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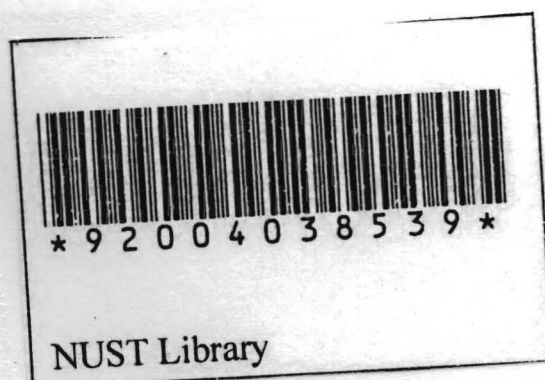


**Faculty of Communication and
Information Science
Department Of Journalism and Media Studies**

MSc (Hon) in Journalism and Media Studies

Thesis Title:

Challenges and Prospects of Development Journalism in Zimbabwe's State Media: A Case Study of *Sunday Mail*'s Coverage of Millennium Developmental Goals (MDGs) 3 and 7.



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Year: 2013 - 2015

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This report was submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of The Masters of Science (Honours) Degree in Journalism and Media Studies.

ABSTRACT

This study investigated Challenges and Prospects of Development Journalism in Zimbabwe's State Media: A Case Study of *Sunday Mail's* Coverage of Millennium Developmental Goals (MDGs) 3 and 7. This study preoccupied itself with questioning the assumed power of the media in promoting development, specifically the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Scholars argue that development journalism cannot thrive without the active involvement of the media. Vernon and Baksh (2010:7) point out that the universal agenda to achieve MDGs by 2015 is likely to fail without the active involvement of the media. The research came at a time when the year 2015 deadline set for the achievement of the MDGs was approaching amid a UNDP MDG 2012 report that Zimbabwe was still far from achieving most of the MDGs. It therefore was not clear if development journalism was practiced towards achieving MDGs 3 and 7. It was also not clear whether development journalism was deployed properly in order for it to have intended results of raising awareness and mobilising citizens and policy implementers towards achieving MDGs 3 and 7. In the Zimbabwean setting it was not clear whether development journalism best encapsulated the manner in which communication for development should be practiced, especially following revelations that MDGs 3 and 7 were still far from being achieved. The study relied on the pragmatic research paradigm in which a mixed methodology was used. The case study design therefore became the most appropriate strategy of inquiry and research methods ranging from content analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis to questionnaires and in-depth interviews were used. From the findings it became clear that the *Sunday Mail* did not practice development journalism due to several factors that included ownership and control, limited resources, lack of specialized training in development journalism, and commercialization of news. As such, 67% of *Sunday Mail* readers had low knowledge, 15% had high knowledge and 18% had moderate knowledge on MDGs 3 and 7, thereby signifying failure by the paper in raising citizens to appreciable levels of knowledge on developmental issues. Those who had a high knowledge of MDGs 3 and 7 attributed their knowledge to universities, workshops, seminars and work related programmes rather than the *Sunday Mail*. It was discovered that if properly carried out development journalism can provide an avenue for citizenry awareness and mobilization on developmental issues.