



FACULTY OF TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

THE INFLUENCE OF MEDIA ON PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF CLIMATE CHANGE  
IN CHONGWE

BY

JACQUELINE NGOMA

BPIR211482564

SUPERVISOR

MR. WISE SIBINDI

A RESEARCH DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO UNIVERSITY OF LUSAKA IN  
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A  
BACHELOR OF ARTS IN POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

LUSAKA - 2026

## **COPYRIGHT**

All rights reserved. No part of this research work may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the copyright holder, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other non-commercial uses permitted by copyright law. For permission requests, please contact the author at

© 2026 Jacqueline Ngoma

## **DECLARATION**

I, Jacqueline Ngoma, student number BPIR211482564, hereby declare that this research is my own work and has not been submitted to any other University for an academic award and that all relevant sources of materials used for the research have been duly acknowledged.

Signature:



Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2026

Supervisor

Signature:



Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2026

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this study to the resilient people of Chongwe, the farmers who wake up before dawn to read the skies, and the youth who bridge tradition and innovation through their smartphones and dreams. To the grandmothers preserving indigenous climate wisdom and the teenagers sharing weather alerts on WhatsApp groups, your parallel efforts to protect your community inspire this research. To Zambia's journalists and content creators, especially young reporters using TikTok and radio to make climate science accessible, may your voices grow louder. To my advisors who challenged me, my parents who believed in late-night writing sessions, and the friends who kept me grounded, this exists because of you.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to express my utmost gratitude to all those who have supported and guided me throughout the course of this research. First and foremost, my sincere thanks go to my supervisor, Mr. Wise Sibindi for his invaluable guidance, encouragement, and constructive feedback at every stage of this study. I am also deeply grateful to my lecturers and the entire faculty of Technology and social science at the University of Lusaka for providing a stimulating academic environment and the resources necessary for my research. Special appreciation goes to my family and friends for their unwavering support, patience, and understanding during the challenging moments of this journey. Lastly, I would like to thank all the participants and respondents who generously contributed their time and insights, making this research possible. Your cooperation is truly appreciated.

Thank you all for your invaluable contributions.

## **ABSTRACT**

This study examined the role of media in promoting climate change awareness and influencing adaptive behaviour among farmers and youth in Chongwe District, Zambia. The objectives were to identify the primary media sources used by these groups, assess the comparative effectiveness of different media platforms in shaping awareness and behavioural change, and explore challenges faced by journalists in reporting climate issues. A mixed-methods approach was adopted. Quantitative data were collected through surveys administered to farmers and youth, while qualitative data were obtained through interviews with journalists and media practitioners. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics and chi-square tests in SPSS to determine relationships between media use and awareness levels. Qualitative data were analysed thematically to identify recurring patterns in climate reporting and media framing. The findings revealed clear demographic differences in media consumption. The majority of farmers (70%) relied on radio as their primary source of climate change information, whereas most youth (71.4%) depended on social media. A statistically significant relationship was found between frequency of media use and climate change awareness. Radio emerged as the most trusted and behaviourally influential platform, particularly in rural areas. In contrast, social media was effective in raising awareness among youth but recorded lower trust levels due to concerns about misinformation. The study also identified constraints in climate reporting, including limited journalist training, editorial pressure, and inadequate access to local data, resulting in coverage that often emphasises disasters rather than practical adaptation strategies. The findings imply that climate communication strategies should be audience-specific, combining trusted traditional media with credible digital platforms. The study recommends strengthening community radio, enhancing journalists' climate reporting capacity, and promoting locally relevant, solution-oriented content. Future research should investigate long-term behavioural impacts of media exposure and evaluate integrated communication models across different rural contexts in Zambia.

**Keywords:** Climate change communication; Media influence; Climate-smart agriculture; Radio; Social media; Zambia.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>COPYRIGHT</b> .....	i
<b>DECLARATION</b> .....	i
<b>DEDICATION</b> .....	iii
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	iv
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	v
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	vi
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b> .....	xi
<b>ABBREVIATIONS</b> .....	xii
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
<b>1.0 Introduction</b> .....	1
<b>1.1 Background to the Study</b> .....	2
<b>1.2 Problem Statement</b> .....	3
<b>1.3 Objectives of the Study</b> .....	5
<b>1.3.1 Main Objective of the Study</b> .....	5
<b>1.3.2 Specific Objectives of the Study</b> .....	5
<b>1.4 Research Questions</b> .....	5
<b>1.5 Significance of the Study</b> .....	6
<b>1.6 Delimitation</b> .....	8
<b>1.7 Definition of Key Terms</b> .....	8
<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW</b> .....	10
<b>2.0 Introduction</b> .....	10
<b>2.1 Media and Climate Change Communication Overview</b> .....	10
<b>2.2.1 Agenda Setting Theory</b> .....	10
<b>2.2.2 Framing Theory</b> .....	11

<b>2.3 Conceptual framework .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>2.4.1 Trends in Climate Reporting.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>2.4.2 Challenges in Global Climate Communication .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>2.4.2.1. Polarization and Politicization of Climate Change.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>2.4.2.2. Information Overload and Audience Disengagement.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>2.4.2.3. Misinformation and the Role of Social Media Algorithms.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2.4.3 Role of Global Media.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2.5 Climate Communication in Africa.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>2.5.1 Media Landscape and Climate Coverage .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>2.5.2 Challenges in African Climate Communication .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>2.5.3 Role of African Media.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>2.6 Climate Communication in Zambia and Similar Rural Districts .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>2.6.1 Media’s Role in Climate Awareness.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>2.6.2 Challenges in Zambian Climate Communication.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>2.6.3 Role of Zambian Media .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>2.7 Suggestions for Improving Climate Communication .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>2.7.1 Integrated Media Strategies.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>2.7.2 Capacity Building.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>2.7.3 Localized Content.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>2.7.4 Fact-Checking Initiatives .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>2.7.5 Policy Advocacy.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>3.0 Introduction .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>3.1 Research Approach.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>3.2 Study Sample.....</b>	<b>24</b>

3.3 Sampling Method.....	26
3.4 Tools Used to Collect Data.....	26
3.6 Reliability and Validity .....	27
3.7 Data Analysis.....	27
3.8 Challenges in the Methodology.....	28
3.9 Ethical Considerations .....	28
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>30</b>
4.0 Introduction .....	30
4.1 Respondents' Characteristics and Media Usage .....	30
4.1.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents.....	30
4.1.2 Media Usage Patterns by Age Group.....	31
4.2 Findings by Research Question .....	31
4.2.1 Primary Media Sources for Climate Change Information.....	31
4.2.2 Media Framing and Public Perception .....	33
Engagement Patterns.....	34
4.2.3 Comparative Effectiveness of Media Platforms .....	35
4.2.4 Challenges in Climate Change Reporting .....	35
4.3 Discussion of Findings.....	37
4.3.1 Media Access and Audience Segmentation.....	37
4.3.2 Media Framing and Public Perception of Climate Change.....	37
4.3.3 Media Exposure and Behavioural Change.....	38
4.3.4 Comparative Effectiveness of Media Platforms .....	38
4.3.5 Trust as a Mediating Factor in Climate Communication.....	39
4.3.6 Institutional and Professional Challenges in Climate Reporting.....	39

4.3.7 Lessons to Help Shape Climate Communication Policy and Practice.....	39
4.3.8 Synthesis of Findings .....	40
<b>CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>5.0 Introduction .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>5.2 Summary of Key Findings.....</b>	<b>41</b>
5.2.1 Media Sources for Climate Change Information.....	41
5.2.2 Media Framing and Public Perception .....	41
5.2.3 Behavioural Change Resulting from Media Exposure.....	41
5.2.4 Comparative Effectiveness of Media Platforms .....	42
5.2.5 Challenges in Climate Change Reporting .....	42
<b>5.3 Conclusion of the Study .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>5.4 Recommendations.....</b>	<b>43</b>
5.4.1 Recommendations for Policymakers and Government Agencies .....	43
5.4.2 Recommendations for Media Institutions .....	43
5.4.3 Recommendations for Journalists .....	43
5.4.4 Recommendations for Development Partners and NGOs.....	44
5.4.5 Recommendations for Farmers and Community Groups.....	44
<b>5.5 Implications of the Study .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>5.6 Limitations of the Study.....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>5.7 Suggestions for Further Research.....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Appendix A: Questionnaire for Farmers and Youth .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Appendix B: Interview Guide for Journalists.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Appendix C: Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guide.....</b>	<b>54</b>

<b>Appendix D: Ethical Clearance and Consent Forms.....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Appendix E: SPSS Output Tables .....</b>	<b>55</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Respondent Demographic Characteristics .....	30
Table 4.2: Media Preference by Age Group .....	31
Table 4.3: Primary Source of Climate Change Information among Farmers .....	31
Table 4.4: Primary Source of Climate Change Information among Youth .....	32
Table 4.5: Differential Perception Based on Content Type .....	34
Table 4.6: Media Platform Effectiveness Scores .....	35
Table 4.7: Challenges Faced by Journalists in Climate Reporting .....	36

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

AST Agenda-Setting Theory

CC Climate Change

CSOs Civil Society Organizations

DV Dependent Variable

FGD Focus Group Discussion

FT Framing Theory

FM Frequency Modulation

GHGs Greenhouse Gases

ICTs Information and Communication Technologies

IPCC Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

IV Independent Variable

KII Key Informant Interview

MoE Ministry of Education

UNFCCC United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

NGOs Non-Governmental Organizations

SDGs Sustainable Development Goals

SPSS Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

TV Television

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

ZNBC Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Introduction**

Climate change is one of the biggest problems in the world today. It causes major shifts in weather, affects natural environments, and disrupts how people live. Its effects in Zambia can be traced to changes in rain seasons starting later with dry periods lasting longer, and storms growing stronger. These changes harm farmers and water resources. In the Chongwe District near Lusaka, the situation is tough. Like other places relying on rain-fed farming, the area faces huge threats from changing weather patterns. Chongwe District relies on seasonal rains to grow crops, so a changing climate puts its food supply and local economy at serious risk.

Most people learn about climate change from media sources. This could be through radio, TV reports, or even posts on social media (Alawade & Obun Andy 2024; Ha et al. 2019). Media often delivers climate details in different styles, and this might affect how people understand the issue and think of ways to solve it (Alawade & Obun Andy 2024; Khanya 2024; Ngumuya 2024). In places like Zambia, the way people access media changes depending on factors like age or whether they live in cities or rural areas. These differences can mean that not everyone has the same level of awareness about climate problems (Lupiya et al. 2023; Mwanza et al.). This shows how vital it is to use focused communication methods to make sure the right people get the information

This study looks at how people in Chongwe get and understand information about climate change using the media they prefer. The research seeks to identify the most trusted and useful sources to share climate-related messages. With this knowledge, it hopes to make spreading important environmental details to those who need it most better. These results will help local leaders, reporters, and community groups as they guide Chongwe residents to deal with the effects of climate change and work towards sustainable growth in the area..

## **1.1 Background to the Study**

Climate change stands out as the biggest environmental problem for our generation bringing tough challenges we must address . In Zambia, this isn't just some distant idea. Communities deal with it every day. The effects show in farming where people who have counted on steady seasonal rains for years now struggle with growing unpredictability. The situation in Chongwe District shows a smaller version of what's happening across the country. There, the changes in climate mix with social and economic struggles highlighting a desperate call to act.

Climate change stands as a major global challenge today affecting ecosystems, economies, and communities all over the world. In Zambia, its effects are becoming clearer with irregular rainfall longer droughts, and more extreme weather happening more often (Mubanga & Umar, 2021). These shifts put agricultural production, water availability, and people's incomes at risk in rural and semi-urban regions like Chongwe.

Chongwe District sits about 30 kilometers east of Lusaka and relies on farming with rain-fed crops. Over the last ten years, climate patterns have shifted in the area. Rainy seasons often start late now, and crop production has dropped (Zambia Meteorological Department 2022). These changes have made it more important to communicate about climate issues to encourage people to adapt and reduce risks. What makes Chongwe a fascinating place to study is its mixed nature. It is not urban, but it is not rural either. This in-between status brings about distinct challenges in how people share and receive information. Being close to Lusaka, there's good access to media, but local traditional knowledge still holds a strong influence. While observing the field , an interesting contradiction stood out. Almost every home has a radio, but younger people using smartphones have brought in separate ways to access information. This mix of media brings up big questions about how consistent and reliable messages are.

The changing media scene in Chongwe brings both chances and hurdles in talking about climate issues. Digital platforms allow people to better engage with environmental topics in a more interactive way. At the same time, having so many media sources can create isolated bubbles where various groups of people hear different stories about climate change. Looking at local media, the researcher noticed some big differences. Radio shows

often talk about how farming is affected by climate change, but social media leans more toward activism or questioning the reality of climate change.

It is still uncertain how different media portrayals lead to real understanding and actions within communities. There seems to be a gap between knowing about something and making practical changes showing that current communication methods might lack important pieces. This study aims to determine not which media channels people use the most but more , which ones work best to encourage real behavioral changes (Fabregas et al. 2023).

This research comes at a vital time as Zambia works on putting its climate adaptation policies into action. Learning about Chongwe's media setup could become a useful example for other peri-urban areas dealing with similar communication issues.

The media plays a central role in sharing information and shaping how people understand and react to climate change. In Zambia, media options include traditional sources like TV channels such as ZNBC and Diamond TV or radio stations like Radio Phoenix and QFM. There are also digital options like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter.

But how well these platforms work differs for different groups. For example, people in rural areas often depend more on the radio because they lack steady internet access (International Telecommunication Union, 2023; World Bank, 2021). Meanwhile younger people in cities are using social media more to stay updated on news. Recognizing how different groups consume media is important to create effective climate-related messages for everyone.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

People in Chongwe see climate change as an important issue, but public understanding and active actions are not always consistent (Ng'ombe et al. 2020). Some residents recognize climate change, but their knowledge is often partial or shaped by false information. A lack of reliable information might arise from uneven access to media, one-sided news reports, or poor communication methods. These problems have serious effects. They make it harder to carry out useful local strategies to adjust to climate changes and put the community at risk of dealing with growing environmental challenges in an area that relies on farming

affected by the climate (Van der Linden & Macibach 2015, Zambia Climate Profiles Consortium 2022).

A major issue is how media framing shapes people's views in Chongwe's varied media environment. Television often presents climate stories with a focus on threats and disasters (e.g. floods and droughts). While this may raise short-term awareness, research shows that fear-based framing does not necessarily lead to sustained behavioural change needed for climate adaptation (Robert Entman, 1993; Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2022). In addition, television coverage frequently centres on urban areas, which can reduce its relevance for rural communities such as Chongwe.

Radio reaches wide audiences and is generally trusted, particularly in rural areas with limited internet access (International Telecommunication Union, 2023). However, it often provides limited in-depth discussion of complex scientific issues and may simplify key climate concepts. At the same time, radio is facing declining engagement among younger audiences who increasingly turn to digital platforms (Pew Research Center, 2022).

Social media offers interactive spaces for sharing information and mobilising communities. However, it also poses a significant challenge, as misinformation about climate change spreads rapidly online (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2022). These platforms can amplify extreme narratives either alarmist or skeptical which may undermine public trust and make it more difficult for communities to develop balanced and informed understandings of climate issues.

The gap between understanding and adapting shows that present communication strategies might lack important parts (Van der Linden et al. 2015; Zambia Climate Profiles Consortium 2022). These problems grow worse because there is a pressing need to study how local tools like TV, radio, and social media affect how people in Chongwe view climate issues (Tucker, Tembo & Developing Radio Partners 2017; Williams, Simweete & Hivos 2023). Without real-world data about how various media types, both and together share accurate climate information and encourage community efforts, plans meant to build climate resilience might not work well (Boykoff 2008; Olausson 2011; Takahashi & Meisner 2013). The limited availability of context-specific evidence on climate change communication in Chongwe District creates a knowledge gap regarding how existing

communication approaches influence public understanding and adaptive behaviour. Without empirical assessment of the effectiveness, framing, and accessibility of climate-related information in this context, it remains unclear whether current strategies adequately address local needs and vulnerabilities. This gap constrains the ability of policymakers, practitioners, and development stakeholders to design evidence-based communication interventions tailored to Chongwe's socio-economic and environmental realities. Therefore, a systematic investigation into climate change communication in the district is necessary to generate reliable data that can inform the development of more context-responsive and effective communication strategies.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1 Main Objective of the Study**

To evaluate the influence of media in shaping climate change awareness among residents of Chongwe

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives of the Study**

1. Determine the primary media sources through which farmers and youth in Chongwe District access climate change information.
2. Assess the influence of media framing on public perceptions of climate change among residents of Chongwe District.
3. Evaluate the comparative effectiveness of different media platforms in promoting climate change awareness in Chongwe District.
4. Investigate the key challenges faced by journalists and media institutions in reporting climate change in Zambia.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

In order to achieve the above objectives, the study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the primary media sources through which farmers and youth in Chongwe District access climate change information?
2. How does media framing influence public perception of climate change among residents of Chongwe District?

3. How effective are different media platforms (radio, television, and social media) in promoting climate change awareness among residents of Chongwe District?
4. What key challenges do journalists and media institutions face in reporting climate change in Zambia?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study offers significant benefits in various fields connecting academic research with practical uses. It adds unique data to the expanding area of environmental communication in academic work focusing on Zambia, a region that has not been studied much. The research evaluate how media platforms affect climate awareness and actions in Chongwe. Through this, it strengthens important theories like agenda-setting and framing while also providing a local angle often missing in global climate communication studies. The results also give practical help to policymakers. They highlight ways to create better climate communication plans that are more focused and effective. By showing which media and messages work best for certain groups, governments and organizations can improve their programs to make sure vital climate information reaches at-risk communities in ways that engage them. Journalists can gain valuable insights using evidence-based tips on how to report climate issues and engage audiences across radio, TV, and online media. The research emphasizes explaining science while telling stories people can connect with, and addressing false information on social platforms. This study is useful to help Chongwe's communities better understand climate challenges and solutions they can act on. It focuses on identifying the best communication methods to explain ways to adjust to climate changes giving locals the tools they need to make smart choices like planting drought-tolerant crops or backing local conservation projects. This work not contributes to academic discussions but also helps build stronger more climate-conscious communities in Zambia and other places.

This study plays a key role in helping both local-level actions and global sustainability plans. It shows how using focused media strategies can boost climate action in Zambia and tie into the international development goals. The results offer practical uses for organizations like ZNBC and the Ministry of Green Economy. They suggest ways to improve climate communication. For instance, ZNBC could change its programming to highlight solution-focused content during crucial farming seasons and share more local

farmer stories to build trust and connect better with the public. The Ministry of Green Economy can use the findings to plan campaign funding . They could direct resources to media outlets and formats that work best, like community radio and interactive digital content, as identified in this research.

Worldwide, the study helps achieve Sustainable Development Goal 13.3, which focuses on climate education. It emphasizes raising awareness and building skills to address climate mitigation and adaptation. The research shows how personalized media strategies increase climate knowledge in rural areas. This creates a model that other developing countries with similar communication barriers can use. The results also connect with Africa Agenda 2063, which pushes for environmental progress. It highlights building strong, climate-ready communities by sharing local knowledge and using technology. The study combines traditional knowledge with scientific climate reporting offering useful ideas to apply ecological sustainability goals across Africa.

The research adds to wider talks about how the media shapes sustainable growth. It shows that using communication methods that fit the specific setting can speed up work on connected SDGs. For example when the media reports well on climate issues, people adopt adaptation methods that not only tackle climate action (SDG 13) but also help with food security (SDG 2) by making farming stronger and fight poverty (SDG 1) by safeguarding at-risk livelihoods. The study also provides ideas focused on gender. These suggestions support SDG 5 (Gender equality) by tackling gaps in how women get and use climate-related information.

Using evidence from Chongwe and linking it to global guidelines, the study gives useful insights to Zambian stakeholders and shares applicable ideas for global climate communication strategies. This dual significance highlights how studying local media can help guide worldwide sustainability changes. It is useful for areas affected by climate problems but not often emphasized in global discussions. The connection with SDG 13.3 and Africa Agenda 2063 makes the results important to policymakers and groups focused on media, education, and environmental work in the Global South.

## **1.6 Delimitation**

This research centers on Chongwe Zambia, and does not cover other areas. The study reviews three types of media: television, radio, and social media. It does not include print media because its reach has been declining. The researcher gathered data from a five-year period (2019–2024) to keep the information useful for present times.

### **Study Limitations**

Although the study offers helpful insights into how media affects climate change awareness in Chongwe, a few limitations need to be noted:

This research focuses on Chongwe District. This focus may make it hard to apply the findings to other parts of Zambia or areas with different cultures. The way climate issues are communicated might differ between villages or cities.

The study looks into television, radio, and social media while leaving out print media like newspapers and magazines because fewer people are reading them now. Even so, some people in the community older folks, might still turn to newspapers to get updates about climate issues.

The survey studied 100 people, but this group might not show the full picture of Chongwe's population in aspects like education, income, and access to technology. Certain groups, like older farmers or people from disadvantaged backgrounds, might not be included.

## **1.7 Definition of Key Terms**

**Climate Change:** Changes in long-term weather patterns, temperatures, and rainfall caused by both human actions such as burning fuels and cutting down trees, and natural events. These changes disrupt the environment, economy, and society (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2022).

**Public View:** People's thoughts, opinions, and beliefs about climate change develop through what they see in the media, their own life experiences, and the culture around them. Media exposure personal events, and societal norms all play a part in shaping how the public views this issue (Ruiz et al. 2020).

**Conventional Media:** Traditional ways of spreading information, like TV, radio, and newspapers, reach large audiences using well-known methods of communication.

**Online Platforms:** Social networks like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter allow fast sharing of (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2022). and user content. These platforms often shape how people think and discuss issues in real-time (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2022)..

**Agenda-Setting Theory:** This theory of media suggests that news platforms shape how much importance people give to issues like climate change by deciding which subjects to cover.

**Behavioral Change:** This includes clear actions that individuals or groups take as a reaction to climate change messaging such as using water or practicing eco-friendly farming.

**Misinformation:** This refers to incorrect or false information about climate issues shared unlike spread lies called disinformation, which often appears on social media.

**Climate Adaptation:** These are methods and measures people use to cope with current or expected effects of climate change, like growing crops that survive drought or setting up warning systems.

**Media Effectiveness:** This shows how well different media (like social media or radio) manage to raise awareness, change opinions, or encourage actions related to climate change.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.0 Introduction**

The media has a big role in shaping how people see climate change. Researchers from fields like communication environmental science, and sociology have looked at this topic. This part reviews what studies say about how media affects climate change awareness, attitudes, and actions (Ha et al. 2019). It dives into global, regional, and local outlooks by pointing out important results, challenges, and areas where research is still needed. It also looks at how the media's role in discussing climate change has changed over time. Plus, it suggests ideas to make media more effective at getting people involved and supporting climate policies.

### **2.1 Media and Climate Change Communication Overview**

The media plays a key role in connecting scientific knowledge to how people understand climate change. It shares information and shapes the way audiences see environmental problems and possible solutions (Alawade & Obun-Andy 2024; Loy et al. 2020). The connection between media and climate change messaging is not simple. It is shaped by things like journalistic practices, the influence of politics and economics, what audiences prefer, and changes in technology (Okoliko & Wit, 2020). Both traditional outlets and online platforms have unique jobs in spreading climate-related information. Studies show that media reporting on climate change has shifted over time. It started with scientific discussions but now often focuses on political and divided opinions. How climate change is presented, as an environmental problem, a chance for economic growth, or a political issue shapes how people view it (Ngumuya, 2024). Research also reveals uneven media attention across different areas, with some places highlighted more than others, and certain perspectives receiving more focus than those of local groups.

#### **2.2.1 Agenda Setting Theory**

Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw created the Agenda-Setting Theory in 1972 to explain how mass media affects what people see as important by focusing attention on specific issues more than others. Their important research during the 1968 U.S. presidential election showed a clear connection between the topics highlighted by local news outlets

and what the public viewed as key election concerns. This proved that media plays a role in deciding what people think about rather than shaping their actual opinions (Khanya 2024). The media highlights certain topics by covering them more often and making them stand out encouraging people to see those issues as critical (Newell, 2000). Media have a dual role. They not create the public agenda but also shape how people interpret and feel about the issues they showcase (Ngumuya, 2024). Agenda-setting theory explains climate change communication by showing how media coverage of events like droughts and floods raises public awareness and makes environmental issues seem more important (Nagai, 2023). When news about climate change is covered and given high priority, it stands out more in discussions and can shape public opinion and policies. Media access in countries like Zambia often varies a lot. Rural areas rely on occasional radio broadcasts. This makes it harder for the media to shape agendas there compared to cities where people have access to more types of media (Lupiya et al. 2023). Editorial biases in state-run and private media, have an impact on the way public agendas differ. These biases affect how social groups rank and understand climate issues (Fejerskov, 2016).

### **2.2.2 Framing Theory**

Robert Entman introduced framing theory in 1993 offering a useful way to see how the media influences how people understand complicated topics. It works by focusing on some parts of a story while ignoring or minimizing others (Guenther et al. 2023). Entman explained that frames act like tools people use to interpret situations. These tools make certain details stand out and lead audiences toward particular ideas and reactions. Media framing goes beyond just presenting facts. It plays a role in creating meaning by shaping how people view and react to different issues (Ngumuya, 2024). Climate change can be seen as a "global crisis" highlighting widespread environmental dangers and international policy arguments. It can be viewed as a "local livelihood challenge," showing how changing climates impact farmers' routines and their ability to secure food (Adobor 2024; Rochyadi-Reetz & Wolling 2022). In places like Zambia how information is presented plays a big role because people have different levels of understanding cultural values, and economic situations (Manda et al. 2024). Using a "solutions frame" that shows successful community methods, like using drought-tolerant crops or saving water, can help farmers by giving real-life examples of resilience they can relate to (Adobor 2024). This kind of

framing inspires people to take action and feel hopeful. On the other hand when information is presented using a "catastrophe frame" that mainly focuses on the harmful effects of climate change, it may leave audiences feeling scared, powerless, or uninterested if clear steps to help are missing (Khanya 2024). Studies show that using climate change frames that align with strong local values often has a greater effect on encouraging public understanding and action in those settings (Manda et al. 2024).

### 2.3 Conceptual framework

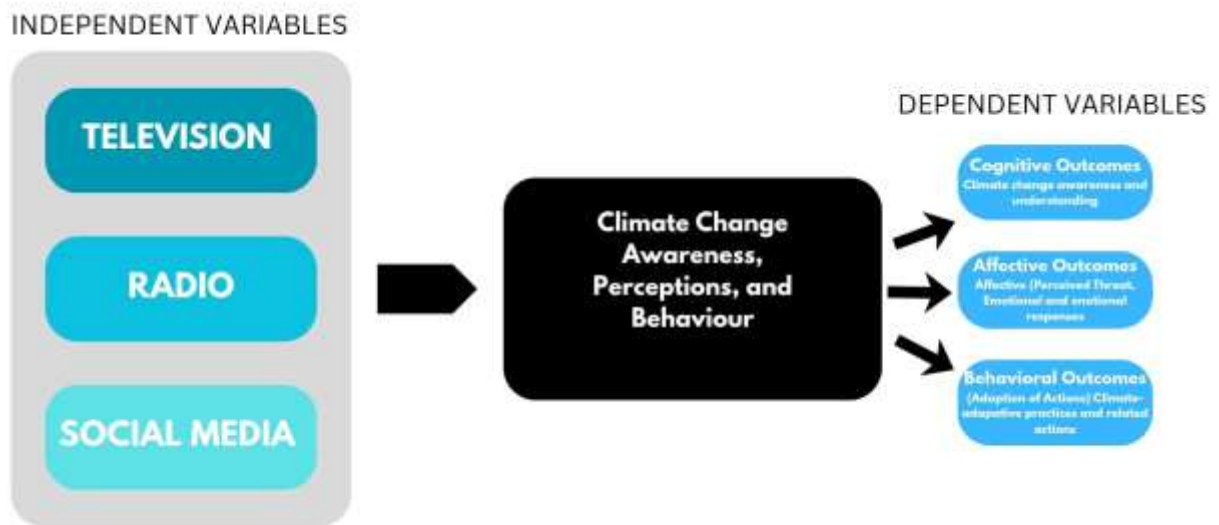


Figure 1.0 : Conceptual framework illustrating the influence of television, radio, and social media on climate change cognitive, affective, and behavioral outcomes

Using Agenda-Setting Theory and Framing Theory, this research identifies television, radio, and social media as key factors that impact how people understand, feel about, and act on climate change. Agenda-Setting Theory focuses on these media platforms shaping what the public knows and how important they think climate issues are. Framing Theory looks at how the way climate messages are presented affects emotions and choices. These theories together offer a detailed way to explain how media exposure can shape thinking, feelings, and actions regarding climate change.

### **2.3 Empirical Review**

Awareness and Actions Research from around the world shows that media has an important role in increasing public understanding and awareness of climate change. People gain much of their climate knowledge through media exposure, which has an impact on what they know and how much they care about climate risks (Sampei and Aoyagi-Usui 2009). Still, studies indicate that while media often improves awareness, it does not always lead to changes in behavior and does not affect all groups in the same way (Whitmarsh, 2009). Research in both richer and poorer regions shows that old-school media like radio and TV still serve as key ways people get climate information. Sampei and Aoyagi-Usui (2009) discovered that when there was more media focus on climate change, people in Japan knew more about it and understood the issues better. Likewise, Boykoff and Roberts (2007) noted that consistent media coverage helps bring climate change into public discussions. However, the way the media presents and focuses on these topics shapes how people see the risks of climate change.

Media framing can shape how people view climate change. Studies by Nisbet in 2009 and O'Neill and colleagues in 2015 show that presenting climate change as a science issue, an environmental risk, or a development problem changes how audiences understand and respond to it. Research suggests using local and solution-focused angles makes it easier for people to relate to compared to using fear-based or abstract stories, as stated by O'Neill and others in 2015. In Africa, research shows that broadcast media radio still plays a key role in spreading information about climate change. Olayinka and Egbule (2016) discovered that radio helps raise awareness about climate change among Nigerian farmers because it is easy to access low-cost, and uses local languages. In the same way, Chikulo (2015) explains that radio is the best way to communicate with people in rural areas of Africa where many have limited access to TV or online platforms. Research done in Southern Africa highlights how media shapes understanding of climate issues. Studies in Zambia and nearby nations show that radio and TV play a big role in spreading environmental information. This is true in rural areas where many people lack internet access and reading skills. The findings reveal that listening to or watching climate-related media raises awareness about changes in weather, droughts, and rainfall patterns. However,

knowing about these issues does not always lead people to take action to adapt (Chikulo, 2015). Social media has brought new elements to how people talk about climate change among younger groups. (Anderson 2017; Pearce et al, 2019) showed that social media helps spread climate information quickly and lets users interact with climate topics. Studies show that using social media has a connection to increased awareness of climate change and shifts in attitudes for young people and those living in cities. But concerns about false information and trust reduce how effective social media is when it comes to building a deeper understanding (Pearce et al. 2019).

Although media plays an important role in increasing climate awareness many studies point out a continuing gap between what people know and how they act. (Whitmarsh, 2009; Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002) explain that raising awareness through media is an important step to change behavior. However social, economic, and structural conditions also have a big effect on whether people use their knowledge about climate to take action. This idea is important in developing countries. Limited resources in these regions may make it hard for people to respond even when they are aware of climate issues. In general, research shows that media like radio, television, and social platforms has a key role in building awareness about climate change and how the public understands it. How well media increases awareness depends on the type of platform, the traits of the audience, and how the messages are presented. These findings offer a solid base to explore how various media outlets influence the understanding of climate change among people living in Chongwe District.

## **2.4 Global Perspective on Media and Climate Change**

### **2.4.1 Trends in Climate Reporting**

Reporting Media around the world has covered climate change much more in the last ten years. Major events like the Paris Agreement and alarming studies from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change have played a big role in this. These key events brought climate change into everyday conversations and made it a common topic in news worldwide. But reporting styles are different depending on the region. Political, economic, and social factors have a big influence on how the news about climate is presented (Stefkovic & Zenovitz, 2023). Western news in North America and Europe talks about climate change by looking at politics and money. Reports often focus on topics like

government policies, companies' roles, and new technologies like using renewable energy or setting a price on carbon. Sometimes, the news highlights scary stories such as extreme weather or crisis warnings. This type of reporting can either make people more worried or wear them out from hearing it too much.

Unlike media in other parts of the world many outlets in the Global South such as those in South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America, focus more on local effects and ways communities adapt (Pointer and Matsiko 2023). Their coverage often shows how climate change makes existing problems worse, like not having enough food, displacement, or unstable economies. Instead of concentrating on complicated policy discussions, journalists in the Global South emphasize personal stories traditional knowledge, and local efforts to stay resilient (Okoliko and Wit, 2020). Differences in available resources and access to knowledge influence climate reporting. Richer countries often have specific teams and resources dedicated to climate coverage. In contrast, newsrooms in less developed nations face funding challenges that make detailed reporting harder. Yet, with the rise of digital tools and social media platforms cross-border teamwork has increased. This has helped local climate stories reach a worldwide audience. Even so, while reporting on climate change has become more common how issues are presented and prioritized stays uneven. These trends highlight larger global political and economic gaps.

## **2.4.2 Challenges in Global Climate Communication**

### **2.4.2.1. Polarization and Politicization of Climate Change**

In many parts of the world, people see climate change as a political and divisive topic. News agencies guided by their ideologies often highlight political arguments instead of emphasizing a shared scientific understanding (Khanya 2024). This shift to politics causes a split in public views where people's belief in climate science ties more to their political stance than actual knowledge of science. Because of this even clear examples of climate issues like hurricanes or heat waves are viewed through political filters making it harder for everyone to work together.

### **2.4.2.2. Information Overload and Audience Disengagement**

The endless stream of stories, reports, and alerts about climate issues has led to something called "climate fatigue." More people now understand climate change than ever before, but

the steady flood of alarming headlines like melting glaciers or disappearing species can make people feel drained, confused, or tuned out (Loy et al. 2020). News outlets often focus on disaster-heavy coverage without providing ways to take action. This worsens the problem keeping public interest and motivation from lasting over time.

#### **2.4.2.3. Misinformation and the Role of Social Media Algorithms**

Digital platforms have changed how we talk about climate, but they have also made it easier for misinformation and climate denial to spread (Alawade & Obun-Andy 2024). Social media algorithms tend to push dramatic or emotional posts instead of focusing on factual news. This creates spaces where false climate information can spread unchecked. Groups that deny climate change often supported by the fossil fuel industry work to make people question climate science. Some news outlets treat climate change like a "debate" instead of a fact giving too much weight to extreme and incorrect ideas. New tools like deepfakes and AI-made content make it even simpler to create fake stories confusing people even more about what's true.

#### **2.4.3 Role of Global Media**

Global media outlets like BBC CNN, Al Jazeera, Reuters, and The Guardian have a big part in shaping conversations about climate change around the world. They influence how people think how policies are made, and how businesses act in many countries. Their wide audience and trusted reputation let them highlight scientific research, challenge powerful institutions, and connect climate-related stories from different places into a clear message (Berglez & Nassanga, 2015). These major networks, as key players in sharing information, choose which climate topics are most important and decide how to present them to global viewers. For example, BBC and CNN often provide live updates on climate disasters helping to turn complex science topics into understandable stories. Organizations like The Guardian and The New York Times have used investigative journalism to reveal corporate green washing, government failures, and lobbying by fossil fuel industries. But their reporting has its flaws. Western-focused biases often overshadow the coverage, leaving climate challenges in the Global South underrepresented unless they connect with Western concerns. Seeing the demand to improve climate reporting with more consistency and solutions-driven approaches, groups in journalism are joining forces to boost global media

efforts. One strong example is Covering Climate Now. This initiative works with over 500 news organizations all over the world to improve climate-related stories. The Guardian has also stepped up by creating its "Climate Pledge." This pledge focuses on putting climate coverage first and refusing advertising from fossil fuel companies. These group efforts are important in fighting misinformation filling gaps in reporting from different areas, and keeping climate issues front and center in the news. However even with their impact global media deal with big hurdles. These include the push to create click bait headlines and the struggle to provide real representation to many climate-threatened areas in global news. Budget cuts often create challenges, with climate desks in newsrooms facing limited financial resources.

## **2.5 Climate Communication in Africa**

### **2.5.1 Media Landscape and Climate Coverage**

Africa has a mix of media, from government-run broadcasters to private stations and local community outlets. Each one plays a different part in shaping how people see climate issues (Okoliko & Wit, 2020). Most climate news in Africa reacts to events rather than preparing people for what might happen. It often talks about things like droughts, floods, or cyclones but skips over the bigger picture or causes behind these events (Okoliko & Wit, 2020). This kind of reporting focuses on disasters happening now, so people might not learn much about long-term climate problems or what is causing them. This leaves gaps in how people understand the crisis. African climate journalism struggles with a lack of resources. Many newsrooms survive on small budgets hiring reporters focused on environmental issues or giving them access to scientific knowledge (Okoliko & Wit, 2020).

The absence of proper climate science training makes it hard for journalists to make sense of detailed data or question governments and companies about environmental decisions. Reporting can also feel the weight of political or economic pressure especially in nations where state-owned media ignores climate risks or private companies care more about profits than investigative work. Even with these challenges local and community media help by giving a platform to those most affected by climate impacts (Okoliko & Wit, 2020). Radio plays a major role in rural regions. Broadcasters share weather warnings advice for farmers, and ways to adapt often using local languages (Lupiya et al. 2023). To

improve climate communication across Africa, it is vital to create programs that help journalists understand data and focus on solution-driven storytelling. Connections between media outlets, scientists, and NGOs can close knowledge gaps. Providing funds to support independent environmental reporting can also lead to more in-depth investigations (Okoliko & Wit, 2020).

### **2.5.2 Challenges in African Climate Communication**

Climate communication in Africa faces significant challenges that hinder effective public awareness and engagement. One of the most pressing issues is the severe resource constraints within newsrooms across the continent, where financial limitations and staffing shortages often mean there are no dedicated environmental reporters (Okoliko & Wit, 2020). This results in climate coverage that tends to be superficial, reactive, and narrowly focused on immediate disasters rather than in-depth analysis of long-term trends or systemic drivers of environmental change (Okoliko & Wit, 2020). Compounding this problem is the widespread language barrier, as critical climate science terminology and policy discussions are frequently not translated into local languages, making the information inaccessible to large segments of the population (Manda et al., 2024). Furthermore, there exists a pronounced urban bias in media coverage, where rural communities, despite being the most vulnerable to climate impacts, receive disproportionately less attention from mainstream outlets (Okoliko & Wit, 2020).

### **2.5.3 Role of African Media**

Talking about climate issues in Africa is tough because many problems stop people from understanding and taking action. A big problem is that African newsrooms don't have enough money or staff. They often can't afford to hire reporters who focus on the environment (Okoliko & Wit, 2020). Because of this, climate-related stories often end up being shallow or just reactions to big disasters while ignoring deeper causes or long-term problems (Okoliko & Wit, 2020). Another roadblock is the language gap. Important terms about climate science and policies aren't often translated into local languages, so a lot of people can't access that information (Manda et al. 2024). Mainstream media often has a clear focus on urban areas giving much less attention to rural communities. Even though these rural areas face the greatest risks from climate effects, they are overlooked in

coverage (Okoliko & Wit, 2020). African media plays an important role in shaping opinions and sharing information. It helps to educate, inform, and connect communities often serving as a bridge between people and their leaders. Media outlets work to address social issues and to promote discussions on development and progress. By reporting on critical events, they have an influence on public views and decisions. These platforms also provide a voice to marginalized groups highlighting their challenges and contributions. African media continues to impact societies by fostering awareness and encouraging dialogue. Even with many challenges African media has a key role in building the story of the continent's climate situation. It highlights local voices and traditional knowledge, which are often ignored in global talks about climate (Manda et al. 2024; Okoliko & Wit 2020). While facing limited funding and other roadblocks, media organizations in Africa still manage to focus attention on climate effects. They use stories tied to communities to show how global changes affect farmers, fishers, and herders in real ways (Okoliko & Wit, 2020). New efforts such as the Pan-African Media Alliance for Climate Change work to help African journalists build skills. They create connections to improve both the depth and range of environmental news. At the same time, they focus on maintaining traditional adaptation practices (Okoliko & Wit, 2020).

## **2.6 Climate Communication in Zambia and Similar Rural Districts**

### **2.6.1 Media's Role in Climate Awareness**

In Zambia in rural areas, people rely on radio as an important way to share information about the climate. It reaches farmers and villages that do not have much access to TV or newspapers. Community radio stations play a big role by sharing local weather updates, farming tips for the seasons, and warnings about disasters. This information affects farming and food supplies helping people in these areas manage their livelihoods better. Climate reporting often reacts to problems instead of working to prevent them. Most stations focus on events like floods and long droughts after they happen. They examine climate trends over time or promote ways to adapt sustainably to changes (Ng'ombe et al. 2020). Community radio allows people to call in with their thoughts or questions. This participatory setup provides a chance to share climate details while also combining scientific facts with local knowledge about weather and land use (Mannar, 2014).

### **2.6.2 Challenges in Zambian Climate Communication**

Zambia struggles with issues that make it hard to communicate about climate and get people to engage and understand the topic. One main challenge is the lack of local studies that look at how people in Zambia view and make sense of climate change messages. This makes it tough to share information that fits well with their culture and education (Mwanza et al. 2023). More people are using digital platforms and social media to spread facts about climate, but not everyone can join these discussions. Many rural and low-income groups do not have easy internet access or smartphones (Chimanga & Kanja 2020; Dumenu & Tiamgne 2020). This technology problem makes the gap in information between cities and villages even wider. Some media outlets often focus on dramatic and sensational climate stories instead of detailed scientific reporting. This approach can affect how the public understands both the dangers and the solutions (Mwanza et al. 2023). The issue becomes worse because many journalists in Zambia do not receive proper training to report on the environment. This lack of expertise sometimes leads to basic or incorrect coverage of complicated climate topics (Mwanza et al. 2023).

### **2.6.3 Role of Zambian Media**

Zambian media can play a big role in changing how people understand climate issues by using more inclusive and science-based methods (Manda et al., 2024). Journalists can improve how they report by teaming up with environmental NGOs agricultural experts, and climate scientists. This could help make their reports more accurate and meaningful and allow people to relate global climate changes to their local situations (Manda et al. 2024). Using local languages in broadcasts can simplify tough environmental ideas and make them clearer for rural communities who need this information to support their way of life (Manda et al. 2024). Generations of traditional ecological knowledge about weather and land use could work together with science creating climate messages that better connect with local cultures (Manda et al. 2024). Interactive programming methods like farmer call-in programs, community discussions, and radio storytelling can help involve listeners . These formats address particular local issues, including shifts in rainfall

maintaining soil quality, and friendly farming practices (Mannar, 2014). Suggestions to Improve Climate Communication

**Integrated Media Strategies** To make climate communication better, combining old and new media works well to reach many different people. Radio, TV, and newspapers still matter a lot in places where internet access is hard to get. These traditional forms of media help connect with rural and less-connected communities, as noted by Lupiya et al. 2023. On the other hand online tools like social media, podcasts, and storytelling platforms let people share ideas in a fun and interactive way for younger generations who prefer technology. Using both types of media together forms a balanced system. Traditional media brings trusted, community-based stories, while online platforms add speed, visuals, and allow people across the world to stay connected and informed. This media strategy integrates different platforms to tailor climate messages to particular audiences and makes use of the unique strengths each one offers.

## **2.7 Suggestions for Improving Climate Communication**

### **2.7.1 Integrated Media Strategies**

A solid way to improve how we talk about climate is to use both traditional and digital media tools together. Things like TV, radio, and newspapers still matter a lot. They are important in rural places or areas where people have limited internet access (Lupiya et al. 2023). On the other hand digital platforms such as social media, podcasts, and online news offer fresh and engaging ways to connect with younger or tech-savvy groups. Using both types of media works well together. Traditional outlets give strong stories that feel local and trusted, while digital options bring fast updates, eye-catching visuals, and connections across the world. This combined media strategy helps adapt climate messages to reach particular groups by using the specific benefits of each platform.

### **2.7.2 Capacity Building**

Training journalists in climate science and solutions-based reporting plays a key role in improving how climate issues are communicated. Media training programs give professionals a strong grasp of the basics of climate science. This helps them report climate news and avoids exaggerating or simplifying the facts (Mwanza et al. 2023). These

programs also focus on teaching practical skills aimed at solutions-based reporting. Instead of only pointing out problems, they encourage showcasing effective strategies for adapting to or preventing climate changes. Such training is now seen as essential to make climate communication more impactful across the globe (Okoliko & Wit, 2020).

### **2.7.3 Localized Content**

Creating hyperlocal climate stories tied to community experiences helps people see climate change as a relatable and urgent issue (Adobor 2024). These stories show the specific challenges and responses of each community, helping link global climate concerns to everyday life. Changes in weather major events, or shifting environments show how local jobs, health, and traditions are affected (Manda et al. 2024). Sharing these focused stories builds understanding and empathy as they reflect personal and shared experiences that people recognize as meaningful. They also offer a chance to highlight traditional knowledge and homegrown solutions, which often go unnoticed in bigger climate discussions (Manda et al. 2024).

### **2.7.4 Fact-Checking Initiatives**

Fact-checking initiatives play a vital role in fighting false information about climate change. They help educate the public and drive meaningful climate action. Media organizations working together with specialized fact-checking teams find, examine, and expose incorrect or misleading claims about climate science, its reasons, effects, and possible solutions (Khanya 2024). Studies confirm that fact-checking not weakens belief in false information but also helps people remember the correct facts over time, no matter their political views. These efforts fight climate myths and teach media skills allowing people to think about information on climate issues.

### **2.7.5 Policy Advocacy**

Pushing the media to keep policymakers responsible for taking steps against climate change plays a key role in making sure there is honesty, accountability, and progress in solving the climate problem. The media acts as a strong bridge between the public and leaders shaping what people know and affecting policy decisions. It brings attention to how governments stick to their promises how they follow through, and how well their climate

measures work. By digging deep with reports detailed reviews, and ongoing stories, journalists can show the difference between what leaders say and what they do. They can share both successes and failures and help share the concerns of communities calling for quick action. This review stresses how crucial the media is in building public understanding and encouraging action on climate change. It explains that the media serves as a key way for many people to get information and has the ability to shape how they see feel about, and react to climate challenges. Even though issues like false information unreliable sources, and differences in climate knowledge remain problems worldwide and in certain areas, there are still chances to make climate communication better. These chances involve using creative methods that include both traditional and digital media reaching out to all kinds of audiences, and ensuring messages are based on trustworthy science. The review also emphasizes the need to adapt communication to fit local needs understanding that climate effects and how communities respond can differ depending on the region. Researchers need to evaluate how well local media campaigns encourage real behavior change in areas that lack resources or face risks. These studies could give useful knowledge about using community stories local involvement, and culture-specific messages to make climate talks more relatable and effective. Learning more about these local methods can help media workers, decision-makers, and climate supporters create better plans to guide communities in making smart lasting choices on climate action.

## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.0 Introduction**

Chapter Three explains the methods used in this study. This section describes the research design and the steps taken to gather, study, and understand data to meet the goals and answer the questions of the research. It details why specific methods, tools, and sources of data were picked. It also explains how the data was collected and analyzed during the study. By laying out this approach, the chapter shows that the chosen methods were suitable and thorough enough to meet the study's goals while ensuring the results are valid and reliable. This section is arranged to walk the reader through the study's design how samples were chosen, ways data was collected, and methods used to study that data. It provides an organized and clear explanation of the research process.

Important questions about how media shape climate change awareness in Chongwe District were studied. The study first looked at the main media sources residents used to get climate-related news. Next, it checked how the style of presenting climate stories impacted how people understood the issue. It also looked into whether these media messages influenced any behavioral changes. In addition, it compared how effective traditional channels like radio were against modern platforms like social media. , it spotted the troubles journalists faced while covering climate-related topics.

### **3.1 Research Approach**

This study used a mixed-methods research method. In the first stage, the researcher applied an exploratory design to narrow down the study focus after reviewing literature and talking with key individuals. In the next stage, they relied on a descriptive design to gather specific data using surveys, interviews, focus groups, and content analysis. They used two methods to gather both statistical data and descriptive details. This combination is a major benefit of mixed methods approaches.

### **3.2 Study Sample**

The study included a total of 100 participants. The sample size was determined based on methodological suitability, representation of key stakeholder groups, and practical feasibility within the scope of an undergraduate research project. Rather than aiming for

statistical generalisation to the entire population of Chongwe District, the study sought analytical depth and meaningful comparison between groups central to climate communication.

The largest proportion of participants (50%) consisted of youth aged 18–35. This decision was justified by the study’s objective of examining digital media use in climate communication. Youth are the most active users of social platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp, making them critical to understanding digital framing and information diffusion. A larger youth sample enhanced variability in responses and strengthened comparative analysis between traditional and digital media users.

Smallholder farmers constituted 35 participants (35% of the sample). Although smaller than the youth group, this number was sufficient because the farmer population selected met specific criteria: reliance on rain-fed agriculture and regular exposure to media at least three times per week. The sample allowed for gender inclusion and representation of diverse farming practices while remaining manageable for in-depth engagement.

Fifteen (15) media professionals were selected through purposive sampling. In qualitative and specialist studies, key informant samples are typically smaller because participants are chosen for expertise rather than representativeness. According to media framing scholarship by Maxwell McCombs and Robert Entman, elite interviews with knowledgeable communicators are appropriate for analysing framing processes. The inclusion of 15 practitioners was therefore adequate to capture newsroom routines, editorial decisions, and institutional constraints.

For the qualitative component, six focus group discussions were conducted: three with farmers (10–12 participants each) and three with youth (12–15 participants each). Qualitative research methodology suggests that thematic saturation in relatively homogeneous groups often occurs within three to six focus groups, as demonstrated by Guest, Bunce, and Johnson. The six groups were therefore sufficient to reach saturation while allowing comparison between farmers and youth..

### **3.3 Sampling Method**

The researcher used multiple sampling methods to pick participants and ensure a wide variety of perspectives. Mixed-methods and climate vulnerability studies often support this kind of approach (Creswell & Plano Clark 2018; Greene 2007). Stratified random sampling was used to select farmers and youth. They split the population into groups based on key factors like age, gender, and location then chose participants. This approach avoided having too many people from just one group.

The study employed purposive and snowball sampling techniques to select participants. Media professionals were selected through purposive sampling because they actively report on climate issues and possess relevant expertise, consistent with recommendations by Palinkas et al. (2015), which emphasize selecting information-rich participants with specialized knowledge. Additionally, snowball sampling was used to recruit some youth participants, whereby initial participants referred other individuals who met the study's criteria, making it easier to identify suitable respondents within the target group.

The study included a total of 100 participants to balance diversity with practical feasibility. Of these, 35 were farmers, selected to represent different farming practices and experiences, ensuring the study captured a wide range of agricultural perspectives. 50 participants were youth, chosen to reflect the opinions and behaviors of younger community members, with snowball sampling helping identify individuals who matched the study's criteria. 15 media professionals were included through purposive sampling because of their expertise in reporting on climate issues, ensuring informed insights into media framing. These numbers were determined to provide sufficient variation in responses while remaining manageable within the research schedule. The farmer group was large enough to allow comparing different subgroups. Conversations with media professionals hit the point where no fresh themes came up during discussions.

### **3.4 Tools Used to Collect Data**

The researcher used three main tools to collect data blending both numbers-based and descriptive methods, as advised in mixed-methods (Holbert 2008; Creswell & Plano Clark 2018). Structured questionnaires were administered to youths, farmers and media professionals which included both simple choice and open-ended queries, to track people's

media use and knowledge of climate issues. To make sure everyone could participate, they translated the questions into local dialects and conducted face-to-face interviews, which fits with how rural climate studies are done in Zambia.

The study conducted focus group discussions to understand community perspectives. A total of 6 focus groups were held: 3 groups of farmers with 10–12 participants each, and 3 groups of youth with 12–15 participants each. These discussions used a flexible set of guiding topics, allowing participants to freely share their views, while sessions were recorded (with permission) to capture detailed responses. In addition, 15 media professionals participated in individual semi-structured interviews, which provided space for reporters to share personal experiences while keeping the discussion focused on climate reporting.

The researcher designed all instruments to match the study goals and used straightforward easy-to-understand language. The questions moved from general topics about media use to specific details of climate communication keeping a clear and logical structure.

### **3.6 Reliability and Validity**

The research used a strong methodology to confirm both validity and reliability. It focused on careful sampling using multiple methods, and clear reporting. These are key ideas in mixed-methods research (Greene 2007; Creswell & Plano Clark 2018). Pilot studies helped fine-tune tools for gathering data. This made them more accurate and consistent, which supported both content and construct validity. But the use of self-reported data might cause issues like recall errors or social pressure biases. These are common problems in studies about perceptions of climate (Gauchat 2018; Nisbet & Kotcher 2009). Even with these challenges, the approaches used hoped to provide useful findings about how media informs people about the climate in the Chongwe District by combining different methods and sources .

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

The researcher used statistical tools such as SPSS to analyze quantitative survey information. They calculated frequencies, percentages, and correlations. This method is common in studies about media effects and climate awareness. The analysis showed

patterns in how people use media and linked things like platform choices to their climate knowledge.

The researcher applied thematic analysis to qualitative data . They transcribed and coded interviews and focus groups to find repeated ideas using well-known steps in climate communication studies (Moser 2016; Braun & Clarke 2006). Media reports underwent content analysis to classify framing styles and word choices aligning with research on climate framing and solutions-focused journalism. Comparing different methods added credibility to the results. It confirmed patterns or clarified differences, which is a suggested way to make interpretations stronger in mixed-method studies.

### **3.8 Challenges in the Methodology**

The study faced a few challenges. The sample size, although suitable for school-related research, did not allow for wide subgroup analysis. Media usage reported by participants might not always match their real habits due to memory issues or the desire to give acceptable answers. Sometimes bad weather slowed down data collection in rural areas. Some people busy media workers, chose not to participate because they lacked time. The study's limited schedule meant researchers could look at recent media content instead of long-term patterns.

The team tackled these challenges by carefully choosing samples using multiple methods, and sharing their process . Even with these setbacks, the research still provided reliable insights into how media communicates climate issues in Chongwe District.

### **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

The research followed ethical rules at every step. The researcher made sure participation was voluntary and explained the study's purpose and how they would use the data. They kept answers private by hiding participants' identities and storing the data .

The researcher trained themselves to understand cultural differences and how to stay away from asking questions that could suggest certain answers. They allowed participants to leave the study at any moment without facing any consequences. They also gave extra

explanations to vulnerable groups such as older farmers, so they could understand the study. These steps protected the quality of the research and ensured respect for both the community's traditions and people's individual rights.

The methodology built a strong system to study how media affects climate awareness. It tackled the real challenges of doing fieldwork in Chongwe District. By using a mix of methods, it combined wide-ranging perspectives with in-depth insights. This approach led to findings that were valuable for both schools and everyday life.

## CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter explores and examines what the study found about how media shapes climate change awareness among people living in Chongwe District. The information is based on data gathered through structured questionnaires discussions in focus groups with farmers and youth, and interviews with key media professionals. The chapter uses the study's research questions and goals to guide how it shares and talks about the findings. Frequency tables and percentages show the quantitative results, while interviews offer detailed examples and context to support the data. It starts by describing who the respondents are and how they use media then it organizes the findings according to the research questions.

### 4.1 Respondents' Characteristics and Media Usage

#### 4.1.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The study involved a total of 100 participants which included farmers, youth, and media professionals. Table 4.1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

*Table 4.1: Respondent Demographic Characteristics*

Category	Farmers (n=20)	Youth (n=70)	Media Professionals (n=10)
Gender (Male)	55%	50%	60%
Gender (Female)	45%	50%	40%
Dominant Age Range	36–55 years	18–25 years	26–45 years

Most farmers were middle-aged or older mirroring the typical age structure found in agricultural families in Chongwe District. Young participants aged 18 to 25, represented a group that uses digital platforms. Media professionals being part of the working-age population, shared their expertise on reporting about climate issues. This mix helped the study gather different viewpoints about how people communicate about climate and use media.

#### 4.1.2 Media Usage Patterns by Age Group

The usage of media varied considerably across age groups, as shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Media Preference by Age Group

Age Group	Radio (%)	TV (%)	Social Media (%)
18–35 years	17	11	72
36+ years	71	25	4

The findings indicate a clear age-based divide in media consumption. Younger respondents relied predominantly on social media, while older respondents particularly farmers depended mainly on radio. This pattern has implications for how climate change information should be tailored and disseminated to different demographic groups.

#### 4.2 Findings by Research Question

##### 4.2.1 Primary Media Sources for Climate Change Information

This subsection examines the main media sources through which farmers and youth access climate change information.

Table 4.3: Primary Source of Climate Change Information among Farmers

Source	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Radio	14	70.0
Television	4	20.0
Word-of-mouth	2	10.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The findings show that radio is the dominant primary source of climate change information among farmers, cited by 70% (14 out of 20) of respondents. Television follows at 20% (4 respondents), while word-of-mouth accounts for 10% (2 respondents).

These results indicate a strong reliance on radio for climate-related information, suggesting its accessibility and relevance to farmers. Television plays a secondary role, while informal interpersonal communication remains limited as a primary source.

*Table 4.4: Primary Source of Climate Change Information among Youth*

<b>Source</b>	<b>Frequency (N)</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Social Media	50	71.4
Radio	20	28.6
Television	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The data reveals a clear dichotomy in how different demographic groups access climate change information. Among farmers (n=20), radio is the overwhelmingly dominant source, cited by 70% of respondents. This is followed by television (20%) and word-of-mouth (10%). This preference for radio can be attributed to several factors, including its lower cost, accessibility in rural areas where electricity may be unreliable, and the availability of local-language programming. The presence of word-of-mouth, though small, also highlights the importance of community and social networks in disseminating information within farming communities, which could be leveraged for peer-to-peer learning initiatives.

In stark contrast, youth respondents (n=70) predominantly rely on social media (71.4%), with radio playing a secondary role (28.6%). Notably, television was not cited as a primary source by any youth respondent. This finding strongly correlates with the high penetration of smartphones and mobile internet among the younger population, who are more engaged with digital platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, or TikTok. The complete absence of television as a primary source for youth is an interesting point, possibly indicating a shift away from traditional broadcast media or that their television consumption is for entertainment rather than information.

These findings have significant implications for the design and implementation of climate communication strategies. A one-size-fits-all approach would be ineffective. Instead, a segmented strategy is required: agricultural extension services and climate information services should prioritize radio broadcasts and community-based methods (like farmer groups) to effectively reach farmers. Concurrently, any initiative targeting youth must have a strong, engaging, and credible presence on social media platforms to counter misinformation and promote climate action. This age-based segmentation of the media landscape underscores the need for tailored communication to ensure that vital climate information reaches all sectors of the population effectively.

#### **4.2.2 Media Framing and Public Perception**

Qualitative analysis revealed that climate change reporting was largely framed around extreme events and crises, such as floods and droughts. While such framing increased awareness, it often generated fear and anxiety rather than practical understanding.

Several farmers noted that messages emphasizing disasters made them feel helpless, whereas programmes discussing solutions such as compost manure and conservation farming were perceived as more useful. One farmer stated:

*“When they talk about compost manure on radio, I try it. But floods just make me afraid.”*

Another farmer similarly noted:

*“Most programmes talk about disasters, but they don’t explain how we can protect our crops or ourselves.”*

In contrast, programmes that adopted a solutions-oriented approach were perceived as more useful and empowering. Farmers reported greater engagement with content that demonstrated practical adaptation measures applicable to their local context. One respondent stated:

*“When they talk about compost manure on the radio, I try it because it is something I can do in my field.”*

Another farmer reinforced this view by noting:

*“I understand better when they explain conservation farming step by step. That helps more than just talking about floods.”*

These recurring views suggest that while crisis-focused framing raises awareness, it may limit constructive engagement if not accompanied by practical guidance. Conversely, solutions-oriented framing appears more effective in promoting understanding and encouraging adaptive behaviour among farmers. Solutions-oriented framing enhances understanding, builds confidence, and encourages adaptive practices.

*Table 4.1 Differential Perception Based on Content Type*

<b>Content Type</b>	<b>Farmer Response</b>	<b>Effect on Behavior</b>
Disaster-focused stories	Feel anxious, helpless	Low adoption of adaptive measures
Solution-focused stories	Feel informed, capable	High adoption of adaptive measures
Mixed approach (disasters + solutions)	Awareness + guidance	Moderate engagement, some adoption

## **Engagement Patterns**

1. Practicality matters: Farmers preferred content they could immediately implement in their fields.
2. Local relevance matters: Messages were more influential when tailored to specific crops, weather conditions, and farming practices.
3. Repetition and demonstration: Programs that demonstrated techniques or repeated key steps were more likely to result in behavioural adoption.

### 4.2.3 Comparative Effectiveness of Media Platforms

Table 4.6: Media Platform Effectiveness Scores

Platform	Awareness	Trust	Behavioural Influence
Radio	4.2	4.5	3.8
Television	3.5	3.8	3.0
Social Media	3.9	2.7	3.1

Radio recorded the highest overall scores, particularly in trust (4.5) and behavioural influence (3.8). Among farmers, radio performed strongest (Awareness 4.5; Trust 4.7; Behavioural Influence 4.2), reflecting high radio ownership and reliance on it for agricultural information. Youth ratings were slightly lower but still high.

Television showed moderate effectiveness (Awareness 3.5; Trust 3.8; Behavioural Influence 3.0). Although reasonably trusted, its impact is limited by lower access, especially among farmers with limited electricity.

Social media scored high in awareness (3.9), especially among youth (4.5), but recorded the lowest trust score overall (2.7). Farmers rated social media particularly low (Trust 2.0; Behavioural Influence 1.5), largely due to limited smartphone and data access. Among youth, behavioural influence was moderate (3.6), despite concerns about misinformation.

### 4.2.4 Challenges in Climate Change Reporting

Journalists identified several challenges affecting climate change reporting, including limited climate science training, editorial pressure to sensationalize stories, and lack of localized data. One journalist noted:

*“Editors want disaster headlines, not soil conservation.”*

Table 4.7: Challenges Faced by Journalists in Climate Reporting

Challenge	Frequency (%)
Limited climate science training	75
Editorial pressure	50
Lack of local data	38

The data indicates several significant obstacles affecting journalists' ability to report on climate issues effectively:

- i. **Limited Climate Science Training (75%):** The majority of journalists reported insufficient formal training in climate science. This limits their capacity to accurately interpret complex scientific findings and communicate them effectively to the public. The lack of specialized knowledge may result in oversimplification or misrepresentation of climate issues, reducing public understanding.
- ii. **Editorial Pressure (50%):** Half of the respondents identified pressure from editors as a challenge. This includes prioritizing stories that attract readership over in-depth climate reporting, or limiting space and airtime for scientific content. Editorial constraints may also influence the framing of climate stories, emphasizing sensational events rather than educational or solution-focused content.
- iii. **Lack of Local Data (38%):** Over one-third of journalists reported insufficient local climate data as a barrier. Without relevant, region-specific data, reporting tends to rely on generalized global information, which may not resonate with local audiences. This highlights the need for improved climate monitoring and accessible data repositories to support accurate and contextually relevant journalism.

These findings underscore that both capacity-building and structural support are critical for enhancing climate reporting. Strengthening journalists' scientific literacy, providing editorial flexibility, and improving local data availability could improve the accuracy, relevance, and influence of climate communication in the media.

### **4.3 Discussion of Findings**

The results show that media has a big influence on building climate awareness, but how effective it is depends on the platform, the audience, and how the message is presented. Farmers trust and use the radio the most, while young people turn to social media. Content that focuses on solutions and is relevant worked best to inspire changes in behavior, which matched what the study aimed to understand.

#### **4.3.1 Media Access and Audience Segmentation**

The data shows clear differences in how people access and use media based on their age and socio-economic factors. Farmers get their climate change updates from the radio. On the other hand young people lean on social media platforms for this information. These differences are due to variations in access to infrastructure how familiar people are with technology, and what they can afford. Farmers rely on radios, which lines up with past research. Studies have found that radio is still the easiest and most trusted way for rural communities in Sub-Saharan Africa to get information. This is because radios are affordable, reach many areas, and use local languages (Manyozo 2012; Lupiya et al., 2023). Zambia shows a similar trend. Community radio is a key tool for sharing agricultural advice and climate updates (Funder & Mweemba, 2019). Young people depend on social media, which matches research showing that younger groups in Southern Africa use digital media more. Mobile phones and sharing information among peers play a big role in this trend (Matchaya et al. 2024; Manda et al. 2024). These studies highlight the idea that communication about climate should target specific audiences instead of being the same for everyone.

#### **4.3.2 Media Framing and Public Perception of Climate Change**

The study showed that coverage of climate change focused on extreme weather like floods and droughts. This type of focus raised awareness but often caused fear and worry instead of encouraging helpful actions. This matches past research, which shows that highlighting threats or crises can overwhelm people and make them disengage especially when they do not have the means to act (Schäfer & Yan 2023; Fesenfeld et al. 2024). On the other hand,

people found solutions-focused framing to be more helpful and motivating. Farmers showed more interest in media that emphasized practical ways to adapt to climate issues specific to their region. This matches earlier research that says focusing on solutions in climate communication helps people feel confident and motivates them to act (Khanya 2024; Shreedhar et al. 2024).

### **4.3.3 Media Exposure and Behavioural Change**

The research shows that media can lead to changes in behavior when it shares climate information. This is true when the content is practical and fits local needs. Farmers who saw localized and helpful content were more likely to start using climate-smart methods like planting earlier or using compost manure. This discovery supports research that shows people change their behavior due to climate information when they see it as relevant, practical, and possible within their economic and social circumstances (Žišt et al. 2021; Manda et al. 2024). Studies in agricultural communication point out that using local examples and hands-on demonstrations greatly encourages small-scale farmers to adopt adaptive measures (Lupiya et al. 2023). The findings underline that awareness alone does not create change. Media must help connect knowledge with actual action.

### **4.3.4 Comparative Effectiveness of Media Platforms**

The analysis showed that radio ranked highest in trust and in shaping behavior with farmers. This matches findings that show radio is still a reliable way to communicate in rural development. Its trust comes from being well-known, dependable, and interactive through programs like call-ins (Manyozo 2012; Žišt et al. 2021). Television helped spread awareness with visual stories, but it faced limits like restricted access and a focus on city audiences. Schäfer and Painter (2020) mentioned this issue too. Social media got a lot of attention from young people, but it scored lower on trust because of fake news and lack of proper monitoring. Climate communication studies, like those by Blum (2024) and Gao et al. (2025), have discussed this challenge. These results highlight the need to combine old and new media to use their strengths together.

#### **4.3.5 Trust as a Mediating Factor in Climate Communication**

Trust played a big role in whether people acted on the messages they saw in the media. People trusted radio shows with local farmers and agricultural experts much more than they did content that seemed to come from outside sources. This discovery matches research showing trust in where people get their information plays a big role in shaping how they act about climate issues (Landmann et al. 2024; Vasi & Paez-Arellano 2025). On the other hand, people having less trust in what they see on social media points to worries about false information. Misinformation has been recognized as a key obstacle to getting climate messages across well online.

#### **4.3.6 Institutional and Professional Challenges in Climate Reporting**

The study found that gaps in climate science education, pressure from editors to sensationalize, and a lack of local data are major obstacles in climate reporting. These results align with common issues noted in media research showing how organizational limitations and newsroom agendas hinder strong environmental journalism (Schäfer & Painter 2020; Žišt et al. 2021). In places like Zambia, these problems often cause reporting to focus on isolated events and disasters. This reduces how well the public learns about ongoing adaptation efforts.

#### **4.3.7 Lessons to Help Shape Climate Communication Policy and Practice**

The findings highlight the importance of creating climate communication policies that focus on segmenting audiences tailoring content to local contexts, and helping journalists build their skills. Experts say media needs institutional backing and specific communication approaches to play a strong role in supporting climate resilience (Manyozo 2012; Manda et al., 2024). Building stronger ties between media organizations, climate experts, and agriculture extension services stands out as a key step to enhance the results of climate communication.

#### **4.3.8 Synthesis of Findings**

The study shows that how people perceive and respond to climate change depends on which media platforms they use how messages are framed, and the level of trust and relevance they feel toward the information. These results match recent studies on climate communication, which highlight the need to use combined, specific, and practical methods (Schäfer & Yan 2023; Fesenfeld et al. 2024).

## **CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.0 Introduction**

This section gives an overview of the study, shares conclusions based on main points from Chapter Four, and suggests ways to improve how people talk about and interact with climate change issues in Zambia. It combines data collected through surveys, interviews, and group discussions held in Chongwe District. The conclusions align with the study's goals and research queries, and the suggestions are directed at government leaders, media organizations, development groups, and researchers working on similar topics in the future.

### **5.2 Summary of Key Findings**

The key findings of the study are summarized in relation to the research questions and objectives as follows:

#### **5.2.1 Media Sources for Climate Change Information**

The research showed that farmers rely on the radio to get updates about climate change, while most young people turn to social media for the same. Television holds a less significant position as a source of information for both these groups. The results highlight how media consumption differs based on factors like age, accessibility, and comfort with digital tools.

#### **5.2.2 Media Framing and Public Perception**

The way the media presents climate change often revolves around severe events such as floods and droughts. This type of reporting raises awareness but can also cause fear and worry often failing to inspire action. On the other hand, messages that focus on practical solutions and local issues help people understand the topic more and make them more likely to get involved.

#### **5.2.3 Behavioural Change Resulting from Media Exposure**

Over half of the farmers said they tried at least one climate-smart farming method after learning from climate-related information. Farmers adopted these practices more when they accessed focused and useful content like radio shows about conservation farming and making compost.

#### **5.2.4 Comparative Effectiveness of Media Platforms**

Farmers trusted radio the most, and it had the strongest influence on changing behavior. It helped encourage farmers to act. Social media reached younger people well but was seen as less reliable because of fake news concerns. Television helped spread awareness but wasn't as effective because not everyone could access it.

#### **5.2.5 Challenges in Climate Change Reporting**

Reporters pointed out that their knowledge of climate science is limited, editors push to dramatize stories, and local data is often missing. These issues make it harder for the media to share clear, helpful, and balanced climate information.

### **5.3 Conclusion of the Study**

This study demonstrates that media plays a central role in shaping the understanding, perception, and behavioral responses to climate change among people in Chongwe District. The ways in which individuals access and use media are strongly influenced by age and socio-economic status. Traditional media, particularly radio, remains the primary source of climate information for many farmers, while younger populations increasingly turn to digital platforms such as social media. This indicates the need for communication strategies that consider demographic differences to ensure messages reach all segments of the population effectively.

The framing of climate change in the media significantly affects public perception and response. Messages that emphasize crises and extreme events succeed in raising awareness but often fail to translate into actionable steps. In contrast, framing that focuses on practical solutions, local relevance, and achievable actions has a stronger influence on encouraging adaptive behaviors. This suggests that media campaigns should balance raising awareness with providing clear, actionable guidance tailored to local contexts.

Behavioral change is more likely when climate information is not only accessible but also trusted, relevant, and perceived as feasible. Farmers are more likely to adopt adaptive practices when messages are aligned with their local realities, delivered by credible sources, and presented in a manner that feels practical and manageable. Trust, relevance,

and feasibility are therefore critical determinants of the effectiveness of climate communication.

While no single media channel is sufficient to reach all audiences, the study highlights the complementary roles of different platforms. Radio remains highly effective in influencing farmers' behavior, whereas social media is essential for engaging younger audiences and facilitating broader information sharing. These findings underscore the importance of using a multi-channel approach to ensure comprehensive coverage and impact in climate change communication strategies.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

Based on the study's findings and conclusions, the following recommendations have been proposed:

### **5.4.1 Recommendations for Policymakers and Government Agencies**

- i. Create and maintain climate communication strategies that focus on reaching people in rural areas.
- ii. Build stronger connections between the Ministry of Green Economy, the Meteorological Department, and local radio stations.
- iii. Put money into creating simple and locally translated climate information materials.

### **5.4.2 Recommendations for Media Institutions**

- i. Give more time on air to practical, solution-focused climate programs on radio.
- ii. Motivate editors to include both disaster coverage and stories of resilience and adaptation.
- iii. Support storytelling from communities to showcase local achievements and successes.

### **5.4.3 Recommendations for Journalists**

- i. Take part in regular training on climate science and environmental reporting.
- ii. Work with agricultural officers and climate professionals to make reports more accurate and useful.

- iii. Use interactive formats like call-in shows to boost community involvement.

#### **5.4.4 Recommendations for Development Partners and NGOs**

- i. Help train journalists and workers at community radio channels.
- ii. Provide funding to create new climate-focused communication initiatives aimed at young people via social media.
- iii. Add activities for media collaboration to climate change adaptation projects.

#### **5.4.5 Recommendations for Farmers and Community Groups**

- i. Join radio shows and local talks to discuss climate-related topics.
- ii. Use media channels to pass on traditional knowledge and methods for adapting to climate change.

### **5.5 Implications of the Study**

The study holds significant meaning for shaping climate communication policies in Zambia. It points out the necessity to develop communication strategies tailored to specific audiences. It stresses the role of dependable local media and highlights presenting climate change as a solvable and practical issue instead of a far-off disaster.

### **5.6 Limitations of the Study**

Although valuable, the study had certain shortcomings. The survey had a small participant pool and focused on Chongwe District, which could limit how the findings apply. It also depended on self-reported actions, which might have included biased responses. The straightforward descriptive analysis used in the study also makes it hard to draw conclusions about cause and effect.

### **5.7 Suggestions for Further Research**

Future studies should:

- i. Use larger participant groups covering several districts.
- ii. Use long-term studies to evaluate how behavior changes over time.
- iii. Investigate how language, culture, and indigenous knowledge affect climate communication.

- iv. Look into how new digital tools like podcasts or mobile advisory services work in spreading information.

## REFERENCES

Adger, W.N., Arnell, N.W. and Tompkins, E.L. (2005) '*Successful adaptation to climate change across scales*', *Global Environmental Change*, 15(2), pp. 77–86 .

Agyekum, T.P. and AntwiAgyei, P. (2022) '*The contribution of weather forecast information to agriculture, water, and energy sectors in East and West Africa: A systematic review*', *Earth's Future*, 10.

Alawade, S.O. and Obun-Andy, M.K. (2024) '*The Role of Media in Shaping Public Perception of Climate Change*', *Journal of Communication and Media Studies*, 1, pp. 31–38.

Baker, Z., Law, T.C., Vardy, M., et al. (n.d.) *Climate, Science and Society, News and Social Media Imagery of Climate Change*, pp. 11.

BBC Media Action (2020) *Climate communication in local languages: A Zambian case study*. London: BBC MA.

Boykoff, M. (2019) *Creative Climate Communications: Productive Pathways for Science, Policy, and Society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006) '*Using thematic analysis in psychology*', *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), pp. 77–101.

Cass, P. (2020) '*Some aspects of climate change communication and effectiveness in PNG*', *Pacific Journalism Review*, 26, pp. 109–120.

Cegnar, T., Boogaard, H. and Finkele, K. (2023) '*Toward effective communication of agrometeorological services*', *Frontiers in Environmental Science*, 11.

Chongwe District Agricultural Office (DAO) (2023) *Annual report on farmer media consumption patterns*. Chongwe: DAO.

Climate Communication Consortium (2022) *Global trends in solutions journalism*. New York: CCC.

- Creswell, J.W. (2014) *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 4th edn. London: Sage.
- Dumenu, W.K. and Tiamgne, X.T. (2020) 'Social vulnerability of smallholder farmers to climate change in Zambia: the applicability of social vulnerability index', *GeoJournal*, 85, pp. 263–275.
- Entman, R.M. (1993) 'Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm', *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), pp. 51–58.
- Fesenfeld, L., Beiser-McGrath, L., Sun, Y., et al. (2024) 'Systematic mapping of climate and environmental framing experiments and re-analysis with computational methods points to omitted interaction bias', *Nature Climate Change*, 14, pp. 72–79.
- Gerbner, G., Gross, L., Morgan, M. and Signorielli, N. (2002) 'Growing up with television: Cultivation processes', in Bryant, J. and Zillmann, D. (eds.) *Media effects: Advances in theory and research*. 2nd edn. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, pp. 43–67.
- Guest, G., Bunce, A. and Johnson, L. (2006) 'How many interviews are enough?', *Field Methods*, 18(1), pp. 59–82.
- Gurwitt, S., Malkki, K. and Mitra, M. (2017) 'Global issue, developed country bias: the Paris climate conference as covered by daily print news organizations in 13 nations', *Climatic Change*, 141, pp. 493–508.
- Hamelin, N. and Halawa, P. (2024) 'Harnessing Social Media for Climate Action in Developing Countries: A Case Study of Egypt', *Sustainability*, 16, p. 3553.
- Hansen, J., Mason, S.J. and Sun, L. (2011) 'Review of seasonal climate forecasting for agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa', *Experimental Agriculture*, 47, pp. 205–240.
- Hathaway, J. and Maibach, E. (2018) 'Health Implications of Climate Change: a Review of the Literature about the Perception of the Public and Health Professionals', *Current Environmental Health Reports*, 5, pp. 251–257.

- Inkong, N., Tsusaka, T.W., Sasaki, N., et al. (2025) *'Understanding the Attributes Related to Climate Change Perceptions among Rural Households in Highlands: The case of Northern Thailand'*, *Sustainability*, 17, pp. 4814.
- Khanya, R. (2024) *'Influence of Media Framing on Public Perception of Climate Change'*, *Journal of Environment and Earth Science*, 14, pp. 28–36.
- Katz, E., Blumler, J.G. and Gurevitch, M. (1973) *'Uses and gratifications research'*, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 37(4), pp. 509–523.
- Malik, Q.A., Qayyoun, H. and Hameed, A. (2023) *'Role of Media in enhancing Pro-Environmental Knowledge, Attitude and Behavior'*, *Global Political Review*, 8, pp. 8–17.
- Manda, S., Matenga, C. and Mdee, A. (2024) *'Challenges for expanding inventories of climate possibilities through indigenous and local knowledges in rural Zambia'*, *Local Environment*, 29, pp. 467–484.
- Mano, W. (2022) *'African media and climate change reporting'*, *African Journalism Studies*, 43(2), pp. 1–21.
- Maulu, S., Hasimuna, O.J. and Chibesa, M. (2024) *'Perceived effects of climate change on aquaculture production in Zambia: status, vulnerability factors, and adaptation strategies'*, *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems*, 8.
- McCombs, M. and Shaw, D. (1972) *'The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media'*, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36(2), pp. 176–187.
- Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) (2023) *State of African climate reporting. Windhoek: MISA.*
- Moser, S.C. and Dilling, L. (2007) *'Creating a climate for change: Communicating climate change and facilitating social change'*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mpofu, N., Ndlovu, T. and Ncube, S. (2022) *'Climate fear appeals in developing nations'*, *Environmental Communication*, 16(3), pp. 412–430.
- Mubanga, K.H. and Umar, B.B. (2021) *'Climate Change and Variability Perceptions in Zambia'*, *Environmental Development*, 37, p. 100569.

Ndlovu, T., Moyo, D. and Ncube, S. (2021) '*Decolonizing climate communication in Africa*', *Journal of African Media Studies*, 13(1), pp. 45–62.

National Climate Change Secretariat (2020) *Communication Strategy Framework*.

Ngumuya, D. (2024) '*Influence of Media Framing on Public Perception of Climate Change in Malawi*', *Journal of Communication and Media Studies*, 1, pp. 21–30.

Nisbet, M.C. (2019) '*Strategic Communication in the Climate Change Debate*', *Oxford Research Encyclopedia*.

Nyanga, P.H., Johnsen, F.H. and Aune, J.B. (2011) '*Smallholder Farmers Perceptions of Climate Change and Conservation Agriculture: Evidence from Zambia*', *Journal of Food, Agriculture & Environment*, 9(34), pp. 1077–1082.

Ofoegbu, C., Chirwa, P.W. and Francis, J. (2016) '*Conceptualising climate change in forest-based rural areas of South Africa: community perceptions and attitudes*', *Environmental Development*, 19, pp. 27–42.

Okoronkwo, D.J., Ozioko, R.I. and Ugwoke, R.U. (2024) '*Climate smart agriculture? Adaptation strategies of traditional agriculture to climate change in sub-Saharan Africa*', *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems*, 8.

O'Neill, S. and Nicholson-Cole, S. (2009) '*Fear won't do it: Promoting positive engagement with climate change*', *Science Communication*, 30(3), pp. 355–379.

O'Neill, S. (2013) '*Visualizing climate change: A guide to visual communication of climate change and developing local solutions*', *Wiley-Blackwell*.

Pan-African Media Alliance for Climate Change (PAMACC) (2021) *African media climate reporting audit*. Nairobi: PAMACC.

Painter, J., Kristiansen, S. and Schäfer, M.S. (2018) '*How media cover climate change*', *Nature Climate Change*, 8, pp. 21–28.

Perkins, K., Huggins-Rao, S. and Hansen, J. (2015) '*Interactive radio's promising role in climate information services*', *Farm Radio International concept paper*, CCAFS Working Paper.

- Robertson, R. (1995) 'Glocalization: *Time-space and homogeneity-heterogeneity*', in Featherstone, M. (ed.) *Global modernities*. London: Sage, pp. 25–44.
- Rogers, E.M. (2003) *Diffusion of Innovations*. 5th edn. New York: Free Press.
- Schäfer, M.S. and Schlichting, I. (2014) 'Media representations of climate change', *WIREs Climate Change*, 5(6), pp. 735–746.
- Servaes, J. (1999) *Communication for Development: One World, Multiple Cultures*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Simpson, N.P., Andrews, T.M., Krnke, M., et al. (2021) 'Climate change literacy in Africa', *Nature Climate Change*, 11, pp. 301–307.
- Somanje, A.N., Mwansa, L.M. and Chisanga, K. (2022) 'Spatial Distribution Analysis of Community Radio Stations as Means for Promoting Climate Change Adaptation Measures in Agriculture under COVID-19 Scenario, Southern Province, Zambia', *Sustainability*, 14, p. 13245.
- Tella, D. (2024) 'The use of social media in communicating environmental governance: A review of two social media platforms in South Africa and Kenya', *Journal of Digital Media Policy*, 15, pp. 119–137.
- Treen, K.M., et al. (2020) 'Online Misinformation about Climate Change', *WIREs Climate Change*, 11(5), e665.
- Wakili, A.A. (2020) 'ICT Innovations for Climate Change Communication and Public Awareness', *International Journal of Computer Applications*, 174, pp. 29–33.
- Zambia Meteorological Department (2023) *Climate Vulnerability Atlas*. Lusaka: GRZ.
- ZAMEC (2022) *Zambian media consumption trends*. Lusaka: ZAMEC.
- Zambian Alliance for Media Excellence and Communication (ZAMEC) (2022) *Environmental reporting capacity assessment*. Lusaka: ZAMEC.

Zeppo, L.V. and Coltri, P.P. (2023) *The dissemination of news about climate change: An analysis of the Brazilian scenario in the last 50 years*, *Brazilian Geographical Journal Geosciences and Humanities research eJournal*, 4.

Zongo, B., Dogot, T. and To, P. (2022) *Farmers Perception of Indigenous Forecast and Climate Information in West Africa: an Evidence-based Review*, *Agriculture and Food Sciences Research*, 9, pp. 31–41.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Questionnaire for Farmers and Youth

#### Section A: Demographic Information

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Age group:  18-35  36 and Above

Education level: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Residential area: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Section B: Media Access and Usage

1. Which of the following media platforms do you access regularly?

Radio  Television  Social Media  Newspapers

2. What is your primary source of climate change information? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. How frequently do you access climate change information through the media? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Section C: Climate Change Awareness

1. How would you rate your understanding of climate change issues?

High  Moderate  Low

1. Which climate change issues are most commonly reported in the media you access?

---

---

---

---

**Section D: Behavioural Change and Adaptation**

2. Have you adopted any climate-smart practices as a result of media information?

Yes  No

3. If yes, which practices have you adopted? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

4. What type of media content influenced your decision to adopt these practices?

---

---

---

---

**Appendix B: Interview Guide for Journalists**

1. This interview guide was used to collect qualitative data from journalists and media professionals involved in climate change reporting.

---

---

---

---

2. How would you describe the level of climate change coverage in your media institution?

---

---

---

---

3. What types of climate change stories are most commonly reported?\_\_\_\_\_

---

---

4. What challenges do you face when reporting on climate change?\_\_\_\_\_

---

---

5. How does editorial policy influence climate change reporting?\_\_\_\_\_

---

---

6. What support or training do journalists receive on climate and environmental reporting?\_\_\_\_\_

---

---

7. What strategies could improve climate change reporting in Zambia?\_\_\_\_\_

---

**Appendix C: Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guide**

The focus group discussion guide was used to facilitate discussions with farmers and youth to explore perceptions of media coverage and climate change messaging.

1. What media platforms do you trust most for climate change information, and why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. How does media coverage influence your understanding of climate change impacts? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What type of climate change information do you find most useful or motivating? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. How can media content be improved to better support climate adaptation? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Appendix D: Ethical Clearance and Consent Forms**

This appendix contains copies of the ethical clearance approval and informed consent forms used in the study. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study, assured of confidentiality, and advised that participation was voluntary.

#### **Appendix E: SPSS Output Tables**

This appendix presents selected Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) output tables that support the descriptive analysis discussed in Chapter Four.

Table E1: Descriptive Statistics – Media Usage Frequency

Media Platform	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Radio	90	1	5	4.12	0.84
Television	90	1	5	2.87	1.03
Social Media	90	1	5	3.76	0.91

Table E2: Frequencies – Primary Source of Climate Change Information (Farmers)

Source	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Radio	14	70.0	70.0	70.0
Television	4	20.0	20.0	90.0
Word of Mouth	2	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Table E3: Frequencies – Primary Source of Climate Change Information (Youth)

Source	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Social Media	50	71.4	71.4	71.4
Television	12	17.1	17.1	88.5
Radio	8	11.5	11.5	100.0
Total	70	100.0	100.0	

Table E4: Cross-tabulation – Media Exposure Frequency  $\times$  Awareness Level ( $H_1$ )

Media Exposure Frequency	High Awareness	Moderate Awareness	Low Awareness	Total
High	28	6	2	36
Moderate	14	18	4	36
Low	4	8	6	18
Total	46	32	12	90

Table E5: Chi-Square Tests – Media Exposure and Awareness

Test	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.487	4	0.014
Likelihood Ratio	13.102	4	0.011

Table E6: Cross-tabulation – Media Platform Preference by Age Group (H<sub>2</sub> )

Age Group	Radio	Television	Social Media	Total
Farmers	14	4	2	20
Youth	8	12	50	70
Total	22	16	52	90

Table E7: Chi-Square Tests – Age Group × Media Platform

Test	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	29.736	2	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	31.082	2	0.000

Table E8: Cross-tabulation – Exposure to Localised Content × Adoption of Practices (H<sub>3</sub> )

Exposure Type	Adopted	Not Adopted	Total
Localised Content	15	5	20
General Content	7	13	20
Total	22	18	40

Table E9: Chi-Square Tests – Localised Content Exposure and Adoption

Test	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.227	1	0.022
Likelihood Ratio	5.341	1	0.021

Table E10: Symmetric Measures – Strength of Association

Measure	Value	Approx. Sig.
Phi	0.361	0.022
Cramer's V	0.361	0.022

