

**ELECTRONIC MEDIA AND THE COVERAGE OF POLITICAL EVENTS
IN JINJA-UGANDA, A CASE STUDY OF NBS RADIO**

BY

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
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DECLARATION

I Kagoya Samalie declare that the information in this research h has neither been published anywhere nor done by any under graduate for academic purpose. It is original and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature



.....

Kagoya.Samalie

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved mother Miss Olive Jane Mbeiza as well as the entire family and to the many who keep our visions alive by extending a hand to all those in the academic struggle.

APPROVAL

I certify that this work has been under my supervision and is now ready for submission to the college of humanities and social sciences in the department of Journalism and media studies.

Dr. MUDoola HERBERT

Supervisor Date.....

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I owe great thanks to my lovely mother and all my sisters for their comfort, spiritual and financial support. And for enduring the many days am away from home.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NBS	Nile Broadcasting Services
FM	Frequency modulation
UPC	Uganda peoples' congress
MP	Member of Parliament
KO TV	Kodheyo Television

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DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Radio

This is an electronic medium which transmits and receives electromagnetic waves of radio frequency, especially those carrying sound messages.

Talk show

According to this study a talk show is a radio program where politicians discuss a given topic to masses.

Broadcast

To broadcast is to send out a programme usually to a big audience.

ABSTRACT

The study examined electronic media and the coverage of political events in Jinja Uganda using a case study of NBS FM –Jinja district. The specific objectives of the study were: to find out the causes of the problems faced by journalists covering political activities, the impacts of political news stories on the audience of NBS FM and in what ways can NBS FM carry out the coverage of political events? A descriptive research design was applied because it enabled the researcher to describe electronic media and coverage of political events. A total of 100 respondents participated in the study. The main tools of data collection were interview guide and questionnaires. The results of the study revealed that the media still faces problems related to lack of independence. The many regulations that the media has to comply with sometimes impose self-censorship upon them; and also media ownership and style of a media house. The results concluded that a range of formal and informal constraints impose the severest limitations to press freedom in Uganda; but the informal constraints impose the severest limitations to press freedom. The duty of the media is to provide citizens with the information they need and want to know. Regulatory frameworks are suffocating media freedom. The study recommended that: The government should adhere to all the provisions of the supreme law concerning media freedom in the country as stated in The 1995 Constitution of Uganda.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the introduction, background to the study, statement of the problem, scope of the study, its significance and the conceptual framework to show the dependent and independent variables.

1.1 Background information to the study

From 1971-1979 when Field Marshall Idd Amin Dada was a president of Uganda, we see the political process collapse. In this regime, fear and terror were instruments of policy and media control. A number of journalists and politicians lost their lives and some even were detained without trial. Therefore in this study, there is need to establish independent regulatory framework to promote the growth of a strong – free and diverse broadcasting sector that serves the interests of the public. Broadcasters ought to play an enormous role in electronic media for all political actors so as to spear head diversity, good governance, human rights and democracy. Article 29 of the 1995 constitution of the Republic of Uganda provides the overall framework for freedom of expression including freedom of the media and information. Therefore freedom of expression and information are fundamental rights noted in article 19 of the Universal declaration of Human rights. There is also need to grant and renew broadcasting licenses in a fair and transparent manner based on clear criteria which include promoting diversity in ownership and content in order to ensure that the public has access to information. The UDHR states “everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression: this right includes freedoms to hold opinions without interference, and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers”.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Although media houses have tried to let journalists practice objective form of journalism, they have failed to let them cover political news

stories without interference. Mr. Dhakaba Meddy a moderator of Sunday panel at NBS FM was suspended from work for two weeks. During the talk show, he asked many questions to the guest M.P of the ruling Government which 'seemed' to be damaging the government.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 General objectives

The study was undertaken to find out how electronic media covers political news events in Uganda.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the study were;

- i. To establish the problems faced by journalists covering political news events.
- ii. To find out the benefits acquired from coverage of political news events.
- iii. To find out the impact of political news stories on the audience of NBS FM
- iv. To identify the various forms through which the media can cover political events.

1.4 Research questions

- (i) What are the problems faced by journalists covering political events?
- (ii) What do journalists benefit from covering political events?
- (iii) What is the impact of political news stories on the audience of NBS FM?
- (iv) In what ways can NBS FM carry out the coverage of political news stories?

1.5 Scope of the study

The scope of the study comprises of the geographical scope, content scope and time scope. This enabled the researcher to identify suitable

methods of data collection: sufficiently utilizing time as a limited resource and in order to plan well.

1.5.1 Geographical scope

The research was carried out at NBS FM Jinja since it has been in the media industry for a relatively long time so this would give an insight to the challenges that the media face. The study involved selected employers and employees of NBS FM and emphasis was put on the production department. The study also involved the audience and clients of NBS FM who represented the study population and gave their views on electronic media and coverage of political activities.

1.5.2 Content scope

This research found out the problems faced by journalists covering political activities in Uganda. It further investigated the effects of coverage of political activities by NBS FM to their audience in Uganda. Accordingly, this research also found out what journalists benefit from coverage of political activities in Uganda. Lastly, this research tried to establish how the management of NBS FM can improve the coverage of political activities in Uganda by its journalists.

1.5.3 Time scope

This research covered a period of one month. This therefore enabled the researcher to get sufficient information for the research.

1.6 Significance of the study

This study enlightens the Government system with the opportunity to review the rules and regulations that limit professional journalistic daily activities.

This study provokes the management of NBS FM and other media houses into bringing up intervention programmes to address problems faced by their journalists during the coverage of political activities.

All in all, this research is significant in that it is in partial fulfilment of the Academic requirement for the award of a Bachelors of Arts in Mass Communication at Kampala International University.

1.7 Justification of the study

This study was aimed at the coverage of political activities by electronic media. The human desire to know what is happening in the nearby areas and the fact that every society needs politicians to give direction makes politics and the media part of society. In every society, different people will always have different thoughts and ideas on how their community should be led. This means that there are various political parties with different ideologies. When it comes to campaigns and other political activities, it is important that the media provides the public with information concerning the ideas of all the political players in the country so that they get a chance of choosing which of the political players they think is best for the interests of the country.

For a political party or organisation to reach all people in a given constituency, it takes a lot of effort, dedication and resources to mobilise people together so that they can send out their ideas. With the electronic media, it is able to reach tens or even hundreds of thousands of people through their broadcasts. From this fact, the media, if properly utilised by politicians and media house owners are capable of acting as a rallying force for changing the world through the spreading of different ideologies by different politicians.

The extent to which the media can be useful in the above aspect is not clear, yet from the above analysis, it is evident that the media can be of a great importance to both politicians and the electorate. Therefore, the researcher thought of it as important to carry out a study on electronic Media Coverage of political Activities.

1.8 The purpose of the study

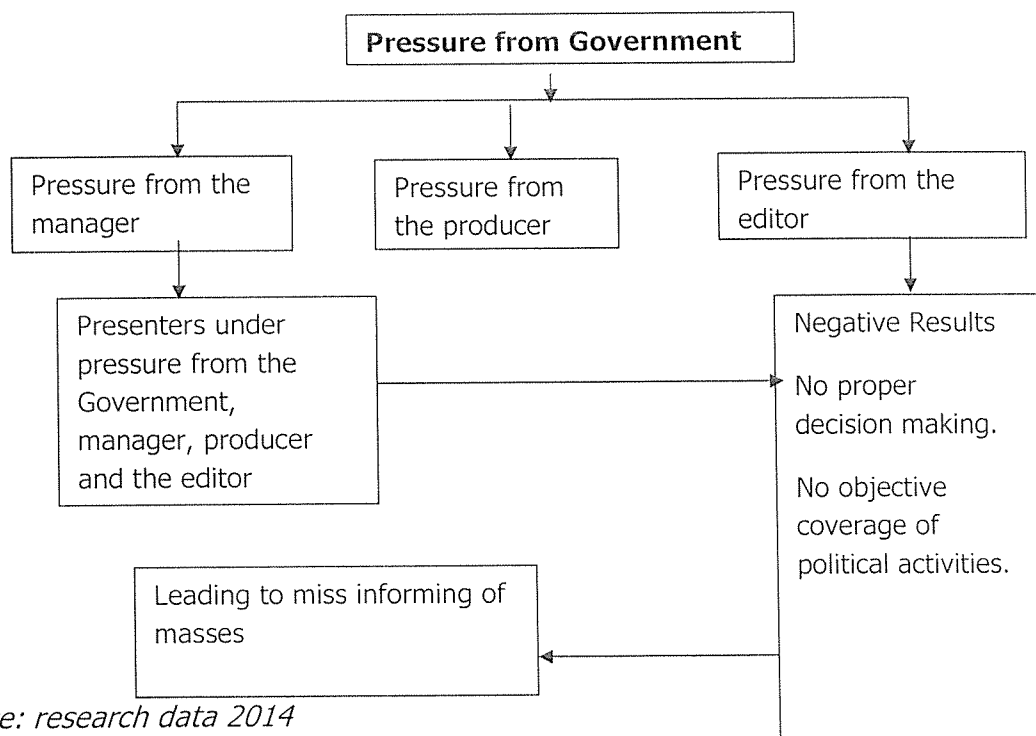
The purpose of this study is to expose the problems, limitations and challenges faced by journalists when covering political activities. The study's main purpose is to establish solutions to these issues.

1.9 Conceptual framework

This report heavily relied on the fact that reportage of issues relating to political activities in Uganda is greatly rendered improper by pressures inserted on the presenters as the final people in the chain of disseminating political news and views to the public. Radio presenters have little say on who to host in their political talk shows. All this is organised by the procedures and editors who are also under the supervision or pressure in this case from the managers. The presenter may for example feel the desire to present views professionally with the highest level of objectivity, truthfulness, accuracy, impartiality and fairness but this may be in conflict with the house style.

This can be dramatically illustrated as in figure 1

Figure 1: The Conceptual frame work.



Source: research data 2014

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature relating to the variables under investigation; it presents the literature review in accordance with the specific objectives of the study. The related literature is presented with the objectives of the study and cited to suit the electronic media coverage of political activities in Uganda.

2.1 Definition of Electronic Media

Electronic media are media that use electromechanical energy for the (audience) to access the content. The primary electronic media sources familiar to the general public are better known as video recordings, audio recordings, multimedia presentations, slide presentations and many others. Most new media are in the form of digital media. However, electronic media may be either analogue or digital format. Although the term is usually associated with content recorded on storage medium, recordings are not required for live broadcasting and online broadcasting and online networking.

2.2 functions of radio

Radio helps people learn what they are supposed to think about. Hence it participates in people's socialisation. Mc Donald James (1999) points out that radio helps socialise people. The society supplements what they have already internalised about behaviour and values in direct encounters with other people.

Radio provides platforms for idea and products advocates. It is a radio's ability to persuade and sell so effectively that it sustains and nourishes most of radio media. Warren David (2000) stresses that; "radio is used to

persuade people and benefit originators of messages.” For example, advertising and public relations are filled with people whose tasks are to use the media to further their persuasive goals.

Grabber Doris (2002) argues that radio informs the society and it plays a surveillance role. It provides the people with news, information and warnings they need in order to make informed decisions. For instance, radio lets the society know when they are threatened by an impending hurricane, volcano/fire and an economic crisis. It also gives the people helpful and useful information that they can use not in times of war but daily life.

Professional communicators who work in radio choose what topics people will hear about. Stories that are given in prominence in the media are believed to be more important than those that are ignored. Issues that the media cover or discuss in editorial tend to consume peoples’ interest as well. Campbell Richard, et al (2004) states that radio sets agendas and helps structure and interpret lives of the people.

Although people may sometimes not get the same pleasure from interacting face to face with human beings .The radio enables people to keep in contact with their politicians to keep a finger on the pulse of public opinion, and align people with others who have the same concerns. Abraham Michael (2000) says that radio helps people connect with diverse groups in society.

2.3 History of NBS FM

NBS FM Kodheyo is located in Jinja on plot 12 Nizam Road. NBS is a community based station whose main core audience are the urban dwellers, peri-urban and rural listeners in Jinja,Iganga,Kamuli,Mayuge, Namutumba, Busembatia, Budaka, Palisa, Kayunga, Busia, Tororo, Mbale,

Mukono, the Lake Victoria Islands and the greater Eastern region, broadcasting mainly in Lusoga, Luganda and English languages.

The radio operates at 89.4 frequency modulation with a capacity of 3 kilowatts of radiated power covering a radius of more than 250 kilometres thus making it the Eastern giant.

Today, NBS covers the widest Greater Eastern part in languages that are understood by the majority. It is the best programmed and listened to station in the East (check Synovate last ratings), delivers effective punch on messaging for the client.

NBS group is comprised of 2 radio stations that is: NBS 89.4, Smart 89 as well as NBS TV and KO TV thus easier to get a comprehensive advertising package.

2.4 Media trends in Uganda

The media in Uganda has not lagged behind, in its role of informing, disseminating knowledge, entertaining and acting as a watchdog on those in positions of power, the media has re-invited itself to be able to appeal to a wider audience, taking advantage of the technological advancements as they become available. The media has adopted several ways of reaching out to more audiences. The use of the internet has played a great role in promoting these new ways most especially when it comes to internet blogs, pod casts, online news services, social networks et cetera. It is now very possible to listen to radio stations online.

2.5. The problems faced by journalists covering political activities

Journalists covering political activities under go various problems, they include:-

Challenges faced by advancement in technology- more particularly the transition from analogue to digital broadcasting. With the advancement in technology, electronic media in Uganda face enormous legal, economic and policy questions. Majority of humanity has not been affected by the digital revolution “.

The fact that there are tensions between the government and the media. The government has criticised the media for unprofessionally handling sensitive issues. His excellence the General, President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni is particularly angered at times by the press’ natural tendency to focus on problems and difficulties in Uganda.

Lack of facilitation: you may find that in order to be at the scene of a political happening, a journalist needs transportation charges which may not be provided for by the media house. The lack of facilitation leads to everyday dilemmas such as accepting a “brown envelope”, et cetera.

Limitations by media houses for which they practise journalism: most journalists covering political events for NBS FM are expected to be in support of the ruling government much as airtime is provided to all different political beliefs.

2. 6 Benefits achieved from covering political activities

Journalist earn a livelihood :reporters who report on political activities get at times piece-rate payment or additional payment inform of commissions, lunch or transport tokens after the coverage or attendance of different occasions.

The information acquired in the process of covering activities is crucial for reference when it comes to writing other works. These facts can be used for evidence as contained in the fact files.

Coverage of political activities offers greater opportunities to journalists: they come in to contact with major political icons and travel to places they just dream of or read about. Becoming power, many journalists have succeeded in becoming powerful politicians as well. This is partly because of the exposure they get through the coverage of political activities.

2.7 The impact of political news stories on the audience of NBS FM

Audiences have different reactions to what is broadcast. In many cases broadcast media only broadcast opinions that are attributed to a particular individual (who may be an in-house analyst) or to an outside entity. One particularly controversial media is whether media organisations should endorse political candidates for office.

Political endorsements create more opportunities to construe favouritism in reporting, and can create a perceived conflict of interest. Mc Combs and Shaw note that the medias' tendency to structure voters perceptions of political reality in effect constitutes a bias;"to a considerable degree the art of politics in a democracy is the art of determining which issue dimensions are of major interest to the public or can be made salient in order to win public support." In their book *The Emergency of American Political Issues* 1977, McCombs and Shaw argued that the most important effect of mass media was "its ability to mentally order and organise our world for us. "Electronic media may not be successful in telling us what to think, "declared the authors: "but they are stunningly successful in telling us what to think about."

Shanto Iyengar looks at why we think what we do about politics in his book "Is Anyone Responsible?" But the theories and premises of his research are derived in a large part from his 1987 book "News That

Matters" (co-authored with Donald Kinder). In the book, he examines how we think about politics, suggesting that radio determines what we believe to be important issues largely by paying attention to some problems and ignoring or paying minimal attention to others.

In a provocative article "All the entire Congressmen's Men," the late Walter Karp, author of "Liberty Under Siege: American Politics" 1976-1988, observed that "the press does not act, it is acted upon so passive is the press that seemingly bold adversarial stories often have the sanction of the highest officials." He quotes from a wealth of sources and presents ample evidence suggesting that the granted power of the press is no more than a "shabby friction" and the political powers have in effect subjugated and distorted the media. Our public realm lies steeped in twilight, he charges, and we call that twilight news.

2.8 Substandard elections

In many countries with weak rule of law, the most common reason Why elections do not meet international standards of being free and fair IS interference from the incumbent government. Dictators may use the powers of the executive to remain in power despite popular opinion in favour of removal. Members of particular faction in a legislature may use power of the majority to prevent the balance of power in the body from shifting to a rival faction due to an election. Non governmental entities can also interfere with elections through physical force, verbal intimidation or fraud which can result in improper casting and counting of votes. Monitoring for and minimising electoral fraud is also an ongoing task in countries with strong traditions of free and fair elections.

Problems that prevent an election from being free and fair take various forms:

There may be unfairness in the rules and procedure: this can include gerrymandering, exclusion from opposition candidates from eligibility for office, and manipulating shareholders for electoral success. All the above are some of the ways the structure of an election can be changed to favour a specific candidate.

Tempering with the election mechanism: this may consist of - voting machines, destruction of legitimately cast ballots, voter suppression, ballot stuffing, tampering with voting machines, confusing voters about how to and for whom to vote, violation of the secret ballot, fraudulent tabulation of results, use of verbal intimidation and ballot stuffing at polling stations.

Continuous interference in campaigns: those in power may assassinate, suppress candidates or even criminalise campaigning, close campaign headquarters, harass/campaigners and also intimidate voters with violence.

There may also be lack of an informed electorate : in this case the electorate may be poorly informed about candidates due to lack of freedom of the press, lack of objectivity in the press due to state or corporate control, lack of access to political news. Freedom of speech may be curtailed by the state, favouring certain viewpoints and propaganda.

However NBS FM has tried to enlighten the masses about their rights as voters. This reduces the levels of ignorance in relation to democratic processes.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 introduction

This chapter deals with the research methodology to the study; discusses aspects of the geographical area in which the research was conducted the research design, the study population, sampling techniques, the sample size, the study instruments, sources of data and data analysis methods.

3.1 Research design

This research was carried out using a survey design where information was systematically obtained using interview schedules and questionnaires. Through this research design, both the detailed and specific information obtained from key respondents was presented. Other related literature was also used.

3.2 Study area and population

The study population was NBS radio management, employees clients and Listeners who summed up to 100 respondents. People who dominated this area of study were of different cultural groups thus different tribes. NBS FM's heads-of-departments were used as informants on the role played by electronic Medias in the coverage of political activities. This is because as administrators they face more challenges related to coverage of political news stories.

3.3 Sample framework

Under sample framework the researcher looked at sampling size, sample techniques and sample procedure. Due to lack of statistical knowledge about the research total population and lack of enough resources, the researcher chose to use Slovenes formulae. She planned to get 100 respondents and Used 0.119 as the margin of error.

3.3.1 Sampling size

The researcher selected a total population of 100 respondents 10members from the management of NBS FM,20 respondents from employees of the radio station,40 listeners and 30 clients. For easier practical study, all were divided in to three categories because members from the same region tend to exhibit similar attitudes and characteristics.

3.3.2 Sample techniques

In this research, the researcher employed simple random sampling, Purposive sampling and accidental sampling method.

3.3.2.1 Simple random sampling

A simple random sample is a subset of individuals chosen from a large population. Each individual is chosen randomly and entirely by chance such that each individual has the same probability of being chosen for the sample as any other. It is free of classification error and it requires less advanced knowledge of the population other than a frame. It best suites situations where not much information is available about the population.

3.3.2.2Purposive sampling

This is a sample selected in a deliberate and random style to achieve certain goal targeting a particular group of people. Especially, when the desired population for the study is rare or very difficult to locate and recruit for a study.

3.3.2.3 Accidental sampling

This selects a particular group of people. However it does not come close to sampling the whole population. Here participants are selected by convenience other than random method. This is used primarily when there is a limited number of people that have expertise in the area being researched.

3.3.3 Sample procedure

Through simple random sampling, the researcher selected the names of people from NBS FM. She then numbered these names and selected the respondents from the names in which numbers 2,4,6,8 and 10 appeared. In case the names that had the above mentioned numbers were many, the researcher used accidental sampling method; the researcher involved anyone she came across provided she was a journalist.

3.4 Methods for data collection

The major methods of data collection were questionnaires, interviews, observation and literature search. Structured questionnaires for qualitative research and interview guide for key informants were employed. Also observation guidelines were prepared specifically to record firsthand information during interview sessions with the respondents.

3.4.1 Instruments

3.4.1.1 Questionnaires

Different set of questions were given to different journalists. In these, issues of coverage of political news stories were considered for the realistic information about the topic for the study.

3.4.1.2 Interview

Interviews were also carried out at NBS FM. These were both formal and informal. Formal interviews guides were used with the targeted groups while informal interviews were daily conversations with different people like journalists, listeners, politicians and so many others.

3.4.1.3 Focus group discussion

This formed an important part of the study and different questions were arranged with different target group members and in discussion. In discussion different issues related to the topic were discussed.

3.4.1.4 Observation

Additionally, personal observation on the coverage of political news events in the study also helped the researcher to come up with realistic information since this was firsthand information.

3.4.1.5 Photographic instruments

The researcher also used photographic instruments such as cameras. This helped in capturing some of the studio equipment used in the coverage of political events.

3.4.1.5 Sources of data

Primary, secondary and anonymous sources of data were used in this research.

i) Primary sources

This was based on the information from the field that came from the respondents using the different instruments such as questionnaires, interviews and observation.

ii) Secondary sources

This was information got from the library books, internet and journals. This was specifically used in literature review and in comparison of different authors.

3.4.3 Validity and reliability of instruments

The research designed directly related, filter short and specific question for his respondents to answer. The questionnaire was intended to acquire fundamental information about topic of which clear instructions at the beginning and throughout the questionnaire provided as well.

The research drafted both structured and unstructured interview questions. In dealing with the structured approach, the research

interviewed respondents impersonal and also conducted telephone interviews while in un structured, the research interviewed the clients and prominent listeners of NBS FM. Self-complete questionnaire were designed for respondents who could not give up their time and others preferred that they could complete them at home or not at their free time.

3.5 Data processing

Data processing in this research involved three activities and these include loading the information from the field, editing their work and tabulating different frequencies from the findings, this suggests that resources from the questionnaires and interview guides were paid attention to in the process.

3.6 Data analysis

In the data analysis, the researcher used both the qualitative and quantitative approach. After recording the necessary information, the researcher then established how many times the alternative response category would give an answer using tally works which later were added up. Later on the researcher presented in frequency tabulation thus rendering it ready for interpretation. Quotations from the interviews and questionnaires were also illustrated in this research.

3.7 Ethical procedure

The researcher got a letter from the head of department of mass to the communication at Kampala International University that was to serve as an introduction letter to various respondents; she then proceeded to the field for the research. The information gathered was observed and identification of the information was not made available to anyone who is not directly involved in the study and at the end all respondents were kept anonymous.

3.8 Study limitations

The study was limited by financial constraints and the time scale. It was not possible for the researcher to cover all the relevant people in the field thus the need to formulate a sample which was used to represent the entire area of study.

Accessibility to confidential information which is necessary was not easy at all. Therefore the researcher tried to assure the respondent that the information obtained would be treated with a high level of confidentiality.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

Chapter four the study systematically presents the results that were obtained from the research that was conducted. The results are qualitatively presented. The analysis and interpretation follows tabular presentation at some stages and the interview results from the respondents are also presented to supplement the qualitative presentation.

The presentation of the study is guided by the research questions that guided the study. The background information of the respondents however is also presented. Hence forth, the presentation is divided in to two sections where section one presents the background information of the respondents, while section two; represents the results of the study according to the research questions that guided the collection of data. The presentation of the data follows in the following discussion.

The study covered respondents randomly selected from among editors, sub editors, directors, guest contributors, reporters, political analysts et cetera. 77 questionnaires were distributed and to respondents while 55 of them were filled and returned; which represented.....positive response from questionnaires. All respondents were able to respond during interviews.

4.1 Bio data of the respondents

Since sampling was random, the respondents had differences in terms of the background. This includes different age groups, education level, marital status and sex.

4.1.1 Sex of the respondents

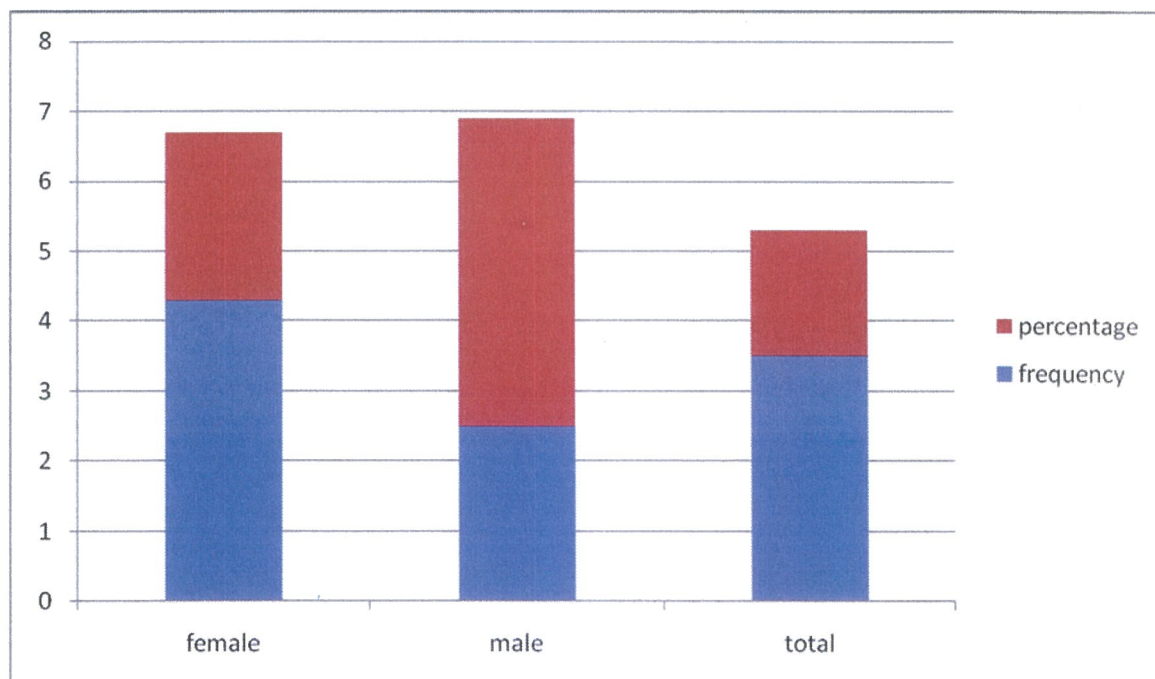
Both males and females were interviewed. The table below indicates sex of respondents

Table 1: A table showing frequencies of both sexes of the respondents

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Female	40	40
Male	60	60
Total	100	100

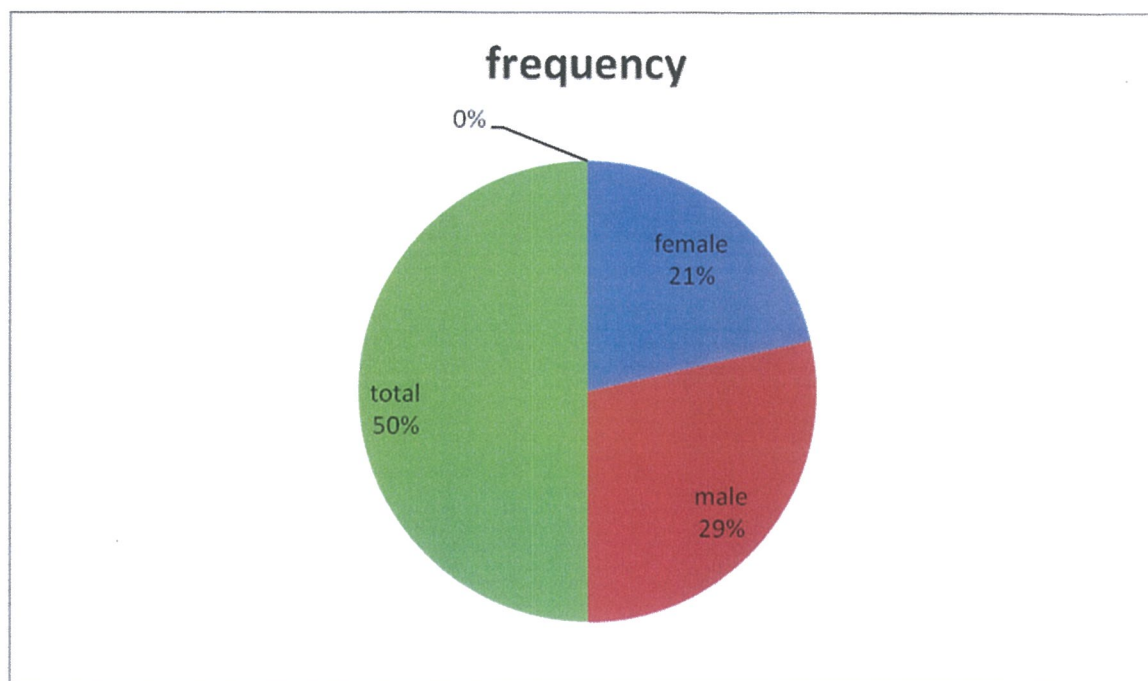
Table 1 indicates that, 40 out of the 100 respondents representing 40% were female while 60 out of 100 respondents representing 60 were male. Thus this indicates that male respondents were more than female.

Figure 1: a graph representing frequencies of both sexes of respondents.



The data in table 1 has also been in figure 1 below

Figure 2: a pie chart showing frequencies of both sexes of the respondents at NBS radio.



Source: Primary data, 2012

4.1.2 Marital status of the respondents

Most of the respondents who were interviewed were between the age of 18 and 50 and as a result most of the respondents are married. Table 3 shows the distribution in as far as the marital status is concerned.

Table 2: Marital status of the respondents

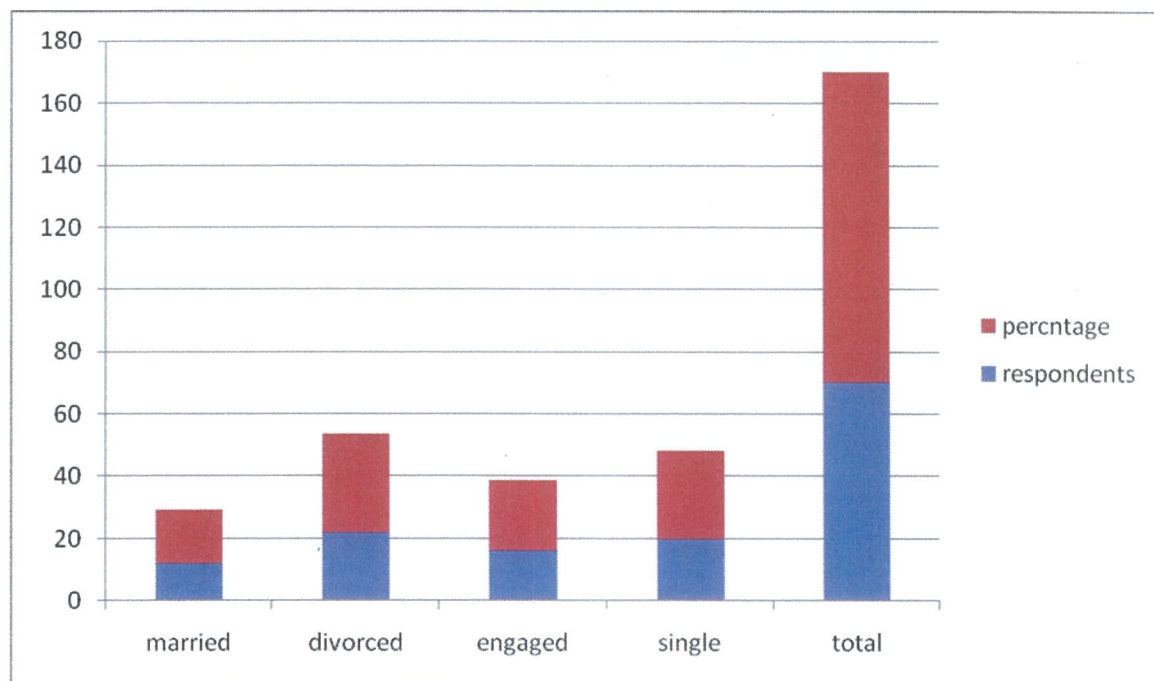
response	respondents	Percentage
Married	20	20
Divorced	45	45
Engaged	10	10
Single	25	25
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data, 2012

Table 2 indicates that 20 out of the 100 respondents representing 20% were married yet 45 out of the 100 respondents representing 45% were divorced, 10 out of the 100 respondents representing 10% were engaged and 25 out of 100 respondents representing 25% were single.

The data in table 2 has also been presented in figure 2

Figure 3: A graph showing marital status of the respondents.



Source: Primary data, 2012

4.1.3 Age of the respondents

To access the validity of the result it was also important to evaluate the age ranges of respondents.

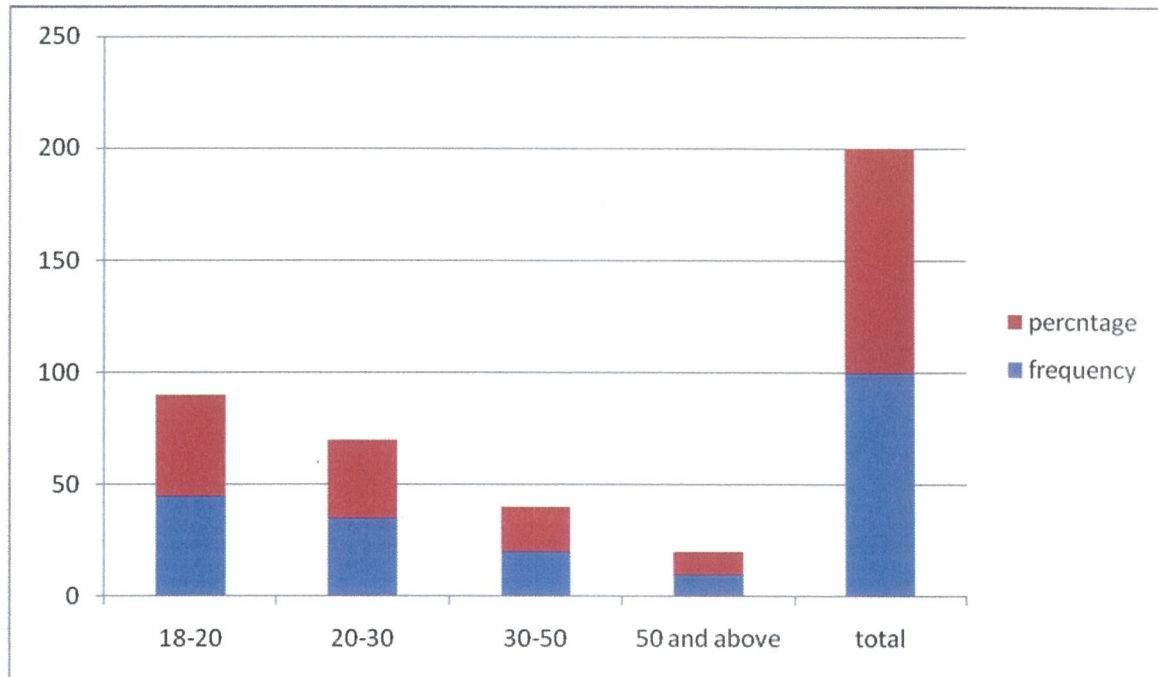
Table 3: Age of the respondents

Response	Frequency	Percentage
18-20	45	45
20-30	35	35
30-50	20	20
50 and above	10	10
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data, 2012

Table 3 indicates that 35 out of 100 respondents representing 45% are aged between 18-20 years, 35 out of 100 respondents representing 35% are aged between 20-30 years, 20 out of 100 respondents representing 20% are aged between 30-50 years and 10 out of 100 respondents representing 10% are aged between 50 years and above.

Figure 4: A graph showing age of the respondents.



Source: Primary data 2012

4.1.4 Level of Education of the respondents

With the use of the questionnaire the researcher collected data on the level of education of the respondents. After analyzing the electronic media coverage of political activities in Uganda, it was evident that most of those who participated in the coverage of political activities are in one way or another limited in the way they reported to the end user of the information who are the audience.

Table 4: Level of Education of the respondents

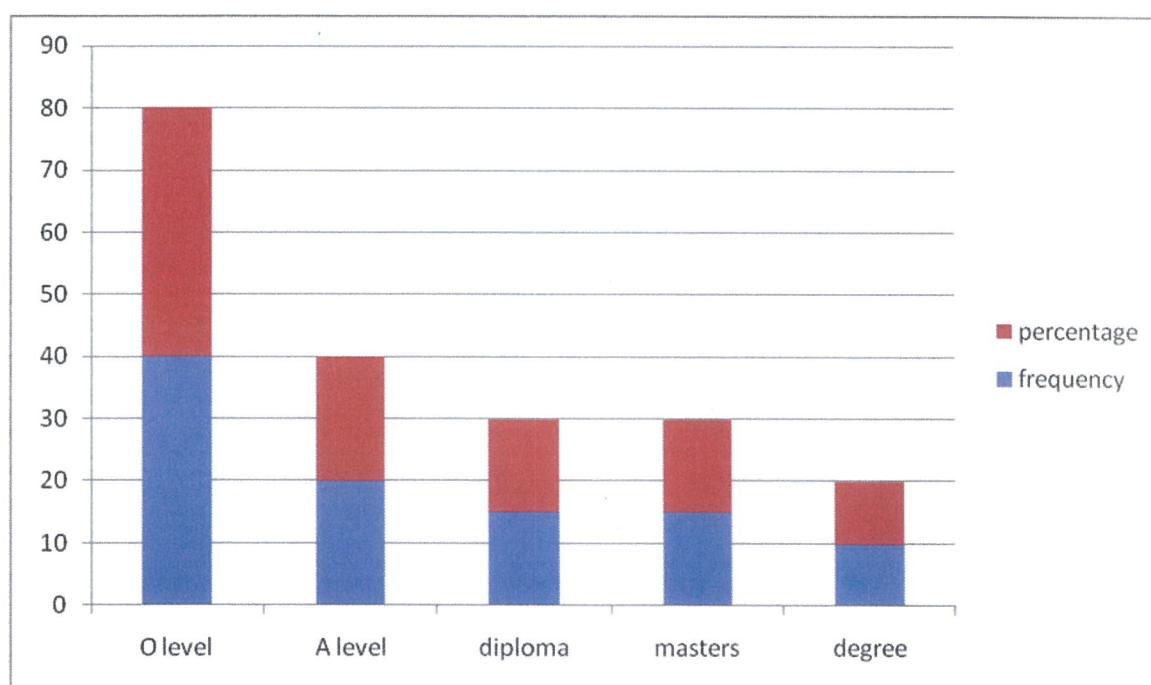
Response	Frequency	Percentage
O level	40	40
A level	20	20
Diploma	15	15
Degree	15	15
Masters	10	10
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data, 2012

From Table 4, 40 out of the 100 respondents representing 40% completed O level, 20 out of the 100 respondents representing 20% completed A level yet 15 respondents representing 15% completed diploma with same percentage as of those who completed degree and 10 out of 100 respondents representing 10% had finished masters.

The data in table 4 has also been in figure 5 below

Figure 5: A graph showing education level of the respondents.



Source: Primary Data, 2014.

4.1.5 Designation of respondents

The respondents were drawn from the list of directors, reporters, political analysts, editors and others. Of all the respondents studied, I was the managing director, 13 were field reporters, 7 were political analysts, 4 were guest contributors, 3 were editors and 7 sub-editors. These were selected because of their vast knowledge of political reporting and media coverage of politics in the country.

Table 5: positions held by the respondents

DESIGNATION	NUMBER	
	Male	Female
M.D	1	0
Field reporters	1	5
Political analysts	6	1
Guest contributors	3	1
Editors	3	0
Sub-editors	4	3
Others	3	10
TOTAL	28	20

SOURCE: Field data, September 2012.

4.2 problems faced by journalists covering political activities.

The first research objective was to investigate the problems faced by journalists in covering political activities in Uganda. In order to get answers to ascertain this objective of the study, the researcher inquired from the respondents and their perception on a number of issues. These issues included: What leads to limitations in media coverage, whether respondents understand the meaning of political activities, and whether the government of Uganda provides support to journalists in covering political activities.

Descriptive statistics of the study were also analysed and indicated results. For example, the researcher was interested in investigating the

problems faced by journalists in covering political activities; the results are presented in table 6.

Table 6: Problems faced by journalists in covering political activities in Uganda

Response	Frequency	Percentage
House style	25	25
Media limitations	10	10
Advancement in technology	24	24
Police brutality	5	5
Corruption	16	16
Inadequate facilitation	20	20
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data, 2012.

4.2.1 House style

Basing on the study findings, 25 out of the 100 respondents representing 25%, said that the house style has a way it negatively affects journalists in covering political activities in Uganda.

4.2.2 Media limitations

From table 6 on the study findings on the problems faced by journalists in covering political activities, 10 out of the 100 respondents representing 10% showed that limitation of the media is also another problem facing journalists in covering political activities in Uganda.

4.2.3 Advancement in technology

Basing on the study findings, 24% of the respondents showed that advancement in technology is another problem faced by journalists in covering political activities in Uganda.

4.2.3 Advancement in technology

Basing on the study findings, 24% of the respondents showed that advancement in technology is another problem faced by journalists in covering political activities in Uganda.

4.2.4 Poor government policies

Study findings also showed that 5 out of the 100 respondents representing 5% argued that poor government policy is also another problem faced by journalists covering political activities in Uganda.

4.2.5 Corruption

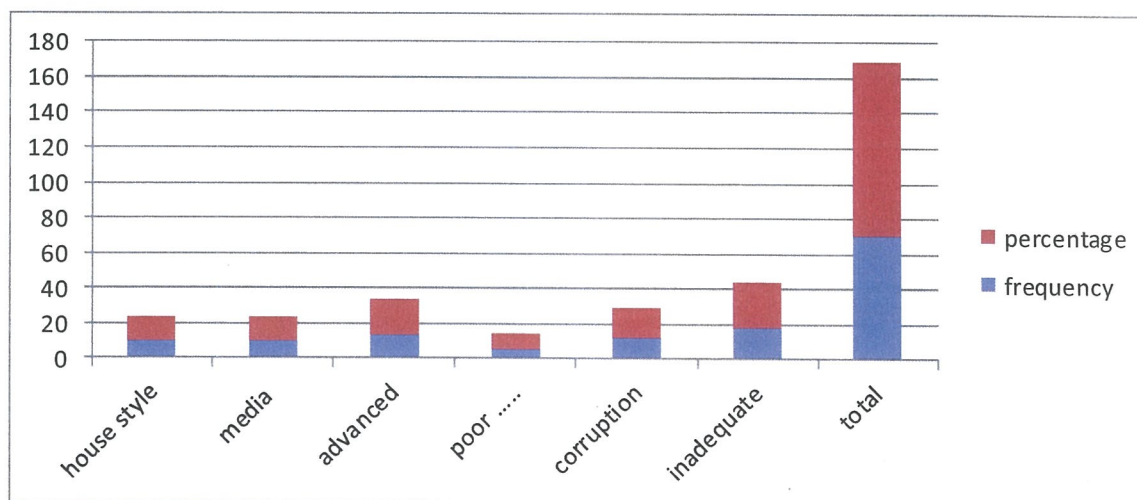
Basing on the study findings, 16% of the respondents showed that corruption is yet another problem faced by journalists in covering political activities in Uganda.

4.2.6 Inadequate facilitation

Further, findings, 20% of the respondents showed that inadequate facilitation is also a problem faced by journalists in Uganda.

The above information is also represented in the graph below.

Figure 6: A graph showing problems faced by journalists covering political activities in Uganda.



Source: Primary data 2012.

4.3 Challenges faced by the media in covering political activities

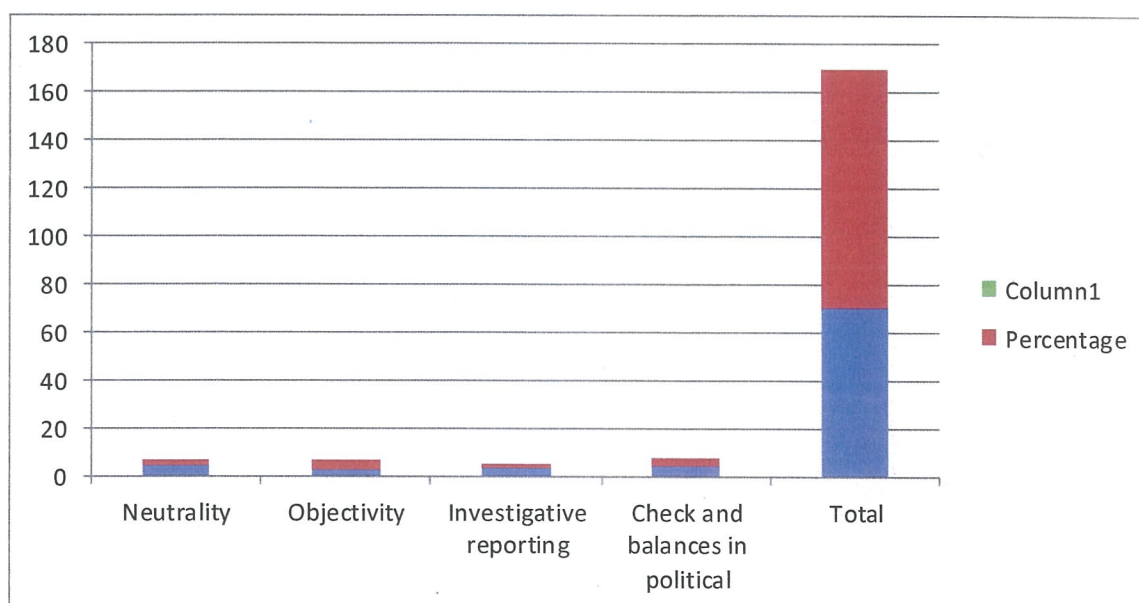
Although the media in Uganda has made significant progress in media freedom, and in particular, political reporting, there are instances of intolerance to critical journalists trying to bring corruption and abuse of power into the light of public scrutiny.

Table 7: Challenges faced by the media in covering political activities

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Criminalization	10	10
Amendment of the press law	33	33
Secrecy	20	20
The truth in relation to money	37	37
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data 2012

Figure 7: A graph showing the challenges faced by the media in covering political activities.



Source: Primary data 2012.

Criminalization: From table 7, 10 representing 10% argued that criminalization is a major challenge faced by the media in covering political activities. Criminalization of media offences is generally unfavourable to the media. In particular, criminalization has related to reporting on military, security, corruption and governance issues. National security remains a blanket condition, not specifically defined. That entitles state officials to lawfully prevail over the rights of journalists. The limitations to media freedom in Uganda are in various provisions relating to sedition, treason, national security, both civil and criminal defamation and the Press and journalists Statute.

The government's commitment to press freedom often comes to a test when the media reveals politically controversial information. The law of treason, put in place in the name of national security, sometimes drives the media to practice self-censorship. The proposed amendments to the journalist statute even pose a bigger danger to journalism in Uganda. The definition of information prejudicial to national security and other media offences is too broad and vague.

Criminal charges against journalists in relation to critical speech are increasingly common in Uganda, though in the instances when a case goes before a judge, courts have often protected journalists from the full repressive potential of this tactic. Since 2005, about 30 prominent journalists working at Kampala-based print and electronic publications have received a barrage of well-publicised police summons. One of these journalists is Mambo Francis. At least 10 radio journalists and talk show penalties have also been charged with crimes. All are out on bail, and none have ever been convicted of any crime. These criminals' cases stem from the publication of reports that were critical of government programmes or policies or allegedly insulted government officials. Charges range from libel to more serious accusations of sedition.

Amendment of the press law: according to the study finding, 33 out of 100 representing 33% showed that amendment of the press law is a challenge to the coverage of political activities in Uganda. The proposed requirement that media houses obtain annual licenses, which can be revoked by the Media Council(read the government), is very dangerous, especially when looked at in the context of other provisions that create and criminalise publication offences. The Media Council could easily revoke or refuse to renew the license of a media house accused of committing the new publication offences the bill creates and this could be done even before a competent court pronounces itself on whether the media in fact committed those offences. This in one way or another impedes the reportage of facts relating to political activities by journalists of different media houses. The fear of closure directly affects the house style. Media houses will opt not to tackle sensitive political issues.

Also, some of the proposed licensing conditions are concerning. It would appear as if the government is worried that under the current law anybody can easily start a media house. But this is the very essence of freedom to impart information. Obviously this has implications on the quality of journalism. But it is necessary in the interest of media pluralism and diversity. The enjoyment of free expression, in this case the freedom to impart and disseminate information, can't be the preserve of only those who have "access to modern technical facilities" or those with the "right to social, cultural and economic values."

The proposed prohibition of the publication of "information injurious to national security, stability and unity, to Uganda's relationship with neighbours and to the economy;" as well as the proposal to criminalise such coverage is very dangerous as such provisions would be subject to subjective interpretation. What constitutes injury to national security and who defines injury to national security or "economic sabotage?" is the

major point of contention. This too hinders journalists from reporting without borders in relation to political activities.

Secrecy: the research finding stood that 20 out of 100 respondents representing 20% allied with secrecy. A related difficulty is that there exists a culture of secrecy in the Ugandan society. Lack of access to information remains a major stumbling block to tackling institutional corruption and abuse of human rights. Paradoxically, the enactment of the Access to information Act has not reduced the level of secrecy in Uganda. The Government has moved at a snails' pace when it comes to putting the law in operation. As a result, reporters often encounter barriers raised by public servants who continue to rely in the Official Secrets Act.

The truth in relation to money: the research showed 37 out of 100 representing 37% on this. Another crucial point is the growing influence of advertisers on media content, there by threatening media independence. There appears to be a conflict between profit making and truth telling. This has led to loss of public trust as media houses are also viewed as being motivated by profits and personal gain. Besides, some media owners are extremely focused on making money and do not care about the welfare of their journalists.

A further complication is that Ugandan journalists have not been spared of the "brown envelope". Editors and journalists of NBS FM radio agree that to some extent, journalists are constantly getting compromised while pursuing stories. The question of ethical challenges facing journalists such as accepting payments to "kill" stories is damaging the reputation of the media industry.

4.4 Politicians and electronic media.

Table 8: Politicians and electronic media coverage, percentage

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Weekly press briefings	37	37
Exclusive interviews	22	22
Press statement	41	41
Total	100	100

Source: primary data 2012

From the findings of the study, 37out of 100 respondents representing 37% argued that weekly press briefings are often used politicians ,22out of 100 representing 22% showed exclusive interviews, 41out of 100 representing 41% uplifted press statement in the coverage of political activities in Uganda. It is evident that many politicians consider the engagement of the media, in particular the electronic media as very crucial in their political manoeuvres. The researcher found out that electronic media has been engaged in various ways by politicians in an effort to promote their political ideas. The following are some of the ways in which this activity is evident.

Press statements: the political fraternity in Uganda also engages the media through press statements and political debates. Press statements are released occasionally and distributed to all the media houses in the country. This is so in most cases when there has been a major social, economic or political occurrence that has significance in the country, like riots in Jinja, rise in fuel prices and arrest of prominent political figures like Mr. Kanusu Robert of UPC in 2010 during elections.

Weekly press briefings: Politicians engage the media through holding weekly press briefings to issue their criticisms or opinions on the occurrences of the past week. This is a general practice by all major political organisations in the country including political parties like

4.5 Desires of the media when covering political events.

The media have got desires to fulfil their social-responsibility when covering political events. These desires are also the cornerstones of a media houses' reputation. Some of them include:-

Table 9: The desire of the media when covering political event

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Neutrality	26	26
Objectivity	24	24
Investigative reporting	20	20
Checks and balances in politics	30	30
Total	100	100

Source: primary data 2012

The research findings on the desire of the media when covering political events showed that 26 out of 100 respondents representing 26% argued in favour of their neutrality, objectivity had 24 out of 100 representing 24%, 20 out of 100 representing 20% sided with investigative reporting while 30 out of 100 representing 30% on checks and balances in politics. The table above is also further presented in the figure below.

they are damaging or beneficial to the damaging to the politicians involved. A good example is the National Social Security Fund dealing in which prominent politicians in the country were accused of political influence pedalling when soliciting the NSSF to buy land in what was popularly known as "Temangalo scandal" in 2008. NBS FM was very professional when covering this running story. Heideking Juergen et al (2002) argues that investigative journalism is very important but media houses ought to practice a reasonable level of professionalism.

Objectivity: the media has been objective and consistent in its engagement with politicians. Objectivity in such a way that media coverage of political events is purely intended to inform the public about what is going on with their leaders at all levels of public political leadership. The media has been very careful not to engage in personal politics that would render the media houses as biased.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions from the study and the recommendations. The study used both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis.

5.1 Summary of findings

The electronic media is fully engaged in the coverage of political activities in Uganda, as observed from the wide coverage that is offered to political reports.

From the observation in this study, the media still faces problems related to the lack of freedom and independence. The many regulations that the media has to comply with some times impose self-censorship upon them. Open threats to various media houses and even closure of some stations when they are deemed to report what is not favourable of the government side has been common. Tolerance of criticism and protection of free speech in Uganda fluctuates based on political factors.

Since the establishment of multiparty system, the government has used legal extra judicial means to repress the media or to impose favourable coverage on their side. Given the relatively strong stance of the courts, criminal charges, though often levelled against journalists, are not the strongest means at the government's disposal. In the numerous instances where government threats and intimidation are levelled extra judicially bodies, through phone calls, confidential meetings or by arbitrary edicts of regulatory bodies with broad ill-defined powers and no due process guarantees, the courts' protections are of little comfort to members of the media. The effects of such threats is particularly

dramatic in rural areas outside the capital , where the resident district commissioners' power is largely unchecked, and such threats seriously inhibit free expression.

5.2 Conclusion

Though there is a proliferation of electronic media houses and wide coverage of political events, electronic media still faces several hurdles. Competition for audience has become the order o f the day and the quality of reporting has sometimes been compromised by commercialised news. The limitations imposed by the archaic laws on press freedom in Uganda cannot be underestimated. However the informal constraints such as media ownership, brown envelope poor remuneration, shortage of resources and poor working conditions pose a bigger burden to Ugandan electronic media.

Press freedom and free expression facilitate the enjoyment of other rights enshrined in the constitution. This is not simply about media organisations and journalists. It is about every citizen. The constitution gives all of us the freedom of speech and expression. The constitution is also clear that limitations to be these freedoms must be neither acceptable nor justifiable in a free and democratic society.

It is evident that a range of informal and formal constraints limit media freedom in Uganda. The informal constraints impose the severest limitations to press freedom. The press can hardly function as a public forum for expression is of views and critics with such constraints. The duty of the journalist s is to provide citizens with the information they need to want to know. The media needs to be free and self-governing without government intervention. Journalists cannot perform this duty if there are regulatory frameworks suffocating media freedom.

5.3 Recommendations

The 1995 constitution of Uganda is very strong on press freedom and freedom of expression. It has been the government observation of these regulations that has been poor in most cases. Thus the government should adhere to all the provisions of the country's' supreme law concerning the freedom of the media in the country. In this way the media actors will be able to carry out their duties without intimidation or fear of arrest when they report what is regarded as "damaging to the government. Regulation of media practitioners in the country should be streamlined according to the provisions of the law. Currently, five separate entities all have some formal overlapping mandate to control, monitor, discipline and sanction journalists and media houses. These include:-Uganda Communications Commission, Police media crimes unit, Broadcasting council, Media council and Media centre. All these are subject to direct government control. Centrally to internationally accepted standards, and in contrast with several other African jurisdictions, there are no provisions in the law requiring the regulatory bodies to be independent of government interference. This structure leaves the media, and especially those who are critical of government action, extremely vulnerable to closure. In addition, it is widely believed those others in government, particularly in Internal Security Organisation; the domestic intelligence body- monitor the media and react often to suppress critical reporting.

Intimidation, unlawful arrest and detention without trial of journalists, most of which are extra judicial: should come to an end. This goes hand in hand with closure of radio stations that are critical of the ruling government; arbitrary acts should be condemned as they serve to censor free expression and limit the ability of the media to inform the masses.

5.4 Further research

This study represents a start in understanding electronic media and coverage of political events in Uganda. Although research on the media in politics is abundant, research on electronic media and coverage of political events is lacking in many respects. Future research should further explore the relationship between the media and political propaganda.

Ultimately the challenge of integrating issues of diversity and variation with theoretical notions and generalisations lies in balancing university versus community specific aims of research. Understanding the relationship between electronic media and political events not only informs theory and research but also affects intervention efforts in real world settings.

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APPENDIX I QUESTIONNAIRES

Dear respondent am **Kagoya Samalie** a student of Kampala International University pursuing a Bachelors Degree in Mass communication, carrying out a research on "Electronic media and the coverage of political activities in Jinja –Uganda: a case study of NBS fm." This study is exclusively for academic purposes and the information provided here shall be the treated confidentially.

SECTION 1: DEMORGRAPHIC DATA

1. What is your name?

.....

2. Which sex group do you belong to?

(i) Male ☐ (ii) Female ☐

3. What is your marital status?

(i) single ☐
(ii) Married ☐ (iii) Divorced ☐

4. What is your education background?

(i)Primary ☐ (ii) Secondary ☐
(iii)Tertiary ☐ (iv) Diploma ☐
(v)Degree ☐ (vi) Masters ☐

5.what is your working experience?

(i)below 1 year ☐
(ii) 2-4 years ☐
(iii)5-10 years ☐
(iv)Above 10 years ☐

SECTION II:

1. Do you think there is any relationship between electronic media and the coverage of political activities in Kampala?

(i) Yes

☐

(ii) No

☐

If yes or no, illustrate the correlation according to your own way of understanding it.

.....
.....

2. What do journalists benefit from covering political activities?

.....
.....

3. What is the impact of political news stories on the audience of NBS fm?

.....
.....

4. What are the challenges faced by the

5. Are there ways NBS fm can perform the coverage of political activities?

i) Yes

ii) No

☐☐

If yes, mention a few

.....
.....

6. What are the desires of the media when covering political activities?

.....
.....

APPENDIX (II)

ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE FOR THE RESEARCH PROCESS

ITEMS	UNITS	UNIT COST	AMOUNT(UGX)
Photocopying	5	4000	20000
Internet/Newspaper	16	500	8000
Pens	3	300	900
Typing/printing	90	500	45000
Binding	3	10000	30000
Ream of papers	2	7000	14000
Antine/consultations	10	1000	10000
Transport	2	20000	40000
GRAND TOTAL		73300	572,900