



# National University of Science and Technology

Think in Other Terms



## Faculty of Communication and Information Science Department Of Journalism and Media Studies

### MSc (Hon) in Journalism and Media Studies

**Tourism Reporting and Journalism Objectivity: An Analysis of the Coverage of  
Zimbabwe Tourism Authority's Promotional Programmes in *The Herald* and  
*NewsDay***

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigated the ethical and professional issues that arise from the relationship between journalists and tourism sources and how these relationships impact on journalism objectivity. The study also sought to establish the factors that influence the way journalist's frame and source tourism stories. It investigated the power positions and perspectives advanced by tourism stories in *The Herald* and *NewsDay* newspapers. Previous scholarly works focused on Public relations and journalism or on the effects of brown envelope journalism on objectivity and the closest related studies were on destination branding and how tourism authorities use the media to market their destinations. This study focused on tourism reporting, considering the importance that the Zimbabwean government has attached to the tourism sector as one of the top three economic sectors in the country. The study specifically focused on how the relationship between the governed Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA) programmes that were covered by *The Herald* and *NewsDay* was. Using Critical Discourse Analysis and media practitioners' inputs as well as those of tourism promoters, the study aimed to fulfill four key objectives. It strove to: comparatively analyse how tourism issues were covered by *The Herald* and *NewsDay*; investigate the power positions and perspectives advanced by tourism stories in *The Herald* and *NewsDay*; identify the ethical and professional issues arising from the relationship between tourism reporters and tourism promoters; and to assess how these ethical and professional issues arising from the relationship between tourism promoters and journalists impact on journalism objectivity. All this was done against a backdrop of literature and theories on ownership and control, theories of representation, framing and objectivity. Christians et al (2009) normative concepts of the media were also taken into consideration. From the data analysed, it was established that there is a direct relationship between ownership, control and content production in tourism reporting, thereby affirming political economists' assertions. It was also established that journalistic values of objectivity are undermined by economic imperatives that affect journalists and that affect the tourism sector as well. Journalists rely on elite sources and they hardly report negatively on their sponsors.