

**THE IMPACT OF GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS ON THE MEDIA PERFORMANCE IN  
UGANDA.**

**A CASE STUDY OF NBS TELEVISION**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The study was conducted to establish the actual role of media in the policy making process in Uganda. It was guided by the following, to examine the effectiveness of media policy making process in Uganda, the level of awareness of government media regulations in Uganda and also establish the contribution of media in the policy making process.*

*The study adopted descriptive design which used qualitative and quantitative research methods on a sample of 150 respondents purposely selected from the target population.*

*The major findings of the study were that, most of the regulations were compatible to satisfy diverse goals but the policies had a symbolic value and lack funds for implementation, the awareness level was low among the respondents, it was also found out that the contribution of the media in policy making process was low.*

*Based on findings it was recommended that the government should sensitize the public on the importance of participation in policy making process and the media owners should increase the coverage of policy making process in their programmes. Government should provide incentives to those media owners who are making a contribution to the policy making process. Government should not heavily interfere with the functions of the media.*

**Key words: government regulation and media performance**

### **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

*Diksha Nautiyal ,(2020) affirmed that journalism is the gathering ,organizing and distribution of information through a wide variety of outlets, considered as an integral part of the media industry journalism can be traced back to Rome circa 59 B.C. With passing time, the field of journalism has evolved tremendously from the news coverage of variety of areas and fields to delivery through different mediums; journalism has come a long way.*

*Nautiyal, (2020) noted that journalism took its first place in India under colonization, the newspaper in India the Bengal gazette was published on 29<sup>th</sup> January 1780 marking the official beginning of journalism in India. In that era, print journalism was the only predominant form of journalism but that became one that explored numerous types of journalism as investigative journalism, political journalism, crime journalism, business journalism and sport journalism.*

*Cooks, (1998) acknowledged that practice of journalism has been closely connected with politics, in nineteenth century states with representative political systems, parties typically controlled the press. A newspaper either directly served as the voice of a party or relied for economic survival on the legal advertising and government printing contracts of local state and federal governments when the right party took over power*

*Skogerbo, (1997) noted that the distinction between market and state organization of media, or between commercial and public forms of broadcasting, masks important differences within each category, for instance because of the first amendment tradition, government intervention in the news media is more inhibited in the United States than in European democracies. In Norway, Sweden, France and Austria government for several decades has subsidized newspapers directly, especially to strengthen newspapers that offer substantial political information but receive low*

*advertising revenues. These policies have sought to stop the decline in the number of newspapers and so to increase public access to diversity of political viewpoints. There is no indication that the subsidized media are more likely to withhold criticism of the government.*

### ***Statement of the problem***

*In Uganda, most news and media broadcast are determined by the owners and gate keepers of the organizations. These owners are those in the helm of affairs of the government, and like the ruling government, the keepers take orders from the owners. Their rank and files may include the management of radio stations and the various news editors and news program producers. The philosophy of any media operation in Uganda depends on the government in place because they want to protect their political interests*

*Both national and international legislation states that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression including ‘freedom of the press and other media’. Limitations to the above human rights can only be acceptable and demonstrably justifiable in a free and democratic society in certain circumstances, such as risks to public security or health (Art. 43 Ugandan constitution, 1995; ICCPR, art. 19(3)).*

### ***Research objectives.***

- 1. To examine the effectiveness of media regulations making process in Uganda*
- 2. To examine the level of awareness of government media regulations in Uganda.*
- 3. To establish the contribution of media in regulations making process.*

### ***Research questions.***

*The relevant research questions related to this study are;*

- 1. How effective is the policy making process in Uganda?*
- 2. What is the level of awareness of government policies in Uganda?*

3. What is the contribution of media on policy making process in Uganda?

*Methodology*

**Research design**

*The research started utilized a case study design. Case study research intended to present facts concerning the nature and the status of the situation, as it exists at a time of the study to describe the present conditions, events or systems based on impressions or reactions of the respondents of the research. This study concerned with the relationships and practices that exist, beliefs and processes that are ongoing, effects that are being felt or trends that are developing about poor waste management. The research used cross-section study and a mixed methods approach (i.e., qualitative and quantitative designs) was used. In this study, both methods were to utilized for instance the qualitative opinions that was to got was to confirmed by statistical data.*

**Study Population**

*The study conducted in NBS TV Uganda located in Kampala District. The study population targeted complies of 150 respondents to whom the Sloven's formula was used to get the sample size.*

**Sample size and sampling design**

*The sample size comprised of 150 respondents (local people- considering a number of issues affecting the area. The researcher used a non-probability sampling procedure where purposive and quota sampling techniques were employed. This is because, in purposive/judgmental sampling, the researcher purposively picked respondents who, in his opinion, are thought to be relevant to the research topic. In this case the researcher is convinced that his judgment is more important than obtaining a*

*probability sample because the problem of conflict is not a new Phenomenon therefore, to obtain relevant data, one must choose relevant respondents.*

### ***Research instruments***

#### ***Questionnaire***

*Questionnaires were chosen because of its ability to reduce any bias and the collection of authentic data important for data analysis. The researcher used both closed ended and open- ended questionnaires aiming at getting underlying causes of poor waste management and seeks the local people's opinions on how the problem would be handled.*

#### ***Data Analysis and interpretation***

*It should be noted that, data obtained from the field in raw form is difficult to interpret. The initial data collected was subjected to quality checks, to ensure that the recordings were correctly done with minimal errors. This entailed; editing, repeating interviews where necessary, coding, summarizing, categorizing and grouping similar information, analyzing according to the theme of the study. It was important to note quotations and observations made during the interviews and their sources or the name of the interviewee. All the questionnaires must be analyzed whether completed or not.*

*Data analysis and processing was on-going and statistical analysis was to done manually and where possible using Microsoft Excel Spreadsheets, frequencies of the emerging issues are then established and it was presented in a tabular or graphic form like pie-charts, bar graph and frequencies and percentages was too generated.*

### ***RESULTS***

**Table 2: Sex of respondents.**

| <b>Sex</b>    | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Male</i>   | 113              | 75                |
| <i>Female</i> | 37               | 25                |

*Source; Primary data*

*The table 2 above shows the classification of respondents by sex. It reveals that a large number of the respondents 113 (75%) are male, 37 (25%) are female, this clearly shows that there is gender bias towards men in the study are. and also it is because men are easily accessible by the researcher.*

**Table 3: Age bracket of respondents.**

| <b>Age bracket</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <i>19-27yrs</i>    | 23               | 15                |
| <i>28-36yrs</i>    | 27               | 18                |
| <i>37-45yrs</i>    | 46               | 29                |
| <i>46-54yrs</i>    | 52               | 35                |
| <i>55+yrs</i>      | 2                | 1                 |

*Source; Primary data*

*The table 3 shows that the majority of the respondents belong to the age group of 46-54 constituting 35% it is followed by those in the age of 37-45 with 29%, followed by 28-36 with 18%, those in the group of 19-27 with 15% and then those in group of 50 and*

above with 1%. This implies that most of the respondents are mature enough to make decisions regarding the government regulations which affect them.

**Table 4: Marital status.**

| <b>Marital status</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Single</i>         | 41               | 27                |
| <i>Married</i>        | 98               | 65                |
| <i>Separated</i>      | 6                | 4                 |
| <i>Widow</i>          | 5                | 3                 |
| <i>Widower</i>        | 0                | 0                 |

*Source; Primary data*

Table 4 above shows that the majority of the respondents 98(65%) are married followed by 41 respondents constituting 27%. This implies that the majority mind about family and they were interested on those regulations which will help them to meet their ends.

**Table 5. Educational level & of respondents.**

| <b>Education level</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Primary level</i>   | 25               | 17                |
| <i>Ordinary level</i>  | 27               | 18                |
| <i>Advanced level</i>  | 54               | 36                |
| <i>Diploma</i>         | 23               | 15                |
| <i>Graduate</i>        | 21               | 14                |

*Source; Primary data*

The table 5 above gives the classification of respondents by level of education. A number of respondents 54 (36%) had completed advanced level, 27 (18%) respondents had completed ordinary level of education, it is observed from the above table that the distribution of respondents in terms of education is more or less evenly distributed implying that they should be interested to know the regulations of the government and how it affect them.

**Table 5 EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MEDIA.**

| S/No. | Effectiveness of Media                                                                                                                          | Mean | Interpretation    | Rank |
|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------------------|------|
| 5     | Goals are compatible to satisfy very diverse groups                                                                                             | 3.93 | Very satisfactory | 1    |
| 6     | Many regulations have primarily symbolic value                                                                                                  | 3.80 | Very satisfactory | 2    |
| 7     | Government agencies have a strong vested interest in “proving” that their programmes have positive impact.                                      | 3.62 | Very satisfactory | 3    |
| 8     | Heavy investments on regulations which do not work.                                                                                             | 3.40 | Satisfactory      | 4    |
| 9     | Any serious study on regulations impact undertaken by a government agency would involve some interference with ongoing programmer’s activities. | 2.05 | Fair              | 10   |
| 10    | Lack of funds, facilities, time and personnel for implementations hinder procuress.                                                             | 3.02 | Satisfactory      | 5    |

|    |                                                                                       |      |                     |   |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|---------------------|---|
| 11 | <i>Legislative and bureaucratic interests resist the effectiveness of regulations</i> | 2.07 | <i>Fair</i>         | 9 |
| 12 | <i>Concentrated benefit with dispersed costs</i>                                      | 3.05 | <i>Satisfactory</i> | 6 |
| 13 | <i>Incrementalism at work</i>                                                         | 2.09 | <i>Fair</i>         | 8 |
|    | <i>Average total</i>                                                                  | 3.00 | <i>Satisfactory</i> | 7 |

Table5, presents the opinion of respondents regarding the effectiveness of media in regulations making process. it shows that Compatibility of regulations to satisfy diverse goals and symbolic value of regulations were rated highly with mean rates of 3.93 and 3.80 respectively implying that the government has made effort to come up with good regulations only that the implementation is not effective. Bureaucratic interest has dominated the regulations making process and incrementalism were the statement ranked lowly by the respondents. On the overall the effectiveness of policy making process was satisfactory with a mean rate of 3.00. the government need to ensure that regulations are well implemented in order to achieve the desired results.

#### **Table 6 AWARENESS LEVEL.**

*Source of information*

| <i>TYPE OF MADIA</i> | <i>FREQUENCY</i> | <i>PERCENTAGE</i> |
|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <i>News paper</i>    | 25               | 17                |
| <i>Radio</i>         | 43               | 29                |
| <i>Television</i>    | 23               | 15                |
| <i>Both</i>          | 59               | 39                |

*Source; Primary data*

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Table 6 shows the opinion of respondents regarding their source of information. It is observed that 39% of the total respondents get to know about the regulations through both the media, 29% through radio, 17% through reading newspaper and television constitute only 15% of respondents. This implies that access to the media is not a problem to most of the respondents only that the media is not providing coverage for government regulations.

**Table 7 awareness of government regulations**

|     | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 82        | 55         |
| No  | 68        | 45         |

Source; Primary data

The table above shows that 55% agreed that they are aware about the government regulations while 45 percent disagreed. This implies that there is much to be done to sensitize people on the importance of their contribution to policy making process. It was also noted from the respondents that only few regulations they were aware of i.e. educational and agricultural policies while much of other policies were neither disclosed to them nor the media addressed them, also majority of the respondents use their leaders to express their ideas and the FM radio.

**Table 8 Has the media contributed on disseminating information regarding government regulations**

|     | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 56        | 37         |
| No  | 94        | 63         |

Source; Primary data

Table 8 above shows that majority of the respondents 63% disagreed with the statement that media has contributed in disseminating information regarding government regulations, other than news, much of the programs are just for entertainment. 37% agreed that media has made a contribution in disseminating information regarding government regulations.

**Table 10 CONTRIBUTION OF THE MEDIA**

| .SNO | Contribution of the Media                                                                                   |      | Interpretation    | Rank |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------------------|------|
| 24   | Enabled citizen to monitor and hold government to account for its action                                    | 1.90 | Fair              | 7    |
| 25   | Encouraged government responsibilities to citizen's demands                                                 | 2.01 | Fair              | 6    |
| 26   | Raised awareness of social problems                                                                         | 2.50 | Fair              | 3    |
| 27   | Improved understanding of and support for government regulations and encourages citizen ownership of reform | 2.10 | Fair              | 5    |
| 28   | Influenced political outcomes                                                                               | 3.07 | satisfactory      | 2    |
| 29   | Led to rapid and fairer economic growth                                                                     | 2.25 | Fair              | 4    |
| 30   | Led to better governance and dynamic civil society                                                          | 3.40 | Very satisfactory | 1    |

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|  |               |      |      |  |
|--|---------------|------|------|--|
|  | Average total | 2.46 | Fair |  |
|--|---------------|------|------|--|

*Table 10 explores the contribution made by media in policy making process of which statement were posed to the respondents to agree or disagreed the mean rates were computed. It was clear from above table that the contribution of media is so minimal as the result shows an average mean rate of 2.47 which was interpreted to be fair. Other than showing a greater contribution in influencing political outcomes and governance (3.40), it has not helped much in monitoring government activities and putting the government into task (1.90). This is mainly because the media coverage on government regulations is very low and fear of victimization from the government*

### **Conclusion**

*Governments in whilst the role of media in policy making process is increasingly recognized in international policy statements, in practice Media remains a relatively under-prioritized area of the so-called 'good governance' agenda. The role of media in governance is fragmented across multiple disciplines with often conflicting priorities (including political science, communication, media studies, and development studies). In spite of its relative under-prioritization in development assistance, few dispute the power of media, and in particular the catalytic role of the media, in influencing governance relationships and processes: media is widely seen as vital for connecting states with society, facilitating inclusive political systems, giving 'voice' to poor and marginalized groups, and enabling citizen participation and social accountability, the strategic use of political communication tools and methodologies can influence the attitudes, opinions and behavior of key stakeholders and secure the political will necessary for reforms to be successful on the ground.*

***Recommendations for improving performance***

*There is need for actual involvement and participation of citizens in the entire process if the regulations made are to be of any value to the government.*

*During this research it was discovered that the policy making process has not been effective enough to meet the needs of the society and this has been attributed to either lack of awareness or low contribution by the media. Basing on the finding the study made the following recommendations;*

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