come here much.

Advertisers do not consider the people in this locality as prospective purchasers of goods (Smythe, 1995).

There are differences between community radio and state radio in the economy of broadcasting. State radio stations are receiving government subsidies and undertaking public relations for the government while community radio stations have no access to government funds. According to Tam-Baryoh (2006:55), unlike French-speaking West Africa governments, English-speaking West Africa does not always help independent media financially. In Sierra Leone, the government considers independent media as antagonistic and therefore unworthy of support. SLBS regional stations receive subsidies from the government and advertise but the government fill-up the airtime with government announcements therefore they are not in good business. The Permanent Secretary for Information and Broadcasting, Nalo (Interview: 2004) says,
The regional stations are to operate on self-supporting bases so they should generate their revenue for sustainability but this proved to be unsuccessful because most of the jobs they handle in the provinces are more or less government’s jobs from the provincial secretary’s office, the resident minister, regional ministers and paramount chiefs who are unwilling to pay for such services.

The regional stations do not benefit from direct product commercials. SLBS headquarter produces most of these to broadcast in regional stations without payment.

The Manager for SLBS, Makeni Kamara, (Interview: 2004) says,

"For commercial this is a rural setting there is not much business... we broadcast adverts for SLBS headquarters but all the money will stay in Freetown. When they need our services, they send us the recorded advert tape with an instruction of duration and life span.

The SLBS headquarters is very successful with advertising because it uses all the regional stations for countrywide broadcast of adverts and the advertisers tend to like this wide audience reach.

The organisations themselves publish the prices for advertising products. An evaluation is conducted on two advertising rating schedules one from the SLBS and the other from an independent station Radio Democracy 98.1. The reasons for this selection are that SLBS is the most established of all government stations and Radio Democracy is the most established community radio station.

The radio stations were unwilling to disclose their budgets but the advertisers and the cost of advertising were available. The advertising log sheet for radio democracy for 3 July and the commercial log sheet for the Sierra Leone Broadcasting service for 20th
of July were collected for analysis. These dates are with the period of the research and the advertising log sheets are the ones that were made available.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jingle Name</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Expiration date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anti Corruption Commission</td>
<td>120 sec</td>
<td>17/8/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grafton Spring Water</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>17/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MELFINO Milk</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>28/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T B Mende</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>03/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAMS Enterprises</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>04/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holstein Comedy</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>28/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DELICO</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>31/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.L. Museum</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>20/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAUDUCCO</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>24/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIM Pack (krio)</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>11/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEPIA Mayonnaise</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>28/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHOCO Powder</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>31/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rams Enterprises</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>04/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENIC Computer</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>16/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHARK</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>31/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astraeus Airline</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>25/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SONIJEE</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>25/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lungi Airport Hotel</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>10/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TB (Limba)</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>03/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIB SIM pack (English)</td>
<td>55 sec</td>
<td>04/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Security</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>05/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top Grade Fashion</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>04/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLOBE</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>31/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DELICIO</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>31/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIL</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>11/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIB SIM Pack (English)</td>
<td>55 sec</td>
<td>04/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACETYNOL</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>31/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLICOM (Krio)</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>15/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T B (Susu)</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>13/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHOCO Powder</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>31/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIM Pack (Krio)</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>11/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLOBE</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>31/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T B (Temne)</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>03/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quick Action</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>31/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Flow (Limba)</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>03/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAUDUCCO</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>24/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect Children in war</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>04/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. B (Kissi)</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>03/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ginger Wine</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>17/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Money Brothers</td>
<td>70 sec</td>
<td>05/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLICOM (English)</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>15/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T B (krio)</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>13/7/2004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the log sheet reveals there is no multinational corporation advertising in Sierra Leone. Most of these companies fold-up during the war and are yet to resume operations. The multinational companies that have started operations in Sierra Leone are mostly diamond and rutile extraction companies such as Koidu Holdings and Sierra Rutile Company; these have little use for advertising. Advertisements are mainly for confectionary products, stationery, health messages, dairy products, clothing, and social messages from public and private sectors. The big advertisers are the computer and mobile telephony companies. The landline telephone network is not effective and not countrywide but the mobile telephone companies have extended their network signals to nearly the whole country. There are currently five mobile phone operators in Sierra Leone: Celtel, Millicom, Africell Datatel, and Comium. They offer GSM services, which work on a prepaid basis. They normally advertise prepaid cards, which costumers can purchase throughout the city and in some provincial towns. In addition, computer literacy programmes and computer training institutes are operating in many parts of the country and computers are in demand in both the private and public sectors. Astraeus Airlines is one of the few international airlines that have started operation in Sierra Leone after the war; all international flights were grounded during the war. The advertisers can choose the language they want their products to be advertised in.

The Radio Democracy has spot adverts for peak time and regular time. Peak time is considered as times in which audience ratings are high, when most people will listen to the radio stations. This is likely be between 7 am to 9 am and 7pm to 10 pm before and after official working hours when the audience will be at home to listen to radio.
No opinion poll or audience survey has been done in this regard but it is suspected that peak time is associated with news and current affairs, popular public participation phone-in programme or music shows. According to the Radio Democracy Advertising Rate file (2004), the cost of spot advertising is as follows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>peak time</th>
<th>Regular time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>120 seconds</td>
<td>Le6, 000 [£1.33]</td>
<td>Le5, 500 [£1.22]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 seconds</td>
<td>Le4, 500 [£0.99]</td>
<td>Le4, 000 [£0.88]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 seconds</td>
<td>Le3,500 [£0.78]</td>
<td>Le2,500 [£0.55]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 seconds</td>
<td>Le2,000 [£0.44]</td>
<td>Le1,500 [£0.33]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The radio station also does sponsored programmes for public and private institutions that requested the service. The organisations have to purchase airtime and pay for production cost of the programme. Sponsored programmes and production cost are listed below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Air Time cost</th>
<th>Cost of production</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60 minutes</td>
<td>Le225, 000 [£49.92]</td>
<td>Le100, 000 [£22.18]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 Minutes</td>
<td>Le187, 500 [£40.60]</td>
<td>Le75, 000 [£16.64]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Minutes</td>
<td>Le112, 500 [£24.96]</td>
<td>Le50,000 [£11.09]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Minutes</td>
<td>Le62, 500 [£13.86]</td>
<td>Le25, 000 [£5.54]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Another income generating activity for the radio stations are obituaries and public announcements, these are daily source of revenue. The public and private organisations usually publicize upcoming and on-going activities or events. Funerals
are part of the socio-cultural make-up in Sierra Leone; it brings members of the family together where unity and identity are manifest. Obituaries are important because of the extended family system in Sierra Leone and the dispersal of family members in various parts of the country, radio has become the most effective way to inform relatives about the death of a member of a family. It is also a prestige for relatives name to be aired as one of the family members. According to Findlay (1975), funeral announcements are very popular in Sierra Leone. That is why the radio station has a cut-off point of 60 words, costing Le1, 500 (£0.33) per slot. Every extra word up to 150 words cost Le0.65 (£0.01) per word. The cost of public announcement for the first 60 words is Le 2,000 (£0.44) and Le0.65 (£0.01) for any extra word. SLBS has similar schedule for obituaries and public notices.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of Day</th>
<th>Commercials</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Expire date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Before News at 7 am</strong></td>
<td>Anti Corruption Commission</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>30/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GUMA Valley Water Company</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>30/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>After News at 7 am</strong></td>
<td>P.R.S.P (Sherbro)</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PIK 6 State Lottery</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>30/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SLICOM (English)</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>30/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>H.M. SAFFIEDEEN</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>31/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LUNA Milk</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>30/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grace Trade</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>26/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Before 8 am News</strong></td>
<td>Anti Corruption Commission</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>30/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SLICOM (Krio)</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>30/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P.R.S.P (Krio)</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Museum</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>30/9/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heineken (Sierra Leone Brewery Ltd.)</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>31/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Iranian</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>20/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R.S.K (Computer institute)</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>18/8/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>After 8 am News</strong></td>
<td>SLBS Counter (Adverts for SLBS request forms and announcements)</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P.R.S.P (Temne)</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P.R.S.P (Loko)</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FINIC</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>24/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yam Motto</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>03/8/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sierra Leone Ports Authority (SLPA)</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>05/8/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.L.C. Bookshop</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>06/8/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Before 8pm news</strong></td>
<td>State lottery - LOTTO (Mini 5) (Krio)</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>30/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GUMA Valley Water Company (Krio)</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>30/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anti Corruption Commission (Mende)</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>30/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PIK 6 Sierra Leone State Lottery (Krio)</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>30/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SLICOM (Krio)</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>30/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gigantic Soap</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>30/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Validity - Premier (Krio)</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>30/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grace Trading (Krio)</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>26/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>After 8 pm news</strong></td>
<td>Heineken - Sierra Leone Brewery Ltd. (Krio)</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td>31/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P.R.S.P (Fullah)</td>
<td>60 sec</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SLICOM (English)</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>30/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BILLING (Krio)</td>
<td>90 sec</td>
<td>30/7/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food Security</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: SLBS File*
SLBS is the national broadcaster in Sierra Leone and most of its advertisers are public institutions such as the Anti-Corruptions Commission, the Guma Valley Water Company, the Sierra Leone State Lottery, the Sierra Leone Ports Authority, the Sierra Leone Insurance Commission, and the National Museum. The station does some of these adverts at 10% discounts and at concession prices; it is more like public service rather than advertising. The station also supports government’s development initiative by advertising government’s programme such as the P.R.S.P as gratis. According to the *Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* (PRSP) (2001:11), the poverty strategy will primarily focus in addressing the immediate challenges of the transition from war to peace. The state identifies corruption as one of the key factors responsible for the war so the government set up the Anti-corruption Commission to educate people about the evils of corruption and investigate corrupt practices. Food Security is another national development programme which the SLBS as a national broadcaster is advertising as gratis, the President in May 19 2002 made a national *Food Security* pledge in which he was determined that Sierra Leone should be self-sufficient in food production by 2007. He says, “Both the poverty alleviation and food security programme are two sides of the same national development coin, because they fully complement one another. Food Security can drive poverty but at the same time you need financial and material support to be food secured.”

The *SLBS Counter* advert is one of the first attempts of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service to market itself to the public. It created a special booth at the Sierra Leone Postal Services (SALPOST) at the heart of the city centre for easy access of consumers to purchase request forms, make public announcements and advertising without travelling to the outskirt of the city to New England to transact business.
SLBS heavily published this stall and increased its gain from this marketing strategy. The service had to do this to face the challenges posed by the proliferation of independent radio stations. The Premier Media is one of the advertising agencies that are developing in Sierra Leone; it also does film production in concert with a Nigerian film production company. A proper investigation has to be conducted to evaluate the operation and functions of this organization.

The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service commercials schedule reflects adverts that are broadcast at what it describes as ‘News adjacency’. These are adverts that are broadcast immediately before and after the news. The costs for spot adverts for news adjacency are as follows

**Spots Adverts**

- 90 seconds Le 3,000 (£0.71),
- 60 seconds Le 2,000 (£0.46),
- 30 seconds Le 1,500 (£0.37),
- 15 seconds Le 1,400 (£0.32),

**Source: The SLBS Advertising Rate File (2004)**

There is a reduction of about 12% for adverts at any other time of the day. The reason for the difference in prices for the news adjacency is that the audience rating is expected to the high during news time because the SLBS is the primary broadcaster of government information and people are interested in the activities of the government which other stations might not have access to.

Sponsored programmes are not reflected in this advertising schedule but non-governmental organisations, religious groups, and public institutions do sponsored
programmes on the stations as part of their promotional activities. The cost for sponsored programmes are listed below

**Sponsored programmes**

90 Minutes programme Le 200,000 [£47.48]
60 Minutes programme Le120, 000 [£28.49]
45 Minutes programme Le 80,000 [£18.99]
30 Minutes programme Le 60,000 [£14.25]
15 Minutes programme Le 40,000 [£9.50]

*Source: The SLBS Advertising Rate File (2004)*

There is a 50% reduction for religious sponsored programmes, Sierra Leone is a secular state but highly religious; the predominant religions are Islam, Christianity and African traditional religions. The station also does live broadcast for national events such as the state opening of parliament, budget speech, and for organisations that request it. Live coverage is done through landline telephone with technical assistance from the Sierra Leone Telecommunication Company (SIERRATEL). Live commentaries are also done using mobile telephony.

**Live Coverage**

90 Minutes programme Le 200,000 [£47.48]
60 Minutes programme Le 180,000 [£42.74]
45 Minutes programme Le 140,000 [£33.24]
30 Minutes programme Le 100,000 [£23.74]

*Source: The SLBS Advertising Rate File (2004)*

SLBS offers 5% discount for advertisers who spend between Le 51,000 [£12.11] - Le 200,000 [£47.48] worth of adverts and 10% discount for over Le 201,000 [£47.72].
There is also 10% discount for government agencies and commissions, this is because SLBS is a government stations supporting government institutions. The researcher was not privy to the budget report of SLBS.

The prices reflected in this analysis are quoted from the advertising rating schedules for the SLBS and Radio Democracy. Both have developed an advertising schedule whilst the other stations are trying to develop one. In addition, SLBS regional stations and independent community radio stations in rural areas do not attract many adverts because their listeners are not potential customers. These advertising schedules will illustrate how broadcasting raise income and the similarities and differences between government and independent community radio stations in income generation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Near to News</th>
<th>Prime Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jingles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. 90 Sec</td>
<td>Le 3,000 [£0.71]</td>
<td>Le 2,500 [£0.55]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 60 Sec</td>
<td>Le 2,000 [£0.46]</td>
<td>Le 1,500 [£0.33]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 30 Sec</td>
<td>Le 1,500 [£0.33]</td>
<td>Le 1,300 [£0.29]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 15 Sec</td>
<td>Le 1,400 [£0.32]</td>
<td>Le 1,200 [£0.27]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsored Programmes</td>
<td>General Programmes</td>
<td>Religious programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. 90 minutes</td>
<td>Le 200,000 [£47.48]</td>
<td>Le 100,000 [£23.74]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 60 minutes</td>
<td>Le 120,000 [£28.49]</td>
<td>Le 60,000 [£14.25]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 45 minutes</td>
<td>Le 80,000 [£18.99]</td>
<td>Le 40,000 [£9.50]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 30 minutes</td>
<td>Le 60,000 [£14.25]</td>
<td>Le 30,000 [£6.65]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. 15 minutes</td>
<td>Le 40,000 [£9.50]</td>
<td>Le 20,000 [£4.43]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live Coverage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. 30 minutes</td>
<td>Le 100,000 [£23.74]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 45 minutes</td>
<td>Le 140,000 [£33.24]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 60 minutes</td>
<td>Le 180,000 [£42.74]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 90 minutes</td>
<td>Le 200,000 [£47.48]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service Advertising File (2004)
Table 6.13: Radio Democracy FM 98.1 Advertising Rate (Independent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Notices</th>
<th>1st 60 Words</th>
<th>Every extra word up to 150 words</th>
<th>Over 150 Words</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Le 2,000 [£0.44]</td>
<td>Le0.65 [£0.01] per word</td>
<td>Le 12,500 [£2.77] per slot</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obituary</td>
<td>Le1, 500 [£ 0.33] per slot</td>
<td>Le0.65 [£0.01] per word</td>
<td>Le 10,000 [£2.22] per slot</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jingles Duration</th>
<th>Peak time</th>
<th>Regular time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 30 sec</td>
<td>Le2,000 [£0.44]</td>
<td>Le1,500 [£0.33]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 60 sec</td>
<td>Le3,500 [£0.78]</td>
<td>Le2,500 [£0.55]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 90 sec</td>
<td>Le4,500 [£0.99]</td>
<td>Le4,000 [£0.88]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 120 sec</td>
<td>Le6,000 [£1.33]</td>
<td>Le5,500 [£1.22]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sponsored programmes</th>
<th>Air time</th>
<th>Cost of production</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 15 minutes</td>
<td>Le62, 500 [£13.86]</td>
<td>Le25,000 [£5.54]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 30 minutes</td>
<td>Le112, 500 [£24.96]</td>
<td>Le50,000 [£11.09]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 45 minutes</td>
<td>Le187, 500 [£40.60]</td>
<td>Le75,000 [£16.64]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 60 minutes</td>
<td>Le225, 000 [£49.92]</td>
<td>Le100, 000 [£22.18]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


A comparative analysis of the two advertising schedules shows that the advertising rates for the independent stations are higher than SLBS. For example, 90 minutes advert for the independent station is Le 4,500 [£0.99] peak time, while for SLBS, it is Le 3,000 [£0.71], and for regular time for Radio democracy, it is Le 4,000 [£0.88], while for SLBS it is Le 2,500 [£0.55]. These prices are competitive and different stations charge according to the demand from advertisers. Independent stations are more competitive and the rates are higher than government stations. Some independent radio and commercial stations are more popular than SLBS and therefore
attract more advertisements (Abdalla, 2000). SLBS too has its advantage it can use its 
regional stations to broadcast advertising thereby increasing its audience reach. Some 
service providers dealing with local communities countrywide prefer to advertise on 
the SLBS (Nicol, 2004). Therefore, there is stiff competition between SLBS and 
independent stations. The Director of KISS104, Kromah (Interview: 2004) says,

SLBS is not a commercial radio station it is supposed to be a public 
broadcaster this means it should not focus on advertising or soliciting 
advertisements. SLBS is charging lower than what commercial stations are 
charging which means they are robbing us of our commercial revenue. The 
taxpayers pay for its services.

This conflict for commercials stemmed from the fact that Sierra Leone has no 
industrial base. Maura et al., (1998:33) state that most media cannot survive without 
advertising but regrets that there is limited organised advertising in the Sierra Leonean 
media market. The advertising is fiercely competed for maintaining that it is a buyers 
market wherein advertisers dictate advertising price. The scholars attribute this 
situation to ‘an underdeveloped economic’.

The state broadcaster (SLBS) is receiving government subsidies but the government is 
also using SLBS as a revenue base. According to the Permanent Secretary 
Information and Broadcasting Nalo (Interview: 2004) the government is paying 
subsidies to SLBS on a quarterly bases. He says that SLBS has two accounts in which 
it pays moneys accrued from commercials; it pays moneys to the national 
consolidated fund for national budgetary allocations and the station manages a small 
FM account for emergency use.
The Permanent Secretary Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Nalo (Interview: 2004) explains the method of subsidy payment to SLBS.

The government pays SLBS budget in quarters four quarters a year, now they are receiving the sum of one hundred and twenty-five million Leones per quarter if you multiply that by four you will have the actual amount for the whole year. The Ministry has a general supervisory role of SLBS financing, according to the policy guidelines submitted at the budgetary statement.”

The vote controller is the SLBS Director General supervised by the Permanent Secretary. This yearly budget for the SLBS is most of the time, not paid in full and when it is paid, it is inadequate to run the stations. Maura et al., (1997:8) convey, “SLBS operates with an average monthly budget of Le 40,000,000 including salaries yet out of the first quarter’s allocation for 1997 it has received only Le 13,000,000.” In other words, what it has received out of its quarterly allocation, is not even enough for one month’s full transmission. SLBS has developed an aggressive advertising strategy to providing adequate funds to run the institution. According to his paper 'What Reform Policy for the SLBS Radio' Massaquoi (2003:36) says, “At the end of September 1998, the SLBS had a credit of Le 25,000,000 in its account. During this year [2003], the commercial division raised Le 47,000,000 in one month through aggressive marketing and good programming on radio and television.” If, according to Maura et al., (1997:8), SLBS needs ‘Le 40,000,000 including salaries for its monthly operations then the SLBS can run on its own steam from revenues accrued from advertising which Massaquoi (2003) says is ‘Le 47,000,000’ monthly.

This is not possible because SLBS is a revenue collection department for the government. According to the Financial Management Act and the Public Budgetary
Act (1994), the SLBS has two accounts the national consolidated revenue funds and the FM Accounts. According to the Permanent Secretary Information and Broadcasting Nalo (Interview: 2004),

The payment modalities are separated into two; (1) The public notices, obituary announcements and other revenue heads, as dictated by the government, go to the Consolidated Revenue Fund for national use. (2) The studio charges and other professional charges go into the FM account with an independent voucher system for emergency use.

This means that SLBS is not using its entire revenue to improve the service. The government utilises moneys paid into the consolidated account for national budgetary allocation.

The main expenditure of broadcasting houses in Sierra Leone is the acquisition of equipment. Holmes (1999) highlights the problems of the lack of equipment and spare parts, which resulted in the demise of the SLBS. Tam-Baryoh (2006) says to ease the financial burden on radio stations the government is waiving custom duties for the importation of broadcast equipment. Another major recurring expenditure is the purchase of fuel for standby generators due to lack of electricity supply. The Permanent Secretary Information and Broadcasting Nalo (Interview: 2004) says,

For this third quarter 2003, the government gave eighteen million Leones worth of fuel to SLBS Freetown. The estimate is that SLBS needs about thirty-five million Leones worth of fuel to broadcast this is equivalent to fifty-one gallons per day. With the limited budget, this is unaffordable. The reason for high consumption of fuel is that the generator is too old. For the regional
stations, the government initially allocated eighty gallons of diesel each in the last quarter.

This illustrates that broadcasting is spending heavily on fuel, which increases the daily expenditure of the radio stations.

The independent radio stations are suffering from the same problem. The Station Manager Radio Mankneh, Kamara (Interview: 2004) says, “As it is now the station spends 48 thousand Leones a day on fuel and there are times we cannot make that amount per day, at present we are heavily in debt.” (Tam-Baryoh (2006:27) says the National Power Authority (NPA) uses obsolete machines to supply the city of Freetown with electricity. These machines frequently need maintenance during these periods whole sections of the city go without electricity and the media suffers on this account this is a countrywide problem.

According to the programme schedule statistics (table 6.9), 50% of all daily broadcasting time is dedicated to music and commercials. Head (1974:11) says, “Radio programming leans heavily on music, news, and talk-show formats.” These musical shows vary from western music to local artists, cultural and traditional music. Disc Jockey shows and fill-up music space are interspersed with commercials. According to the SLBS music producer, Bangura “all radio stations broadcast musical shows from cultural to western. In some stations, up-coming musicians perform in special DJ times. I believe that local music is now as popular as western music.” This situation is not unique to Sierra Leone. Mwakawago (1986) observes that the most popular items in African radio stations are news and music. He maintains that western pop music was very popular on all radio stations but in east and central Africa, Zairian music has provided a distinctly African alternative to western music.
Briefly, the economy of broadcasting in Sierra Leone is a challenge to community interest and public service broadcasting. This is a limitation to the public sphere of broadcasting as community broadcasting struggles to survive financially at the peril of its democratic functions of informing, educating and empowering the populace to become democratically functional (Tam-Baryoh, 2006). There are other limitations worthy of note in the public sphere in Sierra Leone.

6.6.3 Section five- Limitations and Advantages of the public sphere

Public participation in the public sphere is dependent on the availability of telephone. Tam-Baryoh (2006:18) says phone-in programmes and talk shows where listeners take part in discussions are very popular public participatory programmes. He however maintains that there is the drawback that mobile telephony or landline phones are luxuries in poverty-stricken Sierra Leone. The CIA Report (2002) shows that 24,000 people owned landline telephones, 113, 200 owned mobile telephony, and 10,000 Internet users in Sierra Leone. There are five mobile phone operators in Sierra Leone these are Celtel, Millicom, Africell, Datatel and Comium (Tam-Baryoh, 2006:27). This means that participation in the broadcasting public sphere depends on the affordability of the technology this means only those who can afford telephones can participate. Out of five million people, less than one million can participate in the public sphere according to the statistics but in Sierra Leone, there is the communal use of telephone for example, one mobile phone can service an extended family of 30 persons as the need arises. If this cultural use of telephone is considered then more people have access to phones than is statistically recorded. However, to address this problem community radio stations are encouraging ordinary people to write letters to express their opinions. Radio Democracy for example, initiated the programme Blow
Mind, a 45-minute programme to deal with public letters on current issues. Community radio stations consider this as an alternative for those who cannot afford telephone but it depends on literacy. Since there are 85% of people who cannot read and write, the effectiveness of this is questionable.

Another limitation to participation in the public sphere of broadcasting is the hours of transmission. According to the programme schedule analysis, SLBS and Radio Democracy broadcast for 18 hours a day, from 6.00 a.m. to 12 midnight. This is the highest broadcast transmission time for local radio stations with the exception of VOH 96.2 FM that runs for 24 hours 12 for the BBC programmes and 12 for local programmes. Radio UNAMSIL and international rebroadcast stations also broadcast 24 hours a day. The difference between SLBS/Radio Democracy and small community radio stations is that a large percentage of them broadcast far less than 18 hours. According to Kerina & Tam-Baryoh (2000), Believers Broadcasting Network FM 93 broadcasts 12 hours daily beginning as 6:00 a.m. This is the normal broadcasting time for community radio stations between 12 to 16 hours. The reason for this is the high running cost of stations with no electricity supply the stations have to depend on standby generators resulting in high costs for fuel and maintenance.

The government's influence on state broadcasting limits the public sphere. Sesay & Hughes (2005) argue that the government has overriding influence on the content of state-owned stations. They say the government stopped a popular programme called Bottom Line, which provided a critique of government policy the producer was frustrated with censorship and had to leave the SLBS. The government will not allow the voice of the opposition on the SLBS (Tam-Baryoh. 2006:21). The Head of the Department of Mass Communication FBC University of Sierra Leone, presently
Chairperson of the IMC, Cole (Interview: 2004) says, “What we need is a national public broadcast service that will be accessible to both government and opposition.... However, what obtains at this time is that the SLBS is in fact a government service. The government does not entertain opposing views on that radio station.” The author puts this criticism to the Minister of Information and Broadcasting, Kaikai (Interview: 2004) and he seemed to accept the fact unwittingly.

The APC [the opposition party] asked for airtime on the SLBS, they wanted to prepare their own programme and put it on the air. The Ministry needs a list of the things that they would like to do. The Ministry invited the leader of the Opposition, he never showed up.

This means that the Ministry had wanted to vet everything the opposition would say on air and they refused to cooperate. There are no guidelines for political reporting at the SLBS in the case of the BBC, there are guidelines for political reporting (Negrine, 1998; Seymour-Ure, 1996).

The interview also reveals government interference in programme content. The Station Manager SLBS Kenema, Sio-Kamara (Interview: 2004) says they are getting pressure from the provincial office “In fact most of our news and announcements are coming from the provincial administration. Whatever policy government wants to put out is coming from the provincial administration. It is the government arm of administration for the regions and interference is very rife.” The author puts this criticism to the former Minister of Information and Broadcasting, Spencer (Interview: 2004).

I remember when I was Minister, the Station Manager in Kenema complained that the Resident Minister in the east was interfering or trying to dictate what
was to go on the air. I travelled there personally and had a word with the
Regional Minister. The regional stations cannot simply be government
propaganda instruments, although the government obviously needed to
communicate to the public.

Spencer comprehends the meaning of media freedom because he was a journalist
before becoming a minister but he resigned from the government.

The other aspect of interference is the dismissal or forced resignation of staff that are
critical of the government. Cole (Interview: 2004) says, “I know for a fact that one of
their [SLBS] senior members of staff was sent on leave because he brought in people
who came up with dissenting views on a topical issue, he was on leave for over a year
and he has not been recalled.” The Minister of Information and Broadcasting
responded to this criticism he admitted that the Presenter/Producer of Bottom Line on
SLBS offended the government.

Isaac Massaquoi will look at the newspapers by bringing journalists who have
written the same articles to come to reinforce their critical messages. If you are
going to talk about press review, why not mix it up by bringing somebody
from the outside for balance. What they were doing was to come up with the
most critical things about government.

The Minister denies the suspension of the producer. Massaquoi (Interview: 2004)
says, “I checked out in April 2003 not thinking of going back.” He says he felt
pressured, maligned and ostracised, so he had no alternative but to tender his letter of
leave. He is presently a lecturer at the Mass Communication Department FBC
University of Sierra Leone. This is in contradistinction with the Ghanaian media
system, which protects the public media from government interference. According to chapter 12 section 162 (4) of the Ghanaian constitution:

Editors and publishers of newspapers and other institutions of the mass media shall not be subject to control or interference by government nor shall they suffer penalty or harassment for their editorial opinions and views or the contents of their publications.

This means that the constitution protects the media from political interference and the media can fight back legally. Sierra Leone can also implement regulations to insulate the public broadcaster from political victimisation. However, the advantages of the public sphere of broadcasting in Sierra Leone cannot be underestimated.

The public sphere of broadcasting in Sierra Leone has developed a great level of advantage for public participation and empowerment for the ordinary citizens. Tam-Baryoh (2006:16&19) says, as recently as the early 1990s there was very little radio in Sierra Leone with the state SLBS maintaining a small radio operation. Since the mid 1990s, there has been a proliferation of both independent and state FM radio stations, which has given local communities greater access to radio broadcast in their own languages. This demonstrates that there is media diversity, a variety of informative and educational programmes from a multiplicity of channels. This diversity of information is national versus local interest while international re-broadcast stations are giving the international variety of information in Sierra Leone. The diversity of information is coming from a multiplicity of channels as demonstrated in the diagram below.
Broadcast pluralism opens the public sphere of broadcasting as this diagram illustrates. The audience is at the centre of broadcasting activities they are receiving education and information from independent radios, government radios, and international rebroadcast. This means that the audience is receiving a variety of messages with strong involvement of the grassroots through community and regional
radio stations. The local audience is at the centre of this development, a multiplicity of radio stations empowering them through a variety of programmes in their local languages so that they can be functional in society. This is the optimistic perspective of this analysis, the institutionalisation of broadcast media pluralism and the widening of the public sphere of broadcasting. The audience survey conducted by the Talking Drum Studio Sierra Leone (TDS-SL) gives some indications of audience radio reception in the country. According to Abdulla et al (2002:30-35), the rationale for the audience survey was to gather information on the general patterns of radio listening plus specific data on listening habits of TDS-SL programmes. The survey was conducted in six locations: Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone; Magburaka in the north; Kambia in the north; Kenema headquarters of the east; Kailahun in the east under RUF occupation for the 10 years of war; and Sembehun about 17 miles from Bo the headquarters of the south. The sample consisted of 400 Sierra Leoneans drawn from 10 categories - NGOs, Government, university students, schoolteachers, small business, farmers, housewives, unemployed, drivers, market vendors, miners and IDPs. A sample size of 30 was targeted for each category. The survey began with two qualifying questions (1) respondents who are willing to be interviewed and (2) who sometimes listen to radio. Six questions focused on radio listening habits and the rest on TDS-SL programmes. In terms of gender, 48.5% of the respondents were male and 51.5% are female. Age groups were represented as follows; 25 years or younger 22%, 26-40 56.3%, and 41 or over 20.8%.

The TDS-SL audience survey (Abdalla et al., 2002:41) shows that the Sierra Leonean audiences are now receiving a variety of messages from a variety of stations at the grassroots’ level. This development is significant to the public sphere in Sierra Leone.
the more access and quality information and education ordinary people receive from
the public sphere of broadcasting, the more they are empowered to engage in societal
affairs.

Table 6.15: TDS-SL Audience Survey—Percentage of Respondents who listen to
Radio Stations “Very often” or “Sometimes”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stations</th>
<th>Freetown</th>
<th>Magburaka</th>
<th>Kambia</th>
<th>Kenema</th>
<th>Kailahun</th>
<th>Sembehun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>92.4%</td>
<td>96.1%</td>
<td>92.9%</td>
<td>41.3%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98.1</td>
<td>96.9%</td>
<td>82.4%</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>80.2%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAMSIL</td>
<td>80.9%</td>
<td>68.6%</td>
<td>92.9%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93 BBN</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLBS BO</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>41.2%</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>66.3%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KISS 104</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>95.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLBS</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>98.9%</td>
<td>61.9%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenema</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLBS Mile</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>70.6%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>70.6%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mankneh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mile 91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>88.5%</td>
<td>78.4%</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
<td>80.4%</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOA</td>
<td>60.3%</td>
<td>58.8%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>69.6%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BFBS</td>
<td>69.5%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


According to Abdalla et al. (2002:41), the table shows that most respondents from
Freetown and Magburaka listen to most of the radio stations while respondents from
Kambia and Kenema listen to half of them. Respondents from Sembehun listen
mainly to two radio stations transmitting from Bo. Respondents for Kailahun listen
mostly to SLBS Kenema in addition to BBC and VOA. This table indicates that
pluralism exists in the broadcast landscape and a majority of the ordinary population
have access to the broadcasting public sphere. Before this development, the
broadcasting sphere excludes the majority of the people because SLBS was covering
only 25% of the population (Holmes, 1999).
Access to the public sphere of broadcasting depends on radio technology the effectiveness of the transmitters is crucial to people receiving education and information therefore, the audience reach largely depends on the strength and location of the transmitter. Freetown is the location of 98.1FM, 96.2FM and SLBS 99.9. SLBS has 3000 watts transmitter so it could be difficult to receive in some parts of the provinces, 98.1 has a 2000 watts transmitter, which means that it can compete with SLBS but on a limited scale in the provinces. All the other community stations are between 250 watts to 500 watts with limited coverage area. The diagram prepared by the International Military Technical and Training Team (IMATT), which is training the military in Sierra Leone, reflects this.
Fig. 6.16 Radio and TV Coverage in Sierra Leone

RADIO AND TV COVERAGE IN SIERRA LEONE

Based on approximate data from SLBS/Talking Drum

Produced by 803 PSYOPS (IMATT)

Source: IMATT (2000)
This map shows that when SLBS was transmitting on short wave transmitters, it was covering the entire country. Since it broke down its capacity was limited to the 99.9 FM covering limited areas in the country. It is the most powerful transmitter in the country, seconded by the largest independent community radio stations KISS 104 and Radio Democracy with 2000 watts transmitters. VOH 96.2 is the typical case of independent radio transmitters in Sierra Leone within the IMC’s stipulated range of 250-500 watts for community radio station. This covers about a 100-mile radius (IMC Status of Radio Report: 2003). This is one of the reasons that explains why Sierra Leone has so many FM community radio stations that is limited coverage means there is need for more transmitters to cover the entire country. Sierra Leone at present has about 30 radio transmitters broadcasting to about 95% of the total population this technological development has widened the public sphere of broadcasting to include the plebeian sphere.

In an emergent democratic society like Sierra Leone, the citizens depend on credible and trustworthy information from the media sphere to effective participation in politics and other developmental activities (Maura et al., 1997). In terms of credibility and popularity of stations in Sierra Leone in the audience survey, Abdalla et al. (2002) say the questionnaire asked respondents how much you trust the news presented by radio stations. The variables were ‘very much’, ‘somewhat’, ‘not at all’ and ‘undecided’. This research extracts the ‘very much’ variable for analysis. The evaluation involves seven radio stations as shown in the table.
Table 6.17: TDS-SL Audience Survey -Percentage of Responses to “How much do you trust the news presented by the Stations you listen to (Very Much)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stations</th>
<th>Freetown</th>
<th>Magburaka</th>
<th>Kambia</th>
<th>Kenema</th>
<th>Kailahun</th>
<th>Sembehun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SLBS</td>
<td>51.5%</td>
<td>64.7%</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
<td>48.4%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98.1</td>
<td>74.6%</td>
<td>62.7%</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>53.9%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAMSIL</td>
<td>84.4%</td>
<td>58.8%</td>
<td>73.8%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KISS 104 Bo</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>92.2%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOA</td>
<td>53.8%</td>
<td>62.7%</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>64.8%</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


According to the survey, the BBC got 92.2%, Radio UNAMSIL 84.4%, Radio Democracy (98.1FM) 74.6%, 96.2 VOH 53.9%, VOA 53.8%, SLBS 51.5%. This shows that international radio stations are more credible than local stations. This attitude could be attributed to the period of the conflict when the SLBS and Radio Democracy FM 98.1 were used as pro-government and pro-junta stations siding warring factions in the country. BBC and UNAMSIL were unbiased and balanced in reporting the situation untainted with political or private interest. Radio Democracy topped the local radio stations. SLBS was the least credible because it is a government-owned station and the audience considered it to be politically biased. In Magburaka, SLBS beats Radio Democracy FM 98.1 by 2%, because the SLBS transmitter signals are stronger. In Kambia, they are neck to neck still the SLBS signal is stronger. In Kenema, the audience can hardly get FM 98.1 so the audience listened mostly to SLBS. For Kailahun and Sembehun where SLBS is weak and 98.1 signals cannot reach the audience depends on the BBC, Radio UNAMSIL and VOA. Overall, BBC is the most credible station for news. This survey limited the programmes to news excluding local magazines and educational programmes, which may have altered the results. This analysis shows that there is an estimated countrywide reception of broadcasting. The author evaluates this countrywide reception of
broadcasting development within the context of the 75% of the population that was not receiving broadcasting due to the inefficiency of the SLBS monopoly (Holmes, 1999).

This countrywide access to broadcasting facilitates nationwide broadcast of national events. The Acting Director General SLBS Banda-Thomas (Interview: 2004) says SLBS will link-up with all regional stations to simultaneously broadcast events of national importance. “Our programmes go right across the nation because for instance during the reopening of parliament we linked all five regional stations; Bo is in the south, Kenema is in the east, Kailahun in the east, Kono in the east and Makeni in the north for country-wide coverage.” The Search for Common Grounds in collaboration with independent community radio stations formed the Independent Radio Network (IRN). The IRN linked four FM stations two in Freetown, one in Mile 91 and one in Bo to provide independent broadcast coverage of voting day in the 2000 presidential and parliamentary elections. The coordination of these four stations meant that the network was able to reach most of Sierra Leone bringing them updates throughout the day to avoid any misinformation that will disrupt the democratic process (SFCG-SL online, 2006).

The proliferation of community radio stations in the country is a cause for concern because during periods of political instability there is the temptation for the media to be prejudiced and fuel the conflict. This is the pessimistic approach to the proliferation of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. President Kabbah (2003) who agreed to be the ‘spiritual father’ of community radio expresses his concern for the proliferation of community radio in the country,
It took barely a decade (after the introduction of radio in the 1920s) for Goebbels the Germany's Nazi government Propaganda Minister to prove the point beyond any shred of doubt that people can use radio negatively. The Hitler regime paved the road for Radio Mille Collins in the mid-1990s in the misuse of the airwaves for deadly propaganda purposes.

This means that historically people have used radio to promote hate and xenophobia with catastrophic consequences. One cannot dismiss this trepidation, an example of negative use of radio was during the war in Sierra Leone with the two-radio broadcasting camps the pro-government camp and pro-junta camp. The junta captured the SLBS as a pro-junta radio station and Radio Democracy was broadcasting for the exiled elected government as the pro-democracy radio station. Both campaigns were fierce resulting in arousing public anger and incitement that after the military intervention, the members of the pro-democratic camp that succeeded, fell on the so-called pro-junta groups and many lost their lives. This could have been out of frustration but the radio stations contributed to building up this unfortunate situation (Tam-Baryoh, 2003).

This analysis could be justified for instance; when the government was re-instated, it rewarded pro-democratic broadcasters with ministerial appointment. Julius Spencer was appointed as Minister of Information and Broadcasting and Allie Bangura was appointed as Minister of Trade. The government charged with treason and/or detained for investigations the pro-junta broadcaster like the Director General of the SLBS and other senior officials (Tam-Baryoh, 2006).

This anxiety for the proliferation of radio stations is real as there are examples in other African countries that are more graphic. In Rwanda, the medium to propagate
xenophobia and ethnic cleansing was Radio Mille Collines (Imobighe, 1999). This means that Sierra Leone should be very careful in organising its radio system to avoid abuse but it should not allow past incidences to determine the developing of broadcasting.

6.7 Summary

This chapter focuses on analysing the new landscape of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. It demonstrates that there is a link between media and political pluralism; this manifests itself in the introduction of democracy, which facilitated the institutionalisation of media pluralism. The democratic government enacted the Independent Media Commission (IMC) to promote media pluralism. The IMC opened the public sphere of broadcasting by registering a number of independent community radio stations. The government on the other hand, established regional radio broadcast in the regional headquarter towns in the country. This development makes possible grassroots access and participation in the sphere of broadcasting (Holmes, 1999; Strasser-King, 1995). This means that there are two types of broadcasting serving the needs of the ordinary people in Sierra Leone; government-owned regional radio stations and independent community radio broadcasting including international rebroadcast stations (IMC Status of Radio report, 2004). The state developed two regulatory bodies for the new broadcasting landscape the Independent Media Commission (IMC) regulating independent community broadcasting and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting supervising government-owned SLBS (IMC Act, 2000; Rowe, 1998). The two types of broadcasting have serious implications for the public sphere; the government stations limit the public sphere to government information therefore, scholars Palmer (1969) and Strasser-King (1995) are
recommending for its political independence. In contrast, the independent community radio stations created the grassroots sphere of broadcasting meaning that they facilitated greater access to local communities and use indigenous languages for grassroots public participation (Tam-Baryoh, 2006).

Habermas's theory of the public sphere was very appropriate to discussing pluralism in emergent democracy like Sierra Leone. There is the institutionalisation of media multiplicity, diversity of programmes and unrestricted democratic functions of the media (Tam-Baryoh, 2006). The spread of community radio stations means that the population has greater access to broadcasting particularly the excluded grassroots. The introduction of local languages in broadcasting has increased public participation in the broadcasting sphere because there is no educational requirement for participation. The benefits of the institutionalisation of broadcast pluralism by legislation came out clearly. Abdalla et al., (2002) say radio coverage was 25% now it is about 95%, according to the distribution of the radio network in the country. The radio distribution analysis shows that independent community radio stations outnumbered government stations by 5:1 ratio. International government and non-governmental organisations sponsored the proliferation of community radio stations to stimulate progress and the empowerment of the people in an emerging democratic society. The dwindling of international funding for radio stations has resulted to broadcasting turning to commercialisation for sustainability (Tam-Baryoh, 2006).

This chapter analysed the economy of broadcasting in Sierra Leone and the influence of commercialisation on the public sphere of broadcasting. The programme schedule statistics in table 6.9 shows that 50% of the total broadcast time was on advertising and music. As donor support reduces, community radio stations are resorting to
advertising for sustainability (Tam-Baryoh, 2006). The implication of this to the public sphere is that community radio stations will start to serve commercial interest broadcasting for profit at the expense of public service broadcasting. The high cost of running broadcasting has exacerbated this problem because broadcasting depends on standby generators and high cost of fuel due to shortage of electricity supply. This cuts down the hours of transmission and increases the space for advertising. Another issue of economic concern is that the independent broadcasting stations are not receiving subsidies from the government as broadcasting in French West Africa but the government waives import duties for the importation of broadcasting equipment. State broadcasters on the other hand, are receiving government subsidies but the government is using these for public relations and revenue collection (Nalo, 2004). This greatly reduces the commercial potentiality of the state broadcaster. Other limitations to the public sphere are that public participation depends on mobile telephony, which is very expensive for the ordinary man. Political interference in the content of state broadcasting is limiting the public sphere space to government political information.

The chapter assesses the advantages of opening the public sphere of broadcasting showing that about 95% of the population have access to broadcasting at the local community level. This has assisted the development of the grassroots' sphere of broadcasting empowering the ordinary people to have access, receive information and participate in broadcasting. This empowerment is as a result of the democratisation of broadcasting with local languages which encourages public comprehension of critical public issues. Presently community's interest, national interest, international and
business interest are all represented in the public sphere of broadcasting. The next chapter investigates the regulation of this new broadcasting environment
Chapter 7

Regulating the New Media milieu

7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter mapped out the new broadcast landscape with the main objective to establish that there is broadcast pluralism in terms of multiplicity of channels and diversity of programmes. The new stations introduced are local community and regional radio stations, which have provided enormous access of broadcasting to the majority of the population. This means that these new radio stations have broadened the sphere of broadcasting to include a large percentage of the ordinary people formerly deprived of broadcasting services. The use of local language has widened public participation in the public sphere to the grassroots who cannot read or write. For example on the 20th of January 2004 as part of its voters education programme for the 2004 Local Council Elections, KISS 104 FM organised a phone-in programme to educate the ordinary people about the local electoral process and to encourage them to participate as part of their civic responsibility. According to the Station Manager of KISS 104 Halfner (Interview: 2004), one of the issues that came out in the public discussion was that paramount chiefs sometimes interfere with local elections on political parties’ line. The station broadcast an article from the Local Government Act 2000 that paramount chiefs should not interfere in the local government elections, as they are above political partisanship. The programme stressed that they have a role to play but not dubious games in favour of one political party. This programme was very offensive to the local chiefs and they threatened to close down the station but the Independent Radio Network (IRN) and the community publicly supported the station. Paramount chiefs’ interference in local and national
elections also came up in the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2007. The European Union Election Observation Mission Republic of Sierra Leone Report (2007:7) states that the level playing field for political parties to campaign was influenced by the partisanship of a number of traditional leaders. In several instances, traditional leaders were vigorously supporting the SLPP [the ruling party] and trying to control the campaign agenda for political parties in their areas in favour of the incumbent party. This shows that it was legitimate for the ordinary people to raise this issue of traditional leadership interferences in politics in their local community radio station.

The economy of broadcasting is constraining the public sphere as broadcasters wrestle with their public interest function and profit-making objectives (Maura et al., 1997). These new stations together with the government-owned stations are producing a diversity of information, which has enriched the quality and quantity of education and information, and critical debate in the public sphere. They have also created a plebeian sphere in which grassroots participate in political public debate as in democratic participation (McQuail, 2000).

7.1.1 Aims and objectives

This chapter examines the regulatory agencies that are regulating this new media environment to see whether they are opening the public sphere of broadcasting to uphold the interest of the public. According to Cuilenburg & McQuail (2003: 182), governments in the west have always regulated broadcasting and the guiding principle of this regulation was the notion of the public interest, which democratic states are to pursue on behalf of their citizens. Negrine (1994:83) avows that the UK sets its regulatory framework on the PSB that is the BBC acting as trustee of public interest
as proposed by the Crawford Committee in 1927. Various regulatory white papers, commissions, communication Acts and regulatory agencies are regulating broadcasting (Negrine, 1994; Ofcom Document, 2006). According to McChesney (1997:8), the Communications Act of 1934 created the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to regulate broadcasting to public convenience in the US. Broadcast regulation was for private and commercial interest. Sierra Leone is attempting to develop a regulatory framework to meet with the challenges of the new media environment.

This chapter is divided into two sections - Section 1 focuses on the new regulatory body for the media the Independent Media Commission (IMC). This is a change of the regulatory framework of broadcasting from complete government control to independent regulation. The section examines the provisions of the Independent Media Act 2000 (IMC Act, revised, 2004), and the functions and activities of the commission. The assessment of the IMC takes place within the framework of its three specialised sub-committees these are the Application Committee, the Complaints Committee and the Advisory Committee (IMC Act, 2000). The commission established these three sub-committees to facilitate its activities as specified in the act (IMC Act, 2000/2004). There will be an assessment of the major activities of these three committees in order to evaluate the performance of the commission to promote media pluralism and diversity of views.

The government rejected the transformation of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) status to PSB (Palmer, 1969; Strasser-King, 1995) therefore, section 2 scrutinises new attempts at deregulating the SLBS. It analyses the initiative of the National Commission for Privatisation (NCP) to privatise the station as opposed to the
alternative PSB regulation. The NCP together with other stakeholders created the Transitional Management Team (TMT) to administer SLBS until the government takes a final decision on its status.

7.1.2 Theory

The theory of the public sphere, the political economy approach and the ‘Four Theories of the Press’ are useful to discuss issues pertinent to this analysis. The public sphere theory is very significant to the discussion on the establishment of the Independent Media Commission to promote media pluralism. It means that the IMC was set up to register independent radio stations all over the country to increase media access to the ordinary citizens in Sierra Leone. It was also set up to encourage diversity of opinion and information aiming at opening the public sphere to every citizen to participate (IMC Act 2000). The Commission requires all types of broadcasting stations to keep to the public service mandate to ensure that the public sphere of broadcasting is enriched with quality programmes (Final Radio Policy Document, 2004). The importance of the IMC to the public sphere of broadcasting demands our attention and analysis. This chapter scrutinises membership of the commission to assess political influence in the commission. It examines the functions and activities of the commission through its specialised agencies to evaluate the effectiveness of the commission in executing the task of widening the public sphere of broadcasting.

The political economy theory is also relevant to the discourse of the economy of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. The act mandates the IMC to fix registration fees and license independent community radio stations (IMC Act, 2000). This section examines the implications of this as the ability to pay registration fees relates to
opening or closing the public sphere of broadcasting. It implies that if local community radio stations are unable to pay registration fees, they cannot operate and therefore limits the access to the public sphere. The government has slated the SLBS for privatisation how will it balance its public service functions with its profit making interest needs investigating. Recommendations made by the Transitional Management Team proposed that SLBS remained a PSB but should continue to advertise (TMT Report, 2005) this shows that there is conflict between commercialisation and the public interest for the SLBS.

These arguments stemmed from the fact that the SLBS is government-owned and controlled, which limits the public sphere to government information. The four theories of the press will be useful here. The political independence or freedom of the state broadcaster is a cause for concern for many scholars (Palmer, 1969; Strasser-King, 1995). The handing over of the SLBS to the National Commission for Privatisation (NCP) is the latest attempt to ensure the political independence of the institution. The government handed over the SLBS to the Transitional Management Team (TMT) for a period of 18 months before its incorporation as PSB (Baryoh, 2006). This analysis pays attention to the liberalisation of SLBS to PSB as a public sphere of broadcasting in Sierra Leone.

7.1.3 Methods

Policy document analysis and in-depth interviews are the data for analysis. Policy and legislative documents of the Independent Media Commission (IMC) Act 2000 (Revised in 2004) will be evaluated for information on its membership, functions, and regulatory framework for media in Sierra Leone. The National Commission for
Privatisation (NCP) policy documents for the SLBS 2003 will be assessed. These are the reports on the stakeholders’ conference on the media, the ‘Corporatisation’ of the SLBS as PSB (2003) and the TMT Report 2005. These documents will help assess the argument to privatise or incorporate SLBS as PBS. The Ghanaian National Media Commission will be used as a model for comparative assessment with the Independent Media Commission (IMC) in Sierra Leone. The author utilises the 1999 South African Broadcasting Act to suggest improvement on the Sierra Leone Broadcasting regulatory system. The African Charter on Broadcasting adopted at Windhoek in 2001 and the African Commission Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights Banjul 2001 are relevant regional policy documents on broadcasting. The interviewees selected are the Executive Secretary of the Independent Media Commission (IMC) and the Public Relations Officer of the National Commission for Privatisation (NCP) because these two organisations are involved in shaping the regulatory framework of the media in Sierra Leone. The IMC is the main regulatory body for the media but the government mandates NCP to change the status SLBS hence, these two organisations are relevant to this analysis.

7.2 Section One - The Independent Media Commission

The Independent Media Commission (IMC) Act 2000 mandates IMC to promote media pluralism and diversity of views in Sierra Leone. This means that it has the responsibility to promote access and public participation in the public sphere of broadcasting to a large majority of the population. The government brought IMC into being by the enactment of the Independent Media Commission (IMC) Act 2000, (revised in 2004) as an autonomous body to regulate media in Sierra Leone. IMC Act 2004 (Part 3 (8)2c&e) states that the Commission shall “establish categories of
licenses and grant such licenses to electronic media institutions in Sierra Leone....and maintain a register of media institutions, newspapers and magazines published in Sierra Leone." This means that the IMC is responsible to regulate all media in Sierra Leone its jurisdiction extends to 'other such services' as international rebroadcast and Direct Satellite Broadcast.

In comparison, the Ghanaian National Media Commission is a model of the IMC Sierra Leone. Karikari (1994) says the 1992 Ghanaian constitution established Ghana Media Commission under the Freedom and Independence of the Media Article 166, chapter 12. It states that “There shall be established by an Act of Parliament within six months after Parliament first meets, after the coming into force of this Constitution, a National Media Commission.” The government established the commission by an Act of Parliament before this development broadcasting was government controlled. The introduction of constitutional rule brought media pluralism.

7.2.1 Members of the Commission

The IMC Act (2000) stipulates that the commission should consist of a chair and ten other members. The President appoints them acting on the advice of the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ) and subject to the approval of Parliament. “The chairman shall be appointed by the President in consultation with SLAJ. He shall serve on a part-time basis and shall be either a person with wide experience as a media practitioner or a legal practitioner qualified to hold office as a Judge of the High Court of Sierra Leone” (IMC Act 2004: Part 11 (4) 2). The President’s involvement in the appointment of the chair can create room for political influence in the administration of the IMC. In comparison, the Ghanaian constitution makes it
clear that the President has no hand in the appointment of the chairperson of the National Media Commission. Chapter 12 section 166 (2) of the constitution states that, 'The Commission shall elect its own Chairman'. This section rules out any political influence in the appointment of the Chairperson.

According to the African Charter on Broadcasting (2001: 1(2))

All formal powers in the areas of broadcast and telecommunications regulation should be exercised by public authorities, which are protected against interference particularly of a political or economic nature by, among other things, an appointments process for members which is open, transparent, involves the participation of civil society, and is not controlled by any particular political party.

The analysis considers this charter when examining the appointment procedure of the membership of the Independent Media Commission. This provision was made because of the rampant interference of African leadership in the appointment process of media organisations. The Ghana National Independent Media Commission is an example of how political leaders can refrain from such practice. The UK is not free from such political interference. According to the House of Lords Communication Committee Report (2007), the government's role in appointing the chair of the BBC Trust should be limited. The process used to appoint the chair gave ministers considerable opportunity to influence the selection process. The main area of concern expressed in the report was what it described as the "considerable powers" government ministers had over the chair’s appointment (BBC News on-line, 2007). This means that the appointment procedure of media organisations should be analysed to see the level of political interference.
This suggests that the appointment of a member of the IMC in Sierra Leone should be transparent and politics should not interfere with the appointment process.

The African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights, Banjul (2000) supports this view in its resolution on freedom of expression. It states that

Any public authority that exercises powers in the areas of broadcast or telecommunications regulation should be independent and adequately protected against interference, particularly of a political or economic nature. There should be an open and transparent appointments process for members of a regulatory body, involving the participation of civil society, without political party influence.

If international partners and local broadcasters should treat the IMC seriously in the execution of its duties and responsibilities the Act should ensure the political independence of the organisation.

The Executive Secretary of the commission, Kamara (Interview: 2004) comments on the supposedly political influence in the appointment procedure of the commission.

If you look at this Act, you will find out that the President appoints the Chair. Ideally, the civil society should make appointments to the commission not the political class. This Act is now a public document and would-be donors would look at the Act and say why is the President making appointments? You will see that there is a degree of political advantage.

From the preceding discussion, Kamara is justified in his criticism.

Another controversial issue of this appointment was that the chairperson’s position was “full-time” according to the IMC Act 2000. The government created this position
so that the chair can be watchdog for it because in that permanent position he can influence decisions in favour of the government. The position conflicts the role of the Executive Secretary who is responsible for the daily administration of the organisation. When the chairperson and commissioners continued to stay in office after their tenure compounded this problem. According to the IMC Act (2004: Part 2 (5) 1), “The Chairman and the other members of the Commission shall hold office for three years and shall be eligible for reappointment to a second term.” This situation has made the commission lose some of its credibility. According to Morgan (2003:3) who was the IMC Thompson Foundation Consultant, people have questioned the validity of the Commission because some Commissioners continued to stay after their terms of office ended.

The proposed amended Independent Media Act 2004 clearly stipulates that the position of the Chair and the commissioners should be part time with specific tenure of office “He shall serve on a part-time basis.....” (IMC ACT 2004 Part 2(4) 2 revised). The problematic issue of the chair being a presidential appointee still stands. The other members of the commission do not represent diverse interests; the major appointees are mostly members of the professional class. “Two legal practitioners, two experts in the field of telecommunications, two experts in the field of radio and television, two experts in the field of print journalism, a representative of the Minister responsible for Information and a representative of SLAJ” (IMC ACT 2004 Part 2 (4) 2 a-f). This membership still has some political disadvantage with the Minister’s representative and secondly the membership is without civil society representation. In comparison to the Ghana National Media Commission, the Ghana IMC is broad enough to involve a wide spectrum of the civil society. According to chapter 12, 166
(1), there should be one representative each nominated by various organisations such as: the Ghana Bar Association; the Publishers, and Owners of the Private Press; the Ghana Association of Writers; the Ghana Library Association; and the Christian groups including the National Catholic Secretariat, the Christian Council and the Ghana Pentecostal Council. There are also representatives from the Federation of Muslim Councils and Ahmadiyya Mission, training institutions of journalists and communicators, the Ghana Advertising Association, the Institute of Public Relations of Ghana, and the Ghana National Association of Teachers. The membership of the Ghanaian media commission is broad enough to include diverse societal interest.

7.2.2 Functions of the Commission

The major functions of the IMC are to regulate and license the media in Sierra Leone. The licensing of the media means that broadcasting has to go through certain criteria and monetary regulatory obligations, which might restrict the public sphere. In comparison with the Ghana National Media Commission there is no licensing requirement; the Constitution removes all impediments for the registration of media institutions. According to the constitution chapter 12, 162 (3), "...there shall be no law requiring any person to obtain a licence as a prerequisite to the establishment or operation of a newspaper, journal or other media for mass communication or information." To protect African media against political arbitrariness, the African Commission's Resolution on Broadcast Registration Banjul (2000) makes it clear that an independent regulatory body responsible for issuing broadcasting licences should be transparent. It states, "Licensing processes shall be fair and transparent, and shall seek to promote diversity in broadcasting and that community broadcasting shall be promoted given its potential to broaden access by poor and rural communities to the
airwaves.” This provision suggests that the IMC in Sierra Leone is legitimate in licensing the media on condition that it is transparent and encourages media pluralism particularly at the grassroots level. The introduction of an independent media organisation to regulate the media is a significant change of regulatory policy from government (Rowe, 1998). This means that the registration of the media is presumably not to be subject to political patronage.

According to the IMC Act (2004), the primary function of the commission is “to promote a free and pluralistic media throughout Sierra Leone.” Pluralism means opening the media public sphere for public participation through a variety of channels and programmes as recommended by Rowe (1998) and Strasser-King (1995). The other functions of the commission include ensuring that

Media institutions achieve the highest level of efficiency in the provision of media services to promote fair competition among media institutions and persons engaged in the provision of media services. To protect the interest of the public and to promote technological research and the development of adequate human resources for the advancement of the media industry throughout Sierra Leone (IMC Act 2004: Part 3 (8) b-e).

In comparison, this is analogous to the Ghana Media Commission. The Ghanaian Constitution, chapter 12 section 167, makes similar provision for its commission to promote and ensure the freedom and independence of the media and to take measures to ensuring the establishment and maintenance of the highest media standards. A principal function of the Ghanaian National Media Commission, which the Sierra Leone IMC Act overlooked is ‘to insulate the state-owned media from governmental control’. The Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) is a public service corporation
but not completely free from government control. The commission protects GBC from political pressure.

One of the intentions of the IMC legislation is “to protect the interest of the public” (IMC Act 2004 Part 3 (8)1d). The Act defines the interest of the public as ‘access to plurality of views and variety of programming’. This means that broadcasting should produce a diversity of programmes and represent all shades of views and opinions these include the government, opposition, alternative and grassroots. The Act empowers the commission to encourage the multiplicity of channels to create wider access to the public sphere of broadcasting as a free market of ideas and expression (Herman et al., 1997). Forster (2005) divides public interest objectives into content and standards, including standards of harm, offence, fairness and privacy. It also involves positive public interest goals, which are all about the quality, range and diversity of content delivered by suppliers. Engelman (1999) says the public interest attempts to invigorate the political life and democratic culture of a nation. Specific policies foster diversity of programming, ensure candidate access to the airwaves, provide diverse views on public issues, encourage news and public affairs programming, promote localism, develop quality programming for children and sustain a separate realm of high-quality non-commercial programming.

7.3 Evaluation of the Activities of the IMC

The activities of the IMC should focus on promoting and opening the public sphere of broadcasting for public access and participation. This section evaluates its performance through the activities of its three specialised sub-committees these are the Applications, Complaints and Advisory Committees. “The Commission shall for the effective performance of its functions under this Act appoint such Committees as
it may consider necessary” (IMC Act 2004: Part 3 (9) 1). This evaluation is to assess whether the IMC is fostering media pluralism, increase access of broadcasting to a majority of the population and encouraging diversity of views and public participation in the media sphere.

7.3.1 The Applications Committee

The IMC establishes the Applications Committee to license and register the media “An Applications Committee....shall receive and screen applications for the licensing and registration of media institutions” (IMC Act 2004: Part 3 (9) 1a). The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting originally performed this function now there is a change of regulatory policy to independent regulation. In contrast, there is no provision in the Ghana National Media Commission for the registration of the media. According to chapter 12, 162 (3), “There shall be no impediments to the establishment of private press or media” but Karikari (1994) notes that the media institutions should fulfil the financial requirement of the Frequency Board for the issuance of broadcast frequencies. In the case of Sierra Leone, the broadcast media have to satisfy both requirements of registering with the IMC and the Frequency Board in the Sierra Leone Telecommunication (SIERRATEL) (Kamara, 2004). The Applications Committee has screened and registered over 30 radio stations, 36 newspapers, 1 private television and 1 Direct Satellite Broadcast Television (Status of Radio Report, 2004).

The registration of independent community radio stations in the country was an attempt to opening access and participation to broadcasting by the majority of Sierra Leoneans. It aims at empowering the mass illiterate citizens through radio educational and informative programmes. According to President Kabbah (2006), “the country is
characterised by high level of illiteracy (78%), limited education facilities, schools, colleges, and limited access; poor health facilities, hospitals, weak institutions, low capacity and failed programmes” (State House online, 2006). This shows the significance of the media particularly radio broadcasting. In contributing to national development and the public sphere in Sierra Leone President Kabbah (2006) affirms that

The mass media has a significant role to play in encouraging freedom of opinion, including political opinions. Since 1996, out of thirty-nine radio stations, there are seven publicly owned and thirty-two privately owned. In addition, out of three operating TV stations two are publicly owned and one private.

These privately owned radio stations are mostly independent community radio stations and the publicly owned stations are the SLBS and its regional stations owned by the government.

The African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights Banjul (2002) expresses the significance of promoting community radio stations; “community broadcasting shall be promoted, given its potential to broaden access by poor and rural communities to the airwaves.” In discussing the potential of community radio stations in Africa, Mtimde et al., (1998:27) say community radio is a true instrument of democratisation and empowerment. Communities can actively participate in communication, which will empower them to drive and nurture the processes of development and democracy.

Table 7.1: Status of Radio Stations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Station</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radio BBN</td>
<td>Pademba Road, F/town</td>
<td>93.0</td>
<td>Religious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Bintumani</td>
<td>Kabala Town</td>
<td>107.3</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Bontico</td>
<td>Bonthe Town Council</td>
<td>96.9</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen FM</td>
<td>Thunder Hill, Kissy</td>
<td>103.7</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Democracy</td>
<td>Signal Hill, Freetown</td>
<td>98.1</td>
<td>Commercial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Radio</td>
<td>56 Blama Rd, Kenema</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
<td>New England</td>
<td>95.3</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Station</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Gbafth</td>
<td>Mile 91</td>
<td>91.6</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Gbonkonlenken</td>
<td>Yele</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiss 104</td>
<td>Bo</td>
<td>104.0</td>
<td>Commercial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Kolenten</td>
<td>Kambia</td>
<td>92.4</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Life ventures</td>
<td>3 Soldier Street</td>
<td>97.2</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Mankneh</td>
<td>35 Missiri Street, Makeni</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Maria</td>
<td>Catholic Mission, Makeni</td>
<td>102.4</td>
<td>Religious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Moa</td>
<td>Kenema Village, Kailahun District</td>
<td>105.5</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio MODCAR</td>
<td>16 Mission Road, Moyamba</td>
<td>94.8</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Mount Aureol</td>
<td>Fourah Bay College</td>
<td>107.3</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Nongowa</td>
<td>Nyandema, Kenema</td>
<td>101.3</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio New Song</td>
<td>Sewa Road, Bo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice of America (VOA)</td>
<td>Leicester Peak</td>
<td>101.1</td>
<td>International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice of the Handicapped</td>
<td>18J Oniel Street, Quarry, Off Mends Street</td>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice of the Peninsular(Radio Tombo)</td>
<td>2 Findlay Street, Tombo</td>
<td>96.0</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skyy</td>
<td>Mount Joy, Leicester</td>
<td>106.0</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The IMC Status of Radio Report (2004) shows that about 95% of the radio stations registered are community radio. Community radio has international sponsorship for its establishment because of its empowerment and democratic function in encouraging grassroots participation in the public sphere (Mtimde, 1998). Most interviewees
Foullah (2004), Halfner (2004), Massaquoi (2004) and Nicol (2004) confirm that independent community radios are developing because of international assistance. These community radio stations are mostly clustered around the big cities and towns such as Freetown the capital city, Bo the second capital in the south, Makeni the regional headquarter of the north and Kenema the headquarter of the east. This is because these are centres for socio-political and economic activities and information. The two commercial stations registered were originally community radio stations. Maura et al., (1997) argue that commercial media are few because of lack of industrial base and poor economic climate. The Stakeholder Media Seminar Report (2003) states that Sierra Leone’s economy is fragile and does not favour a burgeoning market for media industry.

There are five regional radio stations in different parts of the provinces, which the IMC radio policy document (2004) describes as “Un-registered Stations” or “gratis.” These stations are not within the jurisdiction of the IMC because they are part of the SLBS regional stations as a government department therefore; the IMC felt constrained to regulate a government department, which has its own civil service mandate.

The Application Committee rejected the application of one radio station the West Africa Democracy Radio (WADR). This analysis treats the rejection of the radio station critically because there is the suspicion that it could be politically motivated. This can seriously affect the development of the public sphere in Sierra Leone. The African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights Banjul (2002) opposes all forms of political interference in the decision-making process of issuing license to
broadcasting. It is “aware of the particular importance of the broadcast media in Africa given its capacity to reach a wide audience, due to the comparatively low cost of receiving transmissions and its ability to overcome barriers of illiteracy” therefore, media commissions should be “protected against interference particularly of a political or economic nature.” According to subsection 17 (3) Of the IMC Act (2004), “An application...shall not be granted by the Commission if it is not in the public interest, and there are compelling reasons for refusal, founded on technical ground, national security, and public safety.”

According to the IMC Document (2000:4), it refused WADR a license on the grounds of national security and public interest. The applicants were to establish WADR as a non-partisan, non-profit radio station transmitting to the Manor River Union countries these are; Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea. The project’s main objective was to promote an open, tolerant and democratic society in the three countries and advocate for good governance, popular participation in politics and regional and economic integration (Liberia Orbit online, 2003). What “national security” means in this context is not clear but when one looks at the general political climate in the sub-region then one can conjecture the meaning. The Manor River Union States were fraught with political instability. According to Cole (2004), it was alleged that the Sierra Leone civil conflict was instigated by Liberia the rebel leader who emerged as the President of Liberia Charles Taylor, was accused of fuelling the war in Sierra Leone. Guinea was accusing rebel forces of both Liberia and Sierra Leone for trying to destabilize the country. It was within this context that the registration of WADR was forestalled.
The Commission’s Document (2000:4) argues that the station had made attempts to be established in Liberia and Guinea but was rejected. The IMC Executive Secretary Kamara (Interview: 2004) says,

The commission looks at papers submitted by the proprietors, which indicated that both Guinea and Liberia had refused permission to set up this radio and the commission felt that if it went ahead and registered the station it would not augur well for the sub region. The Act states that the commission should not register any station, which is not in the interest of the public and there was a suspicion that the station aimed at destabilizing Liberia under Charles Taylor.

The objectives of the radio station were not conducive to the political climate at the time. The station was trying to promote a critical public sphere, democratic values and good governance in these societies governed by warlords and military juntas. If WADR was launched in Sierra Leone to preach democracy in the sub-region, regional dictators might take offence. The registration of the station was refused on this ground. The purpose of this analysis was to demonstrate that the IMC Application Committee’s refusal to grant WADR a broadcasting licence on the ground of the public interest was reasonable otherwise; critics might say it was politically motivated. Tam-Baryoh (2006) reports that another West African state Senegal has given permission to WADR to broadcast.

IMC Act 2004 (Part 3 (8) 2c & e) states that the commission shall

Establish categories of licenses; grant such licenses to electronic media institutions in Sierra Leone...... and maintain a register of media institutions, newspapers, and magazines published in Sierra Leone.
This is the economy of broadcasting which might restrict the public sphere of broadcasting. The Independent Media Commission at the initial stage fixed license fees for both the print and electronic media but there was great disparity between the registration fees for the two media. According to the IMC Registration Document (2000), radio stations were to pay in foreign currency $2,000 the equivalence of about Le 4,600,000. The commission expressed the registration fee for newspapers in Leones the national currency; Le 25, 000 (£5.7) and a certificate fee of Le 100, 000 (£22.8), making a total of Le 125,000 (£28.5). This disparity in the payment of registration fees brought great discontentment amongst the electronic media organisations. In his IMC Thompson Foundation Consultant Report, Morgan (2003:20) notes that the costs and potential rewards of running a newspaper and radio station are likely to be very different but the absence of a clear justification for the massive disparity between the two levels of fees have resulted in bitter criticism and resentment amongst broadcasters. In the final newspaper policy (2004), a revision of the old list stated that newspapers should pay a non-refundable fee of Le 250, 000 (£56.98) (subject to inflation). Newspapers should also pay a registration fee of Le 500, 000 (£113.97) for the commission to grant a certificate. The IMC based registration fees for radio stations on the wattage of the transmitters.
Table 7.2: Radio Stations Registration Fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transmitters</th>
<th>Fees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 watts</td>
<td>Le 500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£113.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250 watts</td>
<td>Le 1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£227.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 watts</td>
<td>Le 2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£455.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000 watts</td>
<td>Le 2,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£569.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1500 watts</td>
<td>Le 2,750,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£626.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 watts</td>
<td>Le 3,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£683.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The fees are still higher than the newspapers but the IMC gave rationale for the various categories of broadcasting fees. The disadvantage of this system is that if a community station acquires a bigger transmitter the IMC will immediately demand the station to pay higher fees; community radio stations are limited to 100 and 250 watts transmitters above that range, the IMC considers a radio station as commercial stations. The *gratuitous* categories are government-owned stations, which IMC exempted from paying registration fees such as government-owned stations. These are some of the activities of the Applications committee of the IMC. The commission has registered media houses on all of the categories but the focus of this thesis is on radio broadcasting; satellite broadcasting, video/cinema halls, and television are latest developments, which need in-depth analysis but are too extensive for this thesis to accommodate.

7.3.2 The Complaints Committee

The professionalism of the media and its relationship with the public is very important in building up the sphere of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. It is concerned with the quality of programmes broadcast in the public sphere and for the public interest. According to the revised Independent Media Commission Act 2004 Part 3 (9 c), the
Complaints Committee is responsible for "inquiring into complaints against the contravention of the Media Code of Practice and for the settlement of disputes between the public and media institutions." This mandate is similar to the Ghana National Media Commission. According to chapter 167(b) of the constitution, the National Media Commission shall "take all appropriate measures to ensure the establishment and maintenance of the highest journalistic standards in the mass media including the investigation, mediation and settlement of complaints made against the press or other mass media." This means that the commission can develop a code of standards to arbitrate on all complaints against the press and to protect public interest.

The African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights Banjul (2002) warns that media commissions should not allot judicial functions unto themselves, which is the responsibility of the court. It stresses that a code of conduct should establish complaints and that "any regulatory body established to hear complaints about media content, including media councils...its powers shall be administrative in nature and it shall not seek to usurp the role of the courts." Some of the cases handled by the IMC had brought great conflict between journalists and the commission on the accusation of political interference (Morgan, 2003).

According to IMC Report (2005:11), the commission received 27 complaints from the public against various newspaper and one radio station. On the 14th march 2005, the Sierra Leone Police Force made a complaint against Radio Democracy FM98.1 for the 'publication of false news'. After the IMC had counselled both parties, it was agreed that the matter be laid to rest. Examining the list of complaints brought by members of the public, it is observed that government and public officials usually bring complaints against newspapers. The outcome of most of the cases was that the
newspapers retracted articles and made an apology. There is one in which the newspaper refused to retract or apologise and a fine of Le500,000 was imposed. On the 15th of August 2005, the President Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah lodged a complaint against the Editor of the Peep Magazine for defamation and libel. The IMC ordered the paper to retract the story and apologise. The newspaper did not comply. The IMC levied a fine of Le 500,000 for contempt of IMC's decision; the matter is still pending final decision (IMC Annual Report, 2005:27-36). The situation in which journalists are retracting stories and apologising is problematic. Tettey (2006:3) says there is a lack of discretion in reportage in Africa, as journalists engage in unsubstantiated allegations and, sometimes, falsehoods that may create political disruption. He says without any credible evidence to support the claim, the Glamour Trends, in Nigeria, for example, reported that the president was paid a million dollars in allowances for each overseas trip and thus amassed US$58 million over a two-year period (International Press Institute, 2001). Citing another example in Ghana, Tettey says the editor of the Crusading Guide engaged in extensive coverage of allegations that former president Rawlings and his wife have stashed away significant amounts of money in foreign accounts. Despite his assertions, he had no documentary evidence to prove these allegations.

According to the IMC Act (2004 Part 3 (8) 2h) the commission shall

"Compile and adopt a comprehensive Media Code of Practice in consultation with SLAJ, and any other Media Practitioners’ Association and to monitor the implementation of that Code throughout Sierra Leone."

The Independent Media Commission has developed this code of conduct for the media. The code of conduct drawn for journalists is an improvement of the
Newspaper Media Practitioners’ Act 1997. The Newspaper and Media Practitioners Act 1997, made prescriptions for educational qualification for media practitioners, respect for those in authority and the supremacy of the interest of the state. These were the reasons why it did not receive Presidential Accent (Tam-Baryoh, 2006:7). In contrast, the new IMC code of conduct emphasises on the ethics of the profession; its main concern was professionalism, standards, quality and the public interest.

Newspapers must take care not to publish inaccurate, misleading, or distorted materials, including pictures. They must make all reasonable efforts to check and crosscheck the accuracy of stories prior to publication. Partisan newspapers/magazines must distinguish clearly between comments, conjectures and facts.

The press is not completely free; the 1965 Public Order Act criminalises libel and defamation. The Act also makes printers, vendors and other media workers liable for an offence (Tam-Baryoh, 2006:7).

The radio code of conduct is the instrument to determine the professionalism of broadcasters in the interest of the public. This is the concept of social responsibility, which Curran (2005) speaks about in the Libertarian Theory. According to Barnett (1999), in South Africa, the National Broadcasters’ Association set up the Broadcasting Complaints Commission (BCCSA) in 1993 as an independent, self-regulation body responsible for private and community radio stations, as well as the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). It receives and mediates, on complaints from the public about violations of the radio and TV code of conduct (BCCSA online, 2006). The IMC developed a standard of practice and prescribed a code of conduct for the operations of radio and television stations in Sierra Leone.
The content defines the public service mandate for broadcasters, professionalism, and standards.

According to the IMC Act (2004 Part 3 (8) 2d), the commission shall “prescribe minimum percentage of total broadcast hours to be devoted to public service programmes by various types and categories of electronic media institutions.” This means that the IMC expects Sierra Leone broadcasters to perform public service duties. This situation is akin to the British system of broadcasting in which independent broadcasters are to perform public service. According to Crisell (1999) and Seymour-Ure (1999), this means that radio stations are committed to producing quality broadcasting, which reflects the informational, educational, and entertainment needs of the population whilst promoting national identity, diversity, and universality.

According to Kangai & Ndhlova (1986), broadcasting in new nations should mobilise the public for national development through formal and informal education. It should also serve as a carrier of information between the government and the people, a forum for exchange of ideas and reinforce good social norms, attitudes, and habits.

The IMC Final radio Policy Code of Conduct (2005:9 (1-4)) states that,

Radio and TV stations shall endeavour to promote Sierra Leonean culture and the arts as a means of sustaining national cohesion and unity in diversity...

Every radio/television station must devote at least ten hours a week to public service broadcasting, which shall include programmes ....such as features, documentaries, current affairs, and news.

This means that all broadcast media should dedicate time to public service broadcast regardless of their categories. Programmes should be informative and educative aiming at promoting national unity and variety. The policy identifies these
programmes as features, documentaries current affairs and news to enrich the public sphere.

The Final Radio Policy document (2005:9), stipulates that

All stories aired by radio stations should be with due accuracy, truth, and impartiality. Radio/television stations shall not broadcast before 11:00 p.m. each day, programmes that are violent, pornographic or obscene in character, or will tend to lead children below the age of 18, to crime and anti-social behaviour, or portray smoking, drinking or illegal drug-taking, as a normal way of life. Such programmes should clearly indicate their unsuitability for young people.

This means that the yardstick for professionalism is accuracy, truth, impartiality and the observance of watershed period for children. Broadcasters should consider the age rating of feature films before broadcast. Professionalism and standards were major recommendations of scholars in Sierra Leone. Palmer (1969), Strasser-King (1995), and Rowe (1998) say there is the need to improve professionalism and the standards of broadcasting by providing adequate training for broadcasters. According to Kasoma (1999), professionalism in the media means the observance of duties and responsibilities that adds quality to journalism. He assumes that un-professionalism is due to lack of training maintaining that if the profession were restricted to trained journalists, the occurrence of unprofessional conduct would be minimised. Nwosu (1999) was worried about the low level of professional and ethical standards amongst media practitioners in Nigeria, in spite of an increase in the level of education and training among them. He gives an example of 'brown-envelope syndrome', in which media practitioners take kickbacks for work done. The situation painted here is also
common in Sierra Leone, which brought the need for a code of conduct for improved standards in the profession.

### 7.3.3 Advisory Committee

The commission was mandated to form an Advisory Committee which,

“Shall be responsible for studying development in the media and making suitable recommendations for media policy formulation and legislation, as well as promoting professionalism in the media industry all over Sierra Leone, including research and training” (IMC Revised Act 2004 Part 3 (9c)).

This is not the first time the government has set up a broadcasting advisory committee in Sierra Leone. Holmes (1999:47) reports that in 1956, the colonial administrators established a Broadcasting Advisory Board, consisting of the Public Relation Officer as Chairman, the Director of Education, the Postmaster-General, a Paramount Chief, one clergyman, one Muslim leader, a medical doctor, a professor, two women and other private citizens but unfortunately the Board phased out. Other countries the world over, have advisory committees for broadcasting. According to the UK Communications Act 2003 Part 1 (2), there is a provision for Advisory Committees to OFCOM for different parts of the United Kingdom. The function of the advisory committees was to provide advice to OFCOM on the interest and opinions relating to communication matters of citizens residing in a particular area. In Tanzania, the Broadcasting Policy established six advisory committees, which advise and cooperate with Radio Tanzania in the planning and execution of programmes. The aim was to make it easier for Radio Tanzania to inform experts and government officials on broadcast programme development. These committees include the broadcasts for
schools, fundamental adult education, Christian and Islamic religion and Commercial Service and Music committees (Wakati, 1986).

The IMC Advisory Committee has drafted policy documents to advise the government on the improvement of the media. The Committee has developed Rules and Regulations governing operations of the print and electronic media in Sierra Leone. These documents were the outcome of five media workshops held between 2001 and 2005 in collaboration with the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ), PANOS Institute West Africa (PIWA) and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The IMC has formulated the following documents:

i. Print Media Policy
ii. Electronic Media Policy
iii. Advertising Policy

The electronic media policy document specifically seeks to enrich the public sphere of broadcasting by promoting public interest, public participation and enhancing quality programmes for the citizens. The objectives of the Rules and Regulations of the policy document are:

i. To support national development initiatives and programmes, and to positively affect the quality of life of the people of Sierra Leone, through facilitating systematic and effective use and coordination of mass communication strategies and activities;
ii. To promote participation in national dialogue on development issues by all citizens, consistent with the emerging democratic culture and national constitutional provisions;
iii. To enhance access to information and communication infrastructures and new technologies, especially in rural communities;

iv. To preserve national cultural identity, promote the national cultural patrimony, and enhance the development of cultural and artistic capabilities and institutions for public communication;

v. To ensure the timely, orderly and effective growth of information and communication institutions and professions through standards setting, capacity-building and human resources development and management and;

vi. To promote productive community, national, regional and international interchange.

The document contains the final newspaper and radio policies for the country including the code of conduct of both the print and electronic practitioners. The IMC has tendered these to the government for approval. The drafted revised Independent Media Act 2004 is also before Parliament for enactment.

The government established the IMC to open the public sphere for public access and participation with the mandate to promote media pluralism and diversity of views. The Application Committee of the commission has registered a number of community radio stations to promote media pluralism. The IMC Complaints Committee has drafted a code of conduct for broadcasters, which commits them to public service broadcast for quality programmes in the media public sphere. It also protects the public against negative media reporting. All of these policies aimed at improving standards and professionalism. The Advisory Committee has drafted media regulatory policy to advise the government on future development of the media. The research tests the political economy of broadcasting in the registration license fees for
broadcast institutions to determine whether license fees will limit the public sphere. This analysis assesses the membership of the Commission to evaluate political influence, which might limit the public sphere. The Ghanaian National Media Commission was used as the model for this analysis. The commission has been working with other line organisations such as the National Commission for Privatisation for the deregulation of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS).

7.4 Section 2 – The NCP Attempts at Deregulating the SLBS

The political independence of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) is a major concern for this thesis. Since 1969, the government has rejected recommendations to make SLBS a PSB this is the latest attempt to deregulate SLBS (Palmer, 1969; Strasser-King, 1995). The National Commission for Privatisation (NCP) came into being by an Act of Parliament NCP Act 2002. The Act charges the commission with the responsibility of divesting all ‘Parastatals’ as body corporate under government supervision. These are government companies to embark on the process of privatisation whereby NCP will put them out for private sale. There are twenty-four ‘Parastatals’ that were slotted for privatisation and the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) is one of them. According to Uche (1999:533), these privatisation efforts are part of fulfilling IMF and World Bank Conditionality. He argues that the West advised governments in developing countries to decentralise their economies by privatising and deregulating major industrial and service sectors. In the past, the Sierra Leone government has rejected attempts at deregulating the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service but with this conditionality, the government has no option but to deregulate SLBS as the country’s economy mainly depends on foreign financial assistance.
The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service is different from the rest of the ‘Parastatals’ because legally SLBS was never a state business enterprise. According to Holmes (1999), Palmer (1969) and Strasser-King (1995), SLBS is a civil service organisation, a wing of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. According to Rowe (1998:5), the government has been looking at ways of transforming SLBS into an efficient entity because it has sunken down administratively, professionally and operationally. The government argues that this is a way of getting the SLBS out of its difficulties.

The government's decision to de-regulate the SLBS was also to conform to democratic principles in which a democratic government cannot control the media directly restricting the public sphere. The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights Section 1V on public broadcasting states unequivocally that,

State and government controlled broadcasters should be transformed into public service broadcasters, accountable to the public through the legislature rather than the government, in accordance with the following principles: public broadcasters should be governed by a Board which is protected against interference, particularly of a political or economic nature; the editorial independence of public service broadcasters should be guaranteed.

This means that the international community cannot accept government-controlled broadcasting as part of a democratic institution unless the government deregulates and incorporates it as a public institution. Sierra Leone does not want the international community to see it as maintaining an undemocratic institution as an emergent democracy.
The National Commission for Privatisation (NCP) has put forward a proposal for setting up a franchise to kick-start the privatisation process of the SLBS. According to the Public Relations Officer (NCP) Juxon-Smith (Interview: 2004),

This means securing a person, group or company with the requisite background; professional, administrative and business, with a good business plan that would raise the department SLBS out of its present state of morbidity and be able to raise levels of efficiency to improve the operation of SLBS, improve the output and overall efficiency.

He maintains that after a period government would hand over SLBS back to the privatisation process, which will continue its divestiture. The British broadcasting model of franchise has influenced the idea of franchise in broadcasting in Sierra Leone. Curran & Seaton (1997:182) say the Act mandated Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) to license television franchises and to reallocate these periodically. It allocated programmes, making a number of regional franchises on a fixed term basis of nine years to various regional programme-making companies. The IBA can revoke the franchises of offending companies. Crisell (1997) says the Authority was also required to ensure balanced programmes and due impartiality in the treatment of controversial issues and a high quality in programme production. ITV later replaced the IBA presently the office of communication (Ofcom) is responsible for such responsibilities. The problem with this scheme for Sierra Leone is that there are no local programme-making companies to take up this franchise. Juxon-Smith (Interview: 2004) believes in the practicality of the idea of franchise.

All the regions, all the sections, from the metropolis through to the rural, the grassroots, should receive broadcasting service, so that in actuality,
broadcasting should not be de-linked from development. It should be a viable commercial, profit making entity, and, at the same time, provide a kind of professional broadcasting service.

This is the political economy of the proposed new regime as these thoughts geared towards the privatisation of SLBS. Golding et al., (2000) state that privatisation is a complete sale of public owned companies to private and commercial interest. SLBS will be one of the first government-owned broadcasting in British West Africa to become a commercial entity. All government broadcasting organisations in former British colonies transformed themselves into public service corporations (Holmes, 1999; Katz et al., 1978). The Privatisation Commission reflects on the political will of the government to transform SLBS. According to NCP Public Relations Officer, Juxon-Smith (Interview: 2004)

It does appear that there is reluctance on the part of the government but on the other hand, it was the very same executive, which gave SLBS to the NCP for privatisation among a list of twenty-four parastatals. However, from internal observation, the President is determined to transform SLBS.

If the government is ready to liberalise the SLBS, then legislation must declare it. Kariithi (2001) says the Broadcasting Act 1999 Chapter IV provides for the incorporation of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) by Parliament, which formally gave it its political independence. Private or Public Service Broadcasting should be legislated.

The Independent Media Commission (IMC) in collaboration with the NCP, DfID and the Media Foundation for West Africa organised a one-day seminar on the ‘Corporatisation’ of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service on 3rd March 2003. This
was not the first workshop organised for the development of broadcasting, Strasser-King (1995) reports on the workshop for a National Broadcasting Policy for Sierra Leone. The discussion for the incorporation of the SLBS was threefold: First, to incorporate or privatise SLBS; the second was its source of revenue; and the third aspect was its management and organisational structure. This study examines the recommendations in the report in conjunction with the Transitional Management Team (TMT) Report 2005, which has similar recommendations. After resource-persons have four papers on the incorporation or 'corporatisation' of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service they made the following recommendations: -

That the government incorporates SLBS as PSB, “The SLBS should be removed from total government control and be managed by a management consultant team for about a period of six months, which should lead to actual ‘corporatisation’” (TMT Report, 2005:24).

This means that the TMT recommends for a politically independent Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) free from direct political control to broaden the public sphere of state broadcasting. Other studies and reports have made similar recommendations (Maura et al., 1997; Palmer, 1969; Strasser-King, 1995). The idea of privatisation was not included in this recommendation meaning that the stakeholders at this seminar preferred SLBS as PSB. This position was further confirmed when it came to discussing its sources of revenue.

The recommendations present four options for SLBS funding as part of the political economy argument. The Incorporation Policy document, 7-8) (1) states that “An annual grant from the government which should be determined by the needs of the SLBS.” Holmes (1999), Palmer (1969) and Strasser-King (1995) confirm that the
SLBS depends on government subsidies. The problem with this recommendation is that SLBS will still depend on the government financially, without economic independence; its political independence will be sketchy. In French West African countries, independent broadcasting depends on government grants. According to Bathily (2003:20), who presented a paper on Public Aid to Sustain Broadcasting in *Sierra Leone*, in Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Senegal the governments have initiated new policies of a public funding system to support independent media.

The TMT Report (2005:24) suggests ‘Parliamentary subventions’ for the SLBS, which means that the subvention will be a legislative decision rather than an executive function. Palmer (1969), Maura et al., (1997) and Strasser-King (1995) made similar recommendations. This proposal recommends that the state should provide subvention for the SLBS from the consolidated fund as proposed by Parliament; this may protect it from direct executive control.

The second recommendation for funding was, “Revenue generation activities which could not compromise the corporation’s public service mandate” (TMT Report, 2005:24). The Report specifies income generation activities as SLBS branded products, public sponsorship of programmes and commercial merchandising (e.g. SLBS T-shirts and stickers). This recommendation was a copy of the BBC’s commercial activities. According to the BBC’s Fair Trading Guideline (2006), the BBC’s commercial activities should not compromise its public service mandate. The BBC can create revenues, which it can reinvest into public service activities. Commercial activities include co-production of programmes with commercial sources and sales of BBC programmes to overseas broadcasters. The BBC sells products, services, or rights it owns.
The third recommendation for SLBS funding was “Gifts, grants, donations and sponsorships” (TMT Report, 2005:24). According to Engelman (1996), the American public service system depends on federal government subsidies, gifts and donations. The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service can benefit from donor agencies if they are politically independent because most international organisations are interested in democratic institutions; a politically free SLBS will attract more sponsorship.

The final recommendation was “Advertising and License fees from television service, satellite reception, cinema and video halls, and operations sales tax on radio, television and satellite” (TMT Report, 2005:24). This final recommendation gears towards both public funding and commercialisation through advertising. According to the South African Broadcasting Act 1999, the Charter of Corporation divides the public broadcasting service into two wings, the public service and the commercial. The state broadcaster can raise revenues from advertising and sponsorships, grants and donations, as well as, licence fees levied on television sets and can receive grants from the State. This means that the public broadcaster did not exclude any avenue of making funds. This is important, as the international community is considering broadcasting as ‘a non-public asset’, which means they cannot get sponsorship as a public institution (Andriantsoa et al., 2005; Banda, 2003). Therefore, public service broadcasting in developing countries should explore all avenues for funding.

Management and Administrative Structure of the SLBS aspect of the recommendations relates to policy matters, the legal status of the SLBS, its management structure and other procedures of the organisation. Findlay (1975) and Rowe (1998) say that the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service has no legal existence because there is no legislation that brought it into being. Palmer (1969), Maura et al.
(1997), and Strasser-King (1995) suggest that the government should make the SLBS as PSB with its Board of Directors through an Act of Parliament, following the BBC tradition of a Public Service Corporation. According to Crisell (1997), the government established the British Broadcasting Corporation by a Royal Charter with a Board of Governors and a Director General answerable to the board. Legislation should establish the new SLBS as a public service Corporation and protect it against political and economic interests (TMT Report, 2005:24).

The other recommendation of the Report deals with staff management and professional training. Holmes (1999), KPMG report (2000), Palmer (1969), Rowe (1998) and Strasser-King (1995) made similar comments on the lack of relevant training and poor management structure at the SLBS. It is not surprising therefore that this recommendation comes up again.

"That recruitment procedures for the new SLBS should be done in an open, transparent and organised manner....there should be professional training for staff in programming, engineering and management" (TMT Report, 2005: 24). The idea of having a transparent system of recruitment of SLBS staff is very crucial to the success of the new establishment; the staff of SLBS are appointed, using civil servant criteria, which might not always fit in a broadcasting or journalistic environment. Secondly, this recommendation aims at reducing political patronage, which has resulted to poor quality of staff, poor standards of programme production and bad management. The report concludes that professional training is essential to the new SLBS.

7.4.1 The Transitional Management Team SLBSTV 2005

The National Commission for Privatisation (NCP) established the Transitional Management Team (TMT) to manage the affairs of the SLBS until its incorporation
as PSB. The significance of the TMT is that, it was the first time the state hands over SLBS management to a private group of individuals in the past, the government will authorise organisations or individuals to study SLBS and come up with suggestions for improvement (Rowe, 1998). The NCP puts the team in place after discussion with the British Department for International Development (DfID), the Independent Media Commission (IMC), the Thompson Foundation and the Sierra Leone Government (TMT Report, 2005). It was set up to work out modalities for transforming the SLBS into a PSB that will be politically neutral.

The TMT Report notes, “The problems of the SLBS partially originate from the fact that it has always been run under the auspices of a government department. This in itself deprives the institution of much needed autonomy if required to operate as a viable entity” (TMT Report, 2005:20). This justifies the point that the SLBS has not yet attained political independence and this restricts the public sphere to political information. This is unlike the case of Ghana, South Africa, Nigeria, and Malawi, in which governments have transformed state broadcasting to PSB (Heath, 2003; Lewis & Booth, 1989). The setting up of the Transitional Management Team is the first step to liberalise SLBS.

The state mandates the TMT to put in place a programme that will lead to the eventual incorporation of the SLBS for a period of eighteen months. During this period, it will provide leadership, supervise and monitor the management of the organisation to ensure effective operations and develop a strategic plan for SLBS to be capable of delivering efficient services countrywide (TMT Report, 2005:10). The findings of the Team were not different from Holmes (1999), Palmer (1969) and Strasser-King.
(1995), for the improvement of SLBS. The Team identifies three strategic issues for development. These are:

- Human resource development and management;
- Sources and utilisation for funds; and
- Marketing and financial management system

The Team found out that pensionable staffs of the SLBS are civil servants, subject to the government’s terms and conditions (TMT Report, 2005:21). This means that a broadcaster cannot work with professionalism but with government’s directives biased to government information. The Team was disappointed at the low level of qualifications of staff members. Those who are actually qualified may have left the department for more lucrative appointments.

With regard to the economy of broadcasting, the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) depends on government’s subvention but the station also makes it own independent revenue from advertising. What the Team failed to observe was that SLBS was a revenue collection department for the government. This means that SLBS pays revenue accrued from advertising to the consolidated fund for the national budgetary allocation. The government has de-linked the SLBS account from the Ministry and that the National Revenue Authority is now collecting all ‘non-taxable revenue paid to the SLBS’ (TMT Report, 2005). This means that there are some taxable revenues going to the government’s coffers, which the station is not benefiting from directly.

The problem with the marketing strategy and programming of the SLBS is that it cannot take the initiative to market itself as a government department. Until SLBS gains its political independence, it will be very difficult for it to engage in any
activities of its own initiative (TMT Report, 2005). Other problems and challenges identified by the Team were management problems, lack of sound financial base and overall weak financial management system, staffing and personnel problems, inadequate and obsolete equipment and machinery, impact of political interference on programming, and poor conditions of service.

The Team recommends a change of SLBS Management maintaining that the new management team would set up an effective management system, re-establish the credibility of the institution and carry out a sound financial and marketing policy that should help put the corporation on a sound footing. It recommends that SLBS assumes the form of a company or corporation with a Board of Directors and the corporation will benefit from funds provided by shareholders (TMT Report, 2005:16). This recommendation is slightly different from Palmer (1969) and Maura et al., (1997), in that the TMT was talking about ‘shareholders’ and the SLBS as a ‘company’, implying a profit-making venture as part of the National Commission for Privatisation mandate (NCP Document, 2003). This recommendation is drifting away from the basic concept of license fees as an assured source of revenue for the SLBS. Palmer (1969) and Strasser-King (1995) have already suggested the sources of revenue suggested by the TMT (2005:24). The Team identifies the source of regular income for the new corporation these are:

- Government subvention
- Sales tax on videos, televisions and satellites
- Public sponsorship of programmes
- Commercial merchandising of the corporations such as T-shirts
- Lease rent of SLBS property
Advertising

The research has identified and discussed all of these sources of revenue earlier in this chapter. This was the recent attempt at deregulating the SLBS from government control to a politically independent corporation. The incorporation of SLBS as PSB outweighs the argument for privatisation. The Transitional Management Team is to see SLBS through the incorporation exercise. SLBS should pursue all available sources of revenue, including commercialisation, public funding and government financial support. How this political economic structure affects the public interest mandate of the state broadcaster is yet to be fully determined.

7.5 Summary

The main objective of this chapter was to evaluate the regulatory framework for the new media landscape in Sierra Leone to see whether it is developing the public sphere of broadcasting effectively. The chapter was divided into two sections. Section 1 dealt with the Independent Media Commission (IMC) as the body set up to promote media pluralism and diversity of views. In other words, the Act mandates the IMC to open the sphere of broadcasting by creating access and public participation to the majority of Sierra Leoneans. The Applications Committee has registered 30 community radio stations, which means that the commission has created a wider access of broadcasting to the grassroots in the local community. The political economy of the registration and licensing fees was scrutinised to evaluate how it affects the public sphere of broadcasting. The Complaints Committee has established a code of conduct for broadcasters to promote professionalism and accountability in the media sphere. It regulates for public service mandate for all broadcasters to ensure quality information and education to empower the citizenry to be politically active and functionally
aware. The Advisory Committee has drafted policies for the development of both the print and electronic media.

Section 2 was an assessment of recent attempts at deregulating the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) by the National Commission for Privatisation (NCP). The public sphere of the state broadcaster is limited to government political messages as a government-controlled station. The deregulation exercise is to ensure SLBS political independence and encourage diverse political views and public participation. The argument for the incorporation of the SLBS as PSB prevailed over the idea of privatisation, which means that SLBS will serve public interest rather than profit-making interest. The NCP handed over SLBS to the Transitional Management Team for supervision until the process of incorporation is complete. The Team suggests that SLBS should take advantage of all available sources of funding but how this will impinge on its public interest mandate is yet to be resolved.
Chapter 8

Summary and Conclusion

"The changing landscape of broadcasting in Sierra Leone: past, present and future" aims at discussing the evolutionary changes in broadcasting, which resulted in the institutionalisation of media pluralism leading to the proliferation of a grassroots-broadcasting sphere in the form of local community radio and regional stations. This development demonstrated the opening of the public sphere to creating wider access of broadcasting to the majority of the population, increased public participation, and empowering the grassroots to become democratically active through local language programming. There is a link between media pluralism and political pluralism, the aftermath of the war led to multiparty constitutional rule, which facilitated media pluralism. The democratic government established the Independent Media Commission (IMC) to promote media pluralism and diversity of views in the public sphere. The Commission registered a number of community radio stations, which broadcast in the majority local languages of the people in the local community, covering 90% of the population. Before this development, the state broadcaster (SLBS) was covering 25% of the country using 80% English as the medium of communication, which excluded the grassroots and limited the public sphere to government political information (Holmes, 1999; Palmer, 1969; Strasser-King 1995). The development of a broadcasting regulatory framework facilitated the change. The government was the regulatory body of media in the country through the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. At present, the Independent Media Commission is the regulatory body for the media (Tam-Baryoh, 2006). In developing a broadcasting policy framework for Sierra Leone, various policy documents recommended change.
in the broadcasting sphere from government monopoly to media pluralism. The government accepted recommendations to create media pluralism but failed to give political independence to SLBS. The acceptance of media pluralism significantly improved access and public participation in the media sphere (Rowe, 1998). The most effective mass communication medium singled out for a mass illiterate society like Sierra Leone, as 85% of people cannot read or write, was radio. The use of local languages in broadcasting and the inexpensiveness of the medium are of great relevance to the poverty-stricken country (Head, 1974; Stevenson, 1980). World political development such as the fall of communism and the triumph of democracy triggered off the introduction of political and media pluralism in Africa in the 90s. International donor agencies also made democratic change and media pluralism conditionality for financial assistance to developing countries (Uche, 1999). In documenting and analysing these new developments in the broadcasting landscape in Sierra Leone, the thesis has contributed to the knowledge base of media studies in Sierra Leone and the sub-region. It also raises the issue of political and media development for the world's attention. It challenges arguments, which denied change in the broadcasting landscape in Sierra Leone in favour of media evolution and pluralism (Homes, 1999; Fatoyinbo, 1999).

The theoretical framework for this thesis was the public sphere theory, the political economy approach and the 'Four Theories of the Press'. The institutionalisation of broadcast pluralism has improved access and empowered the grassroots to participate in the public sphere of broadcasting creating the grassroots or plebeian sphere of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. The ordinary people are informed and educated in their local language that has empowered them to understand the political and economic
issues of the day and make their own contribution to development locally and nationally. The IMC Final Radio Policy Document (2004) stated that all broadcasters should observe public service broadcasting principles so that the ordinary people can receive quality information and education as empowerment to participate in the democratic process. The ordinary people express their views in their own languages on public issues through phone-in programmes to promote public participation in the media sphere. Members of the public also write letters to producers for live discussion programmes. This means that the public sphere of participation is limited to the affordability of mobile telephony, landline phones or literacy. Telephones are considered a luxury to the ordinary poverty stricken Sierra Leonean (Tam-Baryoh, 2006). According to the CIA World Factbook Report (2007) it is estimated that in 2002, 24,000 people own a landline telephone, 113,200 own mobile phones in 2003 and there were 10,000 internet users in 2005. According to Tam-Baryoh (2006), there are five mobile phone operators in Sierra Leone: Celtel, Millicom, Africell, Datatel and Comium. Though limited, mobile phones provide a window of opportunity for the ordinary Sierra Leonean to participate in the public sphere of broadcasting. Besides there is the communal use of telephone in Sierra Leone, which gives more access to the technology than actually accounted for statistically. Dahlgren (1995:9) says that, “a functioning public sphere is the fulfilment of the communicational requirements of a viable democracy.” In this respect, Habermas’s theory of the public sphere was useful for emergent democracies like Sierra Leone. The media in Sierra Leone is providing relevant information and diversity of the opinions in educational and current affairs programmes to equip the citizens for political participation (Abdalla et al., 2002; Holmes, 1999).
The public sphere theory was utilised to discuss the political independence of the state broadcaster, the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS). As a government owned station, the public sphere is limited to government political information to the exclusion of alternate political views and the voice of the opposition. This restricts the public sphere and limits public participation through government censorship of content (Tam-Baryoh, 2006). The recommendation of policy documents to incorporate SLBS as a PSB was to ensure its political independence so that it will serve public interest instead of political interests (Palmer, 1969; Maura et al., 1997; Strasser-King, 1995). The proposal to expand the SLBS with regional stations was to broaden the state broadcast public sphere to include access and public participation at the local level on government information (Rowe, 1998). The second attempt at deregulating the SLBS by the National Commission for Privatisation (NCP) and the Transitional Management Team (TMT) seems promising for the incorporation of the institution to PSB (NCP document, 2003; TMT Document, 2005). Garnham (1986:45) says the clearest example of Habermas’s public sphere theory is within the British debate where scholars have used it to defend PSB in the form of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in which, freeing PSB from political and economic influence was a major argument.

The Habermas’s theory of the public sphere was also utilised to discuss the development of a regulatory policy framework for broadcasting in Sierra Leone. The aim of developing such policy framework was to institutionalise media pluralism and to change the status of the SLBS from government control to PSB (Palmer, 1969; Rowe, 1998; Strasser-King, 1995). Dahlgren (1995:13) upholds that “Habermas’s image of the public sphere lurks beneath the surface of many progressive
interventions into media policy issues," stressing that policy issues around media institutions and their output are the most concrete expressions of political attention, to the public sphere. The development of a broadcasting regulatory policy framework is an important aspect of this research subsumed under the public sphere theory. Thompson (1990) says one of the criticisms of the theory is that Habermas did not cater for the plebeian public sphere, popular social movements, and the grassroots in his liberal model of the Bourgeois public sphere. The public sphere was restricted to the educated and propertied elites. This thesis has reworked the public sphere theory for the grassroots and the uneducated and it worked out well. Berger (2002:2), says by reworking some theories like the public sphere theory that are conceptualised in societies with rather different media conditions to Africa, some useful insights can be gained about the processes on this continent. In particular, such re-engineered theory can help provide an analysis of contemporary issues regarding media freedom, the growth of private media, the contests around government-controlled media, and broadcast deregulation in Africa. The public sphere theory was conceptualised within the framework of western industrialised democracies, the participation of the bourgeoisies and educated elites in critical debate for political and social transformation in Western Europe (McQuail, 2002). The thesis utilised it for explaining the democratic participation of the grassroots, the uneducated ordinary people and their participation in critical political and economic debate to revolutionise the political system in their favour. The political and media pluralism in Sierra Leone were conceptualised within the framework of the public sphere theory. It was useful in discussing the development of a regulatory policy framework of broadcasting in Sierra Leone. It was also helpful for analysing the transformation of the Sierra Leone
Broadcasting Service from government-controlled institution to PBS. In this respect, the theory was very useful for discussing political and media development in emergent democracies in Africa.

Williams (2003:69) insists that the public sphere theory was idealising, and perhaps romanticising an elite and male dominated world. It overlooked the history of the radical working class press. McQuail (1983) propositions a category of theory under the caption ‘democratic-participant’ to account for alternative or grassroots media (McQuail, 2000:160) to understanding grassroots’ participation in the public sphere.

Habermas developed the public sphere theory within the context of western democracies, which did not address the internal problem of political and economic instability, and civil conflict in Africa. McQuail (2000:155) states that there is need to have a category of ‘development theory’ among others, which would identify the reality of those societies undergoing a transition from underdevelopment and colonialism to independence. As a way of its contribution, this study presents the preventative, preservative and progressive approaches to addressing African developmental problems (Stevenson, 1988). The first stage of this development proposition is to study the causative agencies of underdevelopment and put remedial measures in place. The second is to create democratic institutions to preserve developmental gains; and finally, the progressive approach is to use African resources for modernisation.

Habermas’s theory of the public sphere did not discuss the idea of media technological dependency, which is prevalent in developing countries (Schiller, 1992; Sreberny, 2000). It was discovered that Sierra Leone depends on western governments and agencies for the development of the new media landscape. Schiller
(1992) argues that the establishment of radio and television broadcast facilities in a society that lacks an industrial base has to acquire the equipment and skilled labour from industrialised countries.

This research reveals that the government-owned SLBS limits the public sphere in to government information. On the day-to-day programming of the SLBS, the Minister of Information and Broadcasting chairs all political discussion as government promotional programme. According to Minister Kaikai (Interview: 2004)

My role is to be a promoter of this government, the mouth piece of the government, that's basically what I am doing and I have no regrets. When the APC was in office nobody even dreamed of bringing the opposition to sit with a government functionary to discuss anything at all. We have had a series of discussion programmes, which I chaired. I do not read the news, I do not read announcements, all I was doing was to be a merely facilitator for government programmes at the station.

The difference between the two governments is that the APC government was a one party government whilst SLPP government is a multiparty democratic government. SLBS is generally the mouthpiece of the government of the day. This could be demonstrated in the coverage of the 2007 Presidential and parliamentary elections in Sierra Leone. According to the European Union Election Observation Mission Republic of Sierra Leone Presidential and Parliamentary Elections Report (2007:8), in key areas such as news the state owned broadcaster SLBS's coverage for both its radio and television services were dominated by SLPP [the ruling party] at the expense of other political parties. The SLPP received an 84% share of news coverage on both SLBS Radio and SLBS TV. The only party to receive
any other notable news coverage on SLBS Radio was APC which received 9%. The two main opposition parties, APC and PMDC got 7% share of television news coverage each. The other radio stations provided voters with a much broader range of neutral information and news on the main candidates and parties during the election campaign period. The combined coverage of independent radio stations being monitored, granted SLPP a 38% share of coverage of political actors, with the APC receiving 23% and PMDC a 13% share. The four remaining political parties also received between 5%-7% share of coverage. The news coverage of the non-governmental radio stations also reflected this proportional balance with the SLPP receiving 39% share, APC 26% and PMDC 17%. On the day-to-day programming of the SLBS, the Minister of Information and Broadcasting chairs all political discussion as government promotional programme.

Scholars such as Hendy (2000), Holmes (1999) and Katz (1978) argue that in Africa and other developing countries state-controlled broadcasting is predominant but the colonial government established these stations on the founding principles of the British model of PSB. Katz et al., (1978:42) argue that nearly all African national broadcasting systems are government controlled and operated and Sierra Leone is no exception.

The ‘Four Theories of the Press’ addresses the issue of the political independence or freedom of broadcasting as a government monopoly and more specifically, the political independence of the state broadcaster, Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS). In this respect, the theory was very effective. Broadcasting was a government monopoly in Sierra Leone since its inception in 1937. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting regulated it as the sole provider of broadcasting. Its service was
limited to 25% of the country, which means that 75% of the population cannot access the broadcasting. SLBS used approximately 80% English language as the medium of communication, which excluded the majority of the illiterate population in the local community (Holmes, 1999). This shows that the government monopoly of broadcasting was not serving the public interest in terms of access and participation. The recommendation for broadcasting pluralism by Strasser-King (1995) and Rowe (1998) was to open the public sphere of broadcasting to the majority of the people in Sierra Leone. The government monopoly was institutionally broken with the establishment of the Independent Media Commission (IMC) to regulate the media and promote media pluralism. The commission has increased the access to the broadcasting sphere by registering community radio stations countrywide. The four theories of the press presented by Siebert et al., (1956) argue that freedom of the press is the absence of government control and this freedom of the press extends to broadcasting (Negrine, 1994). The political independence of SLBS is a major theme of this thesis. Palmer (1969), Maura et al., (1997) and Strasser-King (1995) argue for the political independence of the state broadcaster. According to the four theories of the press (Siebert et al., 1971), the press takes the coloration of the politics of the country in which it operates, but McQuail (2000) says politics can affect the media through policymaking. Scholars like Imobighe (1999), Maduka (1999) and Tanjong (1999) argue that authoritarian government represses the media sphere through government control but democratic government liberates the sphere of broadcasting through deregulation. The research reveals that in Sierra Leone, the one party government and military juntas rejected change in broadcasting
(Palmer, 1969: Strasser-King, 1995) but the democratic government accepted media pluralism (Rowe, 1998; Tam-Baryoh, 2006).

The four theories of the press have some limitations in the Sierra Leone context. The libertarian theory, based on industrialised western economy did not fit into the context of developing countries like Sierra Leone but the idea of liberalisation of the media and its link to democratic culture was useful. Schiller (1992) and McChesney (1992) maintain that it is not only the government, which controls freedom of expression but private ownership as well. Elements of the authoritarian theory were limited but the Soviet-communist theory, which involves the state ownership of the media, was true in the case of Sierra Leone. Siebert et al., (1971) suggest that the libertarian theory is a struggle for press freedom, democratic rights and constitutional rule. Its main principle is the emphasis on the negative freedom of the press that is, absence of government control, which is applicable to Sierra Leone.

The political economy theory provides room to discuss the phenomenon of broadcasting financing and the increased commercialisation of the industry and the implication of this to the public sphere of broadcasting. The programme schedule analysis (2004) shows that 50% of daily broadcast time was dedicated to music and advertising. This means that advertising is the major source of income for broadcasting in the country. According to Tam-Baryoh (2006), the international community supported the establishment of community radios, but as donor funds dwindled, these radio stations are increasingly turning to commercialisation with negative consequences for their public service function. The high cost of running the stations exacerbated the problem due to the scarcity of electricity supply and the purchase of fuel for standby generators. Sustainability is therefore a big problem for
community radio stations. According to Bathily (2003), independent community radio stations in French West Africa receive financial assistance from the government. Sierra Leone’s independent media is not so fortunate. Maura et al., (1997) say that because of the lack of industrial base in Sierra Leone, there are very few service provider organisations which advertise, and they dictate the price to media houses. Utomi (1999) speaks of the poor financial conditions of the media houses, which have made them desperate for advertising revenues and thus susceptible to manipulation by advertisers. The research established that community radio stations in deprived areas in Sierra Leone are not successful with advertising because advertisers do not consider the audiences as potential consumers of products. McChesney (1992) posits that the discourse of the political economy theory neglects smaller and poorer sectors of the potential audience and often a politically imbalanced range of news media. The effects of economic forces work consistently to exclude those voices lacking economic power or resources. It was found out that the political economy theory very useful to discussing the issue of sustainability and advertising in broadcasting.

State broadcasting on the other hand is receiving government subsidies and advertises at the same time, but it is also a revenue-generating department for the government. According to Nalo (2004), SLBS pays money to the national consolidated funds for national budgetary use. He says SLBS regional stations are not in good business with commercials because government announcements and notices fill-up the airtime. In this case, SLBS is not taking full advantage of revenue collected for the improvement of its stations. According to Maura et al., (1997), government pays subsidies infrequently, which constrain the operational ability of the stations. The solution to this problem relates to the change of status of the SLBS to PSB. According to the
TMT Report (2005), the new corporation would exploit all avenues of revenue collection but how this will affect its public service mandate is yet to be determined.

Policy documents were the data employed to analyse the evolution of broadcasting in triangulation with in-depth interviews. The policy document analysis was effective in fulfilling the main objectives of the thesis. It utilises documents data to analyse the transformation of broadcasting from government monopoly to the institutionalisation of broadcast pluralism, established the link between media and political pluralism, the development of a regulatory framework for broadcasting, mapped out the new media landscape and the regulation of the new media environment. The document data assisted in providing evidence to discuss the opening of the public sphere of broadcasting to the grassroots through the introduction of community and regional radio stations.

The primary policy documents are the Commonwealth Committee of Consultant Report on Broadcasting (Palmer, 1969), the report on the Workshop on a National Broadcasting Policy for Sierra Leone (Strasser-King, 1995), the National Media Policy for Sierra Leone (Rowe, 1998) and the Report on the Rehabilitation of the Sierra Leone Broadcast Media (Maura et al., 1998). The 2000 KPMG Report on the Restructuring of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service, the National Privatisation Commission documents on the incorporation of the SLBS 2003, the Transitional Management Team (TMT) Report on the SLBS 2005 and the Independent Media Commission Act 2000 were also utilised. These documents formed the basis of the discussion for the transformation of the broadcasting landscape in Sierra Leone. They contained enormous information on the regulatory policy framework of broadcasting,
broadcast pluralism, the SLBS, and the new independent stations, which are major themes of this thesis (Palmer, 1969; Rowe, 1998; Strasser-king, 1995).

The author conducted in-depth interviews to enhance the empirical foundation of this thesis. The interviews were effective in providing information for analysing the current development in broadcasting, which researchers have not yet documented. Information on the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA) and INFORMOTRAC projects for establishing and financially sponsoring new community radio stations was collected through interviewing the local projects coordinators. Interviews also brought out information on the relationship between community radio stations and media related NGOs, religious stations, and the economic and political constraints of broadcasting. The research successfully uses in-depth interviews in triangulation with the programme schedule analysis; whilst the programme schedule statistical summary presented the quantitative assessment of programmes, the interviews provide the qualitative information on types of programmes produced by radio stations. These two data complemented each other very well. The author interviewed policymakers; government officials, broadcast managers and directors, and media related NGOs working with local communities in Sierra Leone. The author conducted twenty-five interviews and transcribed them for analysis. The interviewees are public officials, ministers of government, senior officials of the ministry, broadcasters of community and regional radio stations fully co-operated to the success of the fieldwork. The research did not conduct interviews with all community radio stations but this did not affect the findings of the research adversely; there was access to information for all community radio stations through media related NGOs, which are sponsoring these stations.
Most of the radio Station Managers considered the interview as a way of publicising their station so they may tend to exaggerate the positive aspect of the stations, while covering up the negative. Furthermore, since most of them were talking out of memory, they can forget some vital facts. The author had to check and cross check information with documents to get it right. That was the usefulness for the variety of interviews conducted; it helped to make generalisation of similar or divergent circumstances.

The author avoided talking about the popularity of a particular radio station or a particular programme from a radio station. This was a great limitation to the chosen methods for this thesis. Examining data collected from interviews, nearly all the stations were claiming that they are the most popular and their programmes have the widest audience reach this research cannot support those claims because they lacked verification. There is the need for a separate research on audience reception and survey to come out with verifiable results. The audience survey conducted by Talking Drum Studio (TDS-SL) (2000) was limited to specific areas a national perspective is required.

The research poses three significant questions: why the evolution of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting landscape? how are the evolutions taking place? and how is the state regulating new media landscape? The evidence provided in each chapter answers these questions. Chapter 4 answers the question how the change occurred in relation to other major socio-political institutions in the country. It examines the government-broadcasting relationships in Sierra Leone to evaluate how regulatory policymaking can open or restrict the public sphere of broadcasting. The research discovers that politics affect broadcasting through the regulatory policymaking, which can have
repercussions on the development of the industry. Authoritarian governments such as the one party APC government were negative towards media deregulation but the democratic regimes, such as the Sierra Leone People's Party government, were positive to media deregulation. The democratic government institutionalised media pluralism through legislation. This facilitated the public sphere to create access and public participation to the majority of the citizens. This act by the government is the reason for this investigation. The pluralist policymaking, which encourages diverse participation, was useful (Freedman, 1999; McChesney, 2003).

Chapter 5 answers the question of how and why policymakers are developing a regulatory policy framework for broadcasting. The analysis shows that scholars like Palmer (1969), Rowe (1998) and Strasser-King (1995) have studied the predicaments of broadcasting and recommended solutions to the problem, these solutions came in the form of recommendations of policy documents. The recommendations for broadcasting evolution were twofold; the transformation of the status of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (Maura et al., 1997; Palmer, 1969) and the institutionalisation of media pluralism (Strasser-King, 1995; Rowe, 1998). The government opted for media pluralism but failed to change the status of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) from government-owned to PSB.

Chapter 6 presents evidence of change in the Sierra Leone broadcasting industry. This study establishes that to institutionalise media pluralism in Sierra Leone, the government enacted the Independent Media Commission (IMC) Act 2000 (Maura et al., 1997; Rowe, 1998). The IMC Applications Committee has registered a number of radio stations, resulting in the proliferation of independent community radio stations in the country (IMC Status of Radio Report, 2004). To rise to the challenge posed by
independent community radio stations, the government established regional stations in each of the headquarter towns in the country (DfID Documents, 1999). IMC also registered international rebroadcast stations such as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Radio France International (RFI) and the Voice of America (VOA). This development was to increase broadcasting channels and the diversity of programmes received by the audience (IMC Status of Radio Report, 2004).

The programme schedule statistics shows that Sierra Leone's local radio stations are using 80% local languages in their daily broadcast, which has significantly increased the empowerment of the people to engage in public sphere debates. State stations broadcast government information and international rebroadcast stations are transmitting international news and programming (Abdalla et al., 2002; Holmes, 1999). News items are political but vary from local to national perspectives. This analysis establishes that the public sphere of critical debate has broadened to include grassroots' participation in current affairs and phone-in programmes (Tam-Baryoh, 2006).

It was also demonstrated that both internal and external factors were responsible for the rise of independent radio. The internal factors are the war, the absence of radio creating an information gap and the presence of radio as war propaganda machine (Holmes, 1999; Spencer, 2004). Other internal reasons are the introduction political pluralism after the war and change of broadcasting regulatory framework (Rowe, 1998; Strasser-King, 1995). The external factors are the international assistance for radio development in the country these include - NGOs and foreign governments such as the Talking Drum Studio, the OSIWA, the Dutch government, British government,
and the US government through their various developmental agencies (Holmes, 1999; Dallas, 2004; Foday-Musa, 2004).

Both internal and external factors significantly contributed to the proliferation of community and regional radio stations and the development of the broadcasting sphere. During the war, the government lost central political control of the country, the ineffectiveness of the SLBS makes it impossible to communicate to the entire country, and therefore the government had no alternative but to register community radio stations to fill the communication gap (Holmes, 1999; Tam-Baryoh, 2006). International assistance in establishing community radio stations in the country further weakened government control over broadcasting; it had no direct control over these stations because they are no part of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The introduction of democracy after the war created a situation where the government should not be seen directly controlling and regulating media outlets as regional bodies and the international community consider this as undemocratic culture (African Charter for broadcasting, 2001). Free media is also part of the conditionality of western donor agencies assisting Sierra Leone develop after the war (Uche, 1999). The government had no choice but to relinquish its broadcasting regulatory function and created the Independent Media Commission to regulate the media and promote media pluralism leading to the proliferation of community radio stations in the country (Rowe, 1998; Strasser-King, 1995).

Chapter 7 answers the question why and how the new regulatory bodies are regulating the new media milieu. The legislation enacted to institutionalise media pluralism was assessed (IMC Act, 2000). The IMC works through three specialised committees. The Applications Committee promoted broadcast media pluralism by registering new
independent radio stations. The Complaints Committee has developed a code of conduct for broadcasters. The Advisory Committee has developed regulatory policies to improve the media and encourage diversity of programmes and public service broadcasting to enrich the public sphere in Sierra Leone (IMC Final Radio Policy document, 2004).

The legislation for public service corporate status was the primary recommendation for the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) for its effective development, functioning and political independence (Palmer, 1969; Maura et al., 1989 Strasser-King, 1995). According to Palmer (1969), the APC government stated that it was ‘premature’ for the SLBS to be a public service corporation and the NPRC government did not respond to this recommendation (Strasser-King (1995). This analysis illustrates that the policy documents recommended for the physical expansion of the SLBS. Rowe (1998), suggests a decentralised SLBS with regional stations; the government established six Regional Radio Stations in the headquarter-towns of the country. It argues that it was its policy to decentralise broadcasting but the research suspects that it was to rise up to the challenge posed by the proliferation of independent community radios.

The research determines that the idea of the SLBS as PSB has been re-activated. The SLPP government has handed the station over to the National Commission for Privatisation (NCP Document, 2004). This resulted in a critical public debate on the incorporation of SLBS as PSB or privatisation. A seminar was organised to this effect in consultation with the DfID, Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ) and the Independent Media Commission (IMC Document, 2003). The seminar recommended again that SLBS should receive a corporate status as PSB through legislation for its
political independence. The state should finance the new corporation by parliamentary subventions, grants, and advertising to enhance its economic independence (IMC document, 2003; NPC document, 2002).

The government appointed the Transitional Management Team (TMT) to manage the affairs of the SLBS for a period of 18 months as the first step to incorporate the SLBS as PSB (TMT Report, 2005). This Team's mandate was to put in place a programme of activity leading to the eventual incorporation of the SLBS. The Team carried out an extensive study of SLBS focusing on its human resource management, funding, marketing and financial management system, and programming to recommend improvement. Based on this background, this thesis found out the following:

- The SLBS is still under government control.
- The station has expanded to include Regional Radio Stations in Bo, Kenema and Makeni, the headquarter towns of the south, east and north respectively. In addition, there is a regional station in Kono, the diamond-mining district, and Kailahun the former headquarter of the rebellion.
- The wind of change is still blowing over the SLBS for its transformation to PSB in the interest of the public.
- Government transferred the station to the National Commission for Privatisation (NCP) for privatisation. In concert with other stakeholders, they recommended that PSB status for SLBS was more feasible.
- The handing over of SLBS to the Transitional Management Team (TMT) was the first step to incorporation.

The change in the broadcasting landscape has sociological, technological, and epistemological significance. Sociologically, the change has increased the audience
choice of media outlets, and widened the public sphere of local public participation in
socio-political issues, using local languages. It has created room for alternative voices
as opposed to the dominant views. The change has provided a medium through which
the citizenry is empowered, they are informed, educated and sensitised to equip them
to participate in the democratic process (Maura et al., 1997; Tam-Baryoh, 2006). The
future use or abuse of broadcasting will be determined with time. The negative
experiences of other countries in Africa as in the case of Rwanda, should not
determine the prospects of broadcasting in Sierra Leone (Imobighe, 1999; Obilade,
1999). The experience of Sierra Leone, where radio served as war propaganda
machine should not decide the future of broadcasting; the future use of broadcasting
could be completely different (Cole, 2003; Spenser, 2004). What is verifiable is that
the change in broadcasting from government monopoly to pluralism is a sociological
development as it encourages grassroots' access and participation in the public sphere.
Technological development facilitated the change in broadcasting and the
establishment of radio stations throughout the country, aided by the international
community. The ITU gave Sierra Leone 42 FM frequencies in 1992 and it has utilised
about 36 of those frequencies (Holmes, 1999; Cole, 2006). The reasons for the
proliferation of radio stations could be twofold, technological, and political. The
transmitters for community radio stations are 500 watts or less, according to IMC
specification (IMC Status of Radio report 2003). These cover less than 100 to 130
mile radius or less depending on the location of the transmitter (IMATT, 2000). This
shows that there is the need for many transmitters to cover a wide radius of
communities in the country. Secondly, it could be politically motivated in the sense
that the government refused to liberate the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS)
(Palmer, 1969; Strasser-King, 1995) so the international community are sponsoring the establishment of independent community in the country to counteract government propaganda. Whatever the reasons, the country is determined to use all 42 FM frequencies given to it by the ITU.

This thesis has contributed to the corpus of knowledge in mass communication. It has built upon existing literature on broadcasting in Sierra Leone and other developing countries in Africa. Holmes wrote *Broadcasting in Sierra Leone* in 1999. Since this publication, significant development has taken place in the landscape of broadcasting, which this research has documented and analysed. Holmes accounts for the historical development of broadcasting whilst this thesis evaluates the political significance of broadcasting development. It maintains that there is a link between the institutionalisation of broadcasting pluralism and political pluralism. This research builds on Holmes publication relating to government relinquishing its regulatory functions of the media. This relates to the introduction of the Independent Media Commission (IMC) as the independent regulatory body of the media, with the mandate to regulate and promote media pluralism. This thesis also extends Holmes research on the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service: the extension of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) to regional stations to cater for the local people, the recent attempts by the National Commission for Privatisation (NCP) and the Transitional Management Team (TMT) to give political independence to the SLBS as public service broadcaster. The analysis of these new developments contributes immensely to the knowledge base of broadcasting in Sierra Leone.

This research has contributed to the body of knowledge of broadcasting in African developing countries. These countries are experiencing an analogous situation in the
change of politics and the media (Banda, 2003; Imobighe, 1999; Karikari, 2003). These scholars report that commencing from the mid 90s African developing countries are experimenting with democratic change, which is facilitating media pluralism. This thesis documents evidence that the change in the political and media landscape experienced by other African countries is taking place in Sierra Leone, in a dynamic and systematic way. In documenting and analysing the Sierra Leone situation, this research has contributed to existing literature on broadcasting in Africa. It has also updated literature, which assessed broadcasting in developing countries as government owned and controlled (Head, 1974, Hendy, 2000; Graettinger, 1977). The analysis shows that the government of Sierra Leone has relinquished regulating the media to the Independent Media Commission. The same development has taken place in other developing countries such as Ghana and South Africa (Barnett, 1999; Karikari, 1994).

This research has contributed to developing theories suitable to discussing African developmental issues. McQuail (2000) says that we need a development theory to comprehend the developmental problems of developing countries. This thesis proposes three approaches as a way of contributing to this discourse. These are the preventative, preservative and progressive approaches to assess and arrest the causative agencies of underdevelopment in Africa. They are used to develop democratic institutions to preserve developmental gains and utilise African natural resources for its modernisation. These approaches will curtail Africa’s dependency on the west and assist in developing a sustainable economy.

This thesis is relevant to other developing countries. It establishes that African countries are experiencing similar changes, but one wonders what are the nature and
specificity of such developments. Ghana's Independent Media Commission, for example, served as a model for the Sierra Leone IMC and South African Independent Broadcasting Act 1999 was a useful document for this analysis. Therefore, a comparative analysis is feasible between Sierra Leone and other British African States to present an African perspective in the age of globalisation.

In conclusion, therefore, the Sierra Leone broadcasting landscape has changed from government monopoly to pluralism and political pluralism facilitated media pluralism. Policymaking, legislation and deregulation facilitated media pluralism. The setting up of the Independent Media Commission, with its mandate to promote media pluralism, has institutionalised broadcast pluralism in Sierra Leone. The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service is still under government control but moves are underway to change its status to PSB. As Warritay (2001) puts it, the rejection of SLBS as PBS has 'turned the hands of the clock of broadcasting backwards'. The National Commission for Privatisation (NCP) and the SLBS Transitional Management Team (TMT) are putting modalities in place for SLBS transformation. However, there is the need for the government to interfere less with SLBS content and management, the local communities to claim ownership of regional stations for its effectiveness, and government to pay income accrued by these stations directly to their accounts for its development. If the government is using the stations for public relations, then it should support them fully. Independent Community Radio Stations, on the other hand, are receiving both local and international support because of the significant role they are playing in the local community. One of the reasons for their success is because they are independent from government control. There is the problem of sustainability as donor funds dwindled and the need make sure their profit-making interest does not
interfere with their public interest as well as coordinating their activities well. This is the first of a series of research the author intends to conduct on the Sierra Leone broadcasting system.
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University of Birmingham Buzz Honorary Graduands (2005)


Appendix 1

Interviews

### Interview – Radio Stations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Tam Baryoh</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Citizen Radio Kissy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah Foullah</td>
<td>Station Manager</td>
<td>Radio Democracy FM 98.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onesimus Lambert</td>
<td>General Manager</td>
<td>Radio Democracy FM 98.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew Kromah</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>KISS 104 Bo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taiwo Cullen</td>
<td>Station Manager</td>
<td>VOH FM 96.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sheila Dallas</td>
<td>Head of Radio</td>
<td>Radio UNAMSIL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam Sio-Kamara</td>
<td>Station Manager</td>
<td>SLBS FM 93.1 Kenema</td>
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<tr>
<td>Samuel Halfner</td>
<td>Station Manager</td>
<td>KISS 104 Bo</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Sandy Gander</td>
<td>Acting Station Manager</td>
<td>Radio Trinity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklyn Kamara</td>
<td>Station Manager</td>
<td>Mankneh FM 95.1 Makeni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Turay</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Radio Maria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abdul Kamara</td>
<td>Station Manager</td>
<td>SLBS FM 88.0 Makeni</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kape Koroma</td>
<td>Station Manager</td>
<td>SLBS Bo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abdul Bangura</td>
<td>Music Producer</td>
<td>SLBS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gina Banda Thomas</td>
<td>Director General</td>
<td>SLBS</td>
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### Interview – Policymakers

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Septimus Kaikai</td>
<td>Minister</td>
<td>Information and broadcasting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julius Spencer</td>
<td>Former Minister</td>
<td>Information and Broadcasting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick Nalo</td>
<td>Permanent Secretary</td>
<td>Information and Broadcasting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hassan Kamara</td>
<td>Executive Secretary</td>
<td>Independent Media Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bernadette Cole</td>
<td>Chairman/Head of Department</td>
<td>Independent media Commission/Media Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyril Juxon-Smith</td>
<td>Public Relations Officer</td>
<td>National Commission for Privatisation (NCP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ibrahim B. Kargbo</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Sierra Leone Journalist Association (SLAJ)</td>
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### Interview – NGOs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Joshua Nicol</td>
<td>Coordinator</td>
<td>INFORMOTRAC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Isaac Massaquoi</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>CORNET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gibril Foday-Musa</td>
<td>Head of Public Relations</td>
<td>Talking Drum Studios</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2

Sierra Leone Broadcasting System Weekly programme Schedule


The radio monitoring report Vol.1, issue #0101 Freetown Sierra Leone December 2000 conducted by The International League for Human Right (ILHR, New York, and the Centre for Media, Education, and Technology (C-Met) Sierra Leone. The author took part in this research.

Appendix 3

Talking Drum Studio - Sierra Leone Radio Programs

Talking Drum Studio - Sierra Leone (TDS-SL) programmes air on all stations in Sierra Leone. These are

1. Golden Kids News
2. Common Ground Feature
3. Home Sweet Home
4. Atunda Ayenda/Lost and Found
5. Wi Yone Salone
6. Salone Uman
7. Leh Wi Mek Salone (formerly Troway Di Gun).
8. Luk wi Pipul

The details of these programmes is on the organisation’s website

http://www.sfcg.org/programmes/sierra/sierra_talking.html