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PROMOTING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS: COVERAGE OF CHILDREN IN SOUTH AFRICAN AND ZAMBIAN MEDIA

CHILDREN & MEDIA: CHAMPIONING BEST PRACTICE

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PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS AND
DEMOCRACY THROUGH THE MEDIA
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"Your opinion matters. Don't be afraid to say what you think. Media can be good or bad depending on how you use it"

JULAIGHA AHMED

PELICAN PARK PRIMARY

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"It Is good when media report children in a good way and show them as happy"

KESTER NDHLOVU, Chisengalubwe Basic School

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"Children need to be protected from harmful things"

ANOINT DUBE, Parkhurst Primary

Abbreviations

EC: European Commission

MMA: Media Monitoring Africa

MNCRD: Media Network for Child Rights and Development

SA: South Africa

SABC: South African Broadcasting Corporation

SCS: Save the Children Sweden

ANPPCAN: The African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect

UNCRC: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

ZNBC: Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation

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" The stories of children in newspaper were really heart touching that I wanted to work harder than I ever had"

JOHN LWAKILA, Troyeville Primary

1. Introduction

As purveyors of information, the media have the responsibility to protect children's rights and to promote children's voices in the news. However, protecting children's rights and promoting their voices in the news remains an ongoing challenge for the media. Despite all the rights enshrined in the Constitutions to protect children's rights and to promote their voices when necessary, we continue to see violations and marginalisation of children's rights in the media. In addition, media seldom amplify children's voices in the news. This raises fundamental concerns and questions about whether journalists are conscious of the consequences of their unethical reporting or not. Therefore, this report aims to promote children's voices and protection of their rights in the media.

In MMA and MNCRD's 2011 report on media coverage of children in South Africa and Zambia, we commended the media for mostly protecting children's rights in their news.[1] We also encouraged the media to keep striving to ensure that all children's rights are protected by all means possible, to protect them from any possible harm that can be caused as a result of violating ethical practice and guidelines.[2] This report is part of a broader project/strategy that seeks to improve the portrayal and participation of children in the news media in South Africa and Zambia. The report is the second, following the 2011 report alluded to above. The research will begin by providing the key findings from the data scrutinised; subsequent to this, the objectives of the research, guidelines on reporting on children developed by MMA, both as background information and as the basis for the research methods adopted for this study, will be provided. The report will continue to detail the methods used to gather and analyse the data for the study, which was collected from 1 May 2012 to 30 September 2012. The research findings will follow thereafter, preceded by South African results.

2. Key findings

- South Africa had a total of 7 814 children's stories out of 87 206 stories in all the media, while Zambia had a total of 286 out of 5 183 stories
- SABC had the highest average number of children's stories at 42 percent, and Radio Phoenix in Zambia had 13.5 percent
- In terms of media's performance, in South Africa, Daily Sun was rated the best in the overall rating while in Zambia, ZNBC TV ranked first
- South African media violated two percent of children's rights, in all items monitored, whilst Zambian media violated three percent
- Children's voices in South Africa stood at five percent, while in Zambia, it was seven percent
- Media in both South Africa and Zambia, mostly mentioned children by means of age or reference but did not name or access them. Both constituted 56 and 68 percent respectively
- When it comes to children's roles, "child" as a role received the most coverage in South Africa at 27 percent, and the "victim" role got the most coverage at 45 percent in Zambia
- Boys and girls respectively received 52 and 48 percent of the coverage in South Africa, and 47 and 53 percent respectively in Zambia
- Teenagers received the most coverage than any age group, both in South Africa and Zambia, with 37 and 43 percent respectively
- Education got the most coverage in South Africa at 22 percent, and child abuse at 23 percent in Zambia
- In South African media, newspapers had most children's stories on page 6 and television had most children's stories appearing as first bulletins. In Zambia, newspapers had most children's stories on page 3 and broadcast (TV and radio) had most children's stories as the fourth item in the bulletins

[1] See Rikhotso, MO & Roberts, S (2012), *Something to be glad about: Coverage of children in South African And Zambian Media.* Johannesburg Media Monitoring Africa. p35

[2] Ibid

3. Research objectives and methodology

This section outlines the research objectives, guidelines on reporting on children, the media whose content was analysed in both South Africa and Zambia, and the process followed to gather and analyse data for this research. The section ends with a discussion on the limitations of the research.

3.1. Research objectives

The overall goal of the project is to improve the portrayal and participation of children in the news media. In striving for this goal, the project seeks to empower children in the media in South Africa and Zambia through promoting their active participation in media practices and coverage. The Empowering Children and the Media (ECM)[3] strategy developed by MMA makes this possible. Through media literacy skills transfer, the strategy enables children to have their voices heard in the media and develops their analytical skills on children's rights and their representation in the media. In doing so, the strategy contributes to creating informed citizens who will contribute to good governance and uphold human rights.

Thus, this research, a significant part of the broader ECM strategy, encompasses a review of media content on reporting on children, both by adults and children in South Africa and Zambia. The research seeks to gauge how children are represented in South African and Zambian media. In other words, it looks at the extent to which children's voices are heard in the media, and whether the coverage protects children's rights. In order to help assess the media's performance, the guidelines below were used.

3.2. Guidelines on reporting on children

This section focuses on the guidelines developed by MMA; these guidelines were developed to assist journalists and media practitioners to produce better-quality reporting on children, with the understanding that respecting children's rights today will mean respect for people's rights in the future. Even though these are not universally agreed upon, they play an important role in protecting children's rights in the media. Below are the guidelines on reporting on children:

1. Even where you are trying to tell people about harm to children or another children's issue or to promote children's rights, you always need to respect the best interests of the individual child. The best interests of each child are to be protected over any other consideration, including over advocacy for children's issues and the promotion of children's rights.
2. Always respect children's dignity and wellbeing. The dignity and rights of every child are to be respected in every circumstance.
3. When interviewing children, respect their privacy and confidentiality, and make sure you protect them from harm and potential consequences.
4. Children have a right to have their views heard on matters that affect them, so try and include them. When trying to determine the best interests of children, the children's right to have their views taken into account is to be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity.
5. When writing a story on children, ask those who know or work with them, or are experts on the issue, about the potential consequences of telling their story. Those closest to the child and best able to assess a child's situation are to be consulted about the diverse ramifications, including potential political, social and cultural ramifications of any reportage.
6. Always hide a child's identity where the child might be at risk. No stories or images will be published that might put the child, siblings or peers at risk even when identities are changed, obscured or not used. When it is editorially necessary to publish a picture of a child that is potentially harmful to that child, the identity of the child shall be obscured in such a manner that the child cannot be recognised.[4]
7. Children involved in legal proceedings need even more protection, and are at greater risk, so make sure to always protect their identity. In all stories in which a child has been involved in a crime, either as a witness, victim or perpetrator, unless exceptional circumstances prevail and then only if there is informed consent from the child involved and the child's caregiver[5], the child's identity will not be revealed, either directly or indirectly.
8. If you want to name or show a child, make sure you are allowed to do so by law, that you have informed consent from both the child and caregiver, and that you still protect them from potential harm.
9. Make sure to protect a child's HIV status. If in doubt, leave it out. To prevent harm and possible stigmatisation, a child's HIV status will not be revealed directly or indirectly, unless there are exceptional circumstances, and informed consent (from both the child and caregiver) has been

[3] A strategy developed by Media Monitoring Africa to improve the media's portrayal of children and achieve meaningful children's participation

[4] In this regard, the face of the child shall be blurred or pixellated completely. However, pixellating the face alone is not enough; anything in the photo that may identify the child, like a bracelet or picture, must be obscured.

[5] It should be noted that caregiver refers to a parent, guardian or an adult who has responsibility for the child, but that the degree of responsibility can vary depending on the circumstances

obtained. If in doubt, this information shall be left out.

10. Challenge negative stereotypes about children and conventional roles children occupy in the media (e.g. helpless victims[6]) whenever you can.
11. Treat girls and boys the same in your stories, with equal care, dignity and respect. Girl and boy children have equal rights and gender-based stereotypes will not be perpetuated when reporting on children.
12. When doing a story on a vulnerable child, make sure to be extra-careful.
13. Do not portray children in a sexual manner. Journalists must not use sexualised images of children.
14. Do not make promises you cannot keep, and don't bribe children for your story. A journalist must never abuse his/her position of power, especially when it comes to accessing or reporting on children. Journalists must never bribe a child with money, goods or promises of help or improved circumstances, in order to obtain information or secure consent. To do so is a gross abuse of power, is highly unethical and negates consent.

It is with these best-practice guidelines in mind that the South African and Zambian media content was examined and the methodology for the study was developed. The next section discusses the research methodology that was informed by these guidelines and previous MMA research.

3.3. Media analysed

A content analysis method was applied in gathering the information. This process allowed MMA to extract data and allowed general trends in the coverage to be analysed. The exact data extracted is explained later in this section.

For South Africa, in total, 16 newspapers and two television stations were analysed. The *Cape Argus* and *Cape Times* were added to the list after journalists from these titles had undergone Editorial Guidelines training. Table 1 shows the media analysed in South Africa, and their type and frequency of publication/broadcast.

Most of the major daily and weekly mainstream English newspapers in the country were analysed. Aside from the *Cape Argus* and *Cape Times*, all the media are widely available in the country's most populated province: Gauteng. Free-to-air English television stations were also included in the sample, that is, *e.tv*, a commercial television station and *SABC3*, a commercial station of the country's public broadcaster. Both *e.tv* and *SABC3* broadcast nationally and are therefore easily accessible to many South Africans.

For Zambia, the media analysed were state- and privately-owned. These included radio, television and newspapers. *Hot FM* has been added to the list to replace *UNZA Radio*, which was not consistent with its news broadcasting. Table 2 shows the media analysed in Zambia.

Table 1: Media analysed in South Africa

MEDIUM	TYPE	FREQUENCY OF PUBLICATION/ BROADCAST
Business Day	Newspaper	Daily
Cape Argus	Newspaper	Daily
Cape Times	Newspaper	Daily
City Press	Newspaper	Weekly
Daily Sun	Newspaper	Daily
e.tv	Television	Daily
Mail & Guardian	Newspaper	Weekly
SABC3	Television	Daily
Saturday Star	Newspaper	Weekly
Sowetan	Newspaper	Daily
Sunday Sun	Newspaper	Weekly
Sunday Times	Newspaper	Weekly
Sunday World	Newspaper	Weekly
The Citizen	Newspaper	Daily
The New Age	Newspaper	Daily
The Star	Newspaper	Daily
The Sunday Independent	Newspaper	Weekly
The Times	Newspaper	Daily

Table 2: Media analysed in Zambia

MEDIUM	TYPE	FREQUENCY OF PUBLICATION/ BROADCAST
Hot FM	Radio	Daily
Muvi TV	Television	Daily
Q FM	Radio	Daily
Radio Christian Voice	Radio	Daily
Radio Phoenix	Radio	Daily
The Post	Newspaper	Daily
Times of Zambia	Newspaper	Daily
Zambia Daily Mail	Newspaper	Daily
ZNBC TV	Television	Daily
ZNBC TV2	Television	Daily

[6] Research conducted by Media Monitoring Africa shows that children are usually portrayed as victims in the media. For more information visit: http://www.mediamonitoringafrica.org

The 10 media in the table above were purposely selected to be representative of the media in Zambia. In terms of newspapers, most of the titles available to many people in the country were selected. Although some audiences may be excluded by the heavy concentration on English, most Zambians can read and speak the language. Besides, English is the country's official language and the medium of instruction in schools.

3.4. Content gathered and analysed

The content analysed from both South African and Zambian media was gathered between 1 May 2012 and 30 September 2012. For radio and television, prime-time news bulletins were analysed each day. Adverts on radio and television were, however, excluded. For print media, news reports with the exception of advertising and paid-for content, sports results, educational supplements, letters to the editor, film/book reviews, and television programming guides for newspapers were analysed.

The content was manually collected by people (hereafter monitors) trained to examine and extract data from all stories that were clearly about children, or picture of a child or children. A child, according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), is a person under the age of 18.[7] Project managers in South Africa and Zambia checked the quality and accuracy of monitoring submitted on a daily basis. The completed monitoring was then captured into a specially designed database. For each children-related story, the following information was captured:

Item/page number: each item was numbered in relation to where it occurred in a news bulletin, or the page on which it appeared in a newspaper. The position of a story in a newspaper is an indicator of the importance attributed to an issue, as front-page stories or opinion, analysis, or editorial pages indicate greater importance ascribed to the issue by the newspaper. Likewise, the order of items on television or radio bulletins shows the relative emphasis given by the station.

Summary: a brief summary of each children-related story or item was provided. The summary reflects the gist of the story.

Type of story: for television and radio, Monitors recorded different types of stories such as news, sports, and business. For print, Monitors recorded different types of stories such as, news, in-brief, editorial, opinion, cartoon and photographs. The type of story is an indicator of editorial commitment to the issue, with editorials indicating greater commitment than, say, news stories.

Topic: the overall topic or central subject of each item was captured using a set list.[8] Monitors were obliged to choose the most specific and most appropriate code for the item being monitored.

Only one topic code for each item was permitted. The more general topic codes were utilised only as a matter of last resort, in those few instances where an item could not be categorised as falling into one of the more specific topic areas. Through topics, we were able to see the issues media cover about children.

Origin: the geographic area in which the stories originated was recorded. Capturing the origins of the stories gave a broad indication of the journalistic selection biases. In other words, it gave an indication of the areas the media covered stories related to children.

Author: the authorship of an item/story, for instance, a journalist, an agency, a combination of these, or a guest writer was captured. Where possible, the gender of the author was also captured. This enabled monitors to determine whether the media commit their own journalists to covering issues related to children, which also is an indicator of editorial commitment to an issue.

Sources: children were captured as sources when directly or indirectly accessed, named, photographed and reference made to their age. On the other hand, adults were only regarded as sources when directly or indirectly accessed. Where clear, further information about the gender and the function of the people accessed was also categorised. Sources in stories gave an important indication of whose stories were covered, who was speaking and who was asked for quotes.

Children's rights: an overall assessment of whether headlines, images and the stories were in the best interests of the child/children or not, was conducted. Monitors chose yes, no or not clear to determine whether the story was in the best interests of the child or not.[9]

Quality of information: ideally, a good news story should give more detail than the bare facts of the event or a particular issue. It should accurately set the context, show the implications of the course of events, and how a particular issue or event might impact society at large. To determine the quality of information provided in the news items, Monitors recorded whether items provided a basic context and an in-depth context. In addition, Monitors noted whether items discussed relevant legislation or policy, provided self-help boxes or information, and whether the stories were in the child/children's best interests.[10]

Ethical principles: both in South Africa and Zambia, principles relating to children's reporting were particularly developed by MMA and used to assess whether stories were generally ethical.

[7] http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm. Convention on rights of the Child. Retrieved on 03 December 2012
[8] For a list of all topics used in the monitoring, see Appendix 2
[9] For the criteria used to assess whether children's rights were respected or not, see Appendix 1
[10] For the quality of information criteria, See Appendix 3

3.5 Media ratings explained

Analysing the news involves considering a range of different elements, and assessing them individually as well as a whole. In analysing media content for this report, around 40 different elements such as the number of stories, adherence to ethical guidelines, children's voices, etc. were included. Often, understanding performance of media requires in-depth news report reading and additional time in bringing all elements together.

Given the complexity of the elements included in the analysis of news content, one of the most valuable ways to easily assess media performance is through a rating system. Over the years MMA has refined its rating system for news media analysis. For this study, MMA implemented a rating system that aimed to give quick and easy access to understanding the performance of the media analysed.

Not only does MMA's Media Rating System (MRS) provide clear indicators as to how each station or title performed, it also enables healthy competition to be developed between channels as to who performed better. In addition, due to the intricate nature of news analysis, the ratings have been divided into five categories. The first four address key issues in reporting, outlined below, while the fifth gives an overall score. The four key areas used to rate media performance are as follows:

- **Voices heard: was the reporting credible and well sourced, or who was in the news?**

Here, information about who spoke in each of the news items was captured. In particular, the overall diversity or spread of sources accessed was analysed through comparing the spread of sources against the other media analysed. The operating assumption was that a greater diversity of sources would lead to more informative and better news.

The gender of sources was also determined. This provided a valuable indicator as to how many female and male voices were seen and heard. The assumption was that given the fundamental inequality that exists in the representation of genders in the media, having a greater number of female voices is to be encouraged to help address inequality.

- **Rights respected: did journalists follow recognised and accepted ethical standards, or how ethical was the coverage?**

Using locally and internationally accepted journalistic principles, news items were assessed in terms of whether they clearly violated or clearly supported any of the ethical guidelines. The assumption was that ethical reporting is essential if the media are to fulfil their mandate.

Fairness was also determined. Using an established methodology, each item was assessed in terms of whether it clearly favoured or clearly disfavoured a person or group. The assumption here was that fair and balanced news is essential to good journalism, and any clear pattern of unfair or biased reporting suggests an ethical failure by a particular media.

News items were also analysed to see the extent to which they promoted and/or respected human rights, as well as how often they challenged stereotypes. Here each story was assessed in terms of whether any stereotypes were clearly supported or clearly challenged. The assumption was that media have a great responsibility to challenge negative stereotypes, and promote a culture of tolerance and respect for human rights.

- **Diversity of coverage: did media cover diverse key events and issues, or which events were covered?**

Topics covered: here the spread of topics covered, compared with other media, was assessed. At the same time, the focus by a media title on a topic or set of topics was also analysed. The assumption was that a diverse range of topics in the news provides better access to information to audiences who are diverse and have diverse needs.

Diversity of region: here each media title was assessed on the basis of the spread of the region where the stories originated, as well as a focus on a particular region. Thus, a regional-based medium may have a focus on a particular area. The operating assumption here was that a diversity of origin will result in more diverse news.

Prominence of key events and issues: here media scored more highly if human rights-focused items or events from under-serviced and under-covered areas were afforded prominent coverage.

- **Depth of information – what information was provided in the coverage?**

Specific information types: here each news story was assessed in terms of what type of information it provided. Five different types were included: issues raised, causes, background information (context), relevant legislation and solutions are all important elements to be considered. The assumption here was that these five types of information are critical to quality news reporting, that goes beyond reporting facts about an event.

Number of information types: here media scored more highly for those stories that contained more types of information, therefore likely to provide more informative news.

- **Overall ranking**

At the end of analysis the overall ranking was applied to get the best-performing medium. All of the above criteria were considered during the overall ranking analysis.

3.6. Children's monitoring methodology and schools involved

In South Africa, child monitors in Grades 6 and 7 participated in the project while in Zambia, 203 children in Grades 6, 7, 8 and 9 from five schools participated in the monitoring activities. The schools were selected to include children from lower-middle and upper-income communities. While the work done by the children in this project is not supposed to be reliable and valid like the findings of the main project, it is a key part of the project's strategy to get children reading news and also participating in the dialogue with media practitioners.

South African schools were selected to include various socio-economic backgrounds and different races, and were situated in two provinces in the country:

- Naturena Primary School in the south of Johannesburg
- Park Senior Primary School in Turffontein, Johannesburg
- Troyeville Primary School in Bertrams/Bez Valley, Johannesburg
- Pelican Park Primary School in Grassy Park, Cape Town

Eighty children took part in the monitoring of eight newspapers, with monitors from each school focusing on two newspapers:

- *The Star* and *Daily Sun* were monitored by Naturena Primary
- *The Citizen* and *The New Age* were monitored by Park Senior Primary
- *The Times* and *Sowetan* were monitored by Troyeville Primary
- The *Cape Argus* and *Cape Times* were monitored by Pelican Park Primary

In Zambia, the following schools participated in the children's monitoring project:

- Chibelo Basic School
- Chisengalumbwe Basic School
- Jacaranda Basic School
- Kabulonga Basic School
- New Northmead Basic School

The media monitored by children in Zambia were the same as those monitored by adults and included:

- *The Post newspaper*
- *ZNBC TV*
- *Muvi TV*
- *Times of Zambia newspaper*
- *ZNBC TV2*
- *Hot FM*
- *Radio Christian Voice*
- *Zambia Daily Mail newspaper*
- *Radio Phoenix*
- *Q FM*

" I was motivated by the fact that I am a voice for children who cannot speak when it comes to violation of children's rights, and that being a media monitor is a privilege, not a right"

MITCHLIN JACOBS, Troyeville Primary

The monitors were trained to analyse stories on children and to judge whether journalists were able to report in a way that did not violate their rights. The child monitors were then provided with monitoring guide books and monitoring books. The former was used to provide tips and reminders on things such as the do's and don'ts of media monitoring and how best to monitor a news story, read images as well as definitions of words frequently used in media monitoring. The monitoring book, on the other hand, contains multiple forms for children to complete while reading their specific newspapers. These monitoring books helped the children to determine the quality of news reporting.

All the monitoring books that were given to the children were collected in 2012 and the data was fed into an MS Access Database which, in the end, contained a total of 765 children's stories in South Africa, and 119 in Zambia.

3.7. Research limitations

There were number of limitations to the research. Firstly, the selection of items was a great challenge. All items were selected manually, firstly by MMA and Media Network on Child Rights and Development (MNCRD) staff, and then checked by Monitors. Since media differ in their presentation of stories, this method was not infallible.

Secondly, comparing very different media also has limitations, as they have diverse audiences and resource bases.

Thirdly, monitoring biases could not be ruled out despite the emphasis from MMA and MNCRD to ensure standardisation across the board. This was, however, minimised by using the same methodology for both countries, training and regular communication during the analysis period.

The preceding sections helped demonstrate how the research's data was collected, and how monitoring and the data analysis processes were conducted. Thus, the following sections of the research will look into the general findings of the monitoring. The findings are divided into two main sections: South Africa and Zambia. They will gauge how children and children's issues are covered in and by the media.

4. South African findings

The following section discusses the 2012 findings, with reference to 2011 monitoring results, to determine whether there has been a change in the way the media report on children's stories. The findings section is divided into two parts, with the results from the SA adult monitoring first and the SA children's monitoring second. During the monitoring period, media in South Africa featured 7 814 children's stories out of a total of 87 206 stories over the period of analysis. This means that nine percent of all the stories were about and/or involved children.

4.1. Adult monitoring

This section discusses the overall findings of the monitoring done by the adults, using a standardised methodology developed by MMA. This methodology, as alluded to above, leaves a slight possibility of bias in the monitoring. Below are the findings of the 2012 monitoring period.

4.1.1. Performance rating

When monitoring, it is always crucial that media performance is rated. This plays an important role in understanding which media has done well in reporting on children and relevant issues which concern them. It also enables healthy competition to be developed between media as to who performed better. Many factors were considered in rating the media, such as the number of children's stories covered by the media, the voices amplified in the media and other elements. As highlighted in the methodology section, due to the intricate nature of news analysis, the ratings were divided into five rating categories, namely, rights respected, voices heard, depth of information, diversity of coverage and overall rating. The first four rating categories were combined to give the overall rating. Table 3 shows the four rating elements and the overall ranking results.

The media were rated between 1 and 18. The overall rating shows that the *Daily Sun* ranked first and *Business Day* ranked last. This does not necessarily mean that the *Daily Sun* performed best across the board, because it ranked eighth on diversity of information. These results reveal that various media performed differently on different elements. For example, *e.tv* ranked seventh overall, yet it was the best on voices heard and depth of information.

Among the two broadcast media monitored, *e.tv* ranked best in all the four elements considered: rights respected, voices heard, depth of coverage and diversity of coverage. Hence, overall ratings show that it is rated before *SABC3*.[12]

Table 3: Media performance

MEDIUM	RIGHTS RESPECTED	VOICES HEARD	DEPTH OF INFORMATION	DIVERSITY OF COVERAGE	OVERALL RATING
Daily Sun	1	3	3	8	1
The New Age	2	6	7	2	2
Sunday Times	6	2	11	4	3
Cape Argus	5	8	13	1	4
Sowetan	4	7	8	6	5
Saturday Star	3	5	14	14	6
e.tv	8	1	1	10	7
The Star	10	4	5	7	8
The Citizen	12	9	12	3	9
SABC3	7	16	2	11	10
Cape Times	13	13	10	5	11
Mail & Guardian	15	14	6	9	12
Sunday Sun	11	11	17	12	13
The Times	14	12	15	13	14
City Press	17	15	9	16	15
Sunday World	18	10	16	15	16
The Sunday Independent	9	17	18	18	17
Business Day	16	18	4	17	18

[11] See Rikhotso & Roberts (2012, p11)

[12] See media rating explanation under sub-section 3.5

4.1.2. Number of children's stories

It is critical to focus on the number of children's stories from each medium, because it helps in determining which medium gives more coverage and focus to issues that involve children. Hence, Table 4 shows the total number of children's stories against the total number of stories each medium published/broadcast during the period of analysis.

Table 4: Number of stories on children

MEDIUM	CHILDREN'S STORIES	TOTAL STORIES	% CHILDREN'S STORIES
SABC3	505	1 206	42%
e.tv	162	756	21%
Daily Sun	973	6 000	16%
The Times	725	4 998	15%
Saturday Star	324	2 244	14%
Mail & Guardian	168	1 425	12%
The New Age	1 343	12 566	11%
Sunday Times	267	2 737	10%
Sowetan	465	5 050	9%
Cape Times	572	6 804	8%
The Sunday Independent	121	1 501	8%
Cape Argus	696	9 701	7%
Sunday World	58	912	6%
Sunday Sun	56	930	6%
Business Day	139	2 773	5%
The Star	608	12 672	5%
City Press	108	2 331	5%
The Citizen	524	12 600	4%

The two television broadcasters analysed, *SABC3* and *e.tv,* had the highest proportion of children's stories with *SABC3* at 42 percent and *e.tv* at 21 percent. This does not mean that they had the highest number of children's stories. It only means that they had the highest proportion of children's stories in relation to all the other stories they broadcast during the period. In fact, *The New Age* and the *Daily Sun* had the highest number of children's stories with 1 343 and 973, respectively. In terms of proportion of children's stories, *SABC3* maintained the top position for the second time in a row.[13] The reason for this could be attributed to the service's ***"Touching Lives Initiative",*** which appeared in almost all of the channel's prime-time news bulletins and frequently featured children.

With regard to newspapers, the *Daily Sun* had the highest proportion of children's stories at 16 percent, an increase on the 11.7 percent we recorded in 2011.[14] The 2012 results show that there has been an exchange of positions in the ranking because the *Saturday Star*, which had the most significant number of stories last year at 13 percent, came third this year at 14 percent. Nevertheless, *The Times*, which had the second-highest number of stories last year at 12 percent, remains second this year with 15 percent.

Interestingly, the exchange of positions that happened among the newspapers with high numbers of stories also prevailed among the newspapers with the lowest amount of children's stories. *The Citizen* and *Business Day* swapped places. *Business Day* had few children's stories compared with other newspapers at two percent last year, compared with 5 percent this year, which resulted in it moving four places up to replace *The Citizen*, which had six percent in 2011 and four percent this year. Such a decrease consequently led to *The Citizen* occupying the last place, which was occupied by Business Day last year.[15]

4.1.3. Geographical coverage

The geographical coverage of the stories is instrumental, as it helps in determining media preferences with regard to where they go to cover children's stories. In order to determine geographical coverage and where clear, Monitors looked at the origin of stories using the following four categories: international, Africa, national and regional, as well as the country's nine provinces. International was used for the stories that were from outside South Africa, and Africa at large. Africa was used for stories from other countries in Africa. Table 5 shows the geographical coverage of children's stories, based on where the stories originated.

Table 5: Origin of stories

Gauteng	28%
International	16%
Western Cape	14%
National	11%
Limpopo	6%
KwaZulu-Natal	6%
North West	4%
Eastern Cape	4%
Mpumalanga	4%
Africa	2%
Free State	2%
Regional	2%
Northern Cape	2%

Gauteng continues to have a greater proportion of the coverage at 28 percent, when compared with other provinces. However, it decreased by one percent from 29 percent in 2011.[16] International stories continue to receive the second-greatest proportion of

[13] See Rikhotso & Roberts (2012, p11)

[14] Ibid

[15] Ibid

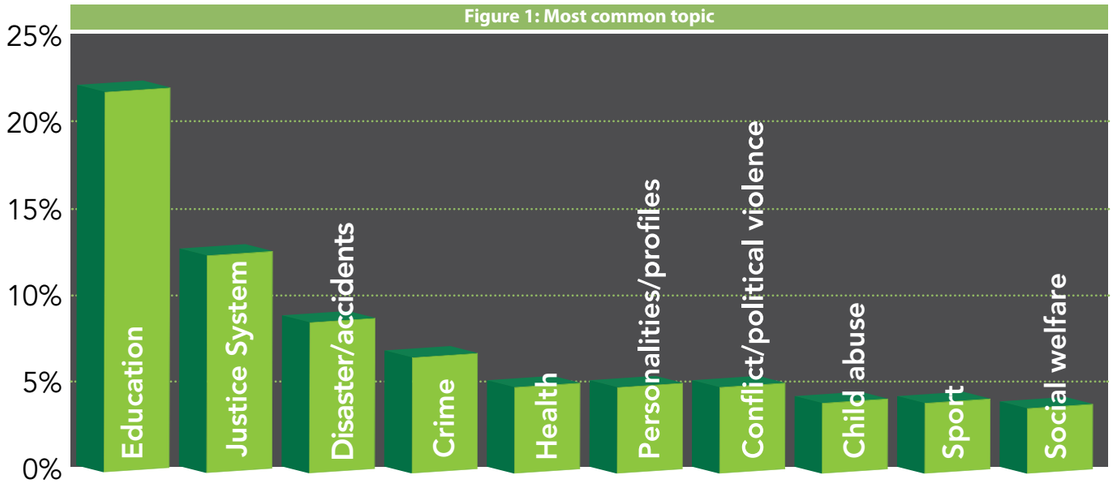
[16] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012, p12)

coverage in the South African media at 16 percent, although the coverage has decreased by two percentage points from 18 percent in 2011.[17] The Western Cape has the third-largest proportion of the coverage at 14 percent. The increase of stories from the Western Cape can be attributed to the introduction of the *Cape Argus* and *Cape Times* newspapers, which are Cape Town-based.

Just like with the 2011 results, these findings show an urban bias in news coverage.[18] The provinces with bigger metropolitan areas in the country like Gauteng, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal continue to receive the most news coverage. However, it should be noted that Limpopo has seen an increase in coverage from four percent in 2011 to six percent in 2012. This increase could be attributed to the education crisis[19] in Limpopo, which saw most, if not all, the media reporting on the issue and its challenges. Despite having witnessed an increase from one percent in 2011 to two percent in 2012, the Northern Cape remains marginalised.[20] Media should try to ensure that there is equitable coverage with regard to geographical locations by, perhaps, promoting citizen journalism across various provinces.

4.1.4. Topic coverage

Topic coverage helps us understand the key issues about children that received media coverage. A total number of 51 topics were identified. However, for analysis purposes we only present the most common topics: Education, Justice System, Disaster, Crime, Health, Personalities, Conflict, Child Abuse, Sport and Social Welfare. For example, Education was about all stories that dealt with basic education, delivery of books, provision of schools, etc.[21] Thus, Figure 1 shows the top 10 topics covered across all the media analysed.



[17 & 18] Ibid:p12

[19] The crisis in Limpopo culminated after money ring-fenced to buy textbooks for the 2012 school year was reallocated in mid-2011 by the Limpopo government. As a result the Provincial Education Department failed to provide textbooks to schools for the 2011-2012 school year

[20] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012, p12)

[21] For a list of topics used, See Appendix 2

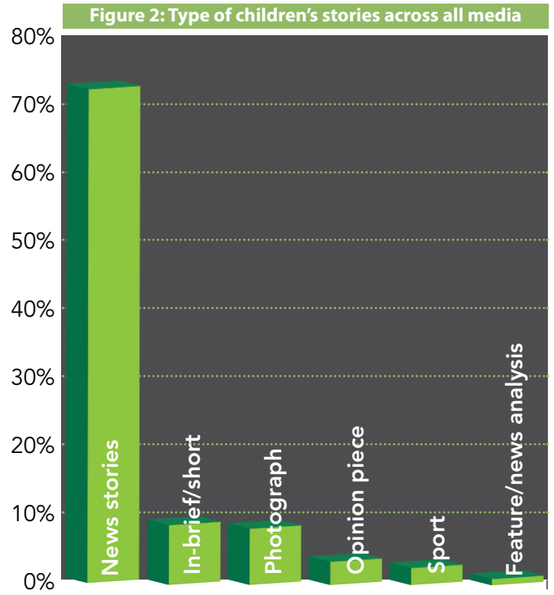
Education is one of the priority areas in the country, as evidenced by the huge budget South Africa allocates to this sector. In fact, education receives the largest proportion of the country's budget. In addition, the National Development Plan identifies education as key to the country's economic development.[22] It is therefore not surprising that education received the greatest proportion of media coverage at 22 percent, which is a significant increase from 16 percent in 2011.[23] It could be argued that coverage of education increased significantly in 2012 due to the education crisis in Limpopo, which spilled over to other provinces such as the Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga, and resulted in a fierce debate among "ordinary" citizens on the impact of the crisis on the country's young citizens. Justice System also witnessed a significant increase in coverage, from six percent in 2011 to 12 percent in 2012, thereby replacing Disaster in second position.[24]

Interestingly, crime coverage in the South African media decreased from eight percent in 2011 to six percent in 2012.[25] This could be a result of the decrease in crime statistics recorded in 2012. According to South African Police Service (SAPS) crime statistics released in 2012, crime decreased by 3.5 percent since 2011.[26] Furthermore, child abuse featured less in the news in 2012 at four percent, compared with six percent in 2011. This reduction can be seen as a sign of positive coverage of children, as child abuse is usually regarded as a negative topic. However, this does not mean that all the stories categorised under Child Abuse were reported negatively.[27]

4.1.5. Prominence of coverage

The prominence of coverage enables us to understand the extent to which children's issues and news that involves them is regarded by the media. Two categories were used to determine prominence of coverage, namely Type of Stories and Sequence of Stories.[28] Figure 2 shows the type of children's stories covered by all the media examined.

News constitutes the majority of the stories analysed at 74 percent, which is an increase from last year's results of 67 percent, while in-briefs/short stories constituted nine percent of the children's stories. News stories refer to event-based articles and make up the majority of the media content, while briefs are short news stories with between three and 10 lines. Photographs decreased from 10 percent in 2011 to eight percent in 2012.[29] This might have to do with



journalists ensuring that pictures were accompanied by text, putting the photograph into context. News stories dominated most of the media coverage. However, this was expected, as the media analysed are news-orientated. This demonstrates that media in South Africa are inclined to report more on the current issues that involve, and are about, children.

Opinion pieces, which are usually written by academics, experts, prominent people and senior editorial staff, saw a decrease from five percent in 2011 to four percent in 2012.[30] This should not be regarded as a huge challenge, because generally opinion pieces are allocated very limited space in newspapers.

Just like the type of stories, the sequence of stories in the media is crucial in determining the newsworthiness of children. Media generally put the most important stories in the first few pages of the newspaper[31], or the top three places in the news bulletin. This choice is often informed by whether the story adheres to a set of news values[32], or criteria for what makes news. Thus, the news the various print media houses consider most important or most likely to sell

[22] National Planning Commission. 2011. National Development Plan: Vision for 2030. Available at http://www.npconline.co.za/medialib/downloads/home/NPC%20National%20Development%20Plan%20Vision%202030%20-lo-res.pdf

[23] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012, p13)

[24] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012, p13)

[25] Ibid

[26] http://www.saps.gov.za/statistics/reports/crimestats/2012/downloads/crime_statistics_presentation.pdf

[27] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012, p13)

[28] For a breakdown of the types of stories used, aee appendix 4

[29] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012, p15)

[30] Ibid

[31] Lindsay, D. 2011. *Scientific Writing = Thinking in Words. Australia*: CSIRO publishing. p42

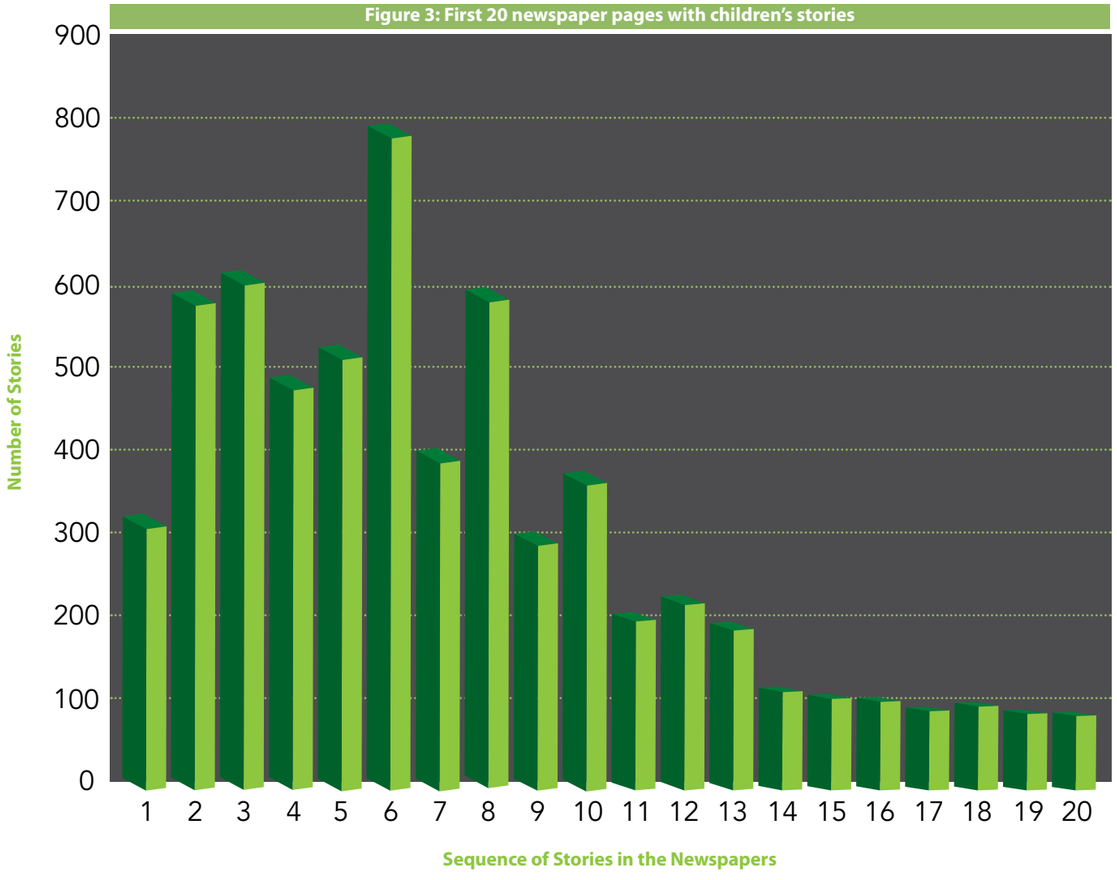
[32] News values help determine how much prominence to give to a story. According to Johan Gultung and Marie Ruge's (1965) list of news values, news should have some of the following characteristics: threshold, frequency, negativity, unexpectedness, unambiguity, proximity, prominence, timelessness or immediacy

papers get front-page coverage. Figure 3 below, shows the sequence of stories in the newspapers and television services analysed, respectively.

As indicated earlier, the page on which a story appears in the newspapers informs the reader of the relative news value of the story. Although newspapers differ in terms of how they arrange their sections, "sensational" and "shocking" stories are usually placed on the front page to grab the reader's attention. Be that as it may, Figure 3 reveals that 301 children's stories appeared on the front page. This is a significant increase on 180 stories in 2011.[33] Such increase can be attributed to the increase in the number of stories monitored. However, the stories on the front page are far less than the 798 which appeared on page 6. This could be attributed to the fact that such stories featured on page 6 are not major stories, or that they lack appeal or prominence.

When it comes to television, it seems more children's stories appear at the beginning of news bulletins and gradually decrease as the bulletin progresses. As shown by Figure 4, 223 children's stories appeared as first stories on television news bulletins, whilst last year there were 118 stories. This indicates a significant increase, which can be attributed to the fact that there were more children's stories recorded in 2012 compared to 2011. The increase can be attributed to the widespread coverage on government failure to deliver text books in many different schools in Limpopo and other areas. Consequently, education as one of the most important children's issues was given prominence in news.[34] The gradual decrease of children's stories from first to last item on the bulletin demonstrate that issues about children received prominent coverage on television. This is the case because the first few stories in the news bulletins are always deemed important.[35] In other words, the television news bulletins are always organised in order of importance.

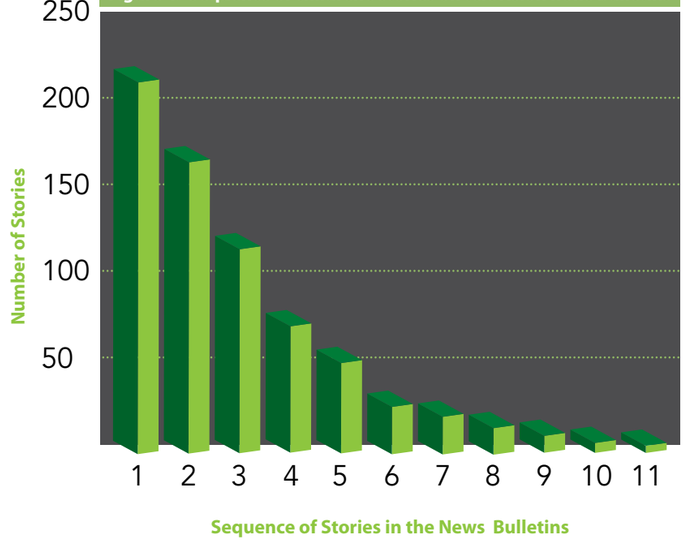
Figure 3: First 20 newspaper pages with children's stories



[33 & 34] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012, p15)

[35] See The News Manual: Radio and Television News bulletins. 2008. available online: http://www.thenewsmanual.net/Manuals%20Volume%202/volume2_49.htm

Figure 4: Sequence of children's stories on television news bulletins



"Looking at the poor kids getting abused and killed and it made us and people as media monitors sad"

MITCHLIN JACOBS, Troyeville Primary

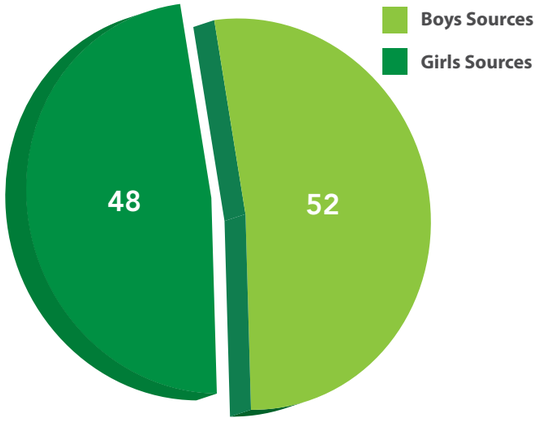
Thus, the portrayal of boys and girls in the media is a very important element to monitor, as we believe that media have the responsibility to not perpetuate existing patriarchal structures and practices that are often hegemonic. In essence, the media should strive to produce content that is *accurate, fair and balanced.*

4.1.6. Representation of girls and boys in the news

The media should provide a platform that allows for equal participation of both boys and girls. They should further enable an environment where children from different backgrounds can participate equally. This is imperative to do because equal representation is important, based on the human rights elements of equal participation and non-discrimination. That is, the media has the responsibility to promote and respect the rights of every individual.

Figure 5, shows that 48 percent of the news monitored focused on girls while 52 percent were on boys. This is a notable improvement in light of last year's results, where 46 percent of the children sourced were girls and 54 percent were boys.[36] Thus, the coverage this year can be said to be better, given that there exists a difference of only four percent in the sourcing of the boy and girl children whereas in last year's results a huge gap of eight percent could be evidenced. Although boys still take the lead in terms of their coverage in the media, these results show that the media are trying to make strides in ensuring that boys and girls receive almost equal coverage.

Figure 5: Representation of girls and boys in the news



4.1.7. Children's roles in the news

According to Reddy and Ratna[37], "there are several arenas where children do and can participate that satisfy one or several aspects of their personhood. The arenas of participation are several and varied; the home, school, work, and community, going further to state and international levels". Therefore, it is important for media to reflect this. The media should illustrate how children are not limited or confined to one role but also play active roles in various environments. While the media are not the only agents or structures that can ensure this, the bigger responsibility certainly lies with them, given the magnitude of their influence, visibility and accessibility. More so because media are often deemed as potent purveyors of stereotypes[38], and as such have a huge influence in shaping our views and attitudes on and opinions about different individuals. Thus, the action of dispelling stereotypes should start with them.

[36] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012, p20)

[37] Reddy, N. & Ratna, K. (2002) A journey in children's participation. India: The Concerned for Working Children. See http://www.workingchild.org/htm/prota9.htm

[38] Hall, S. (1980b). Encoding/decoding. In Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (Ed.), *Culture, media, language: working papers in Cultural Studies, 1972-79* (pp. 128-138). London: Hutchinson 1980). Also see Manges, H. 2007. *The Invisible Signs of Aging in International Media: Is the Age Stereotype a Western Problem? p.11*

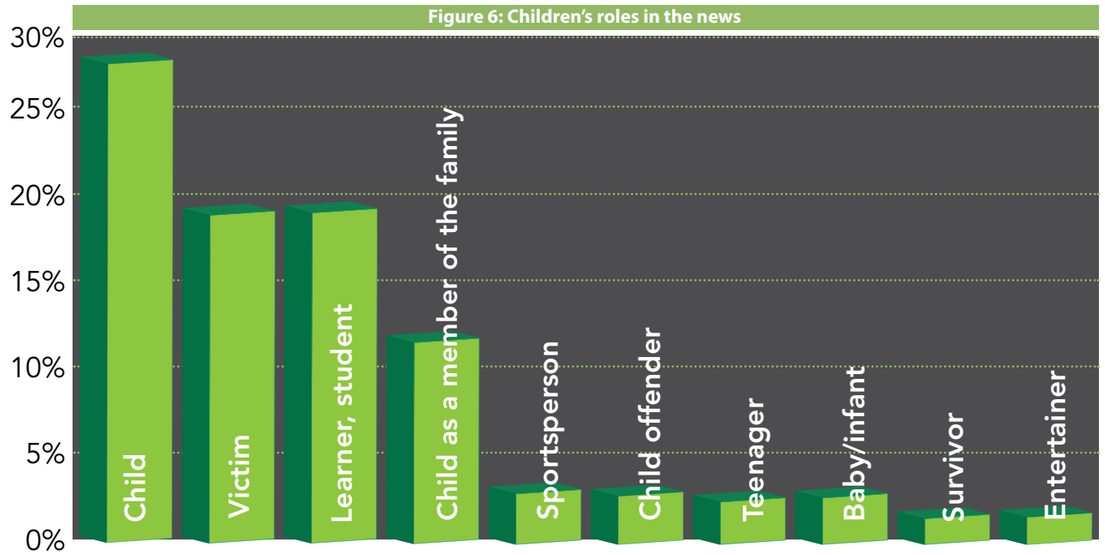


Figure 6 above indicates that the most common role assigned to children in the media is that of them as children, which is similar to 2011 findings. Twenty-seven percent of the stories emphasised the role of children as non description "child", while 20 percent was recorded in 2011.[39] This kind of representation is, however, problematic in that it gives the impression that all children have common characteristics or that they are the same. Consequently, the individual characteristics of each child, their individual strengths, their specific concerns, challenges, problems and interests go unobserved or unnoticed. This consequently has a bearing on how children view themselves; that is, they may see themselves just as children or without something unique to offer. That is to say, children may internalise and start conforming to these depictions.[40]

The second dominant role by which children were identified was that of victims at 19 percent, compared to 17 percent in 2011.[41] While depicting children as victims may be true to the current social, economic and cultural state of the child in question, these views should not overlook the other positive characteristics and qualities of the child. These characteristics can be physical, emotional, social or even general.[42] It is these characteristics and qualities that define a child's individuality and uniqueness. Therefore, media should not fail to notice children's individual dispositions and abilities.

As illustrated by Figure 6, only one percent of the stories focused on children as survivors, a decrease from two percent we recorded in 2011.[43] More emphasis on children as survivors will help children overcome the stereotypical representation of them as helpless and disempowered.[44] This can be achieved through portraying children more as active participants in society. And in instances where children have been abused, the media can and should pursue the story but should seek different angles to the story, such as providing more information on how children who find themselves in those difficulties can remedy their situations. In this way the children in question would feel empowered, knowing very well that there are steps that can be taken to alleviate their circumstances.

4.1.8. Children's age groups in the news

Children's age groups in the news are important to analyse in order to determine the age groups that are given a voice and the ones that are neglected. The research hypothesises that it is only when the media pays attention to the diverse age groups that society can begin to understand the problems faced by the various generations. Thus, the spread of participation of different age groups of children in the media highlights the extent to which their specific challenges and issues regarding their development are put and kept in the media agenda.

[39] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012, p20)
[40] Reddy & Ratna (2002)
[41] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012, p20)
[42] See a document outlining the various characteristics of children and youth adapted by Mentoring Partnership of Long Island, Virginia Mentoring Partnership, and Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, Child Development Seminar, August 1990. Available online: www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_617.doc
[43] Op. cit
[44] Ibid

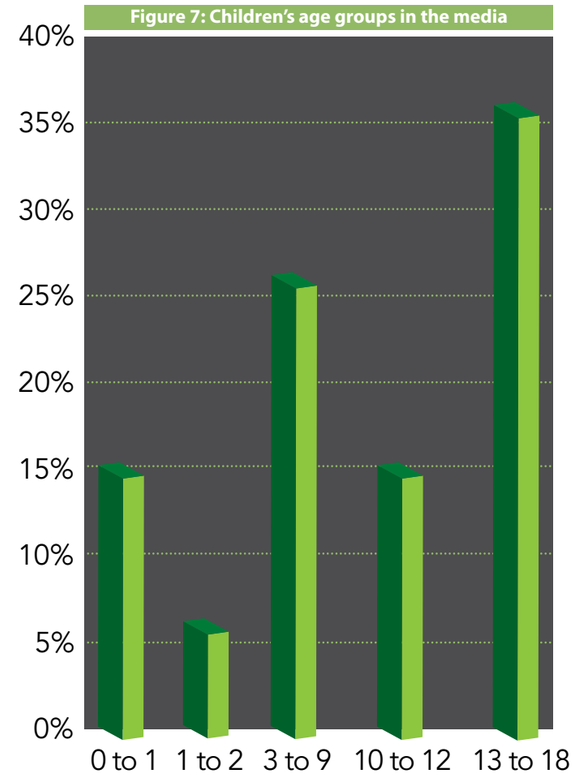


Figure 7 above indicates that children between the ages of 13 and 18 were sourced most, at 37 percent. These results are similar to last year's. The research assumes that the high percentage of this age group in comparison to other age groups is due to the fact that they are more accessible and encounter more challenges and problems, hence extensive coverage of them. More so, media practitioners tend to access an age group that will be able to formulate answers to their questions. Interestingly, the 10 to 12 age group received less coverage compared to the 3 to 9 age group.

4.1.9. How children are accessed in the news

In order to develop children's participation and ultimately realise their rights, the media should afford children the opportunity to voice their ideas, opinions and interests. As outlined in MMA's past research, children are often seen and not heard, thus this calls for a more robust approach in realising children's right to participation especially on matters that directly affect them or are of interest to them. Therefore, children's participation[45] is not only limited to children being seen in the media but to them also being heard, and actively and meaningfully participating in the media. It is against this backdrop that Monitors looked at how children were accessed in the media. In other words, they looked at whether children are often or seldom spoken to, or just mentioned in passing.

Figure 8: How children are accessed in the news

ACCESS CODE/DESCRIPTION	%
Mentioned	56%
Photographed	17%
Named only	13%
Named and photographed	8%
Accessed and named	2%
Accessed, named and photographed	2%
Accessed only	1%
Accessed and photographed	0%
Author	0%

Figure 8 points to how the majority of the children in the media are mentioned only by means of age or reference, but not named or accessed, and in all stories monitored only five percent were accessed. Thus, in comparison to 2011 findings[46], there has been a decline of about two percent in the number of children accessed in the media.

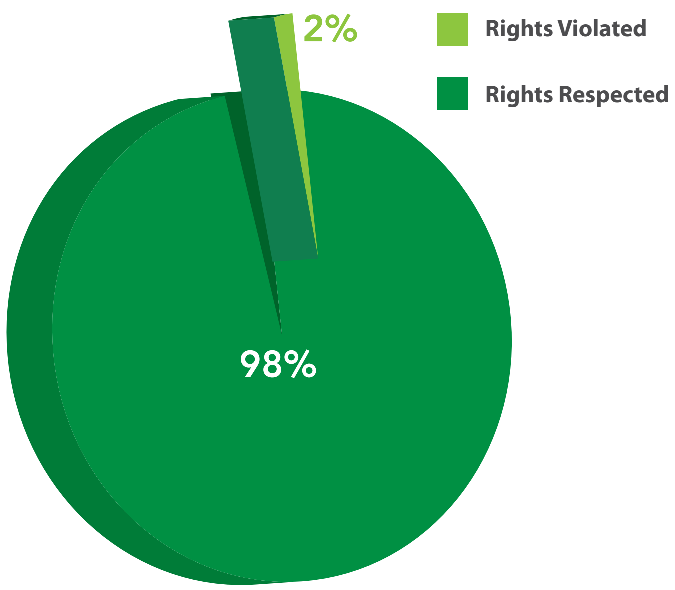
Media Monitoring Africa encourages the media to give children a voice whenever necessary, because they have the capacity to enlighten adults on things that they often overlook or they regard as mundane. Where ethically appropriate, giving children a voice in the media can give insights that will manifest in a continual and diverse learning process.

4.1.10. Children's rights in the news

Children's rights in the media make for an interesting topic because they seem and sound like an elusive idea, as it is often difficult to understand what they comprise and how they can best be respected, promoted, protected and facilitated. Children enjoy many rights, such as those that relate to their physical, social and mental wellbeing.[47] However, the rights that speak to the psychosocial issues related to children should be promoted and protected in, and particularly by, the media. These are the rights to freedom of expression, privacy and dignity, and participation[48]. Thus, respecting children's rights in the media entails adhering to the aforementioned rights, that is, respecting children's rights to voice their opinions and participate meaningfully in situations that are conducive for such actions to ensue. It also means respecting children's right to privacy by not identifying them in scenarios that might make them vulnerable to victimisation, or secondary abuse, stereotyping and stigmatisation. Overall, these are important in ensuring the wellbeing of the child.

[45] Singh (2010, p. 27)
[46] According to year 2011 monitoring results, seven percent of children were accessed
[47] See European Commission's (Justice) report. 2011. Children's rights, as they see them http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/rights-of-the-child_en.pdf
[48] These are the rights that are applicable in the media context

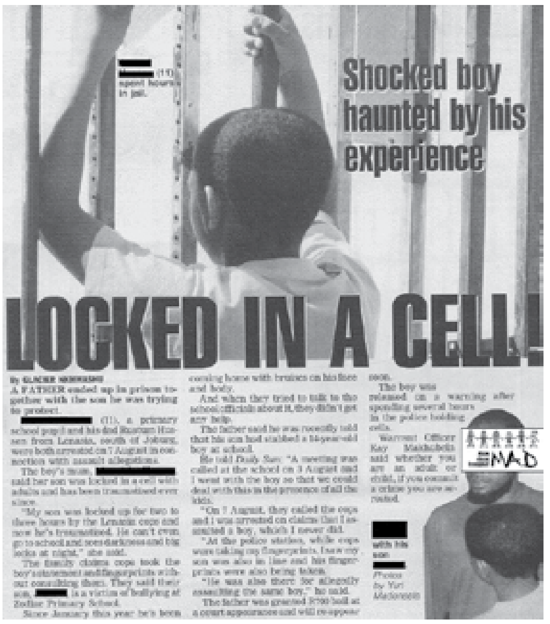
Figure 9: Children's rights in the news



As indicated by Figure 9, the majority of the stories analysed respected children's rights. In fact, 98 percent of the stories respected children's rights while a marginal two percent violated them. The two percent accounts for news items infringed children's rights by identifying them where they were not supposed to, either directly or indirectly, especially in stories that involved child rape victims, child witnesses and child suspects.[49]

Amongst others, the story below is reflective of the two percent that violated children's rights.

Example 1: Child rights violated



[redacted] (11) spent hours in jail.

Shocked boy haunted by his experience

LOCKED IN A CELL!

This story that was published in the *Daily Sun* (20/08/2012, p. 6). The story is about an 11-year-old boy who was reportedly left traumatised after he and his father were arrested for allegedly assaulting a fellow pupil at school. The article reports that the child, who was a victim of bullying, stabbed a 14-year-old boy at school and was arrested together with his father on assault allegations. In an effort to protect the suspected child's identity, the *Daily Sun* hid his face. However, this effort was undone by naming both the child and his father. In so doing, the *Daily Sun* violated Section 9.3 of the South African Press Code, which stresses that "the press shall not identify children who have been victims of abuse or exploitation, been charged or convicted of a crime".

Aside from violating the Press Code, there may be possible consequences for the boy being indirectly identified, such as exposing him to secondary trauma which can result from having to relive or re-enact the traumatic experience. The child also runs the risk of being victimised or discriminated against by members of society. Thus, it is important for the media to be more cautious. It is important to bear in mind that reporting on children should not endanger or cause them harm in any way. Instead, it is best practice for media to always minimise harm when reporting on sensitive matters involving children.

The article below is an example of the 98 percent that respected children's rights.

Example 2: Children's rights respected

A ball, a glove and a smile – Chiara's away

TNA Reporter

STAR: Chiara Contomathios at the 2012 Women's SA Amateur championships.

The article published in *The New Age*, (09/05/2012, p.7) focuses on Chiara Contomathios, a 12-year-old winner of a women's golf championship title, and follows her journey to becoming a champion. It describes how Chiara used to attend different sporting events with her father and how she finally fell in love with golf after being given a ball and a glove by the golfer Retief Goosen, who also flashed her a smile – hence the headline of the story.

What makes the article stand out is how Chiara is portrayed in a positive way, given a voice in the article, and pictured holding her trophy. This kind of reporting is not only in line with the Editorial Guidelines and Principles for Reporting on Children in the Media, but it also recognises that children can be top achievers and should be given positive coverage and credit where it is due.

[49] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012, p22)

4.1.11. Observing guidelines on reporting on children

Stories were analysed to determine the extent to which they observed the guidelines on reporting on children.[50] All the media houses whose content was analysed were trained on how to observe the guidelines.[51] Some of the media houses adopted the guidelines. The guidelines are in line with internationally accepted ethical principles as well as those of the South African Press Council, as they seek to help promote children's rights to privacy, dignity, participation and freedom of expression. Figure 10 shows media adherence to ethical guidelines.

Figure 10: Principle supported vs violated

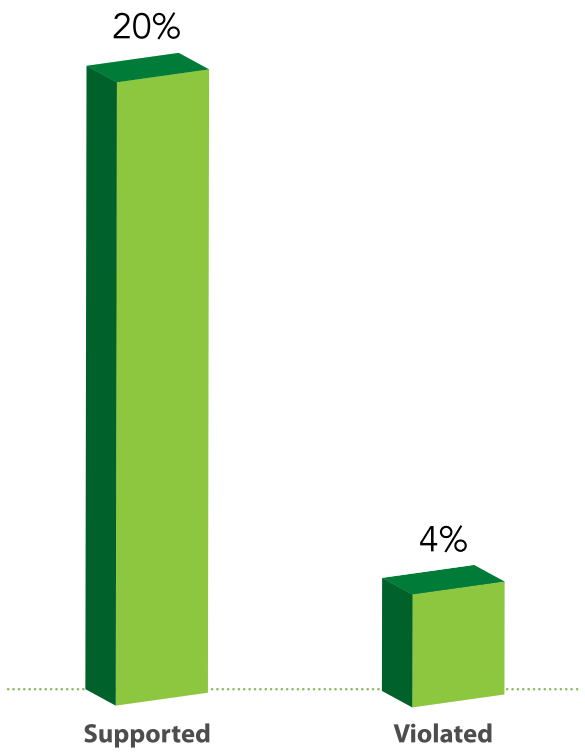
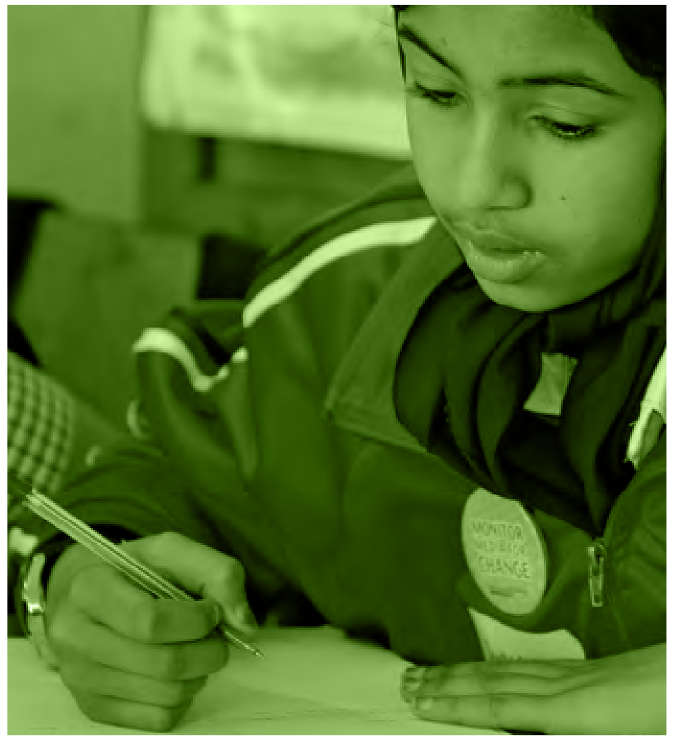


Figure 10 shows that the journalists have clearly shown support for ethical principles in 20 percent of the items monitored and violated four percent. The fact that 20 percent of the stories clearly supported the principle demonstrate that the journalist did well in respecting the rights of children, and portraying them positively in the headlines, content of the stories and the image. In determining such, Monitors were only required to choose and apply the principle only if it was clear that the story deserved the principle. While journalists did the contrary on the four percent that violated the principle, the remaining 76 percent did not have any principle allocated to them as it was not apparent whether the stories clearly supported or clearly violated the principle.

In comparison to 2011 results, principles supported saw a significant increase from last year's seven percent and principles violated decreased from eight percent in 2011 to four percent this year. These results show that more stories were allocated principles; this might be due to the increase in the number of stories compared to 2011.[52]

4.1.12. Race of children in the news

Race remains one of the main dividing issues in South Africa.[53] While class, or rather the gap between rich and poor, has been cited as a mushrooming source of social inequalities[54], race however still remains one of the main issues that cause social divisions in the country. Therefore, racial divisions are undoubtedly pressing social challenges. For example, a black child is nearly 18 times more likely to grow up in poverty than a white child.[55] Thus, MMA looked at the race that received dominant coverage in the media. The motive behind this was to find out whether media's coverage is reflective of the race demographics of South Africa's children, as evidenced by the 2011 census report findings provided by Statistics South Africa.



[50] For a detailed list of the guidelines, see Section 3 of this report

[51] Media houses trained on ethical guidelines: Independent group, *Mail & Guardian*, Avusa and SABC

[52] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012, p22)

[53] See National Planning Commission (NPC). 2011. Diagnostic Overview, p.26; Van der Merwe, C. and Managa. A. 2012. Features Towards Realisation of a Cohesive South Africa: Challenges and Prospects. Pambazuka News. http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/features/85611

[54] Lefko-Everett, K. 2012. SA Reconciliation Barometer Survey: 2012 Report. Cape Town: Institute for Justice and Reconciliation. p.45. Available online: http://reconciliationbarometer.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/2012-SA-Reconciliation-Barometer-FINAL.pdf

[55] Unicef. South Africa's Children: A Review of Equity and Child Rights. p.3 http://d2zmx6mlqh7g3a.cloudfront.net/cdn/farfuture/wgLO144wzfzPCySOxTyYSU6NisZIjgfD70W6E_rOv5M/mtime:1300972067/files/docs/110324review.pdf

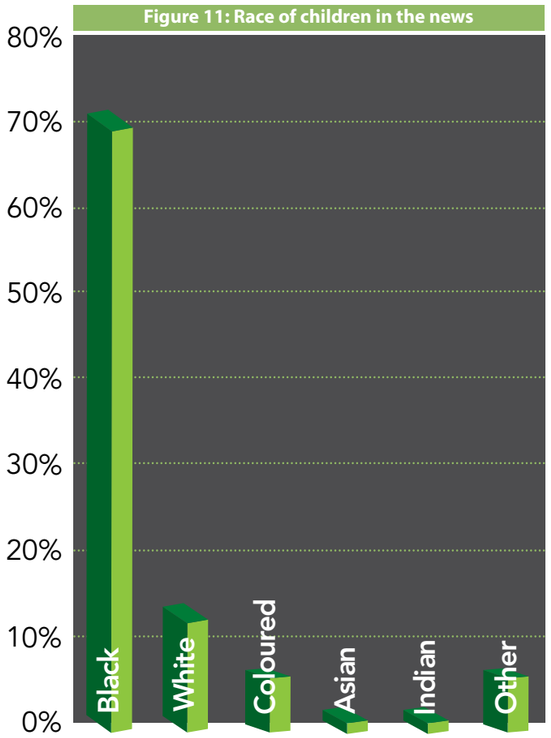


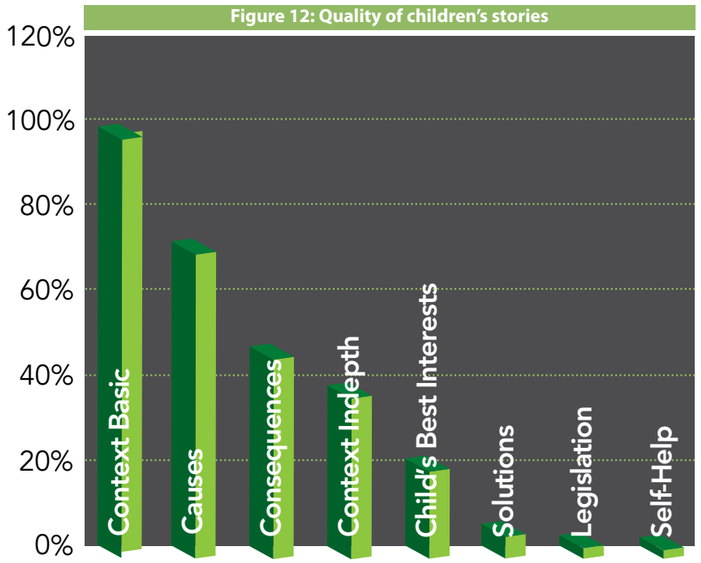
Figure 11 shows, 71 percent of the stories were about black children. This is not surprising because 84.8 percent of children in South Africa are black.[56] Given that education was the leading topic on the media's agenda, it could be argued that black children were affected the most by the Limpopo education crisis.

4.1.13. Quality of children's stories

Quality is difficult to define, but in the current research MMA understands quality news on children to be one that provides detailed information and goes beyond the "who", "where", "when", "what", "why" and "how". In other words, a good-quality story should go beyond providing a basic context to being in-depth, relaying the consequences of the event or issue, as well as offering solutions and self-help tips to the audience, making reference to relevant policy or legislation and being clearly written with the best interests of the child in mind. Monitors used these qualitative elements to examine whether news stories were of good quality or not. Each story was examined against all the elements. Some stories met all the qualitative criteria while others met one or more, and yet others met none. The results are provided in Figure 12.

Since almost all stories in the media should meet the "who", "where", "when", "what", "why" and "how" standard, it is not unusual that all the children's stories had a basic context and 71 percent provided causes of the events or issues reported on. However, only 38 percent of the children's stories provided in-depth context, that is, detailed information about the particular event or issue. This is a worrying finding because children's issues are deeply complex to understand, and to unpack them requires greater context. Greater context also speaks to responsible reporting that includes and highlights important information, such as the possible consequences of the events being reported. A quality news report could also show the implications of the course of events and how the events might impact society at large. It is therefore encouraging that almost half of the children's stories explained the possible consequences of the events or issues reported on. This not only enables children to understand the bigger picture but it also leads to the "realisation that many of the factors they thought were their personal weakness and constraints are external, and can be addressed and overcome".[57]

With regard to solutions, only two percent of the stories offered solutions. Solutions give children and adults tremendous strength. They give them hope that they can rise above the particular challenges or problems reported in the media. Hence, it is a very important aspect that should be included in all media coverage of children and children's issues. It is also best practice for media to reflect and act in the best interests of the child in their coverage of matters affecting children. However, the findings reveal that this unadorned truth is not echoed in the media's coverage, since only a fifth of the stories analysed were reported in the best interests of the child.



[56] Statistics South Africa (2011). Social profile of vulnerable groups in South Africa 2002–2011. Report No. p.4
http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/Report-03-19-00/Report-03-19-002011.pdf

[57] Reddy & Ratna (2002)

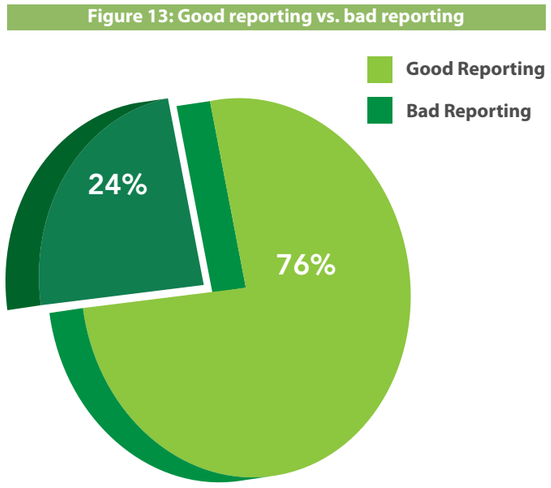
This section detailed the findings of the adult monitoring on the coverage of children in South African media. It highlighted how the media fared in their reporting. It also emphasised and noted media's shortcomings, as well as their good qualities or best practices, when reporting on children and throughout various parts of the report, ways in which the media can mitigate the challenges were suggested. The subsequent section will thus speak to the results of the children's monitoring.

4.2. Children's monitoring

This section focuses on the monitoring done by the child monitors. The monitoring was based more on the children being able to freely express themselves, and their views on how children are represented in the media. Hence, it should be indicated that the results of children's monitoring allows for greater understanding of children's views and emotions. Below are the results of the monitoring by the children.

4.2.1. Good and bad reporting

In October 2011, MMA launched a new set of Editorial Guidelines and Principles for Reporting on Children in the Media.[58] These guidelines encourage ethical and responsible reporting practices, and encourage reporting on children and young people that does not place them at risk of retribution or stigmatisation. Figure 13 below shows a breakdown of children's responses to this question. There has been a slight decrease of standards in media's coverage of children when we comparing these results to those 2011.[59] The majority of stories analysed (76 percent) were considered by the child monitors to have been reported well. In the previous monitoring, child monitors identified 80 percent as well-reported. Badly reported stories accounted for 24 percent and child monitors had various reasons for this. These ranged from not respecting the views of children to not taking the best interests of children into consideration, perpetuating stereotypes and sensational reporting.



One of the ways journalists and media organisations can maintain the highest standards of ethical conduct in reporting on children and children's affairs is to give children, where possible, the right of access to media to express their own opinions. By "providing children with opportunities to speak for themselves about their hopes and fears, their achievements, and the impact of adult behaviour and decisions on their lives, media professionals can improve the representation of children's issues"[60].

4.2.2. What the children's stories were about

It is estimated that 10.3-million children in South Africa do not receive child support grants, to which they are entitled.[61] It is also said that orphans are among the most "at-risk" segments of the child populations, most of these orphans being heads of households.[62] It is therefore important to analyse whether media's reporting focuses on topics and issues that affect children and young people. As such, a topic list was developed and child monitors were allowed to choose more than one topic for each relevant story and give reasons for their selection. A topic was regarded as the central subject of the story. For example, if the story was about a murder suspect appearing in court and it made extensive reference to the murder scene, the central topic would be the justice system which includes court proceedings. Looking at the topics gave a good indication of the general trends of news covered during the period of analysis, and diverse issues covered by the publications analysed. Figure 14, on the folllowing page, presents results for the most prominent topics covered in children's stories.

Similar to the 2012 results from the adult monitoring, education was the most covered topic with 16 percent. This can be attributed to various issues that have been plaguing South Africa's education, particularly in the Eastern Cape and Limpopo. These issues range from education departments in both provinces being put under national administration, to the Limpopo education department failing to deliver textbooks to students. It is very important to note that these results closely mirror the results of the adult monitoring.

[58] See the Editorial Guidelines and Principles on Reporting on Children in the Media on the following website:
http://www.mediamonitoringafrica.org/index.php/resources/entry/editorial_guidelines_and_principles_on_reporting_on_children_in_the_media/

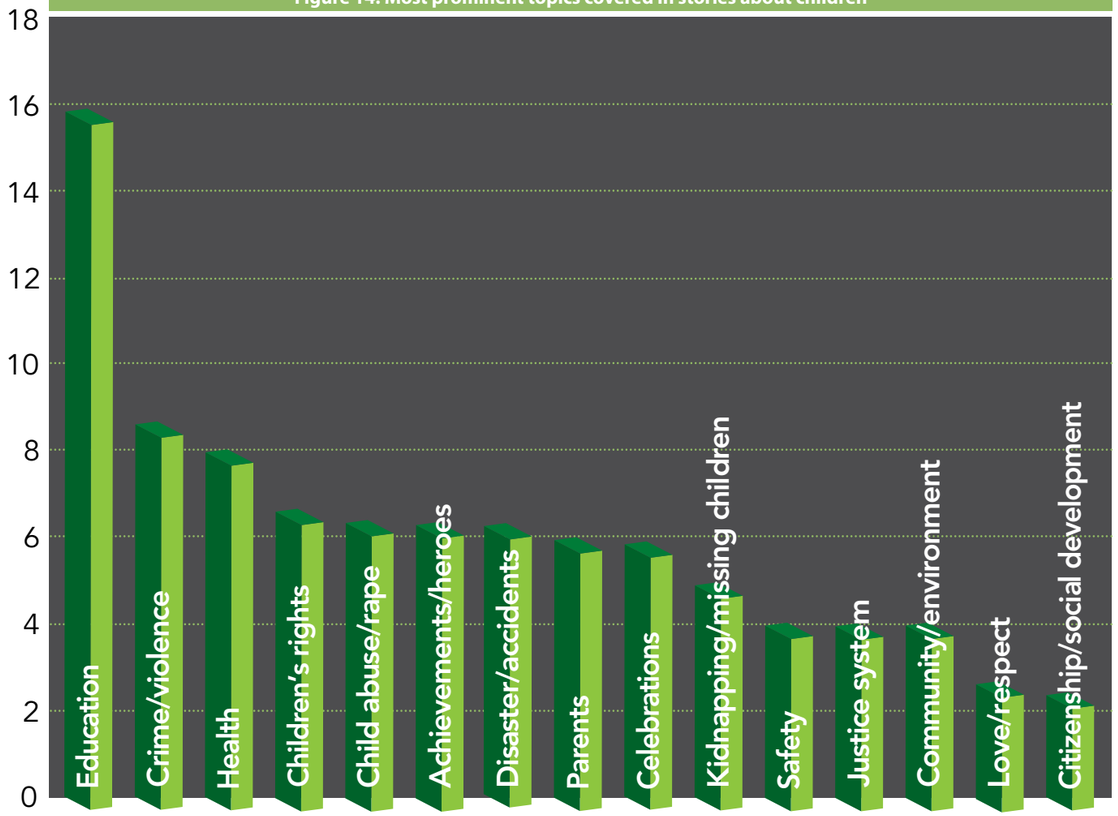
[59] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012; p14)

[60] Shareen Singh, Nisha Naidoo and Shereen Usdin. 2000. Children's Rights and the Media: A Resource for Journalists. p5

[61] Moloi, L. 2012. SAIRR press release: Children on social grants increase thirteen-fold

[62] The Presidency. The Republic of South Africa. 2009. Situational Analysis of Children In South Africa (2007-2008)

Figure 14: Most prominent topics covered in stories about children



Crime/violence and health were the second-and third-most covered topics, scoring nine and eight percent respectively. This is not surprising, as stories on crime/violence and health relating to children tend to be more newsworthy then those involving adults. It is disappointing that children's rights received only seven percent coverage as a topic.

It is important that media joins government in ensuring the realisation of children's rights. More and more children are willing and wanting to freely express their views and perspectives about issues affecting their lives, and the results from the children's monitoring bears testimony to this. It is therefore important that journalists and media houses take cognisance of how children perceive them.

Among the myriad issues that affect children, kidnapping is also a problem. The latest crime statistics show that there has been an increase in the number of reported kidnapping cases in South Africa. The figures for the 2010/2011 period stood at 3 604, and the 2011/2012 period 3 874.[63] It is, however, surprising that these facts are not translated in the media's coverage, with the topic only receiving three percent of the coverage. According to the Centre for the Study of Traumatic Stress in the United States, traumatic events such as kidnapping, shooting and torture present even greater challenges to children and communities. Just like adults, children demonstrate various stress responses as a result of the exposure to traumatic events.[64] It is therefore crucial that journalists give prominence to such stories.

4.2.3. Where do we see boys and girls?

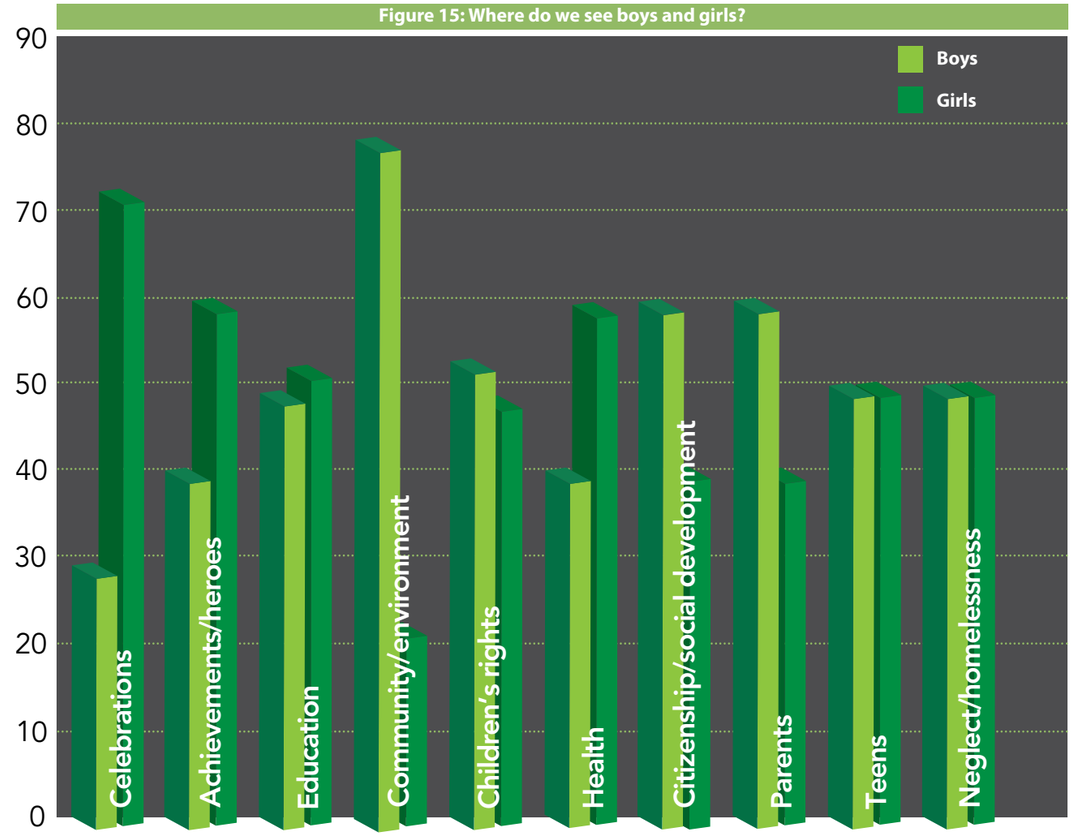
Focusing on boys and girls based on different topics helps determine what kind of issues boys and girls are likely to be featured in and associated with. Figure 15, shows boys and girls according to topics.

The results reveal that 59 percent of stories about achievements featured girls and 41 percent boys. This is a positive finding because girls often feature more in child abuse/rape stories. Seventy-two percent of the stories on celebrations also covered girls, while 28 percent featured boys. With girl children being more vulnerable not only to highly patriarchal social structures, they are also vulnerable to rape and abuse, and it is encouraging to see girls feature strongly

[63] South African Police Service, Department of Police. Crime Statistics April 2011 to March 2012. Available on the World Wide Web: http://www.saps.gov.za/statistics/reports/crimestats/2012/categories.htm

[64] Center for the study of Traumatic Stress. "The Impact of Kidnapping, Shooting and Torture on Children. Available on: http://www.cstsonline.org/wp-content/resources/CSTS_impact_kidnapping_shooting_torture_children.pdf

Figure 15: Where do we see boys and girls?



in more positive topics. Given the powerful messages by the media, such reporting could have a positive influence on how many girl victims can see themselves as rising above their situation.

As indicated by the previous year's adult monitoring of children's stories, children were often portrayed as victims.[65] On the whole, children are portrayed most often in negative terms and in limited roles. It is therefore important that the media make an effort to represent children more positively in stories and in more diverse roles.

Fifty-two percent of the stories on education featured girls, while 48 were about boys; boys and girls in stories on teen pregnancy/abortion and neglect/homelessness received equal coverage. It is good that media tried to achieve an even spread of coverage on these topics, as it shows that both boys and girls are equally affected by these issues.

Overall, there seems to be an even spread of topics between girls and boys, and media should be congratulated for their efforts; however, journalists should continue to strive for equitable gender representation, especially when reflecting children in the media.

4.2.4. Who do we see and hear?

The gender of children sources is always fundamental, and should always be taken into consideration when analysing media coverage. This will not only help determine whether South Africa is progressing when it comes to representation of boys and girls in news stories, but also assess if media accurately reflect the world in which young people live. Figure 16, on the following page, shows the representation of boy and girl sources in the media.

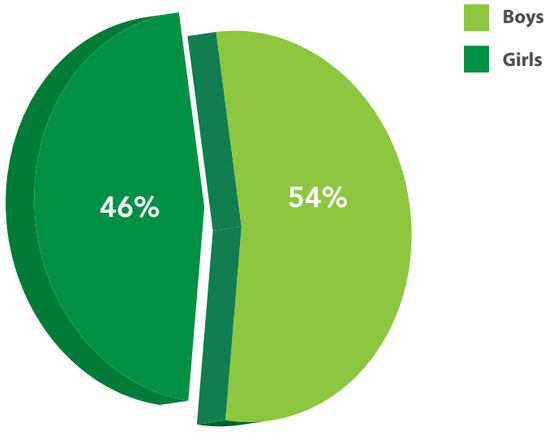
The results show that 54 percent of the sources were boys and 46 percent were girls. it is disappointing that media did not give equal coverage to boys and girls, and did not give them the platform to speak on their different experiences. Previous MMA research shows there is usually unequal balance of coverage between men and women, and that these tendencies filter through to accessing boy and girl children.[66]

4.2.5. Roles of children in news stories

According to Children Now (2001:2), extensive research has shown that the news media consistently paint a distorted view of children. Local television news, in particular, plays a key role since the majority

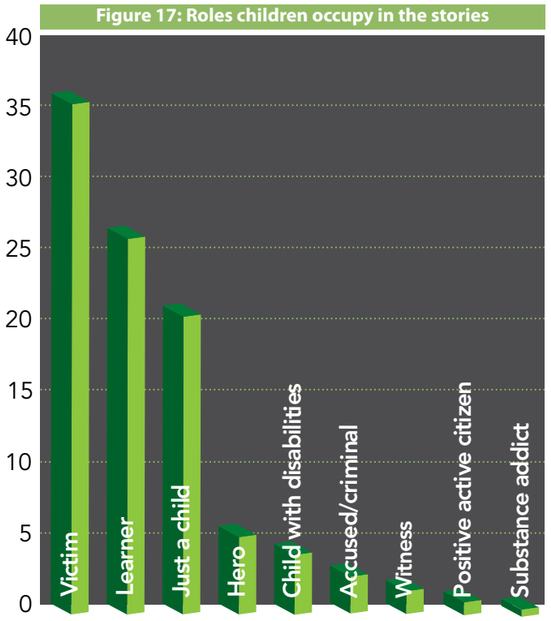
[65] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012; p.20)

Figure 16: Boy and girl sources



of adults get more of their news through local broadcasts than any other source. On the local news, children are more likely to be depicted in the context of crime and violence than through issues such as health, education, and family and community life.[67] Portrayal of children in the news is very important in determining and understanding how media views children and the issues that concern them. Figure 17 shows the roles children commonly occupy in South African media.

Figure 17: Roles children occupy in the stories



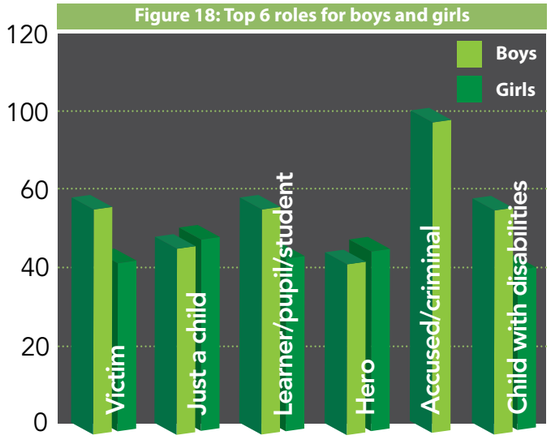
The top four results show that one of the ways in which children are often negatively stereotyped, is the roles which they occupy in media reporting. For example, the Figure 17 shows that 36 percent of the children were portrayed as victims, 27 percent as just learners or students and 21 percent as just a child. This is discouraging as children are not seen as individuals in their own right, and these roles are less positive and empowering. It is therefore important that children are portrayed as individuals who can be taken seriously. Crucially, media need to recognise that children are as diverse as their adult counterparts.

The finding that five percent of the stories portrayed children as heroes should serve as a reminder that the stress on stereotypical or negative roles with regard to coverage of children may easily become focused on limited issues, and not paint a better and realistic picture of the issues and challenges faced by children.

4.2.6. Boys and girls' coverage according to roles

Media images and messages have great influence on societal ideals, particularly when it comes to sex and gender roles. The media has a responsibility to offer a diversity of roles and portrayals. There is clearly great potential to portray children in more positive roles, such as those of positive, active citizens. Figure 18 gives a breakdown of the roles children occupy in the media, according to gender.

Figure 18: Top 6 roles for boys and girls



Overall, as indicated by the figure above, both girls and boys are almost on par in terms of the roles they were accessed in. The difference is arguably marginal. Boys' role as victim scored 56 percent while girls' role as victim scored 44 percent. With regards to the roles that child monitors considered positive, that is, hero, the media performed reasonably well given the attempt made to attribute this role equally to both girls and boys. This is a good attempt by journalists as it is important for the media not to reinforce stereotypes, and to challenge them where possible. The constant portrayal of children in passive roles, and silencing children's voices, impedes them from participating in social life.

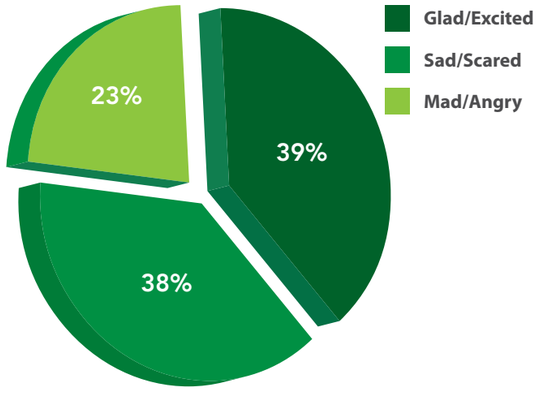
[66] Who makes the news, GMMP, 2005 Wacc

[66] Children Now. 2001

4.2.7. How did children feel about the stories?

Child monitors had an opportunity to give their opinion on how they felt about the quality of the reporting in the stories they were analysing. Figure 19 shows how children felt about the stories.

Figure 19: How do children feel about stories?



The results show that most of the time, children had negative feelings towards the stories they were analysing. Overall, 61 percent of the stories made the children sad, scared, mad or angry. This figure is significantly high and media should always strive to improve how they report on children. On a brighter note, 39 percent of the stories made them happy. This is a significant shift considering that last year's results showed that 48 percent of the stories made children Glad/Excited. Whilst 34 percent made them feel Sad/Scared and 18 percent made them feel Mad/Angry. Since the responses from the child monitors were based on their feelings towards how the stories were reported as well as their feelings towards what had happened to the children in the stories, it could be argued that overall, children do not like the way they are portrayed in the news. Therefore, the media should seek to address this kind of reporting.

5. Zambian findings

Media in Zambia featured a total number of 286 children's stories out of 5 183 stories in all media. This is a slight increase on the 244 children's stories in 2011.[68] This means that about six percent of stories contained children for the entire monitoring period, compared to the 11 percent coverage in 2011. Below are the findings which are divided into two categories: adult monitoring and children's monitoring.

5.1. Adult monitoring

Adult monitoring helps determine the effectiveness of the media by applying the standardised methodology to assess the media. The methods have been tested for many years, and have proven to be reliable. Below are the findings of the monitoring period of 2012.

5.1.1. Performance rating

The media's performance when reporting on children's issues is of great importance, hence it is included during the monitoring as it helps to determine how individual media houses are fairing when it comes to the overall reporting on children's issues. Media houses are monitored on whether they report ethically, include children's voices and/or report on children's issues in detail and in a diverse manner. The results are compared and each media house is rated according to how it performed in relation to others. This enables competition among the media houses, with all of them contending for the top position in the overall rating category.[69] Table 6 shows the results of how the monitored media houses performed.

Table 6: Perfomance ratings

MEDIUM	RIGHTS RESPECTED & ETHICAL	VOICES HEARD	ISSUES IN DEPTH	DIVERSITY	OVERALL RATING
ZNBC TV	4	1	4	2	1
Muvi TV	7	2	2	3	2
Radio Phoenix	1	7	6	7	3
ZNBC TV2	8	4	3	1	4
Times of Zambia	6	6	1	6	5
Q FM	2	8	7	8	6
Radio Christian Voice	3	8	8	9	7
Zambia Daily Mail	9	5	5	5	8
The Post	10	3	9	4	9
Hot FM	5	8	10	10	10

[68] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012, p.27)

[69] See sub-section 3.5 for more explanation of the rating system

The media houses were rated on scale of 1 to 10, with 1 indicating the best performance and 10 the worst performance. As illustrated by Table 6, it is clear that children were mostly accessed by *ZNBC TV*. *Radio Phoenix* was rated one in terms of respecting children's rights and reporting ethically on children. It is a common trend among media houses to mainly report on child abuse, but *ZNBC TV2* performed well in terms of diversity of coverage.

The Times of Zambia newspaper was rated first for in-depth reporting on children. *The Post* newspaper performed the worst in terms of respecting children's rights and ethical coverage. *ZNBC TV* and *Hot FM* were rated the best and worst performers respectively in terms of overall reporting. *Hot FM* was, however, among the top five media houses that respected children's rights and ethically reported on children's issues.

5.1.2. Number of children's stories

As children form a large part of the Zambian population, at 6 976 752 out of the total 13 046 508[70], it is only fair that their issues occupy a reasonable amount of space in the media. Monitoring the quantity of children's stories in the media, which areas receive the most coverage and the topics that are mostly reported, is important as it helps determine the importance that is attached to children's issues and if all geographical areas receive a fair amount of coverage. During the monitoring, the total numbers of stories were recorded and Table 7 shows the results for each individual media house.

Table 7: Number of stories

MEDIUM	CHILDREN STORIES	TOTAL	PER CHILD STORIES
Radio Phoenix	27	200	14%
Muvi TV	69	602	11%
ZNBC TV2	34	322	11%
Q FM	16	156	10%
Hot FM	6	60	10%
ZNBC TV	28	336	8%
Radio Christian Voice	11	144	8%
Zambia Daily Mail	34	882	4%
Times of Zambia	35	1200	3%
The Post	26	1281	2%

The percentages above represent the average number of children's stories. *Radio Phoenix* had the highest reporting with an average of 14 percent, while *The Post* newspaper had the lowest at two percent. In 2011 *Muvi TV* and *The Post* newspaper were the highest at nine and eight percent, and now have percentages of 11 percent and two percent respectively. *Radio Phoenix's* coverage has increased since the previous monitoring period, from less than one to 14 percent. Despite having the lowest total number of stories, *Hot FM* is among the top five media houses that had the most coverage of children's stories. All the media houses above, except *The Post* newspaper, increased their reporting on children and this could be attributed to their realisation that children's issues are important and need more space in the media.[71]

5.1.3. Geographical coverage

It is important to monitor where children's stories originate. This helps in determining the provinces from which the media access most children's stories. Zambia has 10 provinces, with Muchinga the latest to be added to the list. During the monitoring exercise, Muchinga was however monitored as part of Northern Province. Table 8 highlights the percentage of coverage of children's issues in different provinces, on the African continent and in the rest of the world.

Table 8: Origins of stories

ORIGIN	%
Lusaka	41%
Copperbelt	13%
National	11%
Central	8%
Africa	5%
International	5%
Southern	5%
Western	3%
Eastern	3%
Northern	2%
Luapula	2%
North Western	1%

From Table 8 , it is evident that most children's stories, 41 percent, come from Lusaka, the capital city of Zambia, with Copperbelt getting 13 percent coverage. Lusaka and Copperbelt Provinces are urban areas with a combined population of 4 163 542, which is less 1 009 908 of the total urban population, which stands at 5 173 450. Such performance from Lusaka and Copperbelt provinces could be attributed to media houses being located in urban areas and consequently tending to be inclined towards reporting on urban issues. This is problematic in that it often leads to issues facing rural children such as child marriages, child labour and lack of quality education not being adequately covered, despite them being grave in nature.

Furthermore, as indicated by table 8, North Western Province received the lowest coverage. This might be attributed to the fact that it has the second-lowest provincial population in Zambia or that the province is mostly rural and media houses tend to concentrate more on urban areas when it comes to reporting.

In 2011, Lusaka topped the list with 39 percent coverage and international stories were second with 19 percent. Compared with these results, coverage in Lusaka and Copperbelt have increased by two percent and six percent respectively, while international stories have decreased by 14 percent.[72] This decrease could be attributed to the rampant increase in cases of violence against children, which is mostly in the form of sexual and physical abuse in the country, topics the media mostly cover. In the first quarter of last year alone, Zambia recorded a total of 452 cases of defilement, which is explained as having sexual intercourse with a child below 16 years of age. This is provided for under section 138 of the Penal Code.[73] Latest statistics on child abuse are not available; however, reports from the media and Child Protection Unit (CPU) of the Zambia Police Service indicate that cases of violence against children have increased.

5.1.4. Topic coverage

The topics of the stories were monitored using a coded list which had a variety of topics. The 2011 report only had the top five topics appearing in the results because of the limited coverage. However, because of the slight improvement in coverage, one more topic was added, as can be seen in Figure 20.

Figure 20: Most common topics

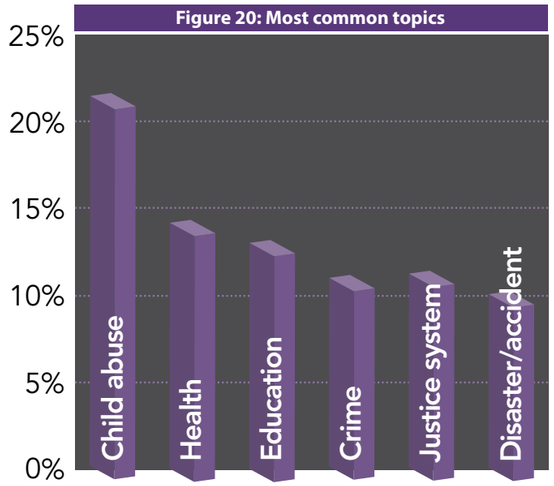


Figure 20 provides evidence of the common trend of reporting by the media in Zambia, as they tend to focus more on child abuse stories. The Figure demonstrates that about 23 percent of the stories monitored were on child abuse.[74]

In 2011, health received the highest coverage at 17 percent, while it only received 14 percent this year; Accidents/Disaster, Education and Justice system each had 11, eight and six percent respectively.

The decrease in reporting on the abovementioned topics, except Education and Justice system, might be attributed to the increase in child abuse cases in the country during the period of monitoring, which also resulted in an increase in Justice system stories. The reason for the increase in some of the topics might be because of the slight improvement in the quantity of reporting, which saw a growth on the previous 244 to the current 286 stories during the two monitoring periods.[75]

5.1.5. Prominence of coverage

It is important to not only monitor the topics, but the genre of the media texts in which children appear. This helps to determine types where children's stories mostly appear. Figure 21 shows the results.

Figure 21: Types of stories across all media

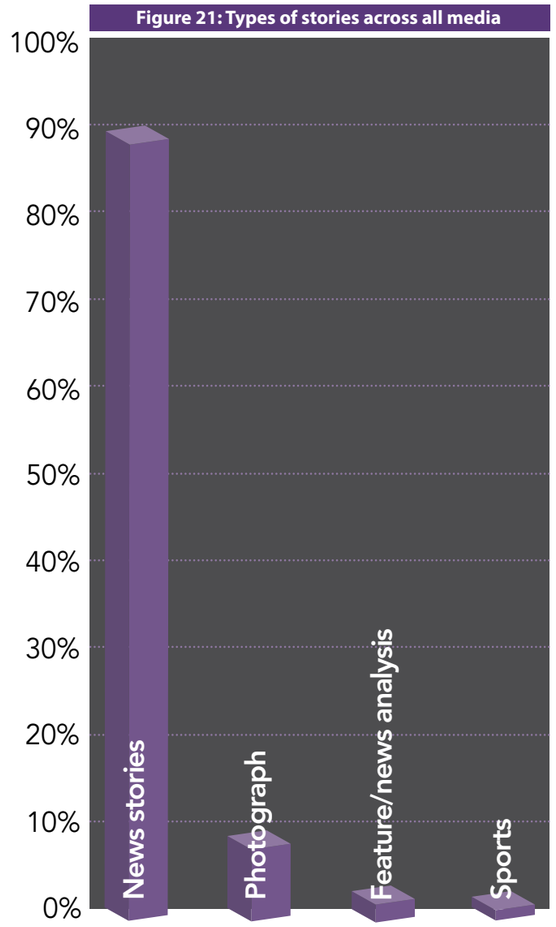


Figure 21 shows that 90 percent of children's coverage was found in news items. This is a significant increase compared to 68 percent coverage in 2011, and can be attributed to the rise in the coverage of children and children's issue. On the contrary, children's coverage in sports items recorded a significant decrease, from 15 percent in 2011 to two percent in 2012.[76] However, the decrease might be attributed to media lacking interest in sporting activities that involved children,

[70] See http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/www.cso.gov.bw/; www.zamstats.gov.zm/
[71] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012;p27)
[72] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012;p27)
[73] http://allafrica.com/stories/201201110621.html
[74] The coverage of child abuse illustrates that the media is giving attention to the dominant issues affecting children and is trying to raise awareness and the urgency needed to address the problem.
[75] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012, p.28)
[76] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012, p.29)

such as a sports festival organised by the Ministry of Youth and Sport. In most cases, children primarily feature in news stories or are otherwise portrayed in photographs. Examples of such instances are when a child is presenting a bouquet of flowers to the Republican President, or when they are ragged and looking miserable. Few of these photographs portray children in a positive light. An example of this is when a child is photographed as an example of or an actual victim of child abuse, without any effort to blur the image in order to protect his/her identity. Photographs of children accounted for seven percent of children's coverage, while features/news analysis decreased from six percent in 2011 to two percent.[77] The cause of this might be that there is less sensitisation from civil society organisations on the need for media to use photographs ethically in reporting children's issues.

Given that there has been a rampant increase in reported child abuse cases in the country (according to The African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN), child abuse in Zambia has become endemic, which has a bearing on their emotional and social development and contributes to long-term emotional trauma)[78], one would think that the media would provide detailed and thorough reporting through features or news analysis on the subject matter. This was, however, not the case, as only two percent of the 286 stories were reported as features children's issues are complex and can not be dealt with and explained in simple short news pieces.

Another way of measuring how much importance the media attaches to children's issues is by looking at where exactly they publish or broadcast the news. The page or broadcast item number in the print and electronic media respectively indicates the level of importance attached to the issue. The further they go in the numbering, the lesser the importance of the subject.

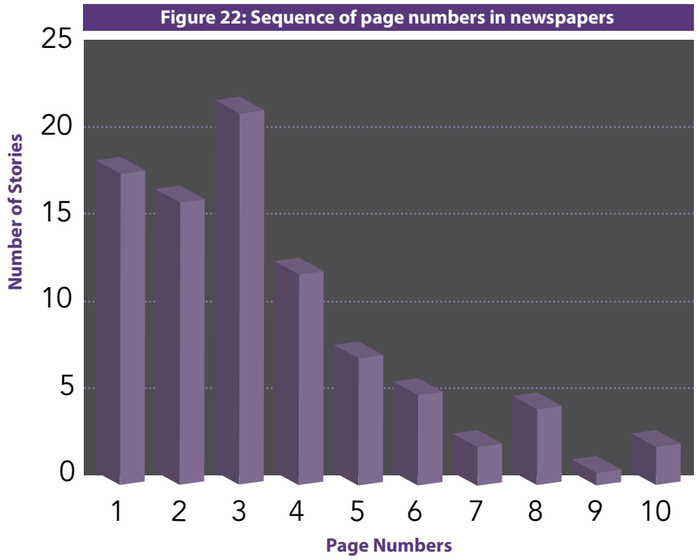
According to Figure 22, page 3 had the most number of stories at 21, followed by page 1 with 18 stories. Just like in broadcast media, news in newspapers appeared on the first few pages followed by business news and/or features and then lastly, by sports news. In the 2011 findings most stories appeared on pages 9 and 1, respectively. However, this year, most these stories appeared on page 3, 1 and then 2, respectively.[79]

The reason for the appearance of children's stories on the first four pages is the same as that given for broadcast items: crimes against children reported in the media are mostly considered hard news, hence their appearance on the first four pages. In addition to crime stories mostly appearing on the first four pages of the newspapers, stories of national importance such as court proceedings and child abuse dominate these pages, hence the higher number of children's stories appearing on the first four pages. This is not wrong; however, given the graveness of the effects of child abuse on the child, most of these stories should have been reported as features in order to give the public detailed information about the vices. This could help reduce these cases as the public becomes informed about how to avoid child abuse and where to report the cases, as well as how to deal with a child who has been abused.

Figure 23 also shows that most of the children's stories were read as item numbers 3, 4 and 5 in broadcast media, at 26, 29 and 27 items respectively out of the total of 191 stories. In 2011, most broadcast children's items appeared as items 4 and 7 while in the results above, most stories appeared as item number 4 and 5.[80] While the 2011 and 2012 results might seem similar, it must be noted that the latter report has a larger number of children's stories compared with the previous report.

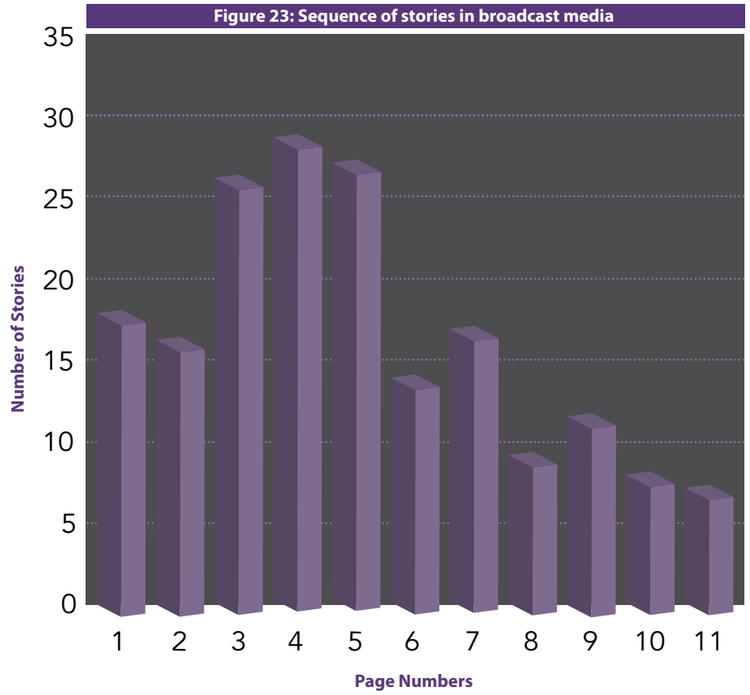
The pattern of newsreading in Zambia is that news of national importance (such as crimes or disasters) are read mostly between item 1 and 6. Item 7 to 13 are news items such as business, and sports. This means that most of the children's stories were news items, as is still evident in the Figure 23. The reason most of the children's stories were read in the first half is because they were mostly crimes perpetrated against children, such as corporal punishment and sexual abuse.

Figure 22: Sequence of page numbers in newspapers



[77] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012; p29)
[78] ANPPCAN Zambia Country Strategic Plan 2012-2015
[79] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012; p29)
[80] Rikhotso & Roberts. (2012; p30)

Figure 23: Sequence of stories in broadcast media



5.1.6. Representation of boys and girls in the news

Table 9 presents opportunities given to different genders to air their views or be mentioned. The results show which genders are mostly reported on and sourced.

Table 9: Boy vs. girl stories

GENDER	%
Boys	47%
Girls	53%

Boys constituted 47 percent and girls 53 percent. These results are a complete shift from the 2011 results, where boys constituted 61 percent and girls 39 percent. The increase in reporting on girls is due to a high percentage of child abuse stories, mostly in the form of sexual abuse, where they appear as victims. Boys are mostly in sports and education stories and rarely in child abuse stories. With that in mind, it is safe to say that sourcing of children in Zambia largely depends on what type of story it is.

5.1.7. Children's roles in the news

How media portray children gives an indication of what they mostly report on, and how they view children in general. Giving children's issues space in the media is one thing, portraying them positively is another. It is important to monitor the roles children take up in the media, as the results show how media perceive children.

Table 10 shows how children are portrayed in the media. Only the top 10 roles have been enumerated, as the percentages for other roles are significantly low statistically insignificant at less than one percent. From the results, we can see that children are mostly portrayed as victims and very rarely as survivors.

Forty-five percent of stories portrayed children as victims. This indicates a significant increase from 27 percent in 2011. Stories that portrayed children just as children were previously at 20 percent compared to the 14 percent in the table above, and these were mostly stories that talked about health and accidents/disasters. Stories with children as learners/students were at 16 percent, and have now decreased to 11 percent.

When children are constantly portrayed as victims, it takes away their ability to see themselves overcoming their predicament and making something positive out of it. It even lengthens their healing process and they start thinking of themselves as helpless. Because there are high numbers of child abuse cases and the public needs to know about them, the media should report on them. This should, however, be done with the child's best interests at heart, so that the child is not subjected to further trauma. Thus, the media is encouraged to report on such stories ethically and, in most cases, portray children as survivors.

Table 10: Children's roles

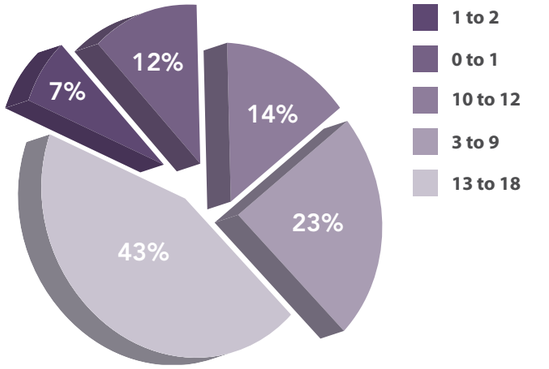
ROLES	NUMBERS	%
Victim	141	45%
Child	42	14%
Learner, student	33	11%
Baby/infant	14	5%
Sick child	14	5%
Missing child	9	3%
Child offender	8	3%
Orphan	7	2%
Suspect	6	2%
Street child	6	2%

All the roles above, except the role of victim, have recorded a decrease compared to the 2011 results. The increase in children being sourced as victims is largely due to the high reporting on child abuse stories, which tops the common topics list.

5.1.8. Children's age groups in the news

When monitoring, it is important to also check which age groups of children the media mostly report on. This will provide understanding as to which age group is likely to receive coverage by the media. Figure 24 shows the results.

Figure 24: Children's age groups



Compared to the 2011 results, there has not been a significant change with regard to the age groups media decided to access. All the age groups still have the same percentages. This might be attributed to the fact that media's attitude towards which age groups should be mostly sourced, did not change much from the previous monitoring period. The only change was in the quantity of reporting. The age groups 13 and 18, at 43 percent, were the most accessed or sourced by media and mostly appeared in stories on sport and child abuse. Children between the ages of 0 to 1 received seven percent coverage while children between the ages 1 to 2 received 12 percent; most children of these two age groups appeared in stories related to health.

5.1.9. How children are accessed in the news

Sourcing children in stories about them is vital, as it promotes their right to freedom of expression and their right to participation. It is therefore very important that the media is monitored on whether they access children in their reporting. Table 11 shows the findings.

It is clear that children are mostly mentioned by means of age or reference but not named or accessed. That is, 211 stories (68 percent) out of the total of 286 stories did not access the children. The number (and percentage) is slightly higher than the 158 (60 percent) that were recorded in 2011. The increase is attributed to the increase in the number of children's stories. The number of stories that photographed children followed, with a total number of 41 (13 percent). This is lower than the 2011 findings, where they constituted 21 percent of the news coverage. An ideal situation is where a child has been accessed. However, only nine percent of stories accessed children, an increase on the six percent of 2011.[81] The main reason for the poor sourcing of children might be attributed to the fact that most of these articles are negative stories that report on abuse against children, and might be against best journalism practice to access those particular children.

Table 11: How children are accessed in the news

	NUMBER	%
Mentioned by means of age or reference, but not named or accessed	211	68%
Photographed	41	13%
Named and photographed	26	8%
Accessed and photographed	13	4%
Accessed, named and photographed	12	4%
Named only	6	2%
Accessed and named	3	1%
Accessed only	0	0%
Author (thus automatically named and accessed)	0	0%

"Zambian children are mostly described as victims of crime and abuse when in fact they are heroes, achievers, ambassadors with a lot of talent in them"

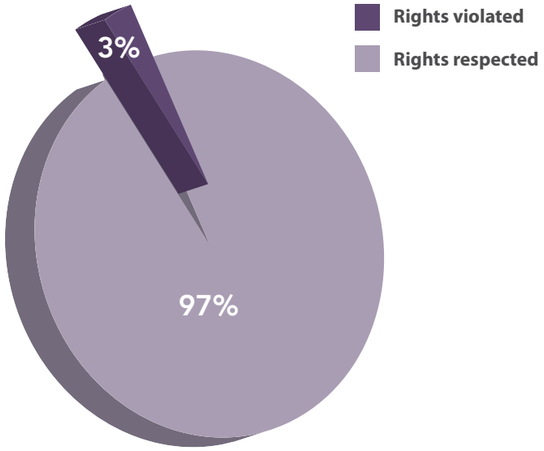
NG'ANDWE NG'ANDWE, Jacaranda Basic School

[81] Rikhotso & Roberts (2012; p31)

5.1.10. Children's rights

When reporting on children, it is important to report ethically and respect their rights. This ensures that all children, especially those who have been abused, feel safe in and respected by the media. Media is not only expected to respect and protect children's rights, but to also promote them. An example of a right that should be promoted by the media is that of freedom of expression. Figure 25 shows the percentages of children's rights respected and violated.

Figure 25: Children's rights



It is clear from the results above that media in Zambia respect child rights, as the results do not differ from the previous report. This is commendable and one can only hope that the next monitoring report will record an increase on the 97 percent of stories where rights have been respected. This shows that media houses are doing their best in protecting and promoting children's rights. The example below shows the efforts made by the Zambian media to ensure that children's rights are protected and promoted.

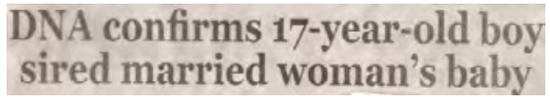
Example 3: Children's rights respected

Kasisi Girls are Lusaka's best 'scientists

The story above, published in *The Post* newspaper (08/07/2012), is about a girl from Kasisi Girls High School who won the regional JETS fair at her school, and who would represent the school at the national level. This story has respected children's rights because it has accessed, named and photographed her. Media are always encouraged to ensure that when reporting on such positive stories, that they provide the name of the child in question, access him/her and publish a photograph of him/her.

However, despite the efforts to protect children, maintaining consistency in protecting children's rights remains a challenge for many media houses. As indicated by Figure 25, three percent of the stories monitored violated children's rights, which is a slight increase on the two percent of 2011. Example 4 is an illustration of one of the stories that violated children's rights.

Example 4: Children's rights violated


DNA confirms 17-year-old boy sired married woman's baby

The story above, published in the *Zambia Sunday Mail* (08/07/2012), is about a 17-year-old boy who was fined by a local court for committing adultery with a married woman, and consequently fathering one of her children. While the article does not name him, it does not mention the reasons why his identity was withheld. More so, naming the mother of the child sired by the 17-year-old exposes the child to embarrassment and shame, as the child is seen as illegitimate.

5.1.11. Adherence to ethical guidelines

Stories were assessed to determine the extent to which they observed the Editorial Ethical Guidelines established by Media Monitoring Africa in partnership with Media Network on Child Rights and Development. Media houses have undergone training on the Editorial Ethical Guidelines. These guidelines are in line with the Code of Ethics of the Zambia Media Council. All the media houses endorsed the guidelines, except *The Post* newspaper. Figure 26 shows the media houses' adherence to ethical guidelines.

Figure 26: Principle supported vs. violated

According to Figure 26, 22 percent of stories supported principles, which means that these stories were in the best interest of the children, be it in the content, headlines or a photograph accompanying the story or standing alone. However, 19 percent of the stories monitored violated principles. This means that the abovementioned criteria regarding children's best interests were not implemented. The remaining 60 percent of the stories did not have any principle, and good examples of such stories are those that reported accidents or disasters happening to children, such as drowning, traffic accidents or stories that reported on missing children, etc.

5.1.12. Quality of stories

Instead of merely reporting on the actual event, the media is encouraged and expected to give a broader and detailed report, one that will make it easier for the public to understand the issue, including its consequences and solutions. Monitoring the standard of reporting is intended to encourage detailed, focused and qualitative reporting. The Table 12 shows the quality of the children's stories determined by criteria.

Table 12: Quality of children's stories

CRITERIA	%
Context basic	100%
Legislation	35%
Causes	28%
Solutions	26%
Consequences	24%
Child's best interest	20%
Context in-depth	5%
Self-help	0%

Context basic at 100 percent means that all of the stories gave the basic information about the story reported. As already indicated in this report, most of the children's stories in the media during the monitoring period were about child abuse, and the 35 percent for Legislation shows that the stories made reference to relevant statutes. For example, when a story is about abuse, does it mention the Abuse Act and explain to the reader what it means?

Causes, Solutions and Consequences previously had 16, 11 and five percent respectively but now have 28, 26 and 24 percent respectively. The increase is commendable as it means that the media realises the need to use these three criteria in its reporting. However, it is interesting to see an increase for context in-depth from four to five percent. This increase could be attributed to the increase in the number of stories monitored.

Reporting on crimes such as child sexual abuse and including self-help information is a practice that is yet to start in Zambia. This is proven in the above table because it was not provided in any of the stories monitored. Usually the reporting will be event-based and will not provide any self-help information for the reader. With the rising numbers of reported child abuse cases, this criterion would be helpful to children, as well as the public, as it would provide the reader with information about which institutions provide services that can help them through their ordeal. It would also sensitise the public and eventually help reduce cases of unreported child abuse.

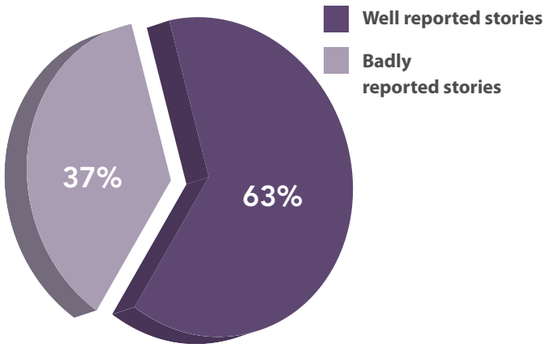
5.2. Children's monitoring

It is important for children to assess how the media portrays them. This does not only allow for children to voice their opinions on how the media covers issues that directly affect them, but it also illustrates children's awareness of media's representations. More so, it emphasises the active role that they can play in society, and most importantly in the media, it also bears testimony to the fact that children can and should be consulted, and their views be taken into account in matters that affect them. Thus, the following section delineates the views of child media monitors from Zambia about how their media represents them.

5.2.1. Good vs. bad reporting

The child monitors focused on how the stories were reported. The monitoring book, which was allocated to all the monitors, asked them, among many other questions, whether they thought the news report was done well or badly, whether the story monitored was about a boy, girl or both, and also asked them to provide a detailed description of how they were shown. Figure 27 shows a breakdown of child monitors' responses to the question of whether the stories they monitored were well or badly reported. Out of the 119 stories that were monitored and captured, the child monitors considered 63 percent of the stories to be well reported, while 37 percent were badly reported. Well reported stories entailed stories that supported children's rights to privacy, dignity, participation and freedom of expression; stories that considered the best interests of the child in their reporting and did not place at risk the child's wellbeing and character development.

Figure 27: Well reported vs badly reported stories



MNCRD thus strongly recommends that children's stories and issues be covered in a way that will enable them to make a contribution, depending on the nature of the story. The coverage should also recognise children's rights and reflect them as well as responsibly portray children without doing any harm to them.[82]

[82] Children's Rights and the Media. 2000; p5

5.2.2. What the children's stories were about

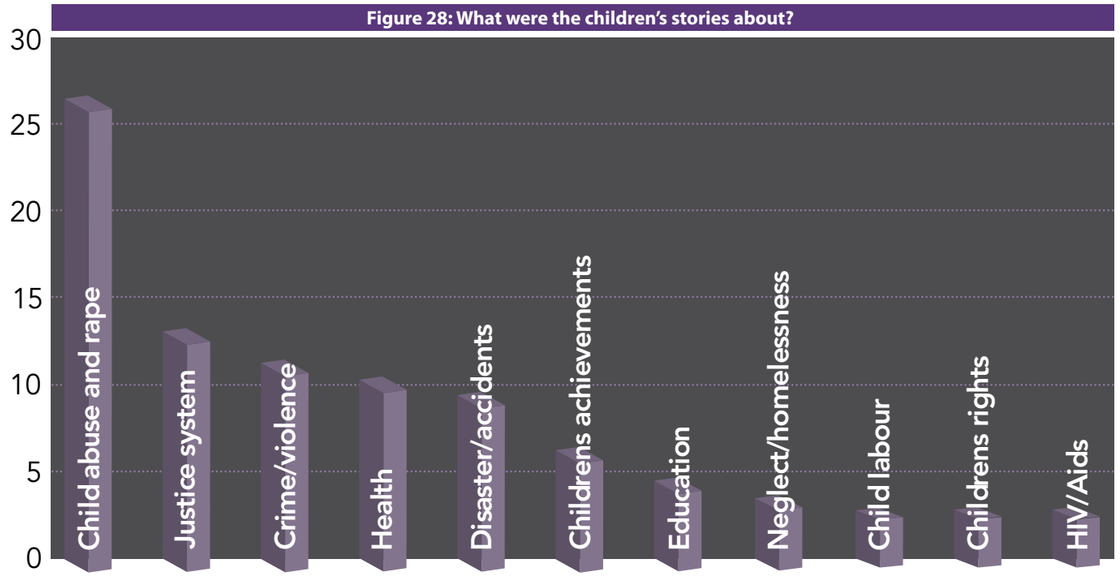
It is important to analyse whether media reporting focuses on topics and issues that affect children and young people. As in the children's monitoring in South Africa, a topic list was developed and child monitors were given the choice to select the most relevant topics for each story. The topic codes were used to determine which issues children were most likely to be featured in. It gave a good idea of general trends of news covered during the monitoring period, and diverse issues that radio newsbulletins focused on. A topic was regarded as the central subject of the story. Figure 28 shows the most prominent topics covered in children's stories.

Of all the stories that were monitored, 27 percent were Child abuse and rape stories, followed by Justice system stories at 12 percent. Crime/violence and Health stories also scored highly with 11 and 10 percent respectively. It is encouraging to see Zambian media focusing on a range of subjects. Aside from Child abuse and rape, there seems to be an even spread of topics in the coverage. These topics also mirror those identified in the Zambian adult monitoring results.

5.2.3. Where do we see boys and girls?

Focusing on boys and girls based on different topics helps determine which kinds of issues boys and girls are likely to be featured in. For example, if girls appeared a lot in child abuse stories, this would help us see that girls are either most frequent victims of child abuse, or that the media intrinsically choose to report on child abuse cases only where girls are concerned, despite the fact that boys can also be victims of abuse. It is important to note that this data was compiled

Figure 28: What were the children's stories about?



through stories that clearly sourced either exclusively boys or girls, and where the monitors could count the number of boys and girls. Figure 29 shows boys and girls according to topics.

Figure 29: Children's gender vs. topics

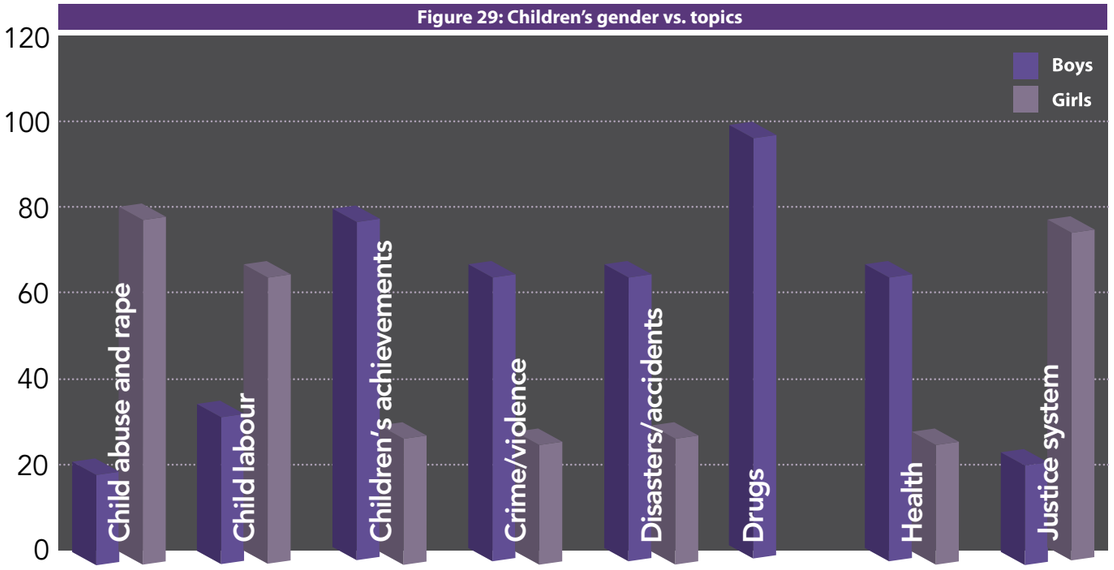


Figure 29 indicates that 79 percent of the of girls' stories were on child abuse topics, while boys featured in the remaining 21 percent. It is also interesting to see that there is also correlation between the number Justice system (77 percent) and Child abuse and rape stories where girls featured.

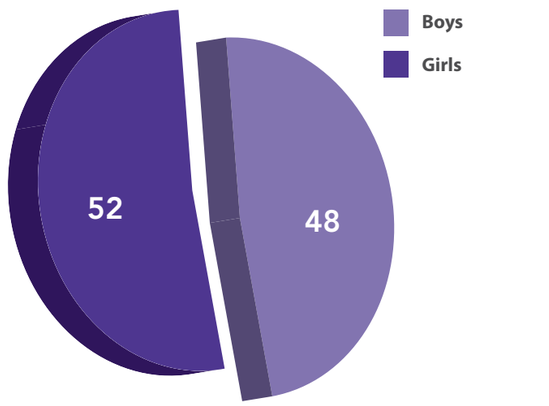
Most of the stories in which boys were sourced were frequently about drugs, children's achievements, crime and violence, and disasters and accidents. Stories on drugs scored the highest and girls did not feature in any of these stories. One might therefore ask why boys are likely to be sourced in drug-related stories. According to one study[83] conducted on drug usage or substance abuse amongst teenagers, it was revealed that boys are more inclined to abuse drugs and, more especially, over-the-counter drugs.

Media should continue to strive for equitable gender representation, especially when reflecting children in the media. This is a good strategy of encouraging participation of both male and female voices in a growing democracy.

5.2.4. Who do we see and hear?

The gender of children sources is always crucial and should always be taken into consideration when monitoring. This will help to determine whether Zambia is progressing when it comes to representation of men and women (boys and girls) in their news stories. Figure 30 shows the representation of boy and girl sources in the Zambian media.

Figure 30: Girl vs. boy sources



Girls as sources constituted 52 percent and boys constituted 48 percent of the total coverage. These results are representative of the demographics of the country, as there are more women than men in Zambia at 52 and 48 percent respectively.[84] With a negligible difference of just four percent, the media in Zambia should be applauded for ensuring that there is equitable coverage between boys and girls.

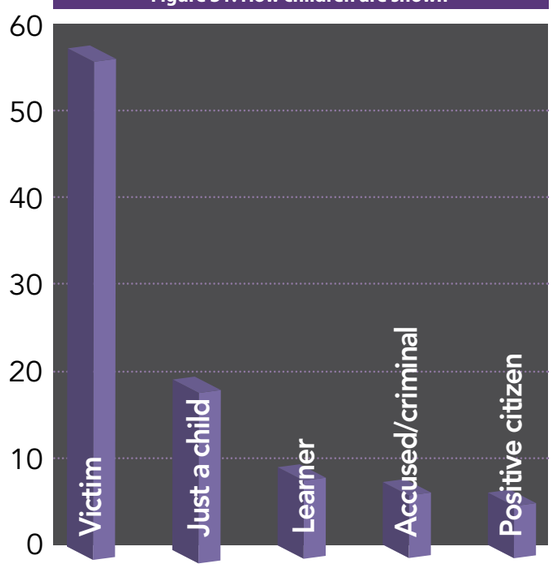
[83] See http://consumer.healthday.com/Article.asp?AID=670177

[84] Zambia Demographic and Health Survey 2009; p13. Accessed on the world wide web: http://www.zamstats.gov.zm/media/2007_zdhs_final_report.pdf

5.2.5. Roles of children in news stories

Portrayal of children in the news is very important in determining and understanding how the media view children and the issues that concern them. For example, if news stories are dominated by roles of children as victims, it arguably gives audiences the impression that the media is mostly concerned about issues that negatively affect the lives of children, or that children are helpless and always taken advantage of. Figure 31 shows the roles of children in radio news.

Figure 31: How children are shown



The top three results are similar to those of the adult monitoring (Zambian adult media monitoring). The most dominant roles children occupied were as victims (57 percent), just a child (19 percent) and learner (8 percent). It is important that children are portrayed as individuals, and that children occupy more diverse roles to suit their diverse personalities and traits. The media need to recognise that children's roles are not limited to that of them as victims, learners or just as children.

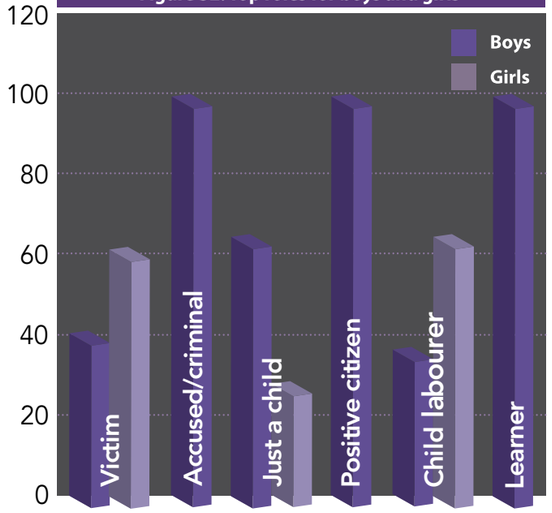
When children are constantly portrayed as victims, it takes away their ability to see themselves overcoming their predicament and making something positive out of it. It even lengthens their healing process, and they start thinking of themselves as helpless.

The media have a responsibility to seek to offer a diversity of roles. Media should strive to portray children in more positive roles, such as portraying them as positive and active citizens, which only received a disappointing 5 percent coverage.

5.2.6. Boys and girls coverage according roles

How boys and girls are portrayed in the news is very important in determining and understanding which roles the media assigns to the two genders. For example, if 20 percent of the sources were victims, it is necessary to try to understand how many boys or girls constituted that 20 percent. Figure 32 shows the roles of children according to gender.

Figure 32: Top roles for boys and girls

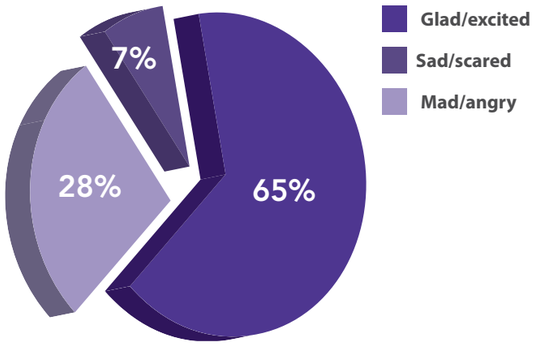


The results of the top six children's roles show that girls are either portrayed in mostly negative roles, or don't feature at all when compared to boys. Girls' role as victims scored 60 percent, while boys scored 40 percent. It is discouraging to note that girls were not featured as positive citizens or learners. Considering that girls were mostly featured as either victims or in stories about child abuse and rape, it would be worthwhile for them to be depicted positively, as heroes and victors, as such depictions are more empowering. These results are indicative of the challenges that society still faces in portraying girls mostly in a negative way and boys mostly in a positive way. The constant portrayal of children in passive roles and silencing children's voices impedes children from participating in social life. More so, girls not featuring at all as learners points out to the further marginalisation of them in societies. That is, girl children are denied the basic things that must be enjoyed by all children.

5.2.7. How did children feel about the stories?

Child monitors had an opportunity to give their opinion on how they feel about the quality of the reporting in the stories they were monitoring. Children are always regarded as sensitive human beings and what they say is usually a reflection of their true feelings, hence it was crucial to always get their feelings on all the stories they monitored. Figure 33 shows how children felt about the stories.

Figure 33: How did the children feel about media's reporting?



The results show that most of the time, children had positive feelings towards the stories they were analysing. Overall, 65 percent of the stories made the children glad or excited. Responses from the child monitors were based on their feelings towards how the stories were reported, as well as their feelings towards what happened to the child or children in the stories.

Twenty-eight percent of the stories made the children mad or angry, and seven percent made them sad or scared. These results should show Zambian media that children like the way they portray them in the news, and should continuously strive to improve the way they report on children and their issues.

6. Conclusion and recommendations

It should be borne in mind that media coverage of children in both South Africa and Zambia should not be directly compared, due to the varying nature of the respective countries' media landscapes and the different media monitored (more media were monitored in South Africa and than in Zambia). However, certain common trends emerged during the monitoring process. As detailed by the findings, a number of issues stand out about the coverage of children in Zambian and South African media, including:

THE SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN CHILDREN'S STORIES

While it should be celebrated that the number of children's stories in South Africa increased from 4 676 to 7 814 and Zambian children's stories from to 244 to 286, more children's stories do not equate to more children's voices or better-quality reporting. However, despite the increase in the number of children's stories in the media. The overall representation of children when compared to that of adults continue to be low. In 2011, media in South Africa had eight percent and six percent in 2012, while Zambia media had 11 percent in 2011 and seven percent in 2012. According to the findings, media in South Africa only quoted five percent of the children. In Zambia, only nine percent of the children were quoted. Both MMA and MNCRD encourage the media to access children's voices in matters affecting them. This can be done by quoting them either directly or indirectly; this, however, should be done only when it is in the best interests of the child or children concerned.

RESPECT FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

South African and Zambian media continue to make significant strides in ensuring that children's rights are respected and protected. The three and two percent violations of children's rights in South African and Zambian media respectively is testament to this. Nevertheless, media should strive for zero percent violation of children's rights. This can be done by ensuring that the children's identities are protected in all situations where they media feels that exposing the child's identity might expose them to danger, victimisation or harm.

THE UNSATISFACTORY PORTRAYAL OF CHILDREN

As indicated by the findings, the role of a child as a victim got the most coverage at 45 percent in Zambia. It may be argued that the portrayal of children as victims in the media should not be seen from a negative point of view, but instead should be seen as indicative of the social ills that children in Zambia face and the urgency for such problems to be addressed. Depicting children in such a limited manner is neither fair nor accurate. Contrary to Zambia, the dominant role that children in South African media were defined through was that of them as non-description "child" (27 percent). The categorisation of children as merely children is devoid of all the potential and unique characteristics individual children possess. Children occupy roles that stretch far beyond the dominant "children" category. That is to say, the categorisation of children as children is an injustice to their unique capabilities; it perpetuates an impoverished view of them. Thus, media should redefine the roles through which they portray children. There is a need to diversify the roles of children in media content particularly roles that can be deemed as positive, to correct the current imbalance and tendency to present children merely as victims, non-description "child", etc.

"I would like to see a lot of stories that talk about children being heroes and achieving good things like school awards, and also stories that show children happy in society"

TINA TEMBO

JACARANDA BASIC SCHOOL

7. Appendices

Appendix 1: MAD OAT criteria

The MAD OAT (Make Abuse Disappear – Online Accountability Tool) section takes into consideration the following aspects of the news items:

HEADLINE

1 The headline is clearly in the best interest of the child
2 The headline clearly supports stereotypes about children
3 The headline is representative of the content of the story image
1 The image is in the best interest of the child
2 The image clearly supports stereotypes about children
3 The image is representative of the story

ARTICLE

1 The article has brought attention to children's rights and related issues (early childhood development, the Millennium Development Goals, basic nutrition for children, vaccination or challenges to the girl child)
2 The article raises awareness of the prevention of drug abuse/child abuse/sexual offences and/or HIV among young people
3 The article is published in the best interest of children

SOURCES

1 Relevant sources, such as parents/guardian/welfare group have been used in the article identity
1 The privacy/identity and HIV status of the child has been sufficiently protected where in the child's interest

ABUSE

1 The child has been abused

Appendix 2: topic list

CODE **TOPIC LIST**

1 **Economics:** includes business, corporate news, finance issues, trade agreements
2 **Politics (international)** and diplomacy efforts, political news from outside South Africa
3 **Disaster/accident:** earthquakes, famine, typhoons, accidents, tragedy
4 **Conflict:** political violence, demonstration, protests, war
5 **Crime:** includes murder, robbery, hijacking, theft, corruption/bribery, fraud at both government and corporate levels
6 **Justice system:** court rulings, constitutional issues, legislation, bills, amendments, judicial system
10 **South African national politics:** includes South African government & Parliament – national government, national issues, Parliament, national politics
11 **Provincial & local government:** includes municipalities, policies affecting only certain provinces, local government finance
12 **Housing:** includes policies, lack of housing, government initiatives
13 **Social welfare:** policies on welfare grants, pension, child grants
14 **Poverty:** rate, policies
15 **Health:** general health issues, diabetes, cancer, nutrition, excludes HIV/AIDS
16 **Development:** policies, projects
17 **Environment/weather patterns and climate:** pollution, extinction of animal/plant species, heat, hail, rain, global warming
19 **Entrepreneur/SMME:** people who make an effort to start their own business
20 **Media and arts:** new media, freedom of expression, entertainment, culture/theatre, lifestyle issues, fashion, religion and tradition
21 **Sport:** news on sporting events, reports, athletes, policies
22 **Personalities/profiles:** features on prominent personalities or upcoming people
23 **Cultural practices and traditions**
30 **Child labour:** exploitation of children for work as cheap labour
31 **Child pornography**
40 **Education general:** where the codes below do not apply
41 **Policy-related:** state of schools, education policies, etc.
42 Events and achievements: school fun days, awards, etc.
43 **Violence:** levels of violence among learners, and school-related disasters and tragedies
50 **Science:** reports about new inventions, technology
60 **Human rights:** includes a variety of rights
61 **Gender:** where the central focus of the story is on a gender-related element.
62 **Racism and xenophobia:** incidents of racism and discrimination based on a person's ethnicity or nationality
63 **Disabilities:** mental or physical
70 **Child abuse – general:** when codes below don't apply
71 **Physical abuse:** beatings, burnings
72 **Mental and emotional abuse:** verbal and consistently making derogatory remarks
73 **Child prostitution:** use of children for sex work
74 **Child abduction/trafficking/slavery:** abducting a child for sexual purposes or slavery
75 **Kidnapping:** taking a child for ransom purposes
76 **Child rape:** non-consensual, includes penetrative and non-penetrative sex with a minor, includes statutory rape
77 **Sexual abuse:** the abuse of boys and girls, and included indecent assault and sodomy
78 **Child neglect:** failure to adequately attend to a child's needs
79 **Maintenance and child support:** bills, divorce cases
80 **Family:** reports on values, the ideal family or focus on a specific family
81 **HIV/AIDS – general:** when codes below don't apply
82 **"AIDS orphans"/children affected by HIV:** where children have no parents/caregivers due to HIV/AIDS
83 **Sex education:** items on practising safe sex in relation to HIV/AIDS and STDs
84 **Treatment of HIV/AIDS:** items relating to ARVs or Nevirapine, or treatment in general
85 **Funds:** monies donated for the treatment of HIV
90 **Teenage pregnancy**
91 **Substance abuse:** drugs and alcohol
92 **Refugee children:** asylum-seekers, refugees' rights
100 **Other:** to be used as a last resort
200 **Not relevant:** for television and radio only

Appendix 3: Quality of stories criteria

CB Context basic: does it mention the basic details about what happened and how, where, who was involved?
CI Context in-depth: is the story given greater context? Does it talk about the broader social consequences? Does it talk about tragic accidents as recurring patterns?
Y Causes: does the story explain the causes of the event?
O Consequences: does the story describe the consequences of the event or how it impacts on broader society?
S Solutions: does the story offer any possible solutions or means of addressing the problems?
L Relevant legislation: does the story mention any relevant legislation or policy?
SH Self-help: does the story provide information to help the reader? e.g. In a drug abuse story, does it give information on where to go to get help for drug addiction? In terms of a sexual abuse or child abuse story, where can anyone go or telephone to receive help?
Does the article provide tool bars (such as columns, graphs or tables) to detect signs of child abuse, sexual abuse, drug abuse, etc.?
Does the story provide information necessary to present an informed self-help story?
CBI Child's best interest: is the story in the child's best interest? Is the story beneficial to the child or not? Is the child portrayed in a positive light?

Appendix 4: Type of news

Type code	Type of item
1	News stories
2	In brief/short
3	Cartoon/graphic image
4	Editorial
5	Opinion piece
6	Feature/news analysis
7	Business
8	Sport
9	Photograph
10	Opinion poll
11	Interview
12	Other – last resort only
13	Panel discussion
14	Phone-in programme/talk show
15	Documentary insert
16	Current affairs show (radio or TV)

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