

**HOW PRINT MEDIA IN UGANDA IS UNBALANCED ON
POLITICAL COVERAGE; A CASE OF THE
NEWVISION AND DAILY MONITOR NEWS PAPERS**

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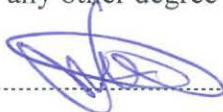
**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO SCHOOL OF
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DECLARATION

I Muhirwoha Julius hereby declare that this research report is my original work and has never been submitted for any other degree to other institutions of higher learning before.

SIGNATURE



DATE

25/09/18

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my beloved Parents who contributed to the success of my research work and my academic carrier and at the same time to my cousin Tuhirirwe Kenneth and to all my brothers and sisters. May God reward you abundantly.

APPROVAL

This is to certify that this report on Uganda Print Media, Un-Balanced Political Coverage; A Case Of The *New vision* And *Daily Monitor* News Papers by Muhirwoha Julius has been under my supervision and it's ready for submission.

SIGNATURE

Handwritten signature in red ink

DATE

25th Sept - 2018

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**“.....ALL TO THE GLORY OF GOD”
AMEN**

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ABSTRACT

This study set out to examine Uganda Print Media, Un-Balanced Political Coverage; a Case of *The New vision* and *Daily Monitor* News papers. This study was conducted under the following specific objectives; to explore the causes of unbalanced political coverage of print media in Uganda, to find out and analyze the implication of unbalanced political coverage of print media in Uganda and to assess the role of unbalanced political coverage of print media on readers in Uganda.

The study used a descriptive research design. Data was collected from a sample of 30 respondents and analyzed using the descriptive method and percentages for qualitative and quantitative data respectively.

Findings revealed that the following were the major issues counting for causes of Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media in Uganda; Uganda's press freedom environment deteriorated in 2013, due in large part to the government's 10-day closure of two major media houses in May. News outlets were regularly subjected to various forms of interference from government officials. Findings concluded that Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media in Uganda has impacted in the following ways. Government interference on print media has undermined the development and progress of some print companies. Violates the reader's rights since the main opposition print media has less autonomy in terms of what to print out and what to leave out. The profitability of some print media companies has been hindered by the rude and harsh authority by the Government such compromising with their license of operation. Findings also revealed that Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media on Readers in Uganda play the following roles, Reliance on Other Media or Competition, Political and economic power, Status or Rank of the Source, Editor's influence and Government interference.

The study recommended that Editors and reporters should take a great deal more care in seeking and representing a plurality of citizens' experiences and points of view, and in providing a much broader forum - facilitating access to the media not only for experts, mainstream politicians, and professional journalists, but also for occasional proponents of positions that emerge through popular grassroots discussions of the issues. Therefore the researcher proposing that citizens be empowered to act not only as receivers of mass media messages, but also as senders.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the study

This study aimed at assessing voice and issue representation in the coverage of 2016 presidential ambitions and electioneering by *The New Vision* and *The Daily Monitor* newspapers from January 2014 to June 2015. It will examine the coverage that will be given to selected 2016 presidential ambition issues and the dominant sources of news, and how this affects the democratic process in Uganda.

Uganda's print media are dominated by two major daily newspapers; the state owned *New Vision* and the independent *Daily Monitor*. *The New Vision* and its sister publication in local publication in local language s –*Bukedde* in Luganda, *Etop* in Ateso, *Orumuri* in Runyakitara and *Rupiny* in Luo have a large market share with a combined daily circulation of over 60,000. *Daily Monitor* owned by the Kenyan based Nation Media group has a daily circulation of 15,000. Other print media notable publications include the weekly *East African Business week*, *Red Pepper*, *The Observer*. *The Daily Monitor*, an independent daily. It was started in 1992 by a group of editors and writers who defected from the *Weekly Topic* after coming into conflict with management policies. The *Monitor* grew from humble beginnings to become *New Vision*'s main rival.

The two newspapers – the state-owned *The New Vision* and the independently owned *The Monitor* – are chosen because they are English dailies. They also have the highest circulation, with *The New Vision*'s daily circulation at 38,000 copies, and *The Monitor*'s 25,000 copies a day. (English is the official language in Uganda and the language of instruction in the formal education system. The country's literacy rate is 65 percent. The country has 52 local languages recognized by the constitution)

The professional code of ethics under the Ugandan Press and Journalists Statute 1995, says:

- i. No journalist shall disseminate information or allegations without establishing its correctness or truth.
- ii. No journalist shall disclose the source of his/her information and shall only divulge them in the event of an overriding consideration of public interest and within the framework of the law of Uganda.
- iii. No journalist shall solicit or accept bribes in an attempt to publish or suppress the publication of a story.
- iv. A journalist shall not plagiarize the professional work of others or expropriate works or results of research by scholars without acknowledging their contribution and naming his/her sources of information.

- v. A journalist shall obtain his/her information through the skillful application of journalistic principles and shall never bribe or offer inducements to sources.
- vi. No journalist shall deny any person with legitimate claim a right to reply a statement. Correction and rejoinders are to be published in appropriate form without delay and in a way that will be noticed by those who have received the original information.
- vii. A journalist shall at all times strive to separate his/own opinions from factual news. Where personal opinions are expressed, the public shall be made to know.
- viii. A journalist shall take the necessary steps to correct any damaging report made on any individual or organization.
- ix. A journalist shall not originate or encourage the dissemination of information designed to promote or which may have the effect of promoting tribalism, racism or any other form of discrimination.

The two newspapers are expected to cover equally the two principal sides to the 2016 presidential ambitions and electioneering; with politicians themselves write articles for publication to the audiences. But in so instances the coverage may insolent in the case of The Monitor may be seen criticizing the incumbent and government's staying in power. The New Vision will be seen supportive of the current president's ambition's to stay on power and the continuation in power of the Movement system.

1.2 Problem statement

The newspapers cover a wider range of topics and provide the most extensive political and business coverage. But while the media may have a big role to play in politics, they have not always lived up to expectations. The Media in Uganda is not doing enough to encourage the emergence of good governance. While acknowledging that media play a key role in the independence movements. The danger is not that will forever remain politically bedeviled. Rather it is that media and civil society are not contributing enough to speed up the inevitable inauguration of a new political climate founded on popular participation and the other trappings of a new political democracy. Development, struggles on the streets put democracy on the political agenda, that the relationship between the media and development in Uganda attracted significant attention.

However, it appears that the media gave importance and attention to only some topics, if not one, and a few sources in the coverage of the 2016 presidential elections process portraying them frequently and marginalizing others by ignoring them. Sabotaging of ambitions of members of opposition by police and other security organizations is an issue and prominent politicians as sources of news seem that dominate the news.

Little is known about why exactly the media did this. Hence this study investigated the media representation of different issue, voice and directions of 2016 presidential elections in the look at why they intensely focused on the electoral reforms and sole candidature of the incumbent at the

expense of other issues, and analyze the implications of the seemingly imbalanced media coverage on democratic process.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to explore un-balanced political coverage among print media in Uganda, study of the New Vision and the Daily Monitor.

1.4 Research objectives

- i. To explore the causes of unbalanced political coverage of print media in Uganda.
- ii. To find out and analyze the implication of unbalanced political coverage of print media in Uganda.
- iii. To assess the role of unbalanced political coverage of print media on readers in Uganda.

1.5 Research questions

- i. What are the causes of unbalanced political coverage of print media in Uganda?
- ii. What is the implication of unbalanced political coverage of print media in Uganda?
- iii. What is the role of unbalanced political coverage of print media on readers in Uganda?

1.6 Scope of Study

The study focused on *The New Vision* and the *Daily Monitor* Newspapers coverage of the political situations atmosphere in Uganda as it unfolds. The two newspapers are the leading national dailies, their circulation is national, they seem to have reporters in almost all parts of the country, and their audience size is significantly big hence becoming an appropriate representative of print media in Uganda.

Time Scope: The months between January 2014 to June 2015 were purposively selected because they will be part of a long period in which the many political parties including the incumbent National Resistance Movement party will decide on the flag bearers of the 2016 presidential elections.

Content Scope: The contents of this study mainly focused on the unbalanced political coverage of print media of 2016 presidential aspirations. Why sole candidature of the incumbent president issue receive immense media attention, the implication of the coverage on society.

Respondent Scope: The study covered a cross section of respondents namely: Editors in The New Vision and Daily Monitor, some selected journalists, politicians, and experts in areas of political science and democracy.

1.7 Significance of the study

This study has several unique perspectives that would enrich our understanding of the print media in Uganda. By investigating the un-balanced political coverage among print media in Uganda, by the New Vision and Daily Monitor, the study will reveal the level of participation in the democratic process. The findings of this study may possibly help in understanding the reasons why some themes in the presidential campaigns attracted more media coverage and attention than others.

The study will provide useful information to government and civil society institutions, as to the implications of news media behavior on public opinion formulation. Given the relative press freedom in Uganda today, it is important to evaluate its benefit to citizens. The study will assess whether public and democratic expectations of the press have been achieved.

To the media practitioners, the findings of this study are expected to provide useful details on the performance of the media in Uganda.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW THEORY

2.0 Introduction

This chapter provides theories and concepts through which the study hinges and systematically addresses concepts related to the research objectives.

2.1 The Concept of Media

Print media refers to the medium that disseminates printed matter, a means of instrumentality storing and communicating information. It can be a system of clandestine or public printing and distributing of dissident or banned literature including everything from statistics, to news to opinion. It is usually printed on paper like newspapers, magazines, newsletters and brochures, in the age of the internet, online 'papers' and blogs (Web logs) are becoming increasingly popular.

Media is a public sphere and a part of social life where citizens can exchange views on matters of importance to their common good. The discursive space wherein individuals engage in rational-critical debate, this comes into being when people gather to discuss issues of concern to them, be they social, political or otherwise. The media institution is located in the public sphere Jürgen (Habermas, 1989).

Rational-critical debate is that debate where there is the use of logic and non-facile criticism; and where all citizens are able to express their opinions and to disagree. Discursive space denotes the arena in which discussions of public issues take place under the Habermasian concept.

This means that in principle it is available to all as receivers and senders. It also implies that the media deal with public matters for public purposes - especially with issues on which public opinion can be expected to form; and that the media are answerable for their activities to the wider society (McQuail 1994). Public sphere operates in favor of the common good. This assumes that there is one undifferentiated public for whom a common good is possible; that there is only one public arena that works for everyone; and that this is a desirable state of affairs.

Bright et al 1999 say the modern era of mass communication is too often merely a form of tutelage, in which rational-critical debate is reduced to the consumption of unstudied opinion. To the extent to which the public lacks autonomy in formulating and expressing opinions, coerced or influenced ideas are "non-public opinion". The argument here is that the media do not offer equal access to all citizens – with the politicians, advertisers and the elite having more accessibility than the other sections of society. Implied in this therefore is that the media play to the interests of these 'privileged' groups and the ideas the media portray are those favorable to, or influenced by these privileged groups.

Habermas has also been criticized (Fraser 1996) for contending that a unified public sphere is the best means of achieving universal access to debate, quality of discourse and ultimately, democracy. Fraser says in egalitarian societies a single public inevitably results in subordinate groups debating under the auspices of the dominant sector, thereby precluding the generation of genuinely independent discourse by the marginalized. Fraser argues that multicultural society only makes sense if we suppose a plurality of public arenas in which groups with diverse values and rhetoric's participate.

In capitalist societies like Uganda, the problem of tutelage is very much alive because not all members of society have equal access to resources and to the media. And where the issue of discussion is of critical importance to the parties involved – for instance what political system a country should adopt – the likelihood of certain sections wanting to influence debate and opinion is quite high.

2.2 Media and Politics

History of Media and Politics in Uganda

Traditionally, Ugandan media have been quite involved in politics, many times openly supportive of a particular side. The first press involvement in politics was in the 1920s when colonialism was taking root and the press attacked the excesses of the British protectorate government. While the first newspapers in the country were religious, the political newspapers came to the scene in the late 1920s and early 1930s. They became especially active, however, in the 1940s. Gariyo (1993) says through the 1940s newspapers like Munyonyozi, Gambuze, and Doboozi opposed Indian monopoly over import trade and control of marketing agricultural products; and also opposed continued British rule. Says Gariyo (1993): Doboozi newspaper castigated the colonial regime for its high-handedness and its refusal to listen to the voice of the people. Secondly and much more importantly, [it] questioned the rationale of British colonial policy, thereby sowing the seeds of anti-colonial struggle.

The protectorate government itself set the trend of truly political papers by establishing Uganda Gazette in the 1940s. The colonial government was clearly aware of the dangers an independent press posed to the status quo, hence it devised a number of measures to rein the media. This was especially through enactment of repressive legislation and establishment of its own propaganda machinery, including a string of vernacular language newspapers.

In 1952 the colonial government established the department of information to “counteract rumors and combat subversive propaganda which might be aimed against the Uganda government” (Okullu 1993). Governor Andrew Cohen had pointed out, upon being posted to Uganda that “Government without a developed information service is like a dumb politician trying to win an election in his country” (Okullu 1993).

Despite the harsh laws, the private press continued calls for democracy and independence. One possible explanation for this is that there was almost no other form of association other than through the press. Gariyo (1993) says it was only later in the 1950s and primarily as a result of press agitation that co-operative societies, trade unions and political parties were allowed. He adds: Enactment of harsh laws to control the press and to prohibit people from having access to alternative views did not stop the emergence of a new type of press, more conscious of its potential and ability to effect change. The beginning of the 1950s saw the emergence of a new type of press which was grown out of struggle and which had a new agenda to present to the people of Uganda. That new agenda was independence, and the press was willing to reach any heights to put forward its demands. For this purpose the democratic struggle had reached a decisive stage and no amount of bullying could stop it.

By the time Uganda got independence in 1962, the country's media was very much involved in politics. But then post-independence governments turned out dictatorial and increasingly muzzled the press. The country was young and independent, so government required the media to help the country stay united, and to develop, rather than to be critical of government politics (Hachten 1971). Amnesty International (1989) says under Idi Amin's regime "critical publications were banned and journalists detained, killed or forced to flee for their lives".

The government that succeeded Amin's banned a number of critical publications, including *Ngabo*, *Enomony* and *Citizen*, and arrested some journalists. Up until 1986, the respective governments continued detaining journalists and banning publications. Museveni's government has through the years banned some publications and continues to arrest and detain journalists. In this environment then, it became very difficult for the media to drive political debate and provide a platform for views contrary to those of government. Museveni's regime has, however, provided more freedoms for the media to carry alternative opinions than previous regimes did, which is why the media has become more involved in debating the democratization process. Mwesige (1993) since public media has been decidedly pro-government and given the lack of an effective political opposition, it became critically important for Uganda to have an independent press.

But the problems that constrain media's role in democracy are also prevalent in Uganda: low circulation, poor facilitation, untrained reporters, low readership levels, et cetera. All of these impacts directly on the way journalists perceive and communicate issues not only to do with governance, but also other aspects of society. Newspapers also reach far fewer Ugandans than radio and television¹⁵. Steadman (2002) says 90 percent of Uganda's households claim to own a radio, while a third of the country's households claim to own a TV set. Mwesige (1998) says the African oral tradition and the low literacy rates in Uganda in a way make radio and television more powerful mediums compared to newspapers. The broadcast media reaches virtually every part of the country and have programmes in several local languages, which place them at an advantage compared to print media. The Ugandan press coverage of the referendum should then be seen in the wider context of the media landscape in the country, and how the English print media fits in it.

2.3 Role of media in society

Curran et al (1989) argue that the main way in which the media matter in modern liberal democracies is by facilitating the functioning of society. McQuail 1994 argued that the media inform the sovereign electorate; act as a two-way channel of communication and influence between governments and governed; and provide a check on the abuse of state power through the disclosure of information. The media also assist in the aggregation of interests within the political process, provide a channel of communication between elites, facilitate the revision of the aims and policies of society through collective debate; and help society identify social problems and strains and adopt appropriate political remedies. These 'functions' are all manifested in the light of the public sphere paradigm.

In many societies, the media feel it is their duty to protect the interests of the citizenry against potential abuse by the government. But while the media may have big potential, not all schools of thought agree with the notion that the media have much power or influence on society. Some, like the leftist political economy perspective, hold that the media merely serve the interests of the dominant classes in society that is the rich and the powerful. In light of these schools of thought that run counter to what the idealized role of the media is under the public sphere, it would be interesting to explore how the media played it out in the Ugandan context during 2016 electioneering.

Tracing the connection between the media and democracy, Craig (2000) argues that journalism needs to be conceptualized as a vital instrument in the production of both democratic and governmental impulses. He says journalism's features like its communicative reach, its daily form and its ability to negotiate heterogeneity make it ideally suited to represent the complexity and flux of national life.

Classical thinking assumes that the job of the news media is to help citizens achieve adequate understanding of political issues and helping citizens towards this understanding has long been and still should be a leading aim of the news media, (Schudson 2000). Citizens must have adequate understanding of politics to discover their own preferences. News media therefore need to contribute vigorously towards this democratic value. Still, media seem to be the centre or source of information where citizens can learn about their representatives' exercise of power.

The role media play in politics has become pivotal; individuals rely on the media more often for social connectedness and political awareness; would be opinion formers and political parties and their leaders rely on them more heavily to reach individual citizens and cultivate or restore public support, (Blumler 1997). There is no doubt that even in Uganda during the constitutional amendment process, the public was expected to pick the issues of the day from the news media. That is why this study endeavors to investigate the issues that the news media covered and what kind of people were behind them.

Media is also an agency of information and debate that facilitates the functioning of democracy; the media brief the electorate and assist voters to make an informed choice at election time; provide a channel of communication between government and governed which helps society to clarify its objectives; formulate policy; coordinate activity, and manage itself, (Curran, 2000) and Golding and (Murdock, 2000).

2.4 Implication of unbalanced coverage – Political economy of media

The link between ownership of news organizations and the character of news coverage is not easy to determine and it grows more difficult by the day as public and commercial systems of ownership mix and blend and intersect in a growing variety of ways Schudson, 2000. News is, in many ways, a collision of different interests. Indeed the traditional tenets of journalism are challenged and undermined by advertisers' demand, owners' pressure, and government power, (Ibid).

This is very critical to this study because the news media (*The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*) it focuses on operate in an environment where several forces ranging from ownership demands, advertisers' dictates and state pressure have tremendous impact on their content. Digesting the political economy model would provide a theoretical framework for this study.

Golding and Murdock (2000, p.73) define Political economy theory as the way news is structured by the prevailing relations between press proprietors and editors or journalists and their sources. They add that capitalists use their economic power within the commercial market system to ensure that the flow of public information is consonant with their interests.

The elites, both governmental and corporate, are given privileged access to news channels, Schudson (2000). Gans, (1979) argues that the sources that are most successful in gaining access to news media are likely to be powerful, well resourced, and well organized for supplying journalists with the kind of news they want at the right moment in time. In all political and economic systems, news coincides with and reinforces the definition of the political situation evolved by the political elite. This means that what news media capture in form of information to a larger extent is the interest of the political elite who even determine political events that make-up news.

Altschull, 1984 cited in Shoemaker and Reese, (1996) outlines four sources of media support that heavily influence the content. He argues that;

- Under the official pattern, media are controlled by the states
- In the commercial pattern, media reflect the ideology of advertisers and their media owning allies.
- Under the interest pattern, media content reflects the ideology of the financing group, such as a political party or religious group.

- In the informal pattern, content reflects the goals of individual contributors who want to promote their views.

The above assumptions would be useful in explaining why media decide to focus intensely on certain themes and not others and would justify some dominant sources of news. In the Ugandan context and in relation to this study, it seems that regular official sources like government ministers, Members of Parliaments, and a cluster of giant advertisers might be using Herman and Chomsky's propaganda model and Altschull's media support techniques to direct the media operations. In any case, for instance, government is an outstanding advertiser in both print and electronic media. Indeed the findings of this study and theoretical body (like in Gans, 1979 & Schudson, 2000) indicate that voices with economic or political power dominated the electioneering coverage.

Within the capitalist nations like Uganda, the media may be constrained from providing a true public sphere that can effectively contribute to democracy, partly because of the nature of the process of news production but also owing to the relationship of the media to other institutions in society. Herman and Machesney (1997) contend that commercial considerations by the private media are threats to the public sphere. They argue: A concentration of media power in organizations dependent on advertiser support and responsible primarily to shareholders is a clear and present danger to citizens' participation in public affairs, understanding of public issues and thus to the effective working of democracy.

Owner and advertiser domination give the commercial media a dual bias threatening public sphere: they tend to be politically conservative and hostile to criticism of a status quo in which they are major beneficiaries. As they are concerned with providing a cordial media environment for advertising goods, it results in a preference for entertainment over controversy, serious political debate and discussions and documentaries that dig deeply inform and challenge conventional opinion.

Communication systems connect a productive system rooted in private ownership to a political system that pre-supposes a citizenry whose full social participation depends in part on access to the maximum possible range of information and analysis and to open debate on contentious issues. Since this dual formation of liberal democratic capitalism first emerged, skeptics have been asking how far a communications system dominated by private ownership can guarantee the diversity of information and argument required for effective citizenship.

2.5 Reasons for weakness in coverage

Government interference

According to *Uganda Human Development Report, (20140)*, Censorship and interference by authorities continued to hamper news coverage and the free flow of information and opinion in 2013. In May, the *Daily Monitor* broke a story about a letter, written by former security official

David Sejusa to the head of Uganda's national security services, calling for an investigation into an alleged plot to assassinate senior government and military officials who were opposed to a plan to install Museveni's son as his successor in 2016. Museveni, who had been elected to his fifth term in 2011, is not expected to run again. As coverage of the story gained momentum, authorities moved to suppress it. On May 12, Museveni's himself called the *Daily Monitor* management to express his anger over the publication of the letter, according to local sources. Two days later, Okurut, the information minister, issued a statement warning journalists against undermining national security, and reminding them of their responsibility under the Press and Journalist Act to "ascertain the truth" of their stories. The same day, the UCC took out full-page ads in the print media that warned broadcasters against "political campaigning" and threatened to revoke the license of any outlet that continued to report on the story. On May 20, heavily armed police officers raided the offices of the *Daily Monitor* and the *Red Pepper* tabloid over their coverage of the story. The two papers along with radio stations KFM and Dembe FM, both owned by the *Monitor's* Nation Media Group (NMG) parent company were suspended for 10 days as officials searched the outlets' offices for documents and pressured journalists to reveal their sources. The closures sparked protests by journalists and civil society groups, during which several journalists were arrested and charged with inciting violence, including Geoffrey Wokulira Ssebagala, then the national coordinator of Human Rights Network for Journalists-Uganda.

In late May, after negotiations between NMG executives and Museveni's, an agreement was reached to reopen the *Daily Monitor*. The paper had reportedly been losing 120 million shillings (\$48,000) a day while it was closed. In a statement released in early June, Hilary Onek, then the minister of internal affairs, detailed the deal that allowed the paper to reopen. Although many of the conditions simply required the *Daily Monitor* to more strictly adhere to its editorial policies, NMG executives also agreed that the paper would abide by vague standards, such as being "sensitive to and not publish or air stories that can generate tensions, ethnic hatred, cause insecurity or disturb law and order." The owners stated that they "highly regretted" the story in question, although it was unclear whether the coverage contained any factual inaccuracies. Finally, they agreed to "periodically interface with government to ensure the undertakings and pledges are respected and implemented." *Red Pepper's* management also apologized and reportedly reached an agreement with the authorities. Although the publications have generally continued to print stories that include criticism of the government, the owners set a dangerous precedent for any media outlets in Uganda that attempt to delve into the inner workings of the security apparatus.

Journalists face harassment, occasional violence, and various other obstacles while attempting to cover the news. Security agencies, especially the police, remained the primary offenders in 2013, with many cases of brutality against journalists. Reporters and free press activists protesting the closure of the *Daily Monitor* and *Red Pepper* newspapers outside the *Daily Monitor* offices in

May were met with force by police, who lobbed tear-gas canisters into the crowd. In September, a police officer grabbed a camera from *New Vision* photojournalist Peter Busomoke and ordered him to delete the photos he had just taken in an open court in Kampala. In October, police detained Urban TV journalist Jude Okech Jorum for four days without charge after he was arrested for criminal trespass while covering a dispute between two orphanages in Wakiso District. Obstruction of media workers was not limited to police forces. In March, guards at Kalisizo Government Prison in Rakai District beat two reporters covering a prison break. The journalists were detained briefly, and their cameras were damaged. Three guards were later charged with assault and malicious damage to property.

Editors' influence: White, 1950 cited in Schudson 2000 concludes that, news communication process is highly subjective, because is majorly based on the gate keeper's own set of experiences, attitudes, and expectations. White's conclusions are vital and relevant to this study. He, for instance explains how editors play the gate keeping role that shapes news content. This might be professional, but he adds that editors invoke their personal attitudes in deciding what news is.

Status or Rank of the Source: In Uganda, the media seem to be covering greatly the voices and activities of the officials in the ruling political party-the National Resistance Movement (NRM) and those of the rich as compared to the activities of the opposition and the poor. Mwesige and Balikowa 2008 found that 86% of the news makers on UBC-TV news for the first week of September 2007, were from the ruling NRM.

Reliance on Other Media or Competition: Competition for audience also shapes news media coverage of issues. Usually the end result is identical coverage because total neglect of the rival's story might lead to loss of market share. On the other hand, reliance on some influential media tends to produce similar content as well and therefore stifles diversity of views and opinions. This symbiotic relationship among news media appears to be true even in Uganda. It is quite clear that a considerable number of topics discussed on TV and radio evening and weekend political shows are drawn from print-newspapers. Similarly, some newspapers pick weekend political talk shows' issue in their Monday editions.

Political and Economic Power: Capitalists use their economic power with commercial market system to ensure that the flow of public information is consonant with their interests, Golding & Murdock, 2000. They add that governments and state departments have become increasingly important producers of public information in a variety of forms ranging from official statistics and daily press briefings to public advertising campaigns. This implies a dominance of economic actors and government official s' activities and voices. Source selection favored the elite interests that the corporate owners of these shows depend on for advertising revenue, regulatory support and access to information.

Gitlin, 1980, in Shoemaker and Reese 1996 have organized content research around a variety of theoretical perspectives or approaches. Gans and Gitlin group these approaches into five assumptions that Shoemaker and Reese did an extensive exposition about. These assumptions could as well be looked at as factors influencing media content. Such influences seem to be appropriate in providing a structure or set of ideas that sustain and permeate this study.

- Content reflects social reality with little or no distortion. This mirror approach to content research assumes that what the mass media distribute and convey an accurate reflection of social reality to the audience-like a television camera turned on the world, (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996. However, as noted earlier in the political economy model, this reality is a construction of the well-known people, stars and celebrities who are preferred by those who carry the camera. In line with this study, reality might be that the theme and voices that were covered by news media's of the constitutional amendment process might be the ones that were debated/debating in all corners.
- Content is influenced by media workers' socialization and attitudes. This communicator-centered approach suggests that psychological factors intrinsic to communications personnel, their professional, personal, and political attitudes, and the professional training communicators receive, lead them to produce a social reality. White Geber, (1964), and 1986 Lichter et all's arguments highlighted already in this section, confirm this assumption.
- Content is influenced by media routines. Shoemaker and Reese argue that media content is influenced by ways in which communications workers and their companies organize work. They for example state; ,reporters are taught to write stories in the inverted pyramid-putting what they consider most important information first and organizing the rest in descending order of importance. Since prominence, timeliness and controversy are some of the salient news values, they appear to have influenced *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* to focus intense coverage on the government officials debating the removal of presidential limits.
- Content is influenced by social institutions and forces. This approach suggests that factors external to the communicator and the organization, economic and cultural forces, and audience-determine content. The market approach, for example, locates influence in the communicators' desire to give audiences what they want in order to ensure large audiences for sponsors' product; whereas the social responsibility approach locates the influence in the communicators' desire to give audiences what they need. Sources, those who have economic power are more likely to influence news reports than those who lack power, Shoemaker and Reese, 1996. The content of the press is directly correlated with the interests of those who finance the press.

Content is a function of ideological positions and maintains the status quo. Hegemony is a broad theoretical approach suggesting that media content is influenced by the ideology of those in power in society. Altschull and other political economists have already alluded to this argument.

2.6 Social organization of news work

The basic orientation of social scientists is that political news making is a reality-constructing activity that follows the lead of government officials, Schudson 2002. The organization of beats is such that reporters get the largest share of their news from official government agencies. One of the great advantages is that such beats provide a reliable and steady supply of the raw materials for news production.

Graber 2003 puts it that media critics are also unhappy that journalists are eager to retain the largest possible audiences, may avoid controversies that might offend sizeable audience segments. News media may in the end reduce the costs of news production by having fewer reporters who might pursue stories from regular sources that are usually official. It is therefore clear that, news is about government officials who are considered authoritative on public policies.

White (1950) and Gieber (1964) in Schudson 2002 argue that; formal study of how news organizations produce news products dates to 'gatekeeper' studies in the 1950s. Several studies demonstrated that editors, who select wire service stories for their newspapers do so in ways that do not mirror the whole array of stories before them but select according to individual prejudice or bureaucratic newsroom routines. Schudson 2002 adds that the individual journalists' attitudes influence news coverage. There are three major factors that affect news production; editors' prejudice, individual journalists' attitudes, and newsroom routines.

The values held by journalists influence news even when considerable effort is made to guard against that influence, Shoemaker and Reese 1996. Tuchman for instance observed journalists as they covered social movements and concluded that production practices were implicitly biased towards the support of the status quo.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the research design, survey population, sampling design source of data, data collection and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The researcher used descriptive research design to describe phenomenon as it exists. Therefore it was undertaken in order to ascertain and be able to describe the characteristics of the variable of interest in a situation, (Kish, L. (1965). It took the description of the Uganda Print Media, Un-Balanced Political Coverage; a Case of *The New vision* and *Daily Monitor* News papers.

3.3 The Study Area

The study area was at the *New Vision* Printing and Publishing Corporation main headquarters and at the main headquarters of *Monitor Publications* in Kampala. And a survey was made on some key individuals to get more information.

3.4 Study population

The study population was 40 respondents and these comprised the managers, Editors and News Reporters in both companies.

3.4.1 Sample Size

A sample size 30 respondent's was used for the study based on managers, News Editors and News Reporters.

3.5 Sources of Data Collection

The researcher used both primary and secondary sources.

3.5.1 Primary sources

This refers to raw facts collected or generated for a given research and it is gathered originally for the first time for a specific research problem. Therefore the researcher directly went to the field to collect data with the assistance of the letter of introduction from the school.

3.5.2 Secondary sources

This refers to data which already exists. Therefore the researcher reviewed records related to the study which enabled him to compile and analyze the data from text book, newsletters, journals stock taking, sheets and annual reports.

3.5.3 Research Instruments

In collecting data, the researcher utilized two major instruments.

3.6 Data Analysis and Presentation

Data processing includes editing, coding and tabulation before data is analyzed

3.6.1 Editing

Editing was done to ensure that the data are accurate consistent uniformly entered and were arranged to facilitate coding and tabulation

3.6.2 Data Analysis

This was done in form of expressing responses as squares correlation of the population and by use of frequency distribution tables and SPSS.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.0 Overview

This chapter presents the analysis and discussion of the findings in respect to the study objectives stated earlier in chapter one. The researcher also compares and contrasts the study findings with the assertions of other authors as seen in chapter two in order to fill the identified gaps as well as vividly point out the unique contribution of this study in the Print Media Industry. The findings are presented in frequency tables with percentages and also qualitative presentation was used. Data was collected from respondents of different sections/departments carrying out research on Uganda Print Media, Un-balanced political coverage ; A Case Of *The New vision* and *Daily Monitor* News Papers.

4.1 General information

The data in this section contains gender, age group, level of education and length of years worked with this organization.

4.1.2 Gender of respondents

The respondents were asked about their gender status and below were their respondents.

Table 4.1: Gender of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentages %
Male	17	57
Female	13	43
Total	30	100

Source: Primary data

From the above table 57% of the respondents were male and 43% were female. This implies that both organizations do not have bias in employing workers therefore it employs a gender balanced workforce. This is because, in journalism every task can be performed by both sex.

4.1.2 Age Bracket

Table 4.2: Showing results on Age bracket

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
20-29	10	33
30-39	14	47
40-49	5	17
50 and above	1	3
Total	30	100

Source: Primary data

From the above table 33% of the respondents were between 20- 29 years, 47% of the respondents fell between the ages 20-39 years, 17% of the respondents were between 40-49 years and 3% of the respondents were above 50 years. Basing on the results obtained, the researcher found that majority of the respondents, 47% were between the age group of 30-39, implying that the management of both organizations is interested in employing young employees who are highly productive and efficient in terms technological innovativeness and creativity.

4.1.3 Level of Education

Respondents were asked to show their education levels and below were responses.

Table 4.3: Level of Education

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage%
Certificate	3	10
Diploma	5	17
Degree	15	50
Post Graduate	6	20
PHD	1	3
Total	30	100

Source: Primary data

From the above table 10% of the respondents were Certificate holder, 17% of the respondents were Diploma, 50% of the respondents were Degree holder 20% of the respondents were Post Graduate holders and 3% of the respondents were PHD holders. Basing on the results obtained, majority of the respondents about 50% were degree holders. This implies that the respondents were knowledgeable and hence would understand and interpret the questions.

4.1.4 Duration of respondents in service

Respondents were asked for how long they had worked with *The New vision and Daily Monitor News Papers* and below were the responses.

Table 4.4: Duration in service

Respondents	Frequency	Percentages %
Less than 2years	9	30
2-10years	14	47
10-20years	6	20
More than 20 years	1	3
Total	30	100

Source: Primary data

From the above table 30% of the respondents have served both, *The New vision and Daily Monitor News Papers* for less than 2years 47% of the respondents between 2-10years 20% of the

respondents between 10-20years and 3% of the respondents had worked for more than 20years. Basing on the results obtained 47% of the respondents had served with *The New vision and Daily Monitor News Papers* between 2-10 years. This implies that *The New vision and Daily Monitor News Papers* has got relatively experienced work force/staff.

4.2 The Causes of Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media In Uganda

Have you observed Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media in Uganda?

Table 4.5: Showing responses on whether they have observed Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media in Uganda.

Respondents	Frequency	Percentages %
Yes	21	70%
No	9	30%
Total	30	100

Source: Primary data

From the table 4.5 above, 70% of the respondents acknowledged that they have observed Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media in Uganda; where as 30% of the respondents did not support the statement. Basing on the results obtained from the table, one can easily argue that to a great extent there was Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media in Uganda.

Respondents identified the following Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media in Uganda in the following ways;

Respondents observed that Uganda's press freedom environment deteriorated in 2013, due in large part to the government's 10-day closure of two major media houses in May. News outlets were regularly subjected to various forms of interference from government officials, and journalists overall continued to face intimidation and harassment from state and nonstate actors, often engendering self-censorship. Despite these obstacles, the independent media remained vibrant.

The *New Vision*—in which the government holds a controlling stake—generally shows some editorial independence, though it tends to side with the government during elections and political protests. Other print outlets, such as the *Daily Monitor*, the *Observer*, and the *Independent*, are more critical of the government and offer a range of opposition views.

The Monitor also urged that while the referendum could take place before the Constitutional Court disposed of DP's petition, counting of ballots needed to be delayed until the case had been decided. It suggested that the ballots be kept with religious leaders and other institutions until the court had decided on the case. This contrasted sharply with *The New Vision* stand, which was that the Constitutional Court expeditiously hears the case and the referendum goes ahead. *The Monitor* was playing the role of voice of the people, or more appropriately voice of the

opposition by advocating the interests of the petitioners. *The New Vision* pushed for the government by urging that the referendum should just go ahead.

4.3 The impact of unbalanced political coverage of print media in Uganda

- Respondents observed that on May 20, heavily armed police officers raided the offices of the *Daily Monitor* tabloid over their coverage of the story. The closures sparked protests by journalists and civil society groups, during which several journalists were arrested and charged with inciting violence, including Geoffrey WokuliraSsebagala, then the national coordinator of Human Rights Network for Journalists–Uganda.
- It was also manifested by respondents that as in previous years, government officials and security agents in 2013 continued to intimidate journalists and attempt to influence content by forbidding certain guests to appear on live radio programs.
- Several laws undermine these guarantees, and the government has continued to crack down on critical journalists and media houses using a variety of methods. Although the Constitutional Court declared the law on sedition unconstitutional in 2010, the government has employed other provisions of the penal code, including those on criminal libel and treason, against journalists.
- Censorship and interference by authorities continued to hamper news coverage and the free flow of information and opinion in 2013. In May, the *Daily Monitor* broke a story about a letter, written by former security official David Sejusa to the head of Uganda's national security services, calling for an investigation into an alleged plot to assassinate senior government and military officials who were opposed to a plan to install Museveni's son as his successor in 2016.
- Kampala mayor and opposition leader Erias Lukwago expelled four reporters from his news conference, accusing them of bias. All were from the government-owned Vision Group, which includes the flagship *New Vision*, Uganda's largest-circulation newspaper.
- In November, a talk show on Kampala-based Top FM Radio was abruptly halted by order of the UCC, 25 minutes into a one-hour interview with Kampala deputy mayor and opposition politician Suleiman Kiddandali. Police later arrested host Richard Kisuule and detained him on charges of inciting violence. Two other journalists who were among a crowd of Kisuule supporters that showed up at the police station were also arrested.

The following articles depicting the arrest of opposition politicians Honorable Patrick Amama Mbabazi and Dr. Kizza Besigye by both newspapers *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*, are an example of unbalanced political coverage of print media in Uganda;

On the same basis, respondents collectively agreed on the following reasons;

- Government interference on print media has undermined the development and progress of some print companies.
- Violates the reader's rights since the main opposition print media has less autonomy in terms of what to print out and what to leave out.
- The profitability of some print media companies has been hindered by the rude and harsh authority by the Government such compromising with their license of operation.
- Pressure and all associated issues within employees/ staff of those print media because of unlimited authority and powers by government agencies.

The challenging issues undermining the unbalanced political coverage of print media in Uganda

- A group of respondents from *Daily Monitor* acknowledged that, Journalists face harassment, occasional violence, and various other obstacles while attempting to cover the news. Security agencies, especially the police, once again topped the list of press freedom offenders in 2012, with many cases of brutality against journalists. In January, plainclothes police in Kampala reportedly shot at *Daily Monitor* photographer Isaac Kasamani as he observed officers throwing a tear gas canister at opposition leader Kizza Besigye, according to local press freedom group Human Rights Network for Journalists–Uganda (HRNJ-Uganda).
- Kasamani was again assaulted by police officers in October, along with two other journalists who had gone to cover Besigye's arrest outside police headquarters in Kampala. Kasamani and reporter William Ntege suffered minor injuries, and both had their cameras destroyed in the incident, according to HRNJ-Uganda and the Committee to Protect Journalists.
- A third reporter was punched in the face. On December 24, officers from a police antiterrorism unit assaulted journalist Mulindwa Mukasa of the Associated Press and WBS Television as he was covering the arrest of an NRM member of parliament.
- Another journalist reporting on the arrest, Radio Simba's Nasser Kayanja, had his mobile telephone confiscated and smashed. There were several other reports of journalists being injured by police during demonstrations in 2012, though it was not always clear whether these cases were deliberate or accidental. EU (2009).

4.4 The Role of Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media on Readers in Uganda.

- Reliance on Other Media or Competition
- Political and economic power
- Status or Rank of the Source
- Editor's influence
- Government interference

Table 4.7 Showing respondents who acknowledged the Role of Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media on Readers in Uganda.

Response	Frequency	Percentages
Reliance on other media or competition.	6	20
Political and economic power	7	23
Status or rank of the source	6	20
Editor's influence	2	7
Government interference	9	30
Total	30	100

Source: Primary data

Reliance on other media or competition.

From the table above 20% of respondents who responded to questionnaires acknowledged that reliance on other media or competition is one the key issues responsible for Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media on Readers in Uganda. It was further observed that competition for audience also shapes news media coverage of issues. Usually the end result is identical coverage because total neglect of the rival's story might lead to loss of market share. On the other hand, reliance on some influential media tends to produce similar content as well and therefore stifles diversity of views and opinions.

Political and economic power

From the table above 23% of respondents who responded to questionnaires acknowledged that Political and economic power in the country has got an impact on Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media on Readers in Uganda. It was further revealed by Golding & Murdock, (2000), that Capitalists use their economic power with commercial market system to ensure that the flow of public information is consonant with their interests. They add that governments and state departments have become increasingly important producers of public information in a variety of forms ranging from official statistics and daily press briefings to public advertising campaigns.

Status or rank of the source

From the table above 20% of respondents who responded to questionnaires acknowledged that Status or rank of the source has got an impact on Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media on Readers in Uganda. On the same Mwesige and Balikowa 2008 manifested that, in Uganda, the media seem to be covering greatly the voices and activities of the officials in the ruling political party-the National Resistance Movement (NRM) and those of the rich as compared to the activities of the opposition and the poor.

Editor's influence

From the table above 7% of respondents who responded to questionnaires acknowledged that Editor's influence has got an impact on Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media on

Readers in Uganda. Schudson (2000) concludes that, news communication process is highly subjective, because is majorly based on the gate keeper's own set of experiences, attitudes, and expectations. Editors play the gate keeping role that shapes news content. This might be professional, but he adds that editors invoke their personal attitudes in deciding what news is.

Government interference

From the table above 9 % of respondents who responded to questionnaires acknowledged that Government interference has got an impact on Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media on Readers in Uganda. According to *Uganda Human Development Report, (20140)*, Censorship and interference by authorities continued to hamper news coverage and the free flow of information and opinion in 2013.

Basing on the results obtained from the table above generally majority of the respondents acknowledged that interference has got an impact on Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media on Readers in Uganda. However, even other factors were paramount on the same issue.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter includes the summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study.

5.1 Summary of the Findings:

5.1.1 The causes of Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media in Uganda

Findings revealed that the following were the major issues counting for causes of Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media in Uganda; Uganda's press freedom environment deteriorated in 2013, due in large part to the government's 10-day closure of two major media houses in May. News outlets were regularly subjected to various forms of interference from government officials. Journalists overall continued to face intimidation and harassment from state and non-state actors. And the independent media remained vibrant.

The Implication of Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media in Uganda

Findings revealed that Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media in Uganda has impacted in the following ways. Government interference on print media has undermined the development and progress of some print companies. Violates the reader's rights since the main opposition print media has less autonomy in terms of what to print out and what to leave out. The profitability of some print media companies has been hindered by the rude and harsh authority by the Government such compromising with their license of operation. And Pressure and all associated issues within employees/ staff of those print media because of un limited authority and powers by government agencies.

The Role of Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media on Readers in Uganda

Findings revealed that Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media on Readers in Uganda play the following roles, Reliance on Other Media or Competition, Political and economic power, Status or Rank of the Source, Editor's influence and Government interference.

5.2 Conclusion of the Findings:

The causes of Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media in Uganda

Findings concluded that the following were the major issues counting for causes of Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media in Uganda; Uganda's press freedom environment deteriorated in 2013, due in large part to the government's 10-day closure of two major media houses in May. News outlets were regularly subjected to various forms of interference from government officials. Journalists overall continued to face intimidation and harassment from state and non-state actors. And the independent media remained vibrant.

5.2.2 The Implication of Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media in Uganda

Findings concluded that Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media in Uganda has impacted in the following ways. Government interference on print media has undermined the development and progress of some print companies. Violates the reader's rights since the main opposition print media has less autonomy in terms of what to print out and what to leave out. The profitability of some print media companies has been hindered by the rude and harsh authority by the Government such compromising with their license of operation. And Pressure and all associated issues within employees/ staff of those print media because of unlimited authority and powers by government agencies.

The Role of Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media on Readers in Uganda

Findings concluded that Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media on Readers in Uganda play the following roles, Reliance on Other Media or Competition, Political and economic power, Status or Rank of the Source, Editor's influence and Government interference.

Recommendations:

- i. I would recommend editors and reporters to take a great deal more care in seeking and representing a plurality of citizens' experiences and points of view.
- ii. I would recommend editors and reporters to facilitate access to the media not only for experts, mainstream politicians, and professional journalists, but also for occasional proponents of positions that emerge through popular grassroots discussions of the issues.
- iii. I would citizens to be empowered to act not only as receivers of mass media messages, but also as senders.

5.4 Area of further study

This study was limited to Uganda Print Media, Un-Balanced Political Coverage; a Case of *The New vision* and *Daily Monitor* News papers. Therefore future researchers should look at other areas such as "Analyzing the role of Information Communication Technology and effective print media industry in Uganda

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APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent

I am Muhirwoha Julius, a student at Nkumba University conducting a research on How Uganda Print Media is Un-Balanced on Political Coverage with a Case of *The New vision* and *Daily Monitor* News papers. This research shall be purely academic in nature. You are requested to spend a small amount of your valuable time to answer the questions as presented below: The information will be treated with utmost confidentiality only for academic purposes. Your cooperation will be highly appreciated. Thank you.

Sign:

Date:

Section A:

Background of Respondent

Fill in the space provided or tick the chosen answer.

1. Sex Male ☐ Female ☐

2. State your age group

a) 20-29 ☐ b) 30-39years ☐
c) 40-49years ☐ d) 50 and above ☐

3. Marital Status

a) Married ☐
b) Single ☐
c) Separated ☐
d) Widower ☐

4. Highest Level of education so far attained.

a) Certificate ☐
b) Diploma ☐
c) Degree ☐
d) Post graduate ☐
e) PHD ☐

5. For how long have you served this organization?

- a) Less than 2 years
- b) 2 - 10years
- c) 10 - 20 years
- d) More than20 years

SECTION B;

THE CAUSES OF UNBALANCED POLITICAL COVERAGE OF PRINT MEDIA IN UGANDA

6. Have you observed Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media in Uganda?

Yes ☐

No ☐

7. If “Yes”, please identifyUnbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media in Ugandain the place provided below

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8.) What could be the causes of Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media in Uganda?

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SECTION C

The Implication of Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media in Uganda.

9. Please analyze the impact of unbalanced political coverage of print media in Uganda in space provided below;

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10 What is the challenging issues undermining the unbalanced political coverage of print media in Uganda

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SECTION D

For section D, you are required to fill the box that best describes your answer following the scale below:

- | | | | |
|----|----|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. | SD | <input type="checkbox"/> | Strongly Disagree |
| 2. | D | <input type="checkbox"/> | Disagree |
| 3. | N | <input type="checkbox"/> | Neutral |
| 4. | A | <input type="checkbox"/> | Agree |
| 5. | SA | <input type="checkbox"/> | Strongly Agree |

THE ROLE OF UNBALANCED POLITICAL COVERAGE OF PRINT MEDIA ON READERS IN UGANDA.

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Reliance on Other Media or Competition.					
Status or Rank of the Source					
Editor’s influence					
Government interference					
13. Media has a central role in mediating information and forming public opinion about the environment in which the tourism industry operates in Uganda.					

11 Identify the role of Unbalanced Political Coverage of Print Media on Readers in Uganda.

I.....

II.....

III.....

IV.....

V.....