

GENDER DISPARITY IN TALK BACK PROGRAMS: A CASE STUDY OF VOICE OF LANGO FM WIMEJA PROGRAM

ANDREW KIZITO OGWANG

RS18M42/728

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM, MEDIA, AND COMMUNICATION IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF JOURNALISM AND MEDIA STUDIES OF UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

September, 2025



**UGANDA CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY**

A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa

DECLARATION

I, Ogwang Andrew Kizito, hereby declare that this dissertation is my own and all the contents presented are original except where stated by the references and that the same work has not been submitted for the award of a degree at this or any other University or institution of higher learning.



9th May 2025

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my father, Simon Odur, my mother, Maria, and my Wife, Dolly. Thank you for your prayers, support, and encouragement during the course of my studies.

Acknowledgement

Glory to God the Almighty for His Divine blessing upon me in the process of this study. Specifically, I would like to thank my late father, Simon, for inspiring me to enroll in the study program. Though he is not well educated, he envisaged the value this course would add to my professional career. His financial contribution is worth appreciating, too.

In the same vein, I would like to extend my gratitude to my friends and colleagues at the workplace who offered me all kinds of support during my studies. You guys are amazing to me.

Also, my supervisor, Ass. Prof. Emily Comfort Maractho, I am so much indebted to your motherly guidance and supervision during this research project. Emily, your cool approach to guidance made things presumed difficult and easy for me.

Ass. Prof. Monica Chibita, I am grateful for all your wise guidance and meaningful engagement during my studies.

APPROVAL

This dissertation is submitted with the approval of Ass. Prof. Emily Comfort Maractho
(Supervisor)

Signed 

Date 9th June 2025

TABLE OF CONTENT

DECLARATION	I
DEDICATION	II
Acknowledgement	III
APPROVAL	IV
LIST OF FIGURES	XI
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION	XII
ABSTRACT.....	XIII
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Introduction.....	1
1.2. Background	1
1.3. Radio Talk-back Program	3
1.4. Gender Disparity in the Media	5
1.5. Problem Statement.....	6
1.6. Objectives of the Study	7
1.7. Research Questions.....	7
1.8. Scope of the Study	7
1.8.1. Geographical Scope	7
1.8.2. Time Scope	8

1.8.3. Content Scope	8
1.10 Significance of the Study	9
1.11. Theoretical Framework.....	9
1.11.1. Introduction.....	9
1.11.2. Feminist Media Theory	10
1.11.3. Critique of the Theory.....	12
1.11.4. Operationalization of Feminist Theories into the situation of Women and Media.....	13
1.12. Summary.....	16
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	17
2.1. Introduction.....	17
2.2. The history of radio Talk-back Program.....	17
2.3. Gender and radio participation.....	22
2.4. Conclusion	30
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	32
3.1. Introduction.....	32
3.2. Research Design: Case study	32
3.3. Area of study	33
3.4. Source of information	33
3.5. Population.....	34

3.6. Purposive sampling	36
3.7. Data collection instruments	36
3.7.1. In-depth interview	37
3.7.2. Observation	37
3.8. Quality control	38
3.9. Strategy for data processing and analysis	38
3.9. Categorization of data	39
3.10. Validity and Reliability	39
3.11. Ethical consideration	39
3.12. Dissemination plan	40
 CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS	 42
4.1. Introduction	42
4.2. Observation	42
4.3. Commonly discussed topics/issues	42
4.4. Categorization of topics/issues discussed	43
4.5. Theme One: Male dominance in the Wimeja Program	49
4.5.1. Time of the program	49
4.5.2. Lack of confidence	50

4.5.3. Low literacy level and exposure.....	51
4.5.4. Low level of income.....	52
4.5.5. Cultural stereotype	53
4.5.6. Controversial discussion.....	54
4.5.7. Radio set ownership and control.....	56
4.5.8. Busy studio line	57
4.5.3. Female host, co-host or both genders	61
4.5.4. Toll-free Studio Line.....	63
4.6. Theme Three: Effect of Male Dominance on the Wimeja Program on society.....	63
4.7. Conclusion and summary of findings.....	65
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	68
5.1. Introduction.....	68
5.2. Discussion for Theme One. Male dominance in the Wimeja Program	68
5.3. Discussion on theme two. The Motivation of women to participate in Wimeja Program.....	85
5.4. Discussion for theme 3. Effect of Male Dominance in the Wimeja Program on Society.....	92
5.5. Chapter conclusion	94
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	96
6.1. Introduction.....	96
6.2. Summary of significant findings.....	96

6.3. Conclusion	97
6.2. Recommendation.....	100
6.3. Areas of further research	101
References	103
Appendices.....	114
Appendix 1. Introduction letter	114
P.O.Box, 4, Mukono, Uganda.....	114
Appendix 2. Interview questions for listeners	115
Appendix 3. Interview questions for Wimeja show host	116
Appendix 4. Observation guide.....	118
Appendix 5 : REC Approval.....	119
Appendix 6 : Map of Uganda showing the location of District	120
Appendix 7 : Map of Lira District, showing Lira municipality (Currently Lira City)	121
DISSERTATION CORRECTION COMPLIANCE REPORT BY THE CANDIDATE (POST VIVA FORM)..	1

LIST OF TABLE

Table 1 : Showing frequently discussed topics on the Voice of Lango Wimeja program 45

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 : Percentage of radio listenership rating in Lango sub-region according to Geo Poll survey (2018).....	34
Figure 2 : Audience share of radio stations in Lango sub-region according to Geo Poll survey (2018).....	35
Figure 3 : The number of calls and SMS received per gender for one month of observation.	47
Figure 4 : A ‘big man’ is ‘ambushed’ by serial callers – cartoon published in Ggwanga 3–9/02/11 and reproduced with the editor’s permission.	82
Figure 5 : Map of Uganda showing the location of District	120
Figure 6 : Map of Lira District, showing Lira municipality (Currently Lira City)	121

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION

AM	Amplitude Modulation
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FM	Frequency Modulation
SADC	Southern Africa Development Cooperation
SMS	Short Message Service
UCC	Uganda Communication Commission
USA	United States of America
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VOL	Voice of Lango

ABSTRACT

This study explored gender disparity in the Wimeja program on Voice of Lango FM, focusing on the reasons behind its male dominance, factors that could encourage greater female participation, and the broader societal consequences of such gender imbalances. The research was grounded in feminist media theory. Using a qualitative approach, the study involved 30 participants from Lira City, selected through purposeful sampling. Data was gathered via in-depth interviews and observation. The findings revealed significant gender disparity in the program, driven by factors such as cultural stereotypes that discourage women from engaging, women's busy morning routines, low self-esteem preventing women from participating in discussions, and economic barriers that hinder women's ability to afford phones to call into the program. To enhance women's involvement, the study recommends that program hosts actively encourage female participation, set up dedicated phone lines for women, and promote the use of social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, and X. Implementing these suggestions could greatly increase women's engagement, contributing to a more inclusive media environment. The study highlights the negative consequences of gender disparity in the program, as it silences women's voices and strengthens male dominance in an already patriarchal society. This contradicts feminist media theory, which advocates for equal rights and representation for women in media production.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the background of FM radio in Uganda and its significant contribution to public discourse on call-back programs. This chapter also introduced the feminist media theory, which is used in the study, how it was applied and offers a critique and also gender disparity in the media. The chapter further highlights the problem statement for the research topics and gaps that necessitated this study. Additionally, this chapter entails the research objectives, questions, scope of study, justification and significance of the study.

1.2. Background

Three decades ago, Ugandan airwaves exploded with the crackling promise of a revolution. Radio broadcasting in Uganda has a long history, with radio being the primary source of information for millions of Ugandans (Charles, Julius, & Kazaara, 2023). The landscape of Ugandan radio changed dramatically with the introduction of private radio stations, offering a broader range of entertaining and educational programming. According to the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC, 2023) report, there are over 301 radio stations across Uganda, with over 80% of Ugandans relying on it for information, entertainment, and education (UCC, 2023). Despite the increasing penetration of digital media, radio remains the most accessible form of media, especially in rural areas where internet access and television are limited (Nelson, 2024). However, despite the liberalisation of broadcast media space in Uganda decades ago, there still exists a glaring gender imbalance in the participatory space for engagements on Radio call-back programs. Yet, Radio

programs, especially talk shows, have played a very important role in engaging the public in constructive debate on various issues such as politics, health and economics, among others (Nabunya, 2009; Sadie, 2020). In addition to the liberalisation of broadcast media space, there have been remarkable strides in women's emancipation in Uganda, especially in political participation. However, in media engagements, progress toward achieving the full potential of the involvement of women has remained slow. Although radio is an important information source and engagement platform, call-back programs are still largely male-dominated. Therefore, this study on gender disparity in call-back programs in the Voice of Lango Wimeja program in Lira City assesses underlying factors perpetuating gender disparity on this interactive platform, highlighting the urgent need to address this issue.

The study has identified and will apply feminist media theory. According to Steiner (2014), the theory was invented by Donna Allen in 1977. Allen and her second daughter, Martha Leslie Allen, identified (and enacted) three principles for feminist journalism: never attack or use words that judge people; privilege facts over opinion because “conclusions without facts keep us apathetic, powerless to act, and dependent upon the decision- making of others” and let people speak for themselves, something “male journalism” refused to do (Steiner, 2014, p. 360). The Wimeja program offers a platform for people to speak for themselves, but it is male-dominated.

The study used a qualitative research method. According to Bryman (2004), a qualitative case study entails a detailed and intensive analysis of a single case. This study focused on the Wimeja program to examine what perpetuates existing disparity in more depth (Bryman, 2004).

1.3. Radio Talk-back Program

Wimeja is one of the flagship programs on the Voice of Lango radio station in Lira City. With the establishment of the Radio in 1998, the Luo program that is broadcast from 7:15 am -9:30 am, Monday to Saturday, creates a participation platform for callers to give their views on current affairs issues like politics, education, health, agriculture, and business, among others. In some instances, local stakeholders engage with callers on pertinent topics of community interest. The program's significance lies in its ability to provide a platform for public discourse and community engagement, making it a crucial part of the radio station's offerings. According to Brisset (2018), many callers believe they can enlighten locals or villagers through their contributions (Brisset, 2018).

From its name, the program was replicated and formatted to have call-ins and modelled on a former program at Radio One, *Ekimeeza*. According to Nassanga (2009), Radio One FM pioneered the mode of public discussion/citizens' media in 2000 with its program *Ekimeeza*. Symbolically, the word "table" connotes roundtable discussions among equals on issues of mutual interest (Nassanga, 2009). Whereas Radio One's *Ekimeeza* involved the public in a discussion on topical issues of interest, Capital Radio was the first station to introduce a participatory political radio talk show, *The Capital Gang*, which had a host and four regular guests, who were known as 'gangsters', into which listeners were free to call (Chibita, 2010).

The program gave leaders a platform to account for society. In Uganda, opposition politicians and civil society activists can effectively communicate their messages with government leaders. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, the public can call in and express their concerns and views, challenge official power, let

off steam, or listen and learn about political developments and the opinions of other Citizens (Mwesige, 2014). Nassanga (2008) calls this the “interactive culture”, where it is now possible for anyone to call into a radio station to air their views and concerns about an issue. The result of this interactive culture, she says, is that an audience that was once docile and passive has now been transformed into a focused and engaged public, with many people talking fearlessly about corruption, poor governance, and other social concerns. This active audience participation is crucial in promoting a more gender-inclusive media, empowering them to be part of the solution (Nassanga, 2008).

According to Mwesige (2009), radio deserves particular attention because it is Uganda's most influential mass medium and most Sub-Saharan Africa. It transcends barriers such as high levels of illiteracy, high costs, and the predominance of the oral tradition (Mwesige, 2014). However, its dominance and influence are not an automatic precursor to its accessibility and usage by all people as an essential means of communication. Nassanga (2009) points out that the presence of media does not imply that everybody utilises it, so examining the access and engagement in citizens’ media is essential (Nassanga, 2008). It is further acknowledged that while the proliferation of broadcast media that transmit in the Indigenous languages may improve people’s chances of participation in the public debate through the media, it also may reduce the chances of the broadcast media enhancing a shared public sphere (Chibita, 2010), this could partly explain gender disparity in media.

1.4. Gender Disparity in the Media

As a manifestation of gender disparity in media participation that shrinks the voices of women, gender activists are increasingly complaining about the insufficiency of women's voices and increased stereotyping in Uganda's media products. Women's voices, it is argued, are less heard on issues traditionally associated with men, like politics, economics, energy, and sports (Maractho, 2017). The reality, however, is that women in developing countries are excluded from the few communication channels that exist, and yet even if they were to have access to media structures in Uganda, reflect the overall cultural orientation of the entire Ugandan society, in which women's voices are not expected to be heard in society. In addition, the mainstream media in Uganda have done little to help women and the Ugandan society demystify this stereotypical thinking (Musubika, 2008). The struggle to make women's voices heard through the media is not a new phenomenon. According to Gadzekpo (2009), on record, active public discourse on gender and media in Africa dates back to the first United Nations World Conference in Mexico City in 1975, where the media was identified as a site for action (Gadzekpo, 2009). The campaign to increase women's participation in public life has been ongoing in Uganda since the early 1990s (Maractho, 2017). To achieve increased participation of women in public spheres, several concerted efforts have been made by different stakeholders in media, academia, civil society, and government, among others. For Instance, Desai (2015) noted that women were heavily involved in securing a woman-friendly constitution during the constitution assembly (Desai, 2015).

Given that background, radio is accessed by listeners, which makes it an exciting topic of study. This study focused on gender disparity in the Wimeja Program on Voice of Lango FM in Lira City.

1.5. Problem Statement

Since the liberalisation of media space in 1990, Uganda has experienced rapid growth in the number of radio stations. Across the 14 defined Uganda Communication Commission broadcasting regions, there are 309 licensed FM stations (Kemanzi, 2020). Many radio stations have introduced call-in programs as an interactive medium, but only a few women participate. The Wimeja program on Voice of Lango in Lira City is no different. Despite the program being in the local language, few women participate in it. The issue of women's participation and representation in the media is a gender concern that numerous media scholars have extensively discussed and brought to the attention of stakeholders for action. Women are significantly less likely than men to be visible in media representation and participation (Georgeac & Rattan, 2019). Despite slight gains in women's participation in media programs, call-back programs remain male-dominated. More so, individuals who call in or contribute to political talk shows regularly remain a reasonably small group known as the 'vocal majority' compared to the listeners, who are primarily men (Nabunya, p. 231). This picture has not changed. The subject of examination is the persistence of male domination in media programs (Mbabazi, 2019). The study investigated why women did not actively participate in the program despite its running in the local language and drew lessons to improve such programs.

1.6. Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of this study was to examine the gender disparity in the Wimeja program on Voice of Lango FM in Lira City. The specific study objectives are to:

1. Examine the underlying reasons why the Wimeja program is male-dominated.
2. Examine factors that may motivate women to participate in the Wimeja program.
3. Examine the implications of gender disparity for women's participation in the Wimeja program for call-in programs in Uganda.

1.7. Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. Why does the Wimeja program remains male-dominated?
2. What factors may motivate women to participate in the Wimeja program?
3. What is the implication of gender disparity in the Wimeja program for call-in programs in Uganda?

1.8. Scope of the Study

This section indicates this study's geographical, time, and discipline content.

1.8.1. Geographical Scope

The study was conducted in Lira City, which has two municipality divisions: Lira City West and Lira City East. With the inclusion of rural sub-counties like Lira, Ngetta, Adekokwok, and Iwal, the population of Lira City is 115,598 Males and 130,839 females, totaling 246,437.

1.8.2. Time Scope

The data collection period was two months, from February to March 2022. This is because the program had to be lived and recorded during a specific period.

1.8.3. Content Scope

Beyond increased women's presence in media in terms of content production, news coverage, and employment, there has been a wide range of studies. The rise of women in elite positions in society (Carter & Britain, 2021) and heightened awareness in newsrooms of these gender disparities might have resulted in increased female sources in the news in the past two decades (Carter & Britain, 2021). The number of women in journalistic functions has also been growing (Byerly, 2016; Padovani & Ross, 2019; Weaver & Willnat, 2020).

Looking beyond all these, one of the other forms of media engagement is through effective feedback. This, therefore, makes media engagement complete and inclusive. However, this cannot be actualised if the feedback is dominated only by male listeners. It is essential to understand why there is continued male dominance on call-back programs, its effects on such programs, and what may motivate women to participate equally (Ewart, 2016). This is also critical because call-in programs have become a mainstay of radio programming.

The study outcome will make an original contribution to the body of literature, and radio programmers can use the information to realign call-back programs to be gender inclusive. Also, members of civil society and academics in the media and communication can use it to promote whole-gender inclusive participation in call-back programs.

1.10 Significance of the Study

The study will provide information on women's status and participation in the Wimeja program. Therefore, it will add more knowledge and perspective to the current awareness of gender inequalities in callback programs. Additionally, the study can be used to realign the format of call-back programs to ensure it encourages more women's participation.

Further, this study can support existing initiatives among women's groups that advocate for fair and balanced participation of women, diversity of voices, and fairness in mainstream media. The results could be used in advocacy interventions, such as meetings with radio program managers and discussions about making participation gender inclusive.

This study will help interest media professionals, academia, and the public concerned with women's participation in media engagement and provide a basis for further research. I will further encourage similar research initiatives and highlight the importance of the nature of participation in the call-back program from time to time.

1.11. Theoretical Framework

1.11.1. Introduction

Gender disparity in the Wimeja call-back program is the core subject matter of this study. In particular, the study examined factors perpetuating this, how women may be motivated to participate, and its effect. Since the study is concerned with the issue of media and gender, the theoretical perspective is anchored on feminist media theory. The key concepts in this theory include a free and fair press devoid of gender

stereotypes and equal participation. This chapter begins with an overview of the feminist media theory, its contribution and critique, and a discussion of the application of the theory in this study.

1.11.2. Feminist Media Theory

Feminist media theory relies on feminist theory. According to Steiner (2014), the field of feminist media studies history arguably begins with Betty Friedan's 1963 attack on famous women's magazines (which were run by men) for their single-minded celebration of the "feminine mystique." The premise of those magazines was the idea that working women were unhappy and neurotic, and women could find fulfilment only as devoted homemakers and mothers (Steiner, 2014). They see women's subordination as having a material base and a consequence of capitalism, especially in a class society that is structured in hierarchical, patriarchal relations (Makama, 2013; Van de Voorde, 2020). The feminist media theorist whose pioneering legacy survives most clearly is, however, Donna Allen – not Betty Friedan (Nasucha & Kertanegara, 2020). In 1972, she founded the Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press (WIFP). A 1977 manifesto by Allen and her daughter Dana Densmore called for inventing a radical and feminist philosophy of communication, "one that is gentle and peaceful, respectful of all people, and politically equal. Allen and her second daughter Martha Leslie Allen identified (and enacted) three principles for feminist journalism: never attack or use words that judge people; privilege facts over opinion and let people speak for themselves, something "male journalism" refused to do Steiner, (Steiner 2014, p.360).

One of the scholars who agrees with feminist media theory is Rakow (2001), who advocates for new systems of creating representations of women that would

sustain participatory democracy. Echoing Donna Allen, she calls for speech to be “freed”, arguing that “[E]ach must have ‘voice,’ the right to speak and to be heard, to represent one’s self and one’s perspectives, to be part of the political decision-making processes” (Rakow, 2001; Steiner, 2014, p.360).

Creedon and Cramer (2007) also suggest that the Recurring themes in feminist media theory include the depiction of women through stereotypes, the emergence of progressive female characters, the subversion of traditional stereotypes, and the objectification of women suggest that generally, women world over are neither portrayed nor treated relatively (Creedon & Cramer, 2007). They blame this on the structure and ownership of the media institutions.

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

In place of the view of the media as reflecting reality, feminist media theorist argues that the media are involved in constructing reality (Shiva & Kharazmi, 2019). So, another contribution from the feminist media theory has been their focus on new themes and approaches with a female viewpoint or angle to media research and theory that were gender blind. According to McQuail (2024), the significance of the media

for women lies in the media's socialising role, primarily through the repetitive depiction of different gender roles and reinforcement of stereotypes (McQuail, 2024). Harvey, (2019) further reinforces this highlights; highlights point that despite the marginal position of feminist media studies in the discipline as a whole, there are at least themes taken up by and revitalized by feminist communication scholars that have gained more habitual importance, such as stereotypes gender socialization and ideology (Harvey, 2019; Steiner, 2014).

Feminist media theorists often use the term distortion to claim that women are misinterpreted in the media. They blame the media for not adapting to society's changes by sticking to stereotypes (Harvey, 2019). Instead of solely blaming the media for the underrepresentation of women, exploring other factors that might be contributing to this issue is worthwhile. This study explored this gap, similarly to examining the gender disparity in the Wimeja program.

1.11.3. Critique of the Theory

According to Gallagher (2013), Feminist media scholarship has emerged as one of the wealthiest and most challenging intellectual projects in media and cultural studies over the past twenty-five years. He adds that the range, complexity, and transdisciplinary nature of feminist media studies today bear little resemblance to the fledgling body of work that began to appear in the 1970s. Despite its evolution, a consistent theme runs through feminist media theory and criticism: its inherently political nature. While Gallagher argues that the primary drive of feminist media theory is political, I believe that core issues such as ensuring equal participation and empowering women to articulate their concerns are crucial in addressing the

participation and under-representation of women's voices in the media (Bachmann & Eckert, 2021; Gallagher, 2013).

Relatedly, Van Zoonen & Banghart) urged that with its substantial project, it is the reciprocal relation between theory, politics, and activism, the commitment of feminist academics to have their work contribute to a larger feminist goal (however defined), the blurred line between the feminist as academic and the feminist as activist, that distinguishes feminist perspectives on the media from other possible perspectives (van Zoonen & Banghart, 2018).

Over time, several debates about how women are portrayed in the media or how many women work have dominated the discourse on women and the media. However, communication alternatives must emerge to critique the present world order and vision of the future (Parveen, 2015). I think this is a compelling argument. Beyond the media, societal structures, which are inherently patriarchal, can also contribute to issues of gender participation.

On the same note, this study examines whether gender stereotypes reflect male dominance in the callback program and seeks to understand what would motivate women to participate in changing the status quo.

1.11.4. Operationalization of Feminist Theories into the situation of Women and Media

In news content, feminists cast their eyes on news sources and point out that the majority of those who are quoted in stories on events of the day are men. However, women and men live in the societies reported on, and both have views on

the events and issues (Shiva & Kharazmi, 2019). This is related to gender disparity in call-back programs since the same gender lives in the same society, and issues discussed in these programs affect all. However, the program attracts the participation of mainly men. Feminist media theory is thus applicable in this study because it will be used to derive a research question on why the program is male-dominated.

Relatedly, according to the feminist media theory, women should be allowed to speak for themselves because male journalists do not offer this opportunity. This also applies to this study, which intends to determine why the Wimeja program is male-dominated. Since the theory contends that women should be allowed to speak for themselves, this study would like to find out why they are not participating despite an equal opportunity given to all in this program. Now that they are not adequately participating, this study wants to determine what may motivate them to share their ideas about the program.

According to Creedon and Cramer (2007), feminists recognise media as powerful institutions that can help shape identities. Seen as the medium through which messages are transmitted (through editorial content, images, and adverts) about the gender roles of women and men in any society, feminists note that media messages can either reinforce or challenge gender stereotypes and sex-based discrimination (Creedon & Wackwitz, 2022). These grounds are equally important in this study. Firstly, suppose the media is a powerful institution that helps shape identities. In that case, if men and women do not equally share this, one gender will have an uneven recognition of identity. In participatory programs like the Wimeja program that have gender disparity, this study will also use this feminist argument to investigate the effect of gender disparity on such programs.

Further, feminist media theory also believes that media can either reinforce or challenge gender stereotypes and sex-based discrimination. This argument is also applicable in this study in the sense that gender disparity in the Wimeja program is a form of reinforcing gender discrimination against women. This has helped form one of the research questions in this study: it asks what may motivate women to participate in the program. The answer to this question will challenge this gender stereotype and discrimination since women will have their voices heard on pertinent issues discussed.

Feminist media theory also contends that women reporters are often assigned to health, education, and social issues. At the same time, men are given the political and economic assignments that are considered part of the career path to senior editorial and media management positions (Byerly & McGraw, 2020; Shiva & Nosrat Kharazmi, 2019; Van de Voorde, 2020). Feminists suggest that these kinds of assignments contain an ideological power and constructions of femininity that continue to position women firmly within the conventional bounds of patriarchal relations (Thornham & Weissmann, 2013). This argument by Thornham, putting into perspective increased women's emancipation, literacy level, and access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) gadgets by both genders, among others, may not be applicable today. This study is interested in examining the gender disparity in the Wimeja program to understand whether a new phenomenon undermines equal gender participation in such an arena. In a nutshell, the theory has helped me to understand and explain gender disparity in the media.

1.12. Summary

In this chapter, I have presented feminist media theory and scholarly arguments about feminist perspectives on women and the media. I have also explained feminist concepts and how they manifest in media forums like call-back programs. This will help analyse how historical and social norms are built into the back program and how these cause gender disparity in the Wimeja program.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents literature on the background of call-back programs, gender, and radio participation. The literature is aligned with gaps and contributions to this study through the use of academic work done in the areas of gender and call-back programs on the radio. Ultimately, it highlights the summary of gaps in the literature, how literature has added to the understanding of the research subject, and how phone-in programs offer opportunities for women's voices.

2.2. The history of radio Talk-back Program

Radio is regarded in Africa as a medium that narrows the knowledge gap on current affairs and as an outlet for socio-political expression (Onyenankeya & Salawu, 2023; Wanyeki et al., 2002). Radio deserves particular attention because it is Uganda's most influential mass medium and most Sub-Saharan Africa (Mwesige, 2014). Radio platforms are crucial for people, especially in rural areas, to air their concerns through interactive radio talk shows that encourage community call-ins (Nakatumba et al., 2024). Radio broadcasting in Uganda has a long history, with radio being the primary source of information for millions of Ugandans (Charles et al., 2023). According to the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) 2022 report, there are over 260 radio stations across Uganda, with over 80% of Ugandans relying on it for information, entertainment, and education (UCC, 2022). Despite the increasing penetration of digital media, radio remains the most accessible form of media, especially in rural areas where internet access and television are limited (Nelson, 2024).

As the most viable communication medium, its access and engagement should be equal for both genders. However, this has yet to be realized in talk-back programs despite the open space. It was hoped that the proliferation of media outlets would mean that more women would have access to the media and consequently would be able to participate more fully in public discourses and debates (Gadzekpo, 2009). This is a gap that this study would like to investigate. Radio forums originated in Canada as organised community-based radio structures meant to facilitate local people's participation in ongoing or impending rural development projects (Bello, 2015). Between 1939 and 1965, the Canadian National Farm Radio Forum brought together rural people from across Canada to learn about and develop a deeper understanding of the issues that affected people's lives in their communities (Manyozo, 2016; Manyozo, 2018). In most of the current call-back programs, their format is deeply embedded in allowing listeners to have a say on current affairs issues in their areas.

Although radio forums started in Canada, the current talk-back format started in the US in the 1970s, following the FM revolution. This was due to the technological and commercial needs of the AM stations. It has gained significance since the 1980s, when the fairness doctrine was cancelled. From the middle of the 1940s, the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) fairness doctrine demanded that radio stations present fair and balanced opinions on controversial topics. Therefore, radio and television stations did not have programs similar to opinion columns in the newspapers, as they were required to present both sides of each discussion (Hacohen, 2014).

Talkback radio programs are increasingly using Short Messaging Service (SMS), consisting of a text message sent by mobile phone or landline, e-mail, and

social media as a means by which audiences can contribute to and engage with programs (Ewart, Ames, & Media, 2016). However, telephone calls remain an essential aspect of talkback, allowing audience members to contact hosts directly and listeners to hear the caller's voice (Ewart et al., 2016). With the wide use of social media, feedback during call-back programs is currently being received on social media platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook. According to Waiswa, (2024), social media presents significant opportunities for connecting with audiences and sources (Waiswa, 2024). This confirms how radio stations are adopting digital engagement with different audiences.

Perhaps more than other traditional forms of mass media, radio has long offered a space for listener feedback and participation. With talk radio programming, listeners have been keyed to producing a mediated deliberative (if not necessarily representative) environment (Raney et al., 2018). These programs are for the callers; callers present their opinions and discuss them with a host. According to Brisset-Foucault, (2018), many callers consider that through their contributions, they can 'enlighten' 'locals' or 'villagers' I believe that that is why some listeners who are supposed to call in are instead invited to the studio live to give their opinions and views to enlighten listeners on a topic of public interest (Brisset, 2018).

Hosts of radio call-back programs create topics for civil discussions to enable a logical, rational, or at least transparent discussion (Gagliardone, 2023). This is also a characteristic of the call-back program because before the phone line is open, the host gives the topic a logical and orderly flow of discussion. Secondly, listeners are cautioned against direct attacks and inappropriate language in discussions to avoid emotional outbursts among callers.

According to an essay in 1932, the radical German playwright Bertolt Brecht contended: Radio is one-sided when it should be two ... The radio would be the finest possible communication apparatus in public life ... [if] it knew how to receive as well as to transmit, how to let the listener speak as well as hear, how to bring him into a relationship instead of isolating him (Brecht & Silberman, 2015).

According to Stuart and Mostert (2011), with dozens of different formats, radio offers something for almost everyone. One format that has grown in popularity and visibility in recent years is call-in talk radio (Mostert, 2018). This format typically involves discussion moderated by a host who invites listeners to call in and comment.

The Wimeja program uses this format, too. However, what makes it distinct is that some days, those supposed to be callers on a particular topic are invited live on air and make short comments to highlight an issue that needs clarification. In the case of a person in authority, they use this platform to respond to issues affecting people.

Participation in radio talk shows is concerned with the study of the nature of radio talk as a genre about issues of right of access to public information, checks and balances of power, human rights and respect for minorities in the society, and nationhood, citizenship, corruption and their ultimate involvement in the governing of the country (Omwoha, 2017). Also, callers can help frame how audiences assess issues by emphasising some aspects over others to influence public attitudes (Kerby & Marland, 2015). This is a valid reason that Radio callers play a foundational role in call-in programs. Without callers, these programs would lose the meaning of their participatory and interactive format. However, according to Brisset (2018), talk-show callers are considered good representatives of ‘the people’s voice’ because they are the people and are competent conveyors of their opinions (Brisset, 2018). Putting this

from a gender perspective, it would be unrealistic and a generalised assumption that callers represent the people's voice if the call-in program is male-dominated, like the Wimeja program. This study concerns why women are not actively participating in the program. This is because leaving such a program to continue to be male-dominated will be a means of stifling women's voices in the public arena.

Traditional forms of broadcast radio compose a distinctly local medium, particularly for small communities that rely on radio because of a lack of access to media technologies with a broader reach (Cho et al., 2024). Radio enables groups and individuals to enter into public discourse, thereby supporting popular participation in decision-making processes and promoting a greater sense of individual and collective agency in directing the community's growth and development (Fombad, Jiyane, & Science, 2019; Mwangi, 2021). And just what constitutes talkback radio is open to question (Griffen, 2020). Talkback also marked growing market segmentation, with music-dominated FM radio targeting the young. This is a standard format of commercial radio stations to attract and sustain an audience base. Attests to this fact by reasoning that talk-back is rooted in commercial radio. However, Gage, Douglas, & Kinsey's (2023) idea that call-back programs are rooted in commercial radio (Gage, Douglas, & Kinsey, 2023) is not widely accurate in Uganda since even community and Christian-based media houses have such programs for engaging listeners. Only the topics and nature of the discussion could differ, but the call-back programs (segments) cut across all types of radio in Uganda.

According to Hacoheh (2013), all participants in the talk-back use and evaluate social actions similarly, as the host leads the way and the callers follow him in sharing the same opinions about social actions and the social good (Hacoheh,

2013). They share an extraordinary emotional force, as hosts use emotional language to motivate audiences to act. Additionally, a talk-back program is based on the personality and performance of its host (Crider, 2014). However, most call-back programs in Uganda are based on current affairs to attract participation and make it lively. They are known in England as phone-ins, whereas in the US, they are part of political talk radio (PTR) (Hacohen, 2013). Regional political talk radio remains a staple of civic discourse in many countries, generally on the AM dial. Its growing popularity has been theorised as filling a demand for “hyper-local news” abandoned due to media conglomeration (Ewart, 2016).

Radio communication has undergone a notable transformation since the adoption of interactive digital platforms, and some authors consider it the medium that has changed the most due to audience participation (Jimenez, 2016). The traditional telephone continues to be used on radio programs for audience participation, although today, it shares spaces reserved for audience contributions with online social media (Bonini & Monclús, 2015). To express their opinions on air, listeners can now use the traditional telephone and digital media such as email and social media (Jimenez, 2016). Facebook and WhatsApp are the most common social media platforms used in call-back programs.

2.3. Gender and radio participation

Like many countries, Uganda has men as the dominant players in decision making, although women shoulder most reproductive, productive, and community management responsibilities, many of which are not remunerated or reflected in national statistics (Dragojević, 2019). However, it is increasingly recognised that the media has a crucial role in women’s political participation. (Cassingham, 2018;

Komuhiimbo, 2016). According to Sadie (2020), fundamental to the constraints that women face is an entrenched patriarchal system in which family control and decision-making powers are in the hands of males (Sadie, 2020). However, participatory community media initiatives are always aimed at increasing the involvement of women in the media, perceiving women as producers and contributors of media content and not solely as 'consumers' (Sunil, 2021). Such engagement encourages the involvement of women in technical, decision-making, and agenda-setting activities. Also, they offer excellent opportunities to develop the capacities of women as socio-political actors. According to Couldry et al. (2018), access to the communication medium is the primary step towards democratizing the communication system (Couldry et al., 2018). He says that people should have access to the media products and the media facilities. Additionally, they have the potential to promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media and to challenge the status quo. But, not all the show hosts in such programs go through journalism training institutions where such knowledge of gender inclusiveness is offered. Regrettably, some hosts did not even go through formal journalism training (Dralega et al., 2016). That is why Critical media literacy scholars such as argue that journalism education should be more than acquiring new technological skills in addition to the 'business as usual' journalism education that is devoid of gender concerns (Govender, 2022; Mesmer & Monographs, 2022; Milosavljević & Vobič, 2021).

Studies in Uganda exploring the issue of media use and participation as a platform of engagement reported differences and similarities (Maractho, 2017; Nassanga et al., 2013; Semujju & Development, 2013). One way to challenge the status quo is through equal participation in programs like call-backs, where women

can speak out about their ideas. However, this is not happening in the Wimeja program.

The media play essential roles in society. They report on current events, provide frameworks for interpretation, mobilise citizens concerning various issues, reproduce predominant culture and society, and entertain (Osimen et al., 2024). As such, the media can be essential in promoting gender equality within the working environment and in the representation of women and men. Additionally, it offers platforms for engagement, such as call-back programs.

Mwesige (2014) notes that evidence from his research suggests that individuals who regularly call in or contribute to political talk shows remain relatively small compared to the listeners (Mwesige, 2014). Moreover, they are primarily men. He adds that participants in these public debates are usually the urban elite, whose views in the public discussions often echo their political party ideologies or positions of interest groups like traders, business groups, or legislators. This individual may be a foot soldier of a political party, an individual who receives rewards in cash or kind from a political party, or an influential person in society (Selormey, 2013). According to Bisset (2018), because they are sometimes paid, they are accused of encouraging a process of ‘commercialisation’ of the airwaves and electoral politics, thus jeopardising independent thinking and ‘genuine popular participation (Brisset, 2018). No wonder Nassanga (2009) notes that participants in these public debates are usually the urban elite, whose public discussions often echo their political party ideologies or positions of their interest groups like traders, business groups, or legislators (Nassanga, 2009). According to Brisset (2018), these people can articulate political judgments better than others and are more competent in conveying other people’s

views than people themselves, often called ‘locals’ or the ‘villagers’ (Brisset, 2018). By doing so, they establish themselves as spokespeople or ‘representatives’. This sense of entitlement of these callers to be a monopoly of local issues in the area created fear among some callers, as was found among women interviewed during this study. However, with the growing number of FM radio stations almost per district in Uganda, many people, including those in rural areas where these radio stations are situated, are participating in call-back programs. The nature of participation is mainly in the local language. This is an indication of growing listenership engaging in these programs. It is not just elites alone calling in these programs; it is even local people who can afford mobile phones.

Relatedly, Melkote & Steeves (2015) observe that the power to tell stories is controlled by elites, who usually control the media. Minority groups, women, people with low incomes, and local communities lose their right to tell their own stories. These disparities in participation are present in the above analysis (Melkote & Steeves, 2015). They are further confirmed by the National Electronic Media Performance Study (2004: 26–27), which found that media debates were dominated by politicians, national leaders, and ‘people with appointments and titles (Nassanga, 2009). In general, attitudes support the persistence of gender gaps in different areas of social life, such as labour, economy, politics, and education. As they are essential information vehicles, the media must reflect the diversity of society (Kellner & Share, 2019).

According to Araüna et al. (2017), media and popular culture have been vital sites for assessing how societies strive for gender equality, deal with gender and sexual diversity, and emancipate groups traditionally discriminated against (Araüna et

al., 2017). In a patriarchal society, men are given superior status, and women are expected to do menial chores while discovering their individuality only through the eyes of men around them. Despite women's impressive progress in politics and policy-making, gender equality and women's empowerment remain a far-distant dream for most Ugandan women. Women in such a society are brought up in such a way that they never see themselves as independent, respectable individuals (Amara, 2024). However, modern changes in gender roles have seen women steadily taking roles that were presumably male-dominated. The post-war period witnessed a further expansion of cash-related activities by women as circumstances continued to propel them to the head of family survival strategies. Women are individually and collectively engaged in farming, trade, business, paid employment, and alcohol brewing (Klimov & Shahar, 2013). This study will examine this to understand whether one factor is that makes them not participate in call-back programs is a stereotypical mindset that women in this day and era cannot make independent opinions to engage in public discourse.

According to Dralega (2016), although African media in general and feminist discourse in the media in Africa have undergone considerable positive changes over the last two decades, a lot remains the same (Dralega et al., 2016). Feminist discourse on the media in Africa remains, with a few exceptions, conservative or what some refer to as 'misogynistic' and deeply rooted in the hegemony of patriarchy. According to Steiner (2014), women running broadcasting and film studios would offer more diverse, creative, and positive representations of women (Steiner, 2014). Feminist media critics also believe men have changed, and they can be agents and promoters of women's space in the media. Being good transformed men, we were opening the door to feminist studies. However, when it broke in through the window, every

unsuspected resistance rose to the surface – fully installed patriarchal power, which believed it had disavowed itself (Hall, 2013). This argument provides a basis for this study in trying to understand whether the hegemony of patriarchy extends to call-back programs, which is why the Wimeja program is male-dominated. It has been highlighted that women's participation is hugely minimal due to society's patriarchal nature, which limits their involvement in such (Bigirwa, 2020). Moreover, if the hegemony of patriarchy extends to the program, the study will help determine what motivates women to participate. This can be one of the ways of detangling this status quo.

Media disparity examines gender in contemporary mass media. Using Tuchman's work in *Hearth and Home* as its jumping-off point, *Media Disparity* questions the extent to which claims of more equitable gender portrayals and greater female involvement are valid in today's media output (Cox, 2013). Three-and-a-half decades after Tuchman argued that women were "symbolically annihilated" by the mass media, this collection shows that little has changed in the way(s) that women are positioned and the roles that they perform (Cox, 2013). If little has changed in women's positions and roles, this study is investigating one area where gender imbalance manifests in media participation. These studies assessed why such disparity persists in call-back programs and what perpetuates it.

The historical struggle for gender equality has been aimed at guaranteeing the rights of women not only to live a dignified (in areas such as work, health, education, housing, food) and free of violence life, but also to participate in politics and government, (Ginting et al., 2016). A free press has responsibilities toward citizens, including monitoring those in power and offering a voice to those without public

voices (Anwar, 2020). However, the argument of giving equal freedom and rights to women looks farfetched in the Wimeja call-back program, which this study focuses on because the platform is levelled. The basis for the study is why the program continues to be male-dominated, even though the platform is open to all audiences.

Karen (2004) notes that who is allowed access to the media and who is invited to speak in news and current affairs contexts is the result of deeply conventional ideas about authority, which, at the very least, are class- and gender-specific and implicitly coded white male' as the norm (Hall, 2015). Hall adds that whose voice is heard and whose voice is denied is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of our political world and our potential for democratic participation. In addition, simplified, stereotyped, and sensationalized media stories and focus often fail to comprehensively represent women's proper role and contributions in society (Dralega et al., 2016).

It has been three decades since the 1995 World Conference on Women was held in Beijing. The conference identified 12 critical areas, one of which is gender and media/communication. This can be seen in the feminisation of jobs and civil society, gender discrimination in the media profession, and stereotypical media portrayals of gender (Alwi et al., 2013). In line with Azwan, this study sought answers on why the media continues to be seen as an arena where gender stereotypes still manifest in unbalanced participation. It is upon this background that this study focuses on the Wimeja program to study what is perpetuating gender disparity, what may motivate women to participate, and the effect of such a program in society.

Araüna et al. (2017) believe that the media provides an essential platform for engagement that can be used to deal with all forms of gender inequality. According to him, media and popular culture have been critical in assessing how societies strive

for gender equality, deal with gender and sexual diversity, and emancipate groups traditionally discriminated against (Araüna et al., 2017). From a theoretical perspective, over the past two decades, many feminist scholars have focused on gender representation in the news and other forms of journalism. However, until recently, the interrelationships between gender, politics, and communication have received relatively little attention (Somolu, 2013).

As a reflection, scholarly arguments indicated that from the history of call-back programs, its access is open for engagement for all, irrespective of gender. Beijing Platform of Action (UN, 1995) projected the media's role as key to realising progress on gender equality and women's empowerment. However, these programs remain male-dominated. Yet, through their participation, this kind of discussion shapes issues like development and policies. (Dagron, 2013). Despite the available platform, women's participation, like Wimeja, is still minimal. Moreover, the literature does not answer this question. However, communication apprehension is an individual's fear and anxiety level associated with actual or anticipated communication with another person or persons. Additionally, lack of education has been a visible barrier to female participation in the formal sector (Makama, 2013). Esiefarienrhe et al., (2022) contend that this inequality has its roots in the colonial system of education, which was primarily geared toward meeting the workforce needs of the colonial government that alienated women from educational and economic opportunities (Esiefarienrhe et al., 2022). But according to the Uganda National Household Survey 2019/2022 report, the literacy rate for persons aged ten years and above was 76 per cent, a slight increase from 74 per cent. However, despite the proliferation of media houses nationwide with equal access to participation, women's voices are still minimal in these spaces. Also, in the last two decades, access to mobile phones has been

enormous. However, Bigirwa (2020) notes that the growth of social media, the allowance of new media, and ways of communicating have created an opportunity to challenge and push back on existing establishments (Bigirwa., 2020). These platforms may serve as platforms for users to express their political views or get involved with issues they feel are essential (Selnes, 2020). Also Rakow et.al, (2015) eloquently advocates new systems of creating representations of women that would sustain participatory democracy (Rakow et al., 2015). Additionally, alternative media, in particular, demonstrate even more clearly than the post-feminist blogger sites the feminist potential of technology for helping to challenge dominant representations and, better, for allowing women to constitute counter-public spheres in the sense of Fraser (2020). But still, male dominate the use of their phones to participate in call-back programs compared to their female counterparts. These are the gaps that this study examined (Fraser, 2020). This study expects to identify the causes of gender disparity in call-back programs, and this will go a long way in adding to the body of knowledge.

2.4. Conclusion

The above chapter presented a wrap-up of relevant literature about the history of the call-back program and gender issues from the perspective of call-back programs. It explains the call-back program's history and the relationship between media and gender participation. What stood out is that though males dominate participation, these males are elites with political interests. This will also offer one of the aspects that will guide the development of data collection instruments since many radio stations are now up-country and use local languages in call-back programs, but these programs are still male-dominated. Interestingly, the number of female elites joining

politics and literacy among them, irrespective of other factors, has increased compared to the past. However, their participation in call-back programs is still minimal. This is one aspect that this study examined. Importantly, the gap in the literature review above was in the key areas that are fundamental in this study, like why the call-back programs are male-dominated and their effects, and how women can be encouraged to participate equally, like their male counterparts. These gaps were extensively addressed in the presentation and discussion chapters in this study.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter will describe the research design and reasons for its selection in the investigation of the research problem, identification of the area of study, source of information, population and sampling techniques, variables and indicators, procedure/protocol of data collection, data collection instruments, quality control, strategy for data processing and analysis, ethical consideration, anticipated methodological constraints, and work plan. Therefore, this study will use qualitative research methods. In addition to its flexibility that allows a researcher to pursue new areas of interest, qualitative research increases the researcher's depth of understanding of the phenomena under investigation.

3.2. Research Design: Case study

This study used a case study design. A case study is an empirical study investigating a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not evident. Yin (2013) generally states that case studies are the preferred strategy when “how” and “why” questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events and when the focus is on the contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context (Yin, 2013).

According to Bryman (2016), a qualitative case study entails a detailed and intensive analysis of a single case (Bryman, 2016). The most common use of the term associates the case study with a location, such as a community or organisation, where the emphasis tends to be an extensive examination of the setting. Social science

researchers, especially those working within Feminism Studies, have used qualitative methods frequently due to their emphasis on cultural meanings generated by actors (Barker & Chang, 2013). Qualitative methods are argued to be inductive as ‘they are oriented towards discovery and process, have high validity, are more concerned with a deeper understanding of the research problem in its unique context (Bix et al., 2017). This research design applies to this study because it focuses on a single subject, which is gender disparity in the Wimeja program.

3.3. Area of study

The study was conducted in Lira City, which has two municipality divisions: Lira City West and Lira City East. With the inclusion of rural sub-counties like Lira, Ngetta, Adekokwok, and Iwal, the population of Lira City is 115,598 Males and 130,839 females, totalling 246,437 (National et al., 2024). With a commendable listenership of the Wimeja call-back program in the City area, the study area is justifiable for conducting this study.

3.4. Source of information

This study focused on gender disparity in a call-back program called Wimeja in Voice of Lango. It is a subject of gender and media participation. Women will be the primary source of information because the study is on women and employs media feminist theory.

3.5. Population

Voice of Lango was established in 2008 as a commercial radio station with a blend of community-focused programming. The program content is predominantly Luo to serve the core purpose of informing, educating, and offering a platform for engagement. The bias in Luo dialect programs is deliberate since the audience base in Lango, neighbouring Acholi and Karamoja (Acholi Jabwor), and the Teso subregion (Kumum) speak Luo.

According to a 2018 Geo poll radio listenership survey, Voice of Lango was rated the most listened-to radio station in the Lango sub region.

Percentage of radio listenership rating in Lango sub-region according to Geo Poll survey (2018)

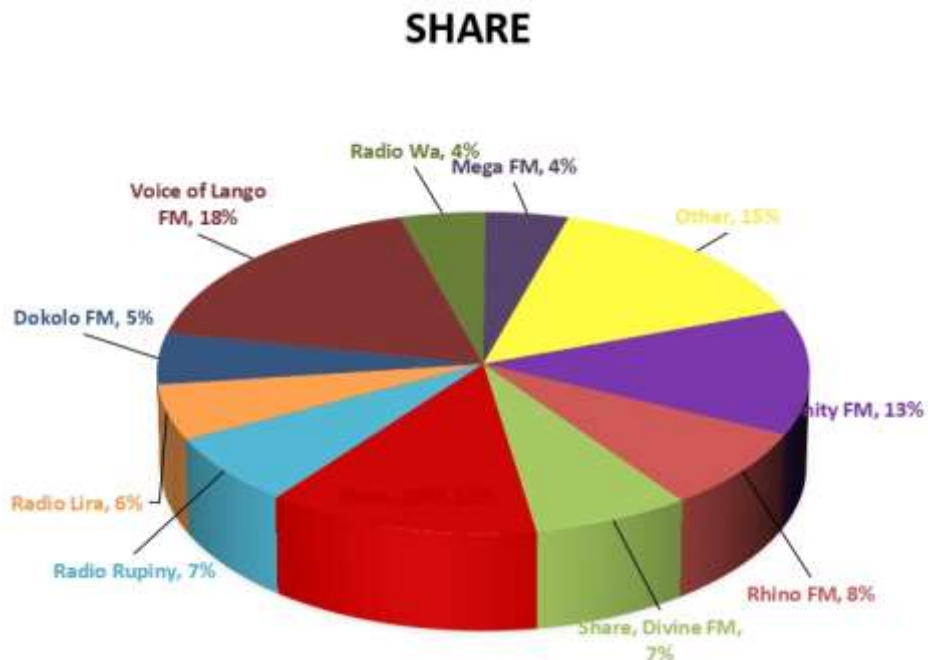


Figure 1: Percentage of radio listenership rating in Lango sub-region according to Geo Poll survey (2018)

Audience share of radio stations in Lango sub-region according to Geo Poll survey (2018)



February 2018		March 2018	
Radio Station	Average Audience	Radio Station	Average Audience
Voice of Lango FM	120,000	Voice of Lango FM	102,000
Unity FM	74,000	QFM	75,000
Divine FM	62,000	Unity FM	74,000
Rhino FM	52,000	Rhino FM	47,000
QFM	47,000	Divine FM	43,000
Radio Rupiny	37,000	Radio Rupiny	41,000
Radio Lira	36,000	Radio Lira	32,000
Radio Wa	33,000	Dokolo FM	30,000
Dokolo FM	32,000	Radio Wa	26,000
Radio Apac	29,000	Mega FM	25,000

Panel Universe Estimate: 1,321,795
 Radio Universe Estimate: 1,107,664

Figure 2: Audience share of radio stations in the Lango sub-region according to Geo Poll survey (2018)

With a command of over 120,000 listeners and Wimeja being its flagship program that runs from Monday to Saturday (7:30 am-9 am), it is the basis for choosing it to carry out this study. The morning hours are prime time in radio programming. Wimeja timing is additionally strategic in that people are always interested in following and engaging in issues that concern their areas, which is always a centre for discussion in this program. This justified the study of this program.

3.6. Purposive sampling

This study used purposive sampling for critical respondents. These key respondents included 30 women and the host of the Wimeja program. The number was reached after reaching saturation. In broad terms, saturation is used in qualitative research as a criterion for discontinuing data collection and analysis. Its origins lie in grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 2014), but in one form or another, it now commands acceptance across various approaches to qualitative research (Saunders et al., 2018). The respondents were interviewed using the semi-structured interview guide for the research. Secondly, the show host was selected because he engages in this program daily, selects topics for discussion, and guides the program. This makes him instrumental in this study as far as getting data on gender disparity in the program is concerned.

3.7. Data collection instruments

This necessitated interaction with radio listeners in a face-to-face arrangement with respondents. Thus, the primary data was collected through respondents' interviews and observation. The key questions in the interview guide were, why is the Wimeja program male-dominated, what can motivate women to participate in the program, what is the effect of the program on society, among others. As Wimmer & Dominick (2009) observed, qualitative research allows researchers to view behaviour in a natural setting without artificiality, increases the depth of understanding, and the method's flexibility allows the researcher to pursue new areas of interest.

3.7.1. In-depth interview

At least 30 respondents were interviewed, consisting of oral questions by the interviewer and oral responses by the informants. Also, one host of the Wimeja program was interviewed as a key informant. Each interview took, on average, 10-20 minutes in a convenient setting that involved a one-on-one conversation between the interviewee and the informant. The interviews were recorded and also taken. The recorded interviews were later transcribed for data analysis. The advantage of using the interview guide was that the study obtained different data sets from different informants since each guide had a different agenda toward the study's general objective. However, Keyton (2006) warns that it is easy to stray off the interview guide as your informant meanders to different topics from the objective of the interview (Keyton & Joann, 2006). During the interviews, the interviewers were guided to remain on course in case they tried to deviate from the subject of the interview.

3.7.2. Observation

Silverman (2005) note that observation enables a researcher to study the respondent's interactions and behavior in their real-life setting (Silverman, 2009). This study observed the Wimeja call-in program by listening to callers' participation for four weeks to effectively follow and examine the overall nature of the discussion, topics, number of calls per gender, and guests always invited to participate live in the program. The information collected during this observation period was instrumental in the discussion and analysis in chapter five of this study.

3.8. Quality control

Stiles, (1993) assumes that research should be believable and beneficial to parties beyond those who participated in doing it (Stiles, 1993).

To ensure quality control in these study respondents were guided with direct questions consistent with what this study in a bid to measure, what is perpetuating gender disparity in the Wimeja program, how to mitigate the challenge and the effect of lack of women participation on the program. Also, observing the program for one month also collaborated on some of the views provided in the interview.

3.9. Strategy for data processing and analysis

Analysing data collected during this study started by transcribing recorded audio taken during in-depth interviews. All recorded voices were transcribed verbatim to capture all informants' responses. After the data processing was done using thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) argued that thematic analysis should be a foundational method for qualitative analysis, as it provides core skills for conducting many other forms of qualitative analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Under this data analysis method, key issues were summarised into different themes to inform the discussion and conclusion of the study. Direct quotes from data collected from informants used pseudonyms to protect their identities. A thematic analysis was conducted to create themes for qualitative data. Braun & Clarke (2006) argue that a data set should include particular topics identified from the overall data corpus. The themes were arranged according to objectives and questions.

I followed the six steps of a thematic analysis as described by Braun & Clarke (2006): familiarising with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and then reporting production (Braun & Clarke, 2006). While Braun and Clarke present getting familiar with the data as the first stage, for this study, a deep understanding and appreciation of the data helped the

researcher to deal with various issues demanded by each stage, as the figure above demonstrates.

3.9. Categorization of data

Savenye & Robinson (2005) define a category as a construct used to classify a specific type of phenomenon in the database. Categories are one of the standard methods of organising data in qualitative research (Savenye & Robinson, 2005). Data collected from the informants was analysed to establish similarities and differences. Similar statements were grouped to form categories. The categories will then be studied and clustered into sub-themes according to each theme from the research sub-questions to help the researcher answer the main research question. This will help organise and present relevant data for the study.

3.10. Validity and Reliability

This was achieved through using the Brawn and Clerke six-step approach of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This involved verbatim transcription of audios, data familiarization through reading the transcripts several times, generating codes, identifying patterns, forming sub coordinate and super coordinate themes. The researcher used participants' voice and direct quotes to avoid changing the meanings of the information, but also selected a few participants to ascertain if the final report reflects their opinions. Additionally, an audit trail was kept.

3.11. Ethical consideration

This reflects one's understanding of the regulations governing research ethics through formal policies and proper procedures in undertaking a research study that have been put into place by professional associations and governments. This study

involved asking respondents questions. To ensure that the rights of the participants are not violated and to maintain good working relationships and credibility, the ethical issues were considered at three levels: planning, during, and after the study.

The Uganda Christian University Research Ethics Committee (REC) approved the study's working title and research instruments before data collection began. The research respondents were assured of confidentiality when using the information they provided. Importantly, informants were made to sign consent forms to participate by consent and free will, not coercion. During the study, appointments were made to arrange interviews. In this respect, appointments were made with the listeners and show hosts who participated in this study. Respondents were interviewed on a one-by-one basis. No respondents were coerced to participate in the study to protect their rights to self-determination.

Informed consent was also sought from informants to allow voice recording and note-taking for later reference, transcribing, interpretation, and data analysis. However, in the data analysis, presentation, and understanding of findings, pseudonyms were used to conceal the identities of some respondents based on the sensitivity of the matters they were discussing. For other respondents, I have used their real names because they feel there is no implication in using their real names.

3.12. Dissemination plan

The findings of this study shall be presented to the research team at UCU, Faculty of Journalism, Media and Communication. After approval, a copy of the dissertation shall be submitted to the Faculty and kept in the library for future use by other researchers. A copy of the dissertation shall be given to the Management of Voice of

Lango Lira City. From the study findings, a manuscript shall be written and submitted to a relevant, widely-read, peer-reviewed journal for publication.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to present, interpret, and analyse the study's findings on gender disparity in the Wimeja program. The chapter explains how the research questions were answered using data obtained through group categories from qualitative approaches, such as key informant interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Apart from interviews, observation was one of the instruments used to obtain data for this study.

4.2. Observation

In line with the methodology of this study, observation of the Wimeja program was also used as one of the data collection methods in addition to interviews. During the one-month observation, focus was on the number of callers/ SMS read per show, gender of participants, topics discussed, gender of the hosts, and invited guests as presented below.

4.3. Commonly discussed topics/issues

The findings of this study arose from data collected in February and March 2022 among female radio listeners of Voice of Lango (VOL) within Lira City and Wimeja program hosts. The data was obtained through interviews and a one-month observation of the Wimeja program. Using interviews, I found topics commonly discussed on the Wimeja program, as indicated in Table 3 below. The topics for discussion are generally picked from prominent issues in VOL's morning Luo news bulletin, aired daily at 7 am.

4.4. Categorization of topics/issues discussed

The table below shows that politics is the most dominant topic on the Wimeja program, followed by government and community development issues, and health falls third. This study found that other issues often discussed are land, family, rights, education, culture, business, and corruption. From the one-month observation of the Wimeja program, most of the topics discussed were political. During the interview, half of the respondents also said political issues are the dominant topics addressed on the Wimeja program. These topics are drawn from both current local and national political issues. However, most of these topics are on local political issues. For example, during observation, prominent political issues that were discussed include the follow-up of the presidential pledge on cattle compensation, the political boundary of Iwal word that was curved from Lira district to form Lira City, controversy in the delayed construction of Lira-Kamdini road, conflict between Lira district and Lira City over property wrangles, National Resistance Movement (NRM) party discussion on parliamentary system of electing the president and opposition MPs walk out from parliament in protest over the debate on torture of citizens by members of the security forces. Some of these topics, like cattle compensation, were discussed more than once due to emerging developments.

After politics, development issues came second among topics discussed on the Wimeja program. Of the 30 respondents interviewed in this study, 13 mentioned development as one of the issues addressed in the Wimeja program. The development issues discussed are local government projects affecting the community, like roads, health facilities, and livelihood projects. Some of the development topics discussed

were an update on the Lira-Kamdini road project, the suspension of construction of the Lira-Kamdini road by the contractor, and garbage management in Lira City.

The issue of health came third among the topics discussed on the Wimeja program. A Quarter of the 30 respondents mentioned that health issues are frequently addressed in the Wimeja program. According to them, health issues are discussed by the medical professionals who are invited to the program. Indeed, a medical doctor was asked to educate people on reproductive health issues during observation.

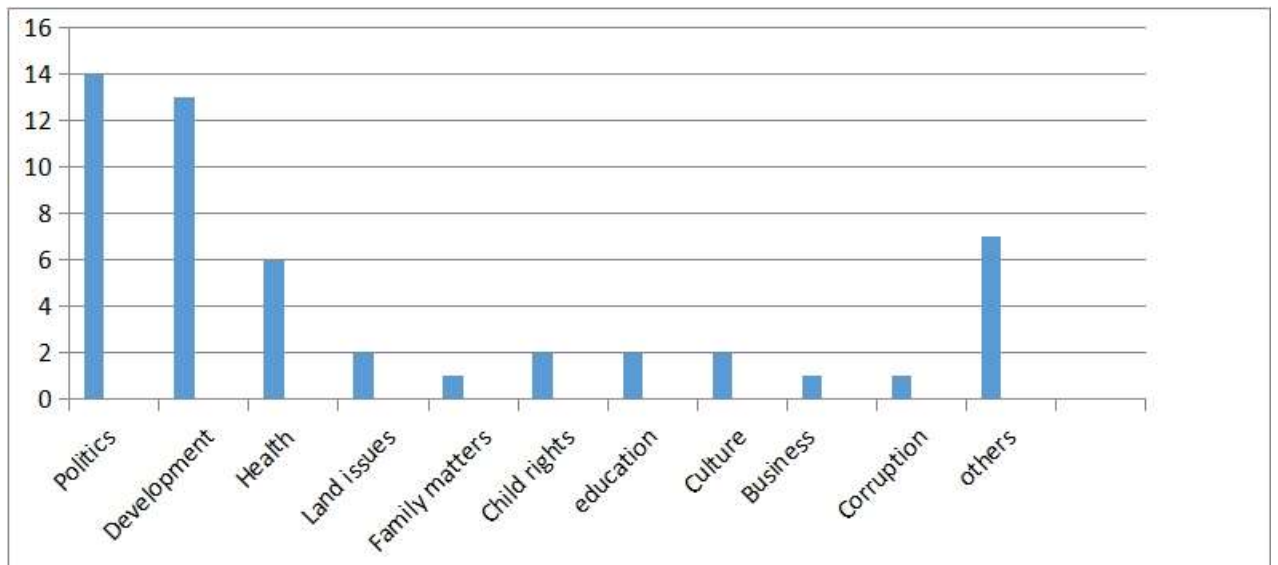
Additionally, education is also one of the issues that are frequently discussed in the Wimeja program. Of 30 respondents, two mention education as one of the topics addressed in the Wimeja program. During the observation, there was a discussion on preparing parents and schools for reopening in the first term. Relatedly, two out of 30 respondents also identified land matters as one of the issues usually discussed on the Wimeja program due to rampant land conflict in the communities. During observation, there was a discussion on the proper management of customary land to avoid conflict in the community. Also, cultural issues were cited by respondents as one of the topics that are always discussed in the Wimeja program. Two out of 30 respondents identified culture as one of the issues always addressed in the Wimeja program. During observation, there was debate about the activity of a witch doctor in the Kwanja district that allegedly led to the death of one person.

Child rights were also among the topics discussed in the Wimeja program. Two of the 30 respondents mentioned the issue of child rights among the topics discussed on the Wimeja program; however, during the one-month observation, the issue of child rights was not addressed.

In addition to the above, three out of 30 respondents mentioned family matters, business, and corruption. However, during observation, the issue of family matters was not discussed. Still, the problems of business security and corruption in the staff recruitment process at the local government of the Apac district were discussed.

Lastly, in categorising other issues, seven respondents out of 30 mentioned issues discussed on the Wimeja program, such as agriculture, environment, religion, security, and sports.

Table 1: Showing frequently discussed topics on the Voice of Lango Wimeja program



During the one-month observation of the program, the focus was on the show host, the number of phone calls received per gender daily, the duration of phone calls, the number of Short Message Services (SMS) read by gender, guests, and their gender. According to the program flow, after the Luo news bulletin, the host and his co-moderator welcome listeners and choose the topic for discussion from a wide

range of issues in the news. Phone callers are invited to give their views after providing an elaborate background. Ideally, in the program script, SMS should be read at the end of the program, but this is seldom done. Before the program's closure, the co-moderator gives general reactions based on the views of callers.

According to the observation, before inviting callers to participate and give their views on the day's topics, the show host has the discretion of choosing the topic for discussion. The topics are generally on current affairs issues locally or nationally. Most of these issues are either political or development issues in the community. The host also gives an elaborate background or explanation on such topics to give the listeners a clear understanding so they can call and give their opinion from an informed point of view.



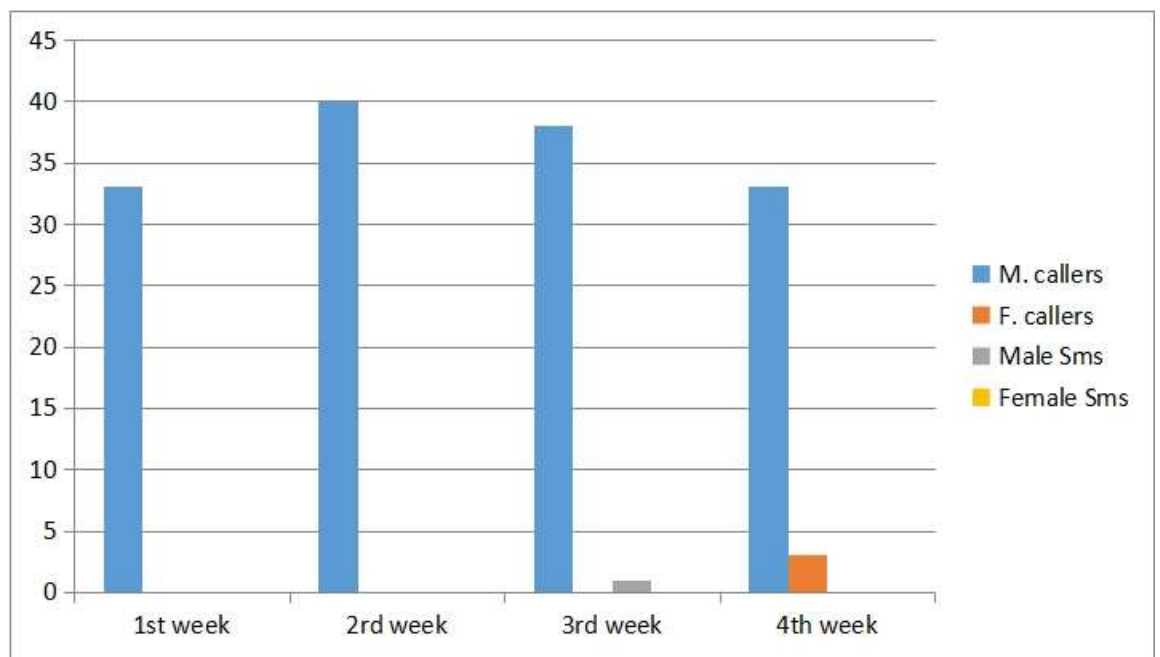
Image 1: Members of the public invited for discussion on the Wimeja program. Photo by Jacob Akii (February 2022).

Occasionally, some of these people's issues discussed are about them, in the case of politicians or organisations/ institutions they work for. The purpose of inviting them is based on fairness and objectivity in the discussion. This gives them

opportunities to explain or defend issues about them and also respond to some questions from the program host before listeners call to ask questions or give their opinions. When the issue is controversial and involves many parties, for fairness, all of them are brought on board by calling them in case they are far away, or the host invites them to live in the studio.

Since the program also has a co-host, he discusses the topic with the show host. During their initial discussion, they give their opinions on the day's subject to stir general debate involving callers' participation.

Figure 2: The number of calls and SMS received per gender for one month of observation.



When inviting callers, the show host read the two on-air phone lines to listeners to call and send SMSs. The calls, on average, last between two to three minutes according to the flow and nature of the issue a caller presents. On the other hand, errant callers who do not want to leave the line are cut off by the host after the

allotted time given to them. Also, callers who make unfounded allegations or attack the personality of participants or others are typically cut off from maintaining professionalism and sanity in the program.

Daily, the average number of callers received ranges from five to 11. Most of them are men. Out of these callers, at least four, on average, are familiar callers. These are people who call the program every day. Even though the program host gives two phone lines to listeners to call and send SMS, unlike calls, SMS that are supposed to be read at the end of the program are rarely read. Instead, the co-program host is given time to give general remarks on the ideas at the program's end. This leaves out all the views presented on SMS. Priority of feedback on the program is given to calls.

From the figure above, 33 males called in the first week, 40 males in the second week, and 38 males in the third week. There were no female callers in the 1st, second and third weeks. However, 33 male and three female callers were registered in the fourth week. In the four weeks, a male listener read only one SMS in the third week. This raises questions about participation generally, the effectiveness of call-in programs, and gender representation.

Using thematic analysis suitable for qualitative research approaches, the broader themes are arranged under the guidance of the research questions: One, why does the Wimeja program remain male-dominated? Two, what factors may motivate women to participate in the Wimeja program? Third, what is the implication of gender disparity in the Wimeja program for call-in programs in Uganda?

4.5. Theme One: Male dominance in the Wimeja Program

4.5.1. Time of the program

Research question one in this study was why the Wimeja program remains male-dominated. This section provides findings based on respondents' perspectives on the above research question. Based on the time of the program, more than half of the 30 respondents reported that they are always busy preparing children to go to school, preparing breakfast, and washing clothes, among other household chores. Despite listening to the Wimeja program, they said calling and participating requires comprehensively listening to the program to understand the topic for discussion before calling and contributing.

Preparing my children to go to school and attending to my husband, who has to go to work, keeps me busy in the morning. This does not give me time to sit, listen, and articulate issues being appropriately discussed (Milly, 15th February 2022).

Apart from entertainment, listening to the radio requires keen attention to follow the program of interest. However, it becomes challenging when you do many tasks requiring your attention. As stated in the report of this finding, a lack of time to actively listen to the radio, especially on topical discussions like the Wimeja program, affects one's ability to call and participate. That is why women, in many family settings, are engaged in doing several works; hence, it does not give them ample time to listen to the program and call in and give their views on the topical discussion. This partly explains why men dominate participation in the program; they are not as busy in the morning as women.

4.5.2. Lack of confidence

The lack of confidence to call in the program was also identified as one of the limitations of women's participation in the Wimeja Program. Despite listening to the program and following the topical discussion, more than half of the 30 respondents said they were not confident in their ability to call and express their views on the program. They said that a lack of confidence makes women fear calling because they believe their ideas will be disregarded, resulting in shame.

I lack communication and public speaking skills, which makes me afraid to call the radio programs to give my views on the Wimeja programs (Jackie, 25th February 2022).

Women are naturally not confident, so they fear calling the radio to share their ideas on public forums like the Wimeja Program (Sandra, 20th February 2022).

I fear calling, thinking that my ideas will be ridiculed by other callers, so I shy away from making on the Wimeja Program (Florence, 18th February 2022).

Public speaking is one of the challenges many people face. This affects their free will of public expression. As identified in this study, one of the factors that perpetuates a lack of confidence is the fear that the ideas you will say will be ridiculed. The fear is even more evident when speaking on the radio since it is listened to by a wider audience. So, like in public gatherings, some women fear expressing themselves in call-back programs due to a lack of confidence in themselves, hence affecting their participation and facilitating male dominance in the program.

4.5.3. Low literacy level and exposure

Additionally, low literacy levels and exposure among women were cited as one of the factors hindering women's participation in the Wimeja program. During the interview, 10 out of 30 respondents said that, because of the program's structure, one has to listen and fully comprehend the issue to give an informed analysis of the discussed topic. However, they said this requires some literacy competencies and exposure, since some issues are technical and others are national. You must have some basic knowledge and exposure to such issues to call and give your opinion. Lack of expertise negatively affects some women's participation in the program. This gives men an advantage to dominate the program, making the voices of women silent. The program offers a levelled participating forum for both men and women to share ideas on issues usually discussed in the program.

I think males dominate participation in the program because they know a lot about current affairs and issues discussed. However, due to women's empowerment nowadays, they are trying to dominate such kinds of public intellectual programs.
(Gloria, 18th March 2022)

Constructive discussion in any forum requires a fair understanding of the subject of the conversation. Relatedly, having an informed perspective in a debate requires some knowledge acquired through formal education. In this study, as indicated above, 10 out of 30 respondents believed that men are more knowledgeable about issues discussed in the Wimeja program, which is why they dominate participation. To these respondents, this is due to the high level of education of men compared to women in the community. Therefore, the challenge of low literacy levels

among women affects their participation in the Wimeja program, making it male-dominated.

4.5.4. Low level of income

Also, according to the research findings, one of the contributory factors that make the Wimeja program male-dominated is the low-income level, which makes it challenging to have phones to call in the program. Relatedly, some women with phones cannot afford airtime to call in the program. Half of the 30 respondents in the study said they consider having a phone a luxury since they cannot afford to buy one. According to them, some women share mobile phones with their husbands, who have substantial control over their phone usage. This kind of call monitoring and tracking prevents women from calling on during radio programs. This was evidenced by one, Agnes, who had this to report:

I share a phone with my husband, who controls it completely. He would be suspicious about calls I make, including calls on the radio. This suspicion is to protect me from other men. I believe this situation is worsened by some men who think that when their wives call on the radio, they will fall in love with the radio presenters. (Agnes, 11th March 2022)

This kind of economic incapacitation and lack of freedom of expression imposed on women by their husbands curtails them from participating in any form of public engagement, including calling on the Wimeja program. Such limitations continue to make men control such a forum. This partly explains why the program is male-dominated.

4.5.5. Cultural stereotype

Further, the study found that the Wimeja program is male-dominated because of cultural stereotypes where speaking in public is believed to be a preserve for men. For instance, one quarter of the 30 respondents believe it is a sign of respect for men to allow them to speak in public on behalf of women. Some informants believe that calling on the radio would bring her family into disrepute among community members because she would be seen as one who lacks respect for her husband and family. This kind of traditional stereotype is reinforced in Islam, where women are not allowed to do certain things, like speaking in public. During an interview with Zari, she revealed this fact.

The reason why I do not call in to participate in the Wimeja program is our negative culture as African women, where society believes that women should not talk a lot in public. Traditionally, and Muslim beliefs, it is perceived that women who speak openly in public are disrespectful to their husbands. (Zari, 25th February 2022)

I shy from calling in the program fearing a public perception that I am a tough woman. A tough woman is perceived by the community that she is not humble, yet culturally, a woman is expected to be humble and permissive. (Peace, 27th February 2022)

According to this study's findings, a cultural norm that entrenches a patriarchal grip in society is still problematic as far as curtailing the freedom of women to

participate in public forums like calling on a radio station to give their personal views, like their male counterparts. Winnie, who is an educated woman, attests to this fact:

The culture of Lango pushes women behind. Even some educated women like me feel there is no need to get involved in issues of public discussion (Winnie, 14th March 2022)

Even though many women are increasingly getting emancipated, they still feel held back by some of these cultural stereotypes. Even though there are no repercussions for women engaging in public discussion, including in the media, some women are still constrained by such cultural stereotypes. This means, to some extent, women's emancipation comes through different forms. For example, acquiring formal education does not, in an actual sense, help to challenge the status quo in totality. This, therefore, creates a social environment where men still dominate women in some issues, including public discourse, like the Wimeja program participation.

4.5.6. Controversial discussion

Another factor identified in the study that limits women's participation in the Wimeja program is the fear of being involved in controversy with men in the program. While observing the program, one aspect of the topics discussed, I found that political issues are one of the most discussed topics in the program. As a platform for accountability on some social, economic, and political matters, stakeholders commonly address these issues. Some of them are politicians. However, since politics is the centre of most of the discussion, A quarter of 30 women interviewed in this study said they do not feel part of political discussion because they are sometimes controversial. Emily is one of the women who said she does not want to be involved in controversial debates.

Even though I listen to the program, I do not call to participate in the discussion since I do not want to associate my personality with controversial talks for fear of being attacked verbally. (Emily, 16th February 2022)

Christine Acen, a former female Member of Parliament for Alebtong district, said in an interview on 12th February 2022 that she, too, does not call in the program for fear of being part of a controversial discussion on the program. This can affect her politically because some people she could be confronting in the debate could be her voters. The seven informants who participated in this study shared this sentiment. They believe men do not fear controversial discussions, so they dominate participation in the program.

Some informants, however, said controversial discussion is usually instigated by regular callers on the program. During my observation, I noticed that these regular callers have political party affiliations or interests and are fond of making reckless and controversial statements. In an interview with Cathy, she stressed that she does not call to participate in the Wimeja program because of these regular callers, who are not always informed about the topics of discussion, but always call in the program.

I feel there is much controversy in the program. So, some women like me think that some callers are on the program, and I do not feel like being part of them because they are very controversial. (Cathy, 14th March 2022)

Some informants think calling the Wimeja program is for these regular male callers. Collin, a former radio presenter, explained in an interview on 21st March 2022 that “some of these regular callers’ radio show hosts know them and their phone numbers, and they are always helped to get through the busy studio line, that is why

they dominate calling on the program.” According to her, this enables these regular callers to call talk-back programs frequently.

Consequently, fear of being part of a controversial discussion, coupled with the reckless utterances of some regular callers on the Wimeja program, makes some women fear calling and contributing to the program to protect their societal reputation since some are politicians. This makes the program male-dominated since some women feel the nature of conflict curtails their participation.

4.5.7. Radio set ownership and control

Additionally, radio set ownership and control in families came up in the study as one of the impediments to women's participation in the Wimeja program. Five of the 30 respondents in this study said they listen to the program but sometimes get interference from their spouses controlling family radio sets. They said that since men control the radio set, sometimes it is hard for them to choose the program to listen to. The respondents noted that while women do house chores and other domestic activities, men are always seated in a corner of a house or the compound listening to the radio. To show respect for the husband, a wife would not question his authority of ownership of the radio and choose a program that should be listen to at a given time. Coupled with economic challenges, most informants said they do not prioritise buying radio sets. The same view over control of radio sets in the family was also shared by Sam, who is the Wimeja program host:

In some families, the man owns the radio set, including the listener's time and the station to which the listener is tuned. This makes it hard for their wives to listen to programs of their choice. This kind of woman whose husbands control a radio set at home only enjoys listening to it while their husband does

not. This is a massive challenge for some families and women to the disadvantage of getting information since radio is the only source of information for many people. (Sam Aliga, Wimeja host, 16th March 2022).

Therefore, since some women do not have a radio set, listening to the Wimeja program and participating by calling in becomes difficult. This gives men who have full ownership and control over radio sets at home the ability to listen to the program and call in. This addition to other factors explains why the program is male-dominated since a section of women do not own a radio, and in case they are listening, they cannot pay attention since they would be hearing from a distance and yet have no choice of tuning to a particular program or radio station.

4.5.8. Busy studio line

This study found that the low participation of women in the Wimeja program is due to the challenge of getting through the studio phone line. Since the program is aired during peak morning hours, many callers are interested in contributing. This makes the line buzzing with callers. According to their experience, 21 out of 30 respondents in this study said that due to the busy nature of work schedules in the morning, they find it challenging to get through the line because one has to keep trying many times before getting through the studio line.

Getting through the studio phone line is challenging since many people simultaneously call to participate in the program. You must be very patient and try many times before getting through. Since I am busy in the morning doing house chores before getting to work, I do not have time to struggle with calling. This is the reason I do not call into the program. (Sara, 12th March 2022)

This challenge makes the program male-dominated since most men and regular callers seem not as busy as these women. That is why they find time to call in the program.

In conclusion, according to this finding, the main factors hindering women's participation in the Wimeja program are the program's time in the early morning hours, low literacy level among women, lack of self-confidence, busy studio line, cultural stereotypes, provocative political topics, and low income that hinders women from buying phones, airtime, and radio sets to listen to the program. All these factors make men dominate participation in the program, hence creating gender disparity in the program.

4.5. Theme Two: Motivation of women to participate in the Wimeja Program.

Research question two in this study is, what can motivate women to participate in the program? Regarding informants' responses on why they do not call to join the Wimeja program, the second research question sought answers on what could motivate women to call and give their views or opinions on the program. Respondents in this study identified four key ways of encouraging women's participation in the Wimeja program. They include encouragement, a dedicated phone line for women, a toll-free telephone line, and having a female host of the program or inclusion of a female co-host in the program.

4.5.1. Encouragement of women's participation

This study found that one way of motivating women to participate in the Wimeja program is to encourage them to participate actively, like their male

counterparts. The Wimeja program hosts should make a deliberate effort to engage with female listeners by encouraging them to call in and participate in the program. Through this method, More than half of the 30 respondents said female listeners would be encouraged to call in the program, increasing the number of female callers and hence bridging the gap of gender disparity in the program. Rose believes that Wimeja host is instrumental in motivating women to call in the program:

I think women should be encouraged to participate in the program. The Wimeja host can do this by always emphasising women's participation. Encouraging women to call can motivate many women to call and join since so many women listen to the program. (Rose, 18th March 20220)

Also, the finding shows that women can motivate fellow women by encouraging them to participate in such engagement platforms. They believe this can be done directly through women who call in the program and use the space to encourage fellow women to call and participate.

Additionally, the respondents said that even though the pursuit of gender equality has gained tremendous achievements in many areas, there is still a need to continue encouraging women to take the lead in areas where there is still gender disparity, like the Wimeja program. Stella speaks specifically about this:

Women's capacity for public engagement should be built periodically to enable them to actively participate in public forums, including the Wimeja program (Stella, 20 February 2022).

To achieve this, I believe it requires a concerted effort from all societal stakeholders to ensure that women exploit the potential of public engagement on

issues that affect them and the general public. Therefore, encouraging women to call and participate in the program would motivate more women to do so, reducing the gender disparity in the program since both women and men would participate equally.

4.5.2. Dedicating separate phone line for women

Dedicating a phone line to women, this study found that it can motivate more women to call and participate in the Wimeja program. The general studio phone line is always busy, making it hard to call and get through in a single dial. Since these female listeners said they are always busy doing house chores and other work in the morning, they do not have time to struggle to get their ideas across the busy line. Having a busy line yet the regular callers are received has even created a negative impression that these regular callers have a prearrangement with the program host that has a way of getting them through using other means like a private line of the host.

In an interview during this study, Coline believes that these regular callers get through the busy line quickly because they are helped by saving their name on the studio phone. Others are received using a private phone line. However, this could not be true for all regular callers, but it creates such an impression not only for women listeners but also for some men who think that regular callers call using a different line that is less busy. Therefore, to demystify this kind of perception among some women, creating and promoting a dedicated line for women where they can call and get through without hassle would motivate these female listeners to call and participate like their male counterparts.

4.5.3. Female host, co-host or both genders

The program host and their host are instrumental in the program's production. This is because they are responsible for selecting topics, moderating calls, and sometimes inviting guests to participate in the program live on air. Their personality and the way

they moderate the program also attract listeners. In this regard, nine respondents in this study said having a female host or co-host on the Wimeja program would motivate other women to call and participate. Also, they said inviting women to live in the studio to discuss issues brought on by topical discussion would encourage more women to call in the program.

With the current format of the program of one male host and co-host, some women perceive it as a male affair, shying away from calling and participating in the program. However, the finding shows that having a female host or co-host would motivate other women to call in and participate in the program equally to their male counterparts. The motivation for these women will start with the female host or co-host, who will be gender sensitive regarding topic selection and phone call moderation. Monica believes in more women's engagement in the program as hosts, co-hosts, and guests who are always invited to the program. To her, this would motivate more women to participate in the program.

If there were one female host or co-host, it would motivate other women to call in. There is a way that the presence of a female presenter can inspire other female presenters to call in the program. (Monica, 8th February 2022)

Also, as indicated in theme two, some women do not call to participate in the program due to a lack of confidence; having a female host would motivate them to build the confidence to call into the program, increasing the number of women participating.

4.5.4. Toll-free Studio Line

This study also found that some women do not call due to a lack of airtime. Therefore, having a toll-free studio phone line would motivate this kind of woman to call and participate in the program. As indicated above, even though some women have mobile phones, they cannot afford airtime, or airtime for calling a radio station is not a priority due to financial constraints.

There should also be a toll-free line for the women because I am not saying women are poor, but airtime for calling is not a priority for women (Emily, 20th March 2023)

Therefore, since some women find it challenging to buy airtime, a toll-free phone line would encourage women or those who do not prioritise airtime to call the radio to get the motivation to call and give their views on the program.

4.6. Theme Three: Effect of Male Dominance on the Wimeja Program on society.

Research question three in this study is: Do you think having a male-dominated program affects society? Radio, being the primary source of information for many common Ugandans, means its impact on society cannot be underrated. This study evidenced this impact, where respondents said they listened to the Wimeja program mainly for two reasons. Firstly to get detailed information during the program discussion, since discussion topics are usually picked from news items. Secondly, to follow issues of current affairs, primarily those in their community, since sometimes local leaders are called to participate in the program to

explain the problems of concern to the community. Through their participation, this kind of discussion shapes issues like development and policies. This attests to how patient this kind of program is to the listeners. Therefore, the findings of this study show that having a male-dominated program is problematic for many reasons. Firstly, it silences the voices of women stifle on issues that are usually discussed in the program because much of the contributions on these issues are given by men.

Secondly, it entrenches the already existing gender imbalance in a society where society looks at men as the only gender who speaks on issues, and women should follow and support their opinions. Also, on the right of freedom of expression enshrined in Article 29 of the Uganda Constitution, having a male-dominated program means some people, in this case, women, are not exercising that right; hence, it means they are affected directly or indirectly. In this study, more than half of the 30 respondents said the above factors show that having a male-dominated Wimeja program affects society, especially women. The respondents mentioned the effect of limiting women's voices in the program. Recho believes that the lack of women's participation in the program limits the views of women; hence, discussion on issues in society on the radio will be dominated by the opinion of men. She said this affects society since issues in society require participatory involvement by all genders. It is good to have gender-inclusive participation in the program. Both men and women are equal; however, some issues affect women and the community, and women should have a direct voice. It should not be left to men to represent the opinions of women (Cooky, Messner & Musto, 2015).

The issue of gender bias was also identified as one of the effects of having the Wimeja program be male-dominated. Bridget, in an interview on 25th January 2022, said men are gender biased in a discussion that they dominate based on the patriarchal

nature of society. To her, this affects society because issues that affect women will be discussed with a bias. She also adds that women are part of society and issues in society that are discussed in media platforms like Wimeja; their involvement is equally important; hence, having limited participation of women in such a program makes their contribution to issues in society minimal.

Men cannot speak about the feelings of women. Moreover, they cannot represent women's views on issues in society. Therefore, women should express themselves on matters in the community so that their voices are heard and recognised. (Bridget, 25th January 2022)

In the spirit of gender recognition, women's voices on issues discussed in public forums like the Wimeja program are essential because they promote a collective voice owned and cherished by all members of society, irrespective of gender. With this, women's voices will be heard and recognised; hence, pertinent societal issues that require their input and opinions will be relegated. This affects the female gender because women's voices and concerns will remain overshadowed.

4.7. Conclusion and summary of findings

The chapter analysed, presented, and interpreted findings of gender disparity in the Wimeja program. The conclusions were clustered into three themes based on the three research questions used in this study. Theme one focused on male dominance in participation in the Wimeja program. The study found that the domination of male callers in the program is increased by factors like the busy schedules of women in the morning when the program is on, hence having limited time to call and participate, the provocative nature of the discussion that scares women's participation, the cultural

stereotype that makes women underrate their potential to call and participate in the program, lack of confidence among some who shy away from calling and participating in the program, radio set ownership in families where the studies found that some men do not allow women to listen to the radio station of their choice, therefore, limiting of women to the program and economic incapacitation that does not enables women to buy a mobile phone or airtime to help call and participate in the program. These factors impede women's participation in the Wimeja program, which is why male callers dominate it.

Theme one of this study revealed the above factors that impede women's participation in the Wimeja program; therefore, these two identified the following ways women could be motivated to improve their participation in the program like their male counterparts. The factors include encouraging women to participate in the program. This study found that it can be done by show hosts and female callers, inviting more women to the program, and introducing a female host or co-host. Also, women can be motivated to participate in the program by dedicating a separate phone line for women in a bid to make calling in the program easy since the main studio line is always busy; hence, it is hard to get through it, a thing that discourages some women from calling in the program. Relatedly, a toll-free line study also found that it would encourage women who would want to call but get the challenge of buying airtime to call in the program. The study found that the above factors would motivate more women to call into the program and bridge the gender disparity in terms of participation in the program.

Theme three in this chapter examined the program's male dominance effect on society. The findings show that the dominance of male participation in the program limits women's voices on issues discussed in the program. However, their views are essential in matters of development in society. Also, men can not represent the feelings of women in such discussions since there is a likelihood of gender bias by men. Therefore, inclusive gender participation would enable objective and balanced involvement in the program.

From the observation point of view, most of the topics discussed in the program are primarily political and followed by development issues, among others. That is why regular callers with political interests frequently call into the program. Their regular participation in the program has made some people believe that there is a separate line that they use to call in the program because, despite the busy studio phone line, they always call and get through some time more than once in the program.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1. Introduction

The current chapter analyses the data presented in the previous chapter. It is arranged according to the themes created from the research questions.

The first part analyses data from the first research question, which sought to understand why the Wimaja program is male-dominated. The second section provides data analysis for the second research question. This includes discussing what can motivate women to participate in the program. Thirdly, the discussion will be on whether having a male-dominated program affects society.

Studies in Uganda exploring the issue of media use and participation as a platform of engagement reported differences and similarities (Manyozo, 2016; Marachtho, 2017; Musubika, 2008; Mwesige, 2014; Nassanga et al., 2013; Semujju & Development, 2013). This is similar to the current finding that talk-back programs are a good platform for discussing issues in a particular area. However, it has been highlighted that women's participation is hugely minimal due to society's patriarchal nature, which limits their involvement in such forums (Bigirwa, 2020; Watkins & Emerson, 2000).

5.2. Discussion for Theme One. Male dominance in the Wimeja Program

The research question in this study is: Why does the Wimeja program remain male-dominated? This section puts the specific findings into the context of this study, the interpretation of the findings, and the implications of the findings based on existing literature. Wimeja is a morning prime-time program. The finding in chapter four shows that many women do not participate in calling and giving their ideas like their

male counterparts because they are always busy doing household chores or other engagements in the morning. This explained the male dominance in terms of participation in the program. Lira City, then Lira Municipality, is among the areas affected directly by the civil war of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). After the war, a conducive environment for development and economic activities increased spontaneously. In addition to doing domestic work, a norm in many families, women also engaged in other economic activities to enhance their livelihoods. The post-war period witnessed a further expansion of cash-related activities by women as circumstances continued to propel them to the head of family survival strategies. Women are individually and collectively engaged in farming, trade, business, paid employment, and alcohol brewing (Asiimwe, 2014).

In addition to household chores, this kind of economic engagement is always done in the morning hours when the Wimeja program is active to support their families. This indicates that women struggle to balance these roles and participate actively in the program. While many of the narratives have blamed women, it is clear that the mindset of those in the media and their perception of women is a problem. By the positions of these women, they are swamped. Their non-participation in talk shows cannot be considered unserious (Maractho, 2019). Interestingly, one must listen to the radio before calling to comprehend the discussed topic.

The implication of changing gender roles in a society where women are taking on more responsibilities and job tasks that were previously perceived to be for men is likely to reduce the participation of women in the program. This is because extra responsibilities require more time to execute. Like many countries, Uganda has men as the dominant players in decision-making, although women shoulder most reproductive, productive, and community management responsibilities, many

of which are not remunerated or reflected in national statistics (Mijumbi, 2002). Based on this, the domination of male participation will still exist in the Wimeja program due to the nature of women's responsibilities regarding the program's timing. Regarding feminist media theory, this finding indicates that beyond being given an equal platform for media participation, there are factors that still limit women participation in the media.

It was hoped that the proliferation of media outlets would mean that more women would have access to the media and consequently would be able to participate more fully in public discourses and debates (Gadzekpo, 2009). However, respondents highlighted a lack of confidence among women as one factor that has made calls for the Wimeja program being dominated by males. However, the increase of local FM penetration in community areas would have given women more opportunities to express themselves since these local FM radio stations, like the Voice of Lango Wimeja program, are broadcast in the local language.

Additionally, despite listening to the program and following topical discussions, many respondents said they needed more confidence to call and participate. Women's refusal to participate when given the opportunity appeared to be largely driven by fear (Maractho, 2017). This stems from how society is structured with aligned gender roles taught from childhood. Thus, men are being trained for leadership activities. At the same time, women are confined to domestic activities and roles ascribed to them by a culture that affects them later in life, thereby making them lose self-confidence/worth and have low self-esteem in their careers in adult life (Makama, 2013). Due to a lack of confidence, some respondents said they fear calling because they believe their ideas will be disregarded. That is why they only listen to the program without participating by calling in. However, during the program

observation, I found that the host tries as much as possible to protect callers from attacking fellow callers or disregarding the ideas of others. Instead, those with baseless claims are tasked to substantiate or are cut off the line. This is done to maintain professionalism in the moderation of the program. However, despite the program host's stance on respecting all views and opinions of callers, errant callers cannot be avoided totally during the program. According to Brisset (2018), these people can articulate political judgments better than others and are more competent in conveying other people's views than people themselves, often called 'locals' or the 'villagers' (Brisset, 2018). By doing so, they establish themselves as spokespeople or 'representatives'. This sense of entitlement of these callers to be a monopoly of local issues in the area created fear among some callers, as was found among women interviewed during this study.

Also, the need for self-confidence to call in and participate in the program, according to the study, results from how they think the public will perceive their ideas on topics being discussed. Women interviewed said they even have what to say but fear to call for fear of the reaction of the listeners, especially those who know them. Communication apprehension is an individual's fear and anxiety level associated with actual or anticipated communication with another person or persons (Neupauer, 1996). This explains one of the reasons why some women do not call to participate in the program. Therefore, if women do not build confidence in public engagement forums like the Wimeja program, such platforms will continue to be dominated by men. This implies that women's voices will remain minimal in such forums, yet the media has been one of the fronts of fighting for women's emancipation. However, the inadequate involvement of women in a discussion forum

like the Wimeja program narrows this frontier, hence affecting the advancement of women's liberation on such platforms.

The low literacy level among women in Uganda is one of the contributing factors to low self-esteem among some women. Lack of education has been a visible barrier to female participation in the formal sector (Makama, 2013). Omolewa (2002) contends that this inequality has its roots in the colonial system of education, which was primarily geared toward meeting the workforce needs of the colonial government that alienated women from educational and economic opportunities in programs like Wimeja you have to be knowledgeable about the topic that is being discussed in a bid to give an informed comment or opinion (Omolewa, 2002). Without knowledge, one's capacity to analyse public discussion issues is limited, creating a lack of confidence in participating in such engagement. Lack of education has been a solid barrier to female participation in the formal sector. According to the Uganda National Household Survey 2019/2022 report, the literacy rate for persons aged ten years and above was 76 per cent, a slight increase from 74 per cent in 2016/17. The literacy rate was higher for males (81%) than for females (72%) in 2019/20. Based on this report, men in Uganda are more literate than women; hence, this explains the low confidence level among women in this study, which they said affects their capacity to call and participate in the Wimeja program. No wonder Nassanga (2009) notes that participants in these public debates are usually the urban elite, whose public discussions often echo their political party ideologies or positions of their interest groups like traders, business groups, or legislators (Nassanga, 2009). It is also worth noting that not all women have this challenge of low self-esteem that can stop them from calling and participating in the Wimeja program. As Nassanga points out, "the presence of media does not imply that everybody utilises it, so examining the

access and engagement in citizens' media is important' (Nassanga, 2009, p.53). They are examining access to such a program as Wimeja, which prompted the study of gender disparity. The finding shows that factors like lack of confidence among women to call and participate in the program are among the factors that have made the program dominated by male callers. The implication, however, stifles women's voices on this engagement forum. However, some societal development issues are discussed, and the involvement of women is essential in their implementation. To achieve this, it is imperative to create awareness among women to understand the importance of their roles in public engagement, like the Wimeja program, to improve their involvement and participation, like their male counterparts.

Further, one of the contributory factors to the lack of women's participation in the Wimeja program, according to the research findings, is economic incapacitation. This makes it challenging for some women who do not have phones to call and participate in the program. Klaa (2020) notes that African women suffer from social and economic insecurity, living under severe psychological and economic pressures as a result of bearing the brunt of family affairs (Klaa, 2020). Interestingly, some women with phones can afford airtime to call in the program. Some informants in the study said they consider having a phone a luxury since they cannot afford it.

According to this study, even if the mobile is owned by women and the one which is jointly owned, men still have substantial control over it. I know that participation in the Wimeja program, either by calling live in the studio or sending SMS, but lack of phone, air time, or joint ownership, makes participation in this program challenging for some women. Given the limited number of people who can physically participate directly, most people participate indirectly by sending messages by e-mail or phone. However, some people find paying for e-mail or phone facilities expensive.

Therefore, only a few participate in public discussions (Nassanga, 2009). The above analysis further explains why the Wimeja program is male-dominated because women who are economically incapacitated cannot afford mobile phones or airtime for those who have mobile phones. However, mobile phones are instrumental in radio talk-back programs.

In the Uganda National Household Survey 2019/2020, Seventy-four per cent of the households owned a mobile phone, and 93 per cent of the households reported that the phones were owned individually, while seven per cent indicated that the mobile phone was owned jointly. Even though this report shows that only seven per cent of mobile phones are jointly owned, it would have a minimal effect on their usage since over 93 per cent of phones are owned by individuals, including both males and females. However, the finding of this study shows that even phones owned by women and the ones they jointly own (family phones) by men have substantial control over their usage, especially calling on the radio. The reason given by respondents of this study is that some men fear that calling on the radio would expose them to radio presenters who would fall in love with them. Also, some men do not want their families to enjoy privacy, but when the wife calls, they presume this would expose their families to the general public since radio programs are listened to by a broad audience.

Another form of control over phones that cannot make other women call in this program is restricting airtime bought in phones. According to the findings of this study, some respondents said their spouses buy airtime on their phones, and they follow up on what is used for at the end of the day. Such women said they could not dare to call the radio station using airtime bought by their spouse for fear of reprimand. As Mijumbi (2002) puts it, Uganda, like many countries, has men as the

dominant decision-making players. Such dominance is evident in our patriarchal nature of society, where men even control the use of phones (Mijumbi, 2002). Such kind of control on the means of communication, like a phone, by men infringes on the right to express opinion and freedom of speech of women, hence making a public forum of participation like the Wimeja program remain male-dominated since some women have a challenge to access.

However, according to Hyden & Leslie (2017), access to the communication medium is the primary step towards democratising the communication system. He says that people should have access to the media products and the media facilities.

Furthermore, the feedback channel should always be open, and the entire interaction between the producers and receivers of messages should be maintained (Hyden & Leslie, 2017). The entire interaction can only be achieved when the means to interact, like the phone, is accessed and used freely by both women and men without control, as was found in this study. Also, women who are economically incapacitated and cannot buy a phone or airtime cannot have an entire interaction on a platform like Wimeja since interaction in the program requires a mobile phone to call and participate.

A mobile phone and a radio set enable one to participate in a call-back program. After listening, one can call or send an SMS to participate in the program. However, at the household level, ownership and control of radio sets are largely controlled by men. Also, in some families, men still share mobile phones with their spouses, with the former having complete control over the phone (Ewart, 2016). This study found one of the factors limiting women's participation in the Wimeja program. Although the Uganda National Household Survey 2019/2020 states that 73 per cent of the

households reported that the radios were owned individually, while 26 per cent indicated that the radio phones were owned jointly. Also, according to BBC Media Action's research on Uganda's media landscape (2019), 90.5 per cent of men listen to the radio, compared to only 68 per cent of women. The situation on the ground, according to this study, suggests that men have much control over a radio, especially during prime time, especially for listening to news and participatory current affairs discussion like the Wimeja program.

The implication of control of radio sets and mobile phones in some families affects women's enthusiasm for discussing issues in the community in a forum like the Wimeja program. For the low listening rates, including the nature of their work and lack of access to a radio, as well as the fact that they cannot choose which programmes they listen to when male family members are present (Gillwald, Milek & Stork 2010). Therefore, the empowerment of women in property ownership at home and the freedom to hold opinions and express them are areas that need to be addressed if gender disparity in terms of participation in call-back programs like the Wimeja program can be challenged. Otherwise, the status quo will remain, and men will continue to dominate the program.

Additionally, the study found that the Wimeja program is male-dominated because of an inherent cultural stereotype. Some respondents in this study believe speaking in public is a preserve of men. This cultural stereotype makes women practice self-censorship against their will to speak on issues they see as pertinent in the community and that they would like to express their views on public forums like the Wimeja program. According to Sadie (2020), fundamental to the constraints that

women face is an entrenched patriarchal system in which family control and decision-making powers are in the hands of males (Sadie, 2020).

However, despite such family system control, to show humility to the man as the family head and concerning the cultural norm, such women would abide by the directive that infringes on their right to freedom of speech and entitlement to their opinion. However, Bigirwa (2020) challenges this, noting that the intersectional and feminist demand to end patriarchal and homophobic systems of oppression must continue to demand a media that centres the voices of the minoritised and aptly represents the different struggles and injustices of all of Ugandan society (Bigirwa, 2020). So, this kind of injustice embedded in the cultural stereotype contributes to the lack of participation in the Wimeja program and other forms of such engagement. It casts women in the shadow of public engagement, making their ideas unrecognised.

According to Tamale (2018), despite women's impressive progress in politics and policy-making, gender equality and women's empowerment remain a far-distant dream for most Ugandan women (Tamale, 2018). The patriarchal nature of our society is one of the stumbling blocks for women's progress as far as emancipation is concerned. Mass media, mainly broadcast media, also experienced exponential growth due to liberalisation in the early 1990s. The postal, broadcasting, and telecommunications annual market and industry report 2017–18 indicates that the numbers grew from one radio and television station in 1990 to 292 FM radio stations in June 2018; 33 operational TV stations (Nassanga & Tayeebwa, 2018). Even in the media, where radio stations are spread across all parts of the country, the participation of women is still minimal due to cultural norms where men have control over the freedom of their wives to engage in this forum, like the Wimeja program.

Patriarchy, as seen by feminist media theorists, is a controlling influence on the status of women in mass communication (Creedon, 2022). The concept of patriarchy explains the historical emergence of particular forms of inequality between men and women. This kind of inequality, if it extends to participation like in callback programs, makes the voice of women go unheard in issues where they could have a shared opinion with men. Feminist media theorists have produced generalised explanations about the subordination of women by offering an analysis of how patriarchy is organised and how power relations within it are made at a general level. The current feminists argue that men set the standards and values, seen as the actors and the first sex, while women are seen as the other who lack the qualities the dominants exhibit reactors and the second sex (Lorber, 2018).

Lorber (2018) observed that gender inequalities such as the glass ceiling, sexual harassment, underpayment, limited chances for women's advancement, sexual exploitation, and gendered division of labour mean that equality and justice for all usually means for men because the structure of gender as a social institution has never been seriously challenged (Lorber, 2018). Since such gender structures are sometimes left unabated, it becomes a regular custom. It reinforces the cultural stereotype in this study, where men control women's freedom of expression regarding participating in the Wimeja program. Also, normalising a cultural belief that men can communicate ideas of women in public forums like Wimeja, is problematic in the sense that women's voices should also be given an audience in a bid to have a gender-inclusive conversation. This is because the feminist media theory argues that everyone (both men and women) should express their ideas.

However, if this is not patriarchal and gender inequality is ingrained in marriage and family, work and the economy, politics, religions, the arts, and other

cultural productions extends to the media space, which is a tool, if used well, can help in amplifying advocacy against gender stereotype in the society. Additionally, equalising women and men in all spheres of life necessitates a concerted effort by all stakeholders, including the media and society, not individual solutions. Uganda's media landscape reflects how the country views and treats women and other minoritised groups (Bigirwa, 2020). For this matter, the media working in a society embedded with these patriarchal values should confront the gender imbalance that comes with it in a bid to promote women's voices in a participatory arena like the Wimeja program.

Relatedly, feminists adopt Antonio Gramsci's hegemony model to explain how media and other cultural products help secure men's dominance in society. Byerly (2013) describe hegemony as a process by which the dominant group, in this case, powerful men, maintain power over social institutions and those in them, in this case, women, by actively seeking the consent of those in society who wish to fit the established norms and practices (Byerly, 2013). The appeal of the concept of hegemony offers an analysis of how both men and women come to participate in a social system, in this case, the media, that is inherently unequal and, therefore, undemocratic. From a gender-based approach, McQuail focuses on whether media choice and interpretation can provide some level of change or resistance for women in a social institution still generally structured by inequality (McQuail, 2024).

Having a voice, therefore, is the most crucial goal and strategy for rectifying subordination. If used well, freedom of expression can restore hope and inspire already suppressed voices to champion the cause of emancipation, hence increasing women's participation in a forum like the Wimeja program. Without a voice, feminist

media theory contends, some groups and individuals are denied the ability to participate in naming, thereby creating the realities in which they and all of us live (Byerly, 2013). The reality that Ross and Byerly are referring to in this study is that some women feel it is normal for men to control their freedom of expression to the extent that they do not find it challenging to speak their minds in public forums of discussion like the Wimeja program. Therefore, cultural stereotypes are one of the factors this study has found affecting women's participation in participatory forums like the Wimeja program. This makes gender disparity in terms of involvement in the program thrive. Sakr (2004) contends that mass media form part of the apparatus through which particular gender roles and attributes are defined and assigned; media will also be a site for negotiating changes in those definitions (Sakr, 2013). With a substantial responsibility, the media can mobilise women and redefine their societal role (Maratho, 2019). The roles played by women in society can motivate other women, hence encouraging them to work towards breaking the glass ceiling, which is still evident in the profession and some roles in society that limit women's potential.

This study also found that fear of being part of controversial discussions on topical issues on the Wimeja program scares away female callers. This leaves male callers to dominate participation in the program. While observing the program for one month, one aspect of the topics discussed, I found that political issues take the lead. As a platform for accountability on some social, economic, and political issues, stakeholders are generally engaged in addressing these issues. Interrogating widespread public and political affairs, the programs chosen revealed very few female presenters/hosts or producers. Subjects of discussion are primarily political and controversial (Mwesige, 2014). However, as stated above, since politics is the centre of most of the debate, some women feel they should be excluded from such

conversations. The fear of women's involvement in politics is sometimes due to implications that generally come from the discussions. Some politicians and agents follow up with people who comment negatively on their political principles. This usually leads to verbal or physical attacks after the program. Women, including those in active politics, fear being part of this kind of conflict. Hence, others abstain from participating in such programs to avoid this kind of controversy.

While studying gender disparity in the Wimeja program, I found that regular callers usually instigate controversial discussions. These regular callers have political party affiliations and are fond of making reckless and controversial statements. This individual may be a foot soldier of a political party, an individual who receives rewards in cash or kind from a political party, or an influential person in society (Selormey, 2013).

The Figure below shows a man calling out to an overweight MP carrying a suitcase full of money: 'We call on the radio. Give us money so that we can talk well about you.' The character uses the Luganda word 'akadingidi', which designates a small cord instrument used in Buganda that symbolises flattery. Interestingly, the MP looks slightly frightened by what looks like an ambush, emphasising that the power distribution in this relation is not as unbalanced as one could have thought, even if there remains a prominent and wide discrepancy between the two parties.



Figure 3: A ‘big man’ is ‘ambushed’ by serial callers – cartoon published in Ggwanga 3–9/02/11 and reproduced with the editor’s permission.

Aware that different topics are discussed on the Wimeja program daily, these regular callers always call to give their opinion, irrespective of whether their opinions matter in the program. Sometimes, due to divergence of opinion, they attack each other, but this happens on infrequent occasions because they know each other personally.

According to Bisset (2018), because they are sometimes paid, they are accused of encouraging a process of ‘commercialisation’ of the airwaves and electoral politics, thus jeopardising independent thinking and ‘genuine popular participation (Bisset, 2018).

As Bisset puts it above, most of these regular callers have a vested political interest either for their gain or for people they pushed their political interest. Politics and controversy are inseparable due to the divergence of thought and opinion. My finding in this study shows that some enlightened women do not want to call in the Wimeja program because they do not like to be seen as part of regular callers who

are not informed about the issues discussed, always and the controversy that they are sometimes involved in on air. This is because some public officials believe these people are a nuisance on the radio since they call and speak on anything, even if they need to be more knowledgeable. Since these regular callers are believed to be agents of some politicians who pay them some stipends to promote their political, some female callers who are politicians should have called in this program because local issues of people they represent are discussed on the program shy away from participating from the program for fear that in case of divergence in opinion, these regular callers can attack and humiliate them on the radio hence affecting them politically since their voters also listen to this program.

Also, general controversies commonly arise from topical discussions. According to this study, women do not want to be part of such controversial discussions for fear of bringing their public and family image into disrepute. Women who want a private life said that though they listen and follow discussions on this program, they prefer to listen rather than call to participate.

Although this controversial discussion on the Wimeja program is not daily, it sets a precedent that affects women's participation even when other issues are being discussed. This, therefore, makes men continue to dominate the involvement in the program, hence perpetuating gender disparity in the program. From a theoretical perspective, over the past two decades, many feminist scholars have focused on gender representation in the news and other forms of journalism (Carter, 2015). However, until recently, the interrelationships between gender, politics, and communication have received relatively little attention (Mayersen, 2020). This points to a gap in the feminist media theory. The evolving nature of the media continues to bring a new challenge to the feminist perspective. In this study, a significant focus

was on the gender disparity in the form of participation, not much on the presentation of women. Therefore, gender disparity in the called-back program brings in a new phenomenon in the feminist media study because it stretches its focus from how women are represented in the new media to how they see their participation in media discourse.

This study also found that busy studio phone lines during the Wimeja program frustrate women from calling. Since the program is aired during peak morning hours, many callers are interested in contributing. This makes the line buzzing with callers. Respondents in this study said that due to their busy work schedule in the morning, they find it challenging to get through the line because they must keep trying many times before they get through the line. Most people I interviewed in Masaka and Fort Portal were more frenetic and most called once a day. Some of them have more than one phone to call in these programs (Brisset, 2018). This character of callers was identified among those who dominated calling on the Wimeja program.

Drawing on experience from the Masaka and Fort Portal study on calling a radio station, I see that getting through the phone line is complex, so those who have to call regularly have more than two mobile phones to call. It also requires time to wait in line for several minutes to be received. This process frustrates women and men too. However, women are more affected due to the nature of the morning busy work schedule compared to men. This, therefore, gives men an upper hand over women and explains why participation in the Wimeja program remains male-dominated.

Although feminist media theory critiques the media for reinforcing gender inequality and stereotypes against women, various societal and practical barriers

prevent women from achieving equal representation and participation in the media. These barriers include: Lack of confidence where women feel less confident or capable of taking on roles or speaking out in the media, busy roles where women have more demanding roles in the morning, such as care-giving or household responsibilities, which restricts their time and ability to participate, Low literacy levels that limits their ability to engage fully in media participation, Control of radio sets in some households where men control radio sets, patriarchal nature of society where traditional gender roles and expectations discourages or prevents women from participating in the program and controversial nature of discussions which some time discourages women from engaging due to fear of judgment or backlash.

The finding of this study concludes that to address the issue of unequal media representation, these barriers need to be addressed. If not, women's participation will remain disproportionate compared to their male counterparts, despite feminist advocacy for equal representation.

5.3. Discussion on theme two. The Motivation of women to participate in Wimeja Program.

Research question two in this study concerns what motivates women to participate in the program. Regarding informants' responses on why they do not call to join the Wimeja program, the second research question discusses what could motivate women to call and give their views or opinions on the program.

This study reveals that encouragement motivates women to call and participate in the Wimeja program, like their male counterparts. To achieve this, the Wimeja program host should deliberate on engaging with female listeners by encouraging them to call

and participate. Through this, female listeners will be encouraged to call in the program, increasing the number of female callers and hence bridging the gender disparity gap in the program. Also, women can motivate fellow women by encouraging them to participate in such engagement platforms. It is increasingly recognised that the media has a crucial role in women's political participation (Komuhiimbo, 2016, p.3).

Though they recognised media participation in political, economic, and social life, the media should also encourage, motivate, and empower women to engage in all aspects of issues in society in a bid to challenge male domination in participatory spaces like the Wimeja program. This will also go a long way in challenging gender disparity in the program.

Importantly, to enable the show host to be deliberate in encouraging women's participation, capacity building of these hosts should also be prioritised by the media houses they work for or organisations that promote gender issues. This is because not all the show hosts in such programs go through journalism training institutions where such knowledge of gender inclusiveness is offered. Regrettably, some hosts did not even go through formal journalism training. Dralega et al. (2016) note that in Uganda media training institutions, gender mainstreaming training is still lacking therefore it is not only essential to revisit the policies and pedagogical approaches but also to engender a shift in the mind frames of all the stakeholders, including educators, university policy-makers, and students (Dralega et al., 2016).

Regarding the above, journalism training should go beyond the traditional curriculum to address the profession's challenging trends. Gender is one such issue. That is why Critical media literacy scholars such as Chawinga (2017), Geertsema-

Sligh (2019), Willnat, Weaver, & Choi, 2013), argue that journalism education should be more than acquiring new technological skills in addition to the ‘business as usual’ journalism education that is devoid of gender concerns. To address these challenges, capacity-building training for practising and realignment of the journalism curricula should focus on gender issues. This is because the media offers a vital space where gender issues can be amplified, but this needs the right attitude and training to build the capacity of practitioners to embrace them. Manisha Chaudhary uses an analogy: “It is like riding a tiger: once you get on, you cannot get off. It is a continuous process. You cannot stop it (Gallagher, 2013, p. 183), p. 183). In her analogy, she stresses that the feminist media theory agenda should be a continuous process to give women full potential through media representation, production, and participation. This requires a concerted effort from varied media players, of which media and journalism training institutions are the core.

The encouragement can be done through fellow women who call in the program and use the space to encourage fellow women to also call and participate in the program. The informants in this study said that even though the pursuit of gender equality has gained tremendous achievements in many areas, there is still a need to continue encouraging women to take the lead in areas where there is still gender disparity, like the Wimeja program. Therefore, encouraging women to call and participate in the program would motivate women to participate in the program. This would reduce the gender disparity in the program due to increased participation by women. Motivation and empowerment start when the individual realises what he needs to do (Baker et al., 2021), which grows from the individual consciousness to groups and eventually to the entire community. Therefore, it dramatically affects the

community since they rely on it for information and entertainment. Radio deserves particular attention because it is Uganda's most influential mass medium and most Sub-Saharan Africa (Mwesige, 2014). Because of its influence, radio show hosts like Wimeja can use space to encourage women's participation in the program. This can ripple effect on other women's motivation to participate in the program. Feminist media critics also believe men have changed, and they can be agents and promoters of women's space in the media. Being good transformed men, we were opening the door to feminist studies. However, when it broke in through the window, every unsuspected resistance rose to the surface – fully installed patriarchal power, which believed it had disavowed itself. Therefore, the involvement of both men, apart from the show host and women, in encouraging women's participation in the Wimeja program can yield double results and challenge male dominance.

This study revealed that having a female host or panel on a Wimeja program would encourage more women to participate. Its current status is that the host and a panel of the program are all men, and some women believe it is a men's affair. Tamale (2018) urged that the male-dominated media in Uganda represents one of the patriarchal pillars that serve as a conduit for perpetuating gender subordination and oppression (Tamale, 2018). Feminist media theorists also believe that women's control of media production makes it different and better. According to Steiner (2014), women running broadcasting and film studios would offer more diverse, creative, and positive representations of women (Steiner, 2014). Therefore, from the feminist media perspective, involving a female host in the program will challenge the status quo and encourage female participation. Also, in a patriarchal society, it would act as breaking a glass ceiling in the male-dominated media, hence encouraging other women to participate in calling in the program.

Engagement on call-back programs is predominantly through phone calls and SMS. Also, new media is being embraced to get feedback, for example, on Facebook and WhatsApp. The Voice of Lango Wimeja program could be more exceptional in getting feedback from listeners. However, its primary method of getting input by phone call is usually dominated by male callers, creating gender disparity in the program. This study was premised on studying the cause of the disparity and what can motivate women to participate in this program equally. In response to the latter, this study found that providing a toll-free line would encourage more women to call in the program since the main line is always busy and makes it hard for women to constantly engage in doing family chores. To show that phones in talk-back programs are extremely busy, Ewart (2016) notes that you could ring all day and would not get through, and I believe there is a backdoor phone number. According to her and other responses, based on this study, some listeners believe the program is pre-moderated to favour some callers against others (Ewart et al., 2016). This causes frustration among callers, which is why some women who took part in this study said they do not call in the Wimeja program.

Also, economic challenges, such as some women being unable to afford airtime, make it challenging to call in to the program. Response from this study found that these women who cannot persevere in struggling to go through the main line and those who have phones but find it challenging to spare airtime to call the radio will be willing to call a toll-free phone line that can be dedicated to women. Suppose the toll-free line is used as a visa-vis the main phone line and restricted to women to

encourage them to participate in the Wimeja program. In that case, it is believed that the gender disparity in the program will be challenged if other factors that make women not call in the program are overcome.

Similarly, phone calls and SMS are the conventional way for listeners to engage in call-back programs. This study revealed that due to other factors like busy phone lines, low self-esteem that make some women shy away from calling the program, cultural stereotypes, and economic challenges that do not enable some women to have mobile phones and airtime to call in the program among other factors, SMS would be a cheaper and convenient means of participation on the Wimeja program. Talkback radio programs are increasingly using Short Messaging Service (SMS), which consists of text messages sent by mobile phone or landline, e-mail, and social media as a means by which audiences can contribute to and engage with programs. However, the telephone call remains an essential aspect of talkback, allowing audience members to contact hosts directly and listeners to hear the voice of the caller (Ames & Ewart, 2018).

In addition to SMS, which can be used as an alternative to participating in call-back programs, the increase in the number of people using social media platforms like Facebook, X, and WhatsApp allows them to engage using this new platform. In Uganda according to the Uganda Communication Commission's market performance report for 2021, the number of people accessing the Internet has increased to 23 million. However, although the proliferation of the number of people using social media and mobile phones could be an enabling factor in improving participation in Wimeja programs through the use of SMS and social media, this is still farfetched. This frustrates those who send their comments via SMS since SMS is rarely read in the program. However, Bigirwa (2020) notes that the growth of social media, the

allowance of new media, and ways of communicating have created an opportunity to challenge and push back on existing establishments (Bigirwa, 2020).

Secondly, comments on Facebook are not read. Above all, they are not advertised to listeners who wish to send their comments on Facebook. Also, the two phones used for receiving calls are not smartphones, and there is no alternative number for WhatsApp. The X (Twitter) account for the program is also not available.

This means those wishing to send comments on X (Twitter) and WhatsApp are also excluded from participating in the program. With evidence that platforms such as Facebook and X (Twitter) facilitate activism, social media have emerged as avenues for debate, discussion, and arenas for engaging in civic-related activities. These platforms may serve as platforms for users to express their political views or get involved with issues they feel are essential (Orgeret & Selnes, 2020).

It is important to note that sending SMS and WhatsApp messages is one of the ways to motivate women who find it challenging to call directly on the studio line and participate in the Wimeja program, since SMS is rarely read. There is no WhatsApp number for the studio; many women who do not call the program but would have used the means of text messages will continue to be left in terms of participation; hence, the domination of men in the program will persist. Alternative” media, in particular, demonstrate even more clearly than the post-feminist blogger sites the feminist potential of technology for helping to challenge dominant representations and, better, for allowing women to constitute counter-public spheres in a sense (Fraser, 2020). Modern technology, such as social media platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook, can help provide an alternative avenue for women's participation in the media space dominated by phone calls, such as the Wimeja

program. However, to make this applicable, the show host should embrace this alternative method since SMS is rarely read during the program's observation, and there is no WhatsApp number or Facebook account for interaction.

5.4. Discussion for theme 3. Effect of Male Dominance in the Wimeja Program on Society.

Research question three in this study is about the effect of a program like Wimeja on society if it remains male-dominated. Radio, being the primary source of information for many common Ugandans, means its impact on society cannot be underrated. This change impact was evidenced in this study, where informants said they listened to the Wimeja program mainly for two reasons. One is to get detailed information during the program discussion, since topics for discussion are usually picked from news items. Secondly, to follow issues of current affairs, primarily those in their community, since sometimes local leaders are called to participate in the program to explain the problems of concern to the community. Through their participation, this kind of discussion shapes issues like development and policies. Dagon (2013) observes that radio has been the most appealing tool for participatory communication and development worldwide, making it the ideal medium for change. This attests to how pertinent this kind of program is to the listeners. Therefore, the findings of this study show that having a male-dominated program is problematic for several reasons.

Firstly, it makes the voices of women not be heard on issues that are usually discussed in the program because many of the contributions on these issues are given by men. However, the Beijing Platform of Action (UN, 1995) projected the media's role as key to realising progress on gender equality and women's empowerment. The

continuation of marginalisation of women in participatory media engagement like the Wimeja program and other forums makes the realisation of the Beijing Platform of Action a far-fetched dream in Uganda after 18 years. Although progress has been made on gender equality and empowerment, much still needs to be done in media engagement and women's empowerment to improve women's participation across all forums, including the media space. Ndukwe (2020) eloquently advocates new systems of creating representations of women that would sustain participatory democracy. In other words, this challenges feminist media theorists to develop new approaches that can encourage women's participation in the media beyond advocating for equal representation of women in the media process, content, and production. This requires intentional efforts to enable individuals to comprehend, evaluate, and analyse media content and its significance.

Secondly, the lack of women's participation in media platforms like the Wimeja program entrenches the already existing gender imbalance in society, where society looks at men as the only gender that should have on matters in society. Also, on the right of freedom of expression that is enshrined in article 29 of the Uganda Constitution, having a male-dominated program means some people, in this case, women, are not exercising that right; hence, it means they are affected in a way directly or indirectly since women too should speak freely on issues including affecting them. Media platforms are essential in advancing such matters. Therefore, the above factors show that having a male-dominated Wimeja program has some effect on society, especially on women.

Also, some issues discussed in the call-back program, like Wimeja, inform policies and programs since local leaders and stakeholders constantly debate these issues on

the radio. However, the minimal level of participation of women in such programs means their ideas will not be absorbed in the policy or program, yet implementation would affect women, too. Therefore, involvement at all levels should be deliberately inclusive and gender-sensitive to arrive at a coherent decision that benefits all members of society, regardless of gender. This is equally important because both men and women are significant in formulating and implementing development policies that affect the community. This is the basis of the feminist media theory that advocates for equal space for participation and representation of both men and women in a bid to promote equality. By doing so, society becomes a better place for all genders since everyone feels recognised, regardless of gender inclination.

5.5. Chapter conclusion

This chapter discussed data findings that were presented in four sections. The discussion was on three themes derived from the research question of this study. The first section of the theme discussed and analysed male dominance in the Wimeja program. The major contributory factors are the busy nature of work tasks for women in the morning that does not give them time to participate in the program, controversial discussion that most women do what to get involved in, and lack of confidence in such form also contributes to the low level of women participation in the program. Also, there are cultural stereotypes where some women still believe they should not express their ideas on societal issues on a program like Wimeja, with the view that such engagement is reserved for men. These factors creating male dominance in the Wimeja program are an indication of extended characteristics of the parochial nature of the society, where there is existing male dominance on many fronts. However, the implication of this in a media space like the Wimeja program, if

not used to challenge such male dominance, can only help to entrench it, hence sustaining the status quo in society.

Section two of the chapter discussed the motivation of women to participate in the Wimeja program. Since there is male dominance in the program, the motivation of women is seen as a way of improving women's participation. This can be done by encouraging women to participate in the program by the show host, creating a separate line dedicated to women, and involving a female host or co-host to inspire other women to participate. Deliberate efforts to encourage women's participation in public engagement spaces like the Wimeja program can go a long way in creating awareness and making them understand their potential and the importance of breaking the glass ceiling of participation.

The last section of the chapter discussed the effect of male dominance of the program in society. Both men and women have equal rights and freedom to hold and express opinions. The male dominance in the program implies that women are not effectively using their freedom to express their views in the program. Therefore, their voice is curtailed, and their contribution to societal issues needs to be felt. However, feminist media theory contests this status quo. In its argument, it advocates for women to speak up about issues about themselves, not through a second party. Therefore, the gender disparity in the Wimeja program affects society in that the voice of women is not stern on pertinent issues in society, hence making the program not gender inclusive in terms of participation.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Introduction

This study examined gender disparity in the Wimeja program on Voice of Lango FM. The study-specific study objectives are to (1) examine the underlying reasons why the Wimeja program is male-dominated, (2) establish factors that may motivate women to participate in the Wimeja program, and (3) analyse the implications of gender disparity for women's participation in the Wimeja program for call-in programs in Uganda.

I developed three themes from these objectives, aligning with the research questions to guide the findings' presentation, analysis, and discussion. The themes were male dominance in the Wimeja program, women's motivation to participate, and the effect of male dominance on society.

6.2. Summary of significant findings.

This study's significant findings were summarised from findings segmented into three themes derived from the research questions. The study made the following findings. For theme one, the male dominance of the program was a result of the nature of busy schedules in the morning, cultural stereotypes that make other women believe that participating in such program is a preserve for men, provocative discussion, the nature of radio set ownership at household and economic challenges where some women cannot afford to buy phones or air time for those having phones also limits women participation in the program.

The second theme presented the study's findings on women's motivation to participate in the Wimeja program. The study found that introducing a dedicated

phone line for women, a toll-free phone line, and a female host or co-host can motivate more female callers to participate in the program.

The third theme examined the effect of male dominance in the program on society. This study found that male dominance in the program stifles women's voices on issues in society.

6.3. Conclusion

Based on the findings, Voice of Lango predominantly discusses political topics drawn from local and national current affairs. Political issues are believed to be the most interesting and attract a commendable listenership. No wonder a pinch of politics blended in, even with developmental problems. Since it is a commercial radio station, getting a considerable listenership and broad audience base to attract more advertising revenue is the most exciting thing. Additionally, in Uganda, men still command much political influence and power over women. Aware of this challenge, the 1995 constitution introduced political affirmative action to increase women's involvement and representation in elective politics at local and national levels. However, over decades, there has been minimal progress in the political competition of women beyond ring-fenced slots. This is partly due to the result of the patriarchal nature of our society, where ascribed gender roles negatively affect women in some spheres like politics. The culture of patriarchy is a powerful determinant of male dominance over females because men are being trained for leadership activities. At the same time, women are confined to domestic activities, roles ascribed to them by a culture that affect them later in life, thereby making them lose self-confidence/worth and have low self-esteem in their career in adult life, politics inclusive (Makama, 2013). In Uganda, the government in the 1995 constitution made a deliberate affirmative

action by including a ring-fenced political space for women at various elective positions to improve women's participation in politics. However, the pronounced commitment of the local and international community to gender equality and to bridging the gender gap in the formal political arena, reinforced by the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform of Action, women are highly marginalised and are poorly represented in political activities (UNDP Report, 2005). There, it is worth noting that gender disparity in the Wimeja program on Voice of Lango is the tip on the iceberg, signifying the continued existence of the challenge in the political system as a result of the effect of the patriarchal society on women. This has caused women to have low esteem in active political participation, representation, and discourse to some extent. The implications, therefore, are that forums for political discussion like the Wimeja program on the Voice of Lango will continue to remain male-dominated, hence rendering women's participation minimal. This eventually affects women's voices and opinions on patient development issues in a society always shaped by politics.

Related call-back programs are programmed in prime houses where radio listenership is high. For Wimeja on Voice of Lango, the program runs from 7 am to 9:30 am. Findings indicate that gender disparity in the program results from the busy nature of women's work in the morning. Lira is a business city, and many women and men are engaged in formal and informal employment. This has resulted in changes in gender roles where women used only to be confined at home doing house chores while men went to work. According to research done by International Alert in northern Uganda after the Lord's Resistance Army War regarding economic activity, International Alert (2010, p. 19), Women are individually and collectively engaged in farming, trade and business, paid employment, and alcohol brewing. Therefore, in

addition to doing house chores and other work that women do due to changes in gender roles in society, it is challenging for them to listen to the program and be called to participate. By the positions of these women, they are swamped. Their non-participation in talk shows cannot be considered unserious (Maractho, 2019).

However, little participation of women in this program, to some extent, goes beyond their busy schedules in the early morning because there was reprogramming of the Wimeja program for Saturday, which starts at 8 am and goes on until 11 am.

However, it is still dominated by primarily male callers.

It is worth noting that the nature of the discussion on the program is sometimes provocative, especially on contentious political issues. Regular callers paddle this kind of controversy. This individual may be a foot soldier of a political party, an individual who receives rewards in cash or kind from a political party, or an influential person in society (Selormey, 2013). During the one-month observation on the program, I noticed that over four regular callers called in the program every day, irrespective of the topic of discussion on the program. In other words, they have become 'experts' in giving their opinion on the program. Many respondents in this study said they did not call in the program for fear of being involved in controversy. Since topics in the Wimeja are predominantly political, controversy will inevitably remain on issues discussed. Despite the moderation of the program, some women already have a biased view of the program as a controversial forum owned by regular callers. This, however, indicates that the program will remain male-dominated since women continue to shy away from it.

6.2. Recommendation

Interaction in getting feedback on the back program has evolved with the advancing nature of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). However, on the Wimeja program, the format of getting feedback is basically through phone calls and, in rare cases, SMS. However, social media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and X (Twitter) are not used. However, many people have embraced social media in their day-to-day interactions. Therefore, using social media in the program could be an avenue for getting feedback and increasing the number of participants. This can also favour women who say they lack the self-esteem to call on the program. The host, therefore, should promote all these avenues and make listeners aware of them so that they can engage using all these platforms.

Relatedly, a separate line dedicated to women should be included in the two studio lines to encourage more women's participation in the program, as the regular phone line is busy.

Additionally, there should be deliberate training of media practitioners to embrace the issue of gender mainstreaming in all their programs. Although some universities and tertiary institutions have started tailoring their programs to include gender courses, there is a need for capacity building for existing practitioners to embrace the issues of gender mainstreaming. Such training will widen their understanding of the issues of inclusive gender participation. Partly, the issues of gender disparity in Wimeja and such programs will be addressed.

Also, radio stations can adopt another form of periodic outreach engagement program with the listeners in their respective community centres beyond talk-back, which is a handy platform for engagement. This platform, called 'baraza', can be relied on live or recorded. However, the level of participation would be more gender inclusive compared to talk-back programs because challenges that make women not call during busy schedules in the morning, air, mobile phone, radio set, and low self-esteem, among others, will be mitigated; hence, bridging the gap in gender disparity in talkback programs.

Even though the issue of gender emancipation has been fronted for decades in Uganda, there is a need to continue to create awareness on the issue of gender parity in all aspects of culture, social, political, and economic, among others. To achieve this, the media is the best forum to challenge the issues, and women and other stakeholders in society should be encouraged to take the mantle in the fight for continued gender equality.

6.3. Areas of further research

This study examined gender disparity in the Wimeja program on Voice of Lango FM. However, from the thorough analysis of data collected and presented here, it is deduced that further studies can be conducted in the following areas: The effect of cultural stereotypes on women's representation and participation in the media.

Secondly, a study needs to be done in an area of limited interest for women in political discussion, a perception or a reality. Also, regarding journalism training, a study can be done on the impact of gender studies on gender-inclusive programming

and representation. Another study area is the impact of financial limitations on access to media platforms and participation.

References

- Aga Khan University. Graduate School of Media and Communications. (2023). The state of women in the media: Representation, coverage and framing of women in East African media. Aga Khan University
- Araüna, N. Dhaenens, F. Van. B, Sofie. (2017). Historical, Temporal and Contemporary Trends on Gender and Media. *Journal of Communication & Cultural Studies*. Vol. 9 Issue 2, P177-184. 8p. DOI: 10.1386/Cjcs.9.2.177_7.
- Aruguete, N. (2017). The Agenda Setting Hypothesis in The New Media Environment. *Comunicación Y Sociedad*, 0(28), 35–58. Doi:10.32870/Cys.V0i28.2929
- Azwan Z. (2013). Media and Gender in Malaysia: An Endless Battle. *Media Asia*. 2013, Vol. 40 Issue 3, P211-214. 4p. DOI: 10.1080/01296612.2013.11689968.
- Baran, S. and Davis, D. (2009). *Mass Communication Theory: Foundations, Ferment and Future*, 5th Ed., Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Barker, M. (2003), 'Rewriting the Sexual Script? Constructions of Sexuality in The Bi, Poly and S/M Communities', Presentation to the First Annual International Congress on Personal Construct Psychology, Huddersfield, July.
- Ben-Shlomo Y, Brookes S, Hickman M. 2013. *Lecture Notes: Epidemiology, Evidence-Based Medicine and Public Health* (6th Ed.), Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford.
- Bethany, K. (2009). Contrasting Interactivities: BBC Radio Message Boards and Listener Participation Radio *Journal: International Studies in Broadcast & Audio Media*. Vol. 7 Issue 1 P11-26. 16p. DOI: 10.1386/Rajo.7.1.11/1.
- Ben-Shlomo Y, Brookes S, Hickman M. 2013. *Lecture Notes: Epidemiology, Evidence-Based Medicine and Public Health* (6th Ed.), Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford.
- Benjamin, B. (2006). *Strong Democracy. Participatory Politics for A New Age*. Berkeley: University of California Press

- Berrigan, F. J. (1979). *Community Communications: The Role of Community Media in Development. Reports and Papers on Mass Communication No. 90*. UNIPUB, 345 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10010.
- Bhasin, K. (1994). Women and Communication Alternatives: Hope for the Next Century. *Media Development*, 41(2), 4–7.
- Bigirwa, T. P. (2020). Skewed Dynamics; Exploring Ways in Which Media Fuels Inequality in Uganda. *The Leaders' Journal*, 7.
- Boyatzis, R. (1998). *Transforming Qualitative Information: Thematic Analysis and Code Development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Braun, V., Clarke, V. (2006). Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77–101. Doi:10.1191/1478088706qp063oa
- Brecht, B. (1979). Radio as A Means of Communication: A Talk on the Function of Radio. *Screen*, 20(3-4), 24–28. Doi:10.1093/Screen/20.3-4.24
- Brisset-Foucault, F. (2018). Serial Callers: Communication Technologies and Political Personhood in Contemporary Uganda. *Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology*. Vol. 83 Issue 2, P255-273. 19p. DOI: 10.1080/00141844.2015.1127984.
- Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods* (Ed). New York. Oxford University Press.
- Bryman, A. (2004) *Social Research Methods* (2nd Edition), Oxford University Press.
- Byerly C. M. (2016). *The Palgrave International Handbook of Women and Journalism*.
- Byerly, C. M., & Ross, K. (Eds.). (2006). *Women and Media*. Doi:10.1002/9780470774908
- Carter C., Steiner L., Allan S. (2019). *Journalism, Gender and Power*. Routledge.
- Cervi, L., & Nuria, ROCA (2017). The Modernization of The Electoral Campaign for the General Elections of Spain in 2015. Towards Americanization? *Communication and Man*, (13), 133-150.
- Chaffee, S. H., & Metzger, M. J. (2001). The End of Mass Communication? *Mass Communication and Society*, 4(4), 365–379. Doi:10.1207/S15327825mcs0404_3
- Chibita. (2009). The Politics of Broadcasting, Language Policy and Democracy in Uganda. *Journal of African Media Studies*, 1(2). Doi:10.1386/Jams.1.2.295/1
- Creedon, P. And Cramer, J. (2007) *Women in Mass Communication* (3rd Edn). Sage Publications. Thousand Oaks. London. New Delhi.
- Creswell W. John (2003) *Research Design; Qualitative and Methods Approaches*. London: Sage Publication

- Cole, E. And Daniel, H.D. (Eds.) (2005) *Featuring Females: Feminist Analyses of Media*; American Psychological Association, Washington, DC.
- Colucci, E. (2007); “Focus Groups Can Be Fun”: The Use of Activity-Oriented Questions In Focus Group Discussions, Sage Publications.
- Cook, Karen. S, Emerson, Richard. M, Gillmore, Mary. R & Yamagishi, Toshio (1983). The Distribution of Power in Exchange Networks: Theory and Experimental Results. *American Journal of Sociology* 89, S. 275– 305. [Doi.Org/10.1007/978-3-658-21742-6_30](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-21742-6_30)
- Cox, Nicole B. (2013). *Media Disparity: A Gender Battleground*. *Democratic Communiqué*. Spring. Vol. 26 Issue 1, P51-53. 3p.
- Cuklanz, L. (2016). ‘Feminist Theory in Communication’. In: *The International Encyclopedia of Communication Theory and Philosophy*. John Wiley & Sons. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118766804.wbiect157>
- Dralega, Carol Azungi. (2016) *Media, Capacity Building and Gender Parity: Why We Shouldn't Look Away*. *Journal of African Media Studies*. Vol. 8 Issue 3, P247-249. 3p. DOI: 10.1386/Jams.8.3.247_2.
- Dralega, C. A., Jemaneh, A., Jjuko, M. And Kantono, R. (2016), ‘Gender Mainstreaming in Media and Journalism Education – An Audit of Media Departments in Uganda, Rwanda and Ethiopia’, *Journal of African Media Studies*, 8: 3, Pp. 251–66, Doi: 10.1386/Jams.8.3.251_1
- Douglas, S. J. (1999). *Listening In: Radio and The American Imagination*. Minneapolis, London: University of Minneapolis.
- Du, Ying Roselyn. (2010). Is the Agenda-Setting Process Different Outside the United States? A Multinational Agenda-Setting Test. *Conference Papers -- International Communication Association*. 2010 Annual Meeting.
- Ewart, Jacqui; Ames, Kate. (2016). Talking Text: Exploring SMS and E-Mail Use by Australian Talkback Radio Listeners. *Radio Journal: International Studies in Broadcast & Audio Media*. Apr 2016, Vol. 14 Issue 1, P91-107. 17p. DOI: 10.1386/Rjao.14.1.91_1.
- Ewart, J. (2013). Local People, Local Places, Local Voices and Local Spaces: How Talkback Radio In Australia Provides Hyper-Local News Through Mini-Narrative Sharing. *Journalism*. Retrieved From <http://journals.sagepub.com/content/early/2013/07/08/1464884913491652.abstract>
- Fraser, N. (1997). *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the ‘Postsocialist’ Condition*. New York: Routledge.

- Gall, M. D, Gall. J. P and Borg, W.R (2003) *Educational Research. An Introduction* (7th Edn) Boston New York.
- Gallagher, M. (2003). Feminist Media Perspectives. In a Companion to Media Studies, A.N. Valdivia (Ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470999066.Ch2>
- Gallagher, M. (2001) *Gender Settings: New Agendas for Media Monitoring and Advocacy*. Zed Books and WACC, London And New York.
- Gessler, A. (2017). Dust Mop or Mic? Women's Utopian Border-Crossings in Cold War Ham Radio. *Radio Journal: International Studies in Broadcast & Audio Media*. Vol. 15 Issue 2, P279-298. 20p. DOI: 10.1386/Rjao.15.2.279_1.
- Gill, R. (2007) *Gender and The Media*. Policy Press Cambridge UK.
- Geertsema, M. (2014), 'Gender Mainstreaming in Journalism Education', In A. V. Montiel (Ed.), *Media and Gender: A Scholarly Agenda for The Global Alliance on Media and Gender*, Paris: UNESCO, Pp. 70–73.
- Glaser, B.G.: *Emergence Vs Forcing: Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis*. Sociology Press, Mill Valley (1992)
- Griffen-Foley, Bridget. (2010) Henry Mayer Lecture Voices of the People: Audience Participation in Australian Radio. *Media International Australia (8/1/07- Current)*. Issue 137, P5-19. 15p. DOI: 10.1177/1329878X1013700103.
- Griffen-Foley, Bridget. (2009). *Changing Stations: The Story of Australian Commercial Radio*, UN Press,
- Gumucio-Dagron, A. (2001), *Making Waves: Stories of Participatory Communication for Social Change*, New York: Rockefeller Foundation
- Gunter, B. (2000) *Media Research Methods: Measuring Audiences, Reactions and Impacts*. Sage Publications. London. Thousand Oaks. New Delhi.
- Hall, S. (1992). Cultural Studies and Its Theoretical Legacies. In L. Grossberg, C. Nelson, Andp. Treichler (Eds.), *Cultural Studies*. London: Routledge, Pp. 277–94
- Hacohen, G. (2012). The Commercial and The Public “Public Spheres”: Two Types of Political Talk-Radio and Their Constructed Publics. *Journal of Radio & Audio Media*. Vol. 19 Issue 2, P152-171. 20 P.2 Charts. DOI: 10.1080/19376529.2012.721836.
- Haring, Kristen (2007), *Ham Radio's Technical Culture*, Cambridge: The MIT Press.
- Harding. H (2005) *The Question in Feminism*, In Stehr N. Reiner Grundmann (2005). *Knowledge, Critical Perspectives* Published by Taylor And Francis Milton Keynes Open University Press 1986 PP 15-29.

- Hasan, S. (2013). *Mass Communication Principles and Concepts*, 2nd Ed., New Delhi: CBS Publishers And Distributors Pvt Ltd.
- Hilmes, Michele. (1997). *Radio Voices: American Broadcasting, 1922–1952*, Minneapolis: University Of Minneapolis Press.
- Howley, K. (Ed.) (2010), *Understanding Community Media*, California: Sage.
- Huberman, M. and Miles, M. (1994) „Data Management and Analysis Methods, “ In Denzin, Norman and Lincoln, Yvonna (Eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. California: Sage Publication.
- Jaffe; Lee, J. Michael. (1999). Gender Identification, Interdependence, And Pseudonyms in CMC: Language Patterns *Information Society*. Vol. 15 Issue 4, P221. 14p. 1 Diagram, 6 Charts. DOI: 10.1080/019722499128385.
- Jamieson, K. H., & Cappella, J. N. (2008). *Echo Chamber: Rush Limbaugh and the Conservative Media Establishment*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Jensen, Klaus And Jankowski, W. Nicholas (1991) *A Handbook of Qualitative Methodologies for Mass Communication Research*. London: Routledge.
- Joseph, B. (2009), ‘Journalism Education’, In H. Wahl-Jorgensen and T. Hanitzsch (Eds), *The Handbook of Journalism Studies*, New York: Routledge, Pp. 42–58.
- Karen, R. (2004). Democratic Participation and Public Access Broadcasting: Callerperspectives on Election Call. *Conference Papers -- International Communication Association*. 2004 Annual Meeting, P1. 15p.
- Khan, A. (2017). Cultural Analysis of Indian Women in A Patriarchal Society: Trajectory of A Woman's Emancipation in Girish Karnad's Naga-Mandala. *Language in India*, 17(2).
- Kerby, M & Marland. A. (2015) Media Management in A Small Polity: Political Elites’ Synchronized Calls to Regional Talk Radio and Attempted Manipulation of Public Opinion Polls. *Political Communication* Vol. 32 Issue 3, P356-376. 21p. 4 Charts, 3 Graphs. DOI: 10.1080/10584609.2014.947449.
- Keyton, J. (2006). *Communication Research: Asking Questions, Finding Answers*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Klein, B. (2009). Contrasting Interactivities: BBC Radio Message Boards and Listener Participation. *Radio Journal: International Studies in Broadcast & Audio Media*. Vol. 7 Issue 1, P11-26. 16p. DOI: 10.1386/Rajo.7.1.11/1.
- Kovach, B., & Rosenstiel, T. (2007). *The Elements of Journalism: What News People Should Know and The Public Should Expect*. New York: Three Rivers Press

- Linje, Manyozo. (2010). Researching Developmental Uses and Formats of Rural Radio: A Development Broadcasting Approach. *Radio Journal: International Studies in Broadcast & Audio Media*. Vol. 8 Issue 2, P141-159. 19p. 1 Diagram. DOI: 10.1386/Rjao.8.2.141_1.
- Llanos, B. And Nina, J. (2011). 'Election Coverage from A Gender Perspective: A Media Monitoring Manual', UN Women [Http://Www.Idea.Int/Publications/Election_Coverage_Gender_Perspective/Index.Cfm](http://www.idea.int/publications/election_coverage_gender_perspective/index.cfm)
- Lopez, L. (2016). Mobile Phones as Participatory Radio: Developing Hmong Mass Communication in the Diaspora. *International Journal of Communication (19328036)*. Vol. 10, P2038-2055. 18p. 1 Chart.
- Lorber, J. (2005) *Gender Inequality: Feminist Theories and Politics* (3rd Edition). Roxbury Publishing Company Los Angeles, California.
- Lyons, J. K. (2008). Political Talk Radio and Values: Finding Support for the Two-Value Political Ideology Model. *Journal of Radio & Audio Media*, 15(2), 150–166. Doi: 10.1080/19376520802397250
- Madamombe, I. (2005). Community Radio: A Voice for the Poor: Better Local Communications Can Boost Development, Democracy. *African Renewal: United Nations Department of Public Information*, 19, 4–5.
- Made, P. A (2010), *Gender in Media Education: An Audit of Gender in Journalism & Media Education and Training*, Johannesburg: Gender Links. Media High Council (2011), *State of Media Freedom, Professionalism and Development in Rwanda: An Assessment*, Kigali: Media High Council.
- Madriz, E. (2000); Focus Groups in Feminist Research in Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd Ed., Pp. 835-850). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Makama, G.A. (2013) *Patriarchy and Gender Inequality in Nigeria: The Way Forward*. *European Scientific Journal*, 9, 101-110.
- Maractho, E. C. (2017), 'Mass Media, Women and Public Life in Uganda: Interrogating Representation, Interaction and Engagement', Doctoral Thesis, Durban: University of Kwazulu Natal.
- Maractho, E. C. (2019), '(Re) Producing Cultural Narratives on Women in Public Affairs Programmes in Uganda', *Journal of African Media Studies*, 11:3, Pp. 293–311, Doi: 10.1386/Jams_00002_1
- Morna, C. M. (2002), *Promoting Gender Equality in and Through the Media: A South African Case Study*, Beirut: United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women.

- Mathu, E. (2005). Should the FM Radio Sub-Culture Be Tamed? In *Talking with Kenyans: Media Debates* (Pp. 24–28). Nairobi: Media Council of Kenya & FES.
- Manyozo, L. (2010). The Day Development Dies. *Development in Practice*, 20(2), 265–269. Doi:10.1080/09614520903564231
- Mccombs, M. (2004). *Setting the Agenda: The Mass Media and Public Opinion*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Mcquail, D. (2002) *Origins and Development of the Field of Study* in Denis Mcquail Edns Mcquail's Reader in Mass Communication Theory, Sage Publications, London.
- Mccombs, M., & Shaw, D. (1972). The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36, 176–187. Doi: 10.1086/267990
- Melkote, R.S. And Steeves, H.L. (2001), *Communication for Development in the Third World*, New Delhi: Sage.
- Mijumbi, R. (2002). ICTs As a Tool for Economic Empowerment of Women: Experiences from The Use of A CD ROM by Rural Women in Uganda. In *Proceedings of Division for The Advancement of Women, United Nations Conference* (Pp. 1-13).
- Miniê, D. (2007). Feminist Media Theory and Activism: Different Worlds or Possible Cooperation. *20 Pieces of Encouragement for Awakening and Change*, 282.
- Minnie, J., & Mapuwaenda, A. (2006). Organisational Evaluation of GL. (Copy Obtained From GL)
- Musubika, J. (2008). Women's Potential and Challenges in Community Radio: The Case of Mama FM. *Agenda*, 22(77), 127-134.
- Mwesige, P. G. (2004a). “Can You Hear Me Now?” Radio Talk Shows and Political Participation in Uganda. Ph.D. Thesis in Communication, Indiana University, United States.
- Mwesige, Peter G. (2009). The Democratic Functions and Dysfunctions of Political Talk Radio: The Case of Uganda. *Journal of African Media Studies*. Vol. 1 Issue 2, P221-245. 25p. 4 Charts. DOI: 10.1386/Jams.1.2.221_1.
- National Electronic Media Performance Study (2004), Broadcasting Council: Kampala.
- Nabunya, C. (2009). *The Role of Radio Talk Shows in the Transition to Multi-Party Politics and Democracy in Uganda. A Case Study* (Master's thesis).
- Nassanga, G. (2009) Participatory Discussion Programs As ‘Hybrid Community Media’ in Uganda. *International Journal of Media & Cultural Politics*. Vol. 5 Issue 1/2, P119-124. 6p. DOI: 10.1386/Macp.5.1-2.119_3.

- Nasucha, M. & Kertanegara, R. (2020). The Audience's Response to Gender Relation Campaign of Ketchup Brand on Youtube, 12(1), 144-166. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31937/Ultimacomm.V12i1.1323>
- Neuendorf, A. Kimberly (2002) *The Content Analysis Guidebook*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publication.
- Nicholas C. Neupauer (1996) Individual Differences in On-Air Television and Radio Personalities, *Communication Research Reports*, 13:1, 77-85, DOI: [10.1080/08824099609362073](https://doi.org/10.1080/08824099609362073)
- Nicola, N. (2010). Black Face, White Voice. *Journal of Language and Politics*, 9(2), 281–309. Doi:10.1075/Jlp.9.2.06nic
- Ojiambo, R. (1999a); Rural Women and Information in Uganda. A Paper Presented at FAO High-Level Consultation on Women and Information, Rome, 4-6th October
- Okoro, N. M., & Chukwuma, O. (2012). Reporting Violent Insurgencies in Postcolonial Nigeria: An Analysis of Audience Assessment of Nigerian Broadcast Media Reportage of The Boko Haram Insurgence. *Global Media Journal: Pakistan Edition*, 5(2).
- Omwoha, J. (2017). Formations of Citizenship Through Radio Talk Participation in Kenya. *Journal of African Media Studies*. Vol. 9 Issue 1, P181-194. 14p. DOI: [10.1386/Jams.9.1.181_1](https://doi.org/10.1386/Jams.9.1.181_1).
- Patton, M. Quinn (1990) *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*. Newbury: Sage Publication.
- Pavarala, V., Malik, K. K., and Cheeli, J. R. (2006), 'Community Media and Women: Transforming Silence into Speech', Chapter 3.2 In Eds. A. Gurumurthy, P. J. Singh, A. Mundkur and M. Swamy, *Gender in the Information Society: Emerging Issues*, Asia-Pacific Development Information Programme, UNDP And Elsevier, New Delhi, Pp. 96-109
<http://www.gsdr.org/go/display&type=document&id=4266>
- Peña Jiménez, P., & Pascual García, A. (2013). *Redes Sociales En La Radio Española. Facebook, Twitter, Y Community Management*.
- Peña-Jiménez, P. (2012). Social and Service Radio in Spain: The Example of "Together Step by Step", From Spain's National Radio. *Communication Magazine of La SEECI*, 0 (27), 14. Doi: [10.15198 / Seeci.2012.27.14-29](https://doi.org/10.15198/Seeci.2012.27.14-29)
- Perse, Elizabeth M.; Butler, Jessica S. Perse, Elizabeth M.; Butler, Jessica S. (2005). Call-In Talk Radio: Compensation or Enrichment. *Journal of Radio Studies*. Vol. 12 Issue 2, P204-222. 19p. DOI: [10.1207/S15506843jrs1202_3](https://doi.org/10.1207/S15506843jrs1202_3).

- Peña Jiménez, P., & Pascual García, A. (2013). *Redes Sociales En La Radio Española. Facebook, Twitter, Y Community Management.*
- Rakow, L. F. (2001). Feminists, Media, Free Speech. *Feminist Media Studies*, 1(1), 41–44.
- Rattan, A. (2019). Tackling the Underrepresentation of Women in Media. Retrieved From <https://Hbr.Org/2019/06/Tackling-Theunderrepresentation-of-Women-in-Media>
- Rodelo.F. (2016). Gender Disparities in the Media Coverage of Local Electoral Campaigns in Mexico. *Cuadernos.Info* Issue 39, P87-99. 13p. DOI: 10.7764/Cdi.39.965.
- Rogers, E., Braun, J. R., And Vermilion, M. A. (1977), ‘Radio Forums: A Strategy for Rural Development’, P. Spain, D. Jamison, And E. Mc Anany (Eds), *Radio for Education and Development: Case Studies*, World Bank Staff Working Paper 266. Washington, DC: World Bank, Pp. 361–81
- Ross K., Padovani C. (2019). Getting to the Top: Women and Decision-Making in European News Media Industries. In Carter C., Steiner L., Allan S (Eds.), *Journalism, Gender and Power* (Pp. 3–17). Routledge.
- Rosser, S.V. (2005) *Through The Lenses of Feminist Theory: Focus on Women and Information Technology*, *Frontiers - A Journal of Women's Studies*, 26. [Http://En.Wikipedia.Org/Wiki/Feminist_Theory](http://En.Wikipedia.Org/Wiki/Feminist_Theory)
[Http://En.Wikipedia.Org/Wiki/Feminism](http://En.Wikipedia.Org/Wiki/Feminism)
- Sadie, Y. (2005). Women in Political Decision-Making in the SADC Region. Retrieved From <https://Www.Jstor.Org/Stable/Pdf/4066648.Pdf?Refreqid=Excelsior%3a3e02ca47208b5dc4c5e21bb15ee0c3cb> [Google Scholar]
- Sakr, N. (2004), ‘Introduction’, In N. Sakr (Ed.), *Women and Media in the Middle East: Power Through Self Expression*, New York: I.B. Taurus & Co. Ltd.
- Saunders, B., Sim, J., Kingstone, T. *Et Al.* Saturation in Qualitative Research: Exploring Its Conceptualization and Operationalization. *Qual Quant* 52, 1893–1907 (2018). [Https://Doi.Org/10.1007/S11135-017-0574-8](https://Doi.Org/10.1007/S11135-017-0574-8)
- Selormey, Edem. 2013. Citizen Voice and Bureaucratic Responsiveness. FM Radio Phone-Ins and The Delivery of Municipal and Local Government Services in Accra, Ghana (Phd). University Sussex, July 2013.
- Selnes, F. N & Orgeret, K. S (2020). Activism as Political Action in Uganda: The Role of Social Media. *Journal of African Media Studies*, Volume 12, Number 3, 1, Pp. 283-300(18). DOI: https://Doi.Org/10.1386/Jams_00025_1

- Shivas, M. (2000) *Alternative Assessment of Women and Media Based on NGO Reviews of Section J, Beijing Platform of Action*, Cited in *Whose News? Whose Views?* Colleen Lowe Morna, 2001.
- Silva, Flávia Gomes-Franco E; Colussi, Juliana; Rocha, Paula Melani. (2018). Whatsapp As A Tool for Participation on Spanish Radio: A Preliminary Study of the Program Las Mañanas on RNE. *Journal of Radio & Audio Media*. Vol. 25 Issue 1, P77-91. 15p. 2. Charts, 1 Graph. DOI: 10.1080/19376529.2017.1370712.
- Silverman, David. (2005). *Doing Qualitative Research*. London: Sage Publication.
- Steiner, L. (2014). 'Feminist Media Theory'. In: *The Handbook of Media and Mass Communication Theory*. Ed. By R. S. Fortner And P. M. Fackler. Vol. 1. John Wiley & Sons, Pp. 359–379. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118591178.Ch20>.
- Steckler, A. (2005), 'Foreword', In P. R. Ullin, E. T. Robinson And E. E. Tolley (Eds), *Qualitative Methods in Public Health*, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, Pp. Xiii–Xx
- Stiles, W. (1993). Quality-Control in Qualitative Research. *Clinical Psychology Review* 13(6):593-618. DOI: 10.1016/0272-7358(93)90048-Q
- Stuart, E., & Woodroffe, J. (2016). Leaving No-One Behind: Can the Sustainable Development Goals Succeed Where the Millennium Development Goals Lacked? *Gender & Development*, 24(1), 69–81. Doi:10.1080/13552074.2016.1142206
- Stuck on repeat: After 30 years, can radio in Uganda find its groove again? (2023). <https://acme-ug.org/2023/12/19/after-30-years-can-radio-in-uganda-find-its-groove-again/>
- Sydney. Hainsworth, Frank 2004, *A Public Voice: Letters-To-The-Editor*, Seaview Press, Henley Beach, SA.
- Tan, Yue; Weaver, David H. (2013). Agenda Diversity and Agenda Setting from 1956 to 2004. *Journalism Studies*. Vol. 14 Issue 6, P773-789. 17p. 4 Charts, 1 Graph. DOI: 10.1080/1461670X.2012.748516.
- Tamale, S. (1999), *When Hens Begin to Crow: Gender and Parliamentary Democracy in Uganda*, Kampala: Fountain Publishers.
- Thornham, S. (2007) *Women, Feminism and Media*. Edinburgh University Press.
- "The State of Radio in Uganda: A 2020 Review and the New Reality of COVID-19," *Internews*, March 2021.
- Tripp, A.M. 2000. *Museveni's Uganda: Paradoxes of Power in Hybrid Regime*. Boulder, Co: Lynne Reinner.

- “The State of Radio in Uganda: A 2020 Review and the New Reality of COVID-19,”
Internews, March 2021. https://internews.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/State_Of_Radio_Uganda_2021-05_Internews.Pdf
- Tuchman, G.(1978a) *The Symbolic Annihilation of Women by the Media* in Tuchman G,
G,
- Daniels A. K. And Beret, J. (Editions) *Hearths and Home: Images of Women in Mass Media* Oxford University Press New York
- UBOS, (2024), National Population and Housing Census, Government of Uganda
- UCC (2018), ‘The Postal, Broadcasting And Telecommunications Annual Market and Industry Report 2017/18’, UCC, www.ucc.go.ug As. Accessed 10th June 2022
- UCC (2021) Market Performance Report 2021. www.ucc.go.ug As. Accessed 15th June 2022
- Uganda Media Women’s Association [UMWA], 2016. Available At <http://www.umwamamafm.co.ug/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Agender-Analysis-Report-On-Media-And-Elections.Pdf>
- United Nations Development (2005), Human Development Report, 2005. UNFPA (2007) “Stepping up Efforts to Save Mothers Lives”. Retrieved 29th July 202 From <http://www.unfpa.org/mothers/index.htm>
- Unesco (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). (2012). Gender- Sensitive Indicators for Media. Framework of Indicators to Gauge Gender Sensitivity in Media Operation and Content. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002178/217831e.pdf>.
- United Nations (1995), ‘Platform for Action and The Beijing Declaration’, *Fourth World Conference On Women*, Beijing, 4–15 September, New York: UN.
- Wallenfelsz, Paul; Wallenfelsz, Kelly. (2004) Agenda-Setting and the New Media. *Conference Papers -- International Communication Association*. Annual Meeting
- Watkins, S. C., & Emerson, R. A. (2000). Feminist Media Criticism and Feminist Media Practices. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 571(1), 151–166. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000271620057100111>
- Wanyeki, L. (2002). *Up in the Air: The State of Broadcasting in Eastern Africa*. London: PANOS.
- Weaver D. H., Willnat L. (2020). *The Global Journalist in the 21st Century*. Routledge.
- Wimmer And Dominick (1994) *Mass Media Research: An Introduction* (4th Edition). Wardsworth Publishing Company, Belmont, California.

Williams, L. & Labonte, R. (2007). Empowerment for Migrant Communities: Paradoxes for Practitioners. *Critical Public Health*, Vol. 17, No. 4, Pp. 365-379

Yin. R.K. (1994) *Case Study Research: Designs and Methods*. Sage Publications.

Van Zoonen. L. (1994) *Feminist Media Studies*. London Sage Publications.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Introduction letter



**UGANDA CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY**

A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa

Faculty of Journalism, Media and Communication

P.O.Box, 4, Mukono, Uganda.

Dear Sir/ Madam

**Re: Informed Consent for the study of “Gender disparity in call back programs:
A study of ‘Wimeja’ program on Voice of Lango Fm”**

My name is Ogwang Andrew Kizito. Currently, am pursuing a Masters in Journalism and Media studies at Uganda Christian University, Mukono. I am collecting data for my master’s research program. This study seeks to solicit views on gender disparity in the Wimeja call-back program.

The purpose of this study is to get a picture of why the program is male-dominated, what may motivate women to participate in the program, and the effect of such a program in society.

Please note that as a participant, the information given will be treated with confidentiality. And on no account will any other person apart from me and my supervisor have access to the information.

Name **Place.....**

Sign..... **Date.....**

Appendix 2. Interview questions for listeners

Name **Place.....**

Sign..... **Date.....**

1. Please introduce yourself
2. What do you know about Wimeja program on Voice of Lango?

3. Do you frequently listen to the program? If yes, How long have you been listening to the program? If no why?
4. What kind of topics are normally discussed in the program?
5. What motivates you to listen and participate in the program?
6. Have you ever called on the program? If no why.
7. Why do you think many women do not call in the program?
8. What do you think can motivate women to participate in the program
9. Do you think having the program male dominated has any effect in the society?
10. Any final thought about gender disparity on Wimeja program?

Appendix 3. Interview questions for Wimeja show host

Name **Place**.....

Date **Time**.....

1. Please introduce yourself.
2. How long have been hosting the program?
3. What is the Wimeja program about?
4. What are some of the dominant topics discussed in the program?
5. What is the average number of phone calls received per show?
6. Why do you think phone callers are dominated by men?

7. What have they done to encourage more women to participate?
8. What do you think can be done to motivate women to call in the program?
9. Do you think having male-dominated callers has any effect on the program? If yes why?
10. Any final about gender disparity in the program?

Appendix 4. Observation guide

The observation guide is a tool which will be used during the daily monitoring of the Wimeja program on Voice of Lango Fm for a period of four weeks.

They include:

1. Topics which are discussed
2. Show hosts and their gender
3. Number of phone callers per gender
4. Duration given per caller
5. Number of SMS per gender
6. Number of invited guests and their gender
7. Any other critical observation

Appendix 5 : REC Approval

Wed, Jan 19, 2022, 5:31 PM

Dear Andrew,

Kindly take note of these comments from the REC.

The researcher meets the majority however- 1. The topic is so specific to gender disparity, as if the author has prior knowledge of disparity the only challenge is that none of that evidence presented in the protocol.

For you to want to examine gender disparity, there must be proof of gender disparity in the programme - how do you know that there are gender disparities in the programme or that men dominate - show that if not, you might want to open up the study to include understanding gender responses/call backs.

The interview guide does not seem to include sufficient questions to address the second objective (what motivates to participate...).

The author needs to submit the observation guide as well. Note: Your study could benefit male participants.

It has been approved, but kindly take note of that.

Thank you.

Ahimbisibwe Osborn (BSWSA, MRPP)

Assistant Registrar, UCU Research Ethics Committee,

Directorate; Research, Partnership, & Innovation,

Uganda Christian University. +256 775 737627, +256 7044 82 044.

Office+256(0)312 350 885

Work E-mail: oahimbisibwe@ucu.ac.ug

Appendix 6 : Map of Uganda showing the location of District



Figure 4: Map of Uganda showing the location of District

Source: <https://reliefweb.int/map/uganda/sub-regions-uganda-12-may-2020> Accessed on 7th March 2022



UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa

UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF RESEARCH & POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

DISSERTATION CORRECTION COMPLIANCE REPORT BY THE CANDIDATE (POST VIVA FORM)

Date: 11th May 2025

Name of Candidate: Ogwang Andrew Kizito **Reg. No:** RS18M42/728

Title of Dissertation Gender Disparity in Talk Back Programs: A Study of Voice of Lango fm Wimeja Program

SN	COMMENTS BY EXTERNAL EXAMINER	ACTION TAKEN	INDICATOR
1	Why Supervisor's name appearing on cover page?	Supervisor's name extracted from cover page	Cover page
2	Mismatch in number of respondents 30 and 31	The number of respondents in the study made to be consistently 31 throughout the report	Chapter two
3	What makes Wimeja program Unique	This was clearly stated in problem statement	Page 4
4	Extract repetition in the quotation of respondents	Repeated quotation of respondents removed and other new quotations added.	Chapter Five
5	Use APL style in all references	APL reference format was used in all references	All chapters

SN	COMMENTS BY INTERNAL EXAMINER	ACTION TAKEN	INDICATOR
1	Chapter on should include introduction like other chapters	Introduction was included in chapter one	Chapter one
2	Why make statements without citation	All statements from other authors are well cited	Chapter Three
3	Conclusion in literature review missing	Conclusion was included in literature review chapter	Chapter Three
4	Delete sampling techniques	Sampling techniques was deleted in the final book	Chapter two
5	1. Describe how method observation was use 2. Finding of observation not mention	1.Observation method was clearly stated how it was used in monitoring Wimeja program for one month 2. Observation findings was included.	Chapter 4

SN	COMMENTS BY VIVA VOCE PANNEL	ACTION TAKEN	INDICATOR
1	How was observation conducted in the study	Well explained in final copy of the dissertation	Chapter Three Page 37
2	No mention of validity	Validity is well explained in the dissertation	Chapter Three Page 39
3	Categoration and justification not well explained	Categoration and justification was well explained in the final copy of dissertation	Page 38 and Page 9
4	How was gender distribution tracked	Gender distribution tracking explained	Chapter 4

5	Review work of Jattim Morris because he did a similar study	The work of Jattim was reviewed and it gave insights that was added in this study	Chapter 2
---	---	---	-----------

Ogwang Andrew Kizito

Candidate's Name

Signature

Ass. Prof Emilly Comfort Maractho

Supervisor's Name

Signature