PERCEPTIONS OF JOURNALISTS ON WOMEN ACCESS, EMPLOYMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN NEWS PRODUCTION.

A case study of the Ugandan print media - *The New Vision*
(June to August 2008).

MASTER THESIS

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Dedication

I dedicate this project to my husband Benson Ouma Juma and our four children Emma, Emily, Eva and Evans for recognising, valuing and understanding that this was the only opportunity for me to grab.

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Abstract

The thesis, "Perceptions of journalists on women access, employment and participation in news production" constitutes an assessment of the situation of female journalists in one of Uganda's print media, *The New Vision.* The study connects the problematic relationship that women have with news media, both as subjects and sources of news stories as well as their experiences and status as practitioners within the news industries. The study was concerned over what in this profession makes its practice favour men, in spite of the fact that there is a tendency towards gender balance among journalists. The power issues inherent in journalism were crucial because we say that the media has a power of definition, but who holds the power of definition among the editorial staff and why? Hence, both 'media and gender' and the culture of journalism and their gender dimensions formed a field to be explored.

The study locates and applies the critical feminist perspectives on women and the media and the process of news production as the basis on which the status of female journalists in Ugandan print media will be analysed. The major question the paper tries to answer is, 'How do journalists perceive of women access, employment and participation in news production?' Hence, informant interviews and document reviews on the situation of women in the media were deemed necessary to generate the answer to the research question.

Results show increased opportunities for women access to journalism schools, the media as well as a recorded success to top editorial posts. However, the organisational structures and policies have proved a barrier to women promotion, career advancement and pay differentials. There was increased coverage of women issues. Women journalists struggled against being pigeon holed to covering soft issues and ventured into hard news like photojournalism, war and investigative reporting. Unfortunately, women voices as news sources remain marginal while negative portrayal of women in the media persisted. Besides the obvious challenge of women as double workers, women journalists continue to encounter sexual harassment and negative attitudes from their male colleagues.

The struggle for equal opportunities in the media workforce should be one that, among other things, fights against patriarchal values and beliefs that perpetuate women subordination, the gendered values embedded within the professional routines, organisational values, policies, economic interests and the politics of ownership. Until all people have equal opportunity in society as a whole, unequal treatment in the news industry will continue.

Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immuno Deficient Syndrome
ACFODE	Action for Development
ANC	African National Congress
API	American Press Institute
ASNE	Association for the American Newspaper Editors
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
GMMP	Global Media Monitoring Project
HIV	Human Immuno Virus
IFJ	International Federation of Journalists
IWMF	International Women Media Foundation
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSSF	National Social Security Fund
NRM	National Resistance Movement
PEJ	Project for Excellence in Journalism
PCCJ	Pew Centre for Civic Journalism
UBC	Uganda Broadcasting Corporation
UCC	Uganda Communications Commission
UK	United Kingdom
UMWA	Uganda Media Women's Association
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USA	United States of America
VAT	Value Added Tax
WEDO	Women's Environmental and Development Organisation
WIN	Women In News

Table of contents   Page

Chapter One

1.1 Introduction.

This study sought to go inside the image factory that is the newsroom to find out the perceptions of journalists on women access, employment and their participation in news production to gauge how *The New Vision* was addressing the question of gender equality. The study was concerned with the problematic relationship that women have with news media, both as subjects and sources of news stories as well as their experiences and status as practitioners within the news industries.

This is because we live in a world that is stratified along lines of gender, race, ethnicity, class age, disability and location, and in which the privileges, disadvantages and exclusion associated with such categories are unevenly distributed (Van Zoonen, 1994: 27; Shivas, 2000; McQuail, 2002:15). The question of gender as was emphasised by Robinson (1993) is very vital:

> *Gender is an important social reality in every society in the world. As sociologists define, it is the main axis to construct of human socialization. Gender shapes identities and perception, international practices and the very forms of social institutions and it does so in race and class specific ways. If we did not see gender as a social phenomenon, we were not seeing clearly (Robinson 1993:24 cited in Toker, 2004).*

We also live in a world which is increasingly saturated by media and information and communication technologies. Mass media are described as both societal and cultural phenomena because every aspect of the production and use of mass media has an obvious cultural dimension. According to McQuail, as an institution mass media forms part of the structure of society and its technological infrastructure is part of the economic and power base, while the ideas, images and information disseminated by media are an important aspect of our culture (1994:73). In this respect, **t**his research explores the relationship between these two factors-gender and media.

Media work calls for certain kinds of ability and technical training (Gallagher, 1987:45).The study is therefore concerned with how women come to media to be media workers, their career progression since leaving school, their qualification, age, marital status and domestic commitments. It is also concerned with female media employee's perception of herself and of her working relationships; her expectations and plans; her attitude to the organisation for which she works and on her male colleagues; and how she judges herself in individual and

social terms. Human beings are greatly influenced by their perceptions of how others assess their performance (Gallagher, 1987:46). So this study, although about women, is also concerned with men's opinions.

The link between representation and recruitment of women in the media as well as their level of participation in news production send important messages about their place, roles and their lives in society. Successive studies have mapped and analyzed ways in which women are portrayed in factual media showing as it does a pattern of marginal presence on the one hand and stereotyping on the other (Allan, 2005:288). The debate and discussion into the persistent misrepresentation of women, in the recent past revolved around male dominance over the media industries and few women in the decision making positions (Gallagher, 1987).

To-day, different scholars talk of a 'gender switch', acknowledging the increasing number of women joining journalism training institutions and being absorbed into media industries as professional journalists (Van Zoonen, 1994). There are considerably more women than previous decades-a revolution in journalism practice that has been brought about by developments in media and communication technology and the increasing nature of mainstream media that have forced a reconsideration of the relationship of news to gender (Allan, 2005).

Research efforts on media and gender in Uganda have tended to concentrate on media portrayal of women (Trip and Kwesiga, 2002; Nassanga, 1994). Little attention has been paid to the originators of media output. An in-depth examination and understanding of the people involved in the image-making in the media themselves is necessary to understand why news appear the way it is. In this context, women's access to and participation in media work become a crucial issue, which this study takes up.

1. 2 Objective(s) of the study

The main objective of this study was to find out the perceptions of journalists on women access, employment and participation in news production to assess how *The New Vision* was addressing the issue of gender equality.

The specific objectives include to:

1. Find out how female journalists access the media in terms of recruitment.

2. Examine the current employment status of female journalists in the media.

3. Find out the level of women participation in news production.

4. Get the perceptions of journalists on coverage and portrayal of women in the media.

5. Document the challenges female journalists face in their professional work.

1.3 Research Questions

The research question (s) starts from the findings that female journalists in the Ugandan mass media are both vertically and horizontally segregated. In 1997, Sentamu found out that very few women (*26%*) were hired and promoted in *The New Vision* and that few held top positions (UMWA, 1997). It was also established that journalism was traditionally seen as a male job whereas women in the media were domestically stereotyped and assigned to leisure, beauty, fashion, education and health beats (UMWA, 1998). The gender imbalance in journalism and low status of female journalist in the media was seen by Nassanga (1994) as a major factor for the persistent negative portrayal of women in the media. It is more than half a decade ago, this study seeks to find out if this is still the case or there is a change.

The main research question guiding this study is, "**How do journalists perceive of women access, employment and participation in news production***?* Under this are five sub questions:

1. How do female journalists access the media*?*

2. What is the employment status of female journalists?

3. How are female journalists engaged in the process of news production?

4. How do journalists feel about the coverage and portrayal of women in the media?

5. What challenges do female journalists face in their professional work?

1.4 Rationale

News is a major source of information, facts, ideas and opinions for people throughout the world. It matters greatly who and what is selected to appear in news coverage and how individuals and events are portrayed. Gallagher (2005) reports that wherever one looks in the world, news is made by men with only 17% of those in the news being women. She acknowledges that since 1995, new technological possibilities have increased the mass, scope and penetration of news, but she poses the question "To what extent have these changes been

paralled by changes in the content of news? The people who appear, the issues that are covered, the stories these news tell about who and what, is important" (Gallagher, 2005:15). In this context, the need to investigate who locates, collects and edits news, in what capacity and with what level of authority in the Ugandan press was necessary.

Studies that particularly focus on women journalist in Ugandan media are a rarity apart from a few that were carried out latest 2002. It is more than half a decade ago. Women situation in the media must have changed for the worse or better. This project builds on these studies to fill the time gap.

By focusing on women in the media, the study operates in a view that worldwide, there has been advocacy for gender equality, women emancipation and empowerment. Uganda is seen as the role model in Africa for successful Affirmative Action policies (Trip and Kwesiga, 2002; Mbire-Birungi 1999; Tamale, 2006). The country ratified a number of international instruments, instituted constitutional provisions and national strategies towards the realisation of gender equality. However, the existence of the legal provisions does not rule out invisible barriers to women advancement. It is necessary to examine the organisational structures to evaluate whether the media are responding to these changes.

1.5 Theory

The focus of this study was to find out the perceptions of journalists on women access, employment and participation in news production to asses how *The New Vision* was addressing the issue of gender equality. It is therefore concerned with the issue of media and gender. As such the study adopts and applies the feminist theories embedded within media studies and studies of news which were dealt with broadly in chapter three on theoretical perspectives.

1.6 Methodology

Qualitative research is grounded in the assumption that features of a social environment are constructed as interpretations by individuals and that these interpretations tend to be transitory and situational. Qualitative researchers develop knowledge by collecting primarily verbal data through intensive study of cases and then subjecting these data to analytic induction (Gall et al, 2003; Gunter, 2000). Qualitative methodologies can be applied to the study of media production by observational, in-depth interviews and qualitative content analysis (Gunter,

2000:57). This is a qualitative case study combined with informant interviews and document reviews as will be explained in detail in chapter four on methodology.

1.7 The Scope of the research

The study was confined to the government owned newspaper- *The New Vision* located in Kampala. By virtue of it being the only government paper, funded by public funds although not entirely, it offers more opportunities for employment and training of media scholars and therefore provides a better place to accessing many journalists who will provide varying perspectives to this study. For instance, www.pressreference.com documents that in 2002, *The New Vision* employed 250 full-time staff and an additional 250 contract workers with over 400 vendors that makes it suitable for this study. *The New Vision* prospectus (2003) shows an increase in the work force from 250 to 315.

The choice for *The New Vision* was also based on the fact that, it has a nationwide readership. (www.newvision.co.ug). Since its launch in 1986, it is the leading national daily with a print run of about 40,000 copies, a readership of 300,000 and an average of 36 pages per issue, but at times reaches as many as 60 pages in an issue. Approximately 70% of the paper is news copy, with 30% of the space dedicated to advertising (www.pressreference.com). These figures are significant in terms of its reach and impact of messages on society. When the front page of a newspaper contains not one reference to female, not one by-line and not one photo of a female, when major stories about war, the economy, social issues or other topics of great import appear day by day devoid of female references and images and when females are described primarily by their physical appearance, their clothes and hairstyles, and their marital and parental status, the message sent is a misleading and an erroneous one: Females are saying and doing nothing of importance, nothing worth reporting. Their intellect, their skills, their perspectives, ideas, their accomplishments are devalued by under representation and invisibility in news (Cynthia, 1995:16).

This research focuses on perceptions of journalists. Fourteen journalists were interviewed among whom were seven females and seven males. The aim in this was to solicit varying views and information rich data that explain elements in women working environment that have a bearing on their performance.

1.8 Significance of the study

1. The study will provide discussions about the status and participation of women in news production in the Ugandan press. Therefore it will add more knowledge to the current awareness of gender inequalities in the media and within the discipline of media and communication.

2. It can aid media managers examine the organisational set up and their operation from the gender perspective to identify the gaps impeding on the practice of female journalists and media. The results can be used to launch dialogue with media practitioners and policy makers. The data can open up creative discussion about the accepted routines and practices in media production, about how particular journalistic decisions result in specific patterns of gender imbalance and about how alternative choices and approaches could lead to a fairer, more gender balanced assignments, and possibly modify or change their practice.

3. This data can be used to support existing initiatives among women's groups who advocate for accurate and balanced representation of women and diversity of voices and fairness in the media content. The results could be used in advocacy interventions say, in meetings with editorial staff, media executive directors to bring about changes in the editorial policies.

4. It will further interest media professionals, and the public concerned with gender and media issues, and, in particular women status in the media, and provide a basis for further research. It could further encourage other similar research initiatives and highlight the importance of monitoring media content from time to time.

1.9 Structure of the thesis

The first chapter presents the introduction to the study which entails the purpose, objectives, research questions, rationale, a brief on theory and methods used, the scope and significance of the study. In chapter two, I present an analysis of the international and specific country research on the situation of women in the media including the situation of women journalists in the Ugandan print media. Chapter three presents the theoretical framework while chapter four presents the methodology of data collection and analysis. Chapter five concurrently presents and discusses data collected while chapter six gives the conclusions and finally, the recommendations.

1.10 Summary

In this chapter, I have provided an overview of the research topic, the overall purpose, objectives, research questions and the rationale. I have also pointed out the theory and method used in the study. The chapter has also presented the scope of the study justifying why *The New Vision* is an important case. The significance of the study has been explained winding up with how the paper is structured.

Next is the literature review on women and the media.

Chapter Two: Literature Review:

2.1 Introduction

Women and the media has been an ongoing debate for a number of decades. It was a major topic at the conference of the 1975-1985 Decade for Women addressed at the 1995 Beijing women's conference (United Nations 1995, 1996) and the subsequent Beijing+5 and +10 conferences. International and national organisations have been formed and media research initiatives have taken pace to monitor women's visibility in the news on radio, TV and news papers (Creedon and Cramer, 2007). This chapter presents international and specific country reports on women and the media.

2.2 International and specific country research findings

One of these findings is that more women than in previous decades are joining the field of mass communication (Van Zoonen, 1994:50; Creedon and Cramer, 2007:35; Gill, 2007:121). According to GMMP (2005), female reporters have gained more ground in radio and television, but the press was found lagging behind with only 29% of stories written by female reporters. This implies that to a significant degree, whatever we see, read and listen is framed from the men's perspectives despite women's increased enrolment in the media industry. The developments in media and information technology, the international and regional legal points such as Affirmative Action policies and Equal Employment opportunities are factors attributed to the increasing visibility of women in the media that have lessened discrimination basing on gender (Creedon, 1993:87). Consequently, we are able to see a formally male dominated profession of journalism infiltrated by women.

In fact, other studies suggest that female journalists are often more educated than men. Indiana University Scholar Christine Logan found in her 1982-1983 study of men and women newspaper managers that female managers were more likely than male managers to have a college education (Creedon, 1993:94). Meanwhile, a 1988 study of daily newspaper journalist by the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE), found that women had more education and better academic records than men (Stinnet & Henry, 1989 cited in Creedon, 1993). Part of this difference stems from the fact that young journalists are more likely than older journalists to have earned a college degree, and female journalists tend to be younger than male journalists (Creedon,1993: 94).

Research also reveals that age has a crucial bearing on women appearance in the news. For women in the profession, a youthful appearance is more highly valued than experience. The GMMP (2005) indicated that up to the age of 34, women are in the majority as both news presenters and reporters. By the age of 50, only 17% of reporters and 7% of presenters are female. Contrary, men go on making news well into their 50s and 60s: nearly half (49%) of all male news subjects are aged 50 or over. But older women are almost invisible: nearly three-quarters (72%) of female news subjects are under 50. The survey of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) in 1990 found out that, while in the US, the traditional journalists are getting older, the journalistic profession worldwide was experiencing a rejuvenation and particularly for female journalists younger than males with more than 50% of the under 25 age group (Creedon and Cramer, 2007:165). It seems likely that many of the new female majority in journalism and mass communication classes prefer other work like public relations or as they age, they settle down or leave the profession. Consequently, it produces a pattern in journalistic workforce whereby women are more likely than men to have less experience. A 1992 study of US news workers showed that women make a very small percentage of journalists with 20 or more years of experience:

> *Women made up only 24.2% of journalists with 20 or more years of experience in 1992, and the figures improve steadily as the number of years decrease. Women made up 29.5% of the journalistic workforce for those with 15-19 years of experience, 34.1% of those with 10-14 years; 41.7% of those with 5-9 years, and 44.8% of those with less than 5 years (Weaver &Wilhoit, 1992:4-5, cited in Creedon, 1993:95).*

As such, news organisations face a problem of retaining women thereby experience loss of female talents and perspectives and women agenda that could jeopardise the companies ability to draw new and diverse readers (API and PCCJ, 2002; Falk & Company, 2003b; Readership Institute, 2004). Pam Luecke, professor of business journalism at Washington University and Donald Reynolds of Lee University attributed this to the diminishing sense of reward, work-family balance and unmanageable newsroom conditions for women (Creedon and Cramer, 2007:40). This calls for the need on the part of media to address work- family issues and improve working environment to suit women lives.

Another aspect cutting across international and national research is the changing nature of journalism that has impacted on the role of the media and women participation in news production. Commercialisation, the rise of celebrity, lifestyle, the columnist and freelance journalism have opened more job opportunities for women in journalism. However,

Thornham (2007) and Gill (2007) observed that the increasing number of women in the media has to be thought of as a business motive rather than gender equality. Attention was given to the shifting address of news which must be seen to speak to a more varied and plural audience but their presence as decorative performers' merely masks women's actual exclusion from news discourse (Thornham, 2007:98). It is this move towards greater intimacy in news address that Van Zoonen (1991:225) took up in her study of women as news presenters on Dutch television. Women she wrote, were increasingly used to establish 'an intimate and personal relationship' with their audience, mediating between the public world of news and the domestic conditions of its reception through their 'woman's touch'. Rather than blurring the boundaries of a gendered public-private division, their presence in fact 'assumes and reconstructs it (Van Zoonen, 1991:227; Thornham, 2007:98). In the same vein, Ammu (2004) observed the need to understand women access and employment in the media in the context of increasing recognition that newspapers have to cultivate women readers.

> *Since the news media's new interest in female audiences derives largely from women's role as consumers and their potential as targets of advertisements for a wide range of products, the job opportunities it generates tend to be limited in both scope and potential (2004:136).*

This attempt to include women and simultaneously suggest that their primary identification is with the personal and domestic produces a precarious balance. Van Zoonen (1994) observed that too much 'intimization' generates concerns that viewers are no longer being addressed as citizens, concerned to understand the serious issues of public life. The intimacy of address associated with the feminine is said to be eroding rational-critical debate. This reveals how media in the market era function to confine women more than men to their objectified bodies through images and norms.

Another trend noticed from 1970's to 1990s concerns women's posts in news media. Creedon and Cramer (2007:39) report that women in the US newspapers have penetrated to the top editorial posts and more have become top editors, CEOs, presidents and publishers (Creedon and Cramer, 2007: 35, 141; Nicholson, 2007:35). This is important as it indicates women's increasing participation in the process of news production. Having women as managers, besides offering a glimmer of hope of being able to ascend and to be role models to upcoming females, it implies that nothing can stop competent and determined women from fulfilling their professional dream (Ammu, 2004:135).

However, contemporary research points to differential treatment between men and women in news media. Women are reported to have problems with promotions and their career advancement (UNESCO 1987:13). In the study conducted by the Media Management Centre at North-Western University, 'Women in News (WIN) 2003', 73% of executive jobs and 82% of the top jobs in newspapers were still held by men while women holding top posts were less than one fifth or 18% (WIN: 38). The ASNE (2005) showed that two thirds, or 65.2% of newsroom supervisors were male and 34.8% were female.

The Great Divide: Female Leadership in US Newsrooms (2002) conducted for American Press Institute (API) and then Pew Centre for Civic Journalism (PCCJ) by Seszer &Company, called attention to issues of women retention, hindrances set up by media managers to women's advancement and undervaluing of female talents (Creedon and Cramer, 2007). In a study that surveyed 273 editors (40% of top managers at dailies) with a circulation of over 50,000, women were split into two, career confident and career conflict. The former were satisfied with their job and opportunities for advancement while the latter were less pleased with their bosses and news content. The study revealed that 45% of females expected to leave to another newspaper or leave the news business as compared to 33% men with same feeling. Women were four times likely to leave newspapers and work in another field. 64% of the women doubted any advancement reasoning that men prefer fellow men while 6% male editors said sexism was an obstacle to advancement of women.

Creedon (1993:87), reports that even though there are many women, real employment opportunities remain confined to a slogan that sometimes appears at the bottom of the job advertisement. She pointed out that for women; the stakes are high if equal opportunity cannot be achieved. She lifts the words of the French feminist Simone de Beauviour (1949/1961) who observed in the late 1940's opportunities through employment as central to women achieving equality with men:

> *It is through gainful employment that woman has traversed most of her distance that separated her from the male, and nothing else can guarantee her liberty in practice (1949/1961 p. 639 in Creedon, 1993:87).*

Using the Indian situation, Ammu (2004) reported that although the number of women in print media was growing, the exciting opportunities are not enjoyed by all or even most of them in the profession. He noted that resistance to the recruitment of women persisted in

certain sections in the press and that many female journalists experienced slow and limited progress, if not total stagnation in their careers (2004:135). This shows that even if some women have reached relatively high positions within their news organisations, there is the existence of a glass ceiling, which keeps women from occupying the very top posts in the editorial hierarchy.

Studies further indicate that women are often found at the lower end of newspaper employment and in middle management, having serious difficulty moving from managing editor to positions like CEOs. One of the reason for this is that women have not been in management pipeline long enough to reach the top and that it takes two decades for women to gain the experience necessary to be a CEO (Hemlinger &Linton, 2002 cited in Creedon and Cramer, 2007:35). As such, women in newspapers face barriers to advancement, lack mentors, role models and professional development opportunities. This may contribute to womens' desire to leave the news business entirely for careers they see as more rewarding.

Moreover, Creedon and Cramer (2007) have noted that women have not achieved power and influence that mirrors their numbers in news rooms. The lack of influence and opportunity for women in newspapers has major implications for the news industry and for society. The Annenberg Public Policy Centre, at the University of Pennsylvania, stressed in a report on the "glass ceiling" and other issues for women in corporations and communication that companies have a responsibility to address diversity and discrimination, because of their function in society:

> *They (companies) communicate in subtle and often unconscious ways who and what is important and normal and who has status and power, and the media help tell us what our national agenda should be (Falk & Grizard,2003b:7) in Creedon and Cramer, 2007:36).*

So, people at the top of such companies who make decisions about what kinds of news, information and entertainment get produced have additional power. More women in positions of authority could have a positive effect on the success of news companies. A report on a sample of Fortune 500 companies in the US found that those with more women in executive positions financially outperform companies with fewer women at the top (Catalyst 2004, in Creedon and Cramer, 2007:36).

Some labour force analysts believe that the growing presence of women and their movement into male dominated fields has also been marked by a trend labelled 'occupational ressegregation', leading to decreased status and erosion of pay (Lafky, 1989:164; Gill, 2007:121). Research shows that the concentration of women into occupations different from those of men plays a crucial role in accounting for male-female earning differentials. Some fear that the increasing participation of women in the journalistic force could lead to lower earnings for everyone. Previous studies in the US in the 1970s and 1980s indicated that there was a tendency of communication industries to give low wages to the young female employees with male employees earning the largest mean salaries (Creedon, 1989:167). There is no consensus as to why the wage gap between men and women exists. One explanation involves applying the human capital model which posits that since women do not anticipate working for as many years, they invest less in acquiring labour market skills (Mincer and Polachek, 1974:76-108 cited in Creedon, 1989:168).

Economists Jacob Mincer and Stanley Polachek reported that when women leave the labour force to rear children, their job skills become stale and they suffer a wage penalty when they re-enter. As such, they assert, employers may invest less in women because they believe women may take time out of their careers to have children and as employers they will not enjoy the same return on their investment that they will with male employees (Creedon, 1989:169).

The human capital model also offers a potential demand-side explanation for the decrease in real earnings for workers. Under this model, discrimination is a cost to the employer because it leads to a smaller pool of potential workers, and this smaller pool leads to higher wages. In contrast, if there is lessening of discrimination, the larger size of the work force would allow employers to pay workers less money (:169).

An alternative explanation to the human capital model is demand focus on prelabor or societal discrimination (Creedon, 1989:169). Francine Blau and Marianne Ferber (1986) of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign have described this as the multitude of social influences that cause women to make decisions that adversely influence their status in the labour market (:182). Societal discrimination occurs when two equally qualified persons are treated differently solely on the basis of sex, race, age, disability and some other factor. This affects the economic status of women by producing differences in economic outcomes

between men and women that cannot be accounted for by characteristics or the qualifications of the individual (Blau and Ferber, 1986:229, in Creedon, 1989:169).The two studies thus found gender to be a statistically significant predictor of income and that being a male was a positive indicator of income concluding that a systematic wage discrimination favouring men pervades news media. They wrote:

> *One is further ahead in predicting earnings by knowing simply that a journalist is a man than knowing what his job functions are, what region of the country or sector of the industry he works in, how much formal school he has had, or the size or prominence of the news organization he works for (p.140 in Creedon, 1989:170).*

Another finding relevant to this paper is how men and women are engaged in news production. The GMMP, 1995, 2000 and 2005 indicated that women are always relegated to covering soft news like environment, education and entertainment as opposed to their male counterparts in favour of hard news such as economy, national defence, international crises, politics and government, while sports news was reported to be the least likely to be reported by women, with just 21% of female reporters. According to the report, although reporters sometimes choose what to cover, in most cases the reporter is assigned by the editor or producer. Gender was considered among factors during story assignment (GMMP, 1995, 2000, 2005).

In Norway, Eide (2000&2002) reported that women cluster in the feature and culture sections, while they are poorly represented in sports, photography, business or politics sections. According to Eide, this was also reflected when it came to salaries. She noted that the most important division of labour was found at the editorial level with only between 7 and 8 percent of Norwegian newspapers having a female editor-in-chief; in spite of Norwegian female journalists being more educated than their male colleagues. She observed that there is an informal gendered division of beats aligned to an adjustment of serious news values with public sphere events to be of interest to men, whilst the so called women's issues are more likely to be framed in relation to the 'private as domestic sphere. It is often said that news provides a mirror on the world, but the results from GMMP and other specific country research reveal that the world we see in the news is a world in which women are virtually invisible. This raises the question of what is news, what makes it news and why. Although many soft news stories are important, they are not always perceived as such in the hierarchy of news values. As a result, the work of female journalists is sometimes under-valued, and women reporters are frequently assigned to stories that are downright trivial.

Besides women participation in news gathering, findings show that despite the continuing increase of women in the news rooms, women as sources of news remain practically invisible. In 1995, the first extensive cross-national study on women portrayal in the media-covering newspapers, radio and television in seventy one countries found that only 17% of the worlds news subjects were women (Media watch, 1995).Women were least likely to appear in news stories about politics, government, economy, and most likely to feature in discussions in the more traditionally feminine domains of health and social issues. This global project gave the first truly international picture of women's under presentation in news. A follow up study in 2000 found that the percentage of female news actors had only increased by 1% to 18%. And in 2005, the figure was still only 21%. Gill (2007:115) observed that even in those countries doing best, women represented only quarter of news actors and across many aspects of political and economic life, women were quite literally invisible. Men constituted 86% of spokespeople and 83% of experts, while women were more than twice as likely as men to be portrayed as victims (GMMP, 2006).

One response to these findings might be to suggest that it simply reflected reality in which women are still absent from positions of power and responsibility in many domains. Gill (2007:115) reports that this argument does not stand up to scrutiny because even in Scandinavian countries where women's participation in decision making and public life is high (for example in Sweden women constitute 43% of the national parliament) they were still dramatically underrepresented in news media and most likely to be found in children's programmes.

Another reaction to the 'reflecting reality' argument comes from research in Cambodia, discussed by Gallagher (2001). Gallagher notes that the long term effect of the Cambodian war has meant that women represent 64% of the adult population, 55% of the labour force (the highest female participation in the world) and that one third of all households are female-headed. Despite this, Gill (2007) observed that only 6% of news items were about women. Moreover, some 22% of items in the press were categorised as obscene by the International Federation of Journalist and Women's Media Centre of Cambodia. A clear finding in this field then is that news does not reflect reality, but presents a consistently more male dominated view of society than exists in actuality.

In Norway, Eide (2000 and 2002) spoke of a limit or a 'pain threshold' of about 20-25% women acting as significant news sources. Only 20% of the informants used by journalists at the ten selected newspapers were women. She reported that the under representation of women in media content reflects that few women hold positions of influence in society and a tendency on the part of women to avoid being focussed on in the media. Female sources, according to Eide refuse to be interviewed or presented with a photo and stay away from public exposure much more than male ones out of fear of vulnerability, or in some cases, perfectionism: that they do not know enough to be useful to the media (Eide, 2000). Therefore, women's points of view are rarely heard in the topics that dominate the news agenda such as politics and government, economics and business.

However, it is not just small numbers of women in news that is cause for concern, but also the ways in which women are portrayed when they do become newsworthy. One consistent finding is that most news about women focuses on their physical appearance and as victims of violence, homemakers but underrepresented in professional categories such as law, business and politics (GMMP, 1995, 2000, 2005; Eide, 2000). Indeed many newspaper editors seem incapable of printing a story featuring a woman without some evaluation of her attractiveness, or at least a description of her age and hair colour (Gill, 2007:115). Gaye Tuchman's description of the unwritten media laws seem as depressingly true today as it was in 1975 when she wrote it: almost whoever she is in the media will present woman in one of the two ways-in terms of her domestic role or her sexual attractiveness. This goes for female politicians and ordinary women as much as for the entertainment celebrities who ill the papers.

The flip side of this is that women who for whatever reason do not conform to the media's requirement that they be eye candy are subjected to regular vilification. The viciousness with which women are attacked if they do not meet normative modes of attractiveness demanded by the press is chilling (Gill, 2007: 116). It also highlights the flexibility of sexism deployed against women, in which different stereotypes could be envoked and mobilised for different purposes and even questions and comments could be used to undermine women.

Van Zoonen (1994) acknowledged a gradual increase in the number of women entering media but noted that, this increase has had little impact on the portrayal of women. Likewise, Maria Del Nevo (2006) argued that greater representation of women does not necessarily mean an increase in and better coverage of women's issues but a consideration of multiple factors such

as patriarchy, media ownership and the prevailing culture within the industry, and the complex nature of the production process where journalistic interests must compete with much stronger commercial interests. This implies that besides gender, there are other factors explaining the underrepresentation and misrepresentation of women as newsmakers despite the increasing visibilityof women in the newsrooms. More so, female journalists continue to face more complex problems.

In her article, "Developing Gender-sensitive Communications Policies" Maria del Nevo (2006) observed that sexual harassment in the workplace, lack of organizational policies which take into account the pressures of women journalists with families, lack of professional training and opportunities as well as social and cultural constraints are amongst the most common problems facing women in journalism. In the same vein, Van Zoonen (1994:5) noted that inequalities in the media stem from discriminatory recruitment procedures and discriminatory attitudes among decision makers. She observed that informal recruitment procedures in the media based on personal contacts and ('old boys') networks tends to exclude women potential applicants and that the lack of formal career structures means that ascent through the hierarchy depends unduly upon personal contacts and acceptance. Research from different countries (such as Castro 1988; Joshi 1987; Smith 1989) indicated that the most important barrier within the media organisation comes from the attitudes of male colleagues and decision makers, gruesome anecdotes of women encountering blatant sexism abound (Van Zoonen 1994:52).

Surveys into attitudes of men communicators towards females also indicate that most men considered women to be incapable of making independent decisions. Moreover they preferred male colleagues and distrusted women as colleagues, feeling that their workload increased while working with women (:52). Gill (2007:122) observed that paternalistic attitudes are also still rife in the newsroom and many editors find the idea of sending a woman to cover a war or conflict unpalatable. She however notes that others invert the older paternalistic forms of sexism and deliberately recruit women to the posts of foreign correspondent believing that a woman's presence in a conflict zone will add to the frisson and drama of war reporters.
The International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF) 1999, 1998, 2001), showed that the top obstacle for women in management, is continually proving their abilities to colleagues and supervisors. The majority were convinced that women in the media make a difference and that the news would be different if women held leadership positions (ILO, 2004: 81 in Creedon,

2007: 163). In many countries, direct sexual discrimination against women is forbidden and many countries and industries have installed some kind of affirmative action policy to facilitate entrance of women and minorities to the media industries.

That said, the domestic and parental responsibilities of working women have been proved as another obstacle for the entrance of women in all professions (Creedon, 1993; Eide 2000&2002; Creedon and Cramer, 2007; Ross and Byerly, 2004). In the media industries, however, the problem is more acute since many of its professions require a round-the-clock availability. Part of the professional ideology of journalism is that news happens 24 hours a day; therefore a journalist's work-like a mother's-is never done (Creedon, 1993:53). Reporters are expected to be mobile and to travel anywhere at short notice. It has been documented that a number of media establishments try to evade statutory responsibilities towards female employees such as night transport or dormitory facilities by excusing women from the night shift or using the problem of night duty to justify not hiring women (Ross and Byerly, 2004:136). Studies of women in journalism in the US show that women are less likely than men in the field to be married of (42% vs. 62%) and to have children (64.6% vs. 75.5%) (Creedon, 1993:98). Eide (2000) described women as being "double" or even "triple bound":

> *Women journalists feel a kind of "double bind", or contradictory expectations challenging them in the exercise of their profession. On one hand, they are supposed to deal with "the soft areas", school, kindergartens, the woman who celebrates her 104th birthday. On the other hand, the modern woman is expected to break barriers, venture into new fields hitherto dominated by men, and perform just as well as their male colleagues, or even better. It is difficult to meet such double expectations, because in reality the expectations are triple: the third one being that we have to take care of home and children, and although men take somewhat more part in that work now than thirty years ago, the development is not that impressive (2000).*

She reported that in Norway, more female journalists prefer to stay single and/or childless than the average of the female population, while among the male ones, you find the opposite tendency-at least some years ago male journalists were found to have more children than average men. This "double bind", where each woman has to make an individual choice according to her aspirations and total life situation, is also a factor which makes it clear that you will not see all women journalists as a collective force venturing for the change of media content.

Nonetheless, times are changing and the gap is growing as fewer women are dropping out of the labour force and taking less time to raise children than women in the past generations. A recent survey of US women found that women are becoming more adamant about wanting

more equal division of the household responsibilities (Creedon, 1993). Next to money, how much mates help around the house is the single biggest cause of resentment among women who are married or living with a man (:99). Progress in this area as well as in the area of affordable child care is central to the progress of women in the workforce. However, the case for Africa is different.

Women in Africa face particular problems due to family structures and expectations, as well as social attitudes. Maria Del Nevo (2006) observed that unlike women in Scandinavian countries where gender equality in terms of home and child care is practically evident, the obstacles of women in Africa extend from the work-place to pressure from their families and communities. At odds with the practice of journalism, female journalists are expected to contribute to the family income, fulfill expectations of caring for the family, face limited child care facilities or money to pay for them. Margaret Sentamu-Masagazi reported that, women who have broken the norm in Africa working as journalists traditionally seen as a male job, have been labeled as 'the impossibles', 'rebels' and sometimes even as 'prostitutes' (UMWA 1998).

Ammu (2004:137) reports that the long, late, and irregular hours and erratic, unpredictable work schedules that characterise the profession, and the mobility it often requires, exacerbate the situation, especially for women from conservative families or communities and those who cannot afford to hire full time domestic help (Also Creedon, 1989:187). The continuing controversy over women and night work exemplifies the dilemma of women who opt for non traditional career in what remains a tradition-bound society for all but relatively small percentage of the urban elite. Proving their worth to the employers and how to combine career and family responsibilities is crucial to female journalists. For the media institutions, the need to address work/family-balance issue by providing more flexible work schedules is deemed necessary. At the same time, news managers must come to understand gender and cultural differences as a means of improving the environment of newsrooms and companies and advancement opportunities for women.

Unfortunately, as the discussion of marriage and family demonstrate, the battle for equality is not won when women are given the education that was previously reserved for men, joined organisations that were previously the domain of men, and given a chance to do work that was previously done by men. Lafky (1993:99) observed that there is no more dramatic example of

this expression than the case of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment as used in this study is taken as defined by Hadjifotiou (1983):

> *A broad definition of sexual harassment would include repeated and unwanted verbal or sexual advances, sexually explicit derogatory statements or sexually discriminating remarks which are offensive to the worker involved, which cause the worker to feel threatened, humiliated, patronised or harassed or which interfere with the workers job performance, undermine job security or create a threatening or intimidating work environment. Sexual harassment can take many forms, from leering, ridicule, embarrassing remarks or jokes, unwelcome comments about dress or appearance, deliberate abuse, the repeated and / or unwanted physical contact, demands for sexual favours, or physical assault of workers (Hadjifotiou, 1983:8).*

Sexual harassment reinforces a view of women as playthings and sex objects, creatures which neither the employer nor male worker takes seriously (Hadjifotiou, 1983:2). Hadjifotiou pointed out that unless these attitudes change demands from women for better pay, equal opportunities and positive action programmes may fall on deaf ears. Lafky (1993) reported that although there is no way to measure the toll that sexual harassment has taken on the lives and careers of women in the journalistic workforce, there is ample evidence that this manifestation of sexism is prevalent in the US newsrooms as it is in society as a whole. Although it is true that men do sometimes experience sexual harassment, studies in the US found that men experienced sexual harassment less severely, and with fewer negative psychological and physical effects. In fact one study found that approximately 95% of all reports involved men harassing females. About half of women journalists reported being harassed at some time in their career while nationally between 42 and 85% of women reported being sexually harassed in the workplace (Resources and Action Plan, 1992:6; Kramarae, 1992 cited in Creedon, 1993:100). Not unnaturally, victims are reluctant to speak openly for fear of public humiliation and retaliation at work (Lafky, 1993:99). Much of the run- of-mill harassment which undermines self-confidence and operates as a constant reminder of women's inferiority is so subtle and insidious that the specific incidences go unrecorded.

For trade unions, Hadjifotiou (1983) argued that sexual harassment raises basic aspects of working conditions. That any worker experiencing stress, deteriorating health, absenteeism, dismissal, disciplinary action or any other forms of victimisation expects the support of their trade union. He however noted that when these consequences for women arise as a result of harassment, they may go unrecognised because the harassment either remains hidden or is considered an unquestioned and natural part of working life.

We now turn to what researchers have found about women in the print media in Uganda.

2.3 Print Media and Women in Uganda

Uganda has over 10 newspapers, some dailies others are weekly. The state owned *New Vision* that was established in 1986 enjoyed monopoly until *The Monitor; a* private newspaper was established in 1992. *The Monitor*, now part of the *Nation* Group of Companies based in Kenya, is also the publisher of the weekly regional paper, *The East African* and owns *K fm and National TV*. The *New Vision* has 4 other papers published in local languages: *Orumuri, Etop, Rupiny and Bukedde*. On 1st December, 2007, *The New Vision* launched its radio station– *Vision Voice* and another *Bukedde Fm* in mid 2008. Currently *Vision TV* is on air-testing. Other papers on the market include, *The Weekly Observer*, *The Red Pepper* and *The Weekly Message*. (http:// library.stanford.educ/depts/srg/Africa/Uganda/ugandanews.html).

Trip and Kwesiga (2002) reported that Uganda has registered positive change in women's' impact on the media. Citing a study carried out by Sentamu (1997), they noted that more women are now joining media training institutions. This has contributed to increased number of women media practitioners. Between the periods 1990 to 1995 Makerere University Mass Communication Department trained 52 women and 41 men, a 12% more woman than men.

Another encouraging finding is that to some extent, the images of women in the media have improved over the years:

> *This improvement in the media coverage of women and women's issues may be in turn linked to the state's pro-women policies of Affirmative Action in the social, political and economic spheres. The apparent good will on the part of the government has made the citizens and the media aware of the need for gender equity and this development has enabled women to become newsworthy (Baza Tanzarn, 1995:5; Mukama, 1999:7) in (Trip and Kwesiga, 2002).*

Since assuming power in 1986, the National Resistance Movement (NRM) has pledged support to the emancipation and empowerment of women. This was a milestone in Ugandan history as it signified the first time ever that a Ugandan government announced its willingness to tackle the issue of gender inequality directly. For the first time, women's rights are enshrined in the constitution (Government of Uganda, 1995; Tamale, 2006). Prior to the above-mentioned developments, there was no point of reference for women with regard to their rights. Government established the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development as a vehicle for formulating policy guidelines and making insight into the question of gender. The legal reforms prohibit discriminatory laws and traditional practices that demean women through the 1995 constitution (Mbire-Birungi, 1999). Government also instituted Affirmative

Action plans that favour women for example the introduction of Universal Primary Education and 1.5 additional points for women entrants at Makerere University (UMWA 1998; Trip and Kwesiga, 2002).

Another success story about women and media was the rise of women's movement attempting to transform social institutions campaigning for gender equality. Since the 1980's, NGOs such as Action for Development (ACFODE), Uganda Media Women's' Association (UMWA) since their founding have opposed negative portrayals of women in the media, sensitised the public and media that women's issues are peoples issues (UMWA, 1998). To supplement government efforts in ensuring balanced gender access to information The Uganda Media Women's Association has undertaken several projects, including a monthly pull-out *"The Other Voice"*, which has four other editions in local languages to articulate diverse issues targeting women, children and disadvantaged groups. The Association has carried out research on issues affecting women and the media; with findings showing that women are given little coverage and that women's information needs are marginalised (UMWA, 1998; Trip and Kwesiga, 2002).

In an effort to transform the media portrayals of women these groups mobilised and motivate female employees in media to join the group. In December 1990 the first issue of the present day *Arize magazine* was produced. To this day, *Arize* is a women's developmental magazine used by women activists to depict positive images of women lacking in the mainstream media (Trip and Kwesiga, 2002). ACFODE also approached *The New Vision* for space to broaden the discussion on women issues. It was permitted to produce the 'Dear Counsellor' which was replaced by the current day '*Women's Vision'* pull out. Today most of the publications have a section dedicated to women issues for example *Women and Men* in the Daily Monitor (Trip and Kwesiga, 2002; UMWA, 1998).

 However, Ugandan studies on women and the media have also reflected gender imbalance in the access, employment and representation of women in the mainstream mass media. Problems and distortions remain in the way women are portrayed in the media according to the 1998 report by UMWA and Friedrich Siftung.

> *Women are perpetually stereotyped as domesticated, given to leisure, fashion and beauty interests. They are also invariably portrayed as brainless, dependent, indecisive, subservient and sports for men's leisure. Women are persistently objectified as men's possession. Educated working women are projected as audacious insubordinate agitators, while those who opt to remain single are portrayed as prostitutes, social degenerates, and immoral beings*

sleeping their way to the top. Those who hold high political or administrative positions are branded as incompetent and insufficient. They are ultimately demonised and isolated as irrational and inefficient (UMWA and Friedrich Ebert Siftung, 1998a:11)

The negative portrayal of women has been associated to men dominance over the media, unfavourable conditions and working environment in the media, women's double roles and sexism. Researchers believe that with men determining the content as the gatekeepers, certain topics and perspectives do not reach the mainstream media. In some cases, mainstream media have been accused of not enhancing professional visibility of women. In a study carried out in 1997, it was found out that the mainstream media have scored less in employing women:

The mainstream media as represented by The New Vision and The Monitor has done much less to hire and promote women. The total employment of women journalists in both papers is only 26 percent and few women hold top level positions. In the New Vision for example the editor in chief, deputy editor in chief, the news editor, business editor and chief sub editor are all men. A similar pattern is evident at the monitor. These set-ups of the two leading media houses are indicative of the fact that training opportunities for women are equally non existent. (Sentamu, 1997:298) in Trip and Kwesiga (2002).

Nassanga advances the same argument when she noted that negative portrayal of women in media partly stems from gender imbalances within journalism itself. For the print media for example, for the papers studied in Uganda, at the top level there was only one woman out of 16 editors (6%). For sub-editors, there were four out of 19 (21%), while reporters were 11 out of 30 (37%). For part timers, there were 8 reporters out of 22 (36%). In all the three newspapers, there were 24 female journalists out of 87. Of the 35 editorial positions, only 5 were occupied by women (5%) (Nassanga, 1994:475).

This situation, she adds is compounded by the fact that journalism does not fall into the category of traditionally feminine occupations like teaching, nursing or secretarial work. She however noted that the situation is changing as shown by the increasing number of female intake at media training institutions. She attributed this change to the work of Uganda Media Women's Association which has been behind the struggle for improvement of women's conditions.

Similarly, the 1998 survey on women in the Ugandan print media also indicated that women's total representation was 27%. Very few women were also reported at the decision-making position with less than 5%. Concern over this kind of status was that women's special needs, aspirations and problems cannot be met nor be addressed properly in the media content (UMWA, 1998:4)

Probing further into the terms and conditions of service, the same study discovered that women formed a minority of the permanent staff list and a majority of the, part-time or casual staff. In *The New vision,* women reportedly formed 38% of the permanent staff and 58% of the temporary staff. Staff development programmes, performance appraisals and reward systems were also said not to be women friendly. In other areas like training opportunities it was reported that women were segregated upon basing on an excuse that they cannot combine motherhood and training with a ratio of benefits at 8:1 men to women (UMWA, 1998:4).

In terms of stories covered, the 1998 study showed that female journalists feature in areas closely associated with their domestic roles as mothers, housewives and care-givers. Women were found mostly in 'soft' news areas such as family life, gender, children, leisure, health and education while men took on 'hard' news areas such as politics, war, crime, business, the economy and sports (UMWA, 1998:5). As a consequence women were exposed to areas of news coverage and resultant stories that do not attract attention and sell. This means they can neither earn recognition of their superiors nor show their full worth or maximally utilise their potentials.

Like elsewhere in Africa it was reported that Ugandan female journalists face sex based discrimination rooted in cultural norms (:6) Research findings indicate that the Ugandan patriarchal society places a lot of barriers in a woman's career path thereby inhibiting professional advancement. Right from birth, it is written that societal norms, values and practices are inculcated into boys and girls such that the boy acquires knowledge and skills for self survival and independence. On the other hand, almost all cultures do not prepare women to speak out and speak out in public (UMWA, 1998:6). Women according to this report grow up lacking confidence and are denied the necessary ability and chances to compete in a male dominated world. This situation is worsened by cultural beliefs that relegate women to inferior, insignificant positions in society characterised by sexual harassment and discrimination. It is in this light that the current government ratified the international instruments and instituted policy frameworks towards realising gender equality. Affirmative action in favour of women was necessitated by the deep inequalities that exist between men and women due to historical, cultural, and economic reasons that prevent women from asserting their rights without an enabling environment being deliberately provided for them (Uganda Constitution 1995; Mbire-Birungi, 1999).

Available literature however, indicates that inadequate policies and laws, absence of avenues of following up cases of discrimination and sexual harassment by news sources and bosses or colleagues in the media remain silent obstacles (UMWA, 1998:6). Tamale (2006), observed that although the status of women in Uganda has improved, some policies are swept under the carpet due to long lived patriarchal values, unclear implementation mechanism and lack of strong political will leaving men to act in the interests of self-preservation and firmly holding the substantive reigns of power and authority. Generalising patriarchy as an African phenomenon, Tamale (2006) observed that even in pluralist countries like South Africa where the African National Congress (ANC) women have an institutionalised presence through quota system, there is no guarantee that parties will institutionalise women's participation as there is not much evidence to show a marked improvement in the general status of women.

Enroute into journalism, the South African journalist Zubeida Jaffer (2002), narrates that not only was she reminded that journalism was not a profession for a girl, but warnings came from the conservative communities and she felt harassed by the news editor restricted by news beauracrats. In her article, 'On Being a Female Journalist', Zubeida noted that journalism has for so long been predominantly male preserve and that the newspapers and media institutions were shaped during a dark period of authoritarianism. Now that a free press is constitutionally guaranteed, she added, the challenge is how to make institutions representative of the entire population so that sensitivities of different perspectives can be captured. She argued that placing women in key positions alone will not solve the problem unless concerted efforts of consciousness raising about sexual politics in media and society is done. She observed that women continue to face sexual harassment in silence yet no media companies have put in place a support mechanism for female journalists (Zubeida, 2002).

For Barbara Mbire- Birungi (1999), the urgent need for the advancement of gender equality is a global saying, but one snowed under by global contradictions that arise from the huge diversity of women. She observed that although the international feminist movement has advanced the cause of women globally and created a global environment and recognition of women's rights through the Beijing Declaration and Plan of Action; Ugandan women, are far away from achieving same status as Scandinavian women, not until citizens culturally evolve from historical customary practices that uphold male domination that they can fundamentally and effectively influence policy aimed at empowering women.

2.4 Summary

International and specific country studies have shown that more women have joined media institutions and industries and also gained ground to top editorial posts. This is due to the global advocacy for gender equality and developments in Information Communication Technology (ICT). Studies also show that the nature of journalism has changed impacting on the role of the media and women participation in them. However, there is persistent differential treatment between men and women in the media. Women are less represented than men either as news subjects or reporters, are restricted to programmes associated with domestic or private issues. The studies also indicate that women face still face problems with access, promotion and career development and they suffer from cultural, sexist attitudes from their communities, families and male colleagues.

Next is the theoretical framework that will inform the study.

Chapter Three: Theoretical Perspectives

3:1 Introduction

This study sought to find out the perceptions of journalists on women access, employment and participation in news production to assess how *The New Vision* was faring in repairing the past gender inequities. This chapter presents feminist theories embedded within media studies and the process of news production as guidelines for the analysis of the status of women in *The New Vision* both as sources of news and media workers. First is a brief on feminism and its origin.

3.2 Feminism

Feminism has been traced back to the 1970's when feminist scholarship emerged in Europe and US as a reaction to women's liberation movements to obtain justice for women (Thornham, 2007; Byerly and Ross, 2006). In the early 1960's, modern women's movements had began to take shape in both developed and developing nations through UN committees concerned with improving women's status (Byerly and Ross, 2006). Some women movements were inspired by national development, others by their real life experiences and from the ability to develop a vision for their own, and others, from women's leadership. In 1892, the term feminism was used in English for a belief in and advocacy of equal rights for women based on the idea of equality of the sexes. During this time in Britain, a number of conferences were held on 'women and socialism' and 'women and the media' in which women of all walks of life came together to take part in the 'women liberation movement' (Thornham, 2007:4).

Basing on its origins and the reasons behind its emergence, feminism can be described as both an intellectual commitment and a political movement that seeks justice for women and the end of sexism in all forms (Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, 2003; Thornham, 2007:4; Sandra, 2005:334). However, at present, the women's movement can not be written off as a political movement with a mass following because it can no longer be assumed that the politicised intellectual can speak on behalf of all women. This is because 'all women' is a suspected term as it is categorised a long power differences in the lines of class, race, age and sexual orientation (Thornham, 2007). Hence women as a group can no longer line up so easily with other oppressed people due to the fact that women's movements have varied histories shaped by culture, economies, political structures and colonial relations (Sandra,

2005:335). This kind of feminism is known as the third wave feminism and it criticises the second wave feminism of the 1960's and 1970's for its lack of attention to the differences among women and instead emphasize 'identity' as a site of gender struggle. 'Second wave' feminism pushed beyond the early quest for political rights to fight for greater equality across the board in education, the workplace and at home. Recently, there have been changes in views about feminism that have led to a 'third wave'. Hence feminism is seen more as a set of beliefs or ideas, rather than participation in any political movement (Sandra 2005:336). Meanwhile, first wave feminism was seen as the struggle to achieve basic political rights during the period from the mid-19th century until the passage of the nineteenth amendment in 1920 (:336).

Generally, all feminists believe that women are disadvantaged in certain ways and therefore are not accorded the same rights as their male counterparts. As Byerly and Ross put it:

> *The term 'feminism' is used to refer to social movements through which women in various times and places have sought not only to obtain their equal rights with men, but also the ability to enter into public deliberation, institution building and the processes associated with citizenship in their societies* (2006:83).

This means that women as a group cannot be treated in the same way and neither can they, as women suffer the same injustices, at least not directly. Feminist theory aims to understand the nature of inequality and focuses on gender politics, power relations and sexuality. While generally providing a critique of social relations, much of feminist theory also focuses on analyzing gender inequality and the promotion of women's rights, interests, and issues. This study is about women and the media. As such feminist perspectives on women and media were deemed as of paramount importance as explained below:

3:3 Feminist Media theories

Feminist media theory is an extension of feminism into theoretical or philosophical ground. It encompasses work done in a broad variety of disciplines, prominently including the approaches to women's roles and lives and feminist politics in anthropology and sociology, economics, women's and gender studies, feminist literary criticism, and philosophy (Byerly and Ross, 2006; Thornham, 2007; Cole and Daniel, 2005)

Feminist media theory as a body of knowledge offers critical explanations which try to challenge women subordination by providing an insight into causes of gender inequalities and what should be done (Creedon and Cramer, 2007:25). It takes into account women's absence from media professions or images of women in media content with the basic goal of attaining equality between women ad men (Lorber, 2005). It theorises communication and then reality justifying the role and authority of experts to accurately describe the world for those of lesser interest and ability. It theorises society by criticising structures reflected in colonialism, corporate capitalism, patriarchy and liberal democracy, goes ahead to theorise media systems of ownership and control over public discourse. It theorises identity and inquires into the meanings people have of their own experiences (Creedon and Cramer, 2007:259).

The adoption and application of feminist perspectives on women and the media lies in the fact that they are concerned with how the media has contributed to the cultural conversation about feminism at different historical moments over the years and therefore vital to explaining the rhetoric of media production. They are also concerned over the pervasiveness of sexist patterns, the difficulty of changing these patterns, and the media's role in the establishment, continuity, and breaking of these patterns (Braye, 2003). The premise of feminist theories on gender and media is the position relied upon a transmission model of the media: a view that media are agents of social control conveying stereotypical and ideological values about women and femininity (Braye, 2003). These writings therefore provide the basis to indict media for their biases or distortion relied on the notion of unproblematic distinction between representations and reality.

Feminists from varied philosophical and theoretical positions approach their analyses of women's problems and solutions with the media sharing at least two goals. Firstly, they tried to explain whether and how the media tried to perpetuate women's secondary status in societies. The second explores how the media might be used as a vehicle to advance women ideas, status, and political power (Braye, 2003; Byerly and Ross, 2006; Thornham, 2007 and Cole and Daniel, 2005)

The recurring themes in feminist media theories suggest that generally women world over are neither portrayed nor treated fairly and they blame this on the structure and ownership of the media institutions. Themes explored in feminism include; gender and media, representation, patriarchy and hegemony among others (Rosser 2005; Creedon and Cramer, 2007). By

examining each of the above concepts separately, they can then be related to the status of women in the Ugandan print media. Below are brief discussions of these popular feminist concepts in relation to women and the media.

3.3.1 Gender

Feminist researchers see gender as a basic organising principle that shapes the conditions of women lives-a lens that brings into focus particular questions. In feminist theories male and female are accepted as biological terms that represent physical differences but feminine and masculine correspond to social, historical and cultural meanings that have been associated with these biological differences varying from culture to culture (Creedon and Cramer, 2007:262). Lorber (2005) wraps the term gender as:

> *A social construct, a legal designation and personal identity. Through the social processes of gendering, gender divisions and their accompanying norms and role expectations are built into the major social institutions of society, such as economy, the family, the state, culture, religion and the law (2005:9).*

This study focuses on gender as an issue for the media by highlighting the ways in which gender inequalities, biases and prejudices manifest themselves in the media. As defined by feminists, this study takes on gender as a way in which society assigns characteristics and social roles to women and men (Shivas, 2000). The roles, functions and characteristics of men according to feminists, have been given greater value than those of women, creating unequal gender power relations which perpetuate discrimination against women in both the public and private spheres.

Sex according to feminists is the basis for discrimination and the violation of the rights of women and girls in all societies (Shivas, 2000). Some of the gender biases and prejudices in the media would be analysed through the choices media managers, advertisers, and media professionals [editors, journalists, sub-editors, news photographers, etc] make each day. For example, decisions about who will be promoted; who will not; what will make news; what will not; who will be interviewed; who will not; and so on are decisions affected by media professionals-beliefs about where women and men should be in society.

These analyses would reveal the extent to which differences-assumed to be rooted in biology are demonstrated to be cultural. From the wide variety of physical characteristics and personal attributes present or possible in humans, Lorber (2005) argued, cultural groups create order by

designing simplifying category systems that are arbitrary assigned, socially enforced and ultimately taken for granted. These systems can be useful or detrimental, rigid or flexible, egalitarian or stratified or binary. The media in this case play a vital role as feminists assert below:

3.3.2 Media

Feminists recognise media as powerful institutions that can help shape identities. Seen as the media through which messages are transmitted (through editorial content, images and adverts) about the gender roles of women and men in any society, feminists note that media messages can either reinforce, or challenge gender stereotypes and sex-based discrimination (Creedon and Cramer, 2007:263). As news and communications channels they can put women's rights and gender equality on the agenda of public policymakers. As institutions that practice sex-based discrimination they are also sites where the struggle for gender equality must be confronted.

In place of the view of the media as reflecting reality, feminist media theorists argue that the media are involved in constructing reality (Shivas, 2003). Quite literary they produce and constitute understandings, subjectivities and versions of the world. This insight extend to gender: rather than there being a prexisting reality to the meaning of the categories masculine and feminine, the media are involved in actively producing gender. So another contribution from the feminist media theory has been their focus on new themes and approaches with a female view point or angle to media research and theories that were gender blind. According to McQuail (2002:15), the significance of the media for women lies in the socialising role of the media especially through repetitive depiction of different gender roles and reinforcement of stereotypes. Van Zoonen highlights:

> In spite of the marginal position of feminist media studies in the discipline as a whole, there are at least themes taken up by and / revitalised by feminist communication scholars which have gained a more habitual importance: stereotypes and gender socialisation, ideology, the later of course erstwhile prominent in critical studies (Van Zoonen, 1994:15).

3.3.3 Representations

Theorising representation accounts for the connection between what is assumed to be 'reality' and what are assumed to be renderings of reality, more or less accurate, in visual and literary texts. Representation and hence a theory of media, requires a deeper understanding of meanings and artefact 'Real' women (Van Zoonen 1994: 268). Feminist media theory often

uses the term distortion to claim that women are underrepresented in the media. They blame the media for not keeping up with the changes in society by sticking to stereotypes. Van Zoonen (1994) observed that we seem to be suffering from cultural lag whereby our cultures, beliefs, attitudes and opinions on women are lagging behind reality about women when she noted that:

> *Women are underrepresented in media content when compared to the 50% of the population which they constitute. In reality many more women work than we get to see or read about in media content. Another argument deals with the definition of femininity presented to us in the media content: submission, availability and complance are characteristics held up as ideals, and consumption is resented as the road to self- fulfilment (1994:30).*

This perspective offers the basis on which to criticise the media for their sexist representation and ignoring women issues instead of providing women with more positive and liberating role models. In feminist terminology therefore, media are thought to transmit sexist, patriarchal or capitalist values that contribute to the maintenance of the social order. In such models meaning is located primarily in relative consistent and uncontradictory media texts (Van Zoonen, 1994: 27).

3.3.4 Patriarchy

Patriarchy as seen by feminist media theorists is controlling influences on the status of women in mass communication (Creedon and Cramer, 2007). The concept of patriarchy signifies the historical emergence of particular forms of inequality between men and women. Feminist media theorists have produced generalised explanations about the subordination of women by offering an analysis of how patriarchy is organised and how power relations within it are produced at a general level. The current feminists argue that men set the standards and values, seen as the actors and the first sex while women are seen as the other-those who lack the qualities the dominants exhibit-the reactors and the second sex (Lorber, 2005:4). Radical anti-establishment feminists critics decry institutionalised sexual oppression and pervasive devaluation of women. Lorber (2005:5) observed that gender inequalities such as the glass ceiling, sexual harassment, underpayment, limited chances for women advancement, sexual exploitation and gendered division of labour mean that equality and justice for all usually means for men, because the structure of gender as a social institution has never been seriously challenged.

One important example of institutionalised oppression highlighted by feminists is sexual harassment. Feminist scholars have observed that sexual harassment is not primarily about sex, or physical attraction, or about boys and men's attempts to be 'nice' to girls or women. Instead, it is about efforts to maintain difference and dominance-an "expression and enforcement of power and a binary gender hierarchy" (Creedon, 1993:99). This implies that many of the issues confronting women in journalism are more closely linked to specific social and cultural norms prevalent in society as Ross and Byerly remarked:

> *Feminist analysis re-envisages rape and sexual abuse as a symptom of a culture of violence against and disrespect for women, which should be viewed as a form of sexist hate crime rather than an impulsive act of sexual need. Solutions had to include radical social change (2004:17).*

Refusing to accept that such violence should be taken for granted, feminists criticised strategies which put the onus purely on women to be 'sensible' such as avoiding public parks, locking car doors, crossing the street to avoid groups of men, going out in the dark. The tongue in-check advice about 'how to avoid rape' highlights the unrealistic nature of most advice. Feminists also challenge the ways in which women were to behave, such as being careful not to dress 'provocatively and obeying an unofficial curfew (Ross and Byerly, 2004:17).

The implication here is that patriarchy and gender inequality is not an individual matter, but is deeply ingrained in the structure of societies, build into organisations of marriage and family, work and the economy, politics, religions, the arts and other cultural productions. Making women and men equal therefore necessitates social and not individual solutions. For this matter women working in media in a society embedded within patriarchal values are bound to face violence. To unearth women oppression in the media, journalist perceptions on challenges facing women in journalism was seen as necessary.

3.3.5 Hegemony

Feminists adopt Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony to help explain ways in which media and other cultural products aid in securing men's dominance in society. Ross and Byerly (2007:2) describe hegemony as a process by which the dominant group in this case, powerful men maintain power over social institutions and those in them in this case women, by actively seeking the consent of those in society who wish to fit the established norms and practices. The appeal of the concept of hegemony offers an analysis of how both men and

women come to participate in a social system in this case the media that is inherently unequal, and therefore undemocratic.

In hegemony theories, mass media do not define reality on their own but give preferential access to the definition of those in authority, which we can claim a kind of distorted realities given to the masses as a form of ideology (McQuail, 1994: 99). From a gender based approach, McQuail focuses attention on whether media choice and interpretation can provide some lever of change or element of resistance for women in a social institution still generally structured by inequality (:102).

Having a voice therefore, is the most important goal and strategy for rectifying subordination. Without voice, feminist contend, some groups and individuals are denied the ability to participate in naming and thereby creating the realities in which they and all of us live (Ross and Byerly, 2007). Their experiences cannot be taken into account in policy making. Their condition remains defined and constrained by official meaning system. To theorise communication fully, we need to ask why everyone does not have the means and ability to make themselves heard and to have what they say be considered in social and political life. According to feminists, some conditions may be real or practical, but most are political and rooted in power (Lorber 2005; Gill 2007; Ross and Byerly, 2007). We need to ask how we can create conditions basic for democratic participation. We need to ask what interpretations are available or not and are contested or accepted, to make meaning of the experiences brought to the table (Van Zoonen, 1994:268). The above feminist media theories can be employed to explain how gender biases and inequalities are perpetuated through the media.

3.3.6 Operationalisation of feminist theories into the situation of women and media

Feminists contend that media portrayals typically construct narrow and stereotypical portraits of women and femininity (Gallagher, 2001; Eide 2000 &2002; Ammu, 2004; Gill, 2007). For female characters the focus is on physical appearance, sexual appeal, and romantic success, with women appearing most often as housewives, mothers or objects of desire. As subordinates and nurturers, female characters are frequently depicted with stereotypical attributes (e.g. as emotional) and exhibiting stereotypical attributes (e.g. differing). Women bodies are presented as objects for others' viewing pleasure, objects used to beautify and adorn (Cole and Daniel, 2005:3). Although showing a woman as a loving mother or as sexual being is not inherently problematic, it becomes a problem if they are almost always shown

this way, which normalises objectification and provides a limited perspective on women's humanity. We can as such assess if media use can be associated with holding stereotyped views about who the sexes are and what they can typically do like impact on gender roles, attitudes, gender related behaviour and body use.

Feminists also alert us on the gendering of the production and consumption process in the media. Anna Coote and Beatrix Campbell pursued this argument in 'Sweet Freedom: The Struggle for Women's Liberation (1982), they write:

> *Men control the means of expression- from the press and broadcasting, to advertising film and even criticism-by occupying dominant positions within them, and by using the power this gives them to convey the ideas and values of patriarchal order (1982:189) in Thornham (2007:7).*

This was an argument given substance by evidence of the overwhelming clustering of women in low status and service occupations within the media (Gallagher 1980, 1985; Creedon 1989; Van Zoonen, 1994). In the newsroom and opportunities in the workplace, we can analyse the positions of women in newsrooms because feminists assert that women often comprise the rank and file of journalists and presenters in media but few are in the top leadership positions (Shivas, 2000).

Women are said to be victims of labour market and societal discrimination based on gender. Creedon (1993) observed that there is role socialization that leads to males and females to believe that some work is and not appropriate for women. If women are absent as producers of media texts, feminist concern is that domination at the point of production by men gives us male definitions of women and how they relate to each other and to men. Women, according to feminists, encounter blatant sexism from attitudes of men who consider them to be incompetent and incapable of making independent decisions.

More feminist insights into the occupational segregation reveal that even with the increasing number, and women being promoted, they do not have the power and influence that mirrors their number (Cartel et al, 1998; Thonham 2007: 8). This status signifies sexist judgements about women such that their subordinate status in patriarchal society is symbolically reinforced. Basing on the fact that Uganda is a patriarchal society, this perspective can be used to determine the positions and roles assigned to women and men in the newsroom and what bearing it has on major decisions concerning journalistic work.

Another argument from the feminist media theories is the gendered divide in beats between men and women in journalism. News agenda, feminists assert, defined closely with human interest is aligned to be appropriate for females while hard news agenda is of interest to men. This work division according to Gill, 2007:126; Van Zoonen,1998 and Eide, 2002, employs widely shared stereotypes about women in a way that women are perceived of having different interests and a different way of reporting news. Feminists contend that women reporters are often assigned to health, education, and social issues, while men are given the political and economic assignments which are seen as part of the career path to senior editorial and media management positions (Tuchman, 1978b:12; van Zoonen, 1991, 1994; Shivas, 2000). Feminists suggest that these kinds of assignments contain an ideological power and constructions of femininity which continue to position women firmly within the conventional bounds of patriarchal relations (Thornham, 2007:10).

Although more women are seen in the international media, such as CNN, BBC as war and political correspondents, this, according to feminists has only emerged in the last few years and is not the norm in the majority of media worldwide. Looking at the issue of beats more closely, feminists raise fundamental questions about subjectivity, identity and culture. One such question according to Thornham concerns the gendering of culture itself when she reported that:

> *Women's writing was acknowledged to possess sentiment, refinement, tact, observation, domestic expertise, high moral tone and knowledge of female character. Only male writers exhibited originality, intellectual training, abstract intelligence, self control and knowledge of male character. Women creative production was seen as the generalised product of their femininity. It was not in the canonical sense, authored, high culture like abstract intelligence (2007:12).*

These reaffirmations of high/low culture divide serve to confirm masculinity of the enlightenment concept of 'individual' who is the source of value, judgement and authenticity and who is embodied in the figure of the artist. The high/low culture, Thornham notes, is a thoroughly gendered one, corresponding to a division between mainstream cultural activity and public professionalism on the one hand, and a critically marginalised, privatised and less original form of production on the other (2007:13).

Thornham goes ahead to argue that this constituting of high/ low culture, public/ private does not merely correspond to an existing, socially structured division. The category of feminine, of the 'woman', is also constructed through these cultural distinctions. Thus the feminisation

of mass cultural forms in opposition to 'authored' writing does not simply reflect gendered social divisions. It also helps construct the notions of feminine, which align it with commodification, standardization and passivity, and which maintain it within the sphere of private, understood as subordinate, emotional and domestic (Thornham, 2007:13).

In news content, feminists cast eyes on news sources and point out that the majority of those who are quoted in stories on events of the day are men, although women and men live in the societies reported on and both have views on the events and issues (Shivas, 2000; Eide 200&2002). This concern is a green light to assessing why women are made invisible by the media's omission of their voices and images. Validation of this assertion by feminists is that the news values support the economically and politically powerful because the standard news criteria focus on prominent people, conflict and drama over cooperation and harmony, and unusualness (Tuchman, 1978b: 133; Gans, 1979; Creedon, 1993; Allan 2005; Creedon and Cramer, 2007; Gill, 2007:126; Byerly, 2004:118). As such the lives of women and others traditionally at the social margin cannot always best be understood with this kind of reporting, Eide 2000 & 2002 described traditional news values as the most important barrier:

> *The traditional news criteria and their emphasis on conflicts, power and sensation and the unusual have the effect of pushing men into the news and pushing women out. The extensive focus on criminality, an area where women are very under-represented, adds to the trend. There are few female leaders, politicians and top influential people. The incidents where a woman kills, wins, participates, surprises, suggests, misappropriates funds, explores, curses or drops a bomb are few and far between (Eide 2000).*

A similar tendency on the part of reporters to privilege all things male in news coverage, has been identified from the portrayal of women newsmakers. Feminists assert that when women appear in the media, they are mostly portrayed as sex objects, beauty objects, as homemakers, as victims or they become front-page and headline news when they engage in activities which are not in line with society's prescription of what women should and should not do (Thornham, 2007:6). Feminists like Lemish, 2007; Ross and Byerly, 2007 observed that these representations do not only function to produce the modes of subjectivity available to women in contemporary cultures but also exemplify fundamental principle of patriarchal thinking which aligns femininity to the private sphere restricting the presentation of women to the physical function of sex (Thornham, 2007:7). Tuchman (1978a: 3-7) argued that such images amount to the symbolic annihilation of women when she claimed that media reflects society's dominant social values and symbolically denigrate women, either by not showing

them at all, or by depicting them in stereotypical roles. She contended, the models that media offer are restrictive and endanger the development of girls and women into complete human beings and socially valuable workers. We can get views of journalists on this and beyond to establish other factors, both individual and from the working environment that explain the way women are portrayed in the media. Most importantly is to know whether the gender of the journalists in the newsroom can make a difference.

However, the feminist transmission views of communication provide limited conceptualisation of gender and communication. The observation that media distorts reality as if media pass on more or less truthfully and successfully, fails to recognise that media production is not simply a matter of reflection but entails a complex process of negotiation, processing and reconstruction (Van Zoonen, 1994:41; Allan, 2005:293). This implies that media are not only assigned to reflect reality but all media output depend on a complex interplay of personal, professional, organizational, commercial and other factors. The understanding of these factors is key to a comprehensive analysis of the perceptions of journalists on women access, employment and participation in news production.

Several authors have presented analytic frameworks for studying media production process. Some literature on these dates back in 1970's but provides important facts. At the individual level, the communicator's decisions are directly influenced by social demographic features, such as gender, ethnicity, education or age, by their cultural and political convictions, by professional features such as conception and ethics and by organizational features such as available time, space, budget, and other occupational demands like commercial imperatives, media structures, ownership and division of labour (Tuchman 1978a:99; Gans, 1979:13).

These perspectives help us to relate the outcome of the news process to the structure of the state and the economy, and to the economic foundation of the news organisation. They also help us understand how journalists' work is constrained by organisational and occupational demands and also they sensitize us on the constraining force of broader cultural traditions and symbolic systems recognising that news is a form of culture (Tuchman 1978a:157).

3.4 Journalistic conventions

Gans (1979:78) and Curran et al (1977:81) noted that in reporting news, journalists choose from a variety of potential activities; and having limited time and space; they must select an even tinier fraction. More important they cannot decide anew every day or week how to select the fraction that will appear on the news; instead, they must routinize their task in order to make it manageable. This means that even the transformation of a personal creative idea into a collective mass media product like a news story has to be construed as a process passing through narrow gates of production. This is very important in that no individual communicator can be held responsible for final output. This association of individuals imply that journalists need to deliberate, consult, compromise, cooperate, reconsider, bargain, adjust and concede. Therefore an understanding of the term news is necessary.

The term news has no universally accepted definition. Mencher (2003) argues that news is relative and depends on who decides what news is, where the event and news medium are located, the tradition of the media house, its audience and host, personal, economic, political and ownership factors. Different scholars have defined news differently but all connote it as 'a sampled version of reality'. Expounding on discourse analysis, Gunter (2000) defines news as a representation of the world in a language that imposes a structure of values, social and economic in origin, on whatever is presented:

> News is a representation in the sense of construction; it is not a value free reflection of 'fruits'…each form of linguistic expression in text-wording, syntactic option etc has its reason. There are always different ways of saying the same thing, and they are not random, accidental alternatives. Differences in expression carry ideological distinctions and thus differences in representation (Gunter, 2000:88).

Gaye Tuchman (1978a) and Herbert Gans (1979) define a newspaper as a bureaucracy staffed by professionals. For (Gans, 1979), news is information which is transmitted from sources to audiences, with journalists-who are both employees of bureaucratic commercial organisations and members of a profession, summarizing, refining, and altering what becomes available to them from sources in order to make information suitable for the audiences. In determining what news is, journalists are guided by news values and ethics that were developed over generations. When applied to the ceasing flow of events, news values allow sifting and sorting to take place, bestowing newsworthiness on some and not others. These include timeliness, impact, prominence of the people involved, proximity to readers and listeners, conflict, the unusual nature of the event and currency (McNair, 1998:77). However concern about the

significance of the prevailing news values is echoed, for ignoring important issues affecting humanity. Boyd (1988: 165) in Mc Nair is cited as saying;

> *Prevailing news values can at times be a distorting mirror on the world, reflecting and endorsing an elitist, fame and wealth obsessed moral structure. If news values can be viewed as an expression of social values, then the news values prevailing in liberal democratic societies refer to a world which is ethnocentric, elite oriented and focused on negative happenings (good news is no news)(McNair, 1998:77).*

After judging what is newsworthy and given a place on the news agenda stories are constructed around choices and such matters as story angles, language, framing, editing and sources to use. These represent subjective choices prescribed by technology, market conditions and ethical codes. McNair reports that in so doing, journalistic stories must be accepted as both true and new providing information which can be relied upon to be accurate (McNair in Hugo De Burgh, 2005:30). Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) note that journalists have to decide how to deploy sources, which stories to cover, guessing what readers want to know thus operate by some theory of democracy of what drives politics, citizenship and how people make judgements.

As much as journalism claim to serve the citizen, media critics say there has developed journalism that justifies itself in the public name but which the public plays no role.

> *Newspapers and TV have aimed at elite or other more narrow demographics, ignoring much of the citizenry, policy and ideas are ignored or presented as sport or are couched in the context of how a certain policy position is calculated to gain some power over rival (Kovach and Rosenstiel, 2007:23).*

Journalists as such, construct their narratives around their own values and beliefs but these must be informed by the contribution of a wide range of information sources who acquire the power to become definers of journalistic reality. Believable and true journalism requires authentication and verification by non-journalistic witnesses such as politicians, professional specialists, academics and other accredited sources of information and interpretation who lend their expert status to the text and give it authority in the eyes of the audience (McNair, 1998:6).

The concept of objectivity is the oldest and key legitimating professional ethic of liberal journalism that guarantees quality control, enhances validity, and believability or trust in journalist work (Hugo De Burgh, 2005: 34; Anderson and Ward, 2007:127). McNair notes that journalism asks to be accepted as, at the very least, an approximation of truth. Objectivity

involves three characteristics; the separations of facts from opinions, a balanced account of the debate and validation of journalistic statements by reference to authoritative others (McNair, 1998:68; Mencher, 2003:53). However, basing journalist performance on objectivity has been criticised as to how possible and practical this can be due to subjectivities, such as process of filtering, gate keeping news, media ownership and political inclinations (Hugo De Burgh, 2005; McNair, 1998; Mencher, 2003; Bill and Kovach, 2007).

Objectivity as advanced by Mencher (2003) entails balance as a moral commitment where common sense is applied in case one party makes a serious allegation against the other that requires fair play. The purpose of the media according to McNair is to help discover the truth to assist in the process of solving political and social problems, by presenting all manner of evidence and opinions as the basis for decisions. Fulfilling this purpose requires, above all a balance' in the representation of competing positions on issues. Robert puts it in McNair (1998):

> *Objectivity rules contain two primary requirements. Depersonalisation demands that reporters refrain from inserting into news their ideological or substantive evaluations of officials, ideas or groups. Balance aims at neutrality. It requires that reporters present views of legitimate spokespersons of the conflicting sides in any significant dispute, and provide both sides with roughly equivalent attention. (1989 p. 30)*

Being objective also mean being fair. Mencher (2003) outlines elements of the term fairness in news reporting and writing when he describes unfair stories as stories those that omit facts of major importance, stories that include essentially irrelevant information at the expense of significant facts, consciously or unconsciously misleads or deceives the reader, ones where the reporters hide their biases or emotions behind such subtly pejorative words and those that hurt innocent people (Mencher, 2003:52). Fair stories should be complete, relevant, and honest - levelling with the reader, straight forward and considerate to innocent parties.

Impartiality is another rule of objectivity that demands journalists to maintain visible detachment from the events they are covering, and refrain from commenting on those events except in circumstances when it is clearly separated as an opinion or analysis and commentary by senior journalists McNair (1998:71). By this convention, a journalist is a neutral figure who can reliably be trusted by all.

Gans (1979 and Tuchman (1978a) make an important observation that if news includes values, it also contains ideologies. These ideologies can be placed in the conventional spectrum although journalists are neither interested in ideology nor aware that they too, promulgate

ideology (1978:215). But the important point here is that journalistic conventions demand that in judging what news worthy, journalists should provide a platform and voice for varying interest groups and not particular interests of dominant groups in society.

3.5 Institutional and organisational imperatives

Although journalists apply news judgement, both as members of a profession and as individuals, they are not totally free agents, rather, they work within organisations which provide them with only limited amount of leeway in selection decisions, which is further reduced by their allegiance to professionally shared values (Gans,1980:179) Applying the functional or system analysis, Gurevitch et al (1982:153) noted that information collected by journalists is subjected to further refinement through the gate keeper concept-viewed from a framework of total social system, made up of series of subsystems whose primary concern include the control of information in the interest of gaining other social ends.

Other theories explain story selection with forces outside the news organization, national economy as moulding story selection, and journalists as the public-relations agents of monopoly capitalism and ideological believe that journalists align the news to the political ideology of those holding power in the country and national culture (Gans, 1979; Van Zoonen 1994). A related approach centres on the audience, as primary consideration for any media output while another type of externally centred theory suggest that the news is shaped, above all, by the sources on which journalists rely or those groups in society powerful enough both to create what they call public events and to gain access to journalists (Gans 1980:144).

Face to face contact with other individuals, structured and influential form of interaction that takes place in formal and informal groups and meetings of communicators, such as editorial meetings, professional organizations, and informal socialising are direct factors influencing communicators (Dimmick and Coit (1982:174). Dimmick and Coit shift to the impact of external factors on media organisations such as the market they cater for, competitive structure of a market, ownership and management structures, organisational policies, goals, structure, work routines and assignments, power relations, division of labour, hierarchies and advertisements. International and national media policies and regulations place constrains on the actions and courses the media industry can take. Whilst the financial and economic organization of the media industry restricts the leeway of media organisation, the latter in turn

constitute the direct environment in which the individual communicator has to operate (Van Zoonen, 1994:48).

Seen from the perspective of the individual communicator, media production entails an ever widening set of circles constraining his or her autonomy. The deeply social collective nature of media production, in which a range of factors influence the decision making process suggests that there is no such person as individual communicator. She or he has to cooperate with colleagues, has to take specific needs, routines and traditions of the organization into account, and is limited by social, economic factors embedding of the media institutions. For feminists' media research, it is important to recognize these to assess the assumption that women are by themselves capable of changing the media production process.

Gunter (2000) observed that media owners operate in two distinct markets. The first market comprises the public consumers of their own particular medium. The second market consists of advertisers to whom they hope to sell opportunities to communicate with purchasers of the goods and services advertisers are offering. As such, programme producers and editors will strive to attract audiences or readers and to maintain the market share. Media therefore, do not simply represent social phenomena with social and psychological influences of academic interests as feminists assert, they are also commercial entities. This means they are unlikely to survive without patronage. Even publicly funded media services will have a significantly reduced probability of continuation if they attract no interest from their target audience. Buyers of advertising and sponsors of media output need to know whether their money has been well spent, by assessing whether particular media channels have delivered the market exposure they had expected (Gunter, 2000:93).

This market imperative however has been a focus to feminist media theorists. Feminists have noted that the rise of commercial media and the increase in new cultural products such as entertainment, fashion, and beauty products have opened employment opportunities for women. On the other hand, they observe that the increasing obsession of media to make profits and address a diverse audience has negatively affected women in journalism. Women entering the profession are increasingly used as a marketing grab reproducing a gendered public-private division that reconstructs the women feminine identity (Thornham, 2007; Ammu, 2007; Carter e al, 1998).

3.6 Summary

In this chapter, I have presented the three waves of feminism and their scholarly arguments and zeroed down to the feminist perspectives on women and the media. I have also explained feminist concepts and demonstrated how they are apparently manifested in media work, such as patriarchy and hegemony. This will help analyse how historical and social norms built in the Ugandan society perpetuate the subordination of women in the media industries. I have also presented theories on how stories are organised through journalistic conventions, institutional and organisational imperatives to illustrate that news production is a complex process that must be examined beyond the gender lens.

The next chapter is on methodology.

Chapter four: Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This research aimed at getting the perceptions of journalists on women access, employment and participation in news production to gauge how *The New Vision* was doing in repairing the past gender inequities. This chapter gives the description of the research design and reasons for its selection in the investigation of the research problem, identification of the population, the selection procedure, methods of data collection used, analysis of data to issues of validity and reliability. To get the perceptions of journalists on women access, employment and their participation in news production, the study focuses on six themes extracted from the research questions. The themes are:

- Background information of the informants.
- Women access to the media.
- Womens' working conditions/ employment status.
- Women's level of participation in news production.
- Perceptions of journalists on the portrayal and coverage of women, and the impact of visibility of women in the media.
- Challenges facing female journalists.

Information about the informants and methods used to collect data are also discussed in this chapter. All the information was obtained through informant interviews and documents reviews about the phenomenon under investigation. After data collection, the recorded information was later transcribed. The data was farther analysed that revealed differences and similarities. Then, themes were formulated as guides to organizing and presenting the relevant data in the study.

4.2 Research design

To get the perceptions of journalists on women access, employment and participation in news production, a qualitative case study design was chosen. The design and method that were chosen were the best for answering the research questions to this purpose.

A research design is the logic that links the data to be collected to the initial questions of the study. It is a plan that guides the researcher in the process of collecting, analyzing and interpreting data. Yin (1994:19) defines:

Colloquially, a research design is an action plan for getting from here to there. Where here may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered, and there, is some set of conclusions (answers) about these questions. Between here and there may be found a number of major steps, including the collection and analysis of relevant data.

This was a qualitative case study design combined with informant interviews and document reviews. It enabled the researcher to interact with informants to get their perceptions. As Wimmer and Dominick (1994) observed, in addition to its flexibility that allows a researcher to pursue new areas of interest, qualitative research increases the researcher's depth of understanding of the phenomena under investigation. To enter the field to interview and analyse documents became useful parts in qualitative research that enabled the researcher to use of multiple sources to improve on the reliability and validity of the study (:156).

A case study is an empirical study that investigates the contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, more especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident as Yin (1994:13) puts it:

In general, case studies are the preferred strategy when "how" and "why" questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events and when the focus is on the contemporary phenomenon within some real life context.

Wimmer and Dominick (1994:154) report that case study method is most valuable when the researcher wants a wealthy of information about the research topic. By adopting this technique, the researcher was able to generate detail. This technique can suggest why something has occurred and thus, afforded the researcher the ability to deal with a wide spectrum of evidence through various data sources.

Qualitative case study entails the detailed and intensive analysis of a single case. The most common use of the term associates the case study with a location, such as a community, or organization where the emphasis tends to be an extensive examination of the setting (Gall et al, 2003; Bryman, 2004)

A case study is done to shade light on a phenomenon, which is the process, events, persons or things of interest to the researcher (Gall et al 2003:436)

The phenomenon under this study was "The perceptions of journalists on women access, employment and participation in news production". As Gall et al (2003) writes, a case is a particular instance of a phenomenon. For purposes of this study, the case chosen was the

"*The New Vision* newspaper", the leading national daily with the widest circulation and readership that employs a significant number of people.

4.3 Selection of the area of study, the case and informants

The selection of the case and informants in this study was based on non probability purposive approach. The case and informants that were selected were considered information rich with respect to the purpose of the study (Wimmer and Dominick, 1994:66); Gall et al, 2003:178). Thus, only one case that is, *The New Vision* newspaper and 14 journalists participated in the study. As argued by Gall et al (2003: 181), determining the number of cases is entirely a matter of judgement; there are no set rules in that selecting an appropriate sample size involves a trade-off between breadth and depth.

> *Within the same fixed resources and limited time, a researcher could study a specific set of experiences for a larger number of people (seeking breadth). In-depth information from a small number of people (seeking depth). In-depth information from a small number of people can be very valuable, especially if the cases are information-rich. Less depth from a large number of people can be especially helpful in exploring and trying to document diversity or understand variation (:181)*

4.3.1 Area of study

Careful selection of research site will help to ensure the success of a study that is, the field setting such as organizations and communities are appropriate for any problems that interest the researcher (Gall et al, 2003). The area of this study was Gender and the media. The portrayal of women has been a global concern. The media have been criticized for playing a significant role. In the recent past, debate on causes of negative portrayal of women in the Ugandan print media revolved around insignificant numbers and inferior posts women held in the media organization and male domination. Today, a significant number of women have enrolled in the field of journalism and are visible in many media settings. This study set out to solicit journalist perceptions on women access, employment and participation in news production to gauge how *The New Vision* was fairing in repairing the past gender inequities. Secondly available research focusing on female journalists in the Uganda print media as media workers is a rarity and out of date. This study sought to fill the time gap.

4.3.2 Selection of the case

According to the 2008-Uganda Communications Commission report, Uganda has over 10 newspapers, over 150 radio stations and over 30 TV stations. In each of these categories there

is one state owned newspaper, television station and radio. The rest are private. The target population in this study were journalists in the state owned newspaper-*The New Vision. The New Vision* is one of the print media that has been stable in its operation since its inception in 1986. It offers more employment and training opportunities for journalists and media scholars hence provided the best site to accessing many journalists both male and females who provided varying perspectives to this study. For instance www.pressreference.com documents that in 2002, *The New Vision* employed 250 full-time staff and an additional 250 are contract workers with over 400 vendors while *The New Vision* prospectus 2004 recorded an employment record of 315 persons.

This paper also has a nationwide readership (www.newvision.co.ug). It is the leading national daily with a print run of about 40,000 copies, a readership of 300,000 and an average of 36 pages per issue, but at times reaches as many as 60 pages in an issue (www.pressreference.com). These figures are significant in terms of its wide reach and impact of its messages on society as well as assessing the level of women participation in news production and women representation as well.

Obviously, when it comes to case studies, there was a need to take an intensive study about a particular case. For purposes of efficiency and getting rich data, the researcher had to single out only *The New Vision* given the time limit of only two months.

4.3.3 Selection of the informants
The expression women and media is broad encompassing women as subjects of the media, women as media producers and the portrayal of women in the media. This paper examined women as producers of media content (editors and reporters). Hence, the key informants were female journalists because the study is on women and media framed within the feminist media theories. The study was concerned over how *The New vision* was addressing the issue of gender equality. For purposes of eliminating biases, male journalists were also interviewed. Seven female journalists were selected comprising five reporters and two female editors. Seven male journalists comprising three editors and four reporters were also interviewed. The number was limited to fourteen to allow the gathering of rich detailed data and efficiency in transcribing and analysing data besides the fact that it is not possible to interview everyone in a case study but rather a few representative individuals. The informants had formal training in

journalism, adequate work and organisational experience to provide relevant and reliable information to this study.

All the 14 informants were given pseudo names although nine of them had consented to the use of their real identification due to ethical considerations for the sake of presentation and analysis of findings (See details under section 4:7 on ethical considerations). Female journalists were pseudo-named as: Cossy, Anna, Ruth, Margie, Miriam, Peace and Beatrice while the male journalists were pseudo-named as Simon, Evans, Oscar, Lawrence, Deuz, Joshua and Frank.

4:4 Methods of data collection

Qualitative research is grounded in the assumption that features of a social environment are constructed as interpretations by individuals and that these interpretations tend to be transitory and situational. Qualitative researchers develop knowledge by collecting primarily verbal data through intensive study of cases and then subjecting these data to analytic induction (Anderson, 1987; Gunter, 2000; Wimmer and Dominick, 1994).

Robson (2000: 188) observes:

> *Selecting a method or methods is based on what kind of information is sought, from whom and under what circumstances.*

This study sought to solicit the perceptions of journalists on women access, employment and participation in news production. This necessitated interacting with the female journalists in a face to face interaction to reveal certain information. Thus, informant interviews and document reviews were used. As Wimmer and Dominick (1994:47) observed, qualitative research allows researchers to view behaviour in a natural setting without artificiality, increases the depth of understanding and the method flexibility allows the researcher to pursue new areas of interest.

4. 4.1nterviews

Interviews can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured. In a structured interview, the interviewer generally works from questionnaire in which questions are asked in a predetermined order and most questions supply respondents with a range of possible answers. In unstructured interview, broader, open ended questions are asked to which respondents

provide answers in their own words (Gunter, 2000; Anderson, 1987 and Bryman, 2004). For purposes of this research the semi-structured informant interviews were used. Informant interviews consist of oral questions by the interviewer and oral responses by informants.

4.4.2 Advantages and disadvantages of informant interviews

Wimmer and Dominick (1994) noted that, the biggest advantage of the informant interviews is the wealth of detail it provides. Compared to other methods, informant interviews provide more accurate responses on sensitive issues. The rapport between respondent and interviewee makes it easier to approach certain issues that might be taboo in other approaches as it is easier to follow up on responses and probe further. On the other hand, the generation of this detailed information presents problems during data analysis and generalizability is sometimes a problem. Interviewing is done with a non-random sample and since interviews usually are none standardized each respondent may answer a slight different version of the question, hence problematic when it comes to data analysis (Bryman, 2004).

Informant interviews may be written down verbatim or audio taped for later transcription and interpretation with the permission of the interviewee (Gunter, 2000:26; Bryman, 2001). Tape recording produces a more accurate report than writing notes but it limits the interviewer's ability to taking notes. Raymond Opdenakker (2006) observed that taking notes during the interview is important for the interviewer, even if the interview is tape recorded: (1) to check if all the questions have been answered, (2) in case of malfunctioning of the tape recorder, and (3) in case of "malfunctioning of the interviewer". Bryman (2004) however, observed that although tape recording is appropriate enough to retain the information, it consumers a lot of time in transcription. He noted that one hour of tape takes five to six hours to transcribe.

There is a degree of freedom accorded to the interviewer to introduce new, previously unscheduled, questions and to follow up on specific remarks made by the respondent (Gunter, 2000). In face to face interviews, there is no significant time delay between question and answer; the interviewer and interviewee can directly react on what the other says or does. Hence, the answer of the interviewee is more spontaneous, without an extended reflection (Opdenakker 2006). This interactive nature however, requires the interviewer to concentrate much more on the questions to be asked and the answers given. Opdenakker (2006) speaks of "double attention", which means:

that you must be both listening to the informant's responses to understand what he or she is trying to get at and, at the same time, you must be bearing in mind your needs to ensure that all your questions are liable to get answered within the fixed time at the level of depth and detail that you need.

Nonetheless, informant interviews provide first hand information. They give in-depth responses, beliefs, attitudes and inner experiences. A lot of untapped experiences are shared between the interviewer and interviewee for instance Opednakker (2006) explains that social cues, such as voice, intonation, body language of the interviewee can give the interviewer a lot of extra information that can be added to the verbal answers on a question.

This visibility however, can lead to disturbing interviewer effects, when the interviewer guides with his or her behavior the interviewee in a special direction (Wimmer and Dominick, 1994). As such, interviewers may communicate their biased attitudes through loaded questions, nonverbal cues or tone of voice. The effect this may have on the validity of the respondents answer. This disadvantage was diminished by using an interview protocol and by the awareness of the interviewer of this effect.

Interviews form a natural way of interacting and exchanging/sharing information about issues at hand, allows freedom of expression because it is done on informed consent on part of the interviewee. Hence the interview is conducted in a relaxed environment without anxiety of violating ethical considerations like intrusion into interviewee's privacy.

4.5 Documents

Documents according to Yin (1994:81) play an important role and are relevant in case study topics to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources. Documents are helpful in verifying the correct spellings and tittles that might have been named in the interviews. Inferences can also be made from documents. He however warns that they must be carefully used and should not be accepted as literal recordings of events that have taken place because they are deliberately edited.

In this study, the administrative documents such as editorial policy, staff recruitment and promotion, awards, employment policy, staff training, progress reports and other internal documents were sought for from the management of *The New vision*. This study was done on one media house and the background information from the documents regarding employment and working conditions assisted the researcher confirm the status and role of women participation in news production. Other documents include the Uganda constitutional

provisions on gender equality and international instruments on women. International and Ugandan literature on the situation of women in media and were also reviewed among others.

4.6 Research Instruments

4.6.1 Interview guides

Interview Guides were used in data collection. Robson (2000) notes that prior to an interview, researchers prepare interview guides that help them indicate the outlines of the topics and subtopics to be covered and interviewer's guidelines on what to say at the opening and closing of the interview. Four interview guides were designed for female and male journalists, female editors and male editors. They were semi-structured, with open-ended questions listed in a desired sequence to allow probing (See appendix i).

4.6.2 The interview procedure

Before departure to Africa, the researcher contacted one *New Vision* journalist she knew through e-mail to provide a list of names, telephones and e-mail addresses of journalists both men and women at *The New Vision.* The e-mails and telephone contacts were used to request the journalist to participate in the study. Final arrangements and appointments were made in Uganda before interviews. The interviews were made with the journalists at their convenient time and place as agreed upon but most of them were conducted from *The New Vision* premises. All interviews were tape recorded after informants consent and brief notes were taken. The interview time was between 30 and 60 minutes. Interruptions were compensated through telephone, e-mail or rescheduled appointment for interviews.

4.7 Ethical considerations

These reflect ones understanding of the regulations governing the research ethics through formal policies and right procedures in undertaking a research study that have been put into place by professional associations and governments (Wimmer and Dominick, 1994:399). This study involved asking humans questions, examining what they have done and obtaining secondary data about the organisation. To ensured that the rights of the participants were not violated and to maintain good working relationship and credibility, the ethical issues were considered at three levels, thus; the planning level, during and after the study.

4.7.1 Planning level

Before leaving for data collection, approval of the working title of the study including the research instruments by the University of Oslo was adhered to.

The purpose of the study was formally explained to prospecting participants during this process. The information sources were also assured of information confidentiality unless otherwise with their consent. The researcher obtained the university's introductory letter from the Department of Media and Communication with the help of the main and co- supervisors. On arrival, this letter was delivered at *The New Vision* reception to the human resource department for consideration and permission to carry out research in the institution.

4.7. 2 During the study

Having an appointment before an interview was vital. This depended upon the mutual agreement between the interviewer and interviewee concerning a convenient place and the most appropriate time for the interviews (Bryman, 2004). In this respect, appointments were made with the journalists bearing in mind their busy schedules and place of convenience for the interviews. As Wimmer and Dominick (1994: 400) put it:

> *First is the principle of autonomy, or self determination. Basic to this concept is the demand that the researcher respects the rights, values and decisions of other people.*

Informants were interviewed one by one. Nobody was coerced, the true nature of research was revealed and there was no violation of informants' rights to self determination. Participants were not exposed to physical or mental stress, no invasion of privacy and all were treated fairly and showed consideration and respect (Wimmer and Dominick, 1994:401). Permission was also sought from informants to allow tape recording in addition to note-taking for purposes of later reference, transcribing, interpretation and analysis of data. The researcher's adherence to this ethics was to weigh the harmful risks of research against its possible benefits i.e. increase in knowledge.

4.7.3 After the interviews

The tape was replayed for the respondents to listen to the conversation and make any changes. However, none of the participants objected to the data. Appreciation was extended to all participants for taking part in the study. After coming back to Norway, the research wrote back emails to all informants thanking them for their participation and also to confirm their positions as to whether they preferred anonymity or their real identifications in the study. Some participants asked for their quotes that were to be used in the study before accepting

anonymous status or real identification. Nine of the fourteen accepted their names to be published while five declined.

However, some of the information collected was so critical of the organisation the sources worked for as well as the opposite sex in the way they relate. Some informants expressed fear of loosing their jobs as well as damage that would be caused to their working relationship if their names were published. The researcher's obligation was to keep the promise of anonymity for those who asked for it to protect them but it was also very hard to grant real identification for consenting informants who did not prefer anonymity after weighing the likely impact. Although nine informants consented to the use of their real identification, the sensitivity of this study and some information given by consenting informants would have negative consequences for them if their identifications were published. Hence it was justifiable to go against their wish and make them anonymous. However, the names of those who consented to real identification are attached (see appendix ii).

4.8 Data organisation and analysis

Data analysis consists of examining, categorising, tabulating or otherwise recombining the evidence to address the initial propositions of a study. According to Yin (1994:102), every investigation should start with general analytic strategy yielding priorities for what to analyse and why. Yin outlines four dominant analytic techniques applicable in both single and multiple case studies namely; pattern matching, explanation building, time series analysis and programme logic models. He however notes that in special situations where case study has embedded units of analysis or where there are large number of cases to be analysed other techniques should be used in conjunction with the four dominant techniques, not alone.

4.8.1 General Analytic framework

The role of the general strategy according to Yin (1994:103) is to help an investigator to choose among different techniques and to complete the analytic phase of the research successfully. Two types of strategies have been identified by Yin (1994) namely; relying on theoretical propositions and developing a descriptive framework for organising the case study.

This study preferred the theoretical propositions that led to the case study. The original objectives and design of this study was based on the feminist media theories that view women as an underrepresented and misrepresented group in both the media industries and in news. Secondly, the study was informed by the studies of news which tries to fill the gap left by the

feminist theories by putting in consideration other factors that determine media out put. This in turn was reflected in a set of research questions, reviews of the literature and new insights. The theoretical propositions helped the researcher to focus attention on certain data and to ignore other data. The proposition also helped to organise the entire case study and to define alternative explanations to be examined. Theoretical propositions about causal relations-answers to 'how' and 'why' questions were very useful in guiding this case study analysis (Yin, 1994:103-4). In this study the theoretical literature and previous empirical studies were considered important for the discussion and analysis of data to the research problem.

4.9 Data analysis

Analysing data begun with transcribing recorded audio. All recorded voices were transcribed individually. This study as discussed above concealed the real names of the interviewees. As such, pseudo names were used in data presentation to observe the ethical, legal and human relations issues.

4.9.1 Transcribing and data reduction

Transcribing recorded interviews involved writing exactly word by word, pauses, and repetitions, as recorded in the audio tape that generated 165 pages (Yin 1994). All the files on tapes were named by the real informant identification, designation, sex, age, marital status, academic and professional qualifications, time and place of the interview and duration of the interview. Pseudo names which were later used during data presentation were assigned to every informant. Transcribing interviews followed a certain sequence. In the first step, I started by identifying the main categories I used in the interview guide that followed the research objectives and questions. In the second step, I tried to identify where the main categories were found in the text that I transcribed for example where did the female editor talk about the problems of family and work balance?. In the third step, I went into the text to extract the meaning for the purpose of creating new categories that could help me understand better the text. In the fifth step, I grouped all the categories into main and sub categories generated from the texts.

4.9.2 Categorization of data

Gall et al (2003) defines category as a construct that is used to classify a certain type of phenomenon in the database. Categories are one of the common methods of organising data in qualitative research. Data collected from the informants was analysed to establish similarities

and differences. Similar statements were marched to form categories. The categories were then studied and clustered into sub themes according to each theme from the research sub questions to help the researcher answer the main research question. This helped organise and present relevant data in the study.

4.10 Validity and reliability

The benefits from the sources of evidence can be maximised if researchers follow three principles of data collection namely; use of multiple sources of evidence, creation of a case study data base and maintaining a chain of evidence. Yin (1994:98) notes that these principles are relevant and apply to all sources of evidence and that when used properly can help to deal with the question of establishing the construct validity and reliability of a case study.

Validity

Yin (1994) describes validity as the appropriateness, meaningfulness and usefulness of specific inferences made from test scores. He judges the quality of a case study design by three types of validity criteria and one reliability criterion. Construct validity is the extent to which a measure used in a case study correctly operationalises the concepts being studied while internal validity is the extent to which research findings can be influenced by extraneous variables. While external validity is the extent to which the findings of a case can be generalised to similar cases (Yin, 1994:36).

However, qualitative researchers do not concern themselves with questions of validity since the qualitative research offers proximity to the respondents and the phenomena under investigation. Validity usually refers to the adequacy of the measure applied. Theoretical foundations, conceptual clarity and methodological considerations are relevant aspects to be discussed visa-a-vis validity. Validity can thus be claimed for the informant interview method that offered proximity to the journalists and the interviewer's ability to activate journalists' perceptions on the topic and allowing journalists to express their views. Other qualitative researchers believe that there can no be validity in interview method as such; it is the results which must be validated in a concrete situation. Validation in this context supposes that the researcher at the analysis phase must continually check, question and theoretically interpret the results. Validity can be claimed for this study since interviewees were allowed to express their views and attitudes on women access, employment and participation in news production.

Further, validity can be claimed on the basis of the fact that the interview transcripts were thoroughly analysed and theoretically interpreted.

4.10.2 Reliability

Yin (1994) points out that, reliability is the extent to which other researchers would arrive at similar results if they studied the same case using exactly the same procedure as the first researcher. The system should show consistency and accuracy while measuring. Careful development of research question, and objectives, careful selection of relevant method and informants were adhered to. At the analysis level, reliability could refer to how well the analysis stands against haphazard interpretations which is important when the aim is to get the perceptions of journalists. The reliability of my study therefore can be seen in the extent to which the analysis of the interview transcripts is reliable. That is to say, reliability in this study relates to whether the data collected have been properly analysed i.e whether the analysis eschews haphazard interpretations

4.10.3 Factors that may limit validity and reliability (Methodological problems)

Validity and reliability might have been threatened due to inaccessibility to the three key informants; the woman-editor-in-chief, Else De Temmerman, the deputy-editor-in-chief, Barbara Kaija and the deputy-news-editor, Hellen Mukiibi, as well as the human resource, Caroline Mboijana. Their unwillingness to have oral interviews, respond to a questionnaire, a phone call or email was a loss of important views from women on top editorial posts. For the human resource, management views that would have countered issues arising from the journalists were missed out. Although the woman editor-in-chief finally referred me to the news editor, whom I had already interviewed, this was not helpful because she as a woman had a different experience and opinion from the said editor.

The presence of these women in their respective position also meant a lot in terms of women empowerment and participation in the media. To demonstrate this lost information, it was only after three months of this data collection that four women on top managerial posts resigned concurrently in one week. The woman editor-in-chief Ms. Els De Temmerman, Human Resource Manager, Carolyne Mboijana, Productions Manager, Rachel Namuli and Circulations Administrator Margaret Wamweta, all resigned within the same week towards the end of October 2008.

The independent Daily Monitor newspaper on 25th and 26th October reported that the woman-editor-in-chief tendered in her resignation shortly before the end of her two year contract on grounds that the government had failed to fulfil its promise of giving the paper the editorial independence assured during her appointment. The other three were reported to have been forced to resign. Mr. Robert Kabushenga, who was Chief Executive officer *The New Vision* was reported to have confirmed the developments but declined to give reasons for the high-profile exits and said each of them had personal reasons not connected (www.monitor.co.ug).

Secondly, there was limited recent research data focussing on the situation of women in the Ugandan media. As seen from the literature review, cited work in this project lies between 1994 and 2002. Most of the work on women and media tended to focus on women portrayal and advertising but not women working in the media industry. These materials would have been useful to assess the trend and initiatives media in Uganda have put in place towards achieving gender equality.

4.11 Summary

I have argued in this chapter that the qualitative case study design was the most appropriate for the phenomenon under the study because it involved getting perceptions that justified the use of informant interviews and document reviews. The advantages of qualitative informant interviews and documentation as well as their disadvantages have been discussed. Methods of extending informant interviews to enhance its utility have been addressed.

The next chapter presents the data collected and the discussions.

Chapter Five: Data presentation and discussion

5:1 Introduction

This chapter concurrently presents and discusses findings of data collected on the perceptions of journalists on women access, employment and participation in news production from *The New Vision*. The results and analysis have been presented following the main research question, 'How do journalists perceive women access, employment and participation in news production*?* Five sub-questions were developed from this main question. Following the questions, six main themes were developed from the findings. The findings under each theme are presented and discussed using the feminist media theory and the studies of news as discussed under chapter two on theoretical perspectives.

The first theme of this chapter presents the background information of the informants. This was divided into six parts namely: name, sex, age, experience in journalism, academic and professional qualifications and their marital status.

The second theme gives an account of how women access *The New Vision* in terms of recruitment.

The third theme presents and discusses the employment status of women in *The New Vision* under which, promotion, professional advancement, salaries and other entitlements are presented as sub themes.

The fourth theme is on women participation in news production. It looks at posts held by women, types of stories female journalists cover or edit and the perceived reasons for gender divide in beats. These include high competition in the media, cultural and feminine attitudes, gender as a factor during story assignment, editorial policy and the cost of equipment. This theme also presents the types of sources in terms of gender more easily accessible to female journalists.

Theme five presents and discusses the perceptions of journalists on the coverage and portrayal of women in the media, and the perceived impact of women visibility in the newsroom on content and portrayal of women in the media.

Finally, theme six presents challenges facing female journalists. These include women as double workers, sexual harassment, male attitudes towards females and journalism itself as a challenge.

These findings were obtained through informant interviews and document reviews. Responses were collected from fourteen journalists comprising seven females and seven males. Several documents on Ugandan women and media, some documents about *The New Vision* plus other national and international literature on the situation of women in the media industry were also reviewed to help in the discussion of the results. The themes are presented below:

5.2 Theme one: Back ground information of the journalists.

This theme presents the background information of the informants. The total number of journalists interviewed was fourteen-seven women and seven men. Their background varied in terms of sex, age, positions held, experience in journalism, duration at *The New Vision*, academic and professional qualifications and their marital status.

The journalists revealed their chronological ages freely ranging between 24 and 48 years. Out of the fourteen informants, nine were permanent employees of *The New Vision* while five were temporary employees what we call 'freelancers'. The informants also held different positions that represented all kinds of positions and desks in the news department.

All the informants had an experience in journalism of at least one year with the most experienced a record of twenty years. The least experienced woman reported a year and four months while the most experienced woman reported thirteen years. For the males, the least experienced was four years and the most experienced was twenty years. All the informants had their experiences at *The New Vision* except one who had joined *The New Vision* from another print media house.

Findings from the background information reveal that men had more job experiences than females. This concurs with cotemporary studies on the gender gap in experience which indicated that women journalists since the early 1980s have tended to be younger with less professional experience than men, unlike the previous decades when women tended to be older and less experienced than men (Creedon, 1993: 95). This has been attributed to the fact

that women are more likely to drop out of journalism and return, or they drop out of journalism more often than men (Creedon, 1989:188).

From the educational background, all the female journalists had acquired formal training in journalism with a minimum qualification of a Diploma in Journalism. This concurs with the feminists' assertion of a 'gender switch' in which there are considerably more women than in previous decades joining the field of mass communication (Van Zoonen, 1994:50; Creedon and Cramer, 2007:35). This positive progress, as Allan (2005) observed can be attributed to the developments in media and information technology that have forced a reconsideration of the relation of news to gender. As for Uganda, there has been an influx of women in journalism institutions and mass communications in the recent years to the extent that at times women out-numbered men. As Nassanga (1994:475) reported, between 1990 and 1994, the intake of women to men in journalism schools was 26 out of 59 while at Makerere University Mass Communication department 39 out of 75 admissions were female. Besides the liberal policies that have seen the emergence of various institutions of learning, the government Affirmative Action plan where women are accorded 1.5 extra points entrance to Universities contribution to this trend (Uganda Constitution,1995; Mbire- Birungi, 1999).

Age remains an important aspect of women active participation in news media. Unlike men, young women in *The New Vision* were active in the field of reporting but as they aged, they tended to settle down for editing or leave the profession. As argued by Creedon (1993: 94), it seems likely that many of the new female majority in journalism opt for public relations instead of acquiring new editorial skills. As such, there is no doubt that there is a big gap between the least and most experienced journalists along gender lines in *The New Vision*. From the literature review and findings, we can say that this is a common trend exemplified by a very small percentage of female journalists with 20 or more years of experience and the existence of an age gap between men and women involved in active journalism. This can be explained by what Creedon and Cramer (2007) observed-the diminishing sense of reward, work- family balance and unmanageable newsroom conditions for women. Several female journalists' expressed uncertainty and conflict between demands of their journalism career and their social life as can be seen from Miriam's words:

> *The problem is that you sacrifice a lot of your social life to be a journalist. You can even miss out dating and if you have a partner, you have to keep on explaining to*

make him understand this kind of job because like me, I come at eight in the morning and leave late at eight (Miriam).

Although the company grants the journalists some two days off, most of the females were planning to leave the profession for other careers where they can have time for the family and social life. Despite this, a number of women were joining the profession unlike the past. We take a look at how women access *The New Vision.*

5.3 Theme two: Women Access to *The New Vision.*

This theme answers research question number one. It presents accounts of how female and male journalists are recruited into *The New Vision*. Results showed that there were two avenues for recruitment; starting as a freelance and direct recruitment through interviews with more employment opportunities for women. However, the recruitment procedure was problematic as it depended on personal connections. Ideally, posts were advertised, those who applied would be short listed and subjected to oral and written interviews. According to Cossy, things were becoming tight:

> *That time I joined, a casual worker or freelancer would easily be recruited onto staff if they demonstrated the ability to do. But now, there are freelancers who have been here for ten years. It is not a guarantee for recruitment. You have to still undergo the process of applying and doing an interview no matter how long you have been in The New Vision (Cossy).*

The interview system implied that recruitment was based on competitive performance. This was because the company believed it was the only transparent way to employ journalists. There was also a belief that when the company loosens up the system in an environment and culture like Uganda where there is a lot of manipulation and corruption and where everyone thinks there is no transparency in recruitment, they may face a lot of problems.

Whereas some informants had that chance to be recruited directly, some begun as freelancers and worked for some years before being enrolled on staff. Some journalists freelanced for many years to the extent that they lost hope of becoming permanent staff. Margie had freelanced for two years before she became a staff. She reported that the recruitment policy was not clear when she said that:

> *The way they recruit people is not clear. It is only when I was recruited that I really understood that okay, may be there is some bit of clarity because it was an advert and I applied and they took me on (Margie).*

Other informants revealed that their recruitment into *The New Vision* was through personal connections with people they knew in the company. Beatrice contended that she had the kind of qualities and the zeal *The New Vision* was looking for. Thus, she did not freelance, neither applied nor sat for any interviews while Ruth, knew somebody:

> *As for the case of The New Vision, I didn't apply, I didn't write to them. They are the ones who approached me. They appreciated me, they gave me an offer and we discussed the offer that is how I joined The New Vision. So I was approached by the editor- in- chief and the political editor and some editors (Beatrice).*

> *In The New Vision, I knew some women who were working there. That could have been the interest point and at least I had some Old Girls (OG's) and it was easy entrance for me (Ruth).*

The employment procedure in *The New Vision* raised some concerns. Some interviewees contended that whereas *The New Vision* periodically puts up job advertisements, these were just for formality. Even those on staff were concerned over several unsuccessful attempts by freelancers to respond to advertisement. They reported that the recruitment procedure was not open. Anna and Frank had this to say:

> *Sometimes when they advertise for jobs, we sit for the interviews but only to see when they shortlist, they just shortlist people who did not even sit for interviews. So I don't know (Anna).*

> *Here, you find there is a person who is just a fresh graduate, he or she has not done any practice and has not practiced with any, even the smallest newsletter. Here he or she comes and gets a position which you are anticipating to be given after doing hard work and so on. So, I would say really that, the ground is not levelled (Frank).*

Each individual had different experience, frustrations and sometimes successful stories depending on how they gained access to the company. However, unlike in the past, more women have had access to *The New Vision*. One of the common jokes in company according to informant Simon was that it is "a women's organisation". One of the bases of this joke arose from the fact that women were becoming more visible almost in every department right from the reception. Feminists looked at this kind of development from the international, regional and legal point where affirmative action policies like equal employment opportunities have been enacted to prohibit employers from discriminating on basis of gender (Creedon, 1993:87). For the case of *The New Vision* however, affirmative action has no place in the recruitment process. According to informants, the introduction of the department of Mass Communications at Makerere University in 1988, the opening up of private training media institutions and media houses have increased the number of women joining the

profession but whose access to the media is either through competition or personal connections as one Cossy emphasised:

> *There is no affirmative action that maybe would put females in consideration that they have not done well and we recruit them. Everyone has to go through the formal process. You sit for oral and written interviews then you are recruited (Cossy).*

In Uganda, equal employment opportunities is a constitutional provision but it does not spell out the percentage of men and women to be employed besides lack of enforcement mechanism to follow up what is happening in different institutions (Uganda Constitution 1995). The dark side of this as Van Zoonen (1994) and Gallagher (1980) noted is that informal recruitment procedures based on personal contacts and ('old boys') networks tend to exclude women potential applicants and that the lack of formal career structures means that ascent through the hierarchy depends unduly upon personal contacts and acceptance.

The growing presence of women in the media as such can be viewed from the business motive rather than gender equality. Media, as feminists assert, have shifted their address of news to appeal to a more varied and plural audience particularly to women as consumers and potential targets of advertisements (van Zoonen, 1991:225; Thornham, 2007:98; Ammu, 2004:136). This is in line with what informant Joshua said. The new upcoming industries like leisure, beauty, fashion and entertainment as well as the increased advocacy on issues such as domestic violence, human rights, education according to Joshua, have opened more chances for women in the media but on the other hand, seen media using women and girls in those entertainment, fashion and other beats as a way of appealing to the audience. To feminists, rather than blurring the boundaries of a gendered public-private division, their presence in fact 'assumes and reconstructs it (van Zoonen, 1991:227; Thornham, 2007:98). As Van Zoonen 1994 and Thornham (2007: 99) argued, the intimacy of address associated with the feminine holds true that media structures function both to confine women to their objectified and passive bodies through cultural images and norms, so that patriarchal oppression justifies itself at least in part by connecting women much more closely than men to the body and through this identification restricting women's social and economic roles.

However, the increased access and use of women for commercial purposes in the media does not translate into equal employment opportunities. Although the employment procedure affected both men and women, females were more likely than men to be discriminated upon and treated differently in the workforce due to social influences and societal discrimination.

As argued by Creedon, 1993: 88 ; Van Zoonen 1994:5, in a system where, recruitment can be based on personal judgment and contacts, females are more exposed than men to manipulations by those in power and decision making post as they can decide who is to be recruited. Women as they asserted are more vulnerable than men to suffer from societal discrimination because of sex role socialization in homes and workforce that perpetuate the belief that some work is appropriate for females irrespective of their productivity and qualification (:88).

As seen from the expressions of Anna and Frank above, there was lack of confidence in the recruitment process pointing to structural loop holes. Frank suggested that the recruitment department should allow in journalists as interns so that those who exceed a certain mark could be put on staff. This, he said, would reduce discrimination arising from personal judgements and manipulations that at times leaves out potential applicants. This points to what van Zoonen (1994:5) remarked on barriers to women access and inequalities in the media, when she noted that inequalities in the media stem from discriminatory recruitment procedures and discriminatory attitudes among decision makers.

That said, the domestic and parental responsibilities of working women have been proved as a big obstacle for the entrance of women in *The New Vision*. Media work presupposes production of work on deadlines and a round clock availability of the journalists and abrupt travelling in response to news (Creedon, 1993:53; Ross and Byerly, 2004:136). As surveys into attitudes of men communicators towards females indicated, most men would prefer male colleagues and distrust women as colleagues, feeling that their workload increase while working with women (Van Zoonen, 1994:52). Journalists in this study acknowledged that it was indeed hard to combine journalism and motherhood (details discussed under theme six on challenges facing female journalists).

This is not to suggest that female journalists, she should not fulfil their reproductive role, but rather to highlight the impact of this as one of the consideration for any employer who would want to maximize profit, as hindrance for women to enjoy equal employment opportunities in the media industry with their male counterparts. As indicated in the literature review, many media employers violate the statutory obligations by not employing women to minimise expenses of night duty allowances, transport and maternity leave. Many women of productive age have made it to *The New Vision* but narrations of their experiences as mothers and

workers showed continuous impact of family duties on their access, work assignments and professional advancement.

5.4 Theme three: Working conditions (employment status).

This theme answers research question number two on working conditions of female journalists. The theme was concerned over what happens to women after they have been absorbed into *The New Vision* whether they were working as freelancers or permanent staff. Under this theme, four sub themes were formulated. These are: promotions, professional advancement, salaries and other entitlements. Generally results indicate unclear promotional criteria. Professional advancement was spelled out as an important aspect for the staff in the *The New Vision* human resource manual. However, the conditions attached and the selection criterion benefited those on top posts, while salaries for staff remained a private affair. The company was commended in terms of fulfilling other employee entitlements like leave, HIV/AIDS scheme, and funeral benefits rights among others. Details follow:

5.4.1 Promotions in *The New Vision*

The impression from the data collected on promotions was that although there were presumed steps to the top ranks in the newsroom, most of the promotions depended on personal decisions on the top hierarchy and employee intimacy with those on top.

When asked about promotions, journalists had mixed reactions. One version was that, one begun from freelancing to a junior writer, then to a full writer and then senior writer to a sub editor and finally to the post of editor. According to Peace, these promotions were on merit and only possible when an employee met the targets in terms of qualities, story count, efficiency and time keeping. The same opinion was expressed by Deuz implying that there was no discrimination based on gender.

> *It is competence, the moment you show competency, then; you are in for it (Deuz).*

The second version was that individual persons decided the fate of one to be promoted. Joshua reported that depending on the career path and section a journalist has proved good, the company appointed somebody deemed an authority in that beat.

> *There are some appointments which are done by the Board of Directors; you know this is a public company. There are editors who are appointed by management; there are those who are junior, appointed by senior editors (Joshua).*

However, several journalists reported that the promotion procedure was unfair and not transparent. They contended that for one to be promoted, s(he) needed to build good personal relationships with powerful people who make decisions on promotions and that many journalists had worked for over four years but were still working as junior reporters while those recruited barely half a year were elevated to senior reporters. Miriam and Frank report:

> *There is a lot of underlying politics of relations with decision makers and mostly the person who decides is the deputy- chief- news- editor Barbara Kaija. So, if you are in good terms with her, things will be good (Miriam).*

> *Promotion is not clear. Nobody knows who will be promoted and for what reason. Nobody has endeavoured to describe what somebody has made special for him or her to reach that level, so that others can emulate (Frank).*

From the expressions in this theme, we can say that opportunities for women in *The New Vision* have opened up and could open up further. This is a trend that has been noticed since 1990s and continuing trend since the 1970s (Creedon, 1993:13; Creedon and Cramer, 2007). Women in newspapers as indicated in the literature, have gained ground as more have become top editors and CEOs, presidents and publishers (Creedon and Cramer, 2007:35) More women are also said to have taken the leading roles on opinion pages and are visible in the major industry organisation, a semblance of what is taking place in *The New Vision.*

Previous studies about the promotion of women in *The New Vision* indicated that the paper had done little to hire and promote women and that very few held the top positions (Trip and Kwesiga 2002; Nassanga 1994). At the time of this study, it was the reverse; the editor-in chief, the deputy-editor-in-chief, the deputy-news-editor, the features editor, the human resource manager, the productions, circulations manager, the legal officer and a chain of subeditors were all women. This was important because it was indicative of women playing a role in determining news content. Having women as managers offers a glimmer of hope of being able to ascend and to be role models to upcoming females (Creedon and Cramer, 2007:141). It was a sought of pride for female journalists in *The New Vision* to see fellow women holding the top editorial posts. The spectacular success of women in a wide range of high profile areas of journalism in *The New Vision* hitherto assumed to be male terrain also implied that there was nothing to stop competent and determined women from fulfilling their professional dream as Ammu (2004:135) noted. So women presence on the top hierarchy in

The New Vision challenged the long live stereotypes about women as a weaker sex; those who are incompetent and lacking managerial skills.

It is widely acknowledged that women have played a significant role in broadening the scope of press coverage to include more and better reporting and analysis of social issues in general and what are known as women issues in particular (Ammu, 2004:138). Women in *The New Vision* have highlighted issues to do with human development and rights, social and economic justice, culture, and other vital aspects of life and society that were earlier neglected by a press traditionally preoccupied with politics. Several informants credited women in *The New Vision* for their coverage of social trends and having introduced more humane interest especially into the features as Cossy explains:

> *If you stand up and see, the whole desk features is female. Features contribute more than 36% of New Vision and in terms of print 30-65% of The New Vision on the daily basis are run by features section and supplements are about 65%. All the subeditors are mostly female (Cossy).*

However, the dissatisfaction expressed about unfair and non transparent promotional procedure point to some organisational loopholes but it is important for us to consider the nature of journalism. Unlike the army where people rise through ranks, there are limited chances for promotion in journalism and high editorial posts hardly fall vacant unless someone has gone for studies, resigned or has been retrenched. That is what happened before these women scooped those top posts that were formally occupied by men. So, we can see a scenario where women rise from reporters to subeditors or editors and middle management and get stuck. On the other hand, men are also stuck as women occupied the two top posts of chief-news-editor and her deputy. *New Vision* as such, is a case where women have been successful. Bearing this in mind, the company would do better by having the employees raised through other alternatives like salary scales. What Ammu (2004:135) reported that there is an existence of a glass ceiling which keeps females from occupying the top editorial pyramid only holds true with *The New Vision* when we consider the period from its inception in 1986 to 2006 but this ceiling has been broken when the paper got the first woman-editor-in-chief, Els De Temmerman, her deputy, Barbara Kaija and the Deputy news-editor Hellen Mukiibi. We wait to see when a woman takes on the role of the Chief Executive Officer.

However, the celebration of this women empowerment ended prematurely three months after this data collection when the said woman editor-in -chief and other three high ranking women

on top management i.e. the productions, circulations and the human resource managers resigned in the same week on grounds of pressure from government and lack of editorial independence (www.monitor.co.ug of the 25th and 26th October 2008). Despite the fact that it takes years for one get to the top editorial pyramid, the exits of the high profile women from *The New Vision* means that the people at the top of such companies who make decisions about what kinds of news, information and entertainment get produced have additional power. Media ownership, mission and values as well as policies also come into considerations when looking at the issue of gender and the media. Creedon and Cramer (2007:36) advised that media have a responsibility to address diversity and discrimination because diversity in those companies helps to ensure that news content is more relevant to readers and that companies have more innovative and adaptive norms.

5.4.2 Professional advancement

Women especially reporters faced hardships in their career advancement. Although *The New Vision* human resource policies were pro-professional development, there was dissatisfaction that the conditions attached for one to be granted a study leave were untenable. Besides concerns over the selection of beneficiaries, the requirements that one must have worked with the company for at least five years, mandatory resignation and rejoining the company as a starter after studies were seen as discouraging.

Journalists were asked to express their views on professional advancement. Here, professional advancement as used in this study referred to the opportunities under the organisational setting that allowed or facilitated journalists to go for further studies or training within the organisation, country or abroad.

The New Vision staff handbook 2008 section 9:1, stipulates that the company recognises training and development as an important activity in improving the skills and knowledge of individual employees to improve productivity, enhance organisational effectiveness and efficiency.

A significant number of the journalists acknowledged the existence of this, under the human resource personnel policy. Some of them were beneficiaries and even those who had not benefited knew about it. *The New Vision* has some understanding with Rhodes University for senior managers who apply for masters courses. The company meets fifty percent of the cost to top up the individual contribution. The company also has some connections with Cardiff - UK Media Institute for both long and short term courses for all journalists.

According to the journalists, the policy was that you could only go for further studies with the support of management to get time off and if you have worked with the organisation for at least five years. There were also routine in-house training on all issues like teamwork, editing, picture use, and computer packages among others.

Despite the fact that *The New Vision* states clearly this provision, the informants expressed concern over their job security, earnings and the procedure of selecting who was to be taken for training. They implicated the organisation for holding double standards. On hand, the organisation specified its will for staff career development but on the other, the conditions attached were discouraging. Cossy and Oscar observed that:

> *If you want to go for further studies, the policy is that you take leave without pay and when you end your training the company is not obliged to take you back. So if you rejoin, you rejoin at the level of a starter (Cossy).*

> *There is a problem, if you are going for further studies; you have got to resign your position. Even just going to Makerere University here, The New Vision gives you hard time because they always want you to leave office at five o'clock and if you are leaving at five o'clock what time are you going for lectures? So, they discourage and they don't want you to go for further studies (Oscar).*

The informants were also concerned over the criteria used for selecting the beneficiaries for further studies. They saw the whole scheme beneficial to those holding senior posts except one reporter, Mukiibi from *Vision Voice* radio currently studying who broke the record.

Although the procedure affected both women and men, women were more likely than men to miss out these opportunities. The above concerns about professional advancement in *The New Vision* conform to what Nassanga reported in 1997 when she noted that staff development programmes and reward systems were not women friendly. Besides the obvious impact of social and domestic duties on women's career development, the organisational condition that one must have worked for at least five years to be granted a study leave, the mandatory resignation and coming back as a starter were more of a discouragement than a motivation hence, made the whole scheme unrealistic for female journalists. Women were more likely than men to be constrained either by their family obligations and spouses or to be segregated upon basing on the excuse that they cannot combine motherhood and training as pointed out UMWA (1998:4). As Nassanga (1997:472), pointed out the large families, especially among poorer women, and the double burden of work and family commitments limited women career advancement. This complexity was demonstrated by informant Evans:

Take a situation where opportunities come for career development, say there is a scholarship and a woman has a young child. Whereas the male counterpart can just leave the child with the spouse, a woman will miss that opportunity. It is easier for men to manoeuvre through such circumstances but for females it is really complicated (Evans).

Secondly, training opportunities that favour people on top of the institutions are more likely to leave out women on the bottom of the hierarchy and in this case, the junior female reporters. As Nassanga (1997:471) pointed out, in Uganda, the level of women's representations on top hierarchy is low in most sectors even in civil service which is the biggest employer. Seen from the citation below young women of less than five years experience and those not holding editorial posts, had limited opportunities for career development.

For freelancers there is no opportunity to be trained by The New Vision. Even for the general staff it is not there. It is only the few lucky ones who every year comes and they have been the ones picked up. It has been rotating among editors. It has been just the top managers and middle manager (Frank).

Therefore, there were limited chances for career development for reporters and subeditors who have not worked with *The New Vision* for a good number of years and those who have not been elevated to the tops posts while any freelance journalist would not think of developing her career under the organisational support.

5.4.3 Salaries and wages

Unlike the freelance journalists who were satisfied with the equity of their wages, the permanent staff expressed concern over the secretive nature of their salary scales. For the freelance, it was simple; they reaped what you had sewn. Freelance informants revealed that when it comes to their wages, they are paid promptly according to their story count. On freelance wages, *The New Vision* was commended for payment equity irrespective of whether one was male or female. Anna was pleased:

I have no complaints with their payments because whatever you do is paid for. Before fourth every beginning of the month, our money is already on the account (Anna).

For those employed on permanent basis, the issue of salary remained a private affair. No one knew how much a fellow staff earned. Every individual negotiated with the human resource department depending on the roles and dimensions and the budget. So it was difficult for journalists to judge whether there was fair play or not. They acknowledged that there was no

difference based on sex but the difference arose from the negotiating power when they were being employed. Miriam felt this was unfair for inexperienced workers:

> *Now you see, for us we came straight from school and we didn't have a high negotiating power… What they give you is what you take (Miriam).*

The system of determining payment depending on the negotiating power benefited the experienced journalists and the company but even with experienced journalists, the satisfaction was more likely to be short lived when they would realise afterwards that they deserved higher pay. Unfortunately, it would be difficult to complain as one Beatrice observed:

> *It gives you an opportunity to really have that satisfaction that I bargained for it and I got it. At the end of the day, you might realise that I bargained for something that is much more less than what I should have gotten but the fact is you bargained for it (Beatrice).*

Salaries and wages are important means of employee motivation and building confidence in the organisation they work for. Whereas freelancers were satisfied that they there was no segregation based on sex, age or gender, they worked hard knowing that they would get what they had worked for. On the other hand, when employees in the same department are paid according to their bargaining power which is highly secretive, it showed that there was no equal pay but the discrepancy was not based on gender as Miriam reports:

> *It is not really about sex. The difference is because of your negotiating power when you are being employed and how good you are. There have been instances when they promise that they shall increase salary after some time but they don't (Miriam).*

Determining salaries basing on one's bargaining power is more like to be a disadvantage to women than men. Researchers have discovered that movement of women into formally male dominated fields like journalism has led to 'occupational resegregation (Creedon, 1989:164). As seen from the literature, more job opportunities for women have on the other hand led to decline in their pay. Young female journalists in *The New Vision* expressed dissatisfaction that the organisation took advantage of their age, ignorance and low bargaining skills to underpay them only to discover that the work load was too far from the pay. They reported that there was a tendency on the part of the organisation to assume that young women do not have many problems and can therefore settle comfortably for little pay unlike men who could not because the company presumed men had more responsibilities. Miriam narrates:

I am not contented. The standard of living is changing and for us young women when we come in, they think since we are not married and out of school, little salary is enough. Yet you may be looking after your dependants and paying rent. So we also need an increment (Miriam).

From the feminist perspective pay differentials between men and women arise from the human capital model. Underpayment of women according to feminists arise from the believe that they invest very little in their labour skills, do not anticipate working for so many years and break off to meet their maternal obligations of child rearing and as such their skills become stale (Creedon, 1989:168). So gender here becomes a factor in accounting for salary differentials between men and women. As feminists argue, irrespective of ones qualification or experience, women's skills are often undervalued as compared to men. Employers may invest less in women because they believe women may take time out of their careers to have children and that, as employers they will not enjoy the same return on their investment that they will with male employees (Creedon, 1989:169).

The human capital model also offers a potential demand-side explanation for the decrease in real earnings for workers. Under this model, employers desist from discrimination so that the can have a big pool of workers and pay them less because a smaller pool of workers would lead to higher wages (:169).

Relating this to the findings in *The New Vision*, there was no wage discrimination among the freelancers while there seemed to be gender-based salary discrimination among permanent staff because freelancers form the employment pool as the human capital model suggests. Any discrimination would lead to a smaller pool at a disadvantage of the employer to give high wages. On the contrary, the secrecy surrounding salaries among the permanent staff and the practice of payment basing on the employee negotiating power made female journalist more vulnerable to the assumptions outlined above. It was very likely for women to be paid less than men on assumption that they invest less in their labour skills and often break off for their maternal roles. Besides the assumptions about women inadequacies and problems, the "negotiating power" leaves the woman journalist vulnerable to self interest manipulations by those in decision making positions.

5.4.4 Benefits/ Entitlements

Informants were generally satisfied by the company's fulfilment of their entitlements. There were many benefits journalists were entitled to as employees of *The New Vision* but these benefits were limited to staff members. They included advances and loans, overtime, service gratuity, contribution to the National Social Security Fund (NSSF), Medical Aid Scheme, Funeral Benefit Programme, wedding contributions, annual leave, sick leave, maternity and paternal leave, HIV/AIDS free treatment and compassionate leave among others. These and many others were clearly explained in *The New Vision* Staff Hand book (2008). Peace was one of the beneficiaries:

> *I lost my mother earlier this year and The New Vision covered the expenses for burial, the coffin, travel allowances and pocket money for my colleagues who were coming to the village for the burial (Peace).*

Here, there was general agreement among informants that *The New Vision* lived to its promises.

5.5 Theme four: Women participation in news production

This theme answers research question number three on how female journalists were engaged in the process of news production. Under this theme, women participation was analysed at four levels namely: the posts they held, the kind of stories they report or edit, the sources the female reporters interact with in terms of gender and the general perceptions of female journalist towards the male journalists.

It was found out that women dominated the middle and top editorial posts than in real active reporting. More women than men edited and reported soft news. Male sources were more accessible to women than female sources and women encountered negative attitudes from male colleagues. Details follow in sub themes.

5.5.1 Women posts in *The New Vision*

Many women were visible on the top management posts and at the editorial level as was shown in the discussion of the preceding theme three (5:4:1 on promotions). The informants were so quick to estimate that either the proportion of female to male journalists was fifty - fifty or women's' population was higher than men.

When you look at the newsroom at large, apart from the photo and sports desks where there are complications in terms of equipment; The New Vision was absolutely liberal (Evans).

It was a kind of pride for female journalists to see females on top positions.

Most people are impressed when they come to The New Vision and see a whole line of women bosses running such a big company; we have a radio, we are soon going into TV, we have a commercial printing but all these, it is so amazing that you can find a woman running a daily newspaper factory having, the productions manager, someone doing the auditing of our finances being a woman. I am so amazed that women can actually be good managers. If we had more media houses having more women at the top, that would change the perceptions that most people have about women (Peace).

There was gender inequality on the top editorial and subediting positions-why women not men? When asked what explains this scenario both males and females explained that these women first of all qualify and are performers. Secondly most of them had been reporters before but now chose to sit down and not to run around. However, there were three most interesting revelations behind this scenario of female positions that cut across both males and females journalists.

One reason was that, it is purely a feminine attitude as Evans observed:

In our Ugandan society most of the women have been reserved until recently. They want to sit back and have a different lifestyle. They just want to cool down, they don't want to run around and they don't want their make-up to get spoiled that kind of attitude but it is difficult to explain (Evans).

The second reason was that editing and subediting is what women can do best. In the judgement of informant Lawrence, women may not necessarily be good reporters but they have what it takes to be very good subeditors because they would be patient, he presumed, they would be very particular and very careful the way they handle stories and people. This view was almost similar to Miriam's when she said:

This is a natural thing of women being able to notice details. And subediting is about being able to notice small things… and it is about sitting down. Men don't want to sit down the whole day (Miriam).

This kind of work apart from being boring and one sitting from morning till evening correcting errors, women efforts in the media go unnoticed. Editors and sub editors get to polish even very badly written stories to make them good but it is the other persons name that goes on but the one who polishes is never recognised as Miriam adds on her voice:

You are like the unsung hero; you have to be in the background all the time (Miriam).

However much these reasons explained what was happening, on the other hand, they promoted gender stereotypes about women.

The New Vision newsroom structure has broken the common beliefs and findings that there are few women in decision making posts in the media. While Carter et al (1998) noted with concern that women were not being promoted to senior decision making positions, the reverse trend at *The New Vision* best speaks of itself. For the first time in the history of the paper, the post of editor-in-chief and the deputy were held by women. This is a positive and a continuing trend that has been noted since the 1970s where women have gained ground to become top posts in newspapers (Nicholson, 2007:35).

5.5.2 Types of stories female journalists cover or edit

Findings under this sub theme revealed gender divide in beats between men and women. Thus, females were more likely than men to be engaged in the production of soft news while the men engaged more in hard news reporting than soft news.

The majority of the informants concurred that women were more likely to cover soft news like features, lifestyle, food, education, fashion, children and women issues. It was also revealed that the male journalists liked to go for the hard news staff like war reporting, crime, business, sports and photo journalism. The researcher visited the sports, photo, the features and political desks to ascertain the proportion of male to female journalists. Gender divide in terms of beats was recorded as expressed below:

> *We have managed to have a few ladies over the years but they have been going away. Right now, the sports desk is 100% male. The last lady we had used to love basket ball. Last year we had a lady then she moved on to the website and that is how we lost her* (Lawrence).

> *On staff, we have one female photographer, five male photo journalists. Then we have a series of freelancers but females are much fewer (Evans).*

5.5.3 Perceived reasons for gender divide in beats

Gender was seen as an important factor that drew a line in beats between men and women. This arose from role socialisation in which certain work is deemed fit and not for women. As such in a competitive media environment women tend to settle for features and social issues. When asked why there was that gender divide in terms of beats several reasons were given. The most common were high competition among old and new entrants, feminine attitude and

culture, gender as a factor during story assignment, the editorial policy, ability and knowledge about the topic and the nature of training at journalism institutions. Details follow:

5:5:3:1 High competitions in the media

Most of the female journalists reported that the media industry was very competitive and that there were many institutions producing journalists into *The New Vision*. When one was new, it was hard to fit on a desk of one's own interest or ability say political desk because most people especially men liked it. Peace and Anna explained why they went into the soft beats:

> *When you are new, it is hard to get in because people are many and it is hard to compete when you hardly have any skills in writing. So I looked for a place or a field where people are not many so that I can fit in the system. That is how I chose education (Peace).*

> *It is not that I like religion but that is where there was space. I tried business desk, I failed, I am a person with a home, mother, I needed enough money but with the business desk, I could only make 100 thousand shillings a month. By the time I tried features I made 270 thousand shillings a month (Anna).*

Other female journalists felt that females had a unique role to play in the media. Ruth felt that as women, there were lots of issues affecting women, girls and children that male journalists cannot bring out. She believed that only female journalists can provide the right information to the public say on issues of maternal health:

> *If they tell us that girls are not going to school because they don't have sanitary towels and you get to know that sanitary towels are expensive because there is VAT levied on those towels, then you as a female journalist have to force this out because if you don't those young girls will continue to suffer (Ruth).*

The gender divide in beats is unlikely to change because media is dealing with complex issues and different people have different interests. According to Joshua, media can only guarantee that all interests are catered for by bringing in all kinds of issues, male and female journalists too. Joshua went ahead to say that if they have a predominant number of people writing on social issues being female, and a predominant number of people writing on politics being men, then it cancels.

> *I don't think in the near future that we are going to see a situation where the majority of subeditors are going to be male. It is very unlikely to have more male writers on issues to do with beauty and fashion which is a growing industry. Also we are unlikely to see political writers being dominated by female writers; No, we are unlikely to see that trend (Joshua).*

5:5:3:2 Cultural or feminine attitude

Although some women attributed their beat specialities as the last option to fit in *The New Vision*, women were naturally termed as people who like small easy things that do not give them hard time. Another reason that was advanced for women shunning away from politics, business and other hard news was that women want to cover events, file a story, hand in quickly and go back home to meet their families. War and investigative reporting require at times travelling, verifying with different sources that may interfere with their maternal roles. Oscar emphasised that if he had a wife, he wouldn't allow her go on travelling.

> *It comes when a woman is married. Even if it were me, I can't allow my wife going far away for weeks on journalism assignments like to cover war in the Northern Uganda. It is natural and cultural of course (Oscar).*

The cultural aspect is deeply entrenched in the Ugandan society extending beyond the family confines to political and social institutions the media inclusive. It has inculcated that inferiority complex in women to turn away from tasks that expose them to the public. Informant Evans expressed this as a major point of concern when it comes to *The New Vision* having only one female photo journalist on staff.

> *It has been in a culture of newspapers in Uganda that photojournalism is male dominated. The females also find it difficult to come forward. There is that attitude in cultural setting that women are supposed to be in the background and photojournalism involves running in front of people. So females feel uncomfortable that kind of thing. They try to keep cool and keep off (Evans).*

Sections of journalism like photography and sports were viewed as jobs for men. This perspective was typical of any female journalist. Evans charged that, female journalist needed to come out of the cocoon of the African culture and take the profession more seriously:

> *In US, you will be surprised that it is fifty-fifty. In Britain, there is some extent almost the same but Africa's cultural arrangement is what ladies need to break so that they look at journalism like a profession which is for all. That is the most important thing they should do (Evans).*

5.5.5.3 Gender as a factor during story assignment

Gender to some extent determined the type of stories female journalists covered. This happened when the editors had to consider the type of assignment, the time of the day and the distance between the female journalist residences and the event. Gender was also considered in terms of the reproductive roles of women. Different editors had this to say:

It is true that consideration is there. If I know that an event is going to take place at night at seven or it is going to go up to midnight, I am very unlikely to deploy a female journalist unless she says she will be able to do; you look at the hazards and the risks involved and say no if there is a male journalist, that will be the first person to deploy in this kind of environment because it is harsh risky environment to a woman than a man (Joshua).

How secure the place where the event is to take place was another consideration if a woman was to be assigned. When there was an entertainment story in public places like Nakivubo stadium where there was a lot of drinking alcohol, the editors had to find out from female journalist if they wanted to go and give them safety tips but if they didn't want, they would not be pressed. Cossy reported that before assigning a female journalist, she had to think of security as paramount.

Women maternal roles were also considered during story assignment. If there was a trip assignment requiring travelling and a woman had a baby, the editor would find out if she was ready to go. These considerations extended to pregnant journalists. The editor and reporter attested to this:

The first priority thing I do is to check whether it is viable for her if she can undertake a particular assignment with her pregnancy. We cannot send her running when she is due in two months time or one month's time to run around (Evans).

I am pregnant, so my editor has realised that I can't cover things like where there is tear gas. So he doesn't take me to such areas (Margie).

Besides the women's reproductive role as a consideration, it was observed that women tend to back away from explosive situations like riots. So it is about men going there. Simon observed that it was advantageous having men being sent covering such rioters situations because men are faster than women in such tricky situations and that generally, men are fighters and they know how to manoeuvre their ways.

5:5:3:4 *The New Vision* editorial policy

The New Vision though supported by government, has been credited for its objective and balanced reporting. According to its website www.newvision.co.ug, the act that established *The New Vision* stipulates that the paper must publish criticisms of the government without becoming an institutional opponent of government.

However, when male and female journalists were asked whether the editorial policy aids or hinders them from covering certain beats, the responses were that to a more extent it hinders than favours them in covering certain beats.

On one hand, the editorial policy helps journalists to know that they were working with a government paper involving government officials that they have to be extra careful. The policy helped them to make sure that they acquire all documents, carry out necessary interviews not to step on people's feet. So it kept them in check to ensure they have the right information.

On the other hand, female and male journalists alike revealed that one had to take heart to report on war and investigation. They reported that doing an investigative report and cross checking facts and verifying with all subjects in the story was not a guarantee for publication in *The New Vision*. When women tried to go on the political desk, they had that fear that their stories might not go well with government officials. So the safest beats were the ones to do with features on societal issues to avoid any stress.

Beatrice reported that she had been stressed over her stories. The last story she cried over arose from an investigative article in which the vice president Gilbert Bukenya was implicated for grabbing land from a soldier who had been there for 20 years. According to her, all editors and bosses came to discuss the story but she produced all the documents. The story was published but the following day an apology appeared. The office of the vice president ran its version with a big headline 'Professor Bukenya clarifies on the story' not that it was false but because it was a big government official.

> *You know! it does not only tarnish your image as a journalist… it puts your morale down and then also people out there who have trusted you with their information start questioning your integrity (Beatrice).*

Other journalists were equally concerned that if one was to venture writing for the political desk, then professionalism should be put aside and then, risk their lives.

> *Politics is not so interesting to cover and it involves a lot of risks because if you are covering politics, you will either criticize government or support it and you are neither of those things. So they are sensitive. There, you are putting your security at risk (Margie).*

> *Covering is one thing but getting published is another issue. We are 50% government and there are stories which can't go well with the president in this newspaper. For example, if a hundred army men have been killed by Kony rebels, you can't put there a hundred army men killed because this is a government paper. You rather say a hundred rebels killed by the government army (Oscar).*

Although *The New Vision* editorial policy affected both men and women, the impact is greater on women because threats of rape and rape itself are a threat to women security and

psychology. As such women in *The New Vision* calculated the risks involved in investigative and political reporting including stress over downplayed critical stories and consoled themselves by settling down to soft news where they felt safe and comfortable. In fact government pressure on the woman editor-in-chief, Else De Temmerman and her initial resignation was according to press reports linked to the persistent coverage of the controversial sale of Mabira forest which the government had earlier endorsed.

Like elsewhere in Africa press freedom is always circumscribed in the name of achieving national and development objectives but journalists working in government affiliated media have to compromise their ethical stands more than those in private media. So political and investigative reporting is one risky area in journalism because it involves analysing and unearthing issues that may not please those in power. This compromises professionalism and the role of the media as watchdogs. Although journalists have to be careful and mindful of media laws when covering issues of national security, it is not justifiable to compromise journalists when the uncover corruption as this is detrimental to national development.

5.5.3.5 The cost of equipment and training

There was concern over the few female journalists specifically on the photo and sports desk. Evans was surprised that training at Makerere University cuts across the board and that the number of females doing photojournalism as their key subject could be even higher than males but when they graduate, they do not practice it. Instead he said, females prefer public relation jobs but reporting jobs, they do not want to carry cameras.

> *Basically it may be because of the costs of equipment involved. Someone after graduating needs to practice reporting without photography. It is all cheap. What you need is a pen and a book whereas photography, you also need a camera and a good camera is very expensive; we are talking of two million or one point five (Evans).*

True, a journalist can write as many stories as he or she can without an accompanying photograph but one cannot claim to be a photojournalist without having a camera. Life after school is abit hard in that it is not easy to be employed on permanent staff so that you begin earning. So in most cases journalists begin as freelancers and the wage from freelancing may not be enough for one to save and buy a camera.

However, women were also perceived to have personal weaknesses in their professional line. In sports, they were said to be lacking the passion for it. To be a sportsman or sportswoman,

one needs that passion, the interest, the ability to write and speak sports language. Lawrence touched on the training at journalism institutions that may be responsible for killing the talents when he said that, many sports women athletes, basket-ballers and netballers shine while in secondary and high school but when they got into universities and other higher learning institutions, they ceased to exist.

> *What can be done is right away at the training at journalism school. They should try to identify people who are deeply interested in sports, as the only way we can divert people from going for those other sections to sports (Lawrence).*

Findings under this theme show a gendered division of beats aligned to an adjustment of serious news values with public sphere events to be of interest to men, whilst the so-called women's issues are more likely to be framed in relation to the 'private as domestic sphere (Tuchman 1978; UNESCO 1987:12; van Zoonen 1991, 1994). As argued by Carter et al (1998:6), much of this work employs the notion of patriarchy and stereotypes to advantage and, the employment of such stereotypes far from being harmless is instead likely to result in negative and undesirable social consequences for women.

However, some women in *The New Vision* were struggling to avoid this kind of pigeon holing to be allowed to write about politics, investigative reporting and photojournalism rather than being ghettoized in advertising-rich lifestyle but their narrations of their experiences implied that they had broken the sanctity of the newsroom. The women editor-in-chief was well known for covering war in Rwanda, Somali and Northern Uganda from where she wrote a book about the Aboke Girls who were abducted by The Lord's Resistance Army rebels (LRA). Therefore, although the patriarchal norms, values and traditions, place a lot of barriers in women career paths in a way that they are being denied an equal place at the reporters table as posited by Carter et al (1998:13) and Gill (2007:126), young female journalists were demystifying these beliefs by proving that they can as well perform like their male counterparts and cover politics and be photo journalists.

There were also sexist assumptions about women's ability and professional capacities in *The New Vision* as such as those expressed, 'men are generally fighters', 'if you were my wife, I wouldn't allow you travel for two weeks', journalism is a man's thing'. These assumptions as Carter et al (1998) noted, appear to be contingent upon a hierarchical division between serious news to be covered by male journalist in a marked contrast, the society soft and trivial

reported by females. Such a system does not only instil inferiority complex in women, but also deny the necessary ability and chances of women to compete in a male dominated media (Lorber, 2005:9; Zubeida 2002; UMWA 1998:6). But women in *The New Vision* were increasing becoming aware of these as one female informant observed:

> *By a mere fact that one is a woman, in times of hard hitting events like covering riots, war, crime and travelling beats, assigning editors repeatedly ask females if they can handle the assignment, if it is okay with their spouses or families(Beatrice).*

Even though this kind of attitude is exemplified by several women covering or editing societal or human interest stories, Carter et al (1998:14) pointed out the issue of commercialisation of the media as another important aspect explaining gender divide in news beats. True, more employment opportunities for women came with sexualisation that structure news as well as entertainment items. As expressed by informant Joshua, many upcoming industries like beauty, entertainment, and fashions were issues that were covered by women not men, something he said was unlikely to change. According to Gill (2007:127) this typification of news is a trend in the market era different from the traditional news journalism in which the increasing power of female journalists depends and exploits topics and angles usually associated with femininity.

Theoretically, this means that, the usual link between media professionals and media texts is turned around. It is not the number of women or men in journalism that determines what news look like or what beat women report on as suggested by feminist media studies, but it is the nature of the genre which allows for a masculine or feminine style of journalism. Going by Carter et al (1998) and Ammu (2004) observation, the overall implication here is that, gender is not a site of most semiotic activities today, it follows that media and gender need to be rethought in terms of readership, gender in terms of age and the relationship between journalism gathering population into readership which takes social identities and civic properties using women as newly significant and political figures.

Beyond the changing nature of journalism, Herbert Gans 1979; Tuchman 1978; Gunter 2000; Curran and Gurevitch 2005; Mencher 2003; Anderson &Ward 2007, attributed the gendering of hard and soft news to the journalist conventions, organizational requirements, external forces like type of audience the media serves and the political aspect of media ownership for

which journalists work for. As seen from the findings, gender of the journalist had little impact on decisions about the type of story.

As such Eide (2000) was right to say that the question of gender and media has to do with power and power relations and that, it is not irrelevant who owns the media, who directs the media and who has decision making powers in the media. This also endorses three explanations advanced by Creedon (1993) why the process of gathering and defining the news has not changed despite the increasing participation of women in news delivery and making. First, mass communication is a profit-driven, advertising-supported business and the entrance of women in the field has not offset the power of this relationship to determine news content. Second, females entering the news industry find that the news definers are still predominantly male, and these editors and owners control the hiring and firing decisions. Third, workplace routines and norms force reporters to conform to dominant values rather than act on empowering values (1993:13).

Creedon's remarks are also true in that at the entry level employees adapt to workplace norms, reasoning, for example, that they must prove themselves, the job market is tight, or they are lucky to be employed. Over time, they learn to internalise and rationalize the norms as fair and balanced rather than to question the assumptions upon which they are based (1993:14). When female journalists in *The New Vision* were asked as to why they venture into soft beats several said that the competition for hard news desks was so high so, they settled for features because there were vacancies.

5.5.4 Types of sources accessible to female journalists
Men remain dominant as news sources among women journalists. Women minority as news sources was explained by their marginal positions in societies like in politics and business exacerbated by the traditional news criterion that leaves them out and the tendency on women to shy away from the media. When it came to news, journalists emphasised that the issue of gender is secondary. In their professional line, journalists are guided by the concept of news values. This meant that gender was not the only factor that determines news. This challenges the feminist position to also think in terms of professional guidelines and other factors.

Several female journalists expressed concern over the reception, willingness and qualifications of female sources. Peace, Anna and Ruth revealed their sources as politicians,

religious leaders, the medical doctors who are free with them, willing to talk and to appear in papers.

> *Women sources don't want to talk, I don't know why. In most cases, women need to style up because even if you talk to a woman, she will say, 'Ooh! I don't have time, call me another time'. You keep calling and the woman is never there. Yet, of men they are there, they want to talk (Peace).*

> *The profession, the area I cover is dominated by men. So one time I tried a female pastor but she disappointed me. She kept on giving me appointments and postponing, then, I ended up leaving her. Normally, I write about men (Anna).*

> *I would say the medical world especially the higher levels of medical world. The people who are quotable, whose information people will read and believe are mostly men (Ruth).*

Male journalists reported that many women sources are a bit closed and when reached out for a comment they postpone appointments or tell journalists that they would consult even when they are in the right position of issuing statements, many of them are guarded and are not like men. Asked what types of sources were easily accessible to female journalists, this is what male journalists had to say:

> *Without any bias against women, men are really good people when you talk to them, they will not take you in many things. If he is the right person, he just gives you the interview straight away but women have a tendency of tossing journalists (Frank).*

> *Actually it goes without saying that unlike poles attract and men find it a lot easier to open to women when it comes to journalism. It is easier for a lady to get information from the male source than for a male journalist getting it from a male source (Simon).*

It was also revealed that naturally, women hate fellow women but men are a soft spot as they can easily release information to women. Whereas the female journalists were proud of men as the most approachable and receptive, some of their male counterparts praised the women as their main sources of news.

> *I get my sources through secretaries. Most of all secretaries of my sources, easily tell me that I have this document here, she photocopies for me, I steal it then tomorrow come and I call the man, why is this, what happened? Then he says," Where did you get that document from?" Most of my sources are women secretaries of the bosses (Oscar).*

These results show that male sources were more easily accessible to female journalists than female sources.

The issue of lack of women journalists in parliament was at one time an area of contention between *The New Vision* and the women members of parliament. Joshua disclosed that there was a misconception among female politicians that the reason for their low coverage was because majority of the journalists were male. In a series of discussions, he said, they tried to tell women MPs to understand how media operate.

> *The media focuses on controversy, the people who normally get into the news are people involved in controversies, personalities like you of course, issues of conflict, people who are outspoken. So if you are shy and the reporter comes to you today and you say, no comment, tomorrow you have no comment, he or she will never come to you again (Joshua).*

To avoid this kind of conclusion that women MPs were not covered because those assigned were male, both male and female journalists have been deployed to parliament but still the impact was minimal according to Joshua:

> *So you find that even the female journalists predominantly quote male MPs… Now we have many female journalists there (in parliament). The issues then ceases that they have not been covered because of gender (Joshua).*

The issue of the kind of sources accessible to female journalists, the proportion of female journalists in the news media and the dominance of news sources by men has been one of the debates on the feminist media agenda. The organising assumption of this part was that the increased presence of women in the newsroom would necessarily encourage more women sources in the news (Gallagher, 1987; Creedon, 1989&1993; Eide 2000&2002; Creedon and Cramer 2007). However, data from *The New Vision* is quite contradictory to the contemporary research conclusions that too few women in newsrooms may be responsible for the scarcity of female sources (Creedon and Cramer, 2007). In spite of the increasing number of female journalists in *The New Vision*, the day-today culture of the news is still dominated by male sources. To reverse this situation, Jane Arthur's (1994:100) advice is very relevant:

> *More women in the industry are not enough. There is need to be more women with a politicised understanding of the ways women's subordination is currently reproduced and with the will to change it (In Carter et al, 1998:4)*

This quotation pinches right to the situation of female journalists in *The New Vision.* The increasing visibility of women in the newsroom and on top posts had less impact on the number of women sources. Women in Uganda, especially the educated, urbanised and those holding a few top posts in different institutions have been pinned for shying away from journalists with no comments and extending appointments. This is a habit Eide (2000 and 2002) observed about women and their under representation as sources in news. Feminist

media scholars try to challenge men's authority over messages and image making (Ross and Byerly, 2004:75). Women need to make much more concerted efforts to get themselves and their messages into the public domain, and using the media for profiling activities would seem to be fairly crucial part of any strategy to win.

However, sourcing news becomes a bit troubling when subjected to a deeper and systematic analysis of the gender dimension of reporting. The standard criteria include a focus on prominent people, conflict and drama over cooperation and harmony, and unusualness (Tuchman, 1978b; Mencher 2003; McNair, 1998; Hugo De Burgo, 2005; Kovach and Rosenstiel, 2007). At a theoretical level, the phenomenon suggests the presence of an ideology of male superiority in news growing out of masculine newsroom hegemony. According to Byerly, the masculine hegemonic newsroom culture enters the content of news by means of selection, framing ands sourcing, all of which extend the ideology of male superiority (2004:118) One logical explanation for this is that men are still the primary actors in social institutions (Eide, 2000 & 2002; Ammu, 2004). In Uganda, as expressed by informants, besides, their poor reception to journalists, very few women are found in positions of influence especially in politics, business and legislature. In fact this is not different from what Nassanga reported in 1997 when she noted that in Uganda the level of women representation in most sectors even in the civil service which is the biggest employer was very low (1997:471).

As expressed by Peace, Anna, Ruth and other male journalists in this study, most professions and areas they covered had very few women who would provide credible information that would be considered newsworthy. This means that women form very few of the natural sources of journalists because news reporters particularly seek sources who are elite by virtue of holding the reigns of legitimate power that is the top leaders of politics, of enterprises, of organisations and others (McNair, 1998:77; Hugo De Burgo, 2005:30).This challenges the feminist theorists who assert that more females in the newsroom would lead to more women voices in the media. As pointed out by (Byerly 2004:119; Gill 2007:126; Creedon 1993:15) the gender of the journalist made little difference in the reporting because women and men are both responsive to the ideology of male superiority that is manifested through journalistic consciousness and professional routines used in coverage of events. Indeed, until journalists, men and women-are able to see values embedded in the gendered, normative assumptions of

journalistic routines, the influx of women in journalism and mass communication can only affect the biological sex in the field.

5.6 Theme five: Perceptions of journalists on women presence and their impact on coverage and portrayal of women.

This theme answers research question number four on the perceptions of journalists on the coverage and portrayal of women in the media and the likely impact of the increasing visibility of the women in the newsroom on women coverage and portrayal. Results showed increased coverage of women issues but negative portrayal of women persisted.

 Coverage of women issues in terms of the number of pages and diversity of issues affecting women had increased. *The New Vision* was commended for its deliberate effort in championing the production of various magazines that highlight women issues in society as well as coverage in news.

> *The New Vision is still with an upper hand when it comes to covering women issues. Some of the magazines produced and sections of the paper highlighting women issues include "Women's' Vision" pull out which cover issues on reproduction and challenges women face as a family and public member, "The Bride" magazine on marriage, "Flair For Her" targeting the most affluent urban women to highlight on successful women, their experiences so that they can live as role models, coverage in features, columnists and in general news (Frank).*

Commendation of *The New Vision* did not only stop at that. Informants reported that unlike the past where women issues were confined to the inside pages, nowadays, women issues make it on the front pages like workers being abused, rape cases, domestic violence and others. However, journalists were not satisfied with the way women were being portrayed in the media. Informants were concerned that most of the women in Uganda are not in positions of influence yet news is about who holds power and who says what. Thus, women usually do not make it to the first pages unless they have been victims or made something unique.

> *A woman will appear if she has done an outrageous thing or if something has happened to her as in rape, as in accused murderer (Frank).*

> *They still portray them as the weak sex that needs help, the one that we should sympathise with; it is not on the basis of their ability and trends. It is still sexist (Beatrice).*

In addition, drives of the market and social interest at times necessitated the portrayal of women negatively. Editors confessed that certain issues required the use of women without

which, the newspaper could not sell. For instance there was a debate in parliament where women MPs were complaining that one of the newspapers had concentrated and published an article about the legs of the MPs titled, *'Who has the most beautiful legs?'* Joshua argued that this was a necessary evil for the survival of the newspaper when he said that:

> *If the legs of women are going to attract readers, without them, you will not get a single buyer. If you photograph 100 legs of men and women differently and then ask who has the most beautiful legs, people are bound to say, the ones for women are interesting. So the media simply is driven by the social interest, what attracts readers (Joshua).*

At times pictures of pretty women were used to attract the audiences as expressed by Cossy:

> *When you are designing a page say on health and you are writing about water, if you use a picture of a man drinking water, no one wants to look at the page. The picture of a woman brings in the reader (Cossy).*

When informants were asked whether the increasing visibility of women on top post has had an impact on women coverage and portrayal in the media, most said that the issue of gender had been a long term tradition embedded within *The New Vision* philosophy right from the beginning during William Pike's regime. Pike served as CEO and chief-news-editor for *The New Vision* for 20 years since its inception in 1986 till 2006 when these ladies took over (The Monitor May 2, 2007; New Vision, Nov 30, 2006 and BBC October 12, 2006).

> *So it is not really that women are on top. It is just something in The New Vision that they want because they know that we are more than one gender and so they want every body involved (Frank).*

The presence of women at the top editorial post was seen as a motivation to upcoming females that they too can excel. But when it came to the issue of decision making as far as media content is concerned, several informants said, it is the news values that determined who goes into the media. Besides this, women on top editorial posts were reported to be working under pressure from government that inhibited them from making radical decisions on media content. Cossy and Margie had this to say:

> *I don't sit on the team that decides the headlines for the day, but I have never heard these editors, Els (woman- editor-in-chief) or Barbara (deputy chief-news-editor) say no we can't use that picture because it could do this for women. Stories are judged whether they are stories or not (Cossy).*

They (women on top) don't determine so much on what is running in the papers because they have pressure that comes from government. Because it is a government affiliated paper, pressure comes from the top, mixed up with that, you can't be sure that women will be represented very well according to the way they are handling things. There are always forces that direct their actions (Margie).

This implied that the gender of those on top editorial posts made little impact on the way women are portrayed as feminists think. Media out put need to be rethought of in terms of other imperatives such as professionalism and ownership when dealing with the issue of gender and the media.

However, female journalists also took part of the blame. It was not about numbers of female journalists visible in the media but the quality and the ability of female journalists who are coming up and all their interests. Some females were opposed to the habit of women shying away from the political, business, and sports news and their clustering in features, entertainment and society issues saying this layback attitude leaves men as the determinants of the main issues directing society. Beatrice was unhappy with fellow women:

Time and again, it comes back like it is not the number; it is what they are doing to change the image. Are they really fighting for women rights as female journalists any way or are they laying back without really giving attention to that?(Beatrice).

Findings under this theme indicate that the coverage of women issues has increased but the negative portrayal of women persisted. *The New Vision* deserves commendation for taking the leading role of providing more content about the women issues. As Frank and Beatrice reported, overwhelming number of women magazines, pull outs and special columns and attention to women issues in main news has been a channel of women gaining access to the media and highlighting issues that affected women and children. Certain issues about women that were deemed taboos in the press such as rape and domestic violence were made issues of public concern. As observed by Ross and Byerly (2004:15-18), this is the advantage that comes with more women in the media because certain myths, such as that women 'enjoy' rape that used to be routinely evoked have disappeared as women take on to highlight these issues in a way that sensitizes the public. As one informant Ruth put it, no male journalist would be interested in writing about the impact of inaffordability of sanitary towels to adolescent primary school going girls especially in the rural Uganda. Ruth reported that it was discovered that many of the girls after reaching adolescence dropped out of school because

they could not afford sanitary towels. With these highlights, she said government at one time proposed the free supply of sanitary pads to upper primary school girls.

The issue of the increasing visibility of women in news and the likely impact on the portrayal of women in the media has been an enduring one on the feminist agenda. The debate and discussion into the persistent misrepresentation of women has been revolving around male dominance over the media industries and decision-making positions (van Zoonen 1994; Creedon, 1989&1993; Gallagher 1987; Allan, 2005; Carter et al, 1998; Eide, 2000&2002; Creedon and Cramer, 2007). From the findings of this study, the issue of women representation on top posts does not apply due to the fact that the editor in chief, deputy editor in chief, deputy news editor, features editors and a whole line of subeditors were all women.

Nonetheless, we need to be a little bit reserved to judge whether the presence of these women on the top had an impact on portrayal of women in the media. Although informants expressed concern over them lacking decision-making power and government interference in editorial matters, two years in office was too short a period to realise change. But it is true as informants asserted that story selection and the way women are portrayed are based on news values and how they appeal to the audience meaning that their presence no matter how long they have held these posts would still make little or no difference.

Theoretically, therefore, it is not the question of gender equality that drives the portrayal in the media, but rather professionalism and business motives to capture the audience. As Gallagher (1987:12) pointed out, women are exploited in terms of their sexuality and physical appearance as 'baits' which products are advertised. It is less controversial therefore to argue that the media are primarily in business to make money, not to function as public service although news workers may argue they do this latter as well. This is what Ross (2004) observed when she remarked that the capitalist order is also gendered, because patriarchy is promoted via news media circulations of highly gendered, male-ordered paradigm of social and economic control (2004:62). Therefore, it still bears repeating that *The New Vision* regularly and routinely perform an affirmative function in reinforcing dominant norms and values to 'the public' and confirming the cherished and comfortable beliefs of most of their consumers.

The findings about women portrayal also illuminate fundamental principles of patriarchal thinking relegating the feminine to the private sphere restricting the presentation of women to the physical functions of sex (Lemish, 2004:42; Ross and Byerly, 2004:9). The women limitation to traditional roles related to the private sphere and traditional caring roles in education, health and the like by the media is another cause for concern about their marginality in the media by feminist in a way that it fertilizes a system of associated masculine behaviours that have grown to dominate the public sphere and served to marginalise women (Eide, 2000; Gill, 2007).

As Ross (2004:63) and Eide (2000) noted, while women have penetrated the media to a significant degree, they still find it difficult to achieve the decision making power, even to affect change. This is true with *The New Vision* for example when women on top editorial position cannot not object the use of sexy women in entertainment pages and particular framing of women in powerful positions because one, the newspaper must sale and conform to news values.

We can therefore state that the presence and rise of women and their capacity to influence agenda, practice, and output of the media is limited by several factors. One of them is that many successful women tend to adopt or at least, adapt to the prevailing values and norms of the profession. Women journalists are therefore socialised into a largely male defined journalistic culture, their way of seeing what news is and giving priority to stories is an adjustment to the reigning culture and a difficult one to change. Ugandan press like the media everywhere, has a predilection for events, especially dramatic ones that involve or threaten violence of conflict. As a result, the gender related issues that routinely receive the most media attention are those that fit into dominant perceptions of what constitutes news, among these are violent atrocities, rape, dowry and murder. Again, as Ammu 2004; Eide 2000 reported, women in decision making positions within the media have not been able or willing to make an appreciable difference to definitions of news and hierarchies of news values.

The above is compounded by the apparent shift in the media's priorities and preoccupations since the early 1990s. As Carter et al, 1998; Eide 2000; Ross and Byerly 2004; Ammu 2004: 138; Gill, 2007 pointed out, the increasing market driven nature of the media today has had a major impact on women perceptions of themselves and their roles in society, which, in turn is reflected in their content. Influential sections of the media now seem obsessed with lives of

the bold and the beautiful, the rich and the famous, the pampered and the powerful, and consequently less receptive to the interests and concerns of those who do not belong to this charmed circle. In this altered media environment, women in top posts in the media cannot make any impact as there is obviously less time and space for in-depth coverage of serious issues, including many relating to gender.

Theoretically, it means that, the increase in number of females on top decision making posts does not result into positive portrayal of women in the media. The media's continuing tendency to focus on events rather than processes often results in the neglect of many important issues concerning women. .

5.7 Theme six: Challenges facing female journalists in The New Vision

This theme answers research question number six on challenges female journalists face in the media. Several challenges were expressed. However, balancing between work and family affairs, sexual harassment, men's attitudes towards women, the nature of journalism were the biggest challenges facing women in *The New Vision*. Details follow:

5.7.1 Women as double workers

As mothers and workers, it did not only impact on their performance, but also women lost opportunities like going for further studies because they had to seek consent from their spouses. At times, married women found it difficult to go and work if they did not have maids. In the country, most women depended on untrained house girls from upcountry. There were limited and expensive child care services and therefore, women who faced difficulties in obtaining house girls or affording child care services opted to resign from work. Others simply lost their positions when they go for their maternity leave because they overstayed.

Cossy narrated her experience that after her first born made a year, her domestic helper left so she could not find anyone to help out. Her mother had just suffered a stroke; her husband had helped but could not continue. The only option was for her to resign.

> *I could not go on. So I said let me sit at home and look after my baby. I came in here and brought in my resignation letter and passed it to all my supervisors (Cossy).*

She was however proud of *The New Vision* in a way that it understood her problems as a woman. In this case, the company carried her leave backward that enabled her settle her

problems and resume duty. At times she would be working and the phone rings that the baby was sick and she would be allowed to leave.

Besides the problem of child care, women with spouses who do not understand how journalism works were problematic to the female journalists as seen from this testimony:

> *Female journalists face bigger risks. It would be surprising that female journalists stay on for a very long time because their place makes a challenge. For instance personally, I often go home around ten. At times later, and just imagine if I was a woman and wife of somebody, it is very unlikely that person would tolerate this wife who goes home at ten or twelve at night (Joshua).*

As seen from the findings above, one of the continuing challenges for women in journalism like their counterparts in other fields is the struggle to reconcile the conflicting demands of work and family, a clearly universal and existential reality (Creedon, 1989&1993; Eide, (2000); Van Zoonen, 1994; Ross & Byerly, 2004). It is difficult for women journalists to live up to the contradictory expectations challenging them in the exercise of their profession. As mothers and workers, they had to ensure that none of this interfered with the other and at the same time they had to prove that they can as well perform like their male counterparts.

From the findings of this study, many of the issues confronting female journalists in *The New Vision* were more closely linked to specific social and cultural norms prevalent in the Ugandan society. Female and male journalists alike acknowledged that conservative husbands and those ignorant of journalism demands were a problem to female journalists as this journalist narrates:

> *It gets actually difficult when you are going to tell your husband that I am going to meet a source and I am not going with you and it is even so late and may be this source is a man. How can you go and meet another man at this time and you refuse me to escort you? You have to bargain that this is my profession. Some accept some do not (Beatrice).*

As Maria Del Nevo (2006) observed, unlike women in Scandinavian countries where gender equality in terms of home and child care is practically evident, the obstacles of women in Africa extend from the work-place to pressure from their families and communities. In Scandinavian countries, for example Norway, besides equal payment legislation that allow salary equity, organisations are mandated to employ at least 47 percent of the workforce as women. Three days before the baby is born, the expectant mothers are granted one year maternity leave with 80% of their paid salaries. Child care is a shared responsibility of both

parents while the state has homes for the elderly plus day care centres that have reduced the burden on women as care takers. At the institutional level, work shifts guarantee work and family balance. Contrary the situation is difficult for women in Uganda where legislation for equal pay and employment opportunities are non existent. Expectant mothers are granted 45 or 60 days of paid maternity leave. At this time when the baby needs intensive parental care, the mother journalist should be back on job if not, the job would be lost. It is difficult in a country with very limited and expensive child care centres besides her societal role as a domestic worker and care taker and as a journalist with unpredictable work schedules, she has to report on duty in the morning and leave late in the evening (UMWA, 1998).

Cossy reported that Uganda being a male dominated society, men have got the freedom that after doing the stories, come evening, they can go away and wind up in the bars as it is incumbent on a woman, she is a woman journalist; two, she is a wife and has to dash home and begin looking after children preparing the evening meal:

> *The reality is that a woman will remain a woman even though you are a journalist; actually you are a wife and a mother you will have to perform a balancing act how to reconcile your career as a woman journalist apart from being a mother and a house wife (Cossy).*

This suggests that part of the price women pay for their career success is its impact on long term relationships (Lafky, 1989; Gill, 2007; Eide, 2000). As Eide noted, a simple numerical increase in numbers of women journalists, then, cannot be taken as a straight forward evidence of greater equality, since for women, but not men, achieving this seems to involve major sacrifices in other parts of their lives. While men can expect to have it all-career, partner, children, most women still face a stark choice.

And, if on the one hand women have to deal with objections or disapproval from families and communities, on the other, they have to contend with employers who would be only too happy not to hire a woman or relegate them to dead-end jobs (Ammu, 2004:137). Many women have successfully worked with the belief that such parity is critical to professional advancement though most are ambivalent about it because of real anxieties about safety, domestic responsibilities and family and social censure. Several female journalists opted to leave the profession even for underpaying jobs provided that they can break off during the day and meet their domestic duties. Four of the seven female informants were planning to leave active journalism; one was no longer very active but only contributed as columnists while

those who had entered the marriage institution and were pregnant worried about their job security because they saw getting pregnant as a disappointment to the employer.

> *Employers and editors don't want someone who is going away. They say we hired you and you are supposed to be working. The New Vision hired me because they wanted someone who would travel outside Kampala to do investigative stories and I was capable but now I am pregnant and reached a point where I couldn't. So it is like a disappointment on the side of the employer that is why they always go out there and look for men. They don't want to understand and accept that she is going for labour and maternity leave for two months yet they are paying. They always grumble about it (Beatrice).*

Creedon (1989:187) identified four areas for amplification in relation to the problems female journalists encounter in combining careers with children. She pointed to the need for women journalists to acquire strong basic writing skills, have suitable role models, learn how to persuade employers of their worth so they are not forced to settle for less prestige and pay than men receive and four, plan how to combine family responsibilities successfully with their careers. There is need to address work family balance issue by providing more flexible work schedules. News managers too, must come to understand gender and cultural differences as a means of improving the environment of newsrooms and companies and advancement opportunities for women as Ammu (2004:45) pointed out.

Nonetheless, things are changing. Day care services are coming up and some corporate women can afford to take their children to day care centres while they do their work then have peace of the mind. So compared to the past the reliance on housemaids is likely to reduce and in such a situation, if a female gets a trip it will be easier for male spouses to take care by just dropping the child at day care centre.

5.7.2 Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment at *The New Vision* was a dismissible offence that is, it was punishable by expulsion. However, the existence of this legal provision does not mean that women did not experience sexual harassment. Both male and female journalists acknowledged that women face sexual harassment both at the work place and in the course of their journalistic work from news sources.

Several female journalists reported that senior male members always try to exploit new young girls who come in especially the interns. That they ask them to go out for coffee and when they turned down the offer, they make it such a big deal. That next time the girls go to ask for

a contact, they would be rude because the girls refused to give in to their demands. However, the senior female staff especially the deputy-editor-in-chief, Barbara Kaija was commended for taking responsibility to advise new comers to take care and concentrate on work but most of the time, she has not been taken seriously as one journalist narrates:

> *But there are some girls who still after getting that advice, they still give in yet some men are married and behave like they are going to marry you but they take advantage of you, just make use of you, make fun of you and then throw you there (Peace).*

It was also reported that it takes a lot of passion, courage and zeal for a woman to do investigative reporting. Female journalists receive threats of different kinds from the news sources over stories such as abduction, rape and shooting when they investigate people with influence. Beatrice narrates her experience:

> *I have gotten threats like a few times barely a year, over stories and they were like you are joking, we are going to abduct you; we can take you and rape you (Beatrice).*

In a kind of advice to fellow female journalists to take up hard news beats, Beatrice said there many men out there willing to work with females but cautioned that some men would take advantage of them.

> *It is really true. And any female journalists who have done investigative journalism will testify to that. Most sources will think that when they give me information, I will accept to go out with them even go and sleep with them (Beatrice).*

Beyond threats and forceful requests for sexual offers were verbal expressions and comments about female bodies that insulted or made women uncomfortable. Miriam often experienced this:

> *There comments when you walk around the corridor like, 'your buttocks'. I can be seated and people throw cheats with written words on them. I walk in the corridor and someone wants to hug me by force or do something to me (Miriam).*

Male journalists had no doubt that female journalists were sexually harassed saying, in a country where sexual harassment is not a big issue, many females are sexually harassed but they do not bring it up because they feel they will be embarrassed.

> *I have no doubt that the people they deal with in everyday routine, all they feel is that they are cheap girls to take around and pull around all the time which will not arise for a man (Joshua).*

Sexual harassment at work was an important issue for women in *The New Vision*. The personal suffering and injury resulting from harassment was an aspect of working life that women in *The New Vision* hardly shared with men or fellow women. There was increasing concern not only about ways of tackling individual cases when they arise, but also over how to challenge traditional working relationships which foster sexism and harassment of women.

Sexual harassment reinforces a view of women as playthings and sex objects, creatures which neither the employer nor male worker takes seriously (Hadjifotiou, 1983:2). Hadjifotiou pointed out that unless these attitudes change demands from women for better pay, equal opportunities and positive action programmes may fall on deaf ears. For trade unions, he argued, sexual harassment raises basic aspects of working conditions. That any worker experiencing stress, deteriorating health, absenteeism, dismissal, disciplinary action or any other forms of victimisation expects the support of their trade union. He however noted that when these consequences for women arise as a result of harassment, they may go unrecognised because the harassment either remains hidden or is considered an unquestioned and natural part of working life (:3). This is quite true of the women journalists at *The New Vision*.

The narrations of the experiences of women in *The New Vision* represent the more obvious form of harassment, where most suffered serious distress. Despite the suffering, women go through they felt it difficult revealing even in a face to face interview like this one and many of the experiences were narrated on off record request. Much of the run- of-mill harassment like those expressed by Miriam, Beatrice and Peace undermine self-confidence, professional performance and operates as a constant reminder of women's inferiority.

As feminists contend, sexual harassment is not primarily about sex, or physical attraction, or about boys and men's attempts to be 'nice' to girls or women. Instead, it is about efforts to maintain difference and dominance-an "expression and enforcement of power and a binary gender hierarchy" (Creedon, 1993:99). This is not to say that men do not face sexual harassment. As contemporary studies show, men experienced sexual harassment less severely, and with fewer negative psychological and physical effects than women both in the work place and outside (Creedon, 1993:100).

As indicated in the findings, some of the strategies to avoid sexual harassment included advising new female entrants to mind about their work not looking for men. Women were also advised to avoid late assignments and congested public places. However, continued experience of sexual harassment meant how unrealistic these strategies were as feminists Ross and Byerly (2004:17) contended. Sexual harassment continued to be taken for granted and it would be only wise to go by the advice of Lafky (1993), who reminded us that the progress of women in the journalistic workforce is tied to their progress in society as a whole. This progress Lafky advised hinges on structural changes that will allow equal opportunity for all regardless of gender. Using a current metaphor, she thus advised:

> *If life is a game, the playing field must be levelled; if life is a race, the starting line must be in the same place for everyone (Lafky, 1993:100).*

The metaphor is useful in that, only if sexism and other forms of discrimination are eliminated will all women and men in *The New Vision* have true equal opportunity in the labour force. Meanwhile the progress of women in journalistic workforce during the past two decades can be linked to a combination of labour market conditions and global advocacy for women emancipation and empowerment, Lafky argued that the degree of progress in the coming years will depend on the conditions as well as a commitment to anti-discrimination policies at national and organisation setting, changes in family structures that give men equal responsibility for housework and child care and a commitment on the part of the employers to allow men and women to accommodate the duo demands of career and family responsibilities (1993:101).

Furthermore, the advancement of women will also depend on the activism of those who have a direct stake in the attainment of equal opportunity. Again Lafky (1993) provided a touching advice that those who seek social and economic justice in the workforce would do well to remember the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1963, Jail):

> *We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed (Lafky, 1993:101).*

Therefore, it is incumbent on women in the media to fight for equality through opening up and participating actively in trade unions as a means to a collective voice. While taking action against an individual harasser may remove an immediate problem as in the case when Anna's harasser was expelled (see in the next sub-theme), it does little to alter the working environment which encourages such practices. Hadjifotiou (1983) suggested that trade unions

take up the broader question of sexist attitudes and behaviour, not only in the workplace but also within their trade unions. He added that not only trade unions but also management becoming aware of their responsibilities to tackle harassment at work by reviewing their workplace policies and procedures for dealing with sexual harassment, in part to limit any liability they may have for actions of their employees (1983:4).

5.7.3 Male attitudes towards females

The common stereotype about women as being weak incompetent, indecisive and lacking leadership skills was demystified. Many women worked successfully as managers in *The New Vision* as was discussed in the previous themes. Female reporters were also reported for having dominating all the Journalism Awards (2007) and as best employees of the month at the company level. Oscar comments:

> *Who said they are incompetent? We have been competing in the world of journalism around the year. Those complicated awards, it is women who took. Barbara Among scooped two awards. Isn't she a woman? Carol took the Basic Education Award and Harriet Onyalla (Oscar).*

However, when the researcher went in to find out from females how they relate with male journalists, some kind of injustices were revealed. Cossy revealed that she went in all girls schools and little did she know about the gender differences between men and women in the way they should interact. When she came to *The New Vision* with that sameness behaviour with male colleagues it earned her a nick name:

> *One of them called me a dangerous woman because I relate with them at a peer level and most of our men are not used to that kind of thing. They think that a woman should be submissive to them (Cossy).*

However much women could perform, being a woman itself was seen as a challenge. Beatrice said women are looked at as a weaker sex and when they want to go up, men want to challenge them to prove that actually they are not what they are trying to do or say. Men will want always to disapprove them and discourage them working in a team. In media everyone struggles to see that his or her story appears on page one. Females were looked at as those who could write for the inside pages.

Some male journalists were expelled over their bad attitudes towards females. Anna narrated that she had a bad experience when she had just joined *The New Vision.* That a certain guy

aged in his forties used to despise her work that as a woman she cannot write a page-one story. When the worse came to its worst, she filed the matter with the human resource manager and that male journalist was expelled.

> *I was trying all my level best to write but then he would come and find me writing and say, 'You are writing nonsense. You are writing a brief. We have good stories, that go on page one', trying to discourage me (Anna).*

Such encounters are typical characteristics of patriarchal beliefs and values widely shared about women. The concern of Cossy and Anna exemplifies how the subordination of women is organised and produced at general levels. As feminists put it, men in patriarchal setting set standards and values and are seen as the actors and the first sex while women are seen as the other, those who lack the qualities the dominants exhibit and the second sex (Lorber, 2005:4). So when Cossy relates with her male colleagues at that sameness level, definitely she had to be described as a dangerous woman because she was seen as reversing the social order instead of being submissive.

As Ugandan studies on women and media indicated, women are invariably portrayed as brainless, dependent, indecisive and subservient and sports for men's leisure while educated working women are projected as audacious, insubordinate agitators (UMWA and Fredrick Ebert Siftung 1998a:11). So in such a system women who traverse the social order will continue to be demonised and demoralised. This also applies to Anna's case. Actually women are perpetually stereotyped as domesticated given to leisure, fashion and beauty interests. It is therefore no doubt although unfortunate, that Anna was attacked by a male colleague that she could not write a page-one story because of beliefs that hard news stories that go on page one were a preserve for men.

5.7.4 Journalism as a challenge

The researcher solicited views of the journalists on how they felt about being in journalism. Females were asked how they find journalism while the male journalists were further asked if they would advise their daughters, siblings or other female relatives to join journalism. Journalism was described as exciting and interesting but stressful and challenging. Females on the desk doing the editing saw journalism as exciting because it exposed them to a lot of information but at the same time challenging.

It is a fine experience because you get to learn into polishing peoples' English, you get to learn that people do not really know how to write, you have to sit down and polish but it is also a bit boring because you have to sit for long hours from morning to evening (Miriam).

Well, it is an exciting responsibility, it can be stressful but at the same time it exposes you to a lot of information. When I was doing my masters unlike others, I found that most of the time I knew a lot of information more than what my lecturers expected (Cossy).

Those females in active journalism described journalism as a tough profession, one that requires, love and passion for it, it requires one to be aggressive and at the same time patience. It was seen as a profession where very few women have been successful in life.

Most females were planning to go for further studies and leave active journalism.

I don't think I will advance in journalism. My plan is after three years, I will be going for another profession. There are few serious female journalists I can admire in the country. Again according to our culture, since journalism there is a lot of moving around, you move like a hawker as if you are hawking goods (Anna).

My career plan is to go back to school; I think I have learnt enough editing, what really? So, I plan to go back to school to become a communication expert, behaviour change expert but not in The New Vision (Miriam).

I wish to do masters in say communication or media studies… I might get out of the media after my masters but I see myself doing communication work (Peace).

Whereas most female journalists were planning to quit active journalism, most male journalists expressed interest to allow their daughters, siblings and other female relatives to join journalism if they demonstrated the passion and ability to write. Oscar said there were serious female journalists who have set precedence in *The New Vision* and saw no reason why he should not encourage females to do journalism. Simon was optimistic that journalism in the country was picking up and that the conditions of working were improving and argued females to embrace this opportunity. For Evans, unlike other professions journalism is very interesting where one cannot get bored. Every time the situation is different and that it gives one an opportunity to interact with all kinds of people. Hence, journalists find it easier to fit in any society. He wants the daughter to be a journalist.

Absolutely yes, my daughter likes what I am doing and she wants to become a journalist and I have no problem with that (Evans).

Contrary, Frank and Joshua said they would not advise their female relatives to join journalism. The former reported that if it is a calling, he would not deny the females but on his own personal advice, he would not because a woman is a care taker of the family and it is just hard.

That thing is hard. It is the only peculiar job you have to work 24 hours and apart from that it is hectic given the role of a woman and our setting. Yes, there could be emancipation and other things but emancipation does not stop her from bearing children and if she is bearing, she has to breast feed and look after her little family (Frank).

The informant description of journalism as a peculiar job where you have to work 24 hours does not literary mean that one has to be in the newsroom day and night. It referred to the demanding nature of journalism whereby it has unpredictable happenings and journalists may be called on at any time when events unfold.

Joshua reported that he would not advise any of her female relatives because journalism was becoming so competitive, infiltrated by so many people, is unmarketable and that the job opportunities are now so scanty.

The expressions about journalism give us different and contradictory statements. What this implies is that journalism is changing. The field is now open and competitive posing challenges and opportunities. The challenge is on female journalists to learn how to adapt and adopt to the situation because things are not likely to reverse.

The question of women defining journalism as a challenging field according to Creedon (1989) arises in connection with the issue of acquiring basic writing skills. It was theorised that journalism is written in terms of winning and loosing, conflict and controversy i.e. "the rise of the fourth estate", "the race for news" not that of women, a submerged group who have been conditioned to develop alternative values based on "concord, harmony, affiliation and community" (Covert ,1981:4 cited in Creedon, 1989:187)

In Covert's opinion, the old newsroom practice, conveyed women's position in relation to male journalists, revealing the fact that women reporters and their human interest stories are 'only marginally relevant to the rational-male business of the newsroom day. According to this line of thought, the preference of women journalists for sequences rather than news-editorial reflect the social conditioning of many women and their avoidance of male-designed news formulas. She pointed out that if women are less conflict oriented than men, they are likely to chose media fields outside the mainstreams of journalism (Covert, 1989:188). Covert advised that journalism schools should put emphasis on the blending of news and features which has occurred in recent years. To a degree this represents a blurring of the sharp lines that denote 'hard news' (the front page news denoting action) and 'soft news' (the feature stories appealing to emotions). Calling attention to the blatant sex overtones of these terms,

Creedon (1989) called on editors not to perpetuate old stereotypes by assigning women feature stories while grooming males for hard news.

This marks the end of data presentation and discussion. The next chapter concludes the study by highlighting major findings and implications for theory and contemporary studies then finalises with recommendations.

Chapter six: Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

The above discussions make a lot of interesting revelations about women access, employment and participation in news production with important implications for theory and contemporary research on women and the media as presented in the main findings below.

6.2 Main findings

On the background information on informants, I have shown that female journalists in *The New Vision* were younger, more educated but with less experience in journalism than men. They were more likely to fall out of journalism practice than men, a finding that concurs with the global findings documenting the situation and problems of female journalists in the media (Creedon 1989 &1993; IFJ 1990; Van Zoonen 1994; GMMP, 1995, 2000, 2005; Creedon and Cramer 2007).

The discussion on women access to media has revealed that unlike the past, there were more opportunities for women recruitment in *The New Vision* due to the world wide advocacy for women emancipation and empowerment that was embraced by the National Resistance Movement (NRM). The developments in information communication technologies also opened up opportunities for women to compete on the job market. Further more, the evolvement of societal needs, emerging global issues and products necessitated the reconsideration of media work in relation to gender as feminists Thornham (2007) and Van Zoonen (1991) contend. However, barriers to equal access and opportunities in recruitment were evidenced by job offers based on personal connections. As Gallagher (1987), Creedon (1993), Van Zoonen (1994), Ross and Byerly (2004) pointed out, women potential applicants were more likely than men to be excluded because they were more vulnerable than men to manipulations by those in decision making power and to suffer from discrimination arising from societal attitudes.

More interesting results came from the discussion on the employment status of women. Women in *The New Vision* held top managerial and editorial posts. This demystified the feminist media assertion of women not occupying top posts in the media due to patriarchy (Eide, 2000 &2002; Gallagher 1987; Van Zoonen, 1994; Creedon, 1993). After twenty years of *New Vision* existence, Ms. Else De Temmerman and Barbra Kaija were the first women in

the history of the paper to hold the post of editor-in-chief and its deputy. However, we must also consider the fact that unlike other professions like the army where people raise through ranks, there few tops that require periodical promotions. This couple with the fact that most women journalists hardly serve for a long time to qualify for those top posts, face problems with work- family balance, lack of role models and mentors.

Structural loopholes on women professional advancement - an impediment in their path to the top editorial pyramid were revealed. The selection procedure and the conditions attached for one to qualify for further training served as a deterrent rather than an encouragement. Contrary, *The New Vision* training policy commitment to its staff career development, conditions such as having worked for at least five years and mandatory resignation made the scheme not very useful to women. As Creedon and Cramer (2007) pointed out most women opt to leave the news business entirely for careers that are more rewarding, an expression that dominated women career plans in *The New Vision.*

Moreover, those women who made it to the top continued to be challenged either by the other bosses or those with a direct stake in the media. A case in point here was the resignation of three women managers and the said woman-editor-in- chief consecutively. This justifies the feminists' argument that there are forces that always direct the action of women in the media. The fact the woman-editor-in-chief resigned over a fight for the papers editorial independence from government, justifies the feminist contention that the presence of women in the media does not reflect that they have achieved power to make decisions.

Staff salaries remained a private issue. Why the paper was not transparent on salaries for her permanent employees can be better understood by labour analysts who have disclosed that the movement of women into formally male dominated fields has led to lower wages and salaries (Creedon, 1989:167). Young female journalists were dissatisfied with their pay on grounds that they realised that the company used their ignorance and low bargaining power to underpay them. This is a trend referred to as occupation re-segregation. It is true as researchers indicated that salary differentials between men and women arise from the fact that employers may not invest much in women because women do not work for many years, break off to rear children thus they invest less in their labour market skills (Creedon, 1989).

The discussion on women participation in the process of news production reveals that there has been increased awareness about the suppressive patriarchal values among women journalists in *The New Vision* and their effort to challenge this order exemplified by their venture into political, photojournalism and other hard news reporting. However, most female reporters and editors covered and edited soft news on women, children, food, education, lifestyle, fashion issues as opposed to their male counterparts specialising in hard news like politics, business, sports, crime, investigations and photography. This is a global phenomenon (GMMP 1995, 2000, 2005). As argued by feminists, gender enters the newsroom practice to confine women to domestic cores, reinforce cultural values and to justify superiority of men over men. The gendered division of beats was constructed in a way that serious news values in public sphere were aligned to be of interest to men while society and women issues were framed in relation to the domestic private sphere for women. As Tuchman, 1978; UNESCO, 1987; van Zoonen, 1991&1994, and Carter et al, 1998, noted, most of this work division employed the notion of patriarchy and stereotypes to advantage.

However, feminist obsession with hard news such as politics, business and sports underplays the importance of other very important issues affecting humanity. First, having a voice on issues affecting women and children is important in terms of empowerment. Women in *The New Vision* through the so-called soft news have contributed to the understanding and widened the debate on fundamental human rights and freedoms that affected women and children that were hardly prioritised in the media. It is through soft news that social issues were analysed that contributed general awareness and better conditions of women, girls and children.

Secondly, feminist focus on hard news as the most important news fails to look at the positive side of the changing nature of journalism and societies evolving roles and needs. It is true that commercialisation of the media has also resulted to media dependence and exploitation of topics and angles associated with femininity such as human interest so as to capture a wider audience as Carter et al, 1998; Van Zoonen, 1998 and Gill, 2007 highlighted. But on the other hand it is also important to realise that commercialisation of the media has opened more job opportunities for women and removed women from the background to become celebrities. Therefore journalism is changing with changes in society and it is no longer the old journalism preoccupied by politics.

Other factors contributing to the gendered division of beats included media ownership in which the editorial policy was an obstacle to women venture into investigative and political reporting. These patterns of news gathering are not likely to change even with the increased number of women because news work is guided by professional news values critiqued by feminists for being gendered and in favour of men (Creedon, 1993; Tuchman, 1978; Eide, 2000&2002.

This study has also shown that men dominated both female and male journalistic notebooks as major news sources. This turns down the feminist assertions that the women sources in the media would increase with more women on top posts and in the newsroom (Gallagher, 1987; Creedon, 1989&1993). This finding concurs with contemporary studies indicating the under representation of women in the media (GMMP, 1995, 2000, 2005; WIN 2005; PEJ 2005). Like elsewhere in society, women are a rarity in most influential positions like politics and business that in part justify this scenario. So, the whole social order is problem. But also female journalist in *The New Vision* continue to face difficulties in accessing women sources even those few in powerful positions as they tend to turn away from journalists. So Eide (2000 & 2002) was right when she apportions blame to media for focussing on feminine characteristics of women rather than their ideas, a move that has seen many women turn away from public exposure. But suffice to say, the fight for equality is a struggle that calls on women to make more concerted efforts to use the media as a platform for highlighting their needs, interests and problems.

It is very true that traditional news values steer reporting in the direction of the powerful men and their activities at the expense of women lives and other marginal groups in society. This implies that the gender of the journalist does not make a difference in reporting. It means both men and women were responsive to the ideology of male superiority manifested through the journalistic consciousness and professional routines in news coverage (Byerly 2004). Unless the status quo of women in society changes, the criterion for selecting news will continue in favour of men.

We have also realised that the coverage of women issues in media content had increased in general news, special columns and magazines. However, negative portrayal of women persisted even with more females in the newsroom just like elsewhere in the world (Lemish, 2007; Eide, 2000&2002; Tuchman, 1978; GMMP 1995, 2000 &2005). Since women were

minority of the prominent persons, they fetch media attention with bizarre. Stereotypical and sexualised characterisations in entertainment and features were confessed by editors as ways of attracting readers. Although progress has been made in the area of content on women issues, women are also used as identities of creating dedicated consumers while simultaneously promoting hegemonic ideology that sustains both capitalism and patriarchy (Gill, 2007; Ross and Byerly, 2004).

Finally, the discussion on challenges facing female journalists show that reconciling the conflicting demands of work and family, sexual harassment and the nature of journalistic work were the major burdens confronting female journalists just like any females anywhere in any field worldwide (Creedon, 1993; Eide, 2002&2002; van Zoonen, 1994; Ammu, 2004). Being double workers affected women in their access, employment status, performance, promotion and in their professional advancement. Females had to fulfil their maternal roles, seek approval from their spouses and prove their worth to the employer. This was worsened by limited family care services and inability to afford them. Unlike women in Scandinavian countries where domestic cores and child caring are shared responsibilities by both wife and husband, the unpredictable work schedules, the long late and irregular hours are at odds with societal expectations of a true wife in the traditional African sense, who is solely supposed to look after children as well as the husband and perform all house work (Tamale, 2006; Nassanga 1994; Kharono, 2002; UMWA, 1998).

Women at *The New Vision* experienced sexual harassment from both male colleagues at the workplace and the news sources. Although sexual harassment was dismissible offence, women continued to suffer distress in silence as it is considered an unquestionable and a natural part of working life (Hadjifotiou, 1989; van Zoonen, 1994; Lafky, 1993). This kind of behaviour by men and the fear of female victims to expose the harassment confirms the feminist assertions that the intention is not to have sex but an effort to maintain difference and domination, an expression and enforcement of the power of men and a binary gender hierarchy (Creedon, 1993; Ross and Byerly, 2007).

7:0 Recommendations

Many changes with regard to women empowerment and emancipation have happened especially in politics but much remains to be done with regard to women's participation in and access to the media, and its impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women in Uganda. For example, the constitution of Uganda provides for Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunities in favour of groups marginalised on the basis of gender, age, disability or any other reason created by history, tradition or custom for the purpose of redressing imbalances which exist among them. This would have been more beneficial if there were provisions for monitoring and evaluation to ensure that what is provided for in the constitution is implemented. Without follow up, holding media institutions accountable for its commitments to gender equality is difficult.

Of vital importance for further progress in this respect are more wide spread awareness and acceptance about the relevancy of media as a powerful instrument for women advancement and empowerment and the need for a gender perspective in media matters. This is because the modern journalism characterised by commercialism, technology, the rise of celebrity, life style, tabloidization, freelancing and the columnist is likely to impact on women employment, participation and portrayal and therefore require a renewed mandate for media industries to promote women's interests rather than reactions to competition. Second, the sensitization of media professionals in both public and private sector including those involved in entertainment to gender and other issues my help to tackle the confusing and conflicting signals currently emerging from the media.

The situation of women in journalism requires attention and action from a number of players. With the government share in *The New Vision,* the potential of governmental intervention in personnel policies is very high. In any case most journalists of both sexes would balk at the prospect of official interference in media matters that compromise editorial independence. Self examination and introspection leading to transformation from within would therefore, be a more acceptable route to change. Among the issues that may bear consideration by those who run *The New Vision* are:

- the desirability and stated policy and transparent procedures with regard to recruitment, remuneration, promotion, work assignment an other matters that affect professional

access, employment and advancement, in keeping with essential principles of gender justice and equity,

- the need to institute measures and mechanisms to counter or minimize the effect of negative gender-based attitudes and behaviours with regard to sexual harassment.

- the possibility of systematic and structural adjustments in work schedules not as a special concession to women, but in recognition of the need for all human beings to achieve a healthy balance between professional and life, which would, in turn enhance both productivity and creativity.

- the practicability of institutional support to women beyond the mandatory maternity leave during particular periods in their lives when it would make a crucial difference to their ability to cope with the often conflicting demands of work and family. This would help to ensure that women's current and potential contributions to the field are not frittered away through the neglect of their felt needs and real problems since these are not rooted in individual shortcoming but in societal biases and inequalities.

Associations and /or unions representing journalists of both sexes can also play a role in ensuring gender justice and equity within the media organisation by advocating or supporting initiatives and changes in policies and procedures as well as measures and mechanism to ensure elimination of gender based disparities and disadvantages in access, employment and advancement.

Organisations, associations and / or networks of women in the media can call attention to the need for change through research and documentation, dissemination of information, discussion and debate, advocacy and lobbying. They can also initiate mutually supportive strategies such as the sharing of resources, training and mentoring to enhance women's confidence, capabilities and potential for advancement within the media.

Media training institutes seem to be appropriate sites for strategies to bring about desirable changes in the media workforce and thereby media workplace, media content, and, eventually even media policy. These institutes can contribute to the process of transformation by

sensitizing students to the importance of gender awareness, equality and equity in all aspects of life including professional life in the following ways:

In a conscious effort to sensitise young people undergoing training for careers in the media to important subjects that require but do not always receive media attention, courses that seek to increase students awareness and understanding of a range of issues, including those affecting various disadvantaged sections of society such as women. One of these would be gender premised on the fact that holistic quality coverage of gender related issues is an integral part of media's role in a democratic society and that awareness of gender as a major force in society is a professional asset for all aspiring journalists, irrespective of the branch of journalism they choose.

Such courses would help demonstrate that issues of gender-popularly but somewhat inaccurately known as women issues should be a concern to both men and women because they affect everybody. The course would help question the tendency in the media to ghettoize gender and related issues and to highlight the growing recognition that all issues, and that women issues are human issues, and that women's rights are human rights.

The courses would also challenge the traditional, artificial duality of 'hard' and 'soft new stories in the media, which privileges the former and relegates gender, among other equally vital issues to the margins of the latter.

It would be an attempt to promote the integration of gender consciousness into media coverage across the board through the exploration of gender issues in the context of some key areas of standards journalistic coverage, such as violence, politics, economics and culture.
It would seek out to demonstrate that human development in general and women development in particular need to be on the agenda of the media. It would help tackle common myths and misconceptions about gender, patriarchy, feminism and women's movements and the critical analysis of the media and gender.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview Guides

Interview Guide for female reporters

My name is Jane Anyango. Currently, am pursuing a Masters of Philosophy in Media studies at the University of Oslo- Norway. I have come back to Uganda to collect data for my master's thesis. This study seeks to solicit journalists' perceptions on women access, employment and participation in news production to determine how well the newspaper is doing in repairing the past gender inequities. The purpose is to get the picture of how female journalists are fairing in formally male dominated occupation, their contributions in news making, success and challenges they face. The information you will provide in this study will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Please feel free discuss with me.

Background information

Briefly talk about yourself, your name, sex, age and your marital status. What are your academic and professional qualifications? How long have you been in Journalism and at *The New Vision* in particular?

Access and employment

- What were you doing before joining *The New Vision?*
- Why did you choose to join *The New Vision?*
- What is the nature of your work?
- How did you access *The New Vision?*
- How do you feel about the recruitment procedure at *The New Vision?*
- How do you feel about promotions of journalist in *The New Vision?*
- What chances are there for you to be promoted in *The New Vision?*
- How do you feel about the personnel policy on staff advancement if any?
- Have you had any chance to go for further training under the organisation?
- What chances do you think are there for you to advance under the organisation policy?
- What could be the hardships for women advancement if any and why?
- What are your career plans as far as training is concerned?
- What do you have to say about salary distribution between men and women?
- As an employee of *The New Vision*, what are your entitlements?
- What problems are likely to hinder your professional performance?

- What do you say about domestic and professional obligations for women journalists?

Professional performance
- What motivated you to join journalism?
- How do you find journalism?
- How do you feel being a female journalist?
- What kind of stories do you cover?
- What considerations are made during story assignment?
- How do you find *The New Vision* editorial policy?
- In what ways does it aid or hinder your potential in news coverage?
- What kinds of news sources in terms of gender are easily accessible to you?
- What is your feeling toward stereotypes that women are incompetent, indecisive, men's pleasure that will use informal ways to top ranks?
- How do male journalistic and the organization perceive of your performance?
- How do your family and community look at you as a female journalist?
- How do you feel about the portrayal of women in the media?
- How do you feel about the proportion of men and women in *The New Vision*?
- To what extent can you say that the increasing visibility of women in the newsroom and on top editorial posts has impact on women coverage and portrayal in the media?
- What are your immediate and future career plans?
- What are the most challenging aspects you face as a female journalist in *The New Vision?*
- Is there any thing more you feel to add or subtract?

Thank you very much for all this information and your time for me, we come to the end of this interview.

Name of interviewee …………………

Place of interview …………………….

Time of interview from………..to …….

Date of Interview………………

Interview guide for male reporters

My name is Jane Anyango. Currently am pursuing a Masters of Philosophy in Media studies at the University of Oslo- Norway. I have come back to Uganda to collect data for my master's thesis. This study seeks to solicit journalists' perceptions on women access, employment and participation in news production to determine how well the newspaper is doing in repairing the past gender inequities. The purpose is to get the picture of how female journalists are fairing in formally male dominated occupation, their contributions in news making, success and challenges they face. The information you will provide in this study will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Please feel free to discuss with me.

Background information and access to the organization

Briefly talk about yourself, your name, sex, age and your marital status. What are your academic and professional qualifications? How long have you been in Journalism and at *The New Vision* in particular?

Male perceptions on Access and employment

- What do you have to say about the employment opportunities for both men and women in *The New Vision?*
- On what basis can you say that women and men have equal employment opportunities?
- In your view, why are there more men than women journalist working as photojournalists and hard news reporters?
- Are men more competent than women? Please explain.
- How do you feel about staff recruitment at *The New Vision*?
- Do you think there are equal opportunities for both men and women? If so explain
- What about promotions? Do you see any problems in the promotion procedure? Please highlight.
- What is your opinion about professional advancement of men and women in *The New Vision?*
- What do you say about *The New Vision* policy on professional advancement if any?
- In what circumstances do you think chances for professional advancement for female journalists may be limited?
- What do you have to say about salary distribution between men and women? Is there a scale to allow equity?

- What is your opinion about female double role as mothers and workers?
- What bearing does it have on the recruitment, promotion and professional advancement of women?
- How do you gauge the organisational policies in response to women's double role if any?

Perceptions of male journalists on women professional performance

- After twenty years, *The New Vision* is now headed by a woman. How do you feel working under a female editor?
- How do you judge her performance vis-à-vis her predecessor**?**
- What difference can you tell in the way females do their work from men?
- What is it that women can do better than men?
- Where are women weaknesses in relation to the professional performance?
- What is your comment on the common stereotypes about women as being incompetent, indecisive and lacking leadership skills?
- What kinds of issues are likely to be covered by females than men?
- To extent can you say that gender plays a role during story assignment?
- What kind of news sources do you think are easily accessible to females than men?
- Why do you think certain sources are accessible to men than women?
- How do you judge *The New Vision* editorial policy in reference to reporters preference of certain beats to others?
- In your opinion what are the major barriers women face in covering certain beats?
- In your assessment, how is the gender distribution in *The New Vision*?
- To what extent can you say that the increasing visibility of women in *The New Vision* has led to gender balanced coverage and improved portrayal of women in the media?
- What could be the obstacles towards attaining gender balanced media coverage?
- Do you have any other information to add or subtract?

Thank you for your cooperation and the time we have been together. This is the end of the interview.

Name of interviewee …………………

Place of interview …………………….

Time of interview from………..to …….

Date of Interview………………

Interview guide for female editors

My name is Jane Anyango. Currently am pursuing a Masters of Philosophy in Media studies at the University of Oslo- Norway. I have come back to Uganda to collect data for my master's thesis. This study seeks to solicit journalists' perceptions on women access, employment and participation in news production to determine how well the newspaper is doing in repairing the past inequities. The purpose is to get the picture of how female journalists are fairing in formally male dominated occupation, their contributions in news making, success and challenges they face. The information you will provide in this study will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Please feel free to discuss with me.

Background information

Briefly talk about yourself, your name, sex, age and your marital status. What are your academic and professional qualifications? How long have you been in Journalism and at *The New Vision* in particular?

Access and employment

- How did you become an editor?
- What is your observation on the recruitment exercise in *The New Vision*?
- How fair is the recruitment exercise?
- How do you feel about promotions in *The New Vision?*
- What factors may limit women chances for promotion?
- What is your opinion on the organisational policy on professional advancement?
- What chances under the organisational policy do you think are there for your career development?
- What could be the hardships for women advancement if any and why?
- What do you have to say about salary distribution between men and women? Is there a scale to allow equity?
- As a female worker, how do you describe your double role at home and professional work?
- In what ways do you think this double affects women performance?
- In what ways do you think women can perform their professional work at the same footing with men given this double role? If yes how?
- What are your entitlements?

Professional performance

- How do you find working as a female editor?
- What is your opinion about the common stereotypes about women as incompetent, indecisive and lacking managerial skills?
  - What kinds of issues are more likely to be covered by women than men?
  - In your view, what determines the beats that females or males specialise in?
  - As an editor, what do you consider when assigning stories; does gender play part in story assignment?
  - According to your observation, what kings of news sources in terms of gender are more likely to accessible to female s than men?
  - How do you find it working with female journalists as compared to men?
  - What is good about working with female journalists?
  - What are some of the challenges of working with females?
  - To what extent can you say that the editorial policy may determine the kinds of beats female go for?
  - How do you describe your professional relationship with male colleagues?
  - What are challenges that you face as a female editor?
  - How do you cope with these problems?
  - How does society and your family perceive of your work as a journalist?
  - What do you say about the portrayal of women in *The New Vision*?
  - To what extent can you say that the increasing visibility of female journalists and their being on top posts can lead to gender sensitivity in the media content?
  - What do you think are the most challenging aspects facing women journalists in *The New Vision*?
  - Do you have anything to add subtract?

Thank you for your cooperation, time and answering my questions. We now come to the end of this interview.

Name of interviewee …………………

Place of interview …………………….

Time of interview from………..to …….

Date of Interview………………

Interview Guide for male editors

My name is Jane Anyango. Currently am pursuing a Masters of Philosophy in Media studies at the University of Oslo- Norway. I have come back to Uganda to collect data for my master's thesis. This study seeks to solicit journalists' perceptions on women access, employment and participation in news production to determine how well the newspaper is doing in repairing the past inequities. The purpose is to get the picture of how female journalists are fairing in formally male dominated occupation, their contributions in news making, success and challenges they face. The information you will provide in this study will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Please feel free to discuss with me.

Background information

- What is your name?
- How old are you?
- What is your marital status?
- What are your professional qualifications?
- Do you have any special training in journalism?
- How long have you been in the journalism profession?
- How long have you served in the New Vision?

Male –editors' perceptions on Access and employment

- What do you have to say about the employment opportunities for both men and women in *The New Vision*?
- What is your comment on criteria followed when recruiting staff in *The New Vision*?
- How do you feel about staff promotion at *The New Vision*?
- What do you have to ay about *The New Vision* policy on professional advancement if any?
- In what circumstances do you think female chances for professional advancement may be limited?
- What do you have to say about salary distribution between men and women? Is there a scale to allow equity?
- What is your opinion about double role as parents and workers?
- What bearing does it have on the recruitment, promotion and professional advancement of women?

Male perceptions on women professional performance

- What is the nature of your work?
- How is the proportion of male to female journalists on your desk?
- In your own opinion, what could be the reason for that number of female journalists on your desk?
- Looking at your desk, what does it require for any female journalist to fit on it?
- What kinds of issues are more likely to be covered by females more than men? What explains that?
- What kind of news sources do you think are easily accessible to females than men?
- How do you judge women professional performance vis-à-vis men**?**
- What is it that women can do better than men in journalism according to your experience?
- Where are women weaknesses in relation to the professional performance?
- To what extent can you say that gender determines the kinds of beats women prefer or what they are assigned by editors?
- In your view, why are there more men than women journalist working as photojournalists, sports journalists and hard news reporters?
- Are men more competent than women? Please explain.
- How would you feel if your daughter, sister or wife did the job you are doing?
- After twenty years, *The New Vision* is now headed by a woman. How do you feel working under a female editor?
- What is your comment on the common stereotypes about women as being incompetent, indecisive and lacking leadership skills?
- What aspects in the editorial policy are likely to inhibit women coverage of other issues?
- In your assessment, how is the gender distribution in *The New Vision?*
- To what extent can you say that the increasing visibility of women in *The New Vision* has to gender balanced coverage?
- What could be the obstacles towards attaining gender balanced media coverage in media?
- What do you think are the problems facing women journalists in *The New Vision* and Media in general?
- Do you have any other information to add?

Thank you for sacrificing your time for this interview. This is the end of it, thanks.

Name of interviewee …………………

Place of interview …………………….

Time of interview from………..to …….

Date of Interview………………

Appendix ii: List of interviewees who consented to the use of their real identification.

Barbara Among

Carol Natukunda

David Enyaku

Fred Ouma

James Odomel

Jimmy Adriko

John Kakande

Louis Jadwong

Steven Candia

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