

# NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



## A RECEPTION ANALYSIS OF MALE CIRCUMCISION TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENTS BY MALE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN BULAWAYO

BY

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## **ABSTRACT**

Within the context of debates concerning the impact of media on audiences, this study takes the form of a qualitative audience reception analysis to investigate how a particular group of male audiences situated in Bulawayo interprets televised male circumcision advertisements. It examines the extent to which the social context influences the audiences' acceptance or rejection of preferred readings encoded in the texts.

The study is situated within the broad theoretical and methodological framework of both the communication for development and the cultural studies approaches to the study of the media. Data for the investigation was collected through the content analysis, focus group and in-depth interview methods as well as through the websites and organisational documents produced by the encoders of the advertisements.

The findings indicate that the male audiences' interpretative strategies were informed by their lived experience as well as pre-existing knowledge. Based on the findings it can be deduced that, contrary to earlier beliefs and media theories such as that of the "hypodermic needle" theory the audience of public communication is not a passive homogenous mass that easily succumbs to media influences, rather the audience is active in the production of meaning, but under determinate conditions in particular contexts. The texts, the producing institutions and the social history of the audiences supply these conditions.

Based on the findings of this research, it is evidenced that university male students culturally and individually receive advertisement differently according to their language, socio-cultural norms, and religion. A major recommendation from this research is that understanding of the linkages between HIV/AIDS, socio-cultural factors is critical when producing public health messages on HIV/AIDS or when assessing what these texts mean to a particular audience.