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# “News is news”

– Ethnic minorities in five Namibian newspapers

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## **Abstract**

This Bachelors thesis has been written with the goal to learn how five Namibian newspapers are portraying ethnic minorities. A secondary goal has been to learn knowledge in how Namibian journalists think when writing about ethnic minorities. The analysed newspaper, Informanté, Namibian Sun, New Era, The Namibian and Windhoek Observer, are all written in English and has their head offices in the capital of Namibia, Windhoek. Both editors and reporters have been interviewed from these five newspapers.

Two methods have been used in this thesis. Quantitative content analysis of articles found in newspapers during three weeks in November, 2011, a total of 55 articles were found containing the names of minorities. A qualitative method of interviews was then conducted with reporters and editors at the newspapers that were part of the research.

The main theories of the thesis are Denis McQuail's version of agenda-setting, McQuail's theory on communicator-audience relations and Teun A. van Dijk's theory about the media's role as a reproductive part in the construction of stereotypes.

The results show that 12.3 % of the analysed articles are mentioning ethnic minorities. In these, persons from the minorities seldom play an active part. The most featured minority was the Herero. Politics is the dominant subject in articles mentioning ethnic minorities, followed by racism/tribalism and tribal culture.

In the interviews with the Namibian journalists, it is evident that there is a great will to emphasize the issues of the ethnic minorities. Most journalists regard their role as important in influencing people and therefore have a responsibility towards their readers.

**Keywords:** Ethnic minorities, Development, Media, Namibia, Newspapers, Sub-Saharan Africa, Tribalism

## **Minor Field Study**

A Minor Field Study is a scholarship granted by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) to students writing a bachelors or master thesis. The purpose is for the students to perform a minor field study in a developing country and thus increasing the students' knowledge of countries in the third world. The students also gain a foundation and merits for further international work.

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# Table of contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 The five newspapers	4
1.2 Democracy and press freedom in Namibia	5
1.3 Definitions	7
<b>2. Theoretical framework</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1 Research questions	10
<b>3. Background of Namibia and its minorities</b>	<b>11</b>
3.1 Damara	14
3.2 Nama	15
3.3 Herero	15
3.4 Whites	15
3.5 Caprivian	16
3.6 Baster	16
3.7 Coloured	16
3.8 Tswana	17
3.9 San	17
3.10 Kavango	17
<b>4. Methodology</b>	<b>18</b>
4.1 Quantitative content analysis	18
4.2 Respondent interviews	18
4.3 Presentation of the respondents	19
4.4 Limitations	19
4.5 Validity and reliability	20
4.6 Ethical considerations	21
<b>5. Results and analysis</b>	<b>22</b>
5.1 Results of the quantitative research	22
5.2 Results of the respondent interviews	24
<b>6. Conclusions and discussion</b>	<b>31</b>
6.1 Further research	33
<b>7. Bibliography</b>	<b>34</b>
Appendix I: Codebook	36
Appendix II: Questions for the respondent interviews	38
Appendix III: Name of the articles, in what newspaper, and publish date	39
Appendix IV: About the authors	40

## 1. Introduction

When starting our research Namibia was chosen almost at random. We researched a lot of different countries looking for journalistic challenges in them. What first struck us about Namibia was the great diversity of ethnic minorities and we immediately started wondering “how is such diversity handled by journalists?”. As we read more and more we only got more interested in the country and not at least in its fascinating demography.

Namibia is a vast and sparsely populated country. Its population is made up of a number of different tribes and ethnic groups. Half of the population will in this thesis be classified as minorities. Since independence in 1990, when apartheid was abandoned and equality to all Namibian citizens was promised, the development of ethnic minorities has greatly differed.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of this study is to identify what role five Namibian newspapers might play in the presentation of minorities. Are they an agent in the government's hunt for tribalism or a voice of equality?

The first three chapters give a background to Namibia, its minorities and its media. These chapters are essential for the rest of the thesis because they give a context to which the quantitative and qualitative research, and ultimately our results, belongs in.

Following these parts are chapters on theory and methodology. These chapters present how the research was conducted, from counting of articles to choices of interview questions. They also place our thesis in a discourse and in the relevant field of study.

Next comes the results chapter which first deals with our quantitative research. Then, in a separate part comes our qualitative research. These chapters are laid out in a similar fashion, discussing one aspect at a time. Finally our conclusions and our discussion are presented in chapter seven.

### 1.1 The five newspapers

The five newspapers included in our study are Informanté, Windhoek Observer, Namibian Sun, The Namibian and New Era. They are all written in English. There are approximately 5-6 more newspapers in Windhoek, but as they are all written in either German or Afrikaans and as neither of us is sufficiently skilled in any of those languages, we had to limit ourselves to the English-speaking ones.

#### Informanté

Owned by the Trustco Group International,, Informanté is the main tabloid of Windhoek and Namibia. It's mostly filled with articles on political scandals and with content sent in by readers.<sup>2</sup> There's a new number published every Tuesday and it's mainly a free newspaper. Newspaper vendors who collect copies of the Informanté are allowed, as defined by a disclaimer on the front page, to sell each copy for two to ten Namibian dollars.<sup>3</sup> Editor in chief, Nghidipohamba Ngolo, says the owner of Informanté, Trustco, has no chance of affecting the content in the newspaper.<sup>4</sup>

The Media Institute of Southern Africa is not as positive about the independence of Informanté. In 2011, two journalists were forced to leave after making a story on the termination of an agreement between Trustco mobile and Econet Wireless Zimbabwe.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Suzman, James, *An Assesment of the Status of the San in Namibia*, p.1, Legal Assistance Centre, Windhoek, 2001

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Toivo Ndjebela, editor, *New Era*, 2011-11-25, Windhoek

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Nghidipohamba Ngolo, editor-in-chief, *Informanté*, 2011-11-24, Windhoek

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> Beukes, Jonathan, *So this is Democracy - National Overview Namibia 2011*, p.99, Media Institute of Southern Africa, Windhoek, 2012

## **Namibian Sun**

Namibian Sun is part of a larger media house, the Democratic Holdings Company, which also harbors two other newspapers, the German-language Allgemeine Zeitung and Republikein, which is written in Afrikaans. The editorial office, located in Windhoek, is shared by the three newspapers. Festus Nakatana, editor at the Namibian Sun, says there is little, but some, interaction with the other two newspapers. Namibian Sun comes out five days a week.<sup>6</sup> It's sold for three Namibian dollars and publishes a new issue every Monday to Friday.

## **Windhoek Observer**

Windhoek Observer was founded in 1978 by Hannes Smith and Gwen Lister, it is the oldest of the Namibian newspapers. Though being the most sold newspaper for a long time, its number of copies is declining and is now around 6000 per issue.<sup>7</sup> Windhoek Observer mainly focuses on writing about politics, current affairs and economics. It's regarded as very serious and is read mostly by politicians and business people.<sup>8</sup> The newspaper publishes a new issue every Thursday and is sold for five Namibian dollars.

## **New Era**

New Era is a state owned newspaper which publishes Monday to Friday. One of the main goals of New Era is to represent all the peoples of Namibia. People from within the government sometimes try to influence what the newspaper should write about, seeing it as the mouth of the reigning party, SWAPO. Editor Toivo Mbadjaseun Ndjobela says that New Era never succumbs to this pressure, as there is a clear view that it's owned by the state and not the government.<sup>9</sup>

## **The Namibian**

The Namibian was founded in 1985 by Gwen Lister, who earlier worked at and founded Windhoek Observer. The newspaper is mainly focused on telling the stories of the different people of Namibia, especially those without any power.<sup>10</sup> Every issue of The Namibian has a section written in Oshiwambo. It is sold for three Namibian dollars and publishes a new issue Monday to Friday.

### **1.2 Democracy and press freedom in Namibia**

According to The Media Institute of Southern Africa there have been a lot of general improvements in Namibian journalism the last couple of years. Calls for improved quality and higher standards within the industry have been made.<sup>11</sup> In Namibia, there are no information laws, granting free access to public documents, this is seen as an obstacle as journalists can not scrutinize policy making and budget topics in a satisfactory way.<sup>12</sup>

Online media is still in an early phase in Namibia. Technology is too expensive and computers are not that common, especially outside urban areas. Together with the high cost and a bad infrastructure for real broadband, the internet plays a rather small role in spreading information. Social network sites such as Twitter and Facebook are being used more and more. They play, together with SMS services, a bigger role than before in the communication between

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<sup>6</sup> Interview with Festus Nakatana, reporter, Namibian Sun, 2011-12-06, Windhoek

<sup>7</sup> Interview with Petronella Sibeene, reporter, Windhoek Observer, 2012-01-20, Windhoek

<sup>8</sup> Interview with Toivo Ndjobela, editor, New Era, 2011-11-25, Windhoek

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Toivo Ndjobela, editor, New Era, 2011-11-25, Windhoek

<sup>10</sup> Interview with Shinovene Immanuel, reporter, The Namibian, 2012-01-10, Windhoek

<sup>11</sup> Beukes, *So this is Democracy - National Overview Namibia 2011*, p.95, 2012

<sup>12</sup> Beukes, *So this is Democracy - National Overview Namibia 2011*, p.97, 2012

newspapers and their readers, as can be seen on pages where traditionally readers' letters have been published.<sup>13</sup>

There are quite a few radio stations in Namibia, but almost everyone is located in the capital, Windhoek. Although many of them can be heard throughout the land. There are both private and state-owned radio stations. The National Broadcasting Corporation, NBC, gets most of its funds from an annual state subsidy. They broadcast in both English, German, Afrikaans, Oshiwambo and Otjiherero.

Among the private stations, there are both those oriented towards entertainment, such as Kudu FM, and those more news oriented, such as RFI English. There are around twenty radio stations in total in Namibia, one located outside of Windhoek.<sup>14</sup>

The number of television stations in Namibia is not as great as that for the radio stations. There are currently three stations. The NBC has its own channel which is commercial free and funded by state subsidy.<sup>15</sup> One Africa Television is Namibia's first commercial TV-station and has one channel. It hosts news, documentaries and entertainment shows.<sup>16</sup> The third one is Trinity Broadcasting Namibia which is a Christian TV-station. It airs shows and programs with Christian content everyday.<sup>17</sup>

From what we learned during our stay, TV is mainly for persons above the lower classes. And the shows mainly viewed are not those aired on Namibian channels, but on South African ones. There are also a few pan-African TV channels that are fairly popular. For people living outside of Windhoek, or within the capitals' township, Katutura, radio channels is the main source of news.

The Reporters Without Borders annual report on press freedom throughout the world concludes that Namibia is the African country where the press is most free. Sharing the 21st place with Canada, Namibia places itself ahead of western countries like Czech Republic, Spain, France and Italy. The Worldwide Press Freedom Index measures how free the press is in all countries. It measures how a violation does or does not interfere with the freedom of journalists and news organizations, as well as what governments do to ensure this freedom. The index is compiled through a questionnaire, with 43 criteria concerning press freedom that each country is compared with. Reporters Without Borders also reports that the press situation in Namibia is satisfying. No journalists, media assistants or netizens have been reported as killed or imprisoned in 2011.

The independent American watchdog organization, Freedom House, also publishes an annual report on the press freedom in the world, The Freedom of the Press. This year's survey placed Namibia together with Italy as the 75th country in the world, regarding press freedom. In Freedom House's index, Namibia does not rank the highest score in Africa. With a score of 38, Namibia ranks as Africa's number eight concerning press freedom, finding itself beaten by Mali, Ghana, Cape Verde, Mauritius, São Tomé and Príncipe, Benin and South Africa. The index of Freedom House is compiled using certain criteria that focus on how countries respect press freedom and everyone's right to freedom of opinion and expression, as the Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states. Each country is given a score from 0 (best) to 100 (worst).

Informanté publishes an article reporting on the prostatic cancer that former president Sam Nujoma is said to have. The Newspaper is heavily criticised by government officials who

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Radio station world (2012-05-29), [http://radiostationworld.com/locations/namibia/radio\\_websites.asp](http://radiostationworld.com/locations/namibia/radio_websites.asp)

<sup>15</sup> Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (2012-05-29), [http://www.nbc.na/ra\\_radio.php](http://www.nbc.na/ra_radio.php)

<sup>16</sup> One Africa Television (2012-05-29), <http://www.oneafrica.tv/>

<sup>17</sup> Trinity Broadcasting Namibia (2012-05-29), <http://www.tbnnamibia.tv/program.html>

called for the resignation of the editor, Max Hamata, who refused to step down or make an excuse. In January 2011 he handed in his resignation, according to MISA this was due to pressure "from above" that the holding company, Trustco, could not ignore. In the aftermath of the publishing, the Minister of Information, Communication and Technology, Joel Kappanda, called for a stop of the invasion of privacy of Nujoma. In 2010 a media ombudsman was appointed. Ombudsman Clement Daniels claimed that a total of 17 complaints had been received during the year, most of them were still under investigation when MISA wrote their yearly report. The report also mentions that awareness of gender issues has been raised in Namibia. If a media person expresses herself or himself in an inappropriate manner concerning gender issues the report states that the person can expect heavy protests.

### **1.3 Definitions**

#### **Ethnic Minority**

The Oxford dictionary defines ethnic minorities as; "a group within a community which has different national or cultural traditions from the main population."

For this thesis, we will regard any community smaller than that of the Ovambo, which is the largest ethnic community in Namibia, as a minority. Many with whom we performed interviews had another perception of this term; most of them also defined an ethnic minority as a group mistreated by the society. For instance, Toivo Ndjebela, news editor at the New Era, says in our interview with him: "in the Namibian context, we regard the homosexual people as an ethnic minority as well."

It seems, as Toivo Ndjebela and other people we've interviewed aren't accustomed to the term "ethnic minorities". This can probably be explained by the governmental agenda, saying; "there are no ethnic minorities".

#### **Tribalism**

Tribalism is a colonial idea of describing the complex structures of African social society as consisting of different tribes. Because African social behaviour was so inconsistent and diverse compared to western society it was simply impossible to classify or treat it with any amount of consistency. Thus tribalism was a term of necessity and not of empirical reality (cf. p.19).

The term was challenged and criticized during the post-colonial era when the African nations began to gain their independence. Today the term is no longer used to describe African social society. Although the criticism is still used today by the government of Namibia to undermine certain groups will to express their cultural identity.

## 2. Theoretical framework

Carlos E. Cortés concludes in his book “The children are watching” that media's image of minorities often becomes the accepted truth about minorities.

“By selecting and continually repeating news stories of a particular type about a social group [...] news media can increase the likelihood that consumers will develop stereotypes about that group. The issue of creating stereotypes, then, is more a function of selectivity and frequency than of accuracy.”<sup>18</sup>

Cortés view on medias portrayal of minorities conforms with Denis McQuail’s theories on media content. In his book “Mass communication theory” he concludes that bias, not necessarily lies, in news reporting distorts reality and gives a negative picture of minorities. This is called “agenda-setting” according to Coleman et.al in “The handbook of journalism studies”.

Agenda setting is a theory which states that what media sees as important and therefore present more material on, will also be seen as more important by the ones consuming media: the people.<sup>19</sup>

The selection of some certain news issues is not a pursuit by journalist to mind control the public, it is just the process of new selection. Everything can not be covered and some issues and events will naturally be given more space and time in newspapers and other media. Other actors, like politicians and organizations, will also try and influence the agenda.<sup>20</sup>

Coleman describes how there are two levels of agenda setting. The first level, as described above, is that public opinion picks up those issues being told by the media. The second level of agenda setting focuses on how the media writes about these issues. Attributes and tone that media uses in their reporting is transmitted to the public mind, in the same as with the issues in general.<sup>21</sup>

The concept of the two level agenda setting theory is especially fitting for this study, since we in our study have looked upon how journalist write about minorities, e.g. if it is written with a positive or negative attitude towards a minority and also if there are certain topics more frequently connected to certain minorities, e.g. crime, farming or tribal matters.

It is not only the public opinion that is being affected by the agenda setting media. Inter-media agenda setting is also an important part in understanding what issues become the ones regarded as most important by the people. It is elite news organizations that sets the agenda for other, e.g. New York Times is named as an american elite news organization in *The Handbook of Journalism Studies*.<sup>22</sup>

Agenda setting has been documented both for local and national issues, all across the world.<sup>23</sup> Therefore, we are certain that agenda setting will be a sufficient platform for this thesis and, in the end, also will be the right tool to conclude how journalists in Namibia do affect their readers.

It is not only the public opinion that may be affected by the media, but also behavior. The authors of the chapter on agenda setting, in *The Handbook of Journalism Studies*, tells the story about the University of Pennsylvania, where extensive news coverage of crime on the campus actually had a negative effect on the amount of applications made by potential future students.

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<sup>18</sup> Cortés, Carlos E, *The children are watching: How the media teach about diversity*, p.148, New York: Teachers College Press, 2000

<sup>19</sup> Coleman, Renita, et.al, Agenda Setting in, *The handbook of journalism of studies*, Wahl-Jorgensen, Karin & Hanitzsch, Thomas (ed.), p.147ff, New York: Routledge, 2009

<sup>20</sup> Coleman, Renita, et.al, op. cit. p. 147f

<sup>21</sup> Coleman, Renita, et.al, op. cit. p. 149f

<sup>22</sup> Coleman, Renita, et.al, op. cit. p. 148

<sup>23</sup> Coleman, Renita, et.al, op. cit. p. 149

This happened at the same time as other, comparable, universities received more applications than usual.<sup>24</sup>

The agenda setting theory does not, however, say that members of the public always picks up the media agenda. It is when people are not having sufficient knowledge about a topic, but still feels it is important, that they are more likely to be steered by the media.<sup>25</sup>

Topics which are not directly part of peoples everyday life, e.g. energy, government spending and drug abuse, is also more likely to be important to them if they are prioritized by the media.<sup>26</sup>(153)

### **Earlier research**

As mentioned earlier (see Definitions p.7) tribalism is a colonial term used for describing African social society. Research among African “tribes” was going on long before there were even colonies but it wasn’t until the colonies started to gain their independence the term was challenged and questioned. In the late 1960’s and early 1970’s several different African scholars started to question an earlier generation of European scholars use of the term “tribe” when dealing with African social society. Already in the 1940’s the term was challenged by European social-anthropologist such as Edward Evan Evans-Pritchard and Meyer Fortes. In their “African Political Systems”(1940) they used the term “people” instead of “tribe” and concluded that “political units” (such as the colonies) were not consistent with social networks, languages or cultures.<sup>27</sup>

One African critic of the term was Archie Mafeje which concluded in his “The Ideology of Tribalism” (1971) that tribalism was created due to western anthropologist’s mentality, basically their will to discover tribes on the African continent. According to Mafeje the word “tribe” did not exist in any of the indigenous South African languages and thus was a colonial and eurocentric idea. Other critics were Absolom L. Vilakazi, Bernard Magubane and Omafune Onoge which all published papers at the time. Their research criticized anthropological research of African society during colonial times by scholars such as Evans-Pritchard, Fortes and Isaac Schapera.

One of the more recent works on media in Namibia is Media system and news selection in Namibia by Andreas Rothe. Rothe has a broad grip on the media landscape in Namibia and his research touches upon print as well as broadcasting, but also on-line media and news agencies. The research is a series of quantitative and qualitative surveys among Namibian journalist and although it doesn’t deal directly with minorities it gives a good overview of Namibia’s journalists. Among other things he concludes that news selection is similar in Namibia and in Germany although with some important differences. Rothe says that Namibian press is much more elite oriented than European counterparts and because of Namibia’s multi-ethnic society stories relating to cultural phenomenon’s are not as prominent.<sup>28</sup> (Rothe p.175) More in line with this thesis is Carlos E. Cortés book “The children are watching: How the media teach about diversity”. Dr. Cortés is professor emeritus of the University of California and his book deals with how media affects our perception of minorities. The book mainly works in an American environment but the fundamentals can easily be applied to any context, such as Namibia. Cortés, as well as Rothe, has a broader grip on media than this thesis and deals with both print and broadcasting channels.

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<sup>24</sup> Coleman, Renita, et.al, op. cit. p. 151

<sup>25</sup> Coleman, Renita, et.al, op. cit. p. 152

<sup>26</sup> Coleman, Renita, et.al, op. cit. p. 153

<sup>27</sup> Fortes, M.; Evans-Pritchard, E.E, *African Political Systems*, 1940, London: Oxford University Press

<sup>28</sup> Rothe, Andreas, *Media system and news selection in Namibia*, 2010, Berlin: Lit Verlag

## **2.1 Research questions**

As our aim is to look further into how ethnic minorities are portrayed in the Namibian printed press these are the questions that we seek answers to:

1. Are ethnic minorities explicitly mentioned in the five newspapers? If so, how?
2. Why are minorities portrayed the way they are?
3. What do reporters and editors think about the ethnic minorities media situation and how do they think when writing about minorities?
4. What do reporters and editors think about their influence on their readers?

### 3. Background of Namibia and its minorities

The oldest groups of people in Namibia are the Damara and San, both Khoekhoe-speaking tribes who for centuries lived as hunter-gatherers in southern and central Namibia. Somewhere between 1500 and 1000 years ago others tribes moved into the area from both the north and the east. From the north came Oshivambo-speaking peoples who settled around and between the Kunene and the Kavango rivers. These were mainly agriculturalists and created small centralized states ruled by kings and queens. From the east came Otjiherero-speaking people who settled in central Namibia. The Otjiherero-speaking tribes were nomadic pastoralists, a way of living which also the Damara soon adopted. Power was very much decentralized and it wasn't until the beginning of the nineteenth century these tribes gained prolific leaders.

In the middle of the eighteenth century other groups were starting to move into Namibia. From the south came the Nama people and groups of Oorlam people. A Khoekhoe-speaking tribe pushed northwards by expanding white settlers from the Cape colony. They were also nomadic pastoralists and settled to the north of the Orange River. The Oorlam people were of khoekhoe, mixed race or slave origin and had a distinct "Oorlam identity."<sup>29</sup> At the same time white settlers, traders and missionaries started to appear. Trading along the coast with Europeans had been existing for some time when whaling increased in the 1770s. This increased the trade and several European settlements were established along the coast, the most important being Walvis Bay. White traders from the Cape Colony also started to appear in the south of Namibia to some extent.

During the eighteenth century white influence over the different tribes in Namibia increased. Trade was a big factor which supplied mainly firearms and alcohol in exchange for cattle and small stock. Mining rights was also granted by African leaders to European companies. The north of Namibia was somewhat spared the influences of long-distance trade, because of its remoteness, until the late eighteenth century when slave trade became an important economy for the small kingdoms. The African leaders eventually ended up in a downward spiral of debt to the European merchants in their pursuit of weapons and alcohol. To pay back they sold off their land and their own people. Raiding neighbours for cattle and slaves increased at the end of the eighteenth century. The increase of violence resulted in several short wars between different tribes and groups in the whole of Namibia.

At the Berlin Conference in 1884 Namibia was granted as a colony to Germany, the name of the colony became German South West Africa. In the 1880s German influence and rule was fairly weak, much because of the high independence and good organization of the different tribes. German colonizing efforts were at first focused on the less populated central and southern parts of Namibia. Here Nama, Damara, Herero, San and Baster communities, tribes and groups were slowly undermined. German authority, companies and traders bought large pieces of land from tribal chiefs and authorities who were desperate to pay their debts to foreign traders. Eventually several companies were formed around the colony and was given generous railway and road building contracts as well as mining, watering and grazing rights. In the 1890s settlers were beginning to arrive in greater numbers and these were given the best lands. Africans were pushed together in smaller and smaller areas of unfertile land and bad grazing. Africans political powers as well as civil rights were also greatly decreased by German authorities.

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<sup>29</sup> Described as "people living outside of the Cape colony but possessing attributes acquired inside the colony." Some of these attributes were the speaking of Afrikaans, possession of firearms, wagons and horse and the adoption of Christianity.

The aforementioned actions led to increased tension between the tribes and the German colonial government. This soon led to what has become known as the Namibian War lasting from 1904 to 1908. The initial military actions were made by different Herero tribes who attacked settlements, forts and farms all over central Namibia. For a period the German authorities were unable to react due to the surprise of the attacks and a lack of soldiers. But this soon changed. Reinforcements arrived from Germany and modern weapons and a numerical superiority proved decisive for the Germans. By 1908 all opposition had been defeated or peace had been agreed upon. The Herero survivors from the battle of Waterberg in 1904 had been chased out in the desert. German patrols were placed at the waterholes around the desert and refugees and survivors who tried to give up were shot or once again chased into a certain death in the desert. Similar treatment was given to the Nama groups who fought against the Germans in the south. After the war captives and refugees were put in concentration camps, here they were forced into heavy labour and terrible conditions. The number of deaths in the tribes during the Namibian war and the following genocide are impossible to determine, though, conservative numbers show that about half of the Herero population was wiped out, most certainly much more than that.<sup>30</sup> The Nama population declined about a third and some Nama-groups, such as the Witboois and the Bethany people were almost completely wiped out.<sup>31</sup> All in all at least 30 000 Africans lost their lives in the war and in the concentration camps, probably many more.

German rule ended in 1915, during the First World War, as South Africa occupied Namibia after a short campaign. In 1921 South Africa became a mandatory power for Namibia, then known as South West Africa, by the League of Nations.<sup>32</sup> South Africa immediately started to implement its own rules of racial segregation onto Namibia. In the north, among the Ovambo tribes direct colonial rule was set up for the first time (the Ovambo tribes had been spared direct colonial contact during German rule). The new colonial government set up reserves where Africans had to live. These reserves were placed on marginal land without sufficient water and thus became places of extreme poverty.<sup>33</sup> Laws that forced African men to carry passes and forced them into labour was also passed as means of control over the black population. Several taxes were introduced which applied to blacks only, the white population paid no personal taxes at all at this time.<sup>34</sup> Resistance from the black population is, though, not unheard of. In 1922 the Bondelswarts, a Nama group, rose in rebellion. This was quickly and harshly dealt with by the South African administration. Guruchas, a town where the Bondelswarts had fled, was bombed from the air in an attack that killed more than a hundred men, women and children. Similar acts of violence happened on several occasions throughout the 1920s.<sup>35</sup>

After the end of World War Two the League of Nations mandate for Namibia was turned into a United Nations Trusteeship in 1946. Although South Africa started to incorporate Namibia closer and closer to its own structures of government. A part of this was the implementation of apartheid which started developing in South Africa at the same time and was concluded in the Odendaal Commission published in 1964.<sup>36</sup> The migrant labour system had been in use since the late nineteenth century but reached new heights during the apartheid rule. Male labourers were mostly taken from the more populous northern Ovambo regions and forced into lengthy

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<sup>30</sup> Wallace, Marion, *A history of Namibia, from the beginning to 1990*, p.178, Windhoek: Columbia/Hurst, 2011

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Wallace, op. cit. p. 206

<sup>33</sup> Wallace, op. cit. p. 218

<sup>34</sup> Wallace, op. cit. p. 221f

<sup>35</sup> Wallace, op. cit. p. 223ff

<sup>36</sup> Wallace, op. cit. p. 243

contracts (eighteen months in mines and two years on farms) to work in mines or on farms in the south and central parts of Namibia. The workers were treated very badly by the white employees, violence was not uncommon and wages were very low. The mines and the farms were also the first places that saw a widespread African organization. These took the form of unions who fought for the workers' rights. Eventually these unions evolved into the much larger nationalist movements of SWAPO (South West Africa People Organisation) and SWANU (South West Africa National Union). These organisations were dominated by people from the north, mainly from the Ovambo tribes. The nationalist movement developed during the late 1950s when resistance against the oppressive apartheid became more common. The unions, SWAPO and SWANU organized strikes that started to affect the government; these were often met with violence. The strikes and resistance continued throughout the 1950s and 1960s.

SWAPO also made a lot of efforts to get an acknowledgement by the UN that South Africa was abusing their trusteeship and that their occupation of Namibia was illegal. In the meantime the implementation of the Odendaal Commission started in the late 1960s. The Odendaal Commission set up new areas for reserves for blacks and the 1970s saw the forced movement of several black communities into these areas according to their tribe (as defined by the commission). A number of apartheid laws were also implemented such as limiting semi-skilled and skilled occupations to whites. When the International Court of Justice failed to proclaim the South African occupation of Namibia as illegal in 1966 SWAPO decided to start an armed struggle for the independence of Namibia.<sup>37</sup> SWAPO was backed by several countries that gave them aid in the form of money, weapons and training, most notable are the Soviet Union and Angola.

The protests against the South African apartheid regime grew increasingly during the 1970s and 1980s. Several large strikes and protests were carried out during this period, more often than not resulting in a violent response from the government. Another response was even harsher laws and actions of racial discrimination. Workers were deported and strike organisers put on trial. At the same time the decolonisation and ensuing armed conflict in Angola escalated and spilled into Namibia. SWAPO also intensified their armed struggle, practically making the north of Namibia a war-zone. At the end of the 1970s there were an estimated 45 000 South African troops in the north. There were also attempts for a peaceful transition to independence that to some extent were supported by the South African government. Examples of this are the Turnhalle Constitutional Settlement, which were to establish a self-governing Namibia under South African control, and UN Resolution 435, which would lead to UN-supervised elections and a ceasefire. None of these attempts ever came to fruition. Although there were talks between the combatants there were also constant setbacks. In May 1978 for example South Africa launched its Operation Reindeer, targeting SWAPO bases in Angola. More than 1200 people lost their lives and especially the attack on the Cassinga refugee camp became an icon of SWAPO's struggle.

The 1980s saw a rising in community activism and protests. Street committees, youth movements, student activism and trade unions started all over Namibia. In 1987 there were 24 major nationwide strikes alone.<sup>38</sup> The increasing pressure from the civil society together with higher costs for the ongoing war eventually led to negotiations of peace and independence in May 1988. In short South Africa's war with Angola ended and a timetable for the implementation of UN resolution 435 was established. Elections were held in November 1989 which SWAPO won, claiming 57,3 percent of the votes and forty-one seats in the assembly. SWAPO received most of their support from voters in Ovamboland where they had 92 % of the votes; they also had

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<sup>37</sup> Wallace, op. cit. p. 268

<sup>38</sup> Wallace, op. cit. p. 303

more than 50 % of the votes in Tsumeb and Kavango. The second largest part became the South African backed DTA (Democratic Turnhalle Alliance), which had its electoral in southern Namibia, Hereroland and Kaoko. DTA was also backed by the white community. Finally, independence was declared on 21 March 1990 and Sam Nujoma from SWAPO was sworn in as Namibia's first president.

Unlike other countries in southern Africa, most notably Angola and Zimbabwe, Namibia's development after independence was mainly peaceful. There have been a few conflicts, such as a rebellion in the Caprivi region in 1999 and between 1999 and 2002 the Angolan civil war once again spilled into northern Namibia. Free and democratic elections to parliament and presidential post have been held in 1994, 1999, 2004 and 2009. All were won by SWAPO who has increased their majority; in 2009 they received around 75 % of the votes to both parliament and to the presidential post. In 2005 Sam Nujoma was after three consecutive periods succeeded by Hifikepunye Pohamba, although Nujoma still remains influential upon Namibian politics. One of the biggest problems since independence has been AIDS and HIV that have struck Namibia hard; in 2009 more than 13 % of the adult population was diagnosed with HIV. Although decreasing over the last couple of years it is still one of the highest ratings in the world and in 2009 a total of 6653 persons died of AIDS.<sup>39</sup>

The ethnic minorities of Namibia are defined mainly by the different languages that are spoken but also by cultural traditions and history. It is important to remember that many of these different groups are not homogenous and their identities were mainly a development of the late nineteenth and twentieth century.<sup>40</sup> At the beginning of the nineteenth century the distinctions between different groups were more fluid than they are today. For example early Europeans made a difference between "Cattle Damara" and "Hill Damara", which basically corresponds to "Herero" and "Damara" today. These differences were as much based on linguistic and cultural differences as they were on economic, as pastoralist were generally richer than agriculturalist. As an example; it wasn't until the middle of the eighteenth century the term "Herero" emerged as a label of Otjiherero-speakers. But to be a "Herero" you still had to own cattle, Otjiherero-speakers without cattle were called "Ovatjimba."<sup>41</sup> The majority of Namibians are Oshivambo speakers, about 50% of the total population. <sup>42</sup> The rest of the population are made up of several different smaller ethnic and language-groups, not a single one making up more than 10% of the population. English is the official language of Namibia even though few people have it as their first language. Most people speak at least three languages where English is the last one. Afrikaans is much more common as a second language as this was the official language during the apartheid years. It is also common for people to understand a few of the other languages, especially within their own language-group. As an example; most Hereros understand Oshivambo, and vice versa, as these both are bantu-languages.

### **3.1 Damara**

The Damara are a Khoekhoe-speaking group of people whose origins in Namibia are somewhat unclear. For centuries they lived in central Namibia to the west of modern day Windhoek, in the

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<sup>39</sup> UNAIDS (2012-05-13), <http://www.unaids.org/en/regionscountries/countries/namibia/>

<sup>40</sup> Wallace, op. cit. p.49

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> The CIA Factbook states that "about 50 % of the population belong to the Ovambo tribe." The Namibian National Planning Commission states that 48,5 % of Namibian households speak Oshivambo as main language. Both of these sources will be used throughout this chapter.

Khomas Hochland (hence being referred to as hill- or berg-Damara by white settlers). Today the Damara make up about 7% of the Namibian population.<sup>43</sup>

### **3.2 Nama**

The Nama are also a Khoekhoe-speaking group that originally were pastoralists in southern Namibia.<sup>44</sup> In the middle of the eighteenth century the Oorlam groups from the Cape Colony mixed with the Nama groups which explains why many Namas today also speak Afrikaans. The Namas were heavily affected by the Namibian War and the following genocide. Today the Nama make up about 5% of the population.<sup>45</sup>

### **3.3 Herero**

The Herero are an Otjiherero speaking group that moved in to Namibia from Botswana between 1500 and 1000 years ago. They were pastoralist and settled in the north-east of Namibia. In the nineteenth century they adopted a lifestyle close to the Oorlam-people and during the end of the nineteenth century several Herero tribes fiercely opposed the German colonization. This eventually led to the Namibian War, the imprisonment and genocide of the Herero people. These events still affect the Herero, not at least in their numbers. Today Otjiherero are spoken in 7.9% of Namibian households (including the Himba)<sup>46</sup> while their ethnic group makes up around 7%.<sup>47</sup>

#### **Himba**

The Himba are also Otjiherero-speakers and basically a Herero tribe. In the sixteenth and seventeenth century they migrated along the Kunene River in northern Namibia and finally settled in the north-west of modern day Namibia.<sup>48</sup> Because of their lands remoteness the Himba have retained a more traditional culture and society than other Herero tribes. Today the Himba tribe number some 15 000 people, although this number is uncertain.<sup>49</sup>

### **3.4 Whites**

The white population of Namibia makes up about 6 % of the total population, or some 130 000 individuals. This is the second largest white population in sub-Saharan Africa after South Africa. The white population is further divided into several different language groups that define their origins, the largest being Afrikaans-, English- and German-speaking.

The white Afrikaans-speaking part of the population can often trace their origins back to South Africa. Immigration from South Africa occurred long before Namibia became a colony and continued during the apartheid years as white Afrikaans-speaking farmers settled in Namibia.<sup>50</sup> Today the white Afrikaans-speaking group makes up almost two thirds of the whole white population.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> CIA Factbook (2011-11-29) <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/wa.html>  
Several sources, such as the National Planning Commission count the Damara and the Nama as the same group as they share the same language. These sources have been disregarded when we write about the Damara or Nama as we think they are different enough to constitute their own groups.

<sup>44</sup> Wallace, op. cit. p.51f

<sup>45</sup> CIA Factbook (2011-11-29) <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/wa.html>

<sup>46</sup> National Planning Commission, *2001 Namibia Population and Housing Census*, p.48, Windhoek: National Planning Commission, 2003

<sup>47</sup> CIA Factbook (2011-11-29)

<sup>48</sup> Minority Rights (2011-12-16), <http://www.minorityrights.org/4178/namibia/himba.html>

<sup>49</sup> Minority Rights (2012-03-02), <http://www.minorityrights.org/4178/namibia/himba.html>

<sup>50</sup> Wallace, op. cit. p.250f

<sup>51</sup> CIA Factbook (2011-11-29)

Among the white community only 7 % are English-speaking. The white English-speaking population can trace back their origins to the British influence over the area. As an example Namibia's third largest town, Walvis Bay, was a British colony from 1878 to 1977.<sup>52</sup>

The German influence over Namibia is undeniable and the most prominent remnant of the colonial years that is left today is the German language. About 32 % of the white population, 2 % of the total population is considered to be German speaking.<sup>53</sup> But according to the 2001 Census German is only spoken in 1,1 % of Namibian households.<sup>54</sup>

Since independence and the abolishment of apartheid the white groups have lost almost all of their political powers but still enjoy economical prosperity. The white groups of Namibia are on the same level as western developed countries according to UN Human Development Index.<sup>55</sup>

### **3.5 Caprivian**

The Caprivi Strip stretches far to the northeast of Namibia and people from this region are known as Caprivians. In many ways the Caprivians have a separate history from the rest of Namibia as they for many years belonged to different trade networks and spheres of influence. Until German occupation in 1908 the Lozi kingdom in modern day Zambia ruled Caprivi.<sup>56</sup> Caprivians still speak the Lozi language of siLozi and many times don't consider themselves Namibian. In 1999 a Caprivian separatist movement attempted a coup to free themselves from Namibian rule. The coup failed and several thousands of Caprivians fled to Botswana and over a hundred were imprisoned and charged with high treason.<sup>57</sup> Around 4 % of Namibia's population is considered Caprivians<sup>58</sup> while Caprivi (or siLozi) as a language is spoken in 5 % of households.<sup>59</sup>

### **3.6 Baster**

The Basters are a mixed-race and Afrikaans-speaking group that migrated from the Cape Colony in the 1860s. In 1870 they were given permission to settle in the town of Rehoboth in southern Namibia, therefore they are often referred to as Rehoboth Basters.<sup>60</sup> The Basters numbers are uncertain because they are not a homogenous group (much like the Coloureds) but they are estimated to be around 2 % of the total population.<sup>61</sup>

### **3.7 Coloured**

The term coloured is a complicated one and basically describes a person of mixed racial ancestry. The term first started to appear after the Second World War when larger groups of coloureds started to migrate into Namibia from South Africa. The coloureds had a certain position in the apartheid system together with Nama and Baster groups, they were not considered black and neither white, but in between and thus had a higher status than blacks. As an example they had different laws regulating ownership of land and had certain areas in the cities where only coloureds could live. People that call themselves coloured can come from a number of different backgrounds and can not be considered a homogenous group. They do not

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<sup>52</sup> Wallace, op. cit. p.103ff

<sup>53</sup> CIA Factbook (2011-12-15)

<sup>54</sup> National Planning Commission, op. cit. p.48

<sup>55</sup> Suzman, James, *Minorities in Independent Namibia*, p.4f, Geneva: UNHCR, 2002

<sup>56</sup> Wallace, op. cit. p.80ff

<sup>57</sup> Wallace, op. cit. p.310

<sup>58</sup> CIA Factbook (2011-12-16)

<sup>59</sup> National Planning Commission, op. cit. p.48

<sup>60</sup> Wallace, op. cit. p.72

<sup>61</sup> CIA Factbook (2011-12-16)

share a certain language or culture although they do share a history because of the apartheid system. The CIA factbook states that 6,5 % of Namibias population is of mixed race.<sup>62</sup>

### **3.8 Tswana**

The Tswana are probably the smallest minority in Namibia making up 0,5 % of the population and mainly living in the east of Namibia, on the border to Botswana.<sup>63</sup> The Tswana are mainly distinguished by their language which is called Tswana. It is a bantu-language, in Namibia closes related to siLozi spoken in Caprivi. Tswana is only spoken in 0,3 % of Namibian households.<sup>64</sup>

### **3.9 San**

The San is together with the Damara the oldest groups of people in Namibia. They are a nomadic khoekhoe speaking tribe originally living in central and eastern parts of Namibia. Ever since colonization the San have lived a marginalized existence seldom enjoying modernization or the likes. Still today they are a much marginalized group often living in poverty.<sup>65</sup> The CIA factbook, that calls the San “bushmen” (a derogatory and racist term still in use both inside and outside of Namibia), states that the San makes up 3 % of Namibias population.<sup>66</sup> The census states that the San language is spoken in 1,2 % of Namibian households.<sup>67</sup>

### **3.10 Kavango**

The Kavango are probably the largest minority of Namibia and take their name from the Kavango River in the north-east of Namibia. They were originally agriculturalist and fishers connected to the Lozi kingdom before being divided between German and Portugese colonialist in the late 19th century. The people of Kavango speak Kwangali or ruKwangali, according to the 2001 Census this is spoken in 9,7 % of Namibian households.<sup>68</sup> According to the CIA factbook they make up 9 % of the Namibian population.

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> National Planning Commission, op. cit. p.48

<sup>65</sup> Suzman, op. cit. p.1

<sup>66</sup> CIA Factbook (2012-04-22)

<sup>67</sup> National Planning Commission, op. cit. p.48

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

## 4. Methodology

Our method consists of two parts, a quantitative content analysis and respondent interviews. These two methods complement each other because one analyzes the content of the newspapers and the other analyzes the reporter's views on their part in the production of the content. In short, the quantitative content analysis answers *how* and the respondent interviews answers *why*.

### 4.1 Quantitative content analysis

Since we want to study how often specific minorities are occurring in the newspapers a method of examining this is the quantitative content analysis.<sup>69</sup> With it we can look at the frequency of minorities, space given to a specific subject or who is talking on behalf of the minorities. Most importantly we can make out certain patterns in the newspapers in the way that they write. The method can answer the question "is this description of a minority a one time event or a re-occurring event?"

Our variables can be divided into two parts. The first one covers the minorities and their role in the article. The second one focuses on the article itself, where in the newspaper it is published, its subject and its source. Answering these questions gives us a broader picture of the newspaper content regarding how they write about minorities.

When doing the quantitative content analysis we only looked for the explicit mentioning of minorities. As an example we would count articles which with the term "white", but we would not count articles with the term "boer", even though these two terms are interchangeable.<sup>70</sup> The same goes for articles mentioning places with minority names. As an example if an article mentioned someone from Rehoboth it was not included in the research, even though it was very likely that that person would have been a Rehoboth Baster.

### 4.2 Respondent interviews

Interviews were conducted with both reporters and editors at all the newspapers that were part of the content analysis. We chose to do respondent interviews as we felt this gives us a much better way of answering the question "why?" than informant interviews would do. Respondent interviews shed light on each interviewed persons thoughts, the same questions are used in all of the interviews which makes it easy to see both patterns and irregularities.<sup>71</sup>

We choose a fixed number of questions that we asked every reporter or editor (see Appendix II). Although we weren't limited by these questions and the interviews didn't take the form of answer-question interviews but rather of a conversation about the subject. The questions to reporters and editors were different to more suit their role in the making of the newspaper.

The subjects of the questions to the reporters were personal background, personal views on minorities, their role as a journalist and their influence as a journalist. These questions give us a background on the person answering so we can know them outside their role as a journalist. As an example we got to know if the person considered themselves a minority or not and their prior education. The subjects for the editors were personal background, personal views on minorities, background of the newspaper, and their role as an editor. The questions to the editors were more formal as they don't write as many stories as the reporters. More interesting were how they argued about choosing news and publishing names and pictures.

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<sup>69</sup> Esaiasson, Gilljam, Oscarsson & Wägnerud, *Metodpraktikan*, p.223, 2007, Vällingby: Nordstedts juridik

<sup>70</sup> During our research the minister of youth, national service, sport and culture, Kazenambo Kazenambo made an outburst against the Suns editor Jan Poolman, calling him both a "white devil" and a "bloody boer". Only articles with the term "white devil" were included in the research.

<sup>71</sup> Esaiasson, op. cit. p. 258

We did not have the luxury to be completely free in our choice of interviewees, although we did still get a good spread over gender and age. The contact with the reporters and editors were made mainly through e-mails and setting up meetings was not as easy as we had thought. It was easier to get hold of reporters as these were not as busy or as few as the editors.

#### **4.3 Presentation of the respondents**

**Toivo Ndjebela**, editor at New Era has worked as a journalist since 2006 when he started at NBC, Namibian Broadcasting. He later went on and worked in turn at both Informanté and the Windhoek Observer. In October 2009 he started as a journalist at New Era. Since August 2011 he has worked as an editor at that newspaper. He is mainly a political reporter but also does business. As Toivo is Oshivambo speaking he does not consider himself a minority.

**Irene Hoaes**, reporter at New Era has worked as a journalist since 2003 when she graduated with a bachelors degree in media studies from the University of Namibia. Before that she had studied agriculture and forestry at the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa. Her first job in journalism was at NBC, the Namibian Broadcasting. After five years at NBC she started at New Era where she works today. She considers herself a minority, but only in certain situations, as she is a mix of Damara, Nama and Herero.

**Shinovene Immanuel**, reporter at The Namibian worked at the Polytechnics student newspaper from 2007 to 2009. In his third year studying journalism at the Polytechnic he got an internship at the newsagency NAMPA (Namibian Press Agency). From there he got recruited by the Namibian where he works today. Shinovene belongs to the Oshivambo.

**Nghidipohamba Nangolo**, editor at Informanté started out as teacher in the north of Namibia. But after six months as teacher he got tired of it and started working as a journalist. This was simply because journalism was the easiest career to begin with. His first job was as radio-journalist for NBC. Nghidipohamba belongs to the Oshivambo.

**Rinelda Mouton**, reporter at Informanté have only worked as a journalist for a short period as she has just recently finished school. At first she didn't want to become a journalist but as she received a scholarship for a journalist education she decided to do it. Rinelda have previously worked at an Afrikaans speaking newspaper, the Republikein. She considers herself a colored.

**Festus Nakatana**, reporter at The Sun has worked as a journalist the past seven years. He first started when attending university where he studied journalism and communications technology, there he also worked for a student news service. Now he works full time at The Sun but has in the past worked for both Namibia Sport and the Windhoek Observer. He considers himself a sports journalist although he does write about other subjects too. Festus belong to the Oshivambo.

**Petronella Sibeene**, reporter at Windhoek Observer has worked as a journalist for six years and started at New Era after taking a degree in Media Studies at the University of Namibia. Two years ago she started at the Windhoek Observer and feels there is a big difference between a private- and state-owned newspapers. She doesn't consider herself a specialist in any subject. Petronella is originally from Zambia but have lived in Namibia for the last 13 years.

#### **4.4 Limitations**

For this thesis we have looked at five Namibian newspapers during a period of three weeks in November 2011. We chose to limit our study to this period of time, partly because of the other parts of our study that had to be performed. But also because we didn't know how much

material we would find and had to make sure we could finish our work in time. Connected to the uncertainty of how much we would find, we limited our study to only include the news-, opinion- and economic pages of the five newspapers.

We originally limited our interview to one editor and one reporter per newspaper. This was due to our limited time in Namibia. As time in Namibia went by, we found it hard to get hold of as many people as we had originally planned for. This can partly be explained by the fact that our stay coincided with the holiday season in Namibia. We have also limited our study to only include only the English-speaking newspapers in Namibia. Neither of the writers of this thesis is sufficiently adept at neither German nor Afrikaans to be able to read a newspaper in that language. Newspapers were singled out as our only media source for this study. This is due to two facts. Firstly, media material is more easily stored from a newspaper than from a tv or radio broadcast. Secondly, newspaper is the main news source for those with power to address ethnic minority issues.

#### **4.5 Validity and Reliability**

Crucial for a study to get an accurate result is to have good validity and reliability. Good reliability means that the result of a study have not been affected by random errors, e.g. coding errors due to tiredness, stress or sloppiness.<sup>72</sup> To have good validity, it is important that theoretical terms and questions correspond to the empirical findings of the study. For example, if we say that the number of articles mentioning minorities is a sign of how well represented those minorities are, we have to be sure that there is nothing, or almost nothing that conflict with this statement.<sup>73</sup>

To pursue a high reliability we have conducted most of the work together. When we read and analysed articles, we sat next to each other and had a constant discussion on what texts would qualify into our study. To get a high reliability for the interview part, we put together an interview guide document. This document consisted of questions that we, through discussion, saw fit to ask editors and reporters. This ensured that we would ask the respondents the same questions. Most of our interviews were performed by us as a pair. One of us was leading the interview, being responsible for asking all the questions from our interview guide. The other person were mostly there to ensure that the recording device was working, but also to remind the interviewer had he forgot any of the questions.

The fact that this study was written by two persons also gives it a high reliability, as everything has been discussed between two different minds. Errors and malfunctional parts of the study have been discovered more easily due to this fact. A negative impact of conducting this in pair, is that not everything can be done exactly in the same way. It's impossible for us, as different individuals, to ask questions in the same way, to interpret words the same way, and so on.

A few things might have influenced the validity of this study. First and foremost, one thing that became obvious during the course of conducting the study, was that readers of Namibian newspapers to a high degree can tell who is coming from what tribe without it being explicitly told in the article. Exactly how easy this is for the average reader is impossible to say. But from what we have learned from our field supervisor and the journalists we have interviewed, dialect, name, language and skin color that are being presented in an article are markers that will tell most people who is from what tribe. A study made by a person who could decode all these markers would be more voluminous in terms of articles including minorities. For us, this has not been a possibility, but the study is still valid as it gives answer to how often ethnic minorities explicitly are being mentioned.

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<sup>72</sup> Esaiasson, op. cit. p. 70

<sup>73</sup> Esaiasson, op. cit. p. 64

One major news event influenced our study to a great extent. The minister of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture, Kazenambo Kazenambo, was involved in a rather big controversy. He led a delegation to Germany in late 2011, to return Herero and Nama skulls that German race biologist had taken during the late nineteenth century. When being criticized over the size of the delegation, by Namibian Sun editor Jan Pohlman, the minister called him “white devil” and “a bloody boer”. This quote rendered a lot of articles, mostly criticizing Kazenambo, but still mentioning the two tribes. What articles would have been published instead of these is impossible to say, but it seems obvious that this event had a major impact on the total amount of articles mentioning ethnic minorities.

Finally, interpretation of answers and questions, by both us and the interviewees, might have had significance for the reliability of the final result.<sup>74</sup>

#### **4.6 Ethical considerations**

Since one part of our study rely on the cooperation from other people, the reporters and editors, it is crucial to follow some ethical rules laid out for this type of study. The Swedish Council of Science stipulates that there are four basic rules that should be followed when involving people in your study. These should be stated to participants before the actual study is carried out.<sup>75</sup>

The first rule is to inform the participating people what the study is all about and what their part will be. Basically, everything that might affect the participants will be in the study must be explained to them.<sup>76</sup>

Second, it is important to make clear that there is no obligation to participate. Contributing to the study is non compulsory and if a participant wishes to end their participating, at any time, this must be respected.<sup>77</sup>

Personal information about the participant should not be published, save for those studies when that information is important for the result.<sup>78</sup>

Finally, there is the rule of usage. This means that personal information collected from the participants during the study should only be used for this cause. The information is not to be used or lended out for any commercial usage, is not to be given to anyone else or used in any other way than scientific ones.<sup>79</sup>

For our study it has been quite easy to adapt to these rules. Editors and journalist have been willing to help us and has not felt any risk in participating. The option to be an anonymous participant has also been offered, with no one feeling that was a necessity.

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<sup>74</sup> Esaiasson, op. cit. p. 70

<sup>75</sup> Vetenskapsrådet, Forskningsetiska principer inom humanistisk-samhällsvetenskaplig forskning, p. 6, (2012-08-15) <http://www.codex.vr.se/texts/HSFR.pdf>

<sup>76</sup> Vetenskapsrådet, op. cit. p. 7

<sup>77</sup> Vetenskapsrådet, op. cit. p. 9

<sup>78</sup> Vetenskapsrådet, op. cit. p. 12

<sup>79</sup> Vetenskapsrådet, op. cit. p. 14

## 5. Results and analysis

### 5.1 Results of the quantitative research

#### Range

The quantitative research was performed during three weeks, from 8 to 28 November 2011. Five newspapers were included in the research, which resulted in a total of 51 editions. A total of 676 articles were published in the sections of the newspapers that we decided to look at. Of these 676 articles a total of 55, or 12,3 %, mentioned minorities directly, and thus are the articles upon which we based this study. Informanté and Windhoek Observer published three each of these articles, the Namibian Sun published 10 of them. The Namibian published a total of 16 articles and New Era published 23 articles which directly mentioned minorities.

#### Actors

Because of the many different minorities in Namibia we first wanted to see which of the minorities appeared in the newspaper. To do this we simply counted how many times minorities were mentioned in the articles, and which these minorities were. These were also divided into active or passive participation in the article. Active participation meaning that the article was about the minority or they had a prominent role in it. Passive participation on the other hand is when the minority is only mentioned in the article. A good example is the article “mixed reaction to Kazenambo outburst” published in New Era on the 18 november 2011. In it both Nama and Herero are mentioned as the article circulates around the minister of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture, Kazenambo Kazenambo’s statements about the editor of the Sun, Jan Poolman. The difference between the Nama and Herero participation in this article is that Utjiua Muinyangue, chairperson of the Ovaherero Genocide Committee makes a statement in it, thus making the Herero an active participant in the article. The distribution of mentioned minorities and their participation in the article can be seen in the following diagram.

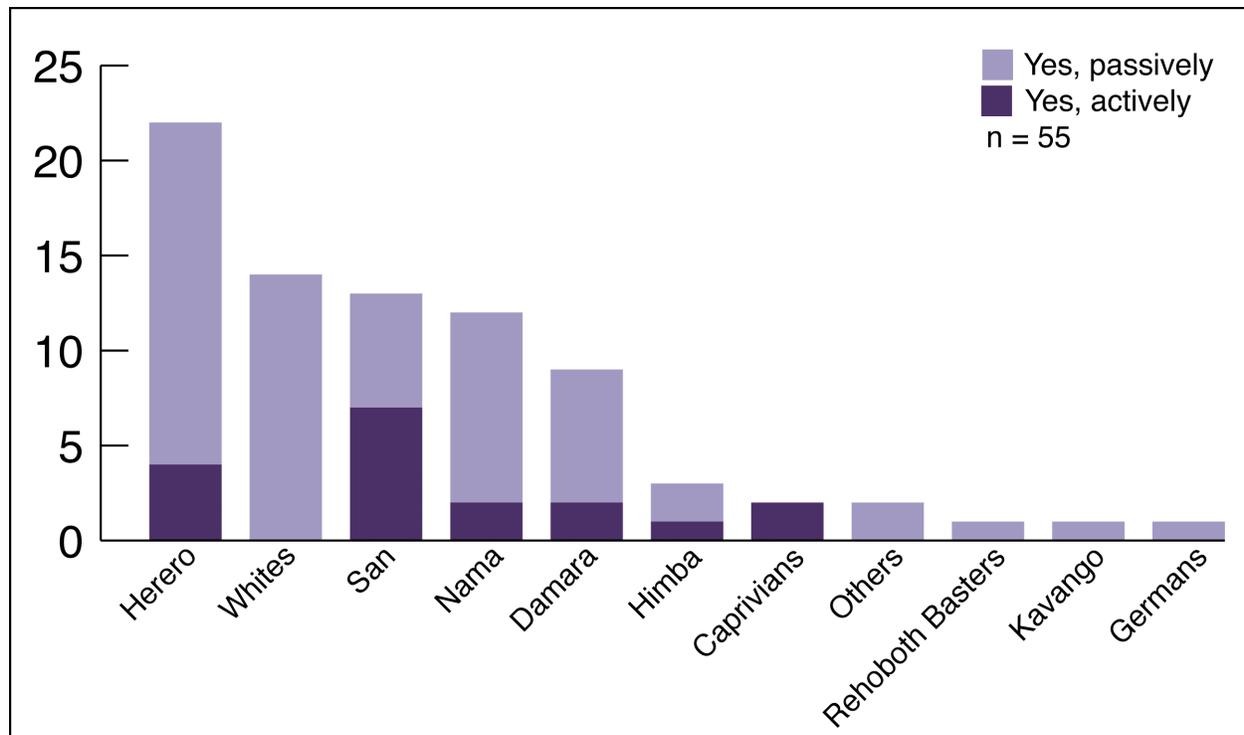


Figure 1: Distribution of minorities during three weeks. Also shown are active or passive participation in the article.

The most obvious conclusion of this diagram is that the minorities seldom are an active part of the articles; only in 19 of the 55 articles they have an active participation. With an active role in an article we mean that the article is talking about the minority, although the minority does not necessarily have to speak on their own. A passive article only mentions a minority in the passing. The most frequent occurring minority in the articles were the Herero, appearing in 23 of the 55 articles, but with a very low active participation. Striking is also that the white minority are mentioned 14 times, of which none are as an active part of the article. The most active minority in the articles were the San, actively participating in eight articles.

There were even fewer times that the minorities actually got a chance to speak for themselves. Only 13 times do we hear the voice of the minorities in the articles. Most often, 7 times, it is the voice of a tribal leader, in one case regarding the San, Katae August chief of the Ju/hoansi San community, makes a statement in New Era published 28 november 2011 about child brides among the San community. In an article in the Namibian, published 23 november 2011 August Modisa, senior traditional councillor of the Batswana ba Namibia Traditional Authority, makes several statements regarding fighting between Tswana factions. It was more common that someone else spoke about the minority, this happened in 20 of the articles. Most often it was a politician speaking about the minority, in 11 cases. In 7 cases it was a government official, such as a police officer.

### Content

One of the things we looked at regarding the content was how the minority was described, or if it was described at all. Even though the minorities most of the times were not described at all or had a neutral description the times they were described they had a directly negative description. 15 out of 55 articles with minorities in them had a negative description of the minority. As an example the article “Lobola: to pay or not pay?” published 25 november 2011 deals with the subject of Lobola, or dowry. The overall tone of the articles is derogatory using terms as “stone-age practice” while only referring to minorities and the prices of wives in these groups. The day before an editorial, “Traditional authorities’ divisions hamper skulls repatriation”, in the same newspaper points out the Nama and Herero traditional authorities as bickering and “hell-bent on making each other appear the villain.” Two weeks before the same newspaper had an editorial called “Tribal divisions embarrassing” using the same kind of derogatory language against tribal authorities among the Herero, Nama and Damara.

The description of minorities can also be linked to what subjects the articles were about. We chose to have both primary and secondary subjects as many articles contained more than one subject.

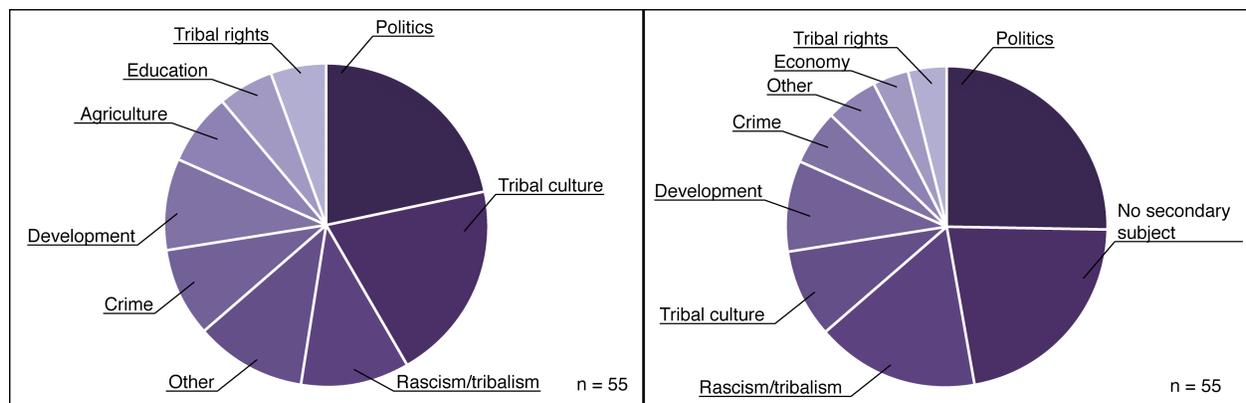


Figure 2: Primary subjects in the diagram to the left, and secondary subjects to the right.

Politics is the dominant subject, both primary and secondary. This is closely followed by racism/tribalism and tribal culture, once again both as primary and secondary subject. If we combine this with who outside of the minority is speaking about the minority it is safe to say that it is seldom the journalist negative views of the minority being expressed in the newspaper, but rather a politicians views. There are several examples of this; one is when minister of youth Kazenambo Kazenambo expressed his feelings over how editor in chief of the Sun Jan Poolman reported on the returning of Nama and Herero skulls. Then the minister used several racial slurs about white people that are considered to be racist.

## **5.2 Results of the respondent interviews**

### **The journalistic role of the editors**

As we have talked to two editors from two very different newspapers, Informanté and New Era, the answers differs to some degree, but there is also a lot of things they agree on. Toivo Ndjebela, editor at the state owned newspaper New Era, has previously worked at Informanté. He describes the difference between the two newspapers.

“... Informanté is more of a tabloid and are interested in who is sleeping with who in the government. We, at New Era, we are a national and serious newspaper. Our mandate is very clear. We're supposed to speak about communities, economy and politics.”<sup>80</sup>

Ndjebela also states that Windhoek Observer mainly focuses on writing about politics, current affairs and economics.

The editor-in-chief at Informanté, Nghidipohamba Ngolo, does not want to label his newspaper as a tabloid. The vision of the newspaper, he says, is to be unique and write stories that also are unique. He also says that every story that can be made with a Namibian angle is prioritized. Regarding how news about minorities is produced, the two editors says that Informanté and New Era have different ways of achieving this. Ngolo describes use Informanté way

“We do have beats. At our newspapers everyone has a section that they write about, but it's not that strict. We don't have anyone who is writing just about minority issues.”<sup>81</sup>

Ndjebelas' story about New Era is different though.

“Community reporters are writing about these questions. They basically go to the community on fridays, go to the ghettos, squatter camps, to where the san lives, hear their voices, make a story.”<sup>82</sup>

When we asked the two editors if owners and advertisers had any influence on what is published, they both put emphasis on that neither owner nor advertiser has any influence. Ndjebela explains how this matter is met by New Era

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<sup>80</sup> Interview with Toivo Ndjebela, editor, New Era, 2011-11-25, Windhoek

<sup>81</sup> Interview with Nghidipohamba Ngolo, editor-in-chief, Informanté, 2011-11-24, Windhoek

<sup>82</sup> Interview with Toivo Ndjebela, editor, New Era, 2011-11-25, Windhoek

“New Era was created through an act of parliament, from 1991. Our mandate is very clear, we must primarily report about government related issues. The commercial newspapers have to look to the economy first. For us, the obligation remains the same. The government don't dictate what and how we make news. We have advertisers, but we don't allow them to have a say. Individuals leaders in the government feel they own our newspapers, trying to force us to cover certain events, but we won't do that unless it's a story that we would cover anyway.”<sup>83</sup>

Informanté is being owned by the international company Trustco, their influence on the newspaper though is none existing according to Ngolo.

“None. Of course, most companies have PR-strategies; they do everything possible to get pr. We encourage people to advertise, but I decide what stories will be published. The advertisers have no influence at all. The owners can advertise in it, but they pay as everyone else.”<sup>84</sup>

### **The journalistic role of the reporters**

The five reporters we talked with gave us varying answers regarding how they see on their role as journalists and their influence on their readers. Festus Nakatana, reporter at the Namibian Sun, told us that journalist do not only work with reporting.

“We are in the business of reporting, but also to educate and inform the Namibians, and to entertain them. We want people to participate; therefore we have opinions and voxpops. We give our readers a chance to talk to us as well. It's important to have that kind of communication”<sup>85</sup>

Irene Hoaes works at New Era as a reporter; she says that it's sometimes hard to be objective.

“I write about things that are important to everyone, environment for instance, it's not a tribal issue. Land might be. With land it's a bit tricky. I have my own beliefs and sometimes I might not be so objective. It's hard sometimes, but not a lot.”<sup>86</sup>

Petronella Sibeene is a reporter at Windhoek Observer; she says that the influence of journalists is great.

“They say a pen is mightier than a sword, so anything we write has impact on our readers. We have the power to influence the minds of the masses out there, sometimes it builds, sometimes it destroys.”<sup>87</sup>

Rinelda Mouton, from Informanté agrees with Petronella regarding the destructive power of journalism.

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Interview with Nghidipohamba Ngolo, editor-in-chief, Informanté, 2011-11-24, Windhoek

<sup>85</sup> Interview with Festus Nakatana, reporter, Namibian Sun, 2011-12-06, Windhoek

<sup>86</sup> Interview with Irene Hoaes, reporter, New Era, 2011-11-28, Windhoek

<sup>87</sup> Interview with Petronella Sibeene, reporter, Windhoek Observer, 2012-01-20, Windhoek

“We actually have a lot of power you know; tomorrow we can destroy a business completely because of what we write. It’s that strong. At the same time, you don’t really know how you affect people, I just write stories.”<sup>88</sup>

All the reporters have responded in a similar way concerning how much time they usually spend on articles, saying that it all depends on how many sources you work with and how long the article is supposed to be. Shinovene Immanuel of The Namibian sums it up.

“It usually takes me from four to five hours if it’s a normal article. But up to two weeks if it’s a feature article, it all depends on the article”<sup>89</sup>

### **The influence as a journalist for editors**

A lot of the articles we read during our analysis period contained either names or pictures. These work as codes for what tribe a person belong to, these codes can be interpreted by people in general. Ndjobela tell us that there is a rule concerning the matter of names and pictures.

“We pay special attention to the minorities, we report in such a way to make the government react, if there is something that isn’t working. But we treat all stories the same, we want to reflect all of the people, and names and pictures are part of that. Each story is valued as a story, not because of if it’s minorities in it.”<sup>90</sup>

Ngolo from Informanté sees that there might be connections to the time of apartheid.

“It's interesting, we come also from the apartheid era, twenty years ago. We come from a tradition who has indoctrinated us that there are differences between certain tribes, but some people take advantage of it. For me, it's not interesting, if a person do something, he did it. We write where things happen, but we're not trying to insinuate that he did it because he was San or Herero, it's not for us to do. I don't have to describe a person's colour or background, for me it's not important. In some situations it's part of the story, as when a black rugby player was beaten because of the colour of his skin, then it was a clear case of racism and we wrote that he was black.”<sup>91</sup>

Neither Informanté nor Namibian Sun has a policy that states how they should write about ethnic minorities. Ndjobela describes how this issue is addressed at New Era.

“There is nothing written, more of an understanding, basically. All people, whether minority or majority, black or white, must be represent. Everybody should have a fair chance to comment on recent topics.”<sup>92</sup>

The Informanté way is somewhat different.

“We would like to be seen as at least be operating within the, I would call it general or international, journalistic codes and ethics. There are certain things

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<sup>88</sup> Interview with Rinelda Mouton, reporter, Informanté, 2011-12-16, Windhoek

<sup>89</sup> Interview with Shinovene Immanuel, reporter, The Namibian, 2012-01-10, Windhoek

<sup>90</sup> Interview with Toivo Ndjobela, editor, New Era, 2011-11-25, Windhoek

<sup>91</sup> Interview with Nghidipohamba Ngolo, editor-in-chief, Informanté, 2011-11-24, Windhoek

<sup>92</sup> Interview with Toivo Ndjobela, editor, New Era, 2011-11-25, Windhoek

you can't mention. If you go into someone's lives, you have to have a good reason. You should always balance your story and cross check your facts. I bend the rules sometimes, depending on the story, news is news."<sup>93</sup>

### **The influence as a journalist for reporters**

As said above, the newspapers have often unwritten agendas on how to write about minorities. Festus Nakatana explains how this works at Namibian Sun.

"We don't have any kind of policy, but as part of our editorial standards, we can't portray them negatively, to call the San people bushmen or something. It's an unwritten rule and something that we fully enforce here, that everyone knows."<sup>94</sup>

Irene Hoaes have not seen any written policy at New Era regarding how to write about minorities, though there is discussion about it.

"You must not write stories that instigate tribalism. Tribalism is giving one tribe more things or everything on the cost of the others."<sup>95</sup>

Nakatana continues to explain how the discussion goes at Namibian Sun whether to publish names and pictures of people belonging to a minority, or not.

"You can see who is from what tribe, but it ends there. If the person is involved in a big case, I mean, news is news."<sup>96</sup>

Festus Nakatana also told us that he thinks there is a big responsibility towards readers, when you are working as a journalist.

"Yes, a big one. We're not only here to entertain them. We also want to see an end to evils in society, corruption and so on. We're running competitions to support things we want to see. We are here to serve the interests of our readers, not only the ones they know about."<sup>97</sup>

Hoaes do not think there a special responsibility connected with being a journalist, just saying "No" when we ask her. Petronella Sibeene sees that there are great responsibility; "We have to be the voice of the voiceless"<sup>98</sup> There seems to be no agreement on whether people from ethnic minorities are being affected if journalists don't mention them in the newspapers. Hoaes says that it does not affect them.

"I don't think so, because we're supposed to see ourselves as Namibians, ideally there are no minorities out there, it's in here. There are minorities, but we don't say it out loud, it's not official."<sup>99</sup>

Nakatana, though, disagrees.

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<sup>93</sup> Interview with Nghidipohamba Ngolo, editor-in-chief, Informanté, 2011-11-24, Windhoek

<sup>94</sup> Interview with Festus Nakatana, reporter, Namibian Sun, 2011-12-06, Windhoek

<sup>95</sup> Interview with Petronella Sibeene, reporter, Windhoek Observer, 2012-01-20, Windhoek

<sup>96</sup> Interview with Festus Nakatana, reporter, Namibian Sun, 2011-12-06, Windhoek

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Interview with Petronella Sibeene, reporter, Windhoek Observer, 2012-01-20, Windhoek

<sup>99</sup> Interview with Irene Hoaes, reporter, New Era, 2011-11-28, Windhoek

“Obviously it matters; some people believe only what the newspapers write. If we don't report on some issues, we're taking that away from our readers, what they should know. We're in this kind of competitive environment. We can't always, every day, send people to the minorities, we don't have enough money.”<sup>100</sup>

As do Sibeene

“We would actually by deprive them of the right of being heard, problems might not be heard. By not writing about them, in the end, people won't be able to assist.”<sup>101</sup>

Immanuel agrees with Sibeene and Nakatana

“People want to see themselves in the newspaper, so of course it's affects them whether we mention them or not. If there's a story about certain persons in the communities, then they will actually read the article and even tell his or hers friend to read it. It makes people feel included”<sup>102</sup>

Concerning publishing names and pictures of persons belonging to ethnic minorities, all of the respondents agree with each other. They say that everyone can see who belongs to what minority, but that it's not their role do censor reality.

“You can see who is from what tribe, but it ends there. If the person is involved in a big case we have to show the name, I mean, news is news.”<sup>103</sup>

Irene Hoaes agrees.

“If that's my name, and that tells who I am, then what can I do? If you give a name, you directly know what tribe that person belongs to, it's unfortunate, but we have to make news.”<sup>104</sup>

### **The editor's personal views on the media situation for ethnic minorities**

Editors Ndjebela and Ngolo have certain thoughts on why and how ethnic minorities are being represented in the newspapers of Namibia. Ndjebela thinks media often focuses on other things.

“The voices of the minorities aren't always represented; the media preoccupies themselves with main things, big stories on corruption and things like that. Things that sell in their view. The minority news is not something that would sell, in their view.”<sup>105</sup>

Ngolo have an explanation to this situation, connected to the “main things” that Ndjebela speaks of.

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<sup>100</sup> Interview with Festus Nakatana, reporter, Namibian Sun, 2011-12-06, Windhoek

<sup>101</sup> Interview with Petronella Sibeene, reporter, Windhoek Observer, 2012-01-20, Windhoek

<sup>102</sup> Interview with Shinovene Immanuel, reporter, The Namibian, 2012-01-10, Windhoek

<sup>103</sup> Interview with Festus Nakatana, reporter, Namibian Sun, 2011-12-06, Windhoek

<sup>104</sup> Interview with Irene Hoaes, reporter, New Era, 2011-11-28, Windhoek

<sup>105</sup> Interview with Toivo Ndjebela, editor, New Era, 2011-11-25, Windhoek

“My own people, the Oshiwambo, they dominate almost everything, the army, police, government. I feel that these people only give the minority a chance, because they are embarrassed, not because they want to do it. They feel like they have to do it, so that they look good.”<sup>106</sup>

Ndjebela thinks there might also be a problem with ethnic minorities lacking the prominent speakers.

“It’s not always easy to represent the voices of the minority because they don’t have prominent people among them who speak at public events where the media are. It’s actually us, the media, who go to them instead of them coming to us. If they had more prominent people among them, who speak at public rallies and public meetings, you would expect them to have more coverage in the press.”<sup>107</sup>

Ngolo continues to explain why minorities do not get more coverage in his newspaper, *Informanté*.

“The San are in Tsumkwe, far away, the same goes for the Namas and Damaras. For newspapers, for us, we don't have offices in Tsumkwe. If I hire someone in Tsumkwe, he will not cover my costs when it comes to selling ads. Because of this economic situation, the minorities are not covered. But they do have at least a chance to call us and say what they want to get inside the paper, if it's interesting we can make a story.”<sup>108</sup>

### **The reporter’s personal views on the media situation for ethnic minorities**

Festus Nakatana thinks that the media coverage of the ethnic minorities is not sufficient. He agrees with *Informanté* editor Ngolo, saying that certain areas are not really covered

“In Namibia, we have the San and Ovahimba tribes, who are the underprivileged tribes. They don't really have any representatives within journalism, though I know people within the industry who are Herero, Kavango and Caprivians. But the only fair coverage the San and Ovahimba get is when government people travel to them. They also don’t get enough coverage, because there are no reporters deployed in those specific areas. There is also the problem of language; we can’t afford to hire staff to cover all the different languages of Namibia.”<sup>109</sup>

Shinovene Immanuel agrees with Nakatana.

“Right now, community issues are not at the front. Sometimes, if the ministers go to the communities, then they will feature. But I think it will change, we journalists always try to emphasize those without voices.”<sup>110</sup>

Irene Hoaes said that it also can be a bad thing if minorities feature much in the news.

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<sup>106</sup> Interview with Nghidipohamba Ngolo, editor-in-chief, *Informanté*, 2011-11-24, Windhoek

<sup>107</sup> Interview with Toivo Ndjebela, editor, *New Era*, 2011-11-25, Windhoek

<sup>108</sup> Interview with Nghidipohamba Ngolo, editor-in-chief, *Informanté*, 2011-11-24, Windhoek

<sup>109</sup> Interview with Festus Nakatana, reporter, *Namibian Sun*, 2011-12-06, Windhoek

<sup>110</sup> Interview with Shinovene Immanuel, reporter, *The Namibian*, 2012-01-10, Windhoek

“They don’t really feature. It’s not good if they don’t get enough room for making good things, and also not good if they feature for making bad things. So it depends.”<sup>111</sup>

Petronella Sibeene explains that the Windhoek Observer do not really write a lot about minorities.

“Different media houses have different agendas and policies. For us, at Observer, to cover the story of minorities, it usually has to be some kind of bad news. Bad news is good news for us. It’s different with the Namibian who do a lot of positive stories regarding minorities. Government media houses cover minorities too, but usually only when politicians visit them. In general, there have been improvements on how newspapers try to cover issues that affect the minorities in the country, but we can still do more. I can’t say all the groups are at the same level, in terms of media coverage”<sup>112</sup>

For Rinelda Mouton, writing about minorities is not that much of an issue.

“You don’t really see stories about minorities in our Informanté, we are more of a gossip paper. And for me, I don’t even know the differences between all the groups, so for me there’s no difference. Everyone is the same”<sup>113</sup>

Though she has a strong belief that the cultural background of the people in the article should have no importance, yet it does.

“A story is published because of the strongness of it, not because of the colour of the people, because people will read a strong story more. In the entertainment section, I always get questions like “where is all the white people, where are all the coloured people?” White and coloured people don’t make news; more black people read our paper than white, so of course we make more news about them. White persons will mostly read Republikein or the German paper, not our paper.”<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Interview with Irene Hoaes, reporter, New Era, 2011-11-28, Windhoek

<sup>112</sup> Interview with Petronella Sibeene, reporter, Windhoek Observer, 2012-01-20, Windhoek

<sup>113</sup> Interview with Rinelda Mouton, reporter, Informanté, 2011-12-16, Windhoek

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

## 6. Conclusions and discussion

Namibian newspapers reporting about ethnic minorities certainly hold up to the high standards and grades given by Reporters Without Borders and other media organizations. Both reporters and editors are highly skilled and educated individuals who take pride in their work. They are also aware of the problems regarding the reporting about the minorities even though they can't always do something about it. Certainly there are flaws among the reporting but as we have seen the responsibility towards these attitudes definitely lies more within the boundaries of the government than within the boundaries of the reporters and editors.

The first conclusion we can draw from our research is that minorities are not very visible in Namibian newspapers, at least not to an untrained eye. Minorities were seldom mentioned in the articles published during a three week period and they were even more infrequent in their participation in the articles, their voices are seldom heard in articles, even in articles that directly involves the minority. This can to some extent be explained by the fact that minorities are not in positions that often appear in media, such as high politicians, business executives and so on, this is especially true for the San and Himba, the most marginalised groups in the research. One can argue that these newspapers are not aimed at the minorities, a lot of which live in remote villages and don't have access to a daily newspaper. That is true, but then how are the minorities portrayed to the greater majority which the newspapers are aimed at? To discuss this using our theory, agenda setting, there is a clear point to make here. Since the newspapers of the Namibian capital, Windhoek, do not write that many stories on minorities, one can imagine how this issue will not be seen as an important one by their readers. If this is mainly due to the news discussions within the newspapers only or if the government plays an important role here is hard to say. But quite a few of our respondents talks about the governmental view on minorities in the interviews, so there is an awareness amongst them that could affect the news selection.

Minorities are most of the times not described at all or described in a neutral way. When described though, a larger portion of the descriptions were negative. It would be unfair to say that minorities overall are described in a negative way, after all only 15 articles over a three week period were negative. The characteristics attributed to the minorities in these cases varied. Common were editorials which accused minority tribal authorities of bickering and whining among themselves. These were obviously reporters own views on the tribal authorities. Still, the times when the minorities are described in a negative way, this will affect the readers according to the second level of agenda setting. That is, not only might readers think it is important since it is written, they will also adopt the tone and word the mentioned minority is described with.

More common though were statements made by persons who were interviewed, like politicians. These statements were seldom questioned by the newspapers themselves and just published; the most obvious example is the outburst of Kazenambo Kazenambo.

Perhaps the most central question is why minorities are portrayed the way they are? As we have seen above minorities are seldom portrayed in any way, no characterizations are attributed to them. When they are portrayed in a negative way it is most often done by a third part and why they speak negatively about the minorities we cannot say. As for the reporters the answer is obviously not an easy one and we can not give a definite answer. One thing we know is that we have no examples of a serious treading, like pure racism or an outright accusation of tribalism. Although the examples we have witness about a certain attitude against minorities, and especially tribal authorities. These attitudes probably stem back from the government's view on minorities, which boils down to that there are no minorities. But once again it is hard to know for certain, all we can say is that reporters certainly are influenced by politicians and the government. This conforms to what agenda setting says about media and, in this case, the government battling for control over the agenda. It seems as the government have managed to influence media in how they are reporting about minorities. Still, many of the reporters and editors say that minority issues are very important. That it is crucial to be the voice of the people

and that of the minorities. If this will change the way minorities are being portrayed in the future is hard to say. All we can be sure of is that there actually is a battle over the agenda in Namibia, as the agenda setting theory have foreseen.

There are three clearly distinguishable problems that both reporters and editors raise regarding the minorities media situation in Namibia. The first one is, as already mentioned above, that the minorities barely have any spokespersons. They seldom have high ranking politicians, influential professors, rich business executives or the likes. Obviously this is a problem in the Namibian society but nothing the reporters can do anything about while writing their story. The second problem raised is that the newspapers can't afford having reporters in every corner of Namibia. This is obviously more of an economic question and probably nothing that reporters or even editors can do something about. And we have to remember that Namibia is huge country with a very sparse population, having reporters everywhere simply wouldn't work, and it probably wouldn't make much good for the minorities anyway.

The third problem is probably the biggest one and something that reporters and editors actually can do something about. It is as simple as that news about minorities does not sell. Even though the minorities constitute almost half of Namibia's population nobody wants to read about them. Obviously the minorities do not even want to read about themselves. Even though most of the interviewed reporters and editors agree that you can't leave out the minorities from the news, they still have to feature somehow. The quantitative research once again shows us clearly that minorities don't feature that much in the news and when they do the topics are one sided (politics and tribalism) and the voices heard are not from within the minority, most often coming from politicians or government officials. This can be connected with the theory of agenda-setting. People do not want to read about minorities because the newspapers don't want to write about them. If newspapers sets the agenda, starts writing about minorities, problematizes their situation and the government's treatment of the question, people will want to read about it. This agenda setting is probably not a product of the news themselves but rather an agenda setting from the government's side, neglecting the minority problem, as many of the interviewees witness about.

In our theory, we have used parts from the works of Dennis McQuail and Carlos E. Cortés thoughts on media as a reproductive part in the construction of stereotypes. Their thoughts are also very much connected and intertwined with the agenda setting theory: what is being written is picked up by the readers.

In our quantitative part, we found that a lot of the articles mentioning ethnic minorities do in fact have racism/tribalism or tribal culture as their primary or secondary subject. This could mean that journalists actually are reproducing tribalistic stereotypes. As earlier presented though, this does not mean that the journalist try to instigate tribalism. It is rather the view of an official person, often a politician, who speaks negatively about the ethnic groups. By letting politicians speak derogatory about ethnic minorities though, they might be a reproductive part in the construction of stereotypes, as potent as McQuail and Cortés picture the journalistic counterparts. Seeing this through the glasses of agenda setting, it seems clear that if politicians and other official persons are allowed to say negative things about minorities, without being questioned, those thoughts and use of words has a significant risk of being transferred to the readers.

In our interviews with journalists it is clear that there is a high standard and a deep commitment to write fair and honest. Irene Hoaes at New Era says that there is discussion when an article might instigate tribalism.

Almost every one of our interviewees are mentioning either moral, high standards, cross checking facts, fairness, being the voice of the voiceless or resembling terms. It seems clear that Namibian journalists want to fight tribalism and differences between the tribes.

## **6.1 Further research**

During our work with this study, we have stumbled upon some things that we feel would have been very interesting to look deeper into.

First and foremost, as we have mentioned in several sections of this study, what we have done only gives one part of the whole picture. To get a greater understanding on how ethnic minorities are being represented in the Namibian newspapers, one would have to know how to identify individuals from the minorities based on names and pictures being published. As we were in no position to do this at our arrival in Namibia, it would be a natural continuation of the work we have done.

As we have focused on the minorities in our study, one thing that would shed more light on this topic as a whole would be to investigate how much Ovambos are being mentioned in the newspapers. As they are the majority, and from what we have learned from interviewing journalist also control most of the official offices, it would be interesting to see if they get more room in the media, compared to their percentage of the total population.

Merging our study with the ideas mentioned above would, in our view, give a more complete picture of how Namibian newspapers write about different ethnic groups.

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## **Interviews**

Festus Nakatana, reporter, *Namibian Sun*, 2011-12-06, Windhoek

Irene Hoaes, reporter, *New Era*, 2011-11-28, Windhoek

Nghidipohamba Ngolo, editor-in-chief, *Informanté*, 2011-11-24, Windhoek

Petronella Sibeene, reporter, *Windhoek Observer*, 2012-01-20, Windhoek

Rinelda Mouton, reporter, *Informanté*, 2011-12-16, Windhoek

Shinovene Immanuel, reporter, *The Namibian*, 2012-01-10, Windhoek

Toivo Ndjebela, editor, *New Era*, 2011-11-25, Windhoek

# Appendix I: Codebook

1. Article ID
2. Coder
  1. Andreas
  2. Erik
3. Date of coding
4. Newspaper
  1. The Namibian
  2. New Era
  3. Namibian Sun
  4. Informanté
  5. Windhoek Observer
5. Publish date
6. Type of text
  1. News article
  2. News item
  3. Editorial
  4. Reportage
  5. Caption
- Present in the article
7. San
  1. Yes - actively
  2. Yes - passively
  3. No
8. Tswana
  1. Yes - actively
  2. Yes - passively
  3. No
9. Nama
  1. Yes - actively
  2. Yes - passively
  3. No
10. Rehoboth Basters
  1. Yes - actively
  2. Yes - passively
  3. No
11. Caprivians
  1. Yes - actively
  2. Yes - passively
  3. No
12. Coloureds
  1. Yes - actively
  2. Yes - passively
  3. No
13. Damara
  1. Yes - actively
  2. Yes - passively
  3. No
14. Herero
  1. Yes - actively
  2. Yes - passively
  3. No
15. Himba
  1. Yes - actively
  2. Yes - passively
  3. No
16. Kavango
  1. Yes - actively
  2. Yes - passively
  3. No
17. Topnaar
  1. Yes - actively
  2. Yes - passively
  3. No
18. Whites
  1. Yes - actively
  2. Yes - passively
  3. No
19. Whites (Afrikaans)
  1. Yes - actively
  2. Yes - passively
  3. No
20. Whites (Germans)
  1. Yes - actively
  2. Yes - passively
  3. No
21. Whites (English)

1. Yes - actively
  2. Yes - passively
  3. No
22. Not explicitly told
1. Yes - actively
  2. Yes - passively
  3. No
23. Other
1. Yes - actively
  2. Yes - passively
  3. No
24. How is the minority described in the article
1. Positively
  2. Neutral
  3. Negatively
  4. Not at all
25. Is the minority assigned any special qualities
1. No
  2. Yes
26. What role has the minority, or the person belonging to the minority, in the article.
1. Lead role
  2. Supporting role
27. If a person from the minority makes an active statement in the article, who is that person.
1. A politician
  2. A tribal leader
  3. A civilian
  9. The minority has no voice in the article
28. In what part of the newspaper is the article published.
1. News Windhoek
  2. News Namibia
  3. News
  4. Economy
  5. Editorial/Opinion
  6. Other
29. Main subject of the article
1. Crime
  2. Economics
  3. Politics
  4. Agriculture
  5. Development
  6. Education
  7. Racism/Tribalism
  8. Other
  9. Tribal culture
  10. Tribal rights
30. Secondary subject of the article
1. Crime
  2. Economics
  3. Politics
  4. Agriculture
  5. Development
  6. Education
  7. Racism/Tribalism
  8. No secondary subject
  9. Other
  10. Tribal culture
  11. Tribal rights
31. Source
1. Reporter
  2. Nampa
  3. Foreign news agency
  4. Nampa and foreign news agency
  5. Other
  6. Not explicitly told

## **Appendix II: Questions for the respondent interviews**

### **For journalists**

#### **Background questions**

For how long have you worked as a journalist? Do you work full-time as a journalist?

What kind of education do you have? Any special education in journalism?

Do you have any journalistic role models? Who?

Why did you become a journalist?

Have you worked on other newspapers? Or with radio or TV?

Are you a specialist in any subject?

Do you belong to a minority? Which?

Did you have any education on how to write about minorities when you went to journalism school? Have you had any internal education on how to write about minorities on this or any other newspaper you worked on?

#### **Personal questions**

What is your view on minorities' visibility in media? In general?

How do you think certain minorities are portrayed in media? Is it a correct portrayal?

What do you think about the government's view on minorities?

Do you think the discussion, or the lack thereof, about minorities is important? In general? In your editorial? Within the minorities themselves?

Do you think minorities get enough room in the media?

#### **Your role as a journalist**

How much time do you usually spend on an article?

Does there exist any policy about how to write about minorities on this newspaper? Does there exist any unwritten agenda on how to write about minorities on this newspaper?

Do you have an internal discussion on your newspaper about how to write about minorities? Is this discussion open?

Are there any subjects or issues that are more sensitive to write about regarding minorities? Are there any minorities that are more sensitive writing about? Who? Why?

People can many times tell what minority a person in the newspaper belong to by their name and/or picture. How does this affect your views on publishing names and pictures?

Is there a difference in writing about certain minorities?

If you belong to a minority, how does this affect your work as a journalist? Your writing? Your choice of news?

#### **Your influence as a journalist**

If you leave out certain minorities in the newspaper, how do you think this affects them?

How do you think what you write about and choose to write about affect your readers?

Do you avoid writing about certain minorities because of reactions from the public, the government, the minority?

### **For editors**

#### **Background questions - editor**

For how long have you worked as a journalist? As an editor? Do you work full-time as an editor?

What kind of education do you have? Any special education in journalism?

Do you have any journalistic role models? Who?

Why did you become a journalist?

Have you worked on other newspapers? Or with radio or TV?

Are you a specialist in any subject?

Do you belong to a minority? Which?

Did you have any education on how to write about minorities when you went to journalism school? Have you had any internal education on how to write about minorities on this or any other newspaper you worked on?

#### **Background questions – newspaper**

Who is the owner of the newspaper? When did it start?

How is the economy of the newspaper? Subscriptions/advertisement?

Number of copies? Increasing/decreasing?

Political view of the newspaper?

How do you regard the other newspapers in contrast to your own? (Namibian Sun, The Namibian, New Era, Windhoek Observer, Informanté)

#### **Personal questions**

What is your view on minorities' visibility in media? In general?

How do you think certain minorities are portrayed in media? Is it a correct portrayal?

What do you think about the government's view on minorities?

Do you think the discussion, or the lack thereof, about minorities is important? In general? In your editorial? Within the minorities themselves?

Do you think minorities get enough room in the media?

#### **Your role as an editor**

What becomes news in your newspaper?

Do you have a policy on how to write about minorities? Do you have an unwritten agenda on how to write about minorities?

How do you think about publishing names and pictures when it comes to minorities?

Do you let certain reporters write about issues regarding minorities?

How much influence do owners and advertisers have on what is published in the newspaper?

## Appendix III: Name of the articles, in what newspaper, and publish date

Newspaper	Publish date	Name of article
Informanté	2011-11-10	Black rugby player assaulted of 'invading Boer territory'
Informanté	2011-11-10	Mission to abduct Muyongo botched
Informanté	2011-11-10	Walvis under burglar attack
Windhoek Observer	2011-11-18	Kazenambo comes out guns blazing
Windhoek Observer	2011-11-18	Namibian Beauties
Windhoek Observer	2011-11-25	Good news on inequality front
Namibian Sun	2011-11-08	Tribal divisions embarrassing
Namibian Sun	2011-11-08	Gobabis women hospitalized after attempted suicide
Namibian Sun	2011-11-17	Kazenambo loses head over skulls
Namibian Sun	2011-11-18	Mr President, call your minister to order
Namibian Sun	2011-11-22	Nama chiefs demand education, development in south
Namibian Sun	2011-11-23	Namibian skulls in Germany owned by individuals
Namibian Sun	2011-11-24	Traditional authorities divisions hamper skulls repatriation
Namibian Sun	2011-11-25	Kazenambo got off easily
Namibian Sun	2011-11-25	The Quiver Tree, a symbol of the south.
Namibian Sun	2011-11-25	Lobola: To pay or not to pay?
New Era	2011-11-08	Woman hospitalized after failed suicide
New Era	2011-11-10	Demarcation angers Caprivians
New Era	2011-11-11	Of course we will welcome you, Khanyi
New Era	2011-11-14	Nudo members defect en-masse to Swapo
New Era	2011-11-15	School turns away San learners
New Era	2011-11-16	Picture: The deputy minister...
New Era	2011-11-16	Picture: Hai//O traditional authority...
New Era	2011-11-16	Picture: Members of the...
New Era	2011-11-16	Sabelo the "cool" guy
New Era	2011-11-16	Defectors speak out but prefer anonymity
New Era	2011-11-17	San learners "not turned away from school"
New Era	2011-11-17	Picture: Mami Tjaverua (above)...
New Era	2011-11-18	Experts dissect Nudo defection
New Era	2011-11-18	Mixed reaction to Kazenamambo outburst
New Era	2011-11-18	Ngaujake threatens to sue Nudo
New Era	2011-11-21	Program targets the marginalized
New Era	2011-11-22	Hero's welcome for the body fo the late chief Hoveka at airport
New Era	2011-11-22	Shebeen owners vow to fight crime
New Era	2011-11-22	More skulls to come from Germany
New Era	2011-11-23	I eat dog meat, so what?
New Era	2011-11-25	A chief falling in the line of duty
New Era	2011-11-25	Introducing Namibias Malcolm X
New Era	2011-11-28	Upsearch in child brides
The Namibian	2011-11-08	Bags of money from Germany will not equal restitution
The Namibian	2011-11-11	Picture: Making living
The Namibian	2011-11-17	Collectors of skulls had hidden agenda – German ambassador
The Namibian	2011-11-17	Kazenambo goes ballistic
The Namibian	2011-11-18	Political Perspective by Gwen Lister
The Namibian	2011-11-22	Damaras celebrate annual Gaob festival
The Namibian	2011-11-22	Scrutinies trafficking of human remains, scholar
The Namibian	2011-11-23	Tswana factions fight over control of assets
The Namibian	2011-11-23	Picture: On the fringes of society
The Namibian	2011-11-24	Nama leaders meet with Pohamba
The Namibian	2011-11-24	Ithana denies rift in Swapo
The Namibian	2011-11-25	"BEE not about owning white business"
The Namibian	2011-11-25	To recognize or not: Ovazemba quest for a chief
The Namibian	2011-11-25	Political Perspective by Gwen Lister
The Namibian	2011-11-25	Draughtsmen claim discrimination by architecths

## **Appendix IV: About the authors**

Andreas Heneborn and Erik Melin are both students in the program for Journalism and Multimedia at the University of Södertörn in Sweden. In June 2011, after working day and night for two weeks with the application, they were granted a MFS-scholarship. During twelve weeks, the study was conducted in Namibia. Mostly in the capital of Windhoek.

Andreas Heneborn has a profound interest in development issues, and has done a ten week long internship at the SIDA magazine Omvärlden. Before embarking on his journalistic journey, he has studied both history and political science. History is one of Andreas special interests.

Erik Melin is very interested in political issues, both in Sweden and abroad. In terms of development issues, he is especially interested in the political progress of developing countries. Before starting the journalistic studies at Södertörn University, he got his bachelor's degree in Practical Philosophy at the Stockholm University, with Political Science as his secondary subject.