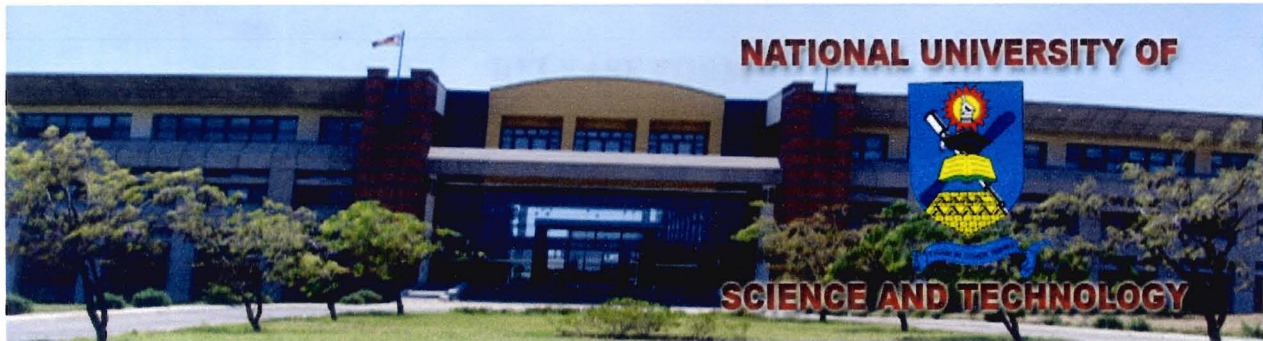


NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



A comparative analysis of the coverage of Marange Resources Private Limited by the public and private media in Zimbabwe: A case study of *The Herald* and *Newsday*

BY
COSMAS MARAYINI
(N0106623J)

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ABSTRACT

The study cross-examines how Marange Resources has been represented and covered by the two mainstream newspapers in Zimbabwe, *The Herald* and *NewsDay*. The study comparatively assesses the coverage of the company by the state and private media, respectively. Through the use of a qualitative research methodology that employed content analysis and in-depth interviews as data gathering tools, the study comparatively analyses how the state and private media covered the mining company as well as examining key factors affecting its coverage. The study reviews key literature around the role of media in economic development and media ethics and professionalism. The Political Economy and Agenda Setting are the major theories that provide a framework for understanding the coverage of the company by the state and private media. The major findings of the study are that there is a sharp contrast between *The Herald* and *NewsDay* in covering Marange Resources owing to a number of reasons. The most important reason identified is the polarisation of the media industry in Zimbabwe. As a result, both publications tend to politicise their coverage of the company especially given the fact that Marange is government owned. The study also found that the dominant sources of news in both papers are the government and officials. Voices of the community members within which the company operates are silent. There are sharp differences on the most topical issues about the company in the two newspapers. The state media positively covers the company through focusing on its social responsibility programmes and activities and its contributions to national economic development. On the other hand, the *NewsDay* negatively covers the company by focussing on corruption activities related to looting of diamonds and how it affects economic development. The study concludes that the state and private media cover mining companies differently. It recommends that the media must objectively, balanced and impartial in covering mining companies regardless of who owns them as they play a key role in economic development. Journalists must improve on their business and economic reporting and shy away from politicising non-political issues.