

**PEARL OF AFRICA MUSIC (PAM) AWARDS: POLITICAL CONSTRUCTION OF  
POPULAR MUSIC IN UGANDA**

by

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## DECLARATION

I, Anita Desire Asaasira, hereby declare that this is my original research and it has not been submitted anywhere for any academic award.

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## DEDICATION

To Assoc. Prof. Steinar Sætre, his wife Jorunn, and their children Odin, Johann and Yria

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AIM	Africa Institute of Music
CBS	Central Broadcasting Services
EA	East Africa
EKRU	Ekivuulu Kya Radio Uganda
FEP AU	Federation for Performing Arts in Uganda
FM	Frequency Moderation
KFM	Monitor FM
MDD	Music Dance and Drama
MTN	Mobile Telecommunication Network
MTV	Music Television
NARAS	National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences
PAM	Pearl of Africa
SMS	Short Message Service
UBC	Uganda Broadcasting Corporation
UBL	Uganda Breweries Limited
UTL	Uganda Telecom Limited
VIP	Very Important People
WBS	Wavah Broadcasting Service

## ABSTRACT

In this dissertation, I examine how the politics of competition in the Pearl of Africa Music (PAM) Awards, an annual music competition, have contributed to the construction of popular music in Uganda. I examine how the politics of competition are performed between the musicians, sponsors, producers, PAM Awards Organizing Committee, judges, audiences and the media and how this relationship participates in the construction of popular music in Uganda. I discuss the politics involved in the organization and execution processes of PAM Awards as well as how this politics participate in constructing what is considered popular music in Uganda.

This study was inspired by the fact that while the politics of competition in the music industry is as old as the music itself, and has indeed had an influence on what music the society consumes, scholars in ethnomusicology and popular music studies are yet to articulate the role of competition in defining popular music. Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony helps to explain how power is performed between musicians, producers, judges, PAM Awards committee, media, audience and sponsors. In this power play, the PAM Awards committee, judges, sponsors and to some extent, the media, and audience are in the dominant position and the competing musicians and producers are the subordinates. However, as Gramsci posits, this hegemonic relationship is not stable; coercion, intimidation and resistance, as both the dominant and subordinate struggle to remain in control, define it.

Given the fact that power relations can be best studied through acquiring the opinions of the dominant and subordinates, this dissertation is based on descriptive qualitative data. The data was collected from five categories of informants namely: producers (studio producers and musicians), consumers (audiences), distributors (media) judges, sponsors, and the PAM Awards organizing committee, who were selected using snowball, random and purposive sampling techniques. To gather data for this study, I employed a variety of tools because each of the tools if used on its own has limitations and these include: 1) interviews; 2) participant observation; 3) focused group discussions; 4) library research; 5) media; and 6) photography and audio recording.

This research has revealed that the politics during and after the PAM Awards contribute to the construction of the popular of music in Uganda. During the processes of categorization,

nomination, voting and judging, not only the competitors, but also their supporters, lay strategies to win the Awards. One of the major strategies is to sponsor more airplay of the competing songs so that more members of the audience and potential future sponsors hear them. The Awarding ceremony is not only a time to declare who has won, but also presents the competing music as music which should be considered as representing what is popular of the music in Uganda. Indeed, as discussed in the Chapter 5, all participants in this competition get a representation in the charts of what is popular music in Uganda at least for a month after the PAM Awards.

Given the scope of this research, however, there are areas that are important for scholarly research, that I never handled. I recommend, therefore, a future study on how the PAM awards have impacted the production, dissemination and consumption of popular music in Uganda. I also recommend a comparative study of PAM Awards and other upcoming music competitions like the DIVA Awards in Uganda.

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

In this study, I examine how the Pearl of Africa Music (PAM) Awards participate in the political construction of popular music in Uganda. This study seeks to interrogate how the PAM Awards, an annual event, promotes competition, which in turn unleashes a performance of power relations between the different stakeholders. I examine the power relations between stakeholders including competing musicians, judges, studio producers, the media, and sponsors of the PAM Awards, the audience, and promoters as well as how their interrelationships participate in the construction of popular music in Uganda. In other words, I interrogate how the decisions made through a performance of power between the PAM Awards stakeholders contribute towards the construction of popular music in Uganda.

### 1.2 Background to the Study

The Pearl of Africa Music Awards is an annual popular music competition in Uganda founded in 2003, where the ‘best’ song or musician in set categories is awarded. However, the concept of formalized music competitions in Uganda did not start with the PAM Awards, but can be traced back to the late 1920s. According to Keshubi-Lubwa *et al.* (1998), the first annual formal music competition was the Namirembe Church Music Festival, which was began in 1929 by Reverend G.M Duncan, the then Namirembe Cathedral<sup>1</sup> Music Director. The festival, which attracted choirs from Anglican schools and churches across Uganda, was a competition based on western choral church music. The Namirembe Church Music Festival ceased in 1936 after Reverend Duncan’s death but was later revived in 1944 by Klaus P. Wachsmann, the Curator of the Uganda Museum at the time. Further still, after Uganda gained independence in 1962, the

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<sup>1</sup> Namirembe Cathedral is located in Kampala, central Uganda.

annual Uganda Music Festival, under the Inspector of Schools (music) Mr. G. Kakoma, was established. It has since developed into the annual Uganda Schools Music Festival for secondary schools, primary schools and colleges under the Ministry of Education and Sports. The participating schools compete in items under categories that include dance, choral singing and music sight reading.

The Pearl of Africa Music Awards was a competition between Ugandan musicians until 2005 when it was extended to include musicians from other East African countries that include Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi and Kenya. This development was influenced by the long term goal of the PAM Awards, which is to award music and musicians in the whole of Africa, as further discussed in chapter four (Mulindwa interview, February 26, 2009). PAM Awards, the brain child of Solomon Kajura and Bruce Lubowa in conjunction with Isaac Mulindwa (an investor), were launched on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2003, with Celtel, renamed Zain, a telecommunications company as the main sponsor. The winning musicians and songs are awarded under categories determined by music styles and regions of Uganda from whence the musicians come (north, south, east and west Nile). Initially, there were twenty-three award categories, a number which has steadily increased over the six year period. By 2008, the number of categories was forty-two, almost double the initial number.

The nature of the awarding process of PAM Awards unfolds in different phases or organizational processes that include categorization, launching, nomination, voting, judging and awarding as discussed in chapter five. The stakeholders involved in the different phases include musicians, music producers, the media, judges, audience, and sponsors; they each play a role in the decision making processes that impact on the outcome of the PAM Awards. The awards have had some positive results. For instance, PAM Awards winners have basked in the prestige of winning an award, as exemplified by adorning their concert adverts with statements like ‘Female Artist of the Year’ alongside their names. However, PAM Awards have also been a source of contradictions that include complaints in relation to the ambiguity of categories and the legitimacy of winners as caused by the decisions made in the process of the PAM Awards.

### 1.3 Statement of the Problem

The definition of popular music has preoccupied many music scholars including those from ethnomusicology and popular music studies in the twentieth and twenty first centuries (Isabirye 2008). No consensual definition has been arrived at even though a number of scholars have attempted to define popular music. Some scholars have defined it as that music produced for mass consumption and is disseminated through mass media (see Middleton 1991). Therefore, popular music is that music produced for commercialization purposes. Some scholars have defined popular music in relation to what it is not; that is in relation to other musics- western art and ‘folk’ music (see Manuel 1988). Other scholars have used an elitist approach such as Theodore Adorno, who defines popular music as that music that is inferior as opposed to the ‘serious’ music or western art music (see Longhurst 2007, Manuel 1988). Other scholars, Richard Middleton (1991) and Sylvia Nannyonga-Tamusuza (2009) for instance, have defined it as music that is time and culture specific. Popular music is time and culture specific because what is popular today may not be popular tomorrow, and moreover what is popular to one culture may not be popular in another. In addition, scholars like Gerhard Kubik (1981) and Stephen Martin (1991) have defined popular music quantitatively as that music appreciated by large or broad sections of society. However, there are no specifications as to how ‘large’ or ‘broad’ that section of society really is. Other scholars have defined popular music in relation to a particular social group (see Manuel 1988 and Middleton 1990). Still, among the many definitions that scholars have come up with over the years, the role of competition towards the construction of popular music has not been highlighted. Moreover it is through competition that musicians are encouraged to create novel material, a core aspect of popular music. However, within the competition, there are hegemonic power relations at play between the musicians, music producers, composers, the media, audience, promoters and distributors. As such, there is need to examine how politics of competition in PAM Awards participate in the construction of popular music in Uganda.



## 1.4 Objectives of the Study

### 1.4.1 General Objective

To investigate how the political interrelationships between the PAM Awards stakeholders contribute towards the construction of Ugandan popular music

### 1.4.2 Specific Objectives

1. To examine how PAM Awards participate in constructing the popular of Ugandan music and musicians
2. To investigate the politics of competition in the organizational processes of PAM Awards
3. To analyze the performance of power between the musicians, judges, music producers, the media, sponsors of PAM Awards, the audience and promoters in the construction of popular music

## 1.5 Definition of Key Terms

Dialectic analysis: an art of debate and discussion.

Genre: a category or type of music defined by structural thematic or functional criteria that are not static but fluid because they are part of a dynamic cultural process.

Gospel Music: a style of music that is defined according to the Christian message in the lyrics.

Hegemony: control or dominating influence by one person or group over others with the possibility of the dominant authority to project their own views onto the subordinate, a position of authority that is not static because of the struggle from the subordinates to take control and the dominant to retain it.

Hidden transcript:	discourse that takes place ‘offstage,’ beyond direct observation by power holders.
Hip Hop:	a genre of music whose rhyming multi-linguistic text is rhythmically delivered in form of vocal narrative against a repetitive backbeat (ostinato) or accompaniment.
Political Construction of Music:	the process of producing popular music that is susceptible to the power relations between the stakeholders; musicians, producers, sponsors, promoters, distributors, the media, and consumers.
Public Transcript:	a continuous stream of performances that serve to further convince the dominant that their claims are in fact validated by the social evidence they see before them own eyes.
Reggae:	a style of music that is founded on the rhythm of the bass guitar and drum is in quadruple time, moderate in tempo, and uses texts about the suffering diaspora and love.
Regional Music:	music that is produced and performed by musicians based in the Northern, Eastern, Western, and West Nile regions of Uganda.
Rhythm and Blues:	a style of music in quadruple time, with a moderate tempo, and whose multi-linguistic lyrics address issues about relations.
Stakeholders:	actors within the PAM Awards institution that make decisions and have a direct interest, involvement or/and investment in the PAM Awards including sponsors, judges, musicians, audiences, producers, and the media.
Popular Music:	mass-mediated music produced for commercial purposes and is politically constructed.

## 1.6 Scope of Study

### 1.6.1 Geographical Scope

This study was conducted in Kampala, the Capital City and center for business and entertainment in Uganda. Kampala was therefore a viable location because it is where the PAM Awards awarding ceremony is performed, which I was able to attend on November 1, 2008. In addition, the panel of nine judges for the PAM Awards is selected from different institutions within Kampala, which include Makerere University and Kampala Music School. Moreover, Kampala hosts the biggest number of recording studios in the country and it is where most musicians from within and outside Kampala come to do their recordings. Furthermore, the media is one of the key stakeholders in the PAM Awards. Being Uganda's media center for newspapers, and host of more than eighteen radio stations and ten television stations that broadcast a wide range of popular music, both Ugandan and foreign, Kampala was the most appropriate location for this study. Furthermore, the head offices of many corporate companies that sponsor PAM Awards are located in Kampala. For instance, the Head Office for PAM Awards is located in Kampala on Worker's House, 1<sup>st</sup> Pilkington Road, 7<sup>th</sup> floor, northern wing. Accessing these offices was crucial for this research's quest to understand the role of corporate companies in the Ugandan music business.

### 1.6.2 Content Scope

I acknowledge that there are a number of issues that a scholar can raise about the Pearl of Africa Music Awards in relation to Ugandan popular music. For instance, one could study how the PAM Awards construct the Ugandan national musical identity. A scholar could also concentrate on how PAM Awards is situated in the world phenomenon of music awards. However, this project mainly concentrates on how PAM Awards contributes towards the definition of popular music in Uganda. I examine how the PAM Awards participate in the political construction of popular music in Uganda. The time scope of this study is from 2003 – when the award was introduced – 2008.

## 1.7 Hypothesis

The study hypothesizes that through the performance of power between the stakeholders that in turn influence who wins the competition; the PAM Awards participate in the construction of popular music in Uganda.

## 1.8 Significance of the Study

This study is a contribution towards the discipline of ethnomusicology's quest to study the relationship between music and culture. By studying how social relations in the form of politics construct popular music in Uganda through the PAM Awards, the study accentuates the fact that music and culture are indeed related. This study will therefore act as a point of reference for other students and scholars interested in such a study. In addition, the study will also be useful for educational institutions as a point of reference.

This study is also intended to make an informed scholarly contribution towards the definition of popular music, a theoretical issue in popular music studies and ethnomusicology. A number of scholars have attempted to define popular music from different angles that include definitions that focus on how the music is produced or by comparing it to other musics. However, this study utilizes another dimension; competition as a participant in the political construction of music. This research is an examination of how competition contributes towards the definition of popular music, a perspective that other scholars have not considered.

This study is a contribution to political science's theorization of power because it deals with the appropriation of hegemonic control beyond Italy, which influenced Antonio Gramsci's conceptualization. In addition, this study demonstrates the appropriation of hegemony in the arts (music in particular) beyond the formal or conventional social relations such as the state and gender relations.

## 1.9 Dissertation Outline

This dissertation is divided into six chapters with the first chapter as a general introduction, where I state the research problem, study objectives, scope of the study so as to give a background to the study. In Chapter Two, noting the inadequate literature on PAM Awards, I review the nature, methodology and trend of scholarship of related literature focusing on three thematic areas; competition in music awards, definition and construction of popular music in Ugandan, as well as relating popular music and politics. I also discuss the theories that have informed this work.

Further, I discuss the research design and methodology I used to collect data for this study in Chapter Three. Most specifically, this study was ethnographic and qualitative, and employed such tools as interviews, participant observation, library research, mass-mediated data, as well as photography and audio recording. I also discuss how I analyzed the data, the limitations to the study, and ethical considerations.

Chapter Four is a focus on giving a contextual background to PAM Awards through a discussion: 1) how the popular music in Uganda has been historically constructed; 2) the history of music competitions in Uganda; and 3) the aim and mission of PAM Awards; and 4) an examination of the involvement of corporate companies in the Ugandan popular music industry. In Chapter Five, I examine the political construction of popular music in Uganda through the activities or organization processes of PAM Awards that include categorization of music and musicians, launching, nomination, voting, judging and awarding. I examine how musicians, music producers, the media, judges, PAM Awards Organizing Committee, sponsors and audience participate in the construction of Ugandan popular music through their participation and interaction in the decision making processes of the PAM Awards. In this chapter, I also examine the musicians' strategies for competition as well as the implication of winning an award for both the music and musicians and how it informs the political construction of popular music in Uganda.

Chapter Six is a summary of my important findings, the conclusions and recommendations. This study concluded that through the influence of the hegemonic relations between musicians, producers, judges, PAM Awards committee, media, audience and sponsors

on the decisions made by each of them, PAM Awards participate in constructing popular music in Uganda. Therefore, this research posits competition as an important element in the definition of popular music.

## CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 2.1 Introduction

While there has been some research on popular music in Uganda (see Ssewakiryanga and Isabirye 2006; Isabirye 2005, 2008; Ssewakiryanga 2004, Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2002; 2005a; 2006; 2007; 2009), the contribution of the Pearl of Africa Music (PAM) Awards towards its definition and construction (since the awards began in 2003) has received inadequate attention. The nature of the articles written about PAM Awards has been mainly journalistic and lacking in scientific methodology and analysis and concentrated on reporting about the awarding ceremony (see for instance Tatyia 2006; Batte 2006; Serugo *et al.* 2003). Other journalistic articles have focused on predicting the results of the PAM Awards ( Kameo 2003; Mbabazi 2007; Katende 2007) while others have concentrated on the positive and negative elements of PAM Awards (Ssejjengo 2007; Batte 2007; Kareire 2006). Further still, some journalistic articles have made reference to PAM Awards in biographical exposés on Ugandan musicians that have been awarded. This trend of scholarship on PAM Awards may be understood in light of the fact that the PAM Awards are relatively new in Uganda since they were in existence for only six years at the time of this research. For this reason, this chapter reviews the trend, methodology and nature of research and scholarship on related topics under three thematic areas namely: 1) competition in music awards; 2) construction of popular music in Uganda; and 3) the relationship between popular music and politics. In the last section of this chapter, I examine the theories that informed this study.

## 2.2 Competition in Music Awards

The element of ‘competition’ is very important in the analysis of any contest, music or otherwise. Scholars have noted that competitions induce an element of innovation so as to create a ‘difference’ from other contestants. This view is discussed by Sylvia Nannyonga-Tamusuza (2003) in her analysis of how competition in school festivals has been instrumental in redefining *baakisimba*, a music and dance genre of the Baganda people of central Uganda. Nannyonga-Tamusuza’s article reveals that the politics of competition have a direct impact on what is performed during a competition. However, competitions also offer a stage for simultaneous stability and continual dynamism. Therefore, alongside the change, there is stability to a certain extent because of the guidelines issued to participants. As such, innovators aim for what will make them stand out while remaining within the framework of what is understood as the ‘authentic’. Nannyonga-Tamusuza’s article raises the question of strategies that contestants come up with in competition, an important issue that informs my study on the impact of PAM Awards on the production of popular music in Uganda. In this study, I examine these strategies and their impact on the PAM Awards competition.

Similarly, in a scholarly article, Robert Agostini (2007) reviews change and continuity in the Italian mainstream popular music of the 1960s by analyzing the music (Italian *Canzone* or song) as defined by the Sanremo Italian Song Festival. However, he also noted that even though the Sanremo Festival accepted the changes in the music, the festival also had set guideline within which musicians innovated. Moreover, Agostini (2007) asserted that there is a reciprocal relationship between the Sanremo Festival and Italian popular music; the festival defines the music to be performed while the music in turn shapes the festival (also see Watson and Anand 2006). Agostini’s work gives insights into how music awards requirements influence the music for competition, since the music has to conform to those requirements in order to be included. The question this study asks, however, is how those requirements are defined and who defines them.

Simon Frith (2004) questions what is British of the music awarded by the Mercury Music Prize. His reflective article examines the present state of British popular music in the global market through an analysis of the declining global significance of British pop and rock recordings. Frith analyzes the decline of British pop music on the United States popular music



sales chart (the major target audience) and uses the concept of globalization to explain this change. Further, he examines the Mercury Music Prize that is awarded to the ‘best’ British album each year in order to answer the following questions: what is meant by British music? What is British in the music awarded? Although Frith does not focus on the interrelations between the Mercury music prize stakeholders, the questions he asks relate to the ambiguity of the criteria used to decide on which music or album is nominated for an award as well as who wins the award inform this study. Such decisions can be looked at as a performance of power, where the music awards committees and judges have supremacy in deciding which music or musicians is included in the competition, who wins and who does not, an issue that is of key interest to this project. Frith’s reflection was based on his experiences as a judge in the Mercury Music Prize, an analysis of reports in print and electronic media, and empirical data analyzing global sales records of British popular music. In this dissertation, I interrogate the criteria used in choosing which songs to include in the PAM Awards as well as an inquest into how the categories used by PAM Awards are defined. Some of the questions I concentrated on include: 1) do the definitions given for the categories correspond with the music that is nominated? 2) Who defines these categories? 3) How are these genres defined and why?

Daniel Avorgbedor (2001) examines how the notions of competition and conflict between the urban Anlo-Ewe performing ensembles in Accra Ghana have an influence on musical performance as an institutionalized behaviour among the urban Anlo-Ewe. He studies competition and conflict as elements situated or located primarily within the dynamics of social relations among the Anlo-Ewe. Although Avorgbedor’s article does not necessarily look at music awards, he examines the element of competition, an important element in my discussion on PAM Awards. Avorgbedor’s article, therefore, informs this study’s inquest into an understanding of the interrelationships between PAM Awards stakeholders as informed by or positioned in the dynamics of social relations outside the PAM Awards.

Victor Ginsburgh (2003) has examined the relationship between awards and the economic success of the winning artistic productions. He also examines awards in relation to the aesthetic quality of the awarded artistic productions. Ginsburgh’s main concern is whether winning an award has an impact on the commercial success of an artistic production and whether winning an award guarantees the aesthetic quality of an artistic production. Ginsburgh’s findings revealed that: 1) experts rank art works by conferring prizes shortly after production; 2) a

measure of the economic success of the art work as reflected for example in sales or box office; and 3) a measure of the long-term reputation of the work assumed to sum up its essential aesthetic quality, even if only imperfectly. Similarly, in this study, I examine how PAM Awards participate in the construction of popular music and musicians in Uganda through the declaration of winners.

Music awards have also been examined as influential in the process of determining the equivalence of popular music industries. In an article, Mary R. Watson and N. Anand (2006) focus on how the Grammy awards are influential in the determination of what is standard in the North American popular music industry. There are three main themes highlighted in this article. The first one is the relationship between awards and sales where the authors examine how winning a Grammy award translates into record sales for the winners. The second theme is about the 'legitimacy' of Grammy categories, nominations and awards. The third theme is the impact of winning an award on the nominees and winners. The article also articulates the role of the media as a promotional vehicle for the nominees and winners in music awards. The findings of this article resonate with this research by providing a context similar to the present study. However, the present researcher goes into details to look at the interrelationships between the PAM Awards stakeholders and how they also participate in the decision-making processes of PAM Awards.

### 2.3 Construction of Popular Music in Uganda

Popular music in Uganda has received limited scholarly attention and in-depth analysis of how it is constructed. References on popular music in Uganda have been made in general surveys about popular music in East Africa (see for example Kubik 1981, Martin 1991). Other studies on Ugandan popular music have been encyclopedic articles, which are informative and descriptive but not very analytical (Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2005a). In addition, journalistic articles in Ugandan newspapers and magazines seem to have the most coverage of popular music in Uganda in the form of biographical information and reports on album launches. However, some in-depth studies on Ugandan popular music have been conducted especially in the 2000s.

While examining how popular music in Uganda is constructed, Sylvia Nannyonga-Tamusuza (2009) posits popular music as time and culture specific. In other words, what is considered popular today may not be popular tomorrow and what is popular to one culture is not popular in another. Further, her examination of how popular music is constructed in Uganda was also a means to understand the challenges of defining, identifying, classifying and cataloguing popular music in Uganda for purposes of archiving. In this scholarly article where data was gathered through fieldwork, Nannyonga-Tamusuza interrogates the conceptualization of the ‘popular’ in the Ugandan context, and notes that it is particularly difficult to define popular music. As such, she proposes adapting a “historical approach to the construction of popular music [which] may suggest a way of defining this music” (Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2009:37). Moreover, identifying who determines the popular is a challenge. In fact, those who determine which of Ugandan music is considered popular are of importance to this study. As such, this research will investigate how the stakeholders of PAM Awards participate in determining or constructing the popular through their involvement with PAM Awards. I therefore focus on the construction of popular music in Uganda as an activity embedded in political interrelations between the different stakeholders in the Ugandan music industry. These interrelations will be brought to the fore through an analysis of how these stakeholders interact within the structure of a competition that is PAM Awards.

The trend of scholarship in popular music has stressed the importance of technology and the media in the definition and construction of popular music. The role of the media in determining which of the music in an industry is popular has been a topic of discussion in popular music studies. Some studies have posited that since the media makes conscious choices about which music to play and which music not to, the media construct what is popular of music (Rich *et al.* 1998). Relating to the situation in Uganda, Brian Mali (2004) carried out an ethnographic study on the role of the media in promoting Ugandan or local artists in Kampala. Mali focused on print and electronic media (radio and television in particular). Mali concentrates on the process of promoting artists by various types of media, why the media promotes musicians, benefits of promotion to the musicians, the obstacles musicians face in getting their music promoted, and the future prospects of music promotion in Uganda. It is however important to know that this was an undergraduate dissertation that is narrow in scope and limited in fieldwork and more descriptive than critical. In addition, Mali’s dissertation does not have a binding theory. Mali’s work, nonetheless, provides insight into how the media politically

constructs what is popular of Ugandan music and musicians through the choices made in deciding which musicians to promote. Therefore, considering that the media participates in the nomination process in PAM Awards, this study further examines how the media— as stakeholders in PAM Awards— participates in the construction of Ugandan popular music by analyzing their power relations with the other stakeholders within the structure of the PAM Awards.

Discussions on the media in the construction of popular music in Uganda also bring to the fore the impact of globalization and localization processes in the definition of popular music in Uganda. Globalization was fostered by new technologies and the media, which allowed communication between people in different continents and saw the dissemination of popular musics from Europe and North America especially to the rest of the world (Robinson *et al* 1990, Bennet 2000). However, some scholars have focused on how different cultures have reinterpreted and repackaged globalized popular music genres like rock ‘n’ roll and rap music by integrating both global influences (foreign elements) and the local (see Solomon 2005, Bennett 1999). In a journalistic article, Simon Musasizi (2008) discusses the localization of hip hop in Uganda by first examining what hip hop was in North America, how it came to Uganda, and how Ugandans have localized it through elements like language. Terms like hybridity, localization, indigenization, deterritorialization and reterritorialization have been used to explain the resultant complex music genres (Connell and Gibson 2003; 2004). Such discussions inform my quest to study how categorization is carried out in PAM Awards considering that the music performed by popular musicians in Uganda is a hybrid of different genres.

The construction of popular music has also been studied in relation to the context in which the music is created and performed (see Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2002, 2006, Forman 2000). In an MA dissertation, Joel Isabirye (2008) discusses how the contexts (social, economic, and political contexts) impact on the texts for federo songs. As Isabirye stresses, it is the context in which the music is created that influences the lyrics, the availability of resources like recording studios, and language. Other scholars have also concentrated on how popular music is informed by and functions in social relations that include gender, race, class, politics, and migration (see Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2002, 2007; Forman 2000). The context that this study focuses on is a political one that is enhanced by the way the PAM Awards stakeholders relate and how this context contributes towards the definition of popular music in Uganda.

Richard Ssewakiryanga and Joel Isabirye (2006), discuss the construction of popular music genres in Uganda since 1986 while looking at how Uganda's political history has played an integral part in the construction of popular music in Uganda. The authors' approach towards the function of politics in the construction of the popular is in reference to how the political situation in Uganda has had an impact on the popular music business. As Ssewakiryanga and Isabirye stress, the political situation provides an environment that is either conducive or not conducive for popular musicians. In this study, the politics I discuss are in the context of how the musicians, judges, producers, PAM Awards Organizing Committee, sponsors, the media and audience interrelate during the various organizational processes.

## 2.4 Popular Music and Politics

Scholars have approached the relationship between popular music and politics in two broad perspectives. The first is the 'music in politics' perspective, which concentrates on how music is used in the advancement of political propaganda. Some studies have discussed how music has been used as a means of political resistance or protest against cruel governments. In a scholarly article for example, Mai Palmberg (2004) discusses the relationship between different music genres and the political crisis in Zimbabwe by analyzing song lyrical content. She gives examples of songs with lyrics that have addressed specific political crises in Zimbabwe. Other scholars have concentrated on how music has been used to reaffirm community ties and values in the face of political turmoil or territorial conflicts (see for example Forman 2000).

Sylvia Nannyonga-Tamusuza (2002) examines how the text of '*Kayanda*', a song by Willy Mukaabya, connotes the political, ethnic and political relations in Uganda as well as gender relations among the Baganda of Central Uganda. The author discusses how the choice of music genre for the song (*Kadongo kamu*) as well as the instrumentation further contributes to the message in the text. In addition, Nannyonga-Tamusuza discusses how Willy Mukaabya uses language with hidden meaning in the text to convey his concerns about the social-political situation in Uganda at the time (1988).

Lisa Gilman, on the other hand, focused on how political leaders have used music to communicate their political propaganda during elections/political campaigns. She discusses how

political parties in Malawi employ women's dancing groups to spread their propaganda through song and dance as well as a means to attract the attention of the voting public. Some scholars have noted that music has been therapeutic in situations where the national resources are unequally shared (Bilby 1995). In addition, other scholars have focused on how popular music is used as a voice to protest political injustices such as racism (Barkley 2003, Bennet 1999). In an essay for instance, Craig A. Locklard (1996), provides a comparative assessment of the relationship between various popular musics and political expression in Southeast Asia in general and Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand in particular. However, "although all music exists in a political context, and music explicitly addresses political subjects, the extent to which music can either embody political content or generate meaning purely through social reception is ... elusive" (Miller 1991:70).

The second perspective, which this research is more inclined to, is 'politics in music'. This perspective concentrates on how power defines the creation, production, dissemination and consumption of music. Keith Negus (1996), in a book chapter, examines how corporations exert control on the music industry and are responsible for the recorded music that has been manufactured and distributed in America. These corporations determine what becomes popular as they operate alongside smaller companies. Although there are few major corporations that measure up to the American context in Uganda, the PAM Awards can be looked at as a corporation that has an impact in the construction of the 'popular' since it awards and partially determines what 'popular' music in Ugandan is. In addition, the impact of PAM Awards on popular music in Uganda is indirectly a concern for the sponsors, who are corporate companies such as Zain Uganda, a telecommunications company and the media.

Politics in music can also be seen through the media, which dictates the music to broadcast. According to Michael Rich *et al.* (1998), the media is an important participant in power plays of the music industry because it has the power to choose which music to air or broadcast and therefore has an influence on music dissemination. Rich *et al.* examine how music televisions stations such as Music Television (MTV), Black Entertainment Television (BET) and Video Hall (VH) 1 are responsible for airing music that sometimes promotes violence. In Uganda, FM radio stations and music television channels also participate in the constructions of what is popular through what is broadcast. The media, being one of the stakeholders in PAM

Awards, will be discussed in reference to its contribution towards the choices of music nominated and voted for as well as how it participates in the processes of PAM Awards.

Gordon Rohler (1998) examines the relationship between Calypso<sup>2</sup> musicians in the islands of Trinidad, Tobago and Barbados and the global and local market for the genre. The author discusses the effects of globalization on calypso which has emerged beyond the confines of its original small communities. Rohler examines the struggles faced by Calypsonians in the process of song production for the world music market while also trying to retain the local market. Calypsonians also struggle to maintain aspects of calypso tradition in a rapidly changing world. Rohler's article hints on the political relationship between the musicians and the demands of the market. As Rohler notes, the "market forces have steadily pushed calypso toward commodification" (1998:82). The article informs the present study's view of PAM Awards as a space where the music producers (musicians and studio producers) come into contact with the consuming audience or market they struggle to please. According to the structure of PAM Awards, it is partly the consuming audience that votes for the winners, results which the producers would take into account when producing music the next time. Therefore, I will look at the PAM Awards as an avenue for the audiences to make their tastes known by exercising their power to determine who the winners are.

Some scholars have discussed music censorship; the control of what music should be listened to, played or sung by individuals or the public, as another arena where politics in music is present. In a report on the Freemusic convention of 1998, several presenters at that conference discussed the negative effects of censorship that included loss of lives (Mabuso and Phiri, Freemuse1998). The people that presented papers at the conference discussed how censorship controls the music produced, disseminated and consumed even though some musicians and audiences may find ways to create and listen to the censored music in hiding (Freemuse 1998). Although censorship is not directly an issue in PAM Awards, the impact of inclusion and exclusion of music and musicians in PAM Awards is an important discussion in the present study. The questions the present study focused on include: what is the implication of not being nominated (exclusion) or being nominated (inclusion)?

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<sup>2</sup> Calypso is Caribbean dance music, often played by a steelband, that deals satirically with social and political topics.

## 2.5 Theoretical Framework

A number of theories have been appropriated to explain how the issues in this study are related. One of the theories that informs this study is Howard Becker's theory of the 'art worlds' because it gives insights into how stakeholders involved in the creation of an artistic production relate to each other and how their interrelations affect the final product, an important aspect of this study. Becker conceptualizes works of art as products that should be understood as "the result of the coordinated activities of all the people whose cooperation is necessary in order that the work should occur as it does" (as quoted in Negus 1996:57). Becker stresses that the production of works of art is coordinated by the shared conventions and consensual definitions arrived at as people form, are attracted by, recruited to and inhibit different art worlds. Richard Peterson (1976) built on this collective practice of artistic production and coined the 'production of culture perspective' which is aimed at explaining how collaborative production is coordinated (as quoted in Negus 1996:41). Peterson argued that the people involved in production adopt a pragmatic, strategic and commercially oriented approach organized around a product that enables them to collaborate (see Negus 1996). Both Becker and Peterson's social constructionist frameworks focus on collaboration and cooperation between actors in the production of art works.

Keith Negus (1996) expands on Becker's theory further to argue that the collaboration and cooperation in the production of an artwork is not without conflict. Negus notes that there are conflicts among the different actors: the producers are sometimes in conflict with musicians, the musicians in conflict with the distributors, the musicians in conflict with the promoters, song writers in conflict with musicians over various issues that may be financial or artistic. Negus argues that there are "numerous accounts in popular biographies and the trade and consumer press [which] indicate that popular music is frequently produced through conflict and a total lack of consensus or shared goals" (1996:58). As such, as Robin Balliger suggests, music should be approached as "an activity embedded in relations of power" (1999:59). It is from both social constructionist frameworks which focus on both collaboration and conflict that this study will build to discuss how the construction of popular music in Uganda is a result of the power relations between the stakeholders of the PAM Awards.



The PAM Awards is a stage on which power relations between musicians, judges, producers, organizing committee, judges, sponsors, audience and media are performed. Power relations between PAM Awards stakeholders can be examined through an interrogation of the decisions made by the different stakeholders. It is these decisions, made through a performance of power between the PAM Awards stakeholders, which shape and define the PAM Awards. Similarly, Timothy D Taylor (1997) notes that in the American Grammy Awards, there are hegemonic powers between the people that nominate and the views of the audiences and critics who sometimes disagree with the people nominated as well as the categories in which some of the music is placed. It is therefore important to note that the choices and decisions by the stakeholders are not necessarily agreed upon, causing conflict. In this study, I intend to adopt the theory of hegemony as advanced by Antonio Gramsci (as quoted in Balliger 1999:58) to discuss how power relations are performed in the PAM Awards.

Gramsci, a leading Italian Marxist thinker, viewed hegemony as a form of control exercised by someone in a dominant position. Gramsci's view states that hegemony doesn't only denote control, but also the ability of the dominant to project their own views and way of seeing the world so that those subordinated to them accept it as the norm. He however emphasizes struggle between the dominant and the subordinate and notes that contestations occur in all social processes (as quoted in Balliger 1999:58). Consequently, the structures of control, in whatever form, also generate new forms of opposition, a dialectical view of cultural struggles. In the case of this study, these dialectical cultural struggles manifest through counter-hegemonies performed through resistances against the decisions made by the dominant stakeholders such as the PAM Awards Organizing Committee. Therefore, the state of power relations is never static, but is a struggle for the dominant to retain power and the subordinate to attain it. As a result, different strategies are employed by each party in their struggle that include coercion, manipulation, resistance, and dictatorship.

James Scott's concept of the hidden and public transcript is also important in this study's investigation of how the counter-hegemony is performed by PAM Awards stakeholders. Scott (1990) posits that wherever there is inequality of power relations, there are both hidden and public transcripts performed. The public transcript refers to what those in power and the subordinate present themselves as they want to be seen in public or on stage. The public transcripts are contrasted by the 'hidden transcripts', as discourses that take place 'offstage'.

They consist of “speeches, gestures and practices that confirm, contradict, or inflect what appears in the public transcript (Scott 1990:4-5). As such, the derivative character of the hidden transcript allows the subordinate, in the middle of the onstage performance of the public transcript, to insert allusions in the hidden transcript that are generally imperceptible to those in control. In this study, the subordinate stakeholders that include musicians, the audience, and music producers in PAM Awards or those that are affected by the decisions made by the decision makers also struggle to have power by resisting or attempting to change the decisions as will be discussed in Chapter Five.

## 2.6 Conclusion

As demonstrated in this chapter, there is still more room for scholarly writings on competition as an aspect of definition in the popular music industry in Uganda. The discussion by Nannyonga-Tamusuza (2003) offers just a small contribution to this vast area by bringing to the fore how competitions induce people to engage in innovations in order to win trophies. However, the literature surveyed in this chapter reveals how the trend, contexts and contents in popular music studies have been the scholar’s themes of discussion. As demonstrated in this chapter, scholars have preoccupied themselves with the relationship between technology and the media in defining and constructing popular music. Due to technology and the media for example, various cultures have re-interpreted and repackaged a number of music genres including rock and roll and R&B. Relating to context, scholars have demonstrated that the political, economic and social contexts have influenced the construction of popular music in Uganda (see for example Isabirye 2006). The political context I focus on in this study will be explained as hegemonic and sustained through strategies of manipulation, coercion, resistance, and intimidation by PAM Awards stakeholders as will be further examined in Chapter Five. In the next chapter, I discuss the methodology she used to gather data for this study. I discuss the research tools as well as the limitations and ethical considerations I observed while carrying out fieldwork.

## CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter is about the description of the research methodology I used to gather data for this study. It is here that I explain the study design, the choice of sampling techniques, tools of research, and data analysis. I also discuss the ethical considerations I adhered to while in the field as well as a discussion on the limitations I faced and how I overcame them.

### 3.2 Research Methodology and Design

The qualitative research methodology, through which descriptive data is gathered, informed this study. The qualitative methodology is oriented towards discovery, exploration, and inductive logic and required me to analyze, describe and interpret data with concrete examples from the field through ethnography.

In order to gather descriptive data, I used an ethnographic approach to study social relations between PAM Awards stakeholders and how their interrelations contribute towards the construction of popular music in Uganda. Ethnography, as a study design, is holistic and aims at describing and systematically recording human activities<sup>3</sup>. Ethnography was relevant to the present study because it involves a focus on “beliefs, values, rituals and general patterns of behavior underlying social relations or networks, hence ... concern[s] with concepts of relatedness embodied in terms such as ‘kinship’, ‘ethnicity’, ‘identity’, ‘society’, ‘culture’ and ‘community’” (Cohen 1993:123). Ethnography therefore depends “upon a complex interaction between the researcher and those being researched” (Cohen 1993: 124). In relation to the present study, ethnography was necessary in order to gather information about the interrelationships between the different PAM Awards stakeholders. In order to address the questions of this study, it was necessary for me to interact with them on a personal level so as to get their views and descriptions of their experiences. Indeed, Bruno Nettl stresses that ethnomusicology as a field of study

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ethnography>. Accessed 10 November 2010.

involves “face-to-face confrontation with musical creation and performance, with the people who conceive of, produce, and consume music is essential, and stress[es] concentration on intensive work with small numbers of individual informants” (1983:9). In order to maintain closeness with informants so as to gather the required data on how PAM Awards construct popular music in Uganda, I had to use ethnography as the approach to this study. In the next section, I discuss the techniques I used to select the people and contexts that I studied.

### 3.3 Sampling

As James Spradley suggests, a good informant should be one who is thoroughly enculturated into the researched culture, one who is currently involved in the culture, and has adequate time for the interview (1979:46). As such, I identified and interviewed people in the following categories: producers (musicians and studio producers), members of the PAM Awards judging panel, the PAM Awards organizing committee, music distributors that include the media (radio, television and print media), the PAM Awards sponsors, as well as the general audience.

I used a number of sampling techniques to gather the data for this dissertation. Purposive sampling, where a researcher selects informants with specific and closely guarded information, was important for me in order to get information that includes the history of PAM Awards, their aim, mission and how the organizational processes are executed. I also used random selection of informants, a sampling technique where informants are picked arbitrarily because they are all able to give information about a given topic. This sampling technique was used in the selection of members of the audience. The third sampling technique I used was snowball, where a researcher gets introduced to other informants by other people especially informants. Snowball was important because it is the people involved in PAM Awards that were aware of who is involved and would provide information. For instance, I was introduced to two of the judges I interviewed by Shamim Asiimwe, the Administrator and Public Relations Officer of PAM Awards.

Three members of the PAM Awards Organizing Committee, that is the Chairman, the Administrator/Public Relations Officer as well as the Operations Assistant, were purposively selected. These were chosen because of the intimate roles they have played in the founding, structuring, organization and execution of the PAM Awards. The information they provided was

important in answering the questions as to why the PAM Awards were started and the processes of organizing these awards among others.

I also used the purposive methodology to select informants in the category of producers that included thirteen musicians and five studio producers that had: 1) been nominated; 2) won an award; or 3) not been nominated. I interviewed musicians and producers that had been involved in PAM Awards and those that have not been involved in order to evaluate the impact of PAM Awards on their careers.

The purposive methodology also informed the selection of four judges. In selecting these judges, I considered the various institutions from which the PAM Awards Organizing Committee chooses judges. Even though I had intended to interview representatives from all the nine institutions involved, most of them were not willing to be interviewed or did not have the time. As Spradley (1979) has earlier on suggested, I focused on those judges that were willing to share their views and time. As such, I selected two judges from Makerere University's Music, Dance and Drama Department, a television music presenter, and a representative of the Federation of Performing Artists in Uganda (FEPAU). Each of these judges represented a different perspective on popular music in Uganda. In addition, each of them judged independently, and it was therefore, important for me to get the different perspectives in order to understand why they made the decisions they made while judging.

In the category of distributors, I interviewed four music journalists in the print media, radio and television presenters because they participate in the mediation of popular music in Uganda. In addition, the media also participates in different processes of PAM Awards, especially the nomination process as will be discussed in Chapter Four. They are also instrumental during the voting process where they advertise and communicate to the public about the categories being voted for on a particular day as well as the instructions to follow while voting. Moreover, television and radio stations also have representatives on the panel of judges and are therefore influential in determining who wins. The insights media personnel provided in terms of what is popular of Ugandan music and the role they play in its construction both in relation to PAM Awards or independently were very informative to this study.

Further, using the purposive sampling method, I selected two sponsors of PAM Awards in order to find how their interests as investors influence the outcome of the awards. I selected a

representative from, Zain Uganda, a telecommunications company, which was the main sponsor of the PAM Awards since the inception of the awards in 2003 until 2007 and co-sponsored with Bell Lager, a beer brand, in 2008 as will be further discussed in Chapter Four. The second sponsor I chose was KFM, a radio station, so as to understand how they benefit from and their contribution in PAM Awards.

I was also interested in exploring the role of the audience in the political construction of Ugandan popular music through their participation or non-participation in the PAM Awards voting process. To select audience members, I used random selection, where I spontaneously selected twenty-seven members of the audience based on their availability and willingness to share their views. For instance, I went to areas where people buy music, particularly kiosks where pirated and dubbed music Cassette Discs/Video Cassette Discs are sold.

In addition, snowball sampling also came in handy in identifying other important informants through references and recommendations from other people and especially informants. For instance, while interviewing Shivan Ategyeka (not real name), a Radio Presenter, she referred me to two musicians that she thought felt marginalized by the PAM Awards and would provide useful information to this study.

### 3.4 Tools of Research

In order to gather the data necessary for this study, I employed a variety of research tools, a technique Bruce L. Berg refers to as triangulation (2007:8). As such, I used a number of tools including: 1) interviews; 2) participant observation; 3) focused group discussions; 4) library research; 5) the media; and 6) audiovisual recording. The use of a variety of research tools was a means to overcome the limitations each of the individual tools presents if used alone. A variety of tools, therefore, provided me with avenues to counteract the limitations of the individual tools as will be further elaborated in the next paragraphs.

### 3.4.1 Interviews

According to Franz Boas (1943), if a researcher's purpose is "to understand the thoughts of a people, the whole analysis ... must be based upon their concepts, not ours [as researchers]" (as quoted in Spradley 1979:18). As such, the only way for me to get the thoughts of the PAM Awards stakeholders was to interview them (see appendix 1 for list of informants).

I specifically used formal interviews that were unstructured in nature. However, I had a list of themes that guided the interview. I asked open-ended questions that encouraged the informant to give detailed explanations. The types of open-ended questions used were: 1) descriptive questions like "how would you describe the process of nomination?"; 2) contrast questions like "what is the difference between afrobeat and soukous music?"; and 3) example questions like "could you give me an example of a reggae song?" (See appendix 2 for a list of sample questions). Some of the responses to the open-ended questions a number of times led to follow-up questions. In addition, I also used what Sylvia Nannyonga-Tamusuza (2005) refers to as 'conversational interviews'. She notes that conversational interviews "in taxis, market places and on the street [provide] important information, especially when people [are] suspicious of formal interviews ... [or] the environment which they [are] in [is] not conducive for formal interviews" (2005b:48). In this study, conversational interviews were mainly used while interviewing members of the audience during and after performances. The questions I asked them included the kind of music they liked, how they participated in PAM Awards, and how they decided on whom to vote for.

### 3.4.2 Participant Observation

According to Helen Meyers, participant observation as a tool of research for ethnomusicologists "enhances validity of the data, strengthens interpretation, lends insight into the culture, and helps the researcher to formulate meaningful questions" (1992:29). With this ethnomusicological backing, I attended a number of events including the Pearl of Africa Music Awards ceremony on the November 1, 2008, album launches and concerts (see appendix 3 for a list of events attended). I chose to attend the PAM Awards ceremony so as to: 1) know the categories of people present; 2) observe the musical performances by nominees and non nominees; 3) observe the ceremonial announcement of the winners; 4) observe the reactions of the audience and musicians towards the results; and 5) to listen to the winner's acceptance speeches. Further, since the PAM Awards ceremony happens once a year, I wanted to use the 2008 PAM Awards as a case study. These observations were then

documented as field notes since the “least reliable field data preservation mechanism is memory” (Jackson 1987:244). Besides, recording of any other form was not permissible.

By attending these events, I was able to identify some of the key informants for this study. I also became aware of some of the issues related to PAM Awards through listening to the crowd’s reactions and comments about the winning song/artiste/group, especially during the PAM Awards ceremony, which are discussed in the following chapters. During the album launches and other shows, I gathered information about how PAM Awards have constructed the popular since some of the shows attended were by PAM Awards nominees and winners. During such events, I was able to conduct conversational interviews with some audience members.

### 3.4.3 Focused Group Discussions

As Lia Litosseliti (2003:20) notes, focused group discussions are important when gathering information and also provide an environment that encourages participation. I conducted two focused group discussions. Since I was not able to carry out interviews during the PAM Awards ceremony I attended because the atmosphere was not conducive; the focused group discussions were intended to recapture “lost views”. As such, I intended to acquire a video recording of the 2008 PAM Awards Ceremony and watch it with the two groups. Unfortunately, the 2008 recording was not accessible and I used the recording of the 2005 PAM Awards instead. I watched the recording with two groups of people and conducted a discussion. The focused group discussions, therefore, enabled me to document the reactions towards the PAM Awards by the audience as it watched the proceedings on a television screen.

The two focused group discussions were held at Africa Institute of Music (AIM) in Muyenga Kampala, and a film house shack (*kibanda*) in Ggaba, Kampala. The informants were students from AIM, who had diverse musical backgrounds and were members to different performing groups. An announcement was made to the students about my intention to carry out the group with anyone interested and seven students turned up. During the focused group discussions conducted at AIM, I also played a number of songs that were nominated in PAM Awards under different categories in order to get the different perspectives of the informants as far as categorization in PAM Awards is concerned, an important issue addressed in this study.

The other focused group discussion in a *kibanda* in Ggaba was advertised on the board that normally shows the movies of the day, the fee and time. Only those that were interested attended this discussion and five informants came for the screening (see appendix 4, for the list of group discussion



participants). The two groups provided a wide range of views, beliefs, reactions, judgments and comments which were all very important in providing me with different dimensions towards the audience's role in the political construction of popular music in Uganda. The various groups were composed of informants that varied in terms of age (22-48), sex (male and female), as well as occupations (students, carpenters, bricklayers, musicians, and porters).

#### 3.4.4 Library Research

Because knowledge is accumulative, I used books and other scholarly materials, whose information provided a basis on which to build new knowledge. The libraries visited for this information include University of Bergen, Norway, Mukono University Main Library, Makerere University Main Library, personal collections, Music Reading Room at the Music, Dance and Drama Department, as well as internet sources for scholarly database that included, Jstor and Google Scholar<sup>4</sup>. I also used materials published by the PAM Awards including their annual magazine and video recordings of previous PAM Awards events, specifically the 2005 recording because it was the only one I was able to access.

#### 3.4.5 Mediated data

Since the PAM Awards have received media coverage from the time of their inception, the media was an important source of information for this study. Moreover, the media is a major stakeholder in the entire process of the PAM Awards. As such, I reviewed newspaper articles since the PAM Awards inception ranging from interviews with PAM Award winners, judges and organizers, to opinion polls about the awards and articles on issues concerning Ugandan popular music. I also made use of newspapers and entertainment magazines that feature articles on the entertainment industry like *The New Vision*, *The Monitor*, *Red Pepper*, *CityBeat*, *Buzz*, and the PAM Awards Magazine that is released annually during the season of the PAM Awards. All these tabloids feature stories about PAM Awards, musicians, album launches, concerts, and new talent in music, among others. Other media that were consulted include radio and television broadcasts, websites dedicated to news and events in the Ugandan music industry including Uganda pulse, music Uganda, as well as the PAM Awards' own website.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> [www.jstor.org](http://www.jstor.org) and [www.google scholar.com](http://www.google scholar.com)

<sup>5</sup> [www.musicuganda.com](http://www.musicuganda.com). Accessed March 20, 2009. [www.ugpulse.com](http://www.ugpulse.com). Accessed on February 22, 2009.

### 3.4.6 Photography and Audio Recording

I used audiovisual recording to document some of the information gathered in the field for the purposes of analysis and illustration for my arguments. Since writing down the answers to the questions during interviews is tedious and may slow down or disrupt the interview, I recorded the interviews using an audio recorder. Recording lessened the disruptions and allowed play back for purposes of transcription and analyzing the information after fieldwork. Photographs were also used to document the observations and have been used as illustrations in this dissertation.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

In order to represent different perspectives on how PAM Awards politically construct popular music in Uganda, I borrowed Sylvia Nannyonga-Tamusuza's dialectic approach, "an art of debate and discussion", to analyze data (2005:50). As such, I used in-field analysis, an on-going process of analyzing the data collected, where the results got were further tested in the consequent interviews carried out (Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2005). In addition, after-field analysis, after fieldwork has been useful in the interrogation of the data collected. This process included the transcription of interviews through which I was able to listen to the interviews over and over, which gave me a deeper understanding of my data. Clifford Geertz's (1973) discussion on the 'thick description', which focuses on layers of significance and meanings attached to a social code or symbol, was a point of departure for analysis during this period. Geertz notes that acquiring thick description is only possible through the processes of 'thinking and reflecting' as well as the 'thinking of thoughts'. The out-of-field analysis was therefore, a process where I reflected on and thought through the data gathered in a process of interpretation. After transcribing the interviews, using themes arising from the study, I coded and indexed the data and literature reviewed for easy access during the writing process.

### 3.6 Limitations to the Study

Due to their politically defined positions within the Ugandan popular music industry and PAM Awards, some of the informants were reluctant to answer certain questions especially regarding the execution of the PAM Awards. For instance, while interviewing one of the musicians about categorization, he noted that the regional representations were unfair to his region but then he said that he could not say anymore because he would be eliminated from the competition if Isaac Mulindwa found out about what he had told me. The only way I was able to get the information from him was to pledge confidentiality and promise to refer to him as an anonymous source. As such, I have used pseudo names in this dissertation and referred to some of the informants as anonymous sources. Similarly, Spradley has stressed that, “informants have a right to remain anonymous. This right should be respected both where it has been promised explicitly and where no clear understanding to the contrary has been reached” (1979:37).

Some of the informants were very suspicious about my intentions because they thought I was a spy for Isaac Mulindwa, the Chairman of the PAM Awards Organizing Committee. The informants that were very suspicious were those that had something negative to say about the PAM Awards and yet, wanted to continue being involved with it. This particular problem was overcome by the presentation of the introduction letter issued by the Music, Dance and Drama Department from Makerere University followed by an explanation about my academic purpose. The letter validated my study and intentions and some of the informants recanted their previous suspicions (see appendix 5 for the introductory letter).

Another limitation to this study was that I was only able to attend one PAM Awards ceremony because PAM Awards happen once a year. As such, I had no other experiences to compare the one experience of attending the PAM Awards ceremony in November 2008. However, watching recordings of previous ceremonies offered a possibility of comparison.

Prior to conducting interviews, I made appointments that were convenient for the interviewees. However, some of them were very busy and kept cancelling the appointments while some did not honor them. I exercised patience and finally interviewed those that were later available although I completely gave up on those that were inaccessible. Nonetheless, some of the informants were very interested in this study and availed themselves for the interviews.

Even though I had planned to have a video documentation of the 2008 PAM Awards ceremony proceedings, it was not possible because the ceremony was at night and outdoors thus too dark for a clear video recording. In addition, my proximity to the main stage was a hindrance to the video recording because the area in which I was seated was far from the main stage. The sitting areas at the PAM Awards

ceremony were three, depending on the amount of money one was willing to spend on a ticket. I, however, chose to sit in the cheapest of the three areas, which had the biggest number of people. Actually, I had to watch the ceremony from a big projector screen since the main stage was only accessible to the Very Important Persons' section. My resolution was influenced by a desire to observe the audience's reactions and note their comments, which was only possible in the section she chose. As such, I prioritized the comments and reactions of the audience to proximity to the stage and therefore had to forfeit the video recording.

### 3.7 Ethical Considerations

As Sara Cohen notes, "issues of ethics, accountability and relevance should also be addressed in relation to the uses and implications of the research and the research materials" (1993:134). In addition, James Spradley notes that informants are "human beings with problems, concerns and interests. The values held by a particular ethnographer do not always coincide with the ones held by informants" (1979:34). Therefore, the informants have the right to give or not to give information, a view I considered and contended with while in the field. As such, I adhered to ethical considerations as raised by scholars before me like Spradley (1979), Brian M. du Toit (1980) and Sara Cohen (1993) among others.

First and foremost, I made the study objectives known to the informants so as not to coerce them for information under false pretences. Similarly, Brian M. du Toit notes, the researcher is required to "clearly inform those being studied of the implications of [their] cooperation, of the use to be made of this information, and of their right to withhold cooperation" (1980:274). Secondly, I protected the privacy of informants that requested for anonymity because they have the right to remain anonymous as already mentioned. When asked not to reveal their identity, I complied so as to protect the "physical, social and psychological welfare" of the informants as well as honor "their dignity and privacy" (Spradley 1979:35) in this dissertation. As such, I acknowledged that acquiring material and information is based on an assumption of trust on the informants' side. Therefore, I sought permission to record interviews as well as the use of the information acquired in this dissertation. This was done by asking the informants to sign a consent form (see appendix 6 for a sample of the form). However, most informants preferred to give their consent orally while those that wanted anonymity chose not to sign. Third, I also put into consideration the credibility of the information represented in respect to the institute of affiliation (Makerere University) as well as the discipline (ethnomusicology)

and scholarship at large. In this regard, I endeavored as much as possible not to misrepresent the information given during fieldwork.

## CHAPTER FOUR: CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND FOR PAM AWARDS

### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I examine the contexts in which PAM Awards participates in the political construction of popular music in Uganda. One of the contexts that I will explore is how popular music in Uganda is historically constructed. A historical context is important for this study because the past informs the present. The popular music of today depends on the “recovery and re-accentuation of previous works” (Lipzitz as quoted in Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2009:38). Indeed, as Keith Negus emphasized: “The writing of history is important and has implications for how we understand and identify with contemporary forms of popular music” (1996:137). Further, I demonstrate that PAM Awards is not the first music competitions in Uganda, by giving a brief history of music competitions in Uganda. I then discuss the aims and mission of PAM Awards because in order to understand how the PAM Awards function, there is need to first know why they were started in the first place. In other words, the aim and mission of the PAM Awards provides a foundation on which to discuss how the decisions made in each of the organizational processes of PAM Awards as well as the interrelationships between stakeholders politically construct popular music in Uganda. Since PAM Awards are a business venture sponsored by corporate companies such as Zain Uganda, Bell Lager, *The New Vision* newspaper, KFM, Wavah Broadcasting Service (WBS) Television, Sanyu FM, and AP Insurance, I also discuss the involvement of corporate companies in PAM Awards and the Ugandan music business.

## 4.2 Historical Construction of Popular Music in Uganda

For an understanding of how popular music in Uganda is politically constructed by the PAM Awards, it is necessary to first understand how popular music in Uganda has been defined and constructed prior to the PAM Awards. As such, this section examines the definition and construction of popular music in Uganda through history because the past informs the future. As a point of departure, it is important to first understand what popular music is in the Ugandan context. Like in any context, the definition of popular music in Uganda has been controversial. Indeed, Nannyonga-Tamusuza (2009) asserts that one of the reasons why popular music is difficult to define is because it is cultural and time specific. As such, it is a historical construction and therefore, the need to address the historical construction of popular music in Uganda.

According to present research, a number of informants defined popular music as that music that is ‘popular’ among ‘many’ people. Pista Nassolo, a law student at Makerere University, for instance, defined popular music as that music which is most played on the radio and television stations and is therefore known by many people (interview, February 11, 2009). Brenda Busingye, a Human Resource Assistant Manager in Simba Telecom, defined popular music as that music that is “widely listened to by many people” (interview, June 4, 2009). Both definitions posit the quantity of the audience as the determinant of what is popular. Such definitions thus require statistical data to determine how many people listen to a particular kind of music to qualify it as being popular. Quantitative definitions have also been proposed by scholars like Gerhard Kubik (1981) who defines popular music as that music listened to by broad sections of society. However, how many people constitute a ‘broad section’? How would such a figure be acquired especially in Uganda where there is a high rate of piracy (Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2009:30).

Robert Kyaggulanyi (a.k.a Bobi Wine<sup>6</sup>), a musician, defines popular music as that music that cuts across age and social status (interview, February 13, 2009). He told me that his music is popular because it is listened to by people from the ‘ghetto’ to the suburbs as well as the young and old. Bobi Wine’s definition focuses on the unitary nature of popular music, which brings together people of social, political and economic standing as well as age.

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<sup>6</sup> Since Robert Kyaggulanyi uses and is mostly called by the name Bobi Wine, the researcher will refer to him as Bobi Wine throughout this dissertation.

Nannyonga-Tamusuza's suggestion that popular music in Uganda should be defined through its historical construction is the point of departure for this dissertation. I acknowledge that what is happening in the popular music industry is as a result of what happened in the past. As such, I will discuss how Ugandan popular music has been defined and constructed through history. A broader explanation of popular music will inform the departure of this discussion.

According to Stephen H. Martin, popular music in Africa predates the coming of European colonialism in the nineteenth century. He defines 'popular' music as "a recreational type of music practiced and enjoyed by most people in a society. They understand it and claim it as theirs" (1991:40). However, this definition is lacking in its usage of the term 'the people' or 'most people'. Who are the people and how many people constitute the collective term 'most'? Moreover, Kofi Agawu contests Martin's view and stresses that "there was no pre-colonial popular music of comparative standing although recreational genres existed. Nor is it easy to imagine such music spreading rapidly across the continent without the technological props we take for granted today including cassette, compact discs, videos, radio, television and internet" (as quoted in Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2006:44). Agawu relates the 'popular' to technology thus re-echoing some of the definitions about popular music as that music that is disseminated through mass media (*ibid.*).

Referring to Uganda in particular, Sylvia Nannyonga-Tamusuza (2005a; 2006) notes that the early development of popular music in Uganda was overwhelmingly influenced by the European music styles introduced into the country by British colonizers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In addition to Gehard Kubik's argument that Afro-American music influenced popular music in East Africa in general, and Uganda in particular, Nannyonga-Tamusuza stresses that the British colonizers and Christian missionaries not only brought religion, but also their musical culture. She notes that European instruments like the piano, guitar, and brass instruments were introduced in institutions like churches, schools, police and the army. Playing western instruments therefore "became an important basis for subsequent modern popular music even if its effect was only indirect" (Kubik 1981:87). Access to European musical instruments and western music and theory through institutions such as schools laid a foundation on which popular music in Uganda has been constructed.

Popular music in Uganda was also constructed through intra-African musical influences (Kubik 1981) that were facilitated by the construction of the Uganda railway that moved from



Mombasa (in Kenya) through Kampala to Zaire, now Democratic republic of Congo. During the construction of Uganda railway in the 1940s, Kenyan laborers used to play solo guitar music. According to Nannyonga-Tamusuza (2005a:50), the first Ugandan popular music genre to develop, *kadongo kamu* was an indigenized form of the solo guitar music similar to that of the Kenyan laborers. According to Nannyonga-Tamusuza, at “its inception in the late 1940s, and early 1950s, *Kadongo-Kamu* music was an acoustic guitar and rattle music performed in streets, in market places and in bars” (*ibid.*). This genre was most popular among the Baganda of central Uganda and was a blend of local and foreign musical elements<sup>7</sup>. The music used Western music’s diatonic scale and rotated around primary chord progressions (I, IV and V) on the guitar. However, the singing was with “a *ggonono* vocal style typical of Buganda’s court music and the *baakisimba* drum beat, which accompanied a festive dance in Buganda” (*ibid.*). This music was very narrative and used rich poetry and proverbial language and it was therefore meant for listening. Therefore, popular music was defined at the time as that music that fused both ‘western’ and ‘traditional’ music elements, which was made possible by the foundation laid by the accessibility to western instruments.

However, during the 1970s, the political climate was very hostile under the regime of Idi Amin (1971-1979), which curtailed the development of the music industry in Uganda. According to Lusania Kasamba, a Canon in the Anglican Church and a Lecturer in Theology at Mukono Christian University, the political climate in the 1970s under the regime of Idi Amin was very hostile (interview, July 6, 2009). Most people including musicians, politicians, businessmen, foreigners and journalists among others were affected in this period. As such, some people including musicians went into exile. For instance, Christopher Ssebowa, a bass guitarist in the University Community Fellowship Band in Kampala, told me that the Congolese band he was performing with opted to go back to Congo for security reasons. Christopher Ssebowa also decided to go with them because that was the only job he had (interview, June 3, 2009). He also knew it would be safer for him to be out of the country because of the military brutality at that time. He later returned to Uganda in the late 1980s when relative peace and stability was established. Some of the musicians that remained and continued to perform took advantage of *kadongo-kamu*’s narrative and use of a proverbial language to address the political issues that could not be addressed openly for fear of execution (see Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2002; 2005a;

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<sup>7</sup> With time, *kadongo kamu* music also spread to other regions of Uganda. For instance, in the people of Ankole in South Western Uganda adopted and refer to it as *kadongo kamwe* (one guitar) music.

Ssewakiryanga and Isabirye 2006). The musicians sung about gender relations and marital issues yet referring to the political situation as a way to “load their music with subversive messages of resistance to the state” (Ssewakiryanga and Isabirye 2006:56).

According to Diplock Segawa, a singer and song writer, another broad category of popular music in Uganda is band music (interview, March 12, 2009; also see Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2005a:50)). Segawa said that in the Ugandan context, band music is a term which does not necessarily refer to a specific style of music, but one that is defined by the number of instruments used in a performance. Band music is used to refer to music that combines string instruments (mainly guitars), winds like saxophones, and percussion instruments (mainly a set of jazz drums and the conga drums) and voice. In a performance by Afrigo Band<sup>8</sup>, I observed that the saxophone, drum kit, a pair of conga drums, a keyboard, and guitars were the major instruments. As Nannyonga-Tamusuza notes, “repetitive choruses and lead parts, instrumental sections, and a strong focus on stage design and costume are all aspects of Uganda’s band music performance practice” (*ibid.*). One of the songs performed that night was ‘Jim’ sung by Joanita Kawalya, in addition to the above instruments, the song had verses (lead part), a refrain (repetitive chorus), with instrumental sections at the beginning and in between lead parts and verses. In live performances of band music, dancing is an important performance practice of this genre. Apart from Kawalya and the instrumentalists, there were three female dancers, two male and one female singer backing up. The female dancers are referred to as the “queen dancers”, while the male performers produce the music, a practice borrowed from bands from the Democratic Republic Congo. In addition, Uganda’s band music is a hybrid genre. The music is a “mixture of soul, reggae, pop, rock ‘n’ roll, calypso, rumba, cha-cha, jazz and rap [which] may constitute the repertoire or even an individual song” (Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2005a:50).

The roots of band music in Uganda are attributed to the bands that were formed in schools, police and the military establishments that performed at political gatherings. In fact, the king of Buganda himself had his own Western-style military band<sup>9</sup> to perform during his private police regiment parades in the 1960s (Cooke as quoted in Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2006:46). Military bands therefore helped make the sound of a western instrumental ensemble familiar. Secondly, the hymnal style introduced by missionaries was also an influence on the band music

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<sup>8</sup> Afrigo Band is a popular music which was established in the 1970s.

<sup>9</sup> Military bands are ensembles that constitute a brass section (trumpets, tuba, trombone), wood wind section (oboe, clarinets, flute) and percussion section (snare drums, bass drums, side drums, cymbals).

produced in Uganda. Nannyonga-Tamusuza, for example, notes that “in fact, Elly Wamala ... explained that his encounter with foreign music was church music, which strongly influenced his musical style, especially the harmony in his accompaniment” (2006:46). Thirdly, the influence of band music from Belgian Congo, now the Democratic Republic of Congo, was overwhelming in the early 1950s with the importation of records by Mwenda Jean Bosco and Lesto Abelo among others. When Belgian Congo got its independence in 1960, “the music of Franco with his group OK Jazz, Rouchereau Tabu, Jean Bokelo and others became the first African popular music to resound over the whole continent” (Kubik 1981:93-4). Christopher Ssebowa recalled that Congolese bands used to perform at a club called Suzaana in Nakulabye, Kampala in the 1960s (interview, June 3, 2009). Ssebowa, a budding musician at the time, requested to perform with a Congolese band at Suzaana and he was accepted. He told me that the kind of music they used to perform was mainly Latin American.

The development of technology also influenced the definition of popular music in Uganda. In reference to the development of popular music in East Africa in general, Martin notes that “the advent of such technological inventions as the radio and phonograph, the tape recorder, and the compact-disc player, the electric guitar and the synthesizer, have all acted to provide instantaneous and diverse musical events from exogenous sources” (1991:40). Technological inventions have therefore played an important role in the development of popular music in Uganda. As Kubik (1981) notes, several radio stations were opened in Africa and a music industry built after 1945. The national radio station, Radio Uganda, was opened in 1953 while Uganda Television was opened in 1963 (Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2005a: 2009). Not only did the mass media expose Ugandans to Latin American and Caribbean music, but it was also an avenue for Ugandan musicians to disseminate their music through live broadcasts. Lusania Kasamba informed me that when Radio Uganda was opened in 1953, there were three types of music being broadcast. The first was European music records, secondly, Kenyan Swahili music, and third, Ugandan ‘popular’ and ‘traditional folk’ music (interview, July 6, 2009). However, since most Ugandan musicians could not afford to record music, as Godfrey Ssenyonjo, a *kadongo kamu* musician, told me, the radio broadcasts of Ugandan popular music were mainly live performances (interview, June 3, 2009).

Transistor radios were used to listen to Radio Uganda. Although not all Ugandan could afford to buy these radios, Ssenyonjo recalled that those who could afford were kind to allow

their neighbors to listen with them. He told I that the very first time his father owned a transistor radio was in 1974. The radio was red in color and he remembers the brand was ‘SANYU’ (interview, June 3, 2009). In the seventies, Ssenyonjo recalls hearing mainly music performed by Ugandan musicians along with Congolese music from the present Democratic Republic of Congo. He recalled songs like Hadija Namale’s *Olupapula Si Mupiira* (A Paper is Not Like a Ball).

The impact of North American popular music rejuvenated Uganda’s band music in the 1980s. The music of Michael Jackson and Madonna was very popular in disco halls among the young people. There was also a following of the reggae legend, Bob Marley, by those who identified themselves as rastafarians (see Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2005a:50). Furthermore, the liberalization of the media resulted into the establishment of private radio and television stations since the 1990s. The first private FM radio station in Uganda was Sanyu FM, which opened on 23<sup>rd</sup> of December 1993 (Ssewakiryanga and Isabirye 2006:63). By the time of this study, there were over 50 radio stations and over ten television stations that broadcast a variety of music videos from Uganda and other countries (see appendix 7a for a list of radio and television stations in Uganda).

Because of this global exposé through the media, musicians in Uganda have been able to incorporate different music styles from across the globe into their music. As Joel Isabirye has noted, the history of Uganda’s popular music shows that there has been a “high degree of hybridization with globally successful popular music forms” (as quoted in Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2006: 46). In addition, the availability of digital technology since the 1990s has also contributed to the reconstruction and re-definition of popular music in Uganda. Such technologies as computers and synthesizers have made recording much easier and faster. According to Apollos Pirwoth, a Congolese musician living and working as a French teacher in Uganda, recording music ‘live’ while playing instruments is very difficult and time consuming (interview, February 13, 2009). In addition, it is also very expensive. However, using computer software such as Flooty Loops (FL) Studio and Logic is much easier because the software has digital simulations of instrumental sounds. Therefore, even though one has no instrument playing skills, he or she can record music because it cuts down on the cost of hiring instruments and instrumentalists and time spent in the studios. During the present research, I met and interviewed a number of musicians with home studios that consist mainly of one computer and some microphones.

Indeed, Nannyonga-Tamusuza notes that there were changes in the 1990s from live recordings to synthesized sounds and the experimentations with other music styles and instruments (2005a:51).

Therefore, popular music in Uganda has also been defined as that music produced and disseminated both technologically and also sometimes performed live. “This music blends indigenous languages, poetic styles and musical styles with foreign musical styles, especially the instrumentation and hymnal styles, and to some extent the language” (Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2006:48). However, considering that each musician has his/her own “unique stylistic characteristics, it is rather difficult to categorize Uganda’s popular music into specific genres, as there are many overlaps and crossovers even within a single song” (*ibid.*).

Earlier attempts to classify popular music in Uganda have been based on the number of instruments used, hence the two broad categories (*kadongo-kamu* and the collective ‘band’ music). The Pearl of Africa Music Awards has, however, categorized popular music in Uganda under other genres that include R&B, Hip hop, Afro beat and reggae. As such, the awards have set precedence of categorization and they have been situated in a position of authority in the construction of what is popular. As Victor Ginsburgh and Jan C. van Ours noted, the ranking of music by ‘experts’ in music competitions has an impact on the subsequent market success of the music since winners are declared and promoted. Therefore, in the analysis of PAM Awards as a competition, I will stress that the results play a role in the construction of what is popular music in Uganda. It is however important to first understand that the idea of competition that defines PAM Awards is not a new phenomenon in Uganda.

#### 4.3 Music Competitions in Uganda

The history of music competitions in Uganda can be traced back to the late 1920s. It is important to note that music performance as a competitive event was foreign to Ugandan contexts until Reverend G. M Duncan — the then Namirembe Cathedral Music Director and organist— in 1929 invented it. Reverend Duncan introduced the Namirembe Church Music Festival for Anglican Church choirs to compete in hymns, chorales, and anthems (see Keshubi *et al.* 1998; Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2003). However, this festival was denominational in nature and therefore left out choirs from other churches like the Catholic Church, Seventh Day Adventists,

and Catholic Orthodox. And again, the music being sung was taught by European missionaries, which therefore eliminated any musician that was not conversant with that European classical musical style. The restriction to 'western' music in the church music festival can be explained by the missionaries' view that African music was pagan and profane, thus unsuitable for church worship (Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2003:98).

The Namirembe Church Music Festival was an annual event until Reverend Duncan's death in 1936, but was later revived by Klaus P. Wachsmann in 1944, the then curator of the Ugandan Museum. Wachsmann reorganized the festival and added more competition categories such as psalms and canticles set to folk tunes from Uganda, Negro spirituals, as well as folk songs from Uganda and Europe. Wachsmann arranged for annual choir directing courses where choir directors were trained on how to be good choir trainers. The first festival was held in 1952 in Mukono District (Keshubi *et al.* 1998).

After Uganda gained independence in 1962, the annual Uganda Schools' Music and dance Festival, under the Inspector of Schools (music), George William Kakoma, were included and eventually ousted the denominational Namirembe Church Music Festivals. The Uganda Schools' Music and Dance Festival were for secondary schools, primary schools and colleges under the Ministry of Education and Sports. By the 1990s, the festival was made compulsory for all schools (Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2003:98). The participating schools compete in categories that include 'traditional folk' and creative dance, choral singing and music sight reading. Peter Cooke and Okaka Opio Dokotum wrote that this competition structure was introduced by teachers and missionaries and that the competitions have their roots in the music competitions of the United Kingdom (2000: 271). The authors further note that the annual Uganda Music Festival was the culmination of a series of competitions held among schools and colleges around the country. Godfrey Ssenyonjo informed me that he participated in the inter-school district music and dance festivals in Mukono District during the mid 1970s (interview, June 3, 2009). He said that being from a school in a village called Lubanyi in Mukono District, his school excelled mainly in performances of what he called 'traditional Kiganda music', but not western music. He recalls performing in categories like 'traditional' instrumental ensembles with a conductor; traditional instrumental solos where he played *endingidi* or tube fiddle. Ssenyonjo also recalled that the few times his school won, they were not able to go to Kampala for the final competition because they did not have enough money to facilitate their stay in Kampala for the duration of

the festival. He informed me that only schools that had sponsorship were able to attend the final competition in Kampala (interview, June 3, 2009). The financial status of the competing schools was therefore a defining factor for who was eligible to compete at the final level.

A number of strategies have been developed by different schools in order to win. For instance, as Nannyonga-Tamusuza notes, some schools have come up with a spy system or network, where a school may send a spy to another school in order to copy a certain style (2003:99). Besides, as Nannyonga-Tamusuza also notes, innovation or reinvention of a music and dance genre is also adopted as a strategy to ‘stand out’ for a better chance of winning.

Another denominational music competition in Uganda is the Catholic Church Music Festivals, which began around 1970, according to Richard Kaabunga, a music teacher, composer and a member of the organizing committee for these festivals (interview, August 15, 2009). Kaabunga recalled participating in the Catholic Church Music Festival as a spectator in 1973 while in his first year in secondary school. These competitions began as part of the annual Diocesan day celebrations that were held at Namugongo, Kampala. As such, the participants in the Catholic Church Music Festivals were all parish choirs that would accompany their priest to the celebrations. The contestants, during these competitions, were judged by a panel of judges who were given a marking sheet with guidelines on what elements to look out for during a performance. Therefore, there were also politics of competition involved as the decision to choose winners lay in the hands of around three judges.

Furthermore, in the 1980s, the church music festivals for Catholic-founded primary and secondary schools were also established, and were still going on at the time of this research (Ssempijja 2006). According to Nicholas Ssempijja (2006), the syllabus for competition is: 1) two ‘sacred’ pieces (one in the ‘western’ style and another in Kiganda<sup>10</sup> ‘traditional’ style), and 2) a set piece on a given theme. Performances of items in these categories are judged by a panel of adjudicators that are selected by the music technical committee that organizes the competition. For one to qualify as an adjudicator, there are certain requirements they have to fulfill: 1) they have to be Catholic; 2) have to be a performer of ‘sacred’ choral music; 3) have academic qualifications in music; and 4) have the ability to interpret and analyze music. The judges in this competition use set marking guidelines to award marks.

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<sup>10</sup> The term Kiganda is used to mean something that belongs to the Baganda of central Uganda.

Another music competition in Uganda was the Radio Uganda Quarterly Festival that began in 1964. This competition was held at the Uganda National Theater, and musicians competed in different styles of music (Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2005a:50). According to Dan Mulima, the Assistant Manager of Star FM (Radio Uganda), the competitions were called *Ekivuulu Kya* Radio Uganda (EKRU) when he started working as a Program Assistant or Radio Presenter at Radio Uganda in 1968 (interview, August 20, 2009). However, due to a hostile political climate during Idi Amin's regime, the competition was halted in the early 1970s.

The EKRU competition, according to Mulima, was organized by the Midland/Luganda<sup>11</sup> Broadcasting Section<sup>12</sup> of Radio Uganda. Mulima informed me that EKRU was mainly meant to promote upcoming artistes in music, poetry and drama. The dates of the competition would be announced by the Midland Broadcasting Section of Radio Uganda radio. Mulima informed me that all the people interested in competing under specified categories were welcomed to the festival. The categories were: 1) *kadongo kamu*; 2) choral music (especially school choirs); 3) poetry, and 4) drama (most drama groups also participated in the choral music category). The participants in the different categories were adjudicated by a panel of judges chosen from among Radio Uganda staff, and occasionally, National Theatre staff.

The competition was held over a period of three days: Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. On Friday and Saturday, the contestants performed and were judged by the panelists, who would then choose the finalists. The finalists would then perform for the 'general public' on Sunday, a performance that would be aired live on Radio Uganda. During this final show, there was no panel of judges to decide the winner. However, the winner was chosen by the audience in attendance. According to Mulima, the machines used to broadcast the performance live had a meter that would measure the intensity of sound. Whenever the audience applauded a performer, the hand of the meter would move clockwise. The louder the applause, the further the hand of the meter moved. Therefore, the performer who got the loudest applause, as was reflected on the meter, would be declared the winner and would thereafter be awarded with "just a few shillings from the government of Uganda" (Mulima, interview, August 20, 2009).

When the PAM Awards began, even though the structure and categories of competition were different from the church, school, and Radio Uganda competitions, the foundation of

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<sup>11</sup> Luganda is a bantu language spoken by the Baganda of central Uganda.

<sup>12</sup> According to Dan Mulima, Radio Uganda used to broadcast in 25 languages and dialects of Uganda.



competition in music was already laid. However, the PAM Awards is a much more publicized competition with more politics and much bigger prize packages than any other competition in Uganda. At this juncture, it is important to examine what PAM Awards are.

#### 4.4 PAM Awards: Aims and Mission

The Pearl of Africa Music Awards is both a company and competition that was launched in 2003 with Isaac Mulindwa as the chairman of the organizing Committee. According to Moses Serugo (2003a), a journalist with *The New Vision* newspaper, the idea of PAM Awards was conceived by Solomon Kajura and Bruce Lubowa. However, Kajura and Lubowa's idea was not successfully executed until Mulindwa adopted it. Isaac Mulindwa is a businessman and investor in the media and music business. He is the Managing Director of Simba FM and also a shareholder in night clubs like Silk Royale (Mulindwa, interview, February 26, 2009). In partnership with media and other corporate companies that include Wavah Broadcasting Service (WBS) Television, Bell Lager, Capital FM, and Crane Bank, among others, PAM Awards was launched in 2003. Celtel Uganda (currently referred to as Zain Uganda) a telecommunications company, was the main sponsor until 2007, leaving Bell Lager, a beer brand of Uganda Breweries Limited (UBL) become the main sponsor for PAM Awards 2008. As such, the PAM Awards were rebranded as the Bell PAM Awards in 2008. To understand the PAM Awards, there is need to be equipped with knowledge on why PAM Awards were started and what were their aims and mission.

According to the official PAM Awards website<sup>13</sup> and a document entitled *The Pearl of Africa Music Awards 2009*, the mission of PAM Awards reads:

As the premier music awards in Uganda, PAM Awards is committed to pursuing the development and growth of the music industry through events designed to enhance the quality of production, promotion and distribution of Ugandan music to international standards.

The mission stipulates that prior to the PAM Awards, the music industry in Uganda was undeveloped in relation to the international standards. Further, PAM Awards vision states: "To

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<sup>13</sup> [www.pamawards.com](http://www.pamawards.com). Accessed February 20, 2008.

become the benchmark of judging creativity in the African music industry through fair competition while empowering local artistes to achieve their dreams in partnership with our sponsors”.

According to Mulindwa, the mission and vision of PAM Awards were inspired by his experiences as an investor within the entertainment business in Uganda (interview, February 26, 2009). He said that his involvement in the entertainment business brought him closer to the musicians, which helped him understand the challenges they faced. Mulindwa further said that understanding the musicians’ challenges inspired him to find solutions hence the creation of PAM Awards. He informed me that the challenges he sought to solve included: 1) lack of respect for musicians; 2) musicians were thought to be wasting time<sup>14</sup>; and 3) local music was not well received by Ugandan audience. Mulindwa blamed the negative image of Ugandan musicians and music on the ‘people’ who promoted and presented the musicians in a bad way. The negative image, he observed, was evident in the poor performance settings that include sound, lighting, stage, and security. In addition, Mulindwa said that the people who liked Ugandan music were looked at as the poor and uneducated people “at the bottom of the barrel, while the people who mattered and had the money to invest into the industry and support the artists were not interested” (Interview, February 26, 2009). The “people who matter”, according to Mulindwa, are “the corporates, people at the top, the educated people who rule the country economically and politically.” He also calls them the ‘A and B classes’. Therefore, Mulindwa “wanted to change that negative image hence the creation of the PAM Awards. The only way to change that image was to understand why music, musicians and the entertainment industry had [had] a bad image”.

Mulindwa said that PAM Awards intended to present the musicians in a glamorous and sophisticated way through providing good staging, sound and lighting as well as offer security during performances to attract the “people who matter”. Mulindwa continued to say; “what I did with PAM Awards was to take the musician from that end (the lower class) and bring him to this end and then showcase him to these people (the A and B class)” (interview, February 26, 2009).

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<sup>14</sup> In reference to the view that pursuing music was a waste of time, the researcher, is reminded of her experiences as an aspiring music scholar after completing the Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE) examinations in 2001. She was admitted with government scholarship at Makerere University to study a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music in the academic year 2002/3. However, to her dismay, some of the researcher’s friends and family members discouraged her because music is not a ‘real’ profession that someone who wanted a secure future should pursue. Some of the reasons given for such negativity included the perception that musicians were poor, disrespected and degenerate members of society.

In doing so, Mulindwa says he wanted to prove to people that the entertainment sector is an industry that can benefit and employ many people, unlike prior preconceived notions about music as a profession. Moreover, Mulindwa pointed out, the public was not very appreciative of the ‘local’ talent and music but were more interested in music from South Africa, Europe, American and the Democratic Republic of Congo instead. Therefore, to get the public to appreciate Ugandan popular music, he had to involve them in the whole process of PAM Awards.

As indicated in the vision of the PAM Awards, Mulindwa’s focus was not only set on recognizing popular music and musicians in Uganda, but also to engage the entire Africa. Mulindwa argued that Africa usually becomes a focus for the international community or makes international news headlines only when something disastrous like famine and war happens. He informed me that he envisioned one big award ceremony that recognizes the work of musicians in all African countries and broadcast internationally for the whole world to see Africa presented in a different light. However, by the time of this research, PAM Awards included musicians only from the East African countries namely; Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya and Tanzania as stipulated in the vision of PAM Awards. Indeed, *The Pearl of Africa Music Awards 2009* document reads:

Our vision is to ensure that together we build a strong partnership with different stakeholders in the music industry such as artistes, promoters, distributors, producers – both audio and video – to see East African artistes competing on the international scene and winning awards in bigger competitions such as the Grammy and MTV awards (2009:3).

As per its vision, PAM Awards has to involve the musicians, promoters, distributors and producers whose partnership is paramount for the success of the PAM Awards’ vision. The question about how the PAM Awards have partnered with the above stakeholders would be answered through an understanding of the organizational processes of PAM Awards. Knowing who is involved, how and why will provide a solid background for a discussion on how the different stakeholders politically interact and how their power relations are performed during the processes of PAM Awards. In the next section, I examine the role of the sponsors PAM Awards and focuses on the following: 1) how they participate; 2) why they participate; and 3) how they benefit. Having knowledge on how and why sponsors participate and benefit from their

participation is an important aspect in the understanding of how sponsors participate alongside other stakeholders in the political construction of popular music in Uganda.

#### 4.5 Sponsoring PAM Awards: Corporate Companies in the Music Business

The Pearl of Africa Music Awards, as a company, is a business enterprise that deals with monetary transactions so as to realize returns. As such, PAM Awards have partnered with corporate companies in order to organize the awards and reward winners. The main sponsors since the award's inauguration in 2003 have been Bell Lager (beer brand from Uganda Breweries Limited) and Zain Uganda (a telecommunications company). Other companies that have partnered with the two companies include Sheraton Kampala Hotel, Century Bottling Company (Pepsi), UAP Insurance, Datanet, *The New Vision* newspaper, KFM, WBS Television, and Kampala Casino.

According to Isaac Mulindwa, founder of PAM Awards and Chairman of the Organizing Committee, the cost to execute the Pearl of Africa Music Awards is very high and therefore requires sponsors. He informed me that the main sponsor for the inaugural PAM Awards was Celtel, renamed Zain Uganda. Mark Owor Ochwo (2003) reported that the inaugural PAM Awards were expected to cost ninety three million Ugandan Shillings, approximately forty four thousand three hundred US Dollars<sup>15</sup>. Ms Johanna Korpia, the then Celtel Uganda Commercial Director, is quoted saying that the company had contributed fifty million Ugandan shillings (approximately \$ 23923), which is 54% of the total money that was needed (Ochwo 2003). Celtel remained the main sponsor until 2008, when it became the second main sponsor because it was in the middle of a rebranding process, from 'Celtel' to 'Zain'. Bell Lager, which had been the second sponsor since 2003, became the main sponsor in 2008. As co-sponsor with Celtel in 2003, Moses Serugo (2003) reported that the company had contributed fifteen million Ugandan shillings to the event, 16% of the total amount required (93 million). Why would Celtel/Zain Uganda and Bell Lager be interested in sponsoring the PAM Awards? How are they involved? What do they gain from their involvement? To answer these questions, I interviewed an

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<sup>15</sup> The dollar is valued at 2090 Ugandan shillings in this dissertation.

informant from the Marketing Department of Zain Uganda who requested for anonymity. For ethical reasons, I will use the pseudo name ‘Eddie Musisi’ to refer to him.

According to Eddie Musisi, Zain Uganda, a telecommunications company, has been sponsoring entertainment events since it came to Uganda under the name Celtel in 1997 (interview, May 15, 2009). According to Musisi, one of Zain Uganda’s promotional policies has always been to promote music, art, and culture. Therefore, the “corporate social responsibility package of Zain Uganda is to promote music, art and culture by helping artists through financial assistance”. For instance, Zain Uganda sponsored Moses Ssali a.k.a Bebe Cool<sup>16</sup> to perform in London in 2008 at Nelson Mandela’s ninetieth birthday. Bebe Cool has also been involved in PAM Awards and actually won three awards in PAM Awards 2008 (see Appendix 8 for a list of 2008 PAM Awards nominees and winners). In relation to how Zain is involved in the PAM Awards, some informants told me that Zain Uganda is involved in deciding which song or musician is announced winner. According to Pavel Sselwanga, a shopkeeper in Kampala, it is impossible for sponsoring companies to allow the musicians that advertise their products to lose (interview, February 13, 2009). If these musicians lose, then the company’s’ image is tarnished. However, Musisi contested such speculation and said that Zain Uganda only provides financial assistance and also sends representatives on the organizing committee to “protect the company’s interests” (Musisi interview, May 15, 2009). Eddie Musisi could not reveal the ‘company’s interests’.

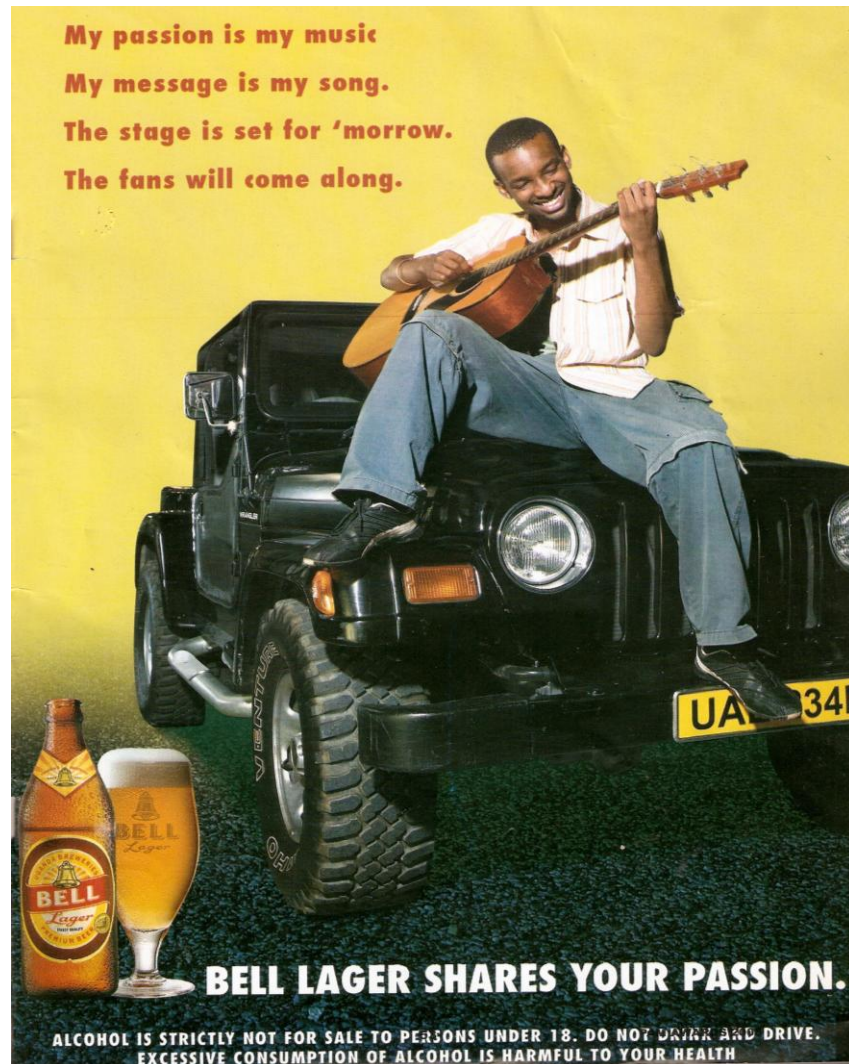
Goretti Masedde, the Uganda Breweries Limited Brand Manager, is quoted by Moses Serugo (2003) saying Bell Lager became a sponsor for PAM Awards so as to support the recognition of local talent. Indeed, the beer brand has identified itself with music as exemplified by its adverts. For instance, the Bell Lager video advert runs a male musician composing a song and then finally performing it on a guitar while seated on the bonnet of his car. In addition, Bell Lager displays a poster advert of a picture of a smiling male<sup>17</sup> playing a guitar and seated on the bonnet of his car on the back cover of PAM Awards magazine (2008) as shown below in Figure 1.

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<sup>16</sup> Since Moses Ssali uses and is mostly called by his stage name Bebe Cool, the researcher will refer to him as Bebe Cool throughout this dissertation.

<sup>17</sup> The smiling male is a Kenyan actor.

Figure 1: Bell Lager Advert



The words that accompany the poster read: “My passion is my music. My message is my song. The stage is set for ‘morrow. The fans will come along<sup>18</sup>”. Then the company slogan is written at the bottom in capital letters: ‘BELL LAGER SHARES YOUR PASSION’ (see Figure 1). However, the company has representatives on the PAM Awards organizing committee. In 2008, Bell Lager was represented by Fred Othieno and Moses Kebba.

<sup>18</sup> These are the lyrics in the song that is sung in the video advert.

How then does Bell Lager and its co-sponsor Zain Uganda benefit from their involvement with PAM Awards? According to Musisi, one of the returns from sponsoring PAM Awards is that Zain Uganda builds affinity or kinship with the society within which it operates. By sponsoring PAM Awards, Zain Uganda cultivates a kinship with the people who are interested in seeing the music business in Uganda grow. Secondly, both Bell Lager and Zain Uganda get branding rights that include using the company logos next to the PAM Awards logo. Branding rights also allow the two companies to advertise their products during PAM Awards events. For instance, during the 2008 PAM Awards ceremony on the November 1, 2008, I observed that there were tents with the Bell Lager logo, whereby the only beer brand sold to the audience was Bell Lager. There were also Zain tents where brochures about Zain services were displayed. In addition, the whole event area was covered in posters and cloth hangings with Bell Lager and Zain Uganda logos. Furthermore, when the PAM Awards were being launched in 2005, Edgar R. Batte (2005) reported that the entrance fee for those that wanted to enter the venue was to buy a coupon that entitled someone to two Bell Lagers or to buy Celtel airtime of any amount.

In addition, during the PAM Awards voting period, the phone number to which all the Short Message Service (SMS) votes are sent is a Zain number: 0752 600100. Therefore, Zain also gains from the SMS charges, which cost one hundred and ten Ugandan Shillings (about \$ 0.05). In addition, there are other products that relate with PAM Awards that have been sold. After the 2003 PAM Awards, for instance, Celtel Uganda, in conjunction with the PAM Awards Organizing Committee produced a cassette tape and Compact Disc (CD) that had the winning songs. The cassette tape or CD was given for free to customers who purchased a new Celtel phone line and a host of phone offers that had been packaged to reward Celtel customers in the 'Mega Festive Specials' promotion (Serugo 2003).

PAM Awards have also partnered with media corporations that include Wavah Broadcasting Service (WBS TV), Beat FM, Sanyu FM, Central Broadcasting Service, K FM, Radio Simba, *The New Vision* and *The Daily Monitor* newspapers. According to Mulindwa, in order for Uganda's music business to develop through the PAM Awards, there is need to involve all the stakeholders in the music business (interview, February 26, 2009). Apart from such stakeholders as the musicians, studio producers, and the audience, the media is one of the most important players in the popular music business in Uganda. As Mulindwa said:

The entertainment industry stakeholders, most especially the media – print and electronic (radio and television) -- thought they were independent of each other forgetting that they all have one common denominator; they are all in the entertainment industry. So, whatever affects that industry affects them. Therefore, when I was selling the idea of PAM Awards in the beginning to get them to come on board as sponsors and give us the media we needed, I told them that if the music industry grows, they will grow as well. When they asked me how they would grow, I said that; “Think about it. Right now, radio stations play mostly foreign music because they don’t have enough local music and they also have a hard time getting it. If this industry grows and there is more local music, you will have a lot more music. If the musicians become stars, you will conduct interviews on radio and TV, your programming will change. You will get away from the expensive programming for TV where you buy material from outside Uganda to keep the people entertained because now they can do ‘local’ music shows, talk shows, etc. Think about it.”

Mulindwa continued to say that not only the electronic media would benefit but also the print media. He informed me that the newspapers would also benefit. How?

The print media would have more to report about the entertainment business and therefore have more entertainment pages unlike before when they published half a page on entertainment every Friday. Currently, every day, there are pages of entertainment. On weekends, they have supplements. So I told them that for every page of entertainment they add, they would have the other three to sell. A page of entertainment about musicians or a show that took place, then get the advertisers to buy the other pages. That is what has happened, the papers have changed, and radio has grown as well as TV because they now have music videos. Radio has music and these printers have too much stuff to write about; people, stars, etc. So, there is no question about quantity (Interview, February 26, 2009).

Therefore, reporting about the awards in the entertainment pages of newspapers serves to attract more customers and have more pages for advertisement. For instance, after the 2008 PAM Awards, K FM paid for a two pages of the highlights of the PAM Awards including the results and photographs of musicians (Tatya and Batte 2008: 26-27). Furthermore, those who are not able to attend the PAM Awards ceremony are able to watch the ceremony live on WBS television and Uganda Broadcasting Corporation. Secondly, the media are paid to broadcast PAM Awards’ adverts about how to vote and the awarding ceremony. As Joseph Beyanga, the



Production Manager of K FM informed me, KFM is paid to promote and advertise for PAM Awards. As one of the sponsors, he informed me that K FM contributes by paying 50% of the money required to air the adverts (interview, June 15, 2009). For instance, if PAM Awards wants to have an advert broadcast and the fee is one million Shillings (approximately \$ 478), K FM pays five hundred thousand shillings and then PAM Awards pays the remaining five hundred thousand. Beyanga further confided in me that K FM also carries out interviews with nominated musicians and makes sure the nominated music is broadcast everyday as part of their sponsoring duties. Moreover, K FM made the decision to sponsor PAM Awards because they share the vision of promoting 'Ugandan' music.

It should, however, be noted that PAM Awards is not the only avenue through which corporate companies have been involved with the music business in Uganda. Corporate companies have become important funders of musicians outside PAM Awards<sup>19</sup>. For instance, both Tony Lubega a.k.a Red Banton<sup>20</sup> and Annet Nandujja, both musicians, have sung songs about WBS Television.

Eddie Musisi, an informant from the Zain Marketing Department, informed me that Zain has sponsored other music projects apart from PAM Awards. Another project that Zain Uganda undertook to fulfill its corporate social responsibility is the 'Dance with the Stars' project, where Ugandan popular musicians from Kampala tour the country, performing in different districts. During these performances, musicians from the areas being visited perform alongside the visiting artistes. Eddie Musisi informed me that the 'Dance with the Stars' project was intended to promote musicians to broader audiences throughout the country (interview, May 15, 2009). In addition, since the artists are paid, it is also an opportunity for them to earn an income. When asked about how Zain Uganda earns from sponsoring such shows, Musisi answered that their focus is not the money that is collected from the entrance fees. However, Musisi later told me that the valuable thing that Zain benefits from sponsoring such endeavors as the 'Dance with the Stars', is the opportunity to talk about their product during the concerts. The musicians are

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<sup>19</sup> According to Sylvester Kyaggulanyi, a musician, studio producer, and songwriter, one of the biggest problems faced by Ugandan musicians is the lack of financial backing. Kyaggulanyi notes that since the musicians do not even earn from their music due to lack of a functional copyright law, musicians are left with the option of earning through performance. However, staging a performance or show needs financial facilitation to pay for the venue, hire sound equipment, security team to collect the entrance fees, as well as transport costs. For this reason, musicians have to solicit for money in any way possible.

<sup>20</sup> Since Tony Lubega uses and is mostly called by his stage name Red Banton, the researcher will refer to him as Red Banton throughout this dissertation.

sometimes wearing Zain T-shirts and caps as a way to market Zain Uganda products. Eddie said that the musicians that work with Zain Uganda sign a memorandum of understanding which states the terms and conditions of the agreement. The agreement includes a clause that has a strict code of conduct for the musician and an agreement on how much the company is investing in the career of the musician. There is, however, no brand-binding clause that restricts the musician from performing or working with any other companies unlike other corporate companies like MTN.

#### 4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed how popular music has been constructed prior to PAM Awards. In addition, there has also been a discussion of the history of music competitions to demonstrate that PAM Awards are not the first music competitions to be conducted in Uganda. As discussed in this chapter, Radio Uganda, Church and School competitions were among the music competitions in Uganda. Moreover, as discussed in this chapter, competitions are surrounded with a lot of politics (strategies of winning, the influence of judges on winning as well as the implications of winning a trophy to those involved these competitions). As such, understanding the politics of competitions in general will help readers to understand the context within which PAM Awards thrive. Among the stakeholders of any competition- music or otherwise- are the sponsors and are discussed in this chapter to show how they participate in a musical competition. Further, PAM Awards strive to achieve an aim and mission and as such, to examine how they construct the popular of Ugandan popular music, one needs to understand what PAM Awards strive to achieve as discussed in this chapter. In the next chapter, I examine how PAM Awards construct the popular of Ugandan popular music through the politics of competition.

## CHAPTER FIVE: POLITICS OF COMPETITION IN PAM AWARDS

### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I examine how the decisions made within the webs of political interrelationships between musicians, producers, PAM Awards organizing committee, media, audience and judges inform the awarding process, and participate in constructing popular music in Uganda. The first section of this chapter explores the categorization of the music and musicians in PAM Awards focusing on: 1) who is involved in the categorization; 2) how these categories are defined; and 3) who defines them. The rest of the sections concentrate on the other various organizational processes of PAM Awards. The first process is the launching of PAM Awards, which is followed by a discussion on the strategies that musicians employ in order to be involved or win the PAM Awards. Examining the strategies employed will give us an understanding about the politics of competition, where strategies are looked at as a means of manipulation so as to attain an award.

The other processes that are discussed are: 1) nominations; 2) voting; 3) judging; and 4) the awarding ceremony that crowns the PAM Awards. While discussing the different processes, I will concentrate on the politics at play between the musicians, judges, media, PAM Awards organizing committee, producers and the audience. In the last section, I examine the impact of PAM Awards in terms of how they construct the popular of music and musicians in Uganda, for instance, through the job opportunities arising from winning an award, providing promotional opportunities for the music and musicians, as well as the impact of the awards on the quality and quantity of music production in Uganda.

## 5.2 Organization Processes of PAM Awards: Performing Politics of Competition

The political construction of popular music in Uganda happens through the entire organization process of PAM Awards. PAM Awards are organized by a committee which is chaired by Isaac Mulindwa with Shamim Asiimwe as the Administrator and Public Relations Officer. The committee is made up of representatives from the PAM Awards administration team (Mulindwa and Asiimwe) as well as representative members from the sponsoring companies<sup>21</sup>. The PAM Awards Organizing Committee is charged with the task to plan and execute all the PAM Awards events as will be discussed in this chapter. In addition, the organizing committee works with the PAM Awards administration team, which includes Salim Nyonyintono, the Operations Assistant. All these teams work together throughout the organization processes that include: 1) categorization; 2) launching; 3) voting; 4) judging; and 5) the awarding ceremony.

### 5.2.1 Categorization in PAM Awards

Categorization in PAM Awards is the process of selecting and defining categories that inform the areas of competition. In PAM Awards, categorization has been one of the most debated upon issues by the musicians, studio producers, media, audience, and PAM Awards organizing committee. Similarly, Mary R. Watson and N. Anand, while referring to the Grammy Awards, noted that “the enactment of ... awards constantly brings into question the legitimacy of categorical judgments of worthiness made by the NARAS<sup>22</sup> awards committee and its voters” (2006:47, 48). The Chairman of the PAM Awards Organizing Committee, Isaac Mulindwa, indeed acknowledges that one of the biggest challenges facing PAM Awards since its inception has been categorization of the music (interview, February 26, 2009). In the six years that PAM Awards were in existence at the time of this research (2003-2008), there has been a number of debates among judges, musicians, studio producers, media, PAM Awards organizing committee, and audience as to whether the music and musicians nominated and awarded in particular

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<sup>21</sup> Representatives from sponsoring companies are not permanent and are changed or retained according to the wishes of the sponsoring company while the PAM Awards administration team is permanent as long as PAM Awards still employs them. For instance, Shamim Asiimwe has been the Administrator and Public Relations Officer for PAM Awards since 2005 and she has been on the organizing committee since then.

<sup>22</sup> NARAS refers to the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences.

categories legitimately belong there. These debates further cast a shadow on the results of the awards especially when someone is awarded in one category, but is thought to belong to another category. Watson and Anand continue to observe that “when an institution fails to make correct or appropriate classifications, the very legitimacy of the institution is at stake” (2006:54). The PAM Awards institution is indeed under criticism and its legitimacy a point of debate. In discussions pertaining to the legitimacy of PAM Awards, there are questions about how categorical decisions are arrived at as well as who should be making those decisions and why. Therefore, the relationship between the stakeholders in charge of making decisions and those that are affected by the decisions is a political one. This relationship is political because the structure of PAM Awards dictates a given organizational hierarchy of decision making positions. Therefore, the decisions made by the stakeholders that are empowered to declare winners will determine who is included in the awards and who wins the awards. However, it doesn’t go without saying that those affected by the decisions may sometimes disagree with the decision makers and sometimes ‘hidden transcripts’ (to use James Scott’s term 1990:4) are performed.

In PAM Awards, categorization can be looked at in two divisions namely: 1) categorization of the music in terms of genres; and 2) categorization of the musicians according to their achievement as ‘the best’ within the performance of a particular music genre or in relation to gender, or regional participation (see appendix 8). In the following sub-sections, I will explore the stances taken by the different stakeholders as regards the categorization so as to foster an understanding of how the power relations between stakeholders inform PAM Awards, which in turn participates in the construction of popular music and musicians in Uganda.

#### 5.2.1.1 Categorization of Music in PAM Awards

According to Isaac Mulindwa, categorizing popular music in Uganda under specified music genres has been problematic just like in other international music awards (interview, February 26, 2009). Why is it so difficult for PAM Awards to categorize music according to genres? To answer this question, there is need to first understand what the term genre means. According to Karin Kosina (2002), the term genre comes from the Latin word *genus*, which literally means kind or class. Therefore, a genre could be “described as a type or category

defined by structural thematic or functional criteria” (Kosina 2002:5). These criteria, however, are “not determined by objective facts, but are part of a dynamic cultural process”, and are therefore fluid (*ibid.*). Roy Shuker also defines a genre as a “category or type, a key component of textual analysis [that] is widely used to analyze popular cultural texts” which includes music and movies (2008:119). In popular music studies, genre<sup>23</sup> is used as a central organizing element.

As different studies on popular music (Robinson *et al.* 1991, Connell and Gibson 2003, Ssewakiryanga and Isabirye 2006, Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2006) have asserted, music has become a fusion of a variety of musical elements due to hybridity and creativity, which makes it a challenge for anyone trying to classify or categorize popular music genres. Sylvester Kyaggulanyi, a musician, producer, and songwriter, who has won the Song Writer of the Year award three times, reiterates the popular music studies’ view that the fusion of a variety of music elements in popular music has made it difficult to clearly categorize music (interview, March 2, 2009). Kyaggulanyi told me that:

The problem with trying to categorize music in a country like Uganda is that we have grown up in an age where we are listening to music from the Western world. But take it from me Anita, categorizing music in Uganda today is like trying to find a real Muganda<sup>24</sup>. It’s all mixed up. Most of the music is a hybrid; a bit of reggae, swing, boss nova. This has made it very hard for people to categorize music. PAM Awards has also made mistakes. Take it from me: there are songs that I utterly fail to categorize. Just like when you listen to American popular music, you hear a bit of Indian and Caribbean and it therefore becomes hard to categorize. In this generation, we are living in a global village (interview, March 2, 2009).

Kyaggulanyi’s main focus is that it is not possible to make categories due to hybridity in the music of Uganda, which is a result of the effects of globalization<sup>25</sup>, where contact is made through the media including radio, televisions, Compact Discs, DVDs, iPods, internet and travel

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<sup>23</sup> Some scholars have had debates on whether to use the term style in preference to the term genre (see Moore 1993).

<sup>24</sup> Muganda (singular) is a term used to refer to a person from Buganda, a kingdom in central Uganda.

<sup>25</sup> Globalization opens lines of communication between people in different geographical locations thus reducing space and time. For example, Ugandans that have access to the internet are able to read about what is happening in America while those with access to radios can access the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) on the FM frequency 101.2 which also hosts music programs. In addition, international music television channels like the British Music Television (MTV) are also available for subscribers to the Multichoice Dish Satellite Television (DSTV), a company based in South Africa. Ugandan television and radio stations also have programs that play strictly international popular music. For instance, Herbert Kyewalyanga, also known as Herbie K is a presenter on an international music show called Music Plus on Record Television (interview, 2009).

of musicians and music between cultures and countries. This contact results into cultural contact, where practices of one culture may be adapted by people from another culture, an ongoing process. As such, Kyaggulanyi equates the hybridity in popular music to the difficulty of finding a ‘real’ Muganda, a venture that has been made difficult by the intermarriages between the Baganda and other ethnic groups in Uganda like the Banyankore<sup>26</sup>. Conell and Gibson (2003) have also noted that the access to different musical cultures through globalization has enriched the compositional resources available to musicians in different geographical locations. Similarly, Deanna Campbell Robinson *et al.* (1991) have noted that musicians from different countries have adapted global music genres like hip-hop and made them their own by infusing musical elements from their cultures in a process called indigenization or localization (also see Timothy D. Taylor’s (1997) discussion on world music). How then can one possibly strictly classify music in genres with such overlaps?

Even though it is difficult to define genres, Roy Shuker (2008) asserts that genres are still relevant to popular music consumers. He notes that the arrangement of records in retail shops according to music genres stipulates that there are “clearly identifiable genres of popular music which are understood as such by the consumers” (Shucker 2008:119). Undeniably, music fans sometimes identify themselves with particular genres by “demonstrating considerable knowledge of the complexities of their preferences” (*ibid.*). I also interviewed consumers that were devoted to particular genres like hip-hop, and were convinced of what they defined that to be. John Ssemyaalo, an employee of Zain and a hip-hop ‘fan’, as he referred to himself, for instance, said that one can tell a song is in the hip-hop style if the musician raps. However, I also interviewed consumers who were not even remotely interested in identifying themselves with a specific music genre, but were just interested in the message of the song and the musician. Paul Asiiimwe, a car washer in Wandegaya (Kampala), for example, told me that his favorite music is *kadongo-kamu* music because of the educative message in the lyrics (interview, February 5, 2009). He further clarified that he likes the *kadongo-kamu* music sung by Lord Fred Ssebata because his messages are ‘realistic’. Therefore, even though music genres may be hard to define, they seem important to consumers as well as disseminators of music.

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<sup>26</sup> The Banyankore (Munyankore sing.) are Bantu people that are mainly found in southwestern Uganda.

However, are music genres important to the musicians as they compose their music? According to Sylvester Kyaggulanyi, the genres are not an important factor during his composition process (interview, March 2, 2009). What he considers is how to present the message in the song the best way possible. On the other hand, Mark Jumbo, another musician, informed me that he intentionally goes to the studio to record music in the Afro beat category (interview, February 22, 2009). Jumbo is one of those musicians that have claimed to know the genres of music they perform by identifying themselves with particular genres. For instance, Barbara Ndagire a.k.a Bella, a musician that started out as a dancer in the dancing group called Shadow's Angels, refers to herself as the 'Queen of Dancehall'<sup>27</sup> (Musoke 2009).

Some of the informants I interviewed, however, informed me that musicians in Uganda do not know the genres of music they perform. Indeed, Joel Isabirye is also quoted as saying that "some Ugandan musicians do not know their genres and cannot categorize their music. [In addition], most Ugandan artists do lots of fusion in their music, making it hard to classify them in particular categories" (Serugo *et al.* 2003b:15). In agreement with Isabirye, Isaac Mulindwa, the chairman of the PAM Awards Organizing Committee, attributes the musicians' 'ignorance' about the genres of music they create to their lack of 'formal training' (Interview, February 26, 2009). Mulindwa notes that unlike their western counterparts, Ugandan musicians do not undergo music training in schools where they are supposed to get knowledge on popular music and how to play instruments.

However, Mulindwa's view that musicians cannot categorize their music because of lack of training ignores the fact that popular music is not part of the curriculum for music in schools in Uganda. As a music student in secondary school, I did not get training in popular music. Further, although I was introduced to popular music during ethnomusicology lectures while pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Music degree at Makerere University, I did not become proficient in defining popular music. Moreover, Mulindwa's limitation of musical training to a classroom context discredits the acquisition of music skills through other methods that include imitation. As Roy Shuker (2008) notes, musical apprenticeship for musicians can also happen through learning from and performing existing songs, through Karaoke, for instance. Therefore, popular musicians can acquire musical skills in other ways without going to school.

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<sup>27</sup> Dancehall is dance music whose lyrics are spoken and sung over a repetitive accompaniment.



Further, a number of scholars on popular music have also noted that the definition of music genres is complex. As such, most analyses of popular music genres have focused on the tension between their emphases on “standardized codes that allow no margin for distraction” as well as the fluidity of such codes (Fabbri as quoted in Shuker 2008:120). This tension is also articulated in PAM Awards, where music is categorized in ‘straight jacket’ genres and yet the divisions between the different genres are difficult to distinguish. Therefore, I acknowledge that “although music genres may carry on functioning as marketing categories and reference points for musicians, critics and fans, genre divisions must be regarded as highly fluid” (Shuker 2008:120). Mindful of the ambiguities involved in categorizing, I can now examine how music is categorized in PAM Awards, who categorizes it and the roles, views and attitudes of the different stakeholders towards this categorization.

According to Shamim Asimwe, the categories under which popular music in Uganda is classified in PAM Awards are predetermined by the PAM Awards Organizing Committee (interview, March 10, 2009). Shamim informed me that the PAM Awards Organizing Committee hires music ‘experts’ or ‘specialists’ from Makerere University Music Dance and Drama Department and a music critic from *The New Vision* newspaper (whose identities were never revealed to me) to categorize popular music in Uganda. The ‘specialists’ also create standard marking guides for the judges to follow, on which questions that highlight the characteristics of a given category are asked (see Appendix 9a,b,c, and d). However, the PAM Awards administration has the power to add or remove categories at will. For example, the number of categories has been increasing since 2003, from twenty-three to forty-two in 2008 with the inclusion and exclusion of categories. For instance, the Best Mataali Artiste and Group category was removed in 2004 and regional awards added in the same year.

Some musicians, studio producers, judges, media practitioners, and the audience have raised questions about PAM Awards’ categorization. Moses Serugo *et al.* also mention categorization as one of the crippling factors of PAM Awards after the inaugural ceremony in 2003 (2003b:15). Therefore, with the belief that the musicians are ‘ignorant’, Mulindwa, speaking on behalf of the PAM Awards administration, said: “we try to do the categories for the musicians and try to fit them in there because we are then telling them that the music [they] are doing actually falls within a specified category” (interview, February 26, 2009). As such, it is apparent that it is actually the PAM Awards Organizing Committee that decides which genres or

categories popular music in Uganda belongs to. Therefore, PAM Awards administration uses its political position in the music business, as Mulindwa puts it, “to educate the musicians”. Mulindwa’s self-appointed power to ‘educate musicians’ exhibits the dominant position he and the PAM Awards administration have over the musicians, the subordinates. Even though Mulindwa and the people within the PAM Awards administration lack musical knowledge, Mulindwa informed me that it is the reason why they hired ‘specialists’ to assist in the categorization. He also told me that he is confident that the ‘specialists’ have been doing a commendable job. As such, Mulindwa and the PAM Awards administration have used their decision making position to convince the musicians to believe that these categories are standard, an aspect of hegemony as advanced by Antonio Gramsci. As such, in a press release to combat categorical complaints, Mulindwa stresses that the PAM Awards administration is not at fault whenever there are problems with wrongly categorized songs. He said that those that carry out the nominations (musicians and media) are responsible for putting songs in the correct or wrong categories (as quoted in Batte 2006). It is the nominators (musicians and media) that determine which song to include under any of the predetermined categories.

I assert that the conflict over categorization in PAM Awards is a result of the different perceptions or definition of the different genres by the musicians. As discussed in the second section of this chapter, due to hybridity and creativity, the imaginary boundaries between music genres have been further blurred. In addition, different musicians have different definitions for the genres depending on their musical background pertaining to who taught them, how and when. For instance, when discussing the characteristics of R&B, Brian Mugenyi, a saxophone player and singer with Oyile and Qwela bands, said that the most distinctive features of R&B are; 1) it comprises of a lot of improvisation for both the singers and instrumentalists; and 2) the fact that there is no limit to the number of chords one can use. On the other hand, Robert Ngobi, a musician and also another member of Oyile Band, informed me that the characteristics of R&B that stand out are; 1) there is a repeated chord progression for both the verses and chorus and then a bridge section; and 2) the bass line and bass drum play the same rhythms (focused group discussion, May 17, 2009). As illustrated by the two separate opinions of musicians playing within the same band, there is complexity in allocating different songs under the different predetermined categories by musicians during nominations.

Furthermore, Herbert Kyewalyanga, a.k.a Herbie K<sup>28</sup>, a Music Video Presenter on Record Television, told I that another cause of categorical problems in PAM Awards is that the categories given do not cover all the music performed in Uganda (interview, March 14, 2009). As such, Herbie K suggested that the PAM Awards should make more use of the media as far as categorization is concerned. Herbie K advises that PAM Awards should use the media to provide weekly charts of most played songs each week of the year, after which a committee of music experts from institutions, the media, and producers would deliberate on categories. All the songs provided by the media could be tabled and then allocated into the different categories (Kyewalyanga, interview, March 14, 2009). However, considering that some musicians have to pay for their music to be broadcast, the accuracy of the weekly charts of the most played songs is in question (anonymous interview, 2009; Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2007:86).

However, some of the studio producers I interviewed suggested that it should be their role to categorize music since they produce it. According to Henry Kiwuuwa, a studio producer, producers are more equipped to define the genres of Ugandan music because they are involved in the creation and production process and are well aware of the musical elements they embed in the music (interview, January 24, 2009). Moreover, studio producers play a major role in the construction of popular music because it is their creativity and skill in the recording studios that produces the music even though the PAM Awards do not give them a chance to participate in any decision making process.

As a result of the complaints about categorization in PAM Awards, some stakeholders, particularly the musicians, have used other forms of resistance like boycotting the PAM Awards ceremony to show their disgruntlement with categorization. Similarly, as Watson and Anand note in relation to the North American Grammy Awards, the “illegitimacy of an award handed out inappropriately or in an ill-thought manner has always been vocally protested” (2003: 51). Watson and Anand noted that the NARAS’ struggle to reject some music genres in the Grammy awards that included rap and rock was fiercely protested until NARAS recanted by creating categories for those genres. Perl Shamsai (1996) gives an account of the 1995 38<sup>th</sup> annual Grammy awards ceremony where such genres as rock and rap were included. Shamsai notes that NARAS “had not anticipated ... the reactions of these musicians to their new-found inclusion which ranged from polite indifference to hostile animosity” (1996:367).

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<sup>28</sup>Since Herbert Kyewalyanga uses and is mostly called by the name Herbie K, the researcher will refer to him as Herbie K throughout this dissertation.

As regards PAM Awards, one of Mulindwa's reactions towards the musicians' complaints in 2006 was that the criticisms against PAM Awards are 'crap' because the PAM Awards Committee was not responsible for the categorical mishaps (as quoted in Batte 2006:25). He also added that the musicians were irrational and ignorant about what they were saying since the musicians and the media were responsible for nominating songs and musicians under the predetermined categories. In reply to Mulindwa's comment, Isaac Ruccibigango, a singer with the now defunct Limit X Trio, took exception and is quoted as saying;

[Mulindwa's] reference to the ignorance of the local artistes without providing appropriate grounds for his conclusions has continued to agitate and frustrate the industry which otherwise would have required selfless guidance... If 'crap' was the decent language to use, then we think your opinion (Isaac) is 'crap' (as quoted in The New Vision 2006b:23).

However, Mulindwa informed me that PAM Awards only accepts constructive criticism but not irrational complaints by people that are not well conversant with the organizational practices of PAM Awards (interview, February 26, 2009; Batte 2006).

Herbie K also recalled that in 2006, Mulindwa called a meeting for all musicians so that there could be a discussion on what the musicians found unsatisfactory with PAM Awards (interview, March 14, 2009). According to Herbie K, who attended the meeting, the musicians informed Mulindwa that their major concern was with the categorization. In Herbie K's words: "Mulindwa arrogantly answered that they do things after analyzing and so they are not going to change that. What else do you want?" So, it looked as though he was not seeking help from the musicians and yet they were bringing up a real problem, an act he did not seem to appreciate". After the meeting, a number of musicians decided to boycott the PAM Awards because the organizers were not listening to them and yet the awards were meant for the musicians. Since Mulindwa's attempt to coerce the musicians was in vain, the meeting resulted in a stalemate because the musicians also refused to yield.

In retaliation, as Ruccibigango noted, the association of the PAM Awards defectors decided that they would have their own awards as they "the PAM Awards will [remain] for the upcoming and vulnerable-to-exploitation artistes" (2006:27). Therefore, in the same year (2006), The Music Forum, a group of artistes that were led by Richard Kaweesa, a musician and producer, met two days before the PAM Awards ceremony and decided to boycott. The

musicians present at the meeting, as reported in *The New Vision* newspaper, included Juliana Kanyomozi, Daniel Kazibwe Kyeyune a.k.a Raga Dee<sup>29</sup>, Ronald Mayinja, Bebe Cool, and Amos Kagenyi a.k.a General Mega Dee<sup>30</sup> (2006b:23). However, to Kaweesa's dismay, Raga Dee, the treasurer of the group, attended the PAM Awards. The musicians that attended the PAM Awards ceremony after deciding to boycott performed what James Scott called a 'hidden' transcript, a "discourse that takes place 'offstage', beyond direct observation by power holders" or those with the decision making power (1990:4). Further still, Joseph Mayanja a.k.a Jose Chameleone<sup>31</sup>, a musician that won the Artist of The Year Award twice (2003 and 2004) also denounced the PAM Awards in 2006 and threatened to sue the PAM Awards if he was ever nominated again or his name mentioned in any activity involving PAM Awards (quoted in Pidson 2006). However, Chameleone has been continuously nominated but he has never enacted his threat.

Such conflicts between stakeholders — that is musicians, media, producers, judges, audience and Mulindwa, a representative of the PAM Awards organizing committee — show the power relations between the stakeholders in different decision making positions. Although the PAM Awards Organizing Committee decides on the categories under which popular music in Uganda is classified, the musicians have the decision-making power to allocate music under the specified categories. However, as shown in this section, the musicians and PAM Awards Organizing Committee have had disagreements over the decisions made pertaining to categorization. The PAM Awards committee that sets the rules of the competition exerts its power through intimidation and coercion when it refuses to succumb to the musicians' complaints. In addition, Mulindwa's view that the musicians are 'ignorant' about the music they perform also implies that he views the relationship between himself and the musicians as unequal, because he is more knowledgeable and rational unlike the musicians who are ignorant and irrational in their complaints and suggestions. Therefore, Gramsci's view that "hegemony is never complete because oppositional practices affect and shape the hegemonic process" gives insights into the complex interrelationships between PAM Awards stakeholders as illustrated in their interrelations as they attempt to define, contest and defend music categorization in PAM Awards (Balliger 1999:58).

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<sup>29</sup> In this dissertation, the researcher will refer to Daniel Kazibwe Kyeyune as Raga Dee because he calls himself and is mostly called Raga Dee.

<sup>30</sup> Since Amos Kagenyi calls himself and is mostly referred to as General Mega Dee, the researcher will refer to him as General Mega Dee throughout this dissertation.

<sup>31</sup> The researcher will refer to Joseph Mayanja as Jose Chameleone because he calls himself and is mostly referred to as Jose Chameleone.

Mulindwa informed me that there is no musician in Uganda that has specifically performed music belonging to one particular genre. Ugandan musicians perform a variety of music styles on the same album or even within the same song (see Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2006). Explaining why one song may have more than one music genre, Paddy Kayiwa, a music producer, relates to the commerciality of the music and the desire to tap a wider audience (interview, February 5, 2009). He told me that to tap into the different music preferences, musicians produce music in different genres as a strategy to attract more fans. Even with this discrepancy, musicians are nominated in such generic categories according to the music they produce within a given year.

I have selected four of the most controversial music categories in PAM Awards and these include: hip hop, reggae, Rhythm and blues (R&B), and gospel. I will analyze the songs that have been assigned to these categories in order to determine PAM Awards' definition. To illustrate the PAM Awards' definitions of the different categories, I use the judging panel marking guidelines or forms (see appendix 9a, b, c and d) for some of the categories as well as the analysis of songs that have been nominated in those categories.

#### 5.2.1.1.1 Hip Hop

Hip Hop is a music genre, which begun as a form of African-American youth expression (Isabirye 2005:8), that originated from North America in New York City in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Bennet 1999). Not only is Hip Hop a music genre, but also a culture or way of living that includes rapping (MC'ing), fashion, graffiti, B-Buoying (break dancing), beat-boxing<sup>32</sup>, 'bling bling' (jewellery) and the use of slang (see Isabirye 2005:10; Musasizi 2008:38). Hip hop as a genre and culture has been widely marketed across the world through international television channels such as the British Music Television (MTV) and the internet, apart from the music videos.

In the case of PAM Awards and other awards like the Grammy Awards, the term hip hop is used to refer to rap music. According to Joel Isabirye (2005), the acronym RAP refers to Rhythm And Poetry, both very essential characteristics of hip hop music. As a definition, "rap is

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<sup>32</sup> Beat-boxing is the art of producing a drumbeat by manipulating the lips with the mouth as the sound box.

a narrative form of vocal delivery which is spoken in a rhythmic patois over a continuous backbeat, the rhythms of the voice and beat working together” (Bennet 1999:78). The backbeat in this context refers to the continuous musical accompaniment, especially the drum beat, played while someone rhymes in synch with the rhythms provided by the drumbeat. The music accompaniment is provided through a method of scratching (playing a record on a turntable, but changing the direction of rotation back and forth rapidly to create a rhythmic pulse) and sampling (or intertextuality, where old recordings are used to create or embellish new records). F. Elizabeth Barkley also defines rap as “a vocal style of rhythmic speaking in rhyme” (2003:263). As such, the poetry in rap encompasses rhyming as well.

Some of the characteristic elements of hip hop include: 1) the meter of hip hop music is mainly quadruple time or 4/4, which means that there are four crotchet beats in a bar; 2) instrumental emphasis is on the drum beat; and 3) the structure of hip hop is made up of verses and a refrain. Sometimes the refrain is sung while other times it is also rapped (see [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)). For the purposes of this study, I will attempt to define hip hop according to the PAM Awards. Even though I was not able to acquire the hip hop marking guidelines for the judges, she will carry out an analysis of a song categorized under the hip hop category in PAM Awards 2008. The song I have chosen to analyze is *Soda Jinjale*<sup>33</sup> by Ernest Nsimbe a.k.a GNL Zamba featuring Kenneth Sekitto a.k.a UNIQUE because it was awarded the Best Hip Hop Single in PAM Awards 2008 (listen to track 1 on the attached audio CD).

According to Ivan Wanje, a musician and member of the Jet 1 Crew, “hip hop is not hip hop without rap” (interview, February 11, 2009). In the song *Soda Jinjale*, the verses and sections of the chorus are rapped while the other parts of the chorus are sung interchangeably. Let us take a look at the refrain of the song as illustrated in Figure 2.

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<sup>33</sup> *Soda Jinjale* is a tune that was originally used to accompany *muwogola* dance of the Baganda of central Uganda.

Figure 2: Refrain of *Soda Jinjale* by GNL Zamba and UNIQUE

*Soda jinjale* (Ginger ale soda)

It's a party in the jungle come and get down with me

*Soda jinjale* (ginger ale soda)

From Uganda to the EA<sup>34</sup>, come and party with me

*Soda jinjale* (ginger ale soda)

*Abakadde n'abato. ee? Mujje tu party. What? (The old and the young. Yes? Come let's party. What?)*

*Soda jinjale* (ginger ale soda)

*Jinjale* (ginger ale) (with echo) x 2

The parts with the words *Soda Jinjale* are sung while the rest of the lyrics are rapped. In addition, the lyrics of the song use both English and Luganda, unlike the North American hip hop which uses only English. The use of Luganda in Ugandan hip hop has been referred to as 'Lugaflow' (from Luganda flow) by the hip hop artists (Musasizi 2008: 38). However, Kiswahili, Acholi, French and English have been used. For instance, in *Soda Jinjale*, as illustrated in the excerpt of the refrain, the musicians use both English and Luganda.

Furthermore, rhyming is an important element in North American hip hop music. Similarly, the text of *Soda Jinjale* has rhyming tendencies. Figure 3 is a textual transcription of the first two phrases of *Soda Jinjale*'s first verse. The underlined words at the end of each phrase illustrate the concept of textual rhyme.

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<sup>34</sup> EA refers to East Africa



Figure 3: First Two Phrases of the First Verse of *Soda Jinjale*

*Okukyakala kulina value naye tekulina vati*

(Enjoying life has value but it doesn't have VAT [Value Added Tax])

*Wanika emikono waggulu kwata ku bbaati*

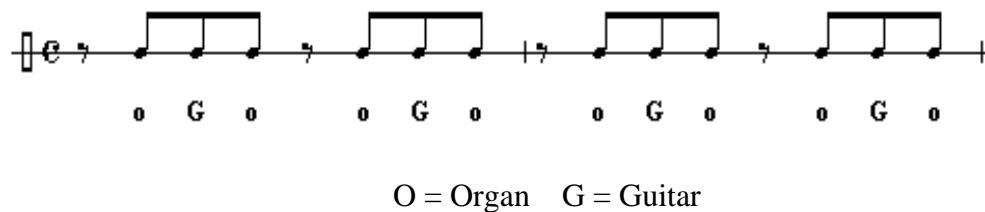
(Put your hands up and touch the roof)

Musically, *Soda Jinjale* has a moderately fast tempo while the meter used is quadruple or 4/4. In the drum beat, the bass drum articulates the down beat, the third beat and the last quarter of the fourth beat while the snare drum emphasizes the second and fourth beats. Other instruments in *Soda Jinjale* are the bass guitar and other types of strings. In addition, the formal structure of *Soda Jinjale* is one that alternates between a verse and refrain. Therefore, hip hop, according to the songs nominated under the category, is that music whose rhyming multi-linguistic text is rhythmically delivered in form of a narrative vocal delivery spoken against a continuous backbeat or accompaniment.

#### 5.2.1.1.2 Reggae

According to Kenneth Bilby (1995), reggae is a music genre that developed in Jamaica in the late 1960s. The development of reggae coincided with the rapid growth of the rastafarian movement among poor urban youth. One of the musical characteristics of reggae is the use of a slow tempo that is always played in quadruple time or 4/4 meter. The rhythm style is characterized by the emphasis on the offbeat or 'afterbeat' as illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4: ‘Afterbeat’ of the Reggae Rhythm Guitar and the Organ



Caption from Bilby 1995:168.

The ‘afterbeat’ in figure 4 above is mainly played by the rhythm guitar as well as the keyboards, which Jamaican musicians refer to as *skengay* (Bilby 1995:168). However, most of the informants I interviewed refer to the ‘afterbeat’ playing style as ‘vamping’. According to Ivan Wanje, reggae is not reggae without ‘vamping’ on the keyboard and guitar. In addition, the drum beat of reggae has accents on beat three for both the bass drum and snare (interview, February 11, 2009). It is however important to note that reggae is not homogeneous but has some recognized variations or sub-genres. The reggae drumbeat I have been explaining so far is referred to as one-drop by Joseph Batte (2004) and Tony Houls (interview, February 22, 2009) because of the one beat played in each bar by the bass drum. Further, there are two more types of reggae that include Lovers Rock, which puts emphasis on beats one and three while the Steppers reggae has the bass drum continuously playing the four beats, giving the beat an insistent drive (Batte 2004; wikipedia; Wanje, interview, February 11, 2009).

In addition to the drums, keyboards, and rhythm guitars, bass guitar plays a dominant role in reggae. The combination of the bass line and the drum is referred to as the *riddim*, where the bass line plays only the lowest notes on the bass guitar and always plays the root note of each chord played<sup>35</sup>.

In the Ugandan context, different musicians have experimented with different styles of reggae. However, according to Paddy Kayiwa, ‘Ugandan’ reggae is in quadruple time and must have the ‘vamping’ on the keyboard which alternates between beat two and four or the rhythms played by both the rhythm guitar and organ (interview, February 5, 2009). Bebe Cool’s one-drop reggae song *I Never Trust No People*, the bass drum and snare accent beat three while the

<sup>35</sup> [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com). Accessed July 2, 2009.

keyboard plays the ‘afterbeat’ (listen to track 2 on the attached audio CD). The ‘afterbeat’ is played by the keyboard and the rhythms alternate between beats two and four with the rhythms. In addition, the bass line of *I Never Trust No People* is played in very low tones that it is barely audible while the tempo of the song is moderate unlike the slow tempo of Jamaican reggae.

The text of *I Never Trust No People* is in English but is pronounced with a Jamaican accent. The lyrics are about how untrustworthy people can be because they will always stab you in the back when you are not paying attention. Further, according to the marking guide in Appendix 9a, reggae music: 1) must articulate “the suffering diaspora or celebrate love”; 2) drums and bass should form the foundation of the rhythm section; 3) meter should be in duple or triple time; and 4) the tempo should legato or marcato. *I Never Trust No People* has all the listed characteristics except the first one. The lyrics are about another interpersonal relationship apart from love.

#### 5.2.1.1.3 Rhythm & Blues (R&B)

Rob Bowman (2007) notes that rhythm and blues (R&B)<sup>36</sup> is a variety of different but related types of popular music produced and supported by African Americans beginning in the 1940s. Bowman further gives seven distinguishing characteristics of R&B: 1) uses quadruple time, with the prominent use of syncopation. The second and fourth beats of each measure are accentuated by the snare drum; 2) has timbre variations where both singers and instruments often alternate between gentle, smooth timbres and harsh, raspy timbres which gives the music a wide range of emotional expressions; 3) the use of the twelve bar form, a three lyric line structure originating in earlier styles of blues; 4) call and response, where a singer or instrumentalist will sing or play a phrase and another vocalist or instrumentalist answers with another phrase; 5) the use of blues notes<sup>37</sup>; 6) tightly integrated complex blending of instruments where there is difficulty in differentiating the separate sounds or instruments being played at a given moment; and 7) most R&B performances share a common instrumentation where the performing

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<sup>36</sup> The term rhythm and blues was coined in 1949 by Jerry Wexler, who used it as a synonym for black rock and roll (Bowman 2007).

<sup>37</sup> Blues notes are those notes that bridge the musical relationship between the minor and major modes (Bowman 2007). These are the lowered third and seventh tones of a major diatonic scale.

ensemble is divided into the rhythm section (drum set, piano, guitar and bass) and the horn section that included the saxophone and trumpet (also see wikipedia<sup>38</sup>).

Even though the definition for R&B is not explicit, a number of the informants I interviewed agreed that there is a difference between the R&B from America and what they called the 'Ugandan R&B'. According to Paddy Kayiwa, a studio producer, the 'Ugandan' R&B that is categorized by PAM Awards is characterized by quadruple time, where the bass drum mainly emphasizes the down beat and the third beat while the snare accentuates the second and fourth beat even though both may have variations (interview, February 5, 2009). Although I was not able to acquire a marking guide for the R&B category, I will analyze the song *Nkuwe ki* (What Can I give You) by Irene Namubiru, which was nominated for PAM Awards 2006 and is transcribed in Figure 5 below (listen to track 3 on the attached audio CD).

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<sup>38</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhythm\\_and\\_blues](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhythm_and_blues). Accessed May 2, 2009

Figure 5: Refrain of the Song *Nkuwe ki* (What Can I Give You) by Irene Namubiru

♩ = 72

Irene

ka - ti nku - te - ke - wa ab'e - fi - ti - na enyi - ngi gye ba - ta - la - ba o - ba nku -

Drum Set

Electric Bass

Keyboard

Irene

we ki ba - by nku - we - ki nku - we - ki mu - nna - nge

D.S

E.B

K.B

As demonstrated in Figure 5 above, even though both the bass drum and snare have variations, the beginnings of beat one and three as well as beats two and four are always accentuated. Secondly, the keyboard part of the 'Ugandan R&B' is played using the 'vamping' playing style (see section on reggae). Brian Mugenyi Seremba, a musician, informed me that 'vamping' is

what differentiates ‘Ugandan R&B’ from that of the west (focused group discussion, May 17, 2009). As shown in the illustration in Figure 5, the piano plays an ‘afterbeat’ or an off /weak beat of each of the four count per bar.

The juxtaposition of the drum beat and the ‘vamping’ creates a unique rhythmic structure that is further enhanced by the rhythms played by other instruments. Robert Ngobi, a musician with Oyile Band informed me that the electric bass emphasizes the rhythms played by the bass drum or kick, as Figure 5 illustrates (focused group discussion, May 17, 2009).

In PAM Awards 2008, the R&B category was the most controversial of the categories. A number of musicians did not agree with some of the songs included. One of the songs was *Usiende Mbali* by Juliana Kanyomozi and Bushoke, which is illustrated in Figure 6 (listen to track 4 on the attached audio CD). For an understanding of why *Usiende Mbali* was said not to belong in the R&B category, I sat down in discussion with different members of the audience, media and musicians. In these discussions, knowing from prior experiences that it was difficult for some people to describe genres, I played a recording of the song as I asked questions. When *Usiende Mbali* was played to Brian Mugenyi, a musician with Oyile and Qwela Bands, Mugenyi said the song was wrongly categorized. He noted that the rhythmic pattern played by the drums was not characteristic of R&B (focused group discussion, May 17, 2009). Although Mugenyi could not clearly elaborate on the discrepancy with the drum beat, I acknowledge that *Usiende Mbali*’s snare drum does not emphasize the second and fourth beats like *Nkuwe ki*. In fact, the second and third beats of *Usiende Mbali* are not accentuated at all because they are tied to previous beats (one and three) as illustrated in Figure 6.

Figure 6: First Two Bars of the Refrain of the Song *Usiende Mbali* by Juliana Kanyomozi and Bushoke

The musical score for the first two bars of the refrain of the song *Usiende Mbali* is presented below. The score is written for six parts: Juliana (Vocal), Response (Vocal), Strings, Electric Bass, Drum Set, and Keyboard. The key signature is one flat (Bb) and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics for the vocal parts are: 'U - sie - nde mba - li - na - mi' and 'kwa - ni pa - do na - ku - pe nda'.

Further, Herbert Mashami, also a musician with Oyile Band, informed me that the electric bass melody of *Usiende Mbali*, unlike other R&B songs, does not emphasize the rhythms played by the bass drum like in *Nkuwe Ki* (focused group discussion, May 17, 2009) In addition; the keyboard section of *Usiende Mbali* is not played in the ‘vamping’ style that characterizes *Nkuwe Ki*.

#### 5.2.1.1.4 Gospel Music

According to Elizabeth F. Barkley, gospel is “sacred music that is created as an integral component of worship in church” (2003:145). Barkley also notes that gospel music “aims, through Christianity, to provide a solution to the challenge of human existence, not only in this

life but for eternity” (*ibid.*). Gospel music’s roots can be traced to the late eighteenth century in North America. It became prominent in the urban religious revivals led by the evangelist Dwight Moody with the musician Ira Sankey. Its roots were in Sunday school hymns, camp meeting spirituals, and the melodies and harmonies of popular music (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2008). Since gospel music used tunes from popular music forms, it was rejected in most of the churches, but was later accepted in the 1930s. Barkley notes that 1930 had been marked as the year of the ‘birth’ of gospel music because the conservative National Baptist Convention officially endorsed gospel music. Black or African-American gospel music, which became distinctive by 1930, is especially associated with Pentecostal churches. It developed out of the combination of the earlier hymns, black performance styles, and elements from Negro spirituals.

Some of the distinguishing musical characteristics of gospel music are: 1) the melodies employ ‘bent notes’ and ‘blues notes’ (Barkley 2003); 2) uses quadruple time or 4/4 meter with emphasis on the second and fourth beats that are usually considered ‘weak’ in western art music; 3) characterized by syncopation that is enhanced by the percussion instruments particularly drums; 4) the instrumentation includes drums, piano and organ and usually accompanied by clapping on the second and fourth beats. The basic drum beat has the bass drum playing the first and third beats while the snare accents the second and fourth beats alongside the clapping and other percussive instruments like the tambourine; 5) uses a fast tempo; 6) uses a homophonic texture with emphasis on the call-and-response performing style; 7) has a verse-refrain or strophic form with 8-bar phrases grouped together in units of 16 or 32 measures; and 8) the lyrics concentrate on a single theme such as conversion, salvation and yearning for spirituality (Barkley 2003:145; Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2008).

In the context of PAM Awards, gospel music is only defined according to the content of the lyrics. Gospel music in Uganda is that music with lyrics about God and spirituality. According to Ngobi Robert, gospel music is Christian music or that music that talks about Jesus Christ, salvation, praise and worship to God (focused group discussion, May 17, 2009). For instance, some of the songs nominated for the PAM Awards Best Gospel Single award include *Komawo Eka* (Come Back Home) by Wilson Bugembe which talks about turning from sinful ways and going back to God as well as *Praise God* by Bebe Cool featuring Tikita which focuses on recognizing God as the Alpha and Omega (beginning and the end) and thanking Him for his protection. Therefore, for a song to be considered gospel in PAM Awards, the only necessary



distinguishing characteristic is the message in the lyrics. In other words, gospel songs can be reggae, hip hop, R&B or any other genre as long as the lyrics are Christian.

#### 5.2.1.2 Regional Popular Musicians

The other category in the PAM Awards competition is for the regional popular musicians. The regions that are competed for include Eastern Uganda, Northern Uganda and Western Uganda. All the Regional Awards were introduced in 2004 except the West Nile region, which was introduced in 2008. The Central Region is not included because, according to Isaac Mulindwa, musicians from the central usually win all the other genre-categories (interview, February 26, 2009). He also argued that regional musicians<sup>39</sup> were not as popular as musicians from Central Uganda. As such, regional music<sup>40</sup> and regional musicians were not known or appreciated, particularly in Kampala, which hosts the biggest percentage of the voting population. In addition, the media houses and musicians that nominate in PAM Awards are mostly situated in Kampala. Mulindwa explained;

When we started out, we realized that if we didn't do regional awards – east, west, and north and now West Nile – the guys in the central would always outshine the guys from the other regions. So you would never get anybody coming into the pool here from other regions. To do that, let's focus the light on each region by giving it one award. By doing that, it helps whoever has won to be spotlighted [because they] get all the media attention, and more likely, they get to perform at the main event as well. That is why once you win the regional award, you can't win it again. Once you've won the regional award, as far as we are concerned, you've now graduated into the 'big boys' club. I can give you examples of Mega Dee, who was the first winner of the eastern region. Mega Dee is doing very well in the 'big boys' club. Loketo Lee from the North is also doing quite well... But it doesn't mean that everybody who wins that category is going to succeed. Some will fail, some will not. So it is not trying to say that each region has its own award

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<sup>39</sup> In this study, the term of reference 'regional musicians' will be used to refer to musicians from other regions of Uganda except the central region, that is the North, West, east, and West Nile.

<sup>40</sup> Regional music refers to that music that is produced and performed by musicians based in the Northern, Eastern, Western and West Nile regions of Uganda.

and categories replicating what's there. It is to try and drive these regional artists into this pool (interview, February 26, 2009).

According to Mulindwa, the league of musicians that he refers to as the 'big boys' club, stand a better chance of winning the awards. As such, Mulindwa brands Kampala musicians to be superior to regional musicians. Therefore, musicians from Kampala cannot compete on the same level as the regional musicians. To solve this inequality or imbalance, regional awards were put in place to initiate regional musicians into the 'big boys' club. One of the reasons why music and musicians from the other regions of Uganda are thought to be inferior to Kampala music and musicians could be historically explained. In the history of popular music development in Uganda, Kampala was the initial center for popular music development as Nannyonga-Tamusuza (2005a, 2006) and Kubik (1981) have noted. For this reason, the music industry in Kampala blossomed much earlier and has developed at a faster rate than that of the other regions of Uganda. Another reason is that there are more and better equipped recording studios in Kampala as well as established networks of dissemination of music through radio, television, and the print media. As such, music produced in Kampala is better in terms of the quality of sound and can be largely disseminated in the available media (Kyewalyanga, interview, March 14, 2009). In fact, Rasta Charz and Sister Charity of Rays Band in western Uganda noted, their recordings are made from Kampala because there was no recording studio in their region at the time (2005) (as quoted in Asaasira 2005: )<sup>41</sup>. In addition, Loketo Lee, winner of the 2005 Northern Artist of the Year award, has recorded all his albums in different studios around Kampala (Loketo, interview, February 18, 2009).

Further still, regional music has not been very popular in Kampala due to language (Ategyeka, Interview, and February 4, 2009). Even though Kampala is a cosmopolitan and multilingual city made up of people from the different ethnicities of Uganda, it is predominantly a Luganda<sup>42</sup> speaking community. Therefore, since the music from the other regions rarely uses Luganda texts, the reception of regional music in Kampala is often unenthusiastic and the music rarely played on radio stations for the Kampala audiences. For this reason, some regional musicians have begun singing in Luganda, like Loketo Lee who informed me that it is the only way to be nominated in other PAM Award categories other than the regional ones (Loketo,

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<sup>41</sup> It is important to note that this information was given in 2005 and the researcher acknowledges that there may have been some changes since then.

<sup>42</sup> Luganda is a language spoken by the Baganda of central Uganda.

interview, February 18, 2009). Loketo also gave an example of Mega Dee, a musician from the Eastern Region that won the 2005 Eastern Artist of the Year award, who started singing songs in Luganda and was therefore nominated in other categories. In fact, Mega Dee was one of the nominees in the 2008 Male Artist of the Year award category.

Although Mulindwa says that Mega Dee became popular after winning the 2005 Best Eastern Artist of the Year Award, in my opinion, there were other factors. Mega Dee is not a new comer in the music business; he used to perform with another musician called Menton Krono, in the late 1990s to early 2000. The dual had a number of songs in Luganda *Muggulu Teriyo Mwenge* (There's No Beer in Heaven), which was a big hit in bars. He has therefore been part of the 'main pool' for a while now. Therefore, as Biggo-Bfx told me, some of the people nominated for the regional awards are popular musicians based in Kampala, who take advantage of the situation because they happen to originate from those regions, just like Mega Dee (interview, June 4, 2009). In such situations, as Biggo-Bfx said, the other regional artists that competed against Mega Dee did not stand a chance since the voting audience was already familiar with Mega Dee's music. Loketo Lee, on the other hand, was not known to the Kampala audiences until he was nominated for the Best Northern Artiste of the Year award in 2005 (Loketo, interview, February 18, 2009). Although he won the regional award and was allegedly initiated into the 'big boys club', Loketo has not been nominated in any other category since. It is, however, undeniable that attention was drawn to Loketo Lee when he won the award, if only for a moment. From the video recording of the 2005 PAM Awards, Loketo Lee can be seen running to the stage to collect his award. He even got a chance to give an acceptance speech. However, did winning an award really initiate Loketo into the 'big boys club'? In reference to the audiences he performs to since his win, Loketo said; "I have always been performing mainly in Sudan, Gulu in Northern Uganda as well as West Nile. In Kampala here, I sing in these small-small pubs" (interview, February 18, 2009). Note how he uses the word 'small' in relation to his performance venues in Kampala, implying that he really has not yet broken through completely to the so-called 'big boys club'. The question about whether the regional awards have accomplished their aim of 'popularizing' regional music and musicians in Kampala as stipulated by Mulindwa is raised in Loketo's situation. Lee is yet to become popular among the Kampala audiences.

Further, according to Daniel Opio, a businessman from northern Uganda, PAM Awards have not done enough to promote regional music and musicians. He complained that regional artists are given only one category per region in which to compete while the musicians from the central take up the rest of the categories (conversational interview, November 1, 2008). Opio expressed his dissatisfaction with regional categories and concluded that the PAM Awards are just a “Kampala affair meant for Kampala musicians and audiences” (*ibid.*). Commenting about the insufficient number of categories for regional artists, Loketo Lee said: “In 2009, Mulindwa must let the Artist of the Year come from another region and not from the central as always. Let him be fair. Even if I, from the north, don’t take it, let a westerner take it or an easterner. It will be fair. It should not be the same people every year. It looks like, you could say, it is for Baganda” (interview, February 18, 2009). According to Loketo, winning an award is not about competition but about sharing prizes. Moreover, all the musicians in Uganda use the same software. Therefore, regional musicians are just as good as musicians from the central. Further, Loketo Lee is suggesting that PAM Awards have constructed popular music in Uganda as that music produced in and by musicians based in Kampala. In other words, PAM Awards have been constructed as an avenue for regional musicians to ‘graduate’ to from being ‘regional’ musicians to the ‘big boys club’ of ‘Ugandan’ popular musicians.

### 5.2.2 Launching PAM Awards

After the categories have been stipulated by the PAM Awards Organizing Committee, the awards are launched during a press conference, which according to the PAM Awards Committee is called a Press Launch. The overall goal of the Press Launch, according to Shamim Asimwe, the Administrator and Public Relations Officer of PAM Awards, is to inform the stakeholders, particularly the musicians, media, producers and audience that the awards are officially beginning (interview, March 10, 2009). At the Press Launch, the media is informed about the guiding principles, requirements and procedure of the PAM Awards. If there are any changes to the organization from the previous year’s awards like the addition of a new music and musician category, the Press Launch is the ceremony at which the announcement is made.

The Press Launch takes place in Kampala but at different venues each year. In 2005, Edgar R. Batte reported that the launch was done at Kyadondo Rugby Club, Kampala and was

attended by musicians, media practitioners, and the general public. According to Asiimwe, the Press Launch is usually done in the month of February, although this was not the case in 2009 due to unforeseen technical problems that Asiimwe could not discuss with me.

Following the Press Launch are the regional tours in the different parts of Uganda. Regional launches are concerts, where musicians from a given region that are hoping to be nominated perform. The regional launches are held in Mbarara Town for South Western Uganda, Jinja Town for Eastern Uganda, Mbale Town for North Eastern Uganda, Lira for Northern Uganda, Fort Portal for Western Uganda, and finally Kampala City. In preparation for these launches, as Salim Nyonyintono, the Operations Assistant informed me, an Operations Team travels to the regions to sensitize the communities prior to the event. Nyonyintono refers to this process as “activating the region” (interview, March 10, 2009). The Operations Team is also responsible for finding a convenient venue for the launch. The criteria for choosing a venue for the launch include: 1) the accessibility of the area to infrastructure; 2) the size of the area depending on the anticipated audience; 3) accessibility to a power source or electricity for the machinery; and 4) security of the area. The Operations Team also contacts musicians from that region that want to perform during the launch. The pre-launch activities are done three weeks before members of the organizing committee, the equipment crew, which sets up the stage, lighting and sound equipment, arrives.

News reporters who later air the proceedings on television channels like WBS Television and National Television (NTV) and also write about the launches in the print media attend the regional launches. For instance, Jude Katende and Gilbert Mwijuke (2008) of *The New Vision* newspaper<sup>43</sup>, reported on the 2008 Bell PAM Awards Western region launch held in Mbarara town. The authors gave a report on the regional musicians who performed, the songs they performed, how they performed (dancing), as well as the audience’s reaction.

Explaining the role of these regional launches, Asiimwe told me that:

At the regional tours, what happens is that we go to seek out new and fresh talent. We provide the people with the platform (the artists in these regions) to be seen and give them a chance for their music to be heard because when we travel upcountry to these regions, we go with different media. Some of these people have never been on stage.

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<sup>43</sup> Article from [www.newvision.co.ug](http://www.newvision.co.ug). Accessed on May 3, 2009.

They've never actually performed in front of an audience. But they are musicians in their own right. Some of them do not have the money to record or may be having managed to record in their local studio around but have never been on stage. So when we go to these regions, we go with a stage, we put on lights, we put on ... you know the works – nice sound system and also attract people to come and see. So, these artists then get a chance to be seen performing. It is their opportunity then to outshine the other people from their regions because when we come back to Kampala, the press then write[s] about them and through that way, we get exposure for them as well (interview, March 10, 2009).

Asiimwe actually implies that regional launches are avenues through which regional musicians that want to be involved with PAM Awards can strategically acquire entry if their performance is appreciated by the PAM Awards. Launches are therefore competing grounds for a place in the awards.

After the regional launches in Uganda, launches in the other East African countries namely: Nairobi in Kenya, Kigali in Rwanda, Dar es Salaam in Tanzania and Bujumbura in Burundi are also done. The details of what happens at these launches are outside the scope of this study. It is at this point that musicians start to strategize as they plan to be involved with the PAM Awards. In the next paragraphs, I discuss the strategies that different musicians have used.

### 5.2.3 Strategies of Competition

In any competition, music or otherwise, contestant devise means to ensure that they win, as in the case with PAM Awards. However, as the contestants formulate strategies, the competition administrations also create rules to govern the competition. Similarly, according to Salim Nyonyintono, one of the rules of PAM Awards is that musicians are not supposed to campaign or solicit for votes (interview, March 10, 2009). He told me that any musician that is caught soliciting for votes in any way is disqualified. Isaac Mulindwa, the Chairman of Pam Awards Organizing Committee, reiterated and stressed that the PAM Awards are very strict about the 'no-campaigning' rule (interview, February 26, 2009). However, reports of musicians soliciting for votes as a strategy for winning an award have been reported in newspapers. For

instance, Ernest Bazanye and Shiela C. Kulubya (2003) reported that one of the 2003 PAM Awards winners, Winnie Munyenga printed out colorful flyers to solicit for votes. They also reported that the 2003 Female Artist of the Year winner, Shiella Nvanungi, a radio presenter on Central Broadcasting Station (CBS) solicited for votes through the CBS. However, there is no recorded evidence of the PAM Awards' response to Munyenga and Nvanungi's blatant disregard of the 'no soliciting for votes' rule.

Another strategy used by some musicians has been the attempt to bribe people thought to be influential in the judging process. A radio presenter recalled an incident where one of the popular musicians offered him two million Ugandan shilling because he thought that the radio presenter was on the PAM Awards panel of judges (anonymous interview, February 5, 2009). Michael Mubiru, a member of the 2008 Judge's Panel, also told me that a female musician had called him up to find out the results (interview, January 22, 2009). How that musician found out that Mubiru was a judge — information that is supposed to be secret until the PAM Awards ceremony — remains unknown.

Another informant told me that some musicians have financially supported people to vote for them. While referring to an incident she witnessed, Shivan Ategyeka, a radio presenter, said: "Musicians go with their friends, load ten thousand shillings worth of airtime for each of them and then their friends vote for them. I have seen it with my own eyes" (interview, February 4, 2009). She further said:

Musicians can really go out of their way to hang out with and have drinks with the people in the media. Why wouldn't I nominate you if you buy for me a beer? Musicians sometimes come to the radio station and say things like 'Hi. What's up today?' They try to be around people and do whatever people ask of them. In fact, calling musicians for interviews on radio is sometimes very hard because some musicians are unavailable. However, during the period of PAM Awards, artists are quick to come when called upon for interviews. Even if you ask for three interviews during the day".

By availing themselves to those that have the power to determine their fate in the PAM Awards namely the judges, media and the audience, the musicians hope to manipulate them for their gain in the end.

Tony Houls told me that musicians also strategically produce music between 30<sup>th</sup> July of the previous year and 30<sup>th</sup> July of the awarding year (interview, February 22, 2009). In fact, Loketo Lee told me that he wanted to be nominated in 2009. In order to qualify, he was strategizing to formulate a group or crew as he referred to it. He said: “I have already formed my own crew. My crew is called Anyanya Crew and I am going to sing sensible songs with messages in Luganda and then four in Acholi and sell the album” (interview, February 18, 2009). According to Loketo Lee, musicians that belong to performing groups or ‘crews’ like the Fire Base Crew led by Bobi Wine seem to be more successful in PAM Awards and in the popular music industry in Uganda. In addition, Loketo was also planning to produce music as a strategy to access participation in PAM Awards 2009.

Paddy Kayiwa also informed me that musicians go to studios and work very hard in preparation for PAM Awards (interview, February 5, 2009). Shivan Ategyeka, a radio presenter on Vision Voice FM, also noted that PAM Awards is the reason why musicians release one song after another because there are no guarantees about which song the audiences are going to like (interview, February 4, 2009). Moreover, as Negus notes, “neither business executives, fans, the musicians nor journalists can predict what is going to be successful” (1996:48). In addition, considering that popular music songs are only popular for a while, Paddy Kayiwa, a producer, told me that musicians aim at releasing songs around the month of June since nominations begin at the end of July or beginning of August, which is enough time for the songs to be played on radio and for the audiences to be familiar with them (interview, February 5, 2009).

Further, musicians like Mark Jumbo, who was in the recording studio at the time of the research, produce music with an intention to be involved with PAM Awards (interview, February 22, 2009). Even though some musicians like Stony claim that they don’t want to be involved with PAM Awards because the awards are unfair, Mark Jumbo is waiting for a chance to be involved. Jumbo told me that winning an award or even just being nominated in PAM Awards comes with added advantages to the musicians. These include promotion to a wider audience through the media coverage, job opportunities, as well as the prestige of being a nominee of winner of a PAM Award. However, some musicians have denied producing music as strategy for being nominated and winning an award. For instance, Bobi Wine informed me that he produces music for his fans because PAM Awards is not his target, but the audience (interview, February



13, 2009). He adds that his popularity and music career are dependent on his ability to produce songs annually, which luckily coincides with the PAM Awards schedule.

According to Henry Kiwuuwa, a music producer, some musicians have used unique elements in their music so as to stand out since all musicians use the same software to record their music and the resulting sound is not that different in the end (interview, January 24, 2009). Further still, Kiwuuwa said that most songs in Uganda use a standardized three-chord harmonic progression. The three chords used are I, IV and V. Brian Mugenyi, a musician with Oyile and Qwela bands, noted that it is easy to sing one song while the instrumental section of another song is playing because the chord progression is similar (focused group discussion, May 17, 2009). He noted that the repetitive chord progression is usually as follows: I – IV – I - V. Therefore, for a song to stand out from the rest of the songs produced within a year, it has to have a unique element. For instance, Klear Kut, a Hip Hop group, produced a song called *Klear Discussion* featuring another band called Percussion Discussion in 2008. This song was different from the other hip hop songs because it used Kiganda ‘traditional’ instruments like the *endingidi* (tube fiddle), *engalabi* (long drum), *ensaasi* (gourd shakers), and *engoma* (drums). All the strategies musicians have employed, as discussed in this section, are either to ensure that they are involved in PAM Awards as nominees or emerge winners after they have been nominated. Therefore, how are the nominations in PAM Awards executed? Who is involved in this process?

#### 5.2.4 Nomination in PAM Awards

The nomination phase is where the songs and musicians to compete under each specified category of the PAM Awards are chosen. The songs eligible for nomination are those released between July 30<sup>th</sup> of the previous year and July 30<sup>th</sup> of the current year. Shamim Asimwe, the Administrator and Public Relations Officer for PAM Awards, informed me that July 30<sup>th</sup> of both the previous and current year is chosen because the nomination process begins in August (interview, March 10, 2009). Therefore, music that is produced after 30<sup>th</sup> July in the previous year is legible for the current year but the music produced after 30<sup>th</sup> July of the current year would only be legible for the next PAM Awards. However, the nomination of music that was not produced within the specified period or of musicians that have not produced any music within a given year has been complained about by the audiences, media and musicians. For instance, in

the PAM Awards 2008, Juliana Kanyomozi was voted the Artist of the Year and yet she did not release any recordings between 30<sup>th</sup> July 2007 and 30<sup>th</sup> July 2008. A number of the informants interviewed thought it was unfair (Gafabusolo, interview, January 15, 2009; Ssemyalo, interview, January 15, 2009). In addition, the song *Koona* (Dance) by Martin Sseku was nominated in the 2008 Best Gospel Single category was recorded and released in 2005 (PAM Awards Magazine 2008:21). Such inconsistencies cause doubt in the legitimacy of PAM Awards.

Further, the musicians that are eligible to be nominated are those that are registered with PAM Awards. According to Isaac Mulindwa, the Chairman of the PAM Awards Organizing Committee, the PAM Awards as an institution has created a database where musicians who have recorded at least one song (audio and video) can register for free (interview, February 26, 2009). Musicians are only required to register once so as to become members. The registration is continuous since there are always new musicians coming up in the music industry in Uganda. While registering, musicians are required to provide personal information like name and age, a picture, as well as evidence of their recorded music. By the time of this research, there were 3,600 registered musicians in the PAM Awards database.

It is these registered musicians that are tasked with nominating music and musicians under the specified categories (see Appendix 8 for the 2008 PAM Awards categories, nominees and winners). However, it is not only the musicians that nominate but media personnel as well. According to Shamim Asiimwe, people that work in the media are aware of the music that musicians have recorded and released because it is media like radio and television stations that disseminate this music and the newspapers that write about or review this music and musicians (interview, March 10, 2009). It is therefore important for the nominators to know which music has been released between July 30<sup>th</sup> of the previous year and July 30<sup>th</sup> of the year of the awards since it informs the decisions they make while choosing which music or musicians to nominate.

Indeed, as Paddy Kayiwa, a studio producer, informed me, there is a lot of politics involved when musicians are asked to nominate each other (interview, February 5, 2009). First, there have been many reports about musicians in conflict, which is usually manifested through physical fights in discotheques and use of song lyrics to discredit and insult their opponents. Some of the longest running feuds are between Joseph Mayanja a.k.a Jose Chameleone and Bebe Cool, and also between Jose Chameleone and Robert Kyaggulanyi a.k.a Bobi Wine. According

to Carol Kezaabu (2009), Bebe Cool, who had apparently helped Chameleone start his music career, conflicted with Chameleone when Chameleone chose his wife at the time, Dolotia<sup>44</sup>, against Bebe Cool's advice. Kezaabu further explained that the feud between Chameleone and Bobi Wine began in 2002, when Chameleone showed up at a concert where Bobi Wine was performing and the crowd turned to cheer Chameleone instead. Bobi Wine is said to have taken exception to this and made a public threat against Chameleone a few days later. Chameleone filed a complaint with the Police and both Bebe Cool and Bobi Wine were arrested. While in prison, Bebe Cool and Bobi Wine composed the song *Funtula* "Dissing"<sup>45</sup> Chameleone" (Kezaabu 2009a:12). On July 5, 2005, Bobi Wine and Chameleone were involved in a knife fight outside Ange Noir Discotheque, where Bebe Cool was stabbed as he tried to stop the fight (*ibid.*). However, the identity of the one who actually stabbed Bebe Cool was never revealed in the newspaper reports.

Apart from the conflicts discussed above, Ugandan musicians have also grouped themselves in what they refer to as crews. For instance, the Firebase Crew is a group of artistes who claim to come from the ghetto and advocate for the betterment of the ghetto. The Firebase Crew, which is made up of over 50 musicians, is under a 'government' with Bobi Wine as the 'President'. Other crews of musicians include the Good Lyfe Crew led by Radio and Weasle, and Leone Island which is led by Jose Chameleone. Therefore, considering the loyalties different musicians have towards the crews they belong to, which is further complicated by the feuds between different musicians, how can there be objective nominations?

Moreover, although the media and musicians nominate, the categories under which they are expected to nominate are stipulated by the PAM Awards prior to the nomination phase. The PAM Awards dictates the categories under which the music and musicians can be nominated. Nomination forms that have the list of categories shown in Appendix 8 are distributed to different places that musicians are known to frequent. These include radio stations, recording studios, television stations, discotheques, PAM Awards offices or they can be downloaded from the PAM Awards official website. Explaining the criteria she used to nominate her favorite artistes and songs, Shivan Ategyeka (not real name), a Radio Presenter, told me that; "personally, I would say that I look at a person who has really worked hard depending on what year it is, for example 2008. I am able to analyze music. Therefore, I know how to recognize music genres,

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<sup>44</sup> Dolotia is the only name given for Jose Chameleone's wife in the article.

<sup>45</sup> Dissing is slang for abusing, despising, or discrediting a person.

let's say RnB. So, I gauge the RnB songs that came out that year and choose the best. And also depending on how the listeners request for the song. Yeah, listenership matters a lot" (interview, February 4, 2009). However, this criteria is very subjective because how many listeners are actually able to call in and request for a particular song? Moreover, the programs are sometimes very brief besides the fact that it is not only music that is aired.

However, some informants were skeptical as to whether the nominees selected by the media and musicians are respected by the PAM Awards Committee or otherwise. For instance, Shivan Ategyeka said that the nomination forms that the media are given to fill in are actually disregarded by the PAM Awards Committee at the end of the day, which is why there are songs allocated in the wrong categories (interview, February 4, 2009). Although she could not clearly define the characteristics of a given music genre to me, Ategyeka stressed that she is able to distinguish the genre a song belongs to because she was a music student in high school and has access to this music in her line of work. She therefore blames the PAM Awards for not respecting the opinions of those that are knowledgeable in music classification; the media.

Some members of the audience have also expressed their dissatisfaction with the nomination results in PAM Awards. During interviews, for instance, a number of audience members expressed disappointment with the songs nominated in the Best R&B Single category of PAM Awards 2008. The songs nominated in this category were; *Nalulungi* by Michael Ross, *Beera Nange* by Toniks, *Sirinayo mulala* by Juliana and Moses Sserwada a.k.a Sweet Kid<sup>46</sup>, as well as *Usiende Mbali* by Juliana featuring Bushoke. When the songs *Usiende Mbali*, *Beera Nange* and *Sirinayo Mulala* were announced under R&B during the awarding ceremony, a number of people in the audience laughed while others sneered at the sheer outrageousness of classifying the three songs under R&B. Daniel Opio, a member of the audience attending the awards ceremony, told me that he was outraged by such music classification mistakes. In addition, the audience was never even informed about how the nominees in the different categories were realized (conversational interview, November 1, 2008). Opio further told me that the audience needed to be involved in the nominations process so that they are not forced to vote for people that have been placed in the wrong categories.

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<sup>46</sup> Since Moses Sserwada calls himself and is mostly referred to as Sweet Kid, he will be referred to as Sweet Kid in this dissertation.

In addition, a number of informants also complained that some musicians are nominated because they are affiliated or work with some of the corporate companies that sponsor PAM Awards. For example, in the 2008 PAM Awards, Bebe Cool, who was working with Zain Uganda at the time, had eight nominations. A number of informants claimed that Bebe Cool's many nominations were orchestrated the PAM Awards Committee, which was responding to the demands of their sponsor, Zain Uganda. One of the members of the 2008 PAM Awards judging panel told me that "corporate companies like Zain Uganda might be facilitating the overall PAM Awards. But again, if they are the very sponsors of a particular artiste, they have to ensure this artiste wins. Don't forget that these artistes promote and advertise for these sponsors. When you look at people like Bobi Wine, he has some powerful sponsors who have to promote him so that he can get some of those awards because when he wins, even their products will be well advertised" (interview, January 22, 2009). However, Mulindwa informed me that these speculations are wrong and have never been proved right (interview, February 26, 2009). He insists that the nomination forms submitted by the musicians and media are the ones used to generate the nominations list. Therefore, correct allocation of music into categories will depend on the nominator's knowledge about music genres.

After all the nomination forms have been collected, they are taken to Ernst & Young, an auditing firm. Ernst & Young is responsible for computing all the results from the nomination. The top four nominees in each category are put on the final nominees list. During a party organized by the PAM Awards Organizing Committee, the results are announced by a representative from Ernst & Young to the media and musicians announces in attendance. At a later date, a nominees party is then organized by the PAM Awards Organizing Committee, nominees are given the guidelines to govern musicians' behavior during the voting period that commences soon afterwards.

#### 5.2.5 Voting for the Nominees

According to Shamim Asiimwe, a week after the list of nominees has been released; information about how the audience is to vote is aired on television and radio stations as well as explained in newspapers (interview, March 10, 2009). In addition, Zain Uganda sends text messages to its subscribers about how to vote. The instructions are: 1) voting is through the Short

Message Service (SMS); 2) the phone number to which the SMSs are sent is 0752600100; and 3) to watch out on radio and television stations and newspapers for which category to vote for on a given day. “From this point on”, Asiimwe said, “For us as PAM Awards, we circulate all this music around the country so that people can know which songs have appeared on the nominations list. So we work hand in hand with the media houses and at that point, television and radio programs directors are asked to play the nominated music so that the audience gets familiar with it” (interview, March 10, 2009). As such, a day is allocated to the voting of one specific category, where the nominated music is played on programs that are sponsored by PAM Awards sponsors especially Bell Lager and Zain Uganda. According to Shivan Ategyeka of Vision Voice FM, during such programs, ‘hooks’ or clips/excerpts (about half a minute) of the nominated songs are played in order to remind the listeners about which music and category they are voting for that day (interview, February 4, 2009). In addition, the presenter of the program is required to talk about PAM Awards and also reminds the listeners about the voting procedure of voting.

In the first two years of the PAM Awards (2003 and 2004), the ‘general public’ strictly carried out the voting through the Short Message Service (SMS). According to Mulindwa, only the ‘general public’s’ vote through SMSs was considered because the PAM Awards are “based on America’s [annual] People’s Choice Music Awards ... which are ... based on the opinion of the public via SMS or internet” (as quoted in Batte 2006:25). In addition, Mulindwa says that having only the public responsible for choosing the winners was a strategy to generate interest and conversations among the public about what music and musicians they liked. He adds that the voting was restricted to the ‘public’ in the bid to engender the appreciation and recognition of ‘local’ talent. Even though Mulindwa did not specify as to how the PAM Awards or Ernst & Young were able to monitor that only the ‘general public’ voted, the use of the SMS voting system posits the public as that which has access to mobile phones. In a report by Davis Weddii posted on *The New Vision* newspaper official website on January 28, 2009, the Ugandan Information and Communication Technology Minister at the time, Ham Mulira, is quoted as having said that 8.2 million people in Uganda own mobile phones. Compared to the 32.2 million population in the whole of Uganda (Wikipedia.com), the percentage of the people that own mobile phones in Uganda is 25.5%. As such, the PAM Awards excludes 74.4% of the Ugandan population, from voting the ‘popular’ music, which brings into question about whether PAM Awards are actually representative of what is popular of Ugandan music. The results from the

SMSs therefore do not necessarily define what the ‘many’ people ‘like’. Mulindwa actually perpetuates the very classes he intended to deconstruct when he decided to establish PAM Awards.

Shamim Asiimwe informed me that voting through SMS by the audience or ‘public’ takes approximately a month. She further informed I that there is “a computerized system that uses codes”. And that “after the nominations list is out, codes are assigned to the different nominees per category so that if one is voting for a particular musician or song, they will know that they have to put in the category number, leave a space and type the name of the song or musician, then send the SMS” (interview, March 10, 2009). The question that immediately comes to the fore is whether such a method of voting is free of rigging. A number of the people interviewed were skeptical about voting by SMS because it is very easy for someone to vote many times. According to Gafabusolo (pseudo name), an employee of Zain Uganda, he does not vote in PAM Awards because voting by SMS is very unfair since any musician who has money to buy airtime for many people will end up winning (interview, January 15, 2009). Similarly, an employee of the Vision Voice FM informed me that she had seen a musician buying airtime worth ten thousand Ugandan shillings (approximately \$ 4.7<sup>47</sup>) for a couple of his friends to vote for him (interview, February 4, 2009). Ten thousand shillings worth of airtime can send more than ninety SMSs when one uses any one of the following telecommunication networks: Orange, Warid Telecom, MTN and Uganda Telecom (UTL). Such a loophole in the SMS voting system makes it hard to determine fairness, an issue that has caused controversy in PAM Awards. In response to this controversy, Mulindwa told me that:

With the SMSs, you can’t cheat because the software looks at the phone number one uses. It will take the first correct vote in any category. Thereafter, any other vote you send in that category with the same telephone number will just be put away. You are wasting money. All you are doing actually is making Celtel or other telephone companies richer because the software will only accept one vote per phone number. So, once you have a correct vote – you know there are four nominees like Isaac, Jane, Mary and Moses. As soon as you send a vote for Mary and Mary is on the nomination list, it tells you; “Thank you for voting in that category. Your vote has been accepted.” And then it stops. So, it doesn’t matter how many more Mary’s you send, they will be received but the software looks at the phone number and notes that the number has already voted in that category.

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<sup>47</sup> In this dissertation, the dollar is valued at 2090 Ugandan shillings.

Those votes are not counted but are rejected by the software (interview, February 26, 2009).

However, I was not told the name of the computer software used to counteract cheating through SMS. The effectiveness of the software, however, is debatable. For instance, imagine a scenario where someone owns more than one phone number considering that buying a SIM card for any telecommunications network in Uganda is relatively cheap. For instance, purchasing a UTL SIM card costs only 1500 Ugandan shillings (\$ 0.72) and the card is purchased with free airtime of 1000 shillings. Therefore, someone could purchase around 100 SIM cards for 150,000 Ugandan shillings (\$ 72). Other telecommunication networks like Zain actually distribute SIM cards for free during promotional tours. Therefore, at such a price, one may acquire a number of SIM cards and be able to vote multiple times, a loophole the computer software cannot detect. Considering that the prize money for the Artiste of the Year category is 10,000,000 Ugandan shillings, the musician would have invested only 1.5% of the money he or she would win. Therefore, the SMS voting system is easily manipulated and therefore, challenges the legitimacy of the winners of PAM Awards.

Since 2005, the introduction of a panel of judges to supplement the public votes changed the dynamics of voting because the public's votes constitute only 40% of the total vote while the judges were accorded the remaining 60%. In the next section, I examine the process of judging the nominees and how it informs the dynamics of the PAM Awards politics.

#### 5.2.6 Judging the Nominees

The panel of judges is made up of nine people, each representing an organization involved with the music or entertainment business in Uganda. As such, there are representatives from; 1) the DJ's Association; 2) Kampala Music School; 3) Music, Dance and Drama Department of Makerere University; 4) a radio music producer; 5) radio presenters of a music show; 6) television presenters of a music show; 7) Uganda's Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development; 8) a newspaper music critic; and 9) a retired veteran musicians that is selected by the Federation for Performing Arts in Uganda (FEPAU). The panel of judges is constituted of what Mulindwa refers to as 'professionals' in the field of music who can be able to



judge the quality of music in depth concentrating on the technicalities non-professionals would not know. In addition, unlike the competitions that I am privy to (like the primary and secondary school music, dance and drama competitions), the judges of PAM Awards neither meet nor have any knowledge as to who the other judges on the panel may be. They all meet at the awarding ceremony after their judgment. When asked why judges never meet until the awarding ceremony, Mulindwa replied:

We don't want anybody to be able to influence somebody else. We want an independent analysis from the different people. We don't want for them to sit together and then one is able to influence anybody else's decision. We want each judge to give their opinion and then all the opinions come together. So, in that way, you also can't get musicians convincing one judge to influence the other eight. We make it difficult. Cheating is practically impossible" (interview, February 26, 2009).

Mulindwa suggests that the first intention for not allowing the judges to meet during the period of judging was a strategy to ensure objectivity. Objectivity would be jeopardized if the judges met because the possibility of one judge being able to influence the other judges' decision is high. However, achieving objectivity as the judge's make their decisions is still questionable. Indeed, Michael Mubiru, a judge for PAM Awards 2008 from the Music, Dance and Drama Department of Makerere University, said that each of the judges have their own tastes, dislikes, opinions, and prejudices that they carry with them as they judge (interview, January 22, 2009). In this case, is it the subjectivities of the nine judges that translate into what Mulindwa calls objectivity? However, while some of the judges I interviewed were skeptical about this arrangement, others approved of it. For instance, Diplock Ssegawa<sup>48</sup>, a judge on the panel of PAM Awards 2008, describes his experience as follows: "The good thing is that I was independent when I was judging. So, nobody pushed me because they told me to keep it to myself. So, even when I was with the artists, they didn't know that I was one of the judges" (interview, March 12, 2009). Ssegawa further noted that this kind of arrangement gave him the opportunity to be objective. However, Michael Mubiru advocates for the judges to meet at a workshop where the PAM Awards Organizing Committee would brief them about the proceedings of the awards (interview, January 22, 2009). Mubiru's proposition was made under the presupposition that such a workshop would help the judges make their decisions based on

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<sup>48</sup> Representative on the panel that was selected by FEPAU. On the contrary, he is not a retired musician like the PAM Awards requirements stipulate.

similar guidelines not using individual experiences as a basis. In other words, there was subjectivity since there was no uniform basis for judgment.

As such, in order to guide the judges in their decision making, forms or marking sheets with guidelines as to what they are to look out for in each category are provided. As Shamim Asiimwe notes;

We have specially designed forms. They were done for us from Makerere University Music Dance and Drama Department. We got a specialist there on the different kinds of music – basically how you distinguish say *kadongo-kamu* from cultural music or folk pop. Then we also worked in conjunction with Kampala Music School and another musical expert – some guy from The New Vision. They help the judges to actually reach their conclusion without bias because as a panel member, you are still a human being (interview, March 10, 2009).

Although the identity of the ‘specialists’ responsible for designing the judge’s marking sheets was not revealed to me, I attempted to find out but to no avail<sup>49</sup>. These marking sheets or forms are picked from the PAM Awards Head Office, as Michael Mubiru informed me (interview, February 22, 2009). Accompanying the forms are CDs of the nominated music as well as Video CDs for the music videos. Mubiru however complained that not all the music that was nominated was included on the CDs and VCDs that he received. Unlike other competitions such as the school and church competitions discussed in Chapter Four, the judging in PAM Awards is not based on live performances that judges attend and then award marks. Rather, the judges base their judgment on the recorded sounds and their experiences and knowledge about the musicians through the tabloids for instance (Kyewalyanga, interview, March 14, 2009). Therefore, each of the judges carries out the judgment wherever is convenient.

After awarding marks to the nominated music and musicians, the judges submit the marking sheets at the PAM Awards Head Office, which are then taken to Ernst & Young. The auditors then compute the results and allocate the 60% voting percentage to the judges. These results are then correlated with the 40% votes from the audience to determine the final results.

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<sup>49</sup> Understanding why and how the categories were chosen would have provided good insight into how these categories are defined and how the categories in turn construct popular music in Uganda. However, the researcher’s endeavor to search for the ‘specialists’ came to no avail. For instance, the researcher asked a number of people from the Music Dance and Drama Department of Makerere University, none seemed to know who that ‘specialist’ could be, while others hinted on the possibility that the person might have left the department.

Given the difficulty of clearly defining music genres, as discussed earlier in this chapter, the question that quickly comes to mind is: how were the judges on the PAM Awards 2008 panel were able to judge objectively? How did they handle the controversy in categorizing music? Charles Lwanga, a member of the panel for PAM Awards of 2005, 2006 and 2007 confided:

For the categorization, personally I had a problem with it especially in 2004 when I was judging for the first time. But what I did was to go to the PAM Awards offices so as to establish the characteristics for those genres that confused me and didn't appear clear to me on the marking sheets... Most of the explanations were not clear and some of the characteristics of the different genres that I was given were not actually the same characteristics when I listened to the music of the nominees (interview, February 4, 2009).

When asked how he managed to judge some of the music that did not correspond to the guidelines given on the marking sheets, Charles Lwanga told me that he used his own discretion, as well as his experience as a music teacher, a performer with bands, choirs, and judge at other music competitions (interview, February 4, 2009). Lwanga further noted that he completely ignored the guidelines that required him to comment on whether a song exudes elements that situated it within a particular genre. Lwanga told me that his decision was influenced by the controversies between the given definitions of genres on the marking sheets and the actual music nominated in different categories. Therefore, he disregarded the definitions provided by that PAM Awards because they did not suffice according to his knowledge of what the genres are. Herbert Kyewalyanga a.k.a Herbie K, an employee of Record Television, also conceded that he did not judge music in some categories due to similar controversies (interview, March 14, 2009). Kyewalyanga further noted that some of the guidelines provided on the marking sheets were vague and stated as questions. He recalled that some of the questions included: "Does this song bring out the true meaning of dancehall? Do the beats and tempo depict the true meaning of dancehall? Does the music have a lasting feel good effect?" Such questions elicit 'yes' or 'no' answers that can be considered 'leading' because they direct the judges towards only one specific answer (yes or no).

Further, with such vaguely stated guidelines, the judges' decisions are bound to be different. In addition, the fact that each of the judges use their own discretion to make their judgments due to unclear guidelines (others do not even judge some categories) "sheds some doubt on [the judges'] ability to cast fully objective judgments" (Ginsburgh and van Ours

2003:294). In fact, Michael Mubiru suggested that PAM Awards should employ “technical people in the field of music” to do the categorization as a counteractive measure (interview, February 22, 2009). Mubiru therefore suggests that it should be people like him to work with PAM Awards to create categories that suit popular music in Uganda.

And yet, some musicians have, however, not been satisfied with the choice of judges and have requested the PAM Awards committee to involve judges from outside Uganda. However, Mulindwa has thwarted this suggestion. He notes that outsiders cannot judge Ugandan music because “they don’t understand our culture” (interview, February 26, 2009). Further, Mulindwa refers to this request as a ‘colonial hangover’. He said, “Ugandan artistes have this colonial mentality. They believe that for anything to be good, it must be foreign... What does a foreign judge know about [Ugandan] languages or cultures, let alone Ugandan music tastes?” (as quoted in Batte 2006:25).

#### 5.2.7 Awarding Ceremony of PAM Awards

It is during the awarding ceremony that the results are announced and the winners given their accolades and cash prizes. Shamim Asimwe said that it is also on that day that Ernst & Young officially hands them the computed results (interview, March 10, 2009). This ceremony is attended by a number of people including musicians, media personnel, studio producers, business men, entrepreneurs, judges, organizing committee, sponsors, and the audience. Musical performances, eating, drinking and the handing over of the PAM Awards accolades characterize the ceremony.

According to Isaac Mulindwa, there are a number of factors considered when choosing the musicians to perform at the awarding ceremony, the first being regional representation (interview, February 26, 2009). As such, each region as defined by the PAM Awards competition is represented. Secondly, there is presentation of a representative performer from each of the award categories. Thirdly, there is an intention to showcase the new talent. The performers chosen by the above criteria may or may not have been nominated in any category. The fourth consideration is that since the A and B classes rarely get to watch the musicians perform, the committee looks at “those songs that have been big hits in that year which people would like to

see” (Mulindwa, interview, February 26, 2009). In the six years that the PAM Awards have existed, there has been a succession of African guest artists from various African countries. The aim of having an internationally successful African musician to perform during PAM Awards, as Mulindwa confided, is to encourage and inspire Ugandan musicians to aim for an international audience. In PAM Awards 2003, the guest performer was Yvonne Chaka Chaka, whose music was popular in Uganda in the 1980s and 90s as Nannyonga-Tamusuza has reported (2005a:51). In 2008, the guest artiste was meant to be Salif Keita from Senegal but he cancelled his coming at the last minute, much to Mulindwa’s disappointment.

At this juncture, I will share my experience of the PAM Awards 2008 ceremony as an example of what happens at the awarding ceremony, the last phase of the PAM Awards. During the 2008 PAM Awards ceremony held at the Shimoni Grounds in Kampala City center on November 1, 2008, I observed that the audience in attendance was divided into three sections: the Very Important Persons (VIP) class; the Bronze class; and the *kayoora*<sup>50</sup> or ‘general happiness’ section where I was seated. The VIP class was filled with the musicians, reporters, the famous<sup>51</sup> as well as people who could afford to pay two hundred and fifty thousand Ugandan shillings (approximately \$ 120) for the VIP tickets. The tickets for the Bronze section cost one hundred thousand shillings (approximately \$ 48) while the *kayoora* class tickets were sold at thirty thousand shillings (\$ 14). Metallic barricades separated the different sections and the stage could only be accessed by the VIP class. In the *Kayoora* class, the audience could not see the stage and was therefore watching the proceedings on a big projector screen. Figure 7 is an illustration of people in the *Kayoora* class watching what was happening on stage from a projector screen.

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<sup>50</sup> *Kayoora* is a Runyakore (a language spoken by the Banyankore people of southwestern Uganda) and Luganda word (kayoola) that literally means everybody that is nobody in society.

<sup>51</sup> The famous are those people that usually make news headlines through their line of work and personal lives among others. They include ministers, models, entrepreneurs, media personnel, politicians, activists, investors, moguls, and the royal families.

Figure 7: People in the *Kayoora* Class Watching the Proceedings of PAM Awards 2008 from a Projector Screen.



Photo by Anita Desire Asaasira.

The ceremony began with an unseen announcer's voice as the pictures of the PAM Award accolade are shown. The announcer began the ceremony thus:

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the 6<sup>th</sup> annual Pearl of Africa Music Awards 2008. Tonight, we are gathering to recognize, respect, honor and award our local talents in the music entertainment industry. As always, we promise you a glamorous evening with an exciting blend of performances from Ugandan artists across the country. It's now show time!"

As soon as the announcement was ended, presiders or MCs of each class were announced. Mitch Egwang from Sanyu FM was on stage while Straka Mwezi from WBS Television was charged with the *Kayoora* class and J. Kazoora from Crown Beverages was in the V.I.P class. The Bronze class had no presider. The three presiders, while taking turns, were in charge of coordinating the different classes (VIP, Bronze and *Kayoora*). The presentation of the presiders

was done through interviews with audience members in the different sections, asking them what they thought about a performer, a category or to predict the winner in a given category. The presiders were also responsible for announcing the performers of the night as well as the people to hand over the awards.

After the presiders had been introduced, Mitch Egwang, the presider on the main stage, invited Isaac Mulindwa, the Chairman of the PAM Awards Organizing Committee who gave an opening speech and there after officially received the results from a representative of Ernst & Young, the company contracted to compute the results. Before any winner was awarded, Wilson Bugembe performed his song *Komawo eka* (Come Back Home) and was followed by Allan Ampaire a.k.a Toniks<sup>52</sup> performing *Beera nange* (Be with Me). The performances were followed by the first eight awards of the night, where the Mitch Egwang and Kazoora read out the names of the nominees and then announced the winners in each of the eight categories. These categories included: 1) Western Artist of the Year; 2) Northern Artiste of the Year; 3) Eastern Artist of the Year; 4) West Nile Artiste of the Year; 5) Best Cultural Artiste/Group; 6) Best Folk Pop Artiste/Group; 7) Best Gospel Single; and 8) Best Gospel Artiste. The awards handed out after the first eight were however differently handled. One or two people, who were mainly famous people in the political, economic or entertainment sectors, would be called upon to announce and hand over accolades over to the winners. For instance, the Inspector General of Police, Katumba Wamala handed out the award for Best Hip Hop Artiste. The winners would then take their accolades and give speeches of appreciation or acceptance of the award.

Some of the winners that gave ‘acceptance’ speeches thanked their fans, family, friends, producers, PAM Awards, and other musicians among others. Mowzey Radio and Weasel, while collecting the Song of the Year Award for their song *Nakudata* (the first of their three awards for the evening) dedicated their accolade to Moses Ssali a.k.a Bebe. Moses Ssekikobogo a.k.a Mowzey Radio<sup>53</sup>, in his speech said: “This award is for Bebe Cool. You made us. Respect!” This statement however, generated mixed reactions from the audience because the audience was aware of an ongoing conflict between Bebe Cool and Mowzey Radio. Some members of the audience cheered, clapped and laughed while others were indifferent. Mowzey Radio, who apparently claims to have served a brief jail sentence because of Bebe Cool, was therefore being

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<sup>52</sup> Allan Ampaire calls himself and is mostly referred to as Toniks. As such, the research will refer to him as Toniks in this dissertation.

<sup>53</sup> Moses Ssekikobogo will be referred to as Mowzey Radio, his stage name, in this dissertation.

sarcastic when he mentioned the word ‘respect’ at the end of his acceptance speech, which was apparent to the audience.

During the performances of the evening, the performing artistes paraded the stage in their best clothes, best dance moves and voices. The audience also reacted differently towards the performances. For instance, the audience members, where I was seated, sang and danced and applauded loudly when Desire Luzinda, Mowzey Radio and Seguya Douglas Mayanja a.k.a Weasle<sup>54</sup>, Grace Nakimera, Wilson Bugembe, David Lutaalo, Toniks and Ernest Nsimbe a.k.a GNL Zamba<sup>55</sup> performed. The other musicians that performed include Jamal Wasswa, Life San and Black Harmony. Unfortunately, the performances and the ceremony were crippled by the poor sound where microphones kept going on and off.

As the ceremony unfolded, the audience reacted towards the results in different ways. Some people next to where I was seated were not convinced by the choice of artists that won awards in some categories. For instance, in the category of Best New Artiste, the nominees were David Lutaalo, Desire Luzinda, Grace Nakimera, and Mowzey Radio and Weasle. One of I’s neighbors at the ceremony complained that only David Lutaalo and Mowzey Radio & Weasle were new artists while the rest had been in the music business for a while. Indeed, the first time I heard Desire Luzinda’s music was in 2007. However, Mowzey Radio and Weasle were not new either. The two artistes had earlier performed separately with the Leone Island Crew as curtain-raisers for Joseph Mayanja a.k.a Jose Chameleone, the leader of the Leone Island Crew by 2003. Therefore, how is ‘new’ defined and determined in this category? Is it that the musicians are new to the PAM Awards or are they new to the popular stage or is it that the ‘general public’ does not know them well? Even though Mulindwa told me that ‘new’ artistes are those that are “fresh on the music scene” (interview, February 26, 2010), the nominees in the 2008 New Artiste of the Year category were not ‘fresh’. The complexity and ambiguity of the PAM Awards categories is evident in the choice of terms for this category.

Other categories that the audience members commented on were the awards for musicians from Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, and Tanzania. Some members of the audience were not thrilled by the fact that PAM Awards awarded foreign musicians. One of the people in the

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<sup>54</sup> Douglas Mayanja will be referred to as Weasle in this dissertation because it is his stage name and he is mostly referred to as Weasle.

<sup>55</sup> Ernest Nsimbe will be referred to as GNL Zamba because that is the name he calls himself and is mostly referred to by.



audience told me that she wished those awards were given to Ugandan artistes because not all the categories of popular music in Uganda were catered for by PAM Awards. “Why then waste twelve categories on foreign artistes instead of conjuring up new categories for Ugandan musicians?” the informant asked (conversational interview, November 1, 2008). Similarly, Enoch K. Kimbowa emphasized that “it would take a really good explanation to understand why there are a whole [twelve] categories for Kenyan, Tanzanian, [Burundi] and Rwandan artists when [Uganda’s] own talent is still either going unnoticed or sidelined” (2006:20). Moreover, the nominated musicians from the other East African countries except Burundi’s Best Female Artist Award winner Macarena did not attend the ceremony. Some informants looked at the absence of East African musicians from the awarding ceremony as a sign of disrespect for the PAM Awards.

Ugandan musicians on the other hand, as Dusman Faustine told me, both respect and criticize PAM Awards. I observed that even though some musicians have made snide comments about PAM Awards in the media, their reactions to winning or losing an award attested to how important winning was to them. Some musicians would dance, receive their awards with a throng of people cheering and dancing as they escorted them to the stage, while others exhibited a calm demeanor. For example, Gerald Kiweewa, whose song *Ndabada* was awarded as the 2008 Best *Kadongo Kamu* Single, danced as he received the award. He danced even more when Isaac Mulindwa Senior<sup>56</sup>, who presented him the award, made him a cash pledge of four hundred thousand Ugandan shillings (approximately \$ 191).

The winners were not the only ones that reacted towards the results, but also the audience. Whenever a winner was announced, some members of the audience clapped, screamed and jumped around with excitement while others hurled insults and accusations about the unfairness of the whole PAM Awards voting system. One of the winners of the night that also caused quite a stir was Bebe Cool, who won three awards. Some people in the class where I was seated kept screaming that he did not deserve the award and booed him when he went to the stage for the award. Some people screamed that he had bribed the PAM Awards judges or sponsors in order to get the awards. When he was declared the Best Male Artiste of the Year, a female member of the audience seated next to I screamed out “Corruption in the Society! That is our Uganda!” to express her views about the results. However, it goes without saying that Bebe Cool also had supporters who cheered him every time he received an award.

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<sup>56</sup> Isaac Muindwa Senior is the father to Isaac Mulindwa, the chairman of the PAM Awards organizing committee.

Further, when Juliana Kanyomozi, the first female to win the Artist of the Year Award was announced, there were a lot of screaming, clapping, and ululation as she accepted the award. The newspaper reports of the following day heralded Kanyomozi's win with some reporters calling her the 'PAM Awards queen' (Tatya and Batte 2008:26). Claude Muhigirwa's report in the Red Pepper newspaper read thus: "It's Juliana! At last, a female becomes Artiste of the Year in PAM Awards" (2008:10-11). In the next section, I examine what it means for musicians like Kanyomozi to win a PAM Award.

### 5.3 PAM Awards Aftermath: Impact of Winning an Award on the Musicians

In the following paragraphs, I examine the impact of PAM Awards on the construction of the popular by analyzing its impact on the music and musicians. I interrogate what it means for different musicians to win awards, the PAM Awards impact on the music, and how PAM Awards in the end construct the popular of music in Uganda.

PAM Awards, like any other competition, rewards winners. For instance, while in secondary school, I recall participating in inter-house competitions, where the winning house would be announced and given a trophy at the end of the three-day competition. In addition to being announced the 'best', the winning house would also be given a bull or goat to slaughter and eat at a party paid for by the school. The prizes given to the winning house in the inter-house competitions were therefore an incentive to work hard during the next competition season. Apart from the prizes, winning the inter-house competition was prestigious and the different houses aimed at maintaining the winning title. In the next paragraphs, I examine the impact of PAM Awards on the musicians and popular music definition in Uganda.

According to Shivan Ategyeka (not her real name), a Radio Presenter on Vision Voice FM, PAM Awards are a promotional vehicle for both musicians and their music (interview, February 4, 2009). Ategyeka said that for musicians, winning an award means being mentioned in the newspapers, on radio, and being seen on television when the awarding ceremony is broadcast. Diplock Segawa, a musician and judge of PAM Awards 2008, also contended with Ategyeka's view (interview, March 12, 2009). Some of the other musicians interviewed also informed I that

winning an award has made them ‘popular’ and thus provided a platform for promotion and marketing of their music. As such, the ‘popularization’ of musicians through PAM Awards has also made their music ‘popular’ because as the musicians are promoted, so is their music. In addition, during the voting period, as discussed earlier in this chapter, the music of the nominated musicians is broadcast on radio daily, thus providing an opportunity for their music to be promoted and distributed. As a result, the popular of musicians and music are constructed as indicated by the advantages of promotion and distribution of the music. For instance, Loketo Lee, a musicians and winner of the Northern Artist of the Year award in 2005 said:

It felt good to win the 2005 Northern Artist of the Year because I was the first one to win that award. So, I really felt very good and it also gave me the publicity. I thank Mulindwa for that. Up to now, people back home in Gulu still talk about my win. It has never faded because I was the first musician from the north to win an award. It has also inspired other upcoming musicians from northern Uganda to make sure they achieve the award. So it is a pleasure (interview, February 18, 2009).

Another example is Ronald Mayinja, a singer with Eagles Production (a band), who won the 2007 Artiste of the Year Award. In a report after the event, Gilbert Mwijuke wrote that “Mayinja is no longer that artist lurking in the shadows – not after the ripples he caused at this Year’s Pearl of Africa Music (PAM) Awards gala” (2007:1). In agreement, Watson and Anand (2006) also noted that music awards, such as the Grammy Awards are promotional vehicles for artists and music, as exemplified by the subsequent record sales of the winning artist’s music. Watson and Anand analyzed the sales records and billboard charts over a period of time and noted that Grammy Award winners indeed outshine nominees (2006:50). Victor Ginsburgh also asserted that the prizes awarded to an art production or the rankings that result from competitions are associated with economic success and may even influence or predict it (2003:100). However, it is difficult to measure the success of PAM Awards winners in relation to sales records because Uganda is riddled with piracy, which makes the analysis of any kind of sales data inaccurate (Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2009:30).

In Uganda, the success of the PAM Award winners has come to be measured by the job opportunities availed to the winning musicians. As Tony Houls said, “the musician who wins an award gets more performance deals. He is usually considered first when a performer is needed for a big event” (interview, February 22, 2009). In addition, some of the winning musicians have

acquired promotional contracts with corporate companies. For instance, Bobi Wine had a contract with MTN — a telecommunications company—at the time of this research, to perform on whatever function they organize. Bobi Wine informed me that most of his earnings come from his gigs with MTN as he promotes the telecommunication company countrywide (interview, February 13, 2009). Bobi Wine, at the time of this research, was also signed to other corporate bodies that include Centenary Bank, Life Guard Condoms and Ministry of Health<sup>57</sup>. Other artists that have worked with and been sponsored by corporate companies include Bebe Cool, who is signed to Zain, also a telecommunications company that has sponsored him to perform in different places including America. Mega Dee has also been signed to Bell Lager. Ronald Mayinja, the 2007 Artist of the Year, said that before he won, he used to get mini contracts from corporate companies (Mwesigye 2008). However, since he won, he gets big contracts such as MTN Uganda, which signed him together with his group Eagles Production for a one hundred and forty million Ugandan Shillings (approximately 69,652 US Dollars) contract. He says that winning the award also comes with a lot of fans; now he goes to the districts of Masindi, Mbarara, and Arua districts and people there recognize him (as quoted in Mwesigye 2008). In addition, artistes that have won PAM Awards have been able to increase the amount of money they charge for performing at shows and the sale of their albums to distribution companies. For instance, after their success in the PAM awards, Bobi Wine now charges 4 million Ugandan shillings (\$ 1914), Juliana Kanyomozi 5 million shillings (\$ 2392), while Blu3 charge 3 million shillings (\$ 1435) for a performance (*ibid.*). Therefore, one of the implications of winning an award is that a musician is promoted, which may result in economic success and job opportunities even though not all the winners get the same opportunities. Economic success can also be looked at as an indication of being popular since more finances may mean more customers thus more ‘popularity’.

Another advantage of winning an award is that it is prestigious for the musicians and creates an image of success for them. As Toniks, the winner of the 2008 Best R&B Single category says, winning an award “to the ordinary folk ... means a lot because ... it is like an inauguration” (quoted in Kezaabu 2009b:16). In addition, Ronald Mayinja was said to have been ‘crowned the king of Ugandan music’ when he won the Artist of the Year Award in 2007 (Tatya 2007:28). Some musicians use the titles of the awards they have won alongside their names such

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<sup>57</sup> [www.ugpulse.com](http://www.ugpulse.com). Accessed on March 20, 2009.

as Female Artist of the Year, Iryn Namubiru. However, according to Tony Houls, the declaration of winners gives the impression that those who do not win have not worked as hard and therefore the credibility of there is in doubt (Interview, February 22, 2009). As Toniks said, winning an award ‘inaugurates’ a musician into a league of those that are successful (as quoted by Kezaabu 2009b). Therefore, Sylvester Kyaggulanyi suggested that the audiences should not take the PAM Awards results as the ‘gospel truth’ or as the predictor of what the good music or best musician is (interview, March 2, 2009). However, Kyaggulanyi’s opinion doesn’t relegate the fact that PAM Awards constructs the popular of Ugandan music and musicians by declaring the ‘best’ through public vote and judge’s choice. As a result, PAM Awards have constructed what Bobi Wine called the ‘big’ and ‘small’ artistes.

According to Shivan Ategyeka (not real name), a radio presenter, there are artists that are always nominated and usually win PAM Awards (interview, February 4, 2009). She informed me that even though some artists were ‘famous’ before PAM Awards, winning awards has made them more ‘famous’. As Bobi Wine said, “PAM Awards make big artists bigger which is disadvantageous to the new and upcoming artists” (interview, February 22, 2009). Shivan Ategyeka also added that the ‘small’ artists are overshadowed” (interview, February 4, 2009). She continued to suggest that “PAM Awards should give ‘small’ artists a chance. They are still looking at the big names rather than looking for the people who are ‘down’ there with great music”. Therefore, PAM Awards are a stage where superiority in terms of the musicians’ popularity are performed as aided by the voting audiences and those that nominate. As such, the competition field is not leveled. Michael Mubiru, a judge on the 2008 PAM Awards judging panel also said:

Whoever has a lot of money stands a better advantage. When you look at musicians in Uganda, some have more money than others. Some are young and new on the music scene while others are older, more experienced and have been in the music business much longer. So they have the potential, the money, and the fame, while others are just upcoming artists. Therefore, you don’t expect the young one to win an older musician because the older one has more advantages compared to the young one like the fact that the older one’s audience could be much bigger. Much as the new artist may have had a good composition; all the other given factors may give the older musicians an advantage. That is one way of being kind of unfair because if someone performs well on the table of judges, the votes through text messages (audience’s votes) will drastically

change the outcome. So, whoever has a bigger audience stands a better chance to win than the one who is not famous (interview, January 22, 2009).

Isaac Mulindwa, in contention with Mubiru, noted that the more ‘famous’ stars stand a better chance of winning an award. Charles Lwanga also contends that the PAM Awards indeed award “those who are popularly known. After all, when you talk to the people who vote, they don’t vote for quality. They vote for the musicians they know. As a result, the PAM Awards turn out to be an event for awarding those who are popularly known” (interview, February 4, 2009).

Another advantage of winning an award is the cash prize that is given to the winners. Each category has a different cash prize attached. As Loketo Lee recalled, he was given a trophy and a one million Uganda Shilling (approximately \$478.5) cash prize (interview, February 18, 2009). The cash prize for the winner of the New Artist of the Year category is ten million Ugandan Shillings (\$4785) while the prize of the Artist of the Year Award is five million shillings (\$2392) and a payment for the recording of the winner’s next album (Asiimwe, interview, March 10, 2009). These cash prizes are a very welcome contribution to some of the musicians whose financial status is not so good.

These implications of winning an award lead one to reflect on how PAM Awards affect the music business in Uganda through the decisions made by musicians, media, audience, judges, and PAM Awards committee to choose winners. One of the recurring debates about the impact of PAM Awards on the music business has been on how the awards have impacted the quantity and quality of music production. According to Shamim Asiimwe, the music quantity has improved a development she attributes to PAM Awards (interview, March 10, 2009). She said that there has been an increase in the quantity of music, which was not the case before 2003. Lwanga also contends with Asiimwe that the quantity of music has increased (interview, February 4, 2009). Biggo-Bfx, on the other hand, told me that the musicians being recognized as new musicians have been around performing in clubs because they had no money to record. However, he did consent to the fact that more musicians are recording music (interview, June 4, 2009). Lwanga also noted that the increase in the quantity of musicians is disadvantageous to the music business in Uganda “because everyone now thinks that he or she can be involved in making and performing music. It is probably because of the cash prizes and awards that have been established by the committee of the PAM Awards. At the end of the day, the quantity has improved but the quality compromised” (interview, February 4, 2009). Therefore, production

output has indeed improved especially with artists trying to release an album on an annual basis in the bid to be involved with PAM Awards. However, as Asiimwe suggests, “the annual release of music albums has been both an advantage and a disadvantage because some of the musicians have been under pressure to release new songs even when they are not ready. And as a result, some have released maybe substandard work even though they beat the nomination deadline” (interview, March 10, 2009).

However, Mulindwa asserts that there is development wrought by PAM Awards in terms of the number of musicians in Uganda as well as the change in the output of music videos. Mulindwa said that “music videos before PAM were few and of poor quality” (interview, February 26, 2009). His view of PAM Awards’ impact on the Ugandan entertainment industry, however biased or exaggerates it is, reiterates some of the views by Asiimwe and Lwanga in relation to the increase in the quantity of music production. Mulindwa also talked about how the increase in music production has also impacted on the media, thus hinting on the impact of PAM Awards on distribution and promotion. He said that the success of the music industry in terms of production has a ripple effect on the media or forms of dissemination which have also develop alongside the music industry because there are more products to disseminate. Indeed magazines with writings on the music industry such *City Beat*, *Exit* as well as websites such as [ugpulse.com](http://ugpulse.com), [musicuganda.com](http://musicuganda.com) as well as Ugandan music video uploads on YouTube<sup>58</sup> may attest to these developments. However, I assert that PAM Awards has only contributed and is therefore not entirely responsible for such developments as Mulindwa suggests.

Some informants I interviewed conflicted over whether or not PAM Awards have impacted quality of popular music in Uganda. According to Mulindwa, the quality, especially of the videos has improved because musicians want to win the Video of the Year award (interview, February 26, 2009). Therefore, with each year, musicians attempt to have a better quality video than that of the winner of the previous year. However, Kyewalyanga accredits the improvement in the quality of music videos to television station such as Record Television, where he works, which censor the music videos to broadcast according to the quality of the music video (interview, March 14, 2009). In addition, Kyewalyanga said that the number of video production studios and groups has increased which has introduced competition in the field of music videos. Therefore, the quality has improved as a result of the competition. However, the debate is still on

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<sup>58</sup> [www.ugpulse.com](http://www.ugpulse.com), [www.musicuganda.com](http://www.musicuganda.com), and [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

the audio music production quality. A number of informants informed me that the quality of music has dwindled because musicians are in a hurry to produce music and yet the song text is made up of only two words (Lwanga, interview February 4, 2009; Kayiwa, interview, February 5, 2009). However, Tony Houls, a studio producer, said that he “really appreciates PAM Awards because they have caused musicians to compete and in the process, they have produced good work because there is competition – someone is fighting for an award and therefore puts more effort in whatever he’s doing” (interview, February 22, 2009). Therefore, the fierce competition between musicians for an award has created also partly influenced the quality of music production, as stipulated by Houls.

In my view, there is a change in popular music in Uganda in terms of the quantity of music and musicians. However, I contend that there are other factors other than the PAM Awards that are responsible. For instance, there has been an increase in the number of recording studios, which may explain the increase in the quantity of production. Secondly, the challenge of foreign music industries as well as the creativity of musicians coupled with technological advancement may explain the change in the quality of popular music in Uganda. I, however, do not disregard the PAM Awards’ contribution towards these changes in popular music in Uganda.

#### 5.4 Conclusion

As discussed in this chapter, indeed PAM Awards participate in the construction of Ugandan popular music. Firstly, by categorizing the different music genres in Uganda, PAM Awards attempts to define the ‘popular’ of popular music in Uganda. In fact, PAM Awards attach some features to ‘define’ music genres like hip hop, reggae, R&B and gospel. Secondly, by declaring some Ugandan musicians as winners, PAM Awards participate in constructing them as ‘popular’. As a matter of fact, these musicians are awarded with trophies. Moreover, the music of the nominated ‘popular’ musicians is broadcasted on various radio stations in Uganda, a situation that also dictates to the audience the ‘popular’ music it should listen to. Lastly, the music and musicians the PAM Awards Committee declares ‘popular’, are believed to have been determined by the ‘majority’ of the Ugandan audience. Therefore, the PAM Awards Committee posits that the ‘public’ has determined what is popular of popular music in Uganda. All these processes involved in the PAM Awards participate in constructing the ‘popular’ of Ugandan



popular music. In the next chapter, I present a summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations to future scholars.

## CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 Summary

In this dissertation, I have examined how PAM Awards participate in the political construction of popular music in Uganda. I have discussed how the politics of competition in PAM Awards are performed through the interrelationships between musicians, producers, judges, audience, sponsors, PAM Awards Organizing Committee and the media. As such, I investigated the role of these stakeholders in the PAM Awards organizational processes and how their decisions determine who wins the awards. This study was based on the assumption that the performance of power between the stakeholders has an impact on who participates in and wins the awards. The winning musicians and music categories are broadcast on the media, which promotes them to a bigger audience.

This study was situated in the ethnomusicological discussions that posit a reciprocal relationship between music and culture; culture informs music and music defines culture. I focus on politics, an aspect of culture, between PAM Awards participants and how their interrelations participate in the construction of popular music. More specifically, this study is also situated in ethnomusicological and popular music studies that have discussed the relationship between music and politics. While most scholars have concentrated on how music functions in politics, this study is a contribution towards how the dynamics of politics function in the trajectory of popular music production, distribution and consumption. From the beginning of this dissertation, I assert that since PAM Awards is a competition, it implies politics because a competition involves a winner, a loser and those that decide who wins or loses. It is for this reason that I employ theoretical perspectives on political relations that include Antonio Gramsci's hegemony, a concept used in reference to the relationship between the dominant and subordinates in a given social structure.

Gramsci, an Italian Marxist theorist, uses the concept of hegemony not only to denote control, but also the ability of the dominant to project their own views onto the subordinate. However, the findings of this study reveal that the relationship between the dominant and subordinates is not stable and is subject to struggle for the dominant to remain in control and for the subordinate to gain control. Therefore, a hegemonic relationship involves acts of resistance (hidden and public transcript as argued by James Scott 1990), coercion and intimidation as both the dominant and the subordinate struggle. I also considered Howard Becker's theory of 'art worlds', which focuses on collaboration and cooperation in the production of artistic products like music. Notwithstanding Becker's view, this study is more inclined to Keith Negus (1996) who builds on Becker's view and argues that artistic production is sometimes a result of conflict. This study therefore emphasizes that the production of popular music in Uganda is an activity embedded in conflict, as created by the politics of competition.

Noting the inadequacy in literature on PAM Awards and popular music in Uganda in Chapter Two, I reviewed the nature, methodology and trend of scholarship on four thematic areas: 1) competition in music awards; 2) construction of popular music in Uganda; and 3) relating popular music and politics. In particular, PAM Awards have mostly been written about in journalistic articles which albeit have not been scientifically researched and analyzed. This research, therefore, contributes towards the scientific study of PAM Awards, which has been inadequate, and also foregrounds competition as an important factor in the definition of popular music, a perspective scholars have not focused on. Further, this research is a contribution towards writings on popular music in Uganda, music competitions, and how politics function in the music industry.

To study how popular music in Uganda has been constructed as a result of competition and the political interrelations between PAM Awards stakeholders, qualitative methods of research were necessary. As such, I discuss the methodology I used to collect data for this study in Chapter Three. Most specifically, this study was ethnographic, where I sampled informants using snowball, random and purposive sampling techniques. I identified five categories of informants namely: producers (studio producers and musicians), consumers (audiences), distributors (media) judges, sponsors, and the PAM Awards organizing committee. To gather data for this study, I also employed the following research tools: 1) interviews; 2) participant observation; 3) focused group discussions; 4) library research; 5) media; and 6) photography and

audio recording. I applied a variety of tools because each of the tools if used on its own, has limitations. In Chapter Three, I also elaborate on how I analyzed data, the ethical codes I adhered to, as well as the limitations I encountered while undertaking this study.

As a background to the analysis of how popular music in Uganda is politically constructed through PAM Awards, I examined how popular music in Uganda has been historically constructed in Chapter Four. I also examined other music competitions in Uganda namely: church music festivals, school music and dance competitions, and the Radio Uganda Quarterly music festival to articulate that PAM Awards is not the first competition in Uganda. The discussions on PAM Awards in this chapter focused on the aim and mission of PAM Awards since the organizational processes of PAM Awards, which are important to this study, are aimed at achieving the awards' aim and mission. I also examined how and why the sponsors of PAM Awards participate and how they benefit.

In Chapter Five, I explored how politics are performed during the organizational processes of PAM Awards while focusing on those that are involved, how and why. I discussed how the political construction of popular music in Uganda arises from the roles played by musicians, judges, PAM Awards committee, studio producers, audience, media and sponsors during the organization processes. The first process in PAM Awards is the categorization of music and musicians, a process that is carried out by PAM Awards organizing committee. In reference to music categorization, I delve into a discussion about the contradictions and debates about the legitimacy of music categorization in PAM Awards. I found out that although PAM Awards categories are mainly defined according to music genres, defining these genres has been problematic. Complaints about songs being in wrong categories and the limited number of categories have been a cause for discomfort and dissatisfaction with the PAM Awards. Different stakeholders agreed with the fact that the PAM Awards music categorization is problematic. As such, I examined four of the music genres used in PAM Awards categorization and attempted to define them according to the music being awarded as well as how these genres are defined by the different stakeholders.

I also examined the second organizational process of PAM Awards, which is the launching. In addition, I discussed the competitive strategies musicians have engineered as they vie for the title of the 'best' in one category or another. Such strategies gave insights into the politics of competition, where the most strategic contestant may get to win the ultimate prize.

Musicians strategize in order to be involved or win an award, results that are determined through the processes of nomination, voting and judging. During nominations, musicians nominate each other under the different categories, an activity embedded in power relations between the different musicians determined by their conflicts and affiliations. The media is also involved in nominating the musicians under the different categories; an activity through which the media becomes involved in determining which music or musician is popular. The nominees chosen by the media and musicians are then subjected to voting and judging in order to pick the winners that are later awarded at the crowning ceremony. In this chapter, I elaborated on the controversies that arise from the different organizational processes as raised by the different stakeholders.

Further still, in Chapter Five, I analyzed the aftermath of PAM Awards by examining the implications of being nominated or winning an award on the music and musicians. Some of the questions focused on include: 1) what does it mean for a musician to be or not be nominated? 2) What are the implications of being declared the ‘best’ through winning an award? I established that it is prestigious for musicians to be nominated or awarded while the reverse is true for those that are not involved in the PAM Awards. However, the data also revealed that even though some people think that not being nominated in PAM Awards means the musician is not skilful enough, there are some stakeholders that do not necessarily agree. Therefore, even though winning PAM Awards is prestigious and may result into success for the musicians, there is an extent to which those that do not win are looked at as equally successful. In spite of such debates, I asserted that PAM Awards have the influential power in their ability to declare who is ‘best’ thus constructing the popular of music and musicians in Uganda.

The study also examined the ongoing debates about the impact of PAM Awards on the quality and quantity of Ugandan popular music production. The data revealed that some informants believed that the PAM Awards have led to an increase in the number of musicians as well as the music being produced. The discussion has also hinted on the debate about whether PAM Awards have impacted on the quality of Ugandan popular music production in terms of output and message in the lyrics.

## 6.2 Conclusions

This study revealed that there is indeed a political relationship between the PAM Awards stakeholders since their positions of authority in relation to decision making differ. For example, the judges dominate over the audience in the decision to declare a winner since the judge's votes are 60% of the total vote as compared to the audience's 40%. In this way, both the judges and the audience have controlling power over the musicians because they determine the winners. Basing on the findings of this research, I have established that the subordinate perform counter-hegemony as a counteraction in situations where the subordinate or those in lesser positions of power were dissatisfied. I therefore conclude that the re-enactment of the awards constantly bring into play power relations that in turn influence the outcome of the awards.

In this study, I have established that through categorization, the PAM Awards Organizing committee and its 'experts' participate in defining the categories of popular music in Uganda. As a result, popular music in Uganda is branded and the characteristic features for each category/genre defined.

In addition, the nomination process constructs what is popular of the music and musicians depending on which songs or musicians are nominated. As a result, the nominated music and musicians are constructed as 'popular' in a process of exclusion and inclusion of music and musicians. Therefore, those who nominate participate in defining which music belongs to a given category and which music and musicians to include in the competition. Consequently, the music and musicians that win are declared the 'best' and therefore are constructed as being 'popular' through the processes of voting by the audience and panel of judges.

As such, when a musician or song is declared the 'best', it is broadcast over the media since the awarding ceremony is broadcast live and the winners written about in newspapers and talked about on radio stations. Through this research, I have established that winning a PAM Award enhances the careers of the winners as measured by the job opportunities availed to them. Winning provides a platform for promotion and marketing for musicians which results in opportunities for sponsorship. In addition, the songs that are declared the 'best' have become templates or models for other musicians while producing music thus constructing the popular of music in Uganda.

As the discussion in this dissertation has articulated, competition is an important phenomenon to consider when attempting to understand how popular music in Uganda is constructed. As in the case with PAM Awards, the competition brings to the fore the power relations between the stakeholders throughout the organizational processes, that in the end have an impact on the results of the awards. Therefore, through the performance of power between the stakeholders that influence the outcome of the awards, PAM Awards participate in constructing popular music in Uganda.

I also established that although PAM Awards have politically constructed the popular of music in Uganda, it is just one of the contributing factors towards this construction. Other factors include the availability of advanced technology to use in recordings as well as the contribution of the media in the construction of what music is popular.

### 6.3 Recommendations

Since the content scope of this study was limited to the study of how popular music in Uganda is politically constructed, I recommend the study of how PAM Awards have impacted music production, dissemination and consumption. Since PAM Awards construct the popular, how do the results impact on the music produced by both PAM Awards hopefuls and winners alike? How are the patterns of consumption affected as a result?

I also acknowledge that music awards have become a franchise and phenomenon in popular music industries around the world. I therefore recommend a comparative study of PAM Awards and the other awards in an attempt to unravel how global popular cultural forms are interpreted by different cultures. Some of the music awards that could be compared with include: the Juno Awards for Canada, Grammy Awards in North America, British Music Awards, Music Television (MTV) Awards for international musicians, MTV African Music video Awards (MAMA) held in South Africa, KORA Awards also held in South Africa, Kisima Awards from Kenya and Black Entertainment Television (BET) Awards for African American entertainers.

Further, even though I examined how popular music in Uganda is constructed, the scope of my study constrained me from examining what is ‘Ugandan’ of the music awarded in PAM

Awards. Moreover, the PAM Awards have been branded ‘Ugandan’ as shown by the title<sup>59</sup>. Therefore, I would recommend a study on how ‘Ugandan’ music is constructed in the PAM Awards.

In addition, since PAM Awards is also celebrated in other East African countries that include Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, and Tanzania, examining how they impact the music industries in those countries could be another area of research future scholars can explore. Such a study could concentrate on what it means for a Kenyan artist, for instance, to win a PAM Award. In addition, future researchers can also explore how PAM Awards participates in the state politics in regard to the establishment of the East African Community between East African countries.

Although I examined the role of the media in the construction of popular music in Uganda as a stakeholder in PAM Awards, the media plays a much bigger role. Therefore, the role of the media in the construction of popular music in Uganda outside PAM Awards is also an area of research scholars could investigate. In addition, the audience’s participation in constructing the popular through their demands and preferences would also be important in further investigations about popular music constructions.

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<sup>59</sup> Uganda is also referred to as the ‘Pearl of Africa’, a title that was given by Winston Churchill.



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# APPENDIX 1: List of Informants

<b>Informant's name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Category of informant</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Asiimwe Paul	5/02/09	Car washer in Wandegeya	Consumer	Wandegeya, Kampala
Asiimwe Shamim	10/03/09	Administrator and Public Relations Officer on the PAM Awards Organizing Committee	Organizing Committee	PAM Awards head office, Kampala
Ategyeka Shivan	4/02/09	Radio Presenter on Vision Voice FM	Music Distributor	<i>The New Vision</i> Head office, Kampala
Beyanga Joseph	15/06/09	Production Manage, KFM radio	Sponsor	Phone interview, Kampala
Biggo-Bfx	04/06/09	Music Distributer	Music Distributor	Wandegeya, Kampala
Bobi Wine	13/02/09	Musician	Producer	Dream Studios at Bukoto, Kampala
Busingye Brenda	04/06/09	Human Resource Assistant Manager in Simba Telecom	Consumer	Simba Telecom head office, Kampala road
Dusman Fausteen	14/03/09	Business lady	consumer	Wandegeya, Kampala
Gafabusolo	15/01/09	IT Technician with Zain Uganda	Consumer	Zain headoffice, Kampala
Jjumbo Mark	22/02/09	Musician	Producer	Dream Studios, Bukoto, Kampala
Kaabunga Richard	15/08/09	Music teacher and composer	Consumer	MDD Department, Makerere University, Kampala
Kansiime Rosette	1/11/08	Student	Consumer	Shimoni Grounds, Kampala
Kasamba Lusania	6/07/09	Lecturer, Uganda Christian University, Mukono	Consumer	Africa Institute of Music (AIM), Muyenga, Kampala



Kayiwa Paddy	5/02/09	Producer at Dream Studios	Producer	Dream Studios, Kamwokya, Kampala
Kiwuuwa Henry	24/01/09	Producer at Grayce Records	Producer	Grayce Records, Kanyanya, Kampala
Kyaggulanyi Sylvester	2/03/09	Nusician, producer and song writer	Producer	Ntinda-Kiwatule road, Kampala
Kye Julius	26/02/09	Music distributor	Distributor	Wandegeya, Kampala
Kywalyanga Herbert a.k.a Herbie K.	14/03/09	Television presenter on Record Television	Judge/Distributor	Recoed TV, Kamwokya, Kampala
Loketo Lee	18/02/09	Musician	Producer	Capital FM offices, Kisementi, Kampala
Lwanga Charles	4/02/09	Assistant Lecturer, Makerere University	Judge	MDD Department, Makerere University, Kampala
Mubiru Michael	22/01/09	Teaching Assistant, Makerere University	Judge	MDD Department, Makerere University, Kampala
Mugerwa Peter	14/03/09	Lawyer	Consumer	Wandegeya, Kampala
Mulima Dan	20/08/09	Assistant manager, Star FM	Distributor	UBC head office, Kampala
Mulindwa Isaac	26/02/09	Chairman, PAM Awards Organizing Committee	Organizing Committee	PAM Awards head office, Kampala
Mumbaji Grace	16/02/09	Shop keeper	Consumer	Bukoto, Kampala
Musiime Joseph	15/01/09	IT Technician with Zain Uganda	Consumer	Zain head office, Kampala
Musisi Eddie	15/05/09	Marketing Manager, Zain Uganda	Sponsor	Zain head office, Kampala
Nakatooke Sarah	11/02/09	Business woman	Consumer	Majestic Plaza, Kampala city center

Nakatudde Fina	11/02/09	Business woman	Consumer	Majestic Plaza, Kampala
Namazzi Esther	16/02/09	Student	Consumer	Wandegeya, Kampala
Namusoke Martha	15/03/09	Student	Consumer	Nakawa, Kampala
Nangoobi Joan	1/11/08	IT Manager, Zain Uganda	Consumer	Shimoni Grounds, Kampala
Nassolo Pista	11/02/09	Student	Consumer	Wandegeya, Kampala
Nyonyintono Salim	10/03/09	Operations Manager, PAM Awards Organizing Committee	Organizing Committee	PAM Awards head office, Kampala
Nubian Li	13/02/09	Musician	Producer	Dream Stidos, Bukoto, Kampala
Odeke Peter	16/02/09	Computer technician	Consumer	Majestic Plaza, Kampala
Opio Daniel	1/11/08	Business man	Consumer	Shimoni Grounds, Kampala
Pirwith Apollos	13/02/09	Musician	Producer	AIM, Muyenga, Kampala
Ssali Paul	13/02/09	Student	Consumer	Makerere University, Kampala
Ssebowa Christopher	03/06/09	Musicians with UCF Band	Producer	UCF, Kikoni, Kampala
Ssebugwawo Stony	22/02/09	Musician	Producer	Dream Studios, Bukoto, Kampala
Ssegawa Diplock	12/03/09	Musician	Judge	National Theatre, Kampala
Ssekalega Lawrence	4/06/09	Teaching Assistant, Makerere University	Consumer	MDD Department, Makerere University, Kampala
Sselwanga Paul	15/03/09	Taxi driver	Consumer	Nakawa, Kampala
Sselwanga Pavel	13/02/09	Shopkeeper	Consumer	Majestic Plaza, Kampala
Ssemyalo John	15/01/09	Employee of Zain Uganda	Consumer	Zain head office,

				Kampala
Ssenyonjo Godfrey	03/06/09	Musician and student	Producer	AIM, Muyenga, Kampala
Tony Houls	22/02/09	Producer	Producer	Dream Studios, Bukoto, Kampala
Tumuhamye Cathie	13/02/09	Student	Consumer	Makerere University, Kampala

## APPENDIX 2: Sample Interview Questions

### **Judges**

1. When were you a judge in PAM Awards?
2. How were you contacted to become a judge?
3. Describe your judging experience.
4. What criteria did you follow to choose the winners in each category?
5. What is your perspective on the categorization of the music and musicians in PAM Awards?
6. What was your experience with the marking guides given for each category?
7. How did you utilize the marking guides?
8. Did you have any judging experience before judging PAM Awards?
9. What kind of competitions did you judge before PAM Awards?
10. How was your relationship with other judges?
11. How were the results of the awards in relation to how you had awarded marks?
12. What challenges did you face while judging PAM Awards?
13. Do you have any recommendations to the PAM Awards committee?

### **Musicians**

1. Give a brief background of your music career.
2. What is your perspective on PAM Awards as a musician?
3. How have you been involved with PAM Awards?
4. How did you choose the people to nominate under each category?
5. What do you think about the categorization of music and musicians in PAM Awards?
6. How would you define the music you perform?
7. How are categorical definitions important in your process of recording/producing music?
8. Who should be involved in the categorization process?
9. What does it mean to you as a musician to be nominated in PAM Awards?
10. How did winning a PAM Award affect your career?
11. What strategies do you employ so as to be nominated or to win an award?
12. Have you been involved in other music competitions?

13. In your perspective, what is the impact of PAM Awards on the music of Uganda?
14. What is the impact of PAM Awards on the popular music industry in Uganda as whole?
15. What was the state of the music industry in Uganda before PAM Awards?

### **PAM Awards Organizing Committee**

1. What is PAM Awards?
2. Why did you start PAM Awards?
3. What did you intend to achieve with PAM Awards?
4. Describe the organizational process of PAM Awards.
5. Who are the people involved in the different organizational processes?
6. Why those particular people?
7. What challenges have you faced in the six years the awards have been running?
8. Who is allowed to participate in the awards?
9. What do you think has been your contribution towards the music industry/business in Uganda?

### **Audience**

1. What music do you like?
2. Why do you like that music?
3. What do you think about PAM Awards?
4. How have you been involved in the awards?
5. What did you consider when choosing which music/musician to vote for?
6. Why did/didn't you participate?
7. What do you think about the results of the awards?
8. How did you feel when your favorite music or musician won an award?
9. How do the results from the awards contribute to your choice of music to consume?
10. What do you think about the way the awards are organized?

## **Producers**

1. How have you been involved in PAM Awards?
2. How did being nominated/winning an award affect your career?
3. How would you describe the categorization in PAM Awards?
4. What are the most important elements in the definition of a style of music?
5. Who should be involved in the categorization of this music?
6. How are generic definitions important in the production of music?
7. Could you give an example of how you would define a given music style/genre?
8. Compare the music industry in Uganda before and after Pam Awards.

## **Media**

1. How are you involved in PAM awards?
2. How did you choose which music and musicians to nominate?
3. Describe your role in the voting process of PAM Awards.
4. What do you think about PAM Awards as a competition?
5. What is your perception of the categorization in PAM Awards?
6. Who do you think should be involved in the process of categorization?
7. Who should be involved in the PAM Awards?
8. How would you describe the impact of awards on the music industry in Uganda?
9. How do the results of the awards relate with the music aired by the media?
10. Are your interests as the media represented in the PAM Awards?

## **Sponsors**

1. How long has your company been involved in PAM Awards?
2. Why did your company get involved in PAM Awards?
3. How do you participate in the awards?
4. How do you profit from sponsoring PAM Awards?
5. Apart from PAM Awards, how else are you involved in the popular music industry in Uganda?

### APPENDIX 3: List of Events Attended

Date	Event	Venue
1/11/08	PAM Awards ceremony	Shimoni Grounds, Kampala city center
27/02/09	Concert by Afrigo Band	Club Obligato, Kampala city center
10/03/2009	Hip Hop night	Sabrina's Pub, Kampala city center
1/05/09	Hildeman's Launch of his songs <i>Campus Gal</i> and <i>Kampe</i>	Blue Africa, Kampala City center



APPENDIX 4: List of Focused Group Discussion Participants

Date	Venue	Participants	Position
17/05/09	Africa Institute of Music, Muyenga, Kampala	Mashami Herbert	Music student and member of Oyile band
		Mugenyi Brian Seremba	Music student and member of Oyile and Qwela bands
		Moi Sydney	Music student
		Nakalema Rebecca	Music student
		Ngirwa Ishemo	Music student
		Ngobi Robert	Music student and member of Oyile band
		Ssenyonjo Godfrey	Music student
14/08/09	Video Shack ( <i>kibanda</i> ) in Ggaba	Ahabwe Kizron	unemployed
		Lwanga Isma	Brick layer
		Mulindo Tadeo	Porter
		Mwijukye Cedric	Carpenter
		Rukundo Geoffrey	Brick layer

## APPENDIX 5: My Letter of Introduction

**MAKERERE**

P. O. Box 7062  
KAMPALA, UGANDA  
E-mail: mdd@arts.mak.ac.ug



**UNIVERSITY**

Tel: +256 414- 541219  
Telegrams: "MAKUNIKA", KAMPALA  
Website: www.makerere.ac.ug

Department of Music Dance and Drama

15<sup>th</sup> December 2008

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:**

**RE: ANITA DESIRE ASAASIRA**

Anita Desire Asaasira is a student of Makerere University. She is on a Masters Programme in the Department of Music Dance and Drama Makerere University.

She is doing research on the topic: *Pearl of Africa Music (PAM) Awards: Political Construction of Ugandan Popular Music.*

I will be grateful if you can render her the necessary assistance she needs.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Mercy Mirembe Ntangaare  
Head of Department



In future correspondence please quote the reference number above

APPENDIX 6: Sample of the Informant Consent Form

**Title of Project:** Pearl of Africa Music (PAM) Awards: Political Construction of Popular Music in Uganda

**Researcher's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Informant's Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

I appreciate your willingness to take part in this research study, which seeks to examine how PAM Awards have contributed towards the construction or definition of what is popular of music in Uganda. By signing this consent form, you indicate that you are voluntarily choosing to take part in this research and you give your permission for the use of the information you have given for academic purposes.

I \_\_\_\_\_ hereby give Anita Desire Asaasira permission to use the information I have given in her dissertation and I understand that it is for academic purposes. I also understand that this information may be used in other publications besides the dissertation but it will strictly remain for academic reasons.

When using this information, my name may be

( ) included in the write up                      ( ) excluded in the write up

By signing below, you indicate that you have read the information written above and have indicated your choices for the optional part.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of informant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

APPENDIX 7 a): List of Some Radio Stations

<b>Station</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Year of Establishment</b>
Radio Uganda	97.3	Kampala	1953
Sanyu FM	88.2	Kampala	1993
Capital FM	91.3	Kampala	1994
Central Broadcasting Station (CBS) 1	88.8	Kampala	1996
Radio One	90.0	Kampala	1997
CBS 2	89.2	Kampala	1998
Top Radio	104.9	Kampala	1998
Radio Simba	97.3	Kampala	1998
Radio France International (RFI)	94.4	France	1996
British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)	101.1	Britain	1997
K FM	99.3	Kampala	2005
Voice of Toro	100.5	Fort Portal, Western Uganda	1996
Power FM	104.1	Kampala	1998

#### APPENDIX 7 b): List of Television Stations

Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC)

National Television (NTV)

Wavah Broadcasting Service (WBS TV)

Citizen TV (Kenya)

Capital Television

Star TV

Top TV

Channel O (DSTV)

Trace (DSTV)

Music Television (MTV) (DSTV)

MTV Base (DSTV)

Lighthouse Television (LTV)

APPENDIX 8: List of the 2008 Categories, Nominees and Winners (in bold font)

Item No.	Category	Nominees/winners	Brief Description
1	Eastern Artiste of the Year	Ayub Kan Huddle Bliss Family, Sammy Cool, <b>Via Kalikwani</b>	Encompasses artists from the districts of Tororo, Mbale, Sironko, Jinja, Soroti, Busia, Iganga, Katakwi, and Pallisa among others.
2	Northern Artiste of the Year	B Fall, <b>BSG Labongo</b> , Grace Atim, Jibu Mambo	Encompasses artists from the districts of Gulu, Kotido, Moroto, Lira, Pader, Adjumani and Kotido among others.
3	Western Artiste of the Year	Don Balaam, <b>Kigambo Araali Moses</b> , Doris Mutahunga, Mutsyo	Artistes from the districts of Mbarara, Fort Portal, Kasese, Bushenyi, Kabale, Rukungiri, Ntungamo, Kisoro, Hoima, Masindi among others.
4	West Nile Artiste of the Year	Black Harmony, <b>Dogman</b> , JM Kennedy, Pingoman	Encompasses the artists from the districts of Arua, Apac, Nebbi, Yembe, Lira, Kitgum, and Nakapiripirit among others.
5	Best Hip Hop Single	Salooni (Navio Featuring GNL Zamba), Siri Muyaye (Ragga D), <b>Soda Jinjale (GNL Zamba featuring Unique)</b>	The best of the hip hop songs released between the 30 <sup>th</sup> of the previous year (2007) and 30 <sup>th</sup> July of 2008.
6	Best Hip Hop Artiste	<b>Navio</b> , GNL Zamba,	The best of the musicians that

		Lethal, Rocky Giant	perform music in hip hop style. The judges are expected to consider the musician's discipline, vocal abilities and how their songs conform to the characteristics of the genre.
7	Best Afro beat Single	Anfukuula (Grace Nakimera), Diana (Juliana Kanyomozi), <b>Zuena (Mowzey Radio and weasel)</b>	The best of the Afro beat songs released between the 30 <sup>th</sup> of the previous year (2007) and 30 <sup>th</sup> July of 2008.
8	Best Afro beat Artiste	Clever J, <b>Bobi Wine</b> , Jose Chameleon, Tool Man	The best of the musicians that perform music in Afrobeat style. The judges are expected to consider the musician's discipline, vocal abilities and how their songs conform to the characteristics of the genre.
9	Best Gospel Single	<b>Komawo eka (Wilson Bugembe)</b> , Koonaa (Martin Seku), Olunaku Luno (Silver Kyaggulanyi), Praise God (Bebe Cool and Tikita)	The best of the Gospel songs or songs with religious texts released between the 30 <sup>th</sup> of the previous year (2007) and 30 <sup>th</sup> July of 2008.
10	Best Gospel Artiste	Ambasada, Betty Namaganda, Martin Seku, <b>Wilson Bugembe</b>	The best of the gospel music artistes.
11	Best Cultural Artiste/Group	Amaraka Group, Annet Nandujja, Kigambo Araali	A category competed for by Ugandan 'traditional' dance

		Moses, <b>Ndere Troupe</b>	and music groups or troupes
12	Best Folk Pop Artiste/Group	Ayub Khan, Doris Mutahunga, Geobless, <b>Percussion Discussion</b>	A category that encompasses songs where folk tunes are recorded using digital technology.
13	Best Kadongo Kamu Single	Akaduuka kabakyala (Sula Luyima), Balina choice (Kazibwe Kapo), <b>ndabada (Gerald Kiweewa)</b> , Olukunya (Mathias Walukagga)	The best of the kadongo kamu songs released between the 30 <sup>th</sup> of the previous year (2007) and 30 <sup>th</sup> July of 2008.
14	Best Kadongo Kamu Artiste/Group	Gerald Kiweewa, <b>Matendo Promoted Singers</b> , Matias Walukagga, Willy Mukaabya	A competition for musicians (solo or group) that perform music in the <i>Kadongo kamu</i> style basing on their discipline, vocal abilities, song texts and how their songs conform to the characteristics of the genre..
15	Best Ragga Artiste/Group	<b>Bebe Cool</b> , Bella, KS Alpha, Peter Miles	A competition for musicians (solo or group) that perform music in the ragga style basing on their discipline, vocal abilities, song texts and how their songs conform to the characteristics of the genre.
16	Best Reggae Artiste/Group	<b>Bebe Cool</b> , Kid Fox, Mr. Wind and Main Ben, Henry Tigan	A competition for musicians that perform music in the reggae style basing on their discipline, vocal abilities, song



			texts and how their songs conform to the characteristics of the genre.
17	Best RnB Single	<b>Beera Nange (Toniks)</b> , Nalulungi (Micheael Ross), Sirina yo mulala (Sweet Kid and Juliana Kanyomozi), Usiende Mbali (Juliana Kanyomozi and Bushoke)	The best of the RnB songs released between the 30 <sup>th</sup> of the previous year (2007) and 30 <sup>th</sup> July of 2008.
18	Best RnB Artiste/Group	Iryn Namubiru, <b>Juliana Kanyomozi</b> , Michael Ross, Obsessions	A competition for musicians (solo or group) that perform music in the RnB style basing on their discipline, song texts, vocal abilities and how their songs conform to the characteristics of the genre.
19	Best Live Band	<b>Eagles' Production</b> , Jeckaki Band, Misty Jazz Band, Trends Band	Competitions between bands that perform live regardless of the style of music. The elements the judges look out for include the skill of the performers on their instruments as well as their performance techniques.
20	Best Live Band Single	Bwosiba Face (Eagles' Production), Nice and Lovely (Eagles' Production), <b>Nyimbire omutanda (Eagles'</b>	The best of the songs released by live band performers between the 30 <sup>th</sup> of the previous year (2007) and 30 <sup>th</sup>

		<b>Production)</b> , Omukisa Gwamuno (Eagles' Production)	July of 2008.
21	Video of the Year	<b>Anfuukula (Grace Nakimera)</b> , Begoonza (Obsessions), it's serious (Lethal, Crack and Hanz), Kapere (Bebe Cool and Kid Fox)	The best music video of a song released between the 30 <sup>th</sup> of the previous year (2007) and 30 <sup>th</sup> July of 2008.
22	Best Audio Producer	<b>Allan Okia</b> , Henry Kiwuuwa, Jason Kiwa, Washington harmony	A competition between studio producers depending on how many songs they have produced have been successful.
23	Song Writer of the Year	CossyViscious, Grace Morgan, Mr. Saxess, <b>Sylver kyaggulanyi</b>	The songwriter that has composed songs that have been popular for the content of the lyrics as well as the melodies of the songs.
24	Best New Artist	David Lutaalo, Desire Luzinda, Grace Nakimera, <b>Moze radio &amp; Weasle</b>	The best of the new artists in the music industry.
25	Best Band/Group Kenya	Jamnazzzi, Kleptomaniacs, <b>Kayamba Africa</b> , Nix	Best of the band musicians from Kenya regardless of the style of music they perform. The elements focused on by the judges are skills, stagecraft, communication and sound output during performances (see appendix 3b).

26	Best Band/Group Tanzania	<b>African Stars</b> , Msondo Ngoma, FM academia, TMK Wanaume	Best of the band musicians from Tanzania regardless of the style of music they perform. The elements focused on by the judges are skills, stagecraft, communication and sound out put during performances (see appendix 3b).
27	Best Band/Group Rwanda	Family Squad, <b>KGB</b> , Holy Jah Doves, SKC	Best of the band musicians from Rwanda regardless of the style of music they perform. The elements focused on by the judges are skills, stagecraft, communication and sound out put during performances (see appendix 3b).
28	Best Band/Group Burundi	Amabano, BBR, Peace & Love, <b>Etoile du Centre</b>	Best of the band musicians from Burundi regardless of the style of music they perform. The elements focused on by the judges are skills, stagecraft, communication and sound out put during performances (see appendix 3b)
29	Best Female Artiste Kenya	Amani, Nikki, Pam, <b>Wahu</b>	Best of the female popular musicians from Kenya regardless of the style of music she performs. The elements focused on include discipline,

			performance etiquette, the message of her music as well as his music output.
30	Best Female Artiste Tanzania	K'Lynn, <b>Lady Jay D</b> , Nakaya, Ray C	Best of the female popular musicians from Tanzania regardless of the style of music she performs. The elements focused on include discipline, performance etiquette, the message of her music as well as his music output.
31	Best Female Artist Rwanda	Miss channel, <b>Miss Jojo</b> , Queen Ally, Sandra Karigirwa	Best of the female popular musicians from Rwanda regardless of the style of music she performs. The elements focused on include discipline, performance etiquette, the message of her music as well as his music output.
32	Best Female Artist Burundi	Edwige Mbonimpa, Kadja Nin, <b>Makarena</b> , Riziki	Best of the female popular musicians of Burundi regardless of the style of music she performs. The elements focused on include discipline, performance etiquette, the message of her music as well as his music output.
33	Best Male Artiste Kenya	Jua Cali, Nameless, Nonini, <b>Wyre</b>	Best of the male popular musicians from Kenya regardless of the style of music

			he performs. The elements focused on include discipline, performance etiquette, the message of his music as well as his music output.
34	Best Male Artist Tanzania	<b>AY</b> , Mr.Nice, Professor J, Bushoke	the outstanding male popular musician from Tanzania regardless of the style of music he performs. The elements focused on include discipline, performance etiquette, and the message of his music as well as his music output.
35	Best Male Artist Burundi	Canjo Amisi, <b>Mr. Kidumu</b> , Kaka Bonney, Shazzy Cool	Best of the male popular musicians of Burundi regardless of the style of music he performs. The elements focused on include discipline, performance etiquette, the message of his music as well as his music output.
36	Best Male Artist Rwanda	Big Dom, Jean Paul Samputu, Marko Nikoshwa, <b>Rafiki</b>	Best of the male popular musicians Rwanda regardless of the style of music he performs. The elements focused on include discipline, performance etiquette, the message of his music as well as his music output.

33	Female Artist of the Year	Catherine Kusasira, Desire Luzinda, Iryn Namubiru, <b>Juliana Kanyomozi</b>	Best of the female popular musicians in Uganda regardless of the style of music she performs. The judges consider the nominee's discipline, performance etiquette, message communicated in her music as well as music output.
38	Male Artist of the Year	<b>Bebe Cool</b> , Bobi Wine, Gen. Mega D, Sweet kid	Best of the male popular musicians in Uganda regardless of the style of music he performs. The elements focused on include discipline, performance etiquette, message communicated in his music as well as his music output.
39	Song of the Year	Kapaapala (David Lutaalo), Kus Kus (Bebe Cool), Mazi Mawanvu (Bobi Wine), <b>Nakudata (Mowsey Radio &amp; Weasle)</b>	The most popular song of the year
40	Album of the Year	Nakudata (Mowsey Radio & Weasle), Nice & Lovely (Geoffrey Lutaaya), Omunene (Bebe Cool), <b>Philly Bongole Lutaaya Tribute Album (Various Artists)</b>	The album thought to have the best collection of songs among all the albums recorded between the 30 <sup>th</sup> of the previous year (2007) and 30 <sup>th</sup> July of 2008.

41	Artist of the Year	Bebe Cool, Bobi Wine, Geoffrey Lutaaya, <b>Juliana Kanyomozi</b>	The best artist of all the Ugandan popular music artists based on discipline, music output, messages in his/her songs as well as his/her performance etiquette.
42	Life Time Achievement Award	Fr. Grimes	The winner of this award is nominated by the PAM Awards organizing committee and it is not necessarily a musician. For instance, in 2008, it was Father Grimes, the longtime principal of Namasagali secondary school and university.

APPENDIX 9a: Sample of PAM Awards Marking Guides for the Judges: Best Reggae  
Artiste/Group

## PEARL OF AFRICA MUSIC AWARDS

### PANEL FORM

CATEGORY : BEST REGGAE ARTISTE/GROUP

ARTISTE/GROUP : BEBE COOL

CRITERIA	REMARKS	POINTS
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>		
Does the music that the group perform fit the description of 'reggae'?		
Do the lyrics of the song articulate themes of the suffering diaspora or celebrate love?		/25
<b>DRUM N' BASS</b>		
Do these two instrumentation form the foundation of the rhythm section?		
Is the music meter duple or triple? Is the tonality in major or minor?		/25
Articulation? Is it in Legato or Marcato?		
<b>MUSICALITY</b>		
Is the group/artiste wholesome musically? Do they display this on stage while performing or on their recordings?		/25
<b>AMBIENCE</b>		
Does the music of the group/artiste leave you with a feel-good factor?		
Is the artiste/group's music and performance qualitative enough to stand out as the Best Reggae Artiste/Group of the Year?		/25
	<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>/100</b>

I confirm that the above information has been independently, willingly and confidentially given by myself

NAME..... SIGN..... DATE.....



## PEARL OF AFRICA MUSIC AWARDS

### PANEL FORM

CATEGORY : BEST BAND/GROUP - KENYA

ARTISTE/GROUP : JAMNAZZI

CRITERIA	REMARKS	POINTS
<b>SKILLS</b>		
Are all the band/group members skilled on their instrument?		
Do they transfer the live feel of their music onto their recordings while performing on stage?		/25
<b>STAGECRAFT</b>		
Does the band/group seem to enjoy themselves during performances?		
Do they perform with conviction?		/25
Is the lead singer given the space and vocal levels ( including foldback) to truly express him/herself?		
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>		
Does the band/group engage the audience in lively banter and keep eye contact?		
Does the band/group make the show entertaining, (consider visual dynamics such as image & movements like dancing and communication)?		/25
<b>SOUND</b>		
Do the band/group members complement each other in sound levels and participation?		/25
Is the band/group representative of Kenyan musical styles and themes?		
	<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>/100</b>

I confirm that the above information has been independently, willingly and confidentially given by myself

NAME.....

SIGN..... DATE.....

Appendix 9c: Sample of PAM Awards Marking Guides for the Judges: Northern Artist of the Year

## PEARL OF AFRICA MUSIC AWARDS

### PANEL FORM

CATEGORY : NORTHERN ARTISTE OF THE YEAR

ARTISTE/GROUP : B FALL

CRITERIA	REMARKS	POINTS
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>		
Did he/ she have enough hit songs that stood above the rest and aroused the emotions of the public?		/25
Did he/she release music that was generally popular & representative of the Northern region?		
<b>ARTISTRY</b>		
Do his/ her songs stand out as artistic statements?		
Were high levels of skill displayed on the instrumentation, arrangements and songwriting?		/25
<b>MUSICALITY</b>		
Is he/she a wholesome musician who displays outstanding musicality both on record and the stage i.e. outstanding vocal gymnastics like singing in high and low ranges? Is he/she an innovative artiste?		/25
<b>BEHAVIOUR</b>		
Was his/ her behavior in public compatible with his/her stature as a top musician to deserve the prestigious "Northern Artiste of the Year Award"?		/25
	<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>/100</b>

I confirm that the above information has been independently, willingly and confidentially given by myself

NAME..... SIGN..... DATE.....

## PEARL OF AFRICA MUSIC AWARDS

### PANEL FORM

CATEGORY : BEST CULTURAL ARTISTE / GROUP

ARTISTE/GROUP : AMARAKA GROUP

CRITERIA	REMARKS	POINTS
<b>SKILLS</b>		
Does the artiste/group play any instruments i.e xylophones, thumb, piano, fiddle, with the required skills?		/25
Are the instruments tuned? Is the singing on pitch and on right the key?		
<b>FUSION</b>		
Does the fusion of traditional instruments and singing blend well with the concept of traditional music?		/25
<b>AMBIANCE</b>		
Is the artsites'/group's music nicely arranged? Does it have a lasting feel-good factor?		/25
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>		
Does the group's/artistes' music help make them fit the description of Best Cultural Group/Artiste?		/25
	<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>/100</b>

I confirm that the above information has been independently, willingly and confidentially given by myself

NAME..... SIGN..... DATE.....