



# National University of Science and Technology

Think in Other Terms



DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM AND MEDIA STUDIES

EXPLORING UMGUZA DISTRICT COMMUNAL FARMERS' INTERACTION WITH MEDIA TEXTS IN EFFORTS TO ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE

BY

MTHOKOZISI NDHLOVU

(NO1311160N)

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE MASTER OF SCIENCE

DEGREE

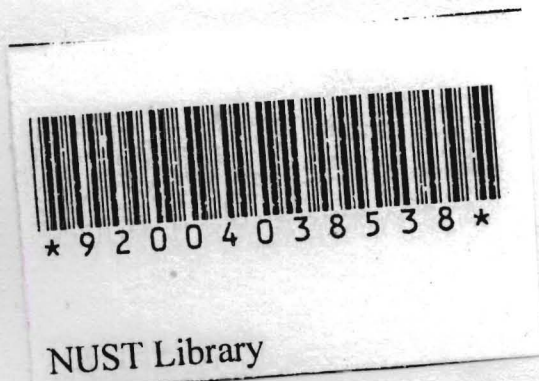
IN

JOURNALISM AND MEDIA STUDIES

BULAWAYO

SUPERVISOR: T MPOFU

YEAR: 2015



LIBRARY NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY P.O. BOX 346 BULAWAYO ZIMBABWE		
DATE	ACCESSION	CLASS. No
04/04/16	SC 15/827	

## Abstract

Climate change is taking a devastating toll on Zimbabwean communal farmers' agricultural activities, a major source of living for the greater part of the population. As communal farmers struggle to adapt to climate change, the media assumes a fundamental role of educating and informing them. It is against this background that the study explored how communal farmers in Umguza District generated meaning out of media texts in efforts to adapt to climate change. Studies combining media and climate change in Zimbabwe (Count-Evans, 2013; Mare, 2011) focused on media's frequency of coverage and framing of the phenomenon, hence opening a gap for an audience oriented-study. In filling this gap, the study used the Reception Theory, Uses and Gratification theory, Two-Step Flow theory, Media Information Literacy and Hall's (1978) Encoding and Decoding Model. Entrenched in pragmatism, the research is a descriptive case study, embedding quantitative techniques at different stages. Multi-stage sampling combining Simple Random Sampling (SRS), purposive and systematic sampling techniques, was used to identify the respondents of semi-structured questionnaires, direct observations and in-depth interviews while the findings were analysed and presented through Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), thematic analysis and pattern matching. The study discovered that personal observations and experiences, the media and opinion leaders were the main sources of information on climate change adaptation in Umguza District. The radio was the most used medium in communicating climate change adaptation, though it was the second most accessed medium after mobile phones, which were not utilised for climate change adaptation. Conservation Agriculture (CA) and planting of drought resistant crops were some of the adaptation techniques communicated in media texts. Communal farmers generated their meaning influenced by their cultural values and personal experiences when interacting with media texts, resulting in some adopting, others rejecting or modifying the adaptation techniques. Communal farmers highlighted the inaccuracy of media texts weather predictions and irrelevance of some techniques as challenges they faced in relying on media texts for climate change adaptation. The study recommends producers of media texts on climate change to utilise mobile phones to package climate change adaptation information while at the same time incorporating opinion leaders and communal farmers' cultural values and personal experiences in those texts.