

Review of: "Animation and YouTube as Alternative and Counterhegemonic Digital Public Sphere in Zimbabwe"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

'Animation and YouTube as Alternative and Counterhegemonic Digital Public Sphere in Zimbabwe' written by Peace Mukwara is in general a very interesting paper to read, specially as an academic, because of the abandonment committed by the academy in the task of studying and publishing the sociopolitical context in the zone. The analysis built by the researcher has the virtue of being really critical, not only of the government but also of the DPS in study, avoiding falling into overly biased speeches.

Having said that, I believe the methodology is the weak point of the paper, as some other colleagues have already pointed out. The vagueness of the chosen guidelines to select the frames of the case study bring a feeling of maybe a subjective choice that brought to certain desired results.

In another topic, and more as an advice, I would recommend adding a brief historical summary of the recent (last 50 years) political events in Zimbabwe to make it easy to the readers to understand where all this study came from.

Now from my expertise and experience analyzing social movements, from where maybe I can be more helpful, I'd say the paper pops up the question of which power groups does both of the quoted political parties represent. Which seem clearer in the case of the Youtube show, but not enough explicitly said. About the government situation, one wonders why does Israel intervene in Zimbabwe? what kind of economic policies is the government chasing?. In second place, about the DPS, the given information says that it is controlled by the MDC or their followers. This explains the binary speech of the Youtube show, which is not only intended to battle the hegemonic discourse, but also to advertise themselves. And, yes, it might not be the most democratic way to spread a critical political view, but again, perhaps the intention of the party is not primarily to democratize the media but to accumulate forces in its favor. I recommend that the researcher incorporate the category of power to allow a better understanding of the case.

In conclusion, papers like this are very important to understand our global reality, because they bring up contexts like Zimbabwe's which are not usually exposed by academics. Although this study is perfectible in aspects like methodology and the sufficient presentation of the agents to be analyzed, it is a very valuable contribution to a less centralized research and an impartial criticism when investigating.