



**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA AND SOCIETY STUDIES**

*RESEARCH TITLE*

*THE DIALECTICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AFRICAN CULTURES AND CHILD MARRIAGES AS  
PORTRAYED BY THE HERALD AND NEWSDAY.*

**BY**

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**Declaration Form**

I Ruvimbo F. Shiri declare that the work I have submitted is my own work and has never been submitted to any college/ institute/ university. I affirm that all work that is not my own has been acknowledge accordingly.

Signed.....

Date.....

## **Dedication**

In honour of my father, mother and brother who gave me their unwavering support throughout my academic years.

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## **Acronyms and Abbreviations**

ACRWC	- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
AFP	- Agency France Press
AMH	- Alpha Media Holdings
AP	- Associated Press
BBC	- British Broadcast Corporation
CAA	- Children's Adoption Act
CNN	- Cable Network News
CRC	- Convention of the Rights of the Child
HIV/ AIDS	- Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
MDLF	- Media Development Loan Fund
NGOs	- Non-Governmental Organisations
ROOTS	- Real Open Opportunities Transformation Support
STIs	- Sexually Transmitted Infections
UNICEF	- United Nations Children Education Fund
UNCRC	- United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child
UNFPA	- United Nations Population Fund
ZBH	- Zimbabwe Broadcast Holdings
ZIMPAPERS	- Zimbabwe Newspapers
ZMMT	- Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust

## **Abstract**

Child marriages are a form of abuse and a violation of children's rights. The media are found at the core of this study as it questions the media's watchdog character. The purpose of the study was to find out the role played by *The Herald* and *Newsday* in their child marriage reportage, assess how African cultures have perpetuated the practice of child marriages and lastly to discover the intervention strategies that have been put in place to address the situation. The research made use of various scholars who conducted different studies so as to understand the issue in the Zimbabwean setup. To better understand child marriages and its portrayal by *The Herald* and *Newsday*, the researcher made use of two conceptual frameworks that is framing and hegemony. For data collection, the research utilised archival research, interviews and questionnaires. A thematic approach was applied in presenting and analysing the content acquired from data collection. As portrayed in the two newspapers under study, child marriages were not given much prominence and salience. The research proved that information published on child marriages was acquired from partner organisations and this depicts lack of depth in such stories. It also proved that cultural practices influence child marriages as represented in early marriage articles. The research recommends that *The Herald* and *Newsday* put children matters such as their rights, in the public agenda so that children's voices are heard. It also recommends Save the Children to continue lobbying policies so that children are well protected by the media, government and society at large. Save the Children is one of the organisations that advocates for children's rights in Zimbabwe. It also highlighted areas that can be taken up for further studies.

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction

A child is characterised as anyone under the age of 18 years, which makes the age of majority 18 years (UNICEF, 2007, 2014). (Sibanda, 2011; Petroni, 2015; Ijeoma, 2013) assert that kid relational unions are any wedding unions done while one or the two accomplices are under the age of 18 years. Young girls around the world are marrying off at a tender age and this could be either willingly or a forced matter. When these young girls marry, they are expected to take on the duties of an adult woman and leave their childhood, (Fonteneau and Huyse, 2014). As per Sibanda (2011), despite the fact that tyke relational unions involve young boys also, the quantity of young ladies included is far substantially higher particularly in nations like Zimbabwe. One of UNICEF's report of 2014 recommends that one quarter to one portion of young ladies in Third World countries progress toward becoming moms afore the age of 18 and youngster relational unions are mainly caused by religion, poverty as well as culture.

*Newsday* and *The Herald* are two of Zimbabwe's widely read newspapers and this research focuses on these two due to their pervasive reporting of matters and their vast readership around Zimbabwe. Klaehn (2002) postulates that portrayal of the world is the thing that the media is generally in charge of, with the end goal that it winds up noticeably flawed on whose adaption we see or find out about in the media. The media are the reflection of the general public, and they are responsible for moulding the perspectives of people in general, convictions and their activities. Hall (1997) betel portrayal as a demonstration of re-showing an implying that as of now exists. William (2003) declares that the media are the concentration of portrayal since they involve the space between watchers, audience members, perusers and the world beyond. As a watchdog, the media have been watchful for kid's rights and when they are disregarded and that is the reason kid relational unions have been a major worry for both Zimbabwean government and the media. It is the capacity of the media to give notability, significance or conspicuousness to an issue while de-underlining or overlooking others during the time spent correspondence (Matei; 2008; Smidt, 2008; Okwuchukwu, 2013; Ottai, 2010;). This study will explore how African societies impact youngster relational unions and which societies are given unmistakable quality and which ones are given notability.

## 1.2 Background of study

In Africa including Zimbabwe, child marriages have become the order of the day. Most girls are robbed of their future by early marriages and these are most common in developing countries. A child is anyone of either sex below the age of 18. Child marriage is then defined by global organisations as a union (whether formal or informal) between two people under the age of 18 or either one of the couple. Both sexes have become victims of child marriages but girls are disproportionately affected as they are the majority of the victims (Kyari, 2011). Zimbabwe's constitution states that the minimum age that one can be married is 18 years but the act still continues especially in rural parts of Zimbabwe (Petroni, 2015; Bulman-Lever, 2007). Statistics in Zimbabwe for child marriages stands at 31% (UN Population Fund Survey, 2012).

McCombs (2006) explores the issue of how the mass media create public opinion through agenda setting. It is also argued that there could be more to media than just spreading news and discussing important topics. The media have strongly been responsible for discussing issues that are topical within a country. Issues that can dominate the media are policy, law and order, economics, public welfare and civil rights (Van Dijk, 1999). Everything that the audience perceive as problems are not personal experiences but audiences experience problems second hand, it is the media that are handing signals of what is happening in the world and determining whether or not something is important.

The Children's Adoption Act describes a child as any person under the age of 18 years and so does the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. Since Zimbabwe is signatory to many of the African and international conventions, it has adopted most of the acts for the protection of children and their rights. Thompson (1995: 156) asserts that a child is any person who is between infancy and youth and this could be a person of either sex. As Thompson (1995) postulates, children are regarded as innocent and having limited understanding. Therefore, since children are all of the above mentioned, they lack the matureness to be involved in marriages and this research sought to find out how *The Herald* and *Newsday* newspapers were covering issues to do with child marriages in Zimbabwe and their relationship with African cultures.

Child marriages have been influenced and keep on being influenced by different factors which include poverty, religion, gender inequality, tradition and even culture. Due to the not so changing cultural norms of Africans, such as customarily marrying off children before

they reach the age of consent, children, especially the girl child, are suffering and their future is distorted because of such acts. When the child marries early, they are bound to face difficulties and are prone to problems which include health problems, lack of adequate education, negligence from family and rest of the society. The girl child is the one who is mostly at risk because it is them that are usually victims of such practices.

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

This study focused on how Zimbabwe's two most popular daily newspapers, *The Herald* and *Newsday*, cover stories to do with child marriages. The investigation dwelt on the way they report and represent issues of child marriages. This research looked at how African cultures influence such practice. Furthermore, the researcher intended to find out the initiative(s) that are being taken for such practices to be put to an end. The role of the media are to educate, inform and entertain, hence the research also wanted to understand whether the print media are making an initiative to end child marriages or even giving a platform to those who want to advocate for an end to child marriages.

### **1.4 Research objectives**

Objectives of the research are the targets that the research hopes to have achieved at the end. Harris (2003) stipulates that research objectives are the ones that set the focus and purpose of the research with the fundamental questions that will be addressed. This research seeks to:

- Assess the media's duty in their child marriage reportage in Zimbabwe.
- Evaluate how African cultures have influenced the practice of child marriages.
- Find out the relevance/ adequacy of intervention strategies that have been employed to address the situation of child marriages.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

#### **1.5.1 Main research question:**

- In what way do the media (*The Herald* and *Newsday*) portray child marriages?

#### **1.5.2 Research sub-questions:**

- What is the African society's role in perpetuating child marriages?
- How are the government and other civic society members (such as NGOs) doing as an initiative to put an end to the still on-going practices of child marriages?

## 1.6 Significance of the study

The research is important as most researches that have been carried out dwell much on other African countries especially the Western and Eastern countries and a very few studies have looked at Zimbabwe, thus this research will do justice as it will mainly be focused on Zimbabwe only. Goonsekere and Amasuriya (2013) looked at tyke relational unions in Sri Lanka and how youngster relational unions can be connected to statutory assault. They saw that of the 71 contextual investigations they led; just 6 were classified as instances of early constrained marriage. A considerable lot of the relational unions notwithstanding for young ladies underneath 18 took after assent by the young girls to wed a man she definitely knew. Verma (2013) likewise directed another study in view of youngster relational unions in Asia. He says that the youngster marriage is a genuine human rights emergency and a standout amongst the most squeezing improvement worries on the planet today. Verma (2013) includes that regardless of most nations instituting laws that stipulate 18 as the base lawful age for marriage, kid relational unions are broadly common and they are for the most part organised by the guardians with or without the young girl's assent.

In addition, Mulugeta (2014) did an exploration on Media Cover of Child Abuse and Child Protection in Ethiopia and he analyses the media scope of child abuse and child prevention and whether the media advance this issue as an imperative piece of general society motivation. Nguyen and Wodon (2015) additionally in their examination on Child Marriage and Education take a gander at what should be possible to lessen youngster marriage and enhance education for girls. They say that in various nations, laws have been embraced to avoid marriages underneath 18 years old, and yet these laws are regularly not implemented. The laws are required, yet they are insufficient. Initiatives to decrease the cost of tutoring for young ladies and the nature of the training accessible to them demonstrate more guarantee.

This research explores how child marriages are portrayed in *The Herald* and *Newsday* and the factors that influence the method of representation. The research also looked at how this has shaped the perceptions of child marriages on newspapers' audiences. The media are merchants of representation and mediation metaphors will testify that the media are not innocent portrayals of reality but instead mirror reality through the eyes of their sponsors and advertisers (Hall, 1997). The media are also a mirror and a window through which people can view and perceive the society; the above mentioned daily newspapers thus are responsible for how the audiences view child marriages. This research also investigated which group of

people is mostly attributed to be causing child marriages and where it is said to be more prominent.

### **1.7 Delimitations**

The research looked at published articles by *The Herald* and *Newsday*, which involve issues to do with child marriages. The researcher interviewed journalists that penned published stories on child marriages in *The Herald* and *Newsday*. Websites of the two newspapers were used in this research as supporting sources. This gave more insight on the readers' views and opinions. Since there are civic organisations such as Save the Children that also work on issues to do with child marriages, they became part of the research as they were interviewed. Such organisations have an impact on the stories that have been published in that they bring out how the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) world is doing as an initiative to stop child marriages and they are also reliable sources of the media when it comes to covering child marriage stories.

### **1.8 Limitations**

The researcher came across some limiting factors during the course of the study. The information was collected using convenience sampling. Though convenience sampling provides time advantages, there may be prejudiced and may not represent the entire population. In this case the convenient sample only consisted of people in Harare and not in areas like Rushinga or Chipinge where child marriage cases are increasing day by day. The findings therefore cannot be generalized to the whole population. Potential limitation to this research was lack of access to adequate sources. The researcher could not get some of the hard copy articles but however, she made use of online articles as the situation required an alternative.

### **1.9 Assumptions of the study**

It is the assumption of the researcher that a reporter who writes an article on child marriages is bound to be biased and their stance on the issue will be greatly influenced by their sex and beliefs. *The Herald* and *Newsday* give prominence to religious groups and also some Zimbabwean cultures (like *kuzvarira*) as the initiator of child marriages. The two local daily newspapers do not thoroughly scrutinise the issue of early marriages in Zimbabwe as a whole, they dwell on little areas such as that child marriages are mostly prominent in the apostolic (*mapostori*) sect and poverty is the main reason why child marriages exist. They

neglect areas that include culture being also the promoter of child marriages and also that they exist in other religious sects.

### **1.10 Structure of the study**

This study is comprised of six chapters in which chapter one is the introduction to the research that has been conducted. Chapter two consists of the literature review and theoretical framework that was used in the research. In Chapter 3, the research discusses the research methods as well as explain the various methods used in gathering and presenting data. Chapter 4 focuses on the organizational analysis of *The Herald* and *Newsday*. Chapter 5 presents the findings. Lastly, chapter 6 sums up the findings of the research and gives a conclusion of the study.

### **1.11 Conclusion**

This chapter was an overview of the study which intends to explore the role of the media, particularly *The Herald* and *Newsday*, in portraying child marriage issues and how African cultures have been the influencers of such act. The chapter also highlighted on the research questions that the study intends to answer, the objectives of the study and difficulties faced during the investigation. The following chapter will be giving details of the literature reviewed and conceptual framework used by the researcher.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review and Conceptual Framework**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter explores certain scholarly works that have been that has been documented on early marriages and that have also been illustrated in the media. According to Cooper (1998) literature review is a procedure of collecting data from different sources and recording it. Literature review is a piece of information that targets to assess essential points of contemporary information on a certain theme.

### **2.2 Literature Review**

The literature review is a critical analysis of published sources, or literature, on a particular topic. It gives information related to the topic understudy. In this literature review themes are derived after having analysed information from different scholars. It groups scholars who argue for the same cause in similar themes and also bring out scholars that are against the topic, as well. The study looks at themes like responsibility of media in children's sexual education, absence of education and the probability of early marriages and escalation of girl child discussions in print media.

#### **2.2.1 The responsibility of media in children's sexual education**

There are different ways of communicating sexual education which include parents, school lessons, peers and church meetings. Due to the advent of technology children of today have a lot of exposure and have chances than back in the day, to access information to do with sexual knowledge. They get this information from television and radio programs, newspapers, magazines, the internet, books and many other sources. Nowadays, teenagers around the globe have easy access of sexually oriented material which could be found in films, music or print. Siegel et al (2001) note that researches indicate that media exposure within children of today has hit highest levels.

Media duties in sexual socialisation have been indicated in some studies that have been carried out. It has been perceived by Temin et al (1999: 189) that amid the youths in Benin City and Nigeria, knowledge of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) is commonly sourced from magazines, posters and newspapers. Television, film and radio are also source of STI information though to a lesser extent. Another study was undertaken by Brown et al (2001) which focused on youths in secondary schools in Argentina and Buenos Aires discovered that

sources of facts on HIV/AIDS was largely sought from mass media. Uganda had its research on children's sexual and reproductive health and it submitted that 35% adolescents said radio was mainly the wellspring of knowledge, 13% said it were the newspapers and 12% recorded that it was through medical services (Korukiko and Ampaire, 1999).

On the other hand, media is not only a constructive socialisation instrument. Media might disseminate knowledge which is separate and different from the environment of the set sexual customs of the culture. This will then encourage youths to engage into anti-social sexual activities which will in turn bring about unwelcomed pregnancies.

In developing countries, media such as television, radio and the internet are scarce or even non-existent. This is because there is no supporting infrastructure such as electricity in the rural areas of African countries. Also people in those areas cannot afford to pay for such amenities.

### **2.2.2 Absence of education and the probability of early marriages**

Sending every child, especially the girl child to school, giving them access to basic education and instead of marrying them off will reduce or better still eliminate child marriages in the society. Addaney (2016) elucidates that early marriages can be clogged by growing a girl's chance of acquiring primary education. He adds that young boys and girls should be informed on how it is important to go to school and be educated and also they should be enlightened on how women can have a positive impact in their societies if they are not married off. Unnecessary population expansion rate will be annulled if early marriages are less. In the Southern African region 55 per cent of girls are not in school. World Bank conducted an investigation in 2012 which diagnosed that early marriages and immature pregnancies together impart 15 to 20 per cent of school leavers in the sub-Saharan Africa region. UNICEF (2007) argues that the pursuit for basic education is linked to gender impartiality and this call for both boys and girls to be given same access to education. It is thus in the quest of this study to search how *The Herald* and *Newsday* cover early marriages.

Nguyen and Wodon (2015) note that the subject of youngster relational unions and the matter of education has become a cause of concern and it has found new devotion from policy makers and the media. Regardless of the efforts put in by the developing countries the problem of early marriages still continues to increase day by day. Early marriages affect the child, especially the girl child in a negative way as it will result them in leaving school

without completing their education, having health complications, face society negligence, increased infant mortality due to early pregnancies and also domestic violence within the home. Mulugeta (2014) goes further to mention the reasons of youngster relational unions, saying that parents or guardians marry off their children because of poverty, cultural norms and conflict circumstances. An instance could be when a family has to pay ransom; they give up their child for marriage as a form of payment. Early marriage mirrors traditional and cultural customs that propagate discrimination of girls. The most affected in early marriages are girls because they are regarded as child carriers and sex objects in societies controlled by men (Mulugeta, 2014). Scholars have done researches and have concluded that it is absence of education that permits people to continue practising such behaviours which infringe the constitutional rights of the girl child.

Additionally, Nguyen and Wodon (2015) note that tyke relational unions are most common in societies where there is poverty, education access is low and health facilities are limited. Bhat et al (2005) also points out that parents or guardians have taken child marriage as a survival tactic for monetary safety as these marriages will give them livestock, other goods and assets to assist the remaining family members and this occurs mostly in families with poor backgrounds. Nguyen and Wodon further their argument by saying that in difficult circumstances where parents are not financially stable, it becomes difficult to send a girl child to school and get an education hence end up marrying off their daughter. This study will show whether *The Herald* and *Newsday* bring out the causes of tyke relational unions in their reportage.

There are researches that have been done to examine the effects of early marriage on education. Brown (2012) explains that girls who are less intelligent academically are seen as to have minor losses in future incomes therefore they have lesser encouragement to keep on going to school unlike those girls who are naturally intelligent. The less intelligent girls end up thinking of marriage as they do not have the encouragement of getting an education or their parents will give them up for marriage. UNICEF (2007) mentions in its report that girls who do not have a vision in furthering their education are bound to fall victims of early marriages. Most girls leave school without completing it because their families would have seen it useless to send a girl child to school. In *Girls Not Brides' brief* (2015) they show that youngster relational unions deprive girls of their constitutional right to education. More than 60% of girls in third world countries have no primary education. An instance can be taken from Malawi where there are two thirds of women and girls who were victims of early

marriage did not have basic education as equated to five per cent of women who have achieved higher education. Giving girls access to secondary education does not only results in girls marrying off later in life but it also results in them having smaller families (UNICEF, 2011: 29).

UNICEF 2011 report indicates that education has shown to be a key factor contributing to high rates of early marriages, especially for the girl child who is mostly at risk. It has also been realised that numbers of girls who are married before the age of 18 decreases if they earn a secondary education. Hence, secondary education is vital for girls as it will decrease the chances of risking the girl child's life.

The research is focused on probable methods that can be adopted to decrease the chances of child marriages in Zimbabwe. In Zimbabwe and many other African countries, they have setup laws that protect children from child marriages but the problem comes where they have not yet criminalised the offence and also these countries have not yet started to execute the laws as they are expected to do. Since education has been derived to be also the cause and result of child marriages, Brown (2012) submits that instead of vouching for global conferences on early marriages, he proposes for countries to consider 'tipping-point' plans in education which involves decreasing the fee for girls to move from primary to secondary schools. This study sought to find out whether The Herald and Newsday are giving resolutions that can be put in place to end this practice.

### **2.2.3 The escalation of girl child discussions in print media**

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) of 1989 states that every child is allowed to have rights and it says that views of children must be listened to and also be heard. The convention continues to say that every child has the right to delight in his or her childhood and not to be disrupted by marriage or by lack of education. Kline (2004) agrees with the above mentioned point by the UNCRC and asserts that the advent of the media carries prospects to widen the youth's point of view and offer the same admittance to information. On the other hand the media also portends cultural belonging and beliefs which might be the cause of childhood intimidation.

Gigli (2004) presents the rights of the child as outlined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989. The convention clearly talks of the right to which all children everywhere are entitled and says that opinions of children themselves should be heard, child

development, not only survival, should be ensured and each child should be able to enjoy his or her right to childhood without disturbances of marriage or lack of education. Kline (2004) supports this and avows that globalization of the media brings opportunities to broaden children's outlooks and provide more equal access to information, but it also threatens cultural identification and values which might be the reasons that threaten childhood. The trends and issues highlighted from young people in the research all point to the need for a more effective use of the vast positive potential of the mass media and new technologies to advocate for, and enrich the lives of children and young people worldwide. As noted by Gigli (2004) and Kline (2004), there is need for researches such as the one being conducted here to look at how newspapers such as *The Herald* and *Newsday* are covering issues to do with child marriages and whether the newspapers are fully representing the issues to do with child marriages from all over the country and upholding the laws which advocate for children's rights.

Kline (2004) in his research studies the issues of children in the age of marketing and asserts that history has shown that the media tend to favour positive portrayal of boys over girls in coverage of issues. He argues that girls are being ignored and insulted by the mass media when their victimisation is at the core of many reports. Terkildsen (1997) however is of the view that child debates are increasing in the media because policy makers and leaders of government have seen the need for the rights of the girl child to be upheld in the male dominated world of today and it is not always that the media is focusing on girls. Though these scholars agree that the world is male dominated, Terkildsen (1997) goes further to argue that the media also have become dominated by men and thus it sympathises with women more as they are seen as the victims. In supporting the view of the above mentioned scholar, the researcher intends to explore more on how the two local newspapers are representing the issue of child marriages and how they report on those organisations that are advocating for the end of child marriages, organisations like Save the Children, Childline and Girls are not Brides just to mention a few. The scholarly work hence shows the activities being done worldwide in advocating for an end to child marriages. Therefore, the study becomes unique in the sense that it analyses such activities covered by the two local daily newspapers.

Most researches that have been done on child marriages have tended to focus more on the girl child because according to Turner (2013) they are the bearers of most of the problems associated with marriages. Some of the problems associated with early marriages are HIV

and AIDS, infant mortality, complications at birth just to mention a few and these are the girl's burden to carry. In most countries, it is the girl child who is given away to an elderly man whom she cannot negotiate safe sex with, thereby leading to HIV and AIDS. Bhat et al (2005) add that in many countries, young married girls move away from their parents' home to live with their husband and his family, where they have no friends, no support, and little say in their own lives or in household matters. Turner (2013) also avows that young married girls often are isolated and powerless. They are unable to negotiate or obtain support for issues in their own interest and they are frequently exposed to violence and threats of abandonment and divorce. This is different from when two under aged children venture into a marriage.

It is this literature in mind that this research seeks to find out how the media cover issues to do with child marriages in the society and also to see to how the African culture(s) have influenced the practice of early marriages. In so doing, the researcher wants to see if there are any initiatives or intervention strategies that have been employed to address the not so ending early marriages in Zimbabwe.

## **2.3 Conceptual Fraework**

A conceptual framework is an analytical tool with several variations and contexts. It is used to make conceptual distinctions and organise ideas. Conceptual framework represents less formal structure and used for studies in which existing theory is inapplicable or insufficient. The following is the conceptual framework used in this particular study.

### **2.3.1 Framing theory**

This theory, as propounded by Tuchman (1978) is a critical activity in the construction of social reality because it helps shape the perspectives through which people see the world. Although media practitioners commonly refer framing only to effective messages (Duhe & Zoch, 1994) and in the same way that a builder frames a house from the bottom up. The framing metaphor can be better understood as a window or portrait frame drawn around information that delimits the subject matter and, thus, focuses attention on key elements that should be focused on. Thus, framing involves processes of inclusion and exclusion as well as emphasis. Entman (1993) summarised the essence of framing processes as essentially involving selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of perceived reality and make them more salient in the communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular

problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described. Frames, then, determine what a causal agent is doing and costs and benefits, usually measured in terms of cultural values; diagnose causes identify the forces creating the problem; make moral judgments evaluate causal agents and their effects; and suggest remedies and justify treatments for the problem and predict their likely effects. *The Herald* and *Newsday* thus are responsible for the framing of child marriages and they determine what is to be seen as the causes of child marriages and their likely effects.

Implicitly, framing plays a vital role in public relations. If public relations, which the media are a part of, are defined as the process of establishing and maintaining mutually beneficial relations between an organization and publics on whom it depends (Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 1995). The establishment of common reference about topics or issues of mutual concern is a necessary condition for effective relations to be established. Framing implies that the media choose which view point to give the public and choose which view point not to give to the public. Framing theory suggests that there is a certain angle that is focused more on and that will be the important thing. The rest is left out and it is seemingly not as important. Just like the media, it gives a certain angle of a story and the public are given what to think about. The media thus become responsible for making the world see issues from the same perspective when they report about issues. It should be noted that the cultural background of the journalist must be taken into consideration as it affects his/ her coverage of the story. If the journalist's cultural beliefs are involved, they are likely to report with a bias.

Related to the framing theory is the agenda setting theory. The theory as cited in McQuail (1987) was propounded by McCombs and Shaw in 1972. The theory states that the media because of its power carefully select a few issues that they deem "important" and present these to the audiences. The media choose certain information that is 'believed' to be important, to share with the audiences for them to consume and also be aware of what is happening around them. This theory also suggests that the media shapes public opinion through their coverage of certain issues or people. The media give importance and salience to certain matters such that some issues are taken seriously because the media says they are important. For instance people who have never been up close with child marriages are likely to look at it according to the media's view on the topic. There are levels of agenda setting and firstly it is when media use objects or issues to influence what people should think about. In the case of child marriages it is the girl child who has been mostly affected and has been victimised but it does not mean that the boy child cannot be subject to this abuse. The media

has set the agenda by this and has given the public a picture of what they choose to show them. The media have thus placed the girl child on the victim side of child marriages such that audiences are likely to sympathize mostly with girls who are subject to abuse than boys who also enter into marriage before the age of 18.

Another cause of concern when it comes to agenda setting is the way the media focuses on characters of issues to shape what people think about. This might include bringing in testimonies from people who were or are affected by a certain problem. In *The Herald* and *Newsday* as the research unfolds, there are characters that will be looked at that were used to shape people's opinions on child marriages. However there is an argument that agenda setting mostly has political connotations and that it is the ideas of the ruling class that are furthered through the media. McQuail (1987) adds that the agenda setting theory is mostly associated with gatekeeping. In the newsroom, the editor in chief is the final gatekeeper who determines what goes to the public and what is to be removed from any particular article based on its newsworthiness. Therefore, it means that some stories on child marriages do not see the daylight due to the nature of the story.

### **2.3.2 Hegemony**

The mass media's representation of youngster relational unions can likewise be found in the language they use to depict or discuss early marriages. As indicated by Foucault (1998), dialect/ language is the connection of a specific power connection. Other than concentrating on the importance of a given talk, the identifiable characteristic for Foucault's approach is its strengths on control connections. These are communicated through dialect and conduct, and the connection amongst dialect, is influenced by different wellsprings of energy. Thus, this method is near social constructivism, as the researcher tries to see how *The Herald* and *Newsday* are moulded by their association with the general population in power and how our general public is being formed or developed by dialect, which thus reflects existing force connections. The investigation endeavours to see how people see the world and studies classifications, individual and institutional connections, philosophy, and governmental issues through the media

Language is used as a powerful tool in social control and George Orwell in the 1945 novel *Animal Farm* offers a great example to which misleading or biased information can be used as an instrument of social control. Squealer's role on the farm is to spread propaganda in favour of his fellow pig and farm leader Napoleon, which he does in a sly, cunning manner.

Squealer manipulates words and twists meaning in order to justify actions, helping to exploit the weaknesses of the farm animals to the pigs' advantage. Sophomore (2012) adds that the media of today fulfils a role similar to that of Squealer the pig in terms of spreading propaganda and misinformation to set a certain agenda. The study will be looking at the two daily newspapers' power of language that they use when reporting on child marriage stories. The research will also look at the words and phrases used in describing the child marriages in the two daily newspapers.

Bhat (2005) adds to what Sophomore (2012) says and is of the view that language is a great force of socialization, an integrated component of culture, a symbol of social and cultural identity and a mode of communication and representation. Language as a sign system is not simply an arbitrary relation between signifier and signified but an ideologically motivated system of signs which controls and shapes all the social realities.

Due to the existence of bias, the researcher investigated whether *The Herald* and *Newsday* are being influenced by the dominant hegemonic powers, religious and cultural groups to have social control and remove child marriages which are being practiced by some religious groups. It also looks at how the culture and background of journalists have an implication on the language they use as they report on such stories.

The concept of hegemony is of essence to explain how language is used as a means of social control. Antonio Gramsci (1999) adds to what the above mentioned scholars have said and says that language is used for social control and dominance. Karl Marx adds to this and in his Base-Superstructure concept, he says that those who control the sources of economic production also control the mental production. Hegemony therefore involves the dominant group persuading other classes to accept its moral, political and cultural values. This study wanted to find out if the two newspapers under study have played their watchdog role in the reporting of child marriages through the use of language. The researcher's aim is to also find out if there are any special choices of words that are used to describe certain cultural groups. It chose to look at how it affects people's perceptions and these people that will be interviewed by the researcher.

McCarty (2004; 56) goes further to say that "as ideological constructs, language policies both reflect and (re)produce the distribution of power within the larger society". Considering Squealer the pig in the novel *Animal Farm*, who manipulates (spins) meaning to validate Napoleon's changing of rules and commandments it can be clearer that language is

exploitative. The truth hence becomes a malleable message meant to serve Napoleon rather than help all the animals. Squealer's "spin" on the truth become the reality for the animals. Language thus becomes an agent of social control rather than communication. It can be agreed that language is a tool that is used by *The Herald* and *Newsday* in achieving its watchdog role in reporting about child marriages and the effects the child marriages have on the psychosocial well-being of the children involved.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

The chapter was paying particular attention to the literature that was relevant to the topic under study in print media specifically looking at two popular local daily newspapers in Zimbabwe. Works of scholars like McQuail, Nguyen, Wodon, Gigli just to mention a few, were used. The framing theory and hegemony were used as conceptual framework as they bring out the representation of early marriages in *The Herald* and *Newsday* and also to see how language has power in print media as they portray some cultures as being the promoters of child marriages. The following chapter will be focusing on the methodology used by the researcher in finding, gathering and analysing data.

## **Chapter 3: Research Methods and Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter concentrates on the research techniques used to collect data on the illustration of child marriages in *The Herald* and *Newsday*. Emphasis is on what facts were collected, how they were collected and how they were presented. It particularly discusses the research design which includes gathering of information processes and research tools most relevant to answer the problem of the study.

This research used the qualitative method. This is so because it is projected that this technique would enhance the quality of the research.

### **3.2 Research Design**

An approach can be considered just as the structure linked with a specific arrangement of ultimate ideas that are employed to carry out a study, that is, logical techniques, ethnography, and activity research (O' Leary, 2004). Haralambos and Holborn (1995:840) identify techniques mentioned by O'Leary and then they refer it to the diversities of methodologies and procedures employed as a part of an investigation for social occasion information. However, Haralambos and Holborn (1995) go on to say that each academic review must include a method to impact its decision and that it must mirror ways for scrutinizing facts so that the theories can be accredited or laid off. This study employed the qualitative approach. In a bid to make the results more practical and realistic, the investigation used qualitative approach and this focused more on content analysis and interviewing people within their cultural context.

### **3.3 Research Universe**

Research universe or population is defined by Saunders et al. (2007) as people, individuals, organisations, groups and communities. In a research, population is the target of study for the collection of data. It talks of the whole group of individuals, objects and occasions, meaning everything has one or more characteristics of interests to the study (Clare, 2010). In this study, the research population included *The Herald* and *Newsday* reporters and editors that have written stories to do with child marriages, Save the Children's focal person on the issue under study and also girls or women who were or are still involved in child marriages.

### **3.4 Sampling**

Sampling is the collection of elements of analysis for example people or institutions for the investigation. The point for this is to choose a few examples from a larger group (sample population) to become the centre for assessing or anticipating a fact, situation or outcome, concerning the group at large (Gunter, 2000). Ncube (2011) is of the notion that sampling is an exercise whereby a certain number of individuals are selected over the total population which are chosen with the aim of getting an understanding about the population of concern. Basically, sampling is the smaller portion of population which symbolizes the bigger portion of population. The research utilises purposive and convenience sampling procedures. It is critical in an investigation to target the correct persons so as to get relevant information to answer the topic of the study.

#### **3.4.1 Purposive Sampling**

It is important in a study to target relevant individuals so as to get reliable information to answer the topic under study. Crossman (2017) describes purposive testing as a non-probability sample that is chosen based on characteristics of a population and the objective of the study. This research made use of purposive sampling to get a sound response to the study's questions outlined before. Since purposive sampling involves engaging specific individuals, the researcher intends to engage reporters that report on child marriages and sexual orientation specifically from *The Herald* and *Newsday*. The specific reporters that were chosen were involved in the key issues being utilised in the exploration which is if the two local daily newspapers, under study, are fulfilling their watchdog role in the scope of the early marriage unions.

Purposive sampling was vital to this study because it saved money and time and the labour of having to go to the whole populace which is enormous. Personnel from Save the Children were included in the study in order to understand the issue of early marriages better since they deal with such issues on a daily basis.

#### **3.4.2 Convenience Sampling**

This type of sampling is used for gathering facts from the readily available populace during the time of the study. It involved respondents to partake at the time which was suitable for the researcher conducting interviews and administering questionnaires. One of the advantages of this technique is that data collection is done in a short space of time. In this case, the people

in Harare were closer to the researcher because she conducted some interviews with *The Herald*, *Newsday* and Save the Children which are in Harare. Additionally, selecting articles on child marriages was convenient because the articles were accessed as hard copy newspapers (under study) and online versions without seeking consent.

### **3.5 Data Collection Procedures**

In this study the researcher came up with several ways of gathering data so as to get more information and get the information from different sources. Since the aim was to have a solid research at the end, the researcher used different strategies to acquire the kind of information that she wanted. In the study, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews, she also did archival research, and questionnaires were administered as well.

#### **3.5.1 Archival Research**

Archival research is a type of primary research which involves seeking out and extracting evidence from original archival records. The records used in archival research may be property of institutional archive repositories (that is, maybe belonging to a government body, business, family or other agency). Archival research can be contrasted with secondary research, that is, can be taken on in a library or online, which includes finding and consulting secondary sources relating to the topic of under investigation and with other types of primary research and empirical investigation such as fieldwork and experiment. The researcher used this type of data collection because it gave more and deeper detail on the articles written in relation to child marriages and their relationship with the African culture. The researcher made use of the articles (on the topic of study) produced by the two newspapers under investigation to analyse and see how different African cultures are portrayed by the two newspapers in relation to child marriages. In this survey, the researcher used recorded information of *The Herald* and *Newsday*'s articles to get facts and it assisted with the response of the search reviews, for example, which cultures are said to preserve or promote kid relational unions.

The study made use of a number of stories that were chosen from *The Herald* and *Newsday*. Some of the documents were not physically accessible at the time of the survey; therefore the researcher resorted to using online archives found on the two local newspaper's websites. Some of the documents were not physically accessible at the time of survey and the researcher had to resort to using online archives found on the two local newspapers' websites.

### **3.5.2 Interviews**

According to Kothari (1997) interview is the exercise of asking questions and receiving answers there and there as they will be posed. Kothari adds that this is used as a strategy of gathering data. It expects the interviewer to ask interviewees open ended questions. This is a form of obtaining data directly from sources by conducting personal interviews (Leedy, 1980).

The researcher used structured interviews and phone interviews as well to gain information from the population related to early marriages in *Newsday* and *The Herald*. Phone call interviews would be used as option B when the respondents were not able to have face to face interviews. An unstructured interview is an interview in which there is no specific set or predetermined questions, although the interviewer usually has certain topics in mind that they wish to cover during the interview. It was the duty of the researcher to affirm the respondents that these were private and confidential. This gave the researcher to obtain reliable information directly from the targeted population so as to be fast.

### **3.5.3 Questionnaires**

Moore (2006) describes questionnaires as documents consisting of a set of questions presented to respondents in a sample group in order to gather research information. O'Connell (1998) asserts that, questionnaires are one of the most efficient ways of getting and finding out what people think and do. Questionnaires allow the researcher to access information that is not directly apparent (Kothari, 1997). In this study the researcher designed questionnaires with open ended questions whereby respondents were giving their own opinions on responses and closed questions where respondents were given choices on the topic. In this study questionnaires assisted the researcher with getting a full understanding of the topic and they served as a follow-up to interviews.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

This research engaged a qualitative form of data analysis thereby using semiotic analysis and content analysis. Another way that was used to conduct data analysis was by using semiotic analysis.

### **3.6.1 Content Analysis**

This can be referred to as textual analysis. It is a procedure used to analyse content of the articles in *The Herald* and *Newsday*. Content analysis is used by social scientists to quantify communication patterns. Content analysis is mostly used by scholars as a methodology in the social sciences by which texts are analysed as to the content's meaning, legitimacy and originality. This type of analysis is the process of grouping verbal and behavioural data for the purpose of classification and summarisation.

### **3.6.2 Semiotic Analysis**

Semiotics is basically the study of signs to derive meaning. It therefore means the researcher used this semiotic analysis in analysing certain words, phrases and pictures used in the articles that have been published by the two local newspapers. Semiotic analysis is used in the study to deconstruct the connotative and denotative meanings within the articles on child marriages and African cultures.

Sebeok (2001) has described semiotics as the study of symbols and represents various areas that are supportive of presenting in what way *The Herald* and *Newsday* have reported about early marriages. For the current study semiotics includes scrutiny of lyrics which were used in pointing out the victim or perpetrators of child marriages. The research explores the words used to employ the certain cultures that are in the bid of promoting kid relational unions.

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

Being aware of both cultural and religious beliefs, not negatively generalize or discrimination of people of different cultural backgrounds was done. Cultures are brought up in the study, but in a respectable way in order to avoid any misunderstandings. Since child marriages and matters associated with the subject such as sexual relations can be sensitive to discuss, the researcher made sure that she chose the right way to talk about the sexual relations without being insensitive. The researcher made sure that she acknowledged every work that she used in the study that does not belong to her.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

This chapter reviewed the methodology used in the research. It also outlined the methods of data collection and data analysis paying particular attention to their significance to the

research without ignoring their shortcomings. The following chapter looked at organisational analysis of the two papers under study.

## **Chapter 4: Organisational Analysis**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter concentrates on the analysis of the two organisations under research which are *The Herald* and *Newsday*. It is important for the researcher to have knowledge of the political economy of the two print media houses so as to have an understanding on how the media houses are funded and how that affects their operations. The purpose of the organisational analysis is for discussing the different roles in the organisational structures. Political economy analysis of *The Herald* and *Newsday* is vital to this research because it helps comprehend the impact of ownership and control patterns on the reportage of child marriage issues by the two papers.

### **4.2 Political Economy**

Political economy is concerned about the relationship between economic and representational dimensions of communication. It is also concerned with media ownership, regulation and concentration. Political economy is an investigation of the social associations, especially the power relations that generally include the construction, appropriation and usage of resources comprising communication resources (Mosco, 2008). Kline (2009) is of the notion that the word can be used to break down how nations are overseen in a structure where both financial and political basics are crushing away and it is one instrument that allows us to generally scrutinise the media and the biases it promotes.

Political economy uses a Marxist way of thinking when examining exchanges and these include taking a look at how individuals from different financial classes have a unique way of getting hold of relative information, and the effect of proprietorship on media products. Proprietorship in a media setup can best be understood by having the knowledge of who is in control of an organisation(s) that works in the media entities. As far as political economy is concerned, the media are seen as tools of the entrepreneur class in which content is influenced by those who own, control and fund the organisation. It is therefore, the duty of this research to distinguish how proprietorship examples of *The Herald* and *Newsday* have an effect on the coverage of early marriages.

### **4.3 *The Herald***

#### **4.3.1 Origins**

*The Herald* is a daily newspaper in Zimbabwe that is under the Zimbabwe Newspapers (ZIMPAPERS) organisation. Its origins can be traced back to the nineteenth century and its forerunner was launched on 27 June 1891 by William E. Fairbridge who at that time was working for the Rhodesian Printing and Publishing Company (RPPC) as an editor. *The Herald* was at that time known as ‘The Mashonaland and Zambesian Times’ (Gale, 1962; Herald Reporters, 2015). When it began in 1891, the first copies to be printed were printed using a makeshift cyclostyle press, “in a hut in what is now Africa Unity Square”, (Herald Reporters, 2015). On October 20, 1892 its name was changed to *The Rhodesian Herald* (Gale, 1962). RPPC was a subsidiary of the Argus Printing and Publishing Company of South Africa (APPC). The newspaper later changed its name to its commonly known name, *The Herald*, soon after Zimbabwe gained its independence in 1980.

#### **4.3.2 Transition of *The Herald***

*The Herald* has its origins in the pioneer times as *The Rhodesian Herald*, and it is also vital to acknowledge that there is very little significant change even with *The Herald* in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. During *The Rhodesian Herald*, Cecil J. Rhodes put Francis Dormer as the editor of the newspaper, to be responsible of the RPPC. This setup was believed to imply that Dormer would not have conflicting ideas with Rhodes in the choices of stories in the newspaper. This then reflects the setup at the current media house of *The Herald*, where it tends to give positive quality to political matters that support ZANU PF and less prominence to other critical issues like early marriages. The government of Zimbabwe, which is a ZANU PF government, has 51.9% shares in ZIMPAPERS. During the frontier times, the pioneer paper was centred on pushing for the interests of the white minority whilst the interests of the blacks were not attended to. The whites were always in good light and blacks were reported in a negative way. The newspaper would report on the political and financial interests of the whites whilst reportage on black people was always awful and was about strange things that had occurred (Saunders 1999). Saunders (1999) adds on that the present *Herald* newspaper is just like new wine poured into an old container. Basically, it means that *The Herald* took on the characteristics of *The Rhodesian Herald* and only changed the owners of the newspaper. Instead of serving the interests of the whites just like in the frontier times, *The Herald* gives

prominence to issues to do with the elites who are also the owners and controllers of the newspapers.

After Zimbabwe got its freedom the print media operations changed and the RPPC also changed to the now known ZIMPAPERS. Manyuki (2003) notes that a board was created so as to protect the newspaper from political trouble. The board created was named The Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust (ZMMT) and was put there so as to control *The Herald*. The paper was clearly settling to be the informer, educator and entertainer of the free Zimbabweans, which means its initial purpose, was to really serve as a watchdog for the general public and be different from the newspaper during the colonial era. With time ZMMT abandoned its initial role of controlling the paper and it began to have several ZANU PF government issues getting into the media and roles were diverted into supporting the political party. Political economy takes up the role of choosing news products of *The Herald*. This shows that *The Herald* was and continues to be a political newspaper and controls which stories see the daylight and which do not. Child marriage issues have less prominence in the paper as they are not really political.

#### **4.4 Funding Mechanisms**

The media industries are a big industry that falls under the economic sector (Picard, 1987). For them to proficiently handle their daily tasks of collecting and publishing or broadcasting information, they need to have adequate resources. Since media's major source of revenue is advertising it shows that advertising has a critical role in the operations of a media house as they also influence the content produced by media houses (Albarran, 1996; Doyle, 2002). It is crucial to have knowledge about the source of funding of *The Herald* because it then mirrors on the number of audience the media house reach out to. The Herald carries a lot of adverts and this can be seen just by the physical eye. The newspaper carries advertisements extending from classifieds to full page advertisements. Most of the adverts that are put in the paper are associated with the government, for example, ZETDC, Netone, Telone, NSSA and private organisations like Econet, Telecel, Rainbow Towers Group, Dairyboard among more others, are big advertisers. Golding and Murdoch (2000) note that funding has distinguishable penalties on the choice of discourse in the public sphere and for public consumption. However, in the case of *The Herald* it is different in that the key advertisers such as Econet, Telecel and Dairy Board do not affect the running of the newspaper. Instead the government of Zimbabwe via the Ministry of Information and Broadcast are the ones that affect the

running of the organisation. This then gives a sign that the government of Zimbabwe is the one which determines what is and what is not published in the newspaper. This stemmed in the research examining how *The Herald* covers the reportage of issues to do with child marriages in the paper.

#### **4.5 Ownership and control**

*The Herald* is owned and controlled by Zimbabwe Newspapers Limited. This gives the authority to Zimpapers to have power to structure *The Herald*. Zimpapers' central body gets delegations from the president and it is all known that one cannot separate Zimpapers from the presidential office. Saunders (1999) notes that *The Herald* is perceived as a political tool in its proximity to the presidential office mainly in the dealing of the general public who see things to do with media. The political economy has an impact on *The Herald* as issues of early marriages are not given much prominence in the paper but instead it is the governmental and business matters that are covered more than anything else. Stories to do with human rights are given less space in the paper or they appear in the paper after a long time.

The Zimbabwean government has a controlling arm in Zimpapers which shows that they have much influence on the daily running of the organisation's operations. Osenga (2010) alludes to Ramaphosa (1999) who says that in political economy the institutions must serve the interests of their funders. It is a clear sign that the government of Zimbabwe has influence on the operations of *The Herald* and Mosco (2008) says those who have power to control the way of business of an organisation are also able to have influence over the products of media of which it is the consequence of the decisions made by the government. This relates to the research in that the newspaper serves the interests of the influential people or leaders and they promote their ideologies at the cost of child marriages which are not given much coverage in the paper so as to bring out how the nation can curb the practice of marrying off children at a tender age.

#### **4.6 Editorial policy**

This part focuses on the editorial policy of *The Herald*. Freedman (2008: 1) contends that policy "is the systematic attempt to foster certain types of media structure and behaviour and to suppress alternative modes of structure and behaviour. It is a deeply political phenomenon." This means that media is all about who is in power and who controls what.

The research sought to understand *The Herald's* editorial policy which requires it to highlight on how this can be reflected in its portrayal of the early marriage unions. The role of *The Herald* is to make sure that they disseminate vital information to the general public. The government has abused its role in controlling the media, for it has had the media to reinforce its noble affluence. It results in the newspaper being encumbered by political matters linked to ZANU PF ruling party. The editorial policy of *The Herald* states that newspapers must be reliable this is achieved by disseminating information that is truthful as much as possible. Newspapers must publish all newsworthy stories and reports from local, national, regional and or international events that is news, sports, social or cultural. Also, newspapers must be able to be read by everyone, taking into consideration sensitivity in the treatment of sensational and shocking stories. Finally, newspapers will be loyal to the elected government that is there at any given time.

When one analyses the editorial policy, it is realised that the forth item of the editorial policy gets submissive to the current government at any time meaning they are advancing the ideologies of the elected government at that time. This then supports the argument of Golding and Murdock (2000) to say that funding has an influence on content. *The Herald* has taken the role of being the 'puppet' of the Zimbabwean government which is made up of mainly ZANU PF supporters, for advancing their propaganda. It is of interest to know that political and business matters are made a need and they occupy a larger space in the newspaper unlike stories to do with human rights such as child marriage stories or child abuse or even stories to do with domestic violence. Mulugeta (2004) is of the view that matters to do with children are as vital as well and they deserve to be included in the press.

#### **4.7 Vision**

*The Herald's* vision is to be the major newspaper that is circulated, printed and that offers publishing services to its customers and also adding value to employees and stakeholders. However, the newspaper has achieved this because it is the widely read in the country.

#### **4.8 Mission**

*The Herald's* mission statement is "To produce newspapers, print and package products and offer publishing services that add values to our customer's employees and shareholders". *The Herald* has tried to make it a point to fulfil its purpose of sharing news with the public on a regular basis. McQuail (2006) suggests that the media are expected to likewise carry the duty

of informing the public which it serves. In contrast, the statement of purpose of *The Herald* has been to a certain extent been abandoned as they have been dwelling much on other issues like political and business issues thereby neglecting other matters like the early marriage matters. Herman and Chomsky (1987) assert that the media efficiently assist in shaping the needs of the elites. Studies have reviewed that *The Herald* is a superior newspaper for the government executives and supporters.

## **4.9 Organisational Structure**

The organogram of an organisation shows the organisation's arrangement in terms of who leads who and who reports to whom when it emanates to information collection and dissemination. The administration in several media houses is at different levels of production. The analysis of the institution's organogram is quite vital as it mirrors on matters of editors being given positions and how this has an impact on the newspaper's production in terms of the outcomes.

### **4.9.1 Editors**

The editor's role is to supervise the production of the newspaper on a day to day basis. Editors have the supervision authority entrusted in them in the absenteeism of the executives and stakeholders who are not part of the making process of the newspaper. Huburd (1996) notes that editor is expected to choose newsworthy stories from all the stories brought to his/her table by the reporters. Second line is the deputy editor. Deputy Editor reports to the editor and does much of the same as the editor's role. He/ she stand in for the editor when the editor is in absentia. After the deputy editor there is the assignment editor who is in charge of government journals from the Ministry of Media Information and Publicity and he/ she then assigns journalists to cover such events. Fourth in line comes the chief sub-editor whose task is to check for any misspellings and grammar mistakes in all stories brought by the reporters. The chief sub editor is expected to outline pages, arranging adverts and stories in the newspaper. Next after comes the news editor whose duty is to determine the angle to be taken when reporters cover stories. He/she has the power to reject stories before they reach the editors, which are not worthy to be put in the paper. The last but not least editor is the line editor. This one is a head of a news desk. The line editor guides reporters on his desk on how to write stories and which stories they should write on.

## **4.9.2 Reporters**

These are the ones that have the job of gathering news from events. They report to their specific line editors. The reporters go out to get stories from events that would have occurred in the different parts of the country and these stories should be newsworthy. Journalists' way of thinking when looking for news stories is guided by the ideologies of the funders of the newspaper and are warned which political or financial stance to take (Mabweazara, 2011).

## **4.10 Associations with other organisations**

*The Herald* has links with all segments of the Zimbabwean sectors. *The Herald* makes sure that it stays up-to-date with what is happening in and around Zimbabwe. Mano (2005:63) cited in Mabweazara (2011) states that news sourcing has more effect on the material of the paper with their appreciating of certain disseminations usually centred along political matters. The disadvantage of this is that matters to do with children are taken seriously after something terrible has happened.

Besides the different perspective they have when it comes to political issues, *The Herald* also has a link with *Newsday*, *Daily News*, *The Standard* and other print media outlets, and it should be observed that they share the same sentiments when it comes to early marriage unions. *The Herald* also has a relationship with Non- Governmental Organisations (NGOs) that work for children's rights. The newspaper has created and maintained amiable relations with news organisations like New Ziana which helps them with various stories and photographs. Not only has *The Herald* sustained good relations with local news organisations but has also kept its relations intact with institutions like CNN, BBC, Agency France Press (AFP) and Associated Press (AP). *The Herald* uses photographs that would have been gained from these global news sources on international stories and they have even have a page for international news that was obtained from the global news sources.

## **4.11 Newsday**

### **4.11.1 Background**

*Newsday* is a newspaper that is privately owned by Trevor Ncube. It falls under the Alpha Media Holdings with other newspapers namely *The Standard*, *The Zimbabwe Independent* and *Southern Eye*. The newspaper was launched in Harare on June 3, 2013. There are two

editors for the newspaper where one is based in Harare and another one in Bulawayo and these are Wilson Mudzu and Nqobani Ndlovu respectively.

#### **4.12 Vision**

The media house's dream is to look for authenticity, disseminate the facts and offer pertinent scrutiny where suitable. The newspaper dream to be open-minded, rational, unbiased, scrutinise the superiors and serve in the interest of the audience whom they promise to serve with integrity, giving them news that is reliable, truthful, accurate and solid. *Newsday* also envisions being the prominent everyday newspaper and a reliable source of news in the country as far as the perusers of the paper are concerned.

While their vision statement also includes making returns, one can deduce that the media house will do anything to get their newspapers selling. Therefore, it means that they might publish stories that might not be truthful, unrealistic or unreliable that they source from the internet (since the internet has become a major source of many journalists). The point that the institution is profit oriented means the sources of news are to some extent to be questioned since conflict sells news, stories that they write against the ruling party are done to make the paper sell.

#### **4.13 Mission**

The institution's mission says that it will use multimedia stands to distribute reliable, unbiased news and material to the public in a realistic and proficient way. The media house fights to enlighten its audience about human rights and nurturing democratic values, of which it tries to do it in a professional way. *Newsday's* mission statement is greatly influenced by the ownership and also by the funding mechanisms that have been setup to suit the policy of the organisation. The task of the company is to utilise multimedia stands to deliver dependable and rational news to all the audiences that is in a practical and proficient way. Since the newspaper is owned by Trevor Ncube, his opinions and views are sometimes included in the paper. Stories that are written bad mouthing the funders of the newspaper never see the light of the day because they risk jeopardising their funding mechanism and this means that they will be going against the papers mission

#### **4.14 Editorial policy**

Editorial policy is defined by Boyd-Barret and Newbold (1995) as instruction of purposes that are marked in every institutional newsroom. These serve a purpose of reminding journalists of what is believed to be newsworthy. For instance, it means anything that is negative about the current ruling party, ZANU PF is newsworthy. Besides politics, anything that sells the paper is deemed newsworthy and is treasured by the media house. It is these conditions that the investigation is grounded on, the articles that have to do with youngster relational unions and review how they are portrayed, especially those to do with the African culture being a key contributor to the unions.

#### **4.15 Ownership and control patterns**

The newspaper is a strong opponent of the publicly owned media such as *The Herald*, as it often criticise the officials of the ruling party in a negative light. It can be argued that the newspaper is bound to be single sided as it is owned by an individual thereby uses that platform to advance his own ideologies. The idea that *Newsday* is owned by an individual means that there are higher chances that his ideologies can easily be shared since the owner has a publishing company.

Alpha Media Holdings (AMH) has been seen to be of the opposition party since the newspapers that fall under AMH always clash on stories with the state controlled media. This conflicting evidence is seen when *The Herald* and *Newsday* have covered the same story but they give different stances to the story. It is even shown in the pictures that the two newspapers share in their newspapers, for instance pictures of President R.G Mugabe, in *The Herald* they use pictures of him looking lively and years younger than he actually is. In *Newsday* they use pictures of him looking old and frail as someone who is not in the right state to lead a nation.

#### **4.16 Funding**

One of *Newsday's* co-funders is established in the United States of America and this organisation is called Media Development Loan Fund (MDLF) and Vusumuzi Investments is based in Zimbabwe this shows means that these companies have influence in the day to day operations of *Newsday*. MDLF holds 39% shares whilst Vusumuzi Investments holds 41% shares. *Newsday* is funded more by a Zimbabwean based organisation; this was done because it is a requirement by the law of Zimbabwe that states that key stakeholders of media outlets

should be from within the country. Funding mechanism of the outlet is then analysed because the funders of an organisation have influence on the content that is produced by the newspaper. Ownership patterns of the organisation also add to the influencing of content that is distributed. Like any organisation, *Newsday* depends on advertising income as these bring in more money into the company than selling hardcopy newspapers. The propaganda model by Herman and Chomsky (2002) shows that advertising is one of the filters that has an impact on the operations of the media outlet and it decides on how the company endures and holds itself out in a market that is filled with so many advertisers. Organisations have a tendency of abandoning their own principles and end up doing the wishes of the advertisers which therefore has a negative impact on the reliability of the articles distributed.

#### **4.17 Organisational structure**

*Newsday* has different departments within it such as transport, editorial, marketing and advertising, production, and more others. These departments in the organisation work together in order to produce better quality work. Below are the roles and their functions within the outlet.

##### **4.17.1 Chairman**

Trevor Ncube holds this position in the organisation and he is also the supervisor for the other newspapers under AMH. He is basically the owner of the institution in layman's words. Since he is the owner of the media outlet, it means that he has great influence in the paper as he can do whatever that pleases him without being pinned down for it by anyone. Ncube is well-known for being anti-ZANU PF so his newspapers are bound to publish articles that are negative about the ruling party members and their leaders.

##### **4.17.2 Editor**

*Newsday* has two editors for the Harare and Bulawayo offices. The editor has major influence on setting up the editorial policy of the institution and is expected to manage the day to day running of the business. He/she has the power to decide which story to put through for printing and which one to exclude. The editor also has the power to create and dismantle a team; a team which includes reporters, line editors, transporters and others. If anything happens the editor is there to answer for it. However, this shows that gatekeeping is done and many critics say it leaves a lot to be questioned. Deputy Editor comes after the editor. He or she has similar roles to the editor. Then there is the desk editor whose responsibility is to

oversee the work of the reporters that specifically fall under them. They are also expected to come up with news that will sell the paper. *Newsday* has editors only for the news and sports desks and the other desks are managed by the deputy editor.

### **4.17.3 Reporters**

These are the people that go out to find stories and are the key stakeholders of the organisation because they determine the success of the company. Journalists go out to collect news from news sources that could be at an event or scene. Gatekeeping starts with the reporter, since they know their organisation's policies they are aware of the kind of stories that they are expected to bring to the diary sessions they have. Reporters exercise self-censorship as they write articles by intentionally leaving out issues that are negative about their funders (Gurevich et al, 2005). In this scenario, reporters may leave out stories of child marriages if they know that their funder was once a perpetrator of child marriages, they may see the story as not newsworthy.

### **4.18 Associations with other organisations**

*Newsday* is in associations with different outlets such as *The Standard* and *The Zimbabwe Independent* just to mention a few. Their relationship can be established at the point that if *Newsday* fails to capture a story then *The Standard*, which is a weekly paper, will capture that story. *Newsday* also is in association with *The Herald*, like mentioned before; they share the same views when it comes to child marriage matters despite the fact that they have clashing views when it comes to political matters. It is also aligned with NGOs which deal with youngster's rights such as Save the Children.

### **4.19 Conclusion**

This chapter was focusing on the political economy and organisational analysis of the two newspapers under study. It was looking at the funding mechanism, ownership and control of the two newspapers and how all these three elements influence the content to be published in the newspapers especially that content to do with early marriage unions.

## Chapter 5: Data Presentation and Analysis

### 5.1 Introduction

The chapter concentrates on data presentation and analysis of information collected utilising the research processes mentioned in chapter three of this study. The chapter utilises the thematic approach of displaying information collected answering the research questions and aims of the research mentioned in the first chapter.

### 5.2 Findings

#### 5.2.1 Cultural practices as agents of child marriages in early marriage stories

The outcomes acquired from interviews, questionnaires, archival research and content analysis depicts that the portrayal of early marriages by *The Herald* and *Newsday* is inclined to some cultural practices such as ‘kuzvarira’, ‘chigadza mapfihwa’, ‘chinamwari’ and virginity testing. These practices are the ones that have been identified by the researcher, as the major contributors to child marriages and have been deemed as deviants. One journalist interviewed said:

“Culture has been and still remains as one of the causes of child marriages in Zimbabwe. Cultural performances such as virginity testing influence child marriages by that the men who will be present as the virginity test is carried out, will take advantage of these girls sexually leading to the impregnating of the girls and they end up getting married to the old men. This practice is however, still dominant in the rural areas of Zimbabwe”

The quote shows that cultural performances in Zimbabwe have led to early marriages. Due to their vulnerability, young girls are taken advantage of by older men in the society.

In portraying youngster relational unions, the above identified cultural practices were marginalised and their mention as “those practices” is debatable, whether the image is a fair representation of them or not. On 27 April 2016 *The Herald* published a story by Tanzikwa Guranungo which had a headline that read “Impact of some social, cultural practices on children in Zimbabwe” and a section of the story read:

‘Some cultural practices such as those practices like the virginity testing affect young girls in Hwange as they experience these checks in the company of adult males.’

From the above quote it can be deduced that *The Herald* does not have to mention the actual cultural practice for people to know which cultural practice(s) that are being referred to since

these cultures have been referred to as ‘those’. Audiences already know that when it is written “those cultural practices” they mean *kuzvarira*, virginity test and others. To further support the point in *Newsday*, an article on March 8, 2017 was published under the headline “Child marriage, violation of human rights: GALZ” and it was mentioned in the article that

“Those cultural practices continue to impede opportunities for young girls...and promote early marriages.”

The researcher got responses from questionnaires administered to the randomly selected public and most responses were aligned to child marriages being propagated by cultural practices. Such practices were mostly initiated by parents or guardians of the children as they will be benefitting more from the marriage. One unnamed source explained:

“Cultural behaviours are to blame for the increase of child marriages in our country. Parents of most children in the rural areas want to continue practising such when we are now in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These parents do it because they know they are the ones that tend to have major benefits from such unions.”

Parents and guardians are the ones primarily responsible for children and they are supposed to make sure that these children are protected. However, due to things like poverty, they are now giving up their children for marriage so as to get rid of their financial problems or that they benefit from that marriage.

#### **5.2.1.1 Discussion**

From the findings mentioned above, the researcher found out that the media have portrayed the cultural performances as deviants, effectively. The media form social realisms which point out particular cultural behaviours which might be correct or wrong (Becker, 1963). The cultural practices have been nailed as the agents of child marriages and this is seen in both newspapers. Linking to framing theory discussed in chapter two of this research, it shows that framing theory is the involvement of choosing and salience, meaning that the media have the power to give what they think is newsworthy and what is not worthy. The media shape how the audiences view the issue of child marriages. In this case the researcher noted that the media frame cultural practices as the perpetrators of youngster relational unions.

It is of great importance to note that most of the child marriages happen in rural areas of Zimbabwe. As they happen in the rural areas, it is the parents that usually force their daughters to get married as they need money from their in-laws to assist them in taking care of the other family members. Therefore, it becomes an involuntary act on the girl’s side. The

research also includes knowledge from life experiences that the researcher encountered during work related learning. During this experience, the researcher came to know that in areas like Rushinga, Gokwe-South, border and in-transit areas (Ngundu and Beitbridge respectively) which are some of the areas with high rates of early marriages, they practice things like '*chinamwari*' and '*kuzvarirwa*' and these have increased the number of child marriages in Zimbabwe. '*Chinamwari*' is also one of the major contributors to the increasing levels of early marriage. This means if such things continue to be practiced then child marriages will continue as well.

### **5.2.2 The Media's watchdog character**

Judging from the study outcomes, it is secure to admit that *The Herald* and *Newsday* have achieved their duty of being a watchdog in the reportage of early marriages. The two local daily newspapers have done their best in informing people who the perpetrators of child marriages are and this is a key sign of its fulfilment of its major duty of being a watchdog for the society. The media's act of covering stories and lobbying for laws that prohibit youngster relational unions is a sign of the newspapers' act of its watchdog role. When the two newspapers write about child marriages they nail down the people who are involved in promoting child marriages. In addition, the media also warn perpetrators who continue to promote the act and show clarity that they will definitely be served by the law if they continue such. In this case perpetrators being referred to are the parents, guardians, the in-laws and anyone who would have taken part in marrying off the minor(s). It can be proven that for sure the media are doing their part in trying to watch over the issue of early marriages; this is shown in an article of April 13, 2017 headlined "Child marriages are never a solution". In the article the journalist wrote:

“...the girl's parents and anyone else who enforced the union will be charged with statutory rape and will probably go to jail”

Furthermore, one can also see the effort that the media are putting into play as the watchdog role which is evidenced in a story published in *Newsday* two days after the constitutional court ruling on January 22, 2016 which had the headline "Child marriage not criminal yet: Biti". Part of the story read:

“It is now up to the legislature to harmonise the laws. The judgement does not make the action of marrying a child a criminal offence yet. It has to be codified.”

This shows that policy makers through the media are doing their best to protect children rights and are in support of the criminalisation of the ConCourt ruling. Policy makers and other organisations use the media to advocate for the government to implement already existing laws and policies that hinder child marriages from continuing and also to criminalise the ruling.

On the other hand, the researcher also found out that the newspapers fall short on their role as the watchdog. This is because some of the articles related to early marriages do not cover all areas in the country that are affected by child marriages. Journalists look at very few areas in Zimbabwe in their coverage and another area which is rarely talked about is the Matebeleland province. The researcher conducted an interview with a *Newsday* journalist who said, “Some people in superior positions like the chiefs and senators of some rural areas still continue to praise child marriages as a good African tradition that should be followed.” The journalist added that:

“*Newsday* and other local newspapers have the duty of spreading alertness to the public on how child marriages are not good for the minors in our society. Chiefs and other senior authorities in rural Zimbabwe must be informed on the negative effects of child marriages so that they can help in curbing the vice practice.”

*The Herald* and *Newsday* have done justice in trying to perform their watchdog role as they report on the causes of early marriages. They have pinpointed that the major causes included cultural customs, poverty, lack of education and religion. However, the media have performed dismally in directing the causes to the nation at large. Child marriages have not been covered with enough depth, most stories are just scratched on the surface and these causes are not followed back to their origin, which is that the country is economically unstable. Journalists interviewed from both the media outlets were dissatisfied by the reportage of the child marriages as the newspapers lacked in-depth in the stories. From the questionnaires administered to the random selected public, one comment read:

“No parent wants to see his or her child without an education but funds limit them. The government of Zimbabwe has failed to address the issue of education needs that are there, especially in the rural areas.”

With the above quote one can tell that the two newspapers have failed to go deep in searching for the root causes fearing to condemn the government as there is a relationship between the causes of child marriages and the performance of the government.

*Newsday* and *The Herald* are accomplishing their role of being a watchdog for the society and indicating that early marriages are a major cause of concern in Africa. An article on February 25, 2016 in *The Herald* with the headline “Govt urged to empower traditional leaders” depict how the newspaper have implemented its duty as the watchdog. The article read:

“Parliament must revisit policies that give traditional leaders their mandate so they can effectively deal with issues of moral decadence and child marriages and child rights”

The article stated that since chiefs are the opinion leaders for those in rural Zimbabwe, they should be taught and be informed on how child marriages interrupt a child’s growth in terms of his or her health and social life. It further talks of the importance of traditional leaders to encourage parents and guardians of minors not to marry off their children no matter the situation because these children are still young and immature to commit into a marriage.

#### **5.2.2.1 Discussion**

The findings stated above, show that the two newspapers have done a great deal in trying to accomplish their role of being a watchdog in the society. Coronel (2005) asserts that the media must take on the duty of being a watchdog of the society and that they should be the eyes and ears of the public and not be an inactive plotter of actions. This means that the media must be alert at all times about the constitutional rights of the public and they should react when these rights are disrupted by any means. Children are the future of tomorrow, they are an essential part of any society and they should be protected by the media (Mulugeta, 2004).

Reporters are expected to protect the interests of the public from nonconformity, vice and misrepresentation. It is discovered by the researcher that the two newspapers under study played a significant role as the watchdog in lobbying for the outlawing of child marriages that happened on January 20, 2016. The media have been identified as the fourth estate that is separate from politics and business entities. Waisbord (2000) submits that reporters should have an investigative role and they should also act as watchdogs for the general public.

Some areas, mostly rural areas, in Zimbabwe have since abandoned some cultural practices that led to child marriages because of the ruling that was done by the Constitutional Court (ConCourt) on January 20, 2016. The ruling of the ConCourt prohibits the marriage of any person who is below the age of 18 years.

### 5.2.3 Newspapers' dependence on associated organisations

After carrying out this research, the researcher found out that the two local daily newspapers depend on other organisations that they are in partnership with who also have the same initiative of wanting to end child marriages. These organisations have been and continue to be given space to air out their views about the immoral practices; the two newspapers under investigation have portrayed the partnering organisations in good light. *The Herald* and *Newsday* rely on statistics and information from organisations like Save the Children, UNICEF, Childline, Girl Child Network and Real Open Opportunities for Transformation Support (ROOTS). The media report on these organisations in a positive way. In an interview with journalists from both *Newsday* and *The Herald*, it was confirmed that ROOTS and other organisations are their reliable sources when it comes to reporting issues to do with early marriages since the ground-breaking court decision which outlawed child marriages.

In a story published in *The Herald* on March 25, 2016 headlined "SADC approve model law on eradicating child marriage" discusses the movement made by state members of the SADC to curb child marriages. Part of the story read:

"Legal drafters from SADC member states have approved the draft Model Law on Eradicating Child Marriage and Protecting Children Already in Marriage, setting the stage for its final adoption by the Plenary Assembly of the SADC Parliamentary Forum."

This shows that *The Herald* is behind those who are trying to eliminate child marriages in the SADC region.

It can be proven that the newspapers under study rely on partner organisations for information about child marriages. In the two newspapers organisations are given a platform to give their opinions and views of the matter at hand. For instance the story which was written by *The Herald* on January 26, 2016 which had the headline "10 reasons to celebrate" was written by a lawyer and a Programme Specialist for Gender who works for United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) whose name is Choice Damiso. This is important because the audiences will have a better understanding when it comes from someone with full knowledge about the matter of child marriages and they will go in-depth unlike a mere journalist who has no background about child marriages. The article showed that the newspapers rely on these organisations that have a better understanding of this matter at hand, for accurate details on early marriages.

From an interview conducted with child protection specialists, she agreed that these two newspapers relied on the information that they as child protection organisations gave them, for them to publish. She said:

“Since our organisation is dealing with the issues of child marriages, we would sometimes want to inform the general public about the causes, pros and cons and also spread awareness of this practice. We usually send a press release or invite journalists to our ‘End Child Marriage Campaigns or events that we have and this is how they get to get information about the matter.’”

Through semiotic analysis the researcher found out that *The Herald* and *Newsday* also gain photographs from these organisations that they are in partnership with. The images are used to elucidate on the sternness of child marriage. In the image below one can notice that the young girl (carried) is being forced to marry and go be a wife to the man who is carrying her. Her facial expression is portraying sadness and that she is not eager or ready to commit herself to that man. Despite the sadness and resistance shown by the girl, the man is holding her with force and is determined to go with her. Photographs are used by the two newspapers so as to have an impact on the reader’s emotions. *The Herald* and *Newsday* try to link the harshness of child marriage with pictures that really show the harshness that is being portrayed in words. The picture was used in *The Herald* on March 23, 2016 with the story headlined “Education can save the African girl from early marriages”.



It is important to note that information that is obtained from partner organisation about child marriages especially statistics are collected on a yearly basis so these maybe used in 2017 when the statistics were acquired in early 2016. Therefore, this becomes a disadvantage because the newsroom will be dealing with information that is not updated. Again the researcher noted that if an organisation brings information that is not detailed enough and that has gaps, it will mean the newspapers will carry forward that fault to the public which will

lead to the spreading of false information. Another issue is that the newspapers will be expected to positively report on the organisations that give them news, even if the organisation does something bad they will not report, which is not what the media are expected to do.

### **5.2.3.1 Discussion**

As mentioned before in the study, the newspapers under research are expected to give back to the society which is called social responsibility. McQuail (1987) suggests that media outlets are supposed to scrutinise the government and partnering organisations but at the same time they have duty to keep the society in a stable environment. The media's duties are to inform, entertain and educate the public on everything that concerns them. Therefore it is safe to say that *The Herald* and *Newsday* have been exclusively been upholding good media ethics in the reportage of child marriages. According to McQuail (1987) the media must be obliged to satisfy certain duties to the general public. The media are expected to meet obligations that are to be reliable, honest, objective, correct and truthful when covering tyke relational union stories.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

This chapter gave the outcomes that were acquired from interviews, questionnaires and content analysis. The responses were presented in a thematic way which made it easy for the researcher to explain them accordingly.

## **Chapter 6: Summary, conclusions and recommendations**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter summarises the entire research, gives a conclusion to the topic under study and then offers recommendations. This chapter is necessary because it explains everything in short that was discussed in the research. It offers recommendations based on the outcomes that were discussed in chapter five. The chapter also highlights areas for future study in relation to the same issue.

### **6.2 Summary**

The primary subject of the research questions was to find out the portrayal of child marriages in print media focusing on two daily newspapers in Zimbabwe, *The Herald* and *Newsday*. It also found out the role of African culture in perpetuating child marriages. Chapter one of the study basically gave an introduction to the research on what it was looking at. It gave a background of what child marriages are, problem statement and significance of the research. It further went on to state the objectives of the study which sought to find out the role played by the media in covering child marriage stories, evaluate how African cultures have influenced the practice of child marriages and finally to discover the intervention strategies that have been employed to address the situation of child marriages. The chapter also stated limitations that the researcher came across during the research. One of the limitations was that the researcher could not get hold of some hard copy articles from the two newspapers under study and had to resort to online sources. Another limitation was that the study was carried out in Harare and not in areas where child marriages were prominent because of convenience sake. It went on to highlight the structure of the research.

The second chapter of the study focused on literature that was written by various scholars on child marriages and the media. Several themes were deduced from all literature reviewed from various scholars who discussed the issue of child marriages and how it was represented in print media. In order to come up with a solid argument, the researcher included scholars like Nguyen, Wodon, Mulugeta, McCombs, and Hall just to mention a few, that were for and against the topic of study. Two conceptual frameworks were utilised which were framing theory and hegemony, these two assisted the researcher in understanding the research question(s).

Chapter three looked at different methodologies utilised in gathering information and also stated the sampling methods used which were purposive and convenience sampling that got the researcher purposively choosing journalists, a personnel from Save the Children and randomly selected people to give relevant and reliable information. To gather data the researcher used interviews, questionnaires and archival research. Content analysis and semiotic analysis were used in analysing the data collected. Content analysis meant that the researcher had to analyse articles in the two newspapers that had to do with child marriages. Semiotic analysis required the researcher to analyse the language and pictures used in the relevant articles. Chapter four looked at the political economy of the two organisations. The political economy meant looking at the funding, ownership and control patterns of each organisation and how these affect the content published by these two newspapers.

Chapter five was the major chapter of any study for it presented the data acquired from the research and it also analyses the findings. Chapter five sought to give answers to the questions asked in chapter one. The chapter gave direct answers from interviewees to show the reliability of information and also to get different views. The interviewees gave their opinions concerning the topic under study. The research was guided by research questions so as to attain adequate information about the topic under study.

### **6.3 Conclusions**

The main objective of this research was to find out how child marriages are influenced by African cultures and also how it was represented in *The Herald* and *Newsday*. The issue of child marriages continues to be an area of concern because many children especially girls in Third World countries are falling victim to this. These marriages are mainly caused by immoral cultural practices, religious beliefs, poverty and many other factors. In order to understand the representation of child marriages by the two daily newspapers, the research had to look at the political economy of both organisations so as to understand why child marriages are portrayed the way they are portrayed. The study also investigated if African cultures have been playing a role in influencing child marriages and also to see if it is really what is happening in reality.

Another aim of this study was to question *The Herald* and *Newsday's* role as watchdogs in protecting children and human rights. It discovered that child marriage issues have not been prioritised and therefore are not part of the agenda of the two media houses. Issues to do with politics and business are the ones that set the agenda of the newspapers. Reporters have been

scratching on the surface when it comes to covering such issues. They lack depth in their reports. Most stories focused on how child marriages could be dealt with. As much as African cultures contribute to the increase of this practice, the two newspapers also neglected other major causes which all come from the economic problems faced in the country. It is concluded that journalists have been under reporting child marriages and have to take up the responsibility of protecting children's rights. They also have to make such social issues important for they affect the day to day lives of people. Children's rights should also be treated as important just like issues to do with politics and business.

## **6.4 Recommendations**

### **6.4.1 Recommendations to *The Herald* and *Newsday***

The research recommends that the two newspapers must focus on putting the matter of child marriage on the public agenda. The study proves that children are equally important and they need attention of the media just like any other thing in the country. The media should be readily available to protect the rights of these children. It is clear after the research was done that journalists rely on information they get from partner organisations. However, they should not only depend on these organisations but they should be able to go to places where child marriages are prominent and get a better understanding of the issue. The research also identified that the two newspapers are more inclined to political stories and they neglect other issues of life especially issues to do with human rights. There are a few stories written on human rights on the first page of any of the two papers. Politics has taken precedence in the two papers and other issues tend to be given less or no attention.

### **6.4.2 Recommendations to NGOs such as Save the Children**

From the research conducted, NGOs were seen to be a vital instrument in ending child marriages in Zimbabwe. They play a major role in communities, hence they should continue to advocate for the eradication of child marriages. It is realised by the study that NGOs played a major role in lobbying policies and laws so that child marriages could be banned. Now the study recommends that NGOs should continue being in the forefront to lobby policies and laws again, so that child marriages can be criminalised as they are not yet a criminal offence. It is important too for these organisations to help media houses with relevant, up to date and accurate data concerning child marriages.

## **6.5 Areas of further study**

Future researches should advance this study in areas to do with how child marriages are portrayed not only in all print media but also in other mainstream media as well as alternative media. Focus should also be on initiatives done by other civic society members through the media to stop early marriages.

## **6.6 Conclusion**

This chapter gave a summary and concluded the research. It also gave recommendations to the two newspapers that were under study and to Save the Children an organisation that advocates for children's rights. Recommendations stated in this chapter were deduced from the findings of this investigation. It also highlighted areas that can be looked at for future study.

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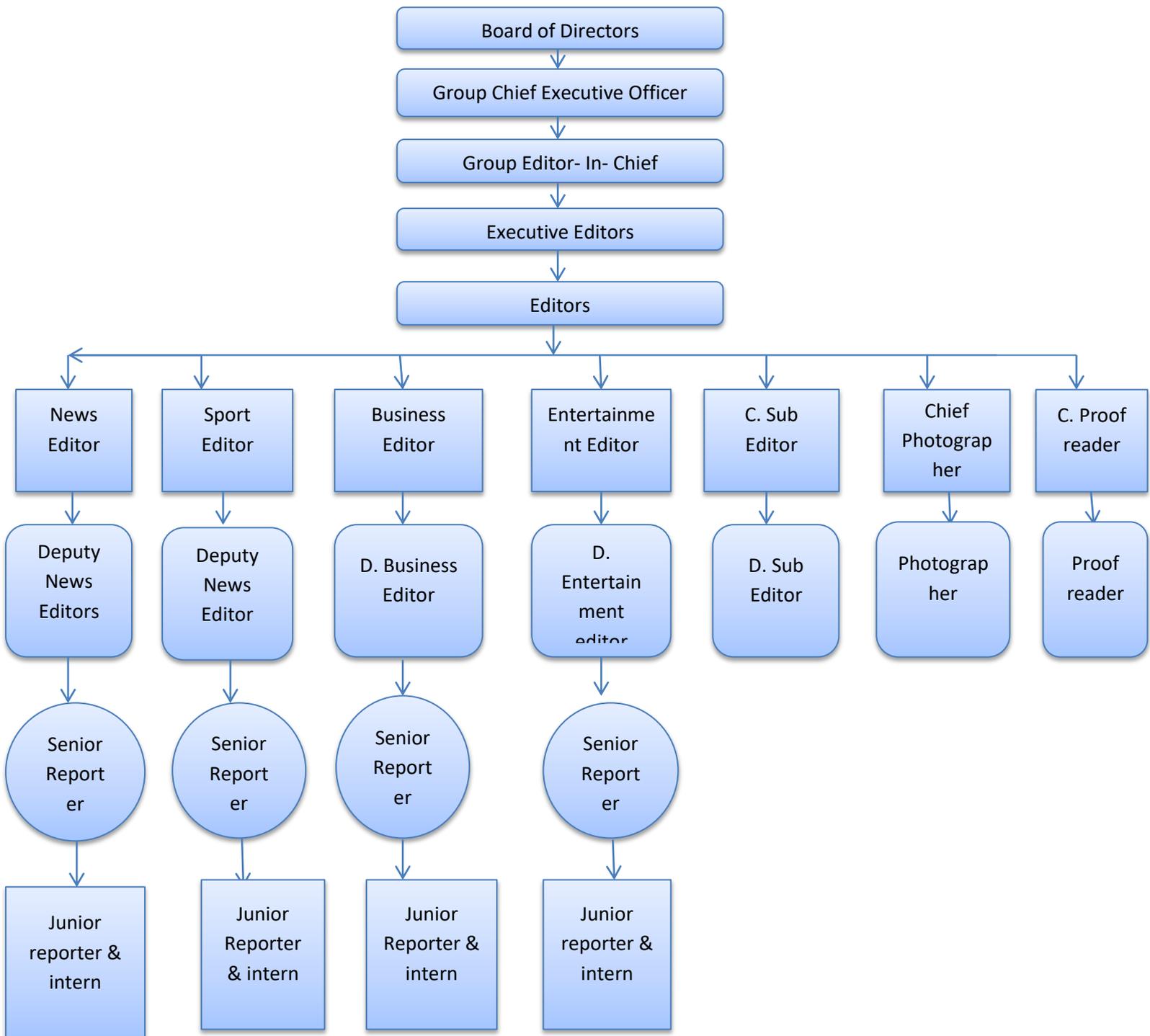
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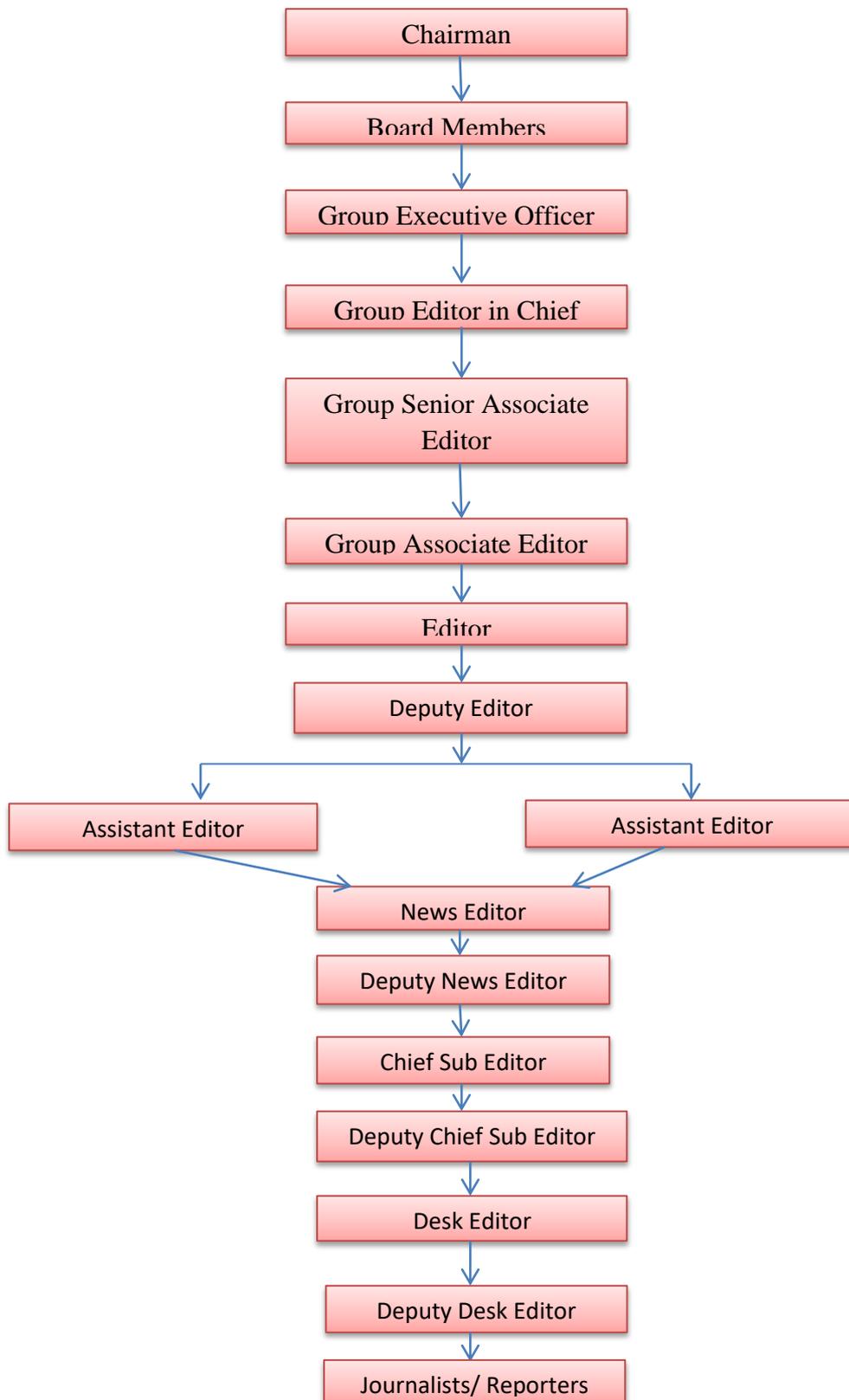
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## Appendices

### Appendix 1 (a) *The Herald's* Organogram



**Appendix 1 (b) *Newsday's* Organogram**



## **Appendix 2 (a) Interview guidelines for journalists from *The Herald* and *Newsday***

My name is Ruvimbo F. Shiri a Bachelor of Social Science Degree student in the department of Media and Society Studies at Midlands State University. As part of my studies, I am conducting a research on the portrayal of child marriages in *The Herald* and *Newsday*. My research then requires me to conduct interviews and I am kindly asking for your assistance through responding to the questions to be asked. The information acquired from this interview shall strictly be used for academic purposes only and shall be regarded as private. Your cooperation shall greatly be appreciated.

1. In your own view, what is child marriage and what do you think are the causes of child marriages?
2. Would you say African culture(s) are the main cause of child marriages and why?
3. Which other angles would you take when writing a story on child marriages besides writing about a victim of child marriages story?
4. What would you consider before writing a child marriage article?
5. As a reporter, do you think child marriages have been given a wide coverage by your media house?
6. From your experience as a reporter, which part of Zimbabwe do you think has most cases of child marriages (urban or rural areas) and why?
7. Do you think there is anything lacking in reporting child marriage stories in your media house?

## **Appendix 2(b) Interview guideline for Child Protection Specialist from a Non-Governmental Organisation**

My name is Ruvimbo F. Shiri a Bachelor of Social Science Degree student in the department of Media and Society Studies at Midlands State University. As part of my studies, I am conducting a research on the portrayal of child marriages in *The Herald* and *Newsday*. My research then requires me to conduct interviews and I am kindly asking for your assistance through responding to the questions to be asked. The information acquired from this interview shall strictly be used for academic purposes only and shall be regarded as private. Your cooperation shall greatly be appreciated.

1. Which areas in Zimbabwe have you been working in as Organisation?
2. In your own view, what are child marriages?
3. Are child marriages a cause of concern in Zimbabwe and why?
4. From what you have experienced in working with issues of early marriages, what would you say are the causes of child marriages in Zimbabwe?
5. In what way do African culture(s) influence early marriages?
6. How are child marriages given prominence in *The Herald* and *Newsday*?
7. What has your organisation done as an initiative to put an end to child marriages?
8. Which other organisations or government departments are you working with in trying to end child marriages in Zimbabwe?
9. What challenges have you been facing in trying to deal with early marriages?



**Appendix 2 (c) Questionnaire for randomly selected people**

My name is Ruvimbo F. Shiri a Bachelor of Social Science Degree student in the department of Media and Society Studies at Midlands State University. As part of my studies, I am conducting a research on the portrayal of child marriages in *The Herald* and *Newsday*. My research then requires me to administer questionnaires and I am kindly asking for your assistance through responding to the questions to be asked. The information acquired from this interview shall strictly be used for academic purposes only and shall be regarded as private. Your cooperation shall greatly be appreciated.

**Age** ..... **Gender** .....

**What is a child marriage?**

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**Are there child marriages in Zimbabwe?**

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**What do you think are the causes of child marriages in Zimbabwe and why?**

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**Who is mostly affected by child marriages (the boy or girl child)?**

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**What do you think are the effects of early marriages especially on the girl child?**

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**To what extent do you think African culture(s) influences child marriages in Zimbabwe and why do you say so?**

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**Who do think is mostly to blame for the child marriages (is it the parents of the children, the children themselves or others)? Give a reason for your answer.**

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**Have you ever experienced any child marriage situation in your family or community? What is it that the family of the child bride faced that resulted in them giving away their daughter for marriage before the age consent?**

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**What do you think should be done to end child marriages in Zimbabwe?**

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Thank You!!!



