A study to investigate how racial inequality issues at Global Celebrity Events are portrayed by varying forms of media and investigating if these portrayals have an effect on public perceptions, using the Oscars as a case study.

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Declaration

“To investigate how racial inequality issues at Global Celebrity Events are portrayed by varying forms of media and investigating if these portrayals have an effect on public perceptions, using the Oscars as a case study?”

I declare that this Dissertation has not already been accepted in substance for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree. It is the result of my own independent research except where otherwise stated.

Signed……………………………………………………………………
Abstract

Racial inequality has been an issue for many years, both in America and the United Kingdom. It dates back until the early It has been highlighted in recent years as it has become a major issue within Global Celebrity Events, specifically the Oscars. The way in which the media portray these issues can vary substantially so it is important to identify whether different forms of media, looking closely at broadsheet and tabloid newspapers have different effects and outcomes on the public.

The aim of this research project was to identify how racial inequality at Global Celebrity Events, specifically the Oscars, is addressed and perceived by the media, looking closely at tabloid and broadsheet newspapers, and how the public perceive these issues. The study included discourse analysis which was completed on broadsheets, tabloids and the BBC News online to identify and analyse the language that is used. A questionnaire was also entailed to be able to cross section with the discourse analysis. The author wanted to see whether there was any correlation between what the reader read and their overall thoughts about the issue. As part of the questionnaire, quotes were extracted from newspapers which included some controversial statements so it was interesting to see whether the type of newspaper that they read the most had an influence on how much they agreed with the it.

The recurring theme that emerged from the results was that there was no direct link with what newspapers were read and the publics perceptions on the matter. It concluded that although there were some supporting statistics, they weren’t consistent enough to create an overall finding from them. There were extraneous variables that needed to be taken in to account, like there is with any research project, such as participant bias and the sample size. However, from looking at the bigger picture and the statistical analysis provided, it is clear that the media does have an influence on the how the public perceives the news, but not necessarily on this topic area.

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Chapter One – Introduction

1.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter is going to explain the structure of the research project and identify the purpose of the dissertation. It will give a clear outline of what will be included and how the author will go about completing the research. The author will ensure they have sufficient background knowledge on the topics to be able to complete the research as effectively as possible with clear recommendations made for the future; a case study approach will be used to pinpoint research and support the findings. The title of the project will be clearly defined along with the aims and objectives and the chapter will be concluded with a clear overview of the project and a chapter review.

1.2 Background to Research

It is essential to be able to define the key terms and the focus of the project before any research is undertaken. A Global Event will be defined, as will racial inequality, the media and discourse analysis, to ensure that the author can carry out the research effectively.

According to Rojek 2013;

“Events are designer-built packages to boost publicity, symbolise fraternity and heighten awareness. Increasingly, Global Events employ celebrities to transfer glamour from the entertainment sector onto charitable and business undertakings”

Global Events can also be described as Media Events; they attract vast amounts of media to follow and cover the event which is then publicised for all to see; either live, normally through the television, or reports and articles the following day which are normally in newspapers and on the internet. An example would be the Oscars. The media thrives off both positive and negative stories so they have the power to either make or break the event. Dayan et al 1994;1 explains what media events can do;
“Media Events have given shape to a new narrative genre that employs the unique potential of the electronic media to command attention universally and simultaneously in order to tell a primordial story about current affairs”

Celebrities are a large part of any global/media event. They are what brings the press and the publicity so it is vital that they are recognized. At events like the Oscars, there is a diverse range of superstars that attend, enhancing its prestigious status. According to Schlecht 2003;3;

“Celebrities are people who enjoy public recognition by a large share of a certain group of people. It can be observed that celebrities enjoy a high degree of public awareness”.

With the combination of the media and celebrities at an event, quite frequently what has occurred is normally published for all too see. As the researcher is using the Oscars as a case study, quite recently the organisation has been in the press due to racial inequality issues. Race is defined as;

“The classic concept of race purports to mark a natural division of the human species, constituting a group of human beings whose members by nature differ in certain significant and immutable ways from the members of other such groups” (Hull, 2016;42).

The organisation has struggled with continuous negative press because very few black actor/actresses were nominated for the awards in 2016. It was all over the media and it even created a hashtag on the social media site twitter; it stated #OscarsSoWhite. In addition, celebrities boycotted the event to try and prove that racial inequality is not deemed acceptable in the 21st century; “For the second year in a row, not a single non-white actor has been nominated for an award… In solidarity, many people will not be attending the ceremony or tuning in” (Shepherd, 2016). The recent Oscars that have just occurred have bought more news to the press as the inequality had decreased significantly; the Academy is improving in this domain, but it still has a long way to go.

1.3 The Oscars: Case Study

The very first Academy Awards, known as the Oscars was distributed in 1929, it was a dinner party for around 250 people at the Hotel Roosevelt in Hollywood. It is now held in the Dolby
Theatre, Hollywood, which can hold up to 3,300 seated guests; the event has grown significantly over the years. It is deemed to be one of the most prestigious awards ceremonies in the world and it is televised in over 100 countries. It is a chance for filmmakers, including Actors, Actresses, Producers, and Directors to be honoured for their best achievements. The academy has about 6000 members with around 94% of them being white. The film industry has moved on dramatically since the first distribution, but they still face hurdles in terms of inequality and discrimination which is why it is an interesting and controversial topic to investigate.

The Oscars will be used as a case study as it is a very successful organisation that has had a lot of press coverage recently, both positively and negatively. It enables the researcher to identify the key issues in the celebrity world and relate it back to public perceptions. By using a qualitative research method, discourse analysis, it allows the researcher to gather a wide range of information from a variety of sources to identify any trends and patterns that link with the findings from the primary research.

1.4 Primary Research

The author proposes to answer the research question by conducting primary research. The method used will be a questionnaire with a variety of open and closed questions within. It will be sent out via an online survey software and completed by the public; this will provide quantitative data that will require content analysis. A convenience sample will be used to collect the data as it as overall representation of how the public perceive certain news stories and their views on the inequality issues at The Oscars. There will be a mixture of female and male participants that will all be over the age of 18 for ethical reasons.

1.5 Secondary Research

To support the primary research and ensure there is a comparative element to the investigation, the author is going to use discourse analysis. A form of qualitative analysis that will be to bring elements of different newspaper articles about the Oscars from both tabloids and broadsheets. The context within these articles will be discussed in terms of the language used and how it differs between the two styles. It will then be used to cross reference from the questionnaire to see whether there are any links with media discourse and the public perceptions.
1.6 Research Question

How are racial inequality issues at Global Celebrity Events portrayed by varying forms of media and investigating if these portrayals have an effect on public perceptions, using the Oscars as a case study?

1.7 Research Aims and Objectives

Aim:
To identify how racial inequality at Global Celebrity Events, specifically the Oscars, is addressed and perceived by the media, looking closely at tabloid and broadsheet newspapers, and how the public perceive these issues.

Objectives:
1. To critically review the literature of racial inequality and the media;
2. To identify public opinion on how they perceive racial inequality at the Oscars and whether different forms of media have different degrees of influencing;
3. To collate discourse analysis from both tabloid and broadsheet newspapers and identify the differences to be able to compare with the public opinion;
4. To review and analyse the primary data and discourse analysis that was carried out, presenting the results in a variety of formats
5. To consolidate the research findings by identifying whether the type of newspaper that is read has a positive or negative effect on the participant’s perceptions and making recommendations for future developments

1.8 Review of the Research Project

The research project will be divided into 5 chapters. The first one will be the Introduction where the author outlines what will be covered throughout the project and highlights the importance and relevance of completing this investigation.

The Literature review will be the second chapter. This will involve the author analysing and comparing previous literature that surrounds the topic. It will aid the author in getting better background knowledge enabling them to highlight the key issues.
Chapter 3 will be the Methodology. This will explain what processes and methods the author used to gather the data, both primary and secondary. There will be an explained reasoning as to why these methods were chosen.

Chapter 4 will consist of the Results, Analysis and Discussion. The Discourse Analysis will be explained and a matrix will be used to gather the relevant data to successfully compare the two types of newspapers. This will help analyse the secondary data. The analysis of the questionnaire will also be included. It will be presented in a variety of formats to help find patterns and trends in the data. It will also aid the researcher in finding links to compare to what the results of the discourse analysis.

Finally, chapter 5 will consist of the conclusion and recommendations. The researcher will provide a summary of the key findings and a conclusion will be included. The chapter will also consist of recommendations for future research.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Chapter Overview

Throughout this chapter the researcher will be reviewing the literature that surrounds racial inequality, specifically at global celebrity events. The researcher will begin with defining race and identifying its journey through time. They will then go on to explain the progression of the issue and how it affects society today. The researcher will then describe how the media has an influence on public perceptions and how different styles of newspaper portray stories in different ways. Following on from this, there will be a section on how these issues affect Global Celebrity events, using the Oscars as a case study.

2.2 History of Racial Inequality

Racial history has been affected and influenced by science, culture and the government; successfully shaping views on race today. Racial inequality has been within culture for thousands of years; however, it became most apparent in the 1500’s which was when the first African slaves were bought to north America to aid the production of crops. The whites prohibited the blacks from being paid for their labour which resulted in slavery; this benefited the whites and entitled them to social, political and economic gain; “practically every society, regardless of color and racial background treated slavery as an economic fact of life” (Meltzer, 1993a;6). This continued for many years and it wasn’t until the American Civil War in 1861 that things started to change and improve for the black community; “historians suggest the war expiated the 'original sin' of America's founding--the protection of slavery in the Constitution” (Danford, 2011). At this time, around 40% of South America’s population were slaves and they used the war as an escape mechanism. Although slavery was eradicated, the freedom of blacks was limited and the transition from slave labour to free labour was very difficult; white supremacy was still very much persistent; “Northern Republicans believed that the Civil War had resolved these political and constitutional questions. They soon discovered they were mistaken, “southern White supremacists denied the freedmen’s freedom by continuing to treat them as if they were slaves” (Kaczorowski, 1987;51). The discrimination prevented blacks from getting good jobs and an education so it was still very much an issue that swamped South
America; in the North, blacks had legal rights but they still suffered from prejudice and inequity.

In 1964 the Civil Rights Act was instated; “The Act outlawed discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, required equal access to public places and employment, and enforced desegregation of schools and the right to vote” (National Park Service, 2015). Although the law made major improvements for the black community in a lot of aspects, it didn’t do much to address discrimination within the voting world. Although both men and women could vote, there were many obstacles such as literacy tests and poll taxes that prevented the black community from casting ballots. All the act did was mandate the same voting rules nationwide. The Civil Rights Act did not end discrimination but it did allow for further progression to be made; “The Civil War abolished slavery, even if it did little or nothing to abolish racism; and in doing so removed the most obvious, if perhaps not the most important impediment to union” (Warren, 1961:7).

Leading on from this, racial inequality is still an ever-growing problem. Since America elected Barack Obama, the first black president in 2009, the divide between white and black individuals was said to decrease; ‘Some suggest that the election of Barack Obama has fulfilled the dream of Martin Luther King Jr. that all be judged based on character rather than the color of their skin’ (Bacon 2015:1). One of his campaigns was to try and create a society in which skin colour would not stand as a barrier to an individual’s opportunity; he wanted to create a future where these issues faded into insignificance, regardless of the country’s history (Harris & Lieberman 2015). However, it is questionable to say that this has happened; in fact “about a third of white Americans say Obama has made race relations worse” (Survey of U.S, 2016). With the recent election of Donald Trump it has highlighted how fair and professional Obama was in terms of leading his country. America now faces a future of uncertainty with a leader that is completely un-just in terms of racial inequality.

2.3 Racial Inequality in the UK

In addition, racial inequality is still an issue in the United Kingdom as well; “A new report on racial equality in the U.K. found that the level of opportunities for young minorities, especially in the black community, is failing to improve and may have gotten worse” (John, 2016) They are still very much prone to employment, housing, pay and criminal justice discrimination
which is deemed as unacceptable in this millennial period. A study was conducted by the Equality and Human Rights Commission; it examined the factors above and found that the UK has hit the worst level in terms of racial inequality over the past five years. The study found that long term unemployment opportunities for 16-25 year olds of an ethnic background has seen a 49% increase since 2010; the average black worker with a degree earns at least 23% less than white employers; 26% of black adults live in overcrowded homes, whereas only 8.3% of white adults do; the UK police treat blacks unfairly and they are three times more likely to arrest them. These findings underline how corrupt society is and how entrenched racial inequality is in everyday life. If changes aren’t made, then society runs the risk of dividing and racial tension increasing.

This study was conducted in 2016 so it is very current data, making it a reliable source. It is also representative of the population as it was conducted throughout the whole of England and Wales, using a large sample.

However, in contrast to this, according to the BBC, 2016 there has been an increase in the number of ethnic MP’s and a rise in the number of ethnic groups with a degree level qualification which is a positive improvement for the black community. Some would argue that the leading division in today’s society is not race anymore, it is class, which is a step forward in terms of racial discrimination (Merrick et al, 2012).

### 2.4 The Media

The media can create a very negative image of individuals from different ethnic origins, the representation of the black man being a case in point. Although this has improved, the lives of black men have been very much affected by negative public perceptions that stem from the media. In 2011 a study was conducted by the Opportunity Agenda on Media Representations and the impact on the lives of black men and boys. They found that negative mass media portrayals, that were constantly reinforced by the television, the internet, print advertising, video games etc. had a close link with lower life expectations of black men; “they [the forms of media] not only help create barriers to advancement within our society, but also make these positions seem natural and inevitable” (Donaldson, 2015). Black men are very rarely used as professional role models in the media, instead they are seen to be linked with rap and hip-hop stars which implies limited life choices for future generations. Black men are also deemed to be more involved with drug-related crime, unemployment and poverty. The media need to
ensure that a more balanced perspective is provided to ensure cultural division is not enhanced; people of colour are individuals, not types (Donaldson, 2015). In addition, with global celebrity events such as the Oscars having a lack of diversity, it fuels the media to be derogatory and exploit minor issues.

The media can also refer and portray news in very different ways; depending on what media one associates themselves with can very much vary their thoughts and perceptions on certain topics. For example, online newspapers are normally based around two categories; broadsheets and tabloids. Within these two areas, news stories are very different in the way they are presented, the language used and the audience they attract. Online tabloid newspapers are deemed to be more sensationalized and use hyperbole to make stories sound more dramatic and interesting to the reader. The titles used in tabloids are very catchy, with their main purpose to attract viewers and the articles that are written are very much gossip related with a large interest in celebrity news. “British tabloids concentration on human-interest material and entertainment is almost exclusive and has robbed readers of the choice of reading news about political, social and economic affairs” (Connell, 2014;16). They also use a lot more images and the reporting is normally less in-depth. However, online broadsheet newspapers are more factual and are aimed at the older generation and well educated audiences; normally categories A, B and C1 of Jicnars Social Economic Scale. They have a much simpler layout with basic headings and limited pictures; they focus on international and political news rather than celebrity gossip. As well as this, individuals are more likely to contribute to comment sections on these types of newspapers; “Dialogue and debate amongst online readers is limited almost entirely to broadsheet discussion threads – 31.3% of broadsheet comments, compared to 2.3% for tabloid newspapers” (Richardson et al, 2011;997). Their aim is to educate rather than entertain.
Figures 2 and 3 clearly state the differentiation of headline use between the two online newspapers. The broadsheet newspaper (Figure 2) uses more educated and sensitive language that reflects its target market. Verbs such as ‘heartbroken’ have been implemented to empathise with its audience and create a sense of awareness about the topic. It is there to inform its readers about a serious issue. Whereas, in contrast the tabloid newspaper (Figure 3) uses rhyme in the headline by exploiting colloquial language. It automatically gives the reader a more informal approach to the matter even though it is a serious issue. In addition, the use of hyperbole makes the news story seem more extreme and dramatic which supposedly attracts their demographic; it focuses more on the celebrity side of the story rather than the political side of it; “The C2DE social groups –which are The Sun’s main target audience- can be stated to be mainly interested in television and celebrity news-stories; therefore, the Sun connects with their target audience by including stories such as this” (Spears, 2011).

(Figure 1) A screenshot of The Guardian Newspaper
However, in contrast to this, tabloid newspapers have started to reach out to further demographics in recent years. According to Colin Sparks, although tabloids are massively depoliticised “tabloid journalism does engage in explanation, but is critical of the nature of the explanation he thinks it customarily offers” (Connell, 1998;17). Tabloids are effective in the way they target their market and although they don’t appeal to all they are an extremely successful newspaper. In addition, “broadsheets now allocate a high priority to stories that would have previously been dismissed and disdained as merely tabloid stories and are including many editorial features that previously were the exclusive preserve of the tabloids” (Connell, 1998;15). This argues that broadsheets and tabloid newspapers are becoming increasingly similar in what stories they publish, however the way they portray these stories is still very much different. The introduction of online publications of newspapers could be a contributing factor to this because they have to appeal to readers, regardless of their target market.

2.5 The Oscars

Over the years the Oscars have had a large problem with racial discrimination; “no actors from ethnic minorities were nominated in 1995 or 1997, or in an extraordinary streak between 1975 and 1980. Throughout the 20th century, 95% of Oscar nominations went to white film stars”
(The Economist 2016). 2016 was a very prominent year in terms of negative media coverage and celebrity backlash linking to racial discrimination. The commotion created a hashtag on Twitter stating #OscarsSoWhite and it resulted in celebrities boycotting the event as they wanted to prove a point and fight for their rights. Research has shown that the Oscars is very unrepresentative when it comes to black actors, they very much under-represent ethnic minorities and over-represent white actors which is where the problem stems from. As well as this the 94% of the Academy’s voting members are white which also could promote the issue. The academy’s president, Cheryl Boone Isaacs was elected 4 years ago to bring greater diversity to the academy’s membership; she wanted to create “a mission, a plan to diversify the Academy and move it into the 21st century”. (Boone Isaacs, quoted by Walker, 2016). The Oscars 2017 demonstrates that the Academy has improved in terms of racial inequality significantly, with it being the best year for diversity. What the organisation has achieved has definitely had an impact on the results.

In comparison to this, Figure 2 demonstrates that there has been a massive increase in the amount of non-white male and female actors and directors that have been nominated for awards in the 21st Century compared to the 20th Century; “as a whole, the twenty-first century has seen better race representation than before” (Kirk 2016).

(Figure 3) A Graph to show the number of non-white actors, actresses and directors that were nominated in the 20th and 21st century, (Kirk, 2016)
The 2017 Oscar Awards provides evidence that 21st century Hollywood and the film industry are starting to make improvements; a diverse Hollywood is more important than ever now Donald Trump is president and politics are being shaped by diverse rhetoric and policies; "The Academy's president said the film industry is "becoming more diverse with each passing day," and the Oscar ceremony seemed to reflect that more than last year" (CBS News, 2017). Ethnic Minorities have started to get the recognition they deserve in the acting world and this year they contributed to many of the awards that were given out. The first ever Muslim Actor, Mahershala Ali, won the award for Best Supporting Actor in the film ‘Moonlight’ and Viola Davis winning best supporting actress for her role in ‘Fences’ is a huge step forward for the academy. In the 21st century films are being produced that empower black minorities such as ‘Moonlight’ that won Best Picture. It is a film that explains the struggles of a young gay African-American man coming to terms with his sexuality in a tough Florida neighbourhood; these issues are exceptionally current so it makes this film very relatable and eye opening for the wider population. Although the increase in black winners is positive progression for the Oscars and the film industry ‘let’s not pretend that one good year for diversity means that “#OscarsSoWhite is a thing of the past,’” (Fienberg quoted by Sarker et al, 2017). A lot more needs to be done but the awards are taking a step in the right direction.

2.6 Chapter Review

In conclusion, this chapter reviews the literature behind racial issues through time and how the media plays a large role within public perceptions; it identifies a gap in the research which is where the study idea originated from. It provides the reader with justification as to why the researcher chose to do this investigation and the literature that is reviewed explains how the research project is a current concept and highlights the significance of investigating the topic in order to offer appropriate recommendations.
Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter will outline and explain the methodology used to collect the relevant data needed to complete the investigation. It will also highlight why primary research and discourse analysis were important throughout this study and why the researcher chose to use these methods, by analysing the differences and advantages of both quantitative and qualitative research methods. In addition, issues surrounding validity and reliability will be discussed alongside references to the ethics form.

3.2 Types of Primary Research

There are two different types of research that could have been used to collect appropriate data. The researcher will later identify which one was more suitable for their topic but both will be defined and explained.

3.2.1 Quantitative Primary Research

Quantitative research is a where data that is collected can be verified. It is normally displayed in numerical forms such as graphs and pie charts; making it easier to generate results from a large sample population. It uses measurable data to articulate facts and to discover patterns in research. Schutt (2012;16) defines Quantitative Research as ‘methods that record variation in social life in terms of quantities. It allows authors to conduct research on a large and broad sample, whilst still yielding precise results. It looks at relationships between variables and deemed to be more objective and reliable. However, it can be seen as more rigid than other types of research and it can provide minimal detail on the motivations and attitudes of the participants which can be critical to their answer choices; “Experimental methods limit the possible ways in which a research participant can react to and express appropriate social behaviour” (McLeod, 2008). There are many instruments that can be used in Quantitative research to gather results. They are as follows:
3.2.1.1 Interviews
Quantitative interviews normally consist of questions that are read by the researcher to the participant; they are mainly closed questions that are able to be compared and evaluated with one another to create statistical analysis, however open-ended questions can be included; “Quantitative interviews offer several benefits. The strengths and weakness of quantitative interviews tend to be couched in comparison to those of administering hard copy questionnaires. For example, response rates tend to be higher with interviews than with mailed questionnaires” (Babbie, 2010).
The researcher chose not to use quantitative interviews as a primary research method as they are time consuming and it wasn’t necessary as the research could have been collected via other easier methods just as effectively.

3.2.1.2 Questionnaires
A quantitative questionnaire normally consists of closed questions; with a rating scale or a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’, it limits the participant in their answers and their social behaviour (McLeod, 2008). It is again used to cover a large sample size which allows for a clearer picture on how the participants behave. It is a very simple research method that can be both online and paper based which is suitable for its vast audiences. Questionnaires need to be standardized, meaning that every participant is exposed to the same questions and the same coding of questions to ensure that the result are valid. In addition, questionnaires are normally cheaper than other forms of quantitative research and as the development of online questionnaires, it is becoming increasingly popular with researchers as it prevents the error prone and tedious task of data entry (Medin et al, 1999) Although questionnaires are good for identifying numerical and statistical patterns in data, they are very objective with little opinion and interpretation involved in the participant’s answers; “Survey research cannot capture the richness, complexity, and depth of value questions. It pays no attention to levels of meaning, nuances in language, or lived values” (Morris, 1991;82).

3.2.1.3 Validity and Reliability
The reliability and validity need to be considered when deciding what type of research the author will use for the study. “Reliability means that a measurement procedure yields consistent scores when the phenomenon being measured is not changing” (Schutt, 2012;124). The reliability is deemed lower for questionnaires than it is for other types of quantitative data
collection methods because of the subjectivity that an individual may have when they complete it. There are some factors that need to be considered when assessing whether Quantitative research is reliable. One way of doing this is test re-test reliability. Because this type of research is very subjective, it enables researchers to establish whether the results are reliable, dependant on the similarity of the answers in the re-test. It allows the researcher to identify whether a measure is stable over time and establish that the research collected will not fluctuate (Bryman 2016;157). Another consideration is Inter-rater reliability; when there is a large amount of subjectivity that influences the participant’s answers there is a possibility that there is a lack of consistency in their responses which needs to be considered when conducting reliable research.

Measuring validity means “the extent to which an instrument measures what it is claimed to measure – an indicator is valid to the extent that it empirically represents the concept it purports to measure” (Punch 2014; 239). Authors need to ensure that the research undertaken has face validity; “face validity is therefore, an essentially intuitive process” (Bryman, 2016;159).

In addition, a pilot test can be carried out; “this helps you [the researcher] to throw up some of the inevitable problems of converting your design into reality” (Robson, 2011;405). It enables the researcher to gain some feedback on the research design before it is published to a wider audience to ensure that it answers the research question.

3.2.2 Qualitative Primary Research

Qualitative research is more focused on the way people understand certain things and it is solely based on exploring an individual’s feelings, opinions and motivations. It is normally used to help develop ideas or a hypothesis for other forms of research. Sample groups are normally small and data is normally collected through participant observation and interviews; “Qualitative researchers engage in naturalistic inquiry, studying real-world settings inductively to generate rich narrative descriptions and construct case studies” (Patton, 2005;1).

Qualitative research has many benefits to it; it has the ability to collect very in depth and detailed responses from participants, which enables the author to gather very accurate results. In addition, interviews don’t have a structured and rigid approach, the researcher can guide or redirect participants to obtain the answers they are looking for which normally results in a more accurate representation; however, this does mean that the participant could be more influenced by the researcher’s personal bias. The data that is collected is more reliant on personal experience which can be more compelling and accurate than some methods of Quantitative research.
analysis. Because the research is normally completed on a few individuals or cases it means that it can’t be generalised to the wider population but the findings can be transferred to other settings.

Some forms of Qualitative Research are as follows:

3.2.2.1 Focus Groups
“A focus group is a group interview on a specific topic which is where the focus comes from; it is an open-ended group discussion which the research guides” (Robson, 2011;294). Focus Groups are becoming increasingly popular in social research as ‘they do not discriminate against people who cannot read or write and they can encourage participation from people reluctant to be interviewed on their own or who feel they have nothing to say (Kitzinger, 1995;299). Focus Groups were not used for the research project as they weren’t necessary.

3.2.2.2 Participant Observation
This is where a researcher observes a participant to gather data, normally in a setting where the participant goes about their everyday life and the relationships that are made with others are analysed. The observer can either have complete observation which means that the researcher doesn’t participate in any of the activities; or complete participation where the researcher participates without being acknowledged as an observer. This was not used in this research project as it wasn’t necessary for the study area that was being conducted.

3.2.2.3 Reliability and Validity
Reliability and validity are used in qualitative research to establish the quality of the research. Mason 1996;21 argues that “reliability, validity and generalizability are different kinds of measures of the quality, rigour and wider potential research, which are achieved according to certain methodological and disciplinary conventions and principles”. There are 4 areas that need to be considered when assessing the reliability and validity of qualitative research; they are external and internal reliability and external and internal validity.

Some research that is conducted can use a combination of both Quantitative and Qualitative data, dependent on what is most beneficial to the study.
3.3 The chosen Primary Research Method

For the research that is being undertaken in this project, a mixed methods approach was considered to be more effective. A questionnaire was used to collect the relevant data with a combination of open and closed questions. The closed question responses were displayed clearly using statistical analysis via graphs and pie charts which allows the researcher to effectively evaluate the findings and identify coherent trends. By using this form of research, it makes it more viable to find links whilst still enabling the participant to express their own opinion and thoughts. The questionnaire data was then linked to the discourse analysis (see section 4.4), which enabled the researcher to gage and highlight people’s opinions on the subjects in comparison to what the media discourse produced.

3.4 Questionnaire - design, sampling and distribution

3.4.1 Design:
The Questionnaire that was used in this research project consisted of 33 questions that consisted of both open and closed ended questions. It was made on a survey software website called Qualitrics. The questionnaire was presented in an easy and clear format as Dillman et al 2014 observe that an attractive layout is likely to enhance response rates. The font size and style was consistent throughout, psychologically symbolizing to the participant that all the questions were of the same importance; it also made the questionnaire look professional and easy to follow. Vertical closed-ended answers were used as this made the questionnaire flow better and it also eliminates the risk of confusion (Sudman & Bradburn 1982). Quotes that were extracted from newspapers to gauge the opinion of the participants. What was expected to be found was that the tabloid readers would agree with the more derogatory quotes because they are exposed to that type of language more often; whereas the broadsheet readers would be less inclined to agree. Please see the final version of the questionnaire in Appendix 4.

A pilot study was carried out prior to the final questionnaire being released on 6 participants. It enabled the reader to gauge the opinion of potential participants to see whether the answers were going to produce interesting, analytical information.

3.4.2 Sampling:
For this study, convenience sampling was used, it is a non-probability sampling technique; “it involves choosing the nearest and most convenient persons to act as respondents. This process
is continued until the required sample size has been reached” (Robson, 2011:275). It enables the researcher to get a feeling for the issues involved and if enough responses are collected it is a good representation of the wider community.

3.4.3 Distribution:
The questionnaire was distributed online via social media platforms such as Facebook, so it is considered to be a Web Survey. Respondents were made aware of the questionnaire by regular posts and they were invited to complete it by clicking a link that would take them directly to it. Web surveys are beneficial as they can be reached by a large audience; it also makes the questionnaire run more smoothly as filters can be added in to skip certain questions and redirect to the most appropriate question, depending on the participant’s answers; “internet-based surveys are becoming increasingly popular because they are believed to be faster, better, cheaper and easier to conduct than surveys that use more traditional methods” Schoblau, 2002;13). Every respondent’s answers are logged and the entire data set can be retrieved so it can be effectively analysed.

3.5 Mixed methods approach – use of primary and secondary data analysis

For this research project a mixed method approach was used. Primary data was collected via a questionnaire, consisting of both open and closed-ended questions. The secondary data analysis used was discourse analysis, which consisted of extracting relevant information from both broadsheet and tabloid newspapers and the BBC news channel on racial inequality at the Oscars. The two components were used to identify themes and links between what the media portray and how the public perceive.

3.6 Secondary research analysis

The secondary research analysis that was used for this study was Discourse Analysis. It was based around the media and used to find links and themes with the questionnaire. Researchers could conduct Quantitative secondary research analysis, however for this project the author focussed on Qualitative secondary research.
**3.7 Media discourse analysis**

“Discourse Analysis is an approach to language that can be applied to forms of communication other than talk” (Bryman, 2016;531). More specifically, “Media discourse refers to interactions that take place through a broadcast platform, whether spoken or written, in which the discourse is oriented to a non-present reader, listener or viewer” (O’Keeffe, 2011;441). An example of this would be analysing the language in newspaper articles. Discourse Analysis generates more fine-grained analysis of texts and it can be used to assess different ‘genres’ of language, looking closely at what words are used, what words have been left out and word ordering; it gives a good idea of how newspapers frame topics over time.

For this project the researcher collected articles from both tabloid and broadsheet newspapers and the BBC news online, on racial inequality at the Oscars. Quotes were extracted from the newspapers and the language content was analysed. A matrix was used to develop and compare themes found within the articles such as positive and negative and political and sensationalised. They were then compared to the answers given in the questionnaire to identify any links or themes between media portrayal and public perception. The discourse analysis used will be time constrained as it will just focus on the Oscars prior to 2017 as the main issue was focussed before this year’s event. This is a limitation to the study, however it gives the opportunity for the project to be developed and taken further to investigate that concept.

**3.8 Triangulation of Data**

Triangulation of data will be used throughout this project to link both primary and secondary research; “The term [triangulation] suggests that the researcher can get a clearer picture of the social reality being studied by viewing it from several different perspectives” (Schutt, 2012;17). By using triangulation, it enables the author to link both the questionnaire and the discourse analysis to find themes and patterns within the research; although there will be some liabilities for a specific research application, the research will overall benefit from a combination of methods (Brewer & Hunter 1989; Serchrest & Sidani 1995).

**3.9 Limitations**

The primary research that was undertaken will always have its limitations. The questionnaire was limited due to the convenience sample. Although this type of sample was suitable for the
research project, it doesn’t necessarily produce the most representative set of results because of the similarity between participants.

In addition, participant bias needs to be considered as this could affect the results and explain why the outcome was like it was. Included in the questionnaire are some derogatory quotes that participants may answer on how they feel is socially acceptable rather than an accurate and honest response. To minimise this issue, the questionnaire was made to be anonymous however it doesn’t prevent the issue completely.

3.9.1 Ethics

Ethics need to be considered when conducting primary research to ensure that the participant, the researcher, the project and the university are protected from risk. The questionnaire that was publicised received approval from Cardiff Metropolitan University Ethics Committee. See ethics documentation in appendix x.

One of the main elements in the application was the potential risks for the author whilst they were conducting the research. The researcher would have only been exposed to the risks if there was a lack of responses from the online questionnaire. If this was the case then the researcher would be positioned in a safe environment, with friends and family being notified of this location. In addition, particular attention was paid to the participants safety. Before the questionnaire was completed, consent was given from every individual. It stated that the questionnaire was anonymous and they were also made aware that they could withdraw at any time.

The projects risks consisted of not getting enough responses and if that was the case then other means of collecting the data would have been executed.

In terms of the University, the researcher needed to ensure that all correspondence with participants was conducted in a professional manner to ensure that it didn’t expose the university to any risks such as a negative reputation.

3.9.2 Chapter Review

This chapter clearly defines what methods the researcher used to collect both primary and secondary data. It also stated other ways that data could be collected and justified why these haven’t been used. It outlined the reliability and validity issues within both quantitative and qualitative data and the questionnaire outline.
If the researcher was going to do the project again, she would ensure that the questionnaire was sent out in plenty of time to gather a suitable amount of responses and also she wouldn’t use a convenience sample as it didn’t produce a very representative set of results.
Chapter Four – Results, Discussion & Analysis

4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter will analyse the results that have been collated for this research project. It will include both statistical and thematical analysis that will clearly identify what has been found. There will be a combination of graphs, extracted from the results from the questionnaire, that will highlight the key findings. The Discourse analysis included, was carried out on broadsheet and tabloid newspapers, along with the BBC News Online, to investigate whether the way the media portrays news stories on the Oscars, influenced public perceptions on the topic. The researcher looked specifically at the grammar and syntax used to identify whether what the participants read had an effect on their thought processes.

4.2 Discourse Analysis

Discourse Analysis is “a method of analysing the structure of texts or utterances longer than one sentence, taking into account both their linguistic content and their sociolinguistic context” (Oxford Dictionary, 2017). For this research project, the discourse of the media has been one of the main focusses, looking closely at tabloid, broadsheet and online newspapers; “media discourse refers to interactions that take place through a broadcast platform, whether spoken or written, in which the discourse is oriented to a non-present reader, listener or viewer” (O’Keeffe, 2006;31). The themes that have been drawn out and compared throughout are; positive and negative, sensationalism and neutrality as these very much vary in the different types of newspapers.

The Discourse Analysis is a made up of quotes that have been selected from newspapers. Matrix 2 (Appendix 1) focusses on the negative comments that the different type of newspapers have said about the Oscars, Matrix 3 (Appendix 2) is the positive comments and Matrix 1 is a comparison between sensationalism and neutrality within the different types of newspapers. This helps the researcher to understand the language used which could potentially be a large influence on audience behaviour. It can also be linked back to the Literature Review where it clearly highlights the differences in broadsheet and tabloid newspapers.
4.3 Thematic Analysis

4.3.1 Positive and Negative

*Matrix 2 (Appendix 1)* identifies articles that have a negative story that have been published about the Oscars; it identifies the difference in language that has been used in both the headlines and within the articles. From the examples given it is clear that tabloid newspapers appear to be more informal, with a spoken language approach; this reflect its dynamic structure as tabloids rarely follow the system that broadsheets do of who, what, where, when, why and how and instead they are structured around the most shocking or interesting elements of the story.

In addition, tabloids tend to use everyday lexis which is associated with spoken language, whereas broadsheets and the BBC News use more prestige lexis. This explains the high status quality of broadsheets in comparison to the more everyday characteristics of tabloids.

This is illustrated in these examples:

1. *Charlotte Rampling has clarified her controversial claim that the uproar over the lack of black Oscar nominees was racist to white people (The Guardian)*

2. *For someone so eloquent on screen, Charlotte Rampling really put her foot in her mouth with her recent comments about the Oscars boycott which has seen a severe backlash (The Mirror)*

The quote from the Guardian is very much to the point and professional; it includes alliteration; ‘clarified her controversial claim’ which adds flow and rhythm although the language is still very formative. In comparison, the Mirror’s headline includes an idiom; ‘put her foot in her mouth’ which adds a colloquial feel, as well as using the adjective ‘severe’ to dramatise the article, all contributing to the informal approach.

Syntax also plays a large role in lexis and the linguistic differences in the types of newspapers. Tabloids are seen to be more syntactically simple whereas broadsheets and BBC news are more syntactically complex. It also has an effect on the density of the syntax; it is common for the simple headlines (tabloids) to be longer and more informal, whereas the shorter headlines (broadsheets) are much less dense as they are brief and to the point.

An example of this is demonstrated in these three quotes:

3. ‘*Whiny and entitled*: Oscar-nominated director Lee Daniels slams #OscarsSoWhite supporters as ‘reprehensible’ and tells them to ‘go out and do the work for your legacy’ (The Daily Mail)
Another example of the lexical diversity playing a large role in headlines within tabloids and broadsheets is stated below:

(6) Charlotte Rampling: I regret my Oscars comments (The Guardian)
(7) Regrets, you've had a few? Charlotte Rampling, 70, embraces an understated red carpet look after saying Oscar boycott was 'racist to whites’” (The Daily Mail)
(8) Charlotte Rampling: Oscars Diversity row ‘racist to whites’ (BBC News)

This example also demonstrates what Fowler (201;91) suggested which was that tabloids relate to a degree of personalization, he argued that tabloids tend to be filled with information about individuals but they lack reports of general processes. The quote taken from the Daily Mail is a prime example of this as they entwine what Charlotte Rampling is wearing in to the headline; ‘embraces an understated red carpet look’ which is completely unnecessary in terms of the story, but it is added to attract people to the article. Another way they do this is by using a rhetorical question with colloquial connotations to open the headline; ‘Regrets, you’ve had a few?’ This automatically creates a different take on the story to make it sound more dramatic and appealing; tabloids put emphasis on gossip, emotion and scandal. In comparison, the Guardian and the BBC News headlines are very simple and to the point with no other external connotations. The headline is addressed with the name of the main individual involved which directs the focus of the article instead of misleading its readers.

When evaluating positive news articles it became clear that tabloids were very unengaging with anything constructive or positive that was said about the Oscars. (located in Appendix 1). Although the majority of press that the event got in 2016 was negative, there were some positives aspects that tabloids seemed to twist to make them sound more appealing and exciting.
This is demonstrated in the quotes below:

(9) Oscars host Chris Rock overcomes nerves to tackle diversity row – and makes it funny” (The Guardian)
(10) Oscars 2016: Chris Rock brands Hollywood **racist** and **slams** Jada Pinkett Smith in race row speech” (The Sun)

(11) Chris Rock put in the performance of his life as host of the 88th Academy Awards - and transformed what had threatened to be the most controversial of ceremonies into **one of the very best** (BBC News)

From analysing these quotes, it is obvious that The Sun have taken a different approach to the Guardian and the BBC News on how they have advertised this story. The Guardian and the BBC have been able to identify that there was an issue, however they have made the positive aspect the highlight of the news story. By using adjectives such as ‘funny’ and superlative adjectives such as ‘the very best’ it ensures that a positive and proactive vibe is exerted. In comparison, The Sun’s headline remains focussed on the negative story, emphasised by using the aggressive verb, ‘slams’. It also names certain individuals within the headline to highlight the controversy.

In addition, the Mirror also publicised an article with the headline that states:

(12) Chris Rock has claimed he's only hosting this year's Academy Awards because Ellen De’Generes turned it down

Interestingly, broadsheet newspapers and the BBC have no articles on this area so it makes the researcher think that the story has been twisted and dramatized to make it sound more appealing for the reader as it is a consistent theme throughout. Tabloid newspapers adapt their stories to suit their target audience which is predominantly the working class; this can result in a very different story being published as they want to engage their market as much as possible. It also emphasises the fact that tabloids very much avoid positive articles as it doesn’t make a very good read.

It is clear from both the negative and positive analysis completed on broadsheet and tabloid newspapers, as well as the BBC online that tabloids use a vast majority of colloquial language with very simple grammar, whereas the broadsheet newspapers and the BBC online are more grammatically complex with a more structured and focussed approach.
4.3.2 Sensationalism and Neutrality

The next section will investigate the differences between sensationalism and neutrality within tabloids, broadsheets and the BBC News. It will highlight the main language variances within the newspapers and identify how tabloids use certain syntax to dramatize their articles, also known as sensationalism, compared with the use of formal lexis and structure within the broadsheets.

Tabloids are renowned for their consistent use of sensationalism and this is one of the main differences between tabloids and broadsheets. This has been highlighted and explained in the Literature Review in Chapter 2. It is linked to the amount of emotiveness that is present in some words and it has been found that tabloids use much more emotional and attitudinal language, whereas tabloids are much more educational and objective.

The following Matrix will highlight the differences:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sensationalism</th>
<th>Neutrality</th>
<th>Comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TABLOID</strong>&lt;br&gt;The Daily Mail&lt;br&gt;22nd Jan 2016</td>
<td><strong>BROADSHEET</strong>&lt;br&gt;The Guardian&lt;br&gt;22nd Jan 2016</td>
<td>As seen by the quote, the Daily Mail has used the aggressive verb combination; ‘launches attack’ which is stated as an action that Charlotte has performed; whereas in the Guardian, the verb used is ‘claimed’ which creates a much more neutral effect. The Daily Mail have sensationalised this story to make it sound more exciting and to draw readers in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Headline</strong>&lt;br&gt;‘It's anti-white racism’: Best actress nominee Charlotte Rampling <strong>launches attack</strong> on Oscar boycott as top producer dubs protesting stars 'spoiled brats'</td>
<td><strong>Quote</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Oscar nominee Charlotte Rampling has claimed</strong> the current campaign to boycott the 2016 Academy Awards over claims of a diversity deficit is racist to white people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TABLOID</strong>&lt;br&gt;The Daily Mail&lt;br&gt;21st Jan 2016</td>
<td><strong>BROADSHEET</strong>&lt;br&gt;The Independent&lt;br&gt;21st Jan 2016</td>
<td>Within this example the Daily Mail have again, used the verb ‘attack’ which makes the story sound more shocking, along with the verb ‘backs’ that creates a colloquial, immature tone. In addition, the abbreviated contraction ‘he’ll’ and the missing word in the sentence emphasises the informality. In comparison with the Independents article, it firstly states Will Smiths previous accomplishments which positively emphasises his importance and it also addresses Jada by her full name which highlights the formality. It covers the issue in a very neutral and objective manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Headline</strong>&lt;br&gt;Will Smith joins Oscars boycott: Actor <strong>backs wife Jada’s attack</strong> on diversity and says he’ll be skipping ceremony too</td>
<td><strong>Quote</strong>&lt;br&gt;Will Smith, a two-time Academy Award nominee, has confirmed that he will be <strong>joining his wife Jada Pinkett Smith in not attending this year’s Oscars ceremony</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLOID</td>
<td>BROADSHEET</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mirror</td>
<td>The Guardian</td>
<td>In this example the Mirror and the Guardian have very similar headlines, however the Mirror have included the verb ‘savages’ to ensure the article sounds more interesting and juicy. It has connotations of aggression and violence which increases the thrill factor of the article, attracting more people to read it. The Guardian have used a simple and direct headline, which is again, very neutral. It simply states who the article will be about with a quote from the speech - there wasn’t any added lexis to make the article more appealing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29th Feb 2016</td>
<td>29th Feb 2016</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headline</td>
<td>Headline</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLOID</td>
<td>BROADSHEET</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sun</td>
<td>The Guardian</td>
<td>Another example of tabloids sensationalising news stories is identified here; The Sun has used the phrasal verb ‘lash out’. The phrase has a very negative stigma and it has violent and physical connotations, again making the story sound much worse than it is. Although the Guardian have used the verb ‘mocked’ which can be seen as colloquial, it doesn’t have any violent connotations that dramatize the story. It also reiterates that both Will and Jada are ‘high-profile’ whereas tabloids always gloss over this aspect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29th Feb</td>
<td>29th Feb 2016</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quote</td>
<td>Quote</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris went on to lash out at Jada Pinkett Smith for boycotting the Oscars because of the diversity row</td>
<td>Rock also mocked Will Smith and Jada Pinkett Smith, high-profile boycotters of the event</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLOID</td>
<td>BROADSHEET</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Daily Express</td>
<td>BBC NEWS ONLINE</td>
<td>The Daily Express quote is relatively formal for a tabloid article, however the use of hyperbole within the statement ‘shaken the film industry to its core’ does add a hint of informality. It has been exaggerated to make the story sound more interesting. In comparison, the BBC News online have stated the outline of the article but because of the different target audience, it isn’t necessary to add in anything extra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22nd Jan 2016</td>
<td>30th June 2016</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening Quote</td>
<td>Quote</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE board of governors in charge of handing out the Academy Awards have unanimously voted to improve the diversity of it's memberships amid the ongoing race row, which has shaken the film industry to its core</td>
<td>The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences then agreed to a shake up of its membership - traditionally seen as old, white and male - to bring in more women and members of ethnic minorities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLOID</td>
<td>BROADSHEET</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mirror</td>
<td>BBC NEWS ONLINE</td>
<td>The Mirror has made their article sound like Chris Rock wasn’t initially chosen to host which makes the story more interesting. It transforms the article and makes it more gossip related as there is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25th Feb 2016</td>
<td>21st October 2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quote</td>
<td>Opening Quote</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chris Rock has claimed he's only hosting this year's Academy Awards because Ellen De'Generes turned it down.

Chris Rock is returning to host next year's Oscars ceremony.

an aspect of controversy. The BBC News Online have no articles on the concept and instead they have simply stated that Chris Rock will host the Oscars – again, a very neutral approach.

(Table 1, Matrix 1) A matrix to show a comparison between sensationalism and neutrality in different articles.

It has been discovered that tabloids push their boundaries in terms of false news stories as they add certain words (normally verbs with aggressive connotations) to dramatize the content. They know exactly what to add into an article to make it sound a lot more appealing yet keeping its original message; this is to ensure that they appeal to their target market. Broadsheets and the BBC News online, on the other hand have no need to dramatize a story as their audiences are very different – people read them to be educated and informed, not to be entertained.

The Discourse Analysis that has been completed has confirmed the objectives that state the informality and sensationalism used in tabloids, and the objectivity and neutrality used in broadsheets and the BBC News online. It suggests that however much a newspaper believes to be objective, there will always be linguistic touches that reveal a certain amount of opinion or viewpoint.

4.4 Questionnaire Results

This section will explain and highlight the findings the researcher discovered in conjunction with the Discourse Analysis. Graphs have been extracted from the results of the questionnaire to ensure that statistical analysis is accurate and can be conducted thoroughly. The questionnaire was made up of 33 questions which in total, collected 66 responses, however only the most relevant information will be discussed. The graphs have been cross-tabbed to create a more interesting outcome and to make it easier to analyse the results. The following graphs will be explained individually and analysed accordingly.
A graph to show the correlation between how often one watches the Oscars and how aware they are of the racial issues that surround the event

(Figure 4)

This graph indicates whether there was a correlation between the amount of times the participants watched the Oscars and how aware they were of the race issues. In the Literature Review (Figure 3) it clearly identifies that there is an issue within the Academy in terms of the amount of black nominees, so regardless if the participants have watched the Oscars or are aware of the issue it proves that the problem is real. The findings from this graph show that the participants that have watched the programme every year are either very or slightly aware of the issue which is what would have been expected; but there is still limited consistency because there were participants that have never watched the programme, yet they were very aware of the issue, highlighting the importance of third party resources. However, in contrast, there is an obvious link between the participants that have never watched the Oscars and thus they know nothing, which could identify that the programme does have an effect.
A graph to show the correlation between the participants age and how much the media influences their opinions on racial inequality

![Graph showing correlation between age and media influence on opinions on racial inequality](image)

(Figure 5)

This is to identify whether there was a certain age group that was more vulnerable to the media which would have a knock-on effect when it comes to what newspapers they read the most. The researcher has used a percentage average again as the age group sizes were different. It is quite clear from this chart that all age groups are influenced by the media to some extent, with the significant group being the 35–44 year olds which could be because they read or they are exposed to more factual and intellectual news stories. However, it needs to be taken in to account that the 35-44 year olds were a very small sample so reliability is limited.
Pie Charts to identify what form of media provided the most information about the issue at the Oscars to what age group

(Figure 6)

These pie charts show where certain age groups heard about the race issue at the Oscars. For this analysis, the 35 – 44 year old age group will be ignored because the sample size was too small which makes it unreliable. As expected, it is clear that over half of 18 – 24 year olds were informed via social media, and this decreased as the age increased. A large chunk of that age group also found out through the internet which could involve online articles and searches. The researcher believes that although there were very few newspaper responses which was surprising, especially in the older age groups, it’s because a limited number of people actually buy a hard copy newspaper and instead they read it online which would come under the ‘Internet’ option. The other result that was expected was that 55 – 64 year olds found out about
the issue through TV News which identifies that they older generation are more inclined to watch the television as they predominantly have more leisure time; ‘Increased longevity and earlier retirement are producing what has been called a new leisure class…Television-watching was by a decisive margin the most frequent leisure activity and this was true of both sexes’ (Cowgill & Baulch, 1962:47)

Regardless of the trend it doesn’t influence the outcome - the type of media that people here news from isn’t a contributory factor.

![A chart identifying what age group reads what newspaper the most](image)

*(Figure 7)*

It is clear to see that from this graph the most popular newspaper consistently is the Daily Mail, especially within the 18 – 24 year old spectrum. It is also the most popular within the other age groups except 45 – 54 year olds – their most popular being the Independent. Although the Daily Mail is the most popular newspaper there is no evidence that this influences the participants thinking and perceptions which is the counter opposite to what the researcher predicted. As a general limitation this could be because the majority of the participants were from a similar background (middle class and well educated) because of the sample style, whereas a newspaper, like the Daily Mail, may have had a bigger impact on another socio-economic group as they could potentially be more vulnerable to these resources; ‘Media images and
words are known, according to the Opportunity Agenda study, to have the greatest impact on the perceptions of people with less real-world experience” (Donaldson, 2015).

A chart to identify the correlation between how often participants read newspapers and how much they are influenced by them

(Figure 8)

This graph was created to see whether there was a link between the frequency of reading a newspaper and the amount it influenced the participants. The 4-6 times a week column will be ignored for this chart as the sample size was too small which means the data will be unreliable and unrepresentative. Apart from the 4 – 6 times a week column, it is interesting to see how consistent the influence is regardless of how many times a week the participant reads a newspaper. It is clear to see from the graph that just because a person reads a newspaper every day, it doesn’t necessarily mean that they are more influenced by it, in fact the people that read the paper less than once a month and more influenced by them. This could mean that when a person reads a paper frequently they become numb to the news and they don’t let it affect their lives because they are so exposed to it, whereas for an individual that is only exposed to the news once a month it could have more of a dramatic effect.
The next section of the results will be based around individual quotes. It will state the quote at the beginning and then the graphs will follow dependent on what type of newspaper they read. The main newspapers that will be analysed will be The Guardian, The Independent, The Telegraph, The Sun and the Daily Mail. The researcher will be identifying whether the broadsheet readers have the same opinion as the tabloid readers and if not then why not. It will be linked back to the discourse analysis to see whether their opinions link to the common language used in the articles. For these graphs to be produced, the questions that were asked to the participants involved them stating to what extent did they agree with the statements. The researcher then cross-referenced the answers with the 5 most popular newspapers according to the questionnaire responses and the results are as follows:

**QUOTE 1**

“At the Oscars, people of color are always welcomed to give out awards, even entertain, but we are rarely recognised for our artistic accomplishments” (Jade Pinkett-Smith, cited by Donnelly 2016).

A graph to show how many participants that read The Guardian agreed with Quote 1.
(Figure 9)

A graph to show how many participants that read The Independent agreed with Quote 1

(Figure 10)

A graph to show how many participants that read The Telegraph agreed with Quote 1
(Figure 11)

A graph to show how many participants that read The Sun agreed with Quote 1

(Figure 12)

A graph to show how many participants that read The Daily Mail agreed with the above statement

(Figure 13)

Name of Newspaper
From analysing these results, it is clear to see that on average, the participants that read broadsheet newspapers tend to agree with the statement more. This could be because they are exposed to the bigger picture and the story that they have read regarding this quote could have had a more positive and structured outlook; rather than just the gossip side. From the discourse analysis, it has been proven that tabloids are renowned for making stories sound more negative than they need to be to ensure that they are stimulating their target audience. Tabloids are notorious for slating and discriminating celebrities and Jada Pinkett Smith has had quite a mixed response from tabloids regarding her decision to boycott the Oscars. This could be the reason why the tabloid readers are less inclined to agree with the statement because they have only been exposed to negative comments. Nevertheless, there were some tabloid readers that agreed to some extent and some broadsheet readers that didn’t agree at all, so although what type of newspaper they read might have some effect, their answer could have been based around their overriding individual opinion.

QUOTE 2

"There are more serious issues for the Black community than the Oscars, and that asking actors to boycott the ceremony is asking them to 'jeopardise their careers' " (Jane Hubert, cited by Donnelly 2016).

A graph to show how many participants that read The Guardian agreed with Quote 2

(Figure 14)
A graph to show how many participants that read The Independent agreed with Quote 2

(Figure 15)

A graph to show how many participants that read The Telegraph agreed with Quote 2

(Figure 16)
A graph to show how many participants that read The Sun agreed with Quote 2

(Figure 17)

A graph to show how many participants that read The Daily Mail agreed with Quote 2

(Figure 18)

From these graphs, it is clear to see that regardless of what newspaper the participants read, the majority of them agreed with the statement to some extent. The quote was focussed on a broader issue that didn’t have any direct celebrity association which could be why the tabloid
readers were not as influenced. A small percentage of the Guardian and Independent readers didn’t agree with the statement at all which could be because they have been exposed to the more political side of the debate and realised how much of a concern the issue was at the Oscars, especially in the 21st century. Broadsheets are also much more neutral and objective in the way they report stories which could be an influencing factor on their audiences responses. In comparison, the tabloid readers have only had access to gossip related articles that stem from a celebrity comment or action, and not necessarily the wider political picture which could be why they agree with the statement. Once again, because there is no direct link with the discourse analysis and the participant’s opinion on this quote, it could be down to personal preference and the newspapers they read could have very little influence.

QUOTE 3

“If you want black nominees every year, you need to just have black categories You already do it with men and women” (Chris Rock, cited by Hilmantel 2016)

A graph to show how many participants that read The Guardian agreed with Quote 3

(Figure 19)
A graph to show how many participants that read The Independent agreed with Quote 3

(Figure 20)

A graph to show how many participants that read The Telegraph agreed with Quote 3

(Figure 21)
A graph to show how many participants that read The Sun agreed with Quote 3

(Figure 22)

A graph to show how many participants that read The Daily Mail agreed with Quote 3

(Figure 23)

Although this quote was referenced from a celebrity, it could be seen as politically incorrect which is what would predominantly be found in tabloids. It was included in the questionnaire to see if there was a distinct difference in the way the broadsheet readers responded, in
comparison with the way tabloid readers did. This quote was important as it was controversial and the researcher felt it would be the deciding factor as to whether the type of newspaper the participants read influenced their perceptions.

From the charts above, it is clear that the majority of all newspaper readers strongly disagree with the statement, however a small percentage of the Sun, the Daily Mail and the Guardian readers agree with the statement which highlights that it doesn’t matter what type of newspaper they read, it doesn’t have a significant effect on the participants over all thoughts. What the researcher was expecting to find was that the tabloid readers would agree with the more controversial and derogatory quotes however from the research it is clear that there is no obvious link between the two concepts.

Participant bias needs to be taken in to consideration when analysing this question. It is quite likely that participants will suffer from social desirability which results in them giving the answer that they think is socially acceptable rather than answering how they really feel; “People tend to resist newspaper influences that lead them in a direction they are not disposed to follow” (Beckett, 2016). This is quite significant for this question as it could come across bad or inappropriate to agree with the statement. A way of controlling and limiting this factor was to make the questionnaire anonymous, which it was, however that doesn’t necessarily prevent it completely; it’s just an extraneous variable that needs to be taken in to account.

4.5 Chapter Review

Overall the researcher has concluded that just because people are exposed to more negative stimuli when reading tabloids as found from the Discourse Analysis, the researcher would have thought that they would agree with the more negative and crude statements that were made, however it has been found that that isn’t necessarily true nor consistent. In some cases, there is a slight difference in opinion between broadsheet and tabloid readers however it’s not significant enough to justify the results. Just because a participant is influenced by the newspaper it doesn’t necessarily mean that it changes their perceptions; there is no obvious link between what an individual reads and their overall thoughts about a subject. Although it has created an interesting result, it is the complete opposite to what the researcher originally predicted. What does need to be considered is that although these newspapers don’t have a significant effect on how the public perceive the race issue, it doesn’t mean that this would be result the for all topics.
Chapter Five – Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Chapter Overview

Within this chapter it will summarise the overall findings of the research project in comparison to the initial aim and objectives found in chapter 1. It will then outline the research limitations that the author encountered whilst doing this project, as well as a personal reflection of the journey. It will be summarised with structured and feasible recommendations for future research along with a chapter review.

5.2 Summary of findings versus the initial objectives

The researcher has achieved the project aims by ensuring that the objectives were sufficiently fulfilled:

1. To critically review the literature of racial inequality and the media

In terms of racial inequality, the literature focussed on the history of the issue and where it stemmed from, along with how racial inequality is a worldwide problem, specifically considering America and the United Kingdom. This was because the Oscars is held in Hollywood, so it identifies the location of where the problem stems from, but the newspapers that were analysed were from the UK, so both countries needed to be considered. The researcher also included a comparison of two different types of newspaper and how they portray stories differently to ensure that when the results were collated there was some literature to refer to. Literature was also investigated on the Oscars as this was used as a case study throughout; it briefly stated the history of the event and how the issue occurred and how improvements would be made. Overall the researcher believes that this objective was met in relation to the overall aim.

2. To identify public opinion on how they perceive racial inequality at the Oscars and whether different forms of media have different degrees of influencing
As stated in the Methodology (Chapter 3) the researcher wanted to design a questionnaire, consisting of open and closed questions to gather information on the participant’s knowledge on the Oscars and where they had heard about the issues, looking specifically at broadsheet and tabloid newspapers. The questionnaire was distributed via email and social networking sites and a convenience sample was used to collect the data. It produced interesting results that can be found in the Results, Analysis and Discussion (Chapter 4). For this reason, the researcher believes that they successfully achieved this objective. The final questionnaire can be found in Appendix 3.

3. To collate discourse analysis from both tabloid and broadsheet newspapers and identify the differences to be able to compare with the public opinion;

This is again, outlined in the Methodology (Chapter 2) and located in the Results, Analysis and Discussion (Chapter 4). It created a very interesting set of results that highlighted the key focus areas. It reinforced what the researcher had anticipated and it was effectively linked with the questionnaire results. It was made up of a combination of tabloid and broadsheet newspapers that were comparable in terms of the syntax and lexis. The researcher believed that they have achieved this objective in relation to the overall aim as it provided relevant and reliable findings.

4. To review and analyse the primary data and discourse analysis that was carried out, presenting the results in a variety of formats

The researcher achieved this objective by successfully creating statistical and thematic analysis that was not only interesting but also engaging. By linking the qualitative and quantitative primary research together and presenting it in a combination of Matrix’s, bar and pie charts it created a fluent and structured piece of analysis.

When doing the analysis, it became clear that the majority of the results from the questionnaire were not what the author anticipated or expected. This was not only interesting but it also offered an opportunity for further study as some of the results could have benefitted from a deeper explanation. Although this was the outcome, there were a few results that did underpin what the researcher originally thought however they were inconsistent. Regarding the discourse analysis, what the researcher found was exactly what they anticipated and it reinforced their research effectively.
5. To consolidate the research findings by identifying whether the type of newspaper that is read has a positive or negative effect on the participant’s perceptions and making recommendations for future developments

The combination of both quantitative and qualitative data that was used in this research project ensured that a reliable, valid and accurate set of results were produced. The above objective was met as the concluding result covered the contents of the main aim. In relation to the objective the recommendations and future developments will be included in chapter 5.4 along with the research limitations that will be in chapter 5.2.

5.3 Research Limitations

Like any research project, the author encountered a few problems along the way which thus meant that the original intentions were not fulfilled. The researcher began the project by investigating both racial and gender issues at global celebrity events and what impact the media had on the public perceptions, however once completing the literature review it was clear that this would be too much to complete within both the word count and the time available. The decision was made to cut out gender and just focus on race which is what has been completed.

Participant bias was also a limiting factor. When analysing the questionnaire, the researcher needed to take into account that the answers provided, especially with certain questions, could have been significantly influenced by social desirability. Because the project was based around quite a controversial topic, the participants could have answered the questions in a way that would have been accepted by society, instead of how they really felt. This was considered as it influenced the results.

Another limiting factor of the project was time constraints. As briefly stated above the researcher had to reduce the question content as it would have been difficult to complete. In addition, whilst the project was being completed the Oscars 2017 was aired which bought about a whole other discussion topic as the academy had made significant improvements. It would have been interesting to continue the study but leading into future research, this is something that could be done.
Lastly, the population group that was surveyed was not a diverse cross section of society; because of the convenience sample it was predominantly classes A – C2 in the socio-economic groups, with 99% of the participants being white; this caused the results to be biased. Although this could have been prevented if the researcher had a range of participants from different ethnic and economic backgrounds, however time was a constraint. It would be interesting to see if the more vulnerable individuals were more influenced by what they read in the newspapers, however this could be an opportunity for further study.

5.4 Personal Reflection on the research journey

The researcher has developed many academic skills whilst being at university such as, conducting primary and secondary research and producing theoretical frameworks. The dissertation has enabled the author to consolidate this knowledge and conduct a research project of her own.

If this project was to be completed again, the author would change several aspects. In order to get more responses from the questionnaire, the researcher would send it out earlier to ensure a larger sample was gathered. In addition, it would be beneficial to get a bigger and more representative group of people to see whether the answers would be what the researcher was originally expecting. It would also make a good comparative element if the results suggested that an individual’s background had an effect on how much they were influenced. The researcher would also have a consistent number of every age group so the results could be compared directly rather than finding the average; which would also make the results more reliable and possibly more consistent.

5.5 Recommendations

1. For the Academy Awards to improve the organisations diversity to ensure it isn’t reflected in the voting procedures

Reasoning: “The organization is currently, according to a 2012 study, approximately 94% white, Boone Isaacs will introduce “an ambitious, global campaign to identify and recruit qualified new members who represent greater diversity.” (Berman 2016)
2. To try and encourage the older generation to become more engaged with the internet and social media as this is the new and developing platform for news

Reasoning: 50% of 55 – 64 year olds were informed about the racial issue at the Oscars via TV News, with only 20% via the internet and 10% via social media

3. A further study to see if individuals from a different socio-economic background are more influenced and/or vulnerable to what newspapers portray

Reasoning: “The tabloids appeal to a readership limited by class, occupation, and social attitude - that is not sufficient in the digital era. Young people are not loyal to one tabloid title and few of them will subscribe online.” (Gapper, quoted by Beckett 2016)

4. A further study to see what was the most common way that newspapers influenced their reader, if they did at all

Reasoning: “Newspaper influence on [reader] opinion was a subtle, almost imperceptible process: either the long-term reinforcement of opinions already held, or to sow seeds and implant suggestions on points to which people have up to now given next to no thought” (Beckett, 2016)

5. A further study to see how the 2017 Academy Awards improved in terms of racial inequality compared to the 2016 Awards and how the newspapers have portrayed this

Reasoning: “After last year’s nominations spawned #OscarsSoWhite, all eyes were on the Academy Award nominations Tuesday – and in stark contrast to 2016, this year proved to be a much stronger year for diversity, both in front of and behind the camera” (Riley, 2017)

5.6 Chapter Review

To conclude the project, it would be suitable to discuss what knowledge the researcher has contributed to the topic. They have bought attention to the issue regarding race at the Oscars and have clearly identified that what media an individual is exposed to, doesn’t necessarily influence their perceptions on the topic. They have also found the language used in both
broadsheet and tabloid newspapers are exceptionally different with very distinct features that adhere to their target audience; however, it was found when completing the literature review that tabloids are starting to reach out to further demographics and broadsheets have started to publish stories that were originally suited for tabloids so that could be why the findings weren’t as significant as the researcher thought they would be.

It is also important to identify the Academy Awards current situation and how it has been improved. 2017 was a revolutionary year for the entertainment industry as there were the most black actors nominated for an Oscar than in any previous years. It is a clear identification of how certain aspects of the film industry needed to be dramatically changed to see an improvement.

It would also be fitting to see how newspapers are being affected by the internet and the increase in the technological world. Newspapers have come under severe scrutiny because of the development of online newspaper articles and the internet; “The latest set of ABC figures for national newsprint sales may not be too surprising in that they confirm a long-running downward trend in the popular and mid-market sectors because of digital platforms” (Greenslade, 2017) It is an issue that needs to be addressed to ensure that print media still has a place in this digital age.
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