

AN ISSUE OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL SALIENCE: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF HOW SOUTH AFRICAN NEWSPAPERS REPORT ON ‘CORRECTIVE RAPE’

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ABSTRACT

“cor•rec•tive: intended to make something better” – This word has positive connotations when related to scientists and activist endeavours to find and develop remedies to problems which plague the world. However, when coupled with sexual violence against South African lesbians, most of whom are black and living in depressed communities, the word is used to describe a tool used to ‘rectify’ their personal identity. The term, ‘corrective rape’ therefore becomes an ironic misnomer used to describe an act of sexual assault that attempts to ‘rectify’ perceived deviant, lesbian or homosexual behaviour (Bryson, 2011). The increase in ‘corrective rape’ cases in South Africa can be attributed to a misogynistic culture rooted in traditional perceptions of women who face new and emancipatory democracy, alcoholism and/ or homophobia (Rape crisis, 2012). This study will include a discussion on ‘corrective rape’, which necessitates a description of rape and the power relationships that enable its subsistence. The paper will also present an argument around the desensitisation of South African citizenry through media messages that has resulted in collective apathy. The aim of this study is to investigate reportage and framing of ‘corrective rape’ by South African media. The Agenda-setting theory as well as Framing and Representation is offered and applied as part of a critical paradigm to understand the media’s representation of the issue of ‘corrective rape’. The study found that South African print media has severely underrepresented cases of ‘corrective rape’ and has failed to create the necessary salience required around the issue of ‘corrective rape’, especially as an emergent trend and extreme contravention of the freedoms espoused in the South African Constitution for lesbian citizens.

Keywords: ‘Corrective rape’, ‘curative rape’, rape, newspaper, Agenda-setting Theory, Framing and Representation Theory, salience

I. INTRODUCTION

South Africa is referred to as *The Rainbow Nation* because of the diversity of its citizens. Due to its hard-fought freedoms, equality of these different racial and cultural groups is an important subject in the country. While it is illegal to be gay in 76 United Nation (UN) member states, seven of those countries impose the death penalty for convicted acts of homosexuality (Mambaonline, 2018)—South Africa's constitution clearly protects the rights of its LGBTI citizens.

However progressive the laws are, it is worth noting that the day-to-day reality and implementation of the liberal sentiments of the constitution are wanting. Vulnerable groups, including women, Black Africans and homosexuals (especially lesbians) continue to be abused by a social and cultural system, which is characterised by prejudice, myth and segregation. In a homophobic climate where violence is a popular weapon, Lesbians are rejected by their communities and are vulnerable to sexual, psychological and physical assault (Mkhize, Bennett, Reddy and Moletsane, 2010). Statistics (2008 – 2011) show that most rape incidences go unreported and that only one in four cases are reported. A further concern is that only 14% of reported cases lead to a conviction by the South African courts (Geisler, 2004). This demonstrates that even when rape cases are reported; those cases seldom result in punitive measures taken.

Considering the prevalence of rape in South Africa, this study argues for the prioritisation of its reportage through media who have a responsibility to ensure public awareness of its citizens. The paper bases its argument on the assumption that when South African newspapers fail to set the agenda for 'corrective rape', the public thus remains ignorant of its pervasiveness and is less likely to engage the issue as a central theme of public concern, discourse and/ or action. In order to ensure the expression of equal rights, it is vital for the media, public and political agenda to reflect a high recognition of any threat to those rights (Martin et al, 2009). It is thus this paper's contention that South African Print media—with specific reference to the newspapers used in the research, which include the *Mail & Guardian*, the *Sunday Times* and the *Sunday Independent* – do not confer status to the issue of 'corrective rape' in a manner that would ensure its salience or recognition by society. Duffy and Turow (2009) maintain that the social standing, knowledge and advocacy of an issue is most effectively raised when it receives attention in the media. Therefore, one of the goals of the research was to highlight the significance of reportage by the three selected newspapers on the issue of 'corrective rape' by investigating whether the newspapers write about the issue of 'corrective rape' and how they report on it (Mouton, 1996).

II. 'CORRECTIVE RAPE': HISTORY AND PRESENT

In South Africa, a woman is raped approximately every 17 seconds (You and rape, 2012). In 2018, The South African Police Service (SAPS) released their annual Crime Report, which indicates that the police recorded 40,035 rapes in 2017/18, an increase from 39,828 in 2016/17 (Africa Check, 2018). This can be translated to an average of 110 rapes reported per day. According to the Medical Research Council, in a survey conducted in Soweto, 25% of men admitted to raping a woman, while 50% of those admitted to raping someone more than once (50 Shades of Black Friday, 2013). As part of these statistics, there are rapes occurring with the intention to “correct”, instances where rapists believe to be correcting behaviour unbecoming of a woman, such as wearing pants, being “butch” in their demeanour or refusing to marry and have children. According to Middleton (2011), Lesbian women are raped by men, sometimes under the supervision of - or mandated by members of their family, as a means of curing them of their gayness, boy-like behaviour or homosexuality.

‘Corrective rape’, also known as ‘curative rape’, is distinctive amongst other categories of rape, as it refers principally to sexual assault on Lesbians that intends to humiliate and punish the victim. The rapist believes that they can “cure” a lesbian by raping them (Bryson, 2011). In South Africa, men who rape Lesbians seem to do so because of a desire to preserve community values – wherein Lesbianism is as unnatural (Rape, 2012). For these men, Lesbians, or rather lesbianism, threatens the notion that a woman belongs to a man because Lesbians do not exhibit or espouse to subservience to males or their acts of domination. This is a perpetual feature of the patriarchy in South Africa and gives rise to feelings of anger (often expressed through verbal abuse and physical acts of violence). Due to their economic, social and cultural discrimination, lesbian women are one of the highest at-risk groups for violence (Kinama, 2011).

In addition to its threat to male dominance, lesbianism is perceived as a threat to the notion of progeny. There is a pervasive belief that because Lesbians are not fulfilling their duty to procreate, this cuts off a man’s lifeline to genealogical immortality (Warren, 1996). According to Triangle, a non-profit organisation based in Cape Town, support groups dealt with 10 new ‘corrective rape’ cases every week and the number is increasing (Martin, Kelly, Turquet & Ross, 2009). Non-Profit Organisation, Luleki Sizwe, confirm this figure, adding that between 2010 – 2013, nine cases of gender-based murders were recorded (Beaty, 2013). It is difficult to determine exact figures of ‘corrective rape’ because the South African police do not specifically record these cases, nor does the issue receive active coverage in the media. Consequentially, victims of ‘corrective rape’ seldom seek assistance for fear of further violence towards them and/ or their families.

The term “corrective rape” was first used in South Africa after the cases of Eudy Simelane and Zoliswa Nkonyana were reported in the news. Nkonyana was a 19-year-old openly Lesbian teenager

who was gang-raped and murdered in 2006, while Simelane was an LGBTI activist and Banyana Banyana soccer player with a high public profile. Both these women were targeted because they were Lesbians. The men accused of raping and murdering these women admitted to doing so because of some reparatory ideology. Other, well-known, cases of ‘corrective rape’ include Sikalele Sigasa, a Gay rights activist, who, with her partner Salome Massoa, were tortured, raped and murdered. There are also the cases such as that of Millecent Gaika, whose attacker kept saying: “You think you are a man, but I’m going to show you that you are a woman”, and Zukiswa Gaca who was raped by an acquaintance in 2009 (Wesley, 2012). The latest case where two lesbians were raped, tortured and murdered, is that of Mooinooi couple Joey and Anisha van Niekerk, where seven suspects are implicated in their killing (Mambaonline, 2018).

In response to the rape and killings, the LGBTI community and other Human Rights groups have demanded training of female police officers on all aspects of rape, and a minimum of 25-years-to-life imprisonment, if an accused, is prosecuted and found guilty of ‘corrective rape’. In addition, activists have called for a clampdown on bribery and corruption at police stations as dockets are often lost (LaVictoire, 2012). Other voices support the call for better police administration and law enforcement regarding ‘corrective rape’. A Special Assignment (SABC3, 2015) investigation reported that there are currently no forms for the SAPS officers to identify crimes specifically perpetrated against the LGBTI community (including ‘corrective rape’). According to Hawthorne (2005), ‘corrective rape’ is not recognised as a Hate Crime by the South African Government, and, as such, there is no understanding around LGBTI human rights violations and lack of sensitivity training for service professionals (Joffe-Walt, 2011).

In addition, the South African judiciary has been criticised for not recognising ‘corrective rape’ as rape used to punish an LGBTI minority group, which could carry harsher sentencing (Rape, 2012). South African courts also do not recognise ‘corrective rape’ in so far setting up preventative measures allowing the use of magistrate courts as equality courts to address any harassments, discrimination or hate speech cases, nor do they consult with LGBTI human rights groups on sentencing for Hate Crimes (which includes ‘corrective rape’). Additionally, the South African Constitution does little to contextualise the specific rights, responsibilities and boundaries to protect against ‘corrective rape’. Further, the Sexual Offences Act, as a piece of legislation, also does not recognise the rights of Lesbians as it pertains to their vulnerability to rape for curative motivations. The legislation described in the Sexual Offences Act does not include ‘corrective rape’ as a category of rape with aggravated circumstances, which results in blanket sentencing.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMES AND LITERATURE APPLIED TO THE STUDY OF ‘CORRECTIVE RAPE’ IN MEDIA

Even though there are several journal articles about the topic of ‘corrective rape’, information to support the research on the agenda-setting and framing of the issue by newspapers, is limited. It is thus a difficult task to determine whether the media establishes significance to an issue such as ‘corrective rape’ by just observing a few publications and hypothesising findings in a cursive way. Theoretical frames and literature reviews are important steps in a rigorous investigation of a topic as it presents an explanation of the phenomenon observed while existing literature guides the researcher to identify the fissure between what is known and unknown to be addressed concerning the same phenomenon.

In analysing how three newspapers in South Africa report the issue of ‘corrective rape’, the study is based on the Critical Realist paradigm. Critical Realism, also known as *transcendental realism*, describes how laws and nature have to be analysed according to underlying power structures (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al*, 2014). In conducting research that explains, rather than predicts, critical realists maintain that power relationships exist and that true emancipation of oppressed people comes from understanding those power dynamics and deconstructing the context which allows for its existence and perpetuation. Thus, the emancipation of marginalised groups and empowerment of those groups by exposing myths becomes the paradigm’s key heuristic value. The epistemological position of critical realism is that knowledge should aim to spark action from audiences and should, therefore, have practical value. Critical realists argue that power relationships are based on distortions and illusions about how society operates. Therefore, the methodological assumption for the paradigm proposes that research starts with a critical analysis of the issue, with an understanding that knowledge should be questioned to further investigate the structural relationships that exist (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis & Bezuidenhout, 2014). Theory should then frame the phenomenon in such a way that it uncovers and explain power relationships.

For the study, framing and representation, as well as newsworthiness, are used for this purpose. According to Entman (2006), framing involves two basic elements, namely *salience* and *selection*. When an issue is reported, the media selects an aspect of the perceived reality to make the issue more salient in communication texts, such as newspapers. Fiske and Taylor (1991) explain how human beings are natural cognitive misers who utilise *frames* to process information rather than investigate an issue to uncover its truth. Price and Tewksbury (1997, cited in Zelizer, 2004) describe framing and representation as the ability of media reports to alter the kinds of consideration people use in forming their opinions. Venter (2007) explains that angles are the interpretive and ideological frameworks from which journalists report about an issue and contextualise news reports within a specific framework. The media may choose to report on an issue in a certain way – the results are that

audiences, being confronted by the ways in which the media choose to report on an issue, have similar perceptions of the issue.

In the research, themes such as ‘type’, ‘victimology’, ‘outcomes’ and ‘axiomatic reality versus stereotypical representation’ will be used to investigate the way in which the selected newspapers frame and represent the issue of ‘corrective rape’. Framing asks how issues (such as ‘corrective rape’) are represented and packaged to audiences who may interpret the message in a variety of ways (Altheide 1997). For Gitlin, framing offers a way to understand the systematic and predetermined organisation of news reports into types facilitated by emphasis, presentation and pattern selection. This means that framing is a way to organise the world for both journalists who report on issues and the audience who rely on journalism.

The above research on framing contributes to the study of how the selected South African newspapers report on ‘corrective rape’ by supporting the idea that media frames an issue in a specific way. How the media frames the issue needs to be investigated and explained to uncover underlying power relationships. Frames have become a parameter for discussing a particular event as frames focus on what will be discussed, how it will be presented and even how it will not be represented (Altheide, 1997). ‘Corrective rape’, in the public sphere is often phrased as a “public health and social awareness issue” as opposed to a “criminal justice issue.” These are two different frames that present different ways of discussing the issue, or divergent discourse to be followed (Falkheimer, 2015: 16).

Together with frame selection, the theory of agenda setting, which refers to the process by which the creators of media content set up an issue that the media will focus on and which audiences might subsequently view as more important than others, is important (O’Shaughnessy & Stadler 2012). That is, if a news issue is covered frequently and prominently, the audience will regard the issue as salient. Mass media coverage has a powerful impact on what individuals think that other people are thinking, and as such, audiences tend to allocate more importance to issues that are covered extensively by mass media (Weaver, 2007). The premise of Agenda Setting theory – for the purpose of this study – is that, whether intentional or unintentional, the media creates an image of reality. If the editor and the newsroom staff, as well as other producers of news content, do not consider an issue to be newsworthy or in the public interest, they do not report on it. The omission of certain issues and the overemphasis of others establish a particular way for media audiences to think about reality.

In viewing the issue of ‘corrective rape’ and its presence in media, agenda setting, and framing provides the theoretical framework to determine the significance behind the selected newspaper’s reportage on the issue. How much coverage the issue receives in comparison to other issues (rape is used as a comparative variable) as well as the positioning of the reports is explained in how the media go about determining what issues to focus on and how this process could possibly influence public opinion. Framing supports agenda setting in extending the scope of the research to include not only

whether the issue is set as a focal point, but also how the issue is presented to audiences. Where the agenda-setting describes recall (through accessibility) of an issue by audiences, the framing and representation theory explains the narrative – how people think about the issue.

IV. GATHERING DATA FROM THREE SOUTH AFRICAN NEWSPAPERS

As basic communication research, this study aims to expand the general understanding of a phenomenon by investigating whether newspapers report on an issue and how (if the selected newspapers do report on the issue) those newspapers report the issue. Erving Goffman (1974) notes that Frame Analysis for a qualitative investigation involves inductive frame construction analysing a small number of reports. This allows for a qualitative content analysis which enables a context-sensitive and comprehensive exploration and description of ‘corrective rape’ presentation in South African newspapers.

The research problem investigated in the study was to explore and describe if and how selected South African newspapers report on ‘corrective rape’ over a twelve-month period by looking at the frames used in those reports compared to those used when reporting on general rape. Therefore, the intention was to determine whether more reports on general rape appear in the media than on ‘corrective rape’, keeping in mind that rape is more prevalent than ‘corrective rape’, which could skew any superficial conclusions based only on frequency. Thus, in addition to frequency, comparing the angles from those reports to better understand the newspapers’ narrative when reporting on the issue, classifying the power relationships that are evident in the reports on ‘corrective rape’ as well as which frames the three selected newspapers used when reporting on ‘corrective rape’, were all scrutinised.

The research occurred over a twelve-month period from 1 March 2012 until 28 February 2013. The data collected over this period may be used in the future to better understand the descriptive elements which involve the three selected newspapers and the issue of ‘corrective rape’; therefore, even if the study collected data in 2012/ 2013, the results may still provide insights to the issue. The *Sunday Times* newspaper, owned by Tiso Blackstar (Sunday Times, 2013), was selected as it ranks as the number one paper by copy sales (estimated 253 721 per edition) and is widely regarded as the most influential weekly newspaper in South Africa (Media history, 2015). Published by M&G Media (Mail & Guardian, 2013), the *Mail & Guardian* is ranked third in terms of sales (35 324 per edition) compared to other national weekly publications. The paper appears every Friday (Audit Bureau of Circulation of South Africa, 2011). Finally, *The Sunday Independent* owned by Independent News and Media exceeded 80 000 readers per publication in 2012 (Media Club South Africa, 2013). The publication is selected as it is comparable with the *Mail & Guardian* and the *Sunday Times* in terms of its subject focus and content.

Reports considered in the research will include genre conventions of written articles (editorials, features, syndicated reports and domestic - and international news stories), advertisements, pictures

and cartoons whereby the newspaper can set the public agenda. Each report is selected purposively as it appears within the selected timeframe published in the Mail & Guardian, Sunday Times and The Sunday Independent. Counting newspaper reports will yield nominal results (absent or present) to partially investigate the research problem: “Have the selected newspapers reported on the issue of ‘corrective rape’ in the selected time frame?” Counting does not, however, provide information about the framing of each category (Du Plooy, 2009). This necessitates the developing of categories from emerging codes from reading the selected articles as units of analysis.

There were eight categories developed to investigate the research problem and applied to each selected report. These categories included *weighting of reports on rape* and then ‘*corrective rape*’, *reports positioning (frequency) within the sample universe*, *classifications of rape*, *victimology*, *outcomes*, *weak versus strong frames*, ‘*corrective rape*’ *reports based on facts and observation versus those published based on stereotypes* and *power relationships*. These are priori - as well as emergent frames that were developed from the literature review as well as actual readings of the reports. Each identified report was assigned a code for ‘rape’ or ‘corrective rape’ and the discrepancy between their weighting was tabulated and compared by transposing the number of reports into percentages as to improve accuracy when being compared.

Another code was developed to try to identify the salience given to the issue by using the work from Galtung and Ruge (1994) on newsworthiness. The codes used in this category included reports which appeared on the ‘cover page’ assigned a newsworthiness identifier (1A) (which is most credence given to the topic); ‘news: domestic’ (assigned (1B)); ‘news: international’ (assigned (1C)), ‘editorials, including reviews and advertorials’ (assigned (2A)); ‘opinions, including columns, syndicated columns, quotes and cartoons’ (assigned (2B)), and lastly ‘letters to the editor’ assigned a newsworthiness identifier (2C) (which is considered least newsworthy). This category explores and describes the assumption that newspapers do not create salience for the issue of ‘corrective rape’ when compared to the difference in where rape and ‘corrective rape’ reports appear within the publications.

To explore the third assumption of the research problem which is that newspapers write in passive and generic frames when reporting on ‘corrective rape’, the categories of weak versus strong frames and reports based on empirical observation and first-person primary sources compared to stereotypes and generalisations were developed. Emergent codes in the latter category were based on an article written by Sheila Liming called “Lesbian texts” (cited in Peele, 2011). These codes included ‘axiomatic of Lesbian reality’ and Lesbians being presented as a stereotype or based on hearsay.

To describe how much importance each newspaper placed on reports of rape and ‘corrective rape’, a reference to frequency and prominence as an element of newsworthiness described by Galtung and Ruge (1994) was made. The codes include reports which appear on the ‘cover page (1A)’, ‘news:

domestic (1B)', 'news: international (1C)', 'editorials (2A)', 'opinions (2B)' and 'letters to the editor (2C)'.

V. TABLES REFLECTING THE DATA COLLECTED, ANALYSES AND FINDINGS

This study was an investigation of how the selected newspapers reported on sexual assault by comparing how rape was framed differently to 'corrective rape'. Through rigorous investigation, the research aimed to understand whether the selected newspapers were setting the agenda for the issue of 'corrective rape' better. The research also aimed to investigate how it was framed in the South African media by looking at selected newspapers (*Mail & Guardian*, *The Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Times*) within a 12-month period. The results may illuminate some aspects of the media's approach to set the agenda for the issue of 'corrective rape' and how they frame these reports – though, it has to be mentioned that the results may only be generalised to the selected newspapers and not to South African media as a whole. One of the limitations of qualitative investigations is the inability for results to be generalised. This, however, was not the intention of the study, but rather to formulate an understanding of salience and frames in the role newspapers (selected) play in the issue of 'corrective rape'.

The first two tables reflect numeral data from identifying reports on rape and 'corrective rape' in the selected newspapers from 1 March 2012 until 28 February 2013.

Table 1: Weighting of population newspapers including 72 reports (including 'corrective rape') concerning rape

Newspapers	Number of total samples	Percentage of total sample
<i>Mail & Guardian</i>	23	32%
<i>The Sunday Independent</i>	24	33.30%
<i>Sunday Times</i>	25	34.70%

The weighting table (Table 1) shows how many reports on rape (including 'corrective rape') were identified during a 12-month period. It was developed based on the research requirements—uncovering raw data to address the assumption of whether the selected newspapers reported on or did not report on rape. There were 72 reports in total, including articles on domestic and international news, book reviews, supplement reports, cartoons, advertisements, advertorials and letters. Every report is categorically assigned to its paper of origin to explore the weighting of reports per publication. The findings of this table reveal that, from the 72 reports on rape (including 'corrective rape'), 23 of those reports appeared in the *Mail & Guardian* (31.90%), 24 of those reports appear in

The Sunday Times (33.30%) and 25 of those reports appear in the *Sunday Times* (34.70%). The data reveals that the number of reports is spread relatively evenly among the selected publications. This is not unexpected as high-profile cases of rape as well as events of activism (for example, the International Day of No Violence Against Women annual campaign on the 25th of November) receive relatively equal page space across newspapers. From the data, each newspaper reports on rape.

Table 2: Weighting of population newspapers including five reports on ‘corrective rape’ exclusively

Newspaper	Number	Percentage
<i>Mail & Guardian</i>	4	80%
<i>The Sunday Independent</i>	0	0
<i>Sunday Times</i>	1	20%

The table (Table 2) was developed based on the data uncovered from the selected newspapers to determine whether it included reports on ‘corrective rape’. For the research to uncover some significant information in the three selected newspapers around how the issue of ‘corrective rape’ is framed and represented, it is important to identify the presence of such reports. This table (Table 3) shows which newspapers reported on the issue and indicates how many reports appear in the publication. The findings of the table reveal that four of the reports concerning ‘corrective rape’ were found in the *Mail & Guardian* (80%), one report was found in *The Sunday Independent* (20%), while no reports on ‘corrective rape’ appeared in the *Sunday Times*. While reports on rape are equally spread over the three selected newspapers over a 12-month period, there is a clear difference in report weighting when focussing on ‘corrective rape’ as a classification of rape. Most of the reports found on ‘corrective rape’ appeared in only one newspaper, which means that there is a difference in approach to the issue of ‘corrective rape’. *The Sunday Times* does not set the agenda for the issue and cannot be included for analysis in terms of how the issue is framed and represented in the media. Thus, to address the sub-problem of the research, two newspapers report on ‘corrective rape’ even though the issue agenda is set more by *Mail & Guardian* than by *The Sunday Independent*. Also, no reports on ‘corrective rape’ appeared in the *Sunday Times* in the selected 12-month period.

Table 3: Article frames referring to frequency (positioning) of rape reports within the newspaper

Article	According to Galtung & Ruge (1965:70) from most important 1A to least important 2C					
	Cover page (1A)	News: Domestic (1B)	News: International (1C)	Editorials, including Reviews and Advertorials (2A)	Opinions, including Columns, Syndicated columns, Quotes & Cartoons (2B)	Letters to the editor (2C)
TOTAL	0	15	14	10	28	5

Motivated by the work undertaken by Galtung and Ruge (1965) on newsworthiness, this table (Table 3) includes data on how an issue is framed and represented by identifying where reports appear within the newspaper. Even though the explicit focus of this research was not to determine agenda setting (or cutting) of media regarding ‘corrective rape’, it supports the idea of news attention or states whether the publications consider the issue newsworthy. In addition, the research explores and describes how the media frames and represents rape and ‘corrective rape’ by indicating where they appear. *Where* the reports appear within the pages of the newspaper also set the level of importance assigned to them (Galtung and Ruge, 1965). Referring to “Table 3: Article frames referring to frequency (positioning) of rape reports within the newspaper”, the findings reveal that there are no reports found on the front page of any of the newspapers.

Table 4: Article frames referring to frequency (positioning) of ‘corrective rape’ reports within the newspaper

Cover page (1A)	News: Domestic (1B)	News: International (1C)	Editorials, including Reviews and Advertorials (2A)	Opinions, including Columns, Syndicated columns, Quotes & Cartoons (2B)	Letters to the editor (2C)
0	1	0	1	3	0

Table 4 compares how frequently ‘corrective rape’ reports appeared on newspaper sections (as indicated by the sub-categories) with reports on rape adapted from the work of Galtung and Ruge (1965). The table referred to the articles on ‘corrective rape’ and coded each of the articles according to whether it is a domestic story, an editorial or an opinion piece. Each report was coded by considering the theme and intention of the article. When compared to *where* the reports of ‘corrective rape’ appear within the pages of the selected newspapers, the results are different. When referring to

“Table 4: Article frames referring to frequency (positioning) of ‘corrective rape’ reports within the newspaper” the data revealed that one report appeared prominently as it was a report on a domestic news event. One report appeared in the editorial pages, while the remaining three reports appeared in the opinions sections of the newspapers.

The work of Fiske and Taylor (1991) provide context to the data by referring to how human beings use frames to process information and determine its relevance and prominence. From the data and theory described, the results yield that the majority of articles on rape as well as ‘corrective rape’ appeared in the opinions sections of the newspapers. The issue of rape and ‘corrective rape’ were less likely to be reported on by journalists than commented on by columnists and cartoonists. While domestic - and international news on rape shares similar weighting in reports, the editors of the publications provide less credence to the issue.

Table 5: ‘Corrective rape’ reports (five reports) presented in weak- or strong frames

Article	Strong frames		Weak frames
	The article is informative & creates awareness	First person narrative	Generic information & reports
1		X	
2		X	
3			X
4			X
5			X

Referring to the work of Druckman and Chong (2007), the category in “Table 5: ‘Corrective rape’ articles (five reports) presented in weak - or strong frames” describes how the reports on the issue can be regarded as weak or strong. The three sub-categories include ‘article is informative & creates awareness’ and ‘first person narrative’, which are both strong frames. While the final sub-category of ‘generic information & reports’ is a weak frame. From the data, the results show that most of the reports on ‘corrective rape’ use weak angles to frame and represent the issue. The result from the collected and analysed data showed that the issue of ‘corrective rape’ was framed using generic information rather than using recorded information to create awareness or first-person narratives. This

is a 60/40% issue. Thus, even though there was a strong call for social mobilisation, the journalists did not provide the reader with the information required to become actively involved in the discussion around the issue, such as providing telephone numbers for reporting cases, including a reminder of their social responsibility regarding the issue, or using action words.

Table 6: ‘Corrective rape’ articles (five reports) framed as axiom or stereotype

Article	The article is axiomatic of real life regarding ‘corrective rape’	The article relies on stereotypes to describe lesbianism regarding ‘corrective rape’
1	X	
2	X	
3		X
4		X
5		X

This table (Table 6) was developed from the raw data uncovered from the selected newspapers and emergent codes. To explore the power relationships, present in the reports, this category answered the question of whether the writer used real Lesbian experiences to write the report (axiomatic) or whether they relied on personal beliefs, attitudes or values of the journalist or writer to construct their opinion (whether pro-gay rights or anti-gay rights). Because journalists and other authors who contribute reports about the issue of ‘corrective rape’ drive the knowledge readers would have about the issue, it is necessary, in exploring and describing the issue, to examine at how they frame the issue. Here, two reports written by the journalist were based on interviews with Lesbians raped by assailants with the intent of “curing” them, while three of the reports relied on secondary knowledge or information. Of these reports, in the article *Love in a brutalised world* (Zvomuya, 2012) quoted a Lesbian as saying: “I love vaginas”, which is an example of an article using a stereotype to describe Lesbianism – the stereotype being that Lesbians are promiscuous; that lesbianism is merely an act of sex and not a question of attraction, relationship projection and partnership.

The problem with relying on information, even well-intentioned, resides in the fact that opinions, attitudes and beliefs are formed by experience, ethnography and synthesis – if a journalist does not belong to a subject-group described in the report, they run the risk of creating an “us-them” frame relying on stereotypes and generalisations instead of ‘a first-person narrative. From the data collected

and analysed, the results are that most of the reports (60%) rely on data from secondary and unreliable or unsubstantiated or biased sources. According to Scheufele (1999), framing is to be seen as a process model, where input from secondary sources will invariably frame the issue of ‘corrective rape’ according to those objective epistemic privileged perspective.

Table 7: Power relationships evident in the five ‘corrective rape’ articles

Article	Journalist appears to be pro-gay rights	Journalist appears to be anti-gay rights	Journalist appears to be neutral
1	X		
2	X		
3			X
4	X		
5			X

Table 7 was developed based on the emergent codes and raw data uncovered from the selected newspapers. Although this research does not consider the impact of the message on the reader, it takes away from Hall’s (2012) work the importance of considering the language used to write a report and the bias it shows. Reports were also scanned for other linguistic markers and homosexual taxonomies that could identify sexual identities as “normal” from those which are “abnormal”. This could draw attention to the homosexual community being framed positively or negatively. Normative assertions could include words such as “homosexual” or “gay” while framing Lesbians as *abnormal* could include reports which use words such as “dyke” or “un-African” as a description (McKaiser, 2012). One of the articles reporting on ‘corrective rape’ *Gender violence requires broader lens* (Judge, 2012) claims that: “...resistance [to male dominance in cultural systems] is partly why violence based on sexuality and gender occurs”, is an example of a report where the journalist appears to be pro-gay rights. By referring to “Table 7: Power relationships evident in the five ‘corrective rape’ reports”, three of the reports show language which appears to be pro-gay rights, while no reports are representative of an anti-gay rights viewpoint. Two of the articles appeared to be written in a neutral tone and style. The findings still uncover some aspects of significance as it does not matter that the issue was framed positively or negatively, but *how* the journalists report on the issue.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

To correctly describe *if* and *how* the newspaper media in South Africa report on ‘corrective rape’, the research problem was fragmented into assumptions and sub-problems which could be utilised to find specific data to enable accurate claims. The first assumption was to prove that selected newspapers did indeed include reports on the issue of ‘corrective rape’. Other assumptions included whether the selected newspapers published articles with bias referring to the issue of ‘corrective rape’ and whether there were more generic frames of ‘corrective rape’ reports in the selected newspapers than reports framing the issue as a topic in need of recourse. In addressing the assumptions, the selected newspapers seemed to favour reports on rape occurrences where an adult assaulted a child. While it is indisputable that the issue of child rape has gravity, the subject seems to polarise the attention of newspapers in reporting on rape. The purpose of the research was not, however, to compare the frames used when reporting on rape to those of ‘corrective rape’, but the inclusion does help to set a context for understanding whether or not the agenda is set for the issue.

The findings revealed that although South African newspapers report on ‘corrective rape’ (issue and incidences), albeit skewed to only two of the three selected newspapers, it underreports on it when compared to the rape-statistic-to-reporting-ratio. The limitation of the study, however, is that even though reputable newspapers were selected for the study, the issues that they cover are not necessarily for niche audiences, such as the LGBTQI community. Even so, this is compared to the 10 new cases of ‘corrective rape’ being reported every week (Marting *et al*, 2009) in Cape Town alone with the five reports on ‘corrective rape’ identified from the 2012-2013 research. ‘Corrective rape’ is not merely an LGBTQI issue. It should not be relegated to communities or politicians who address issues based on their idiosyncratic agendas; Desmond Tutu once encapsulated the idea of humanity and human obligation perfectly when he said: “If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality” (Tutu and Carlton Abrams, 1990). Our moral obligation should always be the equality and respecting the dignity of all.

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