“PLEASE DON’T SHOW ME ON *AGATALIIKO NFUUFU* OR MY HUSBAND WILL BEAT ME LIKE *ENGALABI* (LONG DRUM)”: YOUNG WOMEN AND TABLOID TELEVISION IN KAMPALA, UGANDA.

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Masters of Arts in Journalism and Media Studies

of

RHODES UNIVERSITY

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November 2013

// ABSTRACT

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The "tabloid TV" news genre is a relatively new phenomenon in Uganda and Africa. The genre has been criticised for depoliticising the public by causing cynicism, and lowering the standards of rational public discourse. Despite the criticisms, the genre has been recognised for bringing 'the private' into a public space and one of the major 'private' issues on the public agenda is women and gender equality.

Given these critiques, this study set out to interrogate the meanings that young working class women in Kampala make of the tabloid television news programme *Agataliiko Nfuufu* and to ask how these meanings relate to the contested notions of femininity in this urban space. In undertaking this audience reception study I interviewed young women between the ages of 18-35years by means of individual in-depth interviews and focus group discussions.

The study establishes that *Agataliiko Nfuufu* is consumed in a complex environment where contesting notions of traditionalism and modernity are at play. The study also establishes that while mediating the problems, discomforts and contestations of these young women's lives, *Bukedde* TV1 operates within a specific social context and gendered environment where *Agataliiko Nfuufu* is consumed.

The study concludes that the bulletin mediates the young women's negotiations and contestations, but it provides them with a window into other people's lives and affords them opportunities to compare, judge and appreciate their own. Furthermore, the gendered roles and expectations in this context have become naturalised and have achieved a taken-for-grantedness. Therefore, patriarchy has been legitimised and naturalised to the extent that the respondents define themselves largely in relation to male relatives, and marriage. While the women lament the changes that have taken place in their social contexts which disrupt the natural gender order, they construct themselves as subjects of the prevailing discourses of gender relations that see men as powerful and women as weak and in need of protection.

DEDICATION

This thesis is for my mother, Ms. Scovia Nandyose. You have worked so hard, put your own life on hold and sacrificed so much to see me fulfil my life's dreams. Thank you for believing in me, for your unconditional love, support and encouragement. Yes, you are my "champion" (if I can borrow your word).

It is also dedicated to mummy Josephine "Mulembe" Mirembe (RIP). This journey is a culmination of your wise counsel. To my grandfather Charles Lwanga Ssemakula (RIP) I am who I am because you gave me the best foundation.

To my grandmother Mary Nakagiri Lwanga who has an endless fountain of patience and love. You have risen above your loss to keep all of us grounded.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to my supervisor Priscilla Boshoff for introducing me to the exciting world of gender studies. Your patience, kindness and support were not only invaluable but have left an indelible mark in my life. A special thank you goes to Professor Jeanne Prinsloo for her input. Thanks are also due to Professor Jane Duncan for introducing me to the world of media policy and analysis. Dawn Long, thank you for helping me settle in at the department.

I am indebted to my colleagues and friends Christabel Rusike, Oesi Thothe, Chelesani Moyo, Funke Treasure Durodola, Pauline Atim and Godfrey Nkwera for the intellectual companionship and moral support.

To my entire family, my many brothers and sisters and my mothers, (Justine, Nankinga, Rita and Nalweyiso) your love and support gave me the strength to go on. To Uncles Christopher Casey Luyima, Henry Ssemakula, Ssalongo James Serunjogi (RIP), James Luyima, Bernard Mukiibi and Musisi Mutyaba thank you. Butiga Paul, you are the best!

Dr. Margaret Jjuuko Lwanga, you are and always will be an inspiration. Aunt Lesedi plus Anthony and Christopher Kasozi-Matovu, you have been pillars of strength.

To my lovely sisters and friends Zandile Qwebani, you are my hero; Soa-Harimalala Rakotozafy-Razafimbola, I could never have done this without your encouragement; Lerato Tsebe, and the entire Tsebe family, thank you; Lillian Nalumansi and Mary Irene Namuli your support kept me going.

Joseph Lubega Mukaawa and Nobert Petro Kalule, you are special. Sim Kyazze (Rhodes University), Enock Kiyaga, John Baptist Wasswa and John Baptist Imokola thank you. Micheal Angel Mugerwa, thank you.

Thanks are also due to Vision Group’s Hajjat Hadija Nabukenya and Semei Wessaali for all their help. My deepest gratitude goes to all my respondents who willingly shared their experiences with me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ii

DEDICATION iii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS iv

CHAPTER ONE 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY 1

1.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY 3

1.3 GOALS OF THE STUDY 4

1.4 RESEARCH METHODS 4

1.5 THESIS STRUCTURE 4

1.6 CONCLUSION 5

CHAPTER TWO 6

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY 6

2.0 INTRODUCTION 6

2.1 GENDER IN PRE-COLONIAL UGANDA 6

2.1.1 WOMEN IN POST 1986 UGANDA 8

2.2 KAMPALA 11

2.1.1 THE BATTLE FOR KAMPALA 12

2.2 BUGANDA KINGDOM 14

2.2.1 RELATIONS BETWEEN BUGANDA KINGDOM AND CENTRAL GOVERNMENT 16

2.3 THE BIFURCATED STATE 17

2.4 CONCLUSION 19

CHAPTER THREE 20

LITERATURE REVIEW 20

3.0 INTRODUCTION 20

3.1 MEDIA LANDSCAPE 21
3.1.1 PRIVATISATION AND THE MEDIA 21
3.1.2 MEDIA DIVERSITY, FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY AND REGULATION 22
3.2 VISION GROUP 24
3.2.1 THE *BUKEDDE* BRAND 25
3.2.2 AGATALIIKO NFUUFU 26
3.3 MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY 28
3.4 NORMATIVE ROLES OF THE MEDIA 29
3.5 TABLOIDS 30
3.6 TABLOIDISATION 31
3.7 TABLOID TELEVISION 34
3.8 CONCLUSION 38
CHAPTER FOUR 39
LITERATURE REVIEW 39
4.0 INTRODUCTION 39
4.1 CULTURAL STUDIES 39
4.2 GENDER 41
4.2.1 GENDER DIMENSIONS 44
4.2.1.1 POWER RELATIONS 44
4. 2.1.2 PRODUCTION RELATIONS 45
4.2.1.3 EMOTIONAL RELATIONS 46
4. 2.1.4 SYMBOLIC RELATIONS 47
4. 2.2 DISCOURSE 47
4.3 GENDER AND MEDIA 48
4.4 POPULAR CULTURE AND MEDIA 49
4.5 MEDIA CONSUMPTION, CULTURE AND IDENTITY FORMATION 51
4.6 CONCLUSION 53

CHAPTER FIVE 54
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 54
5.1 INTRODUCTION 54
5.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH 54
5.2.1 RECEPTION ANALYSIS 55
5.3 MY ROLE AS A RESEARCHER AND MODERATOR 55
5.4 RESEARCH METHODS AND SAMPLING FRAME 57
5.4.1 THEMATIC CONTENT ANALYSIS 57
5.4.2 INDIVIDUAL IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS 57
5.4.3 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS 58
5.5 DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES 60
5.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS 61
5.7 CONCLUSION 61
CHAPTER SIX 62
RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION 62
6.0 INTRODUCTION 62
6.1 JENNIFER LUBWAMA SEMAKULA MUSISI 62
6.1.1 DISCUSSION: WOMEN IN THE “PUBLIC” VERSUS “PRIVATE” DOMAIN 63
6.2 THE REVELLERS 67
6.2.1 DISCUSSION: POPULAR CULTURE AND APPROPRIATE DRESS CODES 68
6.3 25-YEAR OLD RAPES A 60-YEAR OLD WOMAN 71
6.3.1 DISCUSSION: POWER RELATIONS AND THE ‘IDEAL’ WOMAN 72
6.4 SHADIAH NOOR NAKYEESE 73
6.4.1 DISCUSSION: WOMEN AND THE LAW 73
6.5 BAD BLACK 76
6.5.1 DISCUSSION: WOMEN ‘TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS’ 77
6.6 MEERE (MARY) NALULE 79

6.6.1 DISCUSSION: WOMEN CONTESTING AND NEGOTIATING GENDER AND POWER RELATIONS 80

6.7 ANNET NAKANGU AND JANE NAKAGGWA..... 81

6.7.1 DISCUSSION: MOTHERS AND CHILDREN IN A CHANGING WORLD 83

6.8 MAAMA [MOTHER] NAGGINDA..... 86

6.8.1 DISCUSSION: RECONCILING TRADITIONAL AND MODERN GENDER VALUES87

6.9 CONCLUSION..... 90

CHAPTER SEVEN 91

CONCLUSION..... 91

APPENDINCES 94

BIBLIOGRAPHY..... 105

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This study investigates the meanings that young working class women in Kampala between the ages of 18-35 years make of *Agataliiko Nfuufu* – a popular news programme on *Bukedde* television – and how these meanings relate to the contested notions of femininity in this urban space. The study is located within media and cultural studies and interrogates issues of culture, colonisation, popular media, tabloids and their position within liberal democracies.

This chapter discusses the background and context of the study and briefly highlights the research goals, the research methods and presents the thesis structure.

1.1 Background to the Study

My decision to investigate the popularity of *Agataliiko Nfuufu* amongst young working class women in Kampala is inspired by personal experiences. These experiences help put my study into perspective and allow me to shed light on some of the questions that I attempt to address. My initial personal experiences stem from my upbringing as a Muganda, raised in Buganda, and I identify with the traditions of Buganda and Kiganda culture. Buganda is located in central Uganda which includes Kampala, Uganda's capital.

As a young girl, I remember sneezing rather loudly while in the company of my grandmother, and she immediately rebuked me, "My dear, you must never do that again. A good Muganda woman does not sneeze anyhow; she is modest, humble and respectable. If you did that in front of a stranger, they would think we did not raise you right!" Then followed a whole list of do's and don'ts; always kneel down when greeting or serving elders regardless of whether you know them or not, an adult is always right, so never talk back at them, you must never ride a bicycle or climb trees, and never whistle. I have lived by these norms (sometimes 'policed' by my relatives): they make sense to me and have shaped my knowledge and position as a woman in my society. I have also labored to pass them on to my younger female relatives.

However, being raised as an only child by a single mother has somewhat disrupted these cultural expectations. This stems from advice that my mother once imparted to me: she was recovering from an operation and was covered up in bandages when I announced to her that the washing line needed to be fixed; she got up, fixed it and then said to me, "My child, you

need to man up: as you can see, there is no man in this house, you have to learn to do these things by yourself." So, I learnt how to fix things, climb trees, have conversations and disagree with her. Above all, her strength and ability to successfully juggle all aspects of life rubbed off on me. Her instinct to survive forced her to "take care of business" but to our male neighbours, she was the "unmarried woman next door" or a "*musajja mukazi*" (woman/man) (Hogson, 2001:1).

The other experience relates to my position as an educated woman, who was born and bred in cosmopolitan Kampala and falls in the 18-35 age group. This life allows me to express myself and ask questions. It is also fine to be an educated and an 'independent' career woman and it affords me the luxury to choose when and to whom I get married. So having attained my degree and secured a job, I took my next step in life by asserting my independence. My first show of independence was to move out of home. I soon found out that an unmarried, childless woman in her late twenties (regardless of education) who is living on her own is not of any value, cannot be respected and is an embarrassment to her family and society (Akihire, 2003). This decision earned me the dreaded *nakyeyombekedde* title. This term's meaning is heterogenous, ranging from simply a spinster, to a woman living alone or a prostitute (Akihire, 2003). A *nakyeyombekedde* can be so bad that popular Ugandan musician, Fred Sebbatta, warns men against these cunning social devils whose main intention is to trap rich men. Men, he advises, would rather marry an ugly woman than have one of these *malaya's* (prostitutes) (Akihire, 2003:206).

These experiences all revolve around the expectations of others about my display of an appropriate femininity and the struggles I encountered in meeting or resisting these expectations. My last experiences stem from a time when a colleague and I were walking on the streets of Kampala. He had a video camera and to my utter annoyance people excitedly asked us, "are you the *Agataliiko Nfuufu* people?" I knew the bulletin and I knew its popularity, but I did not watch it; in fact, I detested it. Having come from a mainstream journalism background, I wondered why people would watch such a bulletin and why they would equate me with a journalism that was, in my opinion, an insult to what journalism ought to be? Two years later, while discussing the bulletin with a colleague at Rhodes University, we wondered why this bulletin was so popular to the extent that other television stations, which have been around for much longer, were starting to imitate its style and

format at the expense of their own known formats. It was during this discussion that I came to the conclusion that this phenomenon had to be interrogated and understood.

These experiences informed the conception of my research into the popularity of *Agataliiko Nfuufu* that is aired on *Bukedde* television which has positioned itself as a television of the ordinary person, as reflected in its slogan *y'omuntu wa bulijjo* (for the ordinary/everyday person) (Nabukenya, 2012). The decision by the editor of the bulletin and station manager of *Bukedde* TV to go against the norms of conventional journalism by running feature-like stories in a news bulletin and their decision to have minimal editing on the news pieces sets them apart (Wasswa, 2012; Nabukenya, 2012). The station opted to broadcast in Luganda, which is an indigenous language that is spoken by a majority of Ugandans, thereby presenting the stories and lives of those people who would never ordinarily make it to the 'elite' news bulletins (Chibita, 2011; Nabukenya, 2012; Wesaali, 2012).

1.2 Significance of the study

Since its inception on 11th October, 2010, the television news *Agataliiko Nfuufu* has provoked a wide range of reactions and emotions. It is the most recent phenomenon in tabloidisation to hit Ugandan television and it has everyone talking; Ugandans love it, politicians hate it, and academics do not know what to make of it (Wasswa, 2012; Wesaali, 2012). It is the prime time bulletin on *Bukedde TV1* and is watched by 87 percent of Kampala residents (Synovate, 2012).

Over the years, research, literature and scholarly writing on popular tabloid newspapers has come out of Africa (see Opolot 2007; Steenveld and Strelitz 2010; Wasserman, 2010; Nonhlanhla and Prinsloo, 2012). But research and analysis around the tabloid television news genre has just started gaining popularity. Most recent work around tabloid television is a study by Mbatha (2012) on the popularity of *Muvi* TV's tabloidised main evening news which is popular among its working class viewers in Lusaka, Zambia.

This study aims to add to the existing body of research by delving into debates around the tabloid television news genre but with a particular focus on young working class women's interpretation of the tabloid television programme *Agataliiko Nfuufu*. While the study is specifically focussed on how these young women make meaning of this bulletin, the research draws on the context of Kampala – the capital city of Uganda and Buganda kingdom – to

contribute to the on-going debates around the importance of tabloid television news within an African context characterised by contesting discourses of tradition and modernity.

1.3 Goals of the study

This study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What meanings do young working class women in Kampala make of *Agataliiko Nfuufu*?
2. How do these meanings relate to contested notions of femininity in this urban space?

1.4 Research methods

This study is a reception analysis that is based upon a qualitative approach. A reception analysis recognises media recipients as co-producers of meaning (Jensen, 1988). This kind of research interrogates the meanings that people make in their encounter with media content in their everyday lives (Jensen, 1988). In line with a reception studies flexibility in combining research methods, this research utilises a three-stage approach to investigate the audience's viewing practices and experiences: a thematic content analysis on sixty-one (61) *Agataliiko Nfuufu* bulletins, three focus group discussions and individual in-depth interviews (Schrøder et al. 2003).

1.5 Thesis structure

This thesis consists of seven chapters. Chapter one introduces the study. Chapter two presents a discussion around gender relations in pre-colonial, colonial and present day Uganda. It also presents the broader social context within which *Agataliiko Nfuufu* is watched.

Chapter three presents a discussion of the media landscape and introduces *Bukedde TV1* and *Agataliiko Nfuufu*. It also presents the first part of the literature review with a discussion around the normative roles of the media, tabloids, tabloid television and tabloidisation.

Chapter four presents the theoretical lenses that inform the study: cultural studies, gender and the gender discourses that are at play in Kampala, popular culture, and modernity.

Chapter five presents the research methodology. It outlines the research approach, and the methods and procedures that were used during the data collection phase.

Chapter six presents the findings and analysis and chapter seven concludes the study.

1.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented an overview of the study. It has discussed the motivation for carrying out this research, its significance and overall background. I have also given a brief discussion of the goals of the study and the data collection methods and outlined the thesis structure. The following chapter discusses women in Uganda and Kampala in particular. It also presents the broader context within which *Agataliiko Nfuufu* is watched. Therein is a discussion of Kampala and Buganda kingdom as the context of consumption.

CHAPTER TWO

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

2.0 INTRODUCTION

> I saw the city's many faces mostly by night, when they come alive and pulse with music; this is because some three-quarters of Uganda's population is under 30, prime partying age (Dreisinger, 2013).

This chapter presents the broader political and cultural context within which *Agataliiko Nfuufu* is watched and interpreted. As indicated in the introduction, this study investigates the meanings that young working class women in Kampala between the ages of 18-35 years make of *Agataliiko Nfuufu* – a popular news programme on *Bukedde* television – and how these meanings relate to the contested notions of femininity in this urban space. To achieve this, the chapter first presents a discussion around gender and gender relations in pre-colonial, colonial and present day Uganda. The discussion includes the roles, position and challenges faced by women in this space.

These issues need to be understood within the context of Kampala with its competing discourses of modernity and traditionalism. Kampala has a joint status as Uganda's capital city and the headquarters of Buganda kingdom. As captured in the opening quote, Kampala is a dynamic cosmopolitan city that is inhabited by people from different parts of Uganda and the world. The chapter teases out these debates and also briefly discusses Buganda's privileged status in pre-colonial Uganda, the turbulent relationship between Buganda and the central government and how this has affected the city's management – a political landscape central to understanding gender relations in this space.

2.1 Gender in pre-colonial Uganda

The gender order of pre-colonial African society was premised on the production of sharp differences between men and women. Tamale (2005:11) argues that capitalist and patriarchal African societies are characterised by a separation of the "public" from the "private" sphere and that the two spheres are highly gendered. The public is highly dominated by men with a focus on "socially valued activities, such as politics and waged labour," while the private is constituted of "unremunerated and undervalued domestic activities performed by women" (Tamale, 2005: 11-12). This assessment extends to Uganda where the gender order privileges

men over women. Women in Ugandan society largely work within the home and are removed from public affairs while men remain decision makers within the public sphere (Mugambe, 2007; Tamale, 2005). Women are still viewed as subjects of the country's traditional patriarchal system and are regarded either as "women in their original home as daughters" or as "married women" (Mugambe, 2007:3).

In pre-colonial and colonial Uganda, a woman did not "constitute a legal entity on her own" but was assigned a male "guardian" who was responsible for her behaviour both legally and socially (Nakanyike, 2001:174). Society then took great pains to define and establish distinctions between an "admirable person" and an "admirable woman" (Fallers cited in Nakanyike, 2001: 173). A "good woman" in pre-colonial Buganda was constructed as,

> One whose freedom of speech and movement, sexual and reproductive labor, productive labor, comportment, diet, and residence were controlled by and needed approval from those who had power over her (Nakanyike, 2001: 175).

In this case, the power to define such an identity belonged to men, like the king and the chiefs (Nakanyike, 2001). This power and control extended to the politicisation of women's bodies and sexuality to the extent that women's sexuality was used as a means of oppression to women but enabling to the power of men (Tamale, 2005). By constructing African women as hypersexual and reckless, colonialists together with African patriarchs were able to justify the strict regulation and control of women's sexuality (Nakanyike, 2001; Tamale, 2005). This led to the reconfiguration of traditional customs with new sexual values, taboos and stigmas (Nakanyike, 2001; Tamale, 2005; Milestone et al. 2012)

Any woman who contravened these "patriarchal codes" provoked negative labelling, and terms like "bad woman", "wicked", "*empala kitale*" (unruly girls), "*bikazikazi*" (undesirable women) or "*banyanyagavu*" (bad in all respects) were used in Buganda to refer to such women (Nakanyike, 2001:174-175). They were branded as "bad" or "wicked" because they were assumed to disrupt the social relations that defined and depended on them as dutiful and obedient (and so respectable) mothers, sisters, daughters, lovers and wives: thus,

> when women (or men) overstep these boundaries, whether intentionally or unintentionally, they not only challenge dominant norms of gendered behaviour, but threaten the moral foundation of society (Hodgson, 2001: 6).

Concern with women's modesty and appropriate comportment was a feature not only of pre-colonial and colonial times: during the era of African nationalism and independence, political leaders in newly independent countries like Zaire and Tanzania disregarded women's

economic contribution, ignored their past political roles and started cultural campaigns to ban "immodest" clothing such as miniskirts and tight pants, and "indecent" Western cosmetic products such as makeup, hair straighteners, and skin lighteners (Hodgson, 2001: 13). These expectations and beliefs persist into the contemporary era, in which large-scale intra- and international migration and globalised electronic media have made contact with other values and ways of life part of the daily experiences of most people within urban centres (Thompson, 1995; Mamdani, 1996; Connell, 2009).

To ensure continuity of the gender order in pre-colonial and colonial Uganda, separate cultural grooming for young boys and girls was carried out. In Buganda, young men (the commoners) attended cultural grooming (vocational and leadership skills) in an *Ekisaakaate* (enclosure); on completion, some went to work in the palace (Cross-Culture Foundation of Uganda (CCFU), 2009). Young Baganda girls, on the other hand, were not expected to become future leaders, so, they were culturally tutored at home by their mothers, *ssengas*[1] (paternal aunts) and *jajjas* (paternal grandparents). Princes and princesses were groomed in an *akakomera* (royal enclosure) but they would also visit the *ekisaakaate* to learn the ways of the 'ordinary' people (Cross-Culture Foundation of Uganda, 2009: 3). In 1966, when kingdoms were abolished, these structures and training programmes were destroyed. Today, the *Ekisaakaate* has been re-conceptualised and re-introduced into post 1986 Uganda by Sylvia Nagginda, the queen of Buganda (a brief profile is presented in chapter six).

2.1.1 Women in post 1986 Uganda

The year 1986 brought with it progressive initiatives to address gender discrimination in Uganda. The commitment to address past inequalities was in recognition that women were actively involved – as spies, mobilisers and fighters – in the liberation struggle of 1980-1986 which ushered the National Resistance Movement (NRM) into government (Goertz, 2002; Mugambe, 2007). The NRM embarked on a programme that was aimed at addressing the glaring gender inequalities in all sectors of the country through gender mainstreaming (Mugambe, 2007).

Gender mainstreaming was to all intents and purposes a principle of affirmative action which involved designing and adopting policies and programmes that were intended to address the different needs and interests of both men and women (Goertz, 2002; Mugambe, 2007). These

[1] A discussion on the Ssenga and her role happens in chapter six

principles were reflected in planning processes and in budgetary estimates. They are reflected in the 1995 constitution, the National Gender Policy, the Land Act, the National development policy and the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP). Furthermore, there is a Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and by law all ministries must have "gender desks" (Mugambe, 2007).

Every district has a woman Member of Parliament and all five tiers of local government have female representation where it is stipulated that a third of the leadership positions in the Local Councils (LCs) are reserved for women (Goertz, 2002; Mugambe, 2007). There have also been high profile appointments of women in various positions like the vice presidency and ministerial positions thereby challenging the notions of male superiority (Goertz, 2002; Mugambe, 2007; Wyrod, 2008). These moves are seen and applauded as progressive towards women empowerment at both the local and international scene (Goertz, 2002; Khadiagala, 2002; Mugambe, 2007). They are also indicative of a "new configuration of gender relations" that is receptive to women's rights (Wyrod, 2008: 2).

However, while there are progressive initiatives to address gender discrimination, violence, patriarchy and gender justice remain problematic (Goertz, 2002; Khadiagala 2002; Mugambe, 2007). The gender mainstreaming policy has been criticised as a mere "tokenism to women" borne out of a need to reward and show gratitude to the women who contributed to ushering in the current government (Mugambe, 2007: 4; see also Goertz, 2002). Furthermore, the appointment of women in powerful positions has not improved the lives of the women within the lower classes of this society. Women's rights are still limited in scope and are not necessarily synonymous with equality between men and women. A strong case is made by Wyrod (2008: 2), who argues that though majority of Ugandan men are receptive to women's rights, they can only accept them if they do not "undermine their ultimate authority over women, especially within the home."

It is against this background that Wolff and Bufumbo's (2006) investigation into perceptions about the different relationships between alcohol consumption and sexual risk-taking for men and women in five high HIV prevalence villages in south-western Uganda concluded that the sex of the consumer in public drinking places determined how society viewed and treated an individual. In these communities, men drinking outside the home environment were viewed as independent, masculine and free from domestic responsibilities while women drinking outside male supervision not only challenged and defied feminine ideals of domesticity but

also signified sexual vulnerability and justification for sexual coercion, especially, if they accepted drinks from men (Wolff et al, 2006).

In the political arena, though there is a deliberate move to include women in the democratic processes, their participation is still mostly limited to their bodily presence. Mugambe (2007: 7) notes that women in Uganda are voted into positions of authority based on two ‘strengths’; either their “beauty” or their “ability to appear masculine”; strengths that compromise the quality and content of their engagement in all kinds of debates. Furthermore, the “gate-keepers” of access to available political spaces are not the NRM’s women league – the national organisation for women members of the NRM – or even women voters but the “Movement elites” who include the sitting political leadership (Goertz, 2002: 550). Ultimately,

> …the political value of specially created new seats has been eroded by their exploitation as currency for the NRM's patronage system, under-mining women's effectiveness as representatives of women's interests once in office (Goertz, 2002: 550).

As a result, decisions about women and their well-being are still made by men, a phenomenon that has a direct impact on the statistics pertaining to women’s health, education and employment. Women’s fertility rates stand at 7.2 children per woman, a statistic that informs the child bearing patterns especially between educated and non-educated women (Mugambe, 2007). While going to school for young women delays their child bearing age, child bearing in Uganda starts as early as below 15 years (Mugambe, 2007). Adolescent women between 15-19 years have already had a child and 80 percent of girls aged 20-24 have already had a third child. Nearly half of those aged between 45-49 years have already had their eighth child. As a result, young girls and women have no choice but to forego formal education, and formal employment so that they can nurture their children and look after their homes (Mugambe, 2007). All in all, young women in post 1986 Uganda still face multiple concerns and injustices like gender based violence, limited political representation, limited access to resources like land and property and poor access to proper health care and education (Goetz, 2002: Khadiagala: 2002: Mugambe, 2007).

2.2 Kampala

Kampala was founded in 1874 by Kabaka[2] Mutesa I. It is home to *Bulange,* the administrative headquarters of Buganda kingdom (section 2.3 discusses Buganda) and was formally gazetted as Uganda's first urban area in 1912. It also represented the principal ''node'' of colonial administration and was established as Uganda's administrative capital in 1962 (Mayiga, 2009; Omolo-Okalebo et al. 2010). It is made up of five administrative divisions –Nakawa, Kawempe, Makindye, Rubaga and Kampala Central Division – each with its own division mayor (KCC, 2001; 2009; KCCA, 2010).

Kampala is a melting pot of diverse lifestyles, beliefs, and cultures. The city is marked by disparate neighbourhoods, some lush and suburban while others are rough-and-tumble (Dreisinger, 2013). Although various languages are spoken, English – Uganda's official language – and Luganda remain the major languages of communication. Luganda (the language of the Baganda) is spoken by the largest number of Ugandans (Chibita, 2006; 2010). It also remains the most commercially viable language with more media and literary productions than any other indigenous language (Lugalambi et al., 2010; Chibita, 2006).

To critics, Kampala is a "modern executive slum" that is known for traffic jams, congestion, poor sanitation, high noise levels, pick-pockets, a general lack of order and rural-urban migration (estimated at 5 percent annually) (KCC, 2009; Lambright, 2012; Otage et al., 2011). In 1969, Kampala had a population of 330,700; by 2008, the population had grown to 1.6 million;[3] currently, Kampala's population is estimated at 3 million by day and 1.2 million by night as people, traders and commuters move in and out of the city to work each day (Lambright, 2012).

About 53 percent of Kampala's population live in crowded *mizigo* (tenements) of less than two rooms – with communal bathrooms and toilets that are usually located outside the house (Giddings, 2009). An estimated 1.5 million people (39% of the total city population) live in Kampala's slums which points to the existing planning and governance problems; these are exacerbated by a city whose architecture is still based on pre-independence planning (KCC, 2001; KCC, 2009; Giddings, 2009; Vermeiren et al., 2012). For example, apart from a 20-kilometre northern bypass (completed in 2009), there has not been any significant upgrade or

[2] Luganda word meaning 'King'

[3] It is estimated that Kampala's population will swell to 2.1 million by 2017 (Giddings, 2009).

adequate investment in the city's transport network since 1989 (Vermeiren et al., 2012). The bypass was constructed to divert cross-country traffic thereby reducing traffic pressure in the central business district (Vermeiren et al., 2012; Bagala, 2013). However, it was constructed through wetlands leading to perpetual flooding for residents living in and around former wetlands like Kalerwe, Bwaise, Namungoona and Kawaala (Bagala, 2013).

The slums and former wetlands are free from government policing, are easily accessible and are mostly unplanned, inadequately serviced, low density areas with poor housing and non-existent service delivery (Kabumbuli and Kiwazi, 2009; Giddings, 2009; Vermeiren et al., 2012). Failure to improve on the city's infrastructure also extends to the provision of a centralised sewerage system. The current system is still limited to the high income and centrally located neighbours. Those in slum areas use toilets that are located outside their houses or resort to "flying toilets or open defecation" (Niwagaba et al., 2011). In the central business district, only 11 of the estimated 500-600 public toilets (serving an average of 3,200 per block) are owned by Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA).

2.1.1 The battle for Kampala

Until recently, the overall leader of Kampala was the mayor – elected by Kampala residents. The mayor and his team worked under the auspices of Kampala City Council (KCC). KCC was recognised within Uganda's decentralisation policy which gives local governments the responsibility to provide local services in roads, water and sanitation, health, solid waste management, and education (KCC, 2009; Lambright, 2012). However, Kampala's commercial and political importance along with its enduring and evident political opposition to the central government exposes it to manipulation which hampers effective service delivery and development (Lambright, 2012: 1).

KCC has historically been controlled by the opposition; its past three mayors[4] are from the Democratic Party (DP) – which has a huge support base in Buganda (Lambright, 2012). The DP leadership in Kampala was a thorn in the side of the ruling party (the NRM), so, they devised means of taking over the management of Kampala (Lambright, 2012). Ugandan Local Councils, argues Lambright (2012), that are headed by opposition politicians receive fewer resources from central government. Therefore, partisan politics, as the case is with

[4] John Ssebaana Kizito, Ntege Nasser Ssebagala-who later shifted camps to NRM and the current mayor Erias Lukwago

Kampala, undermined KCC's attempts at service delivery. By interfering with the management and reducing and/or delaying funds to KCC, central government was able to diminish the image and status of an opposition led management, and justified the abolition of KCC (Lambright, 2012).

By replacing KCC with the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) the central government was able to take over the management of Kampala (Lambright, 2012). Amidst heated debates and controversy, the KCCA Act 2010 was passed by parliament. The Act recognises that Kampala is located in Buganda but also declares Kampala as the capital city of Uganda that is to be administered by the central government (KCCA, 2010). The act changed the mayor's title to 'Lord Mayor', declared his role as 'ceremonial' and transferred all the executive functions of managing Kampala City[5] to the Executive Director of KCCA, who reports to a newly created Minister of Kampala (KCCA, 2010). Both the director and minister are appointed by the president. KCCA, according to government, was created to curb inadequate financing that hampered KCC's work. However, Lambright (2012: 13) argues that KCCA was introduced because "the central government was unwilling to put the resources actually needed to address Kampala's challenges into an opposition-dominated city council."

Suffice to say, the results of this move have caused political, administrative and social tensions. When the new Lord Mayor, Erias Lukwago won the election, his speech captured the reality, "I have not beaten only (Peter) Sematimba[6]… I have won against President Museveni and the entire state machinery" (Sserunjogi, 2013). However, his tenure has been overshadowed by constant disagreements and fights with the Executive Director – Jennifer Musisi (a brief profile is in chapter six). The NRM establishment in KCCA have snubbed the Lord Mayor who has reacted by "becoming the opposition leader of his own government" (Barya cited by Sserunjogi, 2013).

The principals' disagreements have seen the Lord Mayor drawing on his culture to discredit the female Executive Director's actions. For instance, while launching the Kampala street lighting project, Musisi had to be hoisted to the top of the street lights in order to fix a bulb, the Lord Mayor quickly pointed out that in Buganda, it is unacceptable for women to climb

[5] Which includes, among other things, working as an accounting officer, giving legal advice, heading public service at KCCA and above all, representing the government in KCCA (KCCA, 2010; Lubwama et al, 2013).
[6] Peter Sematimba was Lukwago's opponent and the NRM flag bearer for the seat of Kampala mayor

trees, and went on to ask, “can you imagine a woman mounting a tree” (*New Vision*, 2011; *Daily Monitor*, 2011).

Of particular interest to this study is the disagreement between the principals due to Musisi’s decision to evict informal traders (street vendors) and erase illegal structures around Kampala. The move was aimed at reducing the chaos and congestion around the city centre; but the victims of the eviction were mostly women (Lange, 2003; Barya cited by Sserunjogi, 2013). This is because Uganda’s economic crisis has forced women to become the prime providers, and a majority of them earn their money in the informal economy (Lange, 2003: 1).

Informal trade in this case refers to businesses that do not require a lot of capital to set up and manage and are also unrecognised, unprotected, unlicensed and unrecorded by the public authorities (Snyder 2000; ILO, 2002).These kinds of businesses allow women to combine child care with their work therefore many single, divorced and widowed women feed and educate their children on the basis of their entrepreneurial activity (Lange, 2003). The majority of the people who operate Kampala’s informal sector are women; for instance, an estimated 70 percent of market and roadside traders are women and 40 percent of shop owners are women (Lange, 2003).

2.2 Buganda Kingdom

As Uganda’s capital, Kampala’s leadership and lifestyle as discussed above represents and draws on western discourses of human and gender rights. However, Kampala is a unique city due to its dual modern and traditional status. It is located in central Uganda which is home to the largest kingdom in Uganda. Buganda covers the present day districts of Kampala, Mpigi, Mukono, Masaka, Kalangala, Kiboga, Rakai and Mubende. The districts are mainly inhabited by the Baganda[7] who are the largest ethnic group (making up 17.3 percent) in Uganda (Mutibwa, 1992; Mayiga, 2009; Lugalambi et al,. 2010). Its central location has given the Baganda political, economic and cultural advantage over other tribes (Lugalambi et al, 2010).

[7] Buganda refers to the land, Baganda to the people, Muganda to an individual, Luganda is the language and Kiganda is the culture

The administrative seat and headquarters of Buganda are known as *Bulange*, and are located in Mengo[8], Kampala.

Buganda has two pinnacles of power; the *Kabaka* in whom all executive authority is vested although much of his work is executed by a *Katikkiro* (prime minister) (Semakula, 1971; Mayiga, 2009) and the *Lukiiko* (parliament) which is the "nerve center" of the kingdom that brings together chiefs from five different administrative units of the kingdom (Mayiga, 2009: 39). The administrative units include *amasaza* (counties), *amagombolola* (sub-counties), *emiruka* (parishes), sub-parishes and *Bukungu* (village unit) (Semakula, 1971; Mayiga, 2009). It is these structures that the colonial leaders and the NRM duplicated in other regions of the country. For example, the Resistance Councils (RC) – now Local Councils (LC) – that form the five tiers (LC one to five) of local government are a result of this (Nsibambi, 1991). The two pinnacles of Buganda's power, together with the kingdom ministers constitute the "Kabaka's Government" (Mayiga, 2009: 151-153).

Any talented and capable Muganda can easily rise to a position of social importance; however, the distinctions between different Baganda make it essential for each Muganda to know which class he or she belongs to (Semakula, 1971; Mayiga, 2009). The highest class are the royal family (*abalangira* (princes) and *abambejja*[9] (princesses) who, by virtue of their royal heritage, are the rulers, while the *bakoopi* (serfs) are at the bottom of the social stratum (Semakula, 1971; Mayiga, 2009). In principle, the queen mother and the king's co-heiress (his sister or cousin sister) wield tremendous power, but this is purely dependent on the character of the individual woman who occupies this position (Mayiga, 2009).

The life of a Muganda is primarily defined by his/her clan; clans are universally patriarchal and largely exogamous (Semakula, 1971; Mayiga, 2009). One's clan determines one's name, property inheritance, marriage partner, responsibility in the Kabaka's court and burial place (Mayiga, 2009). The royal family are an exception to this general practice because Baganda kings are attached to their mother's clan and are in this sense matrilineal (Semakula, 1971). Critical to note is that the kingdom emphasises a discourse which draws on traditional concepts of gender roles (Hodgson, 2001; Nakanyike, 2001; Goetz, 2002; Tamale, 2005). For example, there are clear distinctions between the roles played by men and those for women:

[8] Mengo is a suburb in Kampala; it is the seat of the Kabaka's government. Before the abolition of kingdoms, it was known as Mengo Municipality. After the abolition it was fused with Kampala City Council (Mayiga, 2009).
[9] Though female, *bambejja* are always referred to as *Sseebo* (Sir).

men are supposed to be authoritative, are taught leadership skills and expected to take responsibility for their families, while women are supposed to be care givers, counsellors, and are responsible for the day-to-day management of the home and family (Cross-Culture Foundation of Uganda, 2009).

In present day Buganda, the role of nurturing holistic young persons is fulfilled by the modern day *Ekisaakaate*. Today's *Kisaakaate* ensures that modern and traditional concepts of gender are explored so that young girls and boys (between 6-18 years) appreciate both traditional and modern values. They are also challenged to think critically within various contexts in which they find themselves (Cross-Culture Foundation of Uganda, 2009). Using Luganda as a medium of instruction, the youngsters are taught about responsibility from an African perspective, including wealth creation, sex and sexuality, health nutrition and fitness, hygiene and sessions with *ssengas*[10] (for girls) or *jajjas* (for boys and girls) are also held (Cross-Culture Foundation of Uganda, 2009).

The trainers recreate traditional ways of storytelling like the *ekyoto* (fireplace) where children traditionally gathered in the olden days to learn cultural norms and values including stories, proverbs and folklore told by their *jajjas* (grandparents) (Cross-Culture Foundation of Uganda, 2009). Training rotates around different school premises in and around Kampala. Each child incurs a fee of about 155,000 Uganda shillings (US$75), seen as a relatively high price for ordinary Ugandans (Cross-Culture Foundation of Uganda, 2009). It attracts children and youths from Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania and South Africa.

2.2.1 Relations between Buganda kingdom and central government

A tense relationship has always existed between Buganda kingdom and successive Ugandan governments (Mutibwa, 1992; Tumusiime, 1992; Mayiga, 2009). This feud is embedded in the special status that Buganda enjoyed during colonial times (Wrigley, 1988; Mutibwa, 1992). The British turned Buganda – the largest and most powerful politico-cultural sub-entity at the time of Uganda's independence –"into a state within the state" (Mutibwa, 1992: 3; see also Wrigley, 1988). For example, while Uganda attained independence in 1962, Buganda declared her own independence on 24th September, 1960, and repeated the declaration on 1st January 1961 (Tumusiime, 1992).

[10] A discussion on the *Ssenga* and her role in this society takes place in Chapter six

The kingdom established itself as a powerful state and became a springboard for British imperialism, known as "Buganda sub-imperialism" (Wrigley, 1988; Mutibwa, 1992; Mayiga, 2009). This power was also translated into demands for semi-autonomous status or recognition as an independent and sovereign state (Mayiga, 2009: 11). The Baganda embraced and exploited their power by exercising their own version of leadership and rule over non-Baganda, gaining wealth and self-aggrandisement; traits that had devastating effects on the project of nation-building:

> Through their use of the Baganda to conquer Uganda the British had established a lasting hatred between the Baganda and a sizeable chunk of the rest of Uganda, weak premises on which to build a nation (Lwanga-Lunyigo, 1987: 5).

Tension and mistrust remain the defining factors between Mengo and successive central governments (Mayiga, 2009). Though kingdoms were abolished in the 1967 constitution, only the political component was disabled, while the cultural component remained intact and functional (Mayiga, 2009). These cultural expectations have re-surfaced, with obvious tensions and contradictions in present day Uganda.

2.3 The Bifurcated state

Mamdani's work on the bifurcated state provides this study with an appropriate framework to understand the persistence into the present of traditional gender identities that exist alongside, and compete with, "modern" notions of gender which are informed by a human rights discourse consistent with democracy. As discussed in the previous section, gender is an organising principle of Ugandan society. But being a traditional subject evokes expected gender norms (Hodgson, 2001). For former colonial states, the gender norms are also influenced by their colonial histories.

Colonial African states were "ideological constructs" that mirrored patriarchal, authoritarian and monarchical colonial practice (Mamdani, 1996:22). Through indirect rule, colonisers drew sharp distinctions between 'citizens' comprising of the colonisers and governed by civil law, and 'subjects' who were the indigenous Africans governed by customary law (Mamdani, 1996). Customary law was enforced by native authorities, like chiefs, who acted as colonial agents and oversaw all aspects of society including women, land, forests and water sources (Mamdani, 1996). The chiefs also implemented their colonisers' orders, collected taxes and ensured that there was a steady supply of labour for their masters (Mamdani, 1996).

The colonisers further concretised these distinctions by 1) sanctifying the authoritarian version of custom as “genuine,” and constructing native custom as unchanging and singular; 2) organising native authority on the basis of a fusion of power where the chief was the executive, legislature, judiciary and administrator combined, so he could make laws as long as they did not contradict the national law and 3) customary law emphasized the right to use force to “coerce subjects to follow custom” (Mamdani, 2001: 655-656).

These moves ensured that each native authority was like a local state under supervision from the centre, thereby establishing “ethnic federations” that were comprised of various native authorities, each defined and divided along class, ethnic, nation, race, age and gender lines (Mamdani, 2001: 655-656; Nakanyike, 2001; Hodgson, 2001). It is this federation that Mamdani refers to as the “bifurcated state” (Mamdani, 1996: 16).

The bifurcated nature of the colonial state proposed different sets of identities that were distinct from market-based identities and cultural identities (Mamdani, 2001). Therein lay the complex collaborations between colonial administrators and male elders who tried to assert and sustain patriarchal authority over women through the construction and reinforcement of “customary law” and “traditional authority” (Hodgson, 2001:3-4). Central to this inherited state was the patriarchal nature of civil law where gender power relations were still demarcated along the gender order (Mamdani, 1996). For instance, colonial officials developed legislation that was explicitly gendered which attempted to restrict “the movement of people into or out of rural and urban areas” (Hodgson, 2001:10-11).

However, the rise of nationalism throughout Africa from the 1950’s onwards saw a rise in rural-urban migration. Nationalist leaders then

> condemned elite women who pursued western ways and chastised poor women for their disrespectful behaviour, urging them to behave in “African” ways, central to which was respect for patriarchal authority (Hodgson, 2001: 13)

Despite the condemnation provoked by resisting the gender order, women in Buganda also migrated to the cities to re-claim their space, voice, bodies, and actions. Women also used the space of the city to assert their own visions of female sexuality, economic autonomy and political expression (Hodgson, 2001: 9). But colonial officials, especially during World War II, blamed all moral decay on women, and employed brutal laws and legislation to ensure that unattached women were rounded up and repatriated to rural areas (Nakanyike, 2001). This colonial history did not only shape events and trends that Uganda’s new generation of leaders

manipulated to their advantage, they continue to shape the country to this day (Mutibwa, 1992).

A vivid illustration of the struggle between traditional subject identities and modern citizen identities is described by Prinsloo (2007) in her analysis of the traditional and modern governance of Swaziland. In Swaziland – the last remaining absolute monarchy – traditional and modern identities, values and behaviours co-exist and struggle for dominance in specific social and cultural spaces, a struggle which is both reflected in and shaped by its representation in the media. This is exemplified by Lindiwe Dlamini, a widow and single mother, whose 18 year old daughter, Zena, was taken as King Mswati's tenth bride. Lindiwe's decision to prefer "abduction" charges against the king's emissaries as opposed to the king reflects her contestations and negotiations with her position as a citizen of Swaziland and as the king's subject. Prinsloo (2007) concludes that though there is evidence of contestation between traditional and modern identities, people negotiate them differently and "ethnic identity continues to be discursively deployed in opposition to democratic governance" (Prinsloo, 2007). This insight is central to my own analysis of the contestations of feminine identity that emerge in the meanings that my respondents make of *Agataliiko Nfuufu.*

2.4 CONCLUSION

Agataliiko Nfuufu is consumed and interpreted in a complex and highly gendered environment. Kampala is a site of contestation due to its dual modern and traditional status in that while the national government draws on western discourses of human and gender rights, which invoke a 'modern' gender identity, Buganda kingdom emphasizes a discourse which draws on traditional concepts of gender roles. These gender norms are highly influenced by Uganda's colonial history and have persisted through the various changes that the country has undergone.

The next chapter presents Uganda's media landscape, which sets the context for the introduction to *Agataliiko Nfuufu.* The chapter also discusses literature, debates and theories around media in liberal democracies, tabloids and tabloidisation.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.0 INTRODUCTION

> Journalism's editorial priorities have changed. Entertainment has superseded the provision of information; human interest has supplanted the public interest; measured judgment has succumbed to sensationalism; the trivial has triumphed over the weighty; the intimate relationships of celebrities from soap operas, the world of sport or the royal family are judged to be more 'news-worthy' than the reporting of significant issues and events of international consequence. Traditional news values have been undermined by new values; 'infotainment' is rampant. (Franklin, 1998: 4)

> But under popular notions of democracy where emphasis is on interdependence and competing cultural solidarities are a reality, the media are under constant internal and external pressure to promote the interests of the various groups competing for recognition and representation (Nyamnjoh, 2011: 28)

This chapter presents Uganda's media landscape with a specific look at the Vision Group, *Bukedde TV1* and *Agataliiko Nfuufu.* It builds on the debates in the previous chapter which presented the broader context within which *Agataliiko Nfuufu* is watched. The discussion also highlights the concentration of audiences and businesses in Kampala as well as language choices in Ugandan media.

Owing to the multiple layers of issues that arise, this study is informed by different orders of theory which are presented over two chapters. This chapter presents the first part of the theoretical framework and literature that informs the study. The opening quotations indicate the contrasting opinions and the panic that surrounds the changing environment in which media operate. It also indicates the fears that are provoked due to the changes in media content and focus. This chapter explores these discussions, initially examining debates around the role of media in liberal democracies. This leads to a discussion on the position of tabloids within liberal democracies, starting with a definition of "tabloids", "tabloidisation" and "tabloid television". These definitions will be used as working definitions in the study. The perspectives presented in this chapter will provide a framework within which the study will analyse the meaning making process of *Agataliko Nfuufu* in a contested society like Kampala.

3.1 Media landscape

The Uganda Broadcasting Service which included radio and television was introduced in 1954 and 1963, respectively (Lugalambi et al., 2010). In order to privilege, sustain and protect state power, the colonial regime's centralised model of political governance ensured that all interests, including the power and influence of the media, converged in state power (Kakooza, 2012). Therefore, the service was primarily set up to promote the coloniser's agenda which needed a communication system to execute its colonial policies and programmes (Lugalambi et al, 2010, Kakooza, 2012). It was also used to neutralise anti-colonial and pro-independence voices that took advantage of their indigenous language press for political mobilisation (Lugalambi et al, 2010). It is this repressive history of media legislation that Uganda's post-independence leaders inherited (Kakooza, 2012).

At the time of independence, Radio Uganda and Uganda television were under the tight control of government. They were the most reliable and significant sources of information as well as the final authority on information (Lugalambi et al, 2010; Kakooza, 2012). After independence, no regime considered the possibility of liberalising Uganda's broadcast sector. Radio Uganda and Uganda television employees were effectively civil servants directly under the Ministry of Information and these stations remained the sole broadcasters from 1962-1992 (Lugalambi et al, 2010; Kakooza, 2012; Namusoga, 2008).

Uganda's military regimes recognised and exploited the state broadcasters to their advantage by ensuring that they were given optimum coverage (Kakooza, 2012). Successive governments have maintained tight control over the media, solely for the survival of their regimes (Jjuuko, 2003; Ogoso, 2004; Namusoga, 2008; Kakooza, 2012). For example, whenever there was a violent regime change, Radio Uganda would be the first institution to be seized by army officers or civilian dictators in order to announce that they had taken control of the government – like Idi Amin's 1971 coup that ousted Milton Obote (Kakooza, 2012; Ogoso, 2004).

3.1.1 Privatisation and the media

When the NRM took power, inflation rates stood at 350 percent (ILO, 1995). The government requested for World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) intervention. Their response came in form of the Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) through the

introduction of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPS) (ILO, 1995). SAPS, which were introduced in 1993, recommended public service reform in line with the new regime's policies (Mwenda et al., 2005). Privatisation saw a dramatic growth in private economic activity, including a growth in private media ownership especially in the broadcast sector, which had always been controlled by the government (ILO, 1995; Lugalambi et al., 2010). However, due to lack of an articulate regulatory framework for broadcasting, the initial licensing regime was mired in controversy (Lugalambi et al., 2010: 20). As a result, the process was steered by ad hoc procedures which led to a significant rise in the number of privately owned radio and television stations within a short space of time (Lugalambi et al., 2010: 20).

Currently, Uganda has 244 licensed radio stations and 51 licensed television stations. 57 of the radio stations operate in and around Kampala and 38 of the television stations are registered in Kampala (UCC, 2012). Radio is the most popular medium: 63 percent of Ugandan households own a radio, while only 6 percent of Uganda's households own a TV set. These figures can be understood if we take into account that only 11 percent of the population receive electricity from the national grid and Uganda's adult literacy rate stands at an estimated 68 percent (UBOS, 2006; Mwesigye, 2013).

3.1.2 Media diversity, freedom, democracy and regulation

Evidence of large numbers in media outlets and ownership does not automatically translate to diversity in media content; neither does it address issues of democracy, freedom of expression and regulation (Jjuuko, 2003; Chibita, 2011; Kakooza, 2012). Having had direct control over the media before the era of media pluralism, government has failed to value media as a public sphere (Nassanga, 2008). Instead, Uganda's leaders have entrenched their power, side-lined opposition and shown no tolerance for independent media (Kakooza, 2012). Generally, there is a limited degree of press freedom; media regulation stifles innovation and regulatory bodies' roles overlap (Kakooza, 2012). For example, between 1995-1997, three pieces of media legislation were passed: *The Press and Journalist Statute of 1995*, *Electronic Media Act of 1996* and *Uganda Communications Act of 1997* (Kakooza, 2012).

The Press and Journalist Statute of 1995, (now the Press and Journalist Act of 2000) established the Media Council[11] and the National Institute of Journalists of Uganda (NIJU). The Electronic Media Act of 1996 (now the Electronic Media Act of 2000) created the Broadcasting Council – the body in charge of issuing broadcast licences, standardizing, planning, managing, and allocating the frequency spectrum to broadcasters as well as liaising with the Ministry of Information. The Uganda Communications Act of 1997 established the Uganda Communications Commission (Kakooza, 2012; Lugalambi, et al., 2010).

Further, journalists who are perceived to be anti-establishment are subject to arbitrary arrests (Kakooza, 2012). Despite laws and regulations that appear to protect freedom of speech and a vocal and independent media, the current government is notorious for frequently detaining, interrogating, torturing and devising trumped up criminal charges against journalists (Kakooza, 2012; *The Independent,* 2012). The 10th annual Press Freedom Index (2012) ranks Uganda 139th in press freedom rankings out of 179 countries (Kakooza, 2012; *The Independent*, 2012).

In 2009, for instance, the Broadcasting Council ordered for the closure of four radio stations[12] for allegedly inciting the population against a government proposed land law (Kakooza, 2012). The closure was attributed to round table radio talk shows – popularly known as *Ebimeeza. Ebimeeza* (plural for *ekimeeza*), is a Luganda word that means 'table'. It was used to refer to round table discussions that were adopted by FM radio stations. *Ebimeeza* were broadcast in public places like bars and restaurants and they gave a platform to ordinary citizens to gather and participate in discussions about the state of Uganda's social, economic and political lives (Chibita, 2010).

Ssuubi FM, *Akaboozi* and Radio Sapientia were re-opened. However, Central Broadcasting Service (CBS) remained closed for close to two years and when it was finally re-instated *ebimeeza* had been banned (Kakooza, 2012). During this period, all media walked a tightrope: some journalists lost their jobs while others were tortured prompting the period to be referred to as an era of 'darkness to freedom of speech and expression in Uganda' (HRNJ, 2010; Kakooza, 2012). Following the banning of '*ebimeeza*', an amendment to the Press and

[11] The Media Council is government controlled and is tasked with regulating media with the intention of protecting media freedom; it also has broad discretionary powers to revoke and or suspend licences of publications and journalists who breach the law.
[12] Central Broadcasting Service (CBS FM), including Ssuubi FM, *Akaboozi* and Radio Sapientia

Journalist Act titled The Draft Press and Journalist (Amendment) Bill, 2010 was proposed. It called for, among other things, mandatory registration and licensing of newspapers by the Media Council and that offending journalists be subject to heavy fines and possible imprisonment for up to two years (Amnesty International, 2010).

Furthermore, for ten days in May 2013, Uganda police raided, sealed off and marked the premises of *Red Pepper* and *Daily Monitor* (both privately owned newspapers) and two radio stations as crime scenes after the media houses published a leaked letter to the Director-General of the Internal Security Organisation (ISO); the letter highlighted an alleged plot to assassinate senior military officials who were opposed to the 'Muhoozi Project'[13] (Rhodes, 2013). Following negotiations, the media organisations were re-opened; however, the negotiations included a range of compromises to the extent that the *Daily Monitor*, which had hitherto reported as an opposition paper, has lost its critical edge (Rhodes, 2013). Such is the environment within which Uganda's media, especially private media, operates.

3.2 Vision group

The Vision Group started in 1986 as the New Vision Printing and Publishing Corporation. Today, it is one of two media conglomerates[14] that dominate Uganda's media industry (Lugalambi, et al., 2010). It is publicly listed with the government of Uganda as the majority shareholder whose stake currently stands at 53 percent; a stake which makes their reflection of government interests understandable, despite their endeavour to portray editorial autonomy (Lugalambi, et al., 2010; Kakooza, 2012). The *New Vision* newspaper remains the group's flagship business, but the stable boasts of four indigenous language regional weeklies: *Etop*, *Orumuri*, *Rupiny* and one indigenous language daily tabloid *Bukedde* (Vision Group, 2013). All regional publications were started as a public service (Kakooza, 2012). The group recently diversified into broadcast.

The group's infrastructure allows it countrywide reach and coverage and its decision to embrace local programming has endeared it to Ugandans (Wasswa, 2012). Their diversification into broadcast has also focussed on regional broadcasting (Wasswa, 2012). Its five FM radio stations can be found in the country's major regions and languages. The group recently launched four television stations: *Bukedde TV1, Bukedde TV2* (Luganda stations), *TV*

[13] The project entails plans for President Yoweri Museveni's son – Muhoozi Kainerugaba – to succeed him
[14] The Nation Media Group (NMG) is the other conglomerate

West (broadcasts in Runyankore/Rukiga) and *Urban TV* (English). Over the years, *Bukedde*, the Luganda tabloid, has become a notable commercial success; in turn, the owners have capitalised on its success and nurtured *Bukedde* as a brand of its own.

3.2.1 The *Bukedde* brand

Bukedde is a Luganda word loosely meaning "dawn exposes all/ dawn will expose me" (Wasswa, 2012). *Bukedde* the newspaper was launched as a tabloid in 1994. Today, it is ranked as the largest selling Luganda paper and second biggest daily in Uganda, reaching up to 44 percent of people in and around Kampala (Synovate, 2012). Its content ranges from leisure, farming, relationship advice, single and searching columns, gossip, traditional remedies, shocking eye-openers, women and health, entertainment, people and sports (Kakooza, 2012; Vision Group, 2012). *Bukedde*'s success has led to the paper being published in two weekend titles: *Bukedde Lwamukaaga* (*Bukedde* on Saturday) and *Bukedde Ku Ssande* (*Bukedde* on Sunday). There is also a radio station (100.5 *Bukedde* FM), and two television stations (*Bukedde TV*1 and *Bukedde TV*2).These outlets are collectively referred to as "*Bukedde* family" (Nabukenya, 2012).

All mediums in the *Bukedde* family are a replica of *Bukedde* the tabloid newspaper and they have assumed the *Bukedde* name, format, brand and identity (Nabukenya, 2012). The family serves the same audience but they feed off of each other's strengths and weaknesses:

> Normally, Bukedde radio is instantaneous so it breaks stories and refers its listeners to the TV for detailed stories later in the day. In turn, the television will announce and advertise what the following day's paper will have. We support and complement each other's work (Nabukenya, 2012).

This is also a cost-cutting mechanism because one reporter covers a single story that can be used for the entire *Bukedde* family (Talemwa et al., 2011). The family uses Luganda as its medium of communication. The Vision Group has realised that there is a market for Ugandan productions that are delivered in indigenous languages, and they have capitalised on this as evidenced in the *Bukedde* family (Wasswa, 2012)

Bukedde TV1's slogan *y'omuntu wa bulijjo* ("for the ordinary person") directly speaks to their audience as the ordinary person (Nabukenya, 2012). The station is in its third year of operation but already boasts the largest share of audiences in and around Kampala with an estimated reach of 87 percent, according to the latest independent Uganda All Media

Products and Services Survey (UAMPS) (Synovate, 2012). The station can also be received via Digital Satellite Television (DSTV) on channel 148. The station's prime time news bulletin *Agatailiko Nfuufu* and programmes like *Abanoonya* (Single and Searching), *Kyenkya* (breakfast show), *KinaUganda* (Ugandan movies) and *Noluyimba lwo* (song requests) have the highest viewership in the country (Synovate, 2012). However, while the Vision Group celebrates its success, the UAMPS have been criticised as fake, and have been questioned and reduced to a "he who pays the piper calls the tune" situation (Katunzi, 2012; Isabirye, 2012).

3.2.2 Agataliiko Nfuufu

The prime time bulletin *Agataliiko Nfuufu* airs on *Bukedde TV1*from Monday to Sunday at 22.00- 23.00 with a repeat at 6.00AM the following day. Its afternoon edition (*Agataliiko Mu Ttuntu*) airs at 12.30-13.00 every day and the weekly round-up (*Agataliiko Aga Wiki*) airs on Sundays from 13.30-14.30. This study is limited to the prime time bulletin *Agataliiko Nfuufu* which made its television debut on 11th October, 2010.

Agataliiko Nfuufu, loosely translated as "plain dustless" or "without dust", is a unique Luganda late night news bulletin. The nature of the programme means that it uses vernacular phrases from people's daily experiences, a move that is aided by the fact that Ugandans frequently use slogans in their day to day communication (Nabukenya, 2012). To attract an ordinary audience, the station managers named their programmes after slogans that people habitually use, understand and associate with (Nabukenya, 2012). The "dustlessness" in *Agataliiko Nfuufu* denotes a bulletin that is free from the gate-keeping process that informs conventional journalism (Wasswa, 2012). The name and slogan also mean that the station is giving its audience, "the real thing, *ono bwino* [this is ink], therefore it is full proof, *nkuwa* [I am giving you] something original" (Nabukenya, 2012).

At inception, the bulletin's reporting team comprised of a "sophisticated network of citizen journalists" and mostly relied on user generated content, which stood at 70 percent of the bulletin (Wasswa, 2012). For 15,000-20,000 shillings (about $4-$5), the stringers hunted for any scandal that they deemed newsworthy (Talemwa et al., 2011). A year later, the station joined DSTV and was required to adopt DSTV's minimum standards of broadcasting; they abandoned the user generated content and opted for the already existing *Bukedde* infrastructure to sustain the bulletin (Wessaali, 2012; Nabukenya, 2012; Wasswa, 2012). Today, there is a team of 90 reporters, 50 of whom are based upcountry (Wesaali, 2012).

Ordinarily, a dusty situation blurs vision and robs audiences of the capacity to appreciate the finer details of texts, but the bulletin prides itself in presenting news in its 'rawest' – and therefore most dustless and transparent – form with stories about 5-10 minutes in length (Wasswa, 2012; Nabukenya, 2012). The choice to broadcast in Luganda and air at 22.00[15] hours gives *Agataliiko Nfuufu* and *Bukedde* leverage over others: by this time of night people have come back home and for those who might have experienced load shedding, the electricity will have been switched on again (Synovate, 2012).

Another reason for the bulletin's popularity lies in its content. *Agataliiko Nfuufu's* content is audacious and dramatic, and combines weird and funny episodes from the daily lives of Ugandans with very elaborate coverage of personal/group disasters, scandals, celebrity lifestyles, dead bodies, and domestic disputes, scenes of violence, village scandals and wizards, witchdoctors, and nudity (Wasswa, 2012; Talemwa et al., 2012). Unlike news bulletins that follow normative ethical principles and news values, *Agataliiko Nfuufu* does not carry any alerts about potentially disturbing content (Wasswa, 2012).

Agataliiko Nfuufu is presented by a male and female anchor. Their dress code has evolved from the *bitengi*[16] that the anchors wore when the programme first aired, to a suit and tie for the male and a *gomesi* (a detailed discussion is in chapter six) for the female anchor (Wessaali, 2012). The original studio which resembled a rural bar room has since given way to a more conventional circular table with a computer generated background and graphics (Talemwa et al., 2011). In an interview with Hajjat Hadija Nabukenya – the station manager of *Bukedde* television – she said that the one hour bulletin has about 8-9 stories which include at least 3 development stories, features, a "society story" (about churches, for example), a sports segment and a health segment (Nabukenya, 2012). The features are aimed at self-development, poverty eradication, improving one's nutrition and appreciating local cultures (Wessaali, 2012; Nabukenya, 2012).

However, the claim that *Agataliiko Nfuufu* is 'dustless news' has also come under criticism with some arguing that it actually is dusty (Talemwa et al., 2011). Some members of the public, politicians and Buganda kingdom have criticised the bulletin for its content. For example, it has been criticised for depicting Uganda as lawless. According to the spokesperson of Uganda Prisons, from the bulletin's content and coverage, "one gets the

[15] The other television stations, all in English, are broadcast between 21.00-22.00 hours.
[16] A printed cotton fabric with various distinct colours, borders and designs

impression that violence and torture is deeply rooted in Ugandan society and not a preserve of the State agents" (Wasswa, 2012).

The tension and mistrust between Buganda and the central government also extends to the relationship between the kingdom and *Bukedde* television. In an interview with Semei Weesali (the content manager of *Agataliiko Nfuufu*), he agrees that they clash with the Mengo establishment because the establishment feels that *Agataliiko Nfuufu* "demonises" Buganda:

> Because every crime we depict it as if it is happening here in Buganda. We have crossed lines with Mengo people about the Kabaka and the stories we write about him (Weesali, 2012).

For example, a story about a group of prostitutes in Bwaise angered the Mengo establishment because the prostitutes spoke Luganda (Weesali, 2012). However, in his interview, Weesali argues that in a changing society, it would be difficult for a Muganda girl living in Kampala to balance Kiganda culture and modernity (*Agataliiko Nfuufu*, 28th November, 2012):

> …those girls are Baganda, they are in Buganda, they have run out of ideas and they resorted to selling their bodies. What are you trying to hide from them? When you don't show it on *Agataliiko Nfuufu* does that mean that it's not happening? Now what is my role as a journalist? It's to mirror (Weesali, 2012)

He reveals that media institutions that have tried to please Buganda have lost their way, for instance WBS (Wavah Broadcasting Services) – a privately owned television station – "do not fall anywhere" while CBS "tries but you wonder what they are up to" (Weesali, 2012). It is therefore safer, according to Weesali (2012) to focus on broadcasting to "Buganda as a whole". Weesali's argument shows that the kingdom is trying to hide what is really happening to its people. The argument should perhaps be understood in context of the central government's majority ownership of the station.

3.3 Media and democracy

The need to broadcast to the entire Buganda needs to be appreciated within the broader roles of the media in contemporary liberal democracies where they are expected to act as a conduit between the central government and the citizens (Dahlgren 1995: 2; Christians et al., 2009). Democracy in this case is taken to mean a state where equality and liberty prevail such that "the rule of the many triumphs over the rule of the few" (Christians et al., 2009: 91). Under a democracy, ideally all citizens are afforded equal and similar opportunities to participate in

decision making. In this case, society recognises the right to mutual influence, where every citizen has the right to debate and discuss ideas without coercion (Christians et al., 2009: 91). Media in liberal democracies are meant to act as the fourth estate and play a 'watchdog' role by holding the leaders accountable if they are not delivering services or are going against the fundamental civil liberties of the citizens. Therefore, any contemporary society that subscribes to the democratic principles of freedom and self-government has to have a healthy and vibrant environment within which media operate (Christians et al., 2009).

It is against this background that Christians et al. (2009) propose the normative roles of the media. These roles propose a set of general functions of media, values and ethical roles of journalists within liberal democracies (Christians et al 2009). These theories are meant to 'prescribe' the media's relations with different organs of power like the government, businesses and the media itself (Christians et al, 2009). Christians et al. (2009) present four normative roles of the media, which include the Monitorial, Facilitative, Radical, and Collaborative roles. The next section gives a brief summary of these roles.

3.4 Normative roles of the media

The Monitorial role argues for a media that acts as an objective watchdog of the powerful, especially the state. Within this role, the media are tasked to represent reality as well as present varying ideas and stimulate debate (Christians et al. 2009).

The Facilitative role envisages a media that does not focus on individual rights; rather the media should aim at improving the quality of citizens' lives, contribute to democracy, emphasize citizen participation and promote civil society (Christians et al. 2009).

The Radical role of the media advocates for a media that exposes wrongdoing, fights for radical change, justice and development while the fourth and final role is the Collaborative role of the media which is premised on a media that forms a relationship with powers, like the government, in a bid to achieve development and ultimately nation building (Christians et al., 2009).

In African democracies, the collaborative role is the most preferred function of the media. To this end, the formation, control and ownership of radio and television, especially public service broadcasters, is in the hands of the government of the day (Thompson, 1990; Opuku-

Mensah, 1998; Ogoso, 2004). In this instance, the media are used for public service broadcasting and emphasis is put on the provision of news, current affairs and development-oriented programming. In such situations, the mainstream media are a preserve of the elite, and the larger parts of the population are left out of the necessary debates.

Sparks (2000:11) directly attributes the growth of popular media and tabloids to the state and elite control of the mainstream media. Though tabloids are identified as a sub category of popular journalism, their role is not recognised in journalism within liberal democracies (Gripsrud, 2008; Christians et al., 2009). Yet tabloid elements within 'serious' news items highlight the "everyday concerns and interests of 'ordinary', non-intellectual and relatively powerless people to be represented in public discourse" (Gripsrud, 2002: 237). Tabloid media are not only devoted to the popularisation of political and cultural issues, they are also credited for ameliorating the political disenchantment of the working class by addressing "existential aspects of people's lives that ordinary politics is more or less incapable of grasping" (Gripsrud, 2002: 237).

3.5 Tabloids

Tabloids can be traced back to 17th century Europe when Alfred Hamsworth, later called Lord Northcliff established the *Daily Mirror* – the first tabloid – in Britain (Gripsrud, 2008). Today, Britain is associated with the "riot of competing tabloids" (Wasserman, 2010:19). In the United States, the start of tabloids is attributed to the penny press of the 1830's; the penny press sold for one penny while all other newspapers went for six cents (Sparks, 2000). In New York, the founding of the *Sun* in 1833 brought about the first paper that addressed readers in the language of the "common man" (Thussu 2007: 17) which can be seen as an era when "a journalism of entertainment developed alongside a journalism of analysis" (Wasserman, 2010:19). The *Sun* is said to have mainly appealed to the American working class by covering human-interest news that included "scandalous tales of sin, the immoral antics of the upper class, and humorous tales of mishaps of all kinds" (Thussu 2007: 17).

The term "tabloid" is originally derived from the word "tablet," however, the term is a fluid, ambiguous and slippery entity whose specific meaning cannot be pinned down to one particular definition (Bird, 1992: 8; Sparks, 2000: 10; Glynn, 2000; Gripsrud, 2002: 236). Within journalism, usage of the term is in reference to a particular format (size and shape) of

a newspaper. This format is half-sized compared to a standard broadsheet (Sparks 2000). Over the years, however, the term has broadened to include, radio and television programming as well as to mean news content, presentation and style of news – also known as tabloid journalism (Bird, 2009; Sparks 2000).

Tabloids and tabloid journalism in general pay little attention to politics, society and economics and prioritise the "private axis" by covering sports, scandal and popular entertainment especially the personal and private lives of people (Sparks, 2000:12). Tabloids have blurred the boundaries "between women's stuff and traditional policy matters" by putting 'private' issues like domestic violence, child abuse, relationships, addictions and eating disorders on the "nightly televisual map" (Lumby, 1997: 117-118). By juxtaposing the usual serious news with the tabloid content, tabloids connect the public and private spheres.

This is contrary to "serious journalism" which focuses on the "public axis" by looking at politics, economics and society (Sparks, 2000:12). It is precisely for this reason that concerns have abounded over whether the rise of tabloids is indicative of a "crisis in democracy" as their content is believed not only to cause moral decadence but also to "dumb down" journalism, leading to the tabloidisation of media culture (Sparks, 2000: 11; Sparks, 2010).

3.6 Tabloidisation

The term "tabloidisation" gained currency in the 1980's; but just like tabloid, there is a general lack of consensus on a specific meaning of the term (Turner, 1999: 60; Gripsrud, 2000: 34; Bird 2009; Dahlgren, 2009; Conboy, 2006). Gripsrud (2000: 34) argues that tabloidisation is a "tabloid term, more of a journalistic buzzword than a scholarly concept." Bird (2009: 39) argues that the problem with the term tabloidisation is that "like 'obscenity', everyone seems to recognise it when they see it, but no one really agrees what it is": it is "something of a 'shape shifter bugaboo' referring to many things all at once and seemingly threatening from equally all angles" (Serazio 2009: 13).

Generally, "tabloidisation", just like "tabloid" is used to connote the decay and lowering of journalistic standards that consequently leads to the deterioration of news content (Gripsrud 2000; Zelizer, 2009; Bird, 2009). It is associated with the trivialisation of media forms which is seen to undermine the ideal roles of media in liberal democracies (Bird, 1992; 2009; Dahlgren, 1995). As such the term is used to refer to the growing trend of mainstream media

that reflects the character and features of tabloid-style journalism (Dahlgren, 1995; Turner, 1999; Gripsrud, 2000).

Despite the fuzziness in defining tabloidisation, various scholars have identified three defining textual characteristics that can be attributed to tabloidisation; these include *range*, *form* and *style* (McLachlan and Golding, 2000: 76-77; Sparks, 2000: 10; Gripsrud, 2000: 37; Uribe and Gunter, 2004: 390; Bird, 2009: 41). *Range* refers to the decrease in space that is allocated to information vis-à-vis entertainment; there is also less attention that is devoted to "hard" and foreign news as opposed to "soft" news (Sparks, 2000: 10; Uribe and Gunter, 2004: 390). In this case, "serious" news is crowded out in favour of celebrity news, gossip and human interest stories both in the press – in this case *Bukedde* newspaper – and in broadcast – like *Bukedde TV1* (Bird, 2009: 41). *Form* refers to the favouring of visual representations – like the use of simplistic formats which can be seen in the increased use of visuals – as opposed to written text (Bird, 2009). Print tabloid media reflects a personal mode of address and tabloid television, as will be discussed in the next section, is much more personal, relaxed and places a lot of emphasis on dramatised visuals, shorter scripts and language that is "a bit more vernacular" (Dahlgren, 1995: 60; Bird 2009).

Finally, *style* indicates an increased and personalised coverage of news which can be seen in both print and television tabloids. In both mediums, longer analytical writing is replaced by shorter, punchier and personalised writing (Bird, 2009). These, according to Gans (2009: 24), are "audience incentives" that are aimed at retaining the viewers' curiosity but are short on in-depth analysis. It is for this reason that tabloid genres are assumed to generally appeal to the "ordinary" people like for example, the working class (Glynn, 2000: 6). But Gans (2009: 17) has replaced the term tabloidisation with "popularisation". Popularisation is less critical and not media specific; it is also a more constructive term that refers to a common social process in society which has the ability to reinforce and enhance the role of the news media in providing information, stimulating debate and upholding democracy (Gans, 2009).

Tabloidisation, in the north (United States and United Kingdom press) entails a shift away from the daily news agenda to editorially generated content that is promoted days in advance, it also entails a move from politics towards crime, and a move away from "information-based treatments of social issues and towards entertaining stories on lifestyles or celebrities, and an overwhelming investment in the power of the visual, in the news as an entertaining spectacle" (Turner, 1999: 59-60). Tabloidisation also speaks to the "dumbing down" of media content in

favour of commercialised journalism that prioritises delivering large audiences to potential and existing advertisers (Sparks, 2000). The rise of tabloids in general is attributed to a desire for profit maximisation (Turner, 1999; Sparks, 2000; Wasserman, 2010; Steenveld and Strelitz, 2010).

But in Africa, where mainstream media is a preserve of the elite, the growth of popular media can be seen as providing a space where ordinary citizens can also have access to and participate in the public sphere. Wasserman (2011:11-12) states that,

> A closer, contextual reading of popular media … often brings to light a different kind of political engagement, one which could be termed the 'politics of everyday' and which breaks down the boundaries between the knowledge class and ordinary people.

Here, a strong case is made that in Africa popular media and culture should be read and understood within the political and cultural contexts of reception. For example, in explaining the rapid growth and popularity of the *Red Pepper* – Uganda's first tabloid newspaper – Rugyendo (2012) posits that the genesis and popularity of tabloidisation in Uganda can be traced to the post 1986 generational shift and the "NRM peace dividend":

> The coming [of the] NRM on the Ugandan political space ushered in a new set of citizens; citizens who had never seen wars, never been refugees and just wanted to have fun. It set in [sic] a citizen who spent time in the disco, the beach, football tournaments and other entertainment places having fun and retiring home with no harm (Rugyendo, 2012).

Red Pepper responded to the needs of a new generation and a readership that existed "outside the thick walls shelving civil servants and the politicians" whose news was provided by the mainstream media (Rugyendo, 2012). The mainstream media responded to the *Red Pepper's* success by starting light content magazines, tabloid papers, and most recently, tabloid televisions like *Bukedde* TV1 (Rugyendo, 2012; Kakooza, 2012). The focus of these tabloid outlets extends beyond celebrities to include coverage on poor service delivery, poor sanitation, and the politics of everyday that mainly affect the working class.

Eide (1997: 180) argues that tabloid journalism needs to be recognised for its "service and campaign journalism" in which journalists "address a *lifeworld* where information *does* matter for the reader, not a *system* world where readers' possibilities for action are limited" (Eide, 1997: 177-178: original emphasis). Journalists, in this case, advocate for and campaign on behalf of consumers and address audiences as consumers of goods and services thereby providing them with human interest content which is "anchored within the everyday" and

attempts to provide “news you can use” which ultimately improves their daily lives (Dahlgren, 1995: 60). A case in point is made by Steenveld and Strelitz (2010: 536) who argue that South Africa’s *Daily Sun* also plays a significant ‘service journalism’ role which, through its regular features like “Sun Power” and “Mr. Fix it”, mobilize help in response to issues and problems that are raised by its readership.

3.7 Tabloid television

The popularity of “tele-tabloids” or “tabloid television” is attributed to the tabloidisation of television programmes, especially in the news media in the United States (Dahlgren, 1995; Langer, 1998). Tabloid television is a form of popular culture that Glynn (2000:6) classifies as an “electronic descendant of the déclassé tabloid newspapers …” It is from the success of the supermarket tabloids in the United States in the 1980’s – with their coverage of human-interest stories, lifestyle advise and celebrity gossip – that tabloid television shows like *Extra, A Current Affair, Inside Edition, Hard Copy* and *American Journal* owed their roots, popularity and subsequent success (Bird, 1998; Ehrlich, 1996). Henceforth, tabloid television shows began competing with local and network news.

Gradually, major television networks – ABC, NBC and CBS – adopted the tabloid genre (emphasizing scandal, human-interest stories, celebrity lifestyles and crime) and local news evolved into a combination of hard news and gossipy chat which took on a “more sensationalist tone with an emphasis on charisma and image of newscasters” (Dahlgren, 1995: 48; Bird, 1998). The tabloid television genre in the West privileges an informal communicative style that includes an emphasis on presenters’ appearance, celebrities, personalities and storytelling skills as a means of entertaining audiences for profit maximisation (Byerly, 2007: 44). Furthermore, tabloid television is characterised by explicit scripting and shocking images, sensational story titles and catchy graphics.

The growth of tabloid television is further eased and aided by the development of new technologies, globalisation, changes in social attitudes, changes in the regulatory environment and commercial pressures (Biressi and Nunn, 2008: 2). In the United States, the advent of cable television and VCRs led to a competitive media environment where ratings defined the success and/or failure of television news (Bird 1998; Calabrese, 2000). Rupert Murdoch is recognised as the pioneer of tabloidisation, especially in television in the United States

(Glynn, 2000). He is also recognised for the growth of independent broadcasting stations under "Reaganism" due to the intense deregulation policies at the time (Glynn, 2000: 27). Further, recent technological innovations have enhanced television's competitive edge and increased tabloid television's competitive edge over print tabloids:

> [t]elevision's multiple perceptual channels endow it with a semiotic richness that print media obviously lack. Television's capacity for moving-image, voice-over, graphical, musical, and performative signification enable it to produce hyperrealistic effects that point up by contrast the poverty of the supermarket tabloids" (Glynn, 2000: 162-163)

The advantage of the visual image is further enhanced by television's ability to exploit the sense of live programming and participatory immediacy that is experienced through text messaging and live studio call-in (Glynn, 2000).

Tabloid television has also extended from television programmes to include television news. Within television news, tabloidisation is established when news merges into talk shows and reality programming (Bird, 1998: Dahlgren, 1995). Defining tabloid television news is also difficult but it generally focusses on heightened emotionality with an emphasis on the melodramatic:

> Its subject matter is generally that produced at the intersection between public and private life; its style is sensational, sometimes sceptical, sometimes moralistically earnest; its tone is populist; its modality fluidly denies any stylistic difference between fiction and documentary, between news and entertainment (Fiske, 1992: 48)

As such, the tabloid television news format and content draws from and is informed by 'serious' news, current affairs and entertainment discourses (Glynn, 2000). But its popularity stems from the way it communicates which is "producerly" due to its accessibility, evocativeness and provocativeness (Dahlgren, 1995: 61). Langer (1998:7-9) categorises tabloid television news as "other news" which includes human-interest stories such as relationships gone sour, earthquakes, fires, and witches, topics that are not directly related to politics or the economy. Further, tabloid television news is characterised by stories about crime, which are a "staple ingredient of tabloid news" (Gripsrud 2000: 38).

The characteristics of tabloids as discussed resonate with Dahlgren's (1995) analysis of the Swedish broadcasting landscape. In his analysis of *Aktuellt* – the main evening newscast of Swedish television Channel one – Dahlgren (1995: 55) argues that there is an increased tempo in *Aktuellt* whereby increased attention is given to the use of visual cuts and sound bites which has considerably reduced the average time for news items (Dahlgren, 1995).

Further, just like it is with “tele-tabloids”, the programme also pays great attention to the studio décor, quality of graphics and sophisticated logos as well as the anchor’s camera presence (Dahlgren, 1995).

Further, his in-depth analysis of *Nyheter* – evening news on Sweden’s TV4 – concludes that the bulletin has a “relaxed and personal style, with the reporters’ role enhanced; its language is a bit more vernacular, the visuals more audacious, and the dramaturgy somewhat less predictable” (Dahlgren, 1995: 60). However, it is in the reporters’ friendly tone, “positive personal style” and personalisation of its news stories that Dahlgren (1995: 60) credits *Nyheter* for “giving political stories concrete human faces” thus its popularity.

The popularity of the tabloid format with its “tabloid-like sensationalism”, coupled with the human fascination with crime, sex and gossip, argues Ehrlich (1996:3), transcends time and place. However, ethnographic researchers have challenged this media imperialistic notion by arguing that there is “glocalisation” – localisation of the genre to suit local tastes and preferences –within different contexts (Thussu, 2007: 20-25; Wasserman, 2010: 44-57). They argue that although there may be similarities in the tabloid format world over, there are still visible differences between the tabloid TV genre in industrialised states and the genre in Africa.

For example, the American tabloid television scene thrives on the entertainment industry (celebrity news, scandal and gossip). Within the African context, however, the growth of the tabloid television news genre is a recent phenomenon that can be attributed to competition for advertising revenue and unfriendly regulatory media environments that push media owners and editors into the production of light, apolitical stories that will safeguard their licenses (Sparks, 2000; Opolot, 2007; Kakooza, 2012; Mbatha, 2012).

In her research on the popularity of *Muvi TV* and its tabloidised main evening news, Mbatha (2012) concluded that the bulletin’s popularity among working class Zambians stemmed from its ability to emphasise human-interest stories epitomised by tabloid journalism values. She further argues that the working class were able to identify and relate with the stories that were told on *Muvi TV* and they attached “greater believability to the station's news as compared to the public broadcaster, the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC)” (Mbatha, 2012: i). Despite its sensational approach to the issues it covers, the study concludes that *Muvi* television’s bulletin fulfils a critical political function (Mbatha, 2012).

In the South African context, the 1998 launch of the only privately owned and free-to air television station – *e.tv* – introduced a "new vitality and informality to television news" (Duncan, 2009: 70; Duncan and Glenn, 2010: 59). The station's popularity, especially among young black South Africans, is attributed to its use of "direct English" and its informal nature (Duncan, 2009: 70; Duncan and Glenn, 2010: 59). The station airs "a plethora of low popular culture items" like wrestling, action movies, soft porn and *Late Night News with Loyiso Gola* – a satirical current affairs programme (Duncan, 2009: 70; Duncan and Glenn, 2010: 59).

In Uganda, traits of the tabloid television genre are visible in almost all the 44 television stations since the liberalisation of the airwaves (Kakooza, 2012). The majority of these stations are based in Kampala and are all competing for the same audiences. The launch of *Agataliiko Nfuufu*, has further changed the news landscape of the news genre in Uganda. The bulletin focuses on local human-interest stories, on crime, witchcraft, scandals, entertainment and the politics of living and managing Kampala city.

However, while media, especially popular television news, have overturned the public/private notion of the public sphere by bringing the private to the fore, they have been criticised for failing their female audiences. The criticisms relate to extreme representation of women, who are either represented as celebrities, just to be looked at or as victims (Byerly, 2007: 45). These representations are argued to perpetuate the notion that serious politics and the public sphere are men's stuff (Hartley, 1996: 27).

Although popular media have attempted to diversify the concept of femininity by shifting towards a "new femininity" – which involves more sexually assertive, confident, aspirational and fun-seeking (encourage girls to go seek success and pleasure, drink and have sex outside relationships) – they have a history of representing women as centrally concerned with and in need of men, love, romance and relationships (Milestone et al. 2012: 88-90). For instance, in an analysis of the '*Charter for a Man'* in the *Daily Sun*, a widely circulated South African tabloid newspaper, Dewa and Prinsloo (2012: 20) conclude that the campaign "endorsed the existing gender order through the repeated representation of women as weak and in need of patronage, and men as their protectors and providers."

It is against this background that Milestone et al., (2012: 90-91) conclude that the idea of "new femininity" remains deeply contested. They argue that media still segment women's lives in distinct stages that are marked by "normative milestones which women should

achieve" like finding a man, getting married and having children. For instance, research conducted on the Ugandan tabloid, *Red Pepper*, suggests that, while this tabloid usefully brings some "private" issues (such as sexuality) into the public sphere, its representation of women remains deeply patriarchal (Opolot, 2007).

3.8 CONCLUSION

Tabloid newspapers and tabloid television occupy an interesting space in Uganda's contemporary media-sphere. They have emerged at a time of increasing incorporation into global economic flows and pressures, and operate (indeed, thrive) under conditions often inimical to journalistic freedom. However, the *Bukkede* brand, whose main audience is located in Kampala, must also be understood as playing a role within the tensions and divisions that mark the central government's relationship with Buganda. *Bukkede's* brand of tabloid television, then, plays a contradictory role: if, as tabloid theory suggests, tabloids as a prominent form of popular culture, we might see, in this research, some of the ways in which popular concerns and popular politics find expression within this eclectic and vernacular genre. At the same time, the research on African tabloids also suggests that this genre of journalism is not necessarily favourable to the incorporation and representation of women into this public sphere.

The next chapter presents the second part of the literature review which includes a discussion of cultural studies approaches to understanding popular media, and media and identity formation.

CHAPTER FOUR

LITERATURE REVIEW

4.0 INTRODUCTION

> See how Zulufa is complaining that her husband is assaulting her. He sourced you from a bar; you cannot complain to anyone that he is killing you. You should know that a woman who is obtained from her parent's home has an edge…she can turn to the parents for mediation. Without a mediator, you have no choice but to stay in an abusive relationship. How can you blame the man for assaulting you when you are the one who invited him? He will continue beating you like he is sponsored…take heart…whatever is happening to you is not new, it has happened before… (Mubiru, 2011).

The previous chapters have mapped out the various changes in Uganda's media landscape as well as changes in the social, economic and political environment. As these changes occur, new areas present themselves for further investigation; of particular interest to this study is the way men and women relate in a changing society like Kampala. The opening quote is an excerpt from a popular Ugandan song titled *Kanya Mpisa* by Haruna Mubiru; he advises today's young generation, especially women, to try and make their marriages work instead of fighting and divorcing over trivialities. The song, as a form of popular culture, demonstrates how popular culture can frame specific values and behaviours as negative, and also propose more "acceptable" or valid relationships between men and women. Importantly for this study, what we see here is the use of popular culture forms as a platform for contesting notions of gender, and for proposing appropriate masculinities and femininities.

This study is located within the broader framework of media and cultural studies, which is discussed in the opening section of this chapter. The chapter goes on to relate popular culture to debates about modernity and identity formation. These perspectives provide the framework which informs the analysis of the reception of *Agataliko Nfuufu* in Kampala.

4.1 Cultural studies

Cultural studies is concerned with the interrogation of the processes of production, circulation and consumption of media texts (Fiske, 1987; 1989; Johnson, 1987). The approach is a multi-theoretical and interdisciplinary framework that is premised on examining lived culture and the everyday practices by which it is constituted (Hall, 1982). It allows for the interrogation of alternative cultures and understanding the process of interpretation within specific contexts.

Cultural studies addresses "awkward but relevant issues about contemporary society and culture" thus making it well suited to the study of the "culture of the people," that is, popular culture (Johnson, 1987: 38). It encompasses all cultural products that communicate to their audiences ideas about different aspects of lived culture (Fourie, 2007). Culture, in this case is defined as, "a whole way of life" through which meanings are socially constructed and historically transformed (Johnson, 1987: 38).The approach rotates around three fundamental principles: first, it views cultural processes as intimately connected with social relations; second, it recognises the importance of "power" in individuals' abilities to define their needs; and finally, it views culture as a site of social differences and struggle (Johnson, 1987: 39).

It is through media that our daily lives find expression and are multiplied (Hall, 1980; Johnson, 1987). The media are involved in a constant process of production (selection, structure, shaping and presentation) and they do not only act as a mirror reflecting society, but are also involved in the process of producing consensus and manufacturing consent (Hall, 1982). The approach acknowledges the power and hegemonic forces of the ruling class who control the means of production and by extension control the message (Curran, 1991).

A cultural studies approach at the same time celebrates the individual and his/her capacity to resist dominant cultural agendas (Hall, 1981; Johnson, 1987). It argues that meaning making is shaped by individual identity and the social and cultural context within which audiences live out their everyday lives (Hall, 1980; 1982). Audiences are influenced, informed and shaped by other factors like gender, race and class which have a direct impact on how they interpret texts (Hall, 1980).Therefore, while dominant interests must be taken into account at the moment of production, audiences also actively engage with the text within their particular contexts.

It is against this background that Hall's (1980) encoding and decoding model argues that the interpretation of media messages by audiences is not necessarily similar to the meaning that is produced by media institutions. Hall (1980) argues that as much as there is a preferred meaning inscribed at the moment of encoding, audiences can decode the message in three different ways. They can read within the *dominant* code and thereby interpret the text in the way the producer envisaged. Alternatively, audiences can make a *negotiated* reading, in which they accept the dominant ideology by which the text is framed, but make exceptions to suit local conditions; or they can take an *oppositional* reading of the text, and reject the inscribed meaning in its entirety (Hall, 1980:135-137).

The approach's flexibility allows it to embrace a variety of theoretical lenses to interrogate social identities, subjectivities, popularity and pleasures in relation to media outputs. Of particular importance to this study is its provision of a framework within which popular culture and the women's movement can be interrogated (Johnson, 1987; Dahlgren, 1992).

4.2 Gender

The purpose of this study is to investigate the meanings that young working class women in Kampala between the ages of 18-35 years make of *Agataliiko Nfuufu* and to understand how these meanings relate to the contested notions of femininity. Femininity is part of the structure of gender relations. This section focuses on critical social-constructivist understandings of gender.

Femininity on its own has no particular meaning and makes sense only when examined together with, and in contrast to, masculinity (Scott, 1986: 1053-1054; Connell, 2009). Furthermore, it can only be understood within the broader framework of the relationship between men and women in our society, that is, gender relations (Connell, 2009). Gender in this case is defined as a social category imposed on a sexed body that is primarily concerned with the social roles of masculinity and femininity (Scott, 1986; Connell, 2009). Such gender relations, which inform and structure social interaction, link the whole terrain of social life to the reproductive arena (Scott, 1986; Connell, 2009:69).

Categorization into a specific gender is imposed at birth, when a baby is successfully assigned a sex category (male or female) basing on their genitalia (Scott, 1986). Henceforth, the body is dressed and adorned to suit the assigned sex category. After categorization, gender becomes a lived and routine ground for the carrying out of everyday activities and subsequently achieves a taken-for grantedness where gender relations are constantly made and re-made on a daily basis. We can thus talk of gender as "perfomative" (Butler, 1990: 185; Connell, 2009). Gender is "perfomative" in a sense that it is not fixed but rather socially constructed and varies from one situation to another (Butler, 1990: 185). Therefore,

> acts, gestures, and desire produce the effect of an internal core or substance, but produce this *on the surface* of the body, through the play of signifying absences that suggest, but never can reveal, the organizing principle of identity as a cause (Butler, 1990, p. 136; original emphasis)

By performing these acts and gestures, the gendered body proves that its acceptance is sustained through continuous "*fabrications*" which consequently informs the process of identity formation (Butler, 1990: 185; original emphasis).

Reproductive differences between males and females are not controversial, but their significance is (Connell, 2002; 2009). In this instance, approaches to understanding gender diverge sharply; some assume that the body is a machine that manufactures gender differences, others assume that the body is a canvas on which culture paints images of gender; while others conflate the machine and the canvas (Connell, 2009). These reproductive differences are reflected through:

> [b]odily strength and speed (men are stronger and faster), physical skills (men have mechanical skills, women are good at fiddly work), sexual desire (men have more powerful urges), recreational interests (men love sport, women gossip) character (men are aggressive, women are nurturant), intellect (men are rational, women have intuition) and so on. It is widely believed that these differences are large and that they are natural (Connell, 2009:53)

These traits and actions acquire a 'natural' interpretation or meaning, and it is the culmination of these actions upon sexual differences that produces the history of gender (Connell, 2002; 2009: 53). This is further emphasized through naming, behavior, speech, socialization, sexual interaction, child care and the use of other gender marks which directly fall under the domain of gender (Scott, 1986; Butler, 1990; Connell, 2009).

But gender is more than a one-on-one relationship: rather, it involves a "vast and complicated institutional and cultural order which come[s] into relation with bodies and accord[s] them gendered meanings" (Connell, 2009: 56). Critical to note is that these social or cultural meanings that are attached to feminine or masculine identities always privilege masculinity over femininity. It is not surprising therefore that men receive better life opportunities, and it is taken for granted that valued social positions like diplomats, ministers, generals and corporate executives should be reserved for men (Butler, 2004; Connell, 2009).

It is against this background that a conceptual breakthrough which argues for a distinction between the concepts of "sex" and "gender" was advanced in the 1970's (Connell, 2009: 57). The concept's strength lay in classifying 'sex' as a biological fact that considered the differences between males and females and 'gender' as a social fact concerning masculine and feminine roles (Connell, 2002; 2009: 57). This concept successfully challenges the 'natural' assumptions that had collapsed the meaning of sex and gender into one. It also

proposes that an individual is technically free to choose whatever gender patterns they desire. Furthermore, the concept argues that men stand to benefit from "continuously defending the existing gender order" (Connell, 2009:53). Thus, attempts to revise gender relations have historically failed to account for the unequal balance of power between men and women and have also failed to address concerns about the use of power on gendered bodies (Connell, 2002).

These weaknesses inform Connell's (2002; 2009) theorisation on gender. Connell (2002; 2009) proposes a view of gender that focuses on the exercise of power that is enacted on people who are situated in different environments and social institutions. This view argues that gender is not a fixed dichotomy between males and females but that it is a social construction (Connell, 2009). Gender comes into being by people constantly "doing gender", through creating and re-creating human interaction and social life within specific times and spaces (Connell, 2009). It underscores an entire system of relationships that may include sex, but is not "directly determined by sex or directly determining of sexuality" (Scott, 1986:1054).

Therefore, the use of the term "gender" denotes a rejection of the biological determinism implicit in the use of terms such as "sex" or "sexual difference" to explain gender (Scott, 1986:1054; Connell, 2002; 2009). According to this view, men and women are defined in terms of one another with a view that understanding either one of them can only be achieved by focusing on the combination of male and female and the social relations that inhere in that society and/or institution at a specific time (Scott, 1986; Connell, 2009). To this end, Connell's model (2009: 73) of the *gender order* and the *gender regime* contextualise the power play that informs gender construction in societies.

The *gender order* refers to the way that society constructs notions of hegemonic masculinity and emphasised femininity through power relations while *gender regimes* are patterns of gender arrangements in societies and institutions (Connell, 2009: 73-74). Though we as individuals make our own gender, we are not at liberty to choose and "make it however we like" because the gender order is powerfully shaped by the society and institutions within which we as individuals find ourselves (Connell, 2009: 73-74). In this sense, the limits of permissible behaviour are set and implemented with expectations that individual agency must be bound within permissible social norms (Butler, 2004). Therefore, the concept of gender

provides a framework that gives us an understanding of the processes that recreate and reinforce the unequal relations that exist between sexes (Scott, 1986).

Within the African context, gender is similarly understood according to the roles and functions that are assigned to men and women, that is, male or female sexed bodies. Being male or female determines the kind of opportunities that are accorded to an individual (Ngubane, 2010). Critical to note is that social life is lived through patriarchal norms and values, and patriarchy informs daily relations in society (Walby, 1990; Connell, 2009; Ngubane, 2010). Patriarchy is defined as a system of social structures and practices where men are empowered to dominate, exploit and oppress women (Connell, 2009; Walby, 1990). Patriarchy is not a new phenomenon in Africa, and was characteristic of African social structures generally, even before colonisation (Connell, 2005; Mamdani, 1996). However, dominant patriarchal structures are interwoven with the culture of imperialism. Imperialism and colonisation have perpetuated and re-enforced gender inequality on the continent (Connell, 2005; Mamdani, 1996). This Connell (2005) further argues is evidenced in the co-construction of nationalism and masculinity, which further re-enforce assumed gender roles.

4.2.1 Gender dimensions

Gender relations involve complex multiple structures (Connell, 2009). Within these structures, gender is fluid and consists of constant shifts from one gender logic to another (Connell, 2009). For example, a modern liberal state recognises men and women as equal citizens, but dominant sexual codes define men and women as opposites (Connell, 2009). Regardless of the equality advanced by the modern state, women entering the public domain have to work hard for their authority to gain recognition (Connell, 2002; 2009). It is against this background that Connell (2009) identifies a model which distinguishes four dimensions of gender that are played out in contemporary industrial, post-industrial and global society. These are *power relations*, *production relations*, *emotional relations* and *symbolic relations*. Critical to note is that in practice, the four relations in this model do not operate as separate institutions but are intertwined. A discussion of these relations follows below.

4.2.1.1 Power relations

Connell (2009: 76-78) recognizes power relations at three levels: they can be direct, discursive and colonising. Under direct power, Connell (2009) argues that patriarchal power

involves more than direct control of women by men, but that it is also carefully administered through the state (Connell, 2009). In such gender orders, there is a 'mobilization of masculine bias' whereby contemporary systems favour men by reserving promotions for them, thereby empowering them to control the means of force (Connell, 2009).

When power is discursive, then it can be observed in the ways that people use language and practices to categorise people into subject positions (Connell, 2009). Power then is repressive and directly impacts on people's bodies and identities. For example, in a bid to achieve "desirable heterosexual femininity" women take up subject positions that enable them to look, eat and dress in a certain way as a means of fitting into certain 'acceptable' groups, sizes and shapes (Connell, 2009).

In the third and final level, Connell (2009) argues that the creation of global empires by invading indigenous lands and colonialism is by far the most sweeping exercise of power. Imperial powers subjugated indigenous societies, mined them for labour, transformed indigenous gender orders and consequently constructed new societies. The colonisers, "overwhelmingly men from the metropole, seized women's bodies as well as the land; and a fused gender/race hierarchy became a core feature of colonial society" (Connell, 2009: 78). This society has persisted in today's world. However it is critical to note that colonising power was contested by women who took part in the liberation struggles and it is also displayed through contemporary women's activism (Connell, 2009).

4. 2.1.2 Production relations

The most dominant component of production relations lies in the sexual division of labour (Connell, 2009). There is a deliberate structural division of labour whereby the skills and education that is accorded to men and women restrict and determine the work that men and women do (Connell, 2009). It is, for instance, within the domestic environment that the discrimination of sex roles is mostly expressed, prompting Mattelart (1986: 7) to refer to domestic work as *invisible work*. It is invisible because even though women form the mainstay of the support economy, national economic indicators that define the position and development standards of each county do not recognise the economic value of household work, which further emphasises a distinction between "public and private, production and reproduction" (Mattelart, 1986: 7). In this environment,

> [t]he hierarchy of values finds expression through the positive value attached to masculine time (defined by action, change and history) and the negative value attached to feminine time which, for all its potential richness, is implicitly discriminated against in our society, internalised and experienced as the time of banal everyday life, repetition and monotony (Mattelart, 1986: 7)

Furthermore, in the contemporary world, capitalism plays a critical role in production relations. Through a "*gendered accumulation process*," there is a deliberate attempt at emphasizing and maintaining cultural and economic processes that continuously discriminate against women (Connell, 2009: 80). The global economy owes its roots to colonisation and 'housewifization'; in these dual processes, men are portrayed as the primary breadwinners while women are dependent on them (Connell, 2009: 80). In addition, the global economy is organised in such a way that even the products that are placed on the market for consumption have gendered uses and effects, for example cosmetics and cars (Connell, 2009).

4.2.1.3 Emotional relations

Emotional relations, especially those associated with specific social institutions like the bourgeois family, unconsciously shape people's emotions – which could be both loving and hostile – towards other people (Connell, 2009). Emotional relations, particularly those associated with sexuality, are often organised on a gender basis (Connell, 2009). For example, global hegemonic patterns prioritise and encourage cross-gender attraction (heterosexuality) over same gender (homosexuality) relations (Connell, 2009). This is displayed in contemporary society through bourgeois family households. Ideal households are constituted by heterosexual couples, and this ideal is sustained by advertising and other cultural pressures in the media (Connell, 2009).

Further, parent and child emotional connection in households is also highly gendered whereby nurturing children is a mother's responsibility while fathers are emotionally distant bread-winners (Connell, 2009). Emotional relations are displayed in the work place where gender stereotypes inform the job market (Connell, 2009). For example, some occupations are assumed to require particular emotional relations with customers: air hostesses (producing relaxation) are women, while debt collectors (producing fear) are men (Connell, 2009).

4. 2.1.4 Symbolic relations

Symbolic relations view language as an important part of communication and interaction. But there are also gendered implications in linguistic choices particular words can invoke meanings which are greater than one's sex (Connell, 2009). For instance, when "we speak of 'a woman' or 'a man', we call into play a tremendous system of understandings, implications, overtones and allusions that have accumulated through our cultural history" (Connell, 2009: 83). In addition, symbolic relations are also visible in personal forms of culture like gestures, dress, make-up, as well as impersonal ones like built environments (Connell, 2009). It is important to note that symbolic expressions and interpretations of gender change over time, as they are challenged and subsequently become a site of contestation (Connell, 2009).

Further, symbolic relations offer an understanding of gender relations at the levels of culture and discourse. The central premise here is that gender is not a natural or biological phenomenon but that it is constructed through discourse (Connell, 2009).

4. 2.2 Discourse

This study works with Foucault's (1972) concept of discourse as a means of examining the ways in which femininity is understood and constructed in Kampala by young working class women. 'Discourse' in this case is defined as a system of representation and meaning (Hall, 1997: 44). Discourses operate within power relations and determine who can speak and who is spoken to. In other words, discourse "constructs the topic", produces, defines and influences how ideas are presented and how they are subsequently put into practice (Hall, 1997:49). It is also concerned with where meaning comes from and proposes that meaning can only be constructed within a particular discourse; therefore meanings bear the traces of the social processes through which they are made and that nothing meaningful exists outside a discourse (Hall, 1997:44; Connell, 2009: 83).

Furthermore, discourses are not unitary and consistent and do not exist in or by themselves; rather, they are "discontinuous practices, which cross one another, are sometimes juxtaposed with one another, but can just as well exclude or be unaware of each other" (Foucault 1981: 67). Hence they draw from other discourses and should be viewed as open systems which consist of many statements that work together to make up a discursive formation (Gutting,

1989: 231; Hall, 2007). A discursive formation is understood as “a field within which a variety of different, even conflicting, sets of elements can be deployed” (Gutting, 1989: 232).

Thus contradictory practices, interpretations and ways of organising social institutions can exist within a single discursive formation (Gutting, 1989). For example, promiscuity in men is seen as a sign of virility while it is called prostitution among women. Both interpretations exist in the same discursive formation. Critical to note is that discourses rarely experience fundamental changes but do change at surface level while the governing institutions remain intact (Larsen, 1997). With regard to gender, discourse considers the interaction between individual agency and the larger “constraining social structures within which that agency is enacted” as important spaces where individuals negotiate and construct their identities (Holmes et al., 2010: 6). One site of contestation is the media, which draws on and reproduces discourses of acceptable and unacceptable femininities in its construction and circulation of representations of gender.

4.3 Gender and media

Media form an important resource where ideas of masculinities and femininities are rehearsed and circulated. Yet the news media, especially television, have come under criticism for underrepresenting women – in both production and content – to the extent that they constitute only “around a fourth of the subjects in hard news” (Byerly, 2007 :45; Tuchman, 1978; Van Zoonen, 1994). While men dominate all kinds of television output, women only dominate the screen in soap operas; and even then, the women who appear on screen tend to be young, pretty and defined in relation to a protective male (husband, father, son, boss or another man) and are portrayed as passive, indecisive, submissive, dependents and always subservient to men (Van Zoonen, 1994).

This symbolic annihilation of women, especially in television, sends out a message that women only matter as mothers and/or housewives (Van Zoonen, 1994). This marginalisation and denigration of women transmits sexist, patriarchal and capitalist values which further sustain society’s dominant social values (Van Zoonen, 1994). It is against this background that women’s movements are not only engaged in struggling for equal rights and opportunities for women, but also in symbolic conflicts that portray dominant definitions of masculinity over femininity (Van Zoonen, 1994).

Furthermore, the invisibility of women's work and the undervaluing of household tasks play a critical role in determining the image of women that is projected in the media and the media's relationship with women (Mattelart, 1986). Media (radio, film, the novel and television) draw from traditional household routines to tell stories and plan programming schedules (Mattelart, 1986; Gledhill, 1987). Much media content – including the processes of narration, disruption and resolution – is constructed around ideas about women. It has an affiliation with women's culture and consequently "[evokes] the desire and at the same time re-secure the homogenous identity of a patriarchal subject" (Gledhill, 1987: 9). Patriarchal culture, according to Gledhill (1987), consistently uses domestic conflict as a safety valve for social problems that arise out of emphasising masculinity, consequently different media like film and soap operas work to maintain the dominant social values like heterosexual relations and gender roles. Thus, media punctuate the day

> …with moments that make women's condition "all worthwhile", and helps to compensate for being shut up at home all day. It makes women's work legitimate, not as work, but as a duty (sometimes pleasurable) that *forms part of their natural function* (Mattelart, 1986: 8; original emphasis)

Bukedde TV1's content and programming is skewed and targeted towards housewives and stay-at-mothers who spend the bulk of their time watching television while doing housework (Nabukenya, 2012; Wessaali, 2012). *Bukedde TV1* defines its audience as the urban working class, who are, in the Ugandan context, mostly unemployed non-English speakers who have previously been left un-catered for by Uganda's up-market television stations. The majority of these are women (Nabukenya, 2012). By catering to this group, *Bukedde* articulates the lived experiences of the marginalised and poor.

4.4 Popular culture and media

As stated earlier, this study is conceived within a cultural studies framework, whose focus has primarily been popular culture. 'Popular' in this case refers to something that is commonly appreciated, consumed, practised and liked by many people (Dahlgren, 1992; Milestone et al., 2012). Popular culture is associated with the cultural industries and the commercialisation of culture primarily for profit maximisation as opposed to skill and quality (Dahlgren, 1992; Milestone et al., 2012).

It is against this background that cultural debates have been framed around 'high culture' versus 'popular culture'. Historically, the dominant tradition was deeply suspicious of

popular culture to the extent that it "counterpoised it to elite or high culture", and regarded it as a site of "alternative traditions" (Hall, 1993:107-108; see also Dahlgren, 1992). Contrary to this perspective, cultural studies understands popular culture as a contested site where everyday struggles between dominant and subordinate groups are fought, won and lost (Hall 1992; 1993). In these struggles, "dominant ideologies and powerful interests can be challenged and resisted, adapted and reproduced" (Milestone et al., 2012: 5). Therefore, popular culture recognises the lived experiences, pleasures, memories and traditions of a people. In the process, popular culture has

> …connections with local hopes and local aspirations, local tragedies and local scenarios that is the everyday practices and the everyday experiences of ordinary folks. Hence it links with … the informal, the underside, [and] the grotesque. (Hall 1993: 107-108)

In essence popular culture undermines the elite and gives power to the masses and consumers (Milestone et al., 2012). During this process, the masses come into contact with mass culture within the multiple contexts of their everyday life and draw on their lived experiences to interpret, generate and circulate meaning (Dahlgren, 1992).

The media are central to popular culture and much of what we think of as popular culture is actually media culture, in other words, popular culture is mediated culture (Milestone et al., 2012). Van Zoonen (2000: 13) argues that popular media broadens the parameters of debate by bringing into public discourse themes and formats that would otherwise be considered unworthy of the 'public sphere' as conceptualised by Habermas (Habermas in Webster, 2004:350). Increasingly, mass audiences rely on popular media for information, but as journalism, especially television journalism, becomes increasingly popular, the delivery of serious information is "left in a precarious position" (Dahlgren, 1995: 52; Milestone et al., 2012). Dahlgren (1995) argues that popular journalism cannot leave social responsibility to mainstream/serious journalism, for, having become a staple, popular media, especially television, needs to fulfil the roles of mainstream television journalism by "broadening people's horizons, of making new connections between the accessible, experienced world and the world beyond those boundaries" (Dahlgren, 1995: 52).

It is from this perspective that Chibita (2011: 273) argues that in the African context, popular media play a critical role in allowing "alternative voices to be heard as well as holding rulers and powerful members of society accountable". This is because they enable public discourse in the "languages of the people which may be indigenous languages" thereby drawing into

the public domain voices and representations that would otherwise have been left out (Chibita, 2011: 273). In the process, they create, sustain and challenge cultural values and trends.

However, popular culture is largely understood to be conservative and is criticised for working in the interests of the powerful as well as maintaining the status quo by pacifying the masses and justifying capitalism (Ardono et al., 1993). In line with this, Milestone et al. (2012) argue that certain gender ideologies that are entrenched in popular culture contribute to the success of capitalism. It is therefore in the interest of popular culture to re-enforce the "naturalness" of gender roles (Milestone et al. 2012:11). In this case, popular culture, including the media, play an important role in maintaining patriarchy by perpetuating certain gender ideologies (Milestone, 2012: 11). They posit that

> for capitalism to work efficiently there needs to be a gendered division of labour – women need to produce the workforce and nurture them so they are fit to work, and men need to work (Milestone et al., 2012: 36).

In this case, women are primarily linked to popular culture as consumers, rather than producers and they are indeed addressed as such (Milestone et al., 2012). This is also evident in feminist academic research, which, according to Milestone et al., (2012: 37), focuses on women's consumption of popular culture which is the only way that women are linked to popular culture (Milestone et al., 2012: 37).

4.5 Media consumption, culture and Identity formation

The production, storage and exchange of information and symbolic content are central to social life. The advent of the modern era, especially the development of communication media, not only transformed the production, storage, circulation and exchange of symbolic content, it also reworked the symbolic character of social life and restructured the way that individuals related to one another and to themselves (Thompson, 1995). Individuals came to rely on the media to fabricate "webs of significance for themselves" (Thompson, 1995: 11).

However, Thompson (1995: 11) insists that mediated communication is an "integral part of – and cannot be understood apart from – the broader contexts of social life." As such, media products are deeply cultural and must always be *meaningful for* the individuals that produce and receive them (Thompson, 1995: 11: original emphasis). Thompson's (1995; 1996) argument, albeit theorising with a European context in mind, is critical in highlighting the

importance of symbolic content in the process of self-formation in contemporary 'traditional' societies. He argues that due to an individual's engagement with symbolic content, they come to rely less and less on face-to-face interaction and localised forms of authority which prevail in their everyday life (Thompson, 1995). Traditional values become one amongst other ideas of how life ought to be, and previously traditional subjects now have options to draw from other than traditional forms of authority and wisdom.

Thus within contemporary traditional societies the process of self-formation, previously shaped solely by face-to-face communication, is now nourished by mediated symbolic materials which expand the range of options that are "available to individuals and loosening – without destroying – the connection between self-formation and shared locale" (Thompson, 1995: 207). Media become resources for the formation of self-identity:

> Radio, television, film, and the other products of the culture industries provide the models of what it means to be male or female, successful or a failure, powerful or powerless. Media culture also provides the materials out of which many people construct their sense of class, of ethnicity and race, of nationality, of sexuality, of 'us' and 'them' (Kellner 1995: 1).

A strong case here is made for the importance of the relationship between the media and culture during the process of identity formation. However, Strelitz (2004; 2008) cautiously argues that media do not trump context in the process of identity formation: there is a need to view the relationship between media and culture during the process of identity formation as,

> an interplay of mediations between culture-as-lived-experienced and culture-as-representation. On the one hand we have the media, representing the dominant representational aspect of modern culture while on the other we have the lived experience of culture which includes the discursive interaction of families and friends and the 'material-existential' experiences of routine life (Strelitz, 2008: 63).

What Strelitz emphasises here is that our media consumption choices and the meaning making process are largely shaped by our lived cultural experiences (Strelitz, 2004; 2008). At the same time, the media we consume has an impact on how we make sense of these experiences (Strelitz, 2004; 2008). People's encounters with mass culture take place within their everyday life where "interpretive practices, including their various tactics of ideological resistance, generate and circulate meaning" (Dahlgren, 1992: 6).

4.6 CONCLUSION

Popular media, by broadening the public sphere, form an important resource for ideas about society, particularly in the African context where mainstream media are seen to neglect the concerns of ordinary people. One such concern is gender: our gender identities – what it means to be a man or a woman – are constructed within and shaped by particular social and cultural contexts. An important aspect of the discussion so far is the significance of colonialism and how it continues to influence traditional ways of understanding existing gender orders and regimes, despite 'modern' attempts to foreground Western or global notions of gender rights or gender equality. At the same time, popular media form an important site for the construction, circulation and contestation of these meanings, and in so doing provide resources for the formation of identities that no longer necessarily rely on tradition. Yet we must take into account the critiques of the relationship between popular media and gender: while popular media may play a role in contesting power relationships more generally, their form and content arguably favours patriarchal gender relations. These ideas provide a lens through which we can examine and attempt to understand the meanings made of a local form of popular culture.

The next chapter presents the choice of research methodology, research design and data collection methods.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

> If we, as academic researchers, are interested in understanding how people experience media content, we have to use a research approach that enables us to explore the processes through which people actualise media meanings and incorporate them in meaningful ways in their daily lives (Schrøder et al. 2003: 122).

As indicated in chapter one, this study is a reception analysis that investigates the meanings that young working class women in Kampala between the ages of 18-35 years make of *Agataliiko Nfuufu* and how these meanings relate to the contested notions of femininity in this urban space. The primary focus of this chapter is to present the choice of research methodology, the research design and data collection methods.

As indicated in the opening quote, it is important for researchers to use an appropriate research approach and methodology while trying to explore the process of meaning making. Research methodologies provide a framework through which we can understand social phenomenona (Bryman, 1988). Quantitative and qualitative methodologies are the two main methodologies for social research in contemporary society (Bryman, 1988). Quantitative research was popular throughout the 19th century while qualitative research gained popularity in the 1970's (Bryman, 1988; Deacon et al., 1999). The next section introduces and discusses qualitative inquiry as the choice of research methodology for this study.

5.2 Research methodology: Qualitative research

Qualitative research is an inductive process in which theory is derived from (or 'grounded' in) empirical data (Spicer, 2004). This kind of research aims to explore the "ways that people make sense of their social worlds and how they express these understandings through language, sound, imagery, personal style and social rituals" (Deacon et al., 2010: 5). Qualitative research advocates for an interpretive understanding of phenomenon in everyday life within particular cultural and social groupings. This methodology affords researchers the flexibility to use unstructured observation as well as carry out open interviews in the research subject's own environment (Babbie and Mouton, 2001; Deacon et al., 2010; Neuman, 2006). The strength of a qualitative inquiry lies in its ability to generate a wealth of qualitative materials from photographs, conversation transcripts, observation notes and video recordings

of everyday settings; the aim here is to develop 'thick descriptions' that detail how people invest their world with meaning and negotiate and contest other systems of meaning" (Deacon et al., 2010: 6-7). It also provides researchers with a better understanding of the cultural, social and economic context within which their research is being carried out (Schrøder, 1992; Moores, 1993). It is for these reasons that this study employs a qualitative methodological approach. Before I discuss the research techniques that I employed, I will briefly introduce and define reception studies and discuss its importance within the context of this study.

5.2.1 Reception analysis

A reception analysis is a qualitative approach that recognises media recipients as co-producers of meaning (Jensen, 1988). Reception analysis interrogates the meanings that people make in their encounter with media content (Jensen, 1988). It is primarily aimed at carrying out empirical studies "of the social production of meaning in peoples encounter with media discourses" (Schrøder et al. 2003: 147). For reception studies, it is important to note that the reception of media texts cannot be divorced from the context within which media is consumed (Fiske, 1987; Jensen, 1998). It is for these reasons that a reception analysis was seen as appropriate in aiding the study to achieve its goal of investigating the meaning making process of *Agataliiko Nfuufu* and how these meanings are appropriated in the day to day lives of Kampala's working class women.

Reception research draws from a combination of research methods to interrogate audience experiences (Schrøder et al. 2003). This study utilised a three-stage approach to investigate the audience's viewing practices and experiences (Schrøder et al. 2003). The three stages were thematic content analysis, focus group discussions and individual in-depth interviews.
Before I discuss these research techniques, I will first reflect on my role as a researcher and as a moderator during the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews.

5.3 My role as a researcher and moderator

I am very familiar with the terrain, language and culture of Kampala. So, I instinctively understood what my respondents were talking about; but perhaps I understood what they were talking about so well that I did not challenge them to articulate their points. For example, in my first one-on-one individual in-depth interview, my respondent used the word

“etiquette” several times as illustrated in these sentences: “There are very few men in Kampala who understand and appreciate their roles as men because they do not have etiquette”; “I was told that a man has to have etiquette because etiquette is the key” and “Those agitating for gender equality, in my opinion, are those who were raised without etiquette.” I intuitively knew what she was talking about so I did not interrogate what she meant by “etiquette.” It was not until my supervisor indicated to me that I needed to get my respondents to clearly articulate their norms and values that I started realising how I had taken for granted my role as a researcher. Her advice enhanced and alerted me to the importance of this role and prepared me for my role as a moderator.

I ensured the success of the discussions by keeping them within the issue at hand while at the same time attempting to stimulate a wide range of issues and opinions on my respondents’ everyday experiences, context and their views on *Agataliiko Nfuufu* (Lunt and Livingstone 1996). I was careful not to dominate the discussion; instead, I encouraged contributions, managed disruptions and diversions, monitored their social interactions, and “other problematic social dynamics” (Lunt and Livingstone, 1996: 82; see also Hansen et al., 1998; Morgan, 1988). While moderating, I ensured that I covered the questions and themes as outlined in my literature review and interview guides. The interview guides were developed with help from my supervisor (appendices B and C). The guides were drawn to ensure that the focus group discussions covered issues and topics that were relevant to my research. The guides also set out issues that I needed to address in the discussions thereby ensuring consistency (Deacon et al. 2010: 67). The interview guide was written in English but all the discussions, except the ones conducted at *Bukedde* premises, were carried out in Luganda.

I also realised from the start that introducing myself to my respondents as a Rhodes University student caused some of them to view me as a privileged woman entering a domain that I did not understand. To break this barrier, I decided to arrive two hours before my interview sessions. This time allowed me to interact with my respondents before we started the discussions. When I arrived, I always greeted them in perfect Luganda, without using any English. By expressing myself in perfect Luganda I was attempting to ameliorate the perceived class difference signalled by unconscious use of English words within conversation. This helped me to gain access and build trust. I also involved myself in whichever activities that I found them doing. I found that this got my respondents comfortable so that we were referring to each other by name by the time we started the group

discussions. The following section discusses and gives the justifications for each of the research techniques that I applied. They are discussed in the order in which they were used.

5.4 Research methods and sampling frame

5.4.1 Thematic content analysis

I started by carrying out a thematic content analysis of the *Agataliiko Nfuufu* evening bulletin (Schrøder et a1. 2003; Bryman, 2012). Thematic content analysis is the most common approach to qualitative data analysis (Bryman, 2012). A thematic analysis is useful because it is an interpretive research method that can be used to determine, identify and describe "both implicit and explicit ideas within the data, described as themes" (MacQueen et al., 2012:10). In this study, the broad thematic content analysis helped me to familiarise myself with the bulletin as a means of achieving the study goals. The analysis also gave me an overview of the style and format of the bulletin as well as the kinds of themes, stories and general content that *Agataliiko Nfuufu* covers (Beardsworth cited in Deacon et al. 2010: 120-121).

The sampling frame constituted 61 *Agataliiko Nfuufu* bulletins that were watched and coded from October 01st -November, 30th 2012. I carefully watched all 61 bulletins in order to identify the type of story, as well as the central and sub themes (Bryman, 2012). I then represented the content in a table that captured the day of the week, the story number, the category/theme of the story and the duration of the stories.

The thematic content analysis provided me with the necessary background context that informed my role as a moderator in the individual in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and the subsequent analysis. Through the discussions, I was able to get an insight into how my respondents give meaning to the kinds of content in the programme and how they eventually incorporate these meanings into their day to day living. The next section presents the in-depth individual interviews followed by the focus group discussion.

5.4.2 Individual in-depth interviews

Having been away from Uganda for close to a year, I knew that *Agataliiko Nfuufu* was popular, but my understanding was broad based. The individual in-depth interviews gave me an initial in-depth understanding of individual perspectives on *Agataliiko Nfuufu* (Ritchie and

Lewis, 2003). The interviews were also a means of starting the process of looking for participants for the focus group discussions. Indeed they gave me an insight into the feelings, opinions and beliefs of my respondents (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003).

I conducted four in-depth individual interviews. The first two interviews were with *Agataliiko Nfuufu* viewers. My initial contact was with a 30-year old lady who owns a saloon in Kyebando, Erisa zone in Kawempe division. In November 2012, I walked into her saloon between 12.30 and 13:00 hours as she was watching *Agataliiko Mu Ttuntu* (the afternoon bulletin). After the bulletin, a discussion ensued about *Agataliiko Nfuufu* as my research interest. I then requested her, together with her assistant for interviews. The saloon owner became a useful and reliable contact for all my focus group discussions. The last two interviews were carried out with the station manager of *Bukedde* television – Hajjat[17] Hadija Nabukenya – and the *Agataliiko Nfuufu* editor – Semei Wessaali. Nabunkenya is one of the founding members of the bulletin, the bulletin's name and format. *Agataliiko Nfuufu* is a new phenomenon in Uganda, and as such there is no detailed information about the bulletin. Therefore, these two interviews enhanced my understanding of the bulletin and equipped me with the necessary knowledge to confidently carry out my focus group discussions.

5.4.3 Focus Group discussions

Focus groups are synonymous with reception analysis and communication research because they investigate the social construction of meaning during the decoding process (Lunt and Livingstone, 1996; Morley, 1980; Jensen, 1998; Deacon et al. 2010). Focus groups involve bringing together a group or a series of groups of people to discuss issues identified by a researcher (Lunt and Livingstone, 1996: 80; Deacon et al. 2010: 57; see also Fontana and Frey 1994). They are a convenient way of understanding the "simulation of these routine but relatively inaccessible communicative contexts that can help us discover the process by which meaning is socially constructed through everyday talk" (Lunt and Livingstone, 1996: 85). The discussions were also a window into how my respondents use *Agataliiko Nfuufu* to express their identity, class and gender (Lunt and Livingstone, 1996).

I used between 6-10 participants to stimulate debate and ensure a quality discussion (Lunt and Livingstone, 1996: 82). I followed the rule of thumb and continued to run new groups

[17] Hajjat is a title for a moslem woman who has made the holy journey to Mecca and Medina.

until the last group had nothing new to add but merely repeated "previous contributions" (Lunt and Livingstone,1996: 83). For this research, I carried out 3 focus groups discussions with 19 respondents in total. By the time I was conducting the third group interview, my respondents were repeating contributions from my other focus group discussions.

Further, it is argued that it is better to use homogenous groups as participants in the focus group discussions because they are more comfortable with each other (Morley, 1980; Lunt and Livingstone, 1996). The women respondents were picked from *Kawempe* division through snowball sampling. In snowball sampling, initial contacts propose further people whom the researcher approaches and requests to take part in the discussion (Deacon et al. 2007: 53-56). This study's participants were working class women between the ages of 18-35 years. Through my saloon contact, I got members for the first focus group discussion that was held in her saloon located in *Kyebando, Erisa zone* (10th January, 2013), the second focus group discussion that was held in the Kalerwe market area (13th January, 2013) and the third discussion – held at *Kyebando, Kisalosalo* zone (19th January, 2013).

Each focus group discussion started off with a viewing of a purposively selected *Agataliiko Nfuufu* bulletin (Lunt and Livingstone, 1996). Purposive sampling was employed because I wanted to choose a bulletin whose content would not only stimulate debate but also identify and strike a chord with my respondents' discussion of their gender and their position in society (Lunt and Livingstone, 1996: 82; Deacon et al. 2010). The focus group interviews lasted between 40 minutes to an hour and fifteen minutes. I recorded the discussions using a digital audio recorder. Before the discussions started, I requested my participants to introduce themselves; this helped me to identify their voices during the transcription phase. I also had a notebook with me where I captured important moments and the scene before, during and after the discussions. These notes triggered important reminders that informed and enriched the transcription process.

In order to stimulate debate, I ensured that the interview settings were convenient, informal, comfortable and agreeable to my respondents (Lunt and Livingstone, 1996). Therefore, I carried out the first focus group discussion in a saloon, the second focus group in a room owned by one of my respondents in the Kalerwe market area and the third discussion was carried out in a compound where most of my respondents in this particular group discussion stayed. Most of my respondents were mothers so some of them came to the discussions with

their children. The children helped to break the ice because once the mothers introduced the children they also introduced themselves and struck a conversation from this point on. My interviews were punctuated by fights, mothers being asked to fix broken toys, solve disputes or even clean the occasional wound. In the group discussions at the compound, the women were preparing dinner and they kept calling out to friends to check on their food, ensure that it did not burn and also see to it that it had enough firewood.

I also had to ensure that the discussion times were convenient, for example, respondents in my first focus group discussion asked me to carry out the interview at 11:00 am. They intimated to me that their days start with morning chores (laundry, cleaning the house, getting the children ready for school and cleaning the compound), as such, this time was normally their breakfast time so, tea and biscuits were provided. The other two discussions happened on Sunday afternoons, immediately after their Sunday lunches and only refreshments were provided.

5.5 Data analysis procedures

The interview data could not be considered as finished accounts of my respondents' experiences of *Agataliiko Nfuufu* until it had been transcribed, translated and interpreted (Jensen, 1988). All interviews, except for the ones with the station manager of *Bukedde TV* and editor of *Agataliiko Nfuufu*, were conducted in Luganda. As such, I first transcribed all interviews. Then with guidance from the Rhodes University Department of African Languages, I translated them to English. I tried as much as possible to maintain the original meanings of the texts.

To make sense of the data, I used thematic coding. Thematic coding involves classifying interview data by comparing and contrasting various concepts, heading themes and recurrence of data within a data source (Bryman, 2012). Repetition, according to Bryman (2012: 580), is one of the most common criteria for "establishing that a pattern within the data warrants being considered a theme." It is through noting the repetitions that I was able to choose the themes that inform the themes and structure of chapter six.

5.6 Ethical considerations

Involving human subjects in research imposes certain obligations on researchers. McMillan and Schumacher (1997: 418) state that "qualitative researchers need to be sensitive to ethical principles because of their research topic, face- to- face interactive data collection, an emergent design, and reciprocity with participants." I adhered to the stipulated guidelines in the University's Ethics Standards Committee with regard to the use of human subjects. I ensured that all my respondents were above 18 years. I also took time to explain to my respondents what my research was about and the research goals. I also clearly informed them that the information gathered was strictly for academic purposes and indicated that they were free to exit the interview if they so wished.

I sought permission from my respondents to record the interviews with a digital audio recorder. I spent some time re-assuring and explaining to my respondents the difference between an audio recorder and a video recorder after one of them said to me, "please don't show me on *Agataliiko Nfuufu* or my husband will beat me like *engalabi* (long drum)." It is from this comment that this study gets its title.

With regard to issues of whether or not to use pseudonyms, my participants' responses were varied. I have therefore adhered to all their requests as elaborated. When my respondents from my first focus group met and introduced their children by name, it set the precedent for what they would be called during the discussions. They kept referring to each other by using the names of their children (this is common practice in Uganda). So throughout the discussion, these ladies were referred to by their children's names for example, *Maama Kyazze* (to mean mother of Kyazze) or *Maama Ndugwa* (to mean mother of Ndugwa). These respondents indicated to me that they were comfortable with being called this during the transcription. Other respondents' names were shortened during the discussion and they intimated to me that this is how they wanted to appear, while others were comfortable with being referred to using one of their names.

5.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have presented the research design and the three stage data collection methods that I employed in this study. I have also discussed reception analysis and its relevance to the goals of this study – making meaning of *Agataliiko Nfuufu.* The next chapter presents and analyses the research findings.

CHAPTER SIX

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

6.0 INTRODUCTION

> **Mida:** I watch the bulletin every day.
> **Geetu**: Everyday... Unless there is a power black-out, but I watch the bulletin every single day.
> **Lydia:** We are all leading "ghetto lives." We are plan less, leaderless and this is a sad state of affairs. Women are not protected. If you want to see how bad it is, pay a visit to Central Police Station (CPS). You will know that it is hard being a woman.

As indicated in my previous chapters, this study is aimed at investigating the meanings that Kampala's young working class women between the ages of 18-35 years make of *Agataliiko Nfuufu* and how these meanings relate to the contested notions of femininity in this urban space. The structure of this chapter is inspired by outcomes from my focus group discussions. Bryman (2012: 580) states that a repetition and recurrence within a data source is one of the most common criteria to establish that "a pattern within the data warrants being considered a theme."A pattern became apparent during the data analysis phase when I noticed that respondents from all three focus group discussions kept referring to eight scenarios which include 7 women and 2 stories. The 7 women are Jennifer Musisi, Shadiah Noor Nakyeese, Bad Black, Meere Nalule, Annet Nakangu and Jane Nakaggwa and *Maama* Nagginda; and the 2 stories refer to the revellers and a 25-year old man who raped a 60-year old woman. This chapter revolves around these eight scenarios.

These scenarios and their narratives are central to my analysis because they represent the broader issues, contradictions, struggles and triumphs that Ugandan women deal with on a daily basis. Therefore, I profile each woman or give a brief synopsis of the story before launching into the discussion they inspire.

6.1 Jennifer Lubwama Semakula Musisi

Jennifer Musisi (appendix A (1) shows her picture) is the Executive Director of KCCA. She is a business woman, a lawyer, a wife and a mother. She holds a Bachelor of Laws, a Diploma in Legal Practice from the Law Development Centre (LDC) in Kampala and a Master of Public Administration from Makerere University. She has previously worked as a state attorney with the Directorate of Public Prosecutions as well as an assistant legal affairs

secretary in the office of the University Secretary at Makerere University. But she is most recognised for her work as a Deputy Commissioner in the legal department at Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) where she quickly rose through the ranks to become the Commissioner of Legal and Board Affairs.

While at URA, Musisi is credited for co-authoring the administrative changes that led to the fight against corruption and the 2005 forced resignation of several corrupt officials from URA (Sekyewa, 2011). She retired from URA in 2011 with an intention of going into private business but a presidential appointment to manage KCCA took her out of early retirement (Sekyewa, 2011). The president's appointment was based on his faith in her "to clear up the mess that has been caused by the opposition in Kampala city management for decades" (Sekyewa, 2011). In some circles, she is seen as the "president's new blue-eyed girl" (Sekyewa, 2011).

6.1.1 Discussion: women in the "public" versus "private" domain

Musisi's educational and professional achievements are symbolic of the widespread changes within Uganda's gender regime and gender order. It is evident that some women are being recognised as "equal opportunity" partners in all sectors (Connell, 2009: 72). However, the reactions to this success indicate that despite some of these significant changes, the public domain is still highly gendered; Musisi's story is exemplary of the battles and struggles that women in the public domain have to deal with on a day to day basis.

Women in Uganda's public domain who can provide for themselves and contribute to the national economic indicators are fast becoming a reality. As my respondents say, they can now "wake up in the morning, just like their male counterparts, and go to their jobs and not feel guilty about leaving their children at home or with a maid." In fact 34-year old Naggayi states that "a rich woman is the most sought after partner by men these days" while 35-year old Jane reckons that some men are not ashamed to "drive the woman's car and show off as if it belongs to him. He will even pick up other girls in his partner's car!"

However, the dominant gender order still favours men in the "public" and women in the "private" domain (Tamale, 2005). For example, in chapter two, I described a scenario where Musisi is trying to deliver services and the Lord Mayor criticised her for "mounting" trees (*New Vision*, 2011; *Daily Monitor*, 2011). Women that contest their place in the gender order

are systematically discouraged by their partners/husbands until they give up on life in the public domain. My respondents hinted at partners becoming “insecure” once their wives take up paid employment because they think that “she is going to get her independence and leave him.” 25-year old Kisakye concurs that some men become “jealous”, and she eloquently shared with the Kalerwe group how she used to work but had to stop:

> If a man sees that you are working …he never considers that you do not make money sometimes …he will make sure that you never ask him for anything either for the house or for yourself. He will find a way of discouraging you that in the end you will decide at your own volition that you are not going to work anymore. Yet if you both work you could very easily share the financial burden. But if he knows that you work, he will not contribute to anything and you will end up being the man of the home while he spends his money elsewhere…probably on other girls…

Kisakye shared that she gave up her job to save her marriage. Her decision is exemplary of the negotiation between her modern identity – which wants to contribute to the family income through employment in the public domain – and her traditional identity which expects her to stay at home and fulfil her domestic activities (Mattelart, 1986; Tamale, 2005). Most of my respondents chose to look after their children and husbands over employment because their husbands could provide. But bowing out of the public domain does not make the private sphere any easier; my respondents feel unappreciated and undervalued as most of them echo how this domain is a “fulltime job”, the “heavy workload”, and the “difficulty in being a housewife”. Yet their husbands do not respect them regardless of how much they “have to do to keep them looking good and respectable” (Mattelart, 1986; Tamale, 2005). Maama Ndugwa who chose to juggle employment and marriage revealed that it is a challenge to balance both lives:

> I never get enough rest I work from Monday to Monday. I don’t have time to sit at home and I have less time to do my household chores. I don’t even have time for my husband.

But it also became apparent how patriarchal power is not only realised through male partners but is also directly realised and asserted through the state (Connell, 2009). For example, my respondents speak of the economic discrimination of women through acts like the massive KCCA evacuations of street vendors on Kampala’s streets (as mentioned in Chapter 2) where the victims were mostly women. After the evacuations, they were not shown alternative and profitable places to go and set up their stalls. Gertrude states that it was especially hard for unmarried women who do not have alternative income generating activities:

> We had our small stalls by the road side where we were selling tomatoes and other small things to raise money for our children's school fees but KCCA has chased us from the streets. If we use force and stay in the area, they will forcefully throw you off, confiscate your property, sometimes they throw it into the gutter when you are watching and they will arrest you.

As women struggle to stay afloat, the system keeps putting them down: my respondents shared one particular *Agataliiko Nfuufu* story where KCCA officials were captured throwing people's merchandise into the trenches. Some of them called on God to punish those "heartless and careless KCCA people" while Maama Joe was "saddened because most of the stuff they threw away belonged to women." Geetu shared the reality of a struggling street vendor:

> They find a poor woman whose initial capital was 20,000 shillings [about $ 8[18]] and she has slowly accumulated her profits to 100,000 shillings [about $40] then you throw her property into a trench? Really, how unfair can you get? How do you expect her to survive? You see those KCC officials do not have to worry because they are surviving on our sweat and tears, they do not have to work as hard as those women do...

It is therefore apparent that women in the public domain struggle for their credibility and work extremely hard for their authority to gain recognition. My respondents refer to "no sex no job" situations where women are asked for sexual favours in order to keep their jobs.

Furthermore, as indicated in chapter one, the politics and chaos in Kampala have relegated service delivery to a non-entity (Lambright, 2012). Harriet accuses KCCA of spending time "torturing people on the streets" (in reference to the evictions of street vendors) instead of clearing garbage (appendix A (1(A). Others asked "Where is Musisi?" when people, especially innocent children, die due to poor drainage and heavy flooding in areas like Bwaise and Kalerwe. Naggayi sums up the grim situation thus:

> We see so many of those in the news, where the parents are sleeping when the rain starts and do not get to their children in time to save them…In other stories it starts raining when the parents are away and the children are asleep. Children swallow this water in their sleep and die. People drown when they walk out of their houses straight into a drainage channel simply because when it rains, you cannot tell the difference between a drainage channel and a compound.

Most of my respondents are resigned to the status quo and it is apparent to them that their class and position in the social strata relegates service delivery in the areas where they reside

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[18] Using a rate of $1= UGX 2600

to a non-priority for KCCA and Musisi, whose class and position are reflected through Kaitesi's comment:

> When do you expect her to see them or the floods, she stays on top of a hill somewhere, drives there everyday, she will never know what ordinary people in these areas go through. She doesn't care, she does not stay in Kalerwe or Bwaise.

It is perhaps this gap that the *Agataliiko Nfuufu* fills. From the analysis, it emerged that ordinary people, especially the working class, are the main actors in *Agataliiko Nfuufu*. As the main actors, ordinary people are given ample time to speak, comment, lament and share their discontent. It is also evident that the working class community are victims in various situations ranging from the tragic, the bizarre, witchcraft, night dancers[19], neighbourhood fights, misfortunes, and service delivery protests to the comical. For example, one story captures 16 and 20 year old co-wives fighting over a 25-year old man. When they turn to the police for mediation, their lover is charged with statutory rape. The 16-year old immediately changes her age and claims to be eighteen. But the 20-year old confirms that they have been living as man and wife for five years and that they have a four year old child together. The young man's mother pleads with police to let her son go claiming that the girls' mothers married them off for financial benefits (*Agataliiko Nfuufu*, 02 October, 2012). It is such stories that make the bulletin popular among the young women:

> **Kisakye:** The one thing that I like about *Agataliiko Nfuufu* is that they don't tell lies. They go to the source of the story and tell it from where it happened... It is our lives that we see on that bulletin…They tell it as it is… *Agataliiko Nfuufu* also teaches us to be very cautious, especially us women…it is everywhere you have to think twice before you engage in any kind of mischief. Eh, it is the new community police if you ask me.

As indicated in chapter four, tabloid journalism within the African context needs to be recognised for its service and campaign journalism (Eide, 1997: 177-178; Steenveld and Strelitz, 2010: 536). For example, a rotten electric pole in Kamwokya (a Kampala suburb) illustrates this role. The residents are shown complaining about the pole that the electricity distribution company – Umeme – has failed to replace, despite repeated complaints from them. On the bulletin, angry residents demand that Umeme collects the pole with a message that they would rather live without electricity than live in constant fear of when it will come crashing down (*Agataliiko Nfuufu*, 14 October, 2012). Two days later, Umeme replaced the

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[19] People who are possessed by evil spirits; they are believed to be affected only at night. Once possessed, the undress, and dance naked in the middle of the night. It is believed that they also exhume the dead and eat them

pole (*Agataliiko Nfuufu*, 16 October, 2012). It is such services that my respondents like about the bulletin. Fatuma also appreciates it because they take time to teach them about their lives:

> My favourite is the health segment with Doctor Ssali…he teaches us how different foods are good for our health. For example he teaches us the importance of eating things like water melon, and drinking water…I used to take food for granted, but since that segment was introduced, I use it as my reference point on how to feed my family. Now we eat healthy. There are a lot of foods that I used to walk past in the market because I thought they were for the rich, like water melon, cucumber and so many others, now I also buy them.

All in all, despite the odds against women like Musisi, my respondents do not sympathise or celebrate her achievements rather, she "has become a problem". In line with Connell (2009: 75), women in the public domain who are trying to exercise their rights as citizens struggle for their authority to be recognised; in the process they become "tougher than the toughest" and end up becoming "honorary men." Musisi's high handed nature, according to my respondents, becomes the symbol of oppression and ultimately makes her one of them.

6.2 The revellers

This is a story about a group of youth that set out to party and enjoy themselves on 26th December, 2012 (appendix A (2A). In the story, the group (both male and female) went to Nabugabo sand beach in Masaka district to celebrate Boxing Day. Both sexes are dressed in swimming costumes. The video captures the youths drinking, smoking shisha, dancing to loud music and merry making. They are also obviously inebriated (one girl is shown sleeping on the ground, while another is carried away by police). A large group is captured playing around in the water. It is in the water that the young men start taking advantage of the women; they grab them, pull them towards their chests and rip off their swimming costumes. The panicked girls start scampering out of the water but the camera stays on one visibly shaken girl who is completely naked (appendix A (2B). She is shown running out of the water. All she has is the remainder of a tiny piece of cloth that she is unsuccessfully using to cover her private parts, and her breasts and buttocks are uncovered. Once out of the water, she is surrounded by young men whom she tries to dodge as she runs along a path (either side filled with young men). The young men laugh and excitedly pull and poke at her bare body (appendix A (2C and 2D). There are several policemen in the vicinity but they never stop the young men from poking and touching her.

6.2.1 Discussion: popular culture and appropriate dress codes

The revellers are exemplary of a society where the advent of popular culture has exposed youths to "alternative traditions" and ways of life contrary to their own traditional values (Hall, 1993:107-108; see also Dahlgren, 1992; Thompson, 1995; Milestone et al., 2010). My respondents, in line with criticism that is generally levelled at tabloids, accuse *Bukedde TV* of "spoiling" their children and promoting promiscuity and immorality by showing nude pictures (Sparks, 2010). However, the main discussions that follow this story rotate around appropriate dress codes.

Appropriate dressing is still a very important aspect of Kiganda culture. A presentable and well-dressed woman is one dressed in a *gomesi*[20]*/ boondingi/busuuti.* This apparel was first adopted in the 1940s as a school uniform for the then Gayaza girls' boarding school and subsequently adopted as an acceptable form of dressing for women in most areas in Uganda. The *gomesi* is like a massive skirt (or like the oriental Kimono) but stitched with a quasi-blouse with a square neck with two buttons opening on the left together with a sash that is tied around the waist (Semuwemba, 2012). It is worn on top of a *kikoyi* (a cotton – sarong size – cloth). Semuwemba (2012) critiques it as the ostentatious, extravagant and conspicuous display of a feudal society where money was never a problem, for, from one *gomesi*, contemporary designers can make "at least 3 size 12 ladies' dresses". For some it represents an outmoded way of dressing which should give way to more modern attire: today's "active, productive, non-parasitic, bi-cycle riding, *boda-boda* mobile female population cannot manage in that cumbersome garb" (Semuwemba, 2012).

To my respondents, however, the *Agataliiko Nfuufu* female anchors, who are dressed in *gomesi's*, are "respectable", "elegant" and "decent" women who "carry themselves with dignity". For Jane, they make her "proud" while Maama Kyazze can tell that the anchors are "dressed very well from head to toe" and they "don't confuse people like Bbaale Francis did some time ago on Uganda television[21]". Chapter two highlighted a discussion around the new wave of African political leaders who banned African women from "immodest" clothing –

[20] Named after an Indian – Fernando Gomes who re-designed it from a sheet of cotton cloth wrapped around the breasts and tied to the waist with a smaller strip of cloth (the missionaries felt that it revealed the breasts and torso of the 'natives') (Semuwemba, 2012).

[21] While reading the news on Uganda television, in the late 1990's veteran news anchor Bbale Francis saw a snake in the studio. He stopped reading the news, and ran off the set. He was very smart in his coat, shirt and tie, but he was in shorts instead of his trouser suit. All this happened while the cameras were rolling on a live newscast.

such as miniskirts and tight pants – and "indecent" Western cosmetic products (Hodgson, 2001: 13). Therefore, using the *gomesi* as the benchmark for the most appropriate and acceptable dress, my respondents argue that the swimming costumes are "unacceptable." For Geetu, women must go to the beach in "clothes that cover those parts" but Maama Kyazze interjects that "those were the ones that they were dressed in." But the exchange on what should be considered appropriate continues:

> **Maama Kizza:** (Sneers) no way….those were just panties and bras that they had on. (Sneers again) no please….
> **Maama Joe:** Those…beach clothes…how? Let them get skirts or a *lesu* [sarong] on top of those little things. Those women were just tempting men!

It is because of clothes like that, according to Maama Kizza, that a man is "enticed to rape such a woman" so she cannot report or blame anyone if she is raped. 20- year old Mida, who moved to Kampala from Kayunga in January 2012, adds that men who rape "indecently" dressed women like the revellers must not be blamed because they are enticed by "the way they dress." In a patriarchal society like this one, the women echo Uganda's Youth Affairs minister, Ronald Kibule, who advised police to establish if a rape victim was indecently dressed – in mini-skirts, bikinis and tight jeans – before preferring charges against the rapist:

> I have talked to the IGP [Inspector General of Police] and the police in Kampala to see that if a woman is raped they look at how she was dressed. Most women currently dress poorly especially the youth. If she is dressed poorly and is raped, no one should be arrested (Rumanzi, 2013)

But the solution for those "idle girls" according to my respondents is marriage because it restrains women "from doing such things". All my respondents agree that marriage is good because "it saves one from getting into mischief" and this kind of behavior signals that they are not married:

> Let them look for men and get married, and leave all those useless trips to the beach! That beach? They must stop going to the beach, all they need is a man and marriage!

Maama Kizza argues that there is control and dignity in marriage because as a woman, "you are always very careful to uphold your name and your husband's name in the community and country." But Maama Kyazze challenges this argument by asking if married people must not go to the beach? They agree, but Geetu asserts that they must not dress indecently because married people are "always careful" to uphold their image. But for 25- year old Kisakye, who

had her first child at 15 and "rebelled" against her parents, it is better for young girls to wait until they are older to make marriage decisions:

> I never enjoyed my child hood or youth, please don't get me wrong, I am not regretting having had my children, but if only I had known then what I know now, I would have had a better life. Most of my friends that I was in school with are just starting families now and they seem more sure about life, they have had a chance to live out their youth, have fun, achieve their dreams and make informed decisions.

While my respondents argue that marriage will 'tame' unruly young women who do not behave with dignity, Kisakye's statement indicates a tension between the ideal of the married state and other ways of living life. Her view offers an insight into how an alternative way of life for young women envisages them enjoying their youth by 'making better decisions' through delaying marriage and child rearing. My respondent's take on gender equality further offers an insight into an attempt at balancing a somewhat difficult status quo. Fatuma, believes that gender equality only works for those that have been educated, for Kisakye, however, gender equality means that women can have jobs. But a woman must not be defined by these achievements:

> **Kisakye:** Working doesn't take away the fact that you are a woman and a mother; it means that you do your job and then go home and do your household chores, nurture your children and look after your husband. The ability for a woman to juggle all those without any problems is what I understand as gender equality.
>
> **Grace:** Ehhh such a responsibility, work at the office then come home and do housework? Then this equality thing is not as easy as I thought.

Apart from offering them a chance to work, gender equality to some of my unmarried respondents like Grace gives them the confidence to walk up to a man, tell him she likes him and ask him out "without any guilt and with confidence that society will not judge her." However, for Nabbosa, these opportunities have come with negative consequences; women in this day and age have left "the day-to-day running of their homes to their maids"; they no longer look after their husbands or children. For Lydia, some women misunderstand gender equality:

> Once some women find out about equality, they take it too far; for example, the only sign that they are married is when they get into bed with their husband at night. Otherwise they don't look after the husband, they don't do their chores because they have maids and from Monday to Monday, they never know what food their husband has eaten…

> **Fatuma:**….some women have gone to the extent of being unfaithful in their marriages because they hear rumours that her husband is being unfaithful. When asked she will tell you that she has no time to sit on the negotiating table with him, after all we are both equal so what he does, I also do. Why should I seek permission from him to live my life?

These understandings are given weight, more so, by my next discussion which shows that marriage is no great deal after all: for the elderly woman who forms the focus of the discussion, it neither builds her reputation nor offers her protection from scorn and humiliation.

6.3 25-year old rapes a 60-year old woman

This story plays out at Kibibi police station in Butambala on 22nd December, 2012. In the story, a 60-year old woman and her husband are at the police station to lay rape charges against 25-year old Sewagudde Frank (appendix A (3). Area residents caught Sewagudde raping the old lady. At the time of the incident, the husband was not at home, so Sewagudde was only taken to the police station after the husband arrived. At first, Sewagudde denied the charge and claimed that the sex was consensual. He claims to have had 3000 shillings [about $ 1) but thought she was worth only 2000 shillings to "take him in the fuelling" [have sex with her].

He later concedes to the charge and claims that he was attracted to her because she was singing "religious laments" that sounded like "Rihanna and the so called those musicians from abroad". An audibly amused police representative asks Sewagudde: "Eh do you mean to say that if the owner of the woman gives her to you, you can take her as your own?" Sewagudde refutes the offer saying he is a "broke man" who cannot afford to buy her anything, not even on any big day like Christmas. He also says that he cannot keep/stay with a woman for a long period of time like the old man has. But he agrees that he disrespected the old man and asks for his forgiveness. He apologises to the old man for disrespecting him claiming that "he did that thing accidentally, abruptly it came, even right now I am asking that am I normal? What occurred me? There are many bonkmates [sex partners] on the world; a handsome boy I don't know how I got such a courage…" Police blame the rape on drugs that the youth take and promises that the law will take its course.

6.3.1 Discussion: power relations and the 'ideal' woman

This story is exemplary of the unequal power and gender relations that are prevalent in Kampala. Chapter two discussed the vulnerability of women to the extent that they can never be viewed independently from their male guardians – like their fathers or husbands (Mugambe, 2007). For a society that professes gender equality, its underlying patriarchal nature, perpetuated by imperialism and colonisation, have so naturalised these inequalities that women also refer to themselves as the weaker sex (Mamdani, 1996; Connell, 2005). The construction of men's power over women and the naturalisation of these dynamics are brought to the fore by Nankya who does not believe that men and women can and should be equal:

> We all have different roles to play in society and I believe that we should all stick to fulfilling those roles. A man is a man, whether you are better than him, earn more than him, or better educated than him; you can never, as a woman, be above or better than him, you have to leave him with a bit of his dignity and ego as a man.

This attitude is typified in this story where although the residents find Sewagudde in the act of rape, they wait for her husband to come home before making a decision to take him to police. My respondents are touched that "the husband went with her to file a case". But the vulnerability of women in this society is evident in the way that this matter is handled. The entire story is dominated and told by men – the husband, Sewagudde and the policeman (appendix A (3A and 3B). In keeping with the prevailing expectations of a "good woman", the old lady is a silent observer in a story about her violation (Nakanyike, 2001: 175).

Furthermore, bringing charges can be a damaging experience for a woman as opposed to the perpetrator (Connell, 2009). Ironically, the old lady's character rather than Sewagudde's becomes the point of focus. It also becomes the reason behind Sewagudde's attraction and her subsequent violation as he blames her rape on her ability to sing those "religious laments that sounded like Rihanna and the so called those musicians from abroad."

Further, the old lady has become a pawn to the police men who have resorted to handing her from one male "guardian" to the next (Hodgson, 2001; Nakanyike, 2001). The audibly amused police men ask and carelessly offer the woman to Sewagudde should the "owner of the woman" offer her to him. Ironically, Sewagudde is still given the platform to accept or

refuse the offer and he does refuse. Moreover, when he apologises, it is to the husband – for disrespecting him by raping his wife – and not the woman that he violates.

6.4 Shadiah Noor Nakyeese

Shadiah Noor Nakyeese is the wife of re-known businessman, Hajj Haruna Semakula, aka *General Parts*. All the stories (about six in total) play out at the LDC court in Makerere, Kivulu in Kampala. The couple are in court because Semakula accuses Shadiah and her brother of stealing seventy (70) million shillings [about $ 27,000] from his business. There are no lawyers to cross-examine the couple, so they cross-examine each other. A heated exchange happens in the presence of people and the media, before the court session starts. The exchange captured below happens outside the courtroom:

Semakula (as he follows her around): you are prostitute, a thief. You stole my property. Today we are in court, you wait…
Shadiah: I have never stolen anything….
Semakula (interrupts): Don't confuse us…
Shadiah: I have never stolen anything from Hajj Haruna Semakula…
Semakula (interrupts): You stole property from my shop…
Shadiah: You used to give me money but I never stole your property…
Semakula (interrupts): So if you did not steal anything from me why are the journalists recording your statement from the back of the court room?
Shadiah: He found me here and asked to speak to me…
Semakula (interrupts): I found you and picked interest in you. Then your father handed you over to me. I found you with two children that you never told me about.
Shadiah (tries to interrupt): what do my children have to do with this..?
Semakula (interrupts): Be open you are thief…Be open you are thief, you are under police, police is not stupid to bring you here. You stole 70 million…go away. You are already a mother of two and you told me lies.
Shadiah: You found me with my children…
Semakula (interrupts): Very good, did you tell me about them?
Shadiah: I am begging people out there…
Semakula (interrupts): Did you tell me about those children?
Shadiah (faces the camera): I am requesting people that know this gentleman to help me
Semakula: You stole property…
Shadiah: But please explain this to me, if someone gives you something while you are courting and dating, do you give it back to them when you breakup?
Semakula: You have been calling me every day, asking me to take you back. I refused!
Shadiah (speaking directly into the camera)**:** When I started dating that man, I had my own shop. He found me with my own business. He found me working with my uncle in that shop and asked me to go out with him. Then he started giving me money.

6.4.1 Discussion: women and the law

This story sheds light on debates around gender and law in this society. It shows that the power to support and define women as independent entrepreneurs still belongs to their male counterparts (Nakanyike, 2001; Mugambe, 2007). It also highlights the pessimism that is reflected in literature surrounding the utility of law to women in Africa and emphasises the fact that gender determines access to authority and resources (legal and property) (Khadiagala, 2002; Mugambe, 2007; Goertz, 2002). But the main focus of this debate was the ability of the law to effectively protect women in cases like these.

Semakula interrupts Shadiah every time she tries to speak and the subsequent court process (presided over by a female magistrate) are far from civil (appendix A (4 and 4A). Semakula also calls Shadiah a gold digger who was only attracted to him for his money and not his looks (he has one arm). Shadiah accuses Semakula of physical abuse and undressing her, he accuses her of walking around without any underwear. He tells the judge that she is a *malaya* (prostitute), a thief and a drunkard and that he once caught her coming back from a club without her head scarf (considered inappropriate for a muslim woman). He also accuses her of being "loose" because when he married her, he found her with two children from a previous relationship. Not even the judge's warning, in yet another story "*kkooti erabudde General Parts*" (Court warns General Parts) tames his language or uncivil manner towards his wife, the female judge or the courtroom. When the judge advises them to iron out their differences, Shadiah breaks down in court and cries. She vows never to go back to him because she no longer feels safe around him. She says that he has her followed (during one of the court sessions, he follows her to the toilet) and that he has abused, embarrassed and humiliated her on several occasions.

In this case, Shadiah fears for her life because Semakula has her followed. Semakula justifies his obsessive nature by arguing that in this time of HIV/AIDs, he wants to be sure that she is not misbehaving. But there is justification in Shadiah's fear as exemplified in Hanifa Nakiryowa's story (*Agataliiko Nfuufu*, 15th October, 2012). Hanifa walked out of a seven year marriage due to abuse. Out of anger, her husband Dr. Buyinza Faisal – a lecturer at Makerere University – paid a young man to pour acid on her face. She spent two months in hospital and has undergone three surgeries to re-construct her face. Buyinza was briefly arrested and released because "police is still carrying out investigations." In front of a judge, Hanifa shows the court her before and after pictures then announces that she has to "fight for the life of her children", she has forgiven Faisal and wishes to withdraw the case because she is still scared

for her life. She also argues that her husband has not paid any of her and her daughter's (she was also burnt by acid) medical bills but that he has "used a lot of money to frustrate her":

> Many people in Mulago are rotting away because someone has poured acid on them. People like myself. But where is the law when all of this is happening?

Ironically, Semakula tells court that all he needs is an apology then he will take Shadiah back because he is unhappy without her. He also warns that if she leaves him, she will never find another man who loves her as much as he does. In another story, Semakula brags about his wealth, reputation and that he has "only five children." He further tells court that he wants Shadiah to be his heir because he believes in one woman and she is his number one but as he turns and sneers at her he tells the judge and court "but the way I am looking at her, she is not the woman."

All my respondents are aware that there are national laws to protect women and ensure gender equality (Mugambe, 2007). Maama Ndugwa argues that unlike her mother's generation, today's laws "empower" women by allowing them to work and "control their own finances." But as Ewick and Silbey (1992: 737) argue, the justice system is a re-creation of social relations "in a narrower, relatively discrete, and professionally managed context" and it therefore reproduces the norms, activities and relationships that exist within the society that it operates in. This is exemplified in my respondent's lack of confidence and trust in the country's police and justice system. Fatuma fears the "long and tedious court process" while others are reluctant to engage those "expensive lawyers." Nambi argues that the laws are not favourable to women, that they have "rarely worked" and are just "nice on paper":

> for example if a woman loses her husband, sometimes the in-laws and the husband's family members will freely walk into her house and take property arguing that it was their relatives, the woman will also at times be thrown out of her marital home…

My respondents also refer to the "mobilisation of masculine bias" whereby women are deliberately frustrated by men and the justice system in that they eventually give up on court cases. Lydia angrily asks where the police is when "such men [Semakula] become impossible in society" while Fatuma demands answers as to why police does not arrest him because of his unbecoming behaviour. Naggayi hints on cases when "rich men bribe officials so that files disappear" and Kaitesi eloquently sums this up:

> These people know how to frustrate women, they are very malicious. You can report as many times as you want, the case will never go very far. They will never listen to

> you especially if the man has more money than you do. The woman will reach a point of selling everything in the house in order to see the case through. They will ensure that they drag the case for as long as it takes and once you have nothing else to sell and are evidently broke, you give up.

This shows that though the courts of law in modern Uganda provide an institutional foundation for dealing with issues of justice and equality, the social inequalities and the gendered nature of the justice system continues to be a cause of frustration for the women (Khadiagala, 2002).

6.5 Bad Black

Shanita Namuyimbwa, aka "Bad Black" is in her early twenties (appendix A (5); she is a Muganda, a muslim and a mother of three (Lubwama, 2012). She was given the name Bad Black by the *Red Pepper* (Lubwama, 2012). Her mother – a single parent – owned a charcoal stall from where she got money to support herself and her two daughters. Shanita dropped out of school in Senior 2 (the second year in high school at about 14-15 years of age). She subsequently became a commercial sex-worker and had her first two children (one fathered by a Portuguese national) during this period. She says she got into prostitution "to get money" to look after herself and her children. She earned $200 dollars per day but this income was barely enough (Lubwama, 2012).

Bad Black's fortunes changed when she met 53-year old David Greenhalgh, a married man, father and business man from the United Kingdom. He kept her as his mistress and provided for her, bought her a car and a house (Lubwama, 2012). He subsequently opened what to him was a business account and to her a 'love' account in the names of Davishan Development (U) Ltd (short form for David and Shanita) and deposited close to one billion Uganda shillings (Lubwama, 2012). Shanita was the sole signatory to the account. He talked her into having cosmetic surgery to expand her breasts, hips and buttocks because that is how he liked African women and she agreed (Lubwama, 2012). She ended commercial sex and turned into a socialite and philanthropist. In one instance, she claims to have spent close to 100 million Uganda shillings on a birthday party. Her philanthropist ways caught media attention but though they covered her every move, the person who bankrolled her luxurious life-style remained a mystery.

She soon fell pregnant with child number three (born in 2012). But she was also linked with other men and the paternity of child number three made headlines after she claimed that three different men (including Greenhalgh) had fathered the child. One such man that she was linked with was Meddie Sentongo. As the relationship with Greenhalgh soured, Bad Black and Meddie were accused of embezzling eleven billion shillings and further charged with two counts of conspiring to defraud Davishan Development of nine million dollars (Lubwama, 2012). Asked if she and Greenhalgh had ever discussed any development projects, she answered "No; I even don't know what an investment is" (Lubwama, 2012). Nonetheless, she and Meddie were found guilty and sentenced to 4 years and 18 months respectively. A few months into her sentence, she applied for and was granted bail on medical grounds – claiming that her breast implants had a problem. She travelled to Dubai to have them examined and never came back.

6.5.1 Discussion: women 'taking care of business'

Bad Black's story is of a girl who grew up in a poor household, and struggles to make ends meet. The story is emblematic of many women's lives, especially single mothers. Such women's lives are central in not only transforming gender relations but also other domains (gender, cultural, political-economic institutions) that govern social life (Hodgson, 2001). In survival mode, these women have no option but to take up any opportunity that aids them in getting the most basic necessities and services (Hodgson, 2001). This anxiety is made visible in the absurd claims that her third child has three fathers: we can understand this claim as a moral one made on men by whom she has been abandoned.

My respondents call her "despicable" and an "embarrassment to womanhood" (Nakanyike, 2001). Some respondents blame her choices on "bad grooming" because, according to Maama Ndugwa, she stands for everything that could go wrong like "theft, lies, rags to riches and back to poverty, jail, drama, promiscuity, prostitution".

But as a single mother, she is doing whatever it takes to "take care of business" and support herself and her children (Hodgson, 2001: 1). In my respondents' assessment, she is not only immoral but also a bad influence to their children. Ironically, 34-year old Naggayi's life echoes that of Bad Black; she is a single mother, lives from hand to mouth and exchanges sex for food:

> If a man gives me 10,000 shillings (about $ 4), I take it, another one gives me 5000 shillings (about $ 2), I welcome it. I put that together and pay my children's school fees, rent and everything else. I have 3 children and they have to go to school, they have to eat they have to look good. If he gives me his 5000 shillings and says he is coming to my house, he comes home and gets his money's worth… My income is between shillings 10,000- 100,000 (about $ 4 - $ 38) and that is how I survive.

Challenged to define her line of work, Naggayi informs the group that she is not a prostitute but an "unemployed survivor" who "looked for a job and could not find any" yet she had to survive. This, she says, was the only available option. When some members insist on defining it as prostitution, Harriet tries to support her by explaining the distinction between exchanging sex for food with prostitution:

> There is a difference between her, her job and a married woman. She did say that she was not married and this is her job.

Naggayi further reveals that she has a minimum price when Esther asks her if she would take a client for "2000 shillings" she firmly answers that the amount is very little and insists that her starting price is 5000 shillings (about $2) and anyone below that "should not bother."

In line with Hodgson (2001: 1), women who challenge and/or contravene the agreed "patriarchal codes" provoke negative labelling. In a not so obvious manner, Naggayi is judged by her fellow group members when Babirye defines a good lady as one who, among other things, is not "promiscuous" and one who "stays at home and does not go out looking for men". When Esther asks about Naggayi's choices, she quickly reminds them that it is just for survival to which she candidly tells her:

> No one is disputing that, but you are an example to yours and other people's children. If a child sees a parent or an adult doing something, like what you do, they learn that it is fine to do the same. If they see you getting different male visitors each week, they will grow up thinking it is ok. If they see a drunk old woman on television falling down, they will do that. And if they see Nalule at her age looking for a man then it is fine.

This earns Naggayi and Bad Black's behaviour the title of the proverbial "wicked" women (Hodgson, 2001:1). In this instance, Shanita Namuyimbwa becomes "Bad Black" (Nakanyike, 2001: 174-175). But my respondents reckon that the solution to Bad Black's transgressions lies in Buganda's tradition and culture; they feel that she needs a "session with her *ssenga*[22]" which will ensure that she is put straight.[23]

[22] In Buganda, a *ssenga* (paternal aunt) is charged with offering counselling and guidance – to the girl child – on relationships, reproductive health, marriage strengthening and sexuality.

6.6 Meere (Mary) Nalule

75-year old Meere Nalule hails from Mityana district (appendix A (6). She comes into the limelight because she is looking for love. Neither the men who fathered her two children nor her various partners have asked for her hand in marriage. Also, she has never stayed in a relationship for longer than six months. So in September 2012, she took matters into her own hands and approached *Bukedde TV1*'s *Abanoonya* (single and searching) programme to express her interest in searching for a partner with whom she can share and spend her remaining years with. The popularity of this topic was picked up by *Agataliiko Nfuufu*. In her first television appearance, Nalule said that life as a single woman was hard and that she has only tolerated it because she had no option. Nalule acknowledges that she is old, but confidently says that she is still beautiful, and can still have fun. Therefore, the kind of partner that she wants should have these traits and should be able to take her to the beach to have fun and to Congo where she will enjoy Congolese music.

But Nalule is not looking for just any man, the man she is looking for must be "pure silver" (a white man) and preferably of European descent. She does not care about his age as long as he is willing to be with her and has the money to take care of her. He must be slightly taller than her, care for her and love her unconditionally. Furthermore, he must not be married, except if he has had a discussion with his wife and she agrees with the arrangement. When she receives calls and proposals from men around Uganda, she comes back to the programme to clarify: "I am very sure about what I want and it is not a black man. I am very sorry but I want a white man. If I do not get him, I will remain single." Asked why she insists on a white man, Nalule says that she has dated different kinds of black men (including Kenyans and Ugandans) that have even fathered her children but they were "careless" and have not been of help to her and her children.

When she is challenged about being an old woman who might not be able to have sex or do anything to please her man, Nalule responds by giving an example of her father, "…at 45, my late father Festo Kayongo, married a woman who was almost my current age. They lived together for close to 10 years. My father later died, I don't know what happened to that woman, but didn't she stay with him despite her age and their age difference?" As a young

[23] I will discuss the role of the Ssenga in later parts of this chapter.

girl, she claims to have loved both older men and younger ones and this case is not any different. According to *Bukedde* (2012), Nalule did get her white man.

6.6.1 Discussion: women contesting and negotiating gender and power relations

Nalule's story highlights the contradictions and contestations of power within the shifting landscapes of individuals and communities in present day Uganda (Nakanyike, 2001). In an *Agataliiko Nfuufu* survey on the streets of Kampala, Nalule's story generated a debate over the expected gender relations, practices and cultural norms (Hodgson, 2001). At her age, society does not expect her to be looking for a partner let alone think about sex but having gone against the gender order, her desires spark off a debate about appropriate sexual behaviour (Tamale, 2005: 11-12).

Ugandan society prioritises ideal and appropriate homes and relations as only heterosexual ones. These gendered expectations also extend to the power to control sex and sexuality (Nakanyike, 2001; Tamale, 2005). My respondents echo their hatred of the recent wave of media coverage and public debates around homosexuality. They argue that "this homosexuality thing is so bad" and that "men in Buganda cannot be homosexuals" with a firm view that they need their "*kojjas*[24] to do their jobs".

Further, as indicated in chapter two, a good woman in Buganda is one whose entire life – including sexuality – is controlled by those in power (Nakanyike, 2001). Society, therefore, has the power to define and determine who has sex and, in this case, at what age (Connell, 2009). Both male and female viewers who were interviewed and shown on *Agataliiko Nfuufu* were flabbergasted that Nalule, at her age, would consider intercourse. Geetu states that she is "too old to be thinking about partnerships, sex, marriage and all those things", and the majority are "shocked". Esther argues that this is a "bad example" to the younger generation while other respondents feel that she is an "embarrassment to her children and grandchildren". Kisakye, on the other hand, reckons that Nalule is inviting "death unto herself"; in addition, the shame of such a death would be such that even her dead body would feel embarrassed:

[24] *Kojja* (maternal uncle) performs the same roles as the *Ssenga* – but offers advice to the boy child.

> Those white men take drugs, the guy will come when he is high on some drug and take Nalule to bed and the next story will be one informing us of her death. Her dead body will be so embarrassed because it will have died on the job.

Reactions from the men are that she is damaging her reputation. Kisakye recalls a young man's prayer that was sent in to the *kyenkya* (breakfast) show on *Bukedde TV*:

> Lord, please help us and take Nalule away when there is still time for her to redeem herself and her reputation because if you do not take her now, she is going to die on someone's chest.

Two other young men that speak in the *Agataliiko Nfuufu vox populi* (vox pop) video sound bites highlight the dominant production relations that deliberately divide labour according to sex (Tamale, 2005; Connell, 2009). They feel that that at her age, she is supposed to be nurturing and spending time with her grandchildren as she waits on them to bring money and all the basic necessities from the city (Connell, 2009). In the street survey one young man advises Nalule to "go back to the village and dig, look after the family graveyard and wait for them to provide for her every financial need" another young man says that at 75-years, her pre-occupation should not be about sex but "looking after grandchildren". But Nabbosa admires her "stamina" (slang for energy) while Maama Kyazze's response challenges the dominant views and highlights the contestations and shifts in the power base:

> **Maama Kyazze**:…Personally I liked her because she did not do what society and people expect of her, she did what she wanted and felt like doing. Yes she is an old woman, but she was lonely and she felt that she could manage a relationship, so, she took matters into her own hands, what is wrong with that?

Maama Kyazze's comment is this instance reflects a case where, despite the prevailing gender relations, individual agency is sometimes acknowledged and approved.

6.7 Annet Nakangu and Jane Nakaggwa

This story is about a feud between a 45-year old mother – Jane Nakaggwa – and her 20-year old daughter – Annet Nakangu (appendix A (7). The story aired on the 25th of December, 2011 and is set at Nakaggwa's house in Ndodo village, Mpigi district. In the entire story, the mother is seen beating Nakangu – her second child – with a slipper and later with a stick. Ndodo residents asked Nakaggwa to discipline Nakangu for using vulgar language and promiscuous behaviour. But the disciplinary session turns into a heated exchange of words between mother and daughter:

Nakaggwa (words punctuated with beatings); How can you say such things about me, didn't I pay your school fees *Kumanyoko*[25]?
Nakangu: You never paid any school fees for me. Just go on beating me
Nakaggwa: You are such a prostitute. *Kumanyoko!*
Nakangu: You are also a prostitute
Nakaggwa (words punctuated with beatings): If I did not pay your school fees, then go away. *Kumanyoko!*

As the narrator's voice over introduces the story, a voice in the background can be heard confirming that this is indeed a mother and daughter feud. Nakaggwa asks Nakangu why she does not get her own man instead of going for married men, to which Nakangu responds:

Nakangu: Go on beating me. You cannot force me to have a man that is not respectable
Nakaggwa: How can you go to someone's home and insult his wife like that…?
Sister: …she causes so much chaos and misunderstandings everywhere…
Nakaggwa: Is that the man that you are standing up for? …that she had sex with your boyfriend?
Sister:…you said that Uncle Franko is promiscuous so what is different about you… go away and stop continuously causing misunderstandings…
Nakangu: Beat me. I said beat me…but we will go far
Nakaggwa (punctuated with beatings): Show me respect. *Kumanyoko!*
Nakangu: Eh beat me…go on.

The elder sister passes Nakaggwa a stick. It looks like Nakaggwa is beating a log because Nakangu is standing in one place and is not bothered that she is being furiously beaten. Then Nakaggwa offers 5000 shillings [about $2] to anyone who is willing to relieve her of "this *muyaye* [lumpen]". A man is heard asking for the money and Nakaggwa promises to give it to him:

Nakangu: This woman has children everywhere and with different men
Nakaggwa: Like who..?
Nakangu: Didn't you have a child with that man who slaughters pigs in the neighbourhood?
Nakaggwa: whatever you are saying is embarrassing you, not me
Nakangu: You taught us how to be prostitutes! You….you who even had sex with a man in a banana plantation!
At this point, we are shown the mother chasing her daughter but the shot cuts to her standing and still insulting her mother:
Nakangu: Don't you remember that guy who owned a car? In fact she has to be jealous because we slept with the same man. In fact, you should stop calling me your daughter because I am your co-wife!

It is only at the intervention of a man from the neighbourhood who chases Nakangu with a stick that the fight between mother and daughter ends.

[25] A Swahili word meaning your mother's vagina

6.7.1 Discussion: mothers and children in a changing world

Chapters one and two discussed the important roles that tradition and culture play in shaping one's character, behaviour, dress code and communication (Nakanyike, 2001; Tamale, 2005). Within this setting, dominant customs and traditions dictate the appropriate responsibilities and behaviour of women and children (Hodgson, 2001). Traditionally, a child in Buganda belongs to and is raised by the community; culture also dictates that children and women are supposed to be seen and not heard (Asiimwe, 2013). This story teases out debates around the importance of culture, especially within a changing society and its effects on my respondents' cultural beliefs. But most importantly, it touches on the kind of femininity that motherhood inspires and the relationship between mothers and their children.

My respondents passionately discuss and defend their culture, for instance, Nambi argues that cultural leaders and culture teach people "survival skills" in their day to day lives, say for example, marriages whereby if a woman serves her husband standing, he will "wonder what kind of household you came from and who you were raised by." For Nabbosa, the approach of a job hunter to a potential employer determines whether you will be employed:

> If someone was considering offering you a job and…you are rude, hands akimbo and talking anyhow, they will not give you that job...if you have been taught to be humble, greet people wherever you go and be calm; then ask for a job. Your approach matters and our cultures teach us all that…

Central to these cultural discussions is the concern and plight of their children. Children do not only play a role in defining, emphasising and legitimising the women's nurturing role in the "private" arena; they also evoke and define specific kinds of femininity. For example, my respondents are concerned that poor service delivery leads to flooding which causes the death of children in Bwaise and Kalerwe; Bad Black went into prostitution to raise enough money so she could fend for her herself and her children; Semakula calls Shadiah a prostitute because she had children before he met her, and the women are concerned about the moral degeneration that will result from the kind of stories that are aired on *Agataliiko Nfuufu*. There is a lot of talk and discussion around children and women's relationships with them; including their responsibilities and the care and concern taken for their upbringing – in particular their concern not only for their physical safety and general wellbeing, but that they should be reared correctly. The fathers though seem largely absent in childrearing. It is

perhaps for these reasons that this fight between mother and daughter strikes a code with all my respondents.

By talking back at her mother, Nakangu challenges the normative expectations of "respectability" and disrupts the web of social relationships that defines and depends on her as a daughter in her mother's house (Hodgson, 2001). All my respondents agree that Nakangu was "disrespectful" which they say was apparent in the way that when her mother beat her she merely "looked like a log", clearly indicating to them that she was not remorseful. Kisakye argues that children have no right to judge their parents because "even the Bible says your parent is your God on earth":

> That mother looked pained and embarrassed, she was beating that child out of pain…Or maybe the mum was trying to live with the times, I don't know. Times are changing, you find old people that have refused to get out of 'action,' [like Nalule] they have refused to grow up.

This exchange is also indicative of "a world that is changing" and the fear of "moral degeneration" that modernity brings, according to my respondents. Others call it an "abomination" and others look back at the time when "an adult was an adult" and was "never wrong". However, there are apparent contradictions in the social norms of "respectability" as displayed in this story (Hodgson, 2001: 6). While they agree that Nakangu's behaviour calls for disciplinary action, none of my respondents touches on the mother's use of profane language yet they indicate that everybody (including children) deserves to be respected.

Commenting on the ways things have changed and the assaults on personal dignity and self-respect it has engendered, Jane looks back at the time when life was secure enough to "go out at night to ease ourselves without any fear". In contrast, people use basins or bed pans today and the evidence of where it is dumped can be found in Kalerwe, especially when it rains. Most respondents shared stories of how they never knew that elders visited the toilet:

> She [mum] would pretend like she is cleaning the path and continue down the same route, then she would take a long time to come back…then she would come back carrying something from the garden. You would …never imagine that she was in the toilet. It was the same story for our father, you would never see them. Things have really changed.

But today's changing society means that children know when the mum goes to the toilet and can even "point you in the direction of the toilet" loudly saying, "she is over there, in the toilet, can't you see her?" Even the housing situation has changed, and my respondents

reminisce about "how things used to be" like growing up in houses where their grandparents had separate rooms, father's had their own bedrooms, mothers had their own bedrooms and so did the children. In such an environment, they reveal that they only learnt about "what happens at night" when they were fully grown:

> **Harriet:** Today, children are being raised in one roomed houses, they are looking at their mum and dad on the bed; sometimes you jump over them to get in and out of the house and sometimes you pee on them or pee when they are watching, what with these buckets and basins that become toilets at night because you are scared of going out of the house!

As a result today's children, especially those that have grown up in Kampala, "grow up too quickly", my respondents say. They feel that Kampala is not a conducive environment to raise children in. They reckon that children raised in the rural areas are humble, do not have the courage to "pick things" from market stalls and eat them without permission, yet children that are raised in the city "are too quick, and mature faster than their village counterparts." There are more reasons why my respondents feel that life in the city is not right for their children; the *mizigo* – rows of one-roomed houses – are congested and families are deprived of their privacy. People are "in each other's business" and everything that a person does in their house "can be heard by the neighbours". A range of opinions indicate their reality and frustrations at the "bad" city life:

> **Lydia:** When a couple is having their "fun", children are next door hearing what is going on. If you make a mistake of going to ask them to tone it down they will remind you that they also pay rent and have a right to do whatever it is that they are doing in their home! City life is not right at all!
>
> **Kisakye:** our neighbour was having one of those moments with her husband…she was really loud…she did it a number of times…as a group of concerned mothers we asked her to keep it down, she told us that what she does pleases her husband and that is all that matters to her. But we are in the city what else can we do?
>
> **Nabbosa:** …we once asked one of our neighbours to tone it down and she told us that if we had problems with our sexuality we needed to look for medicine to make things right….

My respondents also attribute this kind of moral degeneration to *Agataliiko Nfuufu* and the kind of content that they cover, say for example Bad Black. When I challenge them that the bulletin airs at 10PM in the evening at which time the children should be in bed, they disdainfully refer to children with a privileged background whereby parents can send a child to bed in another room in the house, whereas for them, "a small curtain separates the

bedroom from the sitting room" and sending them to bed means sending them to the veranda or not watching the bulletin because you are sitting in "their bedroom".

For Harriet, all this boils down to the fact that people have "let down" their culture. Jane observes that some people have made towels a form of dressing in that someone can peel food dressed in one or "you visit someone's house at midday and they are walking around in a towel"; she is also saddened by women's changing dress codes in that they have even started putting on trousers when "they are going for burials". For Babirye older women and men are not dressing according to their age group, they dress – in tights, leggings and Loketo pants (those that you tie above the waist) – as if "they missed a stage" because such clothes "are meant for youth." All in all, they conclude that the changing circumstances have negatively impacted on their culture.

6.8 Maama [mother] Nagginda

Sylvia Nagginda Luswata is the current queen of Buganda Kingdom (appendix A (8). Her official title is *Nnabagereka*. Nagginda was born in England, but when she was three months old; her mother sent her back to Uganda to live with her grandparents, who raised her. She had her primary and secondary education in Uganda then she moved to the United States where she earned an Associate's degree with honours from City University of New York, a Bachelor of Arts degree from New York University and a Master of Arts degree in Mass Communication from the New York Institute of Technology. She has worked as a Public Information Officer and Research Consultant at the United Nations headquarters and as an independent consultant in public relations and business development.

She married Ronald Muwenda Mutebi II – the current Kabaka of Buganda – in 1999. She then moved back to Uganda and has since dedicated her life to the provision of relevant and high quality education to less advantaged children. She also established Uganda's first ballet school, the *Kampala Ballet and Modern Dance School.* She is a Goodwill Ambassador for the UNFPA in advocating for girl's education and is also involved in accelerating female participation in education and bridging the gender gap within the education system through the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE). She also aims to uphold the cultural values that make a good mother or woman in Buganda kingdom through the *Nnabagereka*

Development Trust Foundation. The foundation is the organisation behind the annual *Ekisaakaate*.

6.8.1 Discussion: Reconciling traditional and modern gender values

This story is exemplary of how women negotiate the tensions and move between their modern and traditional roles and identities. As indicated in chapter one, competing discourses of modernity and traditionalism circulate in Kampala. On the one hand, the national government selectively draws on western discourses of gender rights and identity; on the other, Buganda Kingdom draws on traditional concepts of gender roles (Hodgson, 2001; Nakanyike, 2001; Goetz, 2002; Tamale, 2005). Nagginda not only represents the women who draw from both discourses but she also presents a solution to the "waywardness" that is exhibited by the symbolic women discussed throughout this chapter.

My respondents speak about Nagginda with warmth and respectfully refer to her as "*Maama*" (mother). Her status and her considerable personal agency that accompanies her role as queen provide her with the framework and means to effect change within the prevailing traditional discourse (Hall, 1997; Connell, 2009). Her drive to address the gender inequalities in Uganda place her in a position where she can be recognised for engaging in the struggle for equal rights and opportunities for women (Van Zoonen, 1994).

As discussed in chapter one, colonialism and imperialism weakened the cultural support systems, fused the gender and race hierarchy and left colonised societies in crisis (Cross-Culture Foundation of Uganda, 2009; Connell, 2009). In the Ugandan context modern education, civil wars and the banning of kingdoms arguably downplayed cultural unity and hampered the formation of wholesome cultural beings (Cross-Culture Foundation of Uganda, 2009). These, according to my respondents, coupled with media products have contributed to moral degeneration because "children watch and imitate" what they see:

> **Jane:** Even school spoils our children. You find lessons that were on the primary 7 syllabus have been moved to the primary 4 level.
>
> **Interviewer:** Pardon me, like what?
>
> **Jane:** A lot, like the reproductive system. These days a primary 4 child (about 8 or 9 years) will know everything there is to know about the reproductive system. You cannot hide anything from them these days.

It is this situation that makes the modern day *kisaakaate* relevant. It is aimed at instilling the new generations with those cultural values that their parents missed out on due to the disruptions. But the *Nnabagereka* Development Trust Foundation is aware that culture is dynamic and it is better for the changes to be incorporated within the younger generations' than the older ones; hence the focus on children between 6-18 years (Cross-Culture Foundation of Uganda, 2009).

By taking on the education of the younger generation, Nagginda is seen as nipping in the bud the moral degeneration of the youth and instead instilling important cultural values in children from a young age. Her role becomes essential in helping women achieve a highly desirable form of respectable femininity that is achieved through schooling that is mainly focussed on their sexuality. Although there are various events and lessons that take place in the *kisaakaate,* my respondents' view and appreciation of the current *kisaakaate* is in its emphasis on training and ensuring that young women regain their value and respect from their husbands and make them feel important in society. For them, it is especially useful at a time when men have started "gossiping" about their wives as Nambi eloquently puts it:

> Today, Maama Nagginda's annual *kisaakaate* classes and lessons rotate around being a good woman and the bush schools. If you think these things are not important, then try getting married without any evidence of having been to the bush schools, your own husband will start talking about you in the neighbourhood.

It is in these instances that the *ssengas* and *kojjas* become relevant. The bush schools primarily involve the sexual initiation of young girls. The tradition mainly entails the *ssenga* tutoring young girls and women in a variety of "sexual matters, including pre-menarche practices, pre-marriage preparation, erotic instruction and reproduction" (Tamale, 2005:9). Traditionally, the *ssenga's* role is essential to gender relations among the Baganda because she is charged with ensuring that the classes and training happen at the right time. These classes involve teaching young girls some economic ventures like weaving and pottery so that the young girl can have an income of her own. But the bulk of the *Ssenga's* tutorials focus on sexuality with particular emphasis on sexual paraphernalia, erotic skills and aphrodisiacs like sensual oils, herbal perfumes, sensual oils and *obutiti* (sexual beads) (Tamale, 2005). *Ssenga* sessions are an important part of the current *kisaakaate.* In Nagginda and the *kisaakaate,* my respondents see a restoration of "proper womanhood" and the nurturing of a "good", obedient and respectable woman within the acceptable social relations.

Most importantly is the training of young women in the rituals, rites and passages of proper femininity:

> **Nambi:** If you do not want to be referred to as a *kiwowongole* (empty/useless) by the opposite sex, then fulfil those rituals…Now if a man finds a woman that has not visited the bush school, he will go around talking about her that "*ekikazi*[26] *ekyo kiwowongole*" [that woman is empty/useless].

The ritual that Nambi and my respondents emphasise in this instance is "*okusiika*" – a procedure that involves young girls stretching or elongating her inner labia (Tamale, 2005). It is evidence of this visit that men will be looking for in a wife. According to my respondents, lack of proof causes the man to "gossip" about the wife. Traditionally, the man can blame the *ssenga* for this laxity and he has the right to send the wife back to the *ssenga* for "proper" training (Tamale, 2005). These, according to my respondents, are important aspects of femininity that need to be emphasised and the ones that they appreciate the *kisaakaate* for embarking on.

However, the downside of the modern day *kisaakaate* for my respondents is that it is "expensive". For Geetu they cannot "afford to send their children to the *Nnabagereka's kisaakaate".* Others are concerned about the two week training period, which they argue is too short. Maama Ndgugwa wonders how much they "can teach a child in two weeks". This is where the media, in my respondents case *Bukedde TV*, come in to provide continuous cultural training for the younger generation as Maama Kyazze suggests:

> I wish media houses would set aside about 15-30 minutes once a week for a programme that teaches children about their culture… A programme like that is better than those films that *Bukedde* television airs from morning to evening. It would be refreshing to see a cultural programme during that time. It would also be beneficial for them in one way or another; after all they want us to watch.

Maama Kyazze's comment evokes Thompson's (1995: 179-181) idea of "the re-mooring of tradition". In his discussion of the role that media plays in modern society, he argues that rather than simply doing away with tradition, media enable tradition to be anchored – "re-moored" in new contexts and in new ways. Tradition as such does not die out – rather people adapt tradition to new ends within new environments with the aid of modern communication technologies. This is a path that is actively suggested by Maama Kyazze: a media that, rather

[26] The term "*ekikazi*" is itself rude

than breaking down tradition in its representations of undesirable femininity, provides an anchor in a sea of uncertainty and change.

6.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented the findings of my research in the form of eight stories, or scenarios, in which women are scrutinised and held to account as gendered beings. Their stories and the discussions they evoke present a range of social and cultural institutions which work against women's attempts to achieve gender equality or simple autonomy. The issues that are discussed here are indicative of the various concerns and problems that my respondents necessarily negotiate in their everyday lives.

The next chapter concludes the study.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the meanings that Kampala's young working class women between the ages of 18-35 years make of *Agataliiko Nfuufu* – a popular news programme on *Bukedde* television – and how these meanings relate to the contested notions of femininity in this urban space. The study also aimed to establish the significance of *Agataliiko Nfuufu*, a tabloid television programme that privileges human interest stories that focus on micro-politics of everyday life. The research was enabled by critical social-constructivist understandings of gender together with theories and debates around popular culture, tradition, modernity, discourse, tabloids and tabloidisation.

While *Agataliiko Nfuufu*, with its tabloid nature, expends considerable airtime on human interest stories, it also deals with a variety of issues which include stories that would ordinarily be found in mainstream journalism as well as aspects of service journalism. Taking this kind of coverage into account, *Agataliiko Nfuufu* is not just a tabloid but displays aspects of both mainstream and tabloid journalism (Steenveld and Strelitz, 2010; Wasserman, 2011). Its large viewership ensures that issues that touch on "the politics of the everyday" find space in a popular public sphere.

In my engagement with my respondents it became clear that *Agataliiko Nfuufu's* popularity stems from its coverage of the "politics of everyday" that touch on their lived experiences. Its use of ordinary Ugandans, especially the working class, as the main actors in the social dramas that they mediate, and the fact that they give the actors ample time to speak, comment, lament and share their discontent makes the bulletin accessible to ordinary people. Ironically, even though my respondents argue that the bulletin does not reflect women in a good light, they do not call for it to be banned: rather, they advocate for additional cultural programmes and segments in other time slots during the day that are aimed at complimenting the queen's work in producing acceptable feminine subjects.

It is also evident that *Agataliiko Nfuufu* is consumed in a complex environment where contesting notions of traditionalism and modernity are at play. While *Agataliiko Nfuufu* is consumed in the modern setting of urban Kampala, the issues that arise are interpreted and understood within my respondents' understandings of the demands of tradition, for example

75-year old Nalule's case. The reaction to this story shows that traditional and modern identities, values and behaviours co-exist and struggle for dominance in specific social and cultural spaces. These struggles are both reflected in and shaped by the representation of women on *Agataliiko Nfuufu*.

It is also evident that these representations produced by *Bukedde TV1* are specific to the social context and the gendered environment within which the programme is located and consumed. In this context, gendered roles and expectations have become naturalised and have achieved a taken-for-grantedness. Patriarchy has been legitimised and naturalised to the extent that the respondents define themselves largely in relation to male relatives, and marriage. While they lament the changes that have taken place in their social contexts which disrupt the natural gender order, they construct themselves as subjects of the prevailing discourses of gender relations that see men as powerful and women as weak and in need of protection.

Yet, in contradictory ways, moments of contestation emerge from the discussion in relation to these taken-for-granted notions: some, like Kisakye, protest that they would like to experience alternative ways of life; to marry at a different time, or not at all. To be able to take recreation without putting their reputations in danger; to be able, perhaps, to find partners who do not take them or their labour for granted. My respondents are women who are evidently by no means helpless; they survive against many odds, to bring up children and run their households in precarious economic and social circumstances, aware of the ways in which society is structured in favour of men, for example their lack of access to justice.

Unsurprisingly, those women who have struggled against the odds to succeed, like Jennifer Musisi, are seen as women who aid the patriarchal system to bring them down. Theirs appears to be what Fiske (1987: 197) calls a struggle "within and against a dominant patriarchy", as they simultaneously legitimate and protect the self-esteem attached to feminine values in the society in which they live, at the same time as they interrogate the structures of patriarchal culture. It is largely a pragmatic response: and the dramas that unfold on *Agataliiko Nfuufu* provide vivid narratives, cautionary tales, against which to measure their struggles with and conformity to, the feminine identities demanded of them.

It is these gendered expectations, I argue, that *Agataliiko Nfuufu* fails to recognise or bother with in its melodramatic portrayal of women and children in a largely patriarchal setting.

This reception analysis with a gender focus is but one of many ways of interrogating the popularity of the *Agataliiko Nfuufu* phenomenon in Kampala. The research has revealed new possible areas of inquiry. For example, it would be useful to look at the tension between Buganda kingdom and central government and how these tensions are played out in the bulletin. I have also briefly mentioned that 53 percent of the Vision Group is owned by the government of Uganda, but a more rigorous interrogation on the implications of this ownership could add more nuances to this area.

APPENDINCES

Appendix A

Appendix A (1) Jennifer Musisi

Appendix A (1A): Kalerwe garbage

Appendix A (B): After the rains, the walls remain wet

Appendix A (1B): Public toilet in Kalerwe

Appendix A (1D):Kalerwe: Outside the interview venue

Appendix A (2): The revellers

Appendix A (2A)

Appendix A (2B)

Appendix A (2C)

Appendix A (2D)

Appendix A (3) Sewagudde Frank

Appendix A (3A)

Appendix A (3B)

Appendix A (4) Shadiah Noor Nakyeese

Appendix A (4A)

Appendix A (5) Bad Black

Appendix A (6) Meere Nalule

Appendix A (7)Annet Nakangu and Jane Nakaggwa

Appendix A (8) Sylvia Nagginda

Appendix B

Interview guide: *Bukedde* television

Section A: Bukedde television

Tell me about the Bukedde brand

Aren't you worried about audience divisions?

What is Bukedde's gender policy?

What kind of audience do you target?

Section B: *Agataliiko nfuufu*

Tell me about the name *Agataliiko Nfuufu*

How would you define/categorise your programmes?

Would you define your television station and programming as a tabloid?

What kind of influence do you have in the media industry?

How do you ensure that there is gender justice and equity in your coverage?

How do you source your stories?

Does politics or the current political situation affect you in anyway?

How many stories does each bulletin have?

Thank you very much for your time.

Appendix C

Focus group Interview guide

Section A: personal information and social/cultural background

Age

Occupation

Married/ single

Parents' occupations

Siblings

Schools attended

Qualifications

Languages spoken

Kampala/elsewhere

Section B: Personal In depth

If from outside Kampala, what has it been like coming to live here?

Tell me about the area you live now?

What do you like about Kampala?

Tell me something you don't like about living here?

Family: tell me about your husband/ partner/ why you are not married?

Gender related issues in Uganda

Gender relations in Uganda/ Kampala?

Position of women? Laws etc?

If work, what are some problems you encounter as a woman? Benefits?

Tradition: how do you relate to your culture? How does your culture affect you in your everyday life?

Section C: The TV news programme *Agataliiko Nfuufu*

Language accessibility: Different languages used – how do they feel about incorporating different languages in the bulletin?

Dress code on the News bulletin – what do you feel about eh way the presenters are dressed?

How often do you watch?

Who with? What do you like talking about?

What do you like about it (generally speaking) or this programme in particular?

Is there any story that made a big impression on you recently? Tell me about it?

What do you think about the way it portrays women? Men?

Thank you very much for your time.

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