

IMPLICATIONS OF RADIO TALK SHOW PRESENTERS AND CONTENT  
ON MEDIA PRACTICE IN KENYA: A STUDY OF SELECTED FM RADIO  
STATIONS

by

Margaret Ayuma Okumbe

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APPROVAL

IMPLICATIONS OF RADIO TALK SHOW PRESENTERS AND CONTENT ON  
MEDIA PRACTICE IN KENYA: A STUDY OF SELECTED FM RADIO  
STATIONS

Margaret Ayuma Okumbe

In accordance with Daystar University policies, this thesis is accepted in partial  
fulfilment of requirements for the Master of Arts degree.

Date:

---

Clayton Peel, PhD,  
1st Supervisor

---

Nancy Adagala, MA,  
2nd Supervisor

---

Rosemary Kowuor, PhD,  
HoD, Communication Department

---

Dean, School of Communication,  
Language, and Performing Arts

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DECLARATION

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I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been submitted to any other  
college or university for academic credit

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Margaret Ayuma Okumbe (09-1549)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It would not have been possible to carry out this study without the encouragement and support of my son, Ibrahim, my daughter, Cherie, and my brother Andrew. I would also like to acknowledge my supervisors, Nancy Adagala Ombuya, and Dr. Clayton Peel, for showing me the way and challenging me to forge ahead. I am so grateful for their mentorship and being available for me.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACMA	Australian Communication and Media Authority
AM	Amplitude Modulation
AMARC	World Organisation of Community Radio Broadcasters
AMWIK	Association of Media Women in Kenya
BBC-WST	British Broadcasting Corporation – World Service Trust
CA	Communications Authority of Kenya
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIME	Centre for International Media Ethics
CS	Cabinet Secretary
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FM	Frequency Modulation
IEBC	Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission
IOSR-JHSS	International Organisation of Scientific Research – Journal of Humanities and Social Science
KARF	Kenya Audience Research Foundation
KBC	Kenya Broadcasting Corporation
KTN	Kenya Times Media
KWS	Kenya Wildlife Services
MCK	Media Council of Kenya
MISA	Media Institute of Southern Africa
MOA	Media Owners Association
MSI	Media Sustainability Index
OCS	Officer Commanding Police Station in Kenya
RFI	Radio France Internationale

SCECSAL	Standing Conference Eastern, Central, and Southern African Library and Information Associations
SMS	Short Message Service
SRT	Social Responsibility Theory
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VOK	Voice of Kenya

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to interrogate radio talk show content, particularly the concern of whether the presenters adhered to professional standards as outlined in the code of conduct for practice of journalism in Kenya. Its objectives were to examine how radio talk show presenters handled content against the MCK's laid down professional and ethical standards, determine whether gaps existed in Kenyan journalism training that were filled by other professionals, and explore audience preferences that influenced the nature of radio talk show content in Kenya. Descriptive research design was used and the target population of the study was ten leading FM radio stations in Nairobi that aired morning talk shows. Purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample of three FM radio stations. Structured in-depth interviews were used in data collection, and data analysis was done using SPSS software version 20. Findings of the study revealed that the regulatory bodies such as the MCK and the Communication Authority of Kenya were leading efforts to regulate content in the interests of decency. The limitations of the MCK as a media regulatory body were lack of capacity to monitor radio stations, resulting in poor enforcement of the journalists' code of ethics. It lacked the capacity to ensure that only trained radio broadcast journalists were hired by media houses. Although the MCK had developed a curriculum for middle level journalism training institutions, its impact in standardising training had been negligible. This study did not assess the efficacy of the CA's programming code as it was launched in July 2016, after the conclusion of the fieldwork for this research. Among the recommendations of the study were improvement of the journalism curriculum as well as embracing of the MCK curriculum by middle level colleges.

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my son and daughter, for their moral support, and to my brother Andrew, for pushing me forward when the going got tough.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

#### Introduction

This chapter presents the background of the study, the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions and justified the study. It further presents the scope of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study, definition of terms adopted and summary of the chapter.

*Free Speech, or Cheap Talk?* is the title of a 2014 study into radio talk shows in Kenya by the Media Council of Kenya. The study suggested there are strengths and weaknesses of the talk show content, and that the “ethicality and professionalism” of some of them is compromised by “the problem of obscenity” mainly because of “uncontrolled interventions from callers”, among other issues (MCK, 2014, p. 5). This background helps to engage in a discourse on talk show content, and how it reflects the quality of recruitment and training at media houses in Kenya.

Through content analysis, this research intended to throw a spotlight on on-air topics, conduct, and the training background of presenters, their respect for professional ethics, and how talk shows and their presenters the reflect highs and lows of media practice in Kenya.

#### Background to the Study

In their article, “The Ills on Kenyan Radio Stations”, Okoti and Ondego (2013) pointed out that radio presenters in privately owned FM stations in Kenya are often ‘actors’, ‘stand up comedians’ and other celebrities. The term celebrity is defined as “actors of a certain rank, performers who had reached the top rung of an

insular profession” (Gregory, 2008, p.1). Many of them are on air during peak hours, starting from six until 10 o’clock in the morning, and in the evenings from four to six o’clock. Among them are Maina Kageni (businessman) and Mwalimu King’ang’i (Comedian, actor, producer, play writer, and Master of Ceremonies at public events), who host a show on Classic FM every weekday morning; and Chipukeezzy (comedian), and Lynda Nyangweso (actress, musician), who are on Radio Kiss 100 every Thursday afternoon. Kageni, in a profile on the entertainment website *Buzz Kenya*, has been referred to as having “never attended college but life offered [him] more opportunities than most people...” (Buzz Kenya, 2013). “Mwalimu King’ang’i” is the pseudonym for the leading Kenyan comedian, Daniel “Churchill” Ndambuki, described on his website as “the most sought after comedian in Kenya today” (Churchill, n.d.).

Many of the presenters are not trained media professionals of any sort, less still journalists (Okoti & Ondego, 2013). Their celebrity status is transferred from other professions as a way of drawing listeners and pushing up ratings for the radio stations. It is the popularity of these personalities, as well as their ability to enhance listenership through their gift of the gab and humour, that earns them the broadcasting jobs. In the process of looking for highly paid entertainment personalities, media houses overlook trained journalists. According to Professor Absalom Mutere, a lot of journalists were disc jockeys who were hired because of their good looks and ability to speak language (BBC, WST, 2008, p. 4).

As Okoti and Ondego (2013) observed that the kind of people employed as presenters came not so well armed for the radio job. The rush for presenters made media owners settle for what was less than the right people. The unforeseen consequence was the compromise of the media dignity. Thus Okoti and Ondego

(2013) came down severely on the presenters' training backgrounds as one of the main flaws in the operation of FM stations in Kenya.

In a training forum organized by the MCK in Machakos on September 29, 2014 among the issues discussed as affecting journalists in Kenya was the dominance by artists and celebrities in editorial departments (Mabonga, 2014). The same workshop cited non-conformity to the journalistic code of conduct, corruption, lack of guidelines, little knowledge of media law, and lack of diversity in discussion of topics in media (MCK, 2013b).

Topics aired during the talk shows range from current political issues, to marital issues, relationships, and sex as illustrated 'Nairobi Morning Rush Hour' by Gado in Appendix H (Okoti & Ondego, 2013). The broadcasters are not experts in the areas they discuss, but they still attract a large listenership. According to Meso and Akello (2014), the MCK had lamented that, despite imposing fines on some of the media houses, complaints concerning violations of the code of conduct through talk shows had not stopped. Use of obscenities and uncontrolled interventions from callers continued to plague these programmes, and they were the subject of on-going complaints to the MCK.

Issues of journalistic standards and ethics are best interrogated through the Code of Conduct for the Practice of Journalism in Kenya (2013), which serves as the foundation for journalism practice in Kenya. The code is entrenched in the second schedule of the 2007 Media Act (2013). The Act governs the conduct and practice of all media practitioners, and applies to print as well as electronic media (MCK, 2013a). Although it is constitutionally mandated, the MCK has its limitations (Obonyo & Peel, forthcoming). These include the financial clout and commercial as well as political interests of the government and private sector, who are stakeholders



in the MCK. The media owners, who employ radio talk show presenters with criteria other than journalistic qualifications, are in fact major stakeholders in the MCK, contributing three representatives to the Media Council's board (Obonyo & Peel, forthcoming, p. 124). Private radio stations are out to make a profit, and media owners, who may be knowledgeable about the code and the requirements of decency of on-air conduct, nonetheless prioritise the ratings and crowd-pulling effects that popular though untrained radio presenters bring.

Thus, inappropriate topical discussions, the quality of moderation during talk shows, sensationalized, immoral contributions, as well as the blatant disregard of professional ethics and the code of conduct were cited as some of the factors that compromised media practice in Kenya (MCK, 2014). Since presenters are perceived as disseminators of information, their application of the code of ethics or lack thereof, affect the image of journalism practice in Kenya.

From 2004, when a change in legislation brought about licensing of many radio stations in Kenya, FM stations went on air, creating more jobs for presenters. The kind of presenters hired were not well prepared to take up radio jobs, according to a critical reflection on Kenya's liberalized radio space by Okoti and Ondego (2013). The stations opened up to public discussion fora due to public demand (Minderhoud, 2009). They became outlets for 'active citizenship' in the form of public debate and opinion platforms (Kodi, 2005, p. 24). These fora provided an opportunity, through phone-in conversations, for listeners to join public debates and express their opinions, in what has become characteristic of private radio stations (Minderhoud, 2009). When radio stations provide a platform for such debate, listeners air their diverse views that are moderated by presenters.

While training did not seem to provide media houses with their desired calibre of personnel as radio talk show presenters, it remains the common ground upon which qualifications for media presenters can be developed. It is also through systematic formal training that responsibility and accountability guided by a code of ethics can be achieved. Thus, among other pursuits, this study sought to examine whether there were gaps in journalism training that caused media houses to hire non-trained personnel to run radio talk shows.

Further, the education and training deficit in parts of the Kenyan media were noted by Berger (2009a). He drew support from the sentiments of the regulators, quoting the then MCK Chairlady, Esther Kamweru, who noted a “call for regulating journalism education in Kenya” brought about by complaints from media players that most training institutions were offering sub-standard courses and flooding the industry with “half-baked professionals” (Berger, 2009b, p. 273).

According to Howard and Rolt (2005), radio talk shows are a form of journalism. Therefore presenters require education, training and experience and should adhere to professional standards of accuracy and impartiality. In the MCK’s (2013c) publication entitled, ‘Training and Welfare of Journalists’, journalist as well as media practitioner in different training forums and workshops agree with Howard and Holt that, to be able to achieve professionalism, training was a critical component for the industry. The MCK research was done in response to the outcry of the media practitioners over “professional skills gaps, career progression, specialisation in journalism, employment criteria for journalists, payment structures and training needs” (MCK, 2013c, p. 3). This study therefore looked at training as a vital component for determination of the status of talk shows through commercial FM stations in Kenya.

UNESCO had named three quality media training institutions in Kenya: the University of Nairobi's School of Journalism, Daystar University, and the Kenya Institute of Mass Communication. The first two, UON and Daystar, had the privilege of being identified as centres of excellence. But there was still dissatisfaction, not just from the regulators, but from employers, too. Nation Media Group became the first to create what it called a "media lab" in which to recruit and develop its own trained resources, signalling dissatisfaction with the training at tertiary institutions. Later, it paired with the Aga Khan University to develop a journalism school that would meet its training needs. According to Berger (2009a), such in-house training should serve as a wake-up call to other media training institutions, including universities. They should concentrate on the competition they are getting from such in-house training programmes, rather than conforming to licensing by regulatory bodies.

Radio is the most preferred mass medium in Kenya, according to Synovate research conducted under the Kenya Audience Research Foundation (Otin, 2011). With growth in numbers comes the competition and desire to outdo one another in programming in order to draw the attention of advertisers (MCK, 2014). The Media Sustainability Index (MSI, 2009) posited that biases, whether political or tribal, frequently surface. MSI also stated that competition among different media houses, corruption, and incompetence were some of the factors that compromised objectivity and other journalistic principles.

#### Statement of the Problem

According to the code of conduct and practice of journalism in Kenya, a journalist shall not publish obscene or vulgar material unless such material contains news, but unfortunately, this is not always the case with radio talk show content. In a

recent study by the MCK, radio talk shows in Kenya have been found to be products of a “lack of quality control and respect for moral and cultural sensitivities loaded with race, religion, and ethnic stereotypes, disability, physical appearance or social status” (MCK 2014, p. 4). As such, the content was regarded by a broad range of listeners, and by the Media Council itself, as constituting violations of decency (MCK, 2014).

The manner in which the radio presenters air content raised questions on the morality and ethics of their practice, both in generating content, and in managing it as it came from live phone-in contributions. The concern raised was whether or not the presenters had exposure and were adhering to the Code of Conduct for Practice of Journalism in Kenya. Another question raised was whether there existed gaps in journalism training that resulted in media houses recruiting outside the market of graduates of media programmes. Additionally, whether or not audience tastes have changed, therefore soliciting a different approach to journalism, or if it was a matter of radio content and presentation adjusting to shifting trends and talents, was interrogated.

To put more emphasize on media adherence to the MCK’s journalistic code of conduct, a separate code of regulation for broadcast media by the Communications Authority of Kenya (CA, 2016) was developed on 1 July, 2016. The new code recognized pre-existing regulatory codes and did not seek to supplant them. It states this explicitly in the second paragraph of its Section 1.2:

This Code will not apply where a broadcaster is a member of a body which has proved to the satisfaction of the Authority that its members subscribe and adhere to a programming code enforced by that body by means of its own mechanisms...(CA, 2016, p. 6).

Using in-depth interviews and content analysis, this study critically examined the three selected radio talk show presenters' content and conduct, against the prescribed code of ethics for practice of journalism in Kenya. The study is a test of the extent to which ethical and professional media standards will be maintained in Kenya.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine media practice in Kenya through presenters and their radio talk show content, using three selected radio stations.

#### Objectives of the Study

1. To examine how radio talk show presenters handled content against the MCK's laid down professional and ethical standards.
2. To determine whether gaps existed in the Kenyan journalism training, that are now filled by other professionals.
3. To explore audience preferences that influenced the nature of radio talk show content in Kenya.

#### Research Questions

1. How did the radio presenters handle content against MCK's laid down professional and ethical standards during talk shows?
2. Did gaps exist in Kenyan journalism training that are now filled by other professions?
3. How did audience preferences influence the nature of radio talk show content in Kenya?

### Justification of the Study

A study carried out in 2014 by the MCK entitled *Free Speech or Cheap Talk* brought out a picture of rampant ills in Kenyan radio talk shows, and made recommendations to media houses on professionalisation broadcasts. Before the MCK survey, the punitive measures against media houses as a result of consumer complaints about the nature of the talk shows had not brought about lasting change. The MCK study points to uncertain outcomes of media regulation upon which this study is based. Since the choice of presenters and content of radio talk shows seem to be driven by market demands, it was hoped that the study would extend the knowledge concerning the tensions between media content regulatory bodies, the demands of the market, and whether popular radio show content reflects the stipulated MCK's media standards in Kenya.

### Significance of the Study

The study endeavoured to highlight standards of media practice through radio talk shows in Kenya. It would be of interest to media practitioners, media owners, policy makers, and media scholars, since it interrogates whether the popular talk shows reflect expected standards of media practice in Kenya as set by MCK. The study sought to sensitize media practitioners (principally, radio talk show presenters, who are the central focus of the study) on the uncertainty of unresolved listeners' concerns regarding the presenters' lack of adherence to media regulations.

Through the findings of the study, media houses would consider the media professionalism development, training and experience, as well as hiring of presenters able to deliver content that serves and considers the public interest. To the media scholars, this study provides a qualitative assessment of perspectives of radio talk

show hosts towards keeping ethical standards, and the necessity of journalism studies curricula that are sensitive to market demands.

#### Assumptions of the Study

The following were the assumptions of the study:

1. The radio talk show presenters sampled would be media practitioners whose practice is governed by the code and regulations of the Media Council of Kenya.
2. The radio talk show presenters would be honest about challenges to their media practice during interviews.

#### Scope of the Study

This study focused on content, and the disposition of radio talk show presenters towards ethical standards. Specifically, the focus was on whether radio presenters and talk show content from selected FM stations in Kenya conformed to, or did not conform to the MCK code of ethics. The research also sought to examine the MCK's challenges of regulating radio talk show presenters and content with regard to concerns from members of the public about the nature of talk shows. The efficacy of the CA's broadcast media code, recently introduced, was not assessed in this research as it was launched in July 2016, after the conclusion of the fieldwork.

Unlike the MCK study of radio talk shows (2014) which considered different categories of radio stations, this research only interrogated private radio stations as they were identified as frequently being in breach of the code of ethics. This research differed from the MCK's focus in 2014, in that while the MCK identified infractions and the listenership's perceptions of them, this research elicited responses from

presenters using interview schedules to find out the presenters' level of knowledge, awareness, and appreciation of the MCK's professional ethics standards.

This research sought to examine how the talk show presenters responded to MCK-crafted guidelines for radio talk shows. The MCK's views on nature of talk shows were sought in this study, as well as interrogation of content the three radio stations produced. The study was carried out in Nairobi, which has the highest concentration of radio stations in Kenya and is also the headquarters of many of the media houses that broadcast regionally and nationally.

#### Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

This section addresses challenges and possible remedies in the conduct of this study. By 2013, Kenya had 120 radio stations, most of them being FM stations owned by individuals and various organizations that include government (Nyabuga & Booker, 2013, p. 1). The research focus was not broad enough to cover all the radio stations in Kenya. Its limited focus was on the presenters and content of three FM radio stations that had the highest listenership ratings (according to the January 2015, KARF survey) and a national reach. The limited focus was delimited by choosing the three most popular FM stations, such that the trends emerging from the research could reflect, to some degree, perceptions and practices that might influence the presenters and content of other radio stations in Kenya. The generalisation was feasible, as the three radio stations selected for the study – Radio Jambo, Radio Citizen, and Radio Maisha - were not only dominant in the market, but also from three distinct media houses: Radio Africa Limited (Radio Jambo); Royal Media Services (Radio Citizen), and the Kenya Television Network (KTN) – Standard Group Limited (Radio Maisha).



To ensure validity and reliability, data collection tools were pretested to reduce errors. It was hoped that pretesting would refine the research tool to yield desired results. Some of the radio stations broadcast in Kiswahili language. This was delimited by the translation of the content into English. Suspicion and fear of divulging information among respondents due to possible competition among media houses, as well as the fear of jeopardising business interests, or fear of risk to their job security, was mitigated by assuring respondents of confidentiality. The researcher also provided detailed information about the objective of the research, to undercut possible reservations.

#### Definition of Terms

##### *Media practice*

Media oriented actions governed by common rules and shared by the common reference-point of certain ends, projects and beliefs (Schatzki, 1999, p. 89 as cited in Couldry, 2004, pp. 121, 126). In this study, media practice is radio talk show activities.

##### *Talk show*

Talk show, sometimes spelt as 'talkshow', is a relatively new term in the Kenyan media. Howard and Rolt (2005) defined a talk show as a radio programme format that may have an invited guest insisting on their facts and opinion, and/or a presenter encouraging caller comments on what they have heard on the programme. Omwoha (2014) referred to the programme as "talk radio" while remaining in agreement with Howard and Rolt (2005) in their definition. This study adopted Howard and Rolts' (2005) definition, but spelt the term as two separate words, as used by the MCK.

##### *Ethics*

Ethics can be defined as a science that “uses a systematic, reasoned or rational approach, based on a set of principles to determine what is good or ethical and what is bad or unethical, in human conduct” (Nassanga 2008; as cited in Retief, 2002, p. 3). Ward (2008) defined ethics as application of principles to situations and issues. Kwame (2010) defined ethics as a reflection process that involves a rule that puts moral values into practice as well as a rational choice between right and wrong. In this study, ethics is defined as the rational application of rules to situations, such as choosing between right and wrong on issues presented on radio talk shows.

### *Ethical*

According to Ward (2008), journalism is ethical “if it evaluates conduct in the light of the fundamental public purposes and social responsibilities.” Public purposes for journalism include dissemination of information; interpretation of events; it acts as a watchdog on power; advocating for reforms for certain causes; education and empowerment of the public as citizens; and guidance for public opinion. Social responsibility refers to the rational application of rules to situations. The study adopted this meaning.

### *Decency*

Moral worth of an action as determined by rules of the society (MCK code of ethics). Recognition of common humanity and the preservation of human dignity through regarding one human and another (Shaw, 1999, pp. 32-33). This study applied Shaw (1999) definition.

### *Content*

Content refers to the complete quantitative and qualitative range of verbal and visual information distributed by the mass media (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, p. 4). This study adopted the same definition.

### *Presenter*

The term 'presenter' is used interchangeably with 'host', referring to the host of a radio programme. In this study, 'presenter' implies the broadcaster of a talk show programme (Omwoha, 2014).

### *Shock jock*

According to Myers (2008), 'shock-Jocks' are opinionated and outspoken DJs on live phone-in programmes who attract high audiences. This study adopted Myers (2008) definition.

### *Comedian*

A person who produces humour or social jokes to an audiences "a work that is designed in some way to provoke laughter or humour on the part of the viewer" (Mill, 2013). The study applied this definition.

### *MCK code of conduct for practice of journalism in Kenya*

Masaviru (2015) defined the MCK code of conduct for practice of journalism in Kenya as an MCK publication that contains 25 principles that govern ethical and responsible journalism in Kenya. This study adopted the same meaning.

### *Ubuntuism*

Care or communal ethics where an individual's action affect the community (Gondwe, 2014; as cited in Mbiti, 1969). This study adopts the same meaning.

## Summary

This chapter introduced a discussion on effects of radio talk show presenters and their content on media practice in Kenya. It also interrogated the nature of presenters and the kind of content produced against complaints listeners had raised. The objectives of the study, justification, research questions, and assumptions were also addressed. Chapter two that follows provides relevant theories, and literature, that broadens the perspective of the research inquiry on implications of radio talk show presenters and content on media practice in Kenya.

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## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical framework, general and empirical literature related to radio talk show content and how it reflects on media practice in Kenya. The chapter also presents the conceptual framework of the study.

#### Theoretical Framework

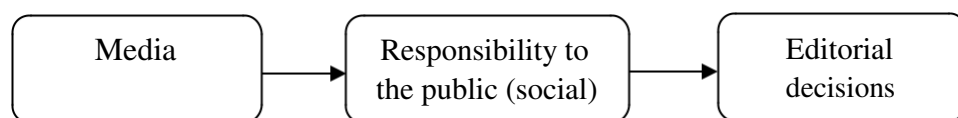
The study applied social responsibility theory (SRT) to explain the research problem, and later to interpret the findings. The SRT focused on the social aspect of morality where personal ethical values are subjected to societal values. The theory proposed that media principles should work for the greater public good as well as ensure that media practitioners are held accountable by the wider society. The theory focused on the social aspect of morality, in the sense that it would ‘sublimate’ personal ethical values to societal values. It entails being responsible to society, and holding the press accountable.

#### Social Responsibility Theory

SRT as one of the four theories of the press, was first formulated in 1956 by Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm (Baran & Davis, 2015, p. 73; Middleton, 2009). In the theory, ethics are emphasized since media is controlled by community opinion, consumer action, and professional ethics (Ochieng, Gachoka, & Mureithi, 2014, p. 9). SRT grew out of libertarian theory and it proposed that freedom carries concomitant obligations. The press functions of SRT are similar with those of libertarian theory but they reflect dissatisfaction with how the owners and operators interpreted them (Paracha & Sultana, 2011). SRT acknowledges the key functions of

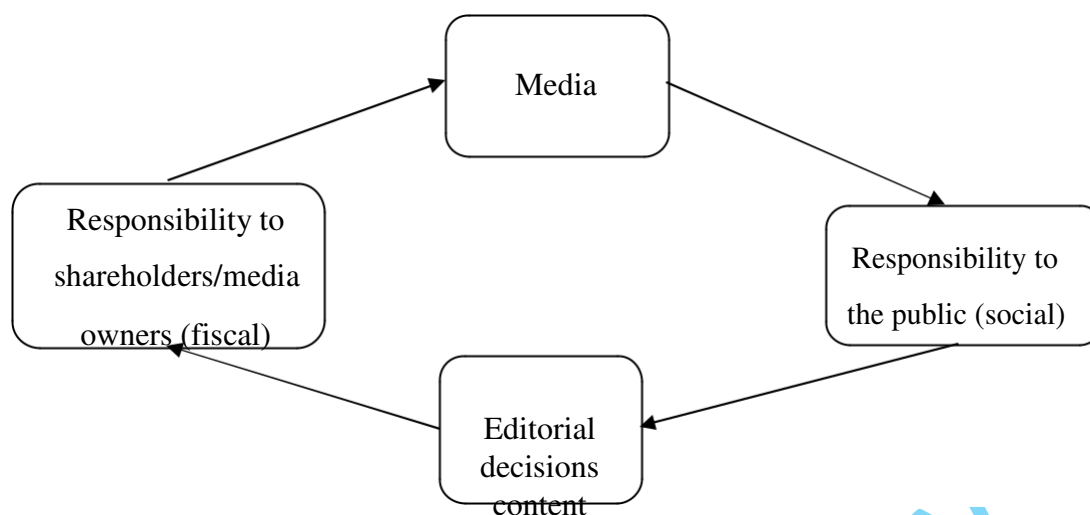
the press that it services the political system, enlightens the public, as well as safeguarding the liberties of the individual but it falls short of them (AL-Ahmed, 1987). The theory attempts to lessen the effects of private ownership to influence public opinion through cultural production through electronic media. Due to the fear that imposing press regulation would expose it to official control of media, SRT calls upon media practitioners to be responsible to the public. The media practitioners were expected to foster productive and creative “Great Communities”. They practitioners were called upon to be the voice of the people by prioritising cultural pluralism and not just the elite groups that had previously dominated culture in the past (Baran & Davis, 2015, p. 73).

The second function was to foster professionalism of journalists and media contributors to seek fairness, objectivity, accuracy, balance, and apply “news values” to all news they published. The SRT made an appeal to media practitioners to be united in the service of cultural pluralism even if it meant profit reduction or antagonism to the social elites (Baran & Davis, 2015, p. 73). It was not however clear on how to successfully provide a socially responsible media from such measures (AL-Ahmed, 1987). Many questions were raised concerning the implementation of SRT in the area of professionalism and ratification of the code of conduct. In an attempt to answer them, Adam-Bloom and Clearly (2009) proposed changes in SRT in two diagrams.



*Figure 4.1: Traditional Model of SRT*

Source: Baran & Davis (2015, p. 78).



*Figure 4.2: Dual Responsibility Model*

Source: Baran & Davis (2015, p. 78)

Adam-Bloom and Clearly (2009) updated the SRT theory to a ‘Dual SRT’ that upholds high ideals, while recognising economic realities. The new position emphasizes media responsibility to the public as well as to shareholders and media owners, without compromising on quality of content. As a result, media institutions would have an obligation to operate in the best interest of all stakeholders. Profit maximization need not be the main goal. The Dual SRT opens media houses to a wider berth of ethical business practices and good corporate citizenship (Baran & Davis, 2013).

SRT is largely based on traditional mass media structures (Ostini & Fung, 2002), where “the press always takes on the form and coloration of the social and political structures within which it operates” (Hardy, 2008, p. 12). In this research, the SRT is appropriated to guide media practice in Kenya – through radio presenters and talk shows – in a manner that makes that practice socially responsible, and accountable to all its stakeholders. According to Middleton (2009), media is accountable to the following:

- The audience as recipients of media messages;

- The government, to who the media owes constructive criticism, popular opinion, and feedback from audience;
- Media owners, to whom the media owe their survival ;
- The media (practitioners) themselves – fulfilling their calling and satisfaction from their personal success.

Some scholars argued that the SRT was based on Western linear assumptions that the development of the media would move from authoritarian to communism to libertarian and then onto the social responsibility model. Ostini and Fung (2002) considered that assumption as false. This study concurs with Ostini and Fung, with the presumption that social responsibility is desirable regardless of the developmental stages of a government in the respective state.

According to Baran and Davis (2013), SRT has weaknesses, such as the optimism that media is willing to meet its obligation to the society, and underestimating the power the profits and competition motivates. The question of formation of new communities, according to Baran and Davis (2015, p. 79), would be strengthened in SRT by emerging technologies that provide greater power to communities to disseminate information. In this study the SRT was interrogated through MCK standards of regulations as a measure of responsibility to the society using radio talk show presenters, and their willing to comply with MCK code of regulations.

Other critics of SRT (Baran & Davis, 2013; as cited in Altschull, 1995; McQuail, 2005; Pickard, 2010) observed that most media organisations, without consideration of the dual social responsibility model, have favoured profit over responsibility. Despite such criticisms, contemporary scholars concur that the social



responsibility theory forms the basis of universal professional media ethics, which are vital in evaluating the quality of media practice.

Although scholars conceded that SRT was intended to guide traditional mass media, media keeps evolving, but functions remain the same. The latest evolution from analogue to digital platform is just one of the many changes. The mode of transmission of media that has changed. Its popularity has not been affected, especially radio. Equally refutable is the fact that SRT lacks explanatory power. This theory was established upon a background of events that inspired and emanated from the Hutchins Commission in the United States in 1947, which led to the theory's formulation.

The Hutchins Commission (1947) was set up in the middle of World War Two when Henry R. Luce, the then head of *Time* magazine, requested Robert Maynard Hutchins, President of Chicago University, to recruit a commission to look into the role of media in modern democracies (Nerone, 1995). The Commission, which took a period of four years, worked in the context of social change, both nationally in the US and globally (Nerone, 1995). The setting up of the commission was in response to the public's complaints on media practices. The following were the Commission's expectations of the media:

- A truthful, comprehensive, and intelligent account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning.
- A forum for the exchange of comment and criticism.
- The projection of a representative picture of the constituent groups in the society.
- The presentation and clarification of the goals and values of the society.
- Full access to the day's intelligence (Gleason, 2009, p. 412).

The Hutchins Commission addressed criticisms of private media performance without sacrificing libertarian principles of a privately owned press free from undue state control (Hardy, 2008). The commission proposed that press freedom had to be balanced with press responsibility as a public servant. It also recommended that the communities' objectives needed to be incorporated in press objectives (Nerone, 1995). Nerone also stated that although responsibility had become part of the day to day journalistic culture, the Commission's interest was public image and professional status. The press reputation was an important aspect in ensuring social responsibility to the society.

#### Application of SRT

This research used the SRT theory to prompt radio talk show hosts to be more responsible and accountable to the greater population. That entailed being answerable to the audience, the government that provides licenses to broadcast, and to themselves as media professionals, for the sense of satisfaction of having done a job well. Through the findings of this research, presenters of radio talk shows would be sensitized to the expectations of their product, which is the content that they generate and moderate on FM radio stations.

#### General Literature Review

##### Media Regulation and Accountability

According to Flenger (2012), traditional instruments of media regulation such as press councils and media journalism were insufficient in monitoring and sanctioning deviation from professional standards. This results from limited sanctioning power (media councils and ombudsman) as well as inadequate enforcement of self-regulation by media owners. The objective of the research was to

explore the potential impact of new forms of media accountability in the digital age (media criticism via social media such as Twitter, Facebook, chats, and email).

The study suggested two options to solving the media accountability dilemma, namely political intervention and market intervention. In this study, political intervention which calls for a stronger government co-regulation as an option to media regulation and accountability (Flenger, 2012; as cited in Puppis, 2009) was not considered. As Wanyama (2015) concluded from reviewed literature, media regulation by government in Kenya from the colonial era has been to curtail media freedom. Therefore this study chose to concentrate on market intervention which refers to the engagement of media consumers.

In the past, media consumers were a “latent group” who may have had an opinion on quality of journalism but lacked a forum for such expression. With the advent of internet and social media, the cost of media monitoring does not exist, as monitoring online can now be done by an infinite crowd of users (Flenger, 2012).

The research drew from the institutional economics media accountability model, whose inclusion of audience monitoring of the media’s performance was seen as a more effective approach to media regulation. Even though the audience were considered as lacking in expertise, they are citizens and consumers with an interest in evaluating the media’s service to society (Flenger, 2012).

According to Flenger (2012), media accountability is important because it preserves social capital of journalism which is trust. The study recommended three approaches to media accountability. The first was footing the costs of accountability by using state subsidies to promote quality journalism, provision of incentives for media accountability by the state and by involving users. Although users would not be

counted upon to finance media accountability instruments, certain privileges could be granted to those that participate in the audience initiative, such as tax exemptions.

The study by Flenger (2012) also looked at the strengthening media accountability expertise through introduction of media literacy. Flenger (2012) suggested that through national projects, media unions and associations would communicate professional journalistic rules to the citizens. Through that approach, journalists would be held accountable. The study proposed that journalism accountability required introducing measurable quality standards. Such standards would inspire future solutions to media accountability. Flenger concluded that media accountability in the digital age was achievable through a decentralised network, using both media professionals and users, and ensuring preservation of media freedom.

Flenger's (2012) proposition that holding the media accountable through the practitioners and the citizens was useful to this research in a sense that, the media content producers and consumers are better placed to institute quality, rather than fully depending on external bodies such as the government and media council. However, for moderation purposes, the media council would still be better placed to intervene when necessary, for instance where the aggrieved parties fail to reach a consensus. Additionally, quality participation by the audience could be enhanced through an increase in media literacy programmes by the Media Council of Kenya (MCK).

To map out the development of radio talk show in Kenya, the research traced changes in radio talk shows and the status of radio presenters in Africa radio broadcasting, and the advent of talk shows in Kenya. Each of these areas was

discussed to highlight implication of radio talk show presenters and content on media practice in Kenya.

#### Changes on Media Platform in Africa

Due to changes in international politics after the end of the Cold war, the world turned to democracy as the almost universal form of governance. Much of Africa embraced that pluralism, which also influenced its media industry. Tomaselli (2003) pointed out that in the past, broadcast journalism in Africa was part of the civil service for most governments. However today, many countries in Africa have moved from state owned media to all inclusion of privately owned media houses (Musau, 1999). Liberalization of broadcasting in Africa was deliberated due to the contest for political change.

Coming from a history of military and one party state government, many countries transitioned to media plurality relatively recently, according to a report on *Broadcasting Policy and Practice in Africa* (Okoth-Owiro, 2010). These political changes resulted from broader international political changes where former socialist and communist governments in eastern and central Europe collapsed, and western liberal democracy was embraced.

The relevance of these changes to broadcasting is that pluralist politics moulded pluralist and diverse media systems as opposed to government state monopolies. The report further documented the extent of commercialization and privatization of broadcasting and telecommunications, and how immediate policy choices created a new broadcasting landscape. The advocates that opened up the airwaves to commercialization and privatization did not foresee the full implications of the freedom on media regulation (Musau, 1999).

## Radio Talk Show in Africa

Due to its affordability, and ability to transcend literacy divides, radio remains the most popular medium in Africa (Chibita, 2010). According to Chibita, radio in sub-Saharan Africa has over the last two decades been dubbed the people's medium. Mwesige (2009) stated that the political role of radio had been fundamentally altered by the advent of private radio, in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa in the 1990s. Radio is divided into four categories: state-controlled public radio; privately owned commercial radio; community-controlled radio and international radio. The privately owned commercial radio has bigger audiences than public radio. Live broadcast rather than pre-prepared programmes (e.g. dramas, magazines, talk-shows involving experts) are the common trend in Africa's radio (Myers, 2008).

The emergence of political talk shows as a new mode of programming, created an opportunity for ordinary people to challenge the ruling establishment in unprecedented ways. Typically, information on radio in Africa travelled in one direction: from top to bottom (Mwesige, 2009). As a public sphere, radio talk show provides a platform where the public seek and acquire information, carry out dialogue and debate on collective public problems and policy; challenge official power; let off steam; listen and learn about political developments; as well as get the opinions of other citizens (Mwesige, 2009).

## Status of Radio Presenters in Africa

At the onset of the new liberties of radio talk shows, presenters were poorly paid, and poorly organised in professional and trade unions (Myers, 2008, p. 6). Monies were paid to journalists to cover stories positively. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, such patronage is referred to as 'coupage'; in West Africa, it is called 'gombo' (Nyamnjoh, 2005), while in other places it is called the 'brown

envelope' (Gondwe, 2014; Myers, 2008, p. 20). In Zambia, this also came in the form of cash payments or free meals, *per diems*, or in other gifts or favours, which placed journalists in compromising situations. They had to act in the interests of business and local politics, thus impacting on neutrality and quality of content (Gondwe, 2014).

One of the motivators for entry into journalism was notoriety that could be positive or negative such as hate-talk that led to post-election violence in Kenya 2007 (Myers, 2008, p. 20; as cited in Abdi & Dean, 2008). Such entry into journalism results in commercial 'shock jocks' (opinionated and outspoken DJs who attract high audiences) and generate higher advertising revenues (Myers, 2008, p. 20). Conditions faced by radio journalists include poor training or no training due to low job security, high turnover, and brain-drain to other professions. The need for training continues to grow (Myers, 2008). According to Myers, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of United Nations (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Association *Mondiale des Radiodiffuseurs Communautaires* (AMARC), World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters, Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), RFI, BBC, and others have developed training materials for the African context.

Most African countries had one main (government sponsored) national journalism/broadcasting training institute or university (Myers, 2008, p. 20). Other privately owned training institutions that offer journalism/media training are of questionable quality. Training had deficiencies in theoretical and ethical aspects of journalism as well as insufficient ability to equip graduates with the skills for practising journalists (WST, 2006, p. 39).

## Radio Broadcasting in Kenya

Radio in Kenya has undergone tremendous growth, both in popularity and numbers. According to the MCK's (2015) publication, *Ethics in Ethnic Media* over 300 radio frequencies and licenses have been issued by the Communication Authority of Kenya, which include those not yet utilized. Starting from 1959 when the Kenya National Broadcasting Service (KBS) was established by the British colonial administration, radio became the first public broadcaster. Today, the Kenya government boasts of 120 radio stations (Nyabuga & Booker, 2013, p. 18). After independence, the corporation was named Voice of Kenya (VOK) and became a government mouthpiece as a department of the Ministry of Information, Broadcasting and Tourism. Even though government adopted a capitalistic approach to economic development, private ownership of broadcasting was not allowed (Oriare, 2008).

## Advent of Talk Shows in Kenya

By 1996, with the liberalisation of the airwaves globally, the Kenyan government started issuing licenses to private radio. The first few licenses were issued to government supporters (Situma & Ndeti, 2010). At that time 13 private radio stations broadcasted around the country. These stations came as a challenge to Kenya Broadcasting Corporation due to their nature of programming. By 2004, the first community radio was licenced, paving way for more vernacular FM radio stations (Ng'ang'a, 2016). These stations broadcasted in local languages, breaking the monotony of English and Kiswahili that had previously been dominant.

The new FM stations which are commercial in nature, brought 'stiff competition in the congested and continuous narrowing market' (Nyongesa, 2005), to



KBC in the sense that, even though the national broadcaster had already operated vernacular stations across the country for many years, it was perpetuating an unpopular government agenda. KBC 'became an inefficient propaganda tool' and was therefore abandoned by the government as a Public Service Broadcaster (PSB) in the liberalised media environment (Nyongesa, 2005). Due to their interactive nature, new FM stations that aired of citizens' concerns, (Situma & Ndeta, 2010), gained popularity.

As a platform for public discussion, these commercial FM radio stations use talk shows and phone-ins to allow the audience's voice to be heard. These talk shows which have become outlets for public debates are also used for expression of voices suppressed for a long time (Abdi & Deane, 2008; Omwoha, 2014). The voices were 'angry, disaffected and determined for change' (Abdi & Deane, 2008, p. 4). The commercial FM radio stations took centre stage for democratic power and encouraged the public to shed off a culture of silence (Odhiambo, 2007).

Digital technologies introduced the use of mobile telephony and the internet, increasing the pace of information dissemination (Nyabuga & Booker, 2013). Due to digital technology, there is an increased user generated content which has resulted in media organizations seeking to cultivate new relationships with audiences. Audiences now regularly contribute content or are encouraged to do so. Radio listeners can now call in and discuss their views and concerns about issues that affect them (Situma & Ndeta, 2010; as cited in Media Debates, 2005).

Nyabuga and Booker's (2013) empirical look at the post-modern media configurations in Kenya noted that direct legislation on media ownership is lacking. As a result, large established media owners have taken advantage of the situation to engage in cross-media ownership. Examples of such organisations that have print,

radio, and television include Nation Media Group, the Standard Group Limited, and Radio Africa Media Group (Nyabuga & Booker, 2013). According to the authors, the media council's CEO Haron Mwangi, stated that media ownership is dominated by the private sector, while the public media is underdeveloped due to underfunding. Also cited was Professor Levi Obonyo's (a past chair of the MCK) observation that, "the liberalization of airwaves was done without the benefit of legislative statutes to guide the operations of FM stations, which now number 200" (Nyabuga & Booker, 2013, p. 67).

It is a challenge for radio stations to adhere to professional ethics. Sensational programme formats and commentating on information has increased (Situma & Ndeti, 2010). The liberalisation of airwaves opened up audience comments from anyone, thus democratizing the media space. Urban commercial radio hosts the 'Shock-Jock' on live phone-in programmes who are opinionated and outspoken DJs that attract high audiences. As a result, they earn higher advertising revenues. Taking advantage of their substantial access to the public, these presenters can, and sometimes do, misuse their privileged positions, for instance by turning to hate speech to deride real or perceived opponents, as was the case in the post-election violence in Kenya in January 2008 (Myers, 2008).

According to Ekwueme, Obayi, and Nwachukwu (2013, p. 170) citing (Omenugha & Oji, 2008), "journalism practice wields such enormous powers and calls for the highest standards of ethics and commitment to truth," to be left in the hands of amateurs. The aim of talk shows is to generate public debate, public participation and inclusion in content generation. Although listenership is high, few callers air their views (MCK, 2014, p. 16). People who call in to talk shows are those

seeking companionship, popularity and are usually seeking media experience by getting involved in discussions (MCK, 2014).

Journalism professionalism is portrayed through the observation of standards (Limor, 2006; UNESCO, 2014). These are contained in the Code of Conduct (a set of rules outlining the social norms, rules and responsibilities of, or proper practices for, an individual, party or organization); set by the Media Council of Kenya. The principles of the codes are not specific to either print or broadcast media (MCK, 2014, p. 4). According to Limor (2006, p. 165), journalistic codes are a collection of dos and don'ts for professional activities, serve as a yardstick for assessing acceptable professional norms. This study mainly focused on a few of the listed codes that touched on complaints raised by listeners. The following are the journalistic code of ethics presented in a seven page document with 26 principles of ethics:

1. Accuracy and fairness. A journalist shall give a fair, accurate and unbiased story coverage on matters of public interest.
2. Independence. A journalist shall gather and report news without fear or favour, and resist undue influence from any outside forces.
3. Integrity. Journalists shall defend the independence of all journalists from those seeking influence or control over news content.
4. Accountability. Journalists shall present news with integrity and common decency, avoiding real or perceived conflicts of interest, and respect the dignity and intelligence of the audience as well as the subjects of news.
5. Opportunity to reply. A journalist shall be accountable for their actions to the public, the profession and adherence to these standards by all journalists and media practitioners; respond to public concerns,

investigate complaints and correct errors promptly; and recognising that they are duty-bound to conduct themselves ethically.

6. A fair opportunity to reply to inaccuracies shall be given to individuals or organizations when reasonably called for.
7. Unnamed Sources. Unnamed sources shall not be used unless the pursuit of the truth will best be served by not disclosing the source, who shall be known by the editor and reporter.
8. Confidentiality. A journalist has a professional obligation to protect confidential sources of information.
9. Misrepresentation. A journalist shall generally identify themselves and not obtain or seek to obtain information or pictures through misrepresentation or subterfuge. Subterfuge can be justified only in the public interest and only when material cannot be obtained by any other means.
10. Obscenity, taste and tone in reporting. A journalist shall not publish obscene or vulgar material unless such material contains news.
11. Paying for news and articles. A journalist shall not receive any money as an incentive to publish any information.
12. Covering ethnic, religious and sectarian conflict. News, views or comments on ethnic, religious or sectarian dispute shall be published or broadcast after proper verification of facts and presented with due caution and restraint in a manner which is conducive to the creation of an atmosphere congenial to national harmony, amity and peace.
13. Recording interviews and telephone conversations. Except in justifiable cases, a journalist shall not tape or record anyone without

the person's knowledge, except in a legal action or for some other compelling reason. In this context these standards also apply to electronic media.

14. Privacy. The public's right to know shall be weighed against the privacy rights of people in the news.
15. Intrusion into grief and shock. In cases involving personal grief or shock, inquiries and shock shall be made with sensitivity and discretion.
16. Gender non-discrimination. Women and men shall be treated equally as news subjects and news sources.
17. Financial journalism. Journalists shall not use financial information they receive in advance for their own benefit, and shall not pass the information to others.
18. Letters to the editor. An editor who decides to open a column on a controversial subject is not obliged to publish all the letters received in regard to that subject.
19. Protection of children. Children shall not be identified in cases concerning sexual offences, whether as victims, witnesses or defendants.
20. Victims of sexual offences. The media shall not identify victims of sexual assault or publish material likely to contribute to such identification.
21. Use of pictures and names. As a general rule, the media shall apply caution in the use of pictures and names and shall avoid publication when there is a possibility of harming the persons concerned.

22. Innocent relatives and friends. The media shall not identify relatives or friends of persons convicted or accused of crime unless the reference to them is necessary for the full, fair and accurate reporting of the crime or legal proceedings.
23. Acts of violence. The media shall avoid presenting acts of violence, armed robberies, banditry and terrorist activities in a manner that glorifies such anti-social conduct.
24. Editor's responsibilities. The editor shall assume the responsibility for all content, including advertisements, published in a newspaper.
25. Advertisements. The editor shall not allow any advertisement which is contrary to any aspect of this Code of Conduct.
26. Hate speech. Quoting persons making derogatory remarks based on ethnicity, race, creed, colour and sex shall not be allowed. (Kenya Gazette, 2013, p. 1227-1233).

The Code of Conduct targets journalists, a media practitioners, or media enterprises (AMWIK, 2014). The main purpose of the document is to produce ethical journalism in Kenya (Masaviru, 2015, p. 24).

Similar to the 2007 Code of Conduct, the schedule does not distinguish between various segments of journalism such as broadcast or print. The code appears to be skewed towards print media, leaving a lot of gaps to be filled by broadcast media practitioners. Wanyama (2009) as cited in Masaviru (2015, p. 24), observes that media have the power to make or destroy people and institutions and yet the same media breaches codes of ethics. That has led to the lowering of professional standards and quality of news features and commentaries. The codes set high standards for ethical and professional behaviour for media practitioners.

The norms of the codes are moral guidelines or standards for comparing professional work among media employees and are not obligatory requirements (Masaviru, 2015, p. 24). In support of this argument, Baran and Davis (2015, p. 76) opined that professional standards can be abstract, ambiguous as well as difficult to implement and enforce. Since professional standards are vague, journalists do not endanger their relationships with sources nor company's profit margins Baran and Davis (2015, p. 76). Apart from their use for media self-regulation, the codes cannot be used to hold the media employee criminally, administratively, disciplinarily or otherwise responsible (EthicNet). Their enforcement is a challenge to the media regulator, MCK.

Complaints continue to plague MCK. Oketch's (2015) account of the continuing radio talk show infractions of ethical standards, contained in the publication entitled *Radio Talk Shows Raise Grave Ethical, Legal Questions*, are an indication that the problem might not be resolved solely by amending laws or introducing codes of conduct. Attempts by the MCK to caution media houses on the use of indecent language and imposing fines on those found culpable, had not borne lasting results.

Shoemaker and Reese (1996) have posited that content produced by media workers usually reflects their socialisation, attitudes and psychological factors intrinsic to them. Routines in media houses and how media workers organise work have an influence on the type of content produced. Another determinant of content is the ideology of those in power who ensure that society continues in its present form (MCK, 2014). It was observed that the content presented determined the talk show programme listeners' attention. According to Codeiro (2012), listeners were exposed to news, information and entertainment from other platforms and formats that

compete with radio, such as social media. The multi-platform sourcing of content created an audience that was participative, non-traditional, non-passive, and independent. The new audiences are content producers on the internet which is the main competitor of traditional media (Codeiro, 2012).

Liberalisation of media due to global political changes occasioned the inception of talk shows (Dean, 2005, p. 181) which were not well prepared for. The basis for recruitment of talk show hosts was not strictly based on media professional requirements, leading to the breach of the code of ethics. Equally important was the proposition that generation of content that is influenced by the background of the hosts, media routines as well as political ideology of those in power. This background provides a foundation for empirical review of quantifiable data, to further highlight the implications of media practice in Kenya through radio talk show presenters and content.

#### Empirical Literature Review

The MCK's (2014) study, *Free Speech or cheap Talk?* was prompted by stakeholders' complaints about adherence to professional ethics by talk show hosts in Kenya. The complaints included poor quality of moderation by radio talk show hosts, inappropriate comments from callers, inappropriate choice of topics for discussion, sensational and immoral contributions from callers and radio talk show hosts, and blatant disregard for the existing professional standards and the Code of Conduct for the Practice of Journalism in Kenya (MCK, 2014). These challenges came up as a result of technological development and subsequent media liberalisation. The introduction of mobile telephony and social media such as Twitter and Facebook



increased listenership and also influenced the shape and content of talk show programmes (MCK, 2014, p. 4).

The changes in technology have brought other challenges such as the management of feedback by radio talk show presenters, and raised the question as to whether and how radio talk shows could be regulated. The MCK study attributed the obscene discussions in talk shows to lack of quality control and respect for moral and cultural sensitivities. Having recognised that radio talk show presenters faced challenges, the study sought to provide guidelines, based on the code of conduct, for explicit topical discussions on radio talk show programmes (MCK, 2014).

Radio talk shows play a vital role in society, such as providing a platform for public discourse on public interest issues, thus enhancing societal solutions for development. Additionally, talk shows generate public debate and enhance public participation and inclusion in development (MCK, 2014). Like all other forms of media, radio may be both useful and harmful depending on how it is used. Radio contributes to growth and development of a society by providing information, education and entertainment (MCK, 2014). Radio talk show programmes are characterised as follows:

- They are predominantly made up of live broadcasts with minimal pre-recorded content.
- Talk shows target audience participation via mobile telephony via voice calls and text messaging.
- Talk shows are moderated by personalities by guiding, facilitating and stimulating discussions.
- Talk shows employ services of ‘a clown’ who is often a comedian or popular actor to energize the show.

- Talk show programmes invite guests with expertise in certain areas who also engage with the audience.
- Talk show programmes discuss issues related to social, political or personal matters. They use interviews, narratives, debates, confessions and testimonies, and also allow confrontation and conflicting opinions.
- Talk shows are screened by producers to maximise audience interest and to attract advertisers (MCK, 2014).

In addition, the study by the MCK (2014) posited that talk shows play the following roles: promotion of citizen journalism where citizens produce content in the form of current news and information. They also provide a social interaction platform that is immediate, where viewers share opinions. Some media houses facilitate face-to-face meetings between radio talk show hosts and the audience through road shows, thus enhancing the social interaction. Furthermore, talk shows set the agenda for public discussions. They open up avenues for callers to report current happenings such as accidents, disasters and events that could be of interest to journalists. They also provide a platform for democratic engagement of the audience with leaders (MCK, 2014).

Additionally, through radio talk shows, the audience can access politicians, engage in political issues, lobby on behalf of communities, and be mobilised to vote and also engage in humanitarian activities. Experts are sometimes invited to help solve peoples' problems. Talk shows perform an entertainment function for the society. The more commonly discussed topics on talk shows include politics, relationships and family issues; current affairs, human interest issues, religious issues, lifestyle and entertainment; as well as development issues such as economic and business topics (MCK, 2014).

In its 2014 study, the MCK researchers sampled content from the following categories: public service radio, community radio, commercial radio (in English and Kiswahili), and religious radio (MCK, 2014). Monitoring of content was done continuously for two weeks, focusing on radio talk shows. A total of 139 samples of talk show content were taken, with the response rate of 89 percent.

The MCK (2014) research also used online questionnaires, distributed by purposively sampling listeners who had tuned in to radio in one month immediately preceding the fieldwork. The questionnaires had four sections: the perception of respondents on adherence to ethical and professional standards during talk shows; quality of topics and host moderation skills; level of awareness on punitive measures on errant media houses; appropriate action audiences could initiate; and respondent ratings on various aspects related to the talk shows.

The sample consisted of 139 listeners who had tuned in to radio talk show programmes for the last one month. Results from the sample indicated that 59 percent of listeners felt that talk show hosts were competent at presentations, handling issues and controlling discussion. This compared with six percent of listeners who thought the hosts were incompetent. The results indicated that audience rating was based on entertainment and escapism rather than adherence to professional ethics. The audience who felt discomfort during talk show discussions rated 59 percent. Another 54 percent of listeners felt that obscene talk was not appealing to them (MCK, 2014).

Discussion on development issues rated 31 percent. From the survey, 62 percent of the listeners indicated having heard hosts using derogatory remarks based on ethnicity, race, creed and sex on morning talk shows. Discussion of public interest issues such as current affairs, socio-political development and policy issues were rated average by 40 percent of the respondents (MCK, 2014, p. 27). Quality of

discussion was hampered by the use of fictitious names, and was given favourable rating by 56 percent of the respondents. According to the survey, this gave callers “courage to engage in invective and reckless banter” (MCK, 2014, p. 28).

Respondents believed that callers to the radio talk shows were paid to generate sensational or emotional views to create interesting debate. Those who strongly suspected that this ‘cash for comment’ practice was common among radio stations amounted to 78 percent of the respondents. It was a significant level of perception that the talk shows were largely stage-managed to draw high audience ratings (MCK, 2014).

Regarding comments on individuals’ feelings and experiences, 63 percent of the respondents thought that the comments were demeaning, offensive, and insensitive or inconsiderate. This was proof that the comments negatively affected listeners. Respondents who had encountered hate speech during morning shows amounted to 60 percent of the sample. Respondents who felt that unethical discussions during talk shows was due to use of untrained hosts and co-hosts were 51 percent while those who credited the talk shows as demonstrating freedom of speech and interaction were 53 percent (MCK, 2014, pp. 27-36).

Using content analysis, the following stations were analysed: Radio Citizen, Radio Jambo, Classic 105 FM, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), Biblia Husema and Ghetto Radio. Radio Citizen starts at six in the morning. It has religious content (worship), weather, traffic updates, newspaper reviews and profiling of public figures. Topics discussed during the two weeks included constitutional reforms, politics, homosexuality, and education. The station had two hosts who moderated the talk show (MCK, 2014).

Classic 105 FM had entertainment, relationships and lifestyle topics, including parenting, handling teenage issues, and other news items such as Kenyan actress Lupita Nyong'o's winning of an Oscar award. KBC had topics such as family, relationships, judiciary and education. It recorded the highest number of callers (10) compared to Classic 105 FM (7). Bibilia Husema radio discussed topics mainly relating to current affairs. Callers were given adequate time to respond to issues by hosts. Insensitive remarks were not given attention by talk show hosts. Radio Ghetto had topics such as transport crisis, as well as ethnic profiling. Hosts were largely unprofessional and incapable of handling talk shows (MCK, 2014).

The general observation during the monitoring weeks was that presenters used vulgar and obscene language on live broadcasts. Issues relating to public interest were not commonly observed; rather, presenters concentrated on issues that titillated their audiences (MCK, 2014). The information in the MCK (2014) study is relevant to the current study because it forms the basis upon which the state of media in Kenya could be interrogated through talk show presenters and content. The study considered listeners' responses when examining the quality of talk shows, and the presenters' adherence to professional ethics, by selecting radio stations from different categories, and found out that private and community radio stations were mostly found lacking in quality (MCK, 2014).

The current research interrogated private FM radio stations as they had been identified as the most prevalent in breach of the code of ethics, unlike the MCK (2014) which considered different categories of radio stations. This research differed from the MCK's (2014) study, because it elicited responses from presenters' level of knowledge and awareness of the MCK's professional ethics, while the MCK identified infractions and the listenership's perceptions of talk shows. Additionally,

the MCK examined views on the nature of talk shows, as well as content produced by the three radio stations.

The MCK (2013c) is a study entitled; *Training and Welfare for Kenyan Journalists* which sought to establish training needs of practicing journalists. The training needs were looked at in relation to, among others, their job placement, specialisation needs, working conditions, welfare, health and safety. The study was prompted by the recurring themes during the MCK's various training forums of journalists and stakeholders where the issues of professionalism and journalists' training featured.

According to the study, entry into journalism was not restricted. Whereas MCK was mandated to accredit journalists; both foreign and local, media houses had their own accreditation systems. Entry qualifications into media houses varied from degree to diploma holders to no degree or diploma. Experience from other media houses, knowledge of media house hierarchy or corporate sections of media houses were considered. The kind of scenario exhibited portrayed lack of precise guidelines followed in the hiring of media personnel in Kenya.

The study observed that such flexibility of entry and practice provided artistes and comedians free entry into the media practice, masquerading as journalists. That resulted in terrible consequences for the profession, where mixing journalism and comedy was noted to have had a negative effect on the image of journalists.

Out of the then 2600 accredited journalists, 260 from various media houses were issued with questionnaires. Key informants who were interviewed included veteran journalists, media managers, media trainers, trade unionists, as well as gender organisations. From the issues that were looked at, training will be highlighted since most of the information interrogated seemed to be bent towards print media.

Respondents' highest formal education was Master's degree at 4.26 percent, bachelor's degree 24.47 percent, while the diploma holders were 46.81 percent. The focus group saw the need for specialised training, but the specialisation did not include broadcast journalism, within which radio talk shows feature.

Gondwe (2014) carried out a study that directly engaged ethical dilemmas and non-professional media practices in Zambia. Gondwe (2014) revealed that Zambia was facing ethical dilemmas related to corruption, conflict of interest, biases, and non-professionalism that had undermined the quality of journalism. The study carried out interviews via Skype with 10 Zambian print journalists. The data was analysed in a descriptive format under five themes: ethical challenges; media transparency and accountability; rules and guidelines; professionalism and journalism training; and values and moral decadence (Gondwe, 2014).

Using an interview schedule, Gondwe's (2014) study found that journalists in Zambia were aware of the existence of media ethics, but lacked the motivation to put them into practice. One of the key factors that contributed to partisan journalism was media ownership. Media ownership was categorised as either government, or private. Private ownership resulted from (introduction of democracy in Africa) that also influenced democratization of the media in Zambia. Gondwe observed that adherence to ethical norms in media were influenced by media ownership and advertisers.

Transparency and accountability were not common practices in Zambia. Rampant corruption in both the media and the state hampered the implementation of transparency and accountability principles (Gondwe, 2014). Gifts were given to editors in the form of airtime from telecommunication companies (Gondwe, 2014), and "brown envelopes", referring to monetary bribes so that journalists could be persuaded not to publish negative stories (Gondwe, 2014). The excuse for such

practices was low salaries for media practitioners. However, the contrary argument was that even those who earned bigger salaries, like the senior media personnel, still received bribes; therefore low pay was not a valid excuse. The study concluded that, transparency and accountability depended on one's moral formation and foundation (Gondwe, 2014).

As concerned rules and guidelines for media, Gondwe's (2014) research observed that, more emphasis was placed on legal aspects of media practice than ethics. It was also noted that ethical issues passed for legality. The media regulatory body in Zambia did not have the capacity to question the lack of adherence to professional ethics because it lacked strong support from media owners and government. Since the media regulatory body was run on a voluntary basis, its disciplinary committee could not impose any serious punishment on any errant journalist as it operated non-punitive rules (Gondwe, 2014). Additionally, Zambia's constitution did not appropriately address media. The study recommended that emphasis on accountability be placed upon each individual journalist.

Regarding professionalism and journalism training, qualifications among media personnel raised concern as it ranged from high school certificate to diploma in journalism. Gondwe (2014) noted that the training offered was Western curriculum, that compelled students to take western journalists as models. Most panellists had not experienced any vice in ethics during the training. They felt that introduction of African ethics "ubuntuism" would not guarantee ethical reporting. The research lamented that classroom learning of ethical behaviour did not translate into practice. Issues of values and moral decadence were seen to be influenced by what was learned in the journalism practice in the field. Globalisation was cited as the reason behind break-up of the community spirit, and loss of language, that also lead to the loss of



African values. Lack of ethical considerations reflected the kind of society to which one belonged.

According to Gondwe's (2014) research, lack of media credibility in Zambia was due to unethical reporting. In the study, Zambia's media was portrayed as being in a state of confusion and lacking direction. The study opined that, even though Afri-ethics (belief that Africans should develop their own ethics based on community and social life, "I am because we are; since we are, therefore I am" as interconnection of the community (Kasoma, 1994; as cited in Gondwe, 2014). The interconnection was the belief that destroying any kind of life extended to one's own life. For journalists to promote their own lives, by preserving the community.

The study proposed Afri-ethics as a possible approach to resolving ethical dilemmas in the media, it had to pass certain tests. These include: convincing fairly young journalists to embrace their elders' wisdom, a quest for communal harmony where tolerance towards outsiders was embraced, provision of space for competing voices, and introduction of a non-hierarchical model of media self-regulation. In the last instance it was recommended that in self-regulation, the state would need to play a subordinate role to a pluralistic public interest. Gondwe's (2014) study aimed at examining how virtue ethics could provide a remedy to unethical reporting in the Zambian media. Virtue ethics in the study was seen as the only solution to ethical challenges because it was about character building. Virtue is both religious and philosophical, and connotes acting to bring consequences (Gondwe, 2014).

Gondwe's (2014) study is useful to this inquiry as it brings out similarities in ethical dilemmas and non-professional media practices in both Zambia and Kenya that need to be addressed. It proposes the use of Afri-ethics as well as virtue ethics as a possible solution to ethical dilemmas in Zambia. Whereas the proposition is a

positive attempt towards the solution of the problem, it could face challenges from the diverse media ownership in Kenya, and the globalisation influence on media and culture (Ward, 2008).

In a study by Simiyu (2014), media ownership was interrogated, as well as the relationship between journalistic freedom and media concentration in Kenya. Using the propaganda model as well as the Media Ownership Theory, Simiyu (2014) noted that media ownership and concentration constricted diversification of viewpoints in Kenya during the 2013 General Elections. Simiyu observed that as early as 2009, media concentration on politicians rose as they eyed the 2013 elections. The politicians took advantage of media liberalisation to secure a foothold in the media and buttress their political positions. Such hegemony, Simiyu (2014) warned, could lead to individuals exercising unchecked power. The objective of the study was to explore the relationship between journalism freedom and media ownership concentration in Kenya.

Simiyu's (2014) findings showed that 71 percent of journalists believed that media diversity in Kenya was at a risk, while 69 percent of the respondents believed that the risk was due to media ownership in Kenya. Most journalists interviewed felt that independence of media was an important aspect of democracy, while 52 percent felt that media owners had direct editorial influence. The study perceived that existence of distrust in mainstream media, leading to more questions on journalistic independence, was as a result of the growth of media concentration in Kenya. Media owners were considered as having an influence on choice of media content on radio talk shows.

Simiyu's (2014) study recommended that the MCK needed to be funded by the government, instead of the Media Owners Association, for it to exercise

independence as a regulatory body, and to establish clear guidelines for monitoring hate speech. The study posits that media owners have an influence on generation of radio talk show content (2014). Moreover, the study stated that media owners exercise some control over the regulatory body, MCK due to their funding. Therefore the MCK is held at ransom and it may be biased to or against media regulations which is an indication of internal challenges.

A study by Mukuna (2005) observed the formulation of ethical standards in broadcast media in Kenya. The main objective of the study was to examine ethical standards in broadcast media in Kenya, with specific reference to FM radio stations in Kenya. Talk shows were singled out as the most prone to abuse, with 59 percent of the 132 respondents describing talk shows as offensive. Out of the principles of journalism interrogated, fairness was most neglected, followed by balance and decency. From the practitioners interviewed in the study, 85 percent were aware of the Code of Conduct for the Practice of Journalism in Kenya, which is enforced by MCK.

According to Mukuna (2005), the biggest challenge facing FM radio stations in Kenya was the need to institutionalise professionalism in broadcasting media by policies enactment and recognition of the country's statutes. In the study, principles of journalism were examined along with professionalism, but the main emphasis was on quality of journalism, which also included the mode of hiring, and the quality of presenters. Mukuna's (2005) study suggested institutionalization of professionalism in broadcast media in order to improve the quality of journalism, while this study explored how radio presenters and content impacts on media practice in Kenya, with reference to presenters' training background, adherence to the code of professional ethics, specifically their use of objectionable content, as well as the listeners'

preferences. Mukuna's (2005) study is useful for clarifying that the structuring of a separate code of conduct for broadcast media is essential for its institutionalization and professional development.

Similar research was done by Ochieng, Gachoka, and Mureithi (2014), on the adherence to ethical principles, with special emphasis on the print media. The researchers conducted a social responsibility audit on how media collected and published information, noting that the assigning of media responsibility to individuals in media houses qualified it as a public interest and watchdog institution. The study distinguished media from other industries by the fact that it provided information to citizens that they needed to know. Therefore, journalism was intertwined with democracy and governance of a country.

Ochieng et al. (2014) concluded that, being socially responsible could contribute to enhancing the professionalism of the media in Kenya. The study concluded that although the MCK had set up ethical principles, adherence by most media platforms was problematic. According to practitioners, 'public interest' was not clearly defined in the MCK code of conduct and needed revision. The findings of the study showed that there existed awareness of the MCK code of conduct by reporters, but editors did not involve reporters in the formulation of policy matters. For further research, the study recommended the development of a relationship between adherence to the code of ethics and the level of journalism training.

The study by Ochieng et al. (2014) differed from this research because it was based on print media, and its main concern was on the adherence to the code of conduct. A look at social responsibility as an enhancement for professionalism in media brings out similarities between their study and the study at hand. Further "public interest was not clearly expounded in the current code of ethics, which left a

loophole in the ratification of the clause” (Ochieng et al., 2014). The study provides an example of an area in the code that is not well executed. The welfare and working environment were among the many issues brought up that affect media practice in Kenya. However, implications of presenters and content were not addressed in the study, as its area of concern was print media, as opposed to broadcast media.

A study by Wefwafwa (2014) sought to evaluate the training standards, capacity, facilities, and manpower of Kenyan media colleges. Inadequate training facilities were noted, coupled with the trainees’ lack of knowledge of their audience, presentation skills and lack of content upon which to report. The learners were subjected to theoretical work and not practical work that would better equip them for the electronic media practice.

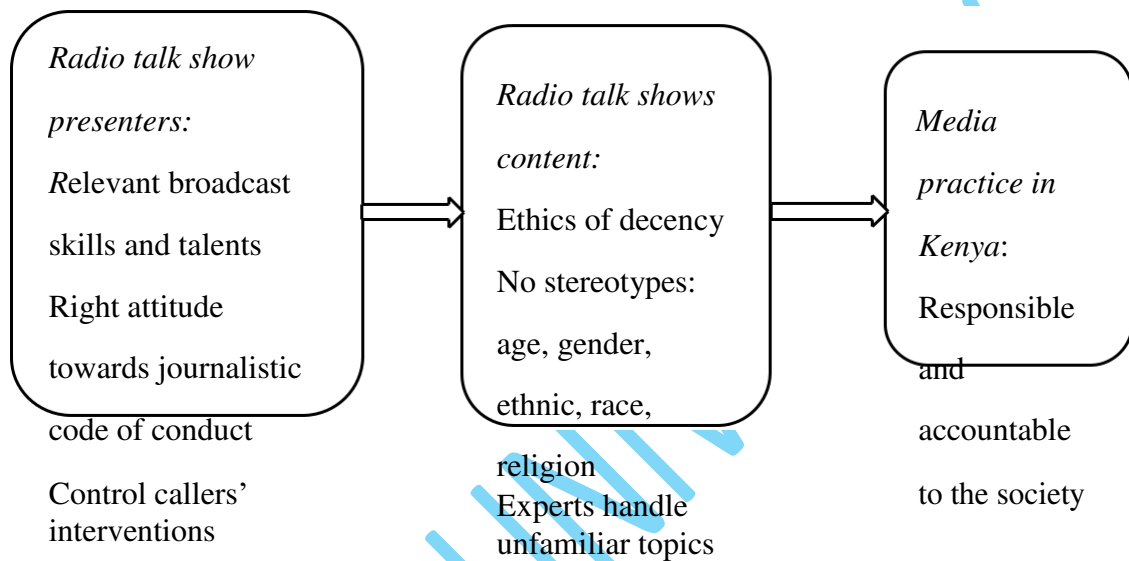
According to Wefwafwa (2014), Boston University was considered to have the best journalism training in the world because it stressed on strong writing and speaking skills. The University considered Liberal Arts Education as a solid ground and as the building block for journalism training. Students in the university covered 70 percent of an area outside communication in order to have something to report on. The study findings showed that 91.5 percent of the trainers felt that there was need to improve training facilities for the media courses they taught. Additionally, 94 percent of the student respondents concurred with the trainers that more facilities were needed for journalism training. Concerning the level of contentment with journalism training by media houses, 77.2 percent of student respondents felt that lack of facilities affected the training quality. The formation of trainers’ networks to support each other was recommended by the study.

Wefwafwa (2014) also opined that the hiring of more experienced trainers, especially in electronic media, was essential. Even though this study provides useful

information on the status of journalism training in Kenya, it does not bring out a clear picture of the discrepancies as well as specialisation and the training gaps in the profession.

### Conceptual Framework

A diagrammatic conceptual framework was formulated as a guiding structure for the study and discussed.



*Figure 2.3: Conceptual Framework*  
Source: Author (2016)

### Discussion

Ideal presenters of radio talk shows would have had broadcast skills through training, be talented in the gift of the gab, have the right attitude towards the code of conduct, and control and moderate callers' interventions. Content by such presenters would exhibit the morals of decency, which is also devoid of stereotypes such as age, gender, ethnicity, race, or religion. Such presenters would seek the counsel of experts when they need it, as opposed to handling topics that are outside their expertise. Consequently, content would be sensitive to the time of the day and the age of listeners that are tuned in, especially children. In so doing, the presenters would exhibit responsibility and accountability of media practice in Kenya.

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### Summary

This chapter examined the theoretical framework, general and empirical literature related to the problem of study and the conceptual framework of the study. Scholarship related to radio talk shows as well as media regulation, the relevance of social responsibility ethics was examined. The reviewed literature included studies on media regulation as well as challenges on adherence to the media code of ethics in the practice. The following chapter presents the research methodology used in the study.

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## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

This chapter presents the research design, target population, sampling size, and sampling technique. It also includes data collection instruments and procedures, data analysis plan and ethical considerations.

#### Research Design

The study employed a descriptive survey using qualitative and quantitative approaches. Kombo and Tromp (2006) as cited in Kerlinger (1973) proposed that descriptive studies were a form of fact-finding, and could result in formulation of important principles of knowledge, as well as solutions to significant problems. This study therefore employed a descriptive survey in order to describe the presenters' training background, their exposure and application of the MCK code of ethics, generation of radio talk show content as well as the handling of callers' complaints. The descriptive survey was also used to describe the MCK's general observation of the performance of radio talk shows countrywide.

#### Population of the Study

“A population refers to an entire group of individuals, objects or items from which samples of measurement are taken” (Kombo & Tromp, 2006, p. 76). Individuals in the population include members with similar characteristics. The population of this study was represented by FM radio stations in Kenya which number 120 (Nyabuga & Booker, 2013).

#### Study Site

The study was carried out on selected FM radio stations in Nairobi, which included: Radio Citizen operated by Royal Media Services, Jambo FM operated by

Radio Africa Limited, and Radio Maisha, which is owned by the KTN – Standard Group Limited. These three radio stations ranked highest in an audience survey conducted by Synovate/ Ipsos in January 2015 (Mungai, 2015). The audience survey presented a peculiar scenario, as Jambo FM and Radio Maisha are newcomers to the popularity stakes. All the three radio stations are located in Nairobi County.

### Target Population

The target population was the 10 leading FM radio stations in Nairobi that air morning talk shows (Ipsos/Karf Survey, 2015). The rationale for choosing Nairobi County was that, it has the highest concentration of FM radio stations in Kenya, therefore the findings could be applied to the other stations in the County. Local radio stations were excluded from the sample because of their lack of stability. Although many FM stations contribute to social development, and they provide a platform for the previously excluded audience due to illiteracy (Apunyu, 2011, p. 5; as cited in Omwoha, 2014), some taint the reputation of FM radio (Okoti & ondego, 2013).

In the past they were used for undermining local cohesion due to lack of professionalism and exposure to the code of ethics (Abdi & Dean, 2008). Equally excluded was the public and national broadcaster, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation. It was not used in the survey for comparison purposes since it was not faulted in the media monitoring survey, which showed that commercial radio stations were notorious for breaching decency ethics in the journalistic code of conduct. The research assumed that the three leading commercial radio stations in the ratings were best placed for generalisation that could be applied to other stations in Kenya.

### Sample Size

The study used three samples. The first sample size for presenters was derived from 10 leading FM stations (Ipsos/Karf Survey, 2015). Three privately owned radio

stations that air breakfast talk shows, were selected on the basis of audience ratings from January 2015 (Synovate/Ipsos, 2015). The first three radio stations' rating were: Radio Citizen at 40 percent, Radio Jambo had 28 percent, while Radio Maisha was at 21 percent (Appendix E). The second sample size was from morning radio talk show content. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), 10 percent of the population is considered as a sufficiently representative sample. The sample was derived from content aired in the year 2016. The weekdays in the year numbered 261 days. The 10 percent of 261 days was 26 days. The study therefore considered 26 days content in the month of January 2016. For each radio talk show, three hourly slots were selected, which amounted to 78 hours. For each of the three radio stations, 26 hours content was selected.

#### Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling was used for selecting radio stations, out of which radio talk show content and presenters were selected. Senior MCK officials with comprehensive knowledge were also selected for interviews. The radio stations were considered for the study, according to the Ipsos/Karf survey (2015) on listenership ratings. The three stations Radio Citizen, Radio Jambo and Radio Maisha continued to take the lead in June to July 2016 according to Kantar Geopoll's Media Measurement Service, (Appendix F). They also represent the biggest media houses in Kenya.

The fourth leading station in the 2015 ratings was Radio Taifa, run by the state owned KBC. However, this was discarded from the sample because, according to research done by the MCK (2014), the focus of the greatest ethical concern (radio stations leading in notoriety for objectionable content) were the privately-owned commercial stations. It was fitting, therefore, for this thesis to use the first three radio

stations in the 2015 ratings – which happen to be private commercial concerns – as the research sample. Among the stations not included were vernacular outlets Inoro FM and Kameme FM, whose content covers specific language communities rather than national audiences.

Presenters from all the three sampled radio stations numbered six, one main presenter and a comedian for each. Radio talk show content was sampled using a simple random sampling procedure. The selection of the period of time for radio talk show pre-recorded content was purposively sampled, where the hourly slots with relevant content were derived. The researcher sourced from Synovate/Ipsos the pre-recorded content for the month of January 2016.

#### Types of Data

The research addressed interviews as primary data from presenters in radio stations, MCK officials as well as pre-recorded raw content from the three selected radio stations. The data were both qualitative and quantitative.

#### Data Collection Instruments

Structured in-depth interviews were used in the research. In-depth interviews elicit detailed information about a person's thoughts and behaviours and explore new issues in depth (Boyce & Neale, 2006). The advantage of using such interviews is that format controls reliability and speed. The disadvantage is that the respondent is limited on what they can talk about (Smith & Osborn, 2007). The interview questions for the presenters and MCK senior officials were self-developed with standardised questions for uniformity purposes (Kombo & Tromp, 2006).

Challenges of using in-depth interviews are that the interviewee could be given to caution and evasiveness when directly addressed (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). A clear introduction for the purpose of research, and assurance to respondents that the

results would benefit the media industry, was part of the researcher's attempts to minimize such concerns. Semi-structured interview questions were used to create some flexibility in the interviews and as a guide. This gave the interviewer an opportunity to establish rapport with the interviewee, probe when the need arose, and allow the respondent room to articulate their interests and concerns (Smith & Osborn, 2007).

### Data Collection Procedures

Before data collection, authorization from the relevant authorities was first sought. An approval letter from Daystar University was sought that was used to seek authorization from the management of selected radio stations. The researcher also obtained a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI).

Four radio talk show presenters were interviewed, one from Radio Jambo, two from Radio Citizen, and one from Radio Maisha according to their availability. The interviews were carried out with their consent and with their understanding that their input would be used for academic research. Respondents were assured of confidentiality such as exclusion of their names.

The developed thematic framework was used to record quantitative (manifest) data and qualitative (latent) data through coding and highlighting unique messages in the pre-recorded radio talk show content. Listening to the radio talk show samples for an overall pattern of content, and then listening again to choose content by themes, and to record frequency of occurrence, gave access to sub-topics in the data from which emerged patterns of response and meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Themes such as graphic language, obscenity, gender stereotyping, and ethnicity or hate speech

were examined to find out their implication for media practice in Kenya. Thereafter, presenters' in-depth interviews were carried out. Lastly, MCK senior officials were interviewed, namely, the Legal Officer and the Media Monitoring Officer. Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis was used in both the pre-recorded content and presenter interviews. The use of coding, counting, and analysis of themes captured important aspects from the data that related to the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). A thematic daily coding framework was developed from MCK (2014) and applied to the pre-recorded talk show slots. The coding scheme for the programmes is provided in Appendix D.

The MCK interview schedule developed (Appendix C) was guided by the objectives of the study that sought an overview, from a regulator's perspective, of ethical and decency concerns surrounding radio talk shows in Kenya and the need to uphold set ethical standards.

#### Pretesting

The interview schedule developed for radio presenters was pretested on Mulembe FM presenters, a vernacular morning talk show radio station. The station and its presenters did not constitute part of the research population since it is a vernacular radio station in Kenya, whose target audience is regional and from a particular ethnic group. The presenters for Mulembe FM were willing to be pretested as opposed to other radio stations. The target FM radio stations had countrywide reach and featured as leading national radio stations in Ipsos/Karf Survey. The pre-test revealed that there was need for another question that had not previously been provided.

After pretesting, the last question on the influence of rating on radio talk shows was included, since the researcher found it necessary as an evaluation measure for radio talk show content. Time taken to answer the questions (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003), was determined so that when booking appointments with respondents, time required for interview would be specified.

The MCK interview schedule was pretested on a management staff member from a government institution. Interview questions were then evaluated for suitability to the MCK respondents. Similarly, pre-recorded data from radio talk show content was pre-sampled by listening to the content two times, to be able to understand how the content was structured. Repetitive listening was done for each radio station as it had its own mode of presentation. Pre-sampling helped in selection of hourly slots that had relevant themes for the research.

#### Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity of the research instruments refers to their relevance and correctness (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Reliability measures the degree a research instrument yields stable and consistent results that are replicable. To ensure reliability, one-to-one in-depth interviews were carried out and recorded. The same sets of questions were used for all respondents to ensure highest reliability and consistency. Interview questions were at times rephrased or alternative questions and examples given (Macfarlan, 2015) when respondents' answers were not clear or inadequate. The data were analysed uniformly to increase reliability.

Validity, on the other hand, is how well an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. To ascertain validity, the researcher developed relevant questions based on research questions. This helped to determine the degree data obtained from the instruments would meaningfully and accurately measure

theoretical concepts according to the requirements of the study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

### Data Analysis Plan

Data analysis involves examining collected information from the survey by extracting variables, detecting anomalies and testing assumptions in order to make deductions and inferences (Kombo & Tromp, 2006, p. 117). The raw data goes through three stages before analysis. These include pre-processing, developing of a coding scheme, and transcribing. Pre-processing was applied to eliminate unusable data such as those with similar responses, ambiguous answers, contradictory responses from related questions, or any other data that lacked relevant themes to research findings (Kombo & Tromp, 2006).

Pre-recorded radio talk show content was pre-processed by eliminating music content, lengthy commercials or extended hourly slots with invited guests. After selecting relevant data, it was then transcribed and typed into visual presentations, namely tables using SSPS software version 20. The use of figures and tables, or display items, are powerful communication tools that give a professional feel (Rodrigues, 2013). The data was then sampled for relevant themes and coded, ready for analysis (Kombo & Tromp, 2006).

Explanatory design analysis was applied to data from radio talk show content (qualitative converted to quantitative) and qualitative data from interviews. Qualitative data from presenters and MCK officials' interviews were used to confirm quantitative data from radio talk show content once the three sets had been analysed. Qualitative data from interviews were presented using tables and analysed by key words being converted to themes. They were then presented using descriptive analysis.



The advantages of using qualitative data were that issues of perception of media conduct could be examined in-depth, for instance when it came to handling of content in research questions one and two, knowledge or exposure to the professional code of ethics was probed, where respondents gave different instances on how they were exposed to the codes. Human experience data may yield powerful and compelling findings applicable to other situations of practice, which may be as effective as the quantitative generalisations of sample characteristics to larger populations.

Disadvantages included presence of researchers during interviews, which was unavoidable due to the need for the researcher to establish trust, and build on that trust to acquire data. Such level of trust could not be easily established with research assistants due to the sensitivity of the data. On the other hand, the researcher's presence could have affected responses during the interviews (Anderson, 2010, p. 141). This was mitigated by establishing of rapport with the respondents for them to gain confidence and trust. According to Kulkarni (2013), triangulation of data is done to capture different dimensions and cross-validate results. This was done for the three sets of data in this study.

#### Ethical Considerations

Research ethics are important because they promote the principles and aims of research, among them knowledge, truth, and avoidance of error. Since research involves the cooperation as well as coordination of different people, disciplines and institutions, essential values for their collaboration, such as trust, accountability, mutual respect and fairness (Resnik, 2011), were applied in this study. Accountability to the respondents as well as the government authorisation body was factored in the study.

In that regard, this research took into consideration laws in Kenya which prohibit harm of the respondents in the course of conducting research. Respondents were given full details concerning the purpose of the research, identification of the researcher, and importance of the research to media consumers as well as the media regulatory body, MCK. In addition to seeking their informed consent, respondents were assured of their confidentiality and privacy with a pledge to protect their identity and with a promise that they would be given a report on the of the research findings after the study was completed. Additionally, personal information that could lead to discomfort such as marital status or remunerations, were not included in the interview schedule.

#### Summary

This chapter explained research approaches, the design involved, data collecting tools, data collection procedure and analysis methods and ethical considerations that were upheld during the study. Using that approach, the researcher hoped to answer research questions and meet research objectives stated in chapter one. In the chapter that follows, data presentation and interpretation of themes from pre-recorded talk show content, presenters' and senior MCK officers' interview responses are provided.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

#### Introduction

This chapter presents analyses and interprets the study findings. In this study, the data were collected and analysed in response to research questions found in chapter one of the thesis. The study interrogated the nature of radio presenters and the kind of content they produced against complaints raised by listeners according to MCK (2014), which postulated that radio talk show content lacked quality, respect for moral and cultural sensitivities.

Using descriptive survey, presenters, MCK senior officers were interviewed and content of their responses was examined. The purpose of the survey was to find out the implication of radio talk show presenters and content on media practice in Kenya using selected radio stations. Pre-recorded content, interviews with radio talk show presenters, as well as senior officers from MCK constituted three sets of the data collected and analysed using content analysis. The first sample of pre-recorded talk shows content from station was coded as follows: Radio Citizen, Radio Maisha and Radio Jambo were sampled for a period of 26 days. The research found that 63 hourly slots had usable content with relevant themes for this research. Therefore the researcher selected 21 pieces of usable content from each station.

By selecting content with relevant themes, the research omitted slots that were predominantly filled with music or continuation of presentations by guest speakers, causing replication information. Such slots were before seven o'clock news and after nine o'clock, just before the end of the talk shows. According to radio ratings published by Geopoll Kenya for February to April 2015, Radio Maisha, Radio Jambo and Radio Citizen had the highest listenership between 6.00 a.m. and 10.00 a.m.

(Onyango, 2015). Therefore this study selected only morning talk show content between 6.00 am to 10.00 am from the three radio stations.

The second data sample was from interviews with radio talk show presenters that availed themselves for the exercise. Two were from Radio Citizen, one from Radio Maisha while one was from Radio Jambo. Two officials interviewed from MCK constituted a third sample. The aim was an in-depth probe of what the MCK perceived to be the status of radio talk show presenters and content in the media industry in Kenya.

### Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

The first set of data from three radio stations' talk show recordings during the month of January, 2016 was coded into numerical values in terms of frequencies for both presenters and listeners per hourly segment. It was then consolidated onto sheets for tabulation, using SPSS software. Frequencies of themes from sampled talk show content were presented in pairs in four tables, compared and contrasted where necessary.

*Table 4.1: Politics and Current Affairs Views of Presenters and Listeners of Selected Radio Stations*

Radio Stations	Respondents	Themes			
		Politics		Current Affairs	
		Frequencies	Percentage	Frequencies	Percentage
Radio Citizen	Presenters	13	7%	31	17%
	Callers	48	26%	51	28%
Radio Maisha	Presenters	40	21%	42	22%
	Callers	51	27%	26	14%
Radio Jambo	Presenters	21	11%	22	12%
	Callers	15	8%	13	7%
	Totals	188	100	185	100

The discussion of two variables, politics and current affairs, was contrasted among the three talk show outlets in Table 4.1. During the talk shows, the core

presenters set the agenda followed by further explanation by the comedian, before allowing telephone call-in contributions from listeners.

The content emanated from both the presenters' tone and comments, and the feedback from call-in contributors. Current affairs discussions were the most intense (188), while political discussions appeared 185 times. The difference between politics and current affairs is that, the former refers to issues concerning quality of governance, suitability of leaders to their positions, law-making and the future in leadership choices. The latter refers to happenings across the country like accidents, floods, inflation, and the education system. In cases where guest speakers were invited, core presenters acted as moderators between the speaker and the callers.

In Table 4.1, callers from Radio Maisha had more topics to discuss in the area of politics (51 out of 188 calls) or 27 percent, while Radio Citizen callers' discussions on political topics rated 48 out of 188 calls or 26 percent. Radio Jambo had fewer calls during discussion on politics (15 out of 188 calls) or 8 percent. The approach by Radio Jambo was they provided discussion topics upon which they asked callers to respond. After different viewpoints were raised, one of the presenters moderated the discussion, clarifying to listeners the stakes in reference to particular topical issues.

One issue posed for discussion by presenters on January 12, 2016, was a question on whether or not listeners agreed with the view that Kenya's Independent Electoral Boundaries Commission (IEBC) was likely to be partial towards the Jubilee Party over the CORD coalition, leading to a possible rigging of the 2017 presidential and parliamentary elections. Another concern was the listeners' thought about the change of legislation allowing the President to appoint the Chief Justice, the Inspector

General and the Auditor General, and whether such powers were likely to give the president an advantage over the opposition in the forth-coming elections.

Other political issues raised by presenters in all the three radio stations were: perceptions of the performances of county governors; rivalry between senators and governors; and aspirations by the former to contest for gubernatorial positions in the coming 2017 elections (see Table 4.1). The public spat between the Governor of Mombasa, Hassan Joho, and Nairobi Senator Mike Sonko, which sparked demonstrations in Mombasa by women condemning Sonko for his criticisms of Governor Joho, featured in the discussions as well.

Radio Maisha presenters had more calls during current affairs discussions (42 out of 185 calls) or 22 percent, while radio station no. 1 had 31 out of 185 calls (or 17 percent). In radio station no. 3, presenters' responses to current affairs issues were lowest (22 out of 185 calls) or 12 percent. Current affairs discussion topics included the threat of closure to the Kisii University by the Cabinet Secretary, Dr. Fred Okeng'o Matiang'i; the CA free-to-air regulations; and errant Pastors who charged their congregants for 'miracles' and the 'prosperity' gospel. In a sense, radio was being used as a public sphere for listeners to air their views and debate on topical issues.

*Table 4.2: Relationships, Family and Lifestyle Views of Presenters and Listeners of Selected Radio Stations*

Radio Stations	Respondents	Themes			
		Relationships and Family		Lifestyle and Entertainment	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Radio Citizen	Presenters	1	1%	30	19%
	Callers	0	0%	7	5%
Radio Maisha	Presenters	0	0	55	21%
	Callers	0	0	26	3%
Radio Jambo	Presenters	47	43%	33	35%
	Callers	61	56%	5	17%
Total		108	100	156	100

Table 4.2 presents relationships and family, lifestyle as well as entertainment themes from the three selected radio stations. Regarding the relationships and family theme, Radio Jambo listeners made 61 out of 108 calls (or 56 percent), while Radio Citizen and Radio Maisha had no discussions on relationships and family. In Table 4.2, Radio Jambo presenters considered their talk show programme as family shows with “soft touch” content that suited all family members. The same radio station had a segment known as “*Patanisho*,” translated as “Reconciliation,” where members of aggrieved families or friends would present their complaints and get a chance to be reconciled on air. The reconciliation process entailed presenters’ and listeners’ contributions.

Not all cases presented in Table 4.2 on Radio Jambo on *Patanisho* were resolved. Such a case was presented on Thursday, January 7, 2016 at 8.00 o’clock, between two sisters who had disagreed. Listeners were requested to give their opinion on why the elder sister sent away the younger one who had lived with her, without giving any explanation. Subsequently, she ceased to communicate with her younger sister. Listeners from Kakamega where the two hailed from were of the opinion that, the younger sister had had an illicit relationship with her elder sister’s husband. Their proposition was that, should that be the case, the younger sister had to call elders, and slaughter a black goat, so that the elders could reconcile them.

The differing opinions from the complainant were not moderated by the presenters. That gave the aggrieved parties opportunities to make their own decision on whether to reconcile or not off-air, or get an arbitrator to assist them to resolve their differences as was suggested by some listeners (see Table 4.2). Another case of failed reconciliation was between spouses. The case of Ms. X and Mr. Y was presented on Friday January 8, 2016 where the glaring facts were that she was

tortured and beaten up by both her husband as well as her in-laws. When the host called her, the response was as follows:

Halo Bi. X, mimi naitwa Bw. Z kutoka Radio Jambo. Na kuna huyu mzee anaitua Bw. Y, angependa kukuomba msamaha. Kwanza, nini ilitoa Bi. Rhodah? (Bi. X akamjibu) Siku ile tulikosana na Bw.Y, nilirudi nyumbani kutoka kazini, nikafua nguo, kisha nikaenda kulala. (Mume wangu) akaniita, na kuniuliza saa yenye nilirudi nyumbani. Tukajibishana, alafu akaanza kunichapa. Alinichapa sana mpaka damu ikaanza kutoka kwa mapua. Aki Bw. Z, nimeteseka sana hapo kwao; kuchota maji, kuenda kwa shamba, na nikimaliza hayo, napikia mtoto wangu, halafu saa tano ikifika, naenda kwa biashara yangu ya kushona nguo. Nikirudi jioni, tena inafaa nipike. Hawanipendi kwa hiyo boma'. Mimi siwezi kurudi, nimeteseka sana.

This is translated as:

Hallo, Ms. X, my name is Mr. Z from Radio Jambo. A certain gentleman called Mr.Y would like to ask for forgiveness. First, what happened, Ms. X? [Ms. X responded] On the day I disagreed with Y, I got back home (from my work place), washed clothes and went to bed. (When my husband came back), he called me and asked what time I had come back home. We had a bitter exchange of words and then he started beating me up, until I nose bled. Surely Mr. Z, I have been tortured so much in his home. I would wake up in the morning, draw water, work on the farm, cook for my child and then I go to my dress making business. In the evening, when I got back at 6.00 pm, I would again make supper. They do not like me in that home. I cannot go back to a place where I suffered so much.

Ms. X declined to reconcile with her ex-husband. The host rebuked Mr. Y for such acts of violence against his wife and advised him to protect her from his family. It was such an emotional reconciliation case that the aggrieved wife cried as she recalled how she had been mistreated. One caller was so offended by Mr. Y's behaviour that he condemned the actions with such strong language that could not be published.



More constructive counsel was offered by callers encouraging Mr. Y to give Ms. X more time to recover from the pain she encountered in their marriage, before he could consider asking for reconciliation (see Table 4.2).

There were however some success stories where some relationships were resolved, especially between spouses. A reconciled couple called back to thank Radio Jambo and explain how they finally reconciled. On January 26, 2016 at 9.00 am, the Radio Jambo hosts brought back a reconciliation case that had been presented earlier on the programme and later resolved. Mr. A and Ms. B were reconciled when he forgave her for unfaithfulness. Earlier on, Ms. B had claimed that Mr. A did not satisfy her (in bed), and that was why she had an affair. Similarly, Mr. A and Ms. B thanked Radio Jambo for reconciling them.

In this study, lifestyle and entertainment were presented as light jokes about people, lifestyles or occurrences. The three radio stations used their hired comedians who worked as co-hosts, or played recorded comedy talk to liven moments for listeners. Another form of entertainment which was not considered among the themes of this study was music. Radio Maisha presenters had the highest number of comedy and light talk instances (55 out of 156 times) or 35 percent. For similar presentations, Radio Jambo presenters had 33 out of 156 occurrences (at 21 percent) in their discussion. Comical and lifestyle discussions by Radio Citizen presenters occurred 30 of 156 occurrences (or 19 percent) of the recorded lifestyle conversations on the three channels that were sampled.

Radio Citizen had sessions where a comedian gave a lengthy political speech, mimicking political leaders' voices and at the same time giving guidance to listeners concerning political issues. On January 12, 2016 at 6.00 am the voice actor, Y, presented the following:

Hujambo msikilizajii,... na karibu kwa yaliotendekaa...Leo nimekuandalia makala maluum...kuhusu mwito wa Raisi Uhuru Kenyattaa..., kwamba tusiwe watu wa kulalamikaaa..., bali wa kutafuta suluhishooo... .

This was translated as:

I greet you dear listener... .Welcome to (this session) on occurrences... . Today I have prepared for you special series, about word of counsel by President Kenyattaa... , that we should not be people who persistently complain, but who look for solutions...’ .

The comical presenter went on to summarise activities and discussions that took place during President Kenyatta’s visit to the coastal counties and their implications. Radio Maisha callers’ discussions on entertainment and lifestyle issues were 55 out 156 occurrences (or 35 percent), while just seven out of 156 callers (5 percent) were recorded as callers’ contributions to the same theme on Radio Citizen. Only three percent of the calls sampled on Radio Jambo contributed to lifestyle and entertainment issues as indicated on Table 4.2.

*Table 4.3: A correlation Between Sports and Traffic Updates/Weather Forecast on the Three Selected Radio Stations in Kenya*

Radio Stations	Respondents	Themes			
		Sports		Traffic Updates/ Weather	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Radio Citizen	Presenters	19	30%	16	33%
	Callers	14	22%	7	14%
Radio Maisha	Presenters	7	11%	18	37%
	Callers	6	10%	7	14%
Radio Jambo	Presenters	15	24%	1	2%
	Callers	2	3%	0	0%
	Total	63	100	49	100

In Table 4.3, sports themes were correlated with traffic updates and weather forecast. Sports and sports-related content by presenters on Radio Citizen were 19 out of 63 occurrences or 30 percent. Radio Jambo presenters had 15 out of 63 occurrences

or 24 percent. Radio Maisha presenters' discussion of sports was 6 out of 63 occurrences or 10 percent.

Sports discussion on all the three radio stations was prompted by presenters after news highlights on the same. Listeners' opinion was sought on performance of teams, especially soccer, or sports administration. On Radio Citizen sports discussion by callers amounted to 14 out of 63 or 22 percent. Sports discussions featured mostly on Fridays on radio station no. 1 for the purpose of setting an agenda for the weekend, and on Mondays to start the week on a high note. Callers' sports discussions on radio station no. 2 were 6 out of 63 occurrences or 10 percent, while callers' discussions of sports on Radio Jambo were 2 out of 63 occurrences or 3 percent. Traffic updates were mainly done by callers upon request by presenters on the three radio stations.

*Table 4:4 Obscene Language and Stereotypes for Callers and Presenters on the Three Selected Kenyan Radio Stations*

Radio Station	Respondents	Themes			
		Obscenity Language		Stereotypes: Racial/Ethnic/Gender	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Radio Citizen	Presenters	4	33%	0	0%
	Callers	0	0%	0	0%
Radio Maisha	Presenters	2	17%	6	67%
	Callers	2	17%	1	11%
Radio Jambo	Presenters	4	33%	1	11%
	Callers	0	0%	1	11%
Total		12	100	9	100

Table 4.4 tracked the language used by presenters and listeners. The research analysed the recorded talk show material for evidence of obscene language as well as racial, ethnic, or gender stereotypes. Frequencies were found to be fairly low compared to other themes. Radio Citizen and Radio Jambo presenters had an equivalent number of instances of obscene language. They each had four out of 13 occurrences (33 percent) conveying objectionable content, but the content attracted no

engagement from listeners in the sampled time frame. An example of such discussions appeared on January 6, 2016 on Radio Citizen, where the presenters used obscene language.

A comment from one of the presenters (comedian) stated that ‘Inspector Opondo’ on social media, *‘hajui kinyambisi chake kinaitua kinyambisi.’* That was translated as, ‘Inspector Opondo does not know that his bottom (that which farts) is called a bottom (that which farts), drawing information from social media, the presenters were informed as follows: “Tuko na warembo hapo Kencom wamevaa spaghetti na vile kuna baridi. *Saa hii si ya kuvaa* “one string instrument” *inapita kwa kinyambisi. Ni wakati wa kuvaa* “mothers union.” It was translated as; some young ladies at Kencom bus stop (Nairobi) are wearing spaghetti (tops). Since it is very cold, wearing of stringed instruments (bikini underwear) that passes through the bottoms is not good. They should wear “mother’s union” (bloomers). The comedian on Radio Citizen (Table 4.4) made a sudden turn from discussing a top (blouse) to underwear. An issue that started as a normal comment was diverted to obscene talk. Another incident reported on the same day was stated that, “*muzazi aliuza ng’ombe kusomesha ng’ombe.*” It was translated as, “a parent sold a cow to educate a cow.” That means that a parent sold a cow to pay fees to a child who was not bright. The comedian referred to someone’s child as a cow.

Radio Maisha similarly, had two occurrences with obscene language from presenters, and another two recorded contributions from callers (see Table 4.4). In one of the incidents, the presenters mimicked a preacher who claimed to be saved, and gave a sermonette on crucifixion, referring to Barabbas as Barnabas (from the Bible). Their discussion was in bad taste, even though it was meant to support the on-going debate on the proposed free-to-air bill, meant to harness rogue church ministers who

were asking for a “seed” offering in order to pray for congregants. Some evidence of obscene language was evident in the sampled content, which meant that it existed.

Themes on racial, ethnic or gender stereotypes were most visible on Radio Maisha with the frequency of six occurrences from presenters (see Table 4.4). These were noted during Patanisho segment, where at times presenters criticized husbands and wives for their weaknesses. Such an instance occurred when Mr. F had sent his wife, Mama G, away and lamented that it was because he did not know how to make “ugali” (maize meal dish), that he wanted her back to cook for him. Both presenters and callers criticized Mr. F for failing to learn how to cook for him. This fits in with the gender stereotype where women were considered as cooks for their husbands, which could be classified as offensive.

*Table 4.5: Economic, Business and Advertisement Themes by Presenters and Listeners From the Three Selected Radio Stations in Kenya*

Radio Stations	Respondents	Themes			
		Economic/Business		Advertisements	
		Frequencies	Percentage	Frequencies	Percentage
Radio Citizen	Presenters	4	27%	158	43%
	Callers	0	0%		
Radio Maisha	Presenters	7	47%	136	37%
	Callers	3	20%		
Radio Jambo	Presenters	1	6%	75	20%
	Callers	0	0%		
	Total	15	100	369	100

Table 4.5 represents economic, business and advertising themes. Economic or business themes featured highest in Radio Maisha which had seven out of 15 occurrences or 47 percent by presenters, while callers discussions appeared three out of 15 times or 20 percent during the sampled talk shows. The low occurrence of discussions on economic or business themes in talk shows could have been an indication that presenters and listeners did not prefer such themes.

Advertisements on Radio Citizen appeared 158 out of 369 times or 43 percent, followed by Radio Maisha at 136 of 369 times out or 37 percent, while Radio Jambo featured 75 out of 369 times or 20 percent. Advertisements are an indicator of high listenership ratings due to popularity of presenters, and the topics they discussed. The prevalence of advertisements could be because of high listenership rates. Data from Presenters' Interviews

Presenters' responses from interview questions were tabulated in a descriptive format using SPSS data software and interpreted using recurring themes.

*Table 4.6: The Period of Time Presenters had Worked with the Radio Station.*  
How long have you worked with the station?

---

*Respondent One*

I have worked on this radio morning show for six years.

*Respondent Two*

I have worked on this radio morning show for five years.

*Respondent*

*Three*

I have worked for six years at the breakfast show in this radio station.

*Respondent Four*

I have worked as a radio presenter in this station for five years.

---

In Table 4.6, respondent one and three had worked for six years while respondent two and four had worked for five years each in their respective stations. That means they had gathered experience as radio talk show presenters in their respective radio stations which could contribute to mastery in the field.

*Table 4.7: Training Background Before Joining the Radio Station.*

Explain your training background before you got this job?

---

*Respondent One*

1. I trained as an actress/comedian and in film production. *Respondent Two*

1. Before being employed as a radio presenter, I acquired a Diploma in *Respondent*

*Three*

*Respondent Four*

1. I started working as a radio presenter in the year 2002 before I acquired any formal training.

2. Before that, I had been trained in drama directing prior to joining high school.

3. Throughout my high school I directed and trained people in drama.

4. Later on I joined Deutsche Welle Radio in Bonn, Germany in the Kiswahili Department where I also trained for one year.

5. When I came back, I joined a radio academy by Phil Matthews, which is one of the best in the country.

---

Respondents two and four in Table 4.7 had broadcast training while respondent one and three had no prior broadcast training before joining their respective radio stations. The training background of the presenters was an indication that media houses preferred to hire for other reasons perhaps such as good voices, or comedians to work as radio talk show presenters. It was proof that media houses were infiltrated by non- media practitioners. There seemed to be a training gap between presenters employed by radio stations, and the trained journalists from local learning institutions in Kenya, a finding which answers objective two of the study.

*Table 4.8: Training Background After Joining the Radio Station.*

After getting this job, have you had any further training? Please explain.

*Respondent One*

1. Yes, after joining the radio station, I underwent in-house training in radio production.

*Respondent Two*

1. After employment as a radio presenter, I acquired a Bachelor of Arts in Communication.
2. I underwent further training on coverage of specific topics such as the general elections, and constitution process by the committee of experts.
3. I have also had an in-house training on media ethics and editorial policy.

*Respondent Three*

1. After being hired as a radio presenter, I got on-job training by a radio specialist (40 years' experience) from America on radio presentation.
2. External training includes communication skills, public mass communication and how to sell on air.

*Respondent Four*

1. Due to my experience in drama as well as formal training and experience in radio production, I was confident that I could do everything with my body, voice and facial expression. That experience has helped me as a radio presenter.

It was evident from Table 4.8 that media houses provided tailor-made training programmes for their employees, in addition to their prior experiences or broadcast training before joining the radio stations. They contracted trainers with the desired experience to train their radio personnel, for instance for respondent one and two who had in-house training from an experienced presenter, while respondent three was trained by an expatriate consultant brought in by the respective media house. The rest of the training, was on specialised areas such as specialised reporting, media ethics, editorial policy, communication skills, public mass communication, and media marketing on air (see Table 4.8). MCK provided some of the short courses with an aim of building radio presenters' professional capacity.



*Table 4.9: Presenters' Exposure to the MCK Code of Professional Ethics*

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Have you had exposure to the MCK code of professional ethics?

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*Respondent One*

1. The media house took us through the MCK code of regulations.
2. We were made to sign that we will abide by them.

1. We had an in-house training that integrated media ethics with the editorial policy for talk show and radio presenters.

1. Yes, I have had exposure to the MCK code of regulations.
2. The Company inducted us on the regulations. *Respondent Four*

1. I first had exposure to MCK code of conduct and professional ethics when I worked as a radio presenter, way back in 2002, before acquiring formal training as a radio presenter.
- 

Three of of four respondents in Table 4.9 had exposure to the MCK code of ethics, through both formal and in-house training. This evident that they are mostly aware of the code of conduct they need to adhere to as they perform their duties.

*Table 4.10: Application of the MCK Code of Ethics to Radio Talk Show Content*

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How does the code govern your work?

---

*Respondent One*

1. We apply code of conduct during talk show.
2. Ensure the content we provide is educative to the audience.
3. We avoid content that could bring conflict to listeners.

*Respondent Two*

1. The MCK code of ethics gives parameters of the dos and don'ts as the constitution is to a media practitioner.

*Respondent Three*

The MCK code of regulations governs our work.

2. I am aware of repercussions of our discussions on air, especially how we handle listeners and the public.
3. We normally take care not to contravene the code of conduct as it controls what we do on air.
4. When we feel that we have contravened any of the rules, we normally apologize and make corrective measures immediately.

*Respondent Four*

I subscribe to the code of conduct in my daily work.

---

The four respondents in Table 4.10 indicated that they applied the MCK code of conduct and professional ethics to their radio work. Respondent one was made to sign an agreement to abide by the code of ethics by the management of the media house. Similarly, respondent two, three and four were urged by their respective media houses to subscribe to the code of ethics, in order to uphold the image of their radio stations. The fact that only one presenter was made to sign is an indicator that different radio stations uphold the code of ethics differently.

*Table 4.11: What Listeners Liked About Radio Talk Show Presenters*

In the feedback you get, what do listeners say they find interesting or likeable about your talk shows?

*Respondent One*

1. The listeners say that I amuse them.
2. I am honest.
3. They also say that I am strong because of being able to working during ungodly hours.  
(*I wake up at 3.30 am and start work at 5.00 am.*)

1. We operate in a politically divided country with two political divides; Jubilee and Cord. When discussing a topic from either group, the group being discussed complained about the content while the opposing group amplified the issue.

2. The group being tabled claimed the presenter had lost track, even when what was being discussed was true.
3. As a presenter, I strive to achieve accuracy and fairness while ensuring that I work within the limits of the code of conduct.

1. Listeners normally respond positively and they like our shows because they are family oriented.
2. We communicate to the entire family, from the kid, to the married, and to the old people. Our topics have a light touch.
3. If it is politics, it is not too strong. I respect family values and I ensure that everything I talk about is within the acceptable norms.

1. Morning shows make people feel good and happy to face the new day with hope and expectation.
2. A new day has come. My agenda is to give listeners hope for a better day.
3. I help people by counseling them and supporting the needy; for instance, sick people to fundraise, in cases where they are unable to pay their hospital bills, for free.

From the perspective of the talk show presenters in Table 4.11, it appears that listeners had a wide variety of benefits. Respondent one was liked due to ability to endure working at odd hours. The presenter was liked because of being able to amuse listeners. Respondent two was liked because of the ability to give a balanced and fair perspective from divergent sides of the political divide. Respondent three was liked because of being moderate and sensitive to family values, while respondent four woke

the listeners up to a new and exciting day. The presenter was happy to give listeners hope for a better day through works of charity and counselling.

*Table 4.12: Listeners' Complaints About Radio Talk Show Content*

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Has anyone ever complained about the content of or any of your radio talk shows?

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*Respondent One*

1. Yes. A listener reported to us about a restaurant that mistreats workers and I discussed it on air.
2. Even though I verified the story as being true, the restaurant owner complained to the management of the media house.
3. We resolved the issue in-house amicably.

1. Most times listeners do not complain about my presentation on talk shows.
2. Once in a while when we state their views, listeners normally counter them with their other opinions.

1. We have an open door policy at Radio Maisha. They sometimes contact the MD, or write to us through emails and even letters.
2. We receive a lot of letters and telephone calls from listeners.

*Respondent Four*

1. At one time a guest gave a wrong telephone contact for a university. Listeners kept calling the private number, until the owner reported the matter to the service provider and to the police.
  2. MCK has never summoned us with regard to listeners' complaints.
- 

Table 4.12 addressed listeners' complaints about the nature of talk show content. Listeners were alert and they raised complaints when aggrieved. Respondent one had a restaurant issue that was highlighted after verification, but owners still raised complaints about the issue. When presenters made mistakes, they apologized to the aggrieved party, which was in agreement with the code of ethics, which states that they should minimize harm.

*Table 4.13: Channeling of Radio Talk Show**Complaints Who were the complaints channeled to?**Respondent One*

1. Complaints are sometimes channeled to the management, but most times they are sent directly to the presenters.
2. They do that through Facebook, Twitter, SMS and telephone calls.

*Respondent Two*

1. Complaints are sometimes channeled to the management, but most times they are sent directly to the presenters.

1. Most times complaints are sent directly to the presenters, but sometimes they are channeled to the Chief Executive officer.

*Respondent Four*

1. The complaints are channeled to the presenter or programme manager.

Table 4.13 addressed the channelling of complaints from listeners to the respective media houses. The four respondents concurred that most times listeners channelled their complaints directly to them as well as to the management of media houses via SMS, Facebook, Twitter or telephone calls. Such channelling is an indicator that listeners liked immediate response to their complaints to long channels through the management of the radio stations or the MCK complaints handling committee. The immediate and two way communication could perhaps improve adherence of the code of conduct by the presenters when they are conscious that listeners get concerned about their conduct.

*Table 4.14: Response by Employer or Statutory Body to Listeners' Complaints*

How did you respond to employer/statutory body, when they drew your attention to the listeners' complaints?

*Respondent One*

1. My response to the employer was that the issue I had presented was verified as being true.

1. I have never been reported to either the management or Media Council of Kenya.

2. The feedback I get through Facebook, Twitter, telephone calls or SMS guides me on steps to take concerning any complaint raised by listeners.

1. During quarterly meetings with the management as well as in weekly meeting with programmes' controller, complaints from listeners are addressed.

2. We review public opinion from listeners' responses.

3. Most of the listeners complain about music, and sometimes they may raise issues on

how a certain topic was discussed or how a certain politician was presented.

*Respondent Four*

1. We try to balance the listeners' views by inviting an expert to the studio to shed more light on the issues under discussion.

Table 4.14 addressed how the statutory body or employers handle complaints from listeners. Respondent three explained that when complaints were addressed to the management, meetings were held to address the issues depending on the urgency of the matter. Such issues were highlighted when media houses were reviewing their performance in their seasonal meeting.

The respondents did not however clarify the kind of reprimand they received when they overstepped their mandate. The four respondents stated that they had never been summoned by the MCK.

*Table 4.15: Sources of Talk Show Content*


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Where do you source information for the content of your talk shows?

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*Respondent One*

1. I source information for discussion on our radio talk show from social media and other mainstream media, for instance news on television and in newspapers.
2. Listeners call, SMS or write to presenters through Facebook or Twitter, giving suggestions on what should be discussed.

*Respondent Two*

1. The content I discuss on morning shows is sourced from current affairs issues that affect the population, for instance the World TB day
2. That prompts me to do research and prepare content for the show.
3. That helps me to invite relevant guests.
4. National events also provide content for discussion as well as issues that affect humanity such as poverty, inflation, bad governance, among others.

*Respondent Three*

1. The show is divided into segments. From 6.00 am to 7.00 am we normally review newspapers. From that segment, most of the stories are from newspapers.
2. We also discuss what we observed on television the previous day and also what is happening on the ground, like breaking news.
3. From social media we may get news like a lion having been spotted outside the game reserve.
4. Immediately the topic changes and we discuss what might be happening to the lion. We call KWS to explain what is happening. There are different sources.
5. Then from 7.00 to 8.00 am we normally have expert guests on different issues. It depends on the issue of the day. If it is about what is happening in the country, an emerging issue like death, a guest psychologist can be invited to talk about it.
6. From 8.00 am we have "Patanisho," a family programme where people who have separated are reconciled. Those who are willing to be reconciled are called and we help them iron out their differences.

*Respondent Four*

1. Content for morning shows is sourced from WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, online newspapers, and from callers across the country.
- 

Table 4.15 presents the talk show presenters' sources of content for discussion on talk shows. The respondents concurred that they sourced talk show content from newspapers, television, WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter stories. Upcoming events were discussion topics as well as breaking news from social media, and from callers in the counties. Guests were also invited to respond to topical issues, such as the

Cabinet Secretary in the Ministry of Education concerning university education. This happened as a result of his closure notice of Kisii University (see Table 4.15). In such an instance, callers are given an opportunity to ask questions, which the guest responds to immediately.

When discussing marital issues, psychologists or counsellors are called upon to respond to certain issues on a live broadcast (see Table 4.2). On Radio Jambo where couples are reconciled, presenters give them a chance to air their grievances. Callers are then asked to give suggestions on how the couples could resolve their differences.

*Table 4.16: Presenters' Verification of Radio Talk Show Content*

How do you verify whether the content is truthful or not?
<i>Respondent One</i>
1. We call authorities in-charge of the area mentioned, for instance a traffic commandant in case of accidents.
<i>Respondent Two</i>
1. I invite guests to discuss topical issues for instance, whether or not KCSE results should be nullified like the CS in the Ministry of Education.
<i>Respondent Three</i>
1. During "Patanisho" the producer calls the aggrieved parties well in advance, and vets them, to ensure that they are genuine.'
<i>Respondent Four</i>
1. We verify content from sources. If they do not verify the issues we do not mentioned them.

Table 4.16 presents respondents' mode of verification of content. The most common mode of verification of content from the respondents' interviews is the use of authorities in the matters at hand. If a listener reports an accident, the Officer Commanding Police Station (OCS) in the concerned area is contacted by phone to verify the matter.



*Table 4.17: Presenters' Competence in Offering Advice to Listeners*

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*Some issues raised on talk shows relate to marital problems. As a talk show host, do you think you are competent to dispense such advice?*

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*Respondent One*

- 1. If the marital issue is complicated, I direct it to the main presenter.*
- 2. We call authorities like counselors to comment on the issues.*

- 1. Radio station no. 1 is a family radio station.*
- 2. We air mature content, issue oriented and we do not deal with trivialities in relationships.*
- 3. There are so many cases of domestic violence. We may invite a professional marriage counselor to shed more light on the issues. So we discuss such issues from the perspective of a professional marriage counselor.*

- 1. Most times the reconciliation we do for couples is successful. There are few times when couples fail to reconcile because, one of them may decline to be heard on air.*
- 2. More people trust us to be able to handle their marital differences. We listen to both sides, and that is why they relax and soften their stand.*

*Respondent Four*

- 1. I am not a professional counselor, but I know what is good and what is bad.*
  - 2. Violence against women is bad. If someone calls for such discussion, I will tell for free that you can't beat a wife and a few other things that pertain to marriage.*
  - 3. Once in a while we may have a telephone interview with an expert on an issue we cannot adequately handle.*
- 

In Table 4.17, addressed the competence of respondents to handle marital issues. Respondents two and four concurred that there was need to invite professional counsellors to explain marital issues to the listeners, while respondents one and three argued that they were qualified to handle common problems such as domestic violence (see Table 4.17). The same presenters claimed that they were able to differentiate between good and bad practices among married couples such as wife beating. They further alleged that since they too are married, some issues in family life are common knowledge. Even though some presenters felt they could handle

common marital problems, where matters were complicated, some sought professional advice on live broadcast.

*Table 4.18: Presenters' Awareness of the Impact Radio Talk Show Content has on Listeners When they Engage Guests and Callers*

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When you engage with guests or callers on the show, are you always aware of the implications of the content to the wider listenership?

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*Respondent One*

1. Yes. One has to be careful about what goes on air, and ensure that it is not offensive.
2. Since the media house is the biggest in Kenya, we avoid libelous issues that can bring conflict to the media house.

*Respondent Two*

1. As a family radio station, we are conscious of the content we give to listeners.
2. It is mature content.

*Respondent Three*

1. During 'Patanisho', parties sometimes use bad language. This could happen because one of the parties is so angry, that it comes out in foul language. We cut them off to discourage, or sensor them on air, because we have a delayed system that we can press to disconnect them.

*Respondent Four*

1. As a main presenter in charge of a four- hour morning show, I have to control the flow of information.
  2. If anything goes wrong, I would be held accountable by my boss.
  3. By the end of the day we ensure that no wrong information passes through the microphone.
- 

The talk show hosts interviewed in Table 4.18 demonstrated awareness of the implications of their content and advice on listeners when they engaged guests or callers. According to their responses in Table 4.18, presenters claimed that they moderated radio talk show content and blocked out content with obscene or foul language before it went on air. Respondent three gave an example where, during 'Patanisho' (reconciliation of couples segment of the show), very angry couples would sometimes use abusive language. Presenters usually rebuke the concerned party for using such bad language. Respondents felt it is their responsibility to control what goes on air for accountability purposes to their superiors, and also to protect the reputation of their stations.

*Table 4.19: Believability of Radio Talk Show Content by Listeners*

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Should listeners assume that all content of radio talk shows is legitimate real life situation? Why should they assume so?
<i>Respondent One</i>
1. We have developed a culture among listeners such that we may change tone or the co-presenters laugh at the joke.
2. That way, we hope that listeners will be able to differentiate between <i>Respondent Two</i>
1. What we discuss are real life situations such as security, accidents, social, political, economic issues that affect the population.
<i>Respondent Three</i>
1. Yes and no. Some of the jokes are created and we also change the tone. That makes the listener know that we are joking.
2. When we get back to serious issues, our mood indicates so as well.
3. It is a culture we develop over time with our listeners.
1. Sometimes a caller may give fictitious information, but also, some true information may not sound real because of its uniqueness.

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Table 4.19 presents believability of talk show content by listeners. Presenters stated that, over time, listeners had learned the presenters' mode of communication. They understood that change of tone to a particular jocular tone, was an indicator that they were joking. Alternatively, a co-presenter laughs at the other presenter's joke. Respondents one and three felt that regular listeners could distinguish between a joke and serious talk by the tone of the presenters' voices (see Table 4.19). Additionally, three out of four respondents alluded that discussions on their talk shows focus on serious issues that affect the society. Respondent four claimed that fictitious stories were sometimes given by listeners, yet some true stories they aired were even more shocking than those that could be made up. It was not in their practice to make up stories.

*Table 4.20: Influence of Audience Ratings on Radio Talk*

*Shows* How do audience ratings influence your talk shows?

*Respondent One*

1. Rating is important because it shows how well I perform. It helps me re-structure my content especially if it is of low quality.

*Respondent Two*

1. Ratings influence the quality of production. To be competitive, one has to understand their audience, that is, what they want, what they don't want, and to suit their needs. With that, we will always be at the top.

*Respondent Three*

1. We normally don't produce programmes for better rating. Our aim is to create a good rapport with our listeners.
2. We try to consider things like how well connected we are with our listeners; if they are having fun; and how real we are with them.
3. There is of course competition in the media, so, people try all sorts of things out there.
4. We have decided to be real without trying anything extraordinary. For example when we are reconciling couples, we are genuine, and we share, with listeners our life experiences because we have also gone through similar issues here and there. That is why it is more of a connection with listeners.
5. Otherwise if we were pretending, or doing it for rating, maybe we would not be there where we are today. People would have realized that we are joking, or acting, or bringing in people to act.

*Respondent Four*

1. We don't prepare programmes in order to get highly rated, but appeal to most of our audience.

Table 4.20 provides presenters views of how audience ratings influenced talk shows were examined. Respondents one and two stated that ratings were an important aspect of radio presentation and they helped them improve the quality of their programmes. Similarly, respondents three and four claimed that ratings helped them appeal to their audience. From the given responses it was apparent that ratings were a kind of necessary valuation for quality measurement of radio talk shows.

Data from MCK interviews

Due to his busy schedule, the CEO of the MCK nominated two senior officials; the legal officer; and the media monitoring officer to take his place. The legal officer was respondent one while the research and media monitoring officer was

respondent two. The responses are presented using descriptive tables as indicated below.

*Table 4.21: The MCK Implementation of 'Free Speech, or Cheap Talk?' Publication*

MCK published a document titled 'Free Speech, or Cheap Talk?' in 2014 stating the guidelines for handling of talk shows. To what extent do you think it has been implemented?

Are there any challenges in its implementation?

*Respondent One*

1. It is the audience who drive the demand of talk shows. The radio presenters believe they should give the audience what they want. Stations like Classic FM have high sales
2. Implementation of the code in a commercial enterprise is not easy. Even if complaints are raised and the station is fined, the stations will comfortably pay because they
4. Radio stations are business entities. They do not use professional management when it
6. Such personnel would want to use unprofessional and unethical means to get a bigger audience.
7. Pressure in the newsroom to make more money weighs on presenters. Inhibitions
8. Content monitoring capacity is a challenge to the MCK. MCK is able to monitor only 90 radio stations out of about 300 that exist. Also the need for continuous listening has not been met.

Table 4.21 interrogated the implementation of the MCK "Free Speech, or Cheap Talk?" publication. Respondent one confirmed that media houses were more interested in making profits than hiring personnel who were well trained in radio broadcast journalism. They employed presenters who had excelled in other fields such as modelling, or music in Tusker Project Fame, who used unprofessional and unethical means to boost audience ratings.

Media houses, being private enterprises, put a lot of pressure on presenters to produce results. The outcome was content that lacked inhibitions for instance; conversations about adult relationships, where a wife was involved in extra-marital relationship because her husband did not satisfy her (see Table 4.17, Respondent Two). Such content attracted high levels of interest from listeners. Additionally,

imposing fines on the offenders did not deter the presenters from contravening the MCK code of ethics. Moreover, since the MCK was only mandated to charge fines worth up to Ksh. 500,000/- against millions of shillings the offenders might make daily, the habit of breaking the set guidelines went undeterred. Respondent one in Table 4.21 also revealed that the MCK lacks the capacity to monitor content for all the 300 radio stations. They had only managed to monitor content for 90 radio stations. It was therefore challenging to enforce the implementation the code of conduct.

*Table 4.22: The Best Approach to Talk Show Content Regulation*

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Free-to-air regulation proposed by CA seems to have gone to another level beyond the code of conduct for practice of journalism in Kenya. What do you suggest as the best approach to the issue of radio talk show content regulation?

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*Respondent Two*

1. The main concern is that many of the talk show hosts are not journalists.
2. They are not familiar with the code of ethics.
3. Many of them are not accredited by MCK. If they were to present their papers, they would not meet the threshold.
4. Hosts use the talk show platform for comedy meant to draw large listenership
5. In the process, the things they discuss are not meant for that period of time of the day.
6. Their content is more harmful to the listener than informative.
7. The code of conduct did not give specific timings, that's why the CA has come in to increase clarity.
8. The code of ethics is supposed to target a specific person, journalist. The is supposed to have grasped media ethics and know what to do
9. Even if the offenders were to be fined, it is only Ksh. 500,000/- which is not a lot of money for media houses.
10. CA's role is to assign responsibility of content to the license holder.
11. They now want to give parameters for use of the license.
12. They put emphasis on the watershed period between 10.00 pm and 6.00 am in the morning. That's when the adult content is allowed on air because it is assumed that children would not be listening to the content.
13. The CA's regulations should not duplicate the MCK code of ethics. They need to be subjected to further review and to public discourse.
14. The CA regulations are noble, and a good attempt to control the media owners, because the MCK code of ethics cannot control the owners.
15. The best approach to emphasize on use of the MCK code of ethics is through training of presenters.

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Table 4.22 addressed views on the best approach to content regulation in Kenya by respondent two. Respondent two acknowledged that most talk show hosts lacked formal training in broadcasting. They could not, therefore, be accredited by MCK for lack of the necessary relevant credentials. The MCK code was meant for personnel with journalism training and not for anyone hired as a presenter in the media industry (see Table 4.22). The reason why the code did not provide specific timings for broadcasting adult content was because it was assumed that users were journalists by training. Therefore, they understood the time slots when they could broadcast different kinds of programme content.

Content regulation had been infiltrated by the license provider, CA, which had proposed a programming code for free-to-air-radio and television services to govern media services. The authority could hold the media owners accountable for producing adult content during the day (Muchiri, 2016). Respondent two stated that, in contrast, MCK could not hold media owners accountable as they do not issue radio broadcasting licenses (see Table 4.22). Additionally, MCK could not hold owners liable for contravening the MCK code of conduct.

Controversy came in between the MCK and the CA due to the likeliness of duplication of duties and responsibilities by the two; the regulatory and the licensing bodies. The respondents suggested further public discourse and scrutiny of the CA's scope of responsibilities. That would also provide clarification to avoid duplication of responsibilities between the two bodies.

*Table 4.23: The MCK's Accommodation of Objectionable Content*

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How best can complaints against objectionable content be accommodated, and addressed by the MCK's arbitration structures, after the initial awareness was raised in the publication?

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*Respondent One*

1. In this country, cheap talk is gruesome. Even though there exists freedom of speech, it has to be qualified. There is need to avoid offending others while expressing oneself.

2. MCK has channels of communication through which complaints can be channeled, such as SMS, e-mail, Twitter, Facebook, and telephone calls.

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In Table 4.23, the research addressed how MCK could address objectionable content. The respondent stated that the existence of freedom of speech is not a licence for offensive language in the name of self-expression. There is need to qualify the talk. The respondent stated that MCK provides channels that are manned by personnel, through which the listeners could channel their grievances against inappropriate content. These channels include the use of SMS, e-mail, Twitter, Facebook, and telephone calls.

*Table 4.24: Knowledge of the MCK Complaints Channels by Countryside Listeners*

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Do listeners in the countryside have the knowledge of channel for communicating complaints to the MCK?

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1. A lot of people do not know the function of the MCK, and that includes legislators.
  2. MCK is trying hard to hold public forums in various counties to sensitize people
  3. Radio in the countryside takes advantage of people's ignorance. They may call somebody on the phone, record it and play it over and over, without the person's awareness.
  4. We first hold forums in rural areas, followed by the training of journalists in order to build their capacity. It is during such training forums that the unique challenges of the specific area are raised and addressed. This is done to discourage people from using media to gain influence
-



The knowledge of MCK complaints channels by listeners in the countryside was examined in Table 4.24. Respondent two claimed that many people did not know the function of MCK, including Members of Parliament. They thought that the MCK had control over what media houses published and not what radio stations presented. To address the issue, the MCK has held forums in the counties to sensitize people of its functions and also build journalists' capacity through training (see Table 4.24). Through such forums, unique broadcasting challenges were raised by the general public, and addressed during the training sessions for journalists.

*Table 4.25: Holding of Short Courses on Radio Talk Show Content Generation by the MCK*

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How often does the MCK hold short courses on talk show radio content generation? How do the short courses influence the quality of the content generated after the training?

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*Respondent One*

1. Short courses are sometimes offered to presenters on content generation, but we have not done monitoring and evaluation for their success.
  2. After the release of the report 'Cheap Talk or Talk Shows' the use of foul language reduced because of spotlighting of talk shows.
- 

Table 4.25 interrogated whether or not the MCK holds short courses on content.

The respondent confirmed that the MCK holds short courses but the frequency could not be determined. Respondent one stated that the MCK had not evaluated the implementation of the 'Cheap Talk or Talk Shows' publication. However, the publication caused radio stations to reduce the use of foul language.

#### Summary Key Findings

The data in this chapter indicated traces of indecent language, and the potential to continue using it for a shock effect which leads to notoriety of radio talk shows, and therefore profit. Despite protestations to the contrary from some of the presenters, regulators from the media council indicated that media houses were more profit oriented than being morally accountable and responsible. Radio stations valued

the success of their programmes in listener ratings more than they valued a reputation for integrity.

Although talk show presenters claimed to uphold the code of conduct and were careful to produce content that appealed to their listeners, the MCK informants refuted the claim. The MCK informants felt that media houses had not yet reached a point of accountability, where they could claim total commitment to upholding the code of ethics. The general observation by the MCK informants was that, presenters still used offensive language with impunity in their content. Equally notable was the fact that media houses hired non-professionals instead of trained broadcast journalists.

This was the trend in the three radio stations that were interrogated in this study. Radio Citizen had two comedians, while Radio Maisha had one. Similarly, Radio Jambo, had a rapper and a former footballer. It can also be alluded that presenters for the three radio stations offered to listeners content that they liked. In response to the question on what listeners liked about respondent one (Table 4.11), the listeners liked being amused. The reconciliation segment, Patanisho in Radio Jambo is also an indication that listeners liked such content.

### Summary

The chapter provided data presentation, analysis and interpretation from the findings. The findings were interpreted based on the research questions stated in Chapter One. Data from content was analysed and presented using figures on descriptive tables. Similarly, interview data was presented in descriptive tables. The chapter that follows provides discussion, conclusion and recommendation from the findings.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

The purpose of the study was to examine media practice in Kenya through presenters and radio talk show content using three selected radio stations. This chapter discusses the study by summarising the key findings in chapter four that were based on the three objectives namely:

1. To examine how radio talk show presenters handled content against the MCK's laid down professional and ethical standards.
2. To determine whether gaps existed in Kenyan journalism training that were filled by other professionals.
3. To explore audience preferences that influenced the nature of radio talk show content in Kenya.

Based on the study findings, conclusions were drawn, followed by recommendations for future studies by other researchers.

#### Discussion of Key Findings

The study discussed ethical conduct on radio talk shows in Kenya, using pre-recorded content, responses from presenters as well as regulators to weigh knowledge levels of, and adherence to the MCK's professional ethics. Objective One

*To examine how radio talk show presenters handle content against the MCK's laid down professional and ethical standards.*

Research objective one was informed by prior research which exposed the use of obscene language or racial or ethnic stereotypes in commercial radio talk shows in Kenya (MCK, 2014). Pre-recorded content from the three radio stations appeared to

corroborate concerns by the regulators, including input given during the MCK interviews for this study. While the occurrence of obscene language content was low (Table 4.4), the code of conduct states that there should not be any such content at all (MCK, 2013a, articles 1:14 and 25:1-3). This is also stated in point no. 10 in the code of conduct and practice of journalists in Kenya which touches on obscenity, taste and tones in reporting. It goes on to state that, a journalist shall not publish obscene or vulgar material unless such material contains news. Nevertheless, the rate at which such coarse content surfaced in the research sample seemed to indicate that radio talk show hosts in Kenya were moderating the use of graphic and stereotypical (ethnic, gender, racial) language, but had not completely stopped using it.

Presenters' responses in Table 4.9 showed that the hosts were familiar with the code of ethics through exposure to it in their respective media houses, and desired to be guided by it in their day-to-day productions. Yet, some degree of obscenity still remained in the content (Table 4.4), chiefly from the presenters' content where 10 out of 12 obscene occurrences were reported, as opposed to callers. The code touched here (no. 4) states that journalists shall present news with integrity and common decency, avoiding real or perceived conflicts of interest, and respect the dignity and intelligence of the audience as well as the subjects of news (MCK, 2013). Furthermore, failure to ratify the code suggests that accountability and social responsibility are not always uppermost in the presenters' minds as they present, moderate, and respond to content.

A degree of obscene language was evident when some presenters attempted to infuse humour into discussions on themes such as relationships and family (4 out of 12) occurrences in Table 4.4. The code addressed was point no. 19 which concerns protection of children, as well as point no. 26 that prohibits making derogatory

remarks based on ethnicity, race, creed, colour and sex. Obscene language was used during watershed periods during which the talk show programmes were aired.

However, in some instances, there was evidence that some restraint was being exercised, in response to complaints from the public either directly by phone, through social media, or through the radio station's management (Tables 4.12, 4.13 and 4.14). The restraint could have been occasioned by the three radio stations based on the fact that they belong to the leading media houses in Kenya which have a countrywide coverage. They may therefore be more sensitive to their corporate brand reputations than the talk shows produced by smaller media outlets. Such media houses work hard to maintain a lead in ratings (Table 4.20).

Three of the presenters said they either felt accountable to their brand, a 'family station' (refer in Chapter Four), and the need to 'avoid libelous issues' (refer in Chapter Four), or were, more directly, held accountable by a supervisor for any content which drew listener discontent (Table 4.14). Although presenters claimed to verify content from sources and authorities concerned (Table 4.16), and were aware of the impact content from callers and guests had on listeners by moderating radio talk show content on air as well as blocking obscene language (Table 4.17), as well as their obligation to provide truthful and honest content (Table 4.19), informants from the MCK were sceptical. The MCK officials felt that, though some presenters were conscious of ethical obligations, but the profit motive associated with attracting more listeners through the shock effect, continued to drive the character of talk show discussions.

Moreover, the likely reason why the CA developed the free-to-air programming code for radio and television services in Kenya (CA, 2015), was to put more emphasis on the MCK regulation, emphasising the watershed period. In

agreement with a previous study by Situma and Ndeta (2010), there was evidence of a lingering lack of professionalism among presenters, leading to the ethical lapses that their sampled content exposed.

The Social Responsibility Theory proposes that media should be responsible and accountable to the society (Middleton, 2009). In this regard, media should be committed to the total elimination of obscene material in the radio talk shows, and exceptions should not be made for obscene language by media presenters even as a way of infusing humour. It appears as if, for as long as the content held a certain group of listeners' attention, thus increasing the programmes' rating, the use of obscenities was likely to be repeated.

#### Objective Two

*To determine whether gaps exist in the journalism training that are now filled by other professionals.*

Broadcast training was not one of the immediate hiring requirements for a radio presenter, according to one of the presenter's interviewed. The four presenters interviewed were all gifted orators and able to engage with listeners from all walks of life. Three out of four presenters sampled had excelled in other fields, such as comedy, drama and music. Two out of the four had acquired radio broadcast training before being hired as radio talk show presenters.

Their ability to speak with eloquence and fluency was clearly noted from the pre-recorded content sampled during this research. Half of the respondents interviewed had been trained in broadcast journalism. Subsequently, all the presenters got tailor-made training by their respective media houses (Table 4.8).

Apart from capacity building, media houses seemed to have a specific calibre of training that they preferred for their presenters. Their in-house training included

coaching and mentorship by experienced radio presenters from Western countries and locally. Seminars were offered by the MCK on the code of ethics, and reporting during special events in Kenya, for instance during elections. Similarly, capacity building seminars for radio hosts were held by the MCK.

This study findings point to the need for diverse modes of training for the radio talk show hosts which includes both formal as well as informal and short courses such as those offered by the MCK in specialised areas (see Table 4.25). That approach would hopefully help improve the radio talk show presenters' adherence to the MCK's journalist code of ethics.

However, formal training offered in Kenya needs to be improved as echoed in a study by Wefwafwa (2014), which stated that 91.5 percent of the trainers felt that there is need to improve training facilities in the media courses they teach. Additionally, 94 percent of learners concurred with the trainers that the facilities in journalism training institutions needed improvement. Such observations are not in isolation. The BBC's training also found that there are deficiencies of theoretical and ethical aspects of journalism as well as insufficient practical lessons that could equip graduates with the skills as practising journalists (BBC, WST, 2006, p. 39).

Although the MCK developed a diploma in Journalism, the impact is yet to be seen. The MCK had earlier warned that, if all middle level colleges offering journalism training failed to implement the curriculum, they would face closure (Ngila, 2015). A move such as this, which sought to standardise journalism training was likely to yield better results for the profession in Kenya. Media houses were more likely to get better trained personnel for hiring who can be held accountable, since the code was tailor-made for trained journalists who would be eligible for the MCK accreditation.

As the media situation in Kenya stands, it would take a while before professionalism in radio broadcasting in Kenya could be taken seriously by media owners, since they hired whomever they thought would increase their revenue earnings rather than on the basis of professional qualifications.

### Objective Three

*To explore audience preferences that influence the nature of radio talk show content.*

Responses from the presenters' interviews indicated that listener-generated content was part of the product that goes on air. Technological changes in communication have opened up communication via social media and email to the listeners. Listeners have a platform for voicing their concerns, opinion, and socialising with presenters on air (Nyabuga & Booker, 2013; Omwoha, 2014). Consequently, talk show hosting requires creative presenters who can maintain listeners attention, to remain relevant in the media business. Presenters were in agreement that they had to work hard to appeal to listeners (Tables 4.18 & 4.19). The MCK's respondents one similarly stated that listeners influenced content generation in radio talk shows (Table 4.21).

When asked what listeners liked about their presentation, the radio talk show hosts cited courage, humour, being balanced, honesty and charity (Table 4.11). There was an aspect of role modelling, and interpretation of information by presenters. A good example was the part where a presenter set an agenda for the day's discussion, from current affairs, and opened up a platform for listeners to respond. Citizen journalism took effect in such a scenario, where listeners' contributions were valued as part of the content generation process during radio talk shows.

From the pre-recorded content from the three radio stations, presenters took time to recognise their listeners by asking them where they had tuned in from. That



helped in determining the quality of the radio reception. It was no longer a case of one man shows, but conversations and relationships giving with listeners. Another old trend in presenter/ listeners' relationship was where listeners giving a chances to greet each other, or pass Birthday wishes to their friends. Radio talk show provides a dynamic platform for audiences to feel part of communities, where they can divulge secrets, vent frustrations and generally participate anonymously, without obligation (Omwoha, 2014).

Such interactions help the presenters to build lasting relationship with listeners. It was through such a relationship-building approach that presenters could work towards uplifting moral standards. Failure to adhere to professional ethics would have a toll on their of credibility, subsequently the loss of audience. This is in agreement with Kasomo's (1994) observation, "I am because we are; since we are, therefore I am," (Gondwe, 2014; as cited in Kasoma, 1994).

But as was variously discussed, from the theoretical to the conceptual frameworks in chapter 2, in the literature used in this study, and in some of the evidence which this study has adduced, it was through the radio presenters' training that they would come to better appreciate and respect the ethics of decency, such that they exercise greater control of callers' interventions, allowed experts to handle unfamiliar topics, and show a responsible and accountable media practice.

### Conclusions

This study discussed the implications of radio talk show presenters and content on media practice in Kenya, specifically in terms of ethical standards, awareness and adherence to them, and how recruitment and training objectives influence such adherence. From the findings, radio presenters appeared to entrench the media council's code of professional conduct and practice of journalism, but did not fully

embrace the ethics of decency. There were traces of obscenities in the content captured and analysed from recorded samples, and even observations from the two key informants from the MCK attested to continuing unsavoury content.

Gaps do exist in journalism training in Kenya. One presenter interviewed observed that to be a radio talk show host takes more than academic study. It requires creativity and an ability to appeal to listeners' tastes in order to remain relevant. Presenter one claimed that her humour appealed to listeners (Table 4.11). Also observed was that listeners trusted presenters enough to allow them to counsel them when they were in distress, especially on family and relationships matters (Table 4.2). That called for some level of maturity and knowledge of counselling by presenters.

The question of whether audience tastes have changed, therefore soliciting a different approach to media practice, was a matter of dispute: while the key informants from the MCK accused the radio stations of pandering to the shock jock appeal of radio content and presentation, many of the presenters themselves claimed they were still directing and moderating the discourse, even using the delayed relay of transmission to filter offensive comment where the discussion appeared likely to be provocative. They insisted that the use of provocative content for higher audience ratings was not an over-riding factor.

Nevertheless, as the study showed, there is still more objectionable content on the talk shows than the MCK code allows. The process of handling objectionable content from radio talk show listeners by the MCK arbitration structures had, to some extent, been overtaken by technology. Listeners communicated directly with the respective presenters and their managers through different media of communication and got timely responses to their concerns. However, when weighty issues arose and

required the MCK intervention, punitive or conciliatory measures did not deter radio presenters from making similar mistakes in future. That was why the CA had stepped in and developed regulations that involve ownership of radio stations.

### Recommendations

The recommendations of this chapter were drawn from the findings of the study, after addressing objectives and research questions. They are as follows:

The study recommends that the CA and the MCK come to a consensus in regard to the regulation of media practice in Kenya. The two statutory bodies need to be clear on the distinction between their roles, and to involve other stakeholders in addressing matters of non-conformity to regulations by media houses. Moreover, the MCK needs to prepare separate codes for broadcast media regulations (ACMA, 2011).

Media houses need to consider the role of media in society, not just for profit making, but also for social developmental. They need to be accountable and responsible to the society by adding value, and not merely using the radio platform to increase revenue through advertising. They should work closely with training institutions to ensure that they are provided with appropriately trained journalists. This can be achieved through their funding of journalism training institutions to enable them to acquire the right equipment and provide some of their personnel as trainers.

Similarly, journalism training institutions need to overhaul their curricular, to include more practical sessions that would fit the need for suitable personnel for hire by radio stations. Media houses hire orators, actors, comedians, musicians and people who have excelled in other fields. This kind of scenario calls for trainers to include Liberal Arts in broadcast journalism training, as was suggested by Wefwafwa (2014).

There is need for listeners to direct most of their grievances to an external regulatory body that can hold the media house responsible and accountable; that is, a neutral body, rather than media houses themselves, since they are the offenders.

#### Areas for Further Research

Further research could be done by the CA on the following areas:

The handling of listeners' complaints at media houses is an area of study that can be undertaken since it was not clearly highlighted by radio presenters during the interviews. Such information may require a different approach, since presenters may not be very explicit in their responses.

Another study area that can be carried out is to examine the challenges faced by the MCK as a media regulatory body and necessary interventions to improve media practice in Kenya.

Media researchers could study how socialisation of radio talk show presenters is reflected on the content and the effects of the agendas they set during talk shows to the political atmosphere in society.

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## APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Radio Presenters' Interview Schedule

Dear Presenter,

My name is Margaret Ayuma Okumbe, an MA in communications (Media studies option) student of Daystar University. I am required to carry out a study in my area of concentration as partial fulfilment of Masters of Arts degree in Communication. My research topic is 'Implications for Media Practice in Kenya of Radio Talk Show Presenters and Content: A Study of Selected FM Radio Stations'. I have identified your radio station as my area of interest.

I kindly request your participation in this research which seeks to examine the implication for media practice in Kenya of radio talk show presenters and content in Kenya. Your responses will be used for the purposes of this study only. Your identity is will not feature in the interviews. Kindly let me know if it is okay to ask you a few questions concerning your work as radio talk show presenter.

### Interview Schedule

1. How long have you worked as a radio talk show presenter in this station?
2. Explain your training background before you got this job?
3. After getting this job, have you had any further training? Please explain.
4. Have you had exposure to MCK code of professional ethics?
5. How does the code govern your work?
6. In the feedback you get, what do listeners say they find interesting or likeable about your talk shows?
7. From the feedback you get, what do listeners like least about your radio talk show presenting?
8. Has anyone ever complained about your radio talk shows content?
9. Who were the complaints channelled to?
10. How did you respond to employer /statutory body, when they drew your attention to the listeners' complaints?
11. Where do you source information for the content of your talk shows?
12. How do you verify whether the content is truthful or not?
13. Some issues raised on talk shows relate to marital problems. As a talk show host, do you think you are competence to dispense such advice?
14. When you engage with guests or callers on your shows, are you always aware of the implications of the content to the wider listenership?
15. Should listeners assume that all content of radio talk shows is legitimate real life situation? Why should they assume so?
16. In what way does audience ratings influence the content you generate during the morning shows. Thank you for your time.

## Appendix B: MCK Interview Schedule

(Legal and Media Monitoring Officers)

1. MCK published a document titled ‘Free Speech, or Cheap Talk?’ in 2014 stating the guidelines for handling of talk shows. Was the document circulated to media houses? To what extent do you think it has been implemented? Are there any challenges over its implementation?
2. Free to air regulation released by the CA seem to have taken another level beyond the known code of conduct for practice of journalism in Kenya. What do you suggest as the best approach to the issue of talk show content regulation?
3. How best can complaints against objectionable content be accommodated and addressed by the MCK’s arbitration structures after the initial awareness was raised in the publication?
4. Do listeners in the countryside have the knowledge of channel for communicating complaints to the MCK?
5. Do you offer short courses on media ethics and content generation to radio talk show presenters? If so, how often does MCK hold the short courses? Do the courses influence the quality of radio talk shows content?



## Appendix C:Thematic Scheme

Radio station: \_\_\_\_\_

Presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

Day of the week: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

S/no.	Theme	Frequency		Total	
		Presenter	Caller	Presenter	Caller
1.	Politics	H			
		C			
2.	Relationships and family	H			
		C			
3.	Sports	H			
		C			
4.	Graphical language/ obscenity	H			
		C			
5.	Lifestyle and entertainment	H			
		C			
6.	Racial/ ethnic stereotypes	H			
		C			
7.	Economic and business issues	H			
		C			
8.	Current affairs	H			
		C			
9.	Hate speech	H			
		C			
10.	No. of advertisements in the programme	H			
		C			
11.	Relationship between theme and advertisements	H			
		C			

Outstanding deviant issues:

Category:

Keywords:


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Coding themes are adapted from Free Speech, or Cheap Talk? (MCK, 2014).

Appendix D: Ipsos/Karf Survey  
(Weekly Audience Ipsos/Karf Q4 - 2014)





**KARF Q4 2014 SNAPSHOT**

Prepared by: Ipsos Ltd.  
Date: January, 2015



Nobody's Unpredictable

Ipsos P7D Audience Sizes : Total Survey Area					
	Q1'14	Q2'14	Q3'14	Q4'14	Audience Change Q1 to Q4
Radio Citizen	8,922,281	9,050,68	78,909,415	8,328,806	(593,475)
Jambo FM	5,067,855	5,819,961	5,705,786	5,842,219	774,364
Radio Maisha	2,636,396	3,269,257	3,579,177	4,316,750	1,680,354
Radio Taifa	3,979,976	4,162,541	4,395,255	3,962,045	(17,931)
Q FM	3,749,642	3,891,710	3,524,499	3,643,071	(106,571)
Milele FM	3,647,259	3,969,730	3,838,721	3,349,322	(297,937)
Inooro FM	2,929,894	3,034,237	2,854,137	2,871,314	(58,580)
Kameme FM	3,054,909	3,037,916	2,735,048	2,861,054	(193,855)
Kiss FM	2,597,693	2,490,178	2,524,190	2,519,585	(78,108)

 **Weekly Reach : Total Survey Area** 

Radio Stations with Weekly Reach ≥ 10% in Q4'14

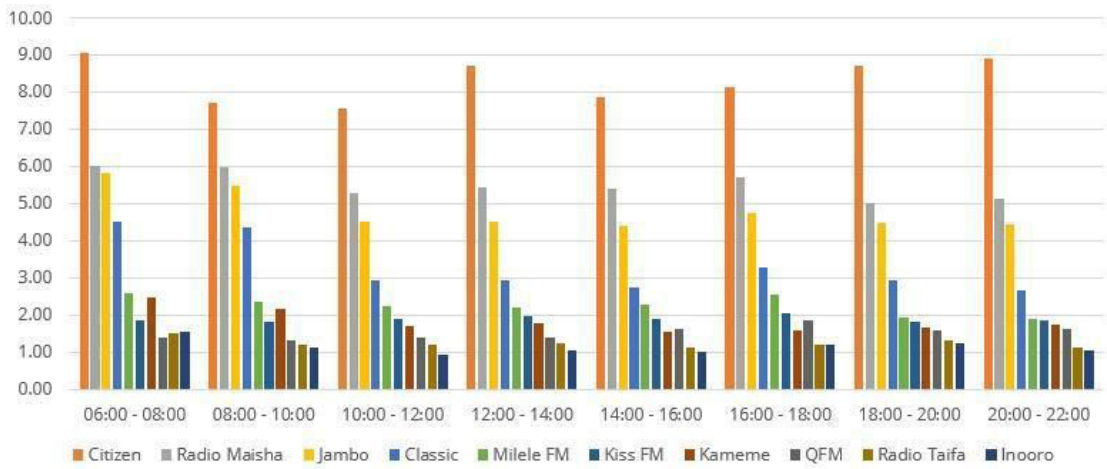
Q1'14 Q2'14 Q3'14 Q4'14

Radio Citizen	42%	43%	42%	40%
Jambo FM	24%	28%	27%	28%
Radio Maisha	13%	16%	17%	21%
Radio Taifa	19%	20%	21%	19%
Q FM	18%	19%	17%	17%
Milele FM	17%	19%	18%	16%
Inooro FM	15%	15%	13%	14%
Kameme FM	14%	14%	14%	14%
Kiss FM	12%	12%	12%	12%

Base: Past 7 Day Radio Listeners = 21 Million (Persons Ages 15yr +)


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### Appendix E: GeoPoll Rating 2016 Kenya Radio Ratings During Day, May-July



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## Appendix F: NACOSTI Research Permit



**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,  
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,  
2241349, 310571, 2219420  
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249  
Email: secretary@nacosti.go.ke  
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke  
When replying please quote

9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Utalii House  
Uhuru Highway  
P.O. Box 30623-00100  
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No. **NACOSTI/P/16/69352/10216** Date: **13<sup>th</sup> April, 2016**

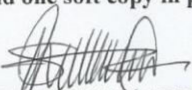
Margaret Ayuma Okumbe  
Daystar University  
P.O Box 44400-00100  
**NAIROBI.**

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *“Implications for media practice in Kenya of radio talk show presenters and content: A study of selected FM Radio Stations,”* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nairobi County** for the period ending **13<sup>th</sup> April, 2017.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.



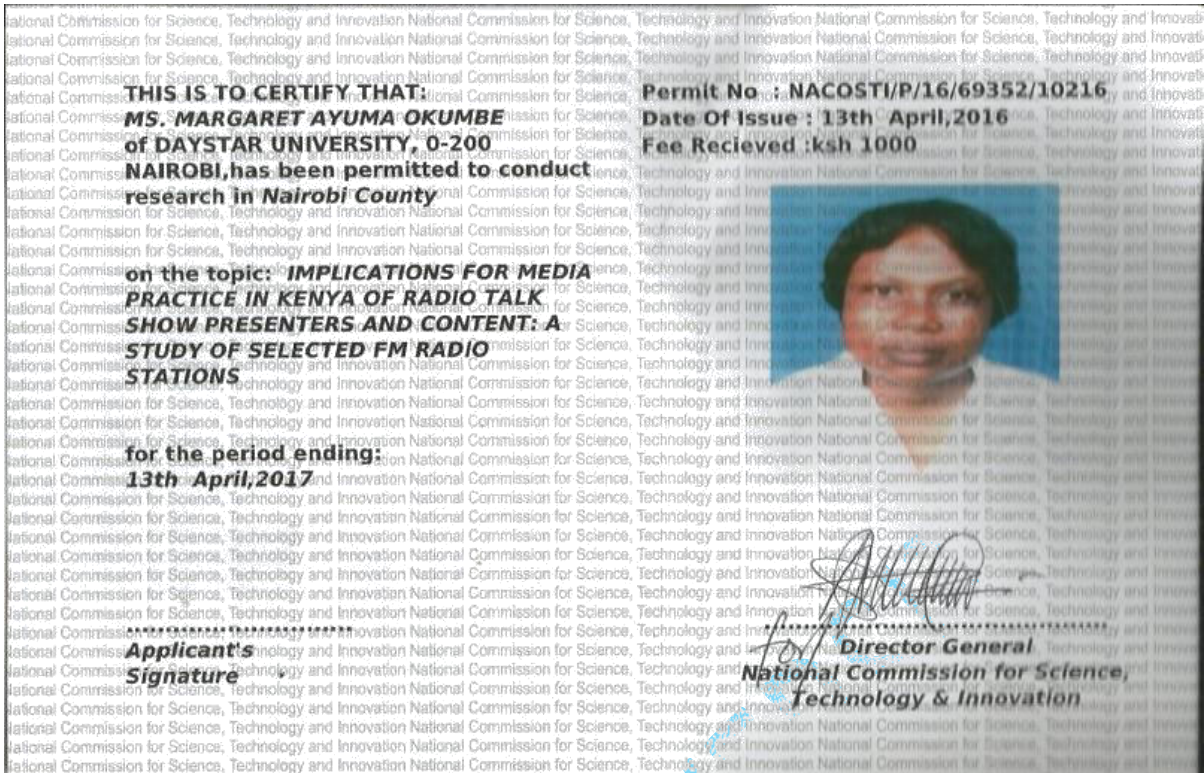
**DR. STEPHEN K. KIBIRU, PhD.**  
**FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO**

Copy to:

The County Commissioner  
Nairobi County.

The County Director of Education  
Nairobi County.

*National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation is ISO 9001:2008 Certified*



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## Appendix G: Nairobi Morning Rush Hour



Cartoonist Godfrey Mwampembwa (GADO)'s 'Nairobi Morning Rush Hour' illustrated illicit sexual affairs on radio stations in Nairobi (Okoti & Ondego, 2013)