

**VOICE AND ISSUE REPRESENTATION IN *DAILY MONITOR* AND
THE NEW VISION NEWSPAPERS' COVERAGE OF THE
CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT DEBATE SEPTEMBER 2003-
SEPTEMBER 2005.**

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DECLARATION

This is to declare that the work presented in this dissertation is original. To the best of my knowledge, such a study has never been submitted for any award of degree in any university, school or college and has been fully supervised.

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ABSTRACT:

It seems research on media representation in Uganda has largely been limited to women and political elections campaigns. This study investigated voice and issue representation in newspaper coverage of the constitutional amendment debate from September 2003 to September 2005. The specific aims were to discover the dominant issues and voices in the debate; notice any similarities and differences in the coverage of the debate between *Daily Monitor* & *The New Vision* newspapers; and find out the implications of one issue and a few voices receiving disproportionate media attention on the democratic process in Uganda. It was presumed that newspapers had tilted their coverage of the whole process majorly on one issue (lifting the presidential term limits locally termed as third term) and that the voices of the male elite dominated the debate. The study employed a triangulation approach that encompassed content analysis, personal interviews, and review of appropriate documents. The researcher purposely selected two national newspapers (*The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*) and two years, randomly sampled six months that resulted into 73 news articles as a whole, selected 11 key informants, and reviewed several relevant documents. The study found that the removal of presidential term limits (third term) dominated the debate on constitutional amendment with 97.3% frequency; government elite, male and urban sources (Members of Parliament, Ministers, and Presidency) dominated as news sources (voices). Both *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* almost had similar coverage and to a greater extent, the media did not fulfill their democratic role. They did not offer citizens a wide variety of opinions and perspectives, but just the narrow spectrum represented by political elite. The study concludes with a call towards localizing news values, a deliberate move toward public communication and community media, training of journalists, emphasizing civic journalism and convincing commercial media to publish and broadcast relevant public information that breeds informed citizenry.

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This study was aimed at assessing voice and issue representation in the coverage of constitutional amendment debate by *The New Vision* and the *Daily Monitor* newspapers from September 2003 to September 2005. It examined the coverage that was given to selected constitutional amendment issues and the dominant sources of news, and how this affects the democratic process in Uganda.

The study used content analysis to determine the dominant issues and news sources or voices, their occupation, political affiliation, gender and location. In-depth interviews were employed to significantly examine the justifications for the varied patterns in the newspapers' coverage of the constitutional amendment debate. The same method was partially used to formulate meaningful inferences of the coverage patterns to democracy.

1.0. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The constitutional review process commenced on February 9, 2001 with the establishment of the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) under the chairmanship of Professor Fredrick Ssempebwa. The Legal Notice No.1 of 2001 issued by the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs established the CRC, (Government White Paper September, 2004). The setting up of CRC became necessary because experience had shown, from operating the current Uganda Constitution since it came into force in 1995, that it had several defects and areas of inadequacy, which needed to be addressed in the interest of proper administration of the country, (Ibid).

After a countrywide research, the CRC submitted its report to the government on December 10, 2003. On the same day, government issued a press release in which it expressed appreciation to the Commission for the good work done and stated that the

Commission's report, findings, and recommendations were to be printed and presented to Cabinet and Parliament for consideration and appropriate action, (Ibid).

But Ssempebwa, the CRC chairman, and Commissioner Sam Owor, each wrote a minority report opposing the lifting of presidential term limits sending jitters through government, (*Daily Monitor*, August 22, 2005, p.3). According to the same news report, in September 2004, the government ignored the minority reports and wrote a White Paper on CRC, which tore to shreds a number of the proposals in the CRC report. The intention of the White Paper, according to government white paper September, 2004 was to state the details of Government decisions on the proposals, findings, and recommendations and to indicate those which were accepted or rejected by government and to show the way forward.

Constitution Amendment Bills:

Cabinet also submitted an Omnibus Bill, over a number of issues to be amended in the constitutional review process. But the Bill ran into trouble after a number of constitutional lawyers warned that it could be a subject of litigation, (*Daily Monitor*, 2005, August 22, p.3). The government dropped the Omnibus Bill and recycled it into two separate Bills namely; Constitution Amendment (No. 2) Bill, 2005 and Constitution Amendment (No. 3) Bill, 2005. The latter is the focus of this study. Bill No. 3 contained the presidential term limits that was popularly referred to in the public debate as *third term* (an elongation of the presidential tenure to grant the president another term of five years in office) or *Kisanja* (another term of office) and other crucial clauses which appear to have received little media attention.

Debate on the Constitutional Amendment Process:

The debate on the constitutional amendment process started with the commissioning of the Constitutional Review Commission in February 2001.

However, the peak of the matter was after the Commission's submission of the reports and the two minority reports as put earlier in 2003. Nansozi Muwanga, a senior lecturer in the department of political science at Makerere University, confirmed that when she stated; "After handing over the CRC report to government, political debate on third term were everywhere, in bars, homes, workplaces, academic workshops, taxis," (Personal Communication, 2007). At this level, different stakeholders had shown their interests before the issues were put to the cabinet and legislators.

Key issues in the Amendment Bill (No. 3) included: clause 37 that amended article 105 of the 1995 Constitution and removed the presidential term limits; granting dual citizenship to individuals capable of making substantial investments in Uganda; clause 5 that replaced article 6 and made Kiswahili a second official language in Uganda in addition to English and Kampala's status as Uganda's modern capital in a modern state. The amendments also provided for the establishment of the offices of the Leader of opposition; holding presidential, parliamentary and local government elections at the same time; reducing the minimum qualification of High Court Judges from ten years practice to 7 years among others.

Media and the debate:

Though equally important, other issues appear to have received less media attention as compared to the removal of the presidential term limits in the constitutional amendment debate. Editorial columns and personal observations support this argument. Secondly, opinions of government officials and a few politicians seem to have dominated the debate on constitutional amendment at the expense of other stakeholders in the democratic process.

Thirdly, the assertion that the lifting of term limits dominated the debate needed to be quantitatively ascertained. It seems there were some other issues that were as important

as the lifting of term limits. *Daily Monitor* of August 22, 2005 (p.3) for instance, revealed that other issues such as the regional tier governments and the opening up of political space were contentious in the constitutional amendment process. Additionally, it appears that politicians dominated this debate. This study sought to provide that evidence as to what and who exactly dominated the debate as per the two national newspapers' coverage of the debate pertaining to the constitutional amendment process.

1.1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

Nearly all-normative theories of media and democracy call for free and open public debate, giving citizens access to all sorts of ideas and points of view. This empowers citizens to form reasoned opinions about public policy. Similarly, the norms of professional journalism, which emphasize fairness and equal treatment, suggest there might possibly be equal coverage of all groups of people and ideas.

However, it appears that the media gave importance and attention to only some topics, if not one, and a few sources in the coverage of the constitutional amendment process portraying them frequently and marginalizing others by ignoring them. The removal of presidential term limits (*third term*) as an issue and prominent politicians as sources of news seem to have dominated the reporting. This implies that the wider participation in the debate on the constitutional amendment process seemed to have been constrained because, possibly there were fewer voices and hence less diversity in media content. Yet, media as social institutions have the obligation to respect democratic principles, which hold that everybody in society who has anything to say must be given a chance.

Little is known about why exactly the media did this. Hence this study investigated the media representation of different issue and voice in the constitutional amendment

debate, look at why they intensely focused on the presidential term limits at the expense of other issues, and analyze the implications of the seemingly imbalanced media coverage on democratic process.

1.2. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS:

Third Term:

This is a local terminology that was used in the political debate of 2001 to 2006 on the constitutional review in Uganda to refer to a five year elongation of the presidential tenure in office contrary to the 1995 Constitution, which provided for only two terms. In this study, third term denotes the removal of presidential term limits in order to create another term of office for president Museveni as an amendment of the 1995 Constitution. Third term is an eminent term in this study because it was presumed to be the dominant issue in the constitutional debate.

Democracy:

Generally the term refers to social relationships, values and guarantees, equal opportunities for all citizens, the rule of law, civil liberties, protection of minorities etc., (Sudulich, 2003). Sudulich adds that democracy implies free and open public debate, citizens' access to all sorts of ideas and points of view so that they can form reasoned opinions about public policy. The researcher opted for Sudulich's definition because it covers the salient feature of democracy relevant to this study and these are; equal opportunities for all, public liberties, freedom of expression and access to all sorts of information.

Though democracy as a concept is not appearing anywhere in the topic of this study, it is reflected among its five specific objectives. The researcher aimed at establishing the implications of the media coverage of the constitutional amendment debate on democratic process in Uganda.

Voice:

Voice in this study is symbolically used to refer to a person or group of individuals, or organizations who provide information to news reporters. Precisely voice refers to news source. Sources are clearly identified as such when news reporters quote or paraphrase information from them in stories. However, in a few cases with in this study, voice is used to refer to news sources' spoken expressions or utterances. One of the major objectives of this study was to establish the dominant voices in the debate about the constitutional amendment. This explains why voice as a term is explicitly defined.

Issue:

According to the Free Online Dictionary (www.freedictionary.com), an issue is a matter of public concern or a point of discussion, debate or dispute. To this study particularly, issue refers to a constitutional clause that was tabled for amendment. These clauses were certainly the issues of concern to the public during the constitution amendment debate. This study majorly aimed at establishing the dominant voices and issues in the debate about the constitutional amendment.

1.3. SCOPE OF STUDY:

The study focused on *The New Vision* and the *Daily Monitor* Newspapers coverage of the constitutional amendment debate from September 2003 to September 2005. The two newspapers are the leading national dailies, their circulation is national, they seem to have reporters in almost 11 parts of the country, and their audience size is significantly big hence becoming an appropriate representative of print media in Uganda.

Time Scope:

The months between September 2003 and September 2005 were purposively selected because they were part of a long period in which the constitutional amendment process and debate took place in Uganda.

Content Scope:

The contents of this study mainly focus on the issue and voice representation in the constitution amendment process, why the third term issue received immense media attention, the leading voices in the predominant themes and the implications of the dominance of some themes and voices (news sources) on the democracy in Uganda.

Respondent Scope:

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

1.3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**1.4.0. General Objective:**

This study sought to investigate the voice and issue representation in the media coverage of constitutional amendment debate.

1.4.1. Specific Objectives:

- 1 To establish the dominant issues in the coverage of the constitutional amendment debate.
- 2 To discover the dominant sources of news or voices in the constitutional amendment debate.
- 3 To establish why some issues received more intensive media coverage than others in the constitutional amendment debate.
- 4 To identify similarities and differences, in the coverage of the debate between *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*.

- 5 To establish the implications of the dominance of the third term debate and certain news sources on the democratic process in Uganda.

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. What were the dominant issues in the coverage of the constitutional amendment debate?
2. Why did these issues receive more intensive media coverage than other issues in the constitutional amendment debate?
3. Who were the dominant sources of news or voices in the constitutional amendment debate in terms of occupation, political affiliation, gender and location?
4. What were the similarities and differences, if any, in the coverage of the debate between *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*?
5. What implications does the dominance of certain issues and news sources have on the democratic process in Uganda?

1.6. MAJOR ASSUMPTIONS:

1. Editors select news stories for their newspapers according to individual prejudice or bureaucratic newsroom routines.
2. Opinions of the elite are more attractive to the mass media than those of ordinary citizens.
3. Male voices dominate political debate.
4. Media coverage influences representation in public discourse.

1.7. JUSTIFICATION:

This study has several unique perspectives that would enrich our understanding of the print media in Uganda. By investigating the dominant themes and news sources in the coverage of the constitutional amendment debate in the two mainstream newspapers, the study will reveal the level of participation in the democratic process. The findings of this study may possibly help in understanding the reasons why some themes in the Constitution Amendment Bill, (2005) attracted more media coverage and attention than others.

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

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

1.7.0. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

This study is conceptualized within theories and studies that critically analyze how journalists routinely cover news and what normally shapes or influences their coverage. A small but crucial element of democratic expectations of the media is also relevant for the contextualisation of this study. Such theories and studies include; Gaye Tuchman's 1978 and W. Lance Bennett (1988)'s news production research; Herbert J. Gan's (1979) study of *CBS Evening News*, *NBC Nightly News*, *Newsweek*, and *Time*; Political economy doctrines as argued by Golding and Murdock (2000); Newcomb's ABX model as stated by McQuail and Windahl (1981); Michael Schudson's *Sociology of News Production* (2000); and theories of influences on mass media content as discussed by Pamela J.

Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese (1991; 1996). However, though some of these studies and theories can be looked at independently, the majority of them are widely intertwined.

1.7.1. Democratic Expectations of the Media:

Theories of the press and democracy presume that mass media can contribute to the democratic process by helping to cultivate social spaces for public dialogue. Croteau and Hoynes (2001) basing on the public sphere model argue that media; “are defined as central elements of a healthy public sphere-the ‘space’ within which ideas, opinions, and views freely circulate” (p. 14). This implies that the press ought to provide platforms for peoples’ participation in the public discourse in order to register their views in policy formulation.

Classical thinking about journalism assumes that the job of the news media is to help citizens achieve what Robert Dahl calls an “adequate understanding” of political issues, and helping citizens towards this understanding has long been and still should be a leading aim of the news media, Schudson, (1995, p. 212). He adds that citizens must have adequate understanding of politics to discover their own preferences. News media therefore need to contribute vigorously towards this democratic value. Still, media seem to be the centre or source of information where citizens can learn about their representatives’ exercise of power.

The role media play in politics, has become pivotal; individuals rely on the media more often for social connectedness and political awareness; would be opinion formers and political parties and their leaders rely on them more heavily to reach individual citizens and cultivate or restore public support, Blumler, (1997, p.397). There is no doubt that even in Uganda during the constitutional amendment process, the public was expected to pick the issues of the day from the news media. That is why this study endeavors to

investigate the issues that the news media covered and what kind of people were behind them.

In his analysis of the role of the media in building democratic African societies, Kupe cited in Nassanga (2003, p.7) argues that the public service broadcasters create an open public sphere that facilitates the circulation of information as a resource for citizenship and acts a forum for debate and discussion in which all news, opinions and ideas, regardless of the social status of their originators have an equal chance of being broadcast. Therefore, *Daily Monitor* and *The New Vision* ought to have provide a forum for debate about the constitutional amendment to all people regardless of their political affiliation or social status.

Juuko cited in Nassanga (2003, p. 29) argues that media are viewed as agencies of information and debate that facilitate the functioning of democracy. She adds that the media also provide a channel of communication between governments and the governed, which help society to clarify its objectives, formulate policy, coordinate activity and manage itself.

If news media are learning fora, they ought to set meaningful agenda so as to achieve political awareness. This is what Rosen, 1993, Hallin, 1992, Asard and Bennett, (1997), quoted in Blumler (1997, p. 403) echoed in their argument that; leading news organizations should aim to create and recreate a national agenda based on a synthesis of public opinion, party perspectives, and expert views on the major concerns of the day. However, in Uganda, it seems this did not happen in the coverage of constitutional amendment debate. The debate appears to have concentrated on a few issues if not one, and left quite many other important ones.

Graber (2003, p.143) argues that;

The press should do four things: provide a forum for discussion of diverse, often conflicting ideas; give voice to public opinion; serve as citizens' eyes and ears to survey the political scene and the performance of politicians; and act as a public watchdog that barks loudly when it encounters misbehavior, corruption, and abuses of power in the halls of government. The basic assumption is that public dialogue generated by media coverage will bring out the truth in political controversies so that the best policies can emerge.

Media is also an agency of information and debate that facilitates the functioning of democracy; the media brief the electorate and assist voters to make an informed choice at election time; provide a channel of communication between government and governed which helps society to clarify its objectives; formulate policy; coordinate activity, and manage itself, (Curran, 2000, p. 127 and Golding and Murdock, 2000, p. 77).

1.7.2. Political Economy of News Media: A limitation to Democratic Expectations of the Media

The link between ownership of news organizations and the character of news coverage is not easy to determine and it grows more difficult by the day as public and commercial systems of ownership mix and blend and intersect in a growing variety of ways (Chomsky, 1991, in Schudson, 2000, p.251). News is, in many ways, a collision of different interests. Indeed the traditional tenets of journalism are challenged and undermined by advertisers' demand, owners' pressure, and government power, (Ibid).

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

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

The elites, both governmental and corporate, are given privileged access to news channels, (Herman and Chomsky, 1988 in Shoemaker and Reese, 1996, p.233; also see Murdock, 1973 in Schudson, 2000, p.180). Gans, (1979, p. 117) argues that the sources who are most successful in gaining access to news media are likely to be powerful, well resourced, and well organized for supplying journalists with the kind of news they want at the right moment in time." Murdock states that in all political and economic systems, news coincides with and reinforces the definition of the political situation evolved by the political elite. This means that what news media capture in form of information to a larger extent is the interest of the political elite who even determine political events that make-up news.

Altschull, 1984 cited in Shoemaker and Reese, (1996, p.232) outlines four sources of media support that heavily influence the content. He argues that,

- Under the "official" pattern, media are controlled by the states.
- In the "commercial" pattern, media reflect the ideology of advertisers and their media owning allies.

- Under the “interest” pattern, media content reflects the ideology of the financing group, such as a political party or religious group.
- In the “informal” pattern, content reflects the goals of individual contributors who want to promote their views.

The above assumptions would be useful in explaining why media decide to focus intensely on certain themes and not others and would justify some dominant sources of news. In the Ugandan context and in relation to this study, it seems that regular official sources like government ministers, Members of Parliaments, and a cluster of giant advertisers might be using Herman and Chomsky’s propaganda model and Altschull’s media support techniques to direct the media operations. In any case, for instance, government is an outstanding advertiser in both print and electronic media. Indeed the findings of this study and theoretical body (like in Gans, 1979 & Schudson, 2008) indicate that voices with economic or political power dominated the constitutional amendment coverage.

Gans, 1979, and Gitlin, 1980, in Shoemaker and Reese (1996, p.6) have organized content research around a variety of theoretical perspectives or approaches. Gans and Gitlin group these approaches into five assumptions that Shoemaker and Reese did an extensive exposition about. These assumptions could as well be looked at as factors influencing media content. Such influences seem to be appropriate in providing a structure or set of ideas that sustain and permeate this study.

- Content reflects social reality with little or no distortion. This mirror approach to content research assumes that what the mass media distribute and convey an accurate reflection of social reality to the audience-like a television camera turned on the world, (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996, p.6). However, as noted earlier in the political economy model, this reality is a construction of the well-known people, stars and celebrities who are preferred by those who “carry the camera”. In line

with this study, reality might be that the theme and voices that were covered by news media's of the constitutional amendment process might be the ones that were debated/debating in all corners.

- Content is influenced by media workers' socialization and attitudes. This communicator-centered approach suggests that psychological factors intrinsic to communications personnel, their professional, personal, and political attitudes, and the professional training communicators receive, lead them to produce a social reality. White, (1950), Gieber, (1964), and 1986 Lichter et al's arguments highlighted already in this section, confirm this assumption.
- Content is influenced by media routines. Shoemaker and Reese argue that media content is influenced by ways in which communications workers and their companies organize work. They for example state; "reporters are taught to write stories in the inverted pyramid-putting what they consider most important information first and organizing the rest in descending order of importance," (Ibid, p.7). Since prominence, timeliness and controversy are some of the salient news values, they appear to have influenced *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* to focus intense coverage on the government officials debating the removal of presidential limits.
- Content is influenced by social institutions and forces. This approach suggests that factors external to the communicator and the organization, economic and cultural forces, and audience-determine content. The market approach, for example, locates influence in the communicators' desire to give audiences what they want in order to ensure large audiences for sponsors' product; whereas the social responsibility approach locates the influence in the communicators' desire to give audiences what they need. Sources, those who have economic power are

more likely to influence news reports than those who lack power, (Gans, 1979 cited in Shoemaker and Reese, 1996, p.180). The content of the press is directly correlated with the interests of those who finance the press, (Altschull, 1984 cited in Shoemaker and Reese, 1996. p.190).

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

1.7.3. Social Organization of News Work:

The basic orientation of social scientists is that political news making is a reality-constructing activity that follows the lead of government officials, (Schudson, 2002, p.255). The organization of beats is such that reporters get the largest share of their news from official government agencies. One of the great advantages is that such beats provide a reliable and steady supply of the raw materials for news production. (Ibid, and Gans, 1979, P.116).

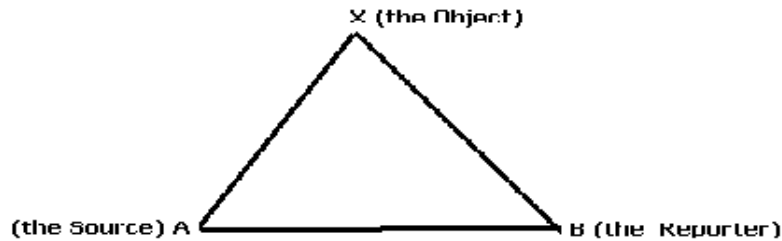
Graber (2003, p.142) puts it that media critics are also unhappy that journalists are eager to retain the largest possible audiences, may avoid controversies that might offend sizeable audience segments. News media may in the end reduce the costs of news production by having fewer reporters who might pursue stories from regular sources that are usually official. It is therefore clear that, news is about government officials who are considered authoritative on public policies.

In Uganda for instance, journalists tend to depend on certain vocal Members of Parliament and some controversial politicians from the official power as their sources of news. It will not therefore be surprising to find such people having dominated the debate on constitutional amendment between September 2003 and September 2005.

White (1950) and Gieber (1964) in Schudson (2002, p.250) argue that; “formal study of how news organizations produce news products dates to ‘gatekeeper’ studies in the 1950s. Several studies demonstrated that editors, who select wire service stories for their newspapers do so in ways that do not mirror the whole array of stories before them but select according to individual prejudice or bureaucratic newsroom routines.” Lichter et al, 1986, in Schudson (2002, p. 259) add that the individual journalists’ attitudes influence news coverage. This assertion was based on the case that news in the United States has a liberal bias because journalists and news organizations are themselves liberal. Lichter et al, White, and Gieber’s conclusions are crucial to this study in the sense that they provide three major factors that affect news production; editors’ prejudice, individual journalists’ attitudes, and newsroom routines.

The values held by journalists influence news even when considerable effort is made to guard against that influence, (Tuchman, 1978 in Baran & Davis, 2003; Gans, 1979; Shoemaker and Reese, 1996). Tuchman for instance observed journalists as they covered social movements and concluded that production practices were implicitly biased towards the support of the status quo.

Newcomb’s ABX model (1953; 1959) also endeavors to explain why certain themes in society become more prominent than others. According to McQuail and Windahl (1981, p. 22) the model takes a triangular shape, the points of which represent respectively two individuals A (the source) and B (the reporter) and an object X, for the purpose of this study an object could be the theme. In their normal environment, both A and B are oriented to one another and to X.



A visual representation of ABX Model

McQuail and Windahl argue, Newcomb in 1959 in his study titled '*The study of consensus*' added some qualifications to his earlier proposition by writing that, communication is only likely to be activated; a) where there is strong attraction between persons, b) where the object is important to at least one of the participants and, c) where the object X has a joint relevance for both. The two scholars concluded that Newcomb model supports the view that people (including journalists) are likely to attend to sources of information, which are in line with their existing positions and look for information, which supports and confirms their actual behavior.

ABX model explains the journalists' orientation with the sources of information and how it influences communication. It also points out clearly that the relevance of the theme or subject to both the reporter and the sources might account for its dominance (or coverage) in the communication channels. The model exposes the fact that the importance of a theme, to either the source or the reporter, might explain its prominence in the media. All the assumptions mentioned in ABX model are in focus of this study. However, the model has some limitations especially when it assumes that the tendency to consensus is the only factor that influences news content. Secondly, the model's generalization that reporters are always subjective is not true.

McQuail, (2000, p. 284) summarizes factors affecting news selection as follows; power and fame of individuals involved in the events, personal contacts of reporters, location of events, location of power, recency and timeliness. Gans, (1979, p.148-177) adds on other factors like, rank in governmental and other hierarchies, impact on nation and national interest, impact on large numbers of people, significance for the past and future, and competitive considerations in the media market. The third term as an issue presumably had all these characteristics. This partially explains why it received immense news media's attention.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

2.0. Dominant Voices in the News:

Almost all studies that have examined the relationship between journalists and their sources conclude that news reporters rely, to a great degree, on official sources and routine channels. (See Sigal, 1973, & Epstein, 1973 quoted in Gamson et al, 1992; Tuchman, 1978; Gans, 1979; Bennett, 1988; Schudson, 2000 & 2003, and Graber, 2003).

Today, news and public affairs programming worldwide are elite centered. This is likely to be the case even in Uganda. In America for instance, a study by FAIR (1999) examined the regular public affairs programming, news, talk/interviews, business and documentary, during a two-week period in the late 1998. The findings indicated that Public Service Broadcasting shows often mirrored the narrow range of debate available in the main stream media; government officials (50%), professionals (31% overwhelmingly journalists) and corporate representatives (11%) dominated the debate over domestic politics leaving little room for the consumer advocates or public interest.

Although this survey was focused on broadcast media, it's strongly relevant to the Ugandan situation because it gives the dominant voices of political views in the media, which is a key dimension of this study. However, it did not account for this dominance and lacks the links between media practice and democracy.

Mwesige and Balikowa (2008, p. 20) assessed Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (*UBC-TV*) as a public service broadcaster and found that the President and the executive dominate news at *UBC-TV*. In the first week of their sample, President Museveni was the main news maker in the lead stories for six out seven days. The president also appeared in 12 of the top 21 top three stories that week. The cabinet ministers

constituted 16.3% of the all the news broadcasts in the first week September 2007 as part of the sample.

Mwesige and Balikowa's findings are confirming a classical theory that news is dominated by official government sources.

In a similar media sociology study, Gans, (1979) analyzed *CBS*, *NBC*, *Newsweek*, and *Times* from 1967 to 1975 and found that news is dominated by the "knowns", people who are already prominent. These knowns consist of incumbent presidents, presidential candidates, leading federal officials, state and local officials, and alleged and actual violators of the laws and mores, (p. 9-10).

Danielian & Page's study, (1994), revealed that more news stories come from governmental and political sources, 10.2 percent for instance, were drawn from the President and White House, and 29.5 percent from other administration sources, (p. 1062). Sigal's (1973) and Sandra Dickson, (1992) quoted in Shoemaker and Reese, (1996, p. 49) give similar findings. Gans, (1979, p.119); McQuail, (2000, p.288); Schudson, (2000, p.180) argue that official government sources are preferred due to their importance and authoritative nature.

Hoynes and Croteau (1990) in their study of the two TV Shows' guests (McNeil/Lehrer and Nightline) found out that; on McNeil/Lehrer, 46% of its guests were government officials, 38 percent were professionals and 5 percent were corporate representatives. Basing on these findings 89 percent of representation was "elite opinion" and only 6 percent of its guests represented public interest, labour, or racial/ethnic groups. Where as on Nightline 34 percent were government officials, 39 percent were professionals and 5 percent corporate representatives, 78 percent elite opinion, and 10 percent represented public interest, labour or racial/ethnic groups. Regarding to gender, 87 percent were male on MacNeil and 82 percent were male on Nightline. This study reveals the

dominance of male elite, which is part of what the researcher aimed at investigating in Uganda's *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*.

Hoynes and Croteau's findings are crucial to this study because the dominant guests on Television shows could be equated to dominant voices in the news for this study. This therefore implies that official power and professionals tend to be the predominant sources of information on all socio-political developments. However, it lacks the local touch that this study intends to provide.

Though news media managers tend to claim that they give the news and information without fear or favor regardless of other political, ethnic or gender interest involved, many research findings indicate that media often fail to live up to that goal. There are biases or lack of balance in the news media's role of provision of information. These imbalances are normally noticed in elements of gender, ethnicity, party affiliation and occupation.

Rendall (2005) in a study that examined C-SPAN's *Washington Journal's* guest for six month period found people of European ancestry making up 85 percent of the guest list, (563 out of 663). On gender, 80 percent were male and 20 percent females. Yet on political grounds, Republicans outnumbered Democrats nearly two to one (134 to 70) that is 65 percent and 34 percent respectively.

Still on imbalances in the news, more worrying findings are in FAIR's (2001) study that examined news sources on U.S.'s *ABC World News Tonight*, *CBS Evening News* and *NBC Nightly News*. 92 percent of all sources interviewed were white on all networks, 85 percent on average were male, and 75 percent on average were Republicans.

To bring the picture closer, a study carried by Democracy Monitoring Group (DEMGroup, 2006) titled "*Uganda Media Coverage of the 2006 Elections*" found that both

electronic and print media were biased in the coverage in a number of ways. It for example, showed that all private and state owned media had tremendous support towards the National Resistance Movement (NRM) political party (the party of the incumbent president). Uganda Broadcasting Corporation Radio (*UBC-Radio*) gave President Museveni 70.11 percent of airtime, Besigye, of Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) 28.24 percent, Bwanika, independent 1.52 percent, Miria of Uganda People's Congress (UPC) 0.00 percent and Sebana of Democratic Party (DP) 0.13 percent. On gender, male dominance was at 92.94 percent yet females were 3.53 percent, and 3.53 percent plural subject with *UBC-TV* (state owned). With *WBS TV* (privately owned) 95.83 percent were males, 2.78 females, and 1.39 percent plural subject, (pp.25-78).

Political and gender bias can also be identified in Mwesige's (2004) study. He found that 51 percent of the guests (on political talkshows) identified themselves as supporters of the ruling Movement and 48 percent supported multiparty. For gender, 85 percent were men including shows moderated by women. Still the callers on political talkshows sampled made 88 percent male dominance, (p.23-24).

Albeit many studies show bias in news media coverage of voices and events, this does not necessarily mean that balance in coverage is unattainable. A study of Semetko, Blumler, Gurevitch, Weaver, 1991, cited in Shoemaker and Reese, (1996, p.44) showed balanced coverage of the Republicans and Democrats by *ABC*, *CBS*, and *NBC* in terms of number of stories, average length of stories, promotion of sound bites used and objects of visual.

The above studies indicate the political, gender and ethnic biases in voices that appear in both print and electronic media locally and internationally. It is not yet clear whether the news media coverage of the constitutional amendment debate had the same biases. This uncertainty justifies this very study and will be able to investigate political, gender,

occupation, and location of the voices to discover whether there were biases in coverage.

2.1. Activities/Issues in the News:

Cook, (1989) cited in Shoemaker and Reese, (1996, p.44) points out in his study of how the media cover the U.S. House of representatives that very few of the events and activities are actually covered, and those that are covered get further winnowed down. Though Cook's study did not provide figures of bias, it provides a general frame work of how news media cover events.

In Uganda, a widely spread presumption is that the media covered third term intensely as compared to other crucial issues. Kanaabi Haruna, coordinator East African Media Institute (EAMI) Uganda Chapter in (June 2007), personal interview argued that third term was not covered as a national issue in terms of its in-depth meaning to good governance but turned into a win or lose battle between the incumbent and opposition.

The major activities in the news according to Sigal, 1973 quoted in Bennett, (1988 p. 94-95) and Gans, (1979 P.16) is a focus on the official or the deviant. For Sigal, who studied the news content of two America's finest newspapers, according to Bennett, the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* found that 46.5 percent of sources were reporting on activities of U.S. officials. In his famous study *Deciding What's News* that analyzed CBS, NBC, *Newsweek*, and *Times* from 1967 to 1975, Gans found that the major activities were government conflicts and disagreements; government decisions, proposals and ceremonies; government personnel changes; protests violent and non-violent; crimes, scandals, and investigations.

News is normally more on domestic or local issues than on far or foreign ones. In their study of Interest Group Voices, Danielian and Page (1994, p.1063) concluded that

interest group voices tend to be louder on domestic issues on which government sources are especially predominant. To be more specific, issues of civil rights dominated the voices by 30.6 percent of all source stories, followed by wage and price control with 26.4 percent, and energy with 24.6 percent.

Slightly close to Danielian & Page's findings, is Mwesige's (2004) study that has already been cited on political bias in political talkshows' guest list and callers. He found that on dominant issues, democratization and governance was given priority by 53 percent on the shows sampled. Social issues were 22 percent, armed conflict, peace and security 10 percent, and economy 5 percent, (p.18).

Danielian & Page and Mwesige studies indicate a similarity in the dominance of democracy issues and discrepancy on economic issues. Indeed, civil rights that was found high in the U.S. is part and parcel of democracy that Mwesige found dominant in Uganda. Therefore, democracy seems to be a central issue on news media agenda globally.

2.2. Factors Affecting the Appearance of Voice and Issue:

2.2.0. Editors' influence:

White, 1950 cited in Schudson (2000, p. 77) concludes that, news communication process is highly subjective, because is majorly based on the gate keeper's own set of experiences, attitudes, and expectations.

White's conclusions are vital and relevant to this study. He, for instance explains how editors play the gate keeping role that shapes news content. This might be professional, but he adds that editors invoke their personal attitudes in deciding what news is. In this study, the researcher examines news sources and topics in the coverage of constitutional amendment debate and why news media tend to focus on certain themes

and voices. The gaps that are likely to be filled as regards to White's conclusion are to investigate this in Uganda, and to possibly challenge his assertion that editors have biases always while selecting news.

2.2.1. Status or Rank of the Source:

Every social scientific study of the press of the past years has found that the press over represents the views of the government officials (Schudson, 1995, p. 214). However, their dominance seems to be inevitable since the main focus of political news is necessarily government, (Ibid). This is consistent with Gans' assertion that the higher an actor is in the governmental hierarchy, the more his or her activities are of importance to news media and society, (1979, p. 147).

In Uganda, the media seem to be covering greatly the voices and activities of the officials in the ruling political party-the National Resistance Movement (NRM) and those of the rich as compared to the activities of the opposition and the poor. Mwesige and Balikowa (2008, p.20) found that 86% of the news makers on UBC-TV news for the first week of September 2007, were from the ruling NRM.

Kibazo and Kanaabi (2007, p.11) in their study titled "*FM Stations in Uganda; Quality without Quality*" found that most FM Stations owned by the very rich and those with the leanings to the ruling party, broadcast less voices of the opposition politicians, This very study also found that the activities and voices of government officials dominated the debate on the constitutional amendment in both *Daily Monitor* and *The New Vision* newspapers.

In their study of how newspapers cover environmental disasters, Horning, Walters, and Templin (1991) in Shoemaker and Reese, (1996, p. 181) found that reporters were likely to rely on government sources than on technical experts who could even provide

scientific background information or information that would help readers minimize further harm. It is clear here that the rank of governmental officials perhaps gives them an upper hand in news coverage and officials of lower hierarchy find difficulty to appear in the news as Bennett, (1988, p. 96) argues; “Un official groups have much more difficulty in influencing political outcomes because their perspectives are seldom given credibility via news coverage.”

Apart from government officials, the rank of experts and their technical know how make them picked by news media practitioners. Soley, (1992) in Shoemaker and Reese, (1996, p. 130) analyzed the experts featured on network news casts and concluded that approximately 90 individuals dominated political events. The experts appeared on the Network evening news casts, the *MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour*; *NPR's Morning Edition*; and Sunday morning news programs and in the Metropolitan Daily newspapers.

2.2.2. Reliance on Other Media or Competition:

Competition for audience also shapes news media coverage of issues. Usually the end result is identical coverage because total neglect of the rival's story might lead to loss of market share. On the other hand, reliance on some influential media tends to produce similar content as well and therefore stifles diversity of views and opinions. Shoemaker and Reese, (1996, p.189) cite a survey which showed 88 percent of journalists surveyed said that U.S.'s National Public Radio (*NPR*) was a “positive influence” on journalism in America. *NPR's* influence was in airing news programs that were later picked by other news media both print and electronic.

This symbiotic relationship among news media appears to be true even in Uganda. It is quite clear that a considerable number of topics discussed on TV and radio evening and weekend political shows are drawn from print-newspapers. Similarly, some newspapers pick weekend political talkshows' issue in their Monday editions. Relating this to this study, there are claims that *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* seem to have had similar coverage of the constitutional amendment debate especially in terms of issues and sources covered. This will be highlighted in the subsequent chapter on discussion of findings.

Entman (1985) argues that competition shapes news content but stifles diversity. His conclusion is based on a study that investigated whether competition affects content. He compared the content of 91 newspapers from communities with either two competing newspapers or two papers with a single owner. He found little evidence to suggest that competition encourages diversity.

2.2.3. Political and Economic Power:

Capitalists use their economic power with commercial market system to ensure that the flow of public information is consonant with their interests, (Golding & Murdock, 2000, p.73). They add that governments and state departments have become increasingly important producers of public information in a variety of forms ranging from official statistics and daily press briefings to public advertising campaigns, (p. 81). This implies a dominance of economic actors and government official s' activities and voices.

It is already established in the political economy of news that source selection normally favors both economic and political elite. Howard (2002) examined sources used on three U.S. big networks *ABC World News Tonight*, *CBS Evening News*, and *NBC Nightly News*. The study found that source selection favored the elite interests that the corporate owners of these shows depend on for advertising revenue, regulatory support and access to information. Howard further argues that network news demonstrated a clear tendency to show case the opinions of the most powerful and economic actors, while giving limited access to those voices that would be most likely to challenge them.

FAIR's Sixth Annual Report 2006 found that there is a blurring line between editorial and advertising content. The report emphatically state that morning news shows at *Gannett* owned stations are erasing the line, airing "*Magazine*" morning programs on which the majority of guests pay to be on the air-in other words "infomercials". These developments indicate that, voice appearance is likely to be paid for, that is likely to maintain the fact that news is a phenomenon of male elite who can pay for their access. This denies the public sphere doctrine that wishes all people to freely enter the space and discuss. It is therefore a menace to democracy.

2.3. Summary of the Key Issues in the Literature:

- News reporters rely, to a great degree, on official sources that are already prominent and routine channels. This trend makes news and public affairs programming worldwide, elite centred, and the major activities in the news to be a focus on the official or the deviant.
- Today, capitalists use their economic power with commercial market system to ensure that the flow of public information is consonant with their interests.
- Due to competition for audience, news media tend to focus their coverage on similar issues and voices thus limiting diversity in content.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This study employed mainly two primary data collection methods; content analysis (which is quantitative) and personal interviews (qualitative) and secondary data from reviewed documents.

3.0 Triangulation Approach:

Using a combination of two approaches or techniques in collecting and analyzing data from both quantitative and qualitative strategies is termed as triangulation, (Amin, 2005, p.63). Yet, Meredith et al cited in Amin (2005, p.64) refer to triangulation as a process of using multiple data collection methods, data sources, analysts, or theories to check the validity of study findings. As Amin argues, in triangulation results from one method can help develop or inform other method. In this study, data collected from content analysis was used for personal interviews and secondary data from documents was used to interpret it.

Though triangulation has different types as Amin (2005, p. 71) suggests, this study employed the methodological one which he defines as an approach that uses more than one research method or data collection technique because each taps different dimensions of a problem.

Methodological triangulation has varied purposes that were relevant to this study; Amin (2005, p.71) states them as;

- Providing a means of cross checking information obtained from different data sources. In this study, some primary data was used in structuring questions for personal interviews.

- Helping to provide information that enables judgment about the true status of the investigation. The justification above also fits here.
- Providing complete insight into the meaning of the results obtained and minimizing researcher's bias.
- Methodological triangulation helps to capture a more complete, holistic view of a research outcome. This study has broader outcomes that justify the usage of this approach.

3.1. Rationale for Using Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches:

As defined by Sullivan (2001, p.98), the qualitative approach basically involves data in form of words, pictures, descriptions, or narrations or narratives; and the quantitative approach uses numbers, counts, and measuring of things. Therefore the qualitative approach, where personal interviews were used was relevant because the researcher needed data in form of words from key respondents. These were selected to provide explanations of some content analysis data.

According Amin (2005, p. 54), the qualitative approach stresses interpretations and meanings of events, achieves greater and deeper understanding of respondents' world, allows higher level of flexibility and presents a more realistic viewing of the social world. He however argues that the qualitative design has problems of reliability caused by extreme subjectivity, a risk of collecting meaningless information, is time consuming and has the problems of representativeness and generalisability of the findings. Despite these weaknesses of the qualitative design, the researcher endeavored to minimize on all the mentioned shortfalls. The data collected through the qualitative design was not for representative purpose but rather to give explicit explanations on some events and behavior of the media practitioners.

Yet quantitative as Amin (2005, p.55) involves the collection of numerical data in order to explain, predict and control phenomena of interest, data analysis being mainly statistical. He adds that quantitative design is applied in order to describe current conditions or to investigate relationships, including cause-and-effect relationships.

The quantitative design was used in order to investigate relations in the media coverage of the constitutional amendment debate between *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*. Since this study had to control as many variables as possible and due to the fact its findings needed to be generalized, the quantitative approach was indeed relevant. Still this study sought to identify the dominant themes and sources that required counting the occurrences in the news stories which could only be done in the quantitative approach.

Though the quantitative design is limited by its peculiar and biased perception of the world and failure to distinguish between appearance and essence of social events as Amin (2005, p.61) argues, the endeavored to control both external and external validity.

3.2. Data Collection Tools/Instruments:

The researcher used a content analysis code book in which he defined and described various variables. The same instrument clearly indicated the procedure that the researcher followed during the data collection.

The code sheet was used in the process of coding various variables. Yet a tape recorder and note books were used to record the primary data from the respondents and various secondary sources.

The interview guide was useful in the process of collecting data from the key informants. The researcher had to be systematic in asking relevant questions that would illicit relevant responses and these questions had been clearly outlined in the interview guide. Therefore, the guide was important to the researchers.

3.3. Content Analysis: Approach and Rationale:

Berelson (1952) quoted in Hansen et al (1998, p.18) defines content analysis as a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication. Though Wakefield and Elliott (2003, p. 218) highlighted the deficiency of content analysis when they said; “It does not allow the assessment of the motivation behind articles, or how messages are being interpreted by an audience,” the design is useful for describing media coverage of visible content.

This design was used because, the researcher needed to describe and analyze media content (in *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*) in a more comprehensive way, a way less prone to subjective selectiveness and idiosyncrasies as Hansen et al (1998, p.91) suggest.

The researcher also needed to identify and count the occurrence of specified dimensions of texts, and through this, to be able to say something about messages, and representations of such texts and their social significances, as (Ibid, p.95) stated. In this case the researcher needed to identify and count dominant topics or issues, sources in terms of occupations, gender, political affiliation, and their locations.

3.4.0. Steps in Content Analysis:

3.4.1 Definition of Research Problem:

The relevance of the method was clearly indicated in the problem statement. The conceptualization was also done in the theoretical stream and later anchored in the review of related studies. The researcher clearly defined the body of the media to be

analyzed, described and characterized. However, since media coverage is all embracing and could refer to anything from newspaper coverage, TV and radio, magazine etcetera (Hansen et al, 1998; Wimmer and Dominick, 2003), the researcher defined media as *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* newspapers.

3.4.2 Selection of the Media:

The media (*The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* newspapers) were purposively selected. Using a purposive sampling technique was partially based on Riffe and Freitag (1997) quoted in Wimmer and Dominick (2003, p.148)'s submission about the significance of purposive sampling. They found out that 68% of all the content analyses in Journalism Quarterly from 1971 to 1995 used purposive samples. Though this design has always been associated with a danger of bias (Kothori, 2002, p.73), the researcher endeavored to be impartial and used sound judgment.

The two newspapers were selected due to a number of reasons; their geographical reach is national- and they seem to have reporters in almost all parts of the country. Kanaabi et al (2004) argue that; "out of the six daily newspapers, only *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* can be regarded as national newspapers," (p.10). The audience size for both papers is considerably big as compared to others, and its composition is vital for policy formulation in Uganda. Finally, the papers were accessible and had the relevant research material. Therefore the two newspapers are an appropriate representative sample for print media in Uganda.

3.4.3 About the Selected Media:

The New Vision:

According to the paper's website, its mission statement is to inform, educate and entertain, accurately and openly, for a better world. Yet its vision statement is to expand as the dominant multimedia enterprise through editorial innovations and world-class

practices. *The New Vision* is 15 by 11 inches in size and averages 36 pages per issue, but can also reach as many as 60 pages in an issue. Approximately 70 percent of the paper is news copy, with 30 percent of the space dedicated to advertising, (Press reference, 2007).

The New Vision Printing & Publishing Company Limited (NVPPCL) started business in March 1986 after the National Resistance Movement (NRM) took power in Uganda. Its initial line of business was the production of an English language newspaper “*The New Vision*”. The Government granted the new newspaper financial autonomy and editorial independence. *The New Vision* management set an objective and progressive political line, supportive of the Movement ideals, but critical of failings, as the basis of its editorial philosophy, (www.newvision.co.ug).

The company registered excellent Audit Bureau of Circulation figures for the period July-December 2005 (including part of sampled period for this study) with *The New Vision* at 35,186, and *Sunday Vision* at 36,729, (*The New Vision* Annual Report, 2005-2006).

The New Vision has its headquarters in the Industrial area; plot 19/21 First Street. Since inception, *The New Vision* claims to have been the leading daily in Uganda, enjoying a 60% share of the total daily newspaper sales. The paper has online version accessed on www.newvision.co.ug. It claims to be the most visited Ugandan website with approximately 900,000 visitors a month.

Daily Monitor/Monitor Publications Ltd:

It was established in 1992 as an independent daily newspaper, and re-launched as *Daily Monitor* in June 2005. The Nation Media Group jointly owns Monitor Publications Ltd with five other individual shareholders. The paper's private ownership perhaps guarantees the independence of its editors and journalists, free from the influence of government, shareholders or any political allegiance, (website information;

<http://www.monitor.co.ug/extras/aboutus.php>). Kyazze (2003, p.156) argues that *Daily Monitor* has kept the promise of independence as made in its editorial of July, 31, 1992.

Daily Monitor grew from humble beginnings to become *The New Vision*'s main rival. *Daily Monitor*'s daily sales are 25,000 copies (although this appears to be an old estimate). With the same 15-by 11-inch format as *The New Vision*, *Daily Monitor* averages 31 pages per issue, but can reach up to 50 pages. In an average issue 80 percent of space is committed to news copy, and the remaining 20 percent is sold to advertiser (.Press reference,2007).

The headquarters of the *Daily Monitor* are located on Plot 29-35, 8th Street, Industrial Area. Monitor Online (www.monitor.co.ug) is the online edition of *Daily Monitor* newspaper. Started in 1994, and claims to be one of the first newspaper websites on the African continent.

3.4.4. Sampling of Years, Months and Issues or dates:

The researcher used purposive sampling to select the media (*The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*), the two years (September 2003-September 2005) and to select relevant content from varied stories, and employed systematic random sampling at stage three to select months and dates. The period of the two years was importance because, the constitutional amendment debate was at its climax as noted in the scope and background of this study. The publications of this period and the time itself played a key role in the history of Uganda. Therefore, the years were defined by the event or issue in question, the constitutional amendment debate.

For the selection of months, the researcher used a random sampling technique to determine a sampling frame of 25 months for both newspapers. Although almost any sampling procedure could produce a representative sample (Sullivan, 2001, p.193), the

researcher chose the probability one in order to be as certain as possible of representativeness and generalisability. The months in the sampling frame were numbered sequentially and they were selected from the list randomly. The number of months and dates sampled were later discovered as optimum. This is because optimum sample is efficient, representative, reliable and flexible (Kothari, 2002, p.70).

The researcher used a systematic random sampling that involved determining the selection interval that was determined by dividing the population size (25 months) by the sample size (6 months). From the random starting point, the researcher selected every (4th) month from the sampling frame. This was done because the samples were chosen by hand rather than via the computer. This systematic sampling approach is clerically efficient (Sullivan, 2001, p.195), and it produces a sample that is even more evenly spread over the entire population (Kothari, 2002, p.77). 6 months were therefore selected as these were; December 2003, April 2004, August 2004, December 2004, April 2005, and August 2005.

Systematic sampling was also used to determine the number of issues or dates. A list of 31 days was drawn and selection interval that was determined by dividing the population size (31 issues or days) by the sample size (15). From the random starting point, the researcher selected every (2nd) issue from the sampling frame. A total of 15 issues were therefore sampled in all the six months for both *Daily Monitor* and *The New Vision*.

3.4.5. Selection of Relevant Content/Unit of Analysis:

The smallest element of this content analysis was a news story or report. News stories or reports were purposively selected. The researcher and his assistants were considering all stories that concerned the constitutional amendment debate. These were identified by reading and scanning all headlines and at least a few paragraphs of news

and analysis pages to identify those stories or articles whose content dealt clearly with the constitutional amendment.

The study used Riffe et al (1998)'s definition of a news story that was employed in a coding protocol for 1996 USA Presidential Race which goes; "*News stories* are defined as all non-advertising matter in a news product. In a newspaper, this would usually include all staff produced hard news stories found in local, regional and national news sections. It may also include relevant features and analysis produced by local staff reporters in relation to the issues in question. But the analysis would exclude editorial pages, reader opinions, business, health, environment, education, fashion and styles, relationship, sports, society and international news stories" (p.112).

This operational definition is in line with Hansen et al (1998)'s assertion that; "general analyses of newspaper coverage of certain issues tend to exclude adverts, weather forecasts, stock markets, sports pages, cartoons, specialist newspaper sections such as books, music, education, health, entertainment" (p.104).

After a manual search for all relevant stories in *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* for the selected period, 73 relevant stories were obtained and examined i.e. 38 from *Daily Monitor* and 35 from *The New Vision*.

3.4.6. Defining Analytical Categories and the Procedure:

Using the relevant stories as the unit of analysis, newspapers were selected, one at a time, from the time frame stipulated. Tracking forms were used to keep track of every issue analyzed regardless of whether or not its content was coded. This eased the monitoring of progress and ensured that no newspaper issue was coded more than once.

A pilot analysis was conducted before starting the actual coding. Two coders were used to analyze stories from one month that was randomly selected from the main sample of six. The coder reliability for primary and secondary sources was 94% and for primary and secondary political affiliation was 90%. Coders had no disagreements over topics, gender and location of the source.

A code book that had details regarding what was to be looked for in the relevant content was provided to coders together with the code sheet. The sheet had options that required the coder to use a circling method in marking items needed. Items in each story were catalogued according to several categories; newspaper name (either *The New Vision* or *Daily Monitor*), date of the issue, page number on which the article started, and the topic or issue.

Due to the huge number of clauses tabled in the Bill (No. 3) that was under study, the constitutional amendment *issue or topic*, it referred to the following;

Removal of presidential term limits (third term), dual citizenship, making Kiswahili a second official language, Kampala's status as Uganda's capital but a part of Buganda, establishment of the offices of the leader of opposition, holding presidential, parliamentary and local government elections at the same time, and Reducing the minimum qualification of High Court Judges from ten years practice to 7 years. The rest of the constitutional amendment issues were coded as others.

To identify an issue or topic, the story was read and its primary focus was determined. If the focus was not offered in the headline, then the coder turned to the intro (the opening one or two paragraphs) or the third and fourth paragraphs. In order to avoid confusion, if the story focused on more than one issue, the primary one (the one that had taken bigger space) was considered.

Stories were coded for their primary and secondary sources. By *news source*, the researcher meant the person or group of individuals, or organizations, who gives information to news reporters. Sources were clearly identified as such when news reporters quoted or paraphrased information from them in stories.

Primary source referred to first person or group of people or organizations to whom particular facts or information were attributed. Secondary source referred to the second person or people or organization to whom particular information or facts were attributed. All sources were coded for their primary and secondary political affiliation, gender, and location.

For identification of both primary and secondary sources, the following occupational categories were used; President, Vice President, Minister (including prime minister and all state ministers), Member of Parliament, elected local council leader at all LC levels, military personnel, appointed civil servants in both local and central governments including those in law enforcement agencies, religious leader, ordinary citizen (not occupationally involved in politics), government/Movement activist, opposition activist, cultural/traditional leader, civil society activist, representative of foreign government, and representative of international organization.

I considered two other options; undefined, if the occupation was not defined in the story, and others; in case the coder could see occupation in the story which was not put on the code sheet. For such, the coder indicated it by writing on the code sheet.

While coding for both primary and secondary political affiliation, the coder would indicate the political leaning of sources as described in the article. The researcher had the following operational definitions and options for political affiliation;

Opposition: referred to individuals clearly playing political roles of organized political parties or organizations in the country.

Movement: referred to individuals playing known roles and functions in Movement as a political organization and as a government.

Government supporter: was used to refer to politicians like Members of Parliament or any other dignified member in society, and ordinary citizens not holding any government, movement, or opposition political office but who declare themselves or seem to advance ideas favorable to the Movement government, its leaders, and policies.

Government critic: referred to politicians like Members of Parliament or any other dignified member in society, and ordinary citizens not holding any government, movement, or opposition political office but declare themselves or seem to advance ideas critical of the Movement government, its leaders, and policies.

Neutral: meant individuals occupationally engaged in politics or not but taking no political sides (opposition, Movement, critics, supporters) on issues analyzed in the study.

Undefined: referred to individuals whose political leanings were not defined in the story under analysis.

All sources were coded for sex category that had only three identifiers; Male, Female, and Group or mixed. Finally, sources' location was also coded. The coder recorded the location (where in terms of place) of the source as indicated in the story. Three identifiers were adopted; Kampala district, other parts of the country (if the story's sources were not in Kampala, then it would be coded as other parts of the country) and not mentioned. This option would be adopted in case the location was not indicated in the story.

3.5. Data Management and Analysis:

Coded sheets were used for data collection. Data Entry screens were designed in AskSam 5.0. The data was initially entered in AskSam 5.0 and then exported to SPSS 14.0. A data dictionary was prepared in SPSS and the data was cleaned and validated. Descriptive statistics, frequencies (for topics, sources, their political affiliation, gender, and location) and cross-tabulations (especially for coverage comparison in both newspapers) were then generated using SPSS 14.0 for windows. SPSS package was selected due to its popularity and efficiency. According to Hansen et al (1998, p.122), powerful package which has traditionally been popular, and continues to be so, with social scientists for content analysis purposes is SPSS."

3.6.0. Interview Design and its Rationale:

Since content analysis does not allow the assessment of the motivation behind articles or how messages are being interpreted (Wakefield and Elliott, 2003, p. 218), it was therefore linked with a series of personal interviews.

Interviewing as a qualitative research method was used in order to promote greater understanding of the way things are (in the media) and why they are the way they are. This is how (Amin, 2005, p.42) argues. In this study, the researcher also needed to solicit for certain meanings regarding the media coverage of the constitutional amendment debate. For example; why did the media coverage centre greatly on the third term? Such a question required narrative data from key respondents. Additionally, interviews offer access to very valuable data of a deeper and richer understanding of people's lives and behavior, including some knowledge of their subjectivity (Benton, 1977; Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Gubrium and Holstein, 1997) quoted in Sullivan, 2001, p.320.

Personal interviews that involved asking questions in face-to-face contact to the other person or persons was used. This collection method allowed the researcher to talk about the subjects within their own frames of reference. This allowed the meanings that the individuals attributed to events and relationships to be understood on their own term, (May, 2001, p.124). Personal interviews allowed greater freedom to ask supplementary questions and sometimes the researcher would omit any unnecessary information.

For personal interviews, the researcher purposively selected 11 respondents who were presumed to have experience and information regarding this study. This number appears to be small but just like in other qualitative research; samples are not intended to be statistically representative. Rather, a small number of extremely detailed interviews facilitate the in-depth exploration of a phenomenon... (Elliott 1999) quoted in (Wakefield and Elliott, 2003, p. 218).

The 11 selected respondents for personal interviews were, one Political Scientist from Makerere University; one Media Analyst from East African Media Institute; three news editors from *Weekly Observer*, *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*; one Member of Parliament; two Media Monitors from Democracy Monitoring group; one radio political show moderator; and two Professors; one of law and the other of democracy from Makerere University.

In conducting the interviews, the three necessary conditions for the successful completion of interviews as suggested by (Kahn and Cannell 1993, Moser and Kalton, 1983) in (May, 2001, p.128-129) were followed. These conditions are as follow:

Accessibility: This refers to whether or not the person answering the questions has access to information which the interviewer seeks. The researcher is quite confident that the interviewee had access to the information that he was seeking for as indicated in the findings.

Cognition or understanding by the person being interviewed of what is required of them in the role of interviewee. All respondents were professionals who knew their roles as interviewees.

Motivation; which is the feeling that the interviewee's participation and answers are valued by the interviewer. The researcher met this condition as well.

The researcher prepared structured open ended questions which Sullivan (2001, p.149) defines as questions to which the respondents write their own responses, much as you do for an essay type examination question. These were used because the researcher needed individuals to describe their feelings and discover the meanings that are important to people as Sullivan (2001, p. 149) suggests. Interviews were conducted in June 2007, and lasted between 30 and 60 minutes.

The interviewees were carefully selected and briefed before interviews were conducted. Still as prerequisite for successful implementation of the interview method, interviewers were honest, sincere, hard working, impartial, and possessed the technical competence and necessary practical experience as Kothari (2004, p.99) argues.

3.6.1 Management and Analysis of Interviews:

Notes were carefully recorded and written after careful listening. The editing exercise was done during the processing of recording. However, this was later advanced at another level during the writing of this report. A lot of information that was presumed irrelevant was left out. Follow up questions were also used during the interview process and these proved fruitful in eliciting relevant data.

3.7. Use of Documents:

This method was used alongside content analysis, and personal interviews for three relevant reasons as May (2001, p.175) states; this method enhances understanding through its ability to situate contemporary accounts within an historical content. Many studies were reviewed to provide a broader picture of media coverage of different issues.

Secondly, use of documents allows comparisons to be made between the observer's interpretations of events and those recorded in documents relating to those events. For comparison purposes related documents were quite helpful. For instance a study done by Democracy Monitoring Group on Uganda Media Coverage of 2006 Election was useful in comparison with this study. Finally, documents provide materials upon which to base further research investigation.

By documents, I refer to written text. Writing is the making of symbols representing words, and involves the use of a pen, pencil, printing machine or other tool for inscribing the message on paper, parchment or some other material medium as Scott (1990) cited in (May, 2001, P.178) argues. Statistical reports, text books, position paper, Journal and newspaper articles, ministerial records would fit in this definition.

3.8. Limitations, Delimitations, and Ethical Considerations:

The outstanding challenge that faced this study was the tedious nature of content analysis. The constitutional amendment process took a considerably long period (2001-2005); it therefore required the researcher to delve into past newspapers of the above period. Such an exercise is time consuming because one needs to go through all relevant articles looking for primary and secondary sources, political affiliation, gender, location etcetera. That is why the sampling technique was used though it seems to have left out many other relevant stories that carried the constitutional amendment issues like dual citizenship etc.

Nevertheless, the researcher endeavored to go through all the sampled newspapers and stories to look for the constitutional amendment issues listed in the code sheet.

In addition, content analysis requires piloting, training of coders, coding, and thorough description and analysis of relevant documents. However, some meaningful control was done by employing a sampling technique that reduced the period and number of issues analyzed. Other properties or categories of analysis were also left and recommended for further studies. For instance, due to time restraint, the context of news sources was not coded.

Some interviewees, who were presumed to have the relevant information turned down the request. This, somehow, slowed down the data collection exercise. However, the

researcher made an effort to get other relevant informants to provide appropriate information to the study.

This research did not overlook ethical considerations. Since the study partially dealt with human beings, precautions were taken to avoid any potential harm to them. For interviewees, appointments were made to meet them basing on their convenience. They were not compelled to reveal relevant information nor were they hoodwinked about the purpose of the study.

For purposes of transparency, the researcher secured an introductory letter from Makerere University, Department of Mass Communication that revealed his full identity and clarified the purpose of the study. The researcher had to first get the interviewees permission before recording their responses.

This study has appropriately used proper citation style that indicates authors and pages of their works. Even information sourced from interviewees has been well attributed to avoid pretense.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.0. Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings obtained using several methods, namely; content analysis, personal interviews, and use of relevant documents. Findings are presented and discussed in order of the study questions.

The researcher used multi- stage sampling at stage one; to select the media, stage two; for determination of years, stage three, to select months and dates, and stage four to determine the content in the stories. The media selected were *The New Vision* and the *Daily Monitor*. The period sampled was from September 2003 to September 2005. Six months were sampled out of twenty five, and 15 issues or dates were sampled out of 30. After a thorough and extensive manual search of the sampled issues, a total of 73 relevant stories; 38 (which 52.1% of all stories) from *Daily Monitor*, and 35 (47.9%) from *The New Vision* were obtained and examined. The table 1 below shows this vividly.

Table 4.1. Frequency of appearance of relevant stories in both newspapers

| Newspaper | Frequency (n) | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------------|---------------|----------------|
| <i>Daily Monitor</i> | 38 | 52.1 |
| <i>The New Vision</i> | 35 | 47.9 |
| Total | 73 | 100.0 |

Source: Primary Data

4.1. The dominant issues in the coverage of the constitutional amendment debate

What were the dominant issues or topics? In general, removal of presidential term limits popularly termed “the third term” was the major issue or topic in 71 stories and was rated at (97.3%) of the total number of stories sampled. Holding presidential,

parliamentary, and local government elections at the same time or the same day was in 1.4% of the stories and others issues apart from the ones indicated on the coding sheet were at the same percentage (1.4%). See table 2 below.

Table 4.2. Frequency or appearances of issues or topics in all stories

| Issue/Topic | Frequency (n) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---------------|----------------|
| Removal of presidential term limits (Third Term) | 71 | 97.2 |
| Holding presidential, parliamentary and local government elections at the same time | 1 | 1.4 |
| Others | 1 | 1.4 |
| Total | 73 | 100.0 |

Source: Primary Data

Though dual citizenship, making Kiswahili a second official language, establishment of the offices of the leader of opposition, and reducing the minimum qualification of High Court Judges from ten years practice to 7 years had been presumed to be important, they were not captured in the stories sampled. This therefore, becomes one of the major weaknesses of the methodology that the researcher employed. In the newspapers and stories sampled, the focus was majorly on the seven issues listed in the code sheet and the rest would be coded as others. Even for those issues coded, the focus was on the issue with most space. For instance, the transition from Movement political system to multiparty politics and regional governments (federal) might have received reasonable coverage in the period that was not sampled or were probably not captured because they were not manifest.

The third term was not only a popular or dominant topic in the print media but also in electronic media. A radio political talk show host and Chief News Editor, at *Super FM*, Mulindwa Muwonge (personal communication, June 2007) said when asked on the dominant topics on his talkshow during the constitutional review process;

Federal system of governance and lifting of term limits were the most common topics discussed. Even if you were asking the guest to talk about other matters, the listeners would call and divert the discussion on either of the two issues. Those who were in support of the third term had enough resources and guts to even bar us from allowing anti-third term guests to appear on talkshows.

There could be several reasons why the third term debate dominated the debate on constitutional amendment as seen in table 2. Below is a set of suppositions for this outstanding dominance.

4.1.0. Why third term dominated the debate

Lifting of term limits was an issue about the presidency. This is the highest office in terms of hierarchy of government and its activities. Equally, people who occupy this office become important in society. It is categorically clear that the incumbent president had interest in running for a third term. To be precise, he wanted the limits on terms to be removed.

On the contrary, those who were opposed to him, wanted limits be retained to enable them also compete for the same office in the future. These were also important people to society. In short, people who were involved in the debate on constitutional amendment were of a higher position in society thus important to news media. The higher an actor is in the governmental hierarchy, Gans (1979, p.147) argues, the more his or her activities are of importance to news media.

As argued earlier, the third term debate might have been popular in all news media; print and electronic. The media at large seemed to have concentrated on the third term because, most television (broadcast) news come from print sources, as (Krauss, quoted

in Schudson, 2000, p.189) argued it while describing the American journalism. Even in Uganda, it appears that most political talk show agenda are derived from papers as some talk show hosts cited in Mwesige, (2004, p.19) confirmed. The talk show hosts said that they chose their talkshow topics from current affairs, mostly as reported in newspapers. Precisely, the third term issue dominated the debate on constitutional amendment because it was the dominant issues in all news media.

The issue had a lot of impact on the nation and the national interest. What affects the nation, its interests and well being, Gans (1979, p.151) argues, would always be captured in the news. Moreover this impact was on large number of people. As Gans adds, the most important story of all is one that affects every citizen. Almost all Ugandans of sound mind were concerned on whether the incumbent president would stand in the subsequent elections which were to be in February 2006.

There was also another anxiety as to who would come if the incumbent did not stand. For democracy upholders, it was all about Uganda's future and image if the limits on the presidential tenure were removed. Supporters of the incumbent were also looking for all ways of letting their "man" stay in the office. But, it gives the impression that local news media have a problem of lacking data about how many people are affected by an event. Presumably, journalists just use their individual judgments basing on journalistic values or their personal understanding of the salience of issues.

The dominance of the third term debate could also be linked to the competitive considerations in story selection between *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*. These two news organizations are in the same medium-print. In this case, for instance, Gans, (1979, p. 177) cites the *Newsweek* journalists who try to beat colleagues at the *Washington Post* to the "punch". The two newspapers (*The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*) could have covered the third term issue immensely due to the competition element. In any case, any news media that did not focus on the third term might have lost its audience.

On many occasions during the period of the debate (2003-2005), *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* have published similar stories with only angle or approach differences. John Kakande, a News Editor at *The New Vision* confirmed the above assertion during (June 2007, personal interview) when he said;

For major national issues like budget, state of the nation address, we normally predict what our colleagues at *Daily Monitor* are likely to come up with. If we are certain about their leading story which is in most cases with a hard stance, we usually come up with a similar issue but with a moderate angle.

To Makerere University's Nansozi Muwanga, (personal interview, June 2007) the third term issue dominated the debate on constitutional amendment due to three reasons;

It was a contentious issue, was relevant almost to every Ugandan and was the most crucial issue if one measured the political temperature of the time, he would have found it the most important.

Muwanga is right on all her three arguments. The third term debate had a follow up element that keeps news men and women active in reporting about national issues. Sometimes, this very fact ends up into sensationalism that sells newspapers. The influential politicians who engaged in the debate needed follow up developments in order to change strategies in their campaigns. Opposition leaders for instance wanted to pre-empt what the Movementists had to come up with. At the same time, the latter needed to know the plans of the former. This kept the third term debate live and fresh.

Yet Haruna Kanaabi, the coordinator, East African Media Institute (EAMI) Uganda Chapter, in (personal interview. 2007) argues that the third term debate was the most

selling issue to the media. To him, the coverage was driven by the market; people were ready and anxious to read about third term developments. Kanaabi says:

If you carried out a survey on how many copies *Daily Monitor* or *The New Vision* sold during this period (constitutional review period) you would have probably found that sales increased by a big margin.

Kanaabi's assertion suggests that news media also engaged in market oriented journalism that is geared towards satisfying people's wants rather than their needs. Since commercial media need to maximize profits generated from advertising revenue realized from bigger audiences, this seemed inevitable.

Ibrahim Semujju Nganda, *The Weekly Observer*, Political Editor (personal interview, June 2007) suggests that the third term dominated debate on constitutional amendment because it was an international issue. He added that:

Even in Nigeria, president Obasanjo was also making attempts to amend the constitution to allow him stand for a third term. The global media focused considerable coverage on Uganda and Nigeria's move on constitutional review. This somehow influenced local media's coverage.

According to Robert Mukasa, *Daily Monitor* News Editor (personal communication June 2007), the third term, as an issue, was dramatic and controversial and was a turning point for Uganda, because it signified how Uganda would be defined in the years to

come, Indeed drama and controversy are two important news values that might have been considered in the third term debate.

As noted in conceptual framework, Bennett (1988, p. 35) looks at dramatized news as reporters and editors' search for events with dramatic properties and then emphasize those properties in their reporting. The potential for drama is a virtual guarantee that an event will become a major news story. Again the controversy was crucial in the sense that two sides were involved in the debate; those advocating for lifting term limits and those against. Both groups were fighting a win or lose battle that sustained palatable news content.

The New Vision's John Kakande (personal interview, 2007) argues that lifting of term limits was an issue to do with the incumbent president, so it had to dominate debate all over. He adds that those who opposed the third term were seen as challengers of the president Museveni and in the end some people like Jaberu Bidandi Ssali had to lose their ministerial positions. Kakande's argument sounds plausible because many other ministers like Miria Matembe, Sarah Kiyingi, Eria Kategaya who were also against the third term for President Museveni were dropped and ostracized by the Movement diehards.

To some people like Soroti Women Member of Parliament, Alice Alaso and Makerere University Law Professor, Fredrick Juuko (personal interview, 2007) third term had to

dominate the constitutional amendment debate because it was the main objective of the constitutional review exercise. Juuko adds; “President Museveni wanted to make his own constitution that would retain him in power. All other issues that were proposed for amendment were just diversionary.”

The media practitioners also followed public instinct; they had to check the public mood. The mood was whether the incumbent president was going to leave power peacefully or not, Juuko said.

According to Prof. Oloka-Onyango, (personal interview, June, 2007), the third term dominance as an issue in the constitutional amendment debate is also attributed to the fact that it was the first time to test term limits since the establishment of the 1995 Uganda constitution. He says that many people internationally wanted to prove whether the president was determined to democratize Uganda as per his relentless claims that; “Past leaders were dictators and generally African leaders want to over stay in power.”

Oloka-Onyango adds that the desire to test term limits and to see whether president Museveni was ready to do contrary to what other past African leaders did kept many groups of people debating consequently making the media focused on the third term debate.

Mohles Seggululigamba, media monitor working with Democracy Monitoring Group (DEMG) in Uganda (personal communication, June 2007) almost shares views with Oloka on why term limits received intensive media coverage. He says, respect for term limits was a democracy benchmark that all democracy advocates wanted to see being implemented. This therefore developed anxiety for media personnel to follow up the issue till its end. Being newsworthy, an element of competition between opposition and incumbent president, coupled with opportunistic tendencies among the Movement supporters, the third term as an issue had to dominate debate on constitutional amendment.

4.2.0. The Dominant Sources of News or Voices in the Constitutional Amendment Debate

Table 4.3. Frequency of Appearance of Different News Sources in Both *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*

| | Source Category | Pri Source Freq | Secondary Source Frequency | Total | Percent |
|----|--|-----------------|----------------------------|-------|---------|
| 1 | Presidency | 6 | 1 | 7 | 6.4 |
| 2 | Ministers | 12 | 4 | 16 | 14.5 |
| 3 | Members of Parliament | 10 | 13 | 23 | 20.9 |
| 4 | Local Council Leaders | 2 | 4 | 6 | 5.5 |
| 5 | Military Personnel | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0.9 |
| 6 | Civil Servants | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3.6 |
| 7 | Ordinary Citizens | 12 | 5 | 17 | 15.5 |
| 8 | Religious Leaders | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0.9 |
| 9 | Government/ Movement Activists | 5 | 1 | 6 | 5.5 |
| 10 | Opposition Activists | 10 | 4 | 14 | 12.7 |
| 11 | Civil Society Activists | 4 | 1 | 5 | 4.5 |
| 12 | Representative of foreign Government | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1.8 |
| 13 | Representative of International Organization | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1.8 |
| 14 | Others | 5 | 1 | 6 | 5.5 |
| | Totals | 73 | 37 | 110 | 100.0 |

Source: Primary Data

Key

Pri Source Freq-Primary Source Frequency

Considerably more stories came from governmental and political sources, taken as a whole; 6.4 percent from the presidency; 14.5 percent from the ministers; 20.9 percent (biggest) from Members of Parliament; 12.7 percent from the opposition activists, for a total of 54.5 percent of all source stories. This is consistent with the familiar finding that political news making is a reality constructing activity that follows the lead of government officials (Gans, 1979, p.116; Schudson, 2002, p.255).

15.5 percent of the sources were ordinary citizens (individuals that occupy low positions in society); this figure sounds big but when compared with that of elites, it is quite small. If we define the elite as people occupying elevated or privileged positions in a social system (Baran and Davis, 2003, p.13), almost 78 percent of the sources were elite.

However, the dominance of elite as news sources is not a surprise because print media circulation targets elite audiences, (Oloka-Onyango, personal interview, June 2007). He adds that print media is an elite project and wherever you go, elites are the leaders.

Ordinary citizens had less input to the constitutional amendment debate. Sources with less power can normally gain access only with an unusually dramatic story; on the other hand, as power decreases, so does the ability to limit access (Gans, 1979, p.120-122). That is why ordinary citizens are usually contacted to express their feeling about a tragedy rather than quoting them on developmental issues. Their voices would be more if there were floods in Kampala suburbs like Bwaise, Kalerwe or Nateete but not on the lifting of term limits.

Perhaps, ordinary citizens have more say in the electronic media especially so in radio talk shows as Seggululigamba (personal interview, 2007) suggests. Even then ordinary citizens rarely appear as guests on the political talk shows; political elites and professional experts are still deemed as the bearers of expert knowledge and opinions (Mwesige, 2004, p.31). He further argues that even as callers on the talk shows or participants on open-air shows,

ordinary citizens are given less time to contribute or ask questions.

According to Mwesige (2004, p.31) today, the hope for ordinary citizens would be in open-air discussions popularly known as *Bimeeza*. Unfortunately moderators of open-air discussions allocate 2-3 minutes to ordinary citizens and those considered to be officials or experts are given undetermined time to articulate issues. This therefore confirms a Neo Marxist Social theory that asserts that media enable dominant social elites to maintain their power, Baran and Davis (2003, p.17). Indeed members, whose ideas appear regularly in the media, unquestionably dominate society.

Though some critics tend to claim that print media targets a small size of the population which is normally specified as elite, this very target is the most influential in policy formulation or decision making. Take for instance Members of Parliament; they are a small section of Uganda's population but were the ones to decide on whether to retain presidential term limits or lifting them.

5.5 percent of news sources on the constitutional amendment were local council leaders. A similar figure is also maintained for government or movement activists and other occupations that were not put on the code sheet but majority of these were journalists.

Slightly lower than that were civil society activists who were 4.5 percent of the sources; civil servants' voices were 3.6 percent; representative of international organizations appeared twice (1.8 percent), representatives of foreign government like ambassadors also appeared twice; and religious leaders and military personnel each appeared once with 0.9 percent.

Less voices of international organizations' representatives and foreign governments indicates a non-interference strategy in the domestic politics of developing countries.

However, this does not mean total silence. The intervention of foreign and international organizations has been and still is indirect. For instance, many of the workshops, debate, and seminars on rule of law or constitutionalism, human rights, election monitoring etcetera, have been funded by either international organizations or foreign governments. Seggululigamba (personal interview, June 2007) confirmed the above argument when he stated;

Democracy Monitoring Group, an organization that I have worked for and almost all other election monitoring groups use donor funds from foreign governments. Our local civil society is not yet financially empowered to facilitate such big projects.

For religious leader and military personnel, each appearing once with 0.9 percent some how causes doubt as to whether the two institutions respected president Museveni's plea that religious leaders must keep away from politics. Indeed, during the debate on the third term in particular, very few military officers came out openly to portray their side.

4.2.1 Dominance of members of Parliament and government ministers;

Equally important to look at is the dominance of Members of Parliament (MPs) and government ministers. The two groups constituted 35.4 percent of all sources and it's also clear that some cabinet ministers were part of the seventh Parliament. Majority of the interviewees approached attributed the dominance of Members of Parliament to the powers they had to lift the term limits. Of course the constitution amendment exercise was entirely a legislative issue that needed their participation within and outside the House. Outside Parliament implies that MPs were supposed to engage their constituents in discussing clauses that were slated for amendment. Surprisingly, it seems very few MPs carried out civic education on constitutional amendment. If it was done, the beneficiaries were the Kampala dwellers. This will be discussed later on the dominance of Kampala.

Close to the above argument, is the fact that Members of Parliament are representatives of the people. This suggests that MPs represented their constituents in the debate. Therefore their dominance was positive to representative democracy. The concept of representative democracy means that citizens express their right of participating in political life by the instrument of the vote, through the election of representatives (Sudulich, 2003, p. 2).

To put this in context, MPs were representatives for both political parties and constituents; they were voted in two dimensions, therefore, their dominance was in principle as Mukiibi Serwanga, (personal interview, June 2007) argues. He maintains that some of the MPs and ministers` were sponsored to do the talking (support for lifting of term limits) in all parts of the country. This accounts for the Mps` dominance as well and is quite consistent with Seggululigamba (personal interview, June 2007) who argued; “Ministers and Members of Parliament had the means to participate in the debate.”

It should be recalled that prior to the passing of the clause on lifting of term limits or third term, a considerable number of Members of Parliament, especially Movement supporters, were allocated shillings five million as “constituency fund” to facilitate civic education on constitutional amendment exercise.

However, to civil society, independent observers, opposition and some media practitioners, the five million was a “kick-back” to Members of Parliament to support the lifting of term limits on presidential tenure in Ugandan constitution which was finally done.

Critics further argue, to ensure the effectiveness of the five million scheme, secret ballot as a voting system in Parliament was replaced by open voting. Open voting was introduced, critics say, to intimidate the beneficiaries of five million shillings. It was not therefore a surprise for 232 (more than 2/3) MPs to vote for lifting of term limits that made the incumbent president to stand for a third term in February 2006.

Nonetheless, public representatives normally dominate the news. Individuals and groups whose well being is achieved and maintained by acting for or on behalf of constituencies must become eager sources in hope of reaching their constituents as members of the audience Gans, (1979, p.118). This explains why so much of the news centers on public and other agencies which serve constituents.

Others argue that the majority of the ministers were schemers who were seeking for lifting of term limits on presidential tenure in order to retain their jobs and also to show the president that they were strong supporters, Semujju, Mukiibi, & Oloka (personal , June 2007). Mukiibi for instance maintains that all ministers who were coded were possibly pro-third term. This perhaps may explain why president Museveni in a 2005 cabinet reshuffle eliminated all ministers who were opposed to lifting of term limits.

The dominance of Members of Parliament and ministers is also attributed to journalistic value of newsworthiness. They are prominent in society and therefore newsworthy. Juuko (personal interview, 2007) states;

It is because of their newsworthiness, these are government officials they are considered to have sense though the reality is that many of these officials despite their positions, have nothing to present. There is a problem with news values today; those who are taken to be newsworthy have nothing meaningful.

The journalistic tendency of concentrating on some sources however insignificant their ideas might be, is what Bennett (1988, p.32) calls psychological massage.

Today, when government officials dominate media content, it is not a big surprise. It is asserted that media organizations are in general more profit-oriented, have more extensive economic interest and have more to gain from a business-friendly government. In turn, governments are now more in need of government-friendly media because they have to woo and retain mass electoral support Curran (2000, p. 123).

A 54.5 percent official sources' dominance can be tied to Curran's argument. Ministers, some of whom at the same time serve as Members of Parliament have the discretion to decide who to advertise with or not. For newspapers like *The New Vision* fifty-five percent of whose revenue comes from advertising, (World Association of Newspapers, 2003) cannot neglect ministers' voices however meaningless they might be.

It is important to note that all stories sampled (73) had a primary source (as indicated in table 3) and almost half 36 out of 73 (49.3 percent) of the stories did not have secondary sources. See table 4. This signifies a failure on the side of journalists as Kanaabi (personal interview, 2007) argues: "For 36 stories not having secondary sources is a big failure on our side as journalists. We sometimes invest less time in verifying and balancing our stories."

Kanaabi also attributes lack of secondary sources to tight deadlines set by news editors. To him, tight schedules bar some journalists from seeking comments regarding pertinent issues from relevant stakeholders.

Daily Monitors' News Editor, Robert Mukasa (personal interview, 2007) attributes lack of secondary sources to laziness among reporters. He adds that many journalists run away from investigative journalism that calls for multiple sources and capitalize on one-sided stories that end up as briefs in dailies.

Yet Mukasa's counterpart John Kakande of *The New Vision* (personal interview, 2007) argues that for stories to have secondary sources depends on the location or context of the sources. He for instance argues;

When reporters get exclusive interviews with some beats, it becomes sometimes difficult for them to get other supplementary sources. And in cases of expert knowledge, reporters might not require any additional voice to balance up with an authority.

One cannot rule out exploitation of some reporters to report slanted news especially in favor of the status quo. If bribery was done to Members of Parliament who appear to be financially stable, what about reporters who are sometimes paid according to the number of stories published?

Table 4.4 Frequency of Secondary Sources in both *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*

| Secondary Source | Frequency (n) | Percentage (%) | Valid Percentage (%) |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------------|
| President | 1 | 1.4 | 2.7 |
| Minister | 4 | 5.5 | 10.8 |
| Member of parliament | 13 | 17.8 | 35.1 |
| Elected Local Council leader at all | 4 | 5.5 | 10.8 |
| Appointed civil servants | 2 | 2.7 | 5.4 |
| Ordinary citizen | 5 | 6.8 | 13.5 |
| Government/Movement activist | 1 | 1.4 | 2.7 |
| Opposition activist | 4 | 5.5 | 10.8 |
| Civil Society activist | 1 | 1.4 | 2.7 |
| Representative of foreign government | 1 | 1.4 | 2.7 |
| Others | 1 | 1.4 | 2.7 |
| Total | 37 | 50.7 | 100.0 |
| Secondary source not specified | 36 | 49.3 | |
| Total | 73 | 100.0 | |

Source: Primary Data

4.2.2 Dominant Source Political Affiliation

Table 4.5. Frequency of Primary and Secondary Source Political Affiliation in *The New Vision & Daily Monitor*

| Category | Primary | Secondary | Total frequency | Percent |
|----------------------|---------|-----------|-----------------|---------|
| Opposition | 9 | 4 | 13 | 12% |
| Government critic | 14 | 7 | 21 | 19% |
| Movement | 21 | 4 | 25 | 23% |
| Government Supporter | 15 | 10 | 25 | 23% |
| Neutral | 8 | 6 | 14 | 13% |
| Undefined | 6 | 4 | 10 | 9% |
| Total | 73 | 35 | 108 | 100% |

Source: Primary Data

In terms of political affiliation, the ruling Movement and its supporters dominated the debate on constitutional amendment by 46 percent if taken as a whole; 23 percent from Movementists or government and 23 from those supporting Movement government policies. Movement during the coding exercise referred to individuals playing known roles and functions in the Movement as a political organization and as a government. Yet, government supporter were politicians like Members of Parliament or any other dignified member in society, and ordinary citizens not holding any government or movement office but declare themselves or seem to advance ideas favorable to the Movement government, its leaders, and policies.

The dominance of ruling Movement government in the debate is not a big surprise. Most of the arguments in this regard were expressed on why Members of Parliament and government ministers were the dominant sources of news on third term and the entire constitutional amendment exercise. However, there are a few factors we can reiterate here. Movement or government supporters had enough resources to organize debate on

constitutional review because the incumbent president had interest in lifting of the term limits for instance.

Government ministers including premier seem to have had big budgets to facilitate “engineered” talks on the third term. The use of resources to manipulate debate is not new because even in the case of political talk shows and open-air discussions, Mwesige (2004, p.32) argues, call-in shows also have a fair share of “mercenaries”. He for instance cites one group of callers called the Movement Voice that was reportedly funded by the Vice President’s office to call-in to different talkshows and defend the ruling Movement’s positions.

Secondly, supporters of the ruling Movement had guaranteed security in all different parts of the country. Yet, on the other side, Popular Resistance Against Life Presidency (PRALP), a small pressure group led by Muwanga Kivumbi and opposed to the lifting of term limits, was dispersed by police almost wherever it staged a public meeting. This group and others similar to it were strongly barred from penetrating rural population possibly due to the fact that the incumbent government boasts of possession of rural votes. Therefore, prevention of opposition groups from approaching rural populace implied protection of guaranteed supporters from any kind of ideological contamination.

Seggululigamba, (personal interview, 2007) argues that the rural populace is composed of elderly voters who seem to be ignorant of government failures and fear insecurity that might emanate from change of government.

Slightly below Movement and its supporters (46 percent), were the government critics and opposition with (31 percent) if taken as a whole, they dominated by 19 percent and 12 percent respectively. A difference of 15 percent between Movement and its supporters, and opposition and government critic, is somewhat big. However, this difference seems to

be majorly caused by both political and economic imbalance between the two blocks highlighted. This imbalance is also consistent with many American studies reviewed that portrayed Republicans as dominant guests and sources in news programmes and on talkshows' guest lists.

Since there isn't enough advertising revenue to support a pluralistic and diverse sector in Africa, Kupe (2003, p.5), the print media, both state and privately owned tend to cater and very much be a voice for the dominant political and economic elite. Still in the African context, government sympathizers tend to be economically powerful and this usually places them in a position that attracts the media attention that is reciprocated through advertising revenue.

In specific terms, government critics also enjoyed bigger space with only 4 percent difference if compared with government supporters. However, the disparity between Movement and opposition (11 percent) is a bit worrying. One can argue about this disparity that opposition leaders or activists had limited opportunities in staging or attending debate on the constitutional amendment debate. This is because by then (between September 2003 and September 2005), political space was still constrained. Political parties had not been allowed to operate local branches and hold public meetings among other things. This therefore, implies that the opposition had to struggle to be relevant.

On the other hand, opposition in Uganda seems to be active in only challenging the ruling Movement on policies it issues without necessarily originating their key agenda for the country. Opposition driven agendas which are not directly confronting Movement government would presumably give more chances for opposition to be relevant in national debate. But the third term debate which was a win or lose battle between the economically empowered Movement and the ill-facilitated opposition could not create easy opening for the opposition to participate.

13 percent of the news sources were neutral, while 9 percent's political affiliation was undefined in the stories analyzed. By neutral, I referred to individuals occupationally engaged in politics or not but pronouncing no political sides (opposition or Movement) in the stories investigated. A big percentage of neutral sources implies an element of impartiality in the coding process and independence of sources while debating on constitutional amendment issues. In other words, sources were not compelled to articulate their own political leanings possibly as a way of streamlining accountability. But this does not rule out bribery in the entire debating exercise.

4.2.3. Frequency of Source Sexual Category

Table 4.6. Frequency of *all Sources' sexual category in The New Vision & Daily Monitor*

| Sexual Category | Primary | Secondary | Total Frequency | Percent |
|-----------------|---------|-----------|-----------------|---------|
| Male | 56 | 29 | 85 | 79% |
| Female | 9 | 3 | 12 | 11% |
| Mixed/Group | 8 | 3 | 11 | 10% |
| Total | 73 | 35 | 108 | 100% |

Source: Primary Data

In gender terms, males dominated the debate on constitutional amendment by 79 percent frequency. Yet females were only 11 percent of the total source frequency of 108. This is an incredible disparity though, in terms of numbers, women are more than men. Group sources that could not explicitly be observed as males or females or a mix of the two sexes, accounted for 10 percent.

Why less females in public debate?

Currently, women are 14.6 million (51 percent) of Uganda's population as compared to men who are 13.8 million (48.59 percent) (State of Uganda Population Report, 2007, p. ii).

However, it is important to note that, by 2002, 13 percent of Uganda's population had attained no education, with 67 percent of these being females, (2002 Uganda Population and Housing Census Analytical Report). This implies that females who are reasonably educated to be able to participate in meaningful debate are very few. And those who are privileged fear to come out on hot debate. For instance by 2004, women had 24 percent seats in Parliament and by 2006 the seats had increased to 31.5 percent, (State of Uganda Population Report 2007).

The State of Uganda Population report also indicates that 19.4 percent of the ministerial positions are occupied by women. These percentages however, did not boost women voices in the third term debate. In short, women who hold big office are reasonably many, but they seem not to have used their office to articulate issues in the media as *Daily Monitor's* Robert Mukasa (personal interview 2007) put it; "Women fear to come out in public to articulate meaningful agendas despite the fact that there is quite a big number of women holding big offices."

For the question of why there were less female voices in the constitutional amendment debate, Nansozi Muwanga, in a personal interview argued;

There is a male simplistic assumption that women do not understand high politics; women are deliberately kept away from such meaningful debate. Men should appreciate that women are naturally silent, they fear to be labeled on some contentious issues like the third term. They should not be blamed for not participating in such debate. Women marginalization in general terms is every where. For instance, political parties or organizations have fewer programmes geared towards letting women voices be heard. Women are always considered as an "add on". Women who prove to be argumentative are identified as feminists or 'terrorists'. We

are in journalists' blackout. Male journalists did not look for us during the debate; they ought to look for us as they do for men voices, we indeed speak but no one hears us.

Muwanga also contends that some journalists are not trained to be fair; they normally neglect women ignorantly.

Soroti Woman Member of Parliament, Alice Alaso, shares views with Nansozi when she asserts in personal interview that;

Media coverage of women is generally bad. Media people have a deliberate bias towards women. Journalists rarely go to women sources. They (journalists) think that we are soft spoken; we therefore do not make palatable news.

Alaso adds that women fear intimidation, and for third term critics, were very much panic-stricken and bribed. Alaso's argument is important given the fact that some ministers who opposed the lifting of term limits were eliminated from their ministerial positions. As Alaso states, many women feel secure when they keep silent on issues that might put their jobs in danger.

EAMI's Kanaabi attributes less women voices to journalists' stereotype that women are not news makers. He adds;

Majority of women shy away from political debate with the mind set that this is not their area. It appears still that there are few women in journalism to advance women cause. I think journalists should re-think about women in the news.

However, the presence of women in journalism does not necessarily mean an automatic representation of women or their issues in the media. Mwesige (2004, p. 22) for instance

found after studying political talk show agenda and democratization in Uganda that political talk shows that were moderated by women had far more men appearing as guests.

Others like Semujju Nganda and Mukiibi Serwanga (personal interview, 2007) argue that there are few outspoken women in the public sphere generally and the available few cannot fight in to the media as men. Women have no tricks to attract media people, Mukiibi adds.

Women feel more concerned with social issues like domestic violence, rights, property inheritance, and women emancipation, Oloka-Onyango (personal interview, 2007). Therefore, third term being a political issue could not attract many women, according to Oloka's argument. It appears still that some women think, their emancipation implies just occupying key positions in government. After attaining such offices, women seem to feel comfortable and avoid any additional step forward of articulating public causes in the media.

Ignoring women in political and other public issues seems to be an old phenomenon that needs to be addressed as Juuko suggests;

There is historical marginalization of women and this is a democratic deficiency that we need to correct. Even in the developed world, consideration of women is just a contemporary issue of 20th century. Consideration of women in election exercise for instance is a recent concern. Otherwise holding public offices and engaging in political life had been confined to men.

4.2.4 Frequency of all Sources' Location

Table 4.7. Frequency of all sources' location in *The New Vision & Daily Monitor*

| Location | Primary | Secondary | Total Frequency | Percent |
|----------------------------|---------|-----------|-----------------|---------|
| Kampala | 45 | 20 | 65 | 60% |
| Other parts of the country | 26 | 14 | 40 | 37% |
| Not mentioned | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3% |
| Total | 73 | 35 | 108 | 100% |

Source: Primary Data

Kampala possibly being the capital city dominated as sources' location by 60 percent. Other parts of the country came second with 37 percent and 3 percent of the stories their sources' location was not mentioned. 3 out of 105 stories that did not have location is a small number which suggests a level of professionalism in the print media. However, Kampala's 60 percent lead raises a query. This is because, other parts of the country category was so open to include all places outside Kampala. An inquiry into Kampala's lead is therefore important.

Why Kampala Dominated the Debate?

Kampala is Uganda's business center; all the powerful buyers are within Kampala, and actually Kampala is Uganda to some people. Majority of the reporters are based in Kampala region, Kanaabi (personal interview, June, 2007).

Connected to the above arguments, Westerstahl and Johansson (1994) cited in McQuail, 2000, p. 280 show that the importance of the event country and the proximity to the home media are two attributes of news accounting for a larger amount of selection. The nearer the location of news events is to the city region or nation of the intended audience, the more likely is to be noticed, also in Gans (1979, p.124). Majority of the news media both print and electronic are concentrated in Kampala, and therefore its audience becomes the

target. As Kanaabi suggests, almost all outstanding reporters are Kampala based, their focus in terms of news events will automatically be Kampala.

75 percent of the newspapers' sales are done in Kampala. Most of the activities that are news worthy take place in Kampala being the capital, the big players on third term were in the center, conferences were organized here, and most of the stakeholders who submitted views on constitutional amendment were within Kampala (Semujju, Kakande, & Mukasa, personal interviews, June, 2007).

Taking *The New Vision* as an example, 55 percent of the revenues come from advertising, 45 come from cover sales, 60 percent of revenue from sales comes from the capital of Kampala and 40 percent from the outlying regions (World Association of Newspapers 2003). The percentages mentioned here almost tally with those of sources' location highlighted in table 7. Stories whose sources were located in Kampala were 60 percent (similar to that of revenue collected from Kampala sales) and other parts of the country accounted for 37 percent which close to 40 percent of revenue sales from outlying regions.

The elite who serve as the media focus are an urban phenomenon; it is not surprising to see Kampala dominating as location of news sources Alaso & Oloka-Onyango (personal interviews, June 2007). According to Uganda Population Census Report (2002-2003) 12 percent of the population lives in urban areas, of which, Kampala has 41 percent of the total urban population. In terms of regions, the Central, where Kampala is part, has the largest share of the population rated at 27 percent, while Western and Eastern regions have 26% and 25%, respectively. The share of the Northern region is 22%.

Centering the debate in Kampala was after security had barred opposition political organizations and pressure groups from penetrating the rural populace with their anti-third term rhetoric, Mukiibi (personal interview, June 2007).

This implies that most of the opposition debate on the constitutional amendment review process was in Kampala. This perhaps justifies Kampala's dominance as well.

Kampala's dominance as a center of news sources is historical as Juuko, (personal interview, June 2007) argues;

Even Uganda's anti-colonial sentiments in 1950s and 60s were based in Kampala. People in the city center have proper means of accessing the media with fewer difficulties. The economy mobilizes the urban dwellers to be active in activities that attract the media. Modern society is urban oriented, and normally society, is judged onto its urban members. The rural populace is usually turned to during the election days.

4.3. Comparison of Debate Coverage between *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*

Table 4.8. Comparison of Frequency for Primary Sources' Political Affiliation

| PRIMARY POLITICAL AFFILIATION | NEWSPAPER | | Total |
|----------------------------------|----------------|------------------|--------------|
| | <i>Daily M</i> | <i>The New V</i> | |
| Opposition | 7 18.42 | 2 5.71 | 9 12.33 |
| Movement | 11 28.95 | 10 28.57 | 21 28.77 |
| Government supporter | 5 13.16 | 10 28.57 | 15 20.55 |
| Government critic | 9 23.68 | 5 14.29 | 14 19.18 |
| Neutral | 3 7.89 | 5 14.29 | 8 10.96 |
| Undefined | 3 7.89 | 3 8.57 | 6 8.22 |
| Total | 38 100.00 | 35 100.00 | 73 100.00 |

Pearson chi2 (5) = 6.0218 Pr = 0.304

Fisher's exact = 0.313

Source: Primary Data

Examining table 8 above, the pro-government (movement and government supporters) constituted 42.11 percent and 57.14 percent of the primary sources of the news stories reported in *Daily Monitor* and *The New Vision* respectively. The anti-Movement government (opposition and government critics) had 42.1 percent and 20 percent of the primary sources of the news stories reported in *Daily Monitor* and *The New Vision* respectively.

The general impression is that the *Daily Monitor* balanced between pro-government and the opposition (42.11% and 42.1% respectively) in coverage of stories while *The New Vision* covered more stories with the pro-government as the primary source than the opposition. *Daily Monitor's* News Editor, Robert Mukasa, when asked (in personal communication, June 2007) on whether his paper had any inclination towards a given political affiliation, he said;

Some people claim that our editorial support the opposition but this is not true. If you focus on the constitutional review process, we were focusing on who was making more news. This implied that whoever made more news received immense coverage on our side.

For *The New Vision* to have more pro-government voices is not a surprise because Movement government owns majority shares (80 percent) of the paper. The paper's News Editor, John Kakande (personal interview, June 2007) confirms this when he states: "Being a state paper, we are of course expected to advance Movement programmes that are geared towards development of the country."

This is also consistent with the paper's historical information posted on its website that says:

"*The New Vision* management set an objective and progressive political line, supportive of the Movement ideals, but critical of failings, as the basis of its editorial philosophy", (*The New Vision*, 2007).

The New Vision some how acted more as a government's mouth piece more than an avenue for availing information to the general public during the coverage of the constitutional amendment regardless of their political affiliation. It is also very difficult to rule out the application of pressure from government like dominance of government supporters as *The New Vision* staff, private criticisms, and sackings of staff. Curran (2000, p.125) argues that usually state owned media experience the cited pressures in order for government to guarantee the mouth piece role. The neutral voices were 7.89 percent and undefined 7.89 percent in *Daily Monitor*, and 14.29 percent and 8.57 percent respectively in *The New Vision*. However, there is no statistically significant association between the newspaper and the primary source.

Table 4.9. Comparison of Frequency for Secondary Sources' Political Affiliation

| SECONDARY POL. AFFL | NEWSPAPER <i>Daily Monitor</i> <i>The New Vision</i> | | Total |
|----------------------|---|--------------|--------------|
| Opposition | 2 5.26 | 2 5.71 | 4 5.48 |
| Movement | 2 5.26 | 2 5.71 | 4 5.48 |
| Government supporter | 5 13.16 | 5 14.29 | 10 13.70 |
| Government critic | 6 15.79 | 1 2.86 | 7 9.59 |
| Neutral | 2 5.26 | 4 11.43 | 6 8.22 |
| Undefined | 21 55.26 | 21 60.00 | 42 57.53 |
| Total | 38 100.00 | 35 100.00 | 73 100.00 |

Pearson chi2 (5) = 4.1218 Pr = 0.532

Fisher's exact = 0.532

Source: Primary Data

It is significant to note that majority of the stories did not have secondary sources (55.26 percent and 60 percent for *Daily Monitor* and *The New Vision* respectively).

The pro-government (government supporters and movement activists) sources constituted 18.42% and 20% in *Daily Monitor* and *The New Vision* respectively. This shows that the pro-government side had slightly higher coverage in *The New Vision* than in *Daily Monitor*. This is quite consistent with the findings primary sources (42.11% in *Daily Monitor* and 57.14% in *The New Vision*) though the voices' difference between the two papers in case of secondary sources is negligible.

Regarding the anti-government (opposition and government critics), the opposition enjoyed much higher coverage in *Daily Monitor* (21.1%) as compared to 8.6% they had in *The New Vision*. The whole picture is that coverage of stories from pro-government secondary sources was even between the two papers but when it came to opposition secondary sources, the coverage was far less in *The New Vision* as compared to *Daily Monitor*.

Worth noting too, is the fact that *The New Vision* carried more voices of neutral personalities. For primary sources for instance, 14.29 percent were neutral and 11.43 percent of the secondary sources. This neutrality could perhaps be attributed to intimidation that characterized the constitutional amendment exercise, especially on the subject of the third term. But still others might have had no side to support. However, there was no statistically significant association between the coverage of secondary source and the newspaper.

Table 4.10. Comparison of Frequency for Primary Sources' Sexual Category

| NEWSPAPER | PRIMARY SEXUAL CATEGORY | | | Total |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------|-----------|-------|
| | Male | Female | Group/mix | |
| <i>Daily Monitor</i> | 28 | 5 | 5 | 38 |
| <i>The New Vision</i> | 28 | 4 | 3 | 35 |
| Total | 56 | 9 | 8 | 73 |

Pearson chi2(2) = 0.4886 Pr = 0.783

Fisher's exact = 0.850

Source: Primary Data

Looking at the table 4.10 above, it is evident that the primary sources were mainly male for both papers. However, there is no statistically significant association between the newspapers and the primary sexual category at 95 percent level of confidence. In other words, none of the two newspapers had preference over the sex of the primary source of the article. As noted earlier, less coverage of women seems to be a world wide trend in media coverage of public agendas. This appears to be cutting across the two well-known media ownerships; state and private.

Table 4.11. Comparison of Frequency for Secondary Sources' Sexual Category

| NEWSPAPER | SECONDARY Male | SEXUAL Female | CATEGORY Group/mix | Total |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| <i>Daily Monitor</i> | 19 | 0 | 1 | 20 |
| <i>The New Vision</i> | 10 | 3 | 2 | 15 |
| Total | 29 | 3 | 3 | 35 |
| Pearson chi2(2) = 5.5249 Pr = 0.063 | | | | |
| Fisher's exact = 0.072 | | | | |

Source: Primary Data

Like for the primary sources, males also dominated as secondary sources. *The New Vision* only quoted three female secondary sources where as *Daily Monitor* did not quote any female as a secondary source. However, despite this observation, there is no statistically significant association between the newspaper and the sex of the secondary source at 95 percent level of confidence. The implication here is that the sex category of the secondary source did not influence or determine which paper was most likely to report a particular story.

Table 4.12. Comparison of Frequency for Primary Sources' Location

| NEWSPAPER | PRIMARY SOURCE LOCATION | | | Total |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------|---------------|-------|
| | Kampala | other parts | Not mentioned | |
| <i>Daily Monitor</i> | 22 | 15 | 1 | 38 |
| <i>The New Vision</i> | 23 | 11 | 1 | 35 |
| Total | 45 | 26 | 2 | 73 |

Pearson chi2 (2) = 0.5152 Pr = 0.773

Fisher's exact = 0.809

Source: Primary Data

Kampala District dominated as the location for the primary sources of news stories for both *Daily Monitor* (57.89 percent) and *The New Vision* (65.71 percent). 39 percent of sources' locations were from other parts of country and only 2.63 percent sources their location was not mentioned. Yet for *The New Vision*, 31 percent of the sources had their locations from other parts of the country and 2.85 percent their location was not mentioned. However, there was no statistically significant association between the newspaper and the primary source location. In other words the location of the primary source whether rural or urban did not influence the newspaper that reported the story.

As already established, print media generally are an urban phenomenon where the elite dominate as consumers. Big business that place adverts in those media operate more in urban centers than in rural or remote areas. However, a closer scrutiny indicates that *Daily Monitor* endeavored to balance between Kampala and other parts of the country with a difference of 18.42 percent as compared to *The New Vision* that had 34.1 percent difference. This difference still stands even when one takes into consideration the fact that *Daily Monitor* had more stories than *The New Vision*. The difference is just of three stories equivalent to 4.11 percent.

It appears that the two papers had a similar focus on Kampala and their content seem to have been similar in a number of ways. The content of news media tends to consistently follow a predictable pattern and that different organizations behave in a similar way when confronted by the same events and under equivalent conditions, as suggested by the Glasgow Media Group (1976);, McQuail,(1977) and Shoemaker and Reese (1991) in McQuail (2000, p.278). This implies that there was a stable perception on the part of news decision makers in both newspapers about what was likely to interest an audience.

The New Vision being a state owned newspaper, its tilt towards government officials and their sympathizers was obvious. Kupe (2003, p. 5) argues that the government controlled media often becomes a voice for the government of the day while privately owned media is a voice for the political opposition, civil society and those elites who are not in power. However, being assured of the government advertising revenue, *The New Vision* ought to have used such an advantage to cover the constitutional amendment debate country wide.

4.4.0 Implications of the outstanding findings on democratic process in Uganda

4.4.1 Third term and Elite or officials' dominance of constitutional amendment debate

The finding that official sources dominate the news is often presented as criticism of the media and it is true with this study. Official sources of Members of Parliament and cabinet ministers dominated the debate on constitutional amendment. If the media were to fulfill their democratic role, they would offer citizens a wide variety of opinions and perspectives, not just the narrow spectrum represented by those who have attained political power, Schudson (2002, p.258). This is perhaps more valid when it comes to private media which survive on advertising revenue. They need to cover politically and economically powerful officials who can in turn provide adverts or influence their allocation. This perhaps might be the reason as to why the dominance of officials cuts across the two newspapers that were investigated but more especially the *Daily Monitor*.

Secondly, democracy thrives in situations where the economics of the media, especially private, are powerful. This empowers the media to resist compromises and to cater for all audiences including the rural ones. However, in case of this study, voices of the ordinary citizens were very few (15.5 percent of all sources of news) in both *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*. Given the fact that 60 percent of sources were located in Kampala, the capital city, rural voices were hardly captured.

Additionally, economics of the media studied seem not to create a media infrastructure that serves the poor and especially rural audiences as Berger (2002, p.33) suggests. Berger further concludes that in such a situation it is precisely the state as an allocator of the resources that can publicly subsidize media according to extra-market criteria. In the Uganda's context, the state owned *The New Vision* did not cover much of rural stories as it is indicated in the findings. The researcher argues rightly that *The New Vision* was expected to be broader in coverage due to its economic advantage over *Daily Monitor*. This implies the tender nature of democracy in Uganda where the state rarely provides such subsidies as Berger suggests.

Still on the indicators of weak democracy, Ansah cited in Ronning, (1994, p.11) argues that most African countries are either too small or too poor to develop a media structure capable of ensuring the representation of a wide range of views and experiences. Though radio is the most popular medium, potentially the most efficient for reaching the population, most of its talk shows are again dominated by the elite (Ibid, p.18). Possibly, the hope for genuine democracy would be achieved through community media that aim at involving ordinary citizens at grassroot level.

The dominance of official sources on a dominant theme of the third term was inevitable since the main focus of political news as Schudson, (1995, p.214) suggests, is necessarily government, and since most information about government necessarily comes from

government sources. This implies that the daily routines of journalism (which confine news values to importance, conflict, prominence, timeliness etc) do not help but stand in the way of democracy since there is a professional slant towards prominent issues and personalities in news coverage. Thus with such routines, the press does not do a good job of aiding the adequate understanding of citizens.

Public or state media like *The New Vision* should operate as a public sphere, because for private owned media (like *Daily Monitor*), owners can use property rights to restrict the flow of information and open debate on which vitality of democracy depends, as Golding & Murdock, (2000, p. 79) concluded. The recent suspension of Timothy Kalyegira's news articles and resignation of Andrew Mwenda from *Daily Monitor* send signals of weak media democracy in Uganda. Restrictions of such type on freedom of expression suffocate democracy.

It is also eminent that concentration of media ownership in a few hands like the case of Nation Media Group that owns *Daily Monitor*, *Kfm*, *Commercial Printery*, *courier services*, and *Nation Television* together with other business interests is likely to limit diversity and freedom. This is because in order to minimize production costs, these media outlets would use a few reporters to report for all news media. This is therefore a real conglomeration of business interests that signifies commercial interests that are likely to lead to the collapse of journalistic standards. Berger (2002, p. 38) argues that media can be a problem rather than part of the solution for democracy in case commercialization leads to a collapse of journalistic standards.

There are opposition voices which purport that Aga Khan's (top owner of Nation Media Group) pact to construct Bujagali Power Plant along river Nile is a pointer to the transformation of the media in Uganda. They argue that the deal would compromise the news media under Aga Khan ownership. This is relevant to the findings of this study

which suggest that commercial interests and property rights might have influenced the coverage of the constitutional amendment debate.

The New Vision's recent move to start a Saturday Edition, an FM radio station, and Television add a new element to the old debate about potential abuses of owner power. The effect of such ownership as argued by Golding and Murdock (2000, p.79) is to reduce the diversity of cultural goods in circulation.

Although, in simple quantitative terms, there may be more commodities in circulation, they are more likely to be variants of the same basic themes and images. What is presumed in such arrangement is a symbiotic relationship between news media, for instance, newspaper giving free publicity to the radio station. Television could also decide to cover the newspaper promotion campaigns, space and time that would have been allotted to community groups would be lost already. This is another major blow to democracy.

4.4.2. Dominance of Members of Parliament:

The study findings reveal that Members of Parliament as a whole dominated the debate on the Constitutional amendment as sources of news at a percentage of 20.9. It is clear that these are representatives of the people. This therefore implies that MPs represented their constituents in the debate. This dominance consequently was positive to representative democracy. MPs were representatives for both political parties and constituents, because they voted them into power by casting their votes.

A representative mode of democracy is preferred to direct democracy because nation states with large populations cannot accommodate the participation of all citizens and the agreement of a majority in the decisions-making process, Sudulich (2003, p.2). This implies that direct democracy of full participation in decisions-making can only work in small communities like in ancient Greek city states. But with modern and big communities like in

Uganda, people must delegate their political rights to representatives, in this case, the Members of Parliament. Dahl (2000, p.109) in Sudulich (2003, p.3) points to this when he states; "The law of time and numbers: The more citizens a democratic union contains, the less that citizens can participate directly in government decisions and the more that they must delegate authority to others."

The presumed challenge of representative democracy is in a representative's ability to consult his or her constituents and readiness to convey the agreed upon positions in parliamentary debate. It appears a considerable number of representatives find less time to go back to their constituents to engage their people in meetings and workshops. Secondly, many representatives assume positions or representative seats out of bribery. Thus, they cannot feel obliged to represent the electorate after all they genuinely did not elect them. Such scenarios therefore call for an informed citizenry and more independent and transparent judiciary and electoral bodies.

In the democratic sense media should provide a channel of communication between governments and governed which helps society to clarify its objectives formulate policy, coordinate activity, and manage itself (Curran, 2000, p.127 and Golding & Murdock, 2000, p.77). However, the dominance of government officials generally somehow limited this role.

4.4.3. Less voices of civil society:

If the democratic purpose of the media system is to assist social groups to constitute themselves and clarify their objectives as Edwin Baker quoted in Curran, (2000, P.140) puts it, then few groups achieved this purpose in the constitutional amendment debate. With 4.5 percent of civil society's voices in the debate, the democratic purpose was barely realized. Usually, it is the civil society that endeavors to help ordinary citizens to realize adequate understanding of political issues through the media as Dahl (2000) states it. The findings of

the study therefore, indicate a patchy democratic environment in Uganda.

Secondly, media should assist collective organizations to recruit support, provide an internal channel of communication and debate for their members; and transmit their concerns and policy proposals to a wider public. In other words, the representative role of the media includes civil society to exert influence on the governmental system, (Curran, 2000, p.149). Blumler (1997, p.397) adds that would be opinion formers and political parties and their leaders rely on the media more heavily to reach individual citizens and cultivate or restore support. On this, a considerable percentage (12.7) of opposition political groups' voices was registered in the constitutional amendment debate. However, it seems the voices of the political parties during the debate were neither focused on recruiting support nor helping ordinary citizens understand politics of the day. The focus seemed to have been only on opposing the status quo rather than transmitting concerns and policy proposals to a wider public. In any case, there were some democratic elements realized in this regard.

4.4.4. Less women and rural voices:

Ordinarily, provision of a platform for diverse views and opinions, including those of the vulnerable groups, is a democratic expectation of the media. The public sphere model also suggests the same thing. The findings of this study indicate that 79 percent of sources of the news on the constitutional amendment were male and 11 percent females. Yet 60 percent of the sources of news were located in Kampala and 37 percent in other parts of the country including other urban centres like district headquarters. These percentages imply that the role of media in democracy is still lacking because a few urban male elite voices are the ones dominating the public sphere. But this dominance in news coverage is explained in previous pages. Precisely the dominance is attributed to the political economy of the media, historical marginalization of women, government restrictions on free speech especially in rural areas, and location of the media outlets in the Uganda's capital Kampala.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0. Introduction:

This chapter presents a summary of the key findings of the study, conclusions, and recommendations for improving media's performance and areas for further research. The study was pegged on two major premises; one, the media's role of providing a platform for open public debate and giving access to all sorts of ideas and points of view; and two, the journalism professional demand of fairness and equal treatment of all sorts of people and ideas.

The study presumed that editors select news stories for their newspapers according to individual prejudice or bureaucratic newsroom routines. Secondly, opinions of the elite are more attractive to the press than those of the ordinary citizens. Thirdly, male voices dominate political debate. And the other assumption was that media coverage control participation in public discourse.

This study generally sought to investigate the voice and issue representation in the media coverage of the constitutional amendment debate. In specific terms, it investigated the dominant issues in the debate, the dominant sources of news or voices, sought to establish why conceivably third term received intensive media coverage than other issues in the constitutional amendment debate. The other objectives were to notice similarities and differences if any in the coverage of the debate between *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* and to establish the implications of the dominance of the third term debate and certain news sources on democratic process in Uganda.

5.1. Summary of Key Findings:

Removal of presidential term limits, popularly known as third term, was the dominant or major issue in the constitutional amendment debate. 71 out of 73 stories sampled were about third term. This makes it exactly 97.3 percent of all stories. Surprisingly, other clauses like dual citizenship, Kiswahili becoming a second official language, and many others appeared less. This finding is line with the assumption that news selection is based on bureaucratic newsroom routines like prominence, timeliness, conflict, and impact.

Prominence, competition, impact on the nation and national interests, controversy, timeliness, being a regional issue, and major target of the proponents of the constitutional amendment were discovered as the major reasons for the dominance of third term in the constitutional amendment debate.

As a whole, government officials (Presidency, Cabinet Ministers and Members of Parliament) dominated as news sources in the debate on constitutional amendment by 41.8 percent. This finding is consistent with the classical notion that political news is a reality constructing activity that follows the lead of government officials. But as an overall group, Members of Parliament dominated the debate with 20.9 percent sources.

The elite enjoyed coverage more than ordinary citizens in both *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*. This is consistent with the assumption that opinions of the elite are more attractive to press than those of the ordinary citizens. Though ordinary citizens' voices constituted 15.5 percent in this study, almost the remaining percent was for the elite.

The study found that the dominance of Members of Parliament and Cabinet Ministers at 20.9 percent and 14.5 percent frequencies was due to majorly on three factors; being deciders on the constitutional amendment clauses and their being representatives of the people. Thirdly, they had worthwhile issues to attract media attention.

49.3 percent of the stories sampled did not have secondary sources. The interviewees attributed this to tight deadlines, small facilitation of reporters, laziness, lack of professional skills, and compromises emanating from corruption of reporters.

The study found that the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) members and their supporters dominated the debate on constitutional amendment by 46 percent frequency. This was tied perhaps to the fact that they were more protected and financially capable to access and attract media attention.

Male voices or sources dominated the debate on constitutional amendment with 79 percent frequency as compared to females whose voices constituted 11 percent. This is also consistent with the assumption that male voices dominate political debate.

The location of the sources of news on the constitutional amendment debate, approximately 60 percent, was Kampala. Yet those from other parts of the country constituted 37 percent. The remaining percentage was for three sources whose locations were not captured by the reporters.

Generally the coverage of the constitutional amendment debate was almost similar in both *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*, save a few divergent cases like the following; it was found out that *Daily Monitor* was more balanced in the coverage between pro-government (42.11 percent) and opposition (42.1 percent) voices than *The New Vision*. The pro government voices enjoyed more space in *The New Vision* (57.14 percent) than their opposition counterparts whose sources constituted only 20 percent.

The findings revealed that the media are still constrained to cover all sorts of views freely thus a failure to serve the democratic process. Few issues and voices are captured in the

news. This is in line with the assumption that media coverage influences participation in public discourse. Political and economic physique still influences the media content, though on a positive note, representative democracy seems to have been realized with Members of Parliament and Cabinet Ministers dominating the political debate on constitutional amendment.

5.2. Major Conclusions:

1. Media in general terms are still narrowly focused in terms of content. They intensely cover controversial issues that sell more copies and neglect some other quite important societal needs that can boost its welfare. This implies that the media in Uganda, are failing to fulfill the informational role that enable democracy to thrive.
2. The journalism professional guidelines like news values or determinants of news editors' prejudice, and individual journalists' attitudes, continue to shape media content despite the fact that they are in themselves a big limitation to media's role in the democratic process especially in Africa. Following such values, will continue to narrow the entrance to the public sphere where all people's views must be registered.
3. Government officials seem to be continuing to dominate the news so long as the media economics are still small and weak. Still with more restrictions on free speech, in Uganda, government voices will continue to enjoy bigger space even in privately owned media. The dominance of government voices fails news media in their role of providing a channel of communication between government and the governed. Society will not therefore be able to clarify and coordinate its objectives and activities appropriately.

4. Print media surely is more of an elite centered phenomenon than being an avenue or platform for ordinary citizens. Print media usually targets upper class citizens. In the case of Uganda, they are the ones who can speak and understand English and even possess the means to consume newspapers. This development, imply that, ordinary citizens are excluded in the decision making process of their own affairs and therefore, cannot be active members in policies' implementation.
5. The media is still urban centered due to the fact that majority of the newspaper consumers and potential advertisers are urban based. Additionally, the two newspapers, *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*, are located in Kampala. 60 percent of the sources captured in the study were located in Kampala. This indicates two major things; one, there is a perpetual knowledge gap between the urban and rural dwellers. The latter therefore, can not make meaningful decisions while exercising their political right of voting leaders. Secondly, the rural populace is subtly denied opportunity to participate in the public discourse.
6. Given the fact that 49.3 percent of the stories sampled did not have secondary sources, it leads to a conclusion that media are still characterized by professional failures that are disastrous to democratization process in Uganda.
7. Members of the ruling party and its supporters in Uganda and in other societies including big democracies enjoy media platform due to their economic and political advantage. This therefore makes media restrictive and public opinion skewed.
8. Both male and female journalists in their effort to report and write news capture more of male voices than their female counterparts. This tendency limits diversity of views, which is a core value of democracy.

9. Intensive competition between *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* newspapers propel them to produce almost similar content though, as political space becomes narrow, a tilt towards government side is inevitably observed. Identical media content that was found in this study, imply failure on the media's role of providing a forum for discussion of diverse and often conflicting ideas. Ideally, plurality of outlets would imply diversity of views and opinions which is not the case.

5.3. General Recommendations for Media Improvement:

1. Journalists ought to revise their source considerations, paying less attention to public officials and more attention to other nation wide groups that also have power, as well as to the ordinary people as Gans, (1979, p.285) suggests. This will automatically demand for more qualified staff, resources and more space which papers should be able to adjust.
2. Newspaper editors and managers ought to organize their papers in a way that provides separate sections capturing summaries of key issues of concern. For instance, the constitutional amendment process was so crucial and all citizens needed information about it. Summaries about such a theme would be useful to readers, listeners or viewers.
3. News media owners and managers should consider training and challenging journalists to find time for serious thought about journalism. This could be achieved through basic journalism training at home, staff retreats, and sending those journalists to renowned colleges and universities in the region to interact with senior trainers in their areas of expertise.

4. Similarly, there should be deliberate efforts to encourage investigative journalism and interpretative reporting that would boost professionalism. Interpretative reporting will reveal the implications of news events and this would make them more understandable to the citizens. Yet investigative reports would make public figures more accountable and transparent, enable citizens to know their rights, and restrain any abusers of power.
5. As Schudson, (2000, p.194) suggests, there is a need to advocate civic journalism which urges news organizations to assume some responsibility for revitalizing public communication, notably by identifying voters' most pressing concerns, creating forums in which those concerns can be aired, and obliging politicians to address them.
6. There is a need to require commercial media to make a range of minority interest stories or pullouts even though they are not profitable. All media, regardless of their ownership status, should be challenged to ask civil society groups for position papers on matters of public concern and publish them regularly. This will widen the public sphere rather than narrowing it. If need be, civil society groups should also be encouraged to buy space through which they can articulate alternative views.
7. Journalists should be reoriented towards women so that they consider them as potential newsmakers. Women too must be sensitized towards the meaning of their participation in public discourse.
8. Government should begin providing subsidies for publication of public information. This should not be taken as a defensive approach (where government officials issue press statements to defend their mistakes) that is common with governments but rather a mechanism to create an informed citizenry.

9. News media ought to re-think the localization of news values so that they can suit and serve societal demands. News values in their ideal format tend to influence journalists to neglect ordinary citizens because they are not prominent. Due to such routines, journalists focus more attention on the prominent officials even if such officials have nothing important to communicate. Ordinary citizens normally come out in the news as deviants or losers.
10. It seems the public service communication and community media are the solution to the dilemmas in the media sector in Uganda. Mwajabu cited in Nassanga (2003, p. 169) argues that community media serve as platforms for debate, exchange of ideas and reacting to plans and projects, help in social aspects, preserve culture, shape people's ideas, mobilize and entertain. This seems more practical in broadcasting than in print. Yet the existing private media sector ought to enhance the critical surveillance role. Kupe cited in Nassanga (2003, p.8) for far reaching democratization to occur, media ownership must be something that is not the exclusive of governments and those who have deep pockets and wish to make more money. It should come within the ambit of ordinary people.

5.4. Recommendations for Further Research:

1. With time and financial resources, this study would be given a broader touch which I have not managed to provide. I only took several samples of years (2003-2005), instead of five years that the constitutional review process took. Then the researcher sampled months and dates or issues. Therefore, a large scale approach to this very subject or theme would give more comprehensive results.
2. Further research is recommended in the context of news sources to measure whether

sources were the enterprising type (where news is drawn from exclusive efforts originating from reporters) or routine (general cooperate news or public relations pieces are provided in form of press statement). Discovering the context of the sources would boost the latent content meaning and implications to democracy.

3. Due to time and resource constraints, this study did not measure the space allocated to sources investigated. It only focused on frequency of those sources without measuring the inches, centimeters, and number of columns allotted to stories. Further research would indeed provide a concrete picture on the amount of space dedicated to public affairs and see whether media contribute to democratic process.

5.5. Conclusion:

This study has revealed motivating information as regards the performance of media in democratization process in Uganda. It is quite clear that Uganda's media contributes less towards democracy than it could since it is a handful of voices that are registered in public discourse. For example, the study found that the constitutional amendment debate that was crucial to the political transition in Uganda was dominated by male, elite, urban, government voices that subscribe to the Movement political system. In the study, several recommendations for further research have been acknowledged as well as suggestions for better performance of news media in Uganda. With such findings, media practitioners would perhaps need to re-think a new approach towards their role in democratization process in Uganda.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A: Content Analysis Codebook

Introduction

This study is aimed at assessing voices and issues' representation in the coverage of constitutional amendment debate by *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* newspapers from September 2003 to September 2005. It examines the coverage given to selected constitutional amendment issues or clauses and the dominant sources, and how this affects participatory democracy.

The following definitions are vital in selecting and analyzing the content under study;

News story

News stories are defined as all non-advertising matter in a news product. In a newspaper, this would usually include all staff produced hard news stories found in local, regional and national news sections. It may also include relevant features and analysis produced by local staff reporter in relation to the issues in question. But the analysis would exclude editorial pages, reader opinions, business, health, environment, education, fashion and styles, relationship, sports, society and international news stories.

Constitutional Amendment Issue

The Constitution Amendment exercise in Uganda 2005 had two major Bills namely; (No. 2) Bill, 2005 and Constitution Amendment (No. 3) Bill, 2005. The latter is the focus of this study because it contains the presidential term limits and other crucial clauses, which appear to have received greater media attention.

Due to the huge number of clauses tabled in the Bill, by constitutional amendment issue, it would refer to the following;

Removal of presidential term limits (third term), Dual citizenship, Making Kiswahili a second official language, Kampala's status as Uganda's capital but a part of Buganda, Establishment of the offices of the Leader of opposition, Holding presidential, parliamentary and local government elections at the same time, and Reducing the minimum qualification of High Court Judges from ten years practice to 7 years. The rest of the constitutional amendment issues would be looked as others.

News sources

A source is a person or group of individuals, or organizations, who give information to news reporters. Sources are clearly identified as such when news reporters quote or paraphrase information from them in stories.

Primary source is the first person or group of people, organizations to whom particular facts or information are attributed. Yet secondary source refers to the second person or people or

organization to whom particular information or facts are attributed.

Note: the data is to be entered on a separate codesheet.

PROCEDURE

The following steps would be taken in the content analysis coding described below;

Newspapers are selected, one at a time, from the time frame stipulated. Tracking form is used to keep track of every issue analyzed regardless of whether or not its content is coded. This eases the monitoring of progress and ensures that no newspaper issue is coded more than once.

All the headlines are read and scanned on the news and analysis pages to identify those stories or articles whose content deals clearly with constitutional amendment as defined above. The required information is recorded by using relevant codes. This is done by one coder and checked by another. Coder may use circling method in marking items needed. Each story is then analyzed for specific characteristics described below;

1. **CODER ID:** The coder's identification number is written
2. **NEWSPAPER:** The newspaper in which the article is located should be indicated
 - a) *Daily Monitor*
 - b) *The New Vision*
3. **DATE:** The date of the issue is coded. This would follow a format like month/day of the month/year e.g. 12/08/2003
4. **PAGE/STORY PROMINENCE,** this can also be observed as location: The page number on which the article starts is indicated.
5. **CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ISSUE OR TOPIC:** The story is read and its primary focus is determined. If the focus is not offered in the headline, then the coder can turn to the intro (the opening one or two paragraphs) or the third and fourth paragraph. In order to avoid confusion, if the story focuses on more than one issue, the primary one (the one that has taken bigger space) is considered.
6. **PRIMARY SOURCE:** As defined the coder identifies and records the first source using the following options;
 - 1 President
 - 2 Vice President
 - 3 Minister (including prime minister and all state ministers)
 - 4 Member of Parliament
 - 5 Elected Local Council leader at all LC levels
 - 6 Military Personnel
 - 7 Appointed civil servants in both local and central governments including those in law enforcement
 - 8 Religious leader

- 9 Ordinary citizen-not occupationally involved in politics
- 10 Government/Movement activist
- 11 Opposition activist
- 12 Cultural/traditional leader
- 13 Civil society activist
- 14 Representative of foreign government
- 15 Representative of international organization
- 16 Undefined
- 17 Others/mention.....

7. **SECONDARY SOURCE:** The coder identifies the second source;

- 1 President
- 2 Vice President
- 3 Minister (including prime minister and all state ministers)
- 4 Member of Parliament
- 5 Elected Local Council leader at all LC levels
- 6 Military Personnel
- 7 Appointed civil servants in both local and central governments including those in law enforcement
- 8 Religious leader
- 9 Ordinary citizen-not occupationally involved in politics
- 10 Government/Movement activist
- 11 Opposition activist
- 12 Cultural/traditional leader
- 13 Civil society activist
- 14 Representative of foreign government
- 15 Representative of international organization
- 16 Undefined
- 17 Others/mention.....

8. **PRIMARY POLITICAL AFFILIATION:** The coder indicates the political leaning of the primary source as described in the article;

- 1 **Opposition:** Refers to individuals clearly playing political roles of organized political parties or organizations.
- 2 **Movement:** Refers to individuals playing known roles and functions in Movement as a political organization and as a government.
- 3 **Government supporter:** Politicians like Members of Parliament or any other dignified member in society, and ordinary citizens not holding any government or movement office but declare themselves or seem to advance ideas favorable to the Movement government, its leaders, and policies.

- 4 **Government critic:** Any individual including politicians, other non-political but dignified members in society and ordinary citizens not occupationally engaged in politics but declare themselves or seem to advance ideas critical of the Movement government, its leaders, and policies.
- 5 **Neutral:** Individuals occupationally engaged in politics or not but taking no any political sides (opposition or Movement) on issues analyzed in the study.
- 6 **Undefined:** individuals whose political leanings are not defined in the story under analysis.

9. **PRIMARY SEXUAL CATEGORY:** The coder identifies the sex of the first source

- 1 Male
- 2 Female
- 3 Group or mixed

10. **SECONDARY SEXUAL CATEGORY:** The sex of the secondary source is indicated

- 1 Male
- 2 Female
- 3 Group or mixed

11. **PRIMARY SOURCE LOCATION:** The coder records the location (where in terms of place) of the source as indicated in the story;

- 1 Kampala district
- 2 Other parts of the country
- 3 Not mentioned

12. **SECONDARY SOURCE LOCATION:** The location of the secondary source is established from the story

- 1 Kampala district
- 2 Other parts of the country
- 3 Not mentioned

Appendix B: Content Analysis Code sheet

CODER 1D: _____

HEADLINE:.....

NEWSPAPER:

1. *Daily Monitor*
2. *The New Vision*

DATE: (month/day/year): ____/____/____

PAGE: _____

ISSUE OR TOPIC:

1. Removal of presidential term limits (**Third Term**)
2. Dual citizenship
3. Making Kiswahili a second official language
4. Kampala's status as Uganda's capital but a part of Buganda
5. Establishment of the offices of the Leader of opposition
6. Holding presidential, parliamentary and local government elections at the same time
7. Reducing the minimum qualification of High Court Judges from ten years practice to 7 years.
8. Others

PRIMARY SOURCE:

1. President
2. Vice President
3. Minister (including prime minister and all state ministers)
4. Member of Parliament
5. Elected Local Council leader at all LC levels
6. Military Personnel
7. Appointed civil servants in both local and central governments including those in law enforcement
8. Religious leader
9. Ordinary citizen-not occupationally involved in politics
10. Government/Movement activist
11. Opposition activist
12. Cultural/traditional leader
13. Civil society activist
14. Representative of foreign government
15. Representative of international organization
16. Undefined
17. Others /mention.....

SECONDARY SOURCE:

1. President
2. Vice President
3. Minister (including prime minister and all state ministers)

4. Member of Parliament
5. Elected Local Council leader at all LC levels
6. Military Personnel
7. Appointed civil servants in both local and central governments including those in law enforcement
8. Religious leader
9. Ordinary citizen-not occupationally involved in politics
10. Government/Movement activist
11. Opposition activist
12. Cultural/traditional leader
13. Civil society activist
14. Representative of foreign government
15. Representative of international organization
16. Undefined
17. Others /mention.....

PRIMARY POLITICAL AFFILIATION:

1. Opposition
2. Movement
3. Government supporter
4. Government critic
5. Neutral
6. Undefined

SECONDARY POLITICAL AFFILIATION:

- 1 Opposition
- 2 Movement
- 3 Government supporter
- 4 Government critic
- 5 Neutral
- 6 Undefined

PRIMARY SEXUAL CATEGORY

- 1 Male
- 2 Female
- 3 Group/mixed

SECONDARY SEXUAL CATEGORY:

- 1 Male
- 2 Female
- 3 Group/mixed

PRIMARY SOURCE LOCATION:

- 1 Kampala district
- 2 Other parts of the country
- 3 Not mentioned

SECONDARY SOURCE LOCATION:

- 1 Kampala district
- 2 Other parts of the country
- 3 Not mentioned

Appendix C: Guiding Questions

This study is aimed at assessing voices and issues' representation in the coverage of constitutional amendment debate by *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* newspapers from September 2003 to September 2005. It examines the coverage given to selected constitutional amendment issues or clauses and the dominant sources, and how this affects participatory democracy.

6 months were randomly selected out of 25 for both papers. A total of 73 stories were coded; 38 from the *Daily Monitor* and 35 from the *New Vision*. 110 sources were identified with these stories.

Guiding Questions for Interviews

1. Why did the presidential term limits that were taken to mean third term dominate the debate on Constitutional Amendment? According to the study, **97.3%** of stories examined were on this. Other issues that were investigated are; Dual citizenship, Making Kiswahili a second official language, Kampala's status as Uganda's capital but a part of Buganda, Establishment of the offices of the Leader of opposition, Holding presidential, parliamentary and local government elections at the same time, Reducing the minimum qualification of High Court Judges from ten years practice to 7 years and others. Was this deliberate or unwitting as Mcquail (1992) put?
2. Why did the government sources dominate the debate? (6%+14%+20%+5%) =45%, presidency, ministers, MPs, and government or movementists respectively. What reasons do you have on MPs and Ministers?
3. What are your comments on the dominance of the elite as compared to the ordinary citizens? It appears the elite voices constituted 87.3% as compared to 12.7%
4. What arguments would you put for the dominance of Movementists and their supporters? Investigations indicate that out of the 73 stories, 36 (49%) were from movementists and their supporters, where as those of from opposition and government critics were 23 (31%)
5. Out of the 73 stories examined, 56 (76.7%) were from male sources and 9 (12.3%) were from females, and the remaining 8 (11%) from mixed/group sources. Is it the reality that women do not participate in political debate? Could there be other explanations for this? What does this mean to democracy?
6. Why did the debate concentrate in Kampala? 45 (62%) stories out of 73 their sources were located in Kampala and the rest of places shared 26 stories where as 2 stories had no location.

Comparison Questions;

The New Vision

1. Majority of the Stories about presidency as a source were in *The New Vision* paper (11.4%: 5:3%), could there be other reasons apart from journalistic news values? How do you explain this trend?
2. It gives the impression that *The New Vision* covered less of the opposition stories (NV5.7%: DM18.4%). The same trend was also depicted in the coverage of government critics (NV 5 – DM 9, 14.3%: 23.7%) respectively. Whereas on stories reflecting government supporters New Vision dominated by 28.6% as compared 13.2% of the DM. What explanations do you have?
3. Why women are less as news sources? *The New Vision* had 4 stories of female sources out of 35 examined.
4. The coverage seemed to be biased towards Kampala as a region. 23/35 their sources were in Kampala. What could have been the reasons? A state medium is presumed to have a national coverage all regions well represented.
5. 36 stories out 73 did not have secondary sources. What does this mean to journalistic values of balance and fairness?

The Daily Monitor

1. *Daily Monitors* covered less of stories about presidency. Majority of the Stories about presidency as a source were in *The New Vision* paper (11.4%: 5:3%), could there be other reasons apart from journalistic news values for this trend on the side of *Daily Monitor*?
2. It gives the impression that *The Daily Monitor* covered more of the opposition stories than *The New Vision*(NV5.7%: DM18.4%). The same trend was also depicted in the coverage of government critics (NV 5 – DM 9, 14.3%: 23.7%) respectively. Whereas on stories reflecting government supporters New Vision dominated by 28.6% as compared 13.2% of the DM. What explanations do you have?
3. Why women are less as news sources? *The Daily Monitor* had 5 stories of female sources out of 38 examined.
4. The coverage seemed to be biased towards Kampala as a region. 22/38 their sources were in Kampala. What could have been the reasons? A regional medium is presumed to have a wider coverage of all regions.
5. 36 stories out 73 did not have secondary sources. What does this mean to journalistic values of balance and fairness?

Appendix D: List of Informants

Alice Alaso, Soroti Women Member of Parliament.

Dr. Nansozi Muwanga, Senior lecturer in the Department of Political Science at Makerere University, Kampala.

Haruna Kanaabi, Coordinator, East African Media Institute (EAMI) Uganda Chapter

Ibrahim Semujju Nganda, Political Editor *The Weekly Observer* Newspaper, Kampala.

John Kakande, News Editor, *The New Vision* Newspaper, Kampala.

Mohles Seggululigamba, Media Monitor working with Democracy Monitoring Group (DEMG) in Uganda.

Mukiibi Serwanga, Media Monitor working with Democracy Monitoring Group (DEMG) in Uganda also Independent Media Analyst.

Mulindwa Muwonge, Chief News Editor, at Super FM, Kampala.

Professor Fredrick Jjuuko, Senior lecturer, Faculty of Law, Makerere University, Kampala.

Professor Oloka-Onyango, Director, Human Rights and Peace Centre, Makerere University, Kampala also Senior lecturer, Faculty of Law.

Robert Mukasa, News Editor, *Daily Monitor* Newspaper, Kampala.