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Think in Other Terms



An analysis of the coverage of gender issues in

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE COVERAGE OF GENDER ISSUES IN THE ZIMBABWE 2013 DRAFT CONSTITUTIONAL AND
REFERENDUM CAMPAIGNS BY THE *CHRONICLE* NEWSPAPER**

BY

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSAL SUBMITTED TO THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE HONOURS DEGREE**

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ABSTRACT

This study is an analysis of the coverage of gender issues in the Zimbabwean 2013 draft constitutional and referendum campaigns. The objectives of the study are to assess the range of gender issues in the new constitution that received coverage in the *Chronicle* during the draft constitutional and referendum campaigns, to investigate who were the sources of news on gender issues in the stories, to find out from the people of Bulawayo if they were well-informed on gender provisions in the draft constitution and to suggest ways of mainstreaming gender into media coverage. What interested the researcher to do this study is her interest in eliminating discrimination as a moral and legal issue. She specifically researched about gender issues in order to battle gender inequalities in Zimbabwe. Major literature that informs the study include the progress made by Zimbabwe on meeting the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development as well as literature on gender, media, democracy and the constitution making process. Key theoretical and conceptual frameworks that help understand the study include News Framing and Priming, Agenda Setting, Public Sphere theory, the Liberal Feminist theory, gender mainstreaming and journalism objectivity. A mixture of qualitative and quantitative research methods was used. Data was gathered using content analysis, in-depth interviews and questionnaires. The researcher used purposive sampling to select 4 journalists and 2 Copac officials for in-depth interviews, while simple random sampling was used to select 50 people who filled out questionnaires. Systematic random sampling was used to select 89 copies of newspapers for content analysis. Major findings of the study were that gender issues were not adequately covered as they accounted for 16% of stories published on draft constitutional and referendum campaigns. The most prominent gender issues that received coverage were women's rights, gender equality and women in positions of power. Missing issues were measures on rectifying gender discrimination and imbalances, equal representation of men and women in government institutions and giving women access to resources on the basis of equality with men. The study also found that men dominated as sources of news with government and Copac officials as the main sources. Voices of the public were missing in these stories and citizens were not well informed on gender provisions in the draft constitution. The study concludes that the *Chronicle* did not adequately cover gender issues yet readers regard it as very important. It recommends that gender should be mainstreamed in the media and that female sources should be treated equal to those of male counterparts.