

# VOICES FROM MARIKANA

## AN ANALYSIS OF HOW SOUTH AFRICAN MEDIA HAVE REPORTED THE MARIKANA MASSACRE OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS

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### INTRODUCTION

MEDIA MONITORING AFRICA (MMA) MONITORED 20 ONLINE NEWS MEDIA IN SOUTH AFRICA TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER THE MEDIA WAS FULFILLING ITS ROLE OF UNPACKING THE ISSUE FOR CITIZENS AND ALSO WHETHER THE MEDIA WAS PERFORMING ITS DUTY OF HOLDING THOSE IN POWER TO ACCOUNT. ARTICLES PUBLISHED BETWEEN THE 1ST AND 30TH OF AUGUST OF EACH YEAR FROM 2012 TO 2022 WERE COLLECTED AND ANALYSED BY DEXTER, AND FURTHER MONITORED ACCORDING TO MMA METHODOLOGY.

#### FINDINGS COVERAGE OVER TIME

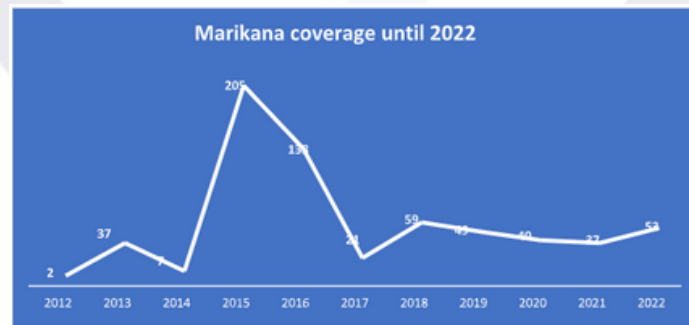


FIGURE 1: AMOUNT OF COVERAGE OF MARIKANA (THE NUMBERS ARE BASED ON WHAT DEXTER SCRAPED FOR THAT PARTICULAR YEAR)

A SPIKE IN COVERAGE CAN BE SEEN AROUND 2015/2016. THE INCREASE CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO THE COVERAGE AFTER THE FARLAM COMMISSIONER RELEASED THE MARIKANA REPORT IN JUNE 2015, AND THE CALL FROM VARIOUS SECTORS SUCH AS POLITICAL PARTIES FOR THE THEN POLICE COMMISSIONER, RIAH PHIVEGA TO STEP DOWN FROM HER POSITION.

OTHER STORIES DURING THIS PERIOD WERE ON FAMILIES OF THE VICTIMS KILLED IN MARIKANA [TAKING THE MINISTER OF POLICE TO COURT FOR CIVIL CLAIMS](#), SEEKING COMPENSATION.

TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE MAGNITUDE OF THE EVENT, THE NUMBER OF STORIES THE MEDIA PUBLISHED DURING THIS PERIOD IS CONCERNING.

#### TOP 5 TOPICS

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Justice system	25%	24%	14%	33%	11%		27%	20%	40%	27%	23%
Commemoration	21%	18%	43%	15%	28%	19%	24%	*	*	27%	49%
Crime	8%	11%	29%	11%	*	24%	*	*	18%	*	17%
Protest	6%	13%	*	7%	*	10%	12%	8%	*	*	*
Economics	6%	*	*	*	8%	*	12%	8%	8%	14%	*
Entertainment	*	*	14%	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	2%
Other	*	*	*	10%	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Election	*	*	*	*	20%	10%	*	*	*	*	*
Disaster	*	*	*	*	7%	*	*	*	*	8%	*
Corruption	*	*	*	*	*	10%	*	14%	*	*	*
Education	*	*	*	*	*	*	7%	*	*	*	*
Human Rights	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	22%	13%	*	*
Poverty	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	5%	*	*
Labour	*	16%	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	8%	*
Housing	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	6%

FIGURE 2: TOP 5 TOPICS. \* MEANS THAT IN THAT YEAR, THE TOPIC WAS NOT ON THE TOP 5 LIST. RED IS FOR HIGHEST AND YELLOW IS FOR LOWEST

'JUSTICE SYSTEM' AS A TOPIC DOMINATED COVERAGE OVER THE YEARS. STORIES RELATED TO THIS TOPIC INCLUDE COVERAGE OF THE FAMILIES OF THE VICTIMS [SEEKING COMPENSATION FROM THE GOVERNMENT](#), AS WELL AS SOME STORIES RELATING TO THE FARLAM COMMISSION INQUIRY AND ITS FINDINGS.

#### TOP 5 AFFILIATION OF SOURCES

	Top 5 affiliation of sources							
	Government	Political parties	Citizens/residents	Unions	Experts	Corporation	Justice system	NGO
2012	19%	15%	7%	6%	4%	*	*	*
2013	22%	8%	*	22%	6%	9%	*	*
2014	37%	11%	23%	6%	*	*	17%	*
2015	49%	19%	*	4%	3%	*	4%	*
2016	30%	25%	8%	5%	3%	*	*	*
2017	23%	33%	9%	9%	*	*	3%	7%
2018	16%	10%	8%	*	20%	*	15%	*
2019	60%	11%	7%	10%	*	*	4%	*
2020	42%	9%	12%	10%	*	*	11%	*
2021	62%	10%	4%	8%	*	*	6%	*
2022	40%	4%	15%	5%	*	*	*	*

FIGURE 3: TOP 5 AFFILIATION OF SOURCES. \* MEANS THAT IN THAT YEAR, THE TOPIC WAS NOT ON THE TOP 5 LIST. RED IS FOR HIGHEST AND YELLOW IS FOR LOWEST.

THE VOICE OF GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN DOMINATING MEDIA COVERAGE OF MARIKANA AS CAN BE SEEN IN FIGURE 3. HOWEVER, AND INTERESTINGLY SO, THERE HAVE BEEN SOME YEARS WHEN THIS VOICE DID NOT TOP THE LIST. FOR INSTANCE, IN 2013, THE VOICE OF GOVERNMENT COMPETED FOR THE TOP SPOT WITH THAT OF UNIONS EACH AT 22%. IN 2018, THE VOICE OF EXPERTS TOPPED THE LIST AT 20%. THIS SEEMS TO BE THE ONLY TIME OR AT LEAST ONE OF THE FEW TIMES THIS VOICE SHARE HAS EVER OBTAINED A BIGGER VOICE SHARE COMPARED TO THE USUAL VOICES THAT ALWAYS DOMINATE MEDIA COVERAGE. SADLY, THE VOICE OF ORDINARY CITIZENS HASN'T BEEN DOMINATING COVERAGE OF MARIKANA AND IN FACT, IN 2013 AND 2015, THIS VOICE SHARE DID NOT EVEN MAKE IT TO THE TOP 5 LIST OF SOURCES.

#### GENDER OF SOURCES

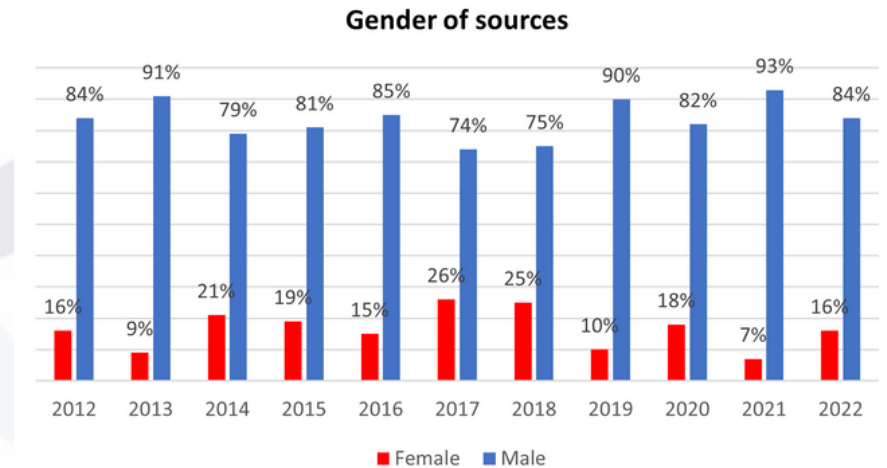


FIGURE 4: GENDER OF SOURCES

IN 2017, WE SEE THE REPRESENTATION OF FEMALE VOICES AT ITS HIGHEST, AT JUST 26%. MALE VOICES CONTINUE TO DOMINATE COVERAGE, A GLOBAL TREND WHICH REINFORCES MALE VOICES HOLDING POWER - MEDIA DESPERATELY NEED TO SHIFT THIS NARRATIVE.

#### CONCLUSION

THE FOCUS OF MEDIA'S COVERAGE ON THE FARLAM COMMISSION AND CALLS TO HAVE THEN THEN POLICE COMMISSIONER STEP DOWN DURING THE SPIKE AROUND 2015/2016 SHOWS, ALBEIT SMALL THAT THE MEDIA DID TRY TO HOLD THE POWERFUL TO ACCOUNT IN COVERAGE.

THE MEDIA ARE ALSO COMMENDED FOR ENSURING THAT THE VOICE OF EXPERTS AND UNIONS WAS ADDED TO THE LIST OF SOURCES.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE FINDINGS SHOW THAT THE MEDIA HAS NOT FULFILLED ITS ROLE OF ADEQUATELY REPORTING AND UNPACKING THE MARIKANA MASSACRE FOR THE PUBLIC BECAUSE COVERAGE OF THE ISSUE IS VERY LOW CONSIDERING THE MAGNITUDE OF THE EVENT WHICH IS COMMEMORATED YEARLY. FURTHER, GREAT EFFORT BY THE MEDIA SHOULD BE MADE TO ENSURE THERE IS AN EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION OF BOTH MEN AND WOMEN IN COVERAGE OF MARIKANA.