

**MEDIA COVERAGE AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN UGANDA
A CASE STUDY OF KAMULI
DISTRICT.**

BY:

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Declaration

I **Milcah Edith** declare that this research report is original work and has never been submitted to any university /institution for any award.

Signature *Milcah Edith*.....

04.09.2013.....

MILCAH EDITH.

DATE

Approval.

This is to certify that the research of **Milcah Edith** has been done under my supervision and is now ready for submission to the faculty of Arts and Humanities for the award of Bachelor degree of Mass Communication of Kampala International University.

Signature.....

Date.....

SUPERVISOR MR. MUDOOLA HERBET

Dedication

I wish to dedicate this research to all the women in Uganda, the People of Kamuli District and all the Mass Communication students at Kampala International University

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to my supervisor for guiding me throughout the duration of the dissertation. I thank all who have made this study a success especially my colleagues in the mass communication class.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study.

Information is an important tool for national development. However, it needs to be quality information if it is to bring about positive change – not only at individual but also societal level. Positive change comes about when individual members harness their resources towards a common goal. This communal effort comes about if such citizens share a common understanding of issues that affect them. It is for this reason that the media plays a crucial role in providing a platform for sharing ideas and ensuring participatory development. This virtually empowers them.

The media is described as the fourth estate because the profession's founding fathers established strict rules and values that became the journalist's constitution. We can see this was always present in the works and reports of great journalists such as James Cameron and Alistair Cooke. They realized right at the outset of the birth of the mass media that the power of the media lies in representing the public interest before the three other estates. The media simply have no power without the people.

The media has a significantly critical role to play and empower women in all aspects of economic, political and social. Newspapers, radios, magazines and televisions internationally have been instrumental in empowering women globally. However, little has been achieved especially at regional and grassroots levels. Newspapers, radios, televisions have not touched the ground particularly in empowering women. BBC radio has special programmes scheduled for women; the station has appropriate means that improves awareness and offer knowledge that helps them improve their livelihood. Also newspapers have been critical in assembling women issues at the forefront through their special pullout advocating for women rights and empowerment. This is not enough. A lot needs to be done than meets the eye.

1.2 Statement of the Problem.

Empowerment is a social action process that promotes participation of people, organization, and communities in gaining control over their lives in their communities and large societies. Empowerment is not characterized as achieving power to dominate others, but rather power to act with others to effect change. (Wallerstein and Bernstein 1988:380 cited in Stein 1997).

According to the United Nations Entity on Gender and Equality for Women's empowerment, women's economic empowerment, political voices, participation and leadership, ending violence committed against women and girls; and engaging women and women's rights fully in national development planning needs high-quality support from UN, intergovernmental processes and ensuring that the mainstream media plays its role in highlighting areas for action. (Michelle Bachelet; 2011).

In Uganda, the media has tried to play a constructive role through its coverage in women empowerment. This is according to Cate Nambi of UBC. Attention have been put in the economic aspects like farming in the newspapers special pull outs.

The study of mass communication is based on the assumption that the media has a significant impact,(McQuail 2000:416).

The media serves as an important link between public and other sectors (Women and Community Projects) and as such, has promoted the other sectors like political, economic and social responsibility. Through the media strategy of communal listenership, some women have formed listeners clubs across Kamuli district in the Eastern Region. Listeners' clubs have a major role in the design and running of programmes (KBS Radio, 2010). They listen and are able to track programmes and make inputs as to what should be encouraged or changed. This promotes ownership and relevance of programmes to the people. Listeners identify themselves with the programmes and listeners clubs are a valid indicator of media reception thus contributing towards the social aspect.

However, little has been achieved on women empowerment through coverage especially in rural areas. Most of the stories in the print media coverage are shallow, and reporters just use what is in front of them.

It is against this background that this research is being carried out to bridge the gap.

1.3 The General objective

The general objective of this study is to investigate the impact of media coverage on women empowerment in rural areas.

1.4 Specific Objective

To examine the role of the newspapers in empowering rural women.

To find out contributions of local media in their effort to empower of rural women.

To establish the challenges faced by the media.

1.5 Research Questions

Do newspapers empower women in their content coverage?

What role do the electronic media play to empower women in the rural areas?

What challenges do the media face in their struggle for women empowerment?

1.6 Scope of the Study

1.6.1 Content Scope/ Subject.

The study will investigate the impact of media coverage in empowering Women in rural areas in Uganda. The study will be carried in rural areas where the media's impact has not been felt massively particularly putting women and media practitioners at the frontline.

1.6.2 Geographical Scope.

The study will be conducted in the rural area in Kamuli district. And a number of 135 people will be selected and interviewed from different fraternity.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The study will be beneficial for the following reasons;

The study will contribute to the promotion and increase on media coverage in empowering women economically, politically and ensuring social responsibility.

It will also come up with recommendations for Ugandan and international media in applying the framework to their coverage on different concerns like gender and women empowerment.

This study will also contribute to long-term conflict mitigation and reconciliation

The study will help researchers to further their studies in the field of media roles in order to improve the available literature in the field.

The study is of importance to the researcher herself as it is a requirement for the award of degree in her studies.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter will be composed up of relevant literatures required to find answers and connect to the research questions. It also attempts to identify the gaps as far as the topic is concerned.

2.1 Conceptual frame work.

Media

News papers
Radio
Television

Women (Empowerment)

Knowledge
Awareness
Entertain

2.2 The role of the newspapers in empowering rural women.

The media whether electronic or print constitute one veritable means of effecting social change. (Dominick, 2011, Orewere, 2006). In fact, the power of the media in this regard is fundamental when looking at media coverage in connection with women empowerment. From ancient times through various civilizations, the capacity of the media as a catalyst for social, economic and political change is highly acknowledged.

Zummerman (1990:75 cited in Stein 1997:63) says that there is a bidirectional relationship between empowerment and participation. As he puts it “empowered persons are more likely to participate in an organization or society at large while on the other hand, participation promotes empowerment. Encouraging women therefore to participation through media programming in key social activities whether economic, political is a deliberate effort to engender empowerment. This view aligns with the definition of empowerment by Wallerstein and Bernstein (1988:380 cited in Stein; 1997).

From the perspective of present day Uganda when the process of democratization is permeating all sectors of society, the media is a tool that can empower the information-deprived communities to contribute to decisions that affect their lives (Girard, 1992). The ideals of

community radio relate to the normative theories of the media, where the media are considered tools of liberation, and channels which people can use to agitate for political and cultural change (Thompson, 1994, Lewis, 2002).

Linden [1999, online] writes that, Formulation of policy and planning procedures in the Third World are characterized by vagueness in conceptualization, and National Plans are often prescriptive than analytical, showing the gaps between reality and rhetoric, intention and implementation [PP: 159].

These gaps affect how community radio contributes to the process of democracy.

Linden further comments, What prevails are isolated policies on various media and communication components and national governments playing a role in their ownership, management and control...in many African countries there is a glaring contrast between officially declared intentions and reality.....[PP: 168]

Opubor (1999) stresses the need to have communication and information policies at all levels that are pro- per and reflect a wider understanding of how accessing information can aid the poor take part in the development process.

Taking a historical approach- a departure this time from the rest of the writers- Wanyeki (1999) notes that regulating the media in the East African region has historically taken on a barrier-approach. She says instead of ensuring access to information and the means to generate information by all categories of people, governments have focused on policies that control this access.

Gawaya 1999 (online) argues that government policies are sometimes formulated poorly and used as a punitive tool against the sector they are meant for.

“License fees are sometimes used as a political tool for those radio stations that go out of line with the government views”.

Enabling communications policies are therefore an empowering tool in the democratization process. Such policies should provide the media an operational environment free of uncertainties but guarantees sustainability. (Buckley, 2000).

2.3 Challenges facing the Media in Uganda.

According to Bernard Tabaire (Daily Monitor: 2012) says the challenges ranges from lack of training and high turnover of practicing journalists to bribery. This has caused lack of objectivity while presenting both sides of the story. Some journalists lack the basics required of a practicing journalist and this has greatly affected the profession. Most of the stories are elite centred.

The analysis of the media freedom is limited. There is still censorship, media ownership especially conglomeration is being limited to the state. This normally allows the state to control information by allowing what it wants to hear.

Most newspapers have closed due to censorship and arrest of journalists, seizure of publications and deny of circulations like what happened to the monitor publication.

The wider nature of the operational area of media poses the challenge of effective coordination of activities. The media's local agents, correspondents serve as liaisons between consumers and the product but most areas are yet to have their own respective correspondents. The absence of these correspondents in such areas makes it costly for the people to send their views and ideas through the media.

At times some journalists see nothing in the people apart from an opportunity to make material gain. They see them as consumers whom they sell commodities at huge profits that keep their bank accounts growing. In either case, the people are not the centre of action. Nor are they an appreciated point of reference. They are simply a tool with no intrinsic value.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methods the researcher will use to collect data. It focuses on the Research design, organization of the study, data collection, and data collection procedure and data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

The study will use a descriptive research design, where both qualitative and quantitative techniques of data collection will be employed. Questionnaires and interviews will be used to collect data from a cross section of respondents.

3.2 Population

The study will use Top management, consumers of the media content and employees of the local government in order to get the answers to the questions in this study. The radio station to be used in the study will include: Kamuli broadcasting corporation.

3.3 Sample size

The study will use a sample size of 50 respondents most of whom will come from the employees of the radio station and the consumers.

3.4 Sampling Procedure

The researcher will employ purposive sampling on the customers and staff members of the radio stations. Radio administrators will help the researcher identify customers and staff members who are relevant to the study.

3.5 Methods of Data Collection

Survey

The researcher will use self-administered questionnaires. This will be applied while collecting data from key customers involved in the study. Interviews will be conducted among the top management.

3.6 Key Informants

The researcher will conduct key informant interviews with the members of the management teams who play a key role in the radio programming services. The interviews are intended to generate information on policy and challenges faced in the process of doing their job.

3.7 Documentation

The researcher will carry out documentary review. The documents will include; policy, strategic plans, and work plans.

3.8 Data control and measurement

The researcher will ensure that the names of respondents do not appear on the questionnaire to ensure confidentiality of the respondents as it is part of the ethical procedure to ensure that respondents are protected.

The researcher will assure respondents that the information given by them was purposely for the reasons of this study and was not used for any other purpose. This will be done to ensure that they confidently answer all the necessary questions for this research without fear of using it for other purposes other than that of academic research.

The permission to conduct the research will be got from the relevant institutions, which include, Kampala International University and heads of the Television stations where data collection will take place.

The researcher then will go ahead to administer questionnaires to the customers and employees and conduct interviews with the top management in order to obtain information relevant to this study.

3.9 Data Processing and Analysis

The researcher will carry out qualitative and content analysis. The researcher will prepare the code sheet specifically for items which are open ended. While for the close ended items, data will be entered straight into the computer. The data will be analyzed using a statistical software package known as Excel.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction.

This chapter is a presentation, interpretation and discussion of the field results. The objectives of the study were to find examine the role of newspapers in women empowerment, to find out the contributions of radios in women empowerment and to establish the challenges faced by the media in women empowerment. The results are presented in tables and in form of frequency counts and percentages.

4.1 Characteristics of the respondents.

The study was conducted in Kamuli district. This was particularly in Nabwigulu sub-county. Thirty people were reached through interviews that included local people and (both women and men) leaders. Then in the interest of time twenty people were selected and given questionnaires to fill in (house wives, politicians, opinion leaders and journalists.)

Focused group discussions which comprised of journalists, women leaders, opinion leaders and community members totaling to ten (10).

The overall total number of respondents in the sample was one hundred (100), which is 50 systematic interviews, 40 through questionnaires and 10 in the focus group discussion.

4.2 Social and Demographic characteristic of the respondents.

Table 1: Education levels of the respondents

Variables	Frequency (%)
Respondent's Age	
25 – 35	77.3
35 – 45	13.3
45 – 55	9.3
Educational qualifications.	
None	2
Primary	4
Secondary	28.7
Diploma / Degree.	65.3
Marital Status.	
Single	.7
Married	99.3
Divorced	0
Widowed	0
Media Exposure.	
Yes	74.7
No	25
Work Status	
Students	3.3
Employed	67
Unemployed	22.7
Doing Business	7

Source: primary source.

N/B Sample size (n) = 100 respondents, percentage 100% Source on the field by the researcher.

The table 4.2.1 illustrates the data collected were from a cross section of people in the district covered. Almost all the targeted groups of respondents of diverse educational levels were reached, implying that balanced views were instilled in the process of data collection.

The education levels of the respondents as indicated in the table 4.3.1 shows that 65.3% of the respondents reached Tertiary level (university and college) level. Those who graduated from secondary level contributed to 28.7% of the respondents while those who graduated from primary level were only 4%. This table therefore shows the intellectual capacities of the respondents and consequently their ability to coherently and reasonably respond to questions in the interview and the questionnaire.

Table 2: Occupation of the respondents

Occupation	Number	Percentage.
Business	15	15
Media	30	30
Law	20	20
Civil services	25	25
Others	10	10
Total	100	100

Source: Adopted from field.

Illustrates the occupation of the respondents who formed part of the sample particularly it emphasizes the professional levels of the respondents thus implying that the sample was drawn from a cross section of people who understood the dynamics of the study and were equally informed on the subject of research.

4.3 Analysis of media coverage and women empowerment.

The objective of the study was to investigate media coverage and women empowerment. To achieve this, respondents were asked on whether the media ensures that women opinion are catered for in decision making; whether the media gives women an equal opportunity to speak and have a say without inferiority; whether the media help increase on women influence. The results are presented in the subsections illustrated below;

4.4 The media and women empowerment.

Respondents were asked if the media ensures women empowerment. Their responses are summarized in Table. 2

Table 3:Opinion on whether the media ensures women empowerment

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
Agree	13	26
Not sure	12	24
Disagree	25	50
Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data

The results in Table 2 shows that 25(50%) of respondents disagreed with the statement that the media ensures that women opinion are catered for in decision making. 13(26%) were not sure and 12(24%) agreed.

The results in the findings contradict with the findings of (Girard, 1992), who carried out a study and said that the media is a tool that can empower the information-deprived communities to contribute to decisions that affect their lives.

The difference in the findings could be related to the fact that the findings of (Girard, 1992) were done in the Europe where the media is free and is not biased.

The media and its limited impact on women.

Respondents were asked if the media gives women an opportunity to speak and to put their views at the forefront their views clearly.

Table 4: Their responses are summarized in the table below;

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
Agree	25	50
Not sure	12	24
Disagree	13	26
Total	50	100

The results in Figure 1 showed that 25(50%) of respondents agreed that the media gives women an opportunity to speak clearly and without bias. 12(24%) were not sure and 13(26%) disagreed that the media gives women an opportunity to speak and express their views clearly.

According to the (constitution; Article 29), the media is to provide information that is informative, educative and it gives the right to any useful information that empowers. It also emphasizes equality that promotes gender balance. Equality may also mean that there is simply too much material being generated for the public but it should be accessible.

The results of the findings therefore show that the media gives women an opportunity to speak though a lot needs to be done.

4.5 Participation and women influence of content.

Respondents were asked if the media helps women participate and have influence on content. Their responses are summarized in table below;

Table 5: Opinion on whether the media gives women a platform to participate and have the influence in the media content

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
Agree	10	12.5
Not sure	-	-
Disagree	40	87.5
Total	50	100

The results in Table 4 showed that 40 (87.5%) of respondents disagreed that the media gives women a platform to participate and have influence in the media 10 (12.5%) agreed that the media offers a platform for women to participate and influence the media.

For the media to accurately mirror our societies, to produce coverage that is complete and diverse, it is critical that the news reflect the world as seen through the eyes of women as well as men. Women should be involved at all levels of media organizations, including as reporters and decision-makers. But simply having more women in a newsroom is not enough to guarantee gender-sensitive reporting. The nature of news, the choices made about what is newsworthy and the way the story is reported must change too. Women need to be used more as the sources and subjects of stories. They need to be interviewed as commentators and experts. Women are interested in, concerned with and write about things that men are interested in. It's important for both not to be isolated in gender-based ghettos and to avoid any separation on gender lines in terms of who writes about what. (WHO, 2003)

This disparity is particularly evident in Africa, where cultural impediments to women fulfilling the role of journalist remain (e.g. travelling away from home, evening work and covering issues such as politics and sports which are considered to fall within the masculine domain) (Myers, 2009).

The Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) reports that throughout the world, female journalists are more likely to be assigned 'soft' subjects such as family, lifestyle, fashion and arts. The 'hard' news, politics and the economy, is much less likely to be written or covered by women.

Thus, it can be said that that the media struggles to balance and avoid the impact of limited media according to the findings of this study.

4.6 Media content and portrayal of women in the media.

Respondents were asked whether the media content and portrayal of women gives a platform for empowerment and the advancement of ideas on media rights and free speech; the development of effective and comprehensive early warning mechanisms through the use of the media to prevent gender based issues.

Table 6: Table showing the results for opinion of respondents on whether the media content and portrayal of women in the media offer a platform for empowerment and the advancement of ideas.

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
Agree	25	50
Not sure	10	12.5
Disagree	20	37.5
Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data

Results from Table 5 show that 20(50%) of respondents agreed that the media content and portrayal of women offer a platform for empowerment and the advancement of ideas. 15(37.5%) of the respondents did not agree that the media does not offer such a platform that helps the advancement of ideas while 5(12.5%) of the respondents were not sure. It can thus be concluded that the media provides such a platform for advancement of ideas according the results of this study.

Women are also far less likely than men to be featured in the world's news headlines, and to be relied upon as 'spokespeople' or as 'experts'. Certain categories of women, such as the poor, older women, or those belonging to ethnic minorities, are even less visible.

Attention needs to be paid to identifying and addressing these various gender imbalances and gaps in the media. The European Commission (2010) recommends, for example, that there should be a set expectation of gender parity on expert panels on television or radio and the creation of a thematic database of women to be interviewed and used as experts by media professionals. In addition, conscious efforts should be made to portray women and men in non-stereotypical situations.

CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY OF THE MAJOR FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND
CONCLUSIONS

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the conclusions from the study and the recommendations made are presented. The study used both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis.

5.1.0 Summary and Discussions

5.1.1 Media and women empowerment.

The findings of the study discovered that the following is the impact of limited media outreach on empowering women: 50% of respondents agreed that the media ensures that the public have realistic expectations about what can be achieved; another 50% of respondents agreed the media gives women an opportunity to speak and to see each other's position clearly in a participatory manner and; 62.5% of respondents agreed that the media Informs the populations through its content of the possibilities for action, even on a very small scale, towards community level; and 87.5%) of respondents agreed that the media helps to prevent the circulation and broadcasting of Stereotypes which destroy communities.

5.1.2 The challenges of the media in empowering women.

It was revealed from the findings of the study that 50% of respondents agreed that the media faces the challenge of the provision of a platform for empowerment of women and the advancement of ideas on media rights and free speech; 87.5% of respondents agreed that the media faces the challenge of the development of effective and comprehensive early warning mechanisms through the use of the media to empower women.

5.2 Conclusion

It is very clear that Media should reflect in their structure and content the various social, economic and cultural realities of the societies (and communities) in which they operate, in a more or less proportional way.

Media should offer more or less equal chances of access to the voices of various social and cultural minorities that make up the society.

Media should serve as a forum for different interests and points of view in a society or community.

Media should offer relevant choices of content at one point in time and also variety over time of a kind that corresponds to the needs and interests of their audiences.

5.3 Recommendations

This research aimed to explore media coverage and women empowerment. The study hopefully was the beginning into an increasing body of research that put firm considerations to the women empowerment such as socioeconomic and their political future.

Further research in the areas of women and media should be investigated. The media structure should itself be easy to control, simple to use, efficient in its reach and favorable to the parts of the population who are the most likely supporters and consumers of their product.

There needs to be loyal managers and editors in place in the relevant media, who do not guard their own professional ethics or actively defend the media's standards of impartiality, diversity and editorial independence.

Women need to be helped by best journalists with solid journalistic education, professional experience and professional pride, who are willing to produce programmes or articles, which are rewarding to women in terms of empowerment.

Finally, the media content should be supporting the rationale behind the women's strategy for empowerment.

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APPENDICES
APPENDIX A: RESEARCH SCHEDULE

Activity	Time in Months		
	1	2	3
Proposal writing			
Data collection			
Data analysis			
Submission			

APPENDIX B: PROPOSED BUDGET

Items	Amount (UG SHS)
Stationery - Papers - Pens	50,000/=
Transport	100,000/=
Phone calls	100,000/=
Internet Usage	30,000/=
Typing and printing	50,000/=
Miscellaneous	200,000/=
Total	530,000/=

APPENDICES
Appendix 1: QUESTIONNAIRE
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR KBS RADIO AUDIENCE

Dear respondent,

I am a mass communication student at Kampala International University researching on media coverage and women empowerment. You have been purposively selected to participate in answering the questions provided below. The answers will be used purposively for academic and treated confidentially.

Tick where necessary and write in the space provided.

Section A.

Socio-Demographic data

Age: (a) 12 – 18 (b) 18 – 25 (c) 25 – 30 (d) 30 – 35

Sex: Male (b) Female.

Marital Status: Married (b) Divorced (c) Single.

Education Level: Primary (b) Secondary (c) College (d) University.

SECTION B

1. Does the radio offer in terms of content reflect your aspirations?

(a) Yes (b) No.

Do you have favorite program on radio?

(a) Yes (b) No

If yes which is the program?

.....

2. What kind of impact do media cause on women empowerment?

(a) Negative impact (b) Positive impact

Give a reason for your answer

.....

3. To what extent has KBS promoted women empowerment in you're your area?

.....

Thank you.

**APPENDIX II:
INTERVIEW FOR KBS RADIO MANAGEMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

Dear respondent,

I am a mass communication student at Kampala International University researching on media coverage and women empowerment. You have been purposively selected to participate in answering the questions provided below. The answers will be used purposely for academic and treated confidentially.

Write in the space provided.

Questions

How do you arrange your content in line with your audience?

.....

Do your programs give women an opportunity to air out their views?

.....

What challenges have you faced while trying to empower women?

.....

Do you have programs specifically targeting women?

.....

If yes, how participative are they?

.....

Thank you.