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Media Political Incitement and Social Unrest in Kampala Central Division, Uganda

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to establish the impact of media political incitement to social unrest in Uganda, with specific emphasis to Kampala Central Division. The study was guided by the following objectives; to examine the nature of media political incitement in Kampala Central Division in relation to social unrest in Kampala central division; to establish the challenges facing media in reporting on political issues that may lead to social unrest in Kampala Central Division; to establish the relationship

between media political incitement and social unrest in Kampala central Division. The sample size comprised 56 respondents. Research findings were arrived at through use of descriptive statistics. It was revealed that there is a strong relationship between media political incitement and social unrest as shown by Pearson's correlation $r=0.825$. Thus indicating that findings answered the general objective that the media political incitement is strongly related to social unrest.

Keywords: Kingdom, Globalization, Uganda

1. Introduction

The world is in an era of globalization in which the flow of ideas has become a common feature of the century (Ralph, 2006). Ralph, (2006) narrated that the media has played an important role and function in facilitating this flow of ideas that the issues that were global have become localized and the reverse is also true. This work assessed the impact of media political incitement and social unrest with a particular bias on Kampala, Uganda.

1.1 Background to the study

In Uganda, the government has since the 2000's used the laws in partisan ways to create a minefield for media owners and reporters who speak or write about issues that the government deems politically sensitive or controversial. For example, on the 10th September 2009, Uganda experienced two days of rioting when government troops responded to rioters throwing stones, blocking roads and lighting fire with excessive lethal force, resulting in the deaths of at least 40 people (source: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2010/09/10/uganda-investigate-2009-kampala-riot-killings>).

The riots occurred when the NRM government instructed state agencies to block the visit of a cultural leader of Buganda, to Kayunga (an area that was historically part of Buganda kingdom) and Luganda-speaking radio stations voiced support for the Buganda cultural leader and encouraged listeners to show that support by traveling to the area during the planned visit.

There have been assertions in many spheres on what constitutes media political incitement. Developing countries especially in Africa have been hard hit with social unrest, violence and uprisings in the recent past to what could be blamed to such. However, what can be drawn and asserted to lead to advocacy of national, ethnicity, racial or and religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, prohibited by Article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) often precedes mass atrocities like genocide, civil wars, mass and forceful displacements of populations and war (ICCPR, 1966).

Some scholars argue that there should be more restraints imposed on media political messages and freedoms of media at particular social settings in order to prevent social unrest, such atrocities mentioned above and enhance peace and prosperity. To the contrary, other commentators argue that not all political media incitement reaches the level of prohibition and a clear edge must be developed (Ringera, 2010) ^[1].

Incitement to violence or ethnic hatred, including by ordinary citizens or politicians, community leaders or journalists, has actually resulted in massive violence and mass killings in many countries across the continent. Rwanda presents the most extreme examples of how the relationship between a government, the media and politics can go horribly wrong. But throughout the continent, there are sporadic instances of alleged incitement resulting in massive violence, such as in Kenya, Ivory Coast, Uganda, Burundi, Nigeria, etc. In an age when ordinary people have to express extreme views to get media attention, there is a need to advocate more peaceful rhetoric.

In Uganda, the NRM-controlled regulatory body governing radio in Uganda, the Broadcasting Council, suspended the licenses of three Luganda-speaking stations (*Suubi FM, Radio Sapienta and Akaboozi*) and withdrew the license of another, Central Broadcasting Station (CBS), all without notice or a prior court order. On September 10 and 11, 2009, political discord between the central government and the Buganda cultural institution sparked riots that left at least 40 people dead in Kampala. Baganda youth began rioting when police blocked a delegation representing the Buganda kingdom from visiting Kayunga district. Police and soldiers threatened journalists trying to photograph and report on the unfolding events. In the wake of the riots, the Broadcasting Council also pressured these and other stations to suspend specific journalists whom the Council deemed had "incited violence." The Council officially banned any open-air broadcasting, a very popular forum for public debate in local communities, known as bimeeza in Luganda in the country on any topic. CBS remained off air for some time (closed on September 10, 2009 and opened on October 23, 2010) while the other three stations (*Suubi FM, Radio Sapienta and Akaboozi*) informally negotiated with authorities to return to the airwaves. The government took swift action against the above local radio stations, allegedly for inciting the public to commit violence, and forcibly pulled them off air on the first day of the riots (*Source: Increased Threats to Freedom of Expression in Uganda | HRW May 2, 2010: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2010/05/.increased-threats-freedom-expression-uganda>*).

The government-sanctioned media clampdown during and after the September riots and the criminal charges levied against numerous print journalists appear to have led local government officials and NRM party operatives to believe they should take similar action. Human Rights Watch Research (2015) found that journalists based in rural districts were increasingly subjected to intimidation, threats, charges, and, to a lesser extent, physical attacks while trying to report on local political matters.

Rural radio journalists, in particular, have been targets of serious and repeated threats to their lives and their jobs. The perpetrators are often pro-NRM government officials, especially Resident District Commissioners who represent the President's office at the district level or police and intelligence officials who are retaliating against criticism or reports on official misconduct, such as alleged corruption, mismanagement, or human rights violations. In many instances, when threatening reporters, local government officials specifically referred to what happened in Kampala during the riots as evidence of the power of the state to stop negative reporting. Because local government officials are perceived to be closely aligned with police, instances of threats and intimidation have gone largely unreported and

without proper investigation or prosecution. When instances have been made public, no investigation has taken place.

The inconsistency of some of the national laws in Uganda like the Access to Information Act 2005, with its obligations under international law and its constitution has not made the situation any better. The government also takes advantage of the vagueness in national laws to suppress critical appraisals. It does so by charging journalists with crimes and granting media regulatory bodies' broad powers to restrain speech through the revocation of licenses.

Ugandan laws criminalizing certain types of speech are overly vague and broad, which makes even innocuous public statements open to criminalization. For example, the crime of "promoting sectarianism," is defined as "any act which is likely to promote feelings of ill will or hostility among or against any ethnic group or body of persons on account of religion, tribe or ethnic or regional origin."

Ugandan government authorities use these laws not to safeguard national security, but rather to stifle speech. For example, a reporter in Gulu district was charged with criminal libel for writing an article on public allegations of corruption by a Deputy Resident District Commissioner, despite the fact that the reporter sought comment from the commissioner himself and then quoted him in the article Uganda's radio network.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Although social media is expected to contribute to development, reconciliation and peace by widening the democratic space, recent world events have shown that social media, just like traditional media, can act as a double-edged sword. On the one hand, the media can act as a tool for widening democratic space, but on the other it can lead to destabilization (Varghese 2011). Uganda government opened up the political space to Multi Party in the early 1900s. The media has been used to spread political incitement through hate speech and incite social unrest leading to violence.

Since the previous political campaigns in 2016, at least 40 criminal charges have been levied against the media (journalists and talk show panelists). Fears have been raised about increased presence of politically inciting information in the Ugandan Media space. On the 10th and 11th September 2021, Uganda experienced two days of rioting when government troops responded to rioters throwing stones, blocking roads and lighting fire with excessive lethal force, resulting in the deaths of at least 11 people. (Human rights report 2021). The same human rights report highlights that Police and soldiers threatened journalists trying to photograph and report on the unfolding events and the Broadcasting Council suspended specific journalists deemed to have incited violence and four local FM stations CBS, Suubi FM, Radio Sapienta and Akaboozi were closed.

As contrasted to mainstream media which involves self-regulation and strict adherence to journalistic codes, the inability to regulate politically inciting content on social media has made it a fertile ground for the spread of hate content (Malik, 2019) and this has resulted into mass protests, riots, and rebellion within Kampala City and mostly in the Central Division.

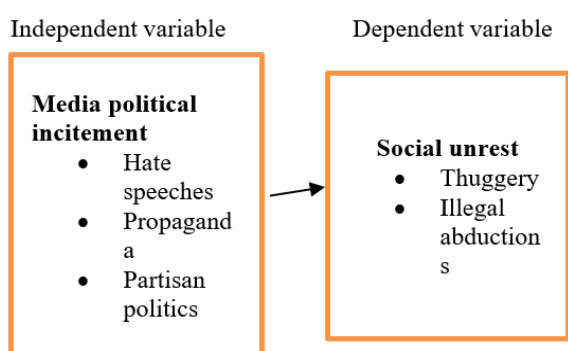
In the past, the government used threats of judicial action to scare Ugandans not to post flammable messages online, however there is continued media political incitement causing social unrest in Kampala Central Division.

There was a challenge of drawing the line between freedom of expression, hate speech and the right not to be discriminated against hence need to study on the impact of medial political incitement on social unrest in Kampala Central Division, Uganda during the presidential and parliamentary campaigns between 2016 and 2021.

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To examine the nature of media political incitement in Kampala Central Division in relation to social unrest in Kampala central division.
2. To establish the challenges facing media in reporting on political issues that may lead to social unrest in Kampala Central Division.
3. To establish the relationship between media political incitement and social unrest in Kampala central Division.

1.4 Theoretical Frame Work



Source: Adopted from Aday and Andersen (1974) and Buor (2004) and modified by researcher 2023

The propagation of social unrest (dependent variable) relies on the way the media can incite the people politically (independent variable). The study was based on the social responsibility theory to develop the conceptual framework. The theory advocates for media to be self-regulating in observance of strict code of ethics and professionalism. Hate speeches, propaganda and partisan politics, can lead to riots and illegal abductions.

2. Methodology

The study employed a cross sectional survey design. This design was chosen because it enables detailed investigation into the characteristics of a population as expressed at a particular point in time. It involves collection of data on attitudes, belief, opinions, practices and perceptions related to the issue of interest (Leedy, 1985) [6] as cited in odiya (2009) [9]. This design is also found to be suitable for providing numeric descriptions of some of the selected participants. It also describes events as they are, as they were or as they will be (Oso & Onen, 2009) [10].

Denscombe (2010) explained that study population doesn't mean everyone that lives in the country but rather all the items in the category of things that are being researched. Kumar(2014) validated Denscombe's submission that a study population is that from which information to find answers to the research questions is obtained. The target population consisted of 65 members from where a sample of 56 respondents were sampled using Krejcie Morgan (1970) [5] in areas of Old Kampala, Nakasero, Kololo, Kamwookya, Kisenyi and Kampala's Industrial Area where most social

unrest has taken place. The study selected members of the public, journalists, political leaders, NGO members, CSO members and police force to participate in the study.

The study employed stratified random sampling techniques. Since Kampala Central Division is already divided into smaller units, the division was considered as a non-overlapping group of homogenous characteristics called strata. Simple random sampling may result in the population being considerably below or over represented (Collis & Hussey, 2003). The advantage of stratified random sampling over simple random sampling is that "stratified random sampling overcomes the problems of under or over representation of sample as each identifiable strata of the population is taken in to account" (Collis & Hussey, 2003). According to Kovacs (1985), "stratification ensures that all the important aspects of the characteristics to be studied are represented in the sample" and this also improve the generalizability of the findings. Simple random sampling was used to select respondents that were be included in the study. This technique ensured that each member of the target population has an equal and independent chance of being included in the sample.

Questionnaire survey was employed to collect data. The researcher used an interviewer based semi structured questionnaire to collect information from the respondents. The technique was appropriate because it handled a large sample size and saved time and money.

Furthermore, the study targeted categories of respondents who are literate and were capable of responding to questionnaire items easily (Odiya, 2009) [9]. Interviews were used to obtain data from the respondents (Interviewees). The researcher conducted the interviews for the media officials, key politicians and key civil society leaders in the district. Interview guides were used for interviewing the key informants as detailed above. This enabled the researcher to gather first-hand information from the respondents over their perceptions about the study variables.

Quality control involves adjusting / modification of the instruments following the pre- test study in order to improve the validity and reliability coefficient to at least 0.70. This is the least value of validity and reliability coefficient generally accepted for survey studies (Popham, (2000). Furthermore, quality was enhanced by controlling the effects of extraneous variables.

This was done through randomization since it limits systematic bias and spreads the effects of extraneous variables evenly (Odiya, 2009) [9]. The method is good since it involves random sampling of participants and their random assignment to groups. Validity of the instruments were determined by giving the instruments to three independent experts who evaluated the relevance of the instrument to the study objectives and rated the items on the scale of relevant (R) and irrelevant (IR). Validity was determined by computing the Content Validity Index using the formulae below:

$$CVI = \frac{\text{average score rated relevant}}{\text{total number of items on questionnaire}}$$

Reliability is the degree to which research findings can be replicated under similar circumstances or the extent to which the scores from the assessment are consistent across repeated administrations of the same tests to the same population. This study used Cronbach's coefficient alpha to

assess the internal consistency of the research instrument. This involves analysis of quantitative and qualitative data by use of both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. Descriptive statistical analysis was used. Frequency and percentage distributions and bars charts were applied. Inferential Statistics include correlation and regression

analysis.

3. Presentation and Analysis of Findings

This chapter presents the data obtained in the study in relation to the study objectives.

Table 1: Showing the nature of media political incitement in Kampala

Statement	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Mean	STD
The media in Kampala Central Division publishes content that comprises hate Speeches	43	10	3	0	0	1.29	0.254
The media publishes/broadcasts messages of propaganda and intolerance	34	16	4	2	0	2.31	0.330
Media platforms such as Twitter, and face book propagate issues that depict partisan politics in Kampala division	39	10	7	0	0	1.19	0.270
Social Networking sites (SNS) communicate hate messages that are spread via different media are in different forms.	30	20	6	0	0	2.00	0.190
In the last one month, you shared, tagged someone, forwarded, or reposted any hate content on social media	39	10	7	0	0	2.10	1.12
The media prints/ publishes content that makes people might feel unease and Intimidated	31	25	0	0	0	1.30	0.280
The media hands out material to the public or sections of the population containing hate speeches	34	16	4	2	0	1.25	1.01

N=56, Source: Primary data 2023

Results from Table 1 indicate that media in Kampala publishes content that comprises hate speeches, as shown by 43 respondents who strongly agreed, while only 10 agreed and 3 were not sure. These statistics confirm that the media in Kampala publishes content that comprises hate speeches, as shown by mean 1.29 with a strong standard deviation 0.254. This shows that the media was a source of incitement because it published content that comprises hate speeches. This meant that the authorities had to understand what type of hate speeches that the media propagated in order to curb the resultant actions that might result in social unrest.

On whether the media publishes/broadcasts messages of hatred and intolerance, 34 of the respondents strongly agreed while 16 agreed. However, 4 were not sure, 2 disagreed and those who strongly disagreed were not there. This confirmed that the media publishes/broadcasts messages of hatred and intolerance. For those that were not sure or disagreed, they may not have had knowledge on what hate messages or intolerance meant as indicated by mean of 2.31 with standard deviation of 0.330. These findings indicated that Kampala was one area where the media was in abundance and its regulation was found wanting because publishing /broadcasting messages of hatred and intolerance could result in social unrest. It was thus important that understanding media content is a contributing factor in understanding people's view and consequently social unrest.

Regarding whether Media platforms such as Twitter, and facebook propagate issues of hate in Kampala, 39 of the respondents strongly agreed while 10 agreed, 7 were not sure, while those who disagreed and strongly disagreed were not there. This is supported by mean 1.19 and standard deviation 0.270. The finding simply indicated that in Kampala, Media platforms such as Twitter, and Facebook propagate issues of hate in Kampala and therefore knowledge of the contributions of Media platforms such as Twitter, and Facebook to political incitement was important. The steady findings on whether Social Networking sites (SNS) communicate hate messages that are spread via different media and in different forms, 30 of the respondents strongly agreed while 20 agreed. However, 6 were not sure and those who disagreed and strongly disagreed were not there as supported by mean of 2.00 and standard deviation 0.190. It was concluded that Social Networking sites (SNS) communicate hate messages that are spread via different

media and in different forms. This was strengthened by some respondents who noted that the social networking sites were very much accessible to most people literate and illiterate alike and therefore tagging, forwarding, creation and posting of hate messages therefore not easy to censor because some of the illiterate could not be stopped from posting hate messages.

Accordingly, the responses as to whether in the last one month; you shared, tagged someone, forwarded, or reposted any hate content on social media, 39 of the respondents strongly agreed while 10 agreed. However, 7 were not sure and those who disagreed and strongly disagreed were not there as shown by mean 2.1 and high standard deviation 1.12.

The findings pointed out that hate messages are always shared on social media. This was justified by a respondent who stated that *"the recipients of these messages and forward them, share them sometimes unconscious of the repercussions"*.

Research findings regarding the statement that media prints/ publishes content that makes people feel uneasy indicates that 31 of the respondents strongly agreed that in the last one month they received hate content messages on social media, while 25 agreed and those who were not sure, disagreed and strongly disagreed were not there as shown by mean 1.30 with standard deviation 0.280. This implied that in the last one-month people on social media received hate content messages. For example, the current state of issues in the media about the reshuffle of IGP Kale Kayihura, the death of Andrew Felix Kaweesi and other killings that have been connected to internal wrangles in the police force.

Finally on the statement that media hands out material to the public or sections of the population 34 of the respondents strongly agreed while 16 agreed. However, 4 were not sure and 2 disagreed and those who strongly disagreed were not there as supported by mean of 1.25 and standard deviation of 1.01. This confirms that hate messages were always distributed during night times. This was further justified by a respondent who noted that *"...when you wake up the morning you get surprised to find that anonymous information is sometimes dropped in your compound or passed under the door sometimes through ventilators.....Without noticing the person who brought them during the night."*

Table 2: Showing challenges facing media in reporting on political issues that may lead to social unrest in Kampala Central Division

Statement	SD	D	NS	A	SA	MEAN	STD
Journalists face personal safety and security risks in the course of their work	0	0	4	22	30	4.46	0.288
Police harass reporters during political times	0	0	0	17	39	4.70	0.250
Public is uncomfortable talking to Journalists during political times	0	0	0	22	34	4.25	0.210
The media law in Uganda is rigid	2	1	13	10	30	4.43	0.280
Journalists lack the necessary equipment	0	0	0	18	38	4.71	0.270
In kampala division, there are incidents of arrests	0	0	1	18	37	4.39	0.310
Journalists are normally made to hand over there equipment's/tools such as cameras un willingly	0	0	4	22	30	4.37	0.330

N=56

Source: Primary data (2023)

The study investigated whether Police harass reporters during political times. The findings showed 39 of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement while 17 agreed and those who were not sure, disagreed and strongly disagreed were not there as indicated by a high mean of 4.70 and standard deviation 0.250 meaning that there were rampant harassment of reporters during political times in Kampala.

On whether Journalists face personal safety and security risks in the course of their work 30 of the respondents strongly agreed that there has been demonstrations and thuggery as a result of media incitement in Kampala, while 22 agreed, 4 were not sure and those who disagreed and strongly disagreed were not there as shown by mean 4.46 and standard deviation 0.288. The findings indicated that Journalists face personal safety and security risks in the course of their work in Kampala.

Regarding whether the public is uncomfortable talking to Journalists during political times. The findings indicate 34 of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that demonstration activities in Kampala have involved signing of petitions, boycotts, traffic blockades and wild social unrest, while 22 agreed and those who were not sure, disagreed and strongly disagreed were not there as shown by mean 4.25 supported by the standard deviation 0.210. In an interview with some of the respondents, when *there was a political rally in one of the down town areas of kisenyi in lubaga division even one could not believe that the scuffle involved the member of parliament campaigns.* It was concluded that during campaign times, police show partisan politics in Kampala.

Research investigation on whether media law in Uganda is rigid results show 30 strongly agreed while 10 agreed. It was concluded that there has been lynching and a wave of

murders in Kampala. However, 13 were not sure, 1 disagreed and two strongly disagreed supported by average of 4.43 and standard deviation 0.280.

Regarding whether Journalists lack the necessary equipment the findings indicate that 38 of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that Kampala has of late experienced regional endangerment of security and criminal violence in the form of criminal youth gangs; while 18 agreed and the those who were not sure, disagree and strongly disagreed were not there as indicated by mean 4.71 and standard deviation 0.70 One of the reasons they gave was that the Journalist law in Uganda is weak and partisan.

As far as the item in Kampala division, there are incidents of arrests, it was found that 37 of the respondents who strongly agreed while 18 agreed. Only 1 of the respondents were not sure while those who disagreed and strongly disagreed were not there This showed the level of concern people have over the arrests during campaigns.

Finally on the statement on the item Journalists are normally made to hand over their equipment's/tools such as cameras. The study findings indicated 30 of the respondents strongly agreed, while 22 agreed with the statement. However, 4 were not sure and those who disagreed and strongly disagreed were not there. The foundations of a good government some intimated is satisfaction among the population. When the people feel dissatisfied, they are compelled to react negatively towards the leadership of government.

The researcher in order to establish the relationship between media political incitement and social unrest in Kampala central Division, used descriptive statistics as depicted in Table 4.2 and went further to calculate the correlation coefficient for media political incitement and social unrest.

Table 3: Correlation between media political incitement and social unrest

		Media political incitement	Social unrest
Media political incitement	Person correlation	1	0.825**
	Significant (2 tailed)		0.000
	N	56	56
Social unrest	Person correlation	0.825***	1
	Significant (2 tailed)	0.000	
	N	56	56

Source: Primary source 2023

**Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2 tailed)

Results in Table 3 show the correlation (r) of 0.825** and its significant 0.000 which is less than 0.05 level of significance. This implies that media political incitement is highly related to social unrest in Kampala central division and therefore the media should realize how they should have

deals to avoid social unrest.

Regression analysis was further done to determine the strength of the relationship between media political incitement and social unrest as shown below.

Table 4: Regression analysis for media political incitement and social unrest

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R Squared	Standard error of the estimate
1	0.825 ^a	0.680	0.669	0.44286

Source: Primary data 2023

a Predictors (constant), Media political incitement

The Table 4 indicates that the coefficient over determination (r^2) value is 0.699, this implies that Media political incitement explains 66.9% variation which is very high in Social unrest in Kampala central division.

4. Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Discussion of findings

The study found that media political incitement had an impact on social unrest in Kampala Central Division during the presidential and parliamentary campaigns between 2016 and 2021 and was escalated by vernacular (local) FM stations and was double-edged. The media has been used to spread political incitement through hate speech and incite social unrest leading to violence. The media politically incited people through hate messages, publishing content with hate messages, preaching misleading information and intolerance through platforms like Twitter, Facebook which promotes social unrest associated with the wave of murders, kidnapping as the residents and aimed at influencing Government decisions.

4.1.1 Nature of media political incitement in Kampala

Media in Kampala publishes content that comprises hate speeches as shown by findings in Table 4.2. This is in agreement with Jaishnkar, (2008) that hate messages that are communicated and spread via different media are in different forms. Some may be in form of pictures (cartoons), in coded languages, and others in outright and straight forward language. Bloggers and micro bloggers may have incidental posts of hate messages posted on their timelines. Others may decide to either share the message, like the messages, or comment on them. Either way, the hate messages have been spread.

Publications and broadcasts of messages of hatred and intolerance have also led to social unrests in Kampala as shown in Table 4.3. These findings are consistent with Matas (2000)^[8] who posits that most growing democracies and economies face various challenges; economic, social and political. Political rivalry, social injustices and economic struggles may push populations to blaming others for their woes. This often may push for hatred. Most of the times the only option to vent is the readily available social media which goes uncensored.

Media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook propagate issues of hate in Kampala and therefore knowledge of the contributions of media platforms such as Twitter, and Facebook to political incitement was important as shown in Table 4:4. The findings are in line Parekh, (2012) who notes that the social networking sites (SNS) are providing cost-effective platforms to communicate with large populations with zero time difference. Noting that media is a powerful tool of communication, media literacy is an issue that cannot be ignored.

As to whether Social Networking sites (SNS) communicate hate messages that are spread via different media and in different forms. Results from Table 4.5 led to the conclusion that Social Networking sites (SNS) communicate hate

messages that are spread via different media and in different forms. This finding agree with Sevasti, (2014) who adds also that, the fact that it is very hard, if not impossible- to control and regulate hate speech content on social media, intensifies the need to identify and make sense of the hate speech phenomenon in order to find the right solution for its diminution without challenging the right to free expression. The findings also pointed out that hate messages are always shared on social media. This was justified by a respondent who stated that *"the recipients of these messages and forward them, share them sometimes unconscious of the repercussions"*.

The results revealed that many people receive hate content messages on social media accounting for 100% of the responses, making it an important factor in political incitement and social unrest in Uganda. Hate Content spread on social media about one group can easily incite other sections against this particular group leading to thuggery. This is in agreement with Jaishnkar, (2008) who avers that political rivalry, social injustices and economic struggles may push populations to blaming others for their woes. This often may push for hatred. Most of the times the only option to vent is the readily available social media which goes uncensored.

Posting of hate messages by friends led to political and media incitement as revealed in table Table 4.8 accounting for 89.2% of the responses. This confirmed that posting of hate messages by friends was one of the indicators of political conflict a conclusion that was further justified by a respondent who noted that *"...when you have data and someone sends you a message, you sometimes take it as a joke and find yourself forwarding it to your friends or the public sometimes without comprehending the consequences of one's actions"*

That the media was awash with messages that create unease and intimidation was confirmed by responses of respondents in Table 4.9 accounting for 94.6%. These findings confirm earlier findings that the media in Kampala publishes content that made people feel uneasy as well as intimidated. This shows that the media was a source of intimidation because it published content that made people circulate hate speeches. This meant that the authorities had to understand what type of hate speeches that the media propagated in order to curb the resultant actions that might result in social unrest.

4.1.2 The challenges facing media in reporting on political issues in Kampala

Many people are not sure that journalists face journalists faced a lot of risks in their work and if this affected their reporting during political periods. These survey results however, indicate that to some extent journalists face a lot of safety and security risks during their work in political periods. One interviewee noted that because of these risks journalists now prefer to write stories that Favor groupings considered to be more powerful and aggressive in order to avoid being attacked. This position is re-echoed in Aidan White's (2003) words that the challenge of objectivity, impartiality and balance in journalism is faced daily by journalists, but there is no test of professionalism greater than that posed in the heat and pressure of a bitterly-fought political election.

Police in Kampala harass journalists accounting for 96.3% of the responses. In an interview with some of the respondents, they indicated that they have seen many journalists being beaten and their equipment confiscated

especially those from media houses considered hostile to government. Caro Rolando writing for IFEX in 2016 reported that Police brutality had escalated in the lead-up to Uganda's presidential elections. In less than two months – between October and November 2015 - there were three separate incidents of journalists shot by police - while they were covering political events.

Journalists are facing difficulties in finding correct and accurate stories because the public fears sharing information on political issues with them. Table 4.21 indicates that all the respondents accounting for 100% agreed to the fact that journalists cannot file accurate stories because the lack credible and reliable sources. Consequently with no sources from the public, journalists are cut off from the gist of the issue at hand and thus have to either graft some stories or do not write about a particular political issue at all as they would not have information from the public. Like the South East Asian Press Alliance noted while covering the elections in East Timor, most of the media outlets do not have enough means to cover all political parties. Some media houses have very few staff - especially online media outlets, which mostly have one or two journalists that cover everything (IFEX, 2017).

The media laws in Uganda are very rigid. This is illustrated by Table 2 which shows that cumulatively, 98.2% of the respondents agreed with the statement that the media law in Uganda is rigid. This was a consistent factor explaining the relationship between the media and state functionaries like the police and other security agencies. The laws make it easy for the security agencies to harass the media and at times deny them coverage of certain political matters accusing them of being anti-government and enemies of the state. This situation resonates with the one in East Timor as reported by the South East Asian Press Alliance in 2017 that the Press Law already requires all media workers to have media ID cards issued by the Press Council. The process, which includes a condition for new media workers to take a six-to-18-month apprentice period before a competency test, only began mid-2016. In the absence of regular media ID cards, the National Elections Commission (CNE) proposed that media workers have to register with for the special IDs. Prior to the election period, journalists protested the idea of a "registration" for media organizations and journalists to be able to cover the upcoming polls. They were wary that the measure and process would go against the Press Law, which protects the rights of the media to cover stories without any restriction.

Journalists lack the necessary equipment to do their work. This was indicated by 92.8% of the respondents who agreed. The conclusion on this was that journalists lack the necessary equipment to do their job. As a result, journalists find it hard to gather information and that they need to come up with a good story and a credible one at that. In East Timor the South East Asian Press Association reported that media owners were keen to invest more in more profitable content than the quality of news content. Journalists are poorly-paid and not well-equipped, logistically and professionally, to provide good quality reporting (South East Press Alliance, 2017).

4.1.3 Relationship between media political incitement and social unrest in Kampala central Division.

The findings indicated that media political incitement has a high relationship in published hate speeches. These findings agree with Ortwin *et al*, 2011 who argued that from a more

systemic or functionalist point of view social unrest can be conceptualized as risk (posing threats to society) but also as an opportunity for positive change or development. For example, those who pursue social or political goals as a means to reshape society, may turn to stimulating social unrest as an instrument for facilitating changes. Even though social unrest may trigger positive changes in society, it is associated with the risk of experiencing damage to human lives and property. It describes a complex web of triggers, immediate risks and probably remote benefits and threats which makes social unrest a typical representative of systemic risks.

Furthermore the study shows that respondents showed in a period of a month one is shared, tagged, forwarded, or reposted on a hate content basis on social media platforms. This conclusion resonates with the ideas of Ortwin *et al*, 2011 these claim the 2008 demonstrations and social unrest in Greece were publicized and posted even to the lowest developing country platforms. These continue to argue that firm position of the government is a cause of such ignited protest movement globally checking the efficacy of governmental action.

Furthermore, the study shows indicated that media platforms such as Twitter, and face book propagate issues that depict partisan politics in Kampala. This is true because in such times kidnappings of people and arrests with demands for ransom are widely shared on the social media. These findings agree with those noted earlier by Misra (2008) who assert that it is easier to post on social media civil violence acts which normally take place in specific geographical political conflicted areas especially urban areas. Such causes may appear not very dramatic or as being highly exaggerated by an outside observer, what counts is that they are believed by those who are sympathetic to the cause (not only the activists). Furthermore, there must be a common conviction among the activists and their sympathizers that the conditions will only change if violence is used. Both conditions can transform a peaceful movement into a radical uprising that leads to numerous acts of violence.

Finally the study shows media hands out material to the public or sections of the population. This was revealed as a spontaneous expressions of dissatisfaction and frustration of government leadership. Similarly, when the people feel dissatisfied, they are compelled to react negatively towards the leadership of government. This conclusion agrees with Ortwin *et al*, 2011. Social unrest seems to be likely in cases in which people are extremely dissatisfied with their situation and probably fear for their health, lives or livelihood. Dissatisfaction is normally linked with the feeling of blame. Someone or some institution is being blamed for the negative situation. Dissatisfaction is also highly connected with the question of perceived inequity and justice. The mass media are important amplifiers or attenuators of social dissatisfaction and bring topics into the public discourse (agenda setting). Finally, the fate of the protest movements depend on the degree to which unsatisfied groups can organize themselves and translate their anger into collective action and the response of the public officials to this organized protest.

4.2 Conclusions

The media in Kampala publishes content with hate messages and preach hatred and intolerance which has led to many occasions to social unrest. Social media platforms such as

face book, Twitter and WhatsApp also propagate issues of hate, while people continued to share these messages without even thinking about the content and the consequences of spreading such messages. The media itself is awash with hate messages thus inciting the people and promoting social unrest in Kampala.

The media in Kampala central has faces the challenge of their personal safety and security, Police harassment, strict media laws which has affected the media environment and lack of the necessary equipment and logistics to carry out their work. All these have made it difficult for the journalist to deliver good products to the public.

The social unrest in Kampala has been characterized by Demonstrations, Petitions, Traffic blockades and wild social unrest for example. Demonstrators piled stones and set fire to block a road during a protest against the arrest of opposition leaders in Kireka suburb of the capital Kampala, April 18, 2011. In reaction Godfrey Mutabazi, executive director of the Uganda.

4.3 Recommendations

The researcher recommends the media should be independent and try to give the public the correct information. However, they should avoid publishing hate messages and messages of intolerance which can lead not only to social unrest but also politically instability and genocide.

It is also recommended that the government addresses the political concerns of the people in Kampala so that the journalists cannot use those issues to incite the public into social unrest.

The public should use peaceful means of protests to avoid the chaos and unrest that results from violent protests and social unrest.

Media houses in Kampala should provide their journalists with adequate resources for them to be able to provide accurate and reliable news to their consumers.

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