

THE FRAMING OF HOMOSEXUALITY BY TWO UGANDAN NEWSPAPERS: AN
ANALYSIS OF *NEW VISION* AND *DAILY MONITOR*

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DECLARATION

This doctoral thesis, *The framing of homosexuality by two Ugandan newspapers: An analysis of New Vision and Daily Monitor*, was done at the Centre for Communication, Media and Society, University of KwaZulu-Natal from February 2014 to November 2016 under the supervision of Prof. Donal McCracken. I declare that the thesis is my own unaided work, and has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university. All figures, tables and panels, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons, are mine. Where use has been made of the work of others, it is duly acknowledged.

Sara Namusoga

Signature.....

Date.....

Donal McCracken

Signature.....

Date.....

To my dear friends in the media

Yours is not an easy job yet you keep doing it.

Sara Namusoga

ABSTRACT

It is the general view that homosexuality is an issue that both society and the media find controversial. In Uganda, press reports mostly echo the negative attitudes towards homosexuality as demonstrated by the studies about the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill. This thesis addressed itself to the framing of homosexuality in the two Ugandan newspapers of *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* during the period 2007-2011. The purpose of the thesis was to investigate the frames that the two media houses apply when they cover homosexuality issues, as well as to examine the changes and/or consistencies in reporting patterns during this time. The study period encompassed two years prior to the introduction of the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill, the year of the introduction of the bill, and two years after the introduction of the bill. Specifically, the thesis investigated the frames, tone, story formats, story placement and the sources. A content analysis of *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* was undertaken, and included all items/articles about homosexuality during this period. Framing theory informed this study.

The key results indicate that from 2007-2011, the two newspapers rely on the human rights frame, followed by the religion frame, to cover homosexuality. As such, homosexuality is treated as a rights and morality issue, which is consistent with findings from studies in other parts of the world. A negative attitude by the two newspapers towards homosexuality was also observed. It also emerged that the majority of stories were hard news stories, implying that homosexuality issues are covered as routine stories with marginal use of more detailed formats such as features and interviews. Furthermore, the Ugandan perspective was promoted through the reliance on Ugandan sources vis-à-vis foreign sources, by both newspapers. Moreover, the issue was treated as an elite issue, given that most stories were placed in the national pages. By placing the most stories on the national pages, the news reports promoted the elite views and downplayed the views from the peripheral, which are carried in the regional pages. Although some changes were observed in the reporting patterns, the overall observation was that although the two newspapers do not necessarily ignore homosexuality, their coverage was biased and homosexuality was treated negatively regardless of the topic or context.

The thesis concluded that the nature of reporting reflected the dominant views of the Ugandan society, which are negative towards homosexuality, making it challenging for homosexuals and their supporters to make their views known through these two media houses, and limiting the views that the audiences have about homosexuality. It is proposed, however, that hope lies in the view that since the political position on homosexuality (especially that of the president) has changed on several occasions, it is only a matter of time before the public view will change and such change reflected in media reports.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Introduction

Controversy is something that the media have to deal with in their daily operations (Kuypers, 2002). Even then, they are still expected to responsibly inform, educate and entertain the public (Alwood, 1996; Kuypers, 2002; Nassanga, 2008; Pan *et al.*, 2010). Contentious issues however, mean that the media have to re-think their presentation of information in order to remain the balanced and objective institutions they are expected to be. In such cases it is a delicate balance of media house policy, existing national laws, cultural considerations and the public/audience's interest that most likely determine the kind of reporting and coverage of a contentious issue. Over the years, the media, the world over, has had to deal with controversial issues such as climate change, stem cell research, national security and homosexuality, each time struggling to remain balanced and objective. This study is about how the Ugandan press cover a particular controversial issue, namely, homosexuality. As will be seen in the literature review and subsequent discussions, homosexuality is a controversial subject not only in Uganda, but the world over.

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the study by providing the background to the study, the research problem, the rationale of the study, the research objectives and questions, the research methodology and key research findings as well as the thesis outline. The chapter will follow the order presented herein, starting with the background to the study.

Background to the study

The debate over homosexuality and same-sex marriage continues globally, with varying opinions existing about its acceptability (Adamczyk and Pitt, 2009; Jowett and Peel, 2010; Van Klinken, 2011). The media is considered one of the key players in the debate, given that most people attribute what they know about homosexuality to media reports as opposed to

having first-hand experience (Calzo and Ward, 2009; Ward, 2013). It is not surprising therefore that the attention that the media pay to issues of homosexuality has increased over the past several decades globally and in Africa (Muula, 2007; Brewer, 2002; Chomsky and Barclay, 2013).

A section of literature suggests that in Uganda, the issue of homosexuality came to the fore in February 2003, after some members of the women's movement proposed that the equal opportunities commission should recognise the rights of homosexuals as a marginalised group (Tamale, 2007a). Following this proposal, the media reported intolerant views and opinions from the public (Tamale, 2007a). Early on, an article in *The Monitor* newspaper (now *Daily Monitor*) of 28 September 1999 reported an alleged homosexual wedding, to which President Yoweri Museveni responded by instructing the police to arrest and prosecute all homosexuals (Tamale, 2007a). Nearly 10 years later, after the tabling of the anti-homosexuality bill before parliament in October 2009 (*The Daily Hansard*, 14 October 2009), the debate on homosexuality came to the forefront again. The debate intensified between October 2009, when the bill was tabled before parliament, and June 2010 when there was international pressure on the Ugandan government to drop the proposed law (Strand, 2011). Although homosexual acts were already illegal in Uganda according to the penal code (Mujuzi, 2009), scholars and human rights activists viewed the bill as an addition to the existing legal penalties against homosexuality (Strand, 2011; Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012).

Meanwhile, the world over, homosexuality is an issue the media finds controversial to cover (Schudson, 2003; Alwood, 1996). This is partly because the coverage of homosexual issues involves two sides that hold conflicting views on issues, with each competing for media attention (Li and Liu, 2010). Nonetheless, the media are expected to report and inform the public on all things, including homosexuality, in a balanced way (Alwood, 1996; Nassanga, 2008; Pan *et al.*, 2010). When covering a controversial issue, the media usually frames it in different ways (Li and Liu, 2010) and as a result, end up either promoting one side, and/or downplaying the other side.

Nonetheless, issues regarding homosexuality are of national importance, as indeed the debate on the laws for and/or against homosexuality demonstrates, seeing that most of the time, the laws originate from government. Therefore, media coverage influences the public agenda and

understanding of those issues (Jamieson and Waldman, 2003; Tewksbury, 2006; Pan *et al.*, 2010). By framing homosexuality positively or negatively, the media will influence the way the public learn about, and understand, the issues. Therefore, it is important that media coverage provides a balanced view in their reports in order to aid decision-making by the public.

In Uganda's case, this is important because homosexuality is a very contentious issue to the extent that the Pew Research Centre's Global Attitudes Survey (2007; 2013) reported that more than 90% of Ugandans interviewed objected to the acceptance of homosexuality in Uganda. Moreover, it was also observed that the media played a key role in the public debate on the anti-homosexuality bill in Uganda (Tamale, 2007b; Strand, 2011; 2012). This makes it important to examine how the media have covered homosexuality. As such, this study sets out to investigate the framing of homosexuality by two Ugandan national daily newspapers, *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*, during a five-year period from 2007-2011.

The purpose of the study is to examine the frames these two media houses used in their coverage of homosexual issues, and to analyse any changes or consistencies in the pattern of reporting over the above-mentioned period. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to examine how the Ugandan press framed homosexuality. The study focuses on the frames used two years before the anti-homosexuality bill, the year the bill was introduced, and two years after the introduction of the bill. Studying this period was deemed important because the period before the bill is understudied (as the literature review will point out) while the period when the bill was introduced forms the bulk of studies on the subject. Likewise, the period after the bill is understudied. The study examines the frames, tone, story formats, story placement and sources. The study also analyses the changes in the reporting patterns of homosexuality issues during the period under study, before discussing the implication of the nature of coverage for future considerations regarding journalism in Uganda and the coverage of a contentious issue such as homosexuality.

More specifically, the objectives of this study are:

- To examine which frames were used by *New Vision and Daily Monitor* to cover homosexuality from 2007-2011
- To analyse the changes in reporting patterns of homosexuality issues from 2007- 2011

- To assess the implication of the nature of reporting to journalism in Uganda in terms of covering a contentious issue such as homosexuality

In order to meet these objectives, the study was guided by the main research question: How did *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* frame homosexuality? Three specific research questions were derived as follows:

1. How did *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* frame homosexuality from 2007 to 2011?
 - i) What are the specific frames used to cover homosexuality?
 - ii) What was the tone of the stories/frames? Were the frames negative, positive or neutral?
 - iii) What story formats were used to report issues of homosexuality?
 - iv) On which pages were the articles placed?
 - v) What sources were found in these articles?
 - a. In terms of geographical location
 - b. Individual sources
2. Were there any changes in reporting patterns of homosexuality between 2007 and 2011?
Changes in reporting patterns were examined in terms of:
 - i) Specific frames used
 - ii) Tone of the frames/stories
 - iii) Story formats
 - iv) Placement of articles
 - v) Sources
3. What is the implication of the results to journalism in Uganda, regarding the coverage of a contentious issue?

Why this study

This study was motivated by the view that the amount of attention that the media pay to issues of homosexuality has increased over the past several decades globally and in Africa (Muula, 2007; Brewer, 2002; Chomsky and Barclay, 2013) and yet, homosexuality is a controversial subject in almost every society, including Uganda. A review of the existing literature revealed

that even though the press in Uganda have been covering homosexuality from as far back as 1997 (Tamale, 2007a), it is the introduction of the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill that has dominated research into how the media, specifically the press, cover homosexuality issues in Uganda. Strand (2011; 2012) is the most recent work that focuses on how the media covered the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill. Cecilia Strand's 2011 study explored attempts by a group of local Ugandan human rights organisations to influence how the media covered the bill, and whether these attempts were successful or not. Strand's 2012 study explored the extent to which discrimination against homosexuals is manifested in media reports and the possible implications of this discrimination for the coverage of controversial policies such as the anti-homosexuality bill. Strand's work is not only centred on the bill, but takes the human rights perspective, thus limiting its scope to the human rights aspects of the bill. This study begins here and widens the focus to include other aspects of homosexuality as covered by the press, such as religion, culture and medicine, to mention just a few.

In addition to Strand's work, is Sylvia Tamale's (2007b) compendium, *Homosexuality: Perspectives from Uganda*. The book documents the coverage of homosexuality by Ugandan newspapers over a 10-year period from 1997-2007. It includes stories published in *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* newspapers, as well as commentary by various individuals who range from human rights lawyers to pro-homosexuality activists. This book provides the only documentation of the earliest coverage of homosexuality issues by the Uganda press, that is, 1997. However, it is also limited in scope to the period 1997-2007. Although Tamale's work gives an indication of the presence or absence of homosexuality issues in Ugandan newspapers, there is lack of documentation on the press coverage of homosexuality before 1997 and after 2007 (in a broad sense separate from the bill). This situation provided the second motivation for the current study, to cover the period after 2007 in order to provide new insight into the subject, owing to the fact that after 2007, the major issue was the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill, which also dominates research into this area.

The other reason for choosing this topic is the perception that the media play an important role in shaping key aspects of an issue (Gamson and Modigliani, 1987) and guide the debate on that issue (Price *et al.*, 2005). In order to gain a broader context into how Ugandan newspapers have covered homosexuality, it is necessary to consider other attendant factors concerning the debate about homosexuality in Uganda, such as other frames apart from the

anti-homosexuality bill. The bill will be included in the study since previous research into the same topic addressed slightly different issues. By including the bill in this analysis, it will be subjected to the same examination as the other frames.

Significance of the study

There is growing interest in the study of the press coverage of contentious issues (Kuypers, 2002; Nisbet *et al.*, 2003; Boyd and Paveglio, 2014; Delshad and Raymond, 2013; Semujju, 2013). Such issues include stem cell research, climate change and homosexuality/same-sex marriage. Results from these studies have been useful in the understanding of which factors affect the role of the press in shaping debate about social, scientific and political issues. From a Ugandan perspective, homosexuality, climate change and journalism ethics are some of the contentious issues that have been researched (Nassanga, 2008; Strand, 2012; 2013; Semujju, 2013). Moreover, as already alluded to, the amount of attention that the media pay to homosexuality issues has recently increased, both in Africa and the rest of the world (Muula, 2007; [Brewer, 2002](#); Chomsky and Barclay, 2013). By undertaking this study, the researcher aims to revisit the discussion on the press coverage of homosexuality in Uganda from a broader perspective than human rights and the anti-homosexuality bill. As such, the results of this study will provide updated information to media scholars, students and journalists on several fronts.

Firstly, since existing literature indicates that the media in Uganda are biased against homosexuality based on studies carried out between 1997 and 2007 and 2009 and 2010, the results of this study will be useful in covering a period that has hitherto been unstudied (2007-2008) and in doing so, show whether coverage is determined by context or the topic. For example, it would be interesting to establish whether the bill was covered differently from the period before the bill. In other words, the results will show whether there have been changes in the coverage since the last studies were undertaken.

Secondly, the study is timely in that Uganda is one of the countries that is still grappling with the acceptance or not of homosexuality, while in some other parts of the world, legislation in support of the recognition of the rights of homosexuals has been passed. Moreover, the press play an important role in disseminating information about homosexual issues. As such, the results of this study will provide a stepping-stone into the discussion on how the two

newspapers under study, approach the delicate issue of balance and objectivity in their coverage of homosexuality, which is a highly contentious issue in the country. The results from this study will inform the on-going debate on homosexuality.

Research methodology, methods and key results

The study adopted the quantitative research approach. This approach was most relevant because the study set out to investigate the dominance of the variables under investigation over a five-year period. Also, it was keeping within academic traditions as far as the study of frames and the framing of homosexuality by the press is concerned (Entman, 1993; Li and Liu, 2010; Pan *et al.*, 2010; Strand, 2012; Engel, 2013). Furthermore, the large volume of data that was generated from the sample dictated the choice of this approach given the limited resources such as time, finances and human resources. A qualitative analysis of all the 328 articles that constituted the sample would have been challenging to undertake accurately within those resources as explained above.

The study specifically employed the content analysis technique. The technique is useful in mass communication studies because it enables researchers to identify developments over a long period of time, including changes in trends (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006), such as the use of a certain frame over a period of time. As such, several scholars have applied this technique to studies on the framing of homosexuality in the press (for example, Pan *et al.*, 2010; Strand, 2012; Engel, 2013).

The study period constituted five years from January 2007 to December 2011 with the purpose of studying the framing and the changes in reporting patterns over this period. Recent research focuses on the dates between October 2009 and June 2010 (Strand, 2011; 2012), which also happens to cover the introduction of the anti-homosexuality bill (The *Daily Hansard*, 14 October, 2009) and the debate that ensued. As such, in addition to including the introduction of the bill and the period after its introduction, this study period covers the period before the bill, which is not included in recent research. The study focussed on the two years before the introduction of the anti-homosexuality bill, the year the bill was introduced and two years after the introduction of the bill.

The content that was analysed for this study was generated from the two newspapers of *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*. In addition to being national newspapers in that their circulation covers most parts of the country, these newspapers also lead in terms of public opinion. The two newspapers also represent the ownership patterns of the media in Uganda since *New Vision* is government owned and *Daily Monitor* is a privately owned newspaper.

Among the key results was that homosexuals and their supporters were mostly absent in the news reports that were analysed, in keeping with findings from existing research. Instead, both *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* relied on other sources known to be opposed to homosexuality, specifically religious leaders, politicians and the layperson. This implies that the audience hardly hear from homosexuals and their supporters, first hand, and as a result, on the whole, the audience is presented with a biased view against homosexuality.

Indeed, it also emerged that the overall coverage by both newspapers was negative and therefore biased against homosexuality. The newspapers' reliance on negative frames/stories, the negligible number of front-page stories about homosexuality and the insignificant number of homosexuals and their supporters as mentioned above were crucial in accounting for this bias. The negative representation of homosexuality by the two newspapers was regardless of the context or topic at hand. This kind of coverage was construed as maintaining and reproducing the negative sentiments that already exist in the Ugandan society. Moreover, it also contradicts coverage in other parts of the world, especially the United States of America, where the portrayal of homosexuality has improved owing to a number of factors such as change in editorial management and the passing of laws that recognise and protect the rights of homosexuals (Chomsky and Barclay, 2013).

The other key result was that coverage tended to promote the dominant perspective on homosexuality in Uganda (which according to survey data is negative) and as such limited the audience's access to perspectives from outside Uganda. The newspapers achieved this through the reliance on Ugandan sources compared to African and other sources as well as the ordinary citizens who expressed their views through the letters and opinions/columns sections of the newspapers. This points further to the bias already described above and also showed that the discussion as reported in the two newspapers is local and serves to cast the

newspapers in a favourable light with the authorities and the public who are opposed to homosexuality. In so doing, the newspapers could be said to remain relevant to their audience.

In addition to the above, both *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* framed homosexuality as a national issue as opposed to a regional or international issue. Therefore, homosexuality was treated as an elite issue (discussed by groups such as politicians, religious leaders and human rights activists) to be discussed at the national level and on Ugandan terms. This result was reinforced by the domination of hard news stories and the absence of the editorial, resulting in the false appearance of balanced reporting since hard news stories are editorially generated while the absence of the editorial implies non-committal to either side of the discussion. By limiting the discussion to national issues, the newspaper reports block other perspectives from outside the country that may not favour the dominant position as portrayed by the elite politicians and religious leaders.

Thesis outline

This thesis consists seven chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the thesis while chapter 2 provides the literature review and identifies the gap that the study aims to fill. The review comprises four parts as follows: (i) an overview of the media's coverage of contentious issues; (ii) a historical review of the press coverage of homosexuality; (iii) the discourses surrounding the discussion of homosexuality in the press and; (iv) literature specific to Uganda and the reason for undertaking the current study.

Chapter 3 lays out the theoretical underpinnings of the study. The study was informed by framing theory and its application to the media framing of contentious issues, particularly homosexuality. The chapter discusses the theoretical background of framing, followed by an overview of framing theory and the outline of the three paradigms of framing research. Selected concepts of framing are then presented, followed by a discussion on media frames, frame building and frame setting. Literature on press framing of contentious issues, specifically homosexuality, both internationally and within Uganda, is also reviewed.

Chapter 4 outlines the chosen research methodology and methods. The chapter describes the research design and method, sampling techniques, data collection and analytical framework as well as discussion about the reliability and validity of the study.

Chapters 5 and 6 present the results of the first and second research questions respectively. The first research question is: How did *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* frame homosexuality between 2007 and 2011? The second research question is: Were there any changes in reporting patterns of homosexuality between 2007 and 2011? Both questions considered the following: a) the specific frames used in press coverage; (b) the tone of the frames; (c) the story format; (d) the placement of stories; and (e) the sources used in these articles.

Chapter 7 presents the conclusions. This chapter also discusses the third research question, which addresses the significance of the study and its implications and; makes proposals for future research.

Chapter 2

The press, contentious issues, and homosexuality

Introduction

The attitude towards homosexuality in Western society has been changing over the years (Sullivan, 2003). This can be attributed to the various schools of thought on the ‘origins’ of homosexuality. While essentialism views homosexuality as preceding culture and history, social constructionism holds that homosexuality is understood differently at different historical times and in different cultural contexts (Sullivan, 2003). The media coverage of homosexuality conforms to the above observations, as it has been influenced by different discourses at different points in history (Alwood, 1996; Kuhar, 2003; Kervinen, 2007). However, one thing remains constant: homosexuality is a contentious subject, even for the media (Alwood, 1996; Kahur, 2003; Schudson, 2003).

This chapter presents a literature review on press coverage of homosexuality over the years. It also makes the case for the current study by describing the current state of research on the Ugandan media. The review consists of four parts. The first part is an overview of the media’s coverage of contentious issues. Here, results from various studies are presented with the aim of demonstrating that the press do indeed have a role to play in communicating contentious issues. Examples drawn are from climate change, bio-fuels, stem cell research and carbon capture and storage.

This is followed by a historical review of press coverage of homosexuality. This part demonstrates that whereas literature on Uganda suggests that homosexuality has not been a press issue for so long, it has been part of the press discourse from the 1940s in other parts of the world such as the United States of America and Slovenia. The ensuing discussion also shows that coverage of homosexuality has evolved over time, having started out as purely negative, improving in the later years by covering different topics using different sources

(including homosexuals and rights activists) and balanced stories depending on the prevailing circumstances.

The third part of the review focuses on the discourses that inform the discussion of homosexuality in the press. This is necessary, because by nature, the discussion of homosexuality is generally discursive. The discourses were selected based on their relevance to the context of the debate on homosexuality in Africa, and Uganda specifically. These discourses are particularly useful because there is limited literature available on Uganda. Moreover, even though the debate in some parts of the world currently employs specific frames such as gay rights and same-sex marriage, the debate in Uganda is still a general one and revolves around the acceptability or not of homosexuality. It was therefore quite difficult to fit the Ugandan media coverage into any of the available media frames on homosexuality. These discourses served as the frames through which the print media reports homosexuality in Uganda. In addition, using these discourses as frames was an attempt at contributing to the theory by studying existing frames instead of creating new ones for my study (Borah, 2011). The latter is viewed as one of the weaknesses of research on framing. Framing theory is discussed further in the next chapter.

The fourth section consists of literature specific to Uganda. This part aims at providing a context and by so doing, making the case for the current study. Although the Ugandan media has covered homosexuality since 1997 (Tamale, 2007b), the available literature focuses on one specific aspect of the debate, that is, the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill, which received both local and international coverage. The period before the bill is unstudied and it is a key conviction of this study that in order to draw any balanced conclusions about the way the Ugandan media cover homosexuality, it is necessary to study the period before a major event such as the bill, so as to fully contextualise the Ugandan media coverage of homosexuality.

The approach discussed above is useful for this study in a number of ways. First, it provides a general background regarding the media's coverage of contentious issues and specifically homosexuality, in the absence of literature that is specific to Uganda. Secondly, by teasing out the broader discourses within which the discussion on homosexuality takes place, one is able to apply frames that are more applicable to the Ugandan case as opposed to the ones

recommended by international studies. This is because whereas framing refers to the media's emphasising of certain aspects of a subject, in Uganda the discussion on homosexuality has not reached that level where it is specialised. Focusing on the framing alone is useful, for example, in places where the discussion has moved from homosexuality to particular topics such as same-sex marriage.

The press coverage of contentious issues

There is growing interest in the scholarship of how the press cover contentious issues (Kuypers, 2002; Nisbet *et al.*, 2003; Boyd and Paveglio, 2014; Delshad and Raymond, 2013; Semujju, 2013). Such research is informed by the fact that the press plays a critical role in shaping debate about social, scientific and political issues. The press' participation in such debates necessitates selection and construction of reality in a way that suits the media's interests and/or professional ethics and practices (Moritz, 1992), and/or in a way that reflects the thinking of the elite in society (Tuchman, 1978; Scheufele, 1999).

When covering a contentious issue, the audiences expect the media to present all sides of the debate in order to comply with the journalistic principles of balance and objectivity (Nassanga, 2008). However, objectivity of the press is debatable especially given the different factors at play during the media production process. Such factors include the journalists' social norms and values, organisational pressures and constraints, reportorial and editorial routines, ideological dispositions and interest group pressures (Scheufele, 2000). For example, in the case of the Ugandan press, *New Vision* is generally viewed as always towing the government line since government is the majority shareholder, while *Daily Monitor* is viewed as more liberal and more likely to criticise government and other political players (Mutabazi, 2009; Freidrich-Ebert, 2012). It suffices then that the ownership of *New Vision* makes it nearly impossible to remain objective on issues concerning government (The open society initiative for East Africa, 2010; Freidrich-Ebert, 2012).

Moreover, the way messages are designed, presented or organised will lead to some information being highlighted more than other information, which in turn serves to legitimise and therefore downplay certain positions (Tuchman, 1978; Scheufele, 2000). A case in point would be the issue of placing a story on the front page vis-à-vis placing it in the inner pages;

or, more specifically in Uganda's case, placing the story in the national news pages as opposed to placing it in the regional news pages. In the two national newspapers of *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*, the national news pages are located immediately after the front page, followed by the regional news pages. Therefore, in terms of prominence, stories in the national news pages receive more prominence and appear to be highlighted more than those in the regional news pages.

By emphasising and downplaying certain positions, the media end up 'framing' a discussion (Entman, 1993). Framing is discussed in more detail in chapter 3. Previous research has demonstrated that the way the media present information on an issue can influence the interpretation of these issues by the audience (McLeod and Detenber, 1999; Scheufele and Tewksbury, 2007; Anderson, 2009). In fact, by framing an issue, the media limit the ways in which that issue will be understood, since framing is basically about "selection and salience" (Entman, 1993:52).

Frames act as an aid to organise an individual's belief about an issue by facilitating people "to locate, perceive, identify, and label occurrences within their life space and the world at large. By rendering events or occurrences meaningful, frames function to organise experience and guide action, whether individual or collective" (Snow *et al.*, 1986: 464). The promotion of particular frames by social factors such as the media and the sharing of frames by members of society thus helps to form the basis of culture and societal trends. The meanings facilitated by frames are a primary contributor to human decision-making and action (Van Gorp, 2007).

A number of studies have shown that the media framing of contentious issues has consequences for the understanding of the issue and for policymaking (Kuypers, 2002; Nisbet *et al.*, 2003; Boyd and Paveglio, 2014; Delshad and Raymond, 2013; Semujju, 2013). The findings from these studies indicate that coverage is not balanced, hence promoting one side of the issue. Semujju (2013) studied the coverage of climate change by Ugandan national newspapers and found that the journalists commonly framed climate change in terms of the dominant United Nations discourse, which views human activity as the biggest contributor to climate change. Other frames that questioned the role of human activity in causing climate change were absent. Similarly, Boyd and Paveglio (2014) found that the Canadian media reports regarding information on the risks and benefits of carbon capture and storage (CCS) as

a mitigation measure for climate change, greenhouse gases and carbon dioxide emissions was unbalanced. Specifically, they found that media did not include frames and information about CCS that are commonly used in other fora such as academics, politics and the industry. Their findings were in agreement with past research that concluded that the message structure influences debates about technological development. Both Boykoff and Boykoff (2007) and Anderson (2009) found that the American media emphasised the controversial nature of anthropogenic climate change by using frames that focussed on particular sources and the uncertainty of science. Both Semujju (2013) and Boyd and Paveglio (2014) recommend that inclusion of dissenting views would have ensured that the information the public received was balanced.

From the above studies, one can infer that the effectiveness of a media frame lies in contextualising the frame according to a particular society's views and opinions. Boyd and Paveglio (2014) found this to be the case. They argued that it would not have been helpful for the Canadian media to frame CCS in terms of the recommended climate change frame (CCS to mitigate climate change) yet the majority of the population believed more in CCS being useful for the reduction of carbon dioxide and not necessarily climate change. By applying the carbon dioxide reduction frame, the media focussed on a tangible problem and solution (lowering greenhouse gas emissions), which is more agreeable to most Canadians as a problem that needs to be addressed.

Related to this, media framing influences the public's attitude towards an issue (Delshad and Raymond, 2013). Delshad and Raymond's study of the relationship between media framing and the public's attitude towards bio fuels found that the media's use of negative frames corresponded with the public's negative attitude towards bio fuels, especially among those individuals who closely followed media reports on the subject. Therefore, when the media promote certain frames, and these frames coincide with the public's frames, this forms the basis of culture and trends (Van Gorp, 2007).

Still regarding the issue of context, Nisbet *et al.* (2003) found that context mattered especially when it came to issues of policy. The authors studied the media coverage of stem cell research applying an agenda building and frame building perspective. They found that the attention the media pays to an issue peaks when the issue receives political attention. They argued that the

dominance of frames varied across the stages of policy development. For example, they noted that when policy surrounding stem cell research lay within the administrative contexts, the new scientific research and scientific background frames became the most prominent frames.

Another key aspect that Nisbet *et al.*'s study explores is the prominence of various sources in coverage of stem cell research. The study acknowledges that various sources seek to influence coverage of an issue by lobbying the media and promoting their frames of interest. Their study found that the Grand Old Party (GOP) and democratic supporters of stem cell research were most likely to feature in media reports, rather than GOP opposing the issue. This was attributed to the prominence of supportive GOP members such as Senator John McCain. However, the state of affairs could also be attributed to journalistic creativity and storytelling mechanisms that made pitting the president, George W. Bush, against prominent members of his party, a dramatic way of reporting. According to these researchers, "increased media attention coincides with the potential of an issue to be framed in dramatic terms" (Nisbet *et al.*, 2003:66). In other words, sources have the potential to influence the media's framing of an issue.

From the foregoing discussion, the media do indeed have a role to play in communicating contentious issues to the public by providing the forum for the discourse to play out. The media also shape the debate in various ways such as message structure, the selection of sources, and the framing of an issue. It is this framing of an issue in order to provide context and relevance that poses a challenge to the cardinal journalistic principle of objectivity. This notion is discussed in more detail in chapter 3.

Press coverage of homosexuality

Homosexuality is one of the contentious issues that the media the world over has to report on. Past research about press coverage of homosexuality has identified trends in the frequency of coverage and attitudes of the press towards homosexuality. Historical studies of press coverage of homosexuality in the United States from the end of the Second World War to the late 1990s reported an increase in the visibility of homosexuals in the news media (Alwood, 1996; Bennett, 1998). Bennett (1998) observed that this increase was gradual, starting with two articles in the 1940s to 25 in the 1960s. This increase in visibility was attributed to a number of factors, among them, the birth of the gay liberation movement, gay and lesbian

journalists coming out of the closet and reporting on gay issues, riots by gays and lesbians, psychiatric research that reinforced or challenged existing negative beliefs on homosexuality, and police raids of gay clubs and restaurants (Alwood, 1996; Bennett, 1998).

The media reports were a reflection of the dominant discourses at the time. For example, during the post Second World War period, homosexuality was viewed negatively, as a psychological disorder and a threat to society that required psychological help in order to be treated (Sullivan, 2003). Consequently, the American media reports were negative and reported homosexuality from a pathological view (Alwood, 1996). However, following the declassification of homosexuality by the American Psychiatric Association in December 1973, media reports took on a more positive stance and visibility doubled; derogatory terms reduced; the number of visual images of real gay men and women (vis-à-vis illustrations) increased and; gay men and women were routinely quoted (Alwood, 1996).

However, this positive period was short-lived and in the 1980s and 90s, there was a return to negative reporting. This turn in events was attributed to the outbreak of AIDS within the homosexual community in 1980. Homosexuals were portrayed as sexual beings whose deviancy was responsible for their acquiring of this deadly disease. Moreover, they were even blamed for spreading it to the heterosexual population (Alwood, 1996). Therefore, it can be said that the media reports took on the character of the prevailing environment and swung from one end to the other.

Stereotypes were another way that the American media reported homosexuality in America. The stereotypes included homosexuals as a danger to children and to society; sexual deviants; criminals, drug abusers and; psychologically sick individuals (Alwood, 1996; Bennett, 1998). These stereotypes served to reinforce the already existing negative attitudes towards homosexuality. Recent literature indicates that some of the negative references such as the stereotype that homosexuals are by nature a threat to children continue in the 21st century (Russell and Kelly, 2003; Raley and Lucas, 2006).

However, following factors such as an increase in the visibility of homosexuals in society, the coming out of homosexual journalists and more vigilance among the gay rights advocacy groups, both Alwood (1996) and Bennett (1998) note that the media atmosphere for homosexuality has become more favourable. Newspapers such as *The New York Times* that

originally had a policy not to report homosexual issues or at most to place them in the inner pages, started out by including gay relationships in their lifestyle pages and later becoming an advocate for gay rights. This shift in position corresponded with change in editorial management to include editors who were sympathetic to the homosexual cause, for example at *The New York Times* (Chomsky and Barclay, 2013). It would appear then that the mind-set of the members of the editorial team contributes to the way homosexuality is covered by a particular newspaper.

Therefore, in the 1990s coverage focused on the growing visibility of gays and their demands for equal rights such as the right to marry and to adopt children, majorly because of AIDS and the debate over whether to exclude them from the American military or not (Bennett, 1998; Streitmatter, 1998). Available literature indicates that the debate over whether to grant homosexual marriages the same status as heterosexual ones has received increased attention (Price *et al.*, 2005). There are also a variety of sources that the media turn to when reporting homosexual issues, including gays and lesbians as well as human rights activists. This is a deviation from the reliance on official sources that served to reinforce the existing negative opinions on homosexuality and serves a sign that the American press' attitude towards homosexuality has improved (Alwood, 1996).

Alwood (1996) and Bennett (1998) conclude that although there is improvement in the coverage of gay rights, the media still treat homosexuality as a contentious subject in need of balance. By treating a subject as a contentious issue in need of balance, the media give the impression that the matter is delicate and needs to be approached cautiously, for example, by using sources that provide "both" sides of the story. In societies where a subject such as homosexuality is viewed negatively, this implies that media reports would never carry a story using only a homosexual man or woman as a source, but they would have to find another source to oppose (read balance) the homosexual's position (Borlase, 2012). This is because the debate on homosexuality questions long-standing beliefs, societal values and norms regarding sexuality (Tereskinas, 2002).

Studies carried out outside the United States present similar findings. Kuhar (2003) reported a gradual increase in news stories about homosexuality in the Slovenian press. Unlike the American research, Kuhar's study which covered the period 1970-2000 (when coverage in the

American press was improving), found that the press were generally sympathetic or neutral to homosexuality during this entire period, with a few instances of negativity that encouraged a negative attitude of the public towards homosexuality. Kuhar found that while reflecting the atmosphere of the day, the Slovenian media specifically used five discourses in their coverage of homosexuality, namely, stereotyping, medicalisation, sexualisation, secrecy and normalisation.

Kuhar reported that these discourses played out at different points in history although they overlapped in some instances. For example, the medical discourse was first applied in the 1970s when the discussion focused on the origins of homosexuality and the argument that homosexuality was a psychological problem. However, the same discourse reappeared in the 1980s when AIDS was a major story among the homosexual community. Similarly, Kervinen (2007) found the medical and sexual discourses prevalent in the Estonian media during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Like Kuhar, Kervinen found that these discourses were dominant at different points but returned at other points. Both Kuhar (2003) and Kervinen (2007) argued that the debate around homosexuality in Slovenia and Estonia reflected the political and social environments at the time. For instance Kervinen noted that although homosexuality was still a taboo in the 1980s, it received substantial coverage in the print media. Estonia had had a history of being liberal towards homosexuality between the two world wars, and since spirituality had taken on a secular character following the Soviet rule, the church no longer had much influence on the public's attitude towards homosexuality. Another example is that of AIDS. Since AIDS was the major topic concerning homosexuals in the 1980s, it was the main topic carried by both Slovenian and Estonian print media.

It is worth noting that although these studies cover different periods (Alwood and Bennett: 1940s-1990s; Kuhar: 1970-2000; Kervinen: late 1980s to early 1990s), their results indicate that the discussion of homosexuality in the print media is discursive in nature and reflects the prevailing atmosphere of the day. For example, Kervinen observed that the first articles on homosexuality in the Estonian media appeared between 1990 and 1992 and were written from a medical perspective, as were the first articles in the United States and Slovenia. Moreover, the studies outside the United States also introduce a unique angle to the debate on homosexuality in that they found that homosexuality was considered alien to their societies, and more specifically, a Western import. Both Kuhar and Kervinen found this to be the case

even after homosexuality became more acceptable in those countries. This view is also found in African and Middle East literature, which pits the West against the non-West in the discussion about homosexuality (Dalacoura, 2014). As such, the discussion takes on a cultural perspective.

Literature that is more recent indicates that the portrayal of homosexuality in the print media is more positive or balanced in some parts of the world. In the United States, for example, same-sex marriage has received commendable coverage especially after the 2003 Massachusetts Supreme Court ruling recognised equal marriage rights for both same-sex and heterosexual couples (Price *et al.*, 2005). Similarly, Zhou's (2010) study of the portrayal of homosexuality in Hong-Kong from 2000 to 2009 confirmed the growing trend of improved reporting of homosexuality by the press. Zhou found an increase in the number of articles from 5.4% to 13.3 %. Furthermore, 93.7% of the articles Zhou analysed were neutral and there was reduced connection between homosexuality and AIDS although there was mention of unsafe gay sex. Linking homosexuality to AIDS is considered a negative aspect of media coverage because homosexuals are blamed for the spread of AIDS among themselves and among the heterosexual community (Alwood, 1996; Kuhar, 2003; Muula, 2007).

The other point worth noting is that although homosexuality has received increasing media attention over the years, it is viewed through a heterosexual lens, therefore maintaining the dominant idea that homosexuality was abnormal while heterosexuality was the accepted norm (Liebler, *et al.*, 2009; Jowett and Peel, 2010). Jowett and Peel (2010) pointed out that following the passing of the civil union act in 2005 the British media reported same-sex marriage in terms of what was missing such as bridesmaids, a typical characteristic of heterosexual bridal entourages.

From an African perspective, a review of the literature reveals an absence of studies that investigate the portrayal of homosexuality in African media, including in South Africa (Mongie, 2013) where the history of homosexuality and of the press is well documented (see Dlamini, 2006; Du Pisani, 2012; Sigamoney and Epprecht, 2013). Nonetheless, literature available from southern Africa provides some helpful insights.

Similar to the American situation, gay and lesbian issues in South Africa were initially met with silence, sensationalism and the perpetuation of negative stereotypes (Cilliers, 2007).

About the silent treatment, Du Pisani (2012) observes that little is known about the coverage of homosexuality by the Afrikaner press before 1968, the year in which a proposed amendment to the immorality law to include homosexuality led to unprecedented press coverage of the parliamentary committee that was mandated to consult the public on the law. And so, like the American press, coverage was spurred by a political event. Nonetheless, Gevisser (1995) noted that the sensationalisation of homosexuality in South Africa could be traced to the 1950s when homosexuals were depicted as drag queens, child molesters, over-sexed hedonists and later, in the 1990s, AIDS victims. The situation has not changed much, as a later study found that the South African media continue to portray homosexuality in terms of “scandals, negative images and stereotypes” (Ndlovu, 2006:9 cited in Mongie, 2013). This is despite the increase in coverage as a result of constitutional reforms that decriminalised homosexuality in South Africa in the early 1990s.

Muula (2007) found similar expressions in the Malawian press when he examined the perceptions towards homosexuality. Muula’s study covered a time when human rights groups in Malawi were demanding that the right to same-sex marriage be considered during the constitutional amendment in 2004. In the letters to the editor, the dominant themes were negative and labelled homosexuality un-African, un-godly and homosexuals as carriers of HIV, among others.

However, homosexuality has not always been covered negatively in the African press. Dunton and Palmberg (1996) contend that the African press has at some point discussed homosexuality in a relatively open way. In support of their argument, Dunton and Palmberg (1996:34) present a number of articles from various newspapers in southern African countries. This interview response from the Sesotho language newspaper, *Shoeshoe*, is one such example:

We opened for ourselves at Moshoeshoe II (suburb of Maseru, capital of Lesotho). But people passed bad remarks about it until we closed it. What makes me wonder and fail to understand, is why these people must condemn us and why they should get involved.

The above quote is an excerpt from an interview with a gay man in Lesotho. The interview appeared in the *Shoeshoe*, a publication of the country’s department of information. That the government department of information could publish such information is ironic especially

under the current circumstances where most African governments are opposed to anything that has to do with homosexuality. In a way, it also confirms the view that traditional African communities were more accepting of homosexuality than the post-colonial communities (Murray and Roscoe, 1998).

African media coverage of homosexuality focuses on topics such as gay rights, legislation and same-sex marriage (Dunton and Palmberg, 1996; Muula, 2007; Du Pisani, 2012; Mongie, 2013).

Based on the studies of media coverage of homosexuality as discussed above, it is possible to conclude that the media patterns are both similar and different in various parts of the world. They are similar in that the media's attitude is determined by the prevailing atmosphere; but different in that in Africa, the media still view homosexuality negatively despite legal reforms to recognise homosexual relations as normal in countries such as South Africa. In the absence of similar research carried out in Uganda, the research described above provides a useful indication of what might be the case in Uganda. Moreover, research carried out over an extended period provides insight into how the different discourses appear and play out in the media. This information is a necessity for the study of framing since media frames are a result of both societal wide discourses and journalists' professional and institutional practices (Scheufele, 2000; D'Angelo, 2002).

This section has presented a broad view of how the press cover homosexuality issues in different parts of the world. The section has pointed out the attitude of the press towards homosexuality historically and more recently. In the next section, the discussion focuses on six discourses that the media use in their coverage of homosexuality, namely, the medical/health discourse, culture discourse, religious discourse, human rights discourse, legislation discourse as well as the law and crime discourse. These discourses were **adopted** from Tamale's (2007b) compendium on the coverage of homosexuality by Ugandan newspapers from 1997-2007 and modified to suit this study. As will be noted later, in the section on the press coverage of homosexuality in Uganda, this compendium serves as the earliest attempt to study the issue. However, it is limited in terms of how the articles that were analysed were selected. Nonetheless, the various sections in which the book is divided are a useful indication of how the Ugandan press is likely to frame homosexuality.

Media discourses on homosexuality

There is adequate evidence to suggest that the debate about homosexuality is discursive in nature (Sinnott, 2000; Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012; Kahur, 2003; Jowett and Peel, 2010; Mongie, 2013) and therefore it is vital to consider the context within which this debate takes place. According to these studies, homosexuality is discussed within a cultural context, with the media reproducing and further emphasising the already established views on homosexuality. Jowett and Peel (2010) found that the British media often referred to gay marriage in the light of heterosexual marriage by emphasising societal/cultural values in their reporting of same-sex marriage. Other studies found that the discussion was framed in terms of wider social discourses such as constitutionalism and human rights (Sinnott, 2000) and threats to public morality and national sovereignty (Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012). Sinnott (2000) observed that the Thai media sided with homosexuals when the democratic principle of equality before the law was threatened by a social institution, but reverted to their negative reporting as soon as that particular discussion ended. Therefore, it can be argued that homosexuality makes news when it turns into a political matter. This appears exemplified by the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill in Uganda (Strand, 2011; 2012) or; the proposed amendment to the immorality law in South Africa that sought to include homosexuality in 1968 (Du Pisani, 2012); or the debate in the United States on whether to admit homosexuals to the United States army or not (Alwood, 1996).

Kahur (2003) noted that the discussion in Slovenia encompassed several discourses at different points from 1970 to 2000 including the medical/health discourse. From a rights perspective, Mongie (2013) found that between 1982 and 2006, homosexual issues were reported in the South African print media mostly in terms of marriage and parenting. This coincided with the period during which basic human rights had been established in South Africa. Therefore, legal and political developments contributed to homosexuals being placed on the media agenda. Mongie also found that the commonest frames used by the media were religion and morality. Ward (2013) argues that religion plays a role in the formation of attitudes towards homosexuality in Uganda and South Africa, albeit to varying degrees. These discourses, and others, are discussed in turn in the next section.

The medical/health discourse

According to Kahur (2003), the medical discourse is one of the several discourses the media apply when covering homosexuality. The others are: stereotyping, sexualisation, secrecy and normalisation. Kahur notes that these discourses were employed by the Slovenian media at different points from 1970 to 2000. Medicalisation, he argued, includes the discussion on the causes of homosexuality and the need to eliminate homosexuals by recognising homosexuality as a disease that needed a cure. The discourse carried medical and psychiatric overtones and was applied in the media across the decades from 1970 to 2000. In the 1970s, the media portrayed homosexuality as an incurable mental disease. However, in the 1990s, following the increased acceptance of homosexuality, the media reported that homosexuality was not a disease but rather an innate condition. Media reports were backed by scientific research findings although they lacked full context and an explanation of the limitations of such research.

Another key strand of the medical discourse was AIDS, a health threat that was first reported among the homosexual community in the United States in the 1980s (Alwood, 1996). Kahur noted that the discussions centred on the fear of AIDS because it was transmitted through sex. The sexual discourse was another negative way of portraying homosexuals in Slovenia, as it made them appear like all they were interested in was sex. This was the case in the American press as well (Alwood, 1996).

In the 1980s and 1990s, the sources cited most by the media were drawn from doctors, psychologists and psychiatrists who “scientifically rejected (or rarely confirmed) the assumption that homosexuality was a pathological state” (Kuhar, 2003:60).

The medical discourse plays a key role in legitimising heterosexuality since the media is able to rely on scientific evidence to argue that homosexuality is an abnormal condition that can be overcome with the help of psychologists and psychiatrists. In Uganda, President Museveni justified his assenting to the 2014 anti-homosexuality act by referring to a report by a group of doctors from the Ministry of Health whose findings were interpreted to the effect that homosexuality was a social condition and not a genetic condition and therefore it could be overcome with psycho-social help (MWC News, 2014). By relying on official statements and scientific research findings, the media are able to portray themselves as “balanced”, and

therefore in conformance with professional journalism principles. However, Peter Mwesige, a prominent media scholar in Uganda warned the media against reporting such findings without digging deeper into the issues addressed and instead relying on the interpretation by political figures (Mwesige, 2014).

The culture discourse

The world over, the press also discuss homosexuality from a cultural perspective, and emphasise the already established views on homosexuality (Cock, 2003; Jowett and Peel, 2010; Van Zyl, 2011; Nyanzi, 2013; Jowett, 2014). Overall, the press focus societal values such as the organisation of a wedding and the idea that marriage should result in child bearing by the married couple.

The cultural discourse is specifically widespread in a number of African countries where homosexuality is viewed in light of the cultural discourses about whether homosexuality is un-African and therefore a Western import (Cock, 2003; Van Zyl, 2011; Nyanzi, 2013). This discourse has been attributed to mostly political and religious leaders (Reddy, 2002; Stobie, 2003) and informs some of the legislation forbidding homosexuality in parts of Africa (Nagadya and Morgan, 2005). Prominent among these politicians and religious leaders is President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe and Pastor Martin Ssempe of Uganda, whose detestation of homosexuality has been documented in several media reports. President Mugabe is reported to have responded to the West's criticism of his position on gay rights in Zimbabwe by saying, "Let the Americans keep their sodomy, bestiality, stupid and foolish ways to themselves. Let them be gays in the US and Europe. But in Zimbabwe, gays shall remain a very sad people forever (1997)" (Reddy, 2002: 164). On his part, Ugandan Pastor Ssempe is on record for arguing on several occasions that homosexuality is an un-African practice that has been imported from the West and therefore it should not be accepted as normal by Ugandans (Ssempe, 2007). This confirms Nagadya and Morgan's (2005:65) conclusion that, "None of the many cultures that exist in Uganda accept homosexuality, which is seen as un-African". Even in South Africa, where discrimination on the basis of one's sexual orientation is forbidden by the constitution, the cultural discourse still informs much of the media debate (Vilakazi, 2008; Vincent and Howell, 2014). Both these scholars reported that one of the dominant dissenting positions views same-sex relationships as un-

African and therefore unacceptable. Muula (2007) also reported similar findings in Malawi during the debate on whether to recognise same-sex marriage in the Malawian constitution.

The proponents of the cultural view argue that Africans are naturally heterosexual people (Dlamini, 2006; Epprecht, 2008; Nyanzi, 2013). This view is also closely linked to the notion that homosexual couples are not productive, and this goes against the belief that a married African couple should produce children in order to further contribute to the extension of the family and clan as normal couples do (Lewis, 2011; Sadgrove, *et al.*, 2012). As Stella Nyanzi (2013:954) observes, “The imagined traditional family is identified and named as characteristically heterosexual”.

On the other hand, opponents of this discourse question the attempt to homogenise the African traditional family, arguing, for example:

What is this ‘traditional family’ in the context of Uganda? With over 50 ethnic groups, multiple colonial influences (including British, French and German), Westernisation, increasing globalisation and three main religions (Christianity, Islam and African traditional religions each with innumerable dogmas, sects and ethos), what criteria definitively selects the one traditional family in Uganda? (Nyanzi, 2013: 953).

Tamale (2011) goes a step further and proposes that there are diverse sexualities in Africa, with homosexuality being just one of them. Tamale maintains that the development of diverse sexualities in Africa was interrupted by various forces, which attempted to standardise global ideas about African sexualities, thereby clearing any questions of diversity.

However, as both Muula (2007) and Vincent and Howell (2014) found, such opposing views in terms of culture rarely find their way into press reports. In addition, a discourse analysis of Uganda’s government-owned *New Vision* newspaper by Sadgrove *et al.* (2012) found that the newspaper did not only reflect the homophobic attitude prevalent in Ugandan society but also nationalised the anti-gay discourses. The newspaper achieved this by turning mostly to sources opposed to homosexuality. Likewise, Strand (2012) argued that homophobia prevented the media from providing balanced coverage of the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill.

This situation can be attributed to the fact that, culturally, homosexuality is considered unacceptable in most African cultures (Sullivan, 2003) including Uganda. Thirty-eight out of

53 countries in Africa have laws banning homosexual activity (Saner, 2013; Cage *et al.*, 2014). Considering that the media are both a cultural product and a component of culture (Moritz, 1992), they are most likely to reflect the dominant cultural position. The reason to believe that this is true is that for a particular discussion to dominate the news discourse, several factors are at play, among them economic and cultural factors or the ability of the discussion to echo the political values (Borah, 2011). Moreover, the rhetorical context in which a controversy is debated will shape the content and form of the debate (Billig, 1991).

The religious discourse

A sub-component of the cultural discourse is the religious view on homosexuality. There is sufficient evidence to suggest that religion plays a significant role in shaping individuals' attitudes towards homosexuality (Schulte and Battle, 2004; Burdette *et al.*, 2005; Olson *et al.*, 2006; Rowatt *et al.*, 2006). Additionally, Adamczyk and Pitt (2009) found that individuals in countries with a strong survivalist orientation such as developing countries like Uganda were less likely to be accepting of homosexuality. Moreover, prior research indicates that the majority of religions categorise homosexuality as “unnatural”, “ungodly”, and “impure” (Yip, 2005). In other words, most religions condemn homosexuality.

In Africa, religion and culture are closely related (Ward, 2015). Muula (2007) cites some examples of religious voices opposed to homosexuality writing in to the letters' section of various Malawian newspapers and denouncing homosexuality. Vincent and Howell (2014) found the same to be true of the South African press. In his analysis of religious institutions and actors and, religious attitudes to homosexual rights in Uganda and South Africa, Ward (2013) contends that African traditional religion continues to play a central role in socialisation, including in matters of sexuality. He notes that although the Ugandan society was historically tolerant towards homosexual individuals, the current hostile environment can be attributed to “politicians, religious leaders and the press, as leaders of public opinion (Ward, 2013:411). This is in agreement with Kaoma (2009) and Englander (2011) who note that the religious leaders in Uganda have contributed to the negative perceptions of homosexuality in Uganda, as can be seen from their support of the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill. Generally speaking, religion is a critical element in public discourse in Uganda, especially concerning contentious issues (The Open Society Initiative for East Africa, 2010;

Ward, 2013).

The current heightened debate on homosexuality in Uganda has been traced to the late 1990s when homosexuality was placed on the agenda of the 1998 Lambeth Conference of Bishops¹ (Ward, 2013). Under contention was whether to recognise same-sex relationships in the church and specifically whether to ordain openly gay bishops. These contentions are what formed the bedrock of the discussion on homosexuality. Uganda and most African countries were opposed to the ordination of openly gay priests while countries in the West were generally in support of the ordination (Sadgrove *et al.*, 2010).

In the United Kingdom, this debate, specifically the one that took place prior to the 1998 Lambeth Conference, was presented using two sides, namely, the conservatives and the liberals (Sollis, 2000). The conservatives are those who are opposed to homosexuality and same-sex marriage while the liberals are the people who are accommodative to homosexuality and same-sex marriage. By presenting these two sides only, the media blocked other voices such as queer theologians whose opinions differ from these two (Sollis, 2000). Sollis maintains that the media favoured a particular discourse, namely, the conservatives versus the liberals. Likewise, the Ugandan and international media tend to carry the mainstream arguments by favouring the conservative voices on homosexuality and rarely citing those religious leaders who are not opposed to homosexuality (Carrington, 2014).

The Bible teachings are the most cited in discussions concerning homosexuality. Sullivan (2003) notes that the Bible provides some of the oldest taboos on homosexuality from the Old Testament teachings, which prescribe death for homosexuality in Leviticus 20:13. Through the letters to the editor section, newspaper readers on either side of the debate supported or rejected homosexuality (Muula, 2007; Rojas-Lizana, 2011) citing scripture from the Bible to communicate their point.

¹The Lambeth Conference of Bishops is the largest gathering of Anglican Bishops from all over the world. It takes place every 10 years and resolutions made at the conference often inform church policy and positions on various issues.

Human rights and homosexuality

This is one of the most enduring discourses on homosexuality (Alwood, 1996; Du Pisani, 2012; Mongie, 2013). Research in this area indicates that the media reflect the prevailing discourses regarding the political environment of the time. In both the United States and South Africa, gay and lesbian rights groups took advantage of the minorities fighting for their rights in the 1960s to push for recognition (Alwood, 1996; Du Pisani, 2012). Mongie (2013) reported that South African newspapers framed homosexuality in terms of tolerance, religion and rights, which was a reflection of the liberation discourse of the 1990s when South Africa was emerging out of apartheid. Mongie's findings confirmed Du Pisani's (2012) that revealed that the Afrikaner press of the 1960s framed homosexual rights in terms of tolerance in line with the prevailing worldwide rights movements of the 1960s. In 2003, when the Ugandan press first reported that homosexuals were demanding that their rights be recognised, the coverage was negative and reflected the negative public perception towards homosexuality (Tamale, 2007a).

However, gay rights can also be political, even to the point that the media swing from one position to another in order to make a political statement. This was the case in Thailand where Sinnott (2000) found the discussion discursive in nature. Citing the example of a teacher-training college's attempt to ban gays from attending that college, Sinnott argued that the press attacked the college for being discriminatory in the light of new constitutional reforms that provided for equal rights for all Thai people. Thereafter the same press reverted to their negative way of covering homosexuality.

In South Africa, despite a favourable legal and human rights environment, anti-gay rights utterances can still be found in the media (Vincent and Howell, 2014). South Africa became the first country in Africa to recognise the right of same-sex couples to marry, when they passed the Civil Union Act No. 17, 2006. However, stereotypical representations such as allegations that homosexual people murder children were found in media reports. Vincent and Howell's research concludes that three discourses are applied in order to "delegitimise the idea of sexual equality... [namely], unnatural, ungodliness and un-African," (Vincent and Howell, 2014:475). This goes to make the point that any discussion about homosexuality should be viewed from its specific context.

Both proponents and opponents of gay rights are responsible for this topic appearing in the press. Utterances by gay activists especially in communities where homosexuality is illegal usually catch the media's attention and lead to negative framing of the issue (Tamale, 2007a). As Tamale reported, her suggestion to the Uganda Equal Opportunities Commission to recognise the rights of homosexuals as a minority group was met with negative press coverage, which blocked those voices in support of her position and promoted those opposed to homosexuality. Tamale's experience in Uganda is similar to that in other African countries such as Malawi and South Africa (Muula, 2007; Vilakazi, 2011; Vincent and Howell, 2014). However, earlier research indicates that some media reports in Africa gave gay activists opportunity to air their views in response to utterances by politicians and other leaders regarding the acceptability of homosexuality (Dunton and Palmberg, 1996). Currently, this is not always the case, as indicated by Strand (2011) who found that human rights activists in Uganda failed to influence the print media to frame the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill according to their interests. Strand's study revealed that the activists resorted to paying for media space in order for their press release to appear in the newspapers. Likewise, Nilsson (2013) argued that in societies where homosexuality is still criminalised or considered unacceptable, the gay rights activists can hardly access the media, whether private or government-owned media.

Some of the rights that activists advocate for include: legal recognition of same-sex marriage; access to health services; privacy; belonging to religious congregations; and the right to exist as different (Tamale, 2007a; Vilakazi, 2008; Ssebagala, 2011; Semugoma et al., 2012; Carrington, 2014).

The legislation discourse

The world over, legislation on homosexuality is one of the most contentious issues on the subject. The aims of the legislation vary from country to country. In the United States and the United Kingdom, legislation dealt with the specific issue of recognising gay marriage as being equivalent to heterosexual marriage (Gibson, 2004; The Equality Network, n.d.). The South African constitutional amendments of the mid 1990s also banned discrimination based on sexual orientation (Cock, 2003). The Ugandan and Gambian legislations sought to prohibit any form of homosexual act including same-sex marriage (Rush, 2014; the anti-

homosexuality act, 2014). In both cases, life imprisonment was prescribed for the offence of same-sex marriage for a couple.

One thing these legislations have in common is that they are decided on within the political realms, and that is probably the reason why they make news. Nonetheless, the Republic of Ireland became the first country in the world to vote in a national referendum on matters of homosexuality. Given that most politicians are opposed to homosexuality, this presented an interesting twist in the story in that the Irish public was given the opportunity to decide on such a controversial but equally important subject. They voted to legalise same-sex marriage (McDonald, 2015).

Needless to say, legislation on criminalising or decriminalising homosexuality has generated significant press coverage over the years probably due to its political and controversial nature. Mongie (2013) argues that legal developments in South Africa were partly responsible for the placement of homosexuality on the media agenda. In the United States of America, the issue of same-sex marriage was first reported when members of the gay community challenged Hawaii's marriage laws (Li and Liu, 2010). Same-sex marriage continued to be covered widely by the American media since it was officially authorised by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court (Gibson, 2004).

Negative portrayals of homosexuals continue to be reproduced in media reporting of legislation regarding homosexual issues (Ellis and Kitzinger, 2002; Rahman, 2004; Muula, 2007). Jowett and Peel (2010:210) found that the media treated homosexuals as inferior to heterosexuals for example when the civil partnership was treated as "an inferior substitute to marriage, representing continued inequality for gays and lesbians". Muula's (2007) study of the perceptions about homosexuals in the Malawian press found that homosexuals were described as alien, ungodly, un-African, a minority that did not need recognition, carriers and transmitters of HIV and psychologically sick individuals. Another study of the South African press found that some of these media discourses served to oppose constitutional rights of the homosexual community (Vincent and Howell, 2014), hence reflecting the generally unfriendly environment. According to Croucher (2002), the South African press ignored the 1998 constitutional provision that recognised homosexuality as a legal way of life in South Africa, and yet it was the first time it was happening in South Africa and in the rest of Africa

and the world.

The importance of media coverage of legislation about homosexual issues is that it is one of the factors responsible for this contentious issue making it to the press pages in ways hitherto impossible. This is because by reporting on the legislations, the media serve to reinforce already existing beliefs about sexuality by privileging the ideas of the elite. As such, key media sources will include opinion leaders such as members of parliament and other politicians as well as religious leaders who are opposed to homosexuality and who, represent the government position, which the media would not have a problem reporting (Strand, 2011; 2012). The coverage of legislation on homosexuality, especially in societies where it is prohibited, is usually biased (Strand, 2011; 2012; Vilakazi, 2008). As Alwood (1996) observes, the media rarely maintains its standard of balance and fairness when it comes to covering homosexuality (Alwood, 1996).

Homosexuality, law and crime

Crime is another way the media represent homosexuality. From the onset, this is a negative portrayal of homosexuals. This discourse is based on the fact that homosexuality is illegal in most societies especially in Africa (BBC News, 2014; Cage *et al.*, 2014). In Uganda, where the current study was carried out, the penal code prescribes life imprisonment for the offence of homosexuality (Ssebagala, 2011) just like the 2014 anti-homosexuality act did (Hollander, 2009; Tamale, 2009; Englander, 2011). A constitutional court ruling on technical grounds overturned the act because it had been passed with no quorum in parliament (Gettleman, 2014; Smith, 2014). However, this discourse also takes on a different angle when it comes to reporting homosexuals as criminals, based on the fact that society rejects homosexuals and prefers to portray them as deviants and social misfits who are out to cause trouble (Tereskinas, 2002). Alwood (1996) documents some incidents where American police officers would arrest homosexuals at any opportunity.

When reporting this kind of topic, the press rely mostly on law enforcement officers such as police officers for information (Alwood, 1996). By relying on official sources, the press definitely reproduce the prevailing discourses, which in this case, are negative.

In conclusion, the public discussion of any contentious issue takes place in an atmosphere that is both supportive and hostile to the topic being discussed. The literature review thus far has demonstrated that various discourses informed the debate about homosexuality at some points. However, worth noting is Gamson's (1988:165) observation that, "every political issue is surrounded by a relevant public discourse, that is a specific set of ideas and symbols that are invoked in the process of constructing meaning about the issue". Regarding homosexuality, this implies that the topic that is carried in the media at any one time is influenced by what is going on in the public domain. An example is when homosexuality came to the fore in the Ugandan media in 2003 following a demand by a human rights activist that the equal opportunities commission recognise the rights of homosexuals as a minority group (Tamale, 2007a).

Contextualising homosexuality in Uganda

As in a number of African countries and the world over, homosexuality is a controversial issue in Uganda. This can be attributed to the fact that the discussion of sexuality is generally considered taboo (Ssebagala, 2011; Tamale, 2013) and therefore it is unlikely that the discussion on homosexuality will be objective. Public discussion of issues about homosexuality in Africa has only come into the public arena recently (Reddy, 2002) perhaps with the real debate lying in the notion that homosexuality is unnatural, immoral and un-African, an argument which also forms the basis for criminalising homosexuality (Uganda Penal Code, 1950; Murray and Roscoe, 1998; the [Uganda anti-homosexuality act, 2014](#)).

Towards the end of the 1990s, research on African sexualities, including homosexuality, took an interesting turn especially in Southern Africa (Amory, 1997). Murray and Roscoe (1998) presented evidence of the existence of homosexual relationships in several African societies long before the colonial period. Murray and Roscoe reported that in Uganda, among the Langi, the Baganda and the Banyoro, homosexuality existed and was well known to the communities and therefore it could not have been un-African or un-Ugandan.

Uganda is among 80 countries in the world, 38 of which are in Africa, where homosexuality is illegal (Cage *et al.*, 2014). According to section 145 of the Penal Code Act, homosexuality is a crime, punishable, upon conviction, by life imprisonment (Ssebagala, 2011). The other Ugandan law regarding homosexuality was the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill, which sought to

amend the penal code section that dealt with homosexuality (Englander, 2011; Mujuzi, 2012). The bill was viewed as controversial both locally and internationally and was met with uproar (Ssebaggala, 2011; Strand, 2012). Furthermore, the bill received considerable coverage by the media because it proposed the death sentence for aggravated homosexuality (Nyanzi, 2013). For example, President Barrack Obama of the United States cautioned Ugandan President Museveni against passing such a law that was anti-human rights (Associated Press, 2014). Locally, human rights groups converged to form a lobby group to campaign against the passing of the bill (Strand, 2012).

At the passing of the bill on 13 December 2013 (*The Daily Hansard*, 13 December 2013), and its subsequent assenting to by the president on 24 February 2014 (Raghavan, 2014), a number of the controversial clauses were amended. For example, clause 3 that proposed the death penalty for aggravated homosexuality was amended to imprisonment for life. However, clause 13 (a) and (d) regarding the promotion of homosexuality was retained in its original form. This clause directly concerns the media. Under this clause, one commits a crime if he or she:

Participates in production, procuring, marketing, broadcasting, disseminating, publishing of pornographic materials for the purposes of promoting homosexuality... uses electronic devices which include internet, films... for purposes of homosexuality or promoting homosexuality.

However, a constitutional court ruling on 1 August 2014 annulled the law on grounds that it had been passed illegally since there was no quorum in parliament at the time of its passing (Smith, 2014). At the time of writing, there were plans by a section of members of parliament to have the bill brought back to parliament and passed again (Aljazeera, 2014). It remains to be seen what effect the law had had on the covering of homosexuality by the press for the brief period before it was annulled.

In many ways, this bill could be said to reflect the Ugandan society's negative attitude towards homosexuality and homosexual individuals. In 2007, a Stedman poll found that 95% of Ugandans were homophobic (Ssebaggala, 2011: B-51, 107). Two later polls carried out by the Pew Research Centre in 2012 and 2013 found that 99% of Ugandans they interviewed did not support the idea of legalising homosexuality. Therefore, whereas homosexuality is not alien to Uganda *per se*, homosexuality was only tolerated and homosexual individuals were

not encouraged to “flaunt” their homosexuality or publicly demand for rights (Murray and Roscoe, 1998; Ssebagala, 2011; Van Klinken, 2013) such as the right to marriage, health care services specifically HIV/AIDS and the right to assemble and mobilise as a social group (Vilakazi, 2011; Ssemugoma *et al.*, 2012). According to Tamale (2013) and **Van Klinken (2011)**, this is the problem with viewing homosexuality as an identity in Africa. According to the two scholars, most members of the societies opposed to homosexuality are opposed to the idea of one identifying as a homosexual in public. In this regard, “it is extremely important to note that the context and experiences of such relationships did not mirror homosexual relations as understood in the West, nor were they necessarily consistent with what we may today describe as a gay or queer identity,” (Tamale, 2013:35).

Uganda is one of the African countries whose presidents are on record for speaking out against homosexuality. As such, the public debate on homosexuality can be traced to the political sphere when in the late 1990s, *The Monitor* newspaper reported a wedding between two homosexual men in Kampala, Uganda’s capital city. In response to that incident, on 28 September 1998, President Museveni ordered the arrest of all homosexuals in Uganda (**Tamale, 2007a**; Ssebagala, 2011). President Museveni, upon returning from a trip to the United States of America, described how he had witnessed a gay march in the United States of America comprising about 300,000 gay people and said that he would never allow such a march, even if it comprised just 20 people, to take place in Uganda (Human Rights Watch, 2008). In 2000, at the International AIDS Conference in Durban, President Museveni stated that homosexuals did not exist in Uganda (Nyanzi, 2013). In 2008, he went on to thank the Anglican archbishop for resisting homosexuality in the wake of the consecration of a gay bishop by the Episcopal Church of the United States of America (Nyanzi, 2013). In 2009, Museveni warned Ugandan youths against being recruited into homosexuality (Gyezaho, 2009).

His remarks came at a time when several African presidents had already spoken out against homosexuality in their countries. Notable among these is President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, then Presidents Sam Nujoma of Namibia, and Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya whose comments were to the effect that homosexuality was unwelcome in their respective countries (Reddy, 2002). President Mugabe for example is quoted as equating homosexuals to pigs and

other beasts, while President Nujoma is reported to have said that he would not allow homosexuals to undo all the good they have achieved since independence (Reddy, 2002).

Other politicians in Uganda have thrown their weight behind the president and argued that homosexuality is not good for the Ugandan society, specifically, the family. In October 2009, David Bahati, a member of parliament belonging to the ruling National Resistance Movement party introduced the anti-homosexuality bill as a private member's bill (*The Daily Hansard*, 13 October, 2009). The former minister for ethics and integrity, Dr Nsaba Buturo, was quoted widely by both local and international media as being opposed to homosexuality and strongly in support of the anti-homosexuality law (Ssebagala, 2011; Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012). One such report quoted Buturo saying, "The government was determined to pass the legislation...even if it meant withdrawing from international treaties and conventions such as the UN's Universal Declaration on Human Rights and conventions, and foregoing donor funding" (Rice, 2009). Nyanzi (2013) argues that politicians with a negative attitude towards homosexuality have influenced the public's perception of the homosexuality.

However, the president's position on the issue has changed several times. For example, he once said that homosexuals have always been tolerated in Uganda but the issue was not discussed publicly (Ssebagala, 2011). This was in response to international outcry on the intolerance of homosexuals in Uganda and the threat to withdraw aid to the country. Reddy (2002), Ssebagala (2011) and Nyanzi (2013) offer useful insights into the changing positions of the political position on homosexuality in Africa and in Uganda.

Media representation of homosexuality in Uganda

The media, specifically the press, are part of this debate on homosexuality since they play a very important role in the socialisation process, in addition to religious and cultural sources of information. In Uganda and elsewhere, the media are particularly critical in attitude formation towards homosexuality since many people do not have first-hand experiences with homosexuals (Calzo and Ward, 2009; Ward, 2013).

Historical and sociological literature indicates that homosexuality existed in Ugandan society even before colonialism (Murray and Roscoe, 1998) contrary to political and religious views (Reddy, 2002; Stobie, 2003). Recent research is in agreement with this position, having

encountered Ugandan homosexuals who have never been, or interacted with people, beyond their locale (Tamale, 2007a; Nyanzi, 2013). In response to claims that homosexuality is alien to Uganda and is a Western or foreign import, Tamale (2007a:18) writes:

I have met many Ugandan gays and lesbians who have never had any form of interaction (direct or indirect) with whites. Some organisations, such as the Gays and Lesbians Alliance (GALA) have members throughout rural Uganda. A good number are non-literate or semi-literate. It is quite clear that whether they arrived at their homosexuality through 'nature' or 'nurture' ... outside influence played no part in determining their sexuality.

Furthermore, Nyanzi's (2013) ethnography study among rural homosexuals in Uganda found that some individuals identified as both Ugandans and gays/lesbians, which contradicts the assumption that one cannot identify as both if homosexuality is alien to Uganda. Nyanzi's study brings to light the argument that the Ugandan society was historically tolerant towards gays and lesbians, unlike today where the current hostility can be attributed to various actors such as politicians, religious leaders and the press, who also double as leaders of public opinion (Ward, 2013). Therefore, although one can claim to be Ugandan and homosexual at the same time, it is difficult to identify as both without facing opposition from the opinion leaders.

However, even with that background, little is known about the press coverage of homosexuality before 1997. A search for academic literature on this period returned no results. Some sections of the literature suggest that the public discussion about homosexuality was non-existent until the 1990s and was spurred by the debate in the Anglican Church over the church's position on same-sex marriage (Ward, 2013). This is important to note because religion influences public opinion in Uganda. This is especially true for Christianity and specifically Anglicanism (The Open Society Initiative for East Africa 2010; Ward, 2013). In that regard therefore, the 1998 Lambeth Conference is one of the factors responsible for bringing the debate over homosexuality in Uganda into the spotlight following the controversy in the Anglican Church on whether to relax long-held negative views on homosexuality or not (Ward, 2013). Ward (2013:418) states, "The subsequent controversies have ensured that homosexuality became for the first time a Ugandan issue".

In 1997, the *Monitor*, a privately owned newspaper in Uganda, ran a story about a wedding

between two homosexual men in Kampala, the country's capital, to which President Museveni responded by ordering the arrest of all homosexuals in Uganda (Ssebaggala, 2011; Nyanzi, 2013). However, this story was not followed by other stories and there is no literature to indicate whether it was related to the 1998 Lambeth Conference or not. Half a decade later in February 2003, the print media carried a story on the demand for equal rights for the gay and lesbian community (Tamale, 2007a). Prof. Sylvia Tamale, the person at the centre of this story contends that this incident propelled the issue of homosexuality to the fore in Uganda. She writes that the media was "dominated by emotive views and opinions from the public... The few voices in support of homosexual rights were drowned out by deafening homophobic outcries," (Tamale, 2007a:17). Therefore, the demand for equal rights is the second factor responsible for the public discussion on gay rights in Uganda. In addition, from the onset the media was hostile towards homosexuality.

The period between 1997 and 2007 is perhaps best captured by Tamale's (2007b) compendium, *Homosexuality: perspectives from Uganda*. This book documents the coverage of homosexuality by Ugandan newspapers for the period 1997-2007. Tamale demonstrates that like the American press (Alwood, 1996), Ugandan newspapers are confronted with the task of covering both supportive and dissenting views on this controversial subject. The book provides some insight into how intolerant the press and the public in Uganda are towards homosexuality (Nyanzi, 2013). However, more research is needed to provide a systematic and empirical analysis of the trends in the coverage of homosexuality by Ugandan newspapers after 2007. This study evaluates the succeeding period after 2007 until 2011.

As already pointed out, in 2008, at the height of the Anglican Church debate on the ordination of openly gay priests, a position that Uganda was opposed to (Sadgrove *et al.*, 2010), the media reported the President thanking the Anglican archbishop for resisting homosexuality in the wake of the consecration of a gay bishop by the Episcopal Church of the United States of America (Nyanzi, 2013).

The 2009 anti-homosexuality bill was another key factor in the press coverage of homosexuality. The bill, which sought to strengthen existing provisions of the penal code on homosexuality (Hollander, 2009; Tamale, 2009; Englander, 2011), was viewed as controversial not least because it proposed the death penalty for those convicted of the crime

of homosexuality (Ssebagala, 2011; Strand, 2011). The bill received coverage both locally and internationally (Strand, 2011; Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012) and inevitably spurred research into how the Ugandan press covers homosexuality (Strand, 2011; 2012; 2013; Borlase, 2012; Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012). As such, much of the literature covering this period focuses on the press coverage of the anti-homosexuality bill.

The studies focus on the human rights perspective (Strand, 2011; 2012; Borlase, 2012). According to Strand (2011), the human rights organisations opposed to the bill at the time failed to influence the press to frame the bill in their favour. Strand observed that homosexuals were portrayed in the press as “objects” and not human beings; the human rights activists’ frames to portray the bill as detrimental to the Ugandan society as a whole were ignored by the press and on the whole, pro-homosexual voices were absent in the Ugandan press. The nature of coverage in the wider media is unknown since there are no studies in that area.

The Ugandan press has been described as homophobic regarding the anti-homosexuality bill (Strand, 2012) and homosexuality generally (Tamale, 2007a; Borlase, 2012; Nilsson, 2013). Strand (2012) observed that the press followed the public opinion and often reproduced the existing negative perceptions towards homosexuality as found among the Ugandan public, leading to the biased coverage of the bill. Hence, Ugandan journalists conform to public opinion when it comes to reporting homosexuality. In fact, Borlase’s (2012) interviews with Ugandan journalists revealed their reluctance to cover homosexuality for fear of being labelled homosexuals or gay and lesbian sympathisers. Borlase also found that in cases where homosexuality was covered, the journalist needed to balance the story by using more than one source in order to cover his or her back. In so doing, the journalists leave it to the audience to make the judgement call on what is truth. Strand (2012) reported that the government-owned newspaper, *New Vision*, has an unwritten policy that bars its journalists from publishing stories about homosexuals or homosexual activities (Strand, 2012). Indeed, a recent informal inquiry from a journalist² at *New Vision* confirmed this to be true, in that stories on homosexuality are not given prominence, except if there is a court case or when

² The journalist’s identity was kept anonymous due to the sensitive nature of the topic.

parliament or the presidency are involved in the discourse. In the journalist's words, "Such stories are basic news of who said what" (private correspondence).

Away from the serious press, the tabloids in Uganda have frequently engaged in the naming and shaming of people believed to be homosexuals by providing enough information such as their names and addresses for them to be easily identified (Ssebaggala, 2011; Strand, 2011; 2012). The murder of David Kato, a Ugandan gay man, has been attributed to a story that ran in the *Rolling Stone*³ under the headline "Hang them!" (Gettleman, 2011; Ward, 2013). The lobby group, Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG), petitioned the High Court of Uganda against this kind of reporting. The High Court ruled in favour of SMUG (Civil Society Coalition on Human Rights and Constitutional Law 2011; Uganda High Court 2011). It remains to be seen what effect the January 2011 High Court ruling against the *Rolling Stone* had on the Ugandan press coverage of homosexuality (Strand, 2011). The High Court ruling prevents the newspaper from further publishing the names and addresses of homosexuals citing the violation of the human rights of these individuals (Civil Society Coalition on Human Rights and Constitutional Law 2011; Uganda High Court 2011).

It is the general view that pro-homosexual voices are rarely carried in Ugandan media (Tamale, 2007a; Strand, 2011; Nyanzi, 2013). A discourse analysis of the government-owned *New Vision* revealed that the newspaper was at the forefront of nationalising anti-homosexuality sentiments (Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, the debate is presented in the form of moral panic (Nilsson, 2013), a tactic that can be employed by politicians to achieve consent on a social issue and make it newsworthy (Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012). Moreover, a 2014 CNN report noted that pro-homosexuality evangelical leaders rarely feature in the news, since focus is placed on those who are anti-homosexuality although their views are not representative (Carrington, 2014). The report concluded, "Most Ugandans are more indifferent on the subject than is often portrayed," (Carrington, 2014: n.p.). Despite the above positions, Nyanzi (2013) observed that pro-homosexual rights voices are also, albeit rarely, carried in the Ugandan media. This partially confirms Strand's (2012) observation that at the

³ The *Rolling Stone* was a tabloid newspaper published in Kampala, Uganda, that was notorious for publishing details of members of the gay and lesbian community in Uganda. It folded in November 2010, about four months after its first issue was published. The tabloid is not affiliated to the American *Rolling Stone* magazine.

peak of the debate on the anti-homosexuality bill, *Daily Monitor* took an editorial decision to continue publishing both supportive and critical articles about the bill even when the government-owned *New Vision* ceased publication on the subject.

In fact, homosexuality is not high on the media's agenda. Strand (2011) found that out of the 176 articles on the anti-homosexuality bill published in *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*, only nine were found on the front page of *Daily Monitor* whereas none were found in *New Vision*. Furthermore, Strand found that the human rights organisations' sponsored frames of the bill did not appear on the front page. She therefore argued that the Ugandan media did not accord the frames any prominence. Strand (2011:927) concluded, "The fact that the three frames [the frames sponsored by the human rights groups] were awarded no front-page coverage in either paper but, indeed, a kind of inconspicuous attention mainly via a proxy, indicates there was at least no wish to completely exclude these critical views on the draft Bill". Overall, the print media in Uganda has been more negative than positive towards homosexuality.

Throughout the period discussed above, coverage has focused on topics such as religion, health and science, human rights, culture, law and politics (Tamale, 2007b) and specifically the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill (Strand, 2011; 2012).

The current scenario presents two opportunities for further research: firstly, to establish whether there has been an increase in visibility of homosexuality in the media over the years and; secondly, in what other ways, apart from human rights and the anti-homosexuality bill, does the Ugandan press frame homosexuality. The current study addresses the second issue. The conclusion that the Ugandan media is biased against homosexuality is based on literature about the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill. This bill is just one of the issues relating to homosexuality that the media has covered. It is therefore important to study the period before and the period after the bill in order to establish whether there are other attendant factors to this biased coverage. This study attempts to contribute to the literature by undertaking a content analysis of newspaper articles from two newspapers from 2007 to 2011. This period is understudied and will carry on from where Tamale (2007) concluded.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented a literature review on the press coverage of homosexuality. It started with a brief discussion on the press coverage of contentious issues, followed by a historical background, before discussing the various discourses that inform the debate on homosexuality. The chapter ends with a review of literature on Uganda in particular, and makes the case for the present study. From this, it has emerged that press and academic interest in homosexuality in Uganda has risen during the post Second World War era. Furthermore, the literature indicates that homosexuality is discussed discursively, hence the need to consider the context in which the debate takes place.

Chapter 3

The framing of contentious issues in the media

Introduction

An exploration of the literature on framing research suggests that there is no consensus on what a frame/framing is, or what frame analysis should consist of, although there have been numerous attempts at resolving this (Entman, 1993; Scheufele, 1999; D'Angelo, 2002). Even then, framing research has focussed mostly on political communication, although other fields such as science and technology and other controversial social issues such as homosexuality have applied framing to their studies, as demonstrated by Stephen, D. Reese *et al.* (2003).

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the issues around framing in an attempt to build up to an understanding of how the media frame controversial issues, specifically homosexuality. The chapter achieves this by discussing the theoretical background of framing. This is followed by an overview of framing theory, outlining the three paradigms of framing research. A clarification of selected concepts of framing follows, followed by a discussion on media frames, frame building and frame setting and framing and bias in the media. Lastly, the chapter reviews literature on the press framing of contentious issues, specifically homosexuality, both internationally and in Uganda where the current study was carried out.

Theoretical background

Given the acknowledged link between the media and/or the state and society (McQuail, 2010), it is inevitable to discuss the framing of a contentious issue without discussing this link. Journalists front the principles of objectivity, balance and fairness, as they relay what is happening in the world to their audiences. However, they may not necessarily achieve this. As Stuart Hall *et al.* (1978) observe, the media are engaged in a deliberate process of selection and construction of what eventually becomes news. As Hall *et al.* (1978:53) argue, "News is the end product of a complex process which begins with a systematic sorting and selecting of

events and topics according to a socially constructed set of categories.” Therefore, even though media practitioners and journalists aim for objectivity, this process of selection and construction limits the attainment of this goal.

The types of stories and topics that make news, the categorisation of the newspaper workforce (for example, specialist correspondents and departments) and the structure of the newspaper into, for example, home news, foreign news and sports, are organisational factors that are responsible for the selection and construction of news (Hall *et al.*, 1978). This selection and construction takes place within the framework of conscious choices, made within the limitations of factors such as journalistic norms, values and newsgathering routines, which influence the outcome of news (Schudson, 2003). Other factors that affect how news is constructed include financial controls (Hamilton, 2004), technology (Pavlik, 2001) and pressure from news sources (Manning, 2001). News is also influenced by more factors such as the media systems and the political systems (Hallin and Mancini, 2004) as well as the political culture of a society (Entman, 2004).

In reporting the news, journalists make certain assumptions about society, notable among them, the “*consensual nature of society*” (Hall *et al.*, 1978:55). It is this assumption that helps to give meaning to social events and issues. Underlying this assumption is another assumption that belonging to one society, all members “share a common stock of cultural knowledge ... access to the same ‘maps of meanings’” (Hall *et al.*, 1978:55). It is these maps of meanings that the media call on, especially when faced with a controversial issue that challenges commonly held societal norms and values. This is because the media expects members of society to make meaning and interpret issues using these commonly held frameworks or maps of meaning that originate from the same view of knowledge and understanding among all social groups and audiences (Hall *et al.*, 1978).

This leads to the framing of issues. When the media are faced with a complex or controversial issue, they need to communicate it in a way that not only makes meaning to the audience, but that they can control (Gans, 1979; Li and Liu, 2010). The media achieve this through a careful process of selection, emphasis, exclusion and elaboration (Tankard, 1997) or framing, because frames can set the terms of the contention without the audience realising it (Devitt, 2002; Tankard, 2003). Frames therefore aid the media in their quest to be seen as objective, as

demonstrated by the various frames that different journalists use in their coverage of homosexuality (Brewer, 2002; Devitt, 2002), a controversial subject by nature (Alwood, 1996; Schudson, 2003; Li and Liu, 2010). Frames such as equality, morality, national security, fairness, tolerance, are some of the ones used by journalists in the United States when reporting homosexuality (Brewer, 2002). Yet, even with the variety of frames available to them, the journalists tend to rely on the equality and morality frames (Brewer, 2002).

Framing theory

Over the years, various disciplines have shown interest in the study and application of framing. Sociology and psychology are the most notable disciplines for laying the foundations for framing theory (Pan and Kosicki, 1993). Erving Goffman (1974) is credited for laying the sociological foundations and Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky (1979; 1984) for laying the psychological foundations. Kahneman and Tversky (1979; 1984) investigated the way individuals made decisions based on the different presentation of similar information and how people evaluated the various presentations they encountered. Meanwhile, Goffman (1974) worked from the perspective that the complex nature of the world results in a struggle by individuals to make sense of the world by applying interpretive schemas or “primary frameworks” (Goffman, 1974: 24) to process new information effectively.

In media studies, framing research has been dominated by political communication (for example Entman, 2004; Dimitrova *et al.*, 2005; Williams, 2007; Strömbäck *et al.*, 2008). However, other areas such as science, specifically climate change as well as new technologies and stem cell research, (Nisbet *et al.*, 2003; Semujju, 2013; Boyd and Paveglio, 2014) have also applied framing theory. Additionally, the application of framing theory to the study of social issues such as HIV/AIDS (Kiwanuka *et al.*, 2012) and race and homosexuality (Kuypers, 2002; Brewer, 2002; 2003; Gibson and Hester, 2007; Li and Liu, 2010; Pan *et al.*, 2010; Strand, 2012) has been important and critical to this study.

Robert Entman (1993) is credited for the groundbreaking work on media and framing theory (Fairhurst, 2005; McQuail, 2010). In his paper, Entman referred to framing as a fractured paradigm, noting, “Despite its omnipresence across the social sciences and humanities, nowhere is there a general statement of framing theory that shows exactly how frames become embedded within and make themselves manifest in a text, or how framing influences

thinking” (Entman, 1993:51). He therefore suggested that future work should focus on developing framing as a single paradigm with clear conceptualisation. Applying framing to politics, Entman contended that framing research was a helpful way to study the power of a communicating text. He posited that framing was, in essence, about selection and salience, and that frames served four roles, namely, problem definition, cause diagnosis, moral judgment and remedy suggestion. For example, by emphasising the cultural aspects of homosexuality, the media limits the understanding of homosexuality and issues surrounding homosexuality to the cultural realm. This should raise a red flag for media scholars and critics when culture, for example, views homosexuality negatively, as is the case in most African societies. Entman’s work is helpful in as far as it highlights the idea that by framing, the media present certain aspects of a reality as more salient than others, therefore making them appear more important than others.

In response, later research heeded Entman’s call to further develop framing research (Scheufele, 1999; Tankard, 2003). These studies focused on specific aspects of framing, namely, how frames are formed, applied, find their way back from the audience to the journalists and their effects on the audience; and empirical methods in frame analysis, respectively. Dietram A. Scheufele (1999:103) addressed himself to four important areas in framing, that is, frame building, frame setting, individual level processing of frames and a feedback loop from audiences to journalists. He proposed a model that demonstrated how frames find their way into the media and how media discourse influences public opinion. He concluded that the fractured nature of framing as outlined by Entman (1993) still existed and called for further strengthening of framing as a theory of media effects, specifically as a process model that investigates the areas outlined earlier.

On his part, James W. Tankard (2003:100) viewed framing as “a multidimensional concept” and proposed an alternative way to measure media frames. Recognising that frames hold the power to exclude voices and downplay arguments during a debate, as well as to determine the conditions of a debate without the audience noticing, Tankard proposed a systematic way of frame analysis, based on the various elements of news stories such as the gender of the writer, placement of an article and the morality of the article (Swenson, 1990). He conceptualised framing research as “dealing more with how an issue or event is portrayed in the media” (Tankard, 2003:101). It appears therefore that issues such as the tone of a newspaper article,

the length of the article and the placement of that article were important play a key role in understanding how an issue is framed in the media.

However, Paul D'Angelo (2002), responding directly to Entman (1993), maintained that there was no need for a single paradigm of framing because reducing framing into a single paradigm would be to deny researchers the privilege to work with different images in order to examine the relationship between media and individual frames. Consequently, D'Angelo proposed three framing paradigms—the cognitive, the critical and the constructive paradigms. These are discussed in turn because they represent a significant way to study the media.

The cognitive paradigm

The basic assumption of this paradigm is that frames alter an individual's thought process during decision-making, interpretation, judgement formation and opinion making. Therefore research informed by this paradigm is interested in how frames work to influence the above processes (D'Angelo, 2002) based on social information (Higgins and King, 1981; Wyer and Srull, 1986; Shrum and O'Guinn, 1993; Wyer and Radvansky, 1999; Shrum, 2002). Lugalambi (2006:130) summarises this best when he observes that, "to approach framing from the cognitive paradigm means attending to the information processing dynamics involved when individuals encounter and engage with media messages".

Accessible information becomes vital to an individual when making decisions (Iyengar, 1991). However, this information is processed using prior knowledge or schemata in order to quickly make decisions and form interpretations. Entman (1993:53) defines schemata as "mentally stored clusters of ideas that guide individuals' processing of information." And so, as Rummelhart (1984) argues, although schemata are particularly active at the point when the individual encounters new information, their presence does not necessarily mean that they will influence information processing; however, they are likely to influence what information becomes important to an individual (Entman, 1993).

With regard to media frames, it is assumed that they trigger "semantic associations within an individual's schemata" (D'Angelo, 2002:876). As such, frames carried in a news report will be useful to an individual for updating and modifying that individual's schemata (Patterson, 1993; Rhee, 1997). However, even though cognitive scholars acknowledge the presence of

information unrelated to a frame, they are interested in studying thoughts aligned with the encoded frames (Schenck-Hamlin *et al.*, 2000; Sotirovic, 2000).

Consequently, a frame is useful only if it can determine whether people notice, understand and remember an issue, just as a photo frame, for example, draws attention to the photo and emphasises the elements in the photo (such as people, trees, animals) as opposed to those elements that are not included in the photo frame. A frame can also determine how people judge and act on an issue. In other words, an individual's decision-making, judgement or opinion formation is limited by the existence of schemata or prior knowledge. Also, getting others to accept one's framing is vital to winning a debate (Tankard, 2003).

Patti Valkenburg *et al.* (1999) undertook an experiment to investigate the impact news frames had on readers' thoughts and on their ability to remember information contained in a story. Their study revealed that news frames could potentially influence the readers' thoughts about, and recall of, issues in the news in the short-run. Further still, they found they could generalise their claims across different issues, and that news frames actually aid the way audiences conceive of certain issues or events. Their conclusion was, "the news media can have the capacity not only to tell the public what issues to think about but also how to think about them" (Valkenburg *et al.*, 1999: 567).

Similarly, Paul Brewer (2002) carried out an experiment to investigate the effect of framing on citizens' use of value language to explain their views on political issues. He studied the two values of morality and equality as applied to gay rights in America. His experiment found that those individuals exposed to the equality frame were most likely to use the same value language to explain their stand on same-sex marriage and those exposed to the morality frame were most likely to make their arguments based on the morality value. His study further found that participants challenged the frames using the value language of the frame they had been exposed to. Like Valkenburg *et al.* (1999), this study demonstrated that media frames play a role in how the public think about political issues.

The critical paradigm

The critical paradigm provides a useful way to study how news frames emerge. From this perspective, frames originate from the journalists' daily routines by which they communicate

to the audiences in terms of the values of political and economic elites (Gitlin, 1980; Entman, 1991; Entman and Rojecki, 1993; Reese and Buckalew, 1995). Later, Scheufele (2000) found that in addition to the journalists' daily routines, frames were a result of organisational pressures and constraints, reportorial and editorial routines, ideological dispositions as well as interest group pressures. In other words, frames can be said to emerge from the way society is organised in terms of politics, social and professional issues.

One of the underlying principles of this paradigm is that the elite frames dominate the news coverage of events and issues, especially when there is a contention (Martin and Oshagen, 1997; Hertog and McLeod, 2003). James K. Hertog and Douglas M. McLeod (2003:159) posit that the dominant frames reflect and sustain the "major institutions of society". If the media promote a religious frame on an issue, it will bring into the limelight, the religious institutions' perspectives on that issue and thus keep in place these major institutions, as is the case in Uganda. Both these studies agree that frames are shared by members of society and therefore shape understanding and influence the debate over social issues. For example, the coverage of General Motors' announcement to close down one of its production plants in December 1991 was framed in terms of citizens as adapting to difficult but necessary business decisions (Martin and Oshagen, 1997). According to these scholars, this kind of coverage serves to promote the idea that "downsizing is inevitable and complicity is necessary for success" (Martin and Oshagen, 1997:690). Therefore, it is not surprising that the news tends to favour the elite and dominate the audience, hence limiting the parameters of debate and of an inclusive public sphere (Entman, 1991; Martin and Oshagen, 1997). Through selectively determining what to include and exclude, journalists allow some frames to emerge at the expense of others, thus supporting the status quo through the dominant frames (D'Angelo, 2002). This paradigm is also a useful approach to the study of who gets to speak during a public debate.

Moreover, this paradigm can also be useful for the study of generalisations in newsgathering. Iyengar (1991) argued that the generalised patterns observed in the packaging of television news could also be applied to other media forms and systems. This is because even though the media may vary in form and system, they share common news patterns, production values and journalistic practices (Gans, 1979; Gitlin, 1980). As such, underpinning this paradigm is the

idea that newsgathering consists of generalised patterns, which contribute to how the journalists frame stories.

The constructionist paradigm

The constructionist paradigm contends that journalistic reporting reflects the culture and provides “interpretative packages” of the views of political actors such as sources (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989). In Uganda’s case, this implies that the media is most likely to be biased in their reporting of homosexuality issues given the unfavourable environment that Uganda is to homosexuals. In addition, it is most likely that the views of those who support the dominant position (which is opposed to homosexuality) will be carried in the news. Such sources include politicians, religious leaders, and the layperson.

Journalists are “information processors” (D’Angelo, 2002: 877) which means that they not only select what to include or exclude but they package that information in such a way that it reflects the environment in which they operate. However, this can result in certain groups, issues or actors being “co-opted” by other dominant groups (D’Angelo, 2002:877). For example, news frames determine the boundaries of policy debates not necessarily in line with democratic norms (Andsager and Powers, 1999; Andsager, 2000).

Another assumption by this paradigm is that frames can dominate the news for long periods and serve as informants to individuals when they are forming opinions about issues (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989; Gamson, 1996). Although there is no study to confirm it, it could be that the negative public opinion towards homosexuality in Uganda stems from the media reports. This is contrary to the critical paradigm, which views dominant frames as making other less dominant frames irrelevant.

In addition, constructionists believe that by media houses sticking to a few credible sources for given topics, they limit the information they provide about a topic. Meanwhile, according to critical scholars, source selection is hegemonic (D’Angelo, 2002). As such, constructionists believe that even a dominant frame still provides for a wider variety of views that are useful for understanding a topic (Andsager, 2000).

Typical research in this area has studied the role of the media in perpetuating the dominant political culture (Tankard, 2003; Zhou and Moy, 2007; Lugalambi, 2006; Pan *et al.*, 2010; Strand, 2011).

This study is informed by the constructionist paradigm more than either the cognitive or the critical paradigms. This is because the study focuses on how the reporting by the two newspapers reflects the society in which they operate.

From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that there is no one way to undertake framing research. It has been argued that this is both a boon and a bane and there is a continuing call to further develop media framing theory through detailed description of a researcher's methodology (Hertog and McLeod, 2003) and through clarification of terms and concepts (Borah, 2011).

Key principles of framing theory

The underlying principle of framing theory is that there is no single perspective to an issue; and each perspective has implications for a variety of values and considerations (Chong and Druckman, 2002). In other words, how an issue is framed will have a bearing on how it is understood, evaluated and judged. For example, if one considers homosexuality to be a vice, then he or she will most likely support a proposed law to ban homosexuality. Likewise, one may consider homosexuality a normal lifestyle, and therefore oppose a proposed law to punish all homosexuals in his or her society. At another level, one might not be opposed to homosexuality *per se*, but oppose same-sex marriage if he or she takes the conservative Christian view of marriage that considers marriage as a union between a man and a woman. These examples illustrate the varied perspectives to one issue and how these perspectives might affect one's considerations of that issue.

The way the media frames an issue will most certainly affect the way that issue is understood by the audience (Scheufele and Tewksbury, 2007). This is because the way a message is interpreted is not dependent on the content of the message but on the mode of presentation (Scheufele and Tewksbury, 2007). In fact, Andrew P. Williams (2007) contends that the media have the power to select what to cover and that prominence of an issue does not necessarily make the issue newsworthy. For example, some sections of the local Ugandan

media ignored the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill even when it was being discussed widely in both local and international media (Strand, 2012). In addition, Cecilia Strand (2011) observed that the Ugandan media ignored the negative aspects of the anti-homosexuality bill and framed it as beneficial to all Ugandans. This was important because homosexuals are considered unwelcome in the Ugandan society (Pew Research Centre, 2013).

Moreover, according to framing theory, when individuals encounter information (whether new or old information), they rely on “stored clusters of ideas” to process that information (Entman, 1993:53). These clusters of ideas are also known as schemata or frames. Frames, therefore, are necessary elements of the way individuals and groups make sense of the world. From a public opinion perspective, the way one frames an issue can impact his or her overall opinion (Chong and Druckman, 2002). Framing is that “process by which people develop a particular conceptualisation of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue” (Chong and Druckman, 2002:104). This means that framing can be taken to mean the way people view an issue or think about an issue. That is why it is very important for politicians to appeal to the public’s frames on an issue in order to win their support on policy matters.

According to Entman (1993), the framing process involves selection and salience. To frame therefore is “to select some aspects of a perceived reality, and make more them more salient” (Entman, 1993:52). As William G. Jacoby (2000) observes, when politicians highlight certain features of a policy, such as its likely impact on its relationship to important values, voters can be mobilised to support a given policy. When a speaker (or writer) highlights certain aspects of an issue, he or she invokes “a frame in communication” (Chong and Druckman, 2002:106). The frames are useful for making sense of the world and help people build expectations, organise their memories, map out their actions and interpret feedback (Goffman, 1974; Lemert and Branaman, 1997; Snow, 2001).

Framing is a two way process between communicators and recipients of communication messages (Scheufele, 1999; Zhou and Moy, 2007). In fact, Entman (1993:52) posits that frames can be found in at least four different locations in the communication process, namely, “the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture”. Frames play different roles at these different moments in the communication process. However, Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007) contend that framing is both a macro-level and micro-level construct. As a macro-level

construct, framing refers to the way in which journalists and other communicators present information to echo existing and underlying schemas in the audience (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996). This would call for spinning of a story, which is mostly seen as a negative attribute. However, framing is a very useful tool for journalists to “breakdown” complex issues in a way that fits within their journalistic routines and principles (Gans, 1979). Therefore, frames are key tools for making relevant complex issues clearer to lay audiences because they appeal to their cognitive schemas. Frames are also necessary in the presentation of controversial issues such as homosexuality (Pan *et al.*, 2010) for the same reasons outlined above. As a micro-construct, framing describes how people use information and presentation features regarding issues as they form impressions.

Lastly, prior framing research has differentiated between issue-specific frames that apply to unique topics and have limited generalisability (Davis, 1995; Bantimaroudis and Ban, 2001; Hertog and McLeod, 2003), and generic frames that are applicable to a wide range of issues over time and across different cultural contexts (De Vreese *et al.*, 2001), such as conflict, economic consequence, human impact, and morality (Neuman *et al.*, 1992; Price *et al.*, 1997; Zillmann *et al.*, 2004). This study examines a specific issue, namely homosexuality, but to make the findings more applicable to future research, I locate the study in the wider research on media framing of contentious issues, which include homosexuality.

Framing theory has been criticised for its failure to pay much attention to power but as McQuail (2010:512) observes, “Entman (1993) in his founding presentation, did say that frames in news stories reveal the ‘imprint of power’”.

Conceptual notes on framing

Frames and framing

The multiple approaches to framing have led to numerous application of framing terms and concepts (Scheufele, 1999; Hertog and McLeod, 2003). Hertog and McLeod (2003:139) view this as both “a blessing and a curse”. In fact, the literature on framing suggests a diversity of the application of the terms “frame”, “framing” and “framework”. Some of its earliest uses seem to suggest an emphasis on the outcome of framing.

Entman (1993:52) states:

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.

Likewise, Tankard *et al.* (1991:11) define a frame as “a central organising idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration”.

These two definitions share the idea that framing *results from* selection and *results in* emphasis. It can be said that the emphasis is achieved through the creation of a context, which leads to a specific understanding of the issue at hand. In so doing, framing also defines what issue is at hand.

Another related definition of framing states that framing “refers to subtle alterations in the statement or presentation of...problems” (Iyengar, 1991:11). Therefore, to frame can also mean to alter in a way that is invisible in order to promote a particular view of a problem or issue.

Other definitions seem to deviate from the emphasis on selection and point to the work of frames as working within the wider socio-political and cultural environment to produce a dominant meaning of a given issue or event. Therefore, it is important to examine the environment in which an issue is presented because this environment determines why one meaning dominates another (Morley, 1976). And so, in light of the above, Gamson and Modigliani (1989:3) define a frame “as a central organising idea for making sense of relevant events and suggesting what is at issue”. A frame therefore produces meaning but goes on to suggest which meaning should be taken as the “truth”. In fact, Gaye Tuchman (1978) argues that without frames, most of what we see or hear happening around us would remain unintelligible.

However, in order for frames to produce a dominant idea, they must persist over time and produce organising patterns “of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organise discourse” (Gitlin,

1980:7). Frames must therefore become part of a society's way of making sense of the world. Todd Gitlin contends that frames allow journalists to recognise information and categorise it cognitively. By so doing, frames organise that diverse information out there into a meaningful structure (Reese, 2003). This idea is best demonstrated by the way the Ugandan newspapers are organised into various sections including national news, regional news, sports news and business news. All the news that is reported in a day is placed into one of these categories.

Even though these applications of framing vary in the way they view framing, they seem to agree in a number of areas, specifically that frames define what issue is at hand, that frames determine how to discuss that issue and therefore limit the way we view that issue. The result of framing is that one perspective of an issue is promoted and becomes the dominant idea regarding that issue (McCombs, 2004). Therefore, for purposes of this study, a frame will be taken to mean a “dominant perspective on the object—a pervasive description and characterisation of the object” (McCombs: 88).

The foregoing discussion has considered frames from a broad perspective. As already alluded to, frames can be applied in sociology, politics, psychology, economics, to mention just a few. Frames are also used in journalism, media and communication, in much the same way as discussed above. As such, the section that follows discusses frames as they apply to the media.

Media frames

There is no single definition of a frame when it comes to media framing theory, although the numerous definitions tend to emphasise a particular framing function or process. For example, some definitions are concerned with how media organisations, professionals and audiences organise and make sense of the world or; how media and political actors frame issues or; what frames mean to a journalist; or what frames are to the audience (Lugalambi, 2006). In the first instance, Reese (2003:11) defines frames as “organising principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world”. To the media and political actors, Entman (1993:52) says that to frame is “to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described”. From a journalist's perspective,

Frank D. Durham (1998:113) writes, “frames provide the bases for interconnecting facts. In the production of news, the role of a news frame is to define what is possible (and what is not) in the event’s presentation as news”. Lastly, to the audience, a frame is “a schema of interpretations that enables individuals to perceive, organise, and make sense of incoming information (Valkenburg *et al.*, 1999:551).

Whereas some scholars have called for the harmonising of these perspectives (Entman, 1993; Hertog and McLeod, 2003), others have instead argued that doing so would prove futile to the growth of framing as a paradigm (D’Angelo, 2002). Nonetheless, Semetko and Valkenburg’s (2000) exploration of the literature for meanings of the commonly applied concepts of news frame, framing, and framing effects offers some direction. Even though they did not find a single usage of these terms, they found that the various definitions point to general theoretical attributes of framing, namely, conceptual tools used to convey, interpret, and evaluate information; parameters for discussing public events; formula persistently used to select, emphasise, and exclude issues; perceiving reality in a way that enables specific problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, or treatment recommendation; mechanisms for locating, perceiving, identifying, and labelling information; and mechanisms for selecting among political alternatives (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000:94).

However, several definitions exist with regard to the specific concept of a media frame (Gamson and Modigliani, 1987; Tankard *et al.*, 1991; Reese, 2003; Miller and Riechert, 2003). For the purposes of this study, a media frame is defined as “a central organising idea or storyline that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events” by defining the controversy and the issue at hand (Gamson and Modigliani, 1987:143). This definition captures the essence of the current study in that it addresses the aspect of media framing during the coverage of a contentious issue. This definition is also in line with the definition of a frame generally (as adopted in the previous section), that considers a frame as a dominant perspective of an object. All the subsequent definitions such as Tankard *et al.* (1991) build on to this definition and suggest that frames work by supplying a context using selection, emphasis, exclusion and elaboration.

From the foregoing discussion, therefore, the key role of a news frame is to organise information that is turned into news content, especially when the story involves a controversy

such as stem cell research, homosexuality or as exemplified in a Ugandan case, the Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF). In fact, according to Tuchman (1978) media frames are necessary for the making of meaning because of their organising role in everyday life (Tuchman, 1978). After all, our knowledge about the nature of the social world depends significantly on how we frame and interpret the information we receive about the social world (Edelman, 1993). Therefore, while carrying out their information role, the media also determine what we know about the world and how we know it.

Media frames organise the world for both the journalists and the audience (Gitlin, 1980). Gitlin contends that media frames are a basic part of journalism work in that they enable journalists to easily identify and categorise information, in order to efficiently relay this information to their audience. For example, information may be categorised as hard news, published in the national news pages or on the front page of the newspaper. The information could also be categorised as health news that appears either in the health pages or in a supplement. However, individual members of the audience bring their own frames to a news story and interpret the news story according to their frames. These individual frames can be defined as “mentally stored clusters of ideas that guide an individual’s processing of information” (Entman, 1993:53). As such, during coverage of a controversy, the media endeavours to aid the framing process of individuals in order to “help develop a particular conceptualisation of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue” (Chong and Druckman, 2002:104), and thus maintain the idea of society as “a consensus” built on ideas originating from the shared culture (Hall *et al.*, 1978:55).

The consensual nature of society is a key assumption made by journalists and other media practitioners in the daily routines of their work. It is part of “the process of signification—giving meanings to social events” (Hall *et al.*, 1978:55). It is assumed that since we all belong to the same society we share cultural knowledge and therefore have access to the same “maps of meanings” which can be manipulated but which also form part of the common values, interests and concerns that we all endeavour to maintain. Therefore, because of everything we have in common, this view assumes that our perspective on issue is largely provided by the culture, part of which is the media (Hall *et al.*, 1978).

Hertog and McLeod (2003) provide useful insight into frames as cultural phenomena. They contend that as cultural phenomena, frames have cultural structures, central ideas and more peripheral concepts linked to them that vary in strength and kind. Myths, narratives and metaphors are all cultural phenomena that are central to frames. These aspects appeal to one's inner-self given that members of society are proud to identify with the ideals, morals, stories and definitions of their culture. More importantly, members of society widely and easily recognise these frames. As such, institutions, organisations and individuals assume that members of the society share the same frame and so all communication is based on these shared meanings. As Entman (2004:17) observes, "When the Whitehouse frames an event or issue by invoking the match with clearly relevant and congruent cultural assumptions, motivations among elites, journalists and the public usually fall right into line".

Frames, therefore "carry extensive meaning to culturally articulate individuals" because they are symbolic and are most likely to strike a chord with certain commonly held "myths", and therefore members of a given cultural group will most likely relate to meanings framed this way (Hertog and McLeod, 2003:141). In other words, the cultural resonances make media content appear not only natural but also familiar (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989). These culturally constructed frames are persistent; occur over long periods of time, and with input from a variety of social actors. This means that these frames contain considerable volumes of social knowledge, which makes it almost impossible for new information to alter their meaning (Hertog and McLeod, 2003).

These cultural frames are important for defining and resolving social controversies (Hertog and McLeod, 2003). Frames define the roles of individuals, groups, organisations and institutions. One frame could portray particular groups as essential to the resolution of a social problem while another frame might portray these same groups as non-essential or even the cause of the problem. A frame might also lead to the marginalisation of a group or individual as well as their views by simply ignoring them (Hertog and McLeod, 2003). For example, part of the reason homosexuality in Uganda and in Africa in general has met resistance is that the discussions about homosexuality take place within a cultural perspective (Van Zyl, 2011; Nyanzi, 2013) and according to the dominant view in African culture, homosexuality is a taboo (Murray and Roscoe, 1998; Dlamini, 2006; Tamale, 2009). Therefore, the idea of homosexuality as an identity is quite problematic in Africa, contrary to most parts of the West

(Tamale, 2013). From a media perspective, the result has been a near absence of homosexual or pro-homosexual voices in the African media (Muula, 2007; Strand, 2012), with the exception of South Africa (Cilliers, 2008).

In addition to organising the world for journalists and their audiences, media frames serve several other functions as discussed in the paragraphs that follow. Because the world is such a complex place and yet the media must report it, they resort to framing in order for their reports to make sense to their audiences (Hall *et al.*, 1978). Therefore, frames simplify erstwhile complex issues for the journalists but more so for the audience targeted by the audience. This particular function of frames has been demonstrated by studies that have examined the framing of controversial issues such as stem cell research (Nisbet *et al.*, 2003) and homosexuality (Strand, 2011).

During a controversy, media frames set the terms and limits of the debate. Gamson and Modigliani (1987:143) contend “the frame suggests what the controversy is about, the essence of the issue”. For example, in framing of homosexuality, the media decide that the issue is really about whether homosexuality is an innate or an acquired behaviour. This function is facilitated by framing’s ability to pass unnoticed (Tankard, 2003). As Gitlin (1980:7) observed, frames are “largely unspoken and unacknowledged” and can therefore prove to be a very useful tool when covering contentious issues because they set the terms of the debate without the audience even noticing it (Tankard, 2003). Tankard contends that this is where much of the power of frames lies. They enable journalists to “spin” a story in a way that not only favours them, but also makes sense to them, and yet appear objective in their reporting. He argues, for example, “News framing can eliminate voices and weaken arguments, that the media can frame issues that favour a particular side without showing an explicit bias” (Tankard, 2003:96).

In addition to setting the terms of the debate, frames have been found to set the tone for an issue or event (Tankard, 2003). The tone can be positive, neutral or negative (Strand, 2011). This is mainly achieved through framing’s interpretive role. Doris Graber (1989:7) alluded to this when she wrote that framing provides the “interpretive background” which forms the basis for judging a story. Moreover, frames can also be viewed as interpretive and presentation patterns (Gitlin, 1980). This aspect is in line with the valence role that frames

play where frames portray an issue negatively, positively or in a neutral way. Therefore, the fundamental significance of framing as an interpretative function is that to most people, the media are the primary sources of information given the fact that they are able to bring to us news about events that happen outside our direct experience (Hall *et al.*, 1978). As such, the media not only define to most of us what is significant but also how to understand what is happening around us.

When discussing frames and framing, two important concepts come to mind, that is, frame building and frame setting. While frame building deals with the production side of the framing process during news construction, frame setting deals with media frame effects. Both concepts are relevant to the study because they deal with both sides of framing just as this study does. These two terms are discussed in turn in the next section.

Frame building

Frame building deals with the construction of a message rather than media effects (Scheufele and Tewksbury, 2007). Scheufele (1999:115) borrowed this term from agenda setting theory in an attempt to answer the question, “what kinds of organisational or structural factors of the media system, or which individual characteristics of journalists, can impact the framing of news content?” In other words, frame building could refer to how media frames are formed.

Both internal and external factors are responsible for frame building. These include news values, the type of media organisation, ideology, sources, advertisers, government control, the market place and technology (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996). Scheufele (1999) identified others as journalists’ social norms and values, organisational pressures and constraints, reportorial and editorial routines, ideological dispositions as well as interest group pressures (Scheufele, 1999).

Journalistic routines, organisational pressures and constraints are key internal factors in the building of frames. Hall *et al.* (1978) refer to the types of stories and topics that make news, the categorisation of the newspaper workforce (for example, specialist correspondents and departments) and the structure of the newspaper into, for example, home news, foreign news and sports, as organisational factors that are responsible for the selection and construction of news. The need to beat deadlines also puts pressure on journalists to, for example, opt for

“more credible” and more frequently used sources whose information will not require such intense verification compared to new sources (Reich, 2011). As such, time can also be viewed as a professional constraint that affects which frames get into the media.

Furthermore, external factors also influence frame building. These mainly consist of the sources on whom journalists rely for information. Journalists’ sources include government, political actors, the public, the private sector, private individuals and others such as academics, public relations officers, and other online and traditional media (Reich, 2011). Existing literature indicates that the relationship between journalists and sources is one of mutual dependence. While journalists require material to work with, their sources require access to the public which the journalists are in a position to provide (Carlson and Franklin, 2011) since journalism provides access to the public sphere (Habermas, 1991).

However, this relationship is more complex than just giving and taking. For example, not all sources are treated equally and so not all of them will find their way into the news (Chibnall, 1977). The more accessible, credible, legitimate and authoritative sources on a given subject will be selected by the journalists. Journalists end up depending on official sources and routine channels as demonstrated by Sigal’s (1973) study of the news sources in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. This leads us to journalistic routines, which encourage repetition and inevitably the privileging of some sources and not others (Carlson and Franklin, 2011). From this perspective, journalists may appear powerless but they retain the power to decide the form of the content of the news report (Ericson *et al.*, 1989 cited in Carlson and Franklin, 2011).

There is no doubt that sources are central to the construction of news. News as we know it today relies on sources for credibility (Reich, 2011; Carlson and Franklin, 2011). This is because they provide the information that the journalists require in order to construct news (Hall *et al.*, 1978). No when else are sources very important than when it comes to covering contentious issues (Li and Liu, 2010). Sources may reassure the audience, for example late night news tended to use government officials and high ranking doctors as sources in the news coverage of AIDS and therefore stayed away from sensationalism (Colby and Cook, 1991). But source bias might also turn up in media reports especially when the sources

impose their frames and attempt to sway the coverage to favour them (Jamieson and Waldman, 2003).

In his study of source credibility as a journalistic work tool, Reich (2011) found that the public accounted for 47% of the sources while the politicians accounted for 31%. Literature on sources informs us that one significant attribute of any source is credibility (Goldenberg, 1975; Gans, 1979; Detjen, *et al.*, 2000). Whereas human influence is also involved in source selection (Strömbäck and Nord, 2005; Reich, 2009), Reich (2011) contends that three factors are responsible for the journalist to choose one source over another. These are, structural aspects such as credibility and familiarity of the source (Manning, 2001); practical aspects, for example the depth of verification of a source's information will save the journalist time or require more time (Manning, 2001); and lastly, contextual aspects which include sources who are sources by virtue of their status in society such as public relations practitioners. Given the preceding background, it is worth noting that not every source will make it into the news.

With regard to the public as a source of frames, it has been argued that media frames reflect the public's attitude generally (Jha-Namibar, 2002), although this will depend on how much the story has developed (Zhou and Moy, 2007). Zhou and Moy (2007:80) contend that "online public opinion can serve as initial input to media coverage with the latter often shaping subsequent online discussion" only in as far as the issue is still new and the frames have not yet been fully set. Otherwise, journalists revert to their professional norms and values as soon as they pick up the issue. This is in line with Scheufele's (1999) theorising on frame building.

Politicians and interest group pressures, the administration, as well as the socio-economic environment, also play a significant role in frame building (Callaghan and Schnell, 2001; Entman, 2004; Zhou and Moy, 2007). Hall *et al.* (1978) argue that elite political actors serve as primary definers of political issues. This is because whenever journalists need information, they turn to the official and already established sources. Reich (2011) referred to this as the contextual aspect of source selection in that some sources become sources by virtue of their positions in society such as public relations practitioners. In that case, it can be said that the media therefore act as a mirror to society (Gans, 1979), demonstrated by the media's use of quotes and sound bites from interest groups and political actors (Scheufele, 1999).

This view has been criticised for rendering journalists passive purveyors of official views (Campbell, 2004). However, scholarly information suggests that the established political elite do indeed play a crucial role in how issues are framed (Entman, 2004; Wolfsfeld, 2004). Entman (2004) demonstrated that when it comes to foreign policy issues the social elites such as media carried frames originating from the White House administration. Recent research also found that the media reproduced elite political discourse. At another level, it was found that the media have the tendency to report in line with the mainstream government debate (Bennett, 1990). Bennett *et al.* (2006) found that the abuse frame, which was sponsored by the Bush government during the Abu Ghraib raids, dominated the news coverage, while the torture frame did not reach the level of a counter frame. Strömbäck *et al.* (2008) posit that the media found it easier to turn to the abuse frame because it was culturally more relevant than the torture frame. Therefore, the media/news is not a mirror of reality *per se*, given the number of both conscious and unconscious choices that restrict the journalists in their operations (Pavlik, 2001; Schudson, 2003; Hamilton, 2004). Moreover, given the active role that journalists play in framing their stories, they retain the freedom to choose which political actors to cite in the news. As such, only those sources that are perceived as relevant and legitimate are able to influence frame building (Strömbäck, *et al.*, 2008).

External factors, however, can only influence frame building to a certain extent. These factors will most likely succeed during the coverage of a new subject whose frames have not previously been developed, such as when the online community originates a discussion that the traditional media then pick up and report on (Zhou and Moy, 2007). Meanwhile, Zhou and Moy's (2007) investigation into the influence of public opinion on news framing contradicted Entman's (2004) position when their research showed that internal pressure outweighs government pressure in shaping news frames. The authors argued, "the media applied rhetorical tactics to adjust the relatively 'aggressive' public opinion frames to 'mild but constructive' media frames (Zhou and Moy, 2007:92). Likewise, Hertog and McLeod (2003) in their study coverage of social protests found that newspaper editors were aware of attempts by protest groups to 'reframe' the issue and they rejected them. Hertog and McLeod quoted the newspapers editors saying, "They want to tell me what the story is. *I* decide what the story is" (Hertog and McLeod, 2003:158. The emphasis is in the original text). That is to say, the newspaper made a deliberate decision to report the protests their way and not the way the protest groups wanted. In so doing, the editors adjusted the framing of the protests.

Sometimes internal and external factors converge and influence frame building. For example, in her study of the press coverage of the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill in Uganda, Strand (2012:568) found that not only did the nation-wide homophobia find its way into both the government and privately owned newspapers, but that the government owned newspaper, *New Vision*, also had in place an “unofficial reprint policy” not to cover homosexuality topics. This partly accounts for the negative coverage of homosexual voices. However, *New Vision* ‘abandoned’ its policy at a certain point in order to keep true to its negative position on homosexuality: they called for the authorities to crack down on homosexuals, which was in line with the prevailing government discourse (Strand, 2012).

Given that the government in Uganda can influence media framing while civil society can only do so to a minimal extent (Strand, 2011; 2012), Borlase (2012) contends that Ugandan journalists are not independent in their reporting of contentious issues, especially homosexuality. Borlase notes that Ugandan journalists still find it imperative to balance stories on homosexuality in order to ‘cover their backs’. This scenario could easily be attributed to the highly unfavourable environment for homosexuality.

Frame setting

Frame setting research examines how news frames shape the public’s interpretation of a given issue (Zhou and Moy, 2007). After all, one of the basic assumptions of framing theory relates to how an issue is framed in the news and how that framing can influence how that issue is understood by the public (Scheufele and Tewksbury, 2007). Public opinion literature gives credence to this assumption (Pan and Kosicki, 1993; Chong and Druckman, 2002). In addition, several experimental studies prove that frames could account for variations in people’s understanding and evaluation of an issue (Kahneman and Tversky, 1984; Kinder and Sanders, 1990; Iyengar, 1991; Davis, 1995; Cappella and Jamieson, 1997).

Selection and salience are the other two very important attributes of the framing process. According to Entman (1993:52), “to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described”. This suggests that the way the news is presented can have a bearing

on how the audience understand the events being reported (Tversky and Kahneman, 1973; Price *et al.*, 1995).

The salience that the media accords a frame renders it more accessible and therefore most likely to be recalled from memory by an individual, rather than a frame that is not as salient. This is because the accessibility of frames makes them more applicable than those that are not easily accessible (Tversky and Kahneman, 1973). For example, covering homosexuality in terms of the right to same-sex marriage in the strict sense of the word “marriage” might not be appealing to the Ugandan audience, whose understanding of homosexuality is currently mostly related to its acceptance or not. Therefore, the more accessible a frame, the more easily it will be available and retrieved from one’s memory (Iyengar, 1990). In other words, the accessibility of frames influences the way people think about an issue (Scheufele, 1999). Two early studies demonstrated this argument (McLeod, 1995; McLeod and Detenber, 1999) when they found that the degree to which a particular news frame is privileged, and the intensity of its application, would affect the public’s understanding of an issue. The findings from these studies showed that any slight variation in the intensity of news frames is likely to affect reactions to the groups involved in the protest. For example, participants who were exposed to a more intensely framed news story were less likely to see the protest as being effective, less likely to support the expressive rights of the protestors and less likely to see the protest as a newsworthy story. This particular aspect of frame setting is central to the current study since one of the aims of the study is to investigate which frames dominate the coverage of homosexuality in Uganda media. Frame dominance is most likely to lead to bias in news reporting. This idea is discussed next.

Framing and bias

The persistent nature of frames also contributes to their successfully influencing how society understands issues. This is specifically important for frames as cultural phenomena since, as, frames develop over time, with input from a considerable number of social actors, they become part of “social knowledge”, rendering it almost impossible for new information to “significantly alter their meanings” (Hertog and McLeod, 2003:142). Another way to put it is that “the significance of frames lies in their durability, their persistent and routine use over time” (Reese, 2003:11).

Regarding the coverage of a controversial issue, the above attributes lead to the issue of bias since some frames become dominant and easily recalled by journalists who may come to rely on them while ignoring other frames. A number of studies show that dominant frames are those from the major institutions or social actors in society and are widely shared among individual members of society (Kuypers, 2002; Hertog and McLeod, 2003). Jim A. Kuypers (2002) contends that the American press gives more prominence to pro-homosexuality voices even though it is not necessarily the case that the American public is overwhelmingly supportive of homosexuality. As such, the American audience are mostly exposed to the pro-homosexuality frames, which are most likely to affect the way they view homosexuality. Considering that the current study is not an experimental study, this point is important especially since the available literature indicates that the Ugandan press are biased in their coverage of homosexuality, in favour of the anti-homosexuality sentiments (see Strand, 2011; 2012).

Contrary to Kuypers (2002), Rhonda Gibson and Joe B. Hester (2007) found that the frame was unlikely to affect an individual's attitude towards an issue if the individual was able to recognise the lack of balance in the sources used in a news story. This study investigated the influence of sources on the public's opinion of same-sex relationships. It hypothesised that if members were exposed to a news story that carried only highly privileged sources opposed to same-sex relationships, those members would oppose same-sex relations. It also hypothesised that if members were exposed to a news story that carried only highly privileged sources in support of same-sex relationships, those members would support same-sex relations. Lastly the study hypothesised that if members were exposed to a news story that presented balanced sources, they would be balanced in their opinion of same-sex marriage. The first two hypotheses were not supported as participants were able to point out the lack of balance in the stories. The study concluded that the use of official sources to privilege anti-gay sentiment did not necessarily lead to increased anti-gay sentiments among participants, which meant that frame effects are likely to be limited for an active audience. In their own words, "these results suggest that news consumers are more savvy than some scholars give them credit for and that readers possess the ability to recognise a lack of balance in regard to source prestige" (Gibson and Hester, 2007:79).

One key assumption of this study is that the way the media frame an issue will influence the way the audience understands that issue. Another key assumption of this study is that the media ought to facilitate the audience to make their own interpretations of contentious issues by providing all sides of an issue and avoiding bias. For example, if the media presents homosexuality using only the cultural perspective, the audience will begin to view homosexuality from a cultural perspective as opposed to a religious or health perspective. Moreover, if the media persistently emphasise the negative aspects of the cultural perspective, they deny members of the audience access to the positive side of the cultural argument. In so doing, the media limit the ways in which the audience can interpret homosexuality, and at the same time report with bias.

Given that the basic function of a frame (or frames) is to organise incoming and outgoing information, it can be argued that the news media inevitably bias the audience when they frame an issue. In fact, Entman (2007) contends that news bias is inevitable since framing results from the media's choosing what to include on their agenda and in which way to include it. He argues, "systematically employing... framing... under the conceptual umbrella of bias would advance understanding of the media's role in distributing power, revealing new dimensions and processes of critically political communication" (Entman, 2007:164).

Literature on objectivity and balance suggests that these two are key ingredients of a credible report especially in a politically charged situation. However, there is enough evidence to suggest that the media are not always objective and balanced in their reporting even when they claim to be liberal. As Entman (2007:165) rightly observes, apart from the coverage of foreign affairs and racial issues, researchers have found a "decided tilt" on subjects such as congressional candidates (Kahn and Kenney, 2002; Druckman and Parkin, 2005), protest movements (Rojecki, 1999), tax policy (Entman, Bell, Frith, and Miller, 2005), unions (Martin, 2004), and media bias.

The media as national institutions—as opposed to being similar to other global media institutions—respond to domestic and social pressure in their countries in line with their audience's expectations. They end up bending their rules and turn to serving the national interest which is determined by other, more powerful institutions and actors (McQuail, 2010). The media's ability to remain objective and balanced is tested during times of crisis

(Topoushian, 2002). This scenario played out during the 2001 September 11 events in the United States when, “Journalists quickly abandoned all pretence of objectivity and become the uncritical mouthpiece of the United States” (Williams, 2003). Similarly, with regards to coverage of homosexuality from the 1940s to the early 1990s, Alwood (1996) argued that the American media were biased against homosexuals and pro-homosexual voices because homosexuality was considered illegal in most states of the United States. In Uganda, Strand (2012) found that the dominant anti-homosexual environment found its way into the Ugandan press coverage of the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill.

Specifically regarding homosexuality, framing of news stories using value words was found to influence public opinion on the issue (Brewer, 2002). Brewer’s experimental study tested participants on their opinion of gay rights after being exposed to stories framed using the equality and morality frames. The results showed that participants who received an equality frame were more likely to explain their opinion in terms of equality and the same was true for those who received the morality frame.

Even then, it should be noted that the press might not always succeed in biasing individuals. This was demonstrated in one experimental study that sought to investigate the use of highly prestigious sources to influence public opinion about homosexuality, a contentious issue (Gibson and Hester, 2007). The study found that participants were able to sense bias and lack of balance in the news sources used in the stories. This makes the point that “the frames that guide the receiver’s thinking and conclusion may or may not reflect the frames in the text and the framing intention of the communicator” (Entman, 1993:52). As Gibson and Hester concluded, the audience do not always get swayed by media reports as is normally believed by scholars.

Although bias is inevitable, persistent patterns of bias across media outlets, time and message dimensions could signal a systematic intent by the media to favour particular groups, causes or individuals (Entman, 2007). Entman (2007:170) concludes, “When news clearly slants, those officials favoured by the slant become more powerful, freer to do what they want without the anticipation that voters might punish them. And those who lose the framing contest become weaker, less free to do (or say) what they want”. The same could be applied to homosexuality.

Press framing of contentious issues

Contention is a natural part of society and is most noticeable as public issues are reported in the news (Miller and Riechert, 2003). According to Miller and Riechert, a topic becomes an issue when the public debate about it; but issues become contentious when individuals and groups take opposing positions. When a debate takes place in the media, it is expected that journalists will stand by their guiding principles, which include objectivity and balance. To a certain extent they do (Schudson, 2003), but there is evidence to the effect that the media sometimes take sides in a debate (Kuypers, 2002), despite the generally accepted notion that during contention, the media should play its informative role and provide all sides of the issue (Kuypers, 2002; Semujju, 2013).

Framing theory is useful in the study of how the press report contentious issues. This is evidenced by the growing literature on how the press frame various contentious issues such as climate change (Semujju, 2013), stem cell research (Nisbet *et al.*, 2003), new technologies (Boyd and Paveglio, 2014), bio fuels (Delshad and Raymond, 2013), protest marches (Hertog and McLeod, 2003) and race and homosexuality (Kuypers, 2002; Li and Liu, 2010; Pan *et al.*, 2010). One way for journalists to deal with complicated situations is by simplifying them in a way that they can control (Li and Liu, 2010). Framing makes this possible. As has already been noted, framing enables journalists to organise incoming information using framing devices, which constitute “journalistic intentions, news values, discursive structures and content formats that integrate the words and images of a news story into a frame” (D’Angelo, 2002:881). For example, journalists cover gay and lesbian issues using diverse frames because framing has the ability to define the terms of a controversy and still go unnoticed (Devitt, 2002; Tankard, 2003; Hertog and McLeod, 2003).

Sources are crucial to the coverage of contentious issues (Li and Liu, 2010). Sources possess the ability to sway the debate in a certain direction by supplying frames to the media (Jamieson and Waldman, 2003) or they can provide assurance and keep the debate on the right track as in the case of HIV (Colby and Cook, 1991). In the latter study, it was found that the use of high-level government officials and prestigious doctors helped the media to keep away from sensationalising HIV and instead present the news with evidence.

It is also important that during the coverage of a contentious issue, all sides of that issue are presented to the public so that they can make up their own minds (Nassanga, 2008; Semujju, 2013). This is particularly crucial given that the way the press frames an issue has a bearing on how that issue will be understood by the public. Therefore, if the press choose to provide the public with only one view of an issue such as climate change, they not only limit the public's understanding of that issue, they also limit the variety of information availed to the public. When they this happens, the press may be said to abdicate its democratic role (Kuypers, 2002).

It is important therefore that the news reports supply a variety of sources to represent all sides of the debate and to do so in a fair and balanced manner (Kuypers, 2002). For example, in a study of how the American press frames two contentious issues, race and homosexuality, Kuypers (2002) found that the press outrightly presented one position through the unbalanced use of sources for quotations. In one case, the ratio of sources that supported the press position, to those who did not, was 14:1. He concludes saying, "Although both sides are presented, one side... will look stronger..." (Kuypers, 2002: 213). The danger posed by this kind of reporting is that the press biases the readers towards a certain position (Brewer, 2002; Boyd and Paveglio, 2014). These studies found that the public were most likely to discuss an issue based on the frames they had been exposed to. Nonetheless, as has already been alluded to (see page 65), this may not always be the case as Gibson and Hester's (2007) study on the influence of sources on the public's opinion of same-sex relationships revealed.

Framing effects are also limited when the debate concerns a topic that the audience are familiar with, and increase when they are unfamiliar with the topic such as risks posed by technological developments (Boyd and Paveglio, 2014). From a cultural perspective this is because frames are constructed over time and involve variety of social actors and so, new information is unlikely to significantly change their meanings (Hertog and McLeod, 2003). Therefore, culture becomes important when debating contentious issues. "The culture is the stock of commonly invoked frames; in fact, culture might be defined as the empirically demonstrable set of common frames exhibited in the discourse and thinking of most people in a social grouping" (Entman, 1993: 53). Frames are able to organise information about a given topic by connecting it to an existing cultural frame (Reese, 2003; Hertog and McLeod, 2003). Social actors such as politicians and religious leaders base their arguments on cultural norms

and hope to win over the public (Wiggins, 2003) while the media revert to cultural frames because they make their work easier (Li and Liu, 2010; Semujju, 2013; Boyd and Paveglio, 2014).

For example, Christian groups oppose same-sex marriages using frames related to religion which views same-sex marriage as abnormal, sinful and illegal before God (Lawsky, 1996). Similarly, politicians opposed to same-sex relationships refer to normality and civil and social tolerance (Nava and Dawidoff, 1994:147). Both groups apply social frameworks in their arguments albeit different standards, namely, religious and civil or secular standards. Meanwhile, Li and Liu (2010) and Boyd and Paveglio (2014) found that the media used the prevailing frames at the time and ones which were familiar to the particular audiences they were targeting. Also, in the United States, homosexuality has been covered extensively in the media since 2004 as a single-sex marriage issue, specifically using the gay and lesbians' rights frames which in the media are reproduced as the morality and equality frames (Rimmerman *et al.*, 2000; Brewer, 2002; 2003).

On his part, Semujju (2013) found that Ugandan journalists framed climate change using the dominant and most familiar frame, which also happens to be the one promoted by the United Nations. This frame supports the argument that climate change is a result of human activity and not natural causes. Interviews conducted with the journalists revealed that they were ignorant about other causes of climate change and so reported the most common one. Therefore, frames exclude certain voices and downplay certain arguments (Tankard, 2003) hence reinforcing the already existing cultural perspectives (Goffman, 1974; Scheufele, 1999). Frames form part of how we organise our thoughts about an issue and render events meaningful and therefore "function to organise experience and guide action, whether individual or collective" (Snow *et al.*, 1986: 464). The meanings influenced by frames are a primary contributor to decision-making and action (Van Gorp, 2007).

Framing is beneficial to the media during the coverage of controversies in a number of ways. One of these is that framing enables the journalists to conceal any bias that may arise because of their ability to set the terms of a debate without the audience realising it (Tankard, 2003). According to Tankard, media framing achieves this by putting emphasis on one or particular aspects of an issue and downplaying the others and thereby directing attention to the

emphasised aspects. They can do this through what Kuypers (2002:210) refers to as “sandwiching”. Sandwiching means placing the side of the issue the press does not support between views that favour the press’ position. He found this to be the case in the American press coverage of a gay issue. This practice will definitely privilege the press’ favoured opinion and yet keep within the media principle of balance. The way the media frame a controversial issue will consequently affect the way that issue is understood (Watts *et al.*, 1999). This is because the media frame a controversy using different angles and perspectives, which may lead to different interpretations of the same issue by the audience (Shah *et al.*, 2004).

That said, a few questions still linger: is it always possible to provide all sides of the story? If so, to what end and in whose interest? Given the specific cultural and national contexts in which the media operates, is it possible for one culture to be favourable to covering an issue in a way that is not necessarily relevant to another culture? Put another way, is the definition of news universal? Jack Fuller (1996) provides a useful answer to some of these questions. Given that news is “a report of what a news organisation has recently learned about matters of significance or interest to the specific community that news organisation serves,” the definition of what constitutes news is inherently biased (Fuller, 1996:6). For example, what is considered significant for one community will be a matter of debate in another community. It is therefore difficult to agree on a unanimous understanding of what news is but it is important to note the three elements that Fuller proposes as key to what constitutes news, namely, timeliness, interest for a given community and significance. Each of these elements points to the uniqueness of news to each community. What is most important, perhaps, is that “the social circumstances of the journalist, the imperatives of the economic market on their news organisations and the culture from which the journalist comes or the larger intellectual currents of the times,” all inform what the journalist considers timely, significant and interesting to a given community (Fuller, 1996:9). The statement that the media constitutes culture just as culture is constituted by the media becomes relevant here in that until it is agreed that societies should be left to define what constitutes news, the debate will continue.

Hence, whether homosexuality should constitute news in every society is a matter of debate. Nonetheless, the next section deals with how the press frame homosexuality, which it finds contentious.

Press framing of homosexuality

The debate over homosexuality continues globally, with varying opinion about the acceptability of homosexuality (Adamczyk and Pitt, 2009). Available literature indicates that the debate revolves around the rights of homosexual individuals (Dunton and Palmer, 1996; Brewer, 2002; Broad *et al.*, 2004; Mongie, 2013). More recently, however, public discussion of homosexuality has focussed on the issue of same-sex marriage (Gallagher and Bull, 1996; Jowett and Peel, 2010), which is also viewed as controversial (Price *et al.*, 2005; Li and Liu, 2010). The media has played an important role in facilitating the debate about same-sex marriage by providing extended coverage of the issues (Gibson and Hester, 2007) and providing fair and balanced coverage (Li and Liu, 2010). The role that the media plays in the same-sex marriage debate is important because they affect people's attitudes towards gays and lesbians and other issues concerning their rights (Calzo and Ward, 2009; Pan *et al.*, 2010).

An exploration of literature indicates that the debate on same-sex marriage has been framed mostly in terms of the two core values of equality and morality (Gallagher and Bull, 1996; Rimmerman *et al.*, 2000; Brewer, 2002; 2003). The findings of these studies show that gay activists who advocate for equal rights for same-sex marriages, because marriage has both a legal and religious aspect, have supplied these frames. Brewer (2002) contends that the gay activists are a powerful minority who aim to achieve complete social recognition and acceptance of homosexuality by turning to the legal system to emphasise their view of morality. Those opposed to the recognition of same-sex marriage as equal to heterosexual marriage argue that same-sex marriage is a threat to "traditional moral values" (Brewer, 2002:306).

These frames have found their way into the media's coverage of gay rights in the United States as confirmed by (Brewer, 1999) and later Brewer (2002). This is despite the existence of other frames (Gallagher and Bull, 1996; Rimmerman *et al.*, 2000), such as "national security" and "equal rights but not special rights" as well as tolerance as opposed to hatred which is not a family value; child support; competing claims of harm (Brewer, 2002:306; McFarland, 2011). It can be inferred therefore that most of the frames regarding the debate

about homosexuality are cultural frames since both equality and morality are critical ingredients of American political culture (McClosky and Zaller, 1984; McFarland, 2011).

Sources are a key element in the same-sex marriage debate (Brewer, 2002; Gibson and Hester, 2007; Li and Liu, 2010). The literature review reveals that the language of activists in support of, and those opposed to, gay rights has supplied the basis of the two dominant frames of equality and morality. However, it has also been found that it is not only the elite who supply frames to the media concerning same-sex marriage but also the non-elite actors (McFarland, 2011). McFarland cautions against the over-emphasis on elite source influence on a non-elite public debate.

Another issue concerns fairness and balance, and how these relate with source dominance. Results from research suggest that while the privileging of biased sources upsets the balance and fairness of a story, a combination of both kinds of stories results in balance and fairness (Gibson and Hester, 2007; Li and Liu, 2010). Gibson and Hester (2007) found that participants in their experiment labelled as “balanced” and “unbalanced” stories that privileged certain sources and those that had both sources. Meanwhile, Li and Liu’s (2010) study revealed differences in balance among the stories with different levels of source dominance. Their content analysis showed that 8.1% of the sources were only pro sources, 3.3% only con sources while 87.1% were balanced. Therefore, sources are critical to the realisation of balance and fairness in media coverage of homosexual issues. However, one study found that members of the audience were able to recognise the imbalance in a news story that tended to privilege sources in support of one side of the debate (Gibson and Hester, 2007). This implies that media framing may not always have an effect on the attitude towards an issue given the active nature of the audience (Price *et al.*, 2005).

The use of media frames is also important in the coverage of homosexuality. By privileging certain media frames, the journalists are likely to influence the understanding of, or the attitude towards, an issue from that perspective (Kinder and Sanders, 1996; Nelson *et al.*, 1997; Brewer, 2002; Price *et al.*, 2005). For example, despite the existence of other frames of same-sex marriage in the United States (Gallagher and Bull, 1996; Rimmerman *et al.*, 2000), the two value frames of equality and morality have come to dominate coverage and the understanding of same-sex marriage (Brewer, 2002). In a later study, Brewer (2003)

investigated the effect of political knowledge on public opinion about gay rights in the United States of America, and whether media framing is responsible for the role that political knowledge has played. He contended that, “that the extent to which political knowledge moderates a value's effect on opinion can depend on whether public debate provides an undisputed frame or competing frames for that value,” (Brewer, 2003:173). Meanwhile Johnson (2012) found that media framing in terms of equality and morality does indeed shape the public attitudes towards same-sex marriage. This study showed that the equality frame aids in reducing opposition to same-sex marriage and civil unions and the equality frame received more media space.

Related to the above point is the issue of a media house's ideology and how it influences the framing of an issue. For example, in the United States of America, studies show that *The New York Times* is likely to use a liberal tone in its framing of social and political issues (Lichter *et al.*, 1986; Angela and Frederick, 1994; Ju, 2005) while the *Chicago Tribune* is viewed as conservative (Gallagher, 1998). With regard to same-sex marriage and homosexuality, there is evidence to support the idea that organisational ideologies do indeed influence the frames that are used in coverage (Pan *et al.*, 2010; Strand, 2012). Pan *et al.*, found that *The New York Times* mostly employed the equality frame while the *Chicago Tribune* used the morality frame. Meanwhile, Strand's study found that whereas initially the government-owned *New Vision* provided minimal coverage of the anti-homosexuality bill, it eventually abandoned coverage while *Daily Monitor*, which is privately owned and boasts of being an independent newspaper, changed from negative coverage to include voices of those opposed to the bill. According to Strand, *Daily Monitor* seemed to have taken an editorial decision to start providing balanced coverage.

Framing homosexuality in the Ugandan press

There is limited literature available on how the Ugandan press frame homosexuality. The most recent research covers the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill (Strand, 2011; 2012; 2013). The Bill was an addition to already existing laws that criminalise homosexuality in Uganda. These studies show that the coverage of the bill was in favour of government and the prevailing public opinion of homosexuality in Uganda. National surveys carried out about 10 years apart

consistently put the figure of those opposed to recognition of homosexuality as a legal way of life at 99% (Pew Research Centre, 2007; 2013).

These studies demonstrated that the ideological positions of the two media houses that were studied, namely, *Daily Monitor* and *New Vision*, had a bearing on the way the two newspapers framed the bill. *Daily Monitor* is privately owned while *New Vision* has government as the majority shareholder. It emerged that there were differences in the frequency of reporting about the bill. Initially, both *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* provided the bill the same amount of coverage but later the former decreased their coverage when the debate reached its peak at international level, while the latter increased the amount of coverage when the criticism to the bill reached its peak internationally. Strand (2011) attributes this trend to the editorial decisions taken by both media houses. Moreover, *New Vision* provided more negative coverage than *Daily Monitor* did, reflected in the commentaries and letters to the editor that allow for clear positions to be stated. Any neutral coverage came from the stories written by journalists and these were the least in number. The study attributes this to possible self-censorship by journalists especially in the government owned *New Vision*, since to oppose the bill could be interpreted as promoting homosexuality, one of the new offences proposed by the bill.

Despite these differences, however, both media houses accorded little editorial space to those opposed to the bill. Specifically, civil society activists opposed to the bill failed to obtain editorial space and resorted to buying space in order to publish their views in form of press releases. Regarding the source of frames used in the coverage of the bill, it was found that the majority of the frames originated from social commentators or in the letters' section of the newspaper. Strand (2011) concluded that the frames therefore were not necessarily an outcome of journalistic output but rather a result of social commentators, ordinary citizens or columnists wishing to comment on the bill.

Civil society opposition to the bill only partially succeeded in influencing the framing of the bill in terms of public health and human rights issues in that coverage was neutral or supportive of the bill. The civil society frames included:

The bill is a threat against public health, as it threatens to undermine commitments and efforts to provide universal access to HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment; the bill is

anti-human rights and anti-constitutional as it is contradictory to international human rights commitment and human rights protections enshrined in the Ugandan Constitution; and the bill has repercussions for all Ugandans and not only homosexuals (Strand, 2011:922).

Strand (2011) found that usage of these frames came from the general public and social commentators and not from the human rights activists. This was demonstrated in the direct or indirect quotations attributed to the human rights activists. While *New Vision* generally provided less coverage, the human rights activists were more visible in their reporting than they were in *Daily Monitor*. *New Vision* contained five items where the human rights activists were directly or indirectly quoted.

Contextual issues are also responsible for the unbalanced coverage of homosexuality by the Ugandan press. Strand (2012) found that the predominant anti-gay sentiments present in the legal, political and social frameworks in Uganda was reflected in the media coverage of homosexuality by the lack of direct quotations from gays and lesbians or discrimination against them by both *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*. However, it emerged that the different house styles of the two newspapers resulted in different coverage at a certain point. Whereas initially both newspapers accorded the same amount of coverage to homosexuality, when criticism to the bill reached its peak, *New Vision* coverage diminished while that of *Daily Monitor* increased. Strand (2012:577) concluded, “The privately owned print media, thus, appear to be less restricted by the surrounding societal context” although they did not totally refrain reproducing the negative and discriminative discourses.

While available literature indicates that the Ugandan government is generally opposed to homosexuality (Englander, 2011; Ssebagala, 2011), it remains to be empirically established to what extent the government has directly influenced the frames used in the coverage of homosexuality issues. The current literature focuses on the efforts of human rights activists to influence the framing of homosexuality in the press, and touches on other frame sources such as the ordinary citizens and social commentators. This current study attempts to fill this gap by investigating other sources as well including government and political actors.

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed literature on framing theory, paying attention to the media framing of contentious issues, specifically homosexuality. The chapter has discussed the theoretical background of framing followed by an overview of framing theory, outlining the three paradigms of framing research. The key concepts in framing were also clarified followed by a discussion on media frames, frame building and frame setting and framing and bias in the media. Lastly, the chapter reviewed literature on the press framing of contentious issues, specifically homosexuality, both internationally and in Uganda where the current was carried out.

Chapter 4

Research methods and methodology

Introduction

This study investigates the framing of homosexuality in two Ugandan daily newspapers, namely, *Daily Monitor* and *New Vision*. The study adopted a quantitative research methodology using systematic content analysis, and focused on the two years before the anti-homosexuality bill was introduced, the year the bill was introduced and two years after the bill was introduced. The content analysis investigated the frames, the tone of the story, the story formats and placement of stories as well as news sources. This chapter presents the rationale for using the quantitative approach and describes the research design, data collection instruments, the content analysis technique, the sampling technique, the coding procedure, reliability, validity and generalizability issues as well as the limitations and challenges faced.

The quantitative approach

The study employed a quantitative research methodology. A quantitative research design was most suited for this study because the study was mostly interested in investigating the dominance of the various variables under investigation. These variables were frames, sources, story formats, tone of the articles and placement of stories. During the investigation, the frequency of these variables over time was examined in order to determine their dominance over the five-year period under study. This was in part due to the fact the study sought to compare coverage before and after the anti-homosexuality bill was passed. Using this research design, it was possible to determine how the two newspapers framed homosexuality and whether there were any changes in reporting patterns over the five years that were being assessed.

The decision to adopt the quantitative research design was also in keeping with academic traditions regarding the study of frames, and specifically, the framing of homosexuality, by the press. This was based mainly on the fact that most frame analysis studies recommend or employ quantitative research methods (Entman, 1993). More specifically, studies that have examined the framing of homosexuality by the press have employed quantitative research techniques, specifically, content analysis (Li and Liu, 2010; Pan *et al.*, 2010; Strand, 2012; Engel, 2013). Furthermore, and perhaps most importantly, a quantitative research design allowed the researcher to deal with a large volume of data that was generated from the sample. A qualitative analysis of all the 328 articles that were considered during the analysis would not have been possible given the human and financial resources that were available to the researcher.

Research Design

The study adopted the descriptive design (Berelson, 1952) in order to “provide a complete and accurate description” (Struwig and Stead, 2013:7) of the way *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* frame homosexuality. As such, the data that was collected was organised, described and summarised using simple frequencies, descriptive statistics and cross tabulation in order to establish the association between the frames, tone, story format, story placement, sources on the one hand, and the year and the two newspapers on the other hand. In the presentation of results in chapters 5 and 6, issues such as the mean, the range and the minimum and maximum values were specifically reported.

The study did not employ inferential statistics for a number of reasons. Firstly, as will be seen in the section on sampling, the sample was purposively selected and was quite narrow. As such, all the media in Uganda did not stand an equal chance of being included in the sample and there was no intention to generalise the results to the rest of the media in Uganda from the onset (Balnaves and Caputi, 2001). Therefore, there was no need to undertake probability tests. Secondly, the study opted for research questions and did not include any hypotheses to be tested. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, is the new development in quantitative research that gives researchers the option not to use inferential statistics (Trafimow and Marks, 2015). In the editorial published in the *Basic and Applied Psychology* journal, the

authors contend that a very high confidence level such as 95% does not necessarily suggest a high chance of being within the interval. This development fits in well with the purposive sampling that was undertaken for this study.

The rationale for choosing the descriptive design was based on the idea that one of the key objectives of the study was to establish whether there was change in the reporting patterns over the five-year period. The descriptive design is “a rich source of anecdotal data and a model for the acquisition of fundamental information,” (Rourke *et al.* 2001). Therefore, the results of this study will provide the foundation for further research, especially from a qualitative perspective.

Data collection instruments and techniques

Codebook and code sheet

The research employed a content analysis codebook in which the variables were defined. The codebook also described the coding procedure in detail in order to minimise errors and disagreements between coders. The coders used the codebook to code the entire sample.

The codebook was utilised together with the coding sheet. The coding sheet was in form of a Microsoft Excel Worksheet. The researcher opted for an electronic coding sheet in order to avoid duplicating entering the data.

Content analysis

Content analysis is defined as a research technique that is used for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of manifest media or communication content (Berelson, 1952). Although some scholars argue that content analysis is one of the most quantitative techniques that are susceptible to coders’ bias, once the categories have been defined clearly and the coders have established high intercoder reliability, the degree of infiltration of bias is reduced (Rourke *et al.*, 2001). The term ‘systematic’ in this case refers to the organisation or proper structuring of the specific set of ideas, assumptions, concepts and interpretations in order to keep the data organised (Reber, 1995).

Content analysis is not without its shortcomings. For example, the technique is not appropriate for assessing the reasons why articles appear the way they do, or how the audience interprets messages (Wakefield and Elliott, 2003). Nonetheless content analysis is a useful technique for describing how the media covers visible or manifest content (Hagelin, 1999).

As such, the researcher opted for the content analysis technique because the study required the description and analysis of items about homosexuality from *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* using a method that is less subjective and more organised (Hansen *et al.*, 1998). The study limited itself to manifest data and not latent data, hence the appropriateness of the content analysis technique.

By undertaking a content analysis, the research was keeping in line with previous studies on the press framing of homosexuality (Li and Liu, 2010; Pan *et al.*, 2010; Strand, 2012; Engel, 2013). The study covered a five-year period from 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2011. The period was selected in order to include analysis of newspaper reports published in a period that has hitherto been understudied. Recent research covers the period 1997 to 2007 (Tamale, 2007b) and October 2009 to June 2010 when the anti-homosexuality bill was tabled before parliament (Strand, 2011; 2012; 2013). By studying the period from 2007 to 2011, this study covers two years before the introduction of the bill, the year the bill was introduced (2009), and two years after the introduction of the bill. The bill was tabled before parliament on 14 October 2009 (The *Daily Hansard*, 14 October, 2009). This period also provides ample space to compare coverage before and after the introduction of the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill in Uganda. Most of the literature available tends to focus on the period when the bill was introduced and the period immediately after. Studying this period was necessary for understanding the general trends of press coverage of homosexuality in Uganda. Since this study set out to investigate the changes in reporting patterns, this time frame was appropriate (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006), to cover that period that is not included in recent research.

With regard to frame analysis, content analysis allows for the systematic investigation of the presence of frames in a media text (Riffe *et al.*, 1998) and is frequently preferred as the traditional method of identifying news frames (Van Gorp, 2007; Borah, 2011). By using

clearly defined categories, the researcher is able to determine the content of the messages by translating “frequency of occurrence of certain symbols into summary judgments and comparisons of content of the discourse” (Altheide, 1996: 15, citing Starosta, 1984), as was the case for this study. Content analysis is therefore useful for studying changes in trends (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006) for example the use of a certain frame over a period of time.

Of particular relevance to this study is the view that content analysis of media texts has been employed to establish how news sources and statements are used to promote a certain view to the audiences (du Plooy, 2009). For example, Po-Lin Pan *et al.* (2010) used content analysis to examine the specific political or social topics regarding homosexual marriage as highlighted in the *New York Times* and *Chicago Tribune*; and which news sources were frequently used by each newspaper based on their ideological positions. Strand (2011) also used content analysis to study the attempts by human rights groups in Uganda to influence the press agenda regarding the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill. She focused on which frames were attributed to the human rights groups and concluded that the human rights groups were only partially successful in influencing the press framing of the bill because coverage of their frames was neutral or supportive of their frames.

Content analysis has also been employed by studies about the framing of homosexuality by print media (for example, Li and Liu, 2010; Pan *et al.*, 2010; Strand, 2012; Engel, 2013). These studies examined various aspects of press coverage of homosexuality including fairness and balance, topics related to homosexuality that the press employed in their coverage, the framing of sources, frame building and the influence of media framing on the support, or not, of homosexuality. This study used content analysis to examine the trends, tone and framing of newspaper coverage of homosexuality in the Ugandan press. Specifically, the study looked at the presence and/or absence of particular frames and sources, the overall tone of an article as well as the story formats and placements. This was done in order to examine the dominance of frames, story types, story locations and sources and whether coverage was balanced or biased. The frames examined were religion, legislation, crime, medicine, human rights and culture.

For the purposes of this study, content analysis was used in the descriptive manner (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006) in order to describe which frames exist in Ugandan media regarding the coverage of homosexuality. This was aimed at providing as much detail as possible about the frames, given that this is a relatively understudied area in the Ugandan context. Content analysis was specifically useful for identifying which frames and sources have been used in the media and changes in the frames and sources used as demonstrated by Pan *et al.* (2010) who analysed how the *New York Times* and *Chicago Tribune* covered the gay marriage issue between 2002 and 2004.

The choice to study media texts was motivated by the understanding that examining media content is crucial for understanding framing (Borah, 2011). This is because the media is one of the key social institutions where framing takes place, especially regarding social and political issues (McCombs, 1972; McCombs and Shaw, 1977; McCombs, 2004). According to these authors, modern mass media provide an avenue for issues to be recognised as important by citizens who may not share the same experiences or spatial-temporal context. In the case of homosexuality, it has been established that what most people know about homosexuality is from media reports since they do not have first-hand experience with homosexuals (Calzo and Ward, 2009).

Furthermore, as cultural institutions, the media initiate, reinstate, reiterate or promote a particular understanding of an issue and in the process affect the public attitude towards a given issue. As such, the way an issue is framed influences the way it is understood by the audience (McCombs, 2004). Moreover, by investigating the presence and/or absence of particular frames, a researcher is able to infer or even apply other methods to examine the effect of these frames or of the framing on public opinion. The latter is beyond the scope of this study.

The decision not to study a specific aspect of homosexuality was informed by the assumption that the debate in Uganda has not yet reached a level where specific aspects of homosexuality (for example, gay marriage and adoption of children by homosexual couples) are discussed quite extensively, as is the case in some societies such as the United States of America and the

United Kingdom. On the contrary, the discussion in Uganda can be said to focus on the broader subject of the acceptability of homosexuality.

And lastly, the strength of this research design is that it involved applying the content analysis technique to identify the trends in the press coverage of homosexuality in Uganda, and providing for comparison across time, of how the different frames were used in the media texts. As Borah (2011:256) put it, “the studies examining the frames in communication identify the various frames present in the text”. An identification of which frames were used by the press is essential for understanding the possible influence of media framing on the understanding of, and the attitudes towards, homosexuality in Uganda. This kind of investigation is also useful for examining how else the press in Uganda frame homosexuality when they are not reporting on the anti-homosexuality bill, which thus far, has dominated academic inquiry in this area.

Stages of content analysis

A number of steps were involved in undertaking the content analysis as described in the sections that follow.

Defining the research concerns

The problem statement clearly outlined what the study was about and why it needed to be undertaken. Drawing on past research about the subject of homosexuality, the content analysis technique was selected as the most appropriate as described in the previous section. Additionally, because the term “media” is broad and encompasses television, radio and even the press (Hansen *et al.*, 1998), the media was defined as the press, specifically *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*.

Sampling: Content analysis of print media

The Uganda media has been described as diverse, consisting of print, electronic and new media—including online news and social media—(Freidrich-Ebert, 2012). Radio is the most dominant medium in Uganda (Open Society of Eastern Africa, 2010; Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, 2012) and the most popular source of news. One opinion poll reported that 68% of those

surveyed said they get their news from radio (Afrobarometer, 2011 as cited by Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, 2012). This is probably due to the low levels of literacy and widespread poverty that hinders the purchasing of newspapers by the majority rural population (Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, 2012). Nevertheless, data for this study was collected from the press, specifically the newspapers that are of a national nature in terms of content and reach/circulation (Kanaabi *et al.*, 2004).

The decision to study the national press and not radio was informed by the observation that even with the prevalence of radio in Uganda, the print media, especially newspapers, remain influential (Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, 2012) especially with regards to politics. Homosexuality is as much a social, as it is a political, subject (Brewer, 2003). Besides, "...mainstream newspapers in Uganda are [...] the conscience of the political elite" (Lugalambi, 2006:173). This means that the press provide a platform for both politicians and political activists to make themselves and their ideas known to the public in order to influence public deliberations. Moreover, even though radio is the most widespread medium in Uganda, coupled with the interactivity, inclusiveness and spontaneity that it provides, the political voices that radio carries are the same voices one finds in the press (Mwesige, 2004). In chapter 2 of this study, it emerged that politicians were some of the key drivers of the debate on homosexuality, in Uganda and Africa as a whole, and that their opinions on the subject contributed quite considerably to the discourse carried in the media.

The case for the study of national newspapers was further strengthened by the idea that newspapers in Uganda influence the agenda in another way as seen through the press reviews and analyses of newspaper stories of the day carried on morning radio and television shows, especially when it comes to the commercial media (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2012; Semujju, 2013). At the same time, newspapers provide a source of story ideas to the editorial teams of electronic media (Semujju, 2013), especially for those radio stations that do not employ field reporters. As such, the national press provided a rich source of data for this study.

The data for this study was collected specifically from the two most widely read daily newspapers, *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* (The Open Society Initiative for East Africa, 2010), using the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling was undertaken because

there was no need for a sampling frame (Balnaves and Caputi, 2001), among other reasons, as explained in the paragraphs that follow. *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* were therefore an appropriate source of data for this study.

The two newspapers are found on opposite ends of the media spectrum in terms of the editorial content and practice (Lugalambi, 2006). *Daily Monitor* considers itself independent and “free from the influence of government, shareholders or any political allegiance” (*Daily Monitor*, 2009: n.p). However, this appears to have changed since Lugalambi wrote in 2006, and may not be as obvious as it was back then (see *The Independent*, 2013). On its part, initially, after being granted financial autonomy and editorial independence by government, *New Vision* set a “progressive political line, supportive of the Movement⁴ ideals, but critical of failings” as the basis of its editorial philosophy (*New Vision*, 2007/2008:5). *New Vision* and its sister publication *Sunday Vision* have been categorised as “pro-government” (The Open Society Initiative for East Africa, 2010:17). The same report categorises *Daily Monitor* and its sister publication *Sunday Monitor* as “independent” (The Open Society Initiative for East Africa, 2010:17).

Secondly, the two newspapers represent the media ownership pattern in Uganda, with *New Vision* being government-owned while *Daily Monitor* is privately owned. This is in addition to the fact that the two newspapers are owned and published by the two media conglomerates that dominate the media landscape in Uganda, namely, the *Vision Group* and the *Nation Media Group*, respectively (The Open Society Initiative for East Africa, 2010; Strand, 2012).

Thirdly, the two newspapers were accessible and easy to reach both electronically and physically. They have their head offices in Kampala, the capital of Uganda, where the researcher resides. Additionally, both their online and physical archives are open to the public and are up to date. These reasons make them suitable for academic study of contentious issues

⁴ The Movement, also known as the National Resistance Movement (NRM), is the political party in power in Uganda, having started out as a political system known as the Movement system that ran on a no-party basis until a referendum that opened up political space in Uganda.

such as homosexuality and climate change (Strand, 2011; 2012; 2013; Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012; Semujju, 2013).

Overview of the selected media

New Vision

Since *New Vision* was established in 1986 as a state-owned newspaper, it has evolved over the years into a multimedia company to include newspaper, magazine and internet publishing as well as television and radio broadcasting. It is part of *Vision Group*, which is a publicly listed company, with government as the majority shareholder. In addition to the daily paper, *New Vision*, *Vision Group*, publishes the weekly *Saturday Vision* and *Sunday Vision*. The Vision Group also publishes the daily vernacular newspaper, *Bukedde*, which is produced in Luganda. Luganda is one of the most widely spoken local languages in Uganda⁵. Other local language newspapers the *Vision Group* produces are *Etop*, *Orumuri*, and *Rupiny* (The Open Society Initiative for East Africa, 2010). The daily circulation for the *New Vision* as at 31 March 2016 was 27,367 while that of the *Sunday Vision* was 18,906 according to the Audit Bureau of Circulation figures of January to March 2016 (Audit Bureau of Circulation, 2016).

Daily Monitor

The Monitor was established in 1992 by a group of six journalists at the now defunct *Weekly Topic*, which was owned by three cabinet ministers at the time. The Nation Media Group (NMG), which is based in Nairobi and is listed on the Nairobi Stock Exchange, bought *The Monitor*, making it part of a big media empire whose majority shareholder is the Agha Khan Foundation for Economic Development (The Open Society Initiative for East Africa, 2010). The paper was renamed *Daily Monitor* in June 2005. The daily circulation of the *Daily Monitor* as at 31 March 2016 was 19,793 while that of the *Sunday Monitor* was 15,587

⁵ The ethnologue: languages of the world, describes Luganda as the de facto language of national identity (<http://www.ethnologue.com/language/lug>).

according to the Audit Bureau of Circulation figures of January to March 2016 (Audit Bureau of Circulation, 2016). Nation Media Group also owns radio and television stations in Uganda.

Sampling of the time and issues/dates

Purposive sampling was used to determine the study period as well as the range of the issues to constitute the message pool. The study period constituted five years from 2007-2011. This study period was selected in order to expand the scope of previous research, which tended to focus on the years 2009-2010 when the anti-homosexuality bill was introduced in parliament and debated in the press both locally and internationally. By studying the period 2007-2011, this study included the period before the bill that had hitherto been understudied. The year 2011 was included in order to accommodate the period that followed the introduction of the bill especially after the local and international debate had reached its peak. Altogether, a total of 60 months was included in the sample.

Likewise, the number of issues that was included in the sample was selected purposively and consisted of every issue of *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* published between 1 January 2007 and 31 December 2011. This included the daily editions, the Saturday editions and the Sunday editions of both newspapers. The reason for the inclusion of such a large number of issues was because the researcher had no idea beforehand as to the number of messages that might be in the population. More so, homosexuality is viewed as a contentious subject in Uganda and there is no knowing the level of coverage by the two newspapers. This approach yielded enough content to analyse for this study since this period has not yet been researched. Moreover, the weekend editions, especially the Sunday editions, provide more analysis, feature and opinion articles that could have easily been missed if the study had restricted itself to the daily editions only. It was also necessary to consider such a large sample because homosexuality is a relatively new topic for the Ugandan media and it was important to include all the editions so that a considerable sample could be obtained.

The expected total of issues was 3,640 published over a period of years (See box 4-1). However, during the search for the issues to be included in the sample, it was discovered that *New Vision* does not publish a Christmas issue. In total therefore, 3635 issues constituted the sample (after subtracting the five Christmas editions of *New Vision*). As such, each newspaper

made up 50 % of the message pool (N=3635). It is worth noting that there were no stories published in 31 editions that constituted the sample. Therefore, the items that were part of the sample came from 3604 editions (3635-31) as illustrated in box 4-1.

Box 4-1: Constitution of study sample

1 week= 7 editions

52 weeks (1 year) = $52 \times 7 = 364$ editions for one newspaper

5 years= $364 \times 5 = 1820$ editions for one newspaper

Total for the two newspapers= $1820 \times 2 = 3640$ editions

$3640 - 5$ Christmas editions for the *New Vision*=3635

$3635 - 31$ editions that had no stories= 3604

Selecting the relevant content

Both electronic and physical archives were searched for stories about homosexuality in both *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*. The key search terms included, “homosexuality,” “homo,” “gay,” “gays,” “gayism,” “lesbian,” and “kuchu” (local term used in Uganda by homosexuals to refer to themselves) and “anti-homosexuality bill”. In addition to these specific keywords, other key words that enabled the coders to widen their search were “sodomy,” “sports,” “HIV” and “penal code”. As Strand (2012) notes, this wide selection of search terms narrows the search to include the relevant items since in Uganda, the term “homosexuality” is also used to refer to other sexual minorities.

A useful way to identify the stories was by looking at the headlines and checking whether they contained any of these key words. If a story’s headline carried any of these words, they

were analysed further in order to determine if they were about homosexuality or not. If the stories were found to be about homosexuality, they were assessed further to identify the frames and other aspects that were coded. Names of key figures in the debate on homosexuality in Uganda also provided a useful hint on whether to consider the story or not. These key figures include individuals such as Prof. Sylvia Tamale and Pastor Martin Ssempe who are on opposing sides of the rights debate with the former supporting the rights of homosexuals and the latter opposing the rights of homosexuals.

The researcher took note of each issue that had been searched in order to ensure that there was no repetition or omission of issues that were part of the sample. The latter was likely to arise given that both *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* do not include items such as briefs and international news in their online editions. This necessitated manually searching the archives of both newspapers in order to include these items.

Determining the unit of analysis

The unit of analysis was an individual item or article (Callaghan and Schnell, 2001; Yang, 2003) covering homosexuality. The research defined an item as a news story (both local and international), a feature, an opinion piece, a letter to the editor, an editorials and a regular column. The item was considered for analysis if its content was about homosexuality as a subject and not because the item mentioned homosexuality. These items could be found in any of the newspaper sections namely, the front page, national news, regional news, international news, sports, business news, supplementary, OpEd and letters to the editor.

After the electronic and manual searches, the number of items came to an *N* of 328. Of these, 142 items came from *New Vision* and 186 from *Daily Monitor*. This entire population was included in the content analysis because they all met the criteria. This mirrored the procedure followed by an earlier research conducted by Keenan (1996). After using key terms to search for articles on public relations using the television news archive at Vanderbilt University, all the 79 articles that were identified were included in the content analysis. On their part, Miller *et al.* (1996) included all the 995 journal articles found in the Educational Resources Information Centre (ERIC) database. According to Neuendorf (2002), this usually happens

for small samples where there is no need to choose a smaller representative sample of the population. As such, all the units in the population are included in the study.

Deciding variables and categories for coding

A preliminary study was undertaken before the actual coding. The items that were used at this stage were obtained from the online editions of both newspapers. The purpose of the preliminary study was two-fold. First it was meant to establish which frames were present in the two newspapers since these were fairly new. The second purpose of the preliminary study was to assign the codes to the frames and other categories that were coded. In addition to the frames, the location of the article (e.g. the front page, national news), the story type (e.g. brief, feature, news), the sources cited in the stories (local sources, continental, international) and the tone (positive, neutral or negative), were also coded. It was after the preliminary study that a codebook was developed.

The various categories that were included in the codebook were defined to suit the objectives of this study as explained below:

The placement of the item

Unlike Strand (2012), the location of the article in this study referred to the different categories/sections under which newspapers in Uganda cover stories. These include the front page, the national news, regional news, international news, sports, business news, supplement/special/supplementary, OpEd (opinion and editorial) and letters to the editor. This classification not only takes into consideration the local setting and perhaps framing devices of the Ugandan press, but also allows for the researcher to unearth the importance/relevance that the newspaper attached to the article. The study assumed that a story placed under national news was considered as having national importance or relevance as opposed to a story placed under regional news. Regional news covers the five main geographical regions in which Uganda is divided, namely, the north, the south, the east, the west and central. Furthermore, administratively and politically, the central region is at the centre of Ugandan politics, economics, religion, culture, education etc. For example, Uganda's capital, Kampala, is found in the Central region and also houses the parliamentary buildings, the seat of the

judiciary as well as the headquarters of most of the ministries. As such, such stories would have been difficult to categorise if this categorisation was dropped.

Supplements are another very common feature of the Ugandan press. These are paid for and the content therein is mostly determined by the sponsor of the supplement. They are normally published on special occasions such as national holidays. Sometimes they are thematic, for example, in commemoration of World Water Day on 22 March every year. It was necessary to include this category to take care of such ‘special’ coverage, which is also an indication of what kind of attention the press accords a topic. With specific importance for this study was the observation by Strand (2011) that during the debate on the anti-homosexuality bill, when the newspapers denied the human rights group editorial space, the groups turned to running a special report that was paid for in order to get their message across. The sports page is a very prominent section of the Ugandan newspaper. It is argued here that it is only second to the front page especially seeing that it is the last page and it carries its own prominent mast. Moreover, advertisers compete for space both on the front page and the sports page. Therefore classifying a story as placed under say page 55, would not accurately represent the importance the newspaper attaches to the story/topic.

The story format

This category catered for the kind of items found in the newspapers. ‘News’ referred to the hard news items as opposed to the feature stories. During the preliminary study, it was observed that the feature stories were labelled appropriately even though they appeared on the second page. This was mostly common in the weekend editions. The study assumed that publishing a story as a feature was an indication of the importance the newspaper attached to the story since features provide more room for more information and exploration as opposed to a hard news story that is normally used for “breaking news” or new information. Hard news stories are also the normal and commonest type of reporting and dominate newspaper reports.

‘Briefs’ are found on almost all pages of the newspapers-except the front page- and are labelled appropriately. They are very short articles, usually with no accompanying photographs or even direct quotes. They are exactly what their name suggests, brief! It was

the understanding of the researcher that a story covered as a brief was considered of less importance than a fully-fledged hard news story on page one.

The editorial shows the position of a newspaper on a given issue or topic. It was important to include this category in the codebook given the findings from earlier studies that showed that the Ugandan media and press specifically, were biased in their reporting of homosexuality issues. This category would most definitely indicate the position of the newspapers on the subject of homosexuality.

The letters to the editor, and the opinion pieces, were relevant for identifying the attitude of the public to homosexuality and for identifying whether the public, journalists or political elite were responsible for the kinds of frames that were found in the two newspapers. From the findings of her study on the attempt by the Ugandan human rights groups to influence the framing of the anti-homosexuality bill, Strand (2011) argued that although the human rights groups did not succeed in directly influencing the framing of the bill, they could have influenced the public who wrote in (to the letters to the editor and through opinion pieces) in support of the human rights groups' position.

Like the feature story, the interview/profile shades more light on an individual or group. This kind of story also gives the interviewee the opportunity to speak for him/herself. As such, this kind of story is important in as far as measuring the importance the newspaper or journalist places on a topic. An interview is more prominent than an ordinary hard news story or even a feature article.

Frames

The frames mentioned earlier are described below. They are also contained in the codebook.

1. Religion (reference to God, Christianity; Islam and African traditional religion; scriptures; the Bible, the Quran)
2. Legislation (reference to legislation regarding homosexuality; both pro and anti-homosexuality legislation)

3. Crime (reference to homosexuality as a crime; homosexuals arrested/charged; individuals charged with crimes related to homosexuality)
4. Medicine (reference to the causes of homosexuality and the dangers of homosexuality)
5. Human rights (reference to the rights of homosexuals)
6. Culture (reference to the history of homosexuality in Uganda; Ugandan culture; African culture; other cultures).

Sources

Sources were characterised under three broad categories, that is, local (Ugandan), continental (African) and “other” or the rest of the world. Particular sources included politicians (such as the president of any country, members of parliament, ministers and local government leaders), religious leaders (Christian, Muslim or African traditional religion leaders), cultural leaders (kings, local chiefs, the *katikiro* or his equivalent), health personnel (such as doctors, nurses and psychologists), lawyers, pro and anti human rights activists or institutions, lay people or ordinary citizens, law enforcement officers (such as the police and judicial officers), research work, homosexual people (gays and lesbians) and media professionals (such as journalists and editors). These categories were created based on the observation that these categories of people often inform the news or opinions in one way or another.

Overall tone

The codebook also included a variable intended to measure the overall tone of the article towards homosexuality. Coders could choose between positive, neutral or negative tones. An article was considered “positive” if the majority of the statements about, and overall impression of, homosexuality were positive. A neutral article took a balanced stance and used an equal number of positive and negative statements. The article was categorised as negative if the majority of the statements about and overall impression of homosexuality were negative. This approach was borrowed from Boyd and Paveglio’s (2014) study that examined the media’s coverage of the factors relating to risk from carbon capture and storage and how the technology was portrayed and whether the coverage was positive or negative.

Development of the codebook and code sheet

A codebook was developed to include the various categories that were investigated during the study. The codebook was quite detailed and set the parameters for what was to be included in the study and what was to be excluded. In addition to the items listed above, the codebook also included the newspaper (whether the *New Vision* or the *Daily Monitor*) and the year of publication. The design of the codebook ensured a smooth coding process. The codebook is attached as appendix A. The categories that were developed were entered into a Microsoft Excel spread sheet (with the guide of the codebook). The Microsoft Excel spread sheet served as the code sheet.

Intercoder reliability checks

The intercoder reliability exercise was undertaken after the codebook had been developed. Intercoder reliability was central to the coding process throughout the study. Intercoder reliability is defined as “the extent to which independent coders evaluate a characteristic of a message or artefact and reach the same conclusion” (Lombard *et al.*, 2002). It was important that two independent coders arrived at the same conclusion after assessing the same text, in order for consistency, validity and reliability to be achieved. When established, inter-coder reliability gives the researcher the confidence to distribute the work among various coders (Neuendorf, 2002). For this study, it was very important for intercoder reliability to be established given the contentious nature of the subject under study. The last thing the researcher wanted was for her data to be questioned regarding a technicality. Moreover, since the frames under investigation were relatively new, it was important that all the coders arrive at the same conclusion in order to aid future research in the same area.

For the intercoder reliability exercise, the two coders were trained in using the codebook and category system prior to data collection. Thereafter, each coder coded 15% (49 articles) of the entire sample before actual coding (Krippendorff, 2004) and a similarity of .98 was obtained. Once this acceptable degree of intercoder reliability had been obtained, the coders embarked on the actual coding of the data. The researcher worked with the coders the whole time.

Data collection/coding procedure

The two main tools that were used for data collection were the codebook and the code sheet. Each of the 328 items that had been identified earlier were read from the beginning to the end. This was done to ensure that the item was primarily about homosexuality. Once this had been established, the coders, using the codebook as their guide, proceeded to code the items. Each item was coded for the name of the newspaper, the year of publication, the frame, the format of the story, the placement of the story, sources in the story and the tone. In most cases, one article contained more than one frame and/or source. In that case, up to five frames and sources were coded.

Particularly useful during the coding process was the classification of the stories by the newspapers under sub-themes of some kind. For example, even though a story was found on the national news page, it was still classified under, say, religion. This gave the coders an initial idea about what the dominant frame was.

Data analysis

After the completion of the coding exercise, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (version 21) (SPSS) application was used to run simple descriptive statistics, cross tabulations and frequencies for analysis. The data analysis employed SPSS because of its popularity and availability. SPSS has been described as “a powerful package, which has traditionally been popular, and continues to be so, with social scientists for content analysis purposes” (Hansen et al., 1998:122). The findings are presented in chapter 5.

Reliability, validity and generalisability

In order to address any validity and reliability issues, the researcher worked with three other coders (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006; Lombard, 2010). The three coders were chosen based on their previous experience with similar work in an academic environment, specifically, media related research. This greatly reduced the training and coding time and produced excellent results. The three coders were first trained in using the codebook before undertaking the assignment. Thereafter, each of the four coders coded 20 articles (10 from each

newspaper) and the results were compared in order to ensure that all of them had grasped the working of the codebook. It is important for the entire team to understand the meaning of the different categories in order to obtain valid results (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006). This exercise also boosted the coders' confidence to handle the assignment since it served as both a bonding and learning experience.

After this familiarisation exercise, two coders were then put in charge of identifying the items that were to be considered for the analysis. These two searched both the online and printed editions of the newspapers. Once these items had been identified, the other two coders embarked on coding the items. The researcher was one of the coders and worked closely with the rest. This was meant to ensure the validity of the whole exercise by being available to answer any questions that might arise along the way. This "division of labour" enabled the entire team not to feel overwhelmed by the volume of the work they had to deal with.

In addition, since the team began work at 9 o'clock in the morning and finished at 5 o'clock in the evening, the researcher ensured that all the coders observed the breaks that had been designed to be part of the day's programme. These included the tea break at 11.00 a.m. and the lunch break at 1.00 p.m. That way, the monotony of coding was broken and everyone's mind was refreshed for the next part of the day. Something else that proved helpful was interacting with the coders during the breaks and bonding with them. This made them feel part of the research and therefore contributed to their being more committed to the work.

These results of this study are limited and not entirely generalisable. This is especially because the sampling was limited to two national dailies and did not include radio, which is the dominant medium in Uganda (Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, 2012). Additionally, newspapers, radio and television target different audiences and are different in the way they are organised, the topics they cover and their nature of reporting. Moreover, New Vision and Daily Monitor are further limited in terms of the language they publish in, which is English. Although the two have a national reach (Kanaabi *et al.*, 2004), and English is one of two official languages in Uganda, English is not widely spoken in Uganda and is limited to the elite (The Open Society Initiative for East Africa, 2010). As such, these two newspapers do not represent the media in Uganda.

Limitations and challenges encountered

Before presenting the results in the next chapter, it should be noted that there are several studies highlighting the limitations with analysing media text. A primary concern is the many biases influencing the final product, that is, media texts, which make these texts an unreliable source for accurate descriptions of real world events (Earl *at al.*, 2004; Oliver and Maney, 2000). This study does not use media texts as sources for accessing real world events. However, the study takes cognisance of the notion that the media in most cases is a mirror of society; more so since the journalists and other media workers who contribute to the production of what we eventually see as media reports belong to the societies in which their media houses operate. As such, even though they are guided by journalistic norms and principles, which require them to be “objective”, they may not necessarily be shielded from the influences from their society. Media texts, therefore, present a useful tool to study what is happening in the society in which they are produced. There is, however, a limitation in the sample. Print media is by no means the dominant media in Uganda. However, the reasons for choosing to study print media were discussed earlier in the section on sampling. Suffice to say, however, that given the time limitations of an academic study such as this one, access to complete records is key. Experience from other researchers shows that gaining access to complete records of numerous radio stations’ transmissions was not possible (Strand 2012). This narrowed the sample to newspapers only.

Initially the researcher planned to rely on the online search engines of the respective newspapers for the articles to be coded. However, very few articles were obtained using the online search engines. The researcher therefore resorted to using the printed copies of the newspapers and found more articles. In addition, as outlined above, using the printed copies was necessary for finding articles under categories such as briefs and international news that are not uploaded as part of the news.

A qualitative analysis of the articles under study would have shed more light on the overall analysis; however, that was beyond the scope of the present study. Despite some of these limitations, this study for the first time provides a systematic analysis of framing literature from the last decade (Borah, 2011:255). This study did not look into a specific issue about

homosexuality such as same-sex marriage because the aim of the study was to paint a general picture of the coverage of homosexuality in the Ugandan press over the years, specifically before and after the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill. It is recommended that future studies attend to this area. Also, this study is not an experimental study. Future research should look into the real effects of the media frames on Ugandans' perception or understanding of homosexuality and related issues.

Chapter 5

The results

Framing homosexuality: frames, tone, story format, story placement and sources

Introduction

Homosexuality remains a contentious issue in Uganda. This study set out to investigate the frames, tones, story format, story placement, sources and reporting patterns of the two main media houses in Uganda, namely *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*, with regard to the phenomenon. The period under investigation constitutes the years between 2007 and 2011, encompassing the enactment of the anti-homosexuality bill in 2009. The study set out to answer three research questions as follows: (1) How did *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* frame the issues of homosexuality from 2007 to 2011? (2) Were there any changes in reporting patterns of homosexuality issues between 2007 and 2011? (3) What is the implication of the results to journalism in Uganda regarding the coverage of a contentious issue?

This chapter presents the results of the first research question. The results of the second and third research questions are presented in chapters 6 and 7 respectively. As mentioned above, with the first research question, the study sought to answer the question: How did *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* frame homosexuality between 2007 and 2011? This question considered (a) the specific frames used in press coverage; (b) the tone of the frames; (c) the story format; (d) the placement of stories; and (e) the sources used in these articles. This is preceded by a general discussion on the coverage of homosexuality by the two newspapers.

Coverage of homosexuality

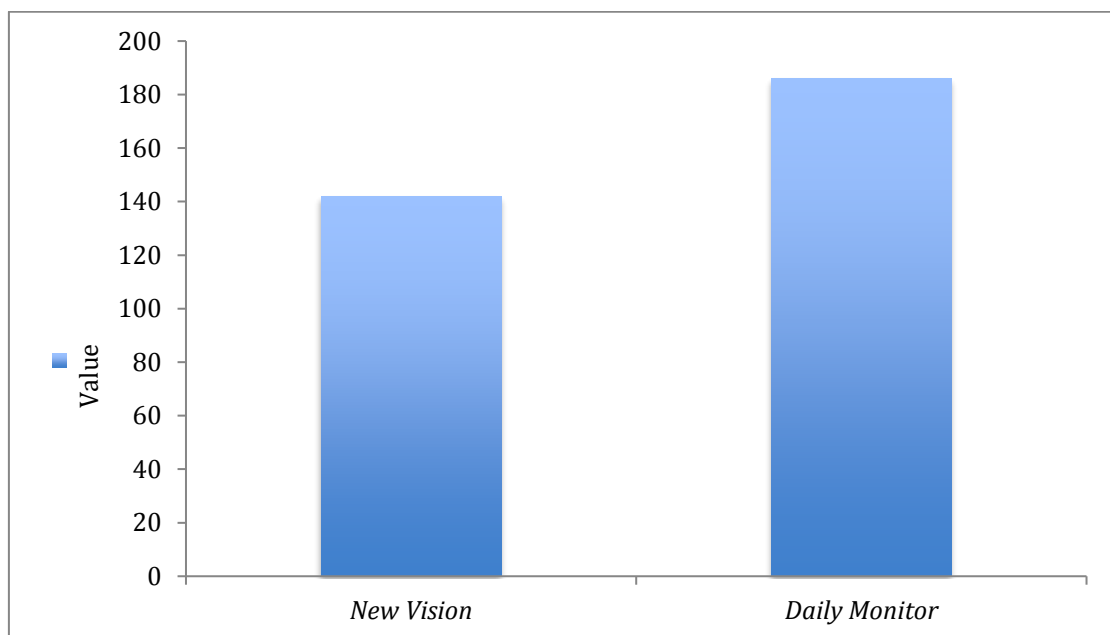
Table 5-1 and figure 5-1 below show the coverage of homosexuality by *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* during the five-year period. Cumulatively this amounted to 328 stories. The table

shows the presence of stories about homosexuality in each of the two newspapers, thereby according attention to the subject. From the analysis as shown in the same table, *Daily Monitor* published 56.7% of the stories (n=186) against *New Vision*, which had 43.3% (n=142).

Table 5-1: Frequency of stories (Number of items (N=328) for the period 2007-2011)

Publication	Frequency	%
<i>New Vision</i>	142	43.3
<i>Daily Monitor</i>	186	56.7
Total	328	100.0

Figure 5-1: Coverage by *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* for the period 2007-2011



Further analysis reveals marginal difference in coverage of 44 articles (186-142) between the two media houses, implying a near convergence in reporting on the phenomenon by the two newspapers. This is in agreement with the literature about reporting on such a matter. According to Strand (2012) when the anti-homosexuality bill was first introduced to

parliament, both the bill and issues on homosexuality received an equal amount of coverage in *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*. Strand (2012) also observed that coverage dropped in *New Vision* when the issue started receiving international criticism.

The marginal difference in coverage points to “the consensual nature of society” (Hall *et al.*, 1978:55), one of the key assumptions that journalists make about society in an attempt to give meaning to social events and issues. Here, journalists assume that since all members belong to one society, they draw from a common source of cultural knowledge and are therefore most likely to interpret events the same. In this case, in spite of the difference in the ideological positions of the two newspapers (*Daily Monitor* is viewed as more liberal than *New Vision*), the nature of coverage thus far reflects the often-held view that Ugandans are mostly united when it comes to the issue of homosexuality. This was also revealed in the Pew Research Centre (2007; 2013) surveys on the subject. The survey results showed that Ugandans were overwhelmingly opposed to homosexuality, as claimed by over 99% of those interviewed. Thus, while *Daily Monitor* would be expected to provide overwhelmingly more coverage than *New Vision*, in fact this was not the case. This further reflects Kuyper’s (2002) findings in the United States of America, that the American media mostly feed their audience on one position regarding homosexuality, that is, American society tolerates homosexuality, regardless of other attitudes on the issue. These two newspapers would therefore not be expected to provide more coverage of such a contentious issue, to which the government is opposed, hence presenting a picture of “one Uganda”.

Framing homosexuality: specific frames

The above results were subjected to further analysis. This included investigating the reporting by the two media houses assessed against the six frames. These were human rights, crime, culture, religion, legislation and medicine. This was undertaken with the view of identifying the frames used in the coverage of homosexuality and, in turn, isolating the dominant frames used by the two media houses. The results and observations are presented in table 5-2.

Table 5-2: Combined frequency of frames

Frames	Frequency	%
Human Rights	104	31.7
Crime	55	16.8
Culture	53	16.2
Religion	42	12.8
Legislation	39	11.9
Medicine	34	10.4
Total	328	100

All six frames that were investigated were found to be present in the news reports that were examined for this study, as seen in table 5-2 above. However, a huge variation in range was observed. The dominating frame was the human rights frame, registering n=104 in absolute count and accounting for 31.7% of the total, with the medical frame registering the least count at n= 34 or 10.4%. The range is 70 (104-34). It was further observed that human rights appears to be an outlier with the rest of the frames being in close range with each other. For instance, in descending order, crime at n=55, culture at n=53, religion at n=42, while legislation stood at n=39 and medicine trailed at n=34. Although this latter group of frames appear to have local grounding, it appears they did not attract media attention to the magnitude of the human rights frame that is considered alien to the Ugandan context especially on controversial matters of the magnitude of homosexuality.

Even then, framing theory contends that there is no single perspective to an issue and that each perspective has consequences for values and considerations (Chong and Druckman, 2002). The manifestation of all the six frames in this coverage is testament to this assertion. Consequently, it is important for the press to provide a variety of information when reporting a controversial issue in order to offer the public the opportunity to make up their own minds (Nassanga, 2008; Semujju, 2013). By focussing on one perspective, the press would be limiting the information available to the public, thereby, as Kuypers (2002) argues, abdicating their democratic duty. Therefore, much as the presence of these varying frames is commendable in this regard, the variation observed above is not enough to conclude that the coverage was balanced given the obvious predominance of the human rights frame.

Nevertheless, it is consistent with existing literature from countries such as the United States of America and those in Southern Africa, which shows that most discussions about homosexuality in the press take place in a rights context regardless of the existence of other frames (Dunton and Palmer, 1996; Brewer, 2002; Broad *et al.*, 2004; Mongie, 2013). It is also an indication of the central place of the human rights perspective in the discussion on homosexuality in Uganda, both in the press and in other spheres of society. Some scholars argue that in Uganda, the public discussion on homosexuality came into the media limelight following a suggestion by one rights activist in September 2003 to have the equal opportunities commission in Uganda recognise the rights of homosexuals as a minority group (Tamale, 2007a). Focus on the human rights frame also speaks to the global nature of the discussion of homosexuality in the press and outside the press.

Besides the human rights frame, the other prominent frame according to table 5-2 is crime, which came second with $n=55$ and contributed 16.8% of the total coverage. Where homosexuality is illegal, the media usually report it as a crime, with homosexuals portrayed as deviants and social misfits out to cause trouble (Alwood, 1996; Tereskinas, 2002). As discussed in chapter 2, the crime frame is entirely negative in its portrayal of homosexuality. It is therefore not surprising that it featured prominently, since homosexuality is considered a crime in the penal code act of Uganda (Hollander, 2009; Tamale, 2009; Englander, 2011).

Homosexual activities in Uganda are illegal according to section 145 of the country's penal code act. These acts are classified as unnatural offences under the "offences against morality" chapter of the law. It is possible therefore, that the use of the religion and culture frames—combined—more than the crime frame, serves to emphasise the moral aspects of homosexuality. The idea of homosexuality as a morality issue is especially prevalent in the United States of America where most of the research has been undertaken (Gallagher and Bull, 1996; Rimmerman *et al.*, 2000; Brewer, 2002; 2003). In addition, being considered an "unnatural" offence makes it an interesting frame for the Ugandan press to invoke in an environment that is viewed as "hostile to homosexuality", as this frame fits in with the prevailing sentiments from the cultural, religious, legal and even political perspectives. From a framing perspective, the use of the crime frame in this manner appears to serve the purpose of defining what we know about homosexuality and how we know it by the media supplying

a context in which an issue is understood (Tankard *et al.*, 1991). In other words, the media prescribe what the public should know about homosexuality, which in this case although a human rights issue, homosexuality is presented as an unnatural offence that goes against the morals and laws of the Ugandan society.

However, crime was followed closely by culture with $n=53$ (16.2%). Discussions on homosexuality in Africa take place within a cultural context, where homosexuality is viewed as Un-African and therefore a western import (Cock, 2003; Van Zyl, 2011; Nyanzi, 2013). The difference between the two frames is two stories (55-53), which is perhaps an indication that the two frames compete with each other in informing the discussion on homosexuality in Uganda. Therefore, much as homosexuality is illegal in Uganda (Hollander, 2009; Tamale, 2009; Englander, 2011), it is also considered a cultural issue (Ssempe, 2007; Nyanzi, 2013). As such, the prominence of these two frames is a demonstration that the media in any society reflects the prevailing discourses at any given time, and, more specifically, the discussion on homosexuality the world over is discursive and usually reflects the dominant discourses at the time (Alwood, 1996; Sinnott, 2000; Kuhar, 2002). This is also the case in Uganda. Given that political and religious leaders usually invoke the cultural frame, it is central to the discussion on homosexuality. It is evident therefore, that homosexuality reflects the dominant discourses of the day in a given society.

A further analysis of the results in table 5-2 shows that although crime was the second most single utilised frame with $n=55$ (16.8%), a combination of the culture (16.2%) and religion frames (12.8%), which are closely related, becomes $n=95$ or 29.0% (16.2%+12.8%) which is above crime (16.8%). The difference between crime on the one hand and culture and religion on the other hand is 40 stories. This puts the culture and religion frames in second place overall, with $n=95$ (53+42) in absolute count. This new value places religion and culture just nine places below human rights (104-95), which is quite close. Once again, it appears that the human rights and culture and religion frames are in competition with each other (Strömbäck *et al.*, 2008). However, the newly attained second place for the religion and culture frames could be a reflection of the deep religious and cultural values of the Ugandan society. Moreover, religion, it is said, played a key role in bringing the discussion on homosexuality in Uganda into the public arena (Ward, 2013). In fact, in addition to the politicians, some of

Uganda's key figures in the discussion on homosexuality are religious leaders such as Pastor Martin Ssempe; former Archbishop of the Church of Uganda, Henry Luke Orombi and; the head of the Muslims in Uganda (Tamale, 2007b; Kaoma, 2009; Ward, 2013). In addition, these drivers of the discussion, who partly constitute the elite in Uganda, are known to invoke the cultural frame and claim that homosexuality is incompatible with African/Ugandan culture (Reddy, 2002; Stobie, 2003; Ssebagala, 2011).

When it came to legislation, the stories where this frame was applied were 39 in number (11.9%), coming in fifth, and significantly below crime. At this point it is nearly impossible to account for this situation, especially since legislation, specifically the 2009 anti-homosexuality, was a key driver of the debate on homosexuality in Uganda, given its controversial propositions. As such, the distribution of these frames across the years would be helpful for finding out how the frame was used across the years. This is addressed in chapter six.

Lastly, medicine was the least used frame, accounting for 10.4% (n=34). In countries where the debate on homosexuality is still at the initial stage, this frame is usually applied negatively to discussions on the origins of homosexuality and homosexuality being a psychological disorder that can be cured through psychosocial counselling programmes. Like the law and crime frame, outlined above, a consideration of the application of this frame over the years would aid analysis of whether time and/or context have any influence on the way this frame is applied. This is also dealt with in chapter 6.

Distribution of frames in *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*

Table 5-3: Distribution of frames in *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*

			Publication		Total
			<i>New Vision</i>	<i>Daily Monitor</i>	
Frames	Human Rights	Count	48	56	104
		% within publication	33.8	30.1	
	Medicine	Count	12	22	34
		% within publication	8.5	11.8	
	Culture	Count	25	28	53
		% within publication	17.6	15.1	
	Crime	Count	24	31	55
		% within publication	16.9	16.7	
	Legislation	Count	10	29	39
		% within publication	7.0	15.6	
	Religion	Count	22	20	42
		% within publication	15.5	10.8	
Total			142	186	328

In an attempt to understand how the two newspapers utilised the frames identified above, the data was further broken down according to the publications as shown in table 5-3. According to the table, both *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* relied mostly on the human rights frame for their reporting. The frame contributed 33.8% (n=48) of the coverage in *New Vision* and 30.1% (n=56) of *Daily Monitor*'s coverage. The difference in coverage is eight stories (56-48), which is quite narrow. Thus, it appears that these two newspapers relied on the human rights frame in their reporting of homosexuality, as observed.

However, a difference can be seen in the use of the other frames by the two newspapers—in descending order:

- *New Vision*: Human rights 33.8% (n=48); culture 17.6% (n=25); crime 16.9% (n=24); religion 15.5% (n=22); medicine 8.5% (n=12) and; legislation 7.0% (n=10).
- *Daily Monitor*: Human rights 30.1% (n=56); crime 16.7% (n=31); legislation 15.6% (n=29); culture 15.1% (n=28); medicine 11.8% (n=22) and; religion 10.8% (n=20).

Notably, whereas *New Vision* applied the legislation frame the least (7.0%, n=10), for *Daily Monitor* it was the medicine frame (11.8%, n=32) that occurred the least. Additionally, while culture came second in *New Vision* (n=25), for *Daily Monitor* it was crime (n=31). A number of reasons can be advanced for this. One is that for a long time *New Vision* did not provide coverage for homosexuality or related issues (Strand, 2012). In fact, it is claimed that the newspaper even has an unwritten policy to that effect (Strand, 2012). Secondly, *New Vision* reports on homosexuality in order to communicate the government's position, which is anti-homosexuality (Strand, 2012). For example, when the anti-homosexuality bill was first introduced into parliament, *New Vision* abandoned its policy on not reporting on homosexuality but then at the height of the international debate and criticism, the newspaper's reporting reduced noticeably (Strand, 2012). *Daily Monitor*, on the other hand, is viewed as a more liberal newspaper that at some point seemed to have taken an editorial decision to present all sides of the debate on the bill (Strand, 2012). In both cases however, medicine was the second least frame as enumerated above.

From the foregoing discussion, it appears that the two newspapers' coverage of homosexuality is not limited to the human rights frame. Both newspapers provided coverage using six frames, including human rights, albeit to varying degrees. The other frames were culture, religion, crime, medicine and legislation. Nevertheless, it appears the combined coverage as well as the separate coverage by each of the newspapers relies on the human rights frame, making it the dominant frame applied by these two newspapers. Additionally, the top three frames, that is, human rights, culture and religion, reflect the dominant discourses globally, in Africa and in Uganda, which makes the point that the press coverage of homosexuality is discursive in nature and often reflects the dominant discourses and societal sentiments (Alwood, 1996; Kahur, 2002; Strand, 2011; 2012; Vincent and Howell, 2014). The slight difference in coverage by the two newspapers, regardless of their different ideological positions, points to the role that the media plays in creating "consensus" in

society, by drawing on the common stock of frames, in order to make events and issues more meaningful as Hall *et al.* (1978) contend. Homosexuality is ‘abhorred’ in Uganda and so the media has to find ways of communicating about it without compromising the interests of their audience and the government, which regulates the media environment. One way they can achieve this is by applying familiar frames or frames that resonate with the commonly held views such as culture and religion frames.

The tone

Table 5-4: The tone (combined for both *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*)

Tone	Frequency	%
Negative	207	63.1
Positive	64	19.5
Neutral	57	17.4
Total	328	100.0

The items containing the frames were also coded in relation to the tone taken on the issue in both newspapers. Three perceived tones were of interest to this study, positive, negative and neutral. The results are presented in table 5-4 above. This analysis found that more than 50% of the items, that is 63.1% (n=207) were toned negatively towards homosexuality. Interestingly, the positive items outnumber the neutral items by just seven (64-57), which although not so far apart still places them way below the negative items. Moreover, in each of the two newspapers, the negative items formed the majority, as shown in table 5-5 below. Table 5-5 shows the distribution of the tones in the two newspapers.

Table 5-5: Distribution of the tones in *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*

		Publication		
		<i>New Vision</i>	<i>Daily Monitor</i>	Total
Tone				
Negative	Count	98	109	207
	% in publication	69.0	58.6	63.8
Positive	Count	23	41	64
	% in publication	16.2	22.0	19.1
Neutral	Count	21	36	57
	% in publication	14.8	19.4	17.1
Total	Count	142	186	328
	% in publication	100	100	100

According to table 5-5, the negative items in *New Vision* accounted for almost 70%, that is, 69.0% (n=98) of the total number of items while in *Daily Monitor*, they accounted for 58.6% (n=109). While the difference is almost negligible (given the mean is 63.81%), it is interesting to note that *Daily Monitor* contained more negative articles than *New Vision*, and yet it is considered the more liberal newspaper of the two. Nonetheless, there is a near convergence in the nature of reporting once again (the negative items in both newspapers are not that far apart) and yet at the same time, it seems the “liberal” *Daily Monitor* is even more negative. This is especially because even though *Daily Monitor* provided more coverage, as evidenced by the large volume of items (n=109), most of them were negative.

It emerges that overall coverage of homosexuality in the two newspapers is mostly negative and a reflection of the negative sentiments towards homosexuality as is prevalent in the Ugandan society. Thus, these findings confirm the literature on the Uganda media’s coverage of homosexuality. Several scholars have reported that media reporting in Uganda is “homophobic” (Strand, 2012:576), tends to adhere to the government position—which is anti-homosexuality—(Strand, 2011) and drowns out voices that are supportive of homosexuality (Tamale, 2007a; Borlase, 2012; Strand, 2012; Nilsson, 2013). The results are also consistent with literature from within Africa. Scholars from Malawi and South Africa found that media reports on homosexuality were dominantly negative, and reflected the strong cultural views

that label homosexuality as un-African, un-Godly and unnatural (Muula, 2007; Vilakazi, 2011; Vincent and Howell, 2014).

The use of a variety of frames as observed earlier in tables 5-3 (page 106) and 5-4 (page 108) is negated by the fact that most of the coverage is negative, which is an indication of bias against homosexuality. According to framing theory, bias is inherent in framing given that through framing, the media choose what to include on their agenda and how to include it. In this regard, it appears that the media chose to include homosexuality on their agenda (and not to ignore it *per se*), but they also chose to cover it in a negative way, which advances the dominant position, and which also happens to be the government position. This brings to the fore one of the functions of media frames: to set the tone for an issue or event (Tankard, 2003) by providing an interpretative background that is used to judge a story (Graber, 1989). By presenting homosexuality negatively, the two newspapers are likely to influence the way their audiences interpret homosexuality, that is, as a negative phenomenon. Gitlin (1980) contends that presentation is important in the way frames function to portray an issue. Biased reports are capable of swinging the public understanding of the issue at hand (Brewer, 2002), but this may not always be the case when it is an 'active audience' which is likely to sense bias in media reports (Gibson and Hester, 2007). Nonetheless, it is worth pointing out that the media frames play the dual role of defining what is significant as well as interpreting events happening around us. It was outside the scope of this study to determine the influence of this reporting on the Ugandan audience, but future research in this area would make informative reading.

Away from that, the clear manifestation of bias towards the government position brings to light the argument that even though media institutions are independent entities, which are supposed to remain objective and carry out the role of informing and educating the public, they are also national institutions (as opposed to international institutions). As such, during the coverage of a contentious issue they apply their rules in a way that enables them to serve the national interest, which is determined by other more powerful institutions and actors (McQuail, 2010). A case in point is the American media during the September 11 events of 2001. According to Williams (2003), journalists swiftly forsook their pretence of objectivity and started presenting the government position unquestioningly. The same practice was

reported by Alwood (1996) and Strand (2012) who argued that the American and Ugandan media respectively reported homosexuality in a biased manner, patterned along the fact that homosexuality was illegal in the two countries at the time.

In a way, this leads to the understanding of frames as cultural phenomena. According to Hertog and McLeod (2003), as cultural phenomena, frames have cultural structures, key ideas and peripheral concepts associated with them that vary in strength and kind. These include myths, narratives and metaphors with which members of society are proud to identify and which inform their morals, stories and definitions of their culture. In relation to homosexuality, available literature indicates that homosexuality is loathed in most parts of Africa and is seen as incompatible with most African cultures (Muula, 2007; Vilakazi, 2011; Nyanzi, 2013). This understanding of homosexuality has been handed down to generations, to the extent that any opposing views are hardly communicated, especially not in the media (Muula, 2007; Tamale, 2007b; Nyanzi, 2013). It should not be surprising then that most members of society identify with this narrative since it informs their morals and stories. Therefore, the media, as part of society, find themselves promoting this one negative view of homosexuality because they share it with members of their audience (Hall *et al.*, 1978). After all, cultural resonance makes media content appear natural and familiar (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989).

Story Format

Further analysis was carried out to determine the format of items that were used in the coverage during the period under study. This was done with the view to determine the kind of attention/reporting that homosexuality received. The story types were taken directly from the daily and weekend newspapers. The results are shown in table 5-6.

Table 5-6: Story format

Story format	Frequency	%
Hard news	201	61.3
Opinion/commentary	57	17.4
Letter to the editor	33	10.1
Brief	17	5.2
Feature	14	4.3
Interview	6	1.8
Total	328	100

Table 5-6 shows the formats that the items in the news reports took. From the table, it was observed that hard news dominated coverage, providing 61.3% (n=201) of the stories. Meanwhile, the interview was the least and accounted for 1.8 % (n=6) of the stories. The stories were registered under different forms and in varying extremes in terms of quantities. The range is 194 (200-6), which is quite wide. Nonetheless, it was observed that the hard news category is an outlier, given the close range within which the other categories lie with each other. For instance, brief (n=17), feature (n=14) while opinion/commentary (n=57) and letter to the editor (n=33) all in absolute count. Further observation indicates that the opinion/commentary 17.4% (n= 57) was followed by the letters to the editor whose percentage was 10.1% (n=33). However, the opinion/commentary and the letters can be merged to form one block, given that both categories are a result of commentary from ordinary citizens wishing to comment on a subject, and not journalists (Strand, 2011). The sum of these two is 90 (57+33), which is still way below hard news. This leaves the hard news stories as the commonest type of stories used to report homosexuality in the two newspapers. It appears therefore that the two newspapers relied on hard news stories in their coverage of homosexuality.

Although the opinion/commentary (n=90) is way below hard news in absolute count (n=201), that it is in second place points to how accommodative of views other than theirs, the two media houses are. One can also draw on Strand's (2011) observation to back this argument. Strand (2011) noted that even though the Ugandan human rights organisations did not fully succeed in influencing the framing of the bill in the media, the significant number of opinion

pieces and letters to the editor about the bill was a sign that the same organisations influenced the public to talk about the bill and homosexuality through commentary. Therefore, since these externally sourced stories came in second place, this could be an indication of an attempt to balance the views and opinions carried in both newspapers to a certain extent, by accepting external voices (this can only be assumed at this point since the tone and opinion/commentary were not cross analysed). Balance and objectivity are key ingredients of a credible media report, more so in a politically charged situation, although it is not always easy for media houses and journalists to remain balanced and objective when covering certain subjects.

That said, opinion/commentary and letters to the editor do not necessarily conform to the formal journalistic style, and originate from the public, unlike hard news stories, which are subjected to journalistic principles and are therefore a more controlled form of reporting. The reliance on the hard news stories inevitably begs the question as to why this was the case. Framing theory posits that frames organise the world for both journalists and their audiences in that they allow journalists to easily identify and categorise information in order to relay this information to the audience efficiently (Gitlin, 1980). Related to this is the argument that frames simplify complex issues for both journalists and their audiences (Hall *et al.*, 1978). To these two foregoing ideas, add the view that framing allows journalists to report controversial issues in a way that they can control (Li and Liu, 2010) by setting the terms and the limits of the debate (Gamson and Modigliani, 1987). One way to achieve all the above is through the choice of story format. By relying on hard news, the media houses seem to be setting the limit to news on the topic, which only journalists are ‘authorised’ to report if it is to be legitimate, and consequently, limiting the direct input from the audience through commentary and letters to the editor. These hard news stories also seem to function to maintain the status quo by making information about homosexuality appear both natural and familiar (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989) in that it is news as usual—not a feature or interview. In addition, it has been argued that frames allow journalists and media houses to conceal bias (Tankard, 2003) and make a story appear objective, which is in favour of the journalists. This argument is best exemplified by an earlier observation concerning the dominant use of negative frames to cover homosexuality, in that the media houses covered homosexuality and thus played their

role of informing the public about this very controversial subject, but in a very controlled and biased (negative) manner.

The editorial, which is the formal voice of the newspaper, was conspicuously absent, indicating the level of commitment or lack of it that the newspapers attached to the issue of homosexuality. This could imply that even though the newspapers dedicated editorial space to the issue of homosexuality by reporting news about the subject, they were non-committal, possibly due to the unfriendly environment in which they operate. This is in spite of the notion that media house ideology influences framing and reporting (Pan *et al.*, 2010; Strand, 2012). Given the strong stand that *Daily Monitor* is expected to take on such controversial issues, in most cases going against the official position and offering balanced coverage unlike *New Vision*, it is surprising that the same newspaper appears to not have been willing to make its position on the subject of homosexuality known. It appears that the two media houses essentially played the role of messenger and did not participate in the discussion in any way that compromises this position. Hence, it is probably true that frames are mostly unspoken and not acknowledged, which makes them very useful in the coverage of contentious issues since they set the terms of the debate yet leave the audience unaware (Tankard, 2003).

Another observation was that the two categories that allow for detailed coverage, that is, features and interviews, were at the bottom of the table. Features accounted for 4.3% (n=14) while the interviews accounted for 1.8% (n=6) of the overall coverage. This places both categories below the briefs whose percentage was slightly higher at 5.2% (n=17). It appears that coverage of the subject matter did not provide detailed reporting in form of features and interviews but neither was the reporting so brief. Instead, the reporting relied on hard news stories, which are routine, and most probably do not go beyond the prescribed limits of ordinary news reports. As elaborated in the previous paragraphs, once again the frames appear to play their most significant role, which is to set the terms and limits of the coverage of this contentious subject, by keeping them within the 'acceptable' and ordinary format, enough not to reveal obvious bias by limiting the use of the 'briefs'.

Further analysis revealed very little difference between the two newspapers as table 5-7 (on page 116) illustrates. Table 5-7 shows the distribution of the story formats in the two

newspapers. A close observation of the results reveals a similar pattern to that observed in table 5-6 (on page 104). For both newspapers, the hard news category tops the table, taking up 66.9% (n=95) of *New Vision's* coverage and 57.6% (n=106) of *Daily Monitor's* coverage. Additionally, the interview was the category with the smallest percentage in both newspapers: 0.7% (n=1) for *New Vision* and 2.7% (n=5) for *Daily Monitor*. In both cases, the range is quite wide, and hard news appears to be an outlier given the closeness of the other categories. The items in *Daily Monitor* outnumbered those in *New Vision* in nearly all categories, except features and briefs. Both newspapers registered a tie when it came to features (n=7) but briefs came to n=5 in *Daily Monitor* and n=12 in *New Vision*. Nonetheless, there were more features (n=7) than briefs (n=5) in *Daily Monitor*, while *New Vision* had more briefs (n=12) than features (n=7). Therefore that two newspapers appear to have maintained a similar reporting pattern as far as the story format is concerned. This is consistent with the results and observations made above, in that the two newspapers relied on the hard news category in their coverage of homosexuality, with the same implications as discussed above.

Nonetheless, an interesting difference was found in the two newspapers regarding the interview. As table 5-7 (on page 116) shows, *Daily Monitor's* interviews came to n=5 (2.7%) while those in *New Vision* totalled n=1 (0.7%). *Daily Monitor* published more interviews than *New Vision* during this period. It appears, therefore, that to a very small extent, *Daily Monitor* did some detailed reporting on the subject matter through the interview format, reflecting the liberal position of the newspaper. This is because, as pointed out in chapter 4, the interview format would require more focus on an individual, group or subject matter, beyond the normal hard news reporting. This format would not feature prominently in a conservative newspaper, which would rather maintain the journalistically controlled hard news format.

Table 5-7: Distribution of story formats in *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*

			Publication		
			<i>New Vision</i>	<i>Daily Monitor</i>	Total
Story	News	Count	95	106	201
Format		% Within publication	66.9	57.0	61.3
	Feature	Count	7	7	14
		% Within publication	4.9	3.8	4.3
	Brief	Count	12	5	17
		% Within publication	8.5	2.7	5.2
	Opinion piece/ Regular column	Count	14	43	57
		% Within publication	9.9	23.1	17.4
	Letter to the Editor	Count	13	20	33
		% Within publication	9.2	10.8	10.1
	Interview/ Profile	Count	1	5	6
		% Within publication	0.7	2.7	1.8
Total		Count	142	186	328
		% Within publication	100	100	100

In addition to the above, suffice to say that journalists are limited in their choice of story formats as such factors as story formats and newspaper structure are responsible for what ends up as news (Hall *et al.*, 1978). There is no way of telling whether the journalists would have preferred to report homosexuality any other way outside the prescribed norms, and that demonstrates the limitations that journalists encounter in their selection and construction of news. However, as Schudson (2003) argues, whichever way you look at it, news is a result of conscious choices made within the limitations of various factors such as journalistic norms, values and newsgathering routines. Therefore, journalists are not exactly powerless in that regard. The preponderance of the hard news story was therefore most likely by choice to a certain extent, as it was a result of the limitations above.

In the section that follows, the results of the analysis are presented in order to establish the placement of stories in the two newspapers. The analysis considered the structure of the two newspapers as demonstrated in table 5-8 (on page 117). This was meant to investigate how

the two media houses viewed homosexuality, for example, whether it was considered a national issue, a regional issue or an issue that deserved front-page coverage.

The placement of items

Table 5-8: Placement of items

Placement of the item	Count	%
Front page	25	7.6
National news	115	35.1
Regional news	34	10.4
International news/Africa	39	11.9
Sports page	4	1.2
Business page	1	0.3
Supplements	26	7.9
Opinion & Editorial (OpEd)	51	15.5
Letter to the editor	33	10.1
Total	328	100

Table 5-8 above shows the placement of the items in the various sections of the two newspapers. From the results in the table, items under national news were the majority, with 35.1% (n=115), while items in the business pages were the least, with 0.3% (n=1). The range is 114 (115-1) but further analysis reveals varying quantities of all the categories. Some of the categories were in close range with each other, for example, on the one hand, international news (n=39); regional news (n=34); letters to the editor (n=33); supplements (n=26) and front page (n=25) and on the other hand, sports page (n=4) and business page (n=1). Lastly, the OpEd stood alone and accounted for 15.5% (n=51). Furthermore, it was observed that national news (n=115) and the OpEd (n=51) were outliers in their own right, given that their values were far apart from all the others and from each other. Nevertheless, the OpEd pages contained far less items than the national news pages. Therefore, a significant number of the stories were found in the national news pages.

From the foregoing, only 25 stories out of 328 were found on the front pages, meaning that the prominence accorded to homosexuality was marginal and occasional. This is keeping within expectations (Strand, 2011), considering that homosexuality is a taboo in Uganda and furthermore that *New Vision* even has a policy barring journalists from covering homosexuality (Strand, 2012). The marginal prominence was a result of placing most of the stories on the national news pages, which come immediately after the front page in these two newspapers. Indeed this strengthens the point made earlier that both newspapers paid commendable attention to the subject as illustrated in tables 5-3 (page 106) and 5-4 (page 108). However, this too is negated by the overwhelming presence of negative frames as observed earlier and illustrated in tables 5-4 (page 108) and 5-5 (page 109). Even then, this points to the media's power when it comes to framing a contentious issue in that prominence does not always equal to balanced and/or unbiased reporting, but can in fact be used to cover up bias (Li and Liu, 2010). Or even worse, prominence does not necessarily make the issue newsworthy (Williams, 2007).

Moreover, by relying mostly on the national news pages (n=115), it appears the newspapers framed homosexuality as a national issue as opposed to an international/African issue (n=39) or even local issue /regional news (n=34) that concerns the ordinary citizen on the peripherals of the capital, Kampala. In a way, this kind of framing could result in emphasising the idea that homosexuality is not indigenous to Uganda and so any discussion on the matter can only take place at the national level, which caters for the elite. This is despite the argument that homosexuals have existed in Ugandan society since time immemorial (Murray and Roscoe, 1998) and even today, there are gay and lesbian individuals in the rural parts of Uganda who have never come into contact with any Western individuals or even attended formal education (Tamale, 2009; Nyanzi, 2013). This is another sign of biased reporting by the two newspapers in that they only focus on the national issues and pay less attention to the local/rural/regional issues regarding homosexuality. Nevertheless, it also goes to make the point that achieving balance and objectivity in media reports is very different, when one considers the notion that media are national institutions, which at some point must abandon objectivity and rally behind national interest (McQuail, 2010). In a way, the national news pages represent an embodiment of what is considered relevant and of value to the elite nationals. This is especially so when one considers the argument that the media reproduce elite political discourse (Entman, 2004).

Furthermore, much as the issue was treated as a national issue, a significant number of the items about homosexuality were found on the OpEd pages (n=51), the letters to the editor section (n=33) and the supplements (n=26). The OpEd items were second overall, while the letters were fifth out of nine categories, followed closely by the supplements. Altogether, these reports totalled 110 (51+33+26) or in percentage terms 33.5%, which is significantly close to the stories that appeared under the national news pages (35.1%). Once again, it appears there was an attempt to balance coverage with the placement of stories on the national pages competing with the placement of stories in the inner pages. Hence, homosexuality received an almost equal share of both editorial/regular news space and space that is normally allocated to the public to express their views.

Meanwhile, homosexuality also received significant coverage under the international news category, which accounted for 11.9% (n=39) of the stories. This category included news from outside Uganda, including Africa and the rest of the world. One could argue that publishing stories from outside Uganda aids the newspapers in introducing the international perspective to a local debate on an international issue such as homosexuality. In so doing, the newspapers present another perspective other than the Ugandan one, and possibly improve the variety of information available to the public through the press. Moreover, given that these two newspapers generally serve the elite population of society, this international perspective could be seen as catering for the elites' interests. Perhaps this is another factor that helps explain the dominant use of the human rights frame in the reports that were assessed. The human rights frame is an elite frame and is therefore most likely to be more meaningful to the elite audience that these two newspapers target. However, as has already been pointed out, even with this seemingly balanced and varied information, the coverage seems biased against homosexuality.

A breakdown of where the items appear in each of the two newspapers shows some differences and similarities between the two newspapers as illustrated in table 5-9 (on page 120).

Table 5-9: Placement of items in *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*

Placement of item	of			Publication		Total
				<i>New Vision</i>	<i>Daily Monitor</i>	
Front page		Count		12	13	25
		% within		8.5	7.0	7.6
		Publication				
National news		Count		53	62	115
		% within		37.3	33.3	35.1
		Publication				
Regional news		Count		17	17	34
		% within		12.0	9.1	10.4
		Publication				
International news/ Africa		Count		21	18	39
		% within		14.8	9.7	11.9
		Publication				
Sports page		Count		1	3	4
		% within		0.7	1.6	1.2
		Publication				
Business page		Count		0	1	1
		% within		0.0	0.5	0.3
		Publication				
Supplements		Count		14	12	26
		% within		9.9	6.5	7.9
		Publication				
Opinion & Editorial		Count		11	40	51
		% within		7.7	21.5	15.5
		Publication				
Letter to the editor		Count		13	20	33
		% within		9.2	10.8	10.1
		Publication				
Total		Count		142	186	328
		% within		100	100	100
		Publication				

Table 5-9 shows the placement of items in the two newspapers. The data in the table shows that both newspapers had more items in the national news pages than in any other section of the paper—for *New Vision* 37.3% (n=53) and *Daily Monitor* 33.3% (n=62). Sports (*New*

Vision 0.7% (n=1), *Daily Monitor* 1.6% (n=3)) and business (*New Vision* 0% (n=0), *Daily Monitor* 0.5% (n=1) remained at the bottom of the table for both newspapers. However, while *New Vision*'s top three categories were national news (n=53), international news (n=21) and regional news (n=17), *Daily Monitor*'s top three categories were national news (n=62), opinions (n=40) and letters to the editor (n=20). And so it appears that in its coverage, *New Vision* relied more on the 'news' categories and to a certain extent, *Daily Monitor* balanced the news and opinion categories.

This points to the difference in ideological positions of the two newspapers, in that *Daily Monitor* is likely to be more accommodative of opinions both in favour of or against homosexuality than *New Vision* (Strand, 2011). Beyond that, this data reveals that to a certain extent, these two newspapers' coverage converges to present homosexuality as a national issue, as already observed, regardless of the difference in their ideological positioning. Although it might be premature to attribute this to the idea of promoting national interest, it seems a logical explanation at this point, given the national reach of these two newspapers. In fact, even Strand's (2011; 2012) work suggests that to a certain extent, both *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* reproduced the national (government and public) position on homosexuality during the debate on the anti-homosexuality bill. Therefore, it appears that during this period (2007-2011), both newspapers framed homosexuality as a national issue more than an international or regional (local) issue as observed earlier. The nationalising of the homosexuality debate leads back to another key assumption that the media make about the consensual nature of society as already pointed out in light of the convergence in the quantity of stories each newspaper carried on homosexuality. This notion comes out more clearly here in that this kind of framing appears to rally all the Ugandan readers behind the idea that homosexuality should be understood in a certain way—a Ugandan way. In this way, the journalists of both media houses give meaning to this issue of homosexuality as a national issue.

Interestingly, for both newspapers, the analysis revealed that the front page was closer to the bottom than it was to the top, coming sixth in both cases, as shown in table 5-9 above. In *New Vision* the front page accounted for only 8.5% (n=12) of the 142 stories, and in *Daily Monitor*, only 7.0% (n=13) of the 186 stories. It is clear from this data that the difference

between the two newspapers is one (1) story (13-12), implying that indeed both newspapers did not provide that much prominence to the subject of homosexuality. This confirms the earlier observation in this regard. Moreover, once again, both newspapers appear to have taken the same position on this subject, irrespective of their difference in ideology and editorial policies.

Suffice to say that following the above observations, as noted earlier, the newspapers appear to have been biased in their reporting. This is in spite of *Daily Monitor* being viewed as the more liberal of the two newspapers. This shows that balance and objectivity are an ideal that the media aspire to attain, but which they might not achieve all the time, even when they claim to be liberal (McQuail, 2010). Framing theory posits that bias is inevitable given that framing is really about selection and salience (Entman, 1993). Nonetheless, journalists and the media hold on to the ideals of balance and objectivity and strive to achieve them especially in a bid to remain credible to their audiences. Although it would be quick to conclude at this point that there is a “decided tilt” in the media reports that were considered, there are signs, which suggest this to be the case. Several scholars have highlighted the reality of a decided tilt when it comes to topics such as congressional candidates (Kahn and Kenney, 2002; Druckman and Parkin, 2005), protest movements (Rojecki, 1999) and tax policy (Entman, *et al.*, 2005). Perhaps homosexuality should be added to this list in Uganda’s case, following research.

Sources

In an attempt to understand who/what informs the media reports on homosexuality, the content analysis included a variable on sources. Specifically, the analysis explored the sources’ geographical origin (locus), the individual sources themselves and how these variables fared in the two newspapers. The results and observations are presented below.

Geographical origin of sources

In order to determine the geographical origin of the sources, three categories were coded, namely, Ugandan, African and ‘other’ as shown in table 5-10 (on page 123). The table shows a wide variation in quantity, with the Ugandan sources accounting for 73.6% (n=241), which

puts them in first place, followed by ‘other’ in second place, with 20.4% (n=67). The African sources were the least, and were found in only 6.0% (n=20) of the stories. Nonetheless, the Ugandan source presence is overwhelmingly high given that they accounted for more than 70% of the stories.

Table 5-10: Combined distribution of sources (geographically) for both *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*

Source	Count	%
Ugandan	241	73.6
Other	67	20.4
African	20	6.0
Total	328	100

Table 5-11: Distribution of sources (geographically) in *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*

Source	<i>New Vision</i>		<i>Daily Monitor</i>		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Uganda	171	76.0	238	81.0	409	78.8
Other	39	17.3	49	16.7	88	17.0
Africa	15	6.7	7	2.4	22	4.2
Total	225	100	294	100	519	100

A breakdown of the sources according to how they appeared in each newspaper (see table 5-11 above) showed a similarity in how the sources were distributed in the two newspapers. As table 5-11 shows, the Ugandan sources had the biggest percentages in both cases, with 76% (n=171) for *New Vision* and 81.0% (n=238) for *Daily Monitor*. ‘Other’ came in second place, 17.3% (n=39) for *New Vision* and 17.0% (n=49) for *Daily Monitor*. In last place were the African sources, with 6.7% (n=15) for *New Vision* and 2.4% (n=7) for *Daily Monitor*. Even with that wide variation in the quantity of all the categories, the Ugandan sources were far ahead of all the others, accounting for more than 70% in each of the newspapers. It appears therefore that the coverage of the two newspapers relied on local Ugandan sources for their reports. Actually, this obvious dominance of the Ugandan sources points to coverage that

favours Ugandan/local sources, which could also imply that the media reports were informed by the Ugandan sources.

That African sources were used the least, is surprising, given that one of the main arguments made by the politicians and religious leaders is to the effect that homosexuality is not African (Reddy, 2002; Ssempe, 2007; Vincent and Howell, 2014). Inevitably, one is prompted to ask the question: why are there less (very few) African sources than the 'other' in these media reports? Perhaps the answer lies in the understanding that both the Ugandan (73.6%) and other sources (20.4%) mostly view homosexuality through a rights' frame, which dominates the coverage of homosexuality by the press in Uganda (see table 5-2 page 102) and globally (Alwood, 1996; Du Pisani, 2012; Mongie, 2013). This makes them more relevant to the two newspapers than the African sources. Moreover, the analysis already showed that homosexuality was mainly framed as a national issue in the stories that were considered for this study, as illustrated in tables 5-8 (on page 117) and 5-9 (on page 120), hence the need for more Ugandan sources than the others.

Additionally, the silence in the rest of Africa could have spoken volumes for the conservative nature of most African cultures especially on such matters of sex and sexuality. In the region, especially in Uganda, homosexuality is viewed as a gross perversion next to anathema that would rather be buried below the surface. Indeed this can be an invidious place for the media fraternity, which has the mandate to provide as much varied information on any subject to the public as possible in a balanced and objective manner. It appears then, that the discussion on homosexuality in the Ugandan press during this particular period was kept largely as a Ugandan affair with the rest of the world being allowed to make minimal contribution in terms of sources. The reliance on the Ugandan sources is also a way to further magnify the Ugandan perspective on homosexuality since sources reflect the public's attitude generally (Jha-Namibar, 2002). Perhaps it is also the Ugandan press' way of localising a global debate, through the use of local sources, in order to make the debate more relevant to their audience. After all, given the context in which this debate takes place (for instance, President Mugabe of Zimbabwe reportedly told the United States of America and the United Kingdom to 'keep their homosexuals to themselves' (Reddy, 2002)), it would appear that even if Uganda/Africa are to have this debate, it should be on local terms.

These observations bring to the fore the role that sources can play in the framing of an issue. According to framing theory, it is important to use a variety of sources that represent all sides of a contentious issue, and to do so in a balanced and fair manner (Kuypers, 2002). Failure to do so could easily privilege one side and make it appear stronger and therefore most likely bias readers to that one position. In this case, it appears that the Ugandan sources were privileged in that even though the other two kinds of sources were present in the reports, their presence was diminished by the overwhelming Ugandan presence. As such, the readers were fed on a heavy Ugandan diet as far as the various perspectives on homosexuality are concerned. Although at this point there is no way of telling the effect this had on the readers' view on homosexuality, it is clear that they received limited information, based on what the Ugandan sources say, and so most likely their idea of homosexuality would be informed by the Ugandan perspective.

This scenario presents a good example of how sources can be used to magnify one side of an issue (bias) and conceal this bias from an unsuspecting audience, and thus remain looking balanced and fair to all sides. It is worth noting however, that, sources do not always succeed in biasing the readers, as previous research has shown (Gibson and Hester, 2007; Li and Liu, 2010). These two studies, undertaken in the United States of America, found that audience members were able to detect bias in news reports that used sources that favoured one side of the debate on same-sex marriage. Future research therefore could consider looking into the likely influence of source bias on the Ugandan audience's understanding of issues around homosexuality.

Relatedly, by relying on Ugandan sources, the press ended up emphasising the local perspective as opposed to the foreign perspectives. This is an exhibition of the power of framing to downplay other voices and, in turn, other arguments (Swenson, 1990). More importantly, is the demonstration that framing is capable of determining the conditions of the debate without the audience noticing (Swenson, 1990). Also, given the international nature of the discussion on homosexuality, and the negative atmosphere that exists in Uganda, it is likely that the press would find it easier to push through the Ugandan perspective, since it is the one they are more familiar with and therefore, it is one which would allow them to control

the discussion. By so doing, the media houses set the terms, conditions and boundaries of the discussion.

Individual sources

The analysis went further and looked at the individual sources in the news reports. These individual sources included politicians, human rights activists, homosexuals, to mention just a few. The results are presented in tables 5-12 (page 127) and 5-13 (page 128).

Table 5-12 shows the combined distribution of individual sources in both *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*. A quick look at the table discloses that the sources varied in both quantity and name. However, the top three sources, in descending order, were religious leaders, 4.7% (n=154), lay person 3.4% (n=112) and politicians 3.0% (n=100). The difference in these three categories is quite close, which gives the impression that they are in competition with each other. Surprisingly, the pro-homosexuality rights activists accounted for 1.0% (n=33), which was more than the anti-homosexuality rights activists 0.5% (n=16). Moreover, although homosexuals (0.7%, n=24) featured less than the pro-homosexual rights activists (1.0%, n=33), they were still above the anti-homosexual rights activists (0.5%, n=16). Cultural leaders also notably featured very little, accounting for only 0.2% (n=7), the same as research with n=8 (0.2%). Additionally, official sources, namely, law enforcement officer 0.8% (n=27), legal practitioner 0.4% (n=14) and health personnel 0.3% (n=9) all accounted for less than 1%.

Table 5-12: Combined distribution of individual sources for both *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*

		Responses		Percent of cases
		Count	%	
Sources ^a	Politicians	100	3.0	30.5
	Religious leader	154	4.7	47.0
	Cultural leader	7	0.2	2.1
	Health personnel	9	0.3	2.7
	Legal practitioners	14	0.4	4.3
	Pro-homosexuality rights activists	33	1.0	10.1
	Anti-homosexuality rights activists	16	0.5	4.9
	Lay person	112	3.4	34.1
	Law enforcement officer	27	0.8	8.2
	Research	8	0.2	2.4
	Homosexuals	24	0.7	7.3
	Media professionals	14	0.4	4.3
	Not applicable	2761	84.2	841.8
	Total	3279	100	999.7
a. Group				

Table 5-13: Distribution of individual sources in *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*

			Publication		Total
			<i>New Vision</i>	<i>Daily Monitor</i>	
Sources ^a	Politicians	Count	29	71	100
		% in publication	2.0	3.8	
	Religious leader	Count	82	72	154
		% in publication	5.8	3.9	
	Cultural leader	Count	3	4	7
		% in publication	0.2	0.2	
	Health personnel	Count	4	5	9
		% in publication	0.3	0.3	
	Legal	Count	8	6	14
		% in publication	0.6	0.3	
	Pro-homosexuality rights activists	Count	14	19	33
		% in publication	1.0	1.0	
	Anti-homosexuality activists	Count	11	5	16
		% in publication	0.8	0.3	
	Lay person	Count	42	70	112
		% in publication	3.0	3.8	
	Law enforcement officer	Count	13	14	27
		% in publication	0.9	0.8	
	Research	Count	6	2	8
		% in publication	0.4	0.1	
	Homosexuals	Count	9	15	24
		% in publication	0.6	0.8	
	Media professionals	Count	4	10	14
		% in publication	0.3	0.5	
	Not applicable	Count	1195	1566	2761
		% in publication	84.2	84.2	
Total		Count	1420	1859	3279

Percentages and totals are based on responses.

a. Group

The content analysis also looked at the distribution of these sources in each of the two newspapers as illustrated in table 5-13. This analysis showed minimal difference in the way

the sources fared in the two newspapers in that the contenders for the top three places remained religious leaders, the layperson and politicians. Upon further analysis however, it appears that actually the order varied in the two newspapers. For *New Vision*, the top three sources in descending order were: religious leaders 5.8% (n=82), lay person 3.0% (n=42) and politicians 2.0% (n=29); while for *Daily Monitor* it was religious leaders 3.9% (n=72), politicians 3.8% (n=71) and lay person 3.8% (n=70). But even with this slight variation in order for *Daily Monitor*, the difference in all the three categories is just two stories (72-70). Following these, in *New Vision* were pro-homosexuality rights activists 1.0% (n=14), law enforcement officers 0.9% (n=13) and anti-homosexuality rights activists 0.8% (n=11). The pattern did not change much in *Daily Monitor*: pro-homosexuality rights activists 1.0% (n=19), homosexuals 0.8% (n=15) and law enforcement officers 0.5% (n=10). Notably, *Daily Monitor* featured fewer anti-homosexuality rights activists (n=5) than *New Vision* (n=11). Relatedly, *Daily Monitor* featured more homosexuals (n=15) than *New Vision* (n=9). This is most likely in keeping true to the two media houses' ideological positioning, with *Daily Monitor* most likely to be more accommodative of homosexuals and their supporters than *New Vision*. Nevertheless, it appears that mostly religious leaders, the layperson and the politicians informed the news reports in the two newspapers during this period, but *Daily Monitor* was more accommodative of homosexual interests than *New Vision*.

These results confirm the earlier observations that coverage was biased in several ways, including in the use of sources. It has emerged from this analysis that the media reports relied on three sources, namely, religious leaders, the layperson and politicians as shown in tables 5-12 (on page 127) and 5-13 (on page 128). Among the three, however, religious leaders featured most prominently with n=154 combined and n=82 and n=72 for *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* respectively. This places the emphasis on the religious leaders as the main informers in this debate, leading to a bias towards them, probably because their position is aligned to that of the government and the majority of Ugandans (Ssempe, 2007; Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012). The evidence in the literature shows that religious leaders, especially those in African countries such as Uganda, oppose homosexuality most of the time (Tamale, 2007b; Ssempe, 2007; Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012). Moreover, when covering homosexuality in Uganda, both local and international media rarely feature religious leaders who support homosexuality

(Carrington, 2014). These factors could have most likely contributed to the preponderance of the negative frames/stories in the media reports that were assessed for this study.

Regarding politicians as sources, it is most likely a reflection of the political nature of the debate on homosexuality. From the literature view, it was observed that in Africa, politicians are another group of key drivers of the opposition against homosexuality. Notable among these are presidents from various African countries including Uganda, Zimbabwe and Namibia (Reddy, 2002). It has been established that media reporting reflects the views of political actors (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989), who in this case are opposed to homosexuality. They could be another factor responsible for the glaring dominance of the negative frames. Also, it could be that they are more accessible than homosexuals and homosexual sympathisers for whom the Ugandan society is an unfriendly environment. As such, other more accessible sources such as religious leaders, politicians and laypersons end up appearing more in the news.

The near absence of official sources such as medical personnel and law enforcement officers is worth noting. This is especially because when reporting a contentious issue, journalists depend on official sources in order to legitimise and keep their reports credible. Therefore, the reliance on non-official sources, especially politicians, religious leaders and laypersons is a reflection of the dominant discourses about homosexuality in Uganda. It can also be inferred that the discussion on homosexuality is much politicised and takes place within a cultural context that is shaped by politicians and religious leaders. This is in line with existing literature (Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012) on the Ugandan press coverage of homosexuality. In addition, according to framing theory it would appear that the journalists turned to these sources out of convenience because their positions are already known and the information they provide would require minimal verification (Reich, 2011).

It appears then, from the preceding observations and discussion, that the public discussion on homosexuality in the Ugandan media is more informed by other sources and not the homosexuals or their sympathisers. This is consistent with existing literature, which shows that homosexuals and their sympathisers rarely feature in Ugandan media reports (Strand, 2011; 2012; Borlase, 2012). From a framing perspective, this points to the idea that part of

framing's power lies in the ability of frames to downplay other voices and arguments and in turn magnify other voices and arguments (Swenson, 1990). The results above show that the homosexuals and their sympathisers rarely speak in these reports, which means that the audience most likely will not hear their perspective first hand. In turn, this drowns out any opposing views to the dominant view, which is informed by the religious leaders in this case. Similarly, framing theorists posit that the dominant sources can sway the debate into a certain direction (Jamieson and Waldman, 2003). It is likely that the reliance on sources other than homosexuals and their sympathisers contributed to the biased reports that have been observed. This is because the dominant and accessible sources such as religious leaders, politicians and the layperson are known to oppose homosexuality, and the results have shown that this is the dominant position in the media reports as well.

Framing theory also posits that journalists and their sources enjoy a symbiotic relationship. While journalists rely on sources for the information they need to construct news, sources need to reach the public, which the media has access to (Hall *et al.*, 1978; Carlson and Franklin, 2011). However, not all sources are equal (Chibnall, 1977) and journalists tend to rely on certain sources more than others, depending on their accessibility, credibility and relevance (Sigal, 1973), which leads to the privileging of some sources, as the case appears to be here. The privileging of the religious leaders could be an affirmation of the central position that religious leaders occupy in this debate on homosexuality (Ssempe, 2007; Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012; Ward, 2013), which is, the opposition to homosexuality. Therefore, their prominence in these news reports is merely reflecting the idea that sources have the capacity to build frames and influence journalistic reporting. This choice of sources as observed here also links to the idea that the media are a reflection of their society and one way they reflect their society is to choose their sources based on factors such as relevance, authority and legitimacy. Nevertheless, sources also serve to reassure the public, when the media are reporting a contentious issue (Colby and Cook, 1991). In Africa and especially in Uganda, matters considered bordering morality, such as sexuality, are largely left to religious or cultural/opinion leaders (Ward, 2013). In this case, it can be said that the religious leaders served to reassure the Ugandan public of the dominant position on homosexuality in Uganda, which can be read as, 'homosexuality should not be accepted in Uganda'.

More specifically, sources play a critical role in achieving balance and fairness in media reports when it comes to framing homosexuality. When the media privilege biased sources, they upset the balance and fairness, but a combination of both kinds of sources helps to resolve this (Gibson and Hester, 2007; Li and Liu, 2010). The bias that has been observed is most likely a result of the overuse of biased sources, namely, religious leaders, politicians and the layperson. Although this is most likely to influence the way the public perceives homosexuality, research indicates that in some cases where the audience is active, the public is able to detect imbalance in sources, especially when it comes to homosexuality (Gibson and Hester, 2007). Therefore, whereas to a certain extent media framing influences the public's attitude towards an issue, it may not always be the case, depending on the nature of the audience (Price *et al.*, 2005). As already mentioned, future research needs to address this gap by looking at the relationship between the media and public attitude towards homosexuality in Uganda.

Related to the above is the view that during the coverage of a controversial issue, the media should stick to its role of informing the audience by providing a variety of information using a variety of sources (Nassanga, 2008; Semujju, 2013) in order to facilitate the public to make up their own minds. However, it appears that this is not the case, because Ugandan sources, religious leaders, politicians and the ordinary citizens, but mostly the religious leaders mainly informed the reporting. Therefore, even if there were numerous sources, three topped the table and of the three, one dominated the rest. Thus, the public was most likely provided with limited information with which to form opinions and make up their minds. It appears then that the two newspapers abdicated their information role by framing homosexuality the way they did.

Discussion

The results of the content analysis presented above indicate that *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* were biased in their coverage of homosexuality. This bias is manifested in the presence of a dominant frame (the human rights frame), the dominance of the stories that presented homosexuality negatively and the privileging of Ugandans and religious leaders as sources. In framing, the dominance of frames implies bias (Kuypers, 2002; Hertog and

McLeod, 2003). One of the tenets of framing is that it involves selection and salience (Entman, 1993). The results of this study revealed that in all the three cases above (frames, tones and sources), all the categories that were investigated were present. However, it is the three listed above that were made salient and so they turned out as dominant. An offshoot of this could be another function of framing, that is, defining a controversial issue and resolving it (McCombs, 2004). In this case, framing defined the issues about homosexuality as a human rights issue and resolved that it ought to be viewed negatively by Ugandans who are the primary audience of these two newspapers. In terms of frame setting, this implies that the public's understanding of the issue has been settled as explained above.

Regarding media frames, frames define what is possible and what is not to journalists (Durham, 1998:113). This echoes the significance of the newspaper structure and story formats/types when it comes to the construction of news. Hall *et al.* (1978) contend that these two factors limit the journalists in their selection and construction of news. However, it ought to be remembered that what becomes published as news is a result of conscious decisions made by the journalists and the gatekeeper, which removes any claim to journalists being powerless (Schudson, 2003). In that regard, this study found that even though the journalists had at their disposal numerous story formats, they chose to go with the hard news stories for their coverage. Moreover, they most likely made another decision to keep most of these stories on the national pages and not for example, sports or international news pages. This shows the dilemma that journalists and media houses face in their quest to construct and report news in a way that is meaningful to them and to the audience.

As was alluded to previously, the framing that was observed reflected the context within which these two newspapers operate, further highlighting the notion that the frames are a product of both journalists and the public whom they serve (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996; Scheufele, 1999). The framing can be described as echoing the public attitude towards homosexuality through the consistent and overwhelming use of sources that support this view, that is, Ugandan sources as well as religious leaders. Some sections of the literature on framing suggest that during the coverage of a contentious issue, media framing serves to reflect public opinion generally (Jha-Namibar, 2002). On the one hand, promoting the public opinion on this issue could be a tactic to 'play it safe' by the media houses and avoid

completely ignoring the issue by reporting in a manner that keeps them in the good books of their audience and government in this case. Therefore, once again, framing is seen to conceal obvious bias from an unsuspecting audience. On the other hand, the vulnerability of media houses as national institutions as opposed to international institutions (McQuail, 2010) is illuminated. In sticking to their role as information providers, media houses have to ensure that they do so within the limits of what is acceptable in their society and as such, bear in mind the national interest; otherwise, they should be prepared to face the consequences. As such, framing is a result of both internal and external factors as pointed out above.

Related to the above point is how media frames marginalise certain groups of people by ignoring them (Hertog and McLeod, 2003). Homosexuality is unacceptable in Africa and Uganda specifically and is considered taboo (Murray and Roscoe, 1998; Dlamini, 2006; Tamale, 2009) by both the government and the public. It therefore did not come as a surprise that homosexuals were left out in the media reports on a subject that touches them directly. This was achieved by the two media houses relying on groups of people who strongly oppose homosexuality, that is, the religious leaders, followed by the politicians and ordinary citizens who are just like them. The use of sources in that manner was complemented by the prominence of the culture and religion frames, which came second to human rights. These two frames consider homosexuality as a moral issue that is incompatible with African and Ugandan cultures and faith in God. The government, politicians and ordinary citizens hold the same view. Furthermore, the use of the hard news stories and not the features or interviews also appears to strengthen this argument in that news on homosexuality is treated as plain news that does not provide much room for detail and focus on individuals or groups, and therefore maintains the status quo (D'Angelo, 2002). Thus, it is inevitable for these two newspapers, which reflect the dominant position, to choose to marginalise homosexuals and their supporters by limiting their role as sources.

Lastly, frames are necessary for individuals and groups to make sense of the world, considering that frames are “stored clusters of ideas” on which individuals and groups rely to process information they encounter (Entman, 1993:53). Therefore, how one frames an issue can impact his or her overall opinion (Chong and Druckman, 2002). From the results and observations thus far, the framing of homosexuality by the two newspapers is likely to

increase or maintain the audience's negative attitude towards homosexuality. This is because the dominance of sources (religious leaders) that support the public opinion on homosexuality (that is, opposition to homosexuality) in Uganda as well as the reliance on negative stories is most likely to resonate with individuals who public opinion polls found are opposed to homosexuality. As such, this kind of framing will most probably lead to maintaining the status quo by relying on dominant frames (D'Angelo, 2002). And for the individuals who rely on these two media houses for information about homosexuality, their understanding of the issue is likely to be biased against homosexuality, given the biased coverage observed above. This is more so since, according to framing scholars, the way an issue is framed will most certainly affect the way that issue is understood (Scheufele and Tewksbury, 2007). Besides, it is through framing that individuals develop a particular conceptualisation of an issue or re-orient their thinking about an issue (Chong and Druckman, 2002).

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the results of the first research question, which aimed to explore the framing of homosexuality by *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* by identifying the frames, the tones, the story format, the story placement and the sources used in the news reports that constituted the message pool. From the analysis it emerged that the two newspapers framed homosexuality using all the six frames that were assessed, that is, human rights, crime, legislation, culture, religion and medicine. However, it was observed that coverage relied on the human rights frame, which is consistent with existing literature on Africa and elsewhere. The analysis also showed that on the whole, the framing was negative, which was also expected since previous research made similar observations. In addition, both newspapers used hard news in their reporting but framed homosexuality as a national issue using the national pages. In all this, both newspapers relied on Ugandan sources, specifically religious leaders, politicians and the ordinary citizens or the layperson to inform the discussion.

It was further observed that the coverage was biased given the dominance of the negative frames, the Ugandan sources as well as the religious leaders, politicians and laypeople, who are all known to represent one position, that is, the opposition to homosexuality. The framing of homosexuality as a national issue thereby keeping it local supported this. Moreover, the

coverage generally reflected the dominant positions, that is, the opposition to homosexuality as well as the view that the key drivers of this discussion are the religious leaders and the politicians. Overall, the results were consistent with existing literature from Uganda, Africa and the world over. Lastly, some differences in coverage between the two newspapers were observed, which was an indication that the ideological positioning of media houses has a bearing on how they cover controversial issues.

Chapter 6

Changes in reporting patterns between 2007 and 2011

Introduction

Available literature documents the Ugandan press coverage of homosexuality only as far back as 1997 (Tamale, 2007b). Most of the literature tends to focus on the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill, which was tabled before parliament on 14 October 2009, and was followed by intense national and international debate until June 2010 (Strand, 2011). Therefore information about the periods before and after the introduction of the bill is scarce, hence the second research question: Were there any changes in reporting patterns of homosexuality issues before and after the introduction of the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill?

This chapter presents the results of this research question. Using the year 2009 as the bridge between the period before and after the introduction of the bill, the period under investigation was divided into five sections, each constituting one calendar year. The period before the introduction of the bill therefore constituted the two years 2007 and 2008, while the period after the bill constituted the two years 2010 and 2011. The year 2009 was the year the bill was introduced. The period before the bill coincides with the peak of the Anglican Church debate on the ordination of openly gay priests, in which Uganda's Archbishop at the time, Henry Luke Orombi, was a key player, together with other African bishops (Sadgrove *et al.*, 2010). This question considered changes in the following five broad areas: (a) the specific frames used in press coverage; (b) the tone of the frames; (c) the story format; (d) the placement of items; and (e) the sources used in these articles.

Unlike the discussion in the previous chapter that considered the difference in coverage between the two newspapers, the content analysis in this chapter considered only the combined coverage. The decision to take this approach was informed by two issues: the first one was that the results in the previous chapter showed that there was

minimal difference in the two newspapers' reporting and framing of homosexuality. Secondly, the amount of data to be dealt with was enormous and would not have fitted within the limits of this thesis. Nonetheless, that data can be used in future research.

Changes in frames

Table 6-1: Frames before and after the introduction of the bill

Frames	Before the bill (2007&2008)		Introduction of the bill (2009)		After the bill (2010&2011)		Total
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
Human rights	60	34.5	27	27.6	18	32.7	105
Culture	34	19.5	11	11.2	6	10.9	51
Religion	29	16.7	10	10.2	3	5.5	42
Crime	22	12.6	23	23.5	10	18.2	55
Medicine	18	10.3	13	13.3	4	7.3	35
Legislation	11	6.3	14	14.3	14	25.5	40
Total	174	100	98	100	55	100	328

Table 6-1 above illustrates the frequency of the frames before and after the introduction of the bill as well as during the year when the bill was introduced. The results show the presence of all the frames that were investigated in all three periods. This implies that these are some of the most common frames used by the two newspapers regarding homosexuality. However, human rights stood out as the top frame in every period, making it a persistent and stable frame.

As the top frame before the bill, human rights registered $n=60$ and accounted for 34.5% of the total number of items. The frame with the least count during this period was legislation at $n=11$ (6.3%). A wide range was observed at 49 (60-11). Human rights appear to be an outlier since the other frames were close in range with each other. For example, culture stood at $n=34$, religion at $n=29$, crime at $n=22$, medicine at $n=18$ and legislation at $n=11$. Nonetheless, marginal differences were observed between culture and religion and; medicine, crime and legislation as illustrated in table 6-1. Still, the human rights frame was the dominating frame before the introduction of the bill.

Culture was the second single most occurring frame in the period before the bill, followed by religion. The relationship between culture and religion is a dependent one (Ward, 2015), so much that in their rhetoric against homosexuality, religious leaders in Africa and in Uganda specifically, often cite homosexuality as being incompatible with culture (Ssempe, 2007; Vincent and Howell, 2014). Nonetheless, on its own, culture constitutes one of the major discourses on homosexuality in Africa (Cock, 2003; Van Zyl, 2011; Nyanzi, 2013) and it therefore was bound to end up as one of the major frames during this period. Those opposed to homosexuality argue that homosexuality is a western import, alien to Africa, which is an innately heterosexual society (Dlamini, 2006; Epprecht, 2008; Nyanzi, 2013), while those who support homosexuality contend that African culture cannot be homogenised and that homosexuality has always been a part of African culture (Tamale, 2011; Nyanzi, 2013). Together, culture and religion constitute the moral frames. Therefore, in addition to homosexuality being reported mainly as a rights issue, the moral aspects of it were also prominently reported using the religious and culture frames before the introduction of the bill.

The kind of reporting described above is a reflection of the dominant views on homosexuality in Uganda. Conversely, it suggests that the dominant frames are most likely time-specific and are defined, to a certain extent, by the issue at hand (Hall *et al.*, 1978). This is because this period coincided with a heated debate on a moral issue, that is, the debate within the Anglican Church on the ordination of openly gay priests (Sadgrove *et al.*, 2010), and the moral frames featured prominently during this period in addition to the already dominant and persistent human rights (equality) frame. This point is further emphasised by the idea that crime and legislation did not feature as prominently, even though homosexuality has been categorised as a criminal offence in Uganda in the penal code since the colonial days (Hollander, 2009; Tamale, 2009; Englander, 2011). Could it be that the penal code provisions are not as controversial as those in the bill, and therefore do not make much news sense? Interviews with journalists, editors and homosexuality rights activists would help to answer this question but they were outside the scope of the current study.

From a framing theory perspective, the results underscore the idea that frames are a result of several factors, among them, social issues (Scheufele, 1999; 2000) and the

organisational structure of media houses (Hall *et al.*, 1978). Discussions about homosexuality in Uganda and elsewhere in the world focus on human rights, religion and culture as the social issues that inform this discussion (Brewer, 2002; Muula, 2007; Tamale, 2007a; 2007b; 2009; Mongie, 2013; Van Zyl, 2013; Vincent and Howell, 2014; Ward, 2015). When these three issues are contrasted with legislation, it emerges that the framing of homosexuality before the introduction of the bill was informed by the prevalent social issues that mainly included the right of homosexuals to be recognised in all spheres of life (the rights frame) and especially for ordination as priests in the Anglican Church. At this point, the only law regulating homosexual activity in Uganda was the penal code, under section 145, but this legislation was / is rarely evoked, hence rendering the legislation and crime frames less significant than the rights, religious and cultural frames, in press reporting of homosexuality. Likewise, it has been argued that media structures influence what becomes news through a careful process of selection and construction of events and topics according to categories that are socially constructed (Hall *et al.*, 1978). Therefore, it appears that the criminal aspects of homosexuality were not considered key topics at this point when the main topic was the human rights of homosexuals and Anglican Church debate on homosexuality.

Further analysis revealed notable changes in 2009. For example, while human rights remained as the top frame at n=27 or 27.6%, crime at n= 23 (23.5%) was the second most utilised frame and appears quite close to human rights. Legislation followed in third place at n=14 (14.3%). Previously crime and legislation were among the frames with the least counts. The frames varied in range, with the top two, human rights (n=27) and crime (n=23), being outliers while the last four, legislation (n=14), medicine (n=13), culture (n=11) and religion (n=10) were within close range. Rather surprisingly, culture and religion registered the least count at n=11 (11.2%) and n=10 (10.2%) respectively.

It appears that at this point, human rights and crime were competing frames, followed by legislation. This strengthens the point made earlier that frames are most likely time-specific and are defined, to a certain extent, by the issue at hand (Hall *et al.*, 1978). This is in addition to frames reflecting the social issues of the day (Scheufele, 1999; 2000). To this end, crime and legislation moved up as soon as the subject

changed to a proposed legislation, which touched on the rights of homosexuals by proposing criminalisation of homosexuality, hence rendering the two frames of crime and legislation nearly as relevant as the human rights frame as opposed to medicine, religion and culture. Moreover, as Strand (2011) observed, the bill received unprecedented coverage by both local and international media, due to its controversial nature. Nonetheless, the prominence of the crime frame at this point could be attributed to the idea that homosexuality is predominantly considered a crime in most societies especially in Africa, Uganda included (BBC News, 2014; Cage *et al.*, 2014). Existing literature suggests that most coverage of the bill was negative (Strand, 2011; 2012) and framing homosexuality as a crime is easily one of the ways of highlighting the negative aspects of a bill in support of criminalising homosexuality. As Tereskinas (2002) observed, by reporting homosexuals as criminals, the media portrays them as deviants and social misfits out to cause trouble.

Meanwhile, the prominence of the rights frame in discussions on homosexuality cannot be overemphasised (Brewer, 2002; Tamale, 2007a; Mongie, 2013), more so during a debate regarding a controversial bill. This is because in Africa and the world over, issues regarding the regulation of homosexuality from a human rights perspective tend to take on two sides, those for and those against the rights of homosexuals—but the negative voices are the ones that are usually carried in the media (Ellis and Kitzinger, 2002; Rahman, 2004; Muula, 2007). According to Muula (2007), the letters to the editor in the Malawian press suggested, among others, that homosexuals were a minority that did not need recognition. Similar circumstances propelled the discussion on homosexuals' rights in the Ugandan media, according to Tamale (2007a). Tamale observed that there was an outpouring of intolerance in media reports when she proposed to the equal opportunities commission that the rights of homosexuals as a minority group needed to be recognised.

That notwithstanding, it is difficult to explain why culture and religion fell to the bottom of the table especially since they are considered two of the key frames that inform issues of homosexuality in Uganda and Africa at large in terms of morality (Ssempe, 2007; Van Zyl, 2013; Ward, 2013). Moreover, according to framing theory, such old and culturally embedded frames are not easily displaced by new information (Hertog and McLeod, 2003). However, as Rummelhart (1984) contends, although

schemata (frames) are active at that point when an individual encounters new information, Entman (1993) argues that these schemata may not necessarily influence what information becomes important to an individual, in this case, the journalist. Therefore, whereas culture and religion are two of the most enduring frames, they did not necessarily influence the journalists' decision to portray homosexuality at this point as a crime and legislation issue and not as a cultural and religion issue.

From the foregoing, it has emerged that there were changes in reporting patterns before the introduction of the bill and when it was introduced in 2009. The framing shifted from being mainly about equality (rights) and morality (culture and religion), to being about equality and crime. Moreover, while coverage before the bill was mostly about human rights, at the introduction of the bill, coverage applied the human rights and crime frames almost equally, reflecting the current topics at the time. However, human rights persisted as the leading frame regardless of the topic meaning that rights issues are at the heart of any discussion on homosexuality in Uganda.

The patterns described above continued in the period after the introduction of the bill. The top three frames remained human rights at $n=18$ (32.7%), legislation at $n=14$ (25.5%) and crime at $n=10$ (18.2%) in descending order, while religion at $n=3$ (5.45%), medicine at $n=4$ and culture at $n=6$ in ascending order, were at the bottom of the table. The range remained high at 15 (18-3) and human rights and legislation appear to be outliers given how close the other frames are. It appears that issues of morality were not emphasised after the introduction of the bill, since the two morality frames were at the bottom of the table. Additionally, the issue of frames being time bound and issue specific arises, given that legislation overtook crime as the second most utilised frame two years after the introduction of the bill, arises. This implies that the reporting focussed more on the bill as a proposed legislation, than aspects of it such as culture and crime.

Additionally, at this point, it suffices that human rights is indeed a persistent frame, having remained as the top frame throughout the five years. As already alluded to, this is consistent with existing literature, which shows that the rights frame is one of the dominating frames in the debate on homosexuality the world over (Alwood, 1996; Brewer, 2002; Muula, 2007; Tamale, 2007a; Mongie, 2013). Such persistence is typical of frames generally, which, as Reese (2003:11) contends, are “organising

principles that are socially shared and *persistent* over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world”. Here, the human rights frame is seen as persistently organising the issues of homosexuality around equality, despite the evidence of the existence of other frames.

Such persistent frames end up becoming cultural frames, which means that they embody social meaning, occur over long periods of time and are informed by various social actors (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989). Such frames also make information appear natural and familiar (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989), consequently reinforcing already existing cultural perspectives (Goffman, 1974; Scheufele, 1999; Watts *et al.*, 1999) and making it difficult for new information to alter their meaning (Hertog and McLeod, 2003). This last part most likely explains why despite the topic in 2009 being a controversial piece of proposed legislation, the media chose to emphasise the human rights aspects of that proposed legislation. The most likely outcome of this kind of framing is that the audience of these two newspapers ended up understanding homosexuality as being merely about the rights of homosexuals and not much else. This leads to the issue of bias as discussed in chapter 5. Additionally, this is also characteristic of the Ugandan press in that when covering a contentious issue, journalists end up favouring the most prevalent frame and/or one they are most familiar with (Semujju, 2013), in this case, the rights frame. Semujju advanced various reasons for this, citing ignorance about the existence of other frames as one of those reasons. There is no telling why it happened this way in the case of homosexuality since interviews with journalists were beyond the scope of this study.

From the foregoing, it appears that the human rights frame was always in competition with culture and religion combined (before the introduction of the bill), crime (when the bill was introduced) or legislation (after the introduction of the bill) as described earlier. This then points to an attempt to balance coverage of issues of homosexuality using various frames. This is in agreement with literature from Uganda. In her interviews with Ugandan journalists, Borlase (2012) found that the journalists deliberately aimed to balance stories on homosexuality in order to avoid being viewed as biased towards homosexuals/homosexuality. Also, according to Schudson (2003), balancing of a story by journalists suggests that it is considered delicate and unlike an

ordinary story. Stories on homosexuality are indeed treated as delicate the world over (Alwood, 1996; Schudson, 2003; Borlase, 2012).

On another note, the decline in the religious frame after the bill is uncharacteristic of the discussion on homosexuality in Uganda where religion is usually foregrounded as one of the main reasons why homosexuality should not be accepted (Ward, 2013). However, it is worth noting that the cultural frame, which was present throughout the five years, is also commonly evoked by the religious leaders (See Ssempe, 2007). This implies that in the period following the introduction of the bill, morality was not a key issue in as far as homosexuality was concerned, rather the key issues were the rights of homosexuals and the criminality of homosexuality in Uganda, hence the need to regulate homosexual activity as envisaged by the sponsors of the bill. Conversely, that the religious frame was not as persistent as the human rights frame further emphasises the view that persistent frames, in this case, the human rights frame, are not shaken by new information and therefore come to dominate the understanding of an issue (Hertog and McLeod, 2003).

Overall, with the exception of the human rights frame, which persisted as the top frame throughout this period, changes were observed in the prominence and use of the other frames. Depending on whether it was the period prior to the introduction of the bill, or when the bill was introduced, or after it had been introduced, human rights was in competition with any one of the other frames, especially, culture, religion, legislation and crime. Therefore, it appears that the two newspapers view homosexuality mostly as a human rights issue and inform their audience on this frame, more than other frames. An audience study or survey to investigate how much the media has contributed to what the Ugandan public knows about homosexuality would be required to confirm this. However, this was beyond the scope of the present study.

In the next section, an analysis of the tone of the stories is presented, focussing on whether the stories portrayed homosexuality in a positive, negative or neutral manner. Overall, the negative stories dominated coverage as illustrated in table 6-2.

Changes in the tone

Table 6-2: The tone before and after the introduction of the bill

Tone	Before the bill (2007&2008)		Introduction of the bill (2009)		After the bill (2010&2011)		Total
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
Negative	116	68.6	53	55.8	38	59.4	207
Positive	31	18.3	21	22.1	12	18.8	64
Neutral	22	13.0	21	22.1	14	21.9	57
Total	169	100	95	100	64	100	328

The results in table 6-2 indicate a wide range in tone across all the years. For example, before the bill, the range was 94 (116-22) while in 2009 the range was 32 (53-21). It was observed that the negative tone persisted as an outlier, and dominated coverage throughout the five years. The neutral and positive tones varied as the least utilised tones before and after the bill respectively, although in 2009, the two tied at n=21 and in other cases, the two were in close range with each other. For example, after the bill, the neutral tone stood at n=14 or 21.88% while the positive tone stood at n=12 and accounted for 18.75%. It emerged then that the framing of homosexuality during the five-year period was persistently negative as has been alluded to in the previous chapter.

Further analysis of the results revealed that in the period preceding the bill, most of the stories, more than 60%, were negative and stood at n=116 (68.6%). The neutral stories had the least count, at n=22 or 13.0%, while the positive stories came second at n=31 (18.3%). Worth noting is that there were more positive than neutral stories in this period, meaning that there was an attempt to include positive stories during the coverage of the Anglican Church discussion on the ordination of gay priests. This can be viewed as an effort to balance coverage although it is annulled by the evidently high number of negative stories.

These observations suggest that homosexuality was mostly covered negatively in the period leading up to the bill, which as has already been pointed out, was when the Anglican Church was debating their stand on homosexuality. This is consistent with the view that homosexuality has always been viewed negatively by the Ugandan press regardless of the context (Strand, 2011; 2012; 2013; Borlase, 2012). This negative

view incorporates the societal-wide negative perception of homosexuality (Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012; Strand, 2012) and emphasises the negative aspects of homosexuality (Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012; Strand, 2012). The situation is similar to that elsewhere in Africa (Muula, 2007; Vilakazi, 2011) and the rest of the world (Alwood, 1996). It is premature to conclude at this point that coverage was biased, but these results point in that general direction since negative stories overwhelmingly outnumbered the positive and neutral stories.

Upon further analysis of the results in table 6-2, it emerged that there was marginal change in the reporting patterns in 2009 when the bill was introduced. Stories carrying negative tones remained in the majority at n=53 and accounted for more than 50% of the total number of stories (55.8%). It was observed, however, that positive and neutral stories took an equal share of the coverage, at n=21 each, and accounted for 22.1% of all the stories. The range remained high, at 32 (53-21), leaving the negative stories as outliers.

The equal number of positive and neutral stories at this point echoes the attempts by the various actors to influence the framing of the bill in order to win the public over. According to Strand (2011), at some point during the debate on the bill, the Ugandan human rights groups spearheaded the efforts to reject the bill as a danger to both homosexual and heterosexual members of society. Strand further observed that at the peak of the discussion of the bill by the international community, *Daily Monitor* seemed to have taken an editorial position to include those voices opposed to the bill, contrary to its earlier stand, while *New Vision* ceased covering the bill. Strand's (2011) findings also indicate that during this period, the local human rights organisations only partially succeeded in influencing the media framing of the bill because most of the frames that were used to cover their views were neutral. Nevertheless, the framing of homosexuality during the year 2009 was negative, as was the case previously, since the negative tone accounted for more than 50% of the stories. This suggests that regardless of the context, homosexuality is generally viewed negatively in the two newspapers that were studied. It also suggests that the two newspapers' negative reporting was in support of the anti-homosexuality bill, which sought to further criminalise homosexuality in Uganda.

This negative framing of homosexuality in 2009 is consistent with existing literature from elsewhere in the world (Ellis and Kitzinger, 2002; Rahman, 2004; Muula, 2007). In Britain, after the civil partnership act came into effect in December 2005, the media portrayed homosexuals as inferior to heterosexuals. For example, civil partnership was treated as “an inferior substitute to marriage, representing continued inequality for gays and lesbians” (Jowett and Peel, 2010:210). In South Africa, the press disregarded the 1998 constitutional provision that legalised homosexuality in South Africa (Croucher, 2002). Although homosexuality was recognised as legal in other countries, it was the first time it was being included as a constitutional right in South Africa, in Africa and in the rest of the world. Therefore, the Ugandan situation did not differ from these experiences and reflects the societal-wide opposition to the acceptability of homosexuality.

The results were analysed further to establish the reporting pattern after the introduction of the bill. The analysis revealed a similar pattern to that already observed in that the negative tone continued to dominate coverage and accounted for nearly 60% of the stories. Negative stories stood at n=38 or 59.4% during this period. Although the difference between the neutral and positive stories remained marginal as previously, this time round, the neutral stories overtook the positive ones to become second at n=14 (21.9%). Positive stories stood at n=12 (18.8%). A wide range was still observed at 26 (38-12) and negative stories appeared as outliers given how close the other categories were.

These results support the argument that regardless of the period, topic at hand or context, these two Ugandan newspapers frame homosexuality negatively, thus reflecting the public attitude in Uganda towards homosexuality as reported by the Pew Research Centre (2007; 2013). This further points to the notion that media framing reflects the public’s attitude generally (Jha-Namibar, 2002), hence this negative framing of homosexuality. Moreover, historically, the world over, media reporting of homosexuality reflects the dominant opinion at that the time as the case in the United States of America (Alwood, 1996; Bennet, 1998) and Slovenia (Kuhar, 2003). Additionally, existing literature shows that the Ugandan press generally ignore the positive voices (Tamale, 2007a; Strand, 2011; 2012; Borlase, 2012; Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012; Carrington, 2014).

In this regard, framing theory contends that the media act as a mirror to society when they report the way they do (Gans, 1979). Therefore, by leaning towards the anti-homosexuality side of the discussion, the newspapers acted as mirrors to the Ugandan society since they focussed on the dominant societal discourses. This is characteristic of the media as cultural products and as components of culture (Moritz, 1992). Furthermore, by framing homosexuality negatively, frames perform an interpretive role since the frames provide the lens through which the public view and understand an issue (Graber, 1989). This leads to the argument that as purveyors of information (Campbell, 2004), the media do not only define what is significant to most of us, but also *how* to understand what is happening around us—in this case, homosexuality is defined negatively.

In addition, the so-called mirroring of society tends to privilege one side of the discussion, in this case, those who are opposed to homosexuality. When that happens, the press is said to be biased in their reporting. Therefore, it could be said that even in this case, the newspaper reports were biased against homosexuality as Strand (2012) found. In chapter 5, it was observed that generally the two media houses were biased against homosexuality, given the over-reliance on the human rights frame and the negative tone throughout this period. It was also noted in chapter 3 that media bias is inevitable given that framing constitutes part of the media daily routine and yet it is basically about selection and salience (Entman, 2007). In the same chapter, it was argued that be that as it may, the persistence of a frame or reporting pattern is a sign of systematic bias (Entman, 2007), which is a negative attribute.

Like the human rights frame, it has emerged that the negative tone is persistent, given its dominance throughout the period 2007-2011. This signals systematic bias against homosexuality and could in turn imply that homosexuals are marginalised in the media while those opposed to them are empowered (Entman, 2007). Additionally, this one-sided framing most likely biases the audience against homosexuality, denying them balanced cover that would enable them to make up their own minds. In acting that way, the media could be said to abscond from their democratic role as sources of varied information on different subjects (Kuypers, 2002).

Nevertheless, even though the negative stories were outliers, the positive and neutral stories maintained a close range throughout this period as explained earlier. For

example, before the bill, positive stories stood at n= 31 while neutral stories stood at n=22. In 2009, the negative and neutral stories were equal in number at n=12. After the bill, the positive stories stood at n=12 and the neutral stories at n=14. This is a reflection of the fluidity and discursive nature of the discussion on homosexuality as demonstrated in a number of studies (Sinnott, 2000; Kahur, 2003; Mongie, 2013). For example, Sinnott (2000) observed that the Thai media sided with homosexuals when it came to matters of national interest such as equality before the law but reverted to negative reporting immediately after the resolution of that particular matter. In fact, interview results from Borlase's (2012) study on Ugandan journalists' reporting of homosexuality show that in Uganda journalists have to balance their stories about homosexuality to avoid being labelled homosexual sympathisers. Likewise, Strand (2011) reported that during the coverage of the bill, neutral coverage was found mainly among stories written by journalists, and these were the least in number.

Overall, as far as the tone is concerned, there was hardly any change, as reporting remained persistently and predominantly negative throughout the study period. This is unlike the use of the specific frames, which appeared to be determined by the current topic. Therefore, the attitude of these two newspapers towards homosexuality is biased and negative, as attempts to balance coverage by using various frames is negated by the dominance of the negative stories.

The next part of the analysis deals with story formats in order to investigate any changes in reporting patterns during this period. These formats included hard news, opinions and regular columns, features, to mention just a few. The results are presented in table 6-3 (on page 150).

Changes in story format

Table 6-3: Story format before and after the bill

Story format	Before the bill (2007&2008)		Introduction of the bill (2009)		After the bill (2010&2011)		Total
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
Hard news	99	58.6	57	60.0	45	70.3	201
Opinion column	27	16.0	17	17.9	13	20.3	57
Letter to the editor	24	14.2	8	8.4	1	1.6	33
Briefs	9	5.3	7	7.4	1	1.6	17
Feature	7	4.1	4	4.2	3	4.7	14
Interview	3	1.8	2	2.1	1	1.6	6
Total	169	100	95	100	64	100	328

Table 6-3 above illustrates the story formats before and after the introduction of the bill. A brief examination of the results reveals a wide variation in quantity and range of the formats, with hard news stories registering the highest count before and after the bill at n=99 (58.6%) and n=45 (70.3%) respectively; and interviews registering the least count at n=3 (1.8%) before the bill and n=1 (1.6%) after the bill. Hard news stories appear to be outliers. Meanwhile, the two opinion categories of letters to the editor and opinion columns came second and third respectively as illustrated in the table. Therefore, these results show that the media coverage relied on hard news stories, followed by opinions and letters to the editor throughout the study period.

Upon closer analysis of the results, it was observed that the top three formats before the introduction of the bill were hard news at n=99 (58.6%); opinions at n=27 (16.0%); and letters to the editor at n=24 (14.2%), in descending order. A wide range was also observed at 96 (99-3) with the top three categories appearing as outliers, while the other categories remained within close range. For example, briefs at n=9, features at n=7 and interviews at n=3. Interestingly, the briefs, features and interviews appeared insignificant and very close in range, yet they are on opposite ends of the spectrum, with the former being the least detailed format and the latter, the most detailed formats. Therefore, while coverage mostly utilised the factual hard news format, it neither downplayed the subject of homosexuality (for example through the use of briefs) nor did it pay significant attention to it using formats such as the feature

and interviews, which normally go beyond the news and provide detailed and more focused information.

This implies that in reporting the Anglican debate on the ordination of gay priests, coverage relied on the routine, factual, journalistically initiated items, but included some views from the public in form of letters and opinion columns. This could be viewed as treating homosexuality mundanely and not as a contentious issue that requires balancing, but since reporting heavily used one format, this argument does not hold. It appears that an editorial decision was made to limit reporting to two formats but rely more on the one format. This demonstrates how framing is incorporated into the decision making by media houses in that, what eventually becomes news is a result of conscious decisions made within limitations such as journalistic norms and newspaper structure (Schudson, 2003).

That aside, marginal changes in reporting were observed in 2009 when the bill was introduced. These changes were mainly in the form of the reduction in the absolute count of stories. Otherwise, the top three formats, in descending order, remained the same, namely, hard news at $n=57$ (60.0%), opinion column at $n=17$ (17.9%) and letters to the editor at $n=8$ (8.4%). Likewise, the interview format remained the least utilised at $n=2$ (2.1%). A wide range was maintained at 55 (57-2) and the hard news and opinion columns appear as outliers since the other categories are within close range as follows: letter to the editor at $n=8$, briefs at $n=7$, feature at $n=4$ and interview at $n=2$. Therefore, it remains noticeable that coverage during the discussion of the bill was similar to that before the bill, which implies that the two newspapers restrict their reporting to the two main formats of hard news and opinions.

Content formats are one of the ways that aid the framing process (D'Angelo, 2002). To an unsuspecting, non-researcher eye, this would pass as balanced coverage to a certain extent in that views from the public as well as those from the newsroom are accommodated in this coverage and the subject of homosexuality is treated with the seriousness it calls for by limiting the use of briefs. However, by limiting coverage to hard news and opinions and minimising the use of features and interviews, coverage further demonstrates how journalists and media houses take advantage of framing, using story formats and newspaper structures, to remain biased without being easily noticed.

As Gitlin (1980) observed, frames remain largely unspoken and unwritten and are therefore very useful when covering a contentious issue in that they set the terms of the debate without the audience noticing (Tankard, 2003). This function of framing becomes more evident here considering that the opinion pieces and letters were most likely triggered by the local human rights groups' buying of space to publish press releases after being denied editorial space (Strand, 2011). According to Strand, these groups influenced the public to comment on the bill in form of opinion pieces and letters to the editors. This is commendable especially since earlier observations showed that homosexuality was treated negatively in the two media houses but that the public was allowed to express their views on the subject nonetheless. So far, it appears that the terms of the debate on homosexuality are such that reporting remains largely factual, using hard news story and therefore reserved for the journalists, but include a limited number of views from the public through the letters and opinion columns, resulting in a very delicate balance.

Upon further analysis, a slight change was observed in the story formats after the bill. While hard news remained the top format, accounting for over 70% of the stories at n=45 (70.3%), followed by opinion columns at n=13 (20.3%), the feature story was the third most utilised format during this period, albeit at a dismal n=3 (4.7%). Letters to the editor, briefs and interviews registered the least count at n=1 (1.6%). A wide range was maintained at 44 (45-1) and hard news and opinion columns appear to be outliers since the other categories are within close range, with features at n=3 and letters, briefs and interviews at n=1. Therefore, story formatting continued to rely on hard news and also accommodated some voices from the public mainly through opinion columns.

It suffices that in the coverage of homosexuality by *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*, reporting is predominantly in the form of hard news stories, with a considerable amount of opinions from the public in the form of letters to the editor and opinion columns. There is negligible use of briefs, interviews and features. This implies that there is an attempt to balance reporting through the use of internally/editorially generated story types that can be subjected to journalistic principles and controls and opinions which represent the views of the public. In that way, the journalists would be working in an environment they can control, which is necessary when reporting a

controversial issue. It is necessary because it allows the journalist to set the terms and limits of coverage, and yet leave the audience oblivious of this action (Devitt, 2002; Tankard, 2003). Balance and fairness are two of the critical ingredients of credibility hence the need for media houses to be seen to be balanced and fair.

Meanwhile, the editorial was conspicuously missing throughout this period, meaning that none of the two newspapers committed to informing the public about their position on this very controversial subject. This, combined with the prominence of the opinions and letters, is an indication that a significant amount of the coverage was not as a result of journalistic/editorial initiative. This highlights an earlier observation made by Strand (2011) that the human rights' frames were mostly found among the opinions, which meant that their presence did not result from journalistic initiative. Furthermore, it points to one of the functions of frames in media coverage of controversial issues, namely, to conceal bias from the "unsuspecting" audience (Devitt, 2002; Tankard, 2003). Results from some experimental studies, show, however, that the audience is able to detect bias in some instances as in the case of source bias (Gibson and Hester, 2007). For this current study, it is not possible to state conclusively whether this was the case, given that it was beyond the scope of the study to interview members of the audience.

The analysis also included a section on story placement before and after the bill as discussed below.

Changes in story placement

Table 6-4 illustrates the placement of stories before and after the introduction of the bill. The results show that stories were found in nearly all sections of both newspapers throughout this period, albeit with varying range and quantity. However, stories on the national news pages dominated coverage during this period, at n=47 (27.8%) before the bill and n=32 (50.0%) after the bill. Business news stories registered the least count at n=1 before the bill and n=0 after the bill. The range was quite high in all cases and national news stories appear to be outliers throughout the study period.

Table 6-4: Placement of stories by year (percentage of the story placement across the years 2007-2011)

Story placement	Before the bill (2007&2008)		Introduction of the bill (2009)		After the bill (2010&2011)		Total
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
National news	47	27.8	36	37.9	32	50.0	115
International news/Africa	29	17.2	7	7.3	3	4.7	39
Letter to the editor	24	14.2	8	8.4	1	1.6	33
Opinion & Editorial	25	14.8	13	13.7	13	20.3	51
Regional news	22	13.0	10	10.5	2	3.1	34
Front page	10	5.9	9	9.4	6	9.4	25
Supplements	10	5.9	11	11.6	5	7.8	26
Business	1	0.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	1
Sports	1	0.6	1	1.1	2	3.1	4
Total	169	100	95	100	64	100	328

A further analysis of the results in table 6-4 shows that a variety of pages carried a substantial number of the stories. The five top categories in descending order were national news at n=47 (27.8%), international news/Africa at n=29 (17.2%), opinion and editorial at n=25 (14.8%), letters to the editor at n=24 (14.2%) and regional news at n=22 (13.0%). Business and sports pages carried the least number of stories at n=1 (0.6%) each. A wide range was observed at 46 (47-1), with the five top categories appearing as outliers and the remaining categories staying close in range as follows: front page and supplements at n=10 and business and sports at n=1. Nonetheless, national news dominated the coverage since it outnumbered all the others by some degree.

The variety of story locations as described above suggests an attempt to balance coverage by presenting varied perspectives including national, regional, international and public opinions. This signals that the topic at hand, that is, the ordination of gay priests in the Anglican Church, is a contentious one that requires deliberate effort to balance coverage (Schudson, 2003). In fact, this observation is consistent with Borlase's (2012) findings that Ugandan journalists who cover homosexuality issues deliberately balance their stories to avoid being labelled a homosexual sympathiser since homosexuality in Uganda is unacceptable (Pew Research Centre, 2007; 2013).

Be that as it may, this perceived balance is upset by the realisation that stories on the national news pages outnumbered the others, thus dominating coverage at this specific point. This implies that homosexuality was framed mainly as a national issue vis-à-vis an international or regional issue. This further implies that the discussion was removed from the periphery (regions) and brought to the national level, hence distancing the local/grassroots Ugandan from the discussion. In some way, this brings to the fore one of the underlying arguments used by those opposed to homosexuality, that is, homosexuality as it is today is an elite lifestyle that the Anglican man or woman in the village knows nothing about, and therefore has little to contribute in a debate such as this (Nyanzi, 2013; Tamale, 2013). This view has been opposed by scholars who argue that in Uganda, there are homosexual individuals who live in the rural areas and have never come into contact with any western or elite values (Tamale, 2007a; Nyanzi, 2013).

This kind of reporting demonstrates how the newspaper structure empowers the journalists and their media houses to privilege the dominant discourses around homosexuality in Ugandan society. As has been argued previously, framing enables journalists to remain in control of their working environment, despite external influence from elite actors or sources. In this case, it could be argued that by presenting various views in form of national, regional and international news as well as opinions from the public in the form of letters and opinion pieces, the journalists were able to conceal any obvious bias as some scholars would argue (Gans, 1979; Li and Liu, 2010). It ought to be remembered that what we read as news is a result of a complex process, which involves systematically sorting and selecting events and topics according to certain social constructs (Hall *et al.*, 1978).

On a different but related note, front-page stories were significantly few, as is the case with existing literature. For example, Strand (2011) observed that the stories about the bill hardly featured on the front page, with only 9 out of 176 articles being carried on the front page. The same was observed about the frames that were sponsored by the Ugandan human rights organisations that were opposing the bill (Strand, 2011). Likewise, coverage before the introduction of the bill showed similar results, that is, the front-page stories were 10 out of 169 stories published before the introduction of the bill. This ties in with literature from the United States of America, which shows

that some newspapers' policies initially barred them from reporting homosexuality issues on the front pages (Chomsky and Barclay, 2013). Therefore, although the two media houses do not necessarily ignore homosexual issues, they do not deem it important to run front-page stories on the subject, even when it concerns the Anglican Church, which is influential in public issues in Uganda (The open society initiative for East Africa, 2010; Ward, 2013). Nonetheless, it adds to the earlier point that to an unsuspecting eye, reporting might appear balanced, especially given that the national news pages are located immediately after the front page.

The reporting pattern did not change much when the bill was introduced in 2009, in that national news stories continued to dominate coverage, registering $n=36$ and accounting for 37.9% of the total number of stories that year. Sports stories maintained the least count at $n=1$ (1.1%), while business stood at $n=0$. As was the case before the introduction of the bill, a wide range of 35 ($36-1$) was observed. Once again, national news stories appeared as outliers considering that opinion and editorial at $n=13$, supplements at $n=11$, regional news at $n=10$, front page at $n=9$, letters to the editor at $n=8$, international news at $n=7$ and sports at $n=1$, in descending order, are all in close range.

National news stories were the only outliers at this point suggesting two things: first, that regardless of the topic, any discussions on homosexuality as reported in the press, are more of a national nature and less of a regional (peripheral) or international nature; second, that this specific proposed legislation would only be discussed in the press at a national level. This confirms existing research, which found that the media nationalised the debate on homosexuality (Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012). But more than this, this, it points to the power that frames hold over who speaks and whose views are downplayed during a debate (Tankard, 2003). The news reports turned the bill/homosexuality into an elite issue by placing most stories in the national news pages ($n=36$). Additionally, very few were placed on the regional news pages ($n=10$), and very few supplements were run (which were mostly produced by human rights activists), hence setting the terms of the debate in a way that could easily go unnoticed as Tankard (2003) contends. Keeping the discussion at the national level is supported by politicians and religious leaders who argue that homosexuality is a western import and has no roots in African/Ugandan culture (Reddy, 2002; Stobie,

2003), while it is dismissed by scholars who contend that there are Ugandan homosexuals who have had no elite/western influence (Tamale, 2007a; Nyanzi, 2013).

A similar reporting pattern as that described above was observed for the period after the introduction of the bill where national news stories dominated coverage at $n=32$ and accounted for 50% of the total number of stories in that period. Letters to the editor registered the least number of stories at $n=1$ (1.6%). A wide range of 31 (32-1) was maintained and with the exception of stories located in the national news and opinion pages, which appear to be outliers, the other categories were in close range with each other. For example, in descending order, front page at $n=6$, supplements at $n=5$, international news at $n=3$, regional and sports news at $n=2$ and letter to the editor at $n=1$.

A decline in absolute count of all the categories at this point was also observed, owing to the waning discussion of the bill, as Strand (2012) also observed. According to Strand, the number of articles about homosexuality reduced with time and eventually ceased by 30 June 2010 when the bill was not being discussed by parliament. It is worth noting that after the introduction of the bill in October 2009, it was not passed into law until December 2013. It is therefore likely that the public lost interest in the bill. However, the decline in the number of stories also implies that the bill received less coverage than the debate in the Anglican Church. This raises the question of why this is the case. Could it be that the two media houses are more comfortable reporting homosexuality when it has an international angle to it, such as the Anglican Church debate? If that be the case, this then highlights the tightrope that media houses and journalists walk as national institutions, vis-à-vis international institutions, in that they reach a point when country is put first (McQuail, 2010).

Even with the decline described above, homosexuality remained mainly a national issue, with opinion pages registering the second highest count. Therefore, it appears that reporting homosexuality at this point was mainly an editorial decision, which has implications as discussed earlier. Moreover, the prominence of the opinion pages was most likely a result of efforts by the human rights organisations to supply frames about the bill to the media, but only succeeded to influence the debate among members of the public, leading to responses from individuals in form of opinions and

letters to the editor (Strand, 2011). These two categories are externally generated and do not necessarily have to conform to most of the journalistic principles such as objectivity, balance and fairness.

Front-page stories remained few throughout the five years, which is not surprising given that reporting generally reflects societal attitudes towards homosexuality, according to which it is taboo to publicly discuss issues of sexuality, especially homosexuality. And so, while the situation in the United States of America has changed over the years and is considered more favourable now, (Alwood, 1996; Chomsky and Barclay, 2013), the case was different for Uganda during the period that was studied. This is the case even after the high court ruling in 2011 that barred media houses from publishing names and residential addresses of suspected homosexual individuals in Uganda, as had been the practice (Strand, 2011; 2012) and almost 20 years since the first story on homosexuality was published. The media remains biased against homosexuality.

Therefore, the period that followed the introduction of the bill was dominated by stories on the national news pages, as were the periods before that. As such, there was no significant change in overall reporting patterns throughout the five years from 2007-2011 since homosexuality was predominantly framed as a national issue.

Lastly, the results were subjected to further analysis regarding the use of sources before and after the introduction of the bill. Specifically, the analysis considered the geographical origin of sources and later, the specific actors as presented below.

Changes in source use

Geographical origin of sources

Table 6-5 shows the use of sources before and after the introduction of the bill, according to geographical origin. According to the table, the results varied in range and quantity. However, Ugandan sources dominated coverage throughout the study period, while African sources registered the least count. The 'other' sources were the second most utilised sources. Overall, the results varied in range and the range was generally high. The Ugandan sources appeared as outliers as the results in the table show a close range between the African and other sources.

Table 6-5: Geographical origin of sources before and after the bill

Sources	Before the bill (2007&2008)		Introduction of the bill (2009)		After the bill (2010&2011)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Uganda	116	69.1	75	82.4	51	73.9
Other	38	22.6	16	17.6	12	17.4
Africa	14	8.3	0	0.0	6	8.7
Total	168	100	91	100	69	100

Specifically, in the period preceding the introduction of the bill, Ugandan sources outnumbered the rest by far accounting for nearly 70% at 69.1% (n=116). African sources registered the least count at n=14 and accounted for 8.3%, while the ‘other’ sources were the second utilised sources and stood at n=38, accounting for 22.6%. The range was wide at 102 (116-14). Therefore, the Ugandan sources dominated coverage during this period.

The dominance of the Ugandan sources before the bill, at a time when the main topic was international in nature, serves to support the point made earlier, that regardless of the topic at hand or the context, any discussions on homosexuality issues in the press are treated as a local, and specifically, national affair. Moreover, since the Ugandan Anglican leadership was on the opposing side of the argument, there is a possibility that the news reports were merely reproducing society-wide sentiments, which appears to be the norm, according to existing literature (Strand, 2011; 2012; Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012).

Conversely, by using ‘other’ sources more than African sources during this period, it appears both *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* covered the discussion as being mainly between Ugandans and the others (who included sources from the West). Once again, the two reflected the dominant views on homosexuality (Tamale, 2007a; Strand, 2011; 2012), represented by Uganda (which in this case could represent Africa) and the West (Solis, 2000). While such framing could serve to cover up bias in news reports by presenting at least two sides of a story, it also undermines alternative opinions (Kuypers, 2002). Actually, Solis (2000) argued that from the onset, media coverage of the gay issue in the Anglican Church favoured the dominant discourses as

described above and gave the impression that there were no alternative opinions to the two dominant ones. Coverage in this case appears to favour two opinions—Uganda and ‘other’—with the former being favoured more.

The reporting patterns described above continued in 2009 when the bill was introduced, with the discussion remaining between Ugandan sources and ‘other’ sources, while African sources were totally absent. At $n=75$, Ugandan sources accounted for more than 80% of all the sources in 2009 (82.4%), far ahead of ‘other’ sources which accounted for less than 20% (17.6%) and stood at $n=16$. Clearly, when the bill was introduced coverage favoured Ugandan sources as it had done previously. This brings to the fore the point about localising media discussions on homosexuality issues, in that it is more obvious now than before, that whether it is an international or a local issue, the press reports seem to promote the Ugandan perspective. Any attempts to balance the reporting by introducing other sources are negated by the negligible number of non-Ugandan sources, so much that in fact African sources were absent during this discussion on a very critical bill. It would be hasty to argue at this point that there was source bias in this reporting unless all the results have been analysed. Nonetheless, evidence thus far and from existing literature shows this to be the case (Tamale, 2007a; Strand, 2011; 2012; Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012).

Meanwhile, it emerged after further analysis that the reporting patterns as described above remained largely the same two years after the introduction of the bill. Ugandan sources continued to dominate coverage, accounting for more than 70% of the sources with an absolute count of $n=51$ (73.9%). Likewise, African sources registered the least count at $n=6$ and accounted for less than 10% (8.7%) as illustrated in table 6-5, while the ‘other’ sources remained as the second most utilised sources, accounting for 17.4% with an absolute count of $n=12$. Therefore, during this period, the discussion remained mainly between Ugandan and ‘other’ sources.

These results suggest that the two newspapers relied on Ugandan sources to report on homosexuality throughout this five-year period. This raises an important question as to why this might be the case. Although no interviews with journalists were carried out for this study, framing theory offers some answers to this question. Proponents of framing theory contend that although sources are key to news reporting, not all sources are treated equally by the press and therefore not all sources make it into the

news (Chibnall, 1977). In that regard, several factors influence source selection, among them accessibility, relevance, reliability and status of the source(s) in society (Sigal, 1973). From this perspective, it appears that relevance was a key factor in source selection, since none other than Ugandan sources would represent the Ugandan perspective on homosexuality, as explained earlier, more than the Ugandan sources.

The above argument is backed by the notion that media framing reflects the public's general attitude (Jha-Namibar, 2002) and as was observed earlier, homosexuality was framed negatively, hence the need for sources—in this case Ugandan sources—that would support this case. In fact, both the Ugandan and international press turn more to sources that are opposed to homosexuality in Uganda than to those who support it (Carrington, 2014). This highlights the observation that journalists are not passive purveyors of information but rather reserve the freedom to choose which political actors to cite in the news, in this case, Ugandan sources.

Media framing not only reflects the public's attitude but also sometimes tends to align itself with the mainstream government position, as was the case with the abuse frame that was sponsored by the Bush government during the Abu Ghraib raids (Bennett, 1990). While the abuse frame dominated coverage, the torture frame did not even reach the level of a counter frame because, as ` argue, the abuse frame was more culturally relevant than the torture frame. Likewise, it appears that the Ugandan sources were more relevant to the debate as it was framed, than either the African or other sources.

The sources were further broken down into individual sources in order to determine the usage before and after the introduction of the bill. Among these were religious leaders, politicians, and homosexuals, to mention just a few. The results are presented in the next section.

Individual sources

Table 6-6: Individual sources (percentage across the years 2007-2011)

Sources	Before the bill (2007&2008)		Introduction of the bill (2009)		After the bill (2010&2011)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Religious leader	71	17.3	27	8.1	30	13.1
Lay person	50	12.2	44	13.3	18	7.9
Politicians	23	5.6	34	10.2	34	14.9
Law enforcement officer	8	2.0	13	3.9	5	2.2
Pro-homosexuality activists	10	2.4	6	1.8	8	3.5
Homosexuals	14	3.4	4	1.2	5	2.2
Legal personnel	7	1.7	9	2.7	3	1.3
Media professionals	5	1.2	3	0.9	6	2.6
Anti-homosexuality activists	5	1.2	4	1.2	4	1.8
Research	6	1.5	2	0.6	0	0.0
Health personnel	4	1.0	2	0.6	1	0.4
Cultural leader	2	0.5	1	0.3	0	0.0
Not applicable	205	50.0	183	55.1	115	50.2
Total	410	100	332	100	229	100

Table 6-6 illustrates individual source use before and after the introduction of the bill. A brief examination of the results shows that the top three sources were religious leaders, the layperson and politicians. The results show a wide variation in range and quantity as can be seen even among the top three sources. For example, before the bill, religious leaders registered the highest count at n=71 (17.3%) and the politicians had the least count at n=23 (5.6%); after the bill, the politicians had the highest count at n=34 (14.9%) while the layperson registered the least count at n=18 (7.9%).

Among the sources with the least count overall was research, health personnel and cultural leaders. The range was generally high and the top three sources appear to be outliers throughout this period. The top three sources contributed the most to the discussion on homosexuality throughout the study period.

Further analysis revealed that among the top three sources in the period preceding the bill, religious leaders had the highest count at $n=71$ (17.3%). The other two top sources, in descending order, were the layperson at $n=50$ (12.2%) and politicians at $n=23$ (5.6%). Of the remaining categories, the cultural leaders had the least count at $n=2$ (0.5%). Others with a notably small count were homosexuals at $n=14$ (3.4%), pro-homosexuality activists at $n=10$ (2.4%) and anti-homosexuality activists at $n=5$ (1.2%). A wide range of 69 (71-2) was observed and the top three sources, as enumerated above, appear as outliers. This is evidenced given how close in range the other sources were: in descending order, homosexuals stood at $n=14$, pro-homosexual activists at $n=10$, law enforcement officers at $n=8$, legal personnel at $n=7$, research at $n=6$, media professionals and anti-homosexuality activists at $n=5$, health personnel at $n=4$ and cultural leaders at $n=2$.

The prominence of the religious leaders, the layperson and politicians at this time, suggests a direct relationship between the topic at hand and the nature of reporting. While the huge disparity between religious leaders and the rest of the sources could be attributed to their relevance to the topic at the time, which was of a religious nature, involving the place of gay priests in the Anglican Church, the insignificant contribution of the cultural leaders could have resulted from their being irrelevant to the topic. This is supported by the fact that in Uganda's case, most of the time cultural leaders are also the religious leaders in their communities, and their communities are not necessarily Christian. As for the homosexuals and their supporters such as pro-rights activists, their minimal featuring in news reports in Uganda is characteristic of the general negative attitude towards them, by the press, politicians and the public (Tamale, 2007a; Pew Research Centre, 2007; 2013; Strand, 2011; 2012; Borlase, 2012).

Related to this, these results also suggest a consistency with Strand's (2011) findings, which showed that the layperson is one of the key commentators on homosexuality in the Ugandan media. Additionally, this further stresses the centrality of religion on

matters of homosexuality in Uganda and Africa at large (Ward, 2013) and the extent to which homosexuals' views are minimal or totally absent in media reports (Strand, 2011; 2012; Borlase, 2012). Moreover, by using the public as sources, media frames often reflect the public's attitude towards an issue (Jha-Namibar, 2002). Although this may not necessarily be the case (Zhou and Moy, 2007), it appears to be true in this case. This combined with the dominance of the Ugandan sources as already pointed out, indicates a bias towards sources that favour the Ugandan position on homosexuality.

The top three sources remained the same in 2009 when the bill was introduced, except that at this point, the layperson took over as the top source at $n=44$ (13.3%), leaving the politicians at $n=34$ (10.2%) and the religious leaders at $n=27$ (8.1%) in the second and third places respectively. The cultural leader retained the least count at $n=1$ (0.3%). Homosexuals and their supporters remained among the sources with the least count. A wide range was maintained at 43 (44-1), while religious leaders, the layperson and politicians remained as outliers. The rest of the sources remained within close range as follows: in descending order, law enforcement officer at $n=13$, legal personnel at $n=9$, pro-homosexuality activists at $n=6$, homosexuals and anti-homosexual activists at $n=4$, media professionals at $n=3$, research and health personnel at $n=2$ and cultural leaders at $n=1$.

The order of sources in 2009 suggests at least two things. The dominance of the layperson in 2009 is consistent with Strand's (2011) findings in that the layperson/ordinary citizen contributed most to the debate on the bill, perhaps as a result of the lobbying by local human rights groups. This points to the highly contentious nature of the subject, since it appears that even the ordinary citizen has an opinion that he/she is confident enough to publish in the press, either as a column, an opinion or a letter to the editor. The prominence of the politicians and the religious leaders shows the political nature of the bill and how media framing responds directly to the current political atmosphere (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989). Gamson and Modigliani (1989), writing from a constructivist perspective, contend that journalistic reporting reflects the views of political factors such as sources. In that regard, it is worth noting that the bill is said to have been initiated by a group of charismatic Ugandan religious leaders working closely with politicians and anti-homosexuality

lobby groups and religious leaders in the United States of America (Kaoma, 2009), hence the prominence of the religious and political leaders as key sources at this point. As information processors, journalists do not only choose what to include or leave out but they package the information so that it reflects their working environment (D'Angelo, 2002), as was the case here. These results suggest that the sources employed most of the time are most likely to support the status quo, which is anti-homosexuality. Taken together, the top three sources in 2009 paint a picture of how far reaching this bill was, even though, according to Strand (2011), the media framed it as having consequences for only homosexuals and not necessarily the rest of society.

These top three sources described above remained as the main sources two years after the introduction of the bill, albeit in varied order. Politicians registered the highest count among the three, at $n=34$ (14.9%), followed by religious leaders at $n=30$ (13.1%) and the layperson at $n=18$ (7.9%). Among the remaining sources, health personnel registered the least count at $n=1$ (0.4%), while research and cultural leader were absent. Homosexuals and pro-homosexuality activists remained insignificant at $n=5$ (2.2%) and $n=8$ (3.5%) respectively. A wide range was observed at 33 (34-1). However, unlike previously where the religious leaders and the layperson were outliers, it appears that this time, politicians were in competition with the religious leaders as they were within close range. The other sources also remained in close range with each other as follows: pro-homosexuality activists at $n=8$, media professionals at $n=6$, law enforcement officers and homosexuals at $n=5$, anti-homosexuality activists at $n=4$, legal personnel at $n=3$ and health personnel at $n=1$, in descending order. The competition between the politicians and religious leaders two years after the introduction of the bill suggests that in addition to the layperson who may wish to comment on a topic in the press, religious leaders and politicians are the other two political actors who inform the debate on this highly political subject, as is also the case elsewhere in Africa (Reddy, 2002; Stobie, 2003; Ssempe, 2007).

Throughout the five-year period, the contributions of homosexuals and their supporters, as well as cultural leaders, were mostly insignificant as they consistently remained among the categories with the least count. Whereas, this is not unusual for the former group, the same cannot be said about cultural leaders, who are presumed to

be key players in matters of homosexuality, given that the world over, in Uganda and in Africa, issues of sexuality are of a cultural nature and discussions of homosexuality usually take on a cultural perspective (Cock, 2003; Jowett and Peel, 2010; Van Zyl, 2011; Nyanzi, 2013). This is peculiar especially considering that the main topic, for example in 2009, was the very contentious anti-homosexuality bill which among other issues, cited culture as one of the reasons homosexuality should be criminalised in Uganda. Nonetheless, two reasons can be advanced to explain this. The first is that in Uganda, cultural leaders such as kings, chiefs and their representatives are forbidden by the constitution to discuss anything political, which homosexuality is as observed by Strand (2012). Therefore, once again, reporting can be seen to reflect the political environment in which the journalists operate. The second reason is that religious and political leaders in Uganda and Africa usually cite culture as the basis of their opposition to homosexuality (Reddy, 2002; Stobie, 2003; Ssempe, 2007), hence perhaps making up for the inability of the cultural leaders to speak out for one reason or another.

The near absence of official sources such as health and legal personnel as well as law enforcement officers appears peculiar to Uganda, since literature from elsewhere shows that it is such official sources that the media relied on to reproduce the prevalent views, which portrayed homosexuals as unwelcome in society (Alwood, 1996; Kuhar, 2003). Moreover, in regard to other contentious issues such as HIV, journalists turn to government officials and prestigious doctors to avoid sensationalism (Colby and Cook, 1991). So, why did these media reports leave out these official sources? Could it be that these official sources are not considered fully established sources to which journalists can turn routinely for information? This view would be supported by the fact that even though homosexuality has been illegal in Uganda since the colonial days, the law has hardly been evoked. Whatever the case, there is little cause for concern since, after all, experimental studies show that an active audience is able to detect biased sources when it comes to homosexuality (Gibson and Hester, 2007:79).

Nevertheless, the near absence of the rights activists throughout the five years is surprising especially given that the rights frame is one of the two most dominant frames in the media coverage of homosexuality (Brewer, 2002). So, why did the

media reports favour religious leaders, the layperson and politicians? According to framing literature, in the coverage of contentious issues, sources can ably sway the debate by supplying frames to the media (Jamieson and Waldman, 2003). Considering this, Strand's earlier work found that the human rights activists only partially succeeded in influencing the debate on the bill and perhaps their biggest achievement was to influence the public to comment on the subject through the opinion pages (Strand, 2011; 2012). This perhaps explains the prominence of the layperson in this debate. In addition, the political elite contributes significantly to how issues are framed (Entman, 2004; Wolfsfeld, 2004). According to Entman (2004) media reports tend to reproduce political discourse and toe the line of mainstream government debate (Bennett, 1990) and retain the liberty to choose which political actors to cite in their news. As such, only those sources that are perceived as relevant and legitimate are able to influence frame building (Strömbäck, *et al.*, 2008). Moreover, as Entman (2007) argued, for such biased reporting as has been observed in this case, journalists tend to rely on official sources to favour their slant. This perhaps addresses the prominence of the politicians and religious leaders.

Discussion

This part of the content analysis has revealed some trends/patterns in the coverage of homosexuality over a five-year period. It emerged that although there were changes, the reporting patterns remained mostly the same and consistently reflected the dominant views on homosexuality. Indeed, more specifically, as had already been observed in chapter 5, reporting relied on the human rights frame more than other frames throughout this period, even though the results show the presence of other frames, especially in the period before the bill, where culture, religion, crime, medicine and legislation were all within close range. This implies that these two Ugandan newspapers majorly frame homosexuality as a human rights issue. By doing so, this kind of coverage reflects the global discussion on homosexuality, which tends to focus on human rights (Brewer, 2002; Mongie, 2013).

By framing homosexuality as a human rights issue, the two newspapers echoed the equality frame, which is especially common in the United States of America (Brewer, 2002; 2003). The equality or rights frame highlights the need or not, to recognise the

rights of homosexuals as equal to those of other individuals. Existing literature indicates that the equality frame and the morality frame are the commonest ways that homosexuality is framed (Brewer, 2002). In this case, these two frames were seen to occur especially when culture and religion, the two frames that represent morality, were combined. For example, in 2009, the sum of these two frames placed them in direct competition with human rights and crime as the commonest ways of framing homosexuality. Therefore, homosexuality was framed first and foremost as a human rights or equality issue, and then as a moral issue throughout this period.

It also emerged that framing was influenced by the prevalent topic to the extent that even though human rights remained the top frame throughout this period, the number of stories carrying legislation frames increased, while the crime frame remained among the top three frames, following the introduction of the bill, with human rights as the top frame. As such, it could be said that although the dominant framing favours the human rights frame, homosexuality can be framed in other ways depending on the context or topic. However, even with these frames available to the two media houses, they tend to keep the human rights frame and only include the other frame to reflect the topic or the discussion.

Likewise, stories on the national news pages outnumbered those on other pages, just as the Ugandan sources outnumbered the rest of the sources. Considering that homosexuality was framed predominantly using the human rights frame, which is a global frame, it could be argued that this global issue was presented to the audience in a local/national way. As such, the newspapers could be said to own the discussion, in effect, making it more relevant to their audiences, who as global citizens are first and foremost Ugandan. It is therefore not surprising that the newspapers chose to frame the discussion to suit the Ugandan perspectives/interests.

This perhaps explains why culture and religion, and Ugandans, religious leaders, politicians and the lay person were the other frames and sources that consistently remained among the top three throughout this period. It is because, as has already been suggested, the coverage by these two newspapers generally reflected the dominant positions in Uganda. In that regard, these two frames (culture and religion) form the dominant discourses on homosexuality in Africa (Cock, 2003; Muula, 2007; Van Zyl, 2011; Nyanzi, 2013; Ward, 2013) just as Ugandan, religious leaders,

politicians and the lay person are known to oppose homosexuality, which is the dominant view (Pew Research Centre, 2007; 2013). These sources featured prominently in the news reports although they varied in prominence depending on the period/topic. For example, prior to the introduction of the bill, religious leaders dominated coverage, but they were overtaken by the layperson in 2009 when the bill was introduced, and later after the bill had been introduced, politicians took over as the top source.

The other glaring issue that emerged was that homosexuality was persistently framed negatively—whether it was before or after the introduction of the bill. This was very clear in the dominance of the negative stories about homosexuality. This was another way that coverage reflected the dominant negative views on homosexuality as observed in earlier literature (Tamale, 2007a; Strand, 2011; 2012; Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012). The 2007 and 2013 Pew Research Centre surveys found that more than 99% of Ugandans were against the recognition of homosexual acts as normal. And so, in a way, the results of this study confirm those of other studies (Strand, 2011; 2012) and views of individuals (Tamale, 2007a; 2007b; Nyanzi, 2013) who argue that the Uganda media's attitude towards homosexuality is negative and does little in informing Ugandans about homosexuality in a balanced way.

This negative attitude towards homosexuality was also reflected in the story format, the placement of stories and the sources. To begin with, coverage relied on hard news stories vis-à-vis interviews and features. While hard news stories tend to focus on the 'hard facts' and set out to answer the 5Ws and H of news, interviews and features tend to focus on a specific issue or an individual and provide more detail than the hard news stories normally would. Therefore, there was little effort by the media houses to go beyond normal factual reporting and include more detailed and more creative reporting using formats such as the features and the interviews. Although the minimal use of briefs is commendable, the minimum detailed reporting in form of interviews and features downplays it.

In addition, the reliance on hard news stories over a prolonged period affirms the delicate nature of the subject of homosexuality. The hard news format is quite useful when reporting such contentious issues because they require balanced coverage (Alwood, 1996; Schudson, 2003; Borlase, 2012). With the hard news format,

journalists are most likely to find it easier to portray themselves as “balanced” and “objective” since hard news focuses on the factual elements of the story. It is important that journalists are viewed as balanced and objective by their audience if they are to remain credible, especially when reporting a contentious issue such as homosexuality (Topoushian, 2002; Nassanga, 2008; Semujju, 2013). Borlase (2012) who, in her interviews with Ugandan journalists who cover homosexuality, found that there was need to balance all stories on homosexuality to avoid being labelled a sympathiser or a homosexual, further supports this point. Moreover, these hard news stories hardly ran on the front page, with only 25 out of 328 stories appearing on the front page throughout this period.

Even though stories on the national news pages, which dominated coverage, are located immediately after the front page, this did little to disguise the negative attitude exhibited by the two newspapers. This is because it resulted in coverage being framed as national, even though both newspapers have provisions for regional stories, which would represent the rural and non-elite or peripheral side of the discussion. The reliance on Ugandan sources also served to emphasise the negative attitude towards homosexuality since, as existing literature shows, the majority of Ugandans are opposed to homosexuality (Pew Research Centre, 2007; 2013).

However, most importantly, perhaps, the negative attitude of these two newspapers towards homosexuality was exhibited in their ignoring of homosexuals and their supporters by providing little or no space for them to be heard in the news reports. Instead, reporting focused on religious leaders, the layperson and politicians, who are known to oppose homosexuality and were some of the supporters of the 2009 anti-homosexuality bill (Kaoma, 2009). This was the case regardless of the prevailing topic or context. This is a typical use of framing to disregard the weaker voices (those of the homosexuals and their supporters) while promoting position favourable to the journalists and those opposed to homosexuality, and still appear to be objective (Tankard, 2003).

Therefore, it can be concluded that the framing of homosexuality throughout this period can be considered biased, particularly when it came to the use of the negative tone of the stories, the placement of stories in the national news pages, minimal presence of front-page stories, and the use of sources that are known to oppose

homosexuality, as explained above. This confirms earlier findings that found that overall the Ugandan media is more negative than positive towards homosexuality (Tamale, 2007a; Strand, 2011; 2012; Sadgrove *et al.*, 2012; Nyanzi, 2013; Nilsson, 2013; Carrington, 2014).

These results imply that the audiences of these two newspapers received negative information about homosexuality over a prolonged period of time, which means that their understanding of issues about homosexuality was most likely limited by the kind and format of information provided in these two newspapers. Specifically, the audiences hardly got to hear from the homosexuals or their supporters and instead consistently heard from those opposed to homosexuality, thereby setting the limits of the debate as thus. This is because during a controversy, frames can suggest what the issue is about (Gamson and Modigliani, 1987), and yet pass unnoticed (Tankard, 2003). Additionally, framing in this case was seen to eliminate the weaker voices (those of the homosexuals and their supporters) while promoting a position that favoured the journalists and those opposed to homosexuality, and still appear to be objective (Tankard, 2003).

Although this kind of framing is likely to influence the audience to view homosexuality negatively and as an elite issue, framing literature suggests that not all biased framing results in biasing the audience against homosexuality. This is especially where the individual is able to detect the bias, for example, when a newspaper uses official sources to promote the anti-homosexuality side of the story (Gibson and Hester, 2007). Framing effects can also be hindered if the context in which a frame is applied is not suitable to a particular society's views and opinions. For example, in their coverage of the mitigation of climate change, green house gases and emission of carbon dioxide, Canadian media ignored the common frames that view carbon capture and storage (CCS) as a mitigation measure for climate change and instead opted for a frame that presents CCS as useful for reducing carbon dioxide but not necessarily climate change (Boyd and Paveglio, 2014). The two scholars argued that this was keeping within the context of the Canadian population, the majority of which hold the latter view, otherwise the framing would not have been successful.

In the current case, the two scenarios described above have implications for the audiences of the two newspapers. In the first place, it is unclear whether the audience are active audiences since that information is not currently available. Even then, it cannot be ruled out. Secondly, in the absence of such information, and in terms of context, it can be argued that this framing was most probably successful since it applied frames that resonate with the public's views on homosexuality especially as a vice that should not be accepted in Uganda as the Pew Research Centre surveys (2007; 2013) suggest. Nonetheless, an experimental or audience study would determine whether this was the case here, but that was beyond this study.

Lastly, these results demonstrate the realities that journalists and media houses face when covering any kind of issue. According to Hall *et al.* (1978), the types of stories and topics that constitute news among others are responsible for what eventually becomes news. In this case, one could say that the media houses exploited this provision to treat homosexuality as a routine subject over the years, paying no special attention to it and yet covering it anyway. By so doing, they applied another function of framing which is to set boundaries and limits during coverage (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989). In addition to setting the boundaries, one can argue that for a controversial issue such as homosexuality, the journalists and their media houses stick to the basics of their work in order to conceal bias, if any. It has already been established that there was a degree of bias in coverage during this period given the over-reliance on the human rights frame and the negative coverage that was observed. Now, by relying on hard news, the journalists and media houses appear to be protecting themselves against overtly relaying bias against a subject that is considered taboo in the society they operate in and which is viewed as illegal by the government. As such, they remain relevant to the audiences they target and to the government which regulates the space in which they operate.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

The objectives of this study were inspired by the need to investigate the coverage of homosexuality issues by the Ugandan media, away from a rights perspective and from the controversial anti-homosexuality bill. These two aspects have dominated academic inquiry into the subject, hence limiting the scope of research. In addition to the human rights frame and the anti-homosexuality bill, the thesis explored other ways in which the media frames homosexuality such as using the religion, culture, medical, crime and legislation frames. The aim was to establish which other frames, apart from that of human rights, the Ugandan media applies in their coverage of homosexuality, and whether the context in which a story is reported and the topic, have any bearing on how homosexuality is framed.

In that regard, the thesis set out to answer the following three research questions:

1. How did *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* frame homosexuality from 2007 to 2011?
2. Were there any changes in reporting patterns of homosexuality between 2007 and 2011?
3. What is the implication of the results to journalism in Uganda, regarding the coverage of a contentious issue?

The thesis is arranged in seven chapters, including this one (chapter 7) and the introductions chapter (chapter 1). The second and third chapters constitute the literature review and theoretical framework. These chapters provide the context in which homosexuality is covered in Uganda and elsewhere in the world, including Africa. Framing theory, which informs this study was explored especially with regards to homosexuality and other contentious issues and it was observed, that although bias resulting from framing is inevitable, systematic bias observed over long periods of time calls for concern among media scholars and media audiences. It was also noted that whereas the coverage of homosexuality has improved in some parts of

the world, with less negative framing reported, in Africa, and Uganda in particular, homosexuality was still viewed negatively by both the press and the society.

The methodology is presented in the fourth chapter. The chapter describes the research procedures in detail. This is followed by the results in the fifth and sixth chapters. Here, the results from the content analysis of two national daily newspapers, namely, *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*, are presented and discussed in light of existing literature and framing theory.

A number of conclusions have been arrived at from this thesis. Among them is the confirmation of existing literature in terms of the human rights frame as the dominant frame when it comes to covering homosexuality. The existence of other frames and their use in news reports was observed, and although they were used in combination with human rights, the human rights frame stood out as the single-most frequently used frame during the period that was studied. In terms of the context or the topic that was being covered, human rights remained as a constant and depending on the context, it was utilised in combination with any of the other frames.

It was also concluded that representation of homosexuality in the two newspapers was negative, regardless of the context or the topic that was being covered. This is a reflection of the negative societal attitude towards homosexuality that has been documented about Uganda. While in some cases the number of positive stories outnumbered the neutral stories, the number of negative stories was overwhelming. This negative coverage is a deviation from that in some parts of the world, especially the United States of America, where press coverage of homosexuality has become generally positive following change in editorial management and the passing of laws that recognise homosexuality as a legal and normal way of life.

The above observation informed the conclusion that the two newspapers' reporting and coverage was biased against homosexuality. This was seen in their reliance on Ugandan sources, who are known to oppose homosexuality, the overwhelming presence of negative stories, the negligible presence of homosexuals and their supporters, and the minimal number of front-page stories. Although press framing of issues, especially homosexuality has been known to influence the understanding of, and attitude towards homosexuality, there is no evidence to support this claim in the

case of Ugandan society. Moreover, in some cases outside Uganda, the audience has been able to detect bias for and/or against homosexuality in the press. Nonetheless, it cannot be ruled out that biased reporting denies individual members of the audience a variety of information on which they can rely to make up their minds on such a contentious issue. Therefore, the two newspapers do not quite help their audiences to make informed choices when it comes to what to believe, accept or understand about homosexuality.

The other conclusion is that the coverage of homosexuality is tailored to the Ugandan audience. This was especially noted in the use of mostly national news stories vis-à-vis international news stories, the use of negative stories, and the reliance on Ugandan sources and not international sources (including African sources). International stories, positive stories and other sources were all present in the news reports that were studied, but they were viewed as an attempt to balance the reporting of a contentious issue and not really as a way to vary the information the two newspapers offered their audience. As such, the Ugandan perspective was promoted more than any other, therefore limiting the scope of the discussion and the kind of information provided to the Ugandan audience, which is the primary audience of the two newspapers.

Implications of the results

One of the key principles of framing theory is that there is no single perspective to an issue, and consequently, each perspective has implications for a variety of values and considerations (Chong and Druckman, 2002). Additionally, framing is deliberate and involves selection and salience (Entman, 1993). That means that although the media have various frames to choose from when reporting an issue, they select which one to go with and most probably, which ideas to emphasise and make salient. The current study has revealed that *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* appeared to have chosen to frame homosexuality negatively. They ignore the voices of homosexuals and their supporters as well as portray the discussion as a national/elite issue, far removed from the periphery and informed mostly by Ugandan sources, specifically religious leaders, politicians and the layperson, who are all known to oppose homosexuality.

The framing described above speaks to the nature of journalism exhibited by these two media houses. The coverage reflects the dominant position by the socio-political players as well as the public. The position is such that these parties are opposed to homosexuality. By reflecting this one side of the story, the journalism here appears to place the media houses in a supporting role of the negative perceptions of homosexuality, making it difficult for the homosexuals and their supporters to express themselves in these two media houses in much the same way as those opposed to them. On the one hand, this should not come as a surprise, given that the media mirrors society. On the other hand, the more liberal *Daily Monitor*, perhaps, should appear to be more balanced than the government-owned *New Vision*, which is expected to toe the government line. Currently, the two media houses are part of the wider section of Ugandan society that is opposed to homosexuality and which is comfortable showing it. Or may be not.

The framing and reporting patterns observed in chapters 5 and 6 have implications for the media/journalists and their audiences as well as media scholars and students. For the journalists, frames make it easy for them to organise information and simplify complex issues, especially when it comes to a contentious issue such as homosexuality, in a way that fits within their journalistic routines and principles (Gans, 1979). According to the results of this study, the journalists and their media houses chose to organise information about homosexuality in a way that portrays it negatively probably because it is the easiest way to simplify this issue, since this kind of framing is already consistent with the public's or audience's perceptions. As such, the media houses and journalists find themselves playing a role in maintaining the status quo regarding the views about homosexuality in Ugandan society. The combination of the delicate nature of the subject, and the nature of reporting observed over an extended period spanning five years, suggests that that *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* are unlikely to prioritise the dissemination of balanced and objective information about homosexuality. Consequently, the two newspapers are unlikely to facilitate their audiences to make informed decisions on whether to support or oppose homosexuality. This view is supported mainly by the fact that the current socio-political environment is opposed to homosexuality and yet the two media houses must meet the interests of both the government (to a certain extent) and their audiences in order to remain relevant sources of information.

From the foregoing, this implies that the audiences of the two media houses receive biased information, which only supports their views and does little to expose them to information that facilitates them to make up their minds on which side of the debate to belong. This is not to downplay the prospect that the individuals who constitute the audience of these two newspapers are active consumers of the content and can therefore detect bias when exposed to it. However, it leads to the consideration of the view that when the media accord one frame more salience than another, that salient frame becomes more accessible and is therefore most likely to be recalled from memory by an individual than a frame that is not as salient. This is because the accessibility of frames makes them more applicable than those that are not easily accessible (Tversky and Kahneman, 1973). Moreover, the two media houses do little to support the active consuming of their newspaper content and yet, to borrow an idea from one scholar, our knowledge about the nature of the social world depends significantly on how we frame and interpret the information we receive about the social world (Edelman, 1993).

Therefore, while carrying out their information role, the media also determine what we know about the world and how we know it. After all, frames are useful for making sense of the world and they help people build expectations, organise their memories, map out their actions and interpret feedback (Goffman, 1974; Lemert and Branaman, 1997; Snow, 2001). The framing as has emerged here determines what we know about homosexuality and how we know it. From the results presented in the results chapters, what we know about homosexuality is that it is news in Uganda but it is mostly presented as a national issue, worth paying attention to, but not too much as to appear as front-page news. We are also led to consider that it is a negative phenomenon, that goes against our cultural values and norms and that religious leaders, politicians and lay people have a say on this very contentious issue, while homosexuals and their supporters do not.

Media scholars can draw some lessons from these results especially in the area of balance and objectivity when it comes to journalistic reporting of news events. When covering a contentious issue, the media are expected to present multiple sides of the debate in order to comply with the journalistic principles of balance and objectivity (Nassanga, 2008). However, the way messages are designed, presented or organised

will lead to some information being highlighted more than other information, which in turn serves to legitimise and therefore downplay certain positions (Tuchman, 1978; Scheufele, 2000). The results of the current study have demonstrated this point in a number of ways. For example, while all the six frames that were investigated were found to be present, the human rights frame stood out as the dominant frame. By way of balance, the human rights frame was always in competition with another frame, but human rights stood out as the dominant frame. In addition, much as the number of stories on the front page was negligible, the biggest percentage of stories was found on the national news pages, which are located immediately after the front page. So, whereas, there was a semblance of balance in reporting, it was negated by the highlighting of some positions more than others. As such, it could be argued that balance and objectivity in journalism may not always produce the desired result, which is most probably fairness. Nevertheless, the two media houses should be seen to be balanced and not out rightly biased as these results show.

Balance and objectivity could be achieved through the application of the various frames more consistently in order to vary the order and presentation of the information provided to the audiences. The study takes cognisance of the socio-political challenges that the media face when it comes to covering homosexuality. However, the study is also aware of the constructionist paradigm's assertion that journalists are "information processors" (D'Angelo, 2002: 877) which means that they not only select what to include or exclude but they package that information in such a way that it reflects the environment in which they operate. Therefore, short of a revolution in the newsroom to accommodate editors and reporters sympathetic to the issues of homosexuals—as was the case in the United States—or the emergence of a viable gay press, it is only a change in public attitude towards homosexuality that will change the situation. In most cases, this change takes place over an extended period but when it does, the press then would most likely turn to reflecting the new status quo, as studies from the United States and other countries show. Therefore, it is a matter of time.

Limitations of the study and relevance to literature

It is worth noting that the results of this study are limited and therefore cannot be generalised. Studying two national daily newspapers and not radio and/or television or all the three, could have limited the kind of results obtained, since the three are different in reach, organisation, nature of reporting and even topics covered. However, as explained in the methodology chapter, undertaking a content analysis of the two leading national dailies was most suited for this kind of academic project that was resource bound in terms of time and finances. Moreover, it is possible that another researcher would have opted to include other categories in the codebook such as the number of words in each story or the gender of the reporter, but this was not deemed necessary for this study since the study was interested in frequency of the stories and frames used by the two newspapers during the study period. In addition, perhaps an inclusion of interviews with journalists and their editors, as well as with some members of the audience would have generated a more informed perspective, however, the main focus of the study was on the framing of the content of the two newspapers and not on the perspectives of the journalists and the editor.

Nonetheless, there are aspects of the research that can be adopted by other studies. The codebook could prove to be useful to a study on another topic focussing on either the same newspapers or different newspapers such as the biweeklies or triweeklies or even the tabloid press, which at this point, it appears, has not been part of the studies on homosexuality coverage by the Ugandan media. Additionally, the review of literature in chapter 2 provides a useful insight into the status of how the media in Uganda and elsewhere in the world deal with controversial issues such as homosexuality.

As already alluded to, the results of this study have helped fill the gap in literature in three different ways. In the first place, the study covered a period that has erstwhile not been covered since existing literature covers the period 1997-2007 and the post-anti-homosexuality bill. Secondly, the study shifted focus from the anti-homosexuality bill, which is the basis of the existing research, to cover other issues apart from the bill. Thirdly, the study changed the focus of research from a human

rights perspective to include other perspectives such as religion, culture and health, to mention just a few.

Nevertheless, the current study/research presents at least two research opportunities: firstly, this study focussed on media texts and the representation of homosexuality in the two newspapers that consisted the sample. Therefore, even though the results demonstrate that both newspapers are biased in their reporting of homosexual issues, and that this bias is most likely to prejudice the audience against homosexuality, there is lack of audience or experimental evidence to prove this. It would be beneficial for future research to investigate the ways in which the Ugandan media reporting of homosexuality has influenced the attitudes and perceptions towards homosexuality. It is already known that the Ugandan society is generally hostile towards homosexuality, but it is not clear how much of this hostility is a result of media reporting.

Secondly, the 2013 anti-homosexuality act was assented to by the president in February 2014, but was annulled by the constitutional court because parliament lacked quorum on the day the bill was passed into law. Nonetheless, some of the provisions in the law directly concerned media reporting. Specifically, according to clause 13, on the promotion of homosexuality, one commits a crime if he or she

Participates in production, procuring, marketing, broadcasting, disseminating, publishing of pornographic materials for the purposes of promoting homosexuality... uses electronic devices which include internet, films... for purposes of homosexuality or promoting homosexuality (Anti-Homosexuality Act, 2013: clause 13(a) and (d)).

It would be beneficial to know whether the act, both its passing and annulment, have had any effect on the way the media report homosexuality. For example, now that provisions such as clause 13 no longer exist in the law books, are more homosexuals and their sympathisers featured in the news? Interviews with both Ugandan and foreign journalists who report from Uganda would also contribute to the knowledge on the factors that influence the coverage of homosexuality in Uganda.

Appendices

Appendix A: Codebook

The framing of homosexuality by two Ugandan newspapers from 2007-2011: An analysis of *New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*

Include the following articles

- News
- Features
- Briefs
- Opinion pieces
- Regular columns
- Editorials
- Letters to the editor
- Statements/announcements/press releases

Do not include:

- Comics
- Cartoons
- Television programme line-ups
- Radio programme line-ups
- Advertisements
- Classifieds
- Corrections
- Analysis/the week that was/weekly summaries
- Pictorials
- Entertainment columns

0. Story ID

- 1. Date of publication of the newspaper (Indicate using the month and year for example, January 2007)**
- 2. Publication: Indicate the newspaper in which the article was found by**

using the following code:

1= *New Vision*

2= *Daily Monitor*

3. Location of article: Indicate the location of the article using the following code:

1= *Front Page*

2= *National News*

3= *Regional News (Eastern, western, northern, southern, central Uganda)*

4= *International News/World News/Africa*

5= *Sports Page*

6= *Business Page*

7= *Supplement/Special/Supplementary*

8= *Opinion and Editorial (OpEd)/Commentary/Prospects*

9= *Letter to the Editor*

4. Story Type: Indicate story type using the following code:

1= *News*

2= *Feature*

3= *Brief*

4= *Opinion piece/Regular column*

5= *Editorial*

6= *Letter to the editor*

7= *Interview/profile*

Frames: Indicate the frame using the following code

5. Religion (reference to: God; Christianity, Islam and African traditional religion; scriptures; the Bible; the Quran)

Code up to five (5)

1= *Christianity and homosexuality are not compatible (homosexuals cannot be Christians; Christianity does not permit homosexuality; the Bible does not permit homosexuality; the Bible is against homosexuality; homosexuality is ungodly; homosexuality is evil; homosexuality is the anti-Christ; homosexuality is satanic; homosexuality is wicked; God hates homosexuals; homosexuality is a curse; it is unnatural)*

2= *Christianity and homosexuality are compatible (homosexuals can also be Christians; Christians should love homosexuals; the Bible does not shun homosexuality; God loves homosexuals)*

3= *Islam and homosexuality are not compatible (homosexuals cannot be Moslem; Islam does not permit homosexuality; the Quran does not permit homosexuality; the Quran is against homosexuality; homosexuality is un-Islamic; homosexuality is satanic; homosexuality is wicked)*

4= *Islam and homosexuality are compatible (Homosexuals can be Moslem; Islam permits homosexuality; the Quran permits homosexuality; the Quran does not shun homosexuality)*

5= *Against God's plan for marriage (Homosexual sex is unproductive; sex is meant for procreation)*

6= *Ungodly (an abomination against God)*

7= *N/A*

6. Legislation (reference to legislation regarding homosexuality; both pro and anti-homosexuality legislation)

1= *The Constitution (the Constitution; constitutional provisions on homosexuality)*

2= *The penal code (penal code provisions on homosexuality)*

3= *The anti-homosexuality bill (introducing a bill on homosexuality; the bill before Parliament)*

4= *Sharia Law*

5= *Other (laws outside Uganda)*

6= *N/A*

7. Law and Crime (homosexuality as a crime; homosexuals arrested/charged; individuals charged with crimes related to homosexuality)

1= *Same-sex marriage (same-sex marriage illegal)*

2= Recruiting children into homosexuality (reference to recruiting children into homosexuality)

3= Sodomy (the offence of sodomy)

4= Promoting homosexuality (individuals and institutions working for the promotion of homosexuality in society/schools, churches/sports and the media)

5= N/A

8. Medicine, health and science (causes; dangers)

1= Causes (causes of homosexuality: psychological disorder; disease; spiritual/demon possessed/bewitched)

2= Threat (threat to public health; causes HIV/AIDS and STDs; multiple sexual partners; trauma and psychological effects)

3= Public health plans (public health/HIV/AIDS plans should cater for homosexuals)

4= Natural (sexual orientation determined at birth; genetic)

5= Unnatural (lifestyle; learned behaviour)

6= N/A

9. Human rights and activism (the rights of homosexuals)

1= The rights of homosexuals should be respected (equal rights; health; education; marriage; existence; expression and assembly; worship in church/mosques)

2= Homosexuals have no rights (health; education; marriage; existence; expression and assembly; worship in church/mosques)

3= Activism for rights of homosexuality (advocating for (equal) rights)

4= Activism against rights of homosexuality (advocating against (equal) rights for homosexuals)

5= N/A

10. Culture (history of homosexuality in Uganda; Ugandan culture; African culture; other cultures)

1= Not Ugandan (homosexuality is alien to Ugandan culture)

- 2= Ugandan (homosexuality is part of Ugandan culture)
- 3= Un-African (homosexuality is alien to African culture)
- 4= African (homosexuality is part of African culture)
- 5= Unacceptable in other cultures (cultures that are not Ugandan or African)
- 6= Acceptable in other cultures (cultures that are not Ugandan or African)
- 7= Homosexuality is a vice (immoral; an abomination; involves abuse of children and adults; always engaged in sex)
- 8= Homosexuality is all about money (homosexuals just want money from the west; states legalise homosexuality to access donor aid)
- 9= Homosexuality is personal (does not concern the whole society; homosexuals should keep to themselves and not seek any rights; should not convince others to join them)
- 10= N/A

Source(s) (the actors in the story: human beings; institutions; research)

Indicate the source using the following code:

Code up to five (5)

11. Local (Ugandan sources)

- 1=Politician (presidents, MPs, ministers and local government leaders)
- 2= Religious leader (Christian, Moslem or African traditional religion)
- 3= Cultural leader (King, chief; Katikiro or equivalent)
- 4= Health personnel (Doctor, nurse, midwife, psychologist, psychiatrist, dentist, gynaecologist)
- 5= Legal (Lawyers)
- 6= Pro-homosexuality rights activist (human rights activists; institution)
- 7= Anti-homosexuality activist (anti-gay activists; institution)
- 8= Lay person (someone on the street)

9= *Law enforcement officer (Police officer, judicial officers)*

10= *Research (Academia)*

11= *Homosexual(s) (gays/lesbians)*

12= *Media professional (journalists, editors, reporters; media managers)*

13= *N/A*

12. African (from the continent of Africa)

1= *Politician (presidents, Legislators, ministers and local government leaders)*

2= *Religious leader (Christian, Moslem or African traditional religion)*

3= *Cultural leader (King, chief)*

4= *Health personnel (Doctor, nurse, midwife, psychologist, psychiatrist, dentist, gynaecologist)*

5= *Legal (Lawyers)*

6= *Pro-homosexuality rights activist (human rights activists; institution)*

7= *Anti-homosexuality activist (anti-gay activists; institution)*

8= *Lay person (someone on the street)*

9= *Law enforcement officer (Police officer, judicial officers)*

10= *Research (Academia)*

11= *Homosexual(s) (gays/lesbians)*

12= *Media professional (journalists, editors, reporters; media managers)*

13= *N/A*

13. Other (Europe and the North America)

1= *Politician (presidents, legislators/senator/congress, ministers and local government leaders)*

2= *Religious leader (Christian, Moslem or African traditional religion)*

3= *Cultural leader (King, chief)*

4= Health personnel (Doctor, nurse, midwife, psychologist, psychiatrist, dentist, gynaecologist)

5= Legal (Lawyers)

6= Pro-homosexuality rights activist (human rights activists; institution)

7= Anti-homosexuality activist (anti-gay activists; institution)

8= Lay person (someone on the street)

9= Law enforcement officer (Police officer, judicial officers)

10= Research (Academia)

11= Homosexual(s) (gays/lesbians)

12= Media professional (journalists, editors, reporters; media managers)

13= N/A

14. Tone of article: Indicate the tone of the article using the following code

1= Positive (positive towards homosexuality)

2= Negative (against homosexuality)

3=Neutral (takes a balanced stance)

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