



**Lupane State University**

*Building Communities through Knowledge*

**Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**

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**AN ANALYSIS OF NEWSDAY AND ZIMEYE COVERAGE OF THE  
MTHWAKAZI LIBERATION FRONT TREASON TRIAL: A RECEPTION  
STUDY**

**BY**

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**THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF A  
BACHELOR OF ARTS HONOURS DEGREE IN LANGUAGE AND  
COMMUNICATION STUDIES.**

## **ABSTRACT**

The arrest of Mthwakazi Liberation Front members in 2011 has stirred heated debate among political scholars in terms of its effect on the tribal and political landscape in Zimbabwe. Its coverage in the media was viewed as “news” but not as a means of getting the answers. The media has proved to be very powerful in terms of galvanizing people towards a certain idea and there were many interpretations of the MLF treason trial stories. It is against this background that this study analyses the coverage of the treason trial by the southern edition of the News Day and ZimEye website. In particular, it explores the meanings obtained by the readers from the news sources and situates them within themes that help understand the tribal and political dimensions in Zimbabwe. In undertaking this analysis, the study draws primarily on qualitative research methods particularly, textual analysis, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. As the study demonstrates, these methods uncover the levels of polarization within Zimbabwean ethnic groupings and how they appropriate the treason trial textual meanings to their lived realities. The study establishes that the coverage of the treason trial created or reinforced Matabeleland particularism.