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**MASTER THESIS**

**THE ROLE OF THE PRINT MEDIA IN THE UGANDA GENERAL  
ELECTIONS PROCESS: THE EXAMPLE OF DAILY MONITOR  
AND NEW VISION NEWSPAPERS**

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**ABSTRACT**  
**THE ROLE OF THE PRINT MEDIA IN THE UGANDA GENERAL**  
**ELECTIONS PROCESS: THE EXAMPLE OF DAILY MONITOR AND NEW**  
**VISION NEWSPAPERS**

**ABUDU RAHAMAN BALABA**

Mass media can contribute to the democratic process by cultivating social spaces for public dialogue. The purpose of this research was to determine the role of the print media in the Uganda 2021 general election process. The qualitative and quantitative mechanisms were used by the researcher. As data collection tools, content analysis of selected stories from the daily monitor and new vision newspapers, as well as interviews, were used. Thirteen interviews were conducted with editors and journalists from the selected newspapers for the qualitative study. A total of N = 1,704 newspaper articles were quantitatively retrieved and examined, with 883 (51.8%) coming from the new vision and 821 (48.2) items coming from the daily monitor.

Findings of the study indicated that 98.6% of news items analyzed, mentioned at least one candidate, and only 1.4% of news items didn't mention a candidate among analyzed news. The study results indicate that 63% of the candidates covered in the analyzed articles were male and only 37% of the candidates were female, 75% of the candidates appeared in the newspaper as subjects of the story, and only 25% appeared as newsmakers. Whereas the dominant political party in the newspaper was the National Resistance Movement (NRM) led by President Yoweri Museveni with 46.8% of the analyzed news. Whereas the National Unity Platform (NUP) came in the second position with a total representation of 33.1% of the total coverage. Other political parties had minimal scores. The study confirmed that print media contributed greatly to electing some political candidates during the 2021 Uganda general election.

**Keywords:** Print Media, Media Coverage, Uganda, Elections, Agenda Setting

**ÖZ**  
**UGANDA GENEL SEÇİMLERİ SÜRECİNDE YAZILI BASININ ROLÜ:**  
**DAILY MONITOR VE NEW VISION GAZETELERİ ÖRNEĞİ**

**ABUDU RAHAMAN BALABA**

Kitle iletişim araçları, kamusal diyalog için sosyal alanlar geliştirerek demokratik sürece katkıda bulunmaktadır. Bu araştırmanın amacı da, Uganda 2021 genel seçim sürecinde yazılı basının rolünü belirlemektir. Araştırmada nitel ve nicel mekanizmalar kullanılmıştır. Toplanan veriler Daily Monitör ve New Vision gazetelerinden seçilen haberlerin içerik analizi ve röportajlardan oluşmaktadır. Bunun yanı sıra nitel araştırma için seçilen gazetelerden editörler ve gazetecilerle 13 görüşme yapılmıştır. 883'ü (%51,8) New Vision gazetesi ve 821'i (48,2) Daily Monitör gazetesinden gelmek üzere toplam N = 1.704 gazete makalesi nicel olarak alınmış ve incelenmiştir.

Araştırmanın bulguları, incelenen haberlerin %98,6'sının en az bir adaydan bahsettiğini ve sadece %1,4'ünün incelenen haberler arasında bir adaydan bahsetmediğini göstermiştir. Araştırma sonuçları, incelenen makalelerde yer alan adayların %63'ünün erkek, yalnızca %37'sinin kadın olduğunu göstermektedir. Adayların %75'i haber konusu olarak gazetede yer almıştır. Gazetelerde içerik bakımından baskın olan siyasi parti ise incelenen haberlerin %46,8'i ile Cumhurbaşkanı Yoweri Museveni liderliğindeki Ulusal Direniş Hareketi (NRM) olmuştur. Ulusal Birlik Platformu (NUP) ise toplam kapsamanın %33,1'ini temsil ederek ikinci sırada yer almıştır. Diğer siyasi partiler minimum düzeyde içeriklerde yer bulmuştur. Bu çalışma, yazılı basının 2021 Uganda genel seçimleri sırasında bazı siyasi adayların seçilmesine büyük katkıda bulunduğunu doğrulamıştır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Yazılı Medya, Medya Kapsamı, Uganda, Seçimler, Gündem Belirleme

## **PREFACE**

Today, various political candidates use the media, particularly print media, in elections around the world. As a result, this study offers several unique perspectives on print media and its role in general election processes. As a study, it will contribute to our understanding of Uganda's print media. It discusses the role of print media in Uganda's general election. This thesis is submitted for a Master's degree at Istanbul University. The research described here was carried out in the department of General Journalism under the supervision of Assoc.Prof. Ibrahim Sena ARVAS. In this preface, I'd like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my advisor for his unwavering support, encouragement, and insightful ideas. I am grateful and honored to have had the chance to collaborate with him. Our ongoing, mind-expanding, and constructive discussions have provided an endless source of inspiration for both of us. This research has been greatly aided by his detailed suggestions and broader reactions, which have assisted me in shaping this thesis.

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**ABUDU RAHAMAN BALABA**

**ISTANBUL, 2022**

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

|             |                                               |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <b>CA</b>   | : Constituent Assembly                        |
| <b>DP</b>   | : Democratic Party                            |
| <b>EC</b>   | : Electoral Commission                        |
| <b>FDC</b>  | : Forum for Democratic Change                 |
| <b>LC</b>   | : Local Council                               |
| <b>MP</b>   | : Member of Parliament                        |
| <b>NRA</b>  | : National Resistance Army                    |
| <b>NRC</b>  | : National Resistance Council                 |
| <b>NRM</b>  | : National Resistance Movement                |
| <b>NSA</b>  | : National Security Agency                    |
| <b>NUP</b>  | : National Unity Platform                     |
| <b>SPSS</b> | : Statistical Package for the Social Sciences |
| <b>UBOS</b> | : Uganda Bureau of Statistics                 |
| <b>UNC</b>  | : Uganda National Congress                    |
| <b>UNLF</b> | : Uganda National Liberation Front            |
| <b>UPC</b>  | : Uganda People's Congress                    |
| <b>AFP</b>  | : Agency France-Presse                        |

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

- Framing** : The concept of framing is related to the agenda-setting tradition, but it broadens the scope of the research by focusing on the essence of the issues at hand rather than a specific topic.
- Media coverage** : All blog articles, video content, or services that are discussed or shown are referred to as media coverage.
- Elections** : An election is a formal group decision-making process in which a population selects one or more individuals to hold public office.
- Agenda setting** : Agenda-setting can be described as the ability to influence the importance placed on the topics of the public agenda".
- Political awareness:** The extent to which an individual pays attention to politics and understands what he or she has encountered.
- Landlocked** : It speaks of a landlocked nation without a navigable border with the ocean.

## INTRODUCTION

Today, a democratic society cannot exist without holding regular, free, and fair elections. This is so that the election process may decide who should be elected, who should be removed from office, and who should take their place.<sup>1</sup> The global mass media has a significant impact on educating and informing its target consumers.<sup>2</sup> However, supporters of the media's agenda-setting role affirm that the media has an impact on how people prioritize and consider different matters, such as elections.<sup>3</sup> The public sphere paradigm was adopted by academics to explain how the media may support the democratic process by cultivating social venues for public discourse. This suggests that the media should offer venues for citizens to engage in public discourse and voice their ideas during the development of public policy.<sup>4</sup>

Additionally, modern theories of journalism hold that the role of the news media is to help the public gain what Robert Dahl refers to as an appropriate understanding of political issues, and that helping the public gain this understanding has always been and should be a major objective of the news media.<sup>5</sup> He goes on to say that citizens must understand politics in order to discover their own preferences. As a result, the news media must work hard to promote this democratic value. Still, the media appears to be at the centre.

According to scholars, societies use the mass media to share and convey political events as well as to try and understand them. Remarkably, the media has replaced politics as the public arena where the construction of the politician's identity as a person of qualities takes place, and the power of these media-performativity

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<sup>1</sup> Charles N. Bwana, "Voting Patterns in Uganda's Elections: Could it be the end of the National Resistance Movement's (NRM) domination in Uganda's politics?", *Les Cahiers d' Afrique de l'Est / The East African Review* [Online], 41 | 2009, Online since 07 May 2019, connection on 09 December 2021. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/eastafrica/582>; <https://doi.org/10.4000/eastafrica>

<sup>2</sup> Baran J. Stanley & Davis K. Dennis (2010) *Mass Communication Theory*. (6th Ed) Boston: Wadsworth.

<sup>3</sup> McCombs E. M and Shaw D. (1972). The Agenda Setting Function of Mass Media. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 26 (Spring): p, 176-87.

<sup>4</sup> Croteau D and Hoynes W. (2001). *The Business of the Media: Corporate Media and the Public Interest*. Thousand Oaks: California 91320. Pine Forge Print.

<sup>5</sup> Schudson, M. (1995). *The Power of News*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

standards is frequently such that they automatically rule out certain candidates from becoming public political figures at all, or at the very least from running for high office.<sup>6</sup> It's worth pointing out that news reporting typically offers analysis and evaluations in addition to simply reporting the facts. For instance, filtering, selection, and emphasis are necessary in political reporting because no political event can be completely covered given the space and time constraints of news organizations.<sup>7</sup> Notably, the news media regularly and constantly serves an affirmative purpose by promoting the public's acceptance of dominant norms and values.

The issue of how the media influences audiences to vote for candidates is becoming more prevalent, but there is a scarcity of comprehensive literature from a Ugandan perspective. As a result, the study investigates the role of the print media in the Uganda general election process to fill a knowledge gap. The specific goals of this study are as follows: to identify the dominant issues and voices of the general election; to identify any similarities and differences in the coverage of the debate between the Daily Monitor and The New Vision newspapers; and to determine the implications of one issue and a few voices receiving disproportionate media attention on Uganda's 14 January 2021 general elections.

According to the nature of the study, the researcher employed a mixed methodology, employing both quantitative and qualitative research techniques. Using both qualitative and quantitative research methods in a single study yields a better understanding of a problem and a complex phenomenon than using only one method. The mixed method was chosen because the research results would be more comprehensive if both methods were used in the same study. Furthermore, the method will help the researcher gain a better understanding of the role of print media in the Uganda general election process. The use of this approach is justified by its ability to lead to concrete and unbiased results.<sup>8</sup>

The researcher collected qualitative data through interviews and quantitative data through content analysis. The researcher finds the content analysis method useful

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<sup>6</sup> Mukhwana, M., P. (2019). Press Coverage of Female Politicians In The Bugisu Region: Analysis Of The Daily Monitor and New Vision Newspapers. Thesis submitted to the Islamic University in Uganda.

<sup>7</sup> Noelle-Neumann, E. (1973). Return to the Concept of Powerful Mass Media. Studies of Broadcasting.

<sup>8</sup> Pavan, G. & Kulkarni, N. (2014). Research Methodology: Review Article. International Journal of Innovative Research and Development ISSN 2278– 0211, 3(7).

while conducting research on the role of the print media in the Uganda general election process. This technique appears to be appropriate for achieving the study objectives because the researcher will use a sample of selected newspapers that are printed material, and drawing out study findings through content analysis may be simple. The New Vision and Daily Monitor newspapers will be scrutinized.

The New Vision and Daily Monitor newspapers were chosen for consideration in this study because numerous media scholars have stated that the New Vision newspaper is the leading English daily newspaper published Monday to Friday that aims to discerning balanced and accurate information.<sup>9</sup> Since its inception in 1986, New Vision has been Uganda's leading daily, accounting for 65 percent of total daily English newspaper sales. The editorial philosophy of New Vision is to provide "information of record" in a balanced manner, covering all the facts while leaving the reader's opinion to the reader. Similarly, the Daily Monitor is Uganda's second largest daily newspaper, published by Monitor Publications Limited, which was founded in 1992 and is part of the Nation Media Group. According to Lugalambi and Tabaire (2012), as well as other researchers, this newspaper is an independent Ugandan newspaper that is distributed both within and outside of Uganda.<sup>10</sup>

The newspaper is published in English and covers a different topics forexample politics, national and international news, economic and health news, among others. The Daily Monitor typically has 30 pages per issue, though issues can be as long as 50 pages, and advertisements take up only 20% of the space. On average, news accounts for 80% of newspaper space.<sup>11</sup>

### ***Problem Statement***

Revolutions in the media industry especially, digitalization and globalization changes of communication and consumption processes have forced new and better

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<sup>9</sup>Acayo.C. & Mnjama. N. (2004) The Print Media and Conflict Resolution in Northern Uganda. *African Journal on Conflict Resolution* 4 (1) pp, 27-43.

<sup>10</sup> Lugalambi, G, W. & Tabaire, B. (2010). Over view of the State of Media Freedom in Uganda, A research Report, ACME. Available at <http://acme-ug.org/wp-content/uploads/Research-Report-on-State-of-Media-Freedom-in-Uganda.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Acayo & Mnjama, pp, 7.

ways of comprehending the uses of media in everyday life, like in the election period.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, a more critical examination of the societal impact of print media on Africa's political system is required. The various cultural traditions that support and appreciate communal media are generally believed to provide men more political positions and involvement than they give women in Uganda.<sup>13</sup> Falola argues that active participation in the community enables women to partake in a wide range of cultural pursuits and forge connections with a wide range of people engaged in social and political issues that have a societal impact in general.<sup>14</sup> However, due to what appears to be inadequate media coverage of women, they are 'weaker' competitors against male candidates during electioneering periods.

The issue of how the media portrays and frames political candidates is increasingly becoming popular and there is no comprehensive body of literature on the subject. Basing on the study conducted by previous researchers in their studies, it's important to point out that gender coverage during elections remains a less studied subject.<sup>15</sup> As a result, in order to fill a gap in the literature, this study investigates how media coverage of candidates in Uganda during the 2021 national elections will affect their electoral prospects.

### ***Objectives of the Study:***

Objectives of this study are categorized into general and specific objectives as follows.

#### ***General Objective of the Study:***

- (i) The primary objective of this study was to investigate the voice and issue representation in the newspaper coverage of the 2021 general elections in Uganda.

#### ***Specific Objectives of the Study***

- (i) To establish the dominant issues in the coverage of the general elections

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<sup>12</sup> Fornäs, J., Becker, K., Bjurström, E., & Ganetz, H. (2007). *Consuming Media: Communication, Shopping and Everyday Life*. Oxford/New York, Berg Publishers.

<sup>13</sup> Otiso, M. K. (2006). *Culture and customs of Uganda*. London: Greenwood Press.

<sup>14</sup> Falola, T. (2003). *The Power of African Cultures*. New York: The University of Rochester Press.

<sup>15</sup> Insenga, M. (2014). An analysis of the representation of the female MP's in the United Kingdom parliament in British press. *European Scientific Journal*, pp, 81-191.

- (ii) To identify why some issues received more intensive newspaper coverage than others in the general election.
- (iii) To establish the implications of the dominance of the general election debate and certain news sources on the democratic process in Uganda.
- (iv) To explore the contribution of print media in free and fair “democratic” general elections in Uganda.
- (v) To identify similarities and differences, in the coverage of the general elections between The New Vision and Daily Monitor newspapers.

### ***Scope of the Study***

In conducting the study on the role of the print media in the Ugandan general elections process; Different news articles from the New Vision and Daily Monitor were used to evaluate how candidates are portrayed in terms of news prominence. They were ranked according to their article placement, the pages on which candidates' stories are placed, and the sizes of the various news articles in relation to an impact on a candidate's electoral success. The two national newspapers are the leading dailies, their circulation is national, they seem to have reporters in almost all parts of the country, and their audience size is significantly big hence becoming an appropriate representative of print media in Uganda. The New Vision and Daily Monitor are the two top news publications in the country; one is a privately owned and the other is owned by the government.

#### ***Time Scope:***

The content analysis mainly concentrated on articles published in the two aforementioned newspapers from the start of election campaigns in Uganda until after the elections, namely from 2020 to 2021. The months of September 2020 and February 2021 were purposefully chosen because they were part of a long period in Uganda during which the election process and debates took place.

#### ***Content Scope:***

This study's contents primarily center on the representation of issues and voices throughout the electoral process, the reasons why certain politicians attracted a lot of media attention, the leading voices in the most popular themes, and the effects of these trends on Uganda's democracy. This research is also conceptualized within theories

and studies that critically examine how journalists cover news on a regular basis and what normally shapes or influences their coverage. A minor but critical aspect of democratic media expectations is also relevant for contextualizing this study. Agenda setting, press, and democracy theories all assume that mass media can help the democratic process by cultivating social spaces for public debate. This means that the press should provide platforms for people to engage in public discourse and express their views on policy issues.

*Respondent Scope:*

The research study included a diverse group of respondents, including editors from *The New Vision* and *The Daily Monitor*, as well as journalists, politicians, and experts in political science and democratic governance.

***Significance of the Study***

This study offers several unique insights that will help us better understand Uganda's print media. The study will analyze the level of participation in the democratic process by undertaking this study on the role of the two mainstream newspapers in the Ugandan election process. Similarly, the findings of this study could aid in understanding why certain themes in the 2021 general elections received more media coverage and attention than others.

Nevertheless, this study will have social implications in the advancement of understanding variables that contribute to the relationship between media and politics as well as theoretical implications in the advancement of indirect media effects, advancement of understanding variables that influence electorates to vote for a particular candidate.

Because this study will investigate the role of the print media in Uganda's general election process, it will contribute to an understanding of circumstances that lead to the wining of a particular candidate alongside other opponents, as well as a better understanding of steps toward free and fair elections in developing democracies.

The study will provide useful information to policy makers in the government, media houses and journalism fraternity. These may use the data to formulate appropriate policies to mitigate media-politics co-existence, freedom of expression which are key to socio-economic and political prosperity for Uganda. The study will

offer valuable information to both government and non-governmental institutions on the effects of news media behavior on public opinion formation. In a same vein, it is critical to assess the benefits of Uganda's current relative press freedom for its populace. The study will evaluate whether the press has achieved the public and democratic expectations.

Conclusively, this study will be useful as far as contributing to the already existing literature regarding news media and elections. Finally, it is expected that, other researchers both professionals and students may use the generated data as point of reference whereby, this data may serve as a foundation for future studies and comparisons in their studies.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **PRINT MEDIA IN UGANDA**

#### **1.1 Country of Study-Uganda**

Uganda is a landlocked East African country with Kampala as its capital. Uganda shares borders with Kenya in the east, South Sudan in the north, the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the west, Rwanda, and Tanzania in the south, covering an area of 197,058,000 square kilometers (93,104 square miles). The official languages of Uganda are English as well as Kiswahili. The overall population of Uganda is 44,828,587 as of Saturday, December 1, 2019, according to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), with urban residents accounting for 17.1% of the total.<sup>16</sup>

Uganda has significant natural resources, including fertile soils, and consistent rainfall and so forth. Like any other African country, Uganda depends on agriculture as the main source of income to most Ugandans employing over 72% of the economy workforce.<sup>17</sup>

#### **Location of Uganda on the World Map**

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<sup>16</sup> Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS - 2018), The National Population and Housing Census 2018 – Main Report, Kampala, Uganda.

<sup>17</sup> Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), Projections of demographic trends in Uganda 2006-2017. Kampala.

Source Google Maps, 2021



## 1.2 The Print Media in Uganda

According to various media scholars, the struggle to disseminate information through print media in Uganda can be traced back to 1900, when the Uganda Church Missionary Society issued the first newsletter called Mengo Note. Uganda Notes in 1902 but was primarily distributed in Kenya, and Uganda Eyogera "Uganda Speaks".<sup>18</sup>

Furthermore, media scholars emphasized that the Ugandan Herald, which represented the European element, first appeared in 1912. The Europeans claimed with some pride that this was the unique newspaper of any kind published in Uganda. The colonial power had a significant impact on the development of the press in Africa, particularly in Uganda. Surprisingly, the Roman Catholic Church and the Church

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<sup>18</sup> Maryian, A. (2010) News in the Ugandan Press: The Case of the New Vision. MA. Thesis in Global Journalism, Orebro University, Sweden.

Missionary Society both published newspapers in 1907 and 1911, respectively, called Ebifa Mu Uganda and Muno.<sup>19</sup>

Today, Uganda's electronic media has developed quickly, print media continues to be crucial for the country. There are approximately 15 newspapers, both daily and weekly. The majority of Ugandan newspapers are published in English. Aside from the major Ugandan newspapers, a number of regional newspapers are published in Uganda's various regional languages. The country has over 30 newspapers, but only four are dailies.<sup>20</sup> The state owns both of these newspapers namely; The New Vision, which is published in English, and Bukedde, that is published in Luganda language. The Daily Monitor and the Red Pepper are both privately owned Ugandan dailies that publish in English.<sup>21</sup>

According to numerous media scholars, the state-owned new vision newspaper is the leading English daily newspaper published Monday through Friday that aims to provide balanced and accurate information. Since its inception in 1986, New Vision has been Uganda's leading daily, accounting for 65% of total daily English newspaper sales. The editorial philosophy of New Vision is to provide "information of record" in a balanced manner, covering all the facts while leaving the reader's opinion to the reader.<sup>22</sup> The newspaper is divided into sections, with a strong emphasis on increased reader value. Furthermore, the New Vision, published by the New Vision Printing and Publishing Company Limited, also known as the Vision Group, publishes Saturday Vision and Sunday Vision on weekends. The Saturday Vision, an English weekend newspaper, aims to provide all Ugandans with leisure, entertainment, and relaxation. It provides a wide range of news, sports, commentary, and entertainment. The Sunday Vision, on the other hand, caters to Uganda's vast religious category, as well as sports, leisure, and entertainment.<sup>23</sup>

Furthermore, the Daily Monitor is a major daily newspaper in Uganda published by Monitor Publications Limited was founded in 1992. The Daily Monitor is also published on Saturday and Sunday under the titles Saturday Monitor and

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<sup>19</sup> Acayo & Mnjama, p, 7.

<sup>20</sup> Lugalambi & Tabaire, p, 8.

<sup>21</sup> Maryian, p, 16 .

<sup>22</sup> Acayo & Mnjama, p, 7.

<sup>23</sup> Lugalambi & Tabaire, p, 8.

Sunday Monitor. This is an independent Ugandan newspaper that is distributed both within and outside of the country. The English-language newspaper covers a wide range of subjects, including politics, local and worldwide news, national issues, economic news, business and finance, and most significantly gender-related articles.<sup>24</sup>

Interestingly, the Daily Monitor averages 30 pages per issue but can reach 50, and 80% of the newspaper space is allocated to journalistic writing, with only 20 percent reserved for advertising. In reality, Uganda's Daily Monitor combines news, entertainment, and information on a wide range of issues. As a result, the daily not only delivers news and information, but it also reflects Ugandan culture, society, and entertainment. It is one of Uganda's most important and intellectual newspapers, and it promotes the economic growth mindset.

### **1.2.1 A side view of the New Vision Newspaper**

Following Yoweri Museveni and the National Resistance Army's seizure of state power in Uganda in 1986 as a result of a five-year guerilla conflict, The New Vision was established. The government owns 80% of the company's shares, which are listed on the Uganda Securities Exchange, and many private owners own the other 20%. An Act of Parliament requires the New Vision to remain independent.<sup>25</sup> The newspaper is not required to "express public opinion and criticism of a particular government policy and objective coverage without becoming an institutional machinery of official interests". Surprisingly, the New Vision newspaper has the highest circulation in Uganda, selling about 35,000 copies each day. The New Vision is a for-profit enterprise that receives no government assistance.<sup>26</sup>

### **1.2.2 A side view of the Daily Monitor Newspaper**

The Daily monitor publication was first established in 1992 as an independent newspaper by five journalists. However, it was a re-launch as Daily Monitor in June

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<sup>24</sup> Acayo & Mnjama, p, 7.

<sup>25</sup> Maryian, p, 16.

<sup>26</sup> Waluya, G. (2008). *Reporting Corruption and Media Ownership: A comparative study of how government and privately owned media report on corruption in Uganda*. University of Oslo: Norway.

2005. The newspaper is part of the regional media conglomerate the Nation Media Group in Kenya. This newspaper is published daily at regional, national and international levels in English language. Every day, about over 30.000 copies of the newspaper are sold. Lastly, it's better to examine the media legal framework to gain a better understanding of the journalistic environment in Uganda.<sup>27</sup>

**Table1.** Daily Newspaper Publication in Uganda

| Name of the Newspaper | Publication Language | Daily Circulation | Price (s) in USD (\$) | Average Pages Per Issue |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Daily Monitor         | English              | 16,169            | 0.40                  | 31-50                   |
| New Vision            | English              | 23,636            | 0.32                  | 36-60                   |
| Bukedde               | Luganda (Local)      | 33,289            | 0.27                  | 50-56                   |

Source: Uganda Business News, 2020

### 1.3 The Role of Print Media in Election

Scholarly research confirms the importance and significance of political elections. This, however, explains why the media expands room for political election analysis during political campaigns in order to present voters with information linked in line with the respective candidates contesting elections globally and in Uganda in particular.<sup>28</sup> Additionally, individuals who have access to journalists can also manage and manipulate the flow of information regarding their candidacy.

Further, previous studies show that state-owned and privately-owned newspapers covered different topics. A case in point are that state owned media who

<sup>27</sup> Odongo, B. D., (2012). Human Rights and Media in Uganda; A critical Analysis of the Mass Media Freedom (Master's Thesis). University of Göteborg, Sweden.

<sup>28</sup> Meeks, L. (2012). Is She “Man Enough”? Women Candidates, Executive Political Offices, and News coverage. *Journal of Communication*, pp, 175-193.

always favours incumbent candidates so as to support the exisisting government in power.<sup>29</sup>

Nevertheless, a number of media studies contend that the placement of stories in newspapers frequently reflects how politicians are portrayed in the newspapers. Experts claim that for sports news, important stories are included on the front pages, the national section, and the back page.<sup>30</sup> In this study, I also suppose that each media company assigns varying sizes of space for different media topics. Further, I examined how much coverage candidates receive in the media during election seasons.

In this study, it important to point out that political candidates with access to journalist have the ability to shape and control the flow of information about their candidacy<sup>31</sup>. In light of this, Brosius, Kiplinger, and Mathias assert that both male and female candidates ought to support journalists while elaborating on how politicians' increased access to media spaces affects their capacity to control the flow of information.<sup>32</sup> According to scholarly studies, Nigerian state-owned and privately-owned publications covered a variety of issues. For example, state-controlled media backed incumbent candidates in support of the ruling administration, while privately operated media favored opposition politicians.<sup>33</sup>

It's worth noting in his study on the 2015 Nigerian elections, Okwuchukwu revealed that all four private newspapers carried more political items than stories about the economy, health, and sports. Furthermore, he stated that state-run newspapers covered more political stories than privately held media outlets.<sup>34</sup> Although significant to the Ugandan context, Okwuchukwu's research focuses on the influence of newspapers owned by particular politicians and entrepreneurs on election coverage in general. In this study, I examined news articles from both the new vision and daily

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<sup>29</sup> Temin, J., & Smith, D. A. (2002). Media matters: Evaluating the role of the media in Ghana's 2000 elections. *African Affairs*, 101, pp, 585–605.

<sup>30</sup> Wanta, Wayne, Golan Guy & Lee Cheolhan, (2004), “Agenda Setting and International News: Media influence on Public perceptions of Foreign Nationals,” *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, Summer 2004, 81(2): pp, 364-377.

<sup>31</sup> Blumler, J. G. (1997). *Origins of the Crisis of Communication for Citizenship*. Political Communication, (14), pp, 395-404.

<sup>32</sup> Brosius, H. & Kepplinger, H. Mathias (1990), “The agenda setting function of television news: Static and Dynamic views”, *Communication Research*, 17: pp, 183-211.

<sup>33</sup> Okwuchukwu, O. G. (2014). The influence of media ownership and control on media agenda setting in Nigeria. *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education*, pp, 36-45.

<sup>34</sup> Okwuchukwu, p, 35.

monitor as the study investigated the role of the print media in Uganda's general elections. Schudson's research, which indicated that both commercial and government media owners used their media as propaganda tools during election seasons, was used to choose the newspapers.<sup>35</sup>

The media's importance in politics has become paramount; people now depend on them more for social interaction and political awareness, and political parties and their leaders also significantly rely on them to connect with voters and build or regain public support.<sup>36</sup> Further, Kasadha and Kantono hypothesized in their study on the 2016 Uganda general election that the government newspaper represents female candidates more than the private newspaper. The study concluded that government owned newspapers were dominated by male candidates more than privately owned media news coverage.<sup>37</sup> Another scholar, Graig, emphasized the importance of allocating equal space by media houses in covering female candidates on dominant topical issues in order to increase their prominence and electability.<sup>38</sup>

As a result, I assume in this study that the more media attention a candidate receives, the more people relate that individual being influential and capable of expressing voters' opinions. Therefore, for the case of Uganda's election process its anticipated by the population that the news media will choose the issues of the day during the 2021 national elections. As a result, the main aim of this study is to investigate such topics that the news media covers.

### **1.3.1 Uganda's Elections - From Past to Present (1960's to 2021)**

The primary crucial components of democracy are the periodical election of leaders and representatives of the people. Scholars underlined the importance of holding frequent, free, and fair elections in order to maintain a democratic society. This is because the electoral process determines who stays in office, who gets

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<sup>35</sup> Schudson, p. 5.

<sup>36</sup> Blumler, p. 33.

<sup>37</sup> Kasadha J, and Kantono R. Media representation and its impact on female candidates' electability in parliamentary elections: A content analysis of three Ugandan newspapers. *J Public Affairs*. 2021; e2616. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.2616>, p. 29.

<sup>38</sup> Graig, G. (2004). *The media, politics, & public life*. Crow's Nest: Allen & Unwin.

dismissed, and who is replaced.<sup>39</sup> Similarly, frequent elections are an expression of the people's will on how and by whom they want to be governed. So, in order for elections to be considered legitimate in a democracy, they must be free and fair. The election process is not simply a means to an end of guaranteeing that a given population owns its destiny; it is also an end in itself as a basic human right. As a result, it is vital for those trying to lead to grasp how and why a certain community is likely to vote in an election.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, this section traces elections in Uganda from its independence (1962) to the current election held in 2021.

During the colonial period Uganda didn't hold any formal election. Overall, "the new Ugandan state was in a fairly good position to give its citizens more than the two years of relative peace and stability it enjoyed immediately after independence in 1962. However, between 1964 and 1985, Ugandans were exposed to high level of violence which was worse than that of any other people in eastern Africa. Over one million Ugandans were killed in this period through violence that was invoked for political purposes".<sup>41</sup>

Nevertheless, between 1961 and 1964, the then president, Mr. Obote appeared to be a consensus leader whose negotiating ability had persuaded the various sub-states to agree upon a federal formula for living together in the new Ugandan state. The deprived peripheral areas considered Obote as a saviour who would rectify regional inequalities, and he had the trust of the Baganda Protestant neo traditionalists. But most of this support came from elite groups sitting on kingdom and district councils, not from people at the polls: Obote's power did not rest on the popular vote.<sup>42</sup> Equally, the strength of the UPC especially from 1964 to 1971 was only in Parliament, not in the whole country. Although Obote controlled a majority of MPs and could employ violence to neutralize the opposition side, the UPC feared elections. Consequently, with the collapse of Obote and the rise of military rule in Uganda, the presidential

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<sup>39</sup> Harrop, M. & Miller, W. (1987). *Elections and Voters: A Comparative Introduction*. London: Macmillan.

<sup>40</sup> Bwana, C., N. (2009). "Voting Patterns in Uganda's Elections: Could it be the end of the National Resistance Movement's (NRM) domination in Uganda's politics?", *Les Cahiers d'Afrique de l'Est / The East African Review*. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/eastafrica/582>

<sup>41</sup> Kasozi, A.B., K. (1994) *The Social Origins of Violence in Uganda, 1964—1985*. McGill-Queen's University Press. London, p, 74.

<sup>42</sup> *Weekly Review*, 14 March 1980).

proposals were never implemented, as the very prospect of a national election itself was eliminated.<sup>43</sup>

Whereas by 1965 the rift in the UPC was evident to outsiders. It manifested itself in the struggle to control the Buganda branch of the party as well as branches in various other districts outside the central region. During the UPC elections that year in Buganda, Godfrey Binaisa, from central Uganda, was elected party chairman while Bidandi Ssali, an opposition supporter, was elected secretary general of the region.<sup>44</sup> Nonetheless, during Obote's first administration there were few free democratic elections at both the local and national levels. Any political activity, except that of the UPC, was discouraged after 1969. The government banned all political parties and organizations citing the attempted assassination of Obote.<sup>45</sup> It's worth to point out that Mr. Obote was a fighter. For instance, he forcefully conducted constituency elections. After the Electoral Commission drew up constituency boundaries, he tactically removed vital files from party headquarters and supervised the organization of the elections from his office, using compliant civil servants.<sup>46</sup>

On the other hand, when Obote was overthrown in 1971, issues of the old Protestant oligarchy tried to make Amin revive the kingdom. But Idi Amin was not interested in doing so. Whereas during the 1980 elections the last *Katikkiro* (Prime minister) of Buganda, Mayanja Nkanji, led a conservative party that had elements for the re-emergence of the monarchy and the Buganda substate. But the party's poor showing at the polls in Buganda itself indicated how the Baganda had been politicized. Yet Obote refused to support proposals to amend a colonial-era electoral law intended to help illiterates to participate in votes because it could be exploited by those who controlled violence, as the elections of 1980 showed.<sup>47</sup> Whereas the National Security Agency (NCC) passed by a large majority a motion to hold elections in December 1980 under the observance of the Uganda National Liberation Front (UNLF) as the only political organization. However, the UPC group led by Paulo Muwanga, Dr Luwuliza- Kirunda, Cris Rwakasisi and Oyite Ojok, refused to accept the decision

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<sup>43</sup> Kasozi, A.B., K., 53, p, 16.

<sup>44</sup> *Weekly Topic*, 20 June 1980.

<sup>45</sup> Kasozi, A.B., K., 53, p, 17.

<sup>46</sup> *Weekly Review*, 14 March 1980.

<sup>47</sup> *The Standard*, 12 December 1980.

made by the council. The UPC group argued that to hold elections under the UNLF was tantamount to making the country a one-party state. Lawrence Sebalu, claiming to represent the DP, sided with them in a unified joint statement to the press. Dan Nabudere and Tarsis Kabwehere warned Ugandans in a TV discussion that undemocratic forces were gaining support in the county.<sup>48</sup>

It is worth revealing that during the 1980 election campaign, Apolo Milton Obote was in the company of prominent supporter called Apa-Loris and used his services. National politics in the northern and eastern Uganda was conducted, in greatly conducted through clan organizations.<sup>49</sup> It is also interesting to note that during the 1980 election campaign the UPC was given all the government's facilities to conduct its political activities. Government main stream media namely, radio, television, and newspapers served the party's interests.<sup>50</sup> Supplies entering the country as grants and relief aid were billed as aid coming from the UPC. Essential commodities such as salt, sugar, and paraffin were distributed by the UPC using the government transportation system. The election process itself was rendered illegal since the Electoral Commission (EC) - whose chairman, Kosea Kikira, was one of the founders of the UPC was partisan and broke a number of laws. The surrogate parliament, the NCC, did not approve the demarcation of constituencies. Notices calling on voters to register whenever a new voters' register was being compiled were not gazetted.<sup>51</sup>

When President Yoweri Museveni Kaguta assumed power in 1985, Uganda held elections for the National Resistance Council (NRC) through electoral colleges from the village level up to the national level in 1989. Ugandans had presidential and parliamentary elections in 1996 that were based on merit rather than political party lines. It should be noted that Uganda held several national elections throughout the NRM regime. Elections in 1989, 1994, 1996, 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016, and 2021 are among them. Every of these elections, however, were handicapped by a lack of organized political rivalry, despite the fact that open, free campaign platforms have been a defining element of all Ugandan elections since 1986.<sup>52</sup> Further, the 1995

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<sup>48</sup> Kasozi, A.B., K., 53, p, 16.

<sup>49</sup> *Weekly Review*, 14 March 1980.

<sup>50</sup> *The Standard*, 12 December 1980.

<sup>51</sup> Kasozi, A.B., K., p, 53.

<sup>52</sup> Bwana, C., N., p, 52.

constitution stated in article 169 that no political parties would be allowed to operate for the next five years until a national referendum was held to decide whether to return to a multiparty system or to continue with a "no-party" system.<sup>53</sup>

Surprisingly, the NRM administration held its first national elections in 1989, with the election of Resistance Councils, which are now known as Local Councils. These elections were held at all levels, from the village to the country's parliament, the National Resistance Council (NRC). As previously noted, due to the NRM government's suspension of all political party operations, the 1989 elections were held under severe anti-party restrictions. The use of party emblems, sectarian appeals, and threats of force, as well as the offering of food and drink and the exhibition of candidate posters, were all prohibited under the 1989 Elections Regulations for Resistance Councils and Committees.<sup>54</sup>

After a protracted period of political unrest, Ugandan elections were held in 2001. These were conducted under the tenet of individual merit, and it's significant to note that Dr. Kizza Besigye, a former political ally and comrade in the NRM, was Mr. Museveni's main rival during those elections. But because it was a close race, the election results showed that Mr. Museveni won with 69.33% of the vote (down from 74.3 percent in the 1996 elections) and Dr. Kizza Besigye came in second with 27.82%. (In contrast to 23.6% for Kawanga Semwogere). Others, including Mr. Aggrey Awori, Mr. Kibirige Mayanja, Mr. Francis Bwengye, and Mr. Karuhanga, received 1.41 percent, 1.00 percent, 0.3%, and 0.14%, respectively<sup>55</sup>. It's important to note that the NRM party controlled the political environment in which these three elections were held. It is improbable that the rational choice strategy was used in the 1989, 1994, 1996, and 2001 elections without a distinct and fair political playing field. However, the party identification approach has not been applicable in the elections because there has been no political party activity.

During the post-1986 elections, the issue of multiparty politics was fiercely debated. As a result of a combination of domestic and international pressure, President

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<sup>53</sup> The 1995 Constitution of Uganda.

<sup>54</sup> Kasfir Nelson (1991). "The Uganda Election of 1989: Power, Populism and Democratization." In Holger Bernt Hansen & Michael Twaddle (eds.), *Changing Uganda: the Dilemmas of Structural Adjustment & Revolutionary Change*. London: James Currey.

<sup>55</sup> Gerald Tenywa, *The New vision*, Tuesday, 10 March, 2001.

Museveni changed his stance on political parties. The incumbent and NRM presidential candidate Yoweri Museveni won the election by 59.28%, according to the election results of multiparty politics and the electoral fight of 2006. (Compared to 69.3 percent in the 2001 elections and to 74.3% in the 1996 elections).<sup>56</sup>

It is important highlighting that the NRM presidential candidate has consistently received support from rural voters, whereas the opposition candidates have consistently received support from urban residents. It is also clear that the prevalent socioeconomic conditions in Uganda have always influenced voting choices, particularly in urban regions rather than rural areas. Young voters always choose to vote for the opposition, however the NRM regularly receives support from the elderly voter population, who consider that the NRM gave stability to the country.

**Figure 1.** Moments of NRM supporter during the Uganda election Campaigns



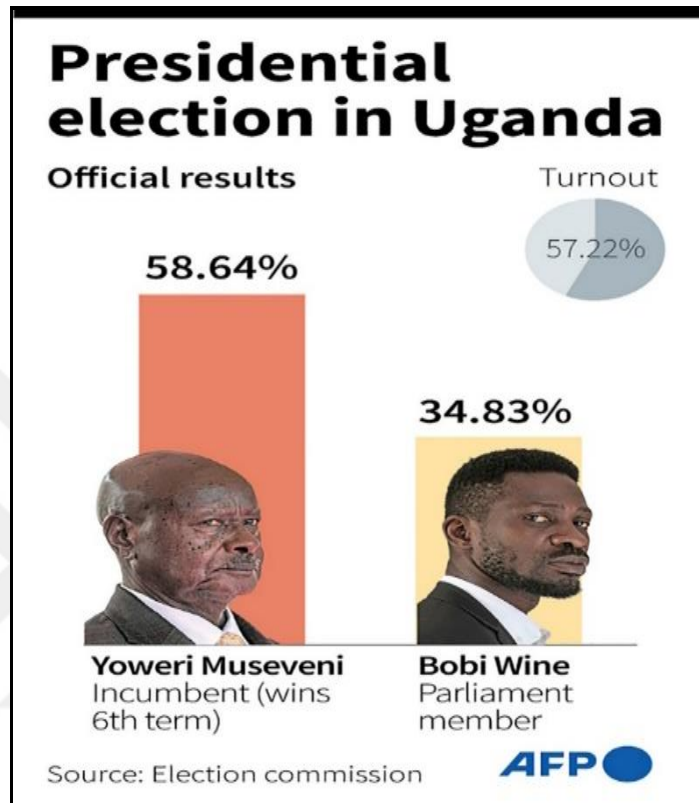
Source: The New vision, Thursday, 17 march, 2006.

On Saturday, January 16, 2021, the Electoral Commission of Uganda (EC) named President Yoweri Museveni and his National Resistance Movement (NRM) the winners of the 2021 elections. This confirmed his election to a sixth term as Uganda's President. Museveni has now been in power for 35 years, making him Africa's fourth longest-serving leader. Museveni received 5.85 million votes (58.6%) according to the

<sup>56</sup> Nelson Muhoozi, The New vision, Thursday, 17 march, 2006.

Uganda Electoral Commission, while the main opposition candidate, Robert Kyagulanyi, commonly known as Bobi Wine, received 3.475 million votes (34.8%).<sup>57</sup>

**Figure 2.** Showing 2021 Presidential Results



Source: Uganda Electoral commission

After the results were announced, Bobi Wine, leading presidential candidate for the National Unity Platform (NUP), said that his party would initiate the relevant processes to challenge the election results. However, he was placed under house arrest by the security forces. During that time access to Bobi Wine was limited, including lawyers or journalists couldn't access him freely. As depicted in figure (3), below, the campaigning period leading up to Uganda's 2021 general election saw an unprecedented level of violence meted out by the security forces towards the opposition parties.

<sup>57</sup> <https://gga.org/uganda-2021-election-implications-and-lessons/>

**Figure 3.** Showing violence against oppositions during campaigns



A police officer sits on a car at the gate of the headquarters of National Unity Platform (NUP) in Kampala, Uganda, on January 18, 2021. *Photo Yasuyoshi Chiba/Afp*

Conclusively, in Uganda elections, are planned for one day and usually starts at 7.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m. unless something happens in a particular polling station to warrant elections to take place the next day. Finally, election results are announced as quickly as possible. After the results are proclaimed, any candidate or registered voter may file a petition against the election results within thirty days of the day the Commission publishes the results in the gazette.<sup>58</sup>

Based on the aforementioned literature study, the researcher has identified areas that require additional research, particularly in Africa, as the majority of previous studies have been conducted elsewhere. According to the analysis, the discussion on how the media reports elections accepts that they receive less coverage. However, when it comes to whether or not the media utilizes gendered words, experts are divided, with some stating that the usage of gender frames is considerable, while others argue that it is diminishing and negligible based on their research.

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.ec.or.ug>, January, 2022.

**Table 2.** Past Elections from 1996-2021 In Uganda

| <b>Year &amp; Date of Elections</b> | <b>Number of Candidtes</b> | <b>Party (Winner)</b> | <b>Candidtes Name (Winner)</b> | <b>Percentage (%)</b> |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 14-01-2021                          | 7                          | NRM                   | Yoweri Museveni                | 58.38%                |
| 18-02-2016                          | 8                          | NRM                   | Yoweri Museveni                | 60.62%                |
| 18-02-2011                          | 8                          | NRM                   | Yoweri Museveni                | 68.38%                |
| 23-02-2006                          | 5                          | NRM                   | Yoweri Museveni                | 59.26%                |
| 12-03-2001                          | 6                          | NRM                   | Yoweri Museveni                | 69.33%                |
| 09-05-1996                          | 3                          | Independent           | Yoweri Museveni                | 74.3%                 |

Source: Electrol Commission, Uganda

It's worth noting that from 1958-1986, Uganda didn't have a fully recognized general election. This was attributed to events like election boycotts, and the overthrow of governments. For example, in 1986, the Movement System Governance led to the overthrow of the Uganda People's Congress (UPC) by the National Resistance Army (NRA) led by Yoweri Kaguta Museveni who then become president. In 1961, The Democratic Party (DP) won the election with 43 seats which made DP the first ever internal self-government in Uganda. Further, the 1962 elections were considered unrepresentable because of the boycott by the Buganda Kingdom. The first elections in Uganda were organised by the Colonial government in October 1957. However, these elections were open to limited Africans at that time.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Electrol Commission, archives,1962.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1 Theoretical Frameworks

Many theories, especially in the developed world have been established to explain voting trends and behaviors within a specific society. The applicability of such theories, however, may differ depending on the present political climate and the conditions surrounding such elections. As a result, to understand the function of the print media in the Uganda general election process, this study will rely on two primary theories, namely: *the agenda setting theory and the press and democracy theories*.

The choice for these theories is that Uganda, as a third-world country, has many complexities in its electoral processes. For instance, in Uganda, where it is culturally expected that everyone wins, the losers have consistently accused the winners of electoral fraud. This makes it challenging to explain voting patterns in Uganda, though, as the legitimacy of election results has never been a given. Therefore, the theories picked will direct the researcher in learning how print media influences voters and streamlines the nation's electoral processes.

#### 2.2 The Agenda Setting Theory

The idea of agenda setting was developed by Maxwell McCombs and David Weaver in 1970 at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. A paper delivered at the International Communication Association (ICA) annual meeting in Montreal, Canada, in April 1973 was the first to bring agenda setting to a larger academic audience.<sup>60</sup> “Explication of an agenda-setting function of the press must include the relevant social and personal characteristics that mediate such an effect”. Basing on their theory they reveal that, “our major theoretical assertion is that every individual

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<sup>60</sup> Maxwell E. McCombs, Donald L. Shaw & David H. Weaver (2014) New Directions in Agenda-Setting Theory and Research, Mass Communication and Society, 17:6, 781-802.

has a need for orientation. Each individual feels some need to be familiar with his surroundings, both his physical and cognitive environment”.<sup>61</sup>

Conceptually, theory is the “phenomenon of the mass media selecting certain issues and portraying them frequently and prominently, which leads people to perceive those issues as more important than others”.<sup>62</sup> Theorists noted that media agenda setting theory posits a relationship between the relative emphasis given by the media houses to various topics and the degree of salience these topics have for the general public

Furthermore, agenda setting theory has been used to investigate media influence throughout the electoral process in developed countries such as the United States. For example, in their research of the 1972 US presidential campaign, McCombs and Weaver investigated agenda setting theory in terms of consistency of voting record, strength of political party affiliation, and degree of conviction regarding presidential candidate choice. Their findings showed that use of newspapers and television for political information increased monotonically with degrees of need for orientation, and that the agenda-setting influence of newspapers likewise increased in a linear manner with levels of need for orientation.<sup>63</sup> McCombs and Shaw, researchers, contend that "editors, newsroom staff, and broadcasters have a significant influence in molding political reality through the selection and presentation of news".<sup>64</sup>

In the same vein, the research conducted by Zucker focused at the nature of the issues being addressed by the media. In line with the agenda setting theory, this researcher found that “the less direct experience people have with an issue, the more likely they would be to rely on the media for information and interpretation of that issue”<sup>65</sup>. Equally the public usually placed a greater reliance upon the media for information concerning unobtrusive issues. Previous studies further indicated that the agenda setting did not occur for a number of prominent issues because media audience

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<sup>61</sup> Maxwell E. McCombs, Donald L. Shaw & David H. Weaver, 47, p, 783.

<sup>62</sup> Wu, H., D. & Coleman, R. (2010). Advancing Agenda-Setting Theory. *J&MC Quarterly* 86 (4)775-789, p, 2.

<sup>63</sup> Maxwell E. McCombs, Donald L. Shaw & David H. Weaver, 47.

<sup>64</sup> McCombs, M. and Shaw, D. (1972). ‘The agenda setting function of mass media’. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36: 176-187, p, 176.

<sup>65</sup> Zucker, H. G. (1978). ‘The variable nature of news media influence’ *Communication Year Book* No. 2 Rubin, B. D. (ed.) New Jersey, 225 – 245, p, 239.

are able to rely on real-world conditions and interpersonal discussion for information, while in the case of the modest issues people usually rely on the information that they obtain through the media.<sup>66</sup>

About sources of media influence on the population scholars,<sup>67</sup> revealed that newspapers are powerful medium. As they have the capability of influencing and determining the way in which many people think about the world, what they regard to be normal or proper, and what they consider to be generally important public issues. Further research by Brown and Deegan also supports the view that people forget much and misinterpret most of what they see or hear on television news, and that newspapers are better at agenda setting.<sup>68</sup> Furthermore, a 2003 study by Camaj and Weaver using survey data from the U.S. presidential election discovered that the need for orientation was a stronger predictor of attention to political news than mere frequency of news media exposure and that media attention was a better predictor of second-level agenda setting effects because the salience of presidential candidate attributes was higher than media exposure.<sup>69</sup> Based on the preceding statements, this explains why, during political campaigns, media expands space for political election analysis in order to provide voters with information related to or in line with the respective candidates contesting for the election period, such as Uganda's 2021 general elections.

### **2.3 The Democratic Expectations Theory**

This research is grounded in theories and studies that examine how news shapes or influences the electoral process. Almost every contemporary media and democracy theories support free and open public discourse that gives citizens access to a variety of thoughts and viewpoints. Contrarily, this gives people the power to make informed decisions regarding public policy, such as choosing one candidate over another during an election. Press and democracy theories, according to academics Croteau and Hoynes, presuppose that mass media may support democracy by

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<sup>66</sup> Brown, N, & Deegan, C., p, 50.

<sup>67</sup> Ader, C. R. (1995). 'A longitudinal study of agenda setting for the issues of environmental pollution'. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 72 (2): pp, 300-311.

<sup>68</sup> Brown, N, & Deegan, C., p, 50.

<sup>69</sup> Maxwell E. McCombs, Donald L. Shaw & David H. Weaver, p, 47.

supporting the people and fostering social spaces for public discourse. The "place" in which ideas, opinions, and viewpoints freely flow is characterized as the "public sphere" in the public sphere concept, however media are often regarded as key components of a healthy public sphere".<sup>70</sup> This implies that the print media facilitates people's participation in public discourse by allowing them to register their opinions in policy formulation and voting for leaders of their choice.

Modern theories of journalism practice presuppose that "the job of the mass 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".<sup>71</sup>

It's worth pointing out that the media's importance in politics has grown as a result of people's increased reliance on it for social interaction, political awareness, and decision-making. In order to develop, restore, and win public support, politicians, political parties, and other leaders also rely more heavily on media to communicate with specific individuals.<sup>72</sup> As a result, there is little doubt that the public in Uganda was anticipated to choose the issues of the day from the news media during the 2021 general election. That is why this study seeks to analyze the influence of print media in the electoral process, concentrating on problems covered by the news media and who was behind them.

Further, Mpoza 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".<sup>73</sup> As a result, the *Daily Monitor* and *The New Vision* should provide a forum for discourse concerning the 2021 general elections to all individuals, regardless of party affiliation or socioeconomic class.

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<sup>70</sup> Croteau D and Hoynes W., 3, p, 14.

<sup>71</sup> Schudson, M., 5, p, 212.

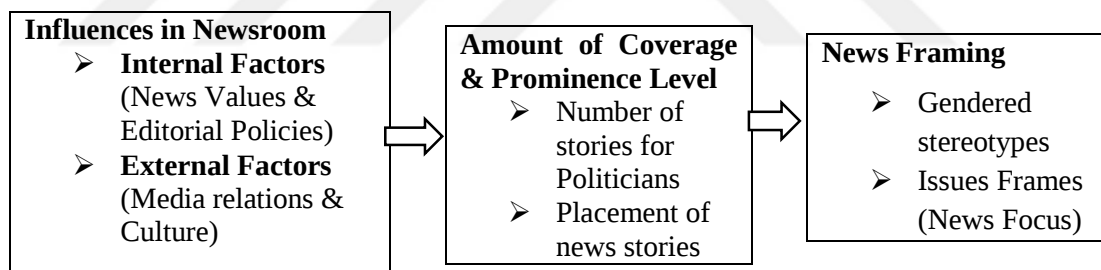
<sup>72</sup> Blumler, J. G. 33, p, 397.

<sup>73</sup> Mpoza, A. (2009). voice and issue representation in *daily monitor* and *the new vision* newspapers' coverage of the constitutional amendment debate September 2003-september 2005. MA. Dissertation, Makerere, Uganda. p, 11.

Nonetheless, it appears that this was not the case in Uganda during the coverage of the 2021 general election discussion. The debate appears to have concentrated on a few, if not one, key issues while dismissing many others. The media as a means of communication between the government and the governed that helps society clarify its aims, formulate policy, coordinate activity, and manage itself.<sup>74</sup>

## 2.4 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework categorizes the study's important components. As a result, conceptual framework refers to the grouping of related concepts in a study so that they can form a complete understanding of the topic under consideration.<sup>75</sup> Equally, a conceptual framework is usually not limited to the assembling of concepts but if further embeds defining the role of each concept in the study.<sup>76</sup> The “conceptual framework categorizes and describe concepts relevant to the study and map relationships among them”.<sup>77</sup>



**Figure 4.** Conceptual Framework

As a result, the researcher has developed a conceptual framework to analyze the research problem and address the objectives of this study based on the nature of this research, which examines the role of the print media in the process of the general elections in Uganda. The conceptual framework of this study identifies internal

<sup>74</sup> Curran, J. (2000). *Rethinking Media & Democracy*. In Curran, J. & Gurevitch, M. (Eds.), *Mass Media and Society* (120-154), 3rd Ed, London & New York: ARNOLD. p, 127.

<sup>75</sup> Jabareen, Y. (2009). Building a conceptual framework: Philosophy, Definitions, and Procedure. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. 8(4), pp, 49-62.

<sup>76</sup> Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded source book* 2nd Ed: Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

<sup>77</sup> Mugizi, W. (2019). Constructing a Conceptual Framework for Quantitative Data Analysis in Social Science Research. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Education*, 2(1), 74-88, p, 27.

characteristics, as shown in Figure, as independent variables that affect how newsrooms cover elections (5). While the coverage and importance of politicians are considered dependent variables. News frames are the last type of variable, sometimes known as a control variable. To measure their impact on the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable of the study, these will later be quantified with independent variables in the statistical analysis.

The researcher identified newspaper content to discover important terms and concepts that could be used to identify general election news frames. Furthermore, the amount of coverage, placement, and tone were examined because these indicate what the media regarded salient through placement and repetition of general election news.<sup>78</sup> Framing occurs when the media purposefully or unintentionally repeats and reinforces information, and the information that is excluded can be just as important as the material offered in a news piece. The researcher examined the quantity and placement of stories on parliamentarians/politicians in the print media, as well as the usage of frames, issues, and characteristics that the media repeated and highlighted during the general election campaign.

#### *Defining Democracy*

The word ‘democracy’ has been defined by several scholars based on their academic examination of its meaning. However, before defining the term democracy it's worth recognizing that this is a term that comes from Greek and it is made up of two other words “demos” People and “kratein” to govern or rule. Therefore “Democracy” can then be defined as the government of the people based on the Greek translation. The key elements of states organized under democracy includes; Fundamental freedom and fundamental rights, Elections and Rule of law. Today there are as many different forms of democracy as there are democratic nations in the world. For example, there are presidential, parliamentary democracies, federal or unitary, proportional voting system, majoritarian system and monarchies. All these are forms of government that use democracy through various forms to rule their people.

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<sup>78</sup> Mukhwan, M., P. (2019). Press Coverage of Female Politicians in the Bugisu Region: Analysis of the Daily Monitor and New Vision Newspapers. Thesis submitted to the Islamic University in Uganda.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

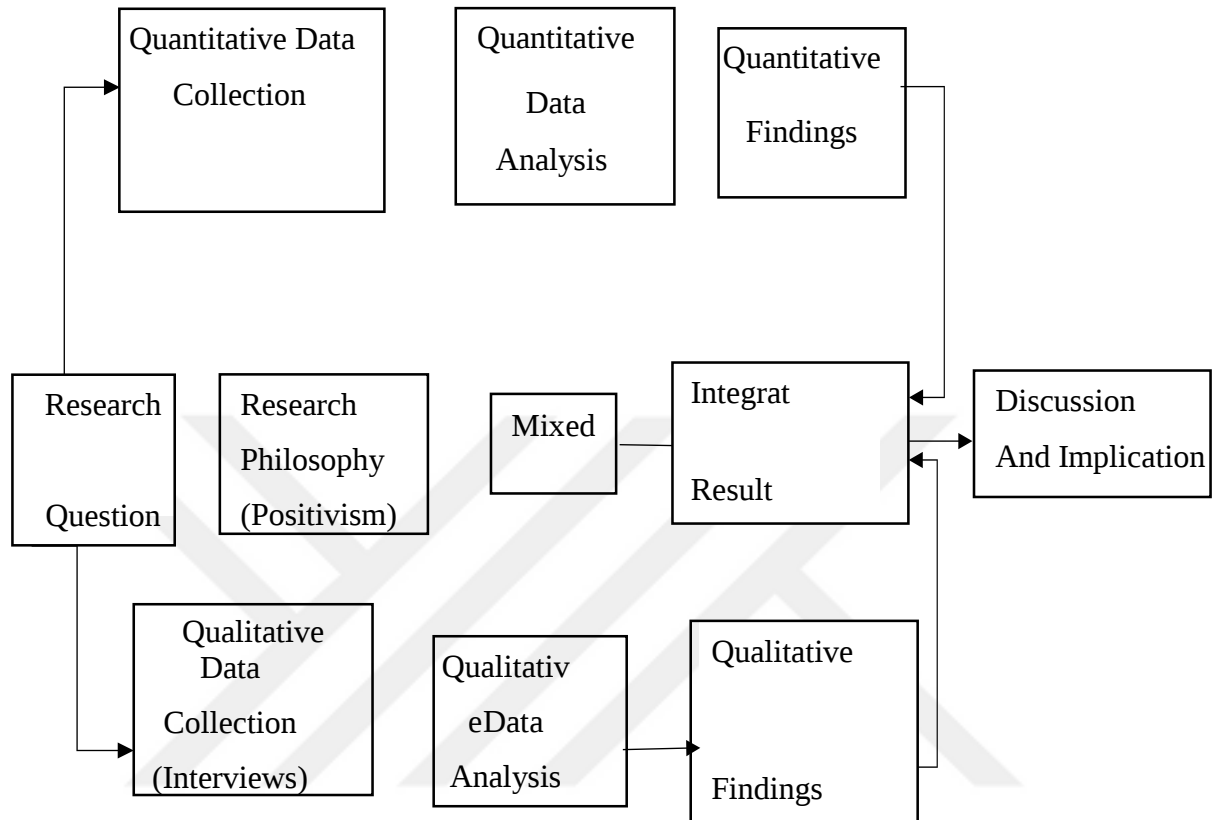
#### **3.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, I described the study's general framework. The chapter specifically explains the technicalities of the entire research process. These include the research philosophy and research strategy of the study. The data gathering procedure, tools, and data analysis approaches are also covered in this chapter. Finally, this chapter focuses on significant ethical issues that were anticipated to develop during the course of the study.

The procedure through which the researcher collects and analyzes data for the study is referred to as research methodology. In this study, data will be gathered and examined in light of the role of the print media in Uganda's general election process. Meanwhile, research philosophy, research design, study area and sample, data collection processes and sources, data analysis tools, and ethical issues will all be part of this study's methodology and processes.

Since this study will adopt a mixed method approach, the methodological framework is illustrated below.

**Figure 5. Methodological Framework of the Study**



**Source:** Researcher's Construct, 2022

### 3.2 Research Philosophy

A research philosophy is a set of beliefs about how evidence on a topic should be collected, processed, and utilised.<sup>79</sup> As a result, based on the nature of the study, research objectives, and research questions, this study chooses to apply both Positivism and Pragmatism as Research Philosophies.

Positivism philosophy was chosen because of its competence and flexibility in dealing with and presenting factual findings from the investigation.<sup>80</sup> Furthermore, it deals with real data and information on the research issue, which are obtained mathematically and logically.

<sup>79</sup> Pavan, G. & Kulkarni, p, 6.

<sup>80</sup> Bernard, H., R., p, 5.

Additionally, scholars<sup>81</sup> stresses that positivism is contingent on quantifiable interpretations that centre themselves to statistical analysis.<sup>82</sup>

Pragmatism research philosophy, on the other hand, acknowledges the several different methods of perceiving the world and conducting research.<sup>83</sup> Therefore, with the qualitative perspective, whereby the researcher uses interviews for data collection, I find that this study will follow a pragmatic philosophy accordingly.

### **3.3 Research Design**

Research scholars pointed out that a research design is an overall plan which binds conceptual research problems to empirical research.<sup>84</sup> More specifically, a research design articulates what type of data is necessary, what methods will be utilized to gather and analyze data, and how the study's research questions will be answered. This study, in this opinion, will be based on both qualitative and quantitative research designs as a mixed technique. In this work, I primarily used two primary data collection methods: quantitative content analysis and interviews (qualitative).

Furthermore, other research scholars like Saunders<sup>85</sup> explains that mixed approach helps critical analysis researchers to minimize the risk of critical biasness and to avoid politicizing. He emphasizes that mixed method helps one to accurately analyze text. As a result, the current study will generate data using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The content analysis technique will be utilized to generate quantitative data, while interviews were employed to generate qualitative data.

It is worth mentioning that, the quantitative part involved collection of research data from the New Vision and Daily Monitor newspapers through content analysis technique. Qualitative data, on the other hand, will be gathered through semi-structured interviews. I strongly believe that this approach will be effective in

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<sup>81</sup> Wu, D. H. (2000). Systematic determinants of international news coverage: a comparison of 38 countries. *Journal of Communication*, p, 110-130.

<sup>82</sup> Collins, H. (2010). *Creative research: the theory and practice of research for the creative industries*: Bloomsbury Publishing.

<sup>83</sup> Saunders, M. (2012). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*: SAGE Publications, Inc.

<sup>84</sup> Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*: Sage, Inc.

<sup>85</sup> Saunders, M., p, 48.

capturing different opinions from the participants, therefore it will enable me present and discuss rich and meaningful findings.

### **3.4 Quantitative Approach and its Rationale**

Accordingly, the quantitative approach uses numbers, counts, and measuring of things. In the social and natural sciences, quantitative research is the systematic empirical analysis of observable phenomena using statistical, mathematical, or computational tools. The goal of quantitative research is to create and apply mathematical models, theories, and hypotheses about phenomena.<sup>86</sup>

In contrast, qualitative research delves deeper into specific experiences with the aim of defining and analyzing meaning using text, narrative, or visual-based data, by identifying themes unique to that group of participants.<sup>87</sup> The quantitative methodology is excellent for establishing correlation, especially when working with hypotheses. They contend, however, that correlation variables cannot be used to determine cause, which supports the use of triangulation in the current investigation.

In contrast to the qualitative research strategy, the quantitative research approach employs a variety of research approaches such as descriptive research, correlational, developmental design, observational studies, and survey research. These research methodologies can also be employed in varying degrees with experimental and causal-comparative research.<sup>88</sup>

Conclusively, a quantitative research approach will be employed to quantify the phenomenon under study by creating numerical data that will be transformed into operational statistics.

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<sup>86</sup> Fink. A. (1995). *How to Measure Survey Reliability and Validity*, Vol.7, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

<sup>87</sup> Pavan, G. & Kulkarni, N., p, 6.

<sup>88</sup> Elliot, C. & Greer, C. (2010). *Newsworthiness and Islam: An Analysis of Values in the Muslim Online Press*. *Communication Quarterly*, (58) 4, pp, 414-430.

### **3.4.1 Content Analysis Approach Rationale**

Content analysis is a research approach used to describe the evident content of mass communication in an objective, systematic, and quantitative manner.<sup>89</sup> This study will use Content Analysis as the research technique to code all sampled news from the selected newspapers. Content analysis was used in previous studies; for instance,<sup>90</sup> employed this technique while investigating on news in the Ugandan press. While researching on the Editorial Features in the Press,<sup>91</sup> and used similar technique.<sup>92</sup>

The reason I chose content analysis to address the current topic is due to various advantages of the method. For starters, it is agreed upon as an objective, systematic, and broad approach. It also supports both quantitative and qualitative procedures. In contrast to pure qualitative studies, the characteristics of variables can be quantified into specific data. As a result of using a quantitative technique, the study's conclusions should be more exact and objective.<sup>93</sup> The researcher should identify and count the frequency of specific dimensions of texts in order to make statements regarding messages, representations of such texts, and their social relevance.<sup>94</sup>

As a result, content analysis can be used to evaluate the relative importance or frequency of different communication phenomena. As a result, I shall examine and analyze media content in (The Daily Monitor, New Vision) in greater depth.

### **3.4.2 The Study Population**

A population is a group of units, objects, or items from which measurements are made. The study's target demographic will consist of two newspapers: The New Vision, a government-run publication, and the Daily Monitor, a privately held publication owned by the Nation Media Group. These newspapers were chosen from among the accessible media for this study due to their high frequency of publication

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<sup>89</sup> Stevenson, R., L. (1994). *Global Communication in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. New York: Longman.

<sup>90</sup> Maryian, p, 16.

<sup>91</sup> Wu, D. H., p, 46.

<sup>92</sup> Fink. A., p, 51.

<sup>93</sup> Stevenson, R., L., p, 54.

<sup>94</sup> Riffe. D, Lacy. S & Drager. M, (1996). Sample Size in Content Analysis of Weekly News Magazines, *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* 73: pp, 635-644.

and longevity, making them suitable documentary sources for content analysis research. Furthermore, the two newspapers were specifically picked because they are national newspapers that circulate both within and outside of Uganda, and they are among Uganda's oldest national publications.<sup>95</sup> The selected newspapers represent the print news media of Uganda in terms of both circulation and geographical distribution. According to Maryian, these newspapers have a reputation for professional and impartial journalism that gives them tremendous influence within the Ugandan news industry. They enjoy substantial readership in and beyond Uganda and they devote considerable space to news (current affairs).

### **3.4.3 The Sample and Sampling Technique**

A sample is defined by many scholars as a subset of the population/universe whose results can be generalized. He goes on to define sampling as the process of learning about a population through a sample selected from it. The sample size for the current investigation will be the entire universe. Since the study will focus on stories where candidates are mentioned, it will be relevant to consider the whole universe and just look out for the stories purposively<sup>96</sup>. Therefore, in this study I will use purposive sampling technique.

The content analysis on news will be based on news items published before election, during and after 2021 general elections. Thus, samples will be purposively selected from the period stretching from February 2020 to March 2021, respectively. The justification for the selected period is that although the general elections will be held in 2021, but currently politician's especially presidential candidates are busy doing underground campaigns by consulting the electorates on their suitability. Then mid the year (2020) actual campaigns resumed then final elections concluded early February 2021. The targeted newspapers are significant to this research study since they are high-circulation national newspapers.

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<sup>95</sup> Maryian, p, 16.

<sup>96</sup> Riffe. D, Lacy. S & Drager. M, p, 59.

### **3.4.4 Unit of Analysis & Coding Procedure**

The unit of analysis will be every single news item (in text, photos, or cartoons) published in the chosen newspapers on male and female candidates for political office. This excludes advertisements, commentaries, letters to the editor, and other types of viewpoints. In order to determine the prominence given to political candidates' stories, the following factors will be investigated and examined in this study: the placement of the story (front pages, teased on front page, inside pages, back pages); its size ( $\frac{1}{4}$  a page,  $\frac{1}{2}$  a page,  $\frac{3}{4}$  a page, and more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  a page) and its source (male, female, dual, not identified/cannot tell). The results from all newspapers will be compared to establish the varying representation of candidates in the 2021 general elections.

The unit of analysis will be a single news story in the meantime. We will utilize the keyword "The name or image of a contender" to filter out stories for analysis. To address the research issues, many coding categories will be created for this study. The exact articles' objective and subjective characteristics will be recorded. One can use the publishing date as an example of an objective property. Subjective factors will include, among other things, the sorts of news sources cited, the subject matter of the particular news pieces, the length of the candidate stories, and the use of direct and/or indirect quotes.

Data will be recorded using a variety of tools, including a coding sheet, a ruler to measure the available space, and a calculator to determine inter-coder reliability. The coding sheet will be created by the researcher, then it will be shown to the thesis advisor and other journalism professors for evaluation of the tool's usefulness. After their observations, corrections will be made.

### **3.5 Qualitative Approach and its Rationale**

Qualitative research approach refers to a collection of interpretive practices that reduce reality to a series of adjectives. Collecting non-numerical data through observation is a scientific method.<sup>97</sup> Qualitative research design is employed across

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<sup>97</sup> Collins, H., p, 47.

many academic disciplines, focusing particularly on the human elements of the social and natural sciences. According to scholars, a qualitative approach is a science that makes an effort to evaluate and comprehend social behavior in order to determine the cause of its course and effects.<sup>98</sup> In media and communication studies, political science, social work, and educational research, qualitative research is commonly used.<sup>99</sup> Basing on the above observations, I find it relevant to adopt a qualitative approach in this study because media and communication studies are broadly enshrined in social science disciplines where this approach is scientifically supported by different scholarly work as cited above.

On the other hand,<sup>100</sup> argue that the qualitative approach has problems of reliability. According to them, this design may result into biasness because the researcher directly interacts with the subject/data and interprets it at personal level. They further argue that qualitative design can turn out to be time consuming especially if the researcher collects meaningless information, which may make its findings less representative and generalizable. According, despite the above-mentioned weaknesses of the qualitative design cited by scholars, I will endeavor to minimize on all the mentioned limitations. As the data collected through the qualitative design will be used to explain some events and observations of the media practitioners.

### **3.5.1 Population, Sampling Technique and Sample Size**

All elements in a well-defined collection or set of values are referred to as the population. As a result, a population is a group of people or items from whom information can be collected.<sup>101</sup> The target group for this study will be politicians and journalists in Eastern Uganda (Bugishu region), as well as print media in Uganda. Nonetheless, a sample is a specified small segment of the population chosen to draw conclusions about the characteristics of the entire population or is a representation of the population to be researched. It makes surveying less expensive and more

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<sup>98</sup> Pavan, G. & Kulkarni, N., p, 6.

<sup>99</sup> Stevenson, R., L., p, 54.

<sup>100</sup> Pavan, G. & Kulkarni, N., p, 6.

<sup>101</sup> Saunders, M., p, 48.

controllable. According to<sup>102</sup> the samples give accurate results than using an entire Purposive sampling was used in the study to get interviews. Purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling in which the researcher chooses which respondents to interview based on the researcher's own assessment of which respondents would be the most useful representatives.<sup>103</sup> Furthermore, the respondents were chosen based on their positions and responsibilities in Uganda's media and politics. Purposive sampling of (13) editors and senior reporters serving as section editors, sub-editors, and senior writers as journalists was chosen to engage in the in-depth interviews. The regional managing editor-daily edition, an associate senior editor, a feature editor, a bureau chief, and a senior writer from the selected newspapers were interviewed. The interview was conducted in a face-to-face setting. The size of the sample should be optimum fulfilling the requirements of efficiency, representativeness, reliability, and flexibility. Principally the sample size should be neither excessively larger nor too small.<sup>104</sup> In this case, the sample size for the interviews was comprised of (13) respondents as indicated in table below.

**Table 3. Sample Size of the Study**

| S/N | Respondent Category | Total Sample | Percentage |
|-----|---------------------|--------------|------------|
| 1.  | Journalists         | 10           | 77         |
| 2.  | Editors             | 03           | 23         |
|     | <b>Total</b>        | <b>13</b>    | <b>100</b> |

### 3.5.2 Interviews Data Collection Technique

This data collection instrument was used in this study to obtain qualitative data. Interviewing is commonly defined as a conversation with a purpose. The goal is to collect data for the research project. On the other hand, interviews are the most appropriate technique to use while investigating sensitive phenomena by creating a peaceful environment for respondents to participate in the study. Information from

<sup>102</sup> Babbie, M. (1992). How to plan and perform a qualitative study using content analysis. *NursingPlus Open*, 2, pp, 8-14.

<sup>103</sup> Babbie, M., p, 69.

<sup>104</sup> Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S.

politicians and media was collected through in-depth face-to-face interviews done by the researcher himself using leading questions.

### **3.5.3 Data Analysis and Interpretation**

Data analysis was specifically done as per the research questions owing to the fact that most of the research questions cut across each other. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program was used for data entry and analysis for quantitative data collected by content analysis. SPSS package was selected due to its popularity and efficiency. SPSS is described as one of the most commonly used statistical package in social sciences. Coding sheets were used in data collection. The data was entered in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and then cleaned and validated. Most of the data was analyzed using descriptive statistics which mainly summarizes, describes, and present pictures of data presented in form of tables and charts. Furthermore, during the quantitative analysis, I used descriptive statistics, frequencies (to get the frequency of coverage) and cross-tabulations, Chi-Square. Accordingly “chi-square test can be used by researchers to: (i) test the goodness of fit; (ii) test the significance of association between two attributes, and (iii) test the homogeneity or the significance of population variance”.<sup>105</sup> I used chi-square to test the significance of association between sex of candidates to compare the coverage between female and male political candidates. Afterwards I conducted quantitative analysis by calculating frequencies and percentages of the entered data in the SPSS program. Because tables make it simple to transmit summary data, they were utilized to present the data.

Finally, data collected through interview was analyzed using qualitative analysis technique. In this situation interview excerpts were transferred from the audio recorder plus notebooks and jotted down on a general sheet. This enabled the researcher to match the research objectives with the interviewee responses to various questions reflected in the interview guide. Meanwhile, procedures for analyzing interview involved the following steps. First, the researcher clustered interview

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<sup>105</sup> Bernard, H., R., 5, p, 124.

participants according to their affiliations and organizations they belong (case units). The second step was analyzing the case units using case analysis and the case-data analysis approach. Within the case study analysis, the researcher analyzed the voices of each interviewee under the study major factors/themes. The voices were recorded using a tape recorder and were written down as each interviewee spoke. In the third phase, codes were created and clustered together under a similar sub-theme. Sub-themes were determined by the amount of replies to each theme, and the results were then presented narratively.

### **3.6 Ethical Considerations**

The researcher explained earlier the aims and significance of the study to the respondents before interviewing them. The principle of voluntary involvement was strategically applied and put forward clearly at the starting point for every respondent that anonymity and confidentiality will strictly be guaranteed. The use of recording device was initially explained to participants of its use during the interview so as to enable the researcher to record and then write down the responses accurately.

### **3.7 Expected Limitations of the Study**

I anticipate limitations in this study basing on the comparison of the two newspapers, which might lead to biased results. In particular, the New Vision and Daily Monitor basically have different characteristics in terms of their ownership; one is government owned while the other is a privately owned newspaper. In addition to that, the New Vision aims at promoting the government agenda and programs, while the daily monitor plays the watchdog role. Thus, ownership and style of the two newspapers could be considered as one of the important influences and is supposed to be taken into consideration. I also expect uncooperative respondents during the interviews.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The primary objective of the study was to examine into the voice and issue representation in media coverage of Uganda's general elections in 2021. The researcher examined each news item separately to identify issue representation contained in it, with a focus on election coverage in the study's sample. To meet the study objectives, the researcher examined the content of 1704 news items from the study's sample. As a result, in this chapter, the researcher provided and described the data that was analyzed. Frequencies and percentages of the examined data were displayed in tables and charts. This chapter contains data organized into five sections. The first section focuses at all variables considered while analysing the news like demographics of the candidate and this gives an insight on the nature of 2021 general election coverage in Ugandan newspapers as analysed during the study. More so, other section presents numerous issues like issues representation in the newspapers during 2021 elections, visual representation, and the comparison between the two newspapers with other variables studied among others.

#### **4.2 General Data Analysis: Newspaper Analysed and Articles Covered**

As discussed in the methodology, this study concentrated at two major daily newspapers namely; The New Vision and Daily Monitor. Nevertheless, as reflected in table (2) below, it confirms that the overall news stories analysed were 1704 from both newspapers of which 883 (51.8%) were from the New Vision. Whereas, 821 (48.2) % items were published by the Daily Monitor. Nevertheless, there was a slight discrepancy between the two newspapers, but the New Vision had more news analysed in the sample for the study.

**Table 4.** Newspapers Analysed

| Name of Newspapers Analyzed |             |              |               |                    |
|-----------------------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Newspaper                   | Frequency   | Percent      | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Daily Monitor               | 821         | 48.2         | 48.2          | 48.2               |
| New vision                  | 883         | 51.8         | 51.8          | 100.0              |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>1704</b> | <b>100.0</b> | <b>100.0</b>  |                    |

Additionally, findings revealed that majority of the stories (81.3%) stretched from top half of the page where 14.4 % were placed at the lower half of the page. As shown in table (3), the maximum space dedicated to a single story was a quarter ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) of the page represented by 48.1%, this was followed by 29.1% for articles that stretched for more than three quarters ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of the page. The least space dedicated to analysed stories was 8.4% for articles that stretched for up to three quarters respectively.

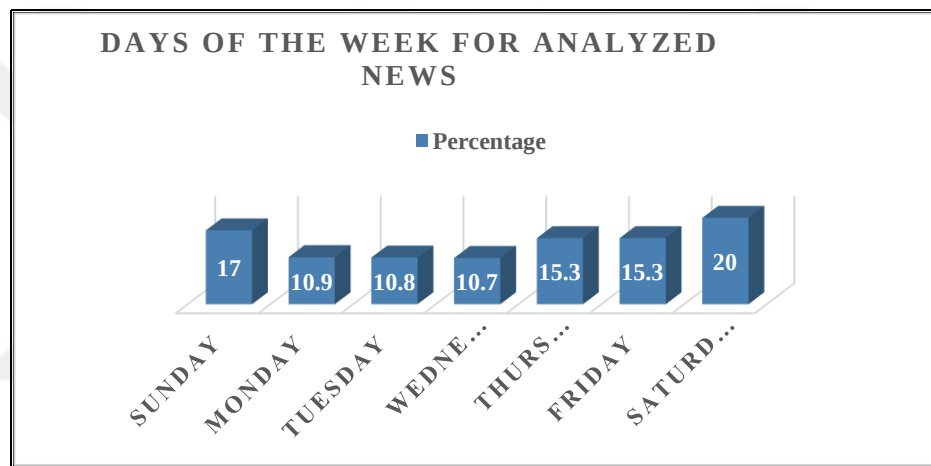
**Table 5.** Size of the News Story

| Size of the Story |                                     | Frequency   | Percent      |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|
|                   | Up to $\frac{1}{4}$ of the page,    | 820         | 48.1         |
|                   | Up to $\frac{1}{2}$ of the page,    | 246         | 14.4         |
|                   | Up to $\frac{3}{4}$ of the page     | 143         | 8.4          |
|                   | More than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the page | 495         | 29.1         |
|                   | <b>Total</b>                        | <b>1704</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Findings exposed that Saturday issues carried more news than any other issue in the course of the week among the articles analysed during this study. Thus, Saturday had an overall representation of 20%. This was followed by Sunday with representation of 17%. Whereas in the third position were Thursday and Friday which had equal representations of 15.3% respectively. However, Monday, Wednesday and Tuesday issues had the least number of news which counted for only 10.9, 10.7 and

10.8% as shown in diagram (1) below. This therefore, gives a distinction between issues published weekdays as they had a bigger news hole dedicated to the general election news compared to the weekend issues, which dedicated much space to leisure, lifestyle among others hence having a small news hall. Equally, it is worth to point out that articles analysed in this study were published between, 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 2020 up to 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 respectively. Appendix (3), shows details of date the Month of articles analysed during this study.

**Diagram 1. Showing Days of Analysed News**



#### **4.3 Demographics of Candidates During the 2021 General Election Coverage**

Findings of this study indicated that 98.6% equivalent to 1680 news items analysed, mentioned at least one candidate and only 1.4% (24) news items didn't mention a candidate among the analysed news. Similarly, it is vital to mention that male candidates dominated newspaper coverage during the 2021 general election. As reflected in diagram two, 63% of the candidates covered in the analysed articles were male and only 37% of the candidates were female. However, this discrepancy in the coverage confirms gender imbalances in the newspaper coverage of politicians during the 2021 general elections. Also, as one respondent confirmed during the interviews that:

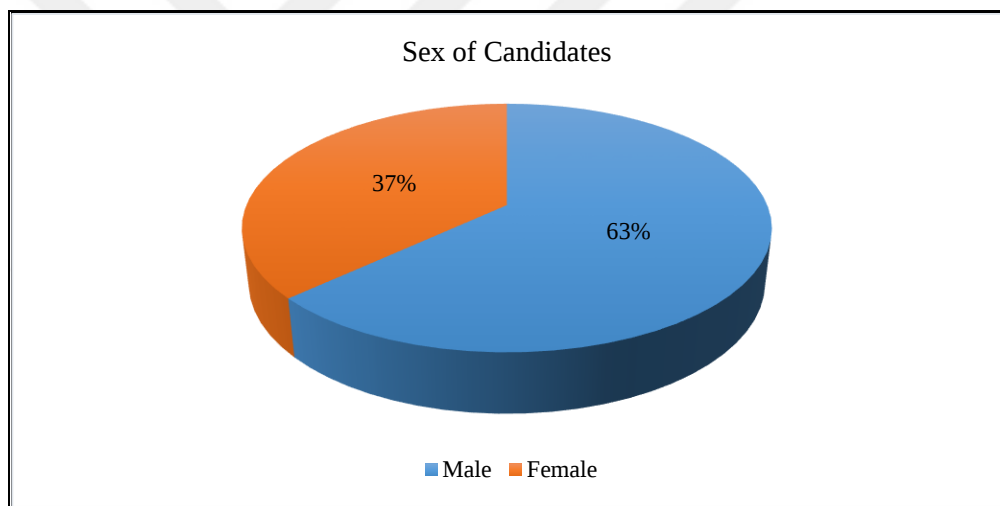
*Here I see many women they fear to come out and speak in media and that's where men dominance comes from, they know that media is made for men,*

women shy away from media responsibility. And to be honest women are so reactive to issues concerned with relationship, family, marriage, girl child women will talk out.

This could however, have resulted into the male domination as winners during the final elections. But another interviewee had a different observation on what female candidates consider in their utterances;

*Female politicians always speak more if comes to issues affecting women, child abuse, domestic violence, defilement female politicians are very passionate about those issues than male politicians.*

**Diagram 2.** Showing Sex of Candidates Covered in the Newspapers



However, it is worth to reveal that though there were gender discrepancies, journalists who were interviewed during the study confirmed that their media houses had policies regarding gender balance as one interviewee revealed:

*Yes, in daily monitor we ensure gender balance, for instance, our reporters when they go in field, we tell them to ensure that there is voice of lady, then we also do stories which are supporting gender issues and also, we have section in our paper where women are interviewed fully so that they can appear in paper.*

In the same vein another respondent who was interviewed also concurred that:

*Yes, just of recent we had the women's day celebrations as new vision we decided to have segment where wrote stories about women local chairperson*

*1 across the country and they would tell us when they got in too office the achievements, challenges they face and the future prospects. And also, we're told to always involve voices of women when we are writing stories.*

Remarkably, according to the status of the candidates, 75% of the candidates appeared in the newspaper as subjects of the story and only 25% who appeared as newsmakers. As indicated in table four below, the dominant political party in the newspaper was the ruling party that is NRM) led by President Museveni, which has been in power since 1985. A total number of 799 articles equivalent to 46.8% of the analyzed news were for candidates who subscribed to NRM. Whereas the National Unity Platform (NUP) came in the second position with a total representation of 564 (33.1%) of the total coverage.

It is important to reveal that the ruling party NRM defeated NUP in the 2021 general election enabling the incumbent president Museveni to enter his sixth term. This however validates the one of the study objectives of exploring the contribution of print media in free and fair “democratic” general elections in Uganda. The dominance of NRM in the newspaper equally propelled its victory in the general election. Nevertheless, findings of the study further indicated that candidates who didn't subscribe to nay position “independent” candidates were represented by 9.2% coming in the third position after NUP which was the biggest opponent of NRM.

**Table 6.** Candidate's Political Party

| Political Party | Frequency   | Percent      |
|-----------------|-------------|--------------|
| NRM             | 799         | 46.8         |
| NUP             | 564         | 33.1         |
| FDC             | 104         | 6.1          |
| ANT             | 1           | .1           |
| DP              | 30          | 1.8          |
| UPC             | 28          | 1.6          |
| Independent     | 156         | 9.2          |
| Others          | 22          | 1.3          |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>1704</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Yet the former strong opponent of NRM called Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) appeared in the fourth position with an overall score of 6.1% accordingly. The press representation of other candidates from political parties such as DP, UPC, and

ANT among others was really unbearable, like the way the election results were. In other word, candidates who were not highly represented in the newspaper also scored lesser vote in the final election. For instance, in the newspaper representation NRM was slightly ahead of NUP which was also evident that President Museveni was slightly ahead of Robert Kyagulanyi as his key opponent.

Qualitative findings of this study also revealed how print media contribute to free and fair democratic general elections in Uganda. One participant in the interview, revealed as follows:

*Of course, our contribution as print media is that we write stories that are against chaos, stories that preach fair and balanced election and ensure that is their issues like beatings we highlight them so that the electoral commission comes in to handle, if their cases of ballot stuffing, bribery our role is to highlight.*

Whereas a journalist who was interviewed and works with the new vision, the Uganda's leading government newspaper echoed that:

*As new vision the leading daily, we just do responsible reporting in order not to propel the country in trouble of genocides and we also play watch dog role to ensure that everything is exposed to the public. Also, we made sure that we reduced conflicts in our reportage.*

#### **4.4 Issues Representation in the Newspapers During 2021 Elections**

The study revealed interesting findings, as one of its objectives was to identify the dominant issues in coverage of the general elections. As shown in table 5, the majority of the news with a frequency of (1271) totalling 74.6% was focused on politics. The dominance of political news in press coverage, on the other hand, can be attributed to the period of the studied news, which was election season. Similarly, these findings support the study's second objective, which was to determine why some issues received more extensive newspaper coverage than others during the general election. This study discovered that political news dominated and received more attention than other issues. This can, however, be attributed to the time period of the examined news, which was election season.

Whereas the second popular affair reported during election period was corruption and crime with a frequency of (105) equivalent to 6.2% accordingly. The reason why corruption and crime news came in the second position could be attributed to the increased violence and pressure that comes from different political groups. It is worth to note that during elections in Uganda there is always too much tension between the leader of opposition and the Ugandan security forces especially the Ugandan Police plus the army called Uganda Peoples Defense Forces “UPDF”, as depicted in figure three, under the chapter of literature review. This tension finally causes havoc and tension among the general public.

**Table 7. Topics Covered in Analyzed Stories**

| <b>Topic of the story</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Politics</b>           | <b>1271</b>      | <b>74.6</b>       |
| Economics                 | 72               | 4.2               |
| Education                 | 60               | 3.5               |
| Infrastructure            | 15               | .9                |
| Security                  | 42               | 2.5               |
| Health                    | 28               | 1.6               |
| Agriculture               | 2                | .1                |
| Human Rights              | 28               | 1.6               |
| Natural resources         | 3                | .2                |
| Energy                    | 1                | .1                |
| Corruption/Crime          | 105              | 6.2               |
| Land                      | 10               | .6                |
| Foreign Affairs           | 8                | .5                |
| Environment               | 13               | .7                |
| Law                       | 9                | .5                |
| private life              | 34               | 2.0               |
| Others                    | 3                | .2                |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>1704</b>      | <b>100.0</b>      |

Nevertheless, the least covered topics in the Ugandan newspapers during the 2021 general election period included; energy and agriculture with less than 0.1% equally. As shown in table 5, below natural resources scored 0.2% whereas law and foreign affairs scored 0.5% separately as the least represented affairs in the press coverage. But it is important to point out that the reasons why such affairs were not covered so much in the press during the election period, could their less relevance to

the electoral processes. In that the listed affairs could not influence one's choice of a candidate contesting for any votable position. Other notable affairs that scored less than one percent included, infrastructure, land and environment, as detailed in above table five.

Nonetheless, in the general election, why some issues received more extensive newspaper coverage than others. Qualitative findings however, concurred with the quantitative findings as one interviewee confirmed that:

*Of course, that was election period predominately what sales at that time is about politics. Here media is driven by public demand for instance if the public wants to hear about candidate Museveni, economic stories then as vision we will do so then. Because our role is to be informative, educative among others.*

Furthermore, as we investigate the dominant issues in general election coverage, it is critical to reveal the number of sources in each analyzed article. According to the study's third objective, which was to analyze the consequences of the general election debate and particular *news sources* on Uganda's democratic process, findings indicated that majority of the articles with a total frequency of 949 equivalents to 55.7% had multiple sources. With this it means that with in one news article there were multiple sources who provided information for one article. For instance, at one event there would be a presidential candidate, numerous candidates contesting for parliament even others at local council levels.

Whereas in the second position were articles which had a single source. These articles with a single source had a total frequency of 561 equivalents to an accumulative percentage of (32.9) thirty-two point nine. This category of articles vividly means that such news stories had only one person as a news maker. For instance, this could include only one presidential candidate or only one Member of Parliament respectively. Yet in the third position were articles with two sources, these had a representation of 8.2% and the least represented articles were those with three sources only, these had a score of 3.2% which evidently was the least score as clearly indicated in table six below.

**Table 8.** Number of Sources in an Article

| Sources          | Frequency   | Percent      |
|------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Single source    | 561         | 32.9         |
| Two sources      | 140         | 8.2          |
| Three Sources    | 54          | 3.2          |
| Multiple sources | 949         | 55.7         |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>1704</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

In line with the above explanation focusing at type of source in analyzed articles, 47.1% had unknown sources categorically identified as anonymous sources. Yet in the second category 25.4% of the articles had a candidate as an outstanding source in the article. Whereas as table seven reveals, other sources such as candidate agent, government officials, party officials, ordinary person, judicial officials, were among the least represented type of sources in the published articles during the 2021 general elections in Uganda.

**Table 9.** Type of Source in the Article

| Type of source      | Frequency   | Percentage   |
|---------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Candidate           | 434         | 25.4         |
| Candidate`s agent   | 3           | .2           |
| Government official | 71          | 4.2          |
| Party official      | 85          | 5.0          |
| Expert              | 9           | .5           |
| Ordinary person     | 122         | 7.2          |
| Judicial Official   | 32          | 1.9          |
| Anonymous           | 803         | 47.1         |
| Multiple            | 145         | 8.5          |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>1704</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Yet qualitative results on the dominance of the elite sources as compared to the ordinary citizens in 2021 election coverage unanimously revealed that:

*The reason why elites dominate our paper is that we dig deep and also, we focus on those who can read and write English and those are the Elites. In*

*terms of readership new vision as a paper our target audience is those people who can read English that's why Elites dominates it.*

As the researcher investigates the voice and issue representation in newspaper coverage of Uganda's 2021 general elections, it is of greater importance to reveal the origin of the analyzed stories. As validated in table eight below, majority of the stories with a total frequency of 680 equivalents to 39.9%, emanated from public meetings and events. Whereas in the second category were stories of hard to tell origins, these were represented by 22.7%. Similarly, government documents and reports had a reasonable representation of 18.3% putting this origin of the story in the third position. Nevertheless, the least origins of the story include press conferences with only 4.3%. But press releases, statements and letters made public scored 14.8% remarkably higher than the latter, as reflected in table 6, below.

**Table 10.** Origin of the story

| Origin of the story |                                            | Frequency   | Percentage   |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|
|                     | Press release/statement/letter made public | 253         | 14.8         |
|                     | Press conference                           | 73          | 4.3          |
|                     | Government report/document                 | 311         | 18.3         |
|                     | Public meeting/event                       | 680         | 39.9         |
|                     | Other/cannot tell                          | 387         | 22.7         |
|                     | <b>Total</b>                               | <b>1704</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Qualitative findings on the media coverage and influence in the 2021 general elections by print media house, was interesting. As a respondent from daily monitor newspaper which is considered as the leading independent press in the country, asserted that:

*For us our role is to write stories, policies what candidates are saying and the voters decides who the vote for. But also, the stories we write can influence for instance, what Bobi Wine has promised and we write about it eventually it will motivate people to vote for him.*

Contrary, a respondent from the new vision also observed that:

*We did not have any influence and determine who will wine but we decided to give platform to every candidate to tell people their manifesto, ideologies then*

*the citizen of Uganda could listen and decide. Influence was therefore to help the voters to understand who is worth for the office in the next five years.*

As the researcher continues to explore the dominant issues in the coverage of the general elections, it is paramount to describe the nature of stories covered. As signified in table 7, below, a whole sum of 1391 articles equivalent to 81.6% were news articles. Whereas in the second position were stories in form of photos and cartoons which totalled to 219 articles equivalent to 12.9% of the overall analysed articles. Interviews were slightly higher than other categories with an overall representation of 3.8% respectively. Nevertheless, as depicted in table 7 below, other forms of story had a minimal representation of less than one percent, these included; editorials, brief bullets, headlines and others.

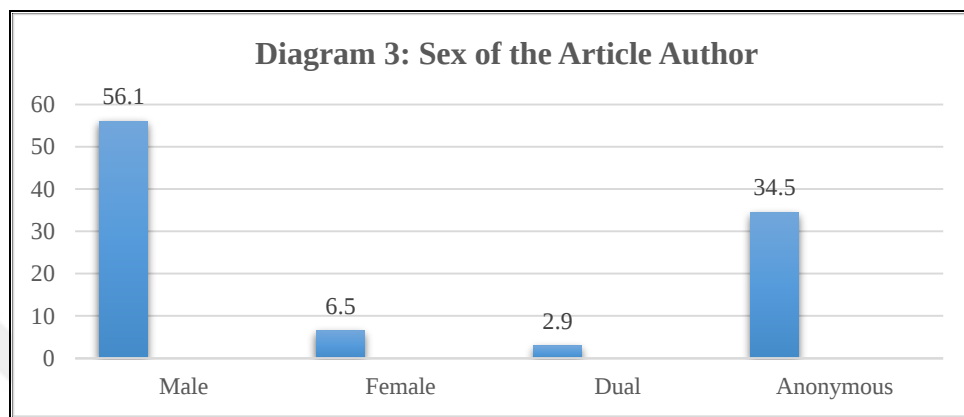
**Table 11.** Nature of Analysed Story

| <b>Nature of story</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| News Story             | 1391             | 81.6              |
| Editorial              | 4                | .2                |
| Interview              | 65               | 3.8               |
| Brief/Bullet           | 15               | .9                |
| Headline               | 3                | .2                |
| Picture/cartoon        | 219              | 12.9              |
| Others                 | 7                | .4                |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>1704</b>      | <b>100.0</b>      |

Similarly, the diagram (3) below depicted the gender of the writers of all publications examined during this study. It is clearly shown that male reporters covered the majority of the articles (56.1%). Whereas in the second category were articles covered by reporters whose sex was anonymous, these were 34.5%. Anonymous in this study referred to authors who sex was not identified as male or female. Yet female reporter was represented by 6.5% appearing in the third position. Finally, few stories were covered by both male and female in an equal reportage. These were categorized as dual authorship which scored 2.9% as the least scores.

Basing on these results it is good to recall that male candidates dominated newspaper coverage during the 2021 general election. As reflected in diagram one,

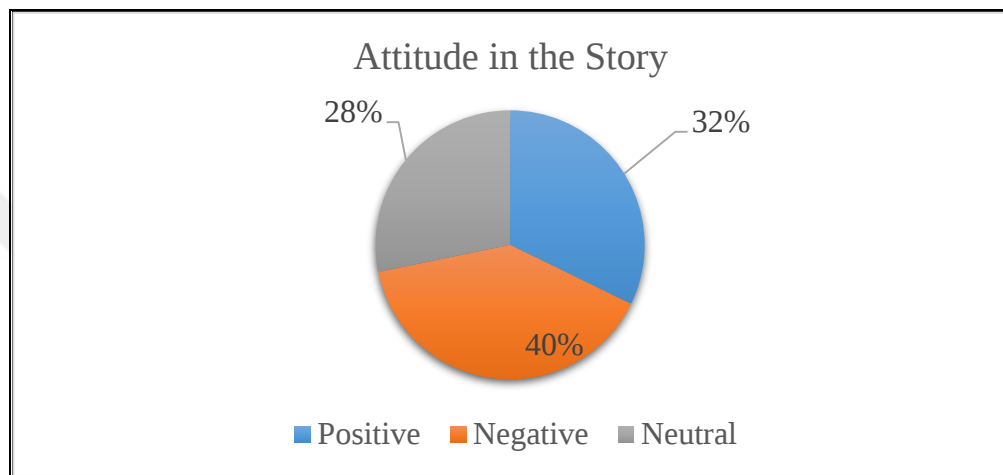
63% of the candidates covered in the analyzed articles were male and only 37% of the candidates were female. This implies that the 2021 general election coverage was dominated by male candidates and reporters, hence an impact on reportage.



Extensively, during the coding process in this study, news was categorized if the news item was contextualized and thematic or if it is decontextualized and episodic plus the neutral category. The contextualized and thematic category, was for the news item that highlighted causes or consequences related to the public good in other words concerning public issues in general. Thematic framing places the news story in a larger context that addresses its significance or consequences for society, a pattern that extends beyond a particular event/incident. The story here situates public issues in a broad or abstract perspective. The news item, on the other hand, is deemed decontextualized and episodic, with a restricted framing in terms of topic or person reference, and is unrelated to the public good/issues. The term "episodic framing" referred to a specific occurrence or situation. Personified and/or singled out stories, or stories that do not expand much beyond that unique occurrence, but rather take the shape of a case study, are typical instances, represented only 40% of the total. Positive (good) news that reported harmony within the country and between nations, as well as national cooperation, development, economic growth, and tension reduction, scored high with 32%. Stories that did not fall into either of the two categories, on the other hand, were classified as neutral news and accounted for 28% of the total, as shown in diagram 4. Surprisingly, the dominance of negative news in newspaper coverage can be attributed to the dominance of political news in newspapers during the election

season, as previously discussed in table (5). As a common saying goes that politics is a dirty game, it means that you cannot have politics without violence, crime, arrests, killings, and other tension related activities, and all these culminates into negative news in the newspaper.

**Diagram 4.** Attitude in the Story



#### 4.5 Visual and Photographic Analysis of Election Photos

This the visual context referred to whether a particular story had an accompanying photo and drawing for elaboration or not. As remarked by Steele, Evans and Green (2009) that one photo is worth a thousand words. Therefore, it is essential in this study to discuss photos that accompanied stories of different candidates who aspired for numerous political positions during 2020/2021 general elections in Uganda. It's worth noting that most of the articles only had one photo. However, visual presentation referred to whether a particular story had an accompanying photo and drawing for elaboration or not. Findings of this study indicated that 1345 (79.5%) as majority articles analysed were accompanied by photo whereas only 350 same as (20.5%) articles were plain texted and not accompanied by any photo. It also worthy to reveal that 1346 (79.0%) articles mentioned the candidate's name in the caption whereas in a total number of 358 (21.0%) articles the candidate's name were not mentioned in the captions that accompanied them.

As table 8 reveals about the human subject in the picture, majority pictures N#738 (43.3%) were of individual person. Whereas in the second category N#425 (24.9%) were for groups of people who were more than eleven persons. Centrally to that, the least represented human subjects in the picture, were for group that ranged between 6 and 10 with N#90 (5.3%) and groups of 2 to 5 scored 10.5% accordingly.

**Table 12.** Human Subjects in the Picture

| <b>Subjects in picture</b> |              | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|----------------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------------|
|                            | None         | 272              | 16.0              |
|                            | Individual   | 738              | 43.3              |
|                            | Group (2-5)  | 179              | 10.5              |
|                            | Group (6-10) | 90               | 5.3               |
|                            | Group 11+    | 425              | 24.9              |
|                            | <b>Total</b> | <b>1704</b>      | <b>100.0</b>      |

It is also worth to reveal that mood of human subjects in the picture, majority of them represented by 40.3% were happy and smiling. As table 9 reveals, the second category of 25.2% respondents were visualized as speaking. Then those who appeared not to be following under any category which were code as none, appeared in the third position with a total score of 15.8%. As the reflected in the table below, other categories were least represented and their representation ranged between 0.1% up to 1.9% in other words they were less than 2%. These included human subjects who were depicted to be in a state of crying, working rural, laughing, friendly, angry/ crazy, threatening, injured, calm, sad, animated among others.

**Table 13.** State of Human Subjects in the Picture

| State of Picture |                       | Frequency   | Percentage   |
|------------------|-----------------------|-------------|--------------|
|                  | None                  | 269         | 15.8         |
|                  | Threatening           | 11          | .6           |
|                  | Angry/Crazy           | 9           | .5           |
|                  | Animated              | 32          | 1.9          |
|                  | Crying                | 1           | .1           |
|                  | Sad                   | 31          | 1.8          |
|                  | Neutral               | 93          | 5.4          |
|                  | Calm                  | 24          | 1.4          |
|                  | Focused/Concentrating | 105         | 6.1          |
|                  | Friendly              | 1           | .1           |
|                  | Happy/Smiling         | 686         | 40.3         |
|                  | Laughing              | 1           | .1           |
|                  | Injured               | 7           | .4           |
|                  | Speaking              | 429         | 25.2         |
|                  | Working Rural         | 2           | .1           |
|                  | Working Urban         | 3           | .2           |
|                  | <b>Total</b>          | <b>1704</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

As far as non-human subjects in the picture were concerned, findings of the study confirmed that N#821 (48.2%) were landscapes. These were followed by single building with N#381 (22.3%) which were ranked to be in the second category. Addition in the third position were non- human subjects categorized as none with N#269 equivalent to (15.8%) respectively. Whereas the remaining items among the non-human subjects had minimal scores which ranged between 0.1% up to 6.7% correspondingly. These included, animals, weaponry, official vehicle, machinery, forestry, civilian vehicle and multiple building accordingly.

**Table 14. Non - Human Subjects in the Picture**

| <b>Non-Human Subjects in picture</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| None                                 | 269              | 15.8           |
| Single Building                      | 381              | 22.3           |
| Multiple Building                    | 114              | 6.7            |
| Civilian Vehicle                     | 31               | 1.8            |
| Official Vehicle                     | 7                | .4             |
| Weaponry                             | 1                | .1             |
| Landscape                            | 821              | 48.2           |
| Forestry                             | 67               | 3.9            |
| Animals                              | 1                | .1             |
| Machinery                            | 12               | .7             |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>1704</b>      | <b>100.0</b>   |

As we conclude the visual presentation of the newspaper coverage during 2021 general elections, it is paramount to reveal the color of the pictures that accompanied articles. It is worth to reveal that majority of the pictures were colored, these accompanied 1428 articles equivalent to 83.8% respectively. Although 268 articles as (15.7%) had no photo, black and white pictures scored less than .1%. Equally, colored cartoons had .1% whereas black and white cartoons scored .3% respectively.

#### **4.6 Comparison Between New Vision and Daily Monitor Newspapers**

The fourth objective of this research was to discover similarities and differences in the between the New Vision and Daily Monitor newspapers in Uganda's general election coverage. As a result, in this part, I present some of the comparisons between the two analyzed newspapers, namely; New Vision and Daily Monitor newspapers have more contrasts than similarities in their political coverage.

As reflected in table (11), findings of this study concurred with objective 5, as it found differences than similarities in the coverage of 2021 Uganda's general election. The new vision newspaper mentioned candidates slightly higher than the daily monitor. With this the new vision had a total sum of 53.1% with higher level of significance at  $P = .003$  and standard deviation of .491. Unlike daily monitor that scored a total sum of 46.9%, standard deviation of .471 and with significance level of

$P = .005$  respectively. It is also worth to reveal that the coverage of sex of candidates in the new vision was equally higher than that of the daily monitor. In this aspect, the new vision newspaper scored 1.40 with a standard deviation of .491, somewhat higher than the daily monitor, which scored 1.33 with a standard deviation of .471, lower than the new vision newspaper.

Similarly, the new vision newspaper covered more of the Candidate's Political Party than the daily monitor. The daily monitor's mean score was 5.00 with a standard deviation of 3.227, whereas the new vision had a mean score of 5.30 with a standard deviation of 3.281. Whereas about the attitude in the articles, the new vision had a total sum of 51.5% unlike the daily monitor which had a total sum of 48.5% accordingly. Contrary to the above, daily monitor covered more topics compared to the new vision. This is evident in the daily monitor's mean score of 2.99 and standard deviation of 4.095, which is substantially higher than the New Visions mean score of 2.43 and standard deviation of 3.363.

**Table 15.** Comparison between the New vision and Daily Monitor

| Group Statistics            |               |     |      |                |                 |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-----|------|----------------|-----------------|
|                             | Newspaper     | N   | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
| Mention of Candidates       | Daily Monitor | 821 | .98  | .134           | .005            |
|                             | New vision    | 883 | .99  | .100           | .003            |
| Sex of Candidates           | Daily Monitor | 821 | 1.33 | .471           | .016            |
|                             | New vision    | 883 | 1.40 | .491           | .017            |
| Topic of the Story          | Daily Monitor | 821 | 2.99 | 4.095          | .143            |
|                             | New vision    | 883 | 2.43 | 3.363          | .113            |
| Candidate's Political Party | Daily Monitor | 821 | 5.00 | 3.227          | .113            |
|                             | New vision    | 883 | 5.30 | 3.281          | .110            |

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the key issues that emerged from the study's findings. The researcher discusses the study's findings in light of the research objectives and theoretical framework. Furthermore, the discussions in this chapter evaluate the extent to which the study's questions were answered. This chapter also summarizes key findings and concludes with some recommendations.

#### **5.2 Discussion**

In conformity with objective four (4) of this study which was to investigate the role of print media in free and fair "democratic" general elections in Uganda. It is important to reveal that the ruling party NRM emerged as the overall winner against NUP and other political parties during the 2021 general election enabling the incumbent president Museveni to enter his sixth term. The NRM's dominance in the newspaper also contributed to its victory in the general election. This is also consistent with this study's theoretical approach, which is based on the agenda setting theory. The agenda setting theory explicitly assumes that when the media chose particular concerns and portrays them frequently and prominently, people perceive such issues to be more significant than others.

This theory therefore backup the study findings as the NRM plus male candidates who dominated in the press coverage of the analysed newspapers subsequently the NRM party and male candidates dominated in the election outcomes. For instance, study findings in diagram two, confirmed 63% of the candidates covered in the analysed articles were male and only 37% of the candidates were female respectively.

Nevertheless, findings of the study further indicated that candidates who didn't subscribe to any political party who were categorized as "independent" candidates were represented by 9.2% coming in the third position after NUP which

was the biggest opponent of NRM. Yet the former strong opponent of NRM called Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) appeared in the fourth position with an overall score of 6.1% accordingly. The press representation of other candidates from political parties such as DP, UPC, and ANT among others was really unbearable, like the way the election results were. In other word, candidates who were not highly represented in the newspaper also scored lesser vote in the final election. For instance, in the newspaper representation NRM was slightly ahead of NUP which was also evident that President Museveni was slightly ahead of Robert Kyagulanyi as his key opponent.

According to this study, the majority of news with a frequency of (1271) totalling 74.6% was focused on politics. This, however, can be attributable to the time period of the analyzed news, which was election season. These findings support the study's second goal of determining why some issues received more significant newspaper attention than others during the general election. Political news predominated and attracted more attention than other concerns, according to the findings of this study. It is important to highlight that the fundamental focus of agenda setting theory has always been the transfer of issue salience and how media emphasis on specific problems increases their relevance for the public and hence influences public decision. According to theorists, agenda setting theory focuses on the relationship between the relative importance given by media sources to diverse topics such as politics, which dominated the current study, and the degree of relevance these topics have for the general population. Increased media coverage, for example, is thought to raise community concern about a specific topic. The media is perceived as shaping numerous subjects and public decision-making rather than reflecting public priorities.

While verifying objective five (5) of this study, it became clear that the new vision newspaper covered a greater portion of the Candidate's Political Party than the daily monitor. The daily monitor's mean score was 5.00 with a standard deviation of 3.227, whereas the new vision had a mean score of 5.30 with a standard deviation of 3.281. In regards to the attitude throughout the articles, the new vision had a total sum of of 51.5%, whereas the daily monitor had a total sum of 48.5%. In contrast to the new vision, the daily monitor covered more topics. This is reflected in the daily monitor's mean score of 2.99 and standard deviation of 4.095, as opposed to the new

vision's mean score of 2.43 and standard deviation of 3.363, which is clearly lower than that of the daily monitor. Based on these findings, it is worth noting that the new vision newspaper provided significantly more coverage of the 2021 general elections than the daily monitor. This could be attributed to the status of the two newspapers, which according to the new vision is a government owned newspaper with all privileges, including access to all information and limited censorship from the government, as opposed to the daily monitor, which is privately owned and may be restricted in some way.



## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has revealed motivating information about the role of print media in influencing people's choice of a specific candidate and, more broadly, the democratization process in Uganda. It is quite clear that Uganda's print media, particularly newspapers, contribute significantly more to democracy than they could because only a few voices are registered in public discourse. For example, the study discovered that general election coverage was critical to the political victory of some politicians, despite the fact that most newspapers were dominated by male candidates, elite, urban, and government officials who supported the National Resistance Movement political system.

The 2021 general election was similar to earlier elections in 1989, 1994, 1996, 2001, 2006, 2011, and 2016 in that there was a lack of structured political contest and open, free campaign platforms, which was a defining feature of all post-1986 elections in Uganda, as seen in figure (3). There have also been complaints about the electoral body's independence and impartiality in the majority of these elections held in Uganda. In conclusion, various suggestions for additional research, as well as recommendations for better print media performance in Uganda, were acknowledged in the study. With such findings, media practitioners may need to reconsider their role during Uganda's general elections and the country's democracy process in general.

### *Recommendations for the study;*

If I had more time and support, I could have given this study a broader perspective that I haven't been able to do. I only chose a few samples of years (2020–2021) because that was normally election season rather than a length of time. The researcher then randomly selected months, dates, or topics. Therefore, I suggest that in the future, a broad approach to this particular topic or issue might produce more thorough results.

Equally, further research is recommended in the context of news sources to measure whether sources were the enterprising type, in other words where news is drawn from exclusive efforts originating from reporters or routine, in that 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 general election behaviours.

Lastly, due to time and resource constraints, this study only concentrated on newspapers. However, a media eco system study is highly recommended, which would indeed provide a concrete picture on the media's role during election, especially the digital media.



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| 2022                          | <a href="https://www.ec.or.ug">https://www.ec.or.ug</a> , January, 2022.                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1. Interviews/ Guiding Questions for Interviews

#### Introduction:

I am **ABUDU RAHAMAN BALABA** a graduate student of MA. In Journalism at Istanbul University I am doing a research on ***The Role of Print Media in Uganda's General Elections Process.*** Could you please spare few minutes and respond to this interview?

1. How was the coverage of the 2021 general election dominate the debate in the Ugandan newspapers?
2. How would you describe the media coverage and influence in the 2021 general elections by your media house?
3. How would you comment on the dominance of the elite sources as compared to the ordinary citizens in the election coverage?
4. Why do you think that some issues received more intensive newspaper coverage than others in the general election?
5. How does print media contribute to free and fair “democratic” general elections in Uganda?
6. Does your media house have policies addressing gender balance in your news coverage?
7. From your experience are their specific issues women politicians tend to address and talk about more than by male politicians do?

**END**

## **Appendix 2. Code Sheet**

**Topic:** The Role of Print Media in Uganda's Elections

**Does the article mention a parliamentary candidate?**

- 0. No
- 1. Yes

**Name of candidate(s)**.....

**Gender of a candidate.**

- 1. Male
- 2. Female

**Is the article accompanied by photo/photos of parliamentary candidate(s)?**

- 0. No
- 1. Yes

**Name of candidate(s)**.....

**Name of Newspaper**

- 1. Daily monitor,
- 2. New vision

**Days of the week**

- 1. Sunday, 2. Monday, 3. Tuesday, 4. Wednesday, 5. Thursday, 6. Friday, 7. Saturday.

**Article Identification**

**Headline**

**Date of the Month**

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31.

**Month of the Year**

- 1. January, 2. February, 3. March, 4. April, 5. May, 6. June, 7. July, 8. August, 9. September, 10. October, 11. November, 12. December

**Newspaper Page Number****Placement of Newspaper Article**

1. Front page, 2. Teased on front page 3. Inside page, 4. Back page,

**Sex of the source**

1. Male, 2 females, 3. Dual source with people of both sex, 4 not identified, 5. Cannot tell

**Number of sources in the article**

1. Single source, 2. Two sources, 3. Three sources, 4. Multiple sources

**Type of source in the article**

1. Candidate, 2. Candidates' agent, 3. Government official, 4. Party official, 5. Expert, 6. Ordinary person, 7. Judicial official, 8. Anonymous.

**Type of Quotation**

1. No quote
2. Direct quotation
3. Indirect quotation

**Status of the candidate in the article**

1. News maker
2. Subject of the story

**Origin of the story**

1. Press release/statement/letter made public, 2. Press conference, 3. Government report/document, 4. Public meeting/event, 5. Other/cannot tell

**Nature of story**

1. News story, 2. Editorial, 3. Interview, 4. Bullet, 5. Headline, 6. Picture/cartoon, 7. Other

**Length of newspaper story**

1. Up to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the page,
2. Up to  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the page,
3. Up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the page,
4. More than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the page

**Does the article begin on the top half of the page or on the lower half of the page?**

1. Top half of the page, 2. Lower half of the page

**Topic of the story**

1. Politics, 2. Economics, 3. Education, 4. Infrastructure, 5. Security, 6. Health, 7. Agriculture, 8. Human rights, 9. Natural resources, 10. Energy, 11. Corruption, 12. Land, 13. Foreign affairs

**Candidate's political party**

1. NRM, 2. NUP, 3 FDC, 4. Farmers' Party, 5. DP, 6. UPC, 7. Independent, 8. Other

**Number of photographs/ cartoons accompanying the article.....**

**Color of picture**

1. Color, 2. Black/white, 3. Color cartoon/illustration, 4. Black/white cartoon / illustration;

**Human Subjects in picture**

1. Individual; 2. Group of 2-5; 3. Group 6-10; 4. Group of 11+;

**Active state:**

1= threatening; 2= angry/ 'crazy'; 3= animated; 4= crying; 5= sad; 6= neutral; 7= calm/placid; 8= focused/concentrating; 9= friendly; 10= happy/smiling; 11= laughing; 12= injured, 13= speaking; 14= working, rural; 15= working, urban;

**Non-Human Subjects in picture.**

1= single building; 2= multiple building; 3= civilian vehicle; 4= military vehicle; 5= books/documents; 6= weaponry; 7= landscape; 8= map; 9= forestry, 10= food; 11= animal(s)/poultry; 12= Ballot box; 13= machinery; 14= children

**Attitude in the articles**

1. Favourable 2. Unfavourable 3. Neutral

**END**

### Appendix 3. Date and Month for Analyzed Articles

| Date of the Month |           |            |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Date              | Frequency | Percentage |
| 02.09.2020        | 1         | .1         |
| 03.09.2020        | 1         | .1         |
| 14.09.2020        | 1         | .1         |
| 17.09.2020        | 1         | .1         |
| 18.09.2020        | 2         | .1         |
| 20.09.2020        | 3         | .2         |
| 02.10.2020        | 1         | .1         |
| 03.10.2020        | 2         | .1         |
| 08.10.2020        | 3         | .2         |
| 09.10.2020        | 2         | .1         |
| 10.10.2020        | 3         | .2         |
| 14.10.2020        | 1         | .1         |
| 20.10.2020        | 1         | .1         |
| 24.10.2020        | 1         | .1         |
| 27.10.2020        | 1         | .1         |
| 28.10.2020        | 2         | .1         |
| 03.11.2020        | 4         | .2         |
| 24.11.2020        | 2         | .1         |
| 28.11.2020        | 1         | .1         |
| 02.12.2020        | 12        | .7         |
| 03.12.2020        | 49        | 2.9        |
| 04.12.2020        | 17        | 1.0        |
| 05.12.2020        | 15        | .9         |
| 06.12.2020        | 11        | .6         |
| 07.12.2020        | 11        | .6         |
| 08.12.2020        | 15        | .9         |
| 09.12.2020        | 8         | .5         |

|             |    |     |
|-------------|----|-----|
| 10.12.2020  | 65 | 3.8 |
| 11.12.2020  | 20 | 1.2 |
| 12.12.2020  | 16 | .9  |
| 13.12.2020  | 3  | .2  |
| 14.12.2020  | 4  | .2  |
| 15.12.2020  | 4  | .2  |
| 17.12.2020  | 11 | .6  |
| 18.12.2020  | 16 | .9  |
| 19.12.2020  | 9  | .5  |
| 20.12.2020  | 21 | 1.2 |
| 21.12.2020  | 30 | 1.8 |
| 22.12.2020s | 4  | .2  |
| 23.12.2020  | 21 | 1.2 |
| 24.12.2020  | 15 | .9  |
| 25.12.2020  | 2  | .1  |
| 27.12.2020  | 5  | .3  |
| 28.12.2020  | 17 | 1.0 |
| 29.12.2020  | 6  | .4  |
| 30.12.2020  | 11 | .6  |
| 31.12.2020  | 5  | .3  |
| 01.01.2021  | 10 | .6  |
| 03.01.2021  | 2  | .1  |
| 04.01.2021  | 5  | .3  |
| 05.01.2021  | 6  | .4  |
| 06.01.2021  | 15 | .9  |
| 07.01.2021  | 8  | .5  |
| 08.01.2021  | 15 | .9  |
| 09.01.2021  | 32 | 1.9 |
| 10.01.2021  | 11 | .6  |
| 11.01.2021  | 9  | .5  |

|            |    |     |
|------------|----|-----|
| 12.01.2021 | 23 | 1.3 |
| 13.01.2021 | 21 | 1.2 |
| 14.01.2021 | 19 | 1.1 |
| 15.01.2021 | 16 | .9  |
| 17.01.2021 | 19 | 1.1 |
| 18.01.2021 | 8  | .5  |
| 19.01.2021 | 23 | 1.3 |
| 20.01.2021 | 20 | 1.2 |
| 21.01.2021 | 60 | 3.5 |
| 22.01.2021 | 25 | 1.5 |
| 23.01.2021 | 14 | .8  |
| 24.01.2021 | 24 | 1.4 |
| 25.01.2021 | 14 | .8  |
| 26.01.2021 | 43 | 2.5 |
| 27.01.2021 | 10 | .6  |
| 28.01.2021 | 8  | .5  |
| 29.01.2021 | 21 | 1.2 |
| 30.01.2021 | 28 | 1.6 |
| 31.01.2021 | 21 | 1.2 |
| 01.02.2021 | 10 | .6  |
| 02.02.2021 | 6  | .4  |
| 03.02.2021 | 9  | .5  |
| 04.02.2021 | 3  | .2  |
| 05.02.2021 | 28 | 1.6 |
| 06.02.2021 | 28 | 1.6 |
| 07.02.2021 | 6  | .4  |
| 08.02.2021 | 20 | 1.2 |
| 09.02.2021 | 33 | 1.9 |
| 10.02.2021 | 13 | .8  |
| 11.02.2021 | 17 | 1.0 |

|              |             |              |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| 12.02.2021   | 17          | 1.0          |
| 13.02.2021   | 14          | .8           |
| 14.02.2021   | 31          | 1.8          |
| 15.02.2021   | 11          | .6           |
| 17.02.2021   | 11          | .6           |
| 18.02.2021   | 19          | 1.1          |
| 19.02.2021   | 38          | 2.2          |
| 20.02.2021   | 184         | 10.8         |
| 21.02.2021   | 168         | 9.9a         |
| 22.02.2021   | 47          | 2.8          |
| 04.02.2021   | 1           | .1           |
| 08.02.2021   | 1           | .1           |
| 09.02.2021   | 1           | .1           |
| 14.02.2021   | 2           | .1           |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>1704</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

#### Appendix 4. A Sample of the New Vision Newspaper Cover Page.

**NEW VISION**

Vol.35  
No.162  
US\$ 2,000  
(KSH 107,  
TZS 11,600,  
R 933)

TUESDAY,  
AUGUST 11,  
2020

**PASS A'LEVEL**  
MATHEMATICS, CHEMISTRY,  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## WHO RAZED KAMPALA'S 40-YEAR-OLD CHURCH?

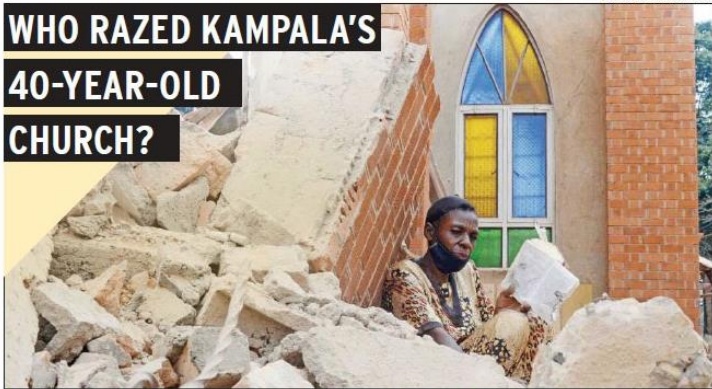


PHOTO BY STUART YIGA

Damalie Kibirige holds a Bible she recovered from the rubble after St Peter's Church Ndeeba in Rubaga division, Kampala, where she attends prayers, was demolished yesterday morning. SEE STORY ON PAGE 6

**SURVEY NUP FLAG-BEARER KYAGULANYI AHEAD OF COL. BESIGYE**

# MUSEVENI LEADS IN NEW OPINION POLL

SEE  
PAGES  
3, 4, 5

**COVID-19**  
**CAR DEALER'S  
EMPLOYEES  
TEST POSITIVE**  
SEE PAGE 7

**COURT**  
**KAZINDA  
CHARGES  
ON WEALTH  
MAINTAINED**  
PAGE 14

**ENTEBBE**  
**TOURISTS TO BE  
REGULATED AS  
ZOO RE-OPENS**  
SEE PAGE 8

**Preferred choice of candidates by March 2020**

|                           |        |
|---------------------------|--------|
| Yoweri Kaguta Museveni    | 50.06% |
| Robert Kyagulanyi Sentamu | 21.16% |
| None                      | 18.44% |
| Kizza Besigye             | 6.28%  |
| Don't know                | 1.35%  |
| Norbert Mao               | 0.63%  |
| Confidential              | 0.42%  |
| Mama Miria Obote          | 0.30%  |
| Mugisha Muntu             | 0.28%  |
| Tumukunde Henry           | 0.28%  |
| Akena Jimmy               | 0.25%  |
| Joseph Mabirizi           | 0.20%  |
| Maureen Kyalya            | 0.10%  |
| Amama Mbabazi             | 0.07%  |
| Rebecca Kadaga            | 0.05%  |
| Olara Otunnu              | 0.03%  |
| Elly Tumwine              | 0.02%  |
| Tumusiime                 | 0.02%  |
| Darlen Katissimu          | 0.02%  |
| Male Mbazira              | 0.02%  |
| Abed Bwanika              | 0.02%  |



GRAPHIC BY BRIAN SSEKAMATTE

**Ministers  
rush for NRM  
nominations**

Current and former ministers are among the first people that have been nominated to contest in party primaries ahead of the 2021 general election. See page 12

**UG DECIDES  
2021  
VISION GROUP: HUB OF CHOICE**

**Tumukunde  
assembles  
team**

Former security minister Lt. Gen. Henry Tumukunde will unveil his campaign team tomorrow ahead of the 2021 polls. See page 9

Appendix 5. A Sample of the Daily Monitor Newspaper Cover Page.

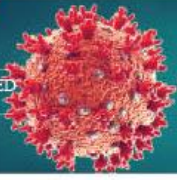
Thursday, October 29, 2020 | US\$2,000 (KSh107 : RFr950 : TSh1,600) | @ / dailymonitor | No.304 | www.monitorco.ug

**UGANDA**

CASES  
11,767

RECOVERED  
7,461

DEATHS  
106



**Covid-19**

Church of Uganda  
calls prayer  
summit ...P.6

**dmToday**

I caught my husband in  
bed with our maid P.19



TRUTH EVERY DAY

# DAILY MONITOR

- PPDA cancelled deal to foreign firms
- Cancellation could jeopardise polls
- Electoral Commission officials meet
- Country goes to the polls in January

## Don't give ballot deal to local firms - parties

**Deadlock.** Political parties say giving local firms contract to print more than 180 million ballot papers for the 2021 General Election could compromise the legitimacy of elections across the country. P.4



A photomontage of Alliance for National Transformation party presidential candidate Mugisha Muntu (left) and Electoral Commission chairperson Justice Simon Byabakama. The Electoral Commission is under pressure for awarding the ballot printing deal to foreign firms. PHOTOS: RACHEL MABALA, FILE



NEWS ...P4

**EC clears Bobi Wine to run for presidency**

NEWS ...P3

**Doctors correct hearing defects in 5 children**

ELECTIONS ...P5

**Regions with most expensive elections named**

THE LIZARD

THOSE MUST BE  
REVOLUTIONARY SPIRITS!



CHIEFDOM PAID SHS75M  
TO RELOCATE SPIRITS

NEWS TANZANIA OPPOSITION CRY FOUL IN POLL P.32 | CHIEFDOM PAID SHS75M TO RELOCATE SPIRITS FOR NYAGAK DAM P.7