

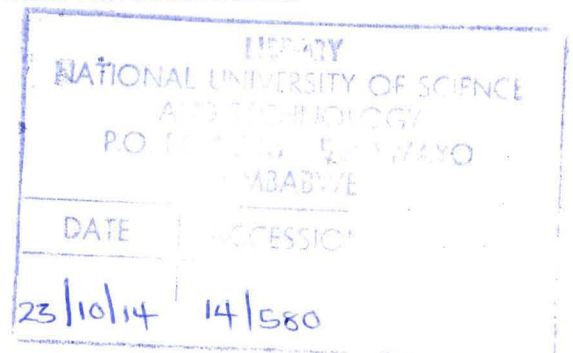
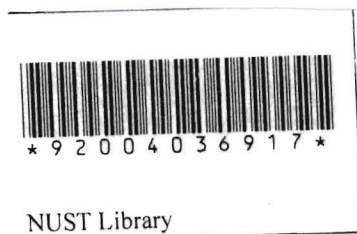
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE EXCLUSION OF STREET KIDS FROM COMMUNITY
MEDIA: A CASE STUDY OF MASVINGO PROVINCIAL STAR.**

BY

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ABSTRACT

Community media is often perceived as a powerful instrument in shaping a society's opinion. Community media exists to represent the concerns of the marginalised in local communities who cannot find way into mainstream media. In this information society, where the public depends on mass media for information, community media is expected to educate and inform its local communities about the plight of street kids. However, this is not the situation at the *Masvingo Provincial Star*, hence this study was carried out to investigate reasons behind the exclusion of street kids in the community newspaper. Being part of society, street kids are also expected to be heard and have their concerns represented in community media. This results in local communities being well informed and they can influence the formulation of public policies that seek to address street kids' plight.

This study was informed by structuralist political economy approach, the propaganda model and cultural studies, which argue that there are structures and filters that shape and determine media content. They also suggest that there are dominant ideas in the media that continue to reproduce domination and subordination, resulting in exclusion and marginalisation of alternative ideas.

The research made use of an exploratory case study of the *Masvingo Provincial Star*. Qualitative and quantitative research paradigms were used in line with purposive and systematic sampling methods. In-depth interviews and unstructured questionnaires were the techniques used to gather data of this study.

Findings of the research revealed that in this contemporary society, there is no real community that exists to serve the marginalised. It has been observed that the need to make profit by community media, over reliance on easy to access sources and the autonomy of media personnel has threatened the real meaning and roles of community media. This leads to exclusion of social groups whose stories do not sell the newspaper.