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MASTER'S IN ARTS COMMUNICATION RESEARCH PROPOSAL

The social construction of crime reality: a comparative content analysis of local newspapers and crime statistics, Gaborone 2016-2017

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to the love of my life, my wife Nokuthaba Mtunzie who has been supportive in the completion of this study. It is also dedicated to my children, Tyrone, and Kayla. May it inspire you as my children to excel to greater heights in your own lives. Lastly, I dedicate it to the memory of my late great father and mentor JR Mtunzie, and to my mother and nieces. I love you all.

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I thank the Department of Humanities for their assistance when I met some challenges regarding this dissertation. Thank you so much.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the construction of crime reality by *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun* newspapers by means of a content analysis and involved the exploration of violent crime news reporting, measured against police statistics. The two publications, *The Midweek Sun*, and *The Voice* newspapers, were quantitatively and qualitatively analysed to identify the types of violent crimes reported and to determine any differences they may have compared to the Botswana Police crime records, between themselves, and on how they framed or depicted violent crimes. The results were collected using a coding sheet, new story analysis form and analysed against official police records to determine any inconsistencies that may have existed between the crimes covered by two newspapers and police statistics. The qualitative analysis involved a coding sheet to identify lexical features and rhetorical devices in the headlines. The lexical units included compound words and fuzzy words. The rhetorical elements scrutinised included metaphors, alliteration, rhyme, puns, and idioms. The research analysed the news headlines. The study will assist in shedding light on the accuracy of crime news reporting, levels of sensationalism, overreporting or underreporting of violent crimes.

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CHAPTER 1:

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the purpose of the study. Furthermore, there is a description of the characteristics of Botswana's media landscape. Chapter one explains the reason for the research study, the issue of violent crime in Botswana and what constitutes violent crime. In addition, there is an in depth look at the comparative components of the analysis and these are *The Voice*, *The Midweek Sun*, and *The Botswana Police Service* (BPS). This section goes on to elaborate on the relevance of this topic, set against the backdrop of Botswana's crime trends. Lastly, it ends with a discussion on the importance of this study to the field of communication.

1.1 Purpose of the study

The topic of research pertains to print media portrayals of violent crimes - specifically those covered in *The Voice and The Midweek Sun* newspapers of Gaborone Botswana. The method used is a qualitative and quantitative content analysis of violent crime news articles published by these print mediums. It is important to note that for the research, the violent crime definition is per the World Health Organisation's 2002 publication, *World report on violence and health* (WRVH). The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines violent crime as:

The deliberate deployment of considerable bodily exertion - be it stated or carried out - against oneself, another individual, or against a faction or members of a society, that either culminates in or has a substantial probability of culminating in harm, fatality, mental and emotional injury, flawed development, or deficiency (Krug, Dahlberg et al 2002:5).

This study analyses and compares the types of violent crime and their frequency in the two publications with the official law enforcement statistics. The main purpose is to determine if there are differences [or similarities] in the types of violent crime news, if crime news covered is aligned to law enforcement statistics on crime and whether there is sensationalist coverage of crime, inaccurate crime reporting and if the crime reality constructed by the newspapers differs from the reality presented by official crime statistics. The reason for the study is to reveal how *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun* frame crime news and learn the level of significance they give to certain types of violent crime and how such crimes are depicted. One of the major

questions that needs an answer is, are these newspapers presenting crime events in a non-biased, factual, and non-hyperbolic way or they depict crime in a way that affects the readers opinions. Earlier research studies reveal that the way media depicts events does not always reflect actual circumstances. Moreover, the fact is that these painters of reality called media houses, publish crime stories excessively when gauged against other news items (Chagnon 2010:8). Therefore, media institutions, be it print or broadcast, do not simply track and narrate the realities of societal happenings. Instead they create a different realism due to their interpretations of news events that are the product of inhouse processes, agenda-setting, journalistic news values. Hence, the need to make comparisons between newspaper depictions of crime events and the actual crime realities occurring on the ground (Chibnall 1977: IX). This means that they can influence public behaviour. Reports on crime have the potential to influence public behaviour to a point where they are incited to carry out acts of crime themselves (Dussuyer cited in Zhu 1994: 29). Therefore, if the press overreport and stir up emotions of outrage, this can manifest in vigilantism and mob justice whereby the public take it upon themselves to bring retribution to alleged perpetrators. This is particularly relevant when we look at the media landscape in Botswana. According to Bothoko's article in *The Mmegi* newspaper, published on 10 December 2018 and entitled *Acts of Mob Justice Worry Police*, there is an increase in vigilantism by the public. On previous occasions, threats of violence have been aired online on public social networks. These online platforms have been used to express the public's disgruntlement with the criminal justice system's seemingly easy release of suspected criminal perpetrators on bail. Visual footage of acts of mob justice have been circulated on online media platforms. For example, in the first week of December vigilantes made up of irate members of the public, beat up a man in Gaborone West after they received news that he was accused of stealing a wallet. The young individual lost his life in the attack.

1.2 Background of the study

1.2.1 The Botswana media landscape

The media landscape in Botswana is characterised by a considerable amount of newspaper outlets. These print media houses have a measure of autonomy and mandate (Fombad cited in Rooney 2012:5). Most newspapers are privately-owned except for the state-funded *The Daily News*. The privately-owned news publications tend to publish on a weekly basis. These are *The Botswana Gazette*, *The Botswana Guardian*, *The Echo*, *The Global Post*, *The Midweek Sun*, *The Mirror*, *The Monitor*, *Ngami Times*, *Sunday Standard*, *Sunday Tribune*, *The Telegraph*, *The Voice* and *The Weekend* (Rooney 2012: 3). From this plethora of newspapers, the researcher chose *The Voice* and *Midweek Sun* for crime news story analysis and comparison with crime statistics of the BPS. These news outlets are tabloid newspapers that publish

considerable amount of crime stories as explained in section 1.2.2. Therefore, they are an ideal choice to investigate crime news representation. The study will help to determine the direction of crime reporting in newspapers if anomalies are discovered in the type of violent crimes given prominence when compared to the records held by the BPS.

1.2.2 *The Voice, The Midweek Sun, and the Botswana Police overview*

During the period 2016 to 2017, there have been many reports in *The Voice* and *Midweek Sun* newspapers in Gaborone emphasising a great deal of violent crimes. The bulk of such news stories have related to acts of murder, rape, and armed robberies. However, one is curious to see if such crime reporting massively differs between the two newspapers and if they sensationalise, overrepresent and misrepresent crime realities in comparison to official Botswana Police Service (BPS) data on crime. It is important to provide a background context of these three components of the comparative analysis. This is to help gain an increased understanding of their purpose and function as it relates to this study.

The Voice newspaper is a weekly tabloid published by The Francistowner (Pty) and founded on the 12th of February 1993 and is a publication that acknowledges and conceptually integrates entertainment and information rather than seeing them as two various parts. The company strives to fuse these two aspects into a lively and dynamic unit (Page info, company overview). In terms of content, it focuses on stories that it feels fascinate the public. These are stories that narrate what people go through, their emotions, and their cultural background. In terms of its target market, any individual who is literate is considered a prospective customer. Therefore, crime occurrence fits into the type of news content that it focuses on. The mission statement of the *Voice* is the maintenance of its position as the top sales news publication and the most profit-making media outlet in Botswana (About the Voice Newspaper Botswana 2015).

It is the current best-selling newspaper in Botswana, printing 35000 copies per weekly publication. *The Voice* is also the recipient of Sol Plaatje Leadership and Excellence Award of 2008 (About the Voice Newspaper Botswana 2015).

CBET (Pty) Ltd produces *The Midweek Sun* and produces the *Botswana Guardian* newspaper. *The Midweek Sun* is a weekly tabloid publication which focuses on entertainment news, light mannered human-interest narratives, and lifestyle news items. CBET has a mission which is to manufacture media commodities of an exceptionally high standard and to keep their audience be in the know, teach, and advance accountability and at the same time grow shareholder value. The publisher also has a set of prime standards that it acts as the guide on how personnel, in this case those of the *Midweek Sun*, conduct themselves. These values are honour, dependability, responsible and open, objectivity, unbiased and truthful reportage, right of reply

guaranteed, value, ingenuity and originality, collaboration, empathy and professionalism, privacy and safety, impartiality and autonomy, equality.

(CBET (PTY) LTD Strategic Foundations 2015)

The *Midweek Sun* brands itself as a brand of excitement and eye-opening revelation. This publication has a print run estimated to be more than 21 000, converting to a readership of 100 000. This news publisher has a target audience made up of both youth and adults (About the Midweek Sun 2015).

The Botswana Police Service (BPS) has a mandate to ensure that lives and property are protected, to stop and identify criminal activities, contain internal conflict, maintain security and public peace, catch criminals, ensure the adherence to laws of the country as stipulated in section 6 of the Botswana Police Act 1979.

The vision of BPS is to be a crime fighting institution with a good reputation (BPS Strategic Elements...2015).

This law enforcement organisation envisages itself as upholding integrity by being free of corruption. It seeks to deliver a respectable, community allied service and one that affords customers an elevated level of respect

In terms of the mission of the state police department, their mission is stated as:

“To provide a professional policing service in partnership with the community”

(Botswana. Corporate Development Strategy 2009: 1).

In expansion, the service consists of lofty standards of expertise, proficiency, timeliness, and meticulousness in policing issues. It entails liaisons with community members to enhance thwarting of, and identification of criminal activities.

(Botswana. Corporate Development Strategy 2009: 1).

1.3 Relevance and importance of the topic

In the area of relevance, the research’s exploratory intentions will contribute to Communication Science by potentially unravelling differences or similarities in the level of importance attached to certain crime activities, the type of crimes presented for consumption to the public compared to the factual statistical realities of crime from State law enforcement. The study is particularly important because currently crime is of grave

concern in Gaborone and surrounding areas. Therefore, accurate reporting is critical to curb the incitement of the public and the instilling of fear. Bothoko (2017) mentions that the first five months of 2017 recorded 700 females rape cases. In most cases, the perpetrators wielded weapons to subdue any form of retaliation from their victims. Another violent crime of concern is murder. According to Gasennelwe (2018) murder cases have progressively risen since 2015 all the way to 2017. A lot of the murder cases have to do with love affairs and relationship breakdowns, and these commonly referred to as *passion killings*. As stated by Alao (2006:341), passion killings are gender-based violent acts that target women. In such instances, the partner or male individual dating a female proceeds to murder her. In addition, Matota (2016) explains that from January to June 2016, BPS records show 126 reported murder cases, an increase that exceeds the entire record of 114 cases of killing for 2015. With such elevated levels of violent delinquency, the representation of such crimes by newspaper outlets becomes important and especially when compared with the BPS records. In fact, Ontebetse (2018) points out that Gallup's *2018 Global Law and Order report* which assesses individual's sense of security or fear by asking four survey questions, attests to the serious nature of criminal activity in Botswana. The report confirms the ever-growing challenge of drug peddling, killings, road carnage, poaching and human trade. According to Gallup's *2018 Global Law and Order report*, Botswana citizens fear the possibility of attacks as they walk in the evenings. The report scored Botswana (61) as one of the top five least safe countries in Africa, the other countries South Africa (58), Liberia (56), Gabon (55), and South Sudan (54). It is under such a climate that the study becomes important since the exploration lays the foundation for further studies. These successive studies can help ensure more accurate reporting and less theatrical depictions of news. And, they will ensure violent crime events given main coverage are synchronised with BPS statistics on crime. This means the public judgements on current state affairs will be based on the true nature of crime occurrence. Therefore, key players will be able to produce solutions to help curb violent delinquency as crime issues are deliberated openly in the public domain.

Therefore, this research will shed more light on the level of accuracy of crime news reporting and provide invaluable information on which violent crimes are a significant threat to the public. The findings of the research can aid in finding the discrepancy between reporting and actual occurrence. This will reduce inaccurate reporting and create greater public trust in the media. The research project will help in exploring and describing the current issues in the Botswana media industry, specifically print newspapers.

Currently, there is no research undertaking on the same topic. The title for this study is:

The social construction of crime reality: a comparative content analysis of local newspapers and crime statistics, Gaborone 2016-2017.

1.4 Relationship of the topic to the discipline of Communication

This topic is particularly important to Communication as a field of study because it relates to how messages on crime are conveyed by the press as social issues to the dependent public and that what is produced as crime news do not always necessarily reflect reality. The message may contrast with the reality as per law enforcement statistics. Therefore, this research study contributes to a greater comprehension of how newspapers report crime. The topic adds greater clarity on how crime reality is represented in the media and the extent to which certain issues are given greater priority over others. Moreover, it helps to answer the question of the extent to which print media overreports or underreports certain societal issues at the expense of more critical news stories that deserve greater priority. This topic helps to identify the differing styles and methods used by news media houses as they frame news. By exploratory nature of this research study, involving both qualitative and quantitative analysis sheds light on journalistic practices in terms of news depiction through their word choices, images, tones, and stylistic devices. All of which then determine the level of accuracy or level of public persuasion to crime as a social phenomenon.

1.5 Conclusion

This chapter explains that the purpose of the study is to explore, describe, analyse, and compare the types of violent crime covered in *The Midweek Sun* and *The Voice* with the official law enforcement statistics. Also, chapter provides a background overview of the media landscape in Botswana. Most of the newspaper publishers in the Botswana are privately-owned and tend to publish weekly rather than daily. *The Midweek Sun* and *The Voice* selection stems from the fact they are tabloids and have a substantial reach. The background of these newspapers shows that they are keen on human interest stories, of which crime falls under as a category. A brief profile of the BPS informs one that they have a vision to maintain the highest standards of policing through integrity, efficiency, and competence. An exploration into crime activity in Botswana shows that violent crime is on the rise year on year murder and rape. So, the portrayal of violent crimes by the selected publications can provide us with insight as to the level of journalistic exaggeration, balanced or unbalanced reporting, and distinctions in crime news framing. It helps us understand the reality that they are painting through their news reports. In addition, the topic is particularly vital to Communication as a field of study because media messages on violent crime [as a societal issue] do not always echo reality. The next chapter clarifies on this point and reviews literature such as *The Social Construction Theory* that informs this study. Chapter two reviews several studies such as *Marxism, Four Theories of the Press* and previously research papers connected to this study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2 INTRODUCTION

Numerous studies have been conducted concerning presentation of crime news. It is against these studies that the work is based. Previous studies are important in respect of aspects such as exaggerations of crime occurrence, inaccurate reporting, and inconsistencies in what crimes are of real concern when measured against the Gaborone crime statistics of the BPS. This Literature review will begin with an examination of the various theories pertinent to the research. The literature review will also help put the study in the most relevant theoretical context. After a critical analysis of the varying related theories, namely political economy, normative, and social construction theories, there shall be an exploration of previous research taken by scholars in the area of social construction of crime, their research methodologies, strengths, weaknesses and similarities or differences related to this research.

2.1 Marxist dominant ideology theory of the media

Political economy theory has been the blueprint used by most academic scholars and began in the 1940s. This theoretical perspective has continued to at the foreground of media research at a global level (Mosco 2009: 1). A comprehensive understanding of the political economy approach can be obtained through an examination of the prominent authors related to the theory will be undertaken. This is followed by an examination of the various key definitions and features of political economy. Lastly, a look at current developments concerning the political economy approach in conjunction with how it relates to the research study will be delved into. The mid-20th century marked a period of change that saw a move from individual to society-centred ideologies. It was during this transition phase that gave rise to Karl Marx's (1818-83) interpretations of media influence and those of Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937). Their *dominant ideology* model formed the basis of media dissection by scholars in the 1960s that spanned over 20 years (Jewkes 2004: 19).

In his writings, Karl Marx's proposes that the heavy influence of the upper echelon, pushing their agendas, means that news as a reality can be reconstructed and, in the process, distorted. The main posit is that there is a connection between fiscal possession and the conveyance of messages.

Marx outlines his outlook of a power dominant group dictating the mass media when he articulated that those who possess the means of production are in a position of power and therefore manage the means of mental production [in this case print media] so that the notions and thinking of those who do not own the means of mental production are made subservient to it (Marx Murdock and Golding 1977 cited in McQuail 2010: 18).

To Marx, the media as capitalist entity functioned in accordance with the directives of the dominant class who owned it. In so doing, all other opinions were denied a podium of expression (Fuchs 2010: 30; Jewkes 2004: 9; Mcquail 2010: 18). Therefore, in the context of this research, crime news reality has the potential to be misrepresented in favour of the dominant agenda of media owners and stakeholders. Moreover, their interests may be contrary to the statistical reality presented by the Botswana Police in terms of the significance or non-significance of types of violent crime.

Marxism has not been short of critics who have taken the viewpoint that it is just an ideology and that is too layered systematically. It is also argued that Marxist theory assumes that media audiences are viewed as passive and do not have an opinion (Chandler 2000: 11). However, Jewkes points out that despite the media, in the era of Marx, being far from the colossal institution of our contemporary world, their role in the flow of information and capitalist status, made Marx's ideologies appropriate during the media's period of growth, deregulation and monopolisation (2004: 9).

The primary successor to Marx's interpretations of the media is the political economy theory.

2.1.1 Political economy theory

Mosco defines political economy by stating that it is the learning of societal interactions, specifically of those groups with authority who collectively are responsible for how resources - including those for communication - are manufactured and disseminated and used (2009:2). Therefore, based on this definition, political economy is having to do with how the media operates as a communication institution and the influence of those who own media. The modus operandi of media is determined by media owners and therefore media messages [news content] disseminated, is dependent on their directives (Ogeng 2010: 4). In a capitalist environment, the media directive is to amass the largest amount of profit for its owners. The media is seen as part of an economic structure that is connected to a political structure.

It is clear from the definition above; political economy is an expansion of Marxist theory on the mass media. Herman and Chomsky (2002: 6) articulate that the media operate in subordination to the agendas of powerful-owner stakeholders that provide for their financial sustenance. These stakeholders have important

objectives to advance and are able, by virtue of their investment in media, to determine and regulate the media. The news stories and content that are written and presented as published material for public consumption have a newsworthiness component that is linked to making profit for media organisations and therefore media owners (Ogenga 2010: 4; Chambers 2000). Owner intrusion into the day-to-day affairs of the organisation, to advance their interests, is conducted discreetly via editorial policy and the journalistic comprehension of what makes up a story worthy of publication (Herman and Chomsky 2002:6). In the context of this study, the two different publications may exhibit differences in the way criminal acts are represented as content, the types of violent law-breaking activities covered, the space allocated and news slant. Therefore, the crime news content covered may potentially be an inaccurate reflection of crime reality as per official crime records. This stratified, top-down relationship between the powerful and the media has serious implications for media portrayal of criminality, the culprits of crime and the system that deals with issues of criminal acts (Jewkes 2004:2).

According to Mosco, political economy is characterised by three integral aspects. First, it leads the way in the scholarly exploration of how society transforms and the history of such change. In this regard, Smith, Ricardo, Mill, and also Marx can be taken as political economists. The latter individuals were pioneers in the field of economics and examined the historical transformation from an agro-economy to one that is industry based. Second, political economy also looks at social whole and interconnectedness of economic, political, social, and cultural areas. Third, political economy is concerned with ethical principles around societal standards and ethics (2009:4). This third area is particularly relevant to this research study since it may help ascertain if journalistic practices in the newspapers under scrutiny are objective, balanced and accurate. With this political economy approach, one will be able to gain a clearer picture concerning news values of the two publications seen through their presentation of violent crime against official crime records. The relevance of political economy is not only for this study but continues to grow due to latest developments in media and the technologies employed.

In relation to the latest developments that have enhanced the appropriateness of political-economic theory, Mcquail explains that media concentration on a global scale has developed significantly. Media ownership, and the power it carries, has narrowed dramatically to less and less individuals and groups. This has also been accompanied by partnerships and amalgamations of media organisations in the electronic hardware and software industries (2010: 33; cited in Mcchesney 2000).

Second, increases in technological advancements has resulted in media convergence and seen the increase in the flow of information worldwide. Third, free trade, private ownership, or liberalisations have led to a decrease in the public service broadcasting and publications sections of the mass media. Lastly, there is the

issue of imbalances in the flow of information. The core posit of the political economy as a theory thereby continues to apply due to such imbalances (Mcquail 2010: 33).

2.2 Normative theory: four theories of the press

The four theories of the press are the work of Fried Siebert, Theodore Peterson, and Wilbur Schramm. These theories categorised as the authoritarian, libertarian, social responsibility, and soviet communist represented attempts by these writers to find out the reason for diverse media forms across nations of the world (Christians 2009: 1). Their contention was that the media of a country was shaped by socio-political environment that it functions under (Siebert et al 1956: 1). Hence, the four classifications of media put forth by these authors. The first of these is the authoritarian theory.

The authoritarian theory posits that media should always play a subjugated role to the agenda of the government in as far as ensuring social stability or the attainment of political objectives. The media has the liberty to disseminate its publications in an environment free of direct regulation, however the government still has the authority to put to the sword media practitioners and media outlets that go beyond the outright or implied state boundaries on news presentation and narration (Benson 2008: 2592). Any publisher revealed to be producing content that heavily opposed the government could be forced to pay a substantial penalty or even closed (Biagi 1999: 365). The Authoritarian theory is a non-democratic oriented theory; however, the libertarian theory is at the opposite end of the spectrum.

The libertarian school of thought originated from the notion that when individuals are furnished with all the data, they have the capacity to identify truth from falsity. Therefore, they are in a position to make sound decisions. This is the type of outlook ascribed to by those who authored the United States Constitution and all states advocating democracy (Biagi 1999: 365). According to ideologists of the libertarian position, a person is a logical creature and can make decisions on his own. Siebert articulates that the main societal objective is to ensure the welfare of the individual, and that individual has the capacity to arrange his environment and make choices which will further his wellbeing (Siebert et al 1963: 40). One critical feature of libertarian theory is that there was a presupposition that the diversity of opinions that reached the public via the press would be comprised of correct, inaccurate, and a mix of both. Despite this, government did not have the authority to censor what it viewed as inaccurate or inappropriate. If the government did engage in such censorship, the ultimate consequence would be the crackdown of voices in contradiction to government opinion. It was suggested, therefore, to permit the public to be bombarded with all opinion regardless of their potential inaccuracies. In the end, the public were trustworthy enough to take absorb all manner of opinions,

then selectively remove what was not in their interest and retain what was (Siebert et al 1963: 51). Beyond the libertarian theory, there is the social responsibility theory which is also democratic but goes further by stating that the media has the duty to make a positive contribution to society.

According to Benson, any premise that the press has a charitable duty to perform positive functions could belong to this classification, however social responsibility as initially described, upheld the principles of non-bias which emphasises factual (especially investigative) news reporting over subjective narratives, the equal representation of differing opinions and neutrality of the reporter in journalistic practices (2008: 2593). Social responsibility theory has the following standpoint: press freedom comes with related responsibilities. The media is duty-bound to society in terms of being responsible in the way it conducts itself. The press takes cognisance of their responsibilities by incorporating them into their journalistic practices and codes in order to gratify society. However, if they do not take ownership of their responsibilities to society, an independent regulating body must monitor them to ensure that they do (Siebert et al 1956: 74; Tsui 2010: 299). The last of the four theories is known as the Soviet communist theory.

The soviet communist theory is based on the school of thought belonging to Karl Marx; media is tasked with ensuring that all views should be aligned to Marxist-Leninist principles and stresses the benefits of togetherness via a single [communist party] perspective. Therefore, if there is to be agreement and cohesion, there should not be a plethora of varying opinions and stances. To ensure this, ownership of media outlets should not be in the hands of private individuals or groups and media should be controlled by government for the purpose of meeting the needs of the working. Historically in the Soviet Union, everyone employed in the journalistic field were government members of staff. These individuals were expected to serve the State. Furthermore, senior media personal also held positions of leadership in the Communist party because the government was responsible for filtering ideas that were in contradiction of the communist position; they even had a department specifically for that purpose (Benson 2008: 2592; Biagi 1999:1; Yin 2008: 5).

2.2.1 Criticism of the four theories of the press

There are numerous criticisms levelled against the four theories above. The most in-depth critique of the four theories came from John C. Nerone in the 1995 publication, *Last rights: Revisiting Four Theories of the Press*, a combined writing effort of academics who discovered anomalies with the four theories. It was highlighted that the four theories are not strictly scientific-based despite giving the impression that they

actually were (Yin 2008: 7; Nerone 1995: 17). Nerone pointed out that the meaning of theory did not come from the scientific definition which means a meticulous evaluation and analysis of propositions under a regulated environment. Instead, in the context of the four theories, it referred to the legal system definition which meant elucidation and logic (1995: 18).

Another criticism brought forth was that these theories were not consistent across the board in terms of their historical relevance. For instance, authoritarianism is a very ambiguous in meaning and applicable to diverse media theories while libertarian theory is more specific to the contemporary West, and social responsibility theory is more concerned with the endeavour to produce a philosophy-based professionalism at a particular point in history. Similarly, the soviet communist theory is historically specific to Russia and Marxism (Nerone 1995: 18). Therefore, the four theories are actually miles apart in terms of historical significance and embedment. They have functioned at different historical contexts and have tended to overlap or cohabit. This is seen by the fact that social responsibility theory has the same qualities in terms of a requirement for journalistic professionalism that is in the libertarian theory.

Moreover, these four theories have differences from a theoretical standpoint. The authoritarian theory, for example, can be considered to be operational methods employed by media and therefore it is more practical based than theoretical. This is particular true when compared to the libertarian theory. Libertarianism is more theoretical by virtue of its historical background. It arose from the works of renowned philosophers Milton Friedman, John Locke, Thomas Jefferson, and John Stuart Mill and therefore has high theoretical legitimacy even though it can be merged with authoritarian operational methods at times (Nerone 1995: 19; Black and Roberts 2011: 76).

Another contention is the fact that the classification of normative theory of the press into four separate parts implies that any media structure falls under one of the stated theories. Fung and Ostini (2002: 45) adds that the Four Theories model, created in the environment of the West, supposed that print media would transform and progress systematically and move from one classification to the next – starting from soviet communist, then progresses authoritarian, then moves to liberalism and finally social responsibility. This supposition was found to incorrect and this straight-line progression discredited the very basis of the four press theories (Nerone 1995: 19).

Further, some critics took the view that the theories were too generalised especially authoritarianism and libertarianism. Nerone (1995:20) points out how the authoritarian theory has the idea of an individual who is not whole, a government that functions independently of public opinion and out-and-out knowledge that is

only accessible to a few. Libertarian theory, in contrast, has an individual who is whole, a government that operates in relation to public opinion, and circumstantial knowledge that is accessible to many. However, there is a failure to take account of instances where such opposites are integrated in a single media system – for example, Thomas Hobbes simultaneously called for libertarian principles to be combined with authoritarian practices of professionalism.

Lastly, according to Yin (2008: 7) the four theories were a result of the Cold War period and were born out of a support for capitalism and its ideals. Therefore, due to capitalist partialities, the four theories condemned the issues raised by the libertarians regarding the ownership of media. The theories concentrated on how media was controlled and on the power of the state but neglected other inhibitive forms of power on the media. An illustration of the latter point is that under these theories, while political freedom was addressed economic independence from the factors that impact the market environment and ownership structure were overlooked.

Nonetheless, the relevance of the four theories to this research is that they provide an understanding of the operation climate that the print media in Botswana operate under. *The Voice* and *Midweek Sun* newspapers may operate under a libertarian and social responsibility theoretical environment. However, it could be a combination of these four theories which determine media reporting and presentation of violent crime. Therefore, by understanding all four theories, one may be able to explain why certain crimes are published and others not. It could help explain if there are other forces at play such as the state or professional practices that are the reason crime reality is sourced, selected, presented, and shaped.

2.3 Social Construction Theory

Social constructionism is a wide-ranging cross-disciplinary theory which became prominent after Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann's *Social Construction of Reality* was published in 1966. The theory has undergone improvements and revisions from scholars in various academic schools ranging from sociology, societal studies, enlightenment philosophies, narrative philosophy and human behavioural studies, post-foundationalism, and post-positivism etcetera (Stam 2001: 294; Henry 2009: 1).

Social constructionists are of the viewpoint that reality stems from a social construction by human beings who engage with the social system, making selective value judgments on what is considered important from a societal perspective and behaving like those aspects perceived as real are based on a tangible existence (Henry 2009: 1). Social constructionists that have their roots in idealist thinking and hold the notion reality

cannot exist alone without human participation. It is argued that individuals in society interpret the world and proceed to draw mental visual representations. These mental visuals are said to reflect a core reality. However, the concern is whether there is any independent objectivity to the reality constructed. The main issue is whether there is any objectivity [absence of human bias brought by personal beliefs, culture, and background] present in actuality that these representations seem to mirror (Henry 2009: 1). According to Henry, the majority of proponents of this theory agree in the existence of some ultimate actuality; whatever is constructed socially has a measure of reality since whatever humans consider being real can be taken to be so. In relation to the media and crime reporting, since realities are created, it follows that those creating them such as journalists have the capability to influence or change these realities to suit a particular need. The level, prevalence or even intensity of crime in society is thus a socially constructed reality that illustrates the fact that we communally construct and, by presumption, are also able to communally deconstruct and replace it with less threatening representations (2009:1).

There are ten key facets of social construction of reality that are crime news related and situate this research under this theory specifically.

2.3.1 Main features of social construction in relation to crime

According to Henry (2009:5) there are ten major features of social construction that most academics subscribe to. These ten fundamental features provide an understanding of the fact that what is reported as crime, significant or insignificant takes place outside of absolute objectivity. It also helps us understand that the position of an individual in society does not validate the reality they claim and that there are agendas that drive and shape the reality presented for consumption as news material. The ten key features are outlined below.

First, due to the way reality is a process of interaction and deliberation, societal classifications like crime should be viewed as truth claims and therefore interpretivist instead of completely valid and positivist. Social issues such as the actual rate of criminality, patterns of crime activity, and perpetrators of crime should be taken as truth claims and are subject to interpretation. This implies likely disparities between news coverage and records of crimes perpetrated. Hence the goal of the research study is to ascertain if the truth presented in crime news reporting by the two newspapers reflects actual crime-news reality as per the crime official statistics.

Second, joint assertions about what is considered to be crime, should not be taken as a reflection of a fundamental reality. This is particularly relevant to this research from the context that the two newspapers under scrutiny could share similar representations of crime however that may not necessarily be the actual reality of criminal activity when compared to the crime statistics of the Botswana Police Service.

Third, the categorisation of social occurrences of crime into several types like homicide, stealing, break-in, and defilement does not have to imply a significant actuality. This is regardless of the negative consequential effects of such crimes on the victims. As a point in case, defilement can actually be more violent than a sexual deed. Therefore, the media has the potential to portray as significant and prioritise such crimes and by so doing, report them outside of their actual context.

Fourthly, the definition of what constitutes crime can vary across boundaries, periods, societies, and distance. For example, smoking and the use of drugs like cocaine depends of the way of life of a particular society. In the United states, the use of Marijuana is legal in states such as Nevada and Colorado. However, the same drug is banned in states such as Idaho and Wyoming (State Marijuana Laws...2018).

Another feature of social construction, professionals and non-professionals alike do not have a right to have more understanding about crime as a social issue. This is important to this research in that one cannot assume that crimes covered by the publications that include expert commentary, imply an absolute reality.

Additionally, understanding in its entirety, is a product of the individual's interaction with his social environment and the construction of a reality that has a component of subjectivity. This adds weight to the possibility of unbalanced crime reporting since the news written by journalists is not independent of their individual perceptions and experiences in their social environment. Therefore, media houses that report on crime content have elements of subjectivity that can help explain why certain stories on crime a given prominence over others.

Furthermore, meaning is produced in an on-going manner and gains significance from individuals assigning attributes to deeds and happenings, together with when meaning is created or carried out. For example, the labelling of what is significant crime by the media can produce an increasingly misrepresentative view of what is actual significant crime. Journalist frame news and therefore they filter and select what crime stories to publish based on internal news values as stated earlier.

The internal news values will tend to differ between the Voice and Midweek Sun newspapers. This has the implication that there may be differences in crime type coverage between the two and between the crime records of the police.

Also, people who produce knowledge, such as those engaged in crime studies, individuals in the statistical offices of the state are equally subject to critique, and their claims are no more advantaged than any others (Henry 2009:5). This ties in with point five on the fact that no person, regardless of their status in the field of crime journalism, is exempt from subjectivity.

The ninth feature of social construction is that the manufacture of understanding of a social occurrence such as crime is determined by collective political agendas that seek a particular desired outcome. For example, messages perpetuated by the media that abortion is murderous, same sex relationships are ungodly and consumer fraud is a simply an intelligent manoeuvre on the part of organizations with a political agenda.

Lastly, the understanding and definition of criminal activity not straightforward but it varies and can change through language usage, symbolism [pictures, graphs in newspapers] and therefore there a plethora of various complex ways that the message delivered can be presented as news. It is with this understanding that content analysis is used in this research. Content analysis helps to identify the differences in crime news coverage as a result of language usage, graphics and colours, picture depictions of crime and a host of other variables. This also known as Semantical content analysis when we count the reoccurrence of a particular classification or trait (Krippendorf 2013:50).

2.3.2 The media's role in the social construction process

Ray Surette (2014: 33) identified four stages in the social construction process that explain the role of the media. The first stage comprises of the physical world. This physical world together with its components and environment describe the world we reside in. Statements concerning what transpired are advanced as factual and unbiased. Claims based on proof are used to classify a crime committed, for example, by a heading that reads *this murder exemplifies the rage on our roads*. Factual claims are a reference to definitions, groupings and assumptions causally linked to the level and character of conditions in the physical world. In stage two, media organisations are in competition for trustworthiness, often with opposing claims such as *sex work should be made illegal* or *decriminalize sex work*. These differing crime representations by media houses create anomalies with official crime statistics. According to Reiner, Livingston, and Allen (2003: 15), crime depiction in the media paralleled to official crime records is termed *the law of opposites*.

This shows that the way crimes occur, including media portrayal of perpetrators and victims is generally disparate to the crime patterns presented by official crime records. In the third stage, the influence and role of media is seen as the media sifts through the claims and societal topics, choosing those that will be reported in their print or other media outlets). This is pertinent to this research because this stage determines what the media prioritise and determine to be realness. The remaining claims are left out completely (Surette 2014: 33). At this stage, the media's preference for overly dramatic stories may result in inaccurate reporting of violent crime and the disregard for the statistical facts of crime occurrence. Stage four is marked by the dominance of the selected social construction, in this case of violent crime, which is presented to the public as a social issue and crime reality through the media.

2.4 Previous research

Several studies have been carried out that are significant to the current research. Some of the studies relate to framing as a concept that helps explain the fact that in journalistic production of news, one cannot remove subjectivity and therefore reality is shaped by the news writer and fed to the public. While framing is more focused on the public perception of crime news, it is of relevance to this research because of this fact. There are numerous academic professionals who have researched on methods used to frame crime. A well noted scholar in this area is Entman, an associate professor in communication studies, who authored an article to help clarify the issue of framing. Frames are wholly-designed outlines that permit the tagging, classification, and handling of a host of world activities [such as crime]. Regarding crime, if a criminal act can be swiftly put in a pre-designed frame, this makes it be perceived as another illustration of a specific criminal act that requires a specific reaction. Little time is necessary to comprehend a criminal act that has been slotted into a crime frame (Surette 2014: 38). He wrote, *Framing towards clarification of a fractured paradigm*, in which he articulated the importance of framing in journalism writing and the plethora of descriptions given to it in different academic fields. He further proceeded to integrate the diverse outlooks on the subject by defining framing as a process of choice and salience where information pertaining to a topic or occurrence goes through a process of sifting until the prevailing implication is left for coverage to the public (Entman 1993: 52). Another contributor to the study of framing is Deidre Freyberger who studied how world publications presented the murder case of Amanda Knox. She analysed the content of 500 news publications across the globe. Her analysis structure covers content areas such as writing style, article position and page positioning. Her findings pointed to the fact that in the United Kingdom, statements referencing Amanda Knox portrayed were in a negative light. Therefore, signifying the media capacity to frame news in any context they desired.

Still about framing, Dietram Schuefele is another important academic contributor to framing in the discipline of Mass Communication. He strove to create and merge the various framing aspects into a single consistent model after Entman's improvement of the approach to framing and that of reality as a social construction. Schuefele expanded framing research and introduced aspects such as frame-building, and audience feedback in journalism (Schuefele 1999). Other academics of repute in the area of social construction are the likes of Raymond Surette. In his book *Media, Crime, and Criminal Justice* in 2007, he wrote of four important stages in the social construction of crime. Indeed, social construction has a variety of crime related studies. The research by Jessica M. Pollak and Charis E. Kubrin of George Washington University is one such example. In their research study, *Crime in the News: How Crimes, Offenders and Victims Are Portrayed in the Media* (2007) they analyze how crime stories are portrayed in news media. Their research methodology involved pairing of crime news stories into 71 pairs and conducting a comparative analysis of crime representation in news publications and local broadcast media to identify dissimilarities and similarities between the two. A content analysis was deployed in the categorized crime cases that relate to young people, to determine the media's depiction of the perpetrators and sufferers of criminal acts. The results suggested the way news content was written concerning the nature of law-breaking, acts of criminality and those subjected to it, were in stark contrast to the crime statistics of law enforcement. Their research is pertinent to this project because the same methodology of a content analysis is being deployed to determine similarities and differences between the two Gaborone newspapers and official crime records issued by law enforcement (2007: 1). Therefore, their content analysis will help provide a point of reference in terms of the components, coding and constructs for the analysis. Furthermore, the theoretical framework for their work is social construction to which this research is situated. Therefore, it acts as a building block for this study on crime. However, the point of departure is that the research study of Pollak and Kubrin is a cross-medium investigation into crime news portrayal whereas this project is confined solely to print media and excludes television.

Another connected research study is that carried by Justin Ready, Michael D. White and Christopher Fisher. Their work entitled: *A comparative analysis of news reports and official police records on TASER deployments*, examines the function of the Media in the portrayal of the TASER gun including their capacity to impact on law enforcement practices (2008: 148). The methodology of the research entailed a content analysis that compared news articles and state law enforcement records of TASER use over a three-year period from 2002 to 2005 (Ready et al 2008: 149). The comparative content analysis is the same methodology employed in this research study. Their content analysis seeks to answer the research question of consistency between what is reported as news and police data incidents on TASER usage.

(Ready et al 2008: 154). This is similar to the first two research questions asked in this research that try to determine the kinds of violent crimes reported in *The Voice* and the *Midweek Sun* newspapers that differ from official police statistics on crime? Both research studies make use of official statistics to determine if the realities constructed by the media are aligned to the statistical realities of law enforcement. Therefore, their work contributes to the way in which this research will be carried out in terms of the presentation of data on crime reporting measured against official records. The main difference in terms of focus is that their research also examines police practices related to the use of a TASER whereas this violent crime research only uses official crime statistics of the police and does not focus on their function but more on the role of the media – the two publications.

The other research study that has bearing on this current research undertaking is that of James F. Davis in his study, *Crime news in Colorado newspapers*. The research he conducted examined the level of crime news content in four newspapers in Colorado and the study tested two hypotheses. The first is that of the absence of consistency in crime news stories reported and official crime statistics - be it for total crime acts committed or for the diverse types of crimes committed. The second hypothesis has to do with public opinion and that it reflects actual crime rates (1952: 325). The second hypothesis unlike the first is therefore insignificant to this current research study which does not examine public opinion. Crime news in the whole paper was analysed instead of the front page only. Streamers, headlines, and photographs were included in the analysis. The main analysis being the column inch measurement allocated which was then calculated as a percentage for each newspaper. The findings, concerning hypothesis one, reveal disparities in what is reported and official crime records (1952: 326). The research study, unlike that of Davis, makes use of content analysis because it will allow for better analysis of newspapers and also instead of analysing every page, the analysis of crime news will be confined to the first three pages [the front-page, page one, and page two]. This will prove useful in exploring deeper potential disparities between violent crime types, crime reporting and state crime records.

Another related research of note is that conducted by Dennis T. Lowry, Tarn Ching Josephine Nio and Dennis W. Leitner. Their research, *Setting the Public Fear Agenda: A Longitudinal Analysis of Network TV Crime Reporting, Public Perceptions of Crime, and FBI Crime Statistics* is primarily focused on the part the media plays in generating public alarm through their description of crime (2003: 61; Holbert, R. L. et al 2004:357). The work contributes to this current project due to the fact that these authors approach the role of media in crime presentation from a social construction perspective and deploy a statistical comparative analysis with official Federal investigation Bureau (FBI) crime reports. While their research is different in that it really is concerned with media effects on the public, their perspectives on the media's ability to social

construct reality help validate the current research. Leitner et al writes that academics have concluded that the levels of criminality reported by the media as news are the opposite of actual criminal activities. They cite a chief study relating to the *Chicago Tribune* which discovered anomalies between crime news and police crime data. They attribute the discrepancies to news values of media organisations which dictate what is considered interesting and appeals to the majority of readers. Therefore, by comparing *the Voice* and *Midweek Sun* newspapers to official crime records, there is a potential to really discover differences in the crime reality articulated in the media and the statistical reality founded on police facts.

Steven Chermak in his article, *Body count news: How crime is presented in the news media* (1994) examined how the manufacture of news stories on crime impacted the way crime was portrayed as news by the media. In his examination, he evaluated content to examine the presentation of crime in newspapers and broadcast media. He analysed content from six newspapers, and these were the *Albany*, *Buffalo News*, the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *Dallas Times Herald*, and the *Detroit*. He further the content of late evening television newscasts purposes of cross medium analysis.

The findings revealed that all the six newspapers gave more attention to murderous crime than any other. Nearly one-fourth of all crime stories published had to do with murder and that the media's representation of murder as significant crime did not equate with official statistics. The inference being murder as a story was seen as the more serious than any of the other crimes. Hence, the media pushed it onto the public sphere because they believed it to be fascinating to the public (1994:11). Chermak (1994:14) attributes these similarities in crime representation across the different publications to three things. First, the news outlets draw their readers from one emporium. Second, journalists from these different publishing houses are dependent on the same individuals to supply them with information. Third, news media are in direct competition with broadcast media and tend to draw their stories from those that are aired prominently on television. Therefore, findings above, also point to potential similarities between the *Midweek Sun* and the *Voice* because they could be pushing similar agendas, and therefore publishing similar crime-related occurrences. Cognisance of the reasons for such similarities, if any, must be considered in this particular research study.

All the previous studies assist to shape and streamline the current research specifically from a methodological point. The content analysis template design has the influence of these previous studies and is customised to meet the needs of the current research. In conclusion, it is important to note that some of their theoretical frameworks on reality help to posit this current study firmly in social constructionism.

2.5 Conclusion

This section explored the various concepts and theories that inform this research. It discussed previous research on the selection and framing of news article for public consumption. In so doing, it showed that there can be disparities in depictions of reality. Aside from varying theories related to crime and media, the two main key concepts described in chapter two were *framing* and *Social construction theory*. Also, the previous research work of various scholars such as Ready, White and Fisher, Chermak, and Davies all form the foundation of the research design and methodologies employed. Chapter three which follows, explains the goals and objectives of the study.

CHAPTER 3: GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

3 INTRODUCTION

This chapter serves to discuss the goals and objectives of this study. The aims of the study are explained together with the exploratory and descriptive objectives.

3.1 Goals and objectives of the study

This research aimed to describe and assess the crime news coverage practices of *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun* weekly news publications in relation to crime statistics of the Botswana Police department and therefore, the goal is applied communication research. The aim of the study was to explore and determine the extent of which the two most well-known tabloid newspapers in Gaborone, present, portray, sensationalize crime events, and whether significantly reported violent crimes correspond with police records. Furthermore, the study aimed at analysing news headlines to reveal whether one selected publication gives greater prominence in terms of violent crime type, photo area allocation, space allocation, images, page jump, word count and word play, compared to the other. Also, the study involves an exploration of violent crime reporting and how it is prioritised by making comparisons between *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun* newspapers against law enforcement crime statistics. Therefore, the objectives are exploratory and descriptive since there is no prior knowledge of the outcome and one could not predict what the findings of the exploration would be (Wimmer & Dominick 2006: 279). Use of exploratory research to determine the types of violent crimes covered, permits one to gain insight on whether *The Midweek Sun* and *The Voice* primarily focus misrepresent crime reality. Their construction of an incorrect reality can be confirmed when their news stories statistics are measured against the police's crime records that deserve the public's attention. Descriptive objectives, on the other hand, permit one to provide an in-depth description of the frequency and type of violent crimes that occur and their coverage by local media newspapers.

The importance of the research cannot be understated. First, the research is important because there has not been a comparative research conducted in Botswana in the context of media and crime news reporting. The study will contribute towards the growth of a research catalogue which will form the foundation for future studies. The recommendations presented by the study may assist key stakeholders in the media and journalistic field to make policy decisions that affect the way crime news is presented to the public. Second, the research may help manage the dynamic relationship between local newspapers and the police. As, Chagnon posits, the connection and interaction between news staff and the police is intricate and oscillates

between antagonistic and co-operative. Despite this shaky relationship the two parties need each other. News writers need the police for crime information. Equally, police officers need media to notify the public of lawbreaking. Furthermore, the media has the capacity to damage the reputation of law enforcement through the way they write crime news and present it to the public (Leishman & Mason cited in Chagnon 2010: 6). Therefore, the findings of the comparative analysis serve to bridge any gaps between these two inter-dependent bodies. In turn, this would transmute into better accurate reporting and greater cooperation. Consequently, the assumption is that the public will benefit since the news produced will be more reflective of reality and less dramatized. The public trust in the justice system is dependent on how they interpret the news presented to them. Descriptive objectives enable the researcher to comparatively analyse the two selected newspaper publications against law enforcement statistics quantitatively and qualitatively. As previously stated, the results will form the basis for further investigative studies in this area.

3.2 Conclusion

This section of the study provided an explanation of the goals and objectives of the study. The study aimed to describe and analyse the way crime news is presented to the public by *The Midweek Sun* and *The Voice* newspapers. The objectives were to explore anomalies and similarities in the depiction of violent crime. Also, to describe differences between *The Midweek Sun* and *The Voice* against BPS records on crime. In summation, the study sets out to explore and describe:

1. Differences between incidences of violent crimes reported by the two newspapers versus police records.
2. Differences between the selected publications in the way they present crime to the public.
3. The types of violent crimes that are given prominence by the selected press houses.

The next chapter looks at the formulation of the research problem. It explains the extent of the topic under scrutiny and delves into issues of relevance, researchability, feasibility, and ethical acceptability of the research. The research statement, research problems and sub-problems are detailed succinctly in Chapter four.

CHAPTER 4: FORMULATION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

4 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the research problem. It examines the extent of the problem under investigation. This section also provides a detailed look at the relevance, researchability, feasibility, and ethical acceptability of the study. Moreover, there is a complete description of the research problems and sub-problems that form the structural foundation of the research.

4.1 Formulation of the research problem

The research statement is: *There is a difference between the types of violent crime covered in the Voice and the Midweek Sun newspapers in Gaborone and the official crime statistics of the Botswana Police.*

4.1.1 Extent of the problem

The researcher carried out the study in the city of Gaborone in Botswana. It was conducted over a 12 Month period. *The Voice* and *Midweek Sun* newspapers are published weekly, and they are easily available. Current data instead of historical data formed the focus of the study. Research entailed the collection of newspaper weekly publications as they became available. Official crime statistics data were procured online because of the reluctance of the public relations department of the BPS to release the most current crime data for research use. Therefore, the data obtained are BPS crime records released to the press during the periodic media press conferences they hold on current crime events. This data was obtained online.

4.1.2 Relevancy, researchability, feasibility and ethical acceptability

In relevancy, the research's exploratory intentions will contribute to Communication Science by potentially unravelling anomalies in the level of importance attached to certain crime activities by media organisations, the type of crimes presented for consumption to the public in comparison to the factual statistical realities of crime as recorded by State law enforcement. This will assist print media newsrooms to streamline and re-evaluate the way they filter, prioritise and cover crime news through their editorial policies. This may provide an indication of the two publications' focus, drive, mission, and editorial policy. If the non-factual

(sensationalist) versus factual, balanced reporting can be described, such a finding could be of an important assistance in determining some publications' normative role in Botswana and per implication, African society. This research will help determine the level of accuracy in the representation of crime news. It will help identify areas of research and analyse the possible role of the media in the social construction of crime news as reflective of reality. The topic is also researchable.

About researchability, the research issue was conducted over a 12-month period and procurement of data took the form of online searches for statistics from the Botswana Police and weekly purchases of copies of *The Midweek Sun* and *The Voice*. The sorting of the newspapers' content and coding of the diverse categories of crime, and the design of measuring instruments such as the news story analysis form, and presentation of findings, were carried out within the set timeframe. This research was also feasible to conduct.

Alluding to feasibility, the research required a minimal level of financial input except for the purchase of the news publications. Therefore, there were no expense barriers to the research study. Furthermore, by means of purposive sampling there were no inhibiting factors preventing access to *the Voice* and *The Midweek Sun* newspapers. There were no interviews or respondent participation and only documented data was used. There are no law limitations that prevented the execution of the study. Also, the research was ethically acceptable due to the absence of potential physical, emotional, or financial risks connected to it.

4.2 Formulation of the sub-problems or research questions

The sub-problems were formulated from the need to succinctly make comparisons that can be quantified.

There are four sub-issues are listed as follows:

- **Sub-Issue 1:** Do the violent crimes reported in *The Voice* differ from official police statistics on crime?
- **Sub-Issue 2:** Do the violent crimes reported in *The Midweek Sun* differ from official police statistics on crime?
- **Sub-Issue 3:** Does the *Voice* cover violent crime news stories differently to *The Midweek Sun* newspaper?
- **Sub-Issue 4:** Is there a type of violent crime that predominantly features in the two newspapers?

In addition, the research questions are as follows:

- **Research question 1:** Are there differences in the type of violent crimes reported in *The Voice* in comparison with official police crime statistics?
- **Research question 2:** Are there differences in the types of violent crimes reported in *The Midweek Sun* in comparison with official police crime statistics?
- **Research question 3:** What type of coverage is given to violent crime reporting in *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun*?
- **Research question 4:** What types of violent crimes, reported by the Botswana Police Department, have the highest coverage in *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun* newspapers?

4.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, we addressed the various research questions and sub-issues formulated from our research statement. Have touched on the relevancy, feasibility, researchability and the ethical acceptability of the research and have determined that there are no inhibiting factors preventing the conduct of this research. The next chapter addresses the methodological aspect of the research, the quantitative and qualitative aspects, the key definitions, the method of data collection, the sampling process, units of analysis, the coding procedure, intercoder reliability, and the qualitative and quantitative components connected to this research.

CHAPTER 5: METHODOLOGY

5 INTRODUCTION

Chapter five addresses the methodology used in the study. The research design chosen incorporated qualitative and quantitative analysis of the news content. Foremost, the researcher chose descriptive quantitative content analysis to identify the amount of violent crime coverage in the copies of two newspapers and measure them against BPS statistics. Next, the researcher used qualitative content analysis in the newspaper headlines to identify how words were used to reflect crime. This analysis involved identifying rhetoric and lexical devices in headline text of the news stories belonging to *The Midweek Sun* and *The Voice*. These stylistic devices were also quantified. Therefore, the qualitative and quantitative analysis are entwined. The following section elaborates methodological research process.

5.1 The research method

The methodology involved a comparative content analysis of violent crime articles in 32 copies of *The Voice* and *Midweek Sun* newspapers in relation to police records. Therefore, the research has three primary data sources. Quantitative and qualitative content analysis methods were employed over a 12-month period. For example, quantitative to count the types and frequencies of crimes covered, and qualitative to analyse words, headings, captions, images to indicate news slant.

5.2 Qualitative/Quantitative aspects of the study

The researcher carried out a qualitative and quantitative content analysis of newspaper articles. Quantitatively, the research involved calculating the rate of recurrence of violent crime coverage. The calculation included percentages for the space allocation of violent crime stories in the first three pages. The quantitative analysis modelled itself along the Readership Institute which conducted the most extensive content analysis of 100 varied newspaper publications and evaluated 47,000 news articles in 700 issues (2002:1). Therefore, news stories were collected and analysed using one applicable Readership Institute tool relevant to this research. This tool is called a story analysis form that is filled out per story. A customised version of the analysis template that met the needs of this research was used. The story analysis form primarily facilitated in the tabulation of frequencies relating to front page allocation, column space allocation, photo area allocation, number of photos, and number of words used in the headlines. An analytical scheme

presented the figures unearthed. The results will help determine the level of significance given to certain

types of crime by *The Midweek Sun* and *The Voice* newspapers and therefore the role of the media in Botswana. Thereafter, the study compared the data of violent crime news stories against the Botswana Police statistics on crime activity. Throughout the year, one collected data from the two news publications and analysed it. A comparison with the crime stats of the Botswana Police proceeded after the news story data sample collection and analysis.

Qualitatively, a stylistic observation analysis form was also used to draw inferences from how *The Midweek Sun* and *The Voice* narrated crime stories in terms of lexical and rhetorical devices in their headlines. Section 5.5 elaborates on the definitions of the varying lexical and rhetorical features that formed the criteria for the qualitative analysis.

Therefore, the quantitative and qualitative analysis of news items in terms of space allocation, placement, prominence, and slant of the coverage of violent crime in the selected press, the study explores, describes, and explains the construction of violent crime reality in Gaborone, Botswana. Finally, by comparing the results from examining *The Midweek Sun* and *The Voice* with the official crime statistics, this study describes and explains variations, if any, between the two publications' representation of crime reality and that which is reflected in BPS records.

The next section provides in-depth definitions of the types of crime considered as violent crime that are to be examined by this research. These are mainly, murder, rape and attempted rape, aggravated assault, and armed and unarmed robberies.

5.2.1 Definitions

For the research, definitions of the several types of violent crime are derived from Botswana's penal code.

Murder is defined as crimes committed by *any person who of malice aforethought causes the death of another person by an unlawful act or omission* Chapter 08:01 Penal code; Malawi Penal Code 7-01). Malice aforethought can be defined as:

- (a) an intention to cause the death of or to do grievous harm to any person, whether such person is the person actually killed or not;
- (b) knowing that the act or omission causing death is likely to cause the death of some person, whether such person is the person actually killed or not, although such knowledge is accompanied by indifference whether death is caused or not, or by a wish that it may not be caused;

(c) an intention by the act or omission to facilitate the flight or escape from custody of any person who has committed or attempted to commit such an offence” (Chapter 08:01 Penal code).

The definition of murder excludes deaths due to negligible behaviour, suicidal deaths, or accident; justifiable homicides; and attempted murder or assaults with the intention of killing someone, which are classed under aggravated assaults.

Aggravated assault is defined as “...*Any person who, with intent to maim, disfigure or disable any person, or to do some grievous harm to any person, or to resist or prevent the lawful arrest or detention of any person.*”

Aggravated assault can refer to any person who:

- (a) unlawfully wounds or does any grievous harm to any person by any means whatever;
- (b) unlawfully attempts in any manner to strike any person with any kind of projectile or with a spear, sword, knife, or other dangerous or offensive weapon;
- (c) unlawfully causes any explosive to explode;
- (d) sends or delivers any explosive or other dangerous or noxious thing to any person;
- (e) causes any such explosive or thing to be taken or received by any person;
- (f) puts any corrosive fluid or any destructive or explosive substance in any place; or
- (g) unlawfully casts or throws any such fluid or substance at or upon any person, or otherwise applies any such fluid or substance to the person of any person (Penal code 08:01; Botswana 1998: s 227.5)

When there is a combination of assault and theft, this falls under robbery (Chapter 08:01 Penal code [sa]; Botswana 1998: s 227.5;).

Robbery is defined as “Any person who steals anything, and, at or immediately before or immediately after the time of stealing it, uses or threatens to use actual violence to any person or property in order to obtain or retain the thing stolen or to prevent or overcome resistance to its being stolen or retained, is guilty of the offence termed robbery” (Chapter 08:01 Penal code [sa]; Botswana 1998: s 291.5)

Robbery can be broken down into two types and these are unarmed and armed.

Unarmed robbery refers to:

“Any person who assaults any person with intent to steal anything, and, at or immediately before or immediately after the time of the assault, uses or threatens to use actual violence to any person or property in order to obtain the thing intended to be stolen, or to prevent or overcome resistance to its being stolen, is guilty of an offence” (Botswana 1998: s293.5; Chapter 16 The Penal Code [sa]).

Armed robbery refers to:

“If the offender is armed with any dangerous or offensive weapon or instrument, or is in company with one or more other person or persons, or if, at or immediately before or immediately after the time of the assault, he wounds, beats, strikes, or uses any other personal violence to any person...” (Botswana 1998: s 293.5; Chapter 16 The Penal Code [sa]).

Rape is defined as:

“any person who has unlawful carnal knowledge of another person, or who causes the penetration of a sexual organ or instrument, of whatever nature, into the person of another for the purposes of sexual gratification, or who causes the penetration of another person's sexual organ into his or her person, without the consent of such other person, or with such person's consent if the consent is obtained by force or means of threats or intimidation of any kind, by fear of bodily harm, or by means of false pretences as to the nature of the act, or, in the case of a married person, by personating that person's spouse, is guilty of the offence termed rape” (Botswana 1998: s 141.5; Makgolwane versus the state 2003).

Attempted rape is defined as:

“Any person who attempts to have unlawful carnal knowledge of any person under the age of 16 years is guilty of an offence and is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 14 years with or without corporal punishment” (Botswana 1998: s 143:1).

The next section examines the various qualitative aspects of the research and these are sampling, population, unit of analysis, measuring instruments, data collection method. Also, the quantitative components of the research are elaborated on.

5.3 Components of the research design

5.3.1 Sampling

The research used purposive sampling to obtain the research sample. This technique allows the researcher to draw the sample from the population portion that is easily available (Johnson and Christensen 2012:231). Therefore, since newspapers are easily accessible it means a convenience sample is possible to draw. Also, newspapers enable accurate record keeping. Knowledge of the various newspapers and crime coverage print publications and the intentions outlined for this research permit the use of personal judgement in selecting a sample. The procedure adhered to in the current study was as follows:

- Selection of one newspaper each per week on Wednesday for *The Midweek Sun* newspaper and Friday for the *Voice* newspaper.
- The construction of a week-by-week calendar to track the two publications and up to 30 copies each as shown below:

2016	Week	The Midweek Sun	The Voice
		Wednesday	Friday
APRIL	1	13 April 2016	15 April 2016
	2	20 April 2016	22 April 2016
	3	27 April 2016	29 April 2016
MAY	4	04 May 2016	06 May 2016
	5	11 May 2016	13 May 2016
	6	18 May 2016	20 May 2016
	7	25 May 2016	27 May 2016
JUNE	8	01 June 2016	03 June 2016
	9	08 June 2016	10 June 2016
	10	15 June 2016	17 June 2016
	11	22 June 2016	24 June 2016
	12	29 June 2016	01 July 2016
JULY	13	06 July 2016	08 July 2016
	14	13 July 2016	15 July 2016
	15	20 July 2016	22 July 2016
	16	27 July 2016	29 July 2016
AUGUST	17	03 August 2016	05 August 2016
	18	10 August 2016	12 August 2016
	19	17 August 2016	19 August 2016
	20	24 August 2016	26 August 2016
	21	31 August 2016	02 September 2016
SEPTEMBER	22	07 September 2016	09 September 2016
	23	14 September 2016	16 September 2016
	24	21 September 2016	23 September 2016
	0	28 September 2016	30 September 2016
OCTOBER	25	05 October 2016	07 October 2016
	26	12 October 2016	14 October 2016
	27	19 October 2016	21 October 2016
	28	26 October 2016	28 October 2016
NOVEMBER	29	02 November 2016	04 November 2016
	30	16 November 2016	18 November 2016

The sample under analysis comprised of 30 copies of the *Midweek Sun* and 30 copies of the *Voice*. Both publications did not release any news material during week of the 28th of September 2016 and 30 September 2016 because of the Botswana Independence celebrations.

5.3.2 Population

The population is subdivided into target and accessible. Target population is the entire content considered for the study from which the researcher can draw conclusions about the social issue. The accessible population, in contrast, is a section of the target population that is reachable by the researcher for the undertaking of the study (Sim and Wright 2002:111). Therefore, the target population were all newspapers in Gaborone. The accessible population were copies of *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun* newspapers.

5.3.3 Units of analysis

Units of analysis refer to those items in the research that assist in getting an understanding of and carrying out a generalisation of the phenomena under investigation (Brewer and Hunter 2006:88). The unit of analysis are the violent crime stories covered in *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun* newspapers and the Botswana Police Departmental crime statistics. The *Voice* and *The Midweek Sun* are known as the observational units. Observational units are the sources from which we have collected the data (Brewer and Hunter 2006:88).

5.3.4 The measuring instrument

The measuring instrument was a content analysis made up of a story analysis form obtained from the Readership Institute's 2002 publication *Analysing Newspaper Content: A How-to-Guide* which provides instruction on how to conduct a content analysis. The story analysis form was adapted to cater to the research because it was originally designed to examine a variety of news stories in relation to the sections in the paper where they appear specifically business, sports, food, lifestyle, local and international news sections. Since this research is primarily focussed on a specific news story type and not overall news or newspaper structure, amendments to the story analysis form had to be made. The second measuring instrument is a an excel comparative analysis table to compare the publications' crime news content with each other and against police statistical records. This table is adapted from the research of Ready, White and Fisher (2008:158) and who by designed it to compare news reports and Taser usage by the police. A ruler was used for measuring space allocation in centimetres.

5.3.5 Data collection

In terms of collection of the data, a total of 30 copies each of *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun* newspapers were collected over 30 weeks from April to November 2016 as they were published. Official crime statistics were obtained from a crime statistical search online. The BPS data on crime obtained date from January 2016 to end of May 2016. Matota (2016) states that there were 387 cases of armed robbery, 126 cases of murder and 671 cases of rape. Data was stored by keeping all crime news articles in a secure stored container and by scanning all crime news articles, arranged systematically per month and per publication. These articles were also stored on a personal computer and for further security, backed up onto an external drive and also on Gmail drive.

5.4 Quantitative components of the research

Quantitative research attempts to provide an answer to phenomena by using mathematical procedures such as statistics to shed light on the social issue under scrutiny. The quantitative analysis of content is a structured and reproduceable analysis of text and images by assigning numeric values to the content under scrutiny (Riff, Lacey, and Fico 2014:19). The reason for data collection is to analyse the issue and draw conclusions (Aliaga et. al. 2002). Therefore, quantitative content analysis was applied to the news content gathered for the study to evaluate, describe, and summarise it. The researcher, through descriptive statistics can breakdown the data into numeric values and classify it for analysis and findings (Wagner, Kawulich and Garner, 2012). An explanation of the quantitative components of the research are in the section below and these are coding procedures, reliability and validity, levels of measurement, and categories for quantitative evaluation.

5.4.1 Coding procedures

Two coders conducted the coding at every phase of the study. Two coders were enough for the process of categorising and assigning values to the news material due to non-complexity of the coding procedure and the minimal financial input required. Also, the researcher conducted a pilot study to assess the quality of the measuring instruments, primarily the story analysis form.

5.4.2 Reliability and validity

Intercoder reliability involved the exchange of newspaper issues for coding between the researcher and assistant coder. The two researchers coded 4 randomly selected newspaper publications, 2 from *The Midweek Sun* and 2 from *The Voice Newspaper*. The figure represented is 6.5 % of the total sample. They shared and compared the same batch of news articles they coded to determine reliability of the coding instruments.

5.4.3 Measurement level

Percent agreement was the scale of measurement based on the use of nominal codes. Percentage agreement is the level of agreement between the two coding implementors derived from the actual coding process (Hayes and Krippendorf 2007:80). The calculation of percent agreement is carried out as follows:

Total number of agreed observations ÷ Total number of observations

The above formula can be expressed as:

$$PAo = A/n$$

PAo an abbreviation for 'proportion agreement observed,' A means 'the number of agreements between the two coders,' and *n* refers to 'the total number of units the two coders for the test' (Neuendorf 2002:149).

5.4.4 Categories for quantitative analysis process

The quantitative analysis categories used were selected to make further comparisons in the attention given to crime news between *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun*. The classifications help to provide a deeper insight into the extent of detail and therefore significance given to violent crime.

- Sub-theme – What is the type of violent crime committed?
- News category – What is the current progress of the crime?
- Source – Who wrote the crime article?
- Headlines/Frontpage – Is the story on the front page and therefore prioritised?
- Jump – does news story continue to an inside page of the newspaper?
- Column size – how much space is occupied by a violent crime story?
- Total photograph area – What is the size of the photograph area occupied?
(The area calculated as length times width).
- Total Number of colour photographs – How many coloured photographs are featured in the article?
- Total number of human subjects – How many people are in the photograph?

5.5 Qualitative components of the research

The qualitative analysis was carried out to identify themes and linguistic patterns of presenting in crime news which may point towards similar or different new slants. Also, the qualitative process of evaluation was intended to determine the level of sensationalism or lack of, given to crimes reported by these two newspapers. The qualitative analysis was broken into two analytical parts and these are lexical features and rhetorical devices as discussed below.

5.5.1 Lexical units

The lexical features examined include:

- **Compound words:** These are words that are created from two or more words. Simply put, they are a composite of two or more words and are inexhaustive and encompass nouns, verbs, and adjectives (Li, Zhang et al: 2014;117). They are broken down into three main types. First, there are closed compounds such as the words *fireworks, firefighter, football, upstream, football, and so on*. These words are joined together without any space in between them.

Second, there are open compound words such as *Ice cream, District attorney, War lord, drug trafficker, crime scene, real estate* etcetera. Note that these compounded words have a space in between them.

Third, there are hyphenated compound words. For example, *light-years, grim-faced, talk-show, award-winning, court-appointed*, etcetera.

Compound words serve to enhance the level of accurate representation of news stories. Therefore, by comparing the usage of these words between *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun* newspapers, it will help provide an indication of how similar or how different these publications in the context of accurate news reporting.

- **Fuzzy Words:** These are words that are ambiguous, unclear, partial, and their adjectives are not absolute. Fuzzy words are described as words with no specific time frame such as *recently, nowadays, and past years*. They can also be broken down into words that are not specific to detail such as the words *high, short, blue etcetera* (Li, Zhang et al 2014:118). Also, words that have a numeric value attached to them can be classified as fuzzy. For example, words like *thousands of, millions of, dozens of* all fall under this category.

By determining the usage level of fuzzy words, one will be able to uncover any inaccurate, biased, or unverified reporting of crime in the newspapers under study. The comparisons drawn will help one to understand if crime news that is reported is presented clearly and factually and help ascertain out of the two newspapers, which publication is reporting ambiguously.

- **Proper Nouns:** A proper noun refers to the name given to a specific person, place, or item. The initial letter of a proper noun is capitalised (Online Cambridge dictionary [Sa]). The words *Linda*, *Gaborone*, and *The Global Citizen Festival* are examples of proper nouns.
- **Verbs:** “A word or a phrase that describes an action, condition or experience.” The words *run*, *keep*, and *feel* (Online Cambridge dictionary [Sa]).
- **Adjectives:** Adjectives describe a noun or pronoun (Online Cambridge dictionary [Sa]). For example, *angry*, *delicious*, *tired*, *naughty*.

5.5.2 Rhetorical devices

The purpose of rhetorical devices as a word choice, is to ignite an emotion response from the reader. Rhetorical language is the writer’s art of persuasion; to stir up the reader to act or support a particular stance. Hence, their importance in determining news-slant, sensationalism, exaggeration of the facts in the reporting of news in the two publications being analysed. Moreover, the greater the rhetorical devices used, the more likely the greater the significance given to a crime.

Rhetorical devices can be categorised into four groups and these are metaphors, alliteration and rhymes, puns, and idioms (Ehineni 2013:14; Lammichhane 2017:35). An elaboration of each rhetorical category is given below.

- **Metaphors:** A metaphor is described linguistically as the assigning of connotative titles, words and phrases to items or applying traits such items that do not represent their actual meanings (Glucksberg 2001:4). Metaphors are a way of making insinuated, indirect comparisons between two items that possess common characteristics (Ehineni 2014: 30).
- **Alliteration:** Alliteration is the occurrence of the same consonant sound from a set of syllables right at the start that are next to, or in proximity to each other. For example, *the lazy lump lounged by the lake*

(the alliteration in this case is applied to the letter l (Delin 2000:171)). Furthermore, the alliteration transpires in connection to the sounds and not the letters (Tolkien 1940: xxxiii). For example, *physical* and *festival* (Delin 2000:171).

- **Rhyme:** Rhyme is “the repetition of an identical stressed vowel sound, followed by identical consonant sound preceded by different consonants” (Ehineni 2014:31). For example, *Eat and Greet, blow, and flow*.
- **Puns:** According to *The Routledge Dictionary of Language and Linguistics (1996:391)*, “A figure of speech of repetition. A play on words that sound similar but are different semantically and etymologically, e.g. *Is life worth living? That depends on the liver*. The prerequisite for a figure of speech to be considered a pun is that it should be “based on the unit of the word, rely on a doubling of textual relevance, and create a humorous, provocative, poignant effect (Harding 2017: 63). Hence their inclusion in the qualitative analysis into crime reporting. Their use from a provocative or poignant aspect could indicate the level of prominence given to a violent crime news story.
- **Idioms:** Peacock (2009:1) states that idioms are words that convey a deeper message than their literal sense. They serve to create pictures in the mind or rapidly stir up passionate feelings pertaining to an issue. They provide a descriptive summation of the current state of an issue without using a plethora of words and phrases. Furthermore, idioms can be ambiguous or transparent. For example, the idiom “*kick the bucket*” is ambiguous. It is possible for a person unfamiliar with this idiom to fail to associate it with death. However, for example, the idiom “*go wrong*” is semantically clear (Ayto 2010: vii).

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the research design. It looked at the operational definitions of what constitutes crime in line with the Botswana Penal code. This study identified and operationalised murder, rape, robberies, and aggravated assault. The components of the research design included sampling, coding procedures, population, measuring instruments and data collection procedures. Aspects of the research such as reliability and validity, percent agreement and level of measurement were described in detail. Moreover, there was a methodological breakdown of the qualitative and quantitative processes of analysis. The qualitative analysis examined crime news headlines to identify rhetorical and lexical features and the regularity of their use. The quantitative analysis counted the number of times featured violent crimes in the two publications and drew comparisons with police crime records.

The next chapter provides a discussion on the findings from the content analysis carried out.

CHAPTER 6 ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

6 INTRODUCTION

Chapter six discusses the analysis and findings from the study. Disparities identified between the two selected two press houses and police records. The BPS crime statistics are specific to Gaborone and are compared to violent crime activity of these two Gaborone city newspapers. The section studies variances and similarities in crime news coverage between *The Midweek Sun* and *The Voice* and looks at the quantitative and qualitative findings of the research at length.

6.1. Analysis and Interpretation of the Data

This section provides an analysis, evaluation, statistically based description of the data gathered. The frequencies of crime occurrence and the frequencies of stylistic devices are included below. The anomalies and similarities from the data collected are presented below.

6.1.1 Crime differences in the Voice and police statistics

Table 1 provides the frequency of violent crime cases between *The Voice* newspaper and official police records. *The Voice* publication has a total of 30 cases of violent crime reported from April to November 2016. Murder accounts for 19 cases and 63 percent of all cases, while rape makes 37 percent of the remaining cases. There are no cases of armed robbery reported for that period.

Table 1. Comparative frequency table between The Voice and police records

<i>Differences Between the Voice Newspaper and the Botswana Police Records</i>				
<i>The Voice</i>			Police Record	
Violent Crime	No of Cases	%	No of cases	%
Armed Robbery	0	0%	387	33%
Murder	19	63%	126	11%
Rape	11	37%	671	57%
Total	30		1184	

The police records on violent crime date from January to June 2016 and confirm disproportions with the cases reported by *The Voice* publication. Rape has the highest frequency of occurrence totalling 671 cases, (57 %). Armed robbery is the second highest with 387 cases representing 33 percent of all cases reported.

Comparatively, based on these statistics, one can see that the major difference between this newspaper and BPS official records, is that armed robbery is completely discarded. Armed robbery is not reported as a news story in *The Voice* newspaper, yet it has the second highest rate of occurrence of 33 percent according to the BPS. Additionally, murder is the most covered and considered the most significant crime with 19 cases, 63 percent coverage. However, murder is recorded as the least occurring violent crime with 11 percent frequency.

The findings confirm that there are marked differences in the types of violent crimes covered by *The Voice* compared to BPS crime statistics in terms of their frequency and prominence. This may indicate that the newspaper prefers the more atrocious, dramatic, and extremely violent acts of delinquency since murder may be considered to be a more heinous crime.

6.1.2 Crime differences in *The Midweek Sun* and police statistics

According to the data in table 2 below, rape is the most presented violent crime in *The Midweek Sun*. From a total of 10 crime stories reported in the 30 copies of this publication, rape has a 60 percent frequency coverage derived from 6 cases. Murder makes up 40 percent with 4 cases reported and there are no armed robbery cases reported.

Table 2. Comparative frequency table between the *Midweek Sun* and police records

<i>Differences Between the Midweek Sun Newspaper and the Botswana Police Records</i>				
Violent Crime Type	The Midweek Sun		Police Record	
	No of Cases	%	No of cases	%
Armed Robbery	0	0%	387	33%
Murder	4	40%	126	11%
Rape	6	60%	671	57%
Total	10		1184	

The disparity between *The Midweek Sun* compared to the police statistics on crime is the fact that there are no incidents of robberies reported by the newspaper. However, police records on armed robbery show a significant occurrence of 387 cases, translating to 33 percent. Another difference is that that incidents of murder are higher in *The Midweek* publication, at 40 percent compared to the BPS record of 11 percent (126 cases).

Interestingly, rape is also the most dominant crime recorded for both *The Midweek Sun* and the Botswana police crime records. There are 671 cases of rape recorded by the police, representing 57 percent compared to a similar figure of 60 percent for 6 rape cases covered by *The Midweek Sun*.

6.1.3 Highest crimes in *The Voice* and *Midweek Sun*

In as far as violent crime is concerned, table 3 shows that murder (63%; $n=19$) had the highest coverage in *The Voice Newspaper* while rape (60%; $n=6$) was the most featured crime in *The Midweek Sun*. Both publications did not feature armed theft as news.

Table 3: Comparative frequency table between *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun*

<i>Newspaper crime coverage</i>				
Violent Crime Type	The Voice		Midweek Sun	
	No of Cases	%	No of cases	%
Armed Robbery	0	0%	0	0%
Murder	18	63%	4	40%
Rape	10	37%	6	60%
Total	28		10	

However, as table 4 illustrates, from a combined total number of 38 violent crime cases for both publications, murder coverage accounts for 57 percent coverage; 22 cases. Rape accounts for 17 cases, representing an overall coverage of 43 percent.

Table 4: Most incidences of violent crime in the *Voice* and *Midweek Sun*

Violent Crime	The Voice	The Midweek Sun	Combined Coverage	
	No of Cases	No of Cases	Total	%
<i>Armed Robbery</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Murder</i>	18	4	22	57
<i>Rape</i>	10	6	16	43
Total	28	10	38	

Table 5 below shows that out of the two print media outlets, *The Voice* has a far greater coverage of crime related stories than *The Midweek Sun*. In fact, this publication contributed 74 percent of all the violent crime news covered compared to 26 percent for *The Midweek Sun*.

Table 5: Holistic analysis of the coverage of violent crime in The Voice and The Midweek Sun

Newspaper	Total Violent crimes coverage between The Voice and The Midweek Sun			N	%
	Armed Robbery	Murder	Rape		
<i>The Voice</i>	0	18	10	28	74%
<i>The Midweek Sun</i>	0	4	6	10	26%
Total				38	

Additionally, by means of a quantitative story analysis form, an analysis of the frequencies of the coded categories mentioned in section 5.3.3. were carried out. Despite both these publications’ significantly covering murder and rape, the newspapers do exhibit similarities and differences in their presentation of crime in their content production. The content analysis examined the frequency distributions of the categories discussed in section 5.3.3. Below are the results of the analysis that are provided systematically.

6.1.4 The coding analysis of murder and rape case categories

Table 6: Frequency distribution of Murder case categories

Variable	Murder Coverage in the Newspapers			
	Voice	Fr	Midweek	Fr
Number of Murder cases (N)	18	%	4	%
News category				
1. Police	3	17	1	25
2. Courts	11	61	3	75
3. Crime	4	22	0	0

According to table 6, in terms of priority, *The Voice* published murder cases that were in the courts pending a verdict. The results show that 61% (11 cases covered out of 18 cases) fell under this court classification. Similarly, *The Midweek Sun* allocated 75% (3 cases out of 4 cases) to this same category. This may be indicative of a drive to ensure factual reporting rather than speculative journalism on the part of these papers. For the stories to be at the court stage where they are pending a ruling, it may mean that a lot of

information has been collected, sourced from other institutions such as the police and judiciary and evaluated before being published as crime news. Therefore, this makes for greater accuracy in the news process and allows the readers an opportunity to follow through the crime issue to the final verdict. It is important to note that while *The Midweek Sun* compared to *The Voice*, has 14% more coverage of crimes in the courts but has a far lower number of murder cases. In fact, it has 14 less cases and therefore, one can see that *The Voice* has a higher overall frequency compared to *The Midweek Sun*. Also, *The Voice* has a higher news report percentage of crimes under investigation by the police. *The Voice* accounted for 17% (N=3) compared to *The Midweek Sun* that had 25%(N=1) under the police category. A marked disparity between the two publications in frequency relates to violent crimes under discussion with no arrests being made yet. For this crime category, *The Voice* accounted for 22%(N=4) whereas there were zero crimes reported by *The Midweek Sun* for this category (N=0). The sharpest difference unearthed is that the volume of murder cases reported upon by *The Voice* take greater priority than in *The Midweek Sun*.

Table 7: Frequency distribution of rape case categories

Rape Coverage in the Newspapers				
Variable	Voice	Fr	Midweek	Fr
Number of Murder cases (N)	10	%	6	%
News category				
1. Police	5	50	0	0
2. Courts	3	30	5	83
3. Crime	2	20	1	17

In relation to the news reporting frequency of rape, in *The Voice*, the police category accounted for the highest frequency of 50% (N=5). In contrast to *The Midweek Sun*, crimes now in the courts had the highest coverage of 83% (N=5). Noticeably and in stark contrast to *The Voice*, this publication did not have any rape cases that were being discussed or under investigation by the police (0%; N=0). Under the category of crime, *The Voice* allocated 20% (N=2) compared to *The Midweek Sun* that allocated 17% (N=1). These findings indicate that potentially, when it comes to reporting rape as a violent crime, both newspapers prioritise cases or incidents that are at an advanced stage, either with the police or in the courts. Hence, both publications have a low percentage of rape cases reported under the crime category. It could also suggest that there is an endeavour to reduce bias or sensationalist storytelling of crime by gathering their stories from entities that are part of the criminal justice system. Also, it could be that such information on such stories is easier to obtain and therefore can help save time.

6.1.5 The analysis of the writing source of the murder and rape news

In relation to writing sources and a positive aspect – both these papers use stories from their own journalists instead of wire reports as wire reports are written for general audiences. The findings are illustrated in table 8.

Table 8: News source frequency for murder coverage

Source	<i>The Voice</i>		<i>The Midweek Sun</i>	
	N=18	Fr (%)	N=4	Fr (%)
1. Wire News Service	0	0%	0	0%
2. Staff Writer	17	94%	4	100%
3. Unknown	1	6%	0	0%

The main source of the published murder news stories in *The Voice* and in *The Midweek Sun* are staff writers. In *The Voice*, staff writers account for 94%(N=17) for the news content on murderous crime and 6% (N=1) from an unknown source. In *The Midweek Sun*, staff writers account for 100% (N=4). In addition, table 9 below show that in the case of rape as a featured crime, staff writers accounted for 100% (N=10) in *The Voice* newspaper and 100% (N=6) for *The Midweek Sun*.

Table 9: News source frequency for rape coverage

Source	<i>The Voice</i>		<i>The Midweek Sun</i>	
	N=10	Fr (%)	N=6	Fr (%)
1. Wire News Service	0	0%	0	0%
2. Staff Writer	10	100%	6	100%
3. Unknown	0	0%	0	0%

The findings show that the two tabloids have similar traits on who writes their crime stories. Staff writers are primarily used. In both *The Voice and The Midweek Sun* Staff writers account for 100% of all the violent crime articles.

6.1.6 The frontpage and jump of murder and rape news stories

Table 10: The front page and jump for murder stories

Frontpage		Voice		Midweek	
		N=18	Fr %	N=4	Fr %
Yes		12	67	2	50
No		6	33	2	50
Jump					
Yes		12	67	2	50
No		6	33	2	50

This section examines the frequency distribution of murder and rape news articles published on the front page. It further provides an analysis of the number of news articles that jumped and carried on to another page. Table 10 compares the data *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun* in relation to murder coverage. The findings show that 67% (N=12) of murder cases in *The Voice* appeared on the front page versus 33% (N=6) that were reported on another page. In relation to news items that jumped, 67% (N=12) of the news items covered on the headline page of *The Voice* jumped. In *The Voice*, only the 33% (N=6) reported a page other than the main page, did not jump. In *The Midweek Sun*, 50% (N=2) accounted for those news stories that carried over into another inside page compared to 50% (N=2) that did not appear on the front page. Similarly, regarding jumping frequencies, 50% (N=2) of murder stories did not continue to another page and 50% (N=2) jumped.

Table 31 Front page and Jump frequencies for rape stories

Frontpage		Voice		Midweek	
		N=10	Fr %	N=6	Fr %
Yes		6	60	4	67
No		4	40	2	33
Jump					
Yes		4	40	4	67
No		6	60	2	33

In addition, for rape crimes published are shown in table 11. In *The Voice*, 60% (N=10) accounted for rape crimes reported on the headline page compared 40% (N= 4) of those articles published on a lesser page other than the front page. Regarding jump, *The Voice* had 40% of the rape news items on the front page jumping while 60% (N=6) did not jump.

6.1.7 Space and photo allocation of news stories

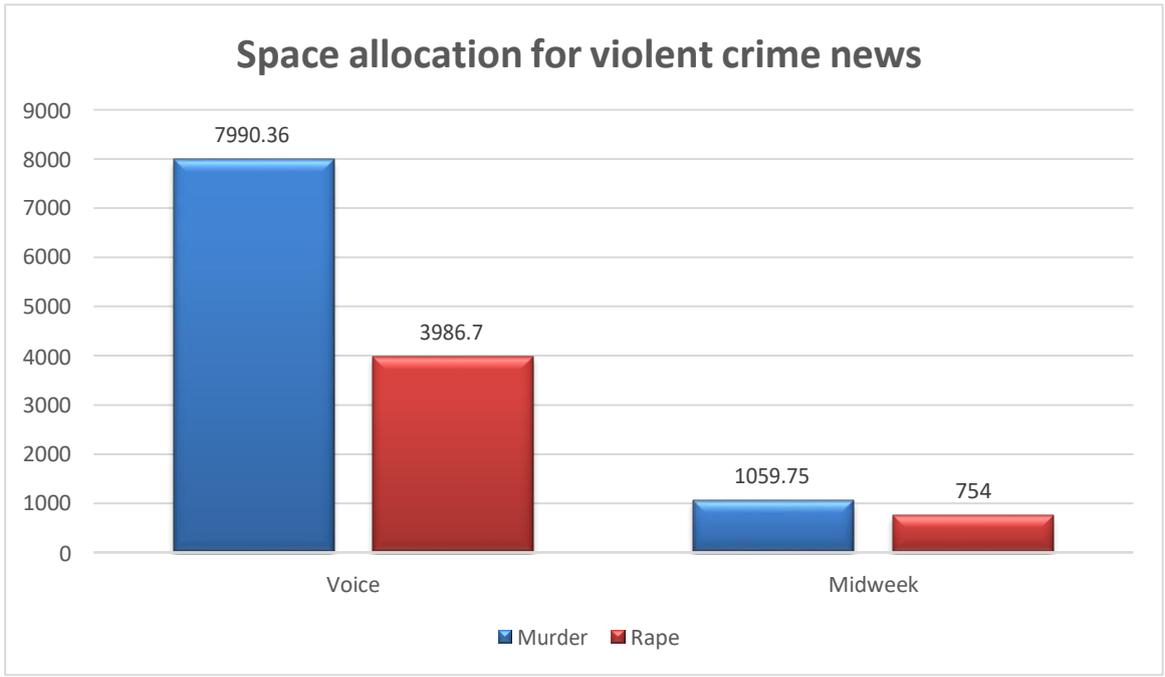


Figure 2: Space allocated to murder and rape news

Based on the content analysis, total column area given to crime news was analysed and calculated. Figure 1 shows the allocation of space to violent crime news content between the selected newspapers. It was discovered that *The Voice* allocated more space to violent crime news articles on murder and rape in comparison to *The Midweek Sun*. The data clearly indicates that *The Voice newspaper* had the largest amount of space (7990.36 cm) compared to *The Midweek Sun* with 1059.75 cm for murder stories. In relation to rape as news, *The Voice* also had a higher allocation of 3986.7 cm compared to 754 cm for *The Midweek Sun*. Based on the above statistics, it is apparent that there are differences in space allocation between the two papers under examination. Furthermore, as shown in table 12, *The Voice* had a total space allocation for violent crime for murder and rape of 11977.06 cm. The percentage of space given to murder was 67% and 23% for rape coverage. In comparison, *The Midweek Sun*, the space given to murder and rape totalled 1813.75 cm which equated to a percent allocation of 58% for murder and 42% for rape.

Table 12: Comparative space allocation percentages

	Total Space allocated to murder and rape	murder	Rape
The Voice	11977.06 cm	67% (7990.36 cm)	23% (3986.7 cm)
The Midweek Sun	1813.75 cm	58% (1059.75 cm)	42% (754 cm)

These findings show that while *The Voice* gives greater importance to murder news than rape news, *The Midweek Sun* has a more balanced approach. It tries to give crime stories on rape as much importance in terms of the space allocation. Furthermore, table 13 provides comparative data on the allocation of news space for violent crime, politics, business, and sports.

Table 13: Space allocation of newspaper sections

	Total Space Allocation (cm)	Crime	Politics	Business	Sport
The Voice	126526.93	11977.06 (9%)	20916.9 (17%)	58395.3 (46%)	35237.67 (28%)
Midweek Sun	55961.45	1813.75 (4%)	10426.1 (17%)	27929.6(50%)	15792 (29%)

The results show that in *The Voice* allocated 46% of news space to business, followed by 28% to sport and 17% to politics. Crime had the least space and was given 9% of total news article space. In relation to *The Midweek Sun*, similarly, business news given the largest amount of space with 50%, followed by sport with 29% space allocation. Politics and crime had the least space; 17% for political news and 4% for violent crime news. Therefore, from this broader analysis of column space, the two publications give more prominence to business news and sports news over crime stories. Except for crime, the differences are minimal between the two news publications when crime is compared to politics, business and sports sections.

Aside, from the allocation of column space, photographs also play a role in assessing the significance of a crime story. Therefore, the next paragraph provides the analysis and findings concerning photo area space allocation.

The pictures of all the crime related stories were measured and analysed to determine the amount of space

allocated. In so doing, the research would ascertain the importance attached to violent crime stories. Virtually all the pictures were recorded and measured in centimetres. The data included the total number of photographs, total number of colour photographs and the total photograph area. With reference to table 14, the tabulated data shows that *The Voice* had a total photo area allocation of 4411.4 cm. It also had a total of 43 photos and all these photos were in colour. *The Midweek Sun* has no article on violent crime that has accompanying pictures. Therefore, this publication has no photo space allocation whatsoever.

Table 14: Overall photo space allocation and usage in the Voice

	<i>Total photo area (cm)</i>	<i>Total number of photos</i>	<i>Total number of colour photos</i>	
The Voice	4411.4	43	43	
The Midweek Sun	0	0	0	

In expansion, table 15 and table 16 provide a detailed breakdown of photo usage and space allocation per the two main violent crimes, murder, and rape. In *The Voice* murder stories featured more photographs ($N=33$) and had the highest column photo area of 2695.65 cm. Rape news stories featured a total of 10 photographs in the same publication. On the other hand, table 16 shows that *The Midweek sun* did not have any photographs for any of their published murder and rape news stories.

Table 15: The Voice newspaper photo usage and space per crime type

<i>The Voice Newspaper</i>			
Crime type	Photo area cm	Total number of photos (N=43)	Total number of colour photos (N=43)
Murder	2695.65	33	33
Rape	1715.75	10	10
Total	4411.4	43	43

Table 16: The Midweek Sun photo usage and space allocation per crime type

<i>The Midweek Sun</i>			
Crime type	Photo area cm	Total number of photos	Total number of colour photos
Murder	0	0	0
Rape	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0

6.1.8 Crime portrayal in *The Voice* compared to *The Midweek Sun*

This section examines the results of the qualitative analysis that explored how the chosen publications present crime news from a linguistic viewpoint. The content analysis examined the lexical features and rhetorical features in *The Midweek Sun* and *The Voice Newspaper*. The analysis focussed on the rate of occurrence of lexical features and rhetorical devices in the crime news headlines of the selected publications.

6.1.8.1 Overall stylistic analysis of *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun*

Table 17: Overall Frequency of lexical and rhetorical devices

Stylistic Features of Headlines		Names of Newspapers			
		Voice		Midweek Sun	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Lexical Units	Compound words	8	14	5	21.05
	Fuzzy words	0	0	1	5.26
	Proper nouns	8	14	2	10.52
	Verbs	27	47	10	52.63
	Adjectives	14	25	2	10.52
	Total Features	57	100	20	100
Rhetorical Features	Metaphors	14	82	1	100
	Alliteration	0	0	0	0
	Rhymes	0	0	0	0
	Puns	0	0	0	0
	Idioms	3	18	0	0
	Total Features	17	100	1	100

Table 17 displays the frequencies and percentages of lexical and rhetorical features. The overall results on lexical features shows that verbs have the highest usage in *The Voice* (47%; 27 out of 57). Similarly, the highest used lexical unit in *The Midweek Sun* are verbs as well (52.63%, 10 out 20). The second highest used lexical feature in *The Voice* are adjectives which account for 25%; 14 out of 57. Interestingly, in *The Midweek Sun*, adjectives feature twice (10.52%, 2 out 20). Other lexical units in this newspaper, specifically proper nouns occur at a frequency of 10.52% (2 out of 20) while compound words are the second highest and feature 5 times from a total of 20 lexical feature. In stark contrast in *The Voice*, compound words (14%; 8 out of 57) and proper nouns (14%; 8 out of 57) are third highest in the headlines.

In addition, as with the consistent pattern, *The Voice* has the largest use of rhetorical features compared to *The Midweek Sun*. *The Voice* employed metaphors and idioms while *The Midweek Sun* only utilised metaphors. Metaphors account for 82% (14 out of 17) of news story headlines in *The Voice* followed by 18% (3 out of 17) of idioms. In *The Midweek Sun*, metaphors occur once which is %100 of the total rhetorical devices. Furthermore, both tabloids did not use alliteration, rhymes, and puns at part of their word choices.

6.1.8.2 Lexical and rhetorical device analysis of *The Voice*

Table 18: The Lexical Features in the Voice newspaper

Lexical Features	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Compound words	8	14
Fuzzy words	0	0
Proper Nouns	8	14
Verbs	27	47
Adjectives	14	25
Total Features	57	100

The results are consistent with the fact that *The Voice* gives far greater coverage to violent crime news. Lexically, the results in table 18 show that *The Voice* has a high usage of verbs (47%) and adjectives (25%) in its headlines. This may be to frame violent crimes as current, shocking, and evil. There is an attempt to create images in the readers mind of how ghastly the crimes committed are. For example,

- *Horny lover killed by girlfriend's brother*
- *Twisted Scorned mother poisons children*
- *Deaf and mute woman gang-raped*
- *Son finally murders dad: Mission accomplished*

In addition, *The Voice* also employs nouns (14%). Again, this implies an attempt to frame the news on crime as accurate by being specific to a locality, institution or by making direct reference to an individual. For example,

- *Murder in Mochudi: Man kills stepdad with a spade*
- *Magaya charged with rape*
- *Sex scandal rocks Harvard*
- *Plot to kill MMolosi uncovered*

Similarly, compound words (14%) are used repeatedly by *The Voice* to create visual imagery in the minds of its readers and importantly, a synopsis of the crimes reported. This is potentially an attempt to keep readers interested enough to read the entire article. For example,

- *Tongue Kiss Drama: Man's tongue bitten off in alleged rape saga*
- *Innocent Blood: Sex starved man murders lover's niece in revenge*

— *Punished: 12 years for a prisoner for 10-hour rape*

Pertaining to rhetorical features, *The Voice* has a larger amount of metaphors (82%) indicating a drive to deeply embed the crimes committed in the head of the readers. Table 18 shows the frequency statistics for rhetorical features in *The Voice* publication.

Table 19: The Rhetorical Features in the Voice newspaper

Rhetorical Features	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Metaphors	14	82
Alliteration	0	0
Rhymes	0	0
Puns	0	0
Idioms	3	18
Total Features	17	100

The use of catchy and intense word play through metaphors, shows an attempt to paint a picture of crime that mentally takes the reader to the scene of the crime and influence their views in the process. Metaphors are used to stir up emotions in the readership and thereby increase the importance of the violent crimes reported. For example,

— *RIP Little Angel*

— *American Dream turns into nightmare: Motswana killed in Chicago*

— *Burning Passion: Serial Arsonist strikes back*

— *Father from Hell*

— *Innocent Blood: Sex-starved man murders lover's niece in revenge*

Idioms feature on three occasions (18%) and the crimes are captioned as follows:

— *Til death do us apart*

— *American Dream turns into nightmare*

— *Tongue Kiss drama*

Alliteration, rhymes, and puns do not feature in any of the news headlines on crime.

We shall now evaluate the lexical and rhetorical features in *The Midweek Sun* in depth.

6.1.8.3 Lexical and rhetorical device analysis of *The Midweek Sun*

Table 20: Lexical Features in The Midweek Sun

Lexical Features	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Compound words	5	21.05
Fuzzy words	1	5.26
Proper nouns	2	10.52
Verbs	10	52.63
Adjectives	2	10.52
Total Features	19	99.98

In *The Midweek Sun*, the highest lexical devices used are verbs. Table 19 shows that verbs, at 52.63 % average frequency, constitute more than half of all lexical units used. Verbs are used in all the violent headlines of *The Midweek Sun*. Since verbs are action words, they are high in volume so that acts of crime are portrayed as events in motion rather than stale news. For example, verbs used include:

- Woman *raped* by gang *masquerading* as police
- 5-year-old girl *sexually molested*
- Man *arrested* for *raping* ex-girlfriend
- BDP politician in court for *defiling* 12-year-old
- Man *drags* mother to death

Additionally, from the statistics in table 19, compound words (21.05%) are followed by proper nouns (10.52%), and adjectives (10.52%) which feature in the news story headlines in equal measure. Examples of compound words in *The Midweek Sun* headlines include:

- BDP politician in court for *defiling 12-year-old*
- *5-year-old* girl *sexually molested*
- Paedophile escapes *custodial sentence*
- *Suspected arsonist* likely to enjoy his freedom
- *Suspected arsonist* sent to *psychiatrist evaluation*

In addition, proper nouns (10.52%) are limited to 2 news story headlines:

- *Tebby's* life cut short
- *BDP* politician in court for *defiling 12-year-old*

The above stories use nouns to a girl called Tebby who was murdered by her worker. The second headline refers to the Botswana Democratic Party that is known locally as BDP.

In relation to adjectives, the study revealed that they were also in limited use in *The Midweek Sun*. Examples of adjectives are:

- Paedophile *guilty* of raping cousin, 5
- Paedophile escapes *custodial* sentence

We shall now examine the rhetorical feature frequency findings. Table 20 gives a breakdown of the rhetorical features covered in *The Midweek Sun*.

Table 21: Rhetorical Features in the Midweek Sun

Rhetorical Features	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Metaphors	1	100
Alliteration	0	0
Rhymes	0	0
Puns	0	0
Idioms	0	0
Total Features	1	100

The findings show that there is only one rhetorical device that is used. Metaphors feature at 100%, 1 out of 1. Alliteration, rhymes, puns, and idioms are not used in any crime news coverage. The metaphor used is a figurative expression:

- Tebby's *life cut short*

In this instance, *life cut short* is a metaphoric expression that really refers to the sudden death of an individual.

6.1.8.4 Headline word count analysis

As part of the quantitative analysis of the selected newspapers, the number of words used in the headline stories was counted manually and using an online counter tool. The comparative results are displayed in table 21.

Table 22: Word count and average frequency in the Voice and Midweek Sun

Newspaper	No of Crime stories	Total No of Words	Average Words per Story (%)
<i>The Voice</i>	28	195	696.4%
<i>The Midweek Sun</i>	10	62	620%

The Voice has a higher total word count of 195 with an average frequency of 696.4% from 28 violent crimes published. Comparatively, *The Midweek Sun* has a total headline word count of 62 with 620% average word frequency from 10 reported violent crimes. The higher word output of *The Voice* could be indicative of that publication's attempt to influence the readership, in terms of how they view violent crimes committed. There is a lot of hyperbolic language that points to the latter and hence the higher increased word count. For example, headlines in *The Voice* such as *Innocent Blood: Man kills, buries girlfriend* and *SAVAGE: Son ties mother to a car and drags her to her death* have a high word count and attempt to paint a picture to the audience that has a lot of bias towards the victims of crime. However, *The Midweek Sun* worded headlines are more precise and shorter such as *Man drags mother to death* and *Tebby's life cut short*. This shows an attempt to present crime news from an unbiased standpoint and for the reader to make their own deductions.

6.1.8.5 Tonal analysis of writing style

As part of the qualitative analysis and the research examined writing tonality between *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun*. This looked to determine the level of bias and reader persuasion in the framing of news content from the selected publications. The assessment on the writing tone, is significant because it helps to identify which news articles are written positively, negatively, and neutral. A positive news story on crime should be uplifting. A neutral news item on crime should display impartiality and balanced reporting void of hyperbolic language that accentuates the crime. A negative news article should use fully loaded, emotion stirring, hyperbolic language. It should narrate the crime story in manner that it evokes fear, outrage, sadness, and disgust. Tonality was broken down to three parts. These are positive, negative, and neutral as illustrated in table 22.

Table 23: The Percentage of tones in the Voice and Midweek Sun newspapers

Newsriting Tone	The Voice (N=28)	The Midweek Sun (N=10)
Positive	7% (N=2)	0%
Negative	68% (N=19)	20% (N=2)
Neutral	25 % (N=7)	80% (N=8)

The two newspapers exhibited a marked difference in how they framed their crime news headlines in terms of overall tonality. *The Voice*, 68% of all its crime news content had a negative coding. Examples of negatively toned articles include the following headlines that use words such as *twisted* and *savage* to highlight the evil nature of the crimes committed:

- *Twisted* scorned mother poisons children
- *SAVAGE: Son ties to mother to a car and drags her to death*
- *Innocent blood: Sex starved man murder's niece in revenge*

Only 7% of news items were positively coded and the wording suggests that justice has been served:

- *Punished: 12 years for a prisoner for 10-hour rape*
- *Notorious criminal hanged for murder*

Furthermore, 25% had a neutral tone in the narration of crime occurrences. For example:

- *Plot to kill Mmolosi uncovered*
- *Four arraigned in court for murder of Air Zim boss*
- *P72000 deposit into murder suspect's account*

On the other hand, *The Midweek Sun* had 80% neutral toned crime articles indicating greater balanced presentation of crime. For example:

- *5-year-old girl sexually molested*
- *BDP Politician in court for defiling 12-year-old*
- *Suspected arsonist sent to psychiatrist evaluation*

Additionally, this newspaper, had 20% of negatively toned news items. For example,

- *Tebby's life cut short*

6.1.9. Conclusion

Chapter 6 provided the analysis details and findings from the research study. Quantitatively, research was conducted by an analysis of frequency occurrences of the coded items such as *news categories, source of the news article, front page and jump allocation, space allocation, and photo area allocation*. Qualitatively, this section covered how crime is portrayed by examining the headlines. Lexical and rhetorical devices were identified and their regularity in the crimes covered to ascertain the level of balanced or unbalanced reporting between the two selected newspapers. Also, the writing style in relation to tones was analysed to determine the level of hyperbolic, subjective, and biased reporting. The next section below provides a conclusion together with recommendations for further research based on the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

7 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides is a conclusion of the study. It includes a discussion on the limitations that affected the research and recommendations for future studies.

7.1 Conclusion

One of the critical purposes for the research was to explore the types of violent crimes and their significance in *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun* measured against the official police records held by The Botswana Police Service. Moreover, crime-news stories in *The Voice and The Midweek Sun* were methodically evaluated to ascertain how violent criminal incidents are depicted. This involved comparing the two selected newspapers in their portrayal of specifically murder and rape news items. Mixed methods of content analysis were used. Quantitative analysis was used to reveal statistically the frequencies and volumes of coded categories in the news articles. Qualitative analysis was used to unlock the hidden and numerous meanings in the written news content that cannot be derived quantitatively. The qualitative analysis conducted explored any biases, or unbiases, and the level of accurate or sensationalised reporting. The quantitative analysis of the study comparatively explored the similarities and differences of these selected news media outlets by identifying the allocated space used for crime stories, photo area allocation, the writing sources, the stages of the crime incidents and whether the crime story was on the front page, jumped to the first 3 pages or started on a page other than the front page.

The key theoretical framework of the study is the social construction theory. A literature review was conducted to analyse the various theoretical views concerning how crime is constructed as a social phenomenon and the role of media in crime presentation. The works of *Raymond Surette's* four stages of social construction were discussed. These stages address how reality, and in this case crime reality, is not completely objective. Therefore, the media is capable of reporting crime news inaccurately and out of line with what police records on crime. There is also a tendency for media to print stories that have a high dramatic value which can create misrepresentations on what is significant crime in the minds of its readers.

In addition to the social construction theory, other studies that informed the study were the seminal works of Entman on framing, *Framing towards clarification of a fractured paradigm (1993)*, *The Four theories of the*

Press (1956), and previously similarly undertaken comparative studies all informed to the current research study. The earlier research studies also informed the research design.

Indeed, there are differences in the type of violent crimes reported in both *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun* in comparison with official police crime statistics. The research has discovered that police records show armed robbery as the second highest violent crime committed. However, it was not covered in any crime stories in *The Voice* and *Midweek sun*. This means that the crime reality that these publications are constructing minimise the issue of armed robbery, yet it is a predominant violent crime type and magnify alternative violent crimes types. According to official police statistics on crime, in 2016 the highest acts of violent crime are rape cases then the third most significant violent crime is murder. However, a difference identified in *The Voice* is that more murder cases were reported than rape cases. This indicates that violent crimes of significance as per police statistics are not being given correct prominence levels. In *The Midweek sun*, indeed rape is covered as the highest crime and is aligned to what the BPS records show. However, one must consider the fact that from a total of 30 *Midweek Sun* copies analysed, only 6 rape cases were covered. This is still an exceptionally low margin of coverage for what is statistically the highest violent crime officially. In conclusion, there are disparities between what these newspapers are reporting and official crime statistics. Therefore, the crime reality constructed by these newspapers is different from the crime reality on the ground. Also, based on the quantitative findings, murder and rape are the types of violent crimes, reported by the BPS that have the highest coverage in *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun* newspapers.

Further analysis was carried out to determine the level of significance given to violent crime. This needed the researcher to evaluate how crime is presented in *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun*. This involved a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the highest featured violent crimes in these tabloid newspapers - murder and rape. The quantitative analysis revealed that most crimes reported by both *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun* were primarily at the courts or being investigated by the police. The coverage of such violent crimes at this stage suggests an attempt to report accurate, well-informed crime stories. The fact that most the crimes were now at the justice system stage of court appearances and arrests could mean the newspapers wanted to dissuade others from committing similar acts of crime. It could also mean that before the cases reached the court system or arrests were made, there was little information to go by. Therefore, only at the advanced stages of the crime incident were journalists able to access more detailed information.

An examination of who wrote for the violent news articles revealed that it was all internal staff writers. The reason for such a high use of internal staff reporters for both murder and rape crimes, can be explained by the fact that they are more likely to work according to the news values of their respective publications

compared to an external reporter. News values in news publications, provide a road map; a framework that determines what news stories are to be covered. Also, they form the basis on how the story is presented as news to the reading public (Cotter 2010:74). Therefore, the staff reporters of *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun* are better equipped to write according to the set priorities and standards set by their respective publications.

In relation to the front page (headline news) and the jump, the findings indicated that there is greater significance afforded to violent crime by *The Voice* compared to *The Midweek Sun*. However, both newspapers have over 50% of crimes placed as headline news. This indicates that they both do consider such news stories as big stories that can draw the reader's attention. It means violent crime is given prominence compared to other news stories. Furthermore, while *the Midweek Sun* may have a lower jump rate compared to *The Voice*, this may be due to the limited scope of the pages analysed. The research is limited to the first 3 pages so it possible that some stories presented on the front pages jumped beyond the restricted pages under analysis.

The analysis of space allocation revealed that *The Voice* allocated more space to violent crime news articles on murder and rape in comparison to *The Midweek Sun*. *The Voice* gave greater importance to murder news than rape news. *The Midweek Sun* has a more balanced approach. It tried to give crime stories on rape as much importance in terms of the space allocation. This is consistent with the overall results between the news publications. A case in point is that of photo usage. The results showed that *The Voice* considers murder as their crime topic of importance hence high photo-space allocations to the issue of murder and rape compared to *The Midweek Sun* which completely excluded any pictorial representations in all their news stories on violent crime. This shows a difference in the agenda functions operating within *The Midweek Sun* compared to *The Voice*. The heavy use of visual images for violent crime by *The Voice* highlighted a potential attempt to capture readers' attention and to bring prominence to violent crime news. Visual imagery was used by *The Voice* to provide a synopsis of the events. The publication featured photographs to emphasize the words in the write up on rape and murder news. Although images help to contextualise the crime occurrence, at times the pictures that are published may form an angle that does not truly reflect the actual criminality. The study revealed that *The Voice* used pictures to accentuate acts of violence crime. Images were used as a tool to evoke emotions and create a biased view in the mind of the readers by reinforcing the textual stance of the newspaper.

With reference to *The Midweek Sun*, there is a viewpoint that supports its non-use of pictures. It can be argued that for balance and accurate reporting, pictures are not needed because they can misconstrue the

text message. It is better to focus on the text alone to contain exaggerations. This could explain why images have been omitted in all the crime news stories of *The Midweek Sun*. It suggests a drive by *The Midweek Sun* not to frame a sensationalised or exaggerated representation of crime incidents. Peter Dahlgren and Colin Sparks explain the reason for non-use of photographs in their book *Journalism and Popular Culture* (1992:144). They argue that the text used in a tabloid newspaper is of far greater importance than the accompany visual imagery. They argue that sensationalism is determined by how words are used in the headlines more than the pictures. Therefore, *The Midweek Sun* may have omitted the use pictures so that they can focus on the textual side and limit sensationalism in their writeups on violent crime.

The qualitative analysis examined writing headline styles from a lexical and rhetorical perspective. The results continued the consistent pattern discovered. *The Voice* had the largest use of rhetorical features compared to *The Midweek Sun*. *The Voice* employed metaphors and idioms while *The Midweek Sun* only utilised metaphors. Metaphor utilisation by *The Voice* suggest an endeavour to stir up emotions in the readership and thereby increase the importance of the violent crimes reported. The news stories were presented as opinion-oriented by using words such as *senseless*, *savage*, and *notorious*. The results from the examination of the lexical and rhetorical devices are intricately linked to the writing tones used. *The Voice* had a higher value of negatively toned news articles on crime compared to *The Midweek Sun* which had a higher value of neutrally toned news articles. Therefore, *The Midweek Sun* had more balanced news reporting on the violent crimes.

Due to the explorative nature of the study, the results cannot be generalised. More research is proposed which could investigate the behavioural effect of crime news on the actual consumers of crime news. This would provide a broader understanding of the extent that consumers' views are influenced by what they read. The study could incorporate the reactions found in the comments sections of crime news stories on social media pages such as *Fight Crime Gaborone*. In addition, such a study could include interviews with law enforcement officials to get their views on what is significant crime and the resources delegated to containing such violent crime cases. This would help shed light on how the violent crimes stories affect them.

A lack of access to crime data limited the depth of the research. Therefore, there is a need for further comparative studies. It is recommended that a comparative research on crime reporting by the Botswana press on a week-by-week basis against the latest police week-by-week crime reports (which were unavailable) be conducted. Therefore, the study resorted to obtaining monthly statistics on crime and measuring them against weekly crime news cases in *The Voice* and *The Midweek Sun*. The BPS weekly reports would allow one to compare violent criminal acts published in, for instance, *The Voice* versus the

BPS crime report for the very same week. The need to conduct further is particularly important when there appears to be an upsurge in crime and therefore the way crime is reported becomes of key importance. This study confined itself to just two newspapers and qualitatively analysed the headlines. It is recommended that a qualitative analysis involving syntactic features in the paragraphs of local papers, be conducted to provide a wider picture on the construction and framing of crime news from a linguistic perspective. In addition, a more detailed examination of the internal news production process and the news values of the different tabloid newspapers could provide insightful information on how crime news is shaped as reality. The studies recommended can include a broader range of local newspapers that report on crime such as *The Mmegi* and *The Monitor*.

Finally, the research revealed differences between the two selected newspapers and police records. Only rape and murder cases were reported by the two publications yet official crime statistics by the police included armed robbery. Furthermore, there were differences between *The Voice* and *the Midweek Sun* in terms of the extent of crime occurrence and how it was linguistically and visually presented as news. *The Voice* published more crime stories, had the highest space allocation, word count, photo area allocation and the highest use of colourful, persuasive, and opinionated language than *The Midweek Sun*.

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APPENDIX 1
THE VOICE ARTICLES ON VIOLENT CRIME

- RIP Little Angel. 2016. *The Voice*, 15 April: 1.
- P 72000 Deposit into murder suspect's account. 2016. *The Voice*, 22 April: 2.
- Horny lover killed by girlfriend's brother. 2016. *The Voice*, 29 April: 2.
- Twisted scorned mother poisons children. 2016. *The Voice*, 6 May: 2.
- Father from hell. 2016. *The Voice*, 20 May: 1.
- Notorious criminal hanged for murder. 2016. *The Voice*, 27 May: 1.
- Plot to Kill Mmolosi uncovered. 2016. *The Voice*, 3 June: 1.
- Four arraigned in court for murder of Air Zim boss. 2016. *The Voice*, 10 June: 2.
- Notorious Kock strikes again. 2016. *The Voice*, 1 July: 1.
- Sign of the times - Boy 7, accused of sodomy. 2016. *The Voice*, 1 July: 1.
- "She is mentally ill but her private parts are normal" - rapist's argument. 2016. *The Voice*, 1 July: 1.
- Abort or die: Woman killed for refusing to abort. 2016. *The Voice*, 29 July: 1.
- Sex scandal rocks Harvard. 2016. *The Voice*, 29 July: 2.
- SAVAGE: Son ties mother to a car and drags her to death. 2016. *The Voice*, 29 July: 2.
- Murder in Mochudi: Man kills stepdad with a spade. 2016. *The Voice*, 5 August: 2.
- Til death do us part - murder accused hubby goes mute, *The Voice*, 12 August: 1.
- American dream turns into nightmare: Motswana shot and killed in Chicago. 2016. *The Voice*, 12 August: 1.
- Deaf and mute woman gang-raped. 2016. *The Voice*, 12 August: 2.
- Magaya charged with rape. 2016. *The Voice*, 26 August: 1.
- Son finally murders dad: Mission accomplished. 2016. *The Voice*, 2 September: 1.
- Tongue kiss drama: Man's tongue bitten off in alleged rape saga. 2016. *The Voice*, 16 September: 1.
- Burning passion: Serial Arsonist strikes again. 2016. *The Voice*, 23 September: 1.
- Senseless murder - Man kills, buries girlfriend. 2016. *The Voice*, 23 September: 2.
- Blind teacher rapes 5 students. 2016. *The Voice*, 7 October: 2.
- Son hacks father to death. 2016. *The Voice*, 21 October: 1.
- Popular pastor accused of molesting 11-year-old girl. 2016. *The Voice*, 21 October: 2.
- Innocent blood: Sex starved man murders lover's niece in revenge. 2016. *The Voice*, 28 October: 1.
- Punished: 12 years for a prisoner for 10-hour rape. 2016. *The Voice*, 4 November: 1.

APPENDIX 2

THE MIDWEEK ARTICLES ON VIOLENT CRIME

Woman raped by gang masquerading as police. 2016. *The Midweek Sun*: 1.

5-year-old girl sexually molested. 2016. *The Midweek Sun*: 2.

BDP politician in court for defiling 12-year-old. 2016. *The Midweek Sun*: 1.

Man arrested for raping ex-girlfriend and girl. 2016. *The Midweek Sun*: 1.

Man drags mother to death. 2016. *The Midweek Sun*: 1.

Paedophile guilty of raping cousin, 5. 2016. *The Midweek Sun*: 1.

Tebby's life cut short. 2016. *The Midweek Sun*: 1.

Paedophile escapes custodial sentence. 2016. *The Midweek Sun*: 2.

Suspected arsonist sent to psychiatrist evaluation. 2016. *The Midweek Sun*: 2.

Suspected arsonist likely to enjoy freedom. 2016. *The Midweek Sun*: 2.

APPENDIX 3

THE CODING SHEET

Story Analysis form with coding instructions	
News Category	
1. Police	<i>Violent crime news currently being investigated by the police.</i>
2. Courts	<i>Violent crime stories being presented in court or are pending a verdict or about to be taken to court).</i>
3. Crime	<i>A violent crime being discussed pending any arrests.</i>
Source	
1. Wire News Service	<i>News items attributed to global news agencies such as Reuters and news stories from another newspaper.</i>
2. Staff Writer	<i>Stories with or without a by-line accredited to internal news writers and correspondents.</i>
3. Unknown	<i>A story on violent crime whose writer is not known</i>
Frontpage	<i>Identify if the news article on crime that appears on the front page of the newspaper</i>
if yes, mark 1 if no, mark 2	
Jump	<i>Identify if the news story continues from the front page to an internal page (pages 2 and 3)</i>
If Yes, mark 1 If No, mark 2	
Space allocation	<i>Measure the total column area that the news article is written in</i>
Total column area (centimetres)	
Photo allocation	
Total number of photographs	<i>Count the number of photographs that appear in the news articles</i>
Total number of colour photographs	<i>Count the number of colour photographs that appear in the news articles</i>
Total photograph area (centimetres)	<i>Measure the total photo area (Length x Width) of news stories</i>
Word count	<i>Count the number of words used in the sentences of the Headlines</i>

APPENDIX 4

ANALYSIS OBSERVATION LIST FOR THE VOICE NEWSPAPER

THE VOICE: LEXICAL FEATURES

Year 2016	Lexical Features: The Voice					
Date	Headline	Compound	Fuzzy	Proper Noun	Adjective	Verb
15-Apr	RIP Little Angel	x	x	x	✓	✓
22-Apr	P72000 Deposit into murder suspect's account	x	x	✓	✓	✓
29-Apr	Horny lover killed by girlfriend's brother	x	x	x	✓	✓
06-May	Twisted scorned mother poisons children	x	x	x	✓	✓
20-May	Father from hell	x	x	x	x	✓
27-May	Notorious criminal hanged for murder	x	x	x	✓	✓
03-Jun	Plot to Kill Mmolosi uncovered	x	x	✓	x	✓
03-Jun	Four arraigned in court for murder of Air Zim boss	x	x	✓	x	✓
10-Jun	Notorious Kock strikes again	x	x	✓	✓	✓
01-Jul	Sign of the times - Boy 7, accused of sodomy	x	x	x	x	✓
01-Jul	"She is mentally ill but her private parts are normal" - rapist's argument	✓	x	x	x	✓
29-Jul	Abort or die!	x	x		x	✓
29-Jul	Sex scandal rocks Harvard	x	x	✓	x	✓
29-Jul	Savage: Man drags his mother to death	x	x	✓	✓	✓
05-Aug	Murder in Mochudi: Man kills stepdad with a blade	x	x	✓	x	✓
12-Aug	Til death do us part - murder accused hubby goes mute	✓	x	x	✓	✓
12-Aug	American dream turns into nightmare: Motswana shot and killed in Chicago	x	x	x	✓	✓
12-Aug	Deaf and mute woman	✓	x	x	✓	✓

	gang-raped					
26-Aug	Magaya charged with rape	x	x	✓	x	✓
02-Sep	Son finally murders dad: Mission accomplished	x	x	x	✓	✓
16-Sep	Tongue kiss drama: Man's tongue bitten off in alleged rape saga	✓	x	x	✓	✓
23-Sep	Burning passion: Serial Arsonist strikes back	x	x	x	✓	✓
23-Sep	Senseless murder - Man kills, buries girlfriend	x	x	x	✓	✓
07-Oct	Blind teacher rapes 5 students	x	x	x	✓	✓
21-Oct	Son hacks father to death	x	x	x	x	✓
21-Oct	Popular pastor accused of molesting 11-year-old girl	✓	x	x	x	✓
28-Oct	Innocent blood: Sex starved man murders lover's niece in revenge	✓	x	x	✓	✓
04-Nov	Punished: 12 years for a prisoner for 10-hour rape	✓	x	x	x	✓

THE VOICE: RHETORICAL DEVICES

Year 2016	Rhetorical Devices: The Voice					
Date	Headline	Metaphor	Alliteration	Rhyme	Pun	Idiom
15-Apr	RIP Little Angel	✓	x	x	x	x
22-Apr	P72000 Deposit into murder suspect's account	x	x	x	x	x
29-Apr	Horny lover killed by girlfriend's brother	✓	x	x	x	x
06-May	Twisted scorned mother poisons children	✓	x	x	x	x
20-May	Father from hell	✓	x	x	x	x
27-May	Notorious criminal hanged for murder	✓	x	x	x	x
03-Jun	Plot to Kill Mmolosi uncovered	x	x	x	x	x
03-Jun	Four arraigned in court for murder of Air Zim	x	x	x	x	x

	boss					
10-Jun	Notorious Kock strikes again	✓	x	x	x	x
01-Jul	Sign of the times - Boy 7, accused of sodomy	✓	x	x	x	x
01-Jul	"She is mentally ill but her private parts are normal" - rapist's argument	x	x	x	x	x
29-Jul	Abort or die!	x	x	x	x	x
29-Jul	Sex scandal	x	x	x	x	x
29-Jul	Savage: son ties mother to a car and drags her to death	x	x	x	x	x
05-Aug	Murder in Mochudi: Man kills stepdad with a blade	x	x	x	x	
12-Aug	Til death do us part - murder accused hubby goes mute	✓	x	x	x	✓
12-Aug	American dream turns into nightmare: Motswana shot and killed in Chicago	✓	x	x	x	✓
12-Aug	Deaf and mute woman gang-raped		x	x	x	x
26-Aug	Magaya charged with rape		x	x	x	x
02-Sep	Son finally murders dad: Mission accomplished	✓	x	x	x	
16-Sep	Tongue kiss drama: Man's tongue bitten off in alleged rape saga	✓	x	x	x	✓
23-Sep	Burning passion: Arsonist	✓	x	x	x	x
23-Sep	Senseless murder - Man kills, buries girlfriend	✓	x	x	x	x
07-Oct	Blind teacher rapes 5 students	x	x	x	x	x
21-Oct	Son hacks father to death	x	x	x	x	x
21-Oct	Popular pastor accused of molesting 11-year-old girl	x	x	x	x	x
28-Oct	Innocent blood: Sex starved man murders lover's niece in revenge	✓	x	x	x	x
04-Nov	Punished: 12 years for a prisoner for 10-hour rape	x	x	x	x	x

APPENDIX 5

OBSERVATION LIST FOR THE MIDWEEK SUN

LEXICAL FEATURES

Year 2016	Lexical Features: The Midweek Sun					
Date	Headline	<i>Compound</i>	<i>Fuzzy</i>	<i>P. Noun</i>	<i>Verb</i>	<i>Adjective</i>
20- Apr	Woman raped by gang masquerading as police	x	x	x	✓	x
18- May	5-year-old girl sexually molested	x	x	x	✓	x
13- Jul	BDP politician in court for defiling 12-year-old	✓	x	✓	✓	x
20- Jul	Man arrested for raping ex-girlfriend and girl	✓	x	x	✓	x
27- Jul	Man drags mother to death	x	x	x	✓	x
24- Aug	Paedophile guilty of raping cousin, 5	x	x	x	✓	✓
07- Sep	Tebby's life cut short	x	x	✓	✓	x
21- Sep	Paedophile escapes custodial sentence	✓	x	x	✓	✓
05- Oct	Suspected arsonist sent to psychiatrist evaluation	✓	x	x	✓	x
19- Oct	Suspected arsonist likely to enjoy his freedom	✓	✓	x	✓	x

THE MIDWEEK SUN: RHETORICAL DEVICES

Year 2016	Rhetorical Devices: The Midweek Sun					
Date	Headline	<i>Metaphor</i>	<i>Alliteration</i>	<i>Rhyme</i>	<i>Pun</i>	<i>Idiom</i>
20- Apr	Woman raped by gang masquerading as police	x	x	x	x	x
18- May	5-year-old girl sexually molested	x	x	x	x	x
13- Jul	BDP politician in court for defiling 12-year-old	x	x	x	x	x
20- Jul	Man arrested for raping ex-girlfriend and girl	x	x	x	x	x
27- Jul	Man drags mother to death	x	x	x	x	x
24- Aug	Paedophile guilty of raping cousin, 5	x	x	x	x	x
07- Sep	Tebby's life cut short	✓	x	x	x	✓
21- Sep	Paedophile escapes custodial sentence	x	x	x	x	x
05- Oct	Suspected arsonist sent to psychiatrist evaluation	x	x	x	x	x
19- Oct	Suspected arsonist	x	x	x	x	x