

The Influence Of Political News Satire On University Of Nairobi Students"  
Political Engagements

by

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APPROVAL

THE INFLUENCE OF POLITICAL NEWS SATIRE ON  
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI STUDENTS' POLITICAL  
ENGAGEMENTS

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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. .

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BSA	British Social Attitude Survey
ERB	Ethics Review Board
K24 TV	Kenya Twenty Four Television
KTN	Kenya Television Network
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation
NTV	Nation Television
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TV	Television
U&G	Uses and Gratification

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## ABSTRACT

This study sought to establish the influence of political news satire on students' political engagements at the University of Nairobi. The study targeted students who resided in main campus. Political satire programming has become evident in Kenyan television over time. *Bulls Eye*, *Truth Meter*, *XYZ Show*, *Flip Side*, *Kukuru Kakara* and the most recently introduced program, *Wicked Edition*, were some of the political news satire shows that were aired weekly on Kenyan television. This study sought to establish if University of Nairobi students watched political news satire and if so, whether it influenced their political engagements. The objectives were to establish the viewing patterns of political news satire among students, to establish attitudes of students towards political news satire, to establish the influence of political news satire on voting of political leaders and to establish the influence of political news satire on attitudes of the students towards political leaders. The study focused on uses and gratification theory that enquires into audience use of media and cultivation theory which probes the cumulative impact of long term viewing of television. Also, the mobilization theory has been highlighted in the study where proponents argue that television news seem to enlighten and mobilize and have a ubiquitous effect. The study adopted a descriptive approach. Data was collected using questionnaires and then analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. The findings of the study revealed that political news satire influenced the political standpoints and voting for political leaders but did not influence voting for political positions. The study recommends that further studies can be done to establish if other factors such as levels of education, ethnic background and living standards measures would contribute to political engagements of students.

## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents, Hannington Barasa and Everline Mukhongo, my siblings, Paul Mallo, Rachael Nafula and Cecilia Nabwire and an awesome friend, Sia Onyango. You are amazing people.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

#### Introduction

Media in our society is central to our daily living since we are surrounded by it. Every day, we encounter messages from different platforms like the radio, television, newspapers, magazines, fliers, posters, graffiti, brochures, books, and the internet. According to O'Neill (2008), many people are the technological martini generation intoxicated by technological cocktails of various media devices. The multiplicity of media platforms exposes the audience to a variety of content. The increasing capacity of portable media means that we have various forms of content with us and everywhere we go (Hodkinson, 2011). The saturation of media formats has led to proliferation of news and this proliferation of news outlets is at a time when interest in news is generally waning (Thussu, 2007). The audience is able to access news from various other sources besides the mainstream media and the traditional media.

The way politics is packaged is becoming different from the traditional formats like news and documentaries and new ways which are more entertaining have been embraced by media enterprises (Jones, 2010). The new formats include animations, comedy sketches, pundit shows, fake news and political satire, among others. Comedic satirical shows on television have apparently been some of the most current and influential programmes, and their influence tends to be closely related to the special characteristics of the medium which is TV (Cao & Brewer, 2008).

According to previous research by Baumgartner and Morris (2006), comedy shows connect with their audiences and have an impact on viewers' perception on

politics, as well as political engagements. Baker (2012) noted that television news is an obvious arena of political and ideological interest. Notably, satire as a form of comedy has flourished over the years and gained recognition on Kenyan television. Political news satire shows are perceived to address the need for entertainment and information through humour based on ridicule and there is a connection to viewers' political engagements such as voting as established in this study.

### Background to the Study

Contemporary media has blurred boundaries between entertainment and news. The characteristics of entertainment have been adopted by traditional hard news to capture its audience (Baker, 2012). Television satire in Kenya got its impetus from the freer press that was made possible after President Moi's era. Use of satire on TV especially to skewer politicians and Kenyan politics would not be allowed much space in the past (Wanjiku, 2014).

However, in the late 90s, towards the end of President Moi's era, *Redykyulass* became a popular satirical show in Kenya. As noted by Kebaya (n.d), *Redykyulass* can be regarded as a sprout of earlier comedians who gingerly addressed political and socio-cultural issues in Kenya state without touching state power and the prevailing political power kingpins. The name *Redykyulass* was a stage name for Kenyan comedians which signalled satirization of absurdities of state power and broadly Kenyan socio-political cultures (Musila, 2008). With the end of former President's Moi's reign in 2002, Kenya's democratic space received a major boost under the then President Kibaki (Wanjiku 2014). Over time, different forms of political satire programming have become evident in Kenyan television particularly in the news segments. *Bulls Eye, Truth Meter, XYZ Show,*

*Flip Side*, *Kukuru Kakara* and the most recent program *The Wicked Edition* are some of the political news satire programs that are aired on Kenyan television.

According to arguments made by some scholars in previous studies, satirical content may shape perception of viewers towards politics and politicians (Holbert, Hmielowski, Jain, Lather, & Morey, 2011). Television viewing patterns for the youth in Kenya is mainly for entertainment purposes (Njonjo, 2012). This study concurs with this argument where respondents agreed to enjoy watching political news satire.

However, from the uses and gratification approach used for this study, it is clear that viewing political news satire may not necessarily influence voting for political positions but it influences voting of political leaders as well as their political standpoints. Proponents of uses and gratification theory argue that different audiences do not derive the same gratification from the media. The differences in media use are related to definite social environment or dispositions of personalities (Palmgreen, Wenner, & Rosengren, 1985).

#### Statement of the Problem

Notably, new media and the internet have aggressively taken shape in the Kenyan media landscape which may be argued to lead to a more politically informed citizenry. However, TV as a medium still has a dominant position as the core source of political news and information to the public (Shapiro & Dempsey, 2007). With many satirical shows involving politicians as guests or caricatures, today's class of satire TV form a key part of televised political culture (Gray, Jones, & Thompson, 2009). The political culture is enhanced when the audience is exposed to entertaining politics.

An important issue of concern about political news satire is the content and its accuracy. Viewers of political news satire might rely on the information that is presented and may also underestimate what they see because it may be taken for granted. Observably, University of Nairobi students seem to be more pronounced in political matters compared to their counterparts in other universities. Television news provides an important link between political matters and the citizens by giving a platform through which political information can be conveyed (Njonjo, 2012).

Inquiry into the cognitive and behavioural effect of political news satire on the viewers is essential in reviewing the factors that contribute to political engagements of the youth. Political news satire has been posited to shape the attitudes of viewers towards political engagements and leaders and also increase the engagements of viewers (Joslyn & Cigler, 2001; McCluskey, McLeod, Scheufele, & Moy, 1999). Political engagements may however be affected by other factors like political party affiliations among others (Jones & Baym, 2010).

Satire has been studied in Kenya before and little focus has been directed towards television and the effect it has on viewers' political engagements (Pachiarotti, & Bosire, 2016). The youth are the main users and consumers of mass communication in Kenya and that they mainly do it for entertainment purposes (Njonjo, 2012). University students form an elite part of the youth in the voting population in Kenya which is a Kenyan citizen aged 18 years and above (Murunga & Nasong'o, 2007). Bearing in mind that the youth forms 51% of the voting population in Kenya, investigating the influence of political news satire on student's political engagements provides a scholarly review that fills this knowledge gap.



### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to establish the influence of political news satire on University of Nairobi students' political engagements.

### Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study was to establish the influence of political news satire aired on Kenyan television on the University of Nairobi students' political engagements. The specific objectives of the study were to:

- i. Establish the viewing patterns of political news satire among University of Nairobi students.
- ii. Establish attitudes of University of Nairobi students towards political news satire.
- iii. Establish the influence of political news satire on voting behavior of the university students.
- iv. Establish the influence of political news satire on attitudes of the university students towards political leaders.

### Research Questions

This study sought to provide answers to the following questions:

- i. What were the viewing patterns of political news satire among University of Nairobi students?
- ii. What were the attitudes of University of Nairobi students towards political news satire?
- iii. What was the influence of political news satire on voting behavior of the university students?

- iv. What was the influence of political news satire on attitudes of the university students towards political leaders?

#### Justification for the Study

This study was an investigation of the media's role in providing political information to young people. News sources in Kenya play an integral part in creating the political environment. Nyabuga (n.d) posed questions to ponder about the control of media on political processes in the deliberation of the role of media in a society by asking; "does the media influence political behaviour? How does it influence (if at all) voting patterns?" The young people have been described as the main consumers of mass media for entertainment purposes and the fact that the youth forms 51% of Kenyan voters necessitates this study.

#### Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study was to provide empirical evidence on university students' interests in political news satire as presented on Kenyan television and to understand how their interests influenced their political attitudes and engagements. This study would be useful for television programmers in media houses by providing information on university students' viewing patterns in reference to political news satire. This is because university students are the elite section of the youth who are the largest consumers of mass communication in Kenya.

#### Assumptions of the Study

The study made the following assumptions:

- i. The respondents would provide honest information.

- ii. The respondents had access to television hence familiar with political news satire.
- iii. The respondents would provide data that was relevant in answering the research questions and objectives.

### Scope of the Study

This study focused on the political satire on Kenyan television in as far as it influences political behaviour and attitude of students at the University of Nairobi. The University of Nairobi students are in the youth category as defined by the government of Kenya which forms 51 percent of voting population (Lang'at, 2017). The population is also cosmopolitan since it is a public institution that admits students from diverse backgrounds. Historically, University of Nairobi students tend to be more pronounced politically through their activism on political matters than any other category of youth in Kenya. Student leaders in the University of Nairobi have been known to champion national causes through active political engagement and which has often led to their expulsion from the university. Further, while governments in the past have banned student organisations over political activities, the student organisations resurfaced in recent years as political freedoms in the country expand (Waruru, 2014).

### Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

The study only focused on undergraduate students at the University of Nairobi excluding postgraduate students. However, since the study was on students who resided in main campus, the postgraduate students were not to be captured because none of them resided in campus. The study also focused on the University of Nairobi, which is a public institution, and hence private institutions were not captured. However, the demographics of the University of Nairobi were representative for both urban and rural students hence

the use of simple random sampling. The researcher foresaw the possibility of students not providing information on politics due to the political temperatures in an election period. The researcher assured the respondents that the data will be treated with utmost confidentiality and that it was for academic purposes.

### Definition of Terms

*Satire*: Originally used as a device to mock the shortcomings of human nature, but is presently used interchangeably with humour, comedy or even parody to label and ridicule events that are laughable (Jones & Thompson, 2009). In this study, it is a form of comedy that uses wit to ridicule political issues or politicians.

*Political News Satire*: Information about politics that makes fun of political situations or political leaders.

*Political Engagements*: Actions by individuals planned to influence either directly or indirectly political choices at various levels of political systems (Gabriel, Kerrouche, & Silke, 2012). Political engagements in this study are activities that entail voting and vying in a political process.

*Influence*: To sway or cause a change. In this study, influence is defined as the capacity of a political news satire to cause a change in status quo.

*Students' Political Engagements*: Political activities of learners in higher education institution that entail voting and vying.

*Political Trust*: The extent to which people acknowledge that the government is achieving outcomes which are consistent with what they expected (Hetherington, 1998). In this study, political trust is the acceptance of political leaders by the people.

*Political Efficacy*: The beliefs about one's own aptitude to comprehend, and to be involved in politics effectively (Niemi, Craig, & Mattei, 1991). In this study, it is the ability to appreciate and be involved in political activities.

*Political Cynicism*: Not being able to trust in government and institutions officials, and a feeling of lack of control over the practices involved in the leadership of a country (Lariscy, Tinkham, & Sweester, 2011). This study defines it as the hesitation of people from political engagements.

### Summary

This chapter has provided the background of the problem and outlined the purpose of the study establishing the influence of political news satire on university student's political engagements. The chapter has also outlined the research objectives, research questions, highlighted the significance of the study, justification and the scope of the study. The limitations and how the researcher overcame the limitations have also been discussed in this chapter. Finally, operational terms for the study have been defined. The next chapter is on literature review.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature relevant to the study from various scholars. Little research has been carried out on political news satire in Kenya especially in regard to television. Most of the literature reviewed in this chapter is therefore mainly based on studies carried outside Kenya. The specific areas covered in this chapter are theoretical frameworks, general literature review, empirical literature review, conceptual framework, discussion and summary.

#### Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework provides a viewpoint or the lens through which to scrutinize a topic. Through the framework, the researcher can conceptualize the topic fully, acknowledge the problem from a wider perspective rather than from a narrow and personalised self-interest approach (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). A theoretical framework is a pool of models, which shows a clear link between independent and dependent variables.

#### Uses and Gratification Theory

The uses and gratification theory is attributed to Herta Herzog and was initially used in the 1940s (Baran & Davis, 2003). Herzog explored radio soap opera fans and their interest in listening to the shows. The benefits derived from the programmes included “merely a means of emotional release,” “the opportunities for wishful thinking,” and the “advice obtained from listening to daytime serials”. As noted by Baran and Davis (2003), Herzog was keen on establishing why women appreciated soap operas. She was

thinking of the audience and not the media. Other studies at the time were interrogating the effect soap operas had on listeners, which supposed that the audience was inert and the soap operas were impacting the audience (Baran & Davis, 2003).

The uses and gratifications theory was first named by Elihu Katz in an article in 1959, where he was responding to Bernard Berelson's proposition that communication research was dead. According to Severin and Tankard (1988), Katz's point of reference was newspapers where communication research at the time inquired "what media do to people" and instead suggested a review of the question to "what do people do with the media?" Schramm's (1954) interrogation of what outlines the contributions of mass communication selected by given persons steered to a principle that elaborated reasons why people were interested in different forms of media. Basically, people make media choices determined by the expectation of the reward and effort required (Schramm, 1954).

Katz, Gurevitch, and Haas (1973) noted that the media is considered as a way for individuals to either unite or disengage with others. They recorded needs and put them into four categories namely, cognitive needs, affective needs, personal integrative needs and social integrative needs. Cognitive needs constitute acquiring information, knowledge and understanding. Affective needs include emotional and pleasurable feelings. Personal integrative needs include strengthening credibility, confidence, stability and status and while social integrative needs involve strengthening contacts with family and friends.

The uses and gratification theory was shunned by researchers because of supposedly lack of science involved in it because it seemed to be too elaborate, though it

came back in the 1970s out of basic need (Baran & Davis, 2003). Researchers were not able to establish reasons for people were doing what they were doing. Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1974) came up with suppositions of uses and gratifications which are:

The audience is conceived of as (i) active; (ii) it has a need to satisfy through media; (iii) take up initiative in linking need gratification and media choice; (iv) Media compete with other sources of need satisfaction; (v) People have data that will set up goals of researchers in mass media; and (vi) The audience provides value judgments (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974, p. 27-33).

According to the uses and gratifications theory, audiences vary in the satisfactions they seek from mass media. These variances are connected to definite social conditions and or persona. These variances result in many media routine and a variation of media effects (Palmgreen, Wenner, & Rosengren, 1985). Most active viewers had the extreme expectation of gratification and also revealed gaining greater satisfaction (Lin, 1993).

In the current study, respondents acknowledged that they learnt about political issues when they watched political news satire programs which agrees to the uses and gratification theory. The study also established a high viewership of political news programs compared to other programs and they acknowledged that they enjoy watching political news satire. Arguably, the motivation for the viewers to watch political news satire may be credited to both cognitive and affective needs of viewers as instigated by the uses and gratification theorists.

### Cultivation Theory

Cultivation theory focuses on television as a precise medium and television's impact on audience's views of the world (Miller, 2005). The aspect of cultivation theory with which TV satire is concerned can be looked at through the cultivation, long term, or cumulative effect. Proponents of cultivation theory suggest that the theory does not



consider television viewers as having an option in whether media affects them (Gerbner, 1998). Gerbner examined whether and how viewing television influenced viewers' perception. He suggested that television was responsible for shaping viewers' ideas of social reality and that the effect of massive television exposure by viewers over time subtly shapes the perception of social reality for individuals.

According to Condry (1989), cultivation theory proposes that high frequency views of TV are more vulnerable to media messages and the trust that they are factual and valid. For instance, individuals who watch a lot of television are exposed to more violence and thus, they are impacted by the mean world syndrome; the belief that the world is a bad and dangerous place compared to what it actually is.

Cultivation theory studies focuses on media effects as those supporting this theory argue that viewing of television can have a long term impacts that progressively impact the viewers. Thus the main focus of this theory is on the impacts of viewing in the attitudes of the audience as opposed to the created behaviour (Dominick, 1990). As such, heavy viewers (individuals consuming a lot of television content) are perceived to be „cultivating“ outlooks that appear to believe that the world created by TV is a precise representation of the real world.

The impact of cultivation theory can be broken down into two categories; one, a general belief about the world and two, the specific attitudes (Evra, 1990). The cultivation theory advocates that this attitude cultivation is founded on attitudes already in the society and that the media takes these attitudes and re-presents them in a completely different package to the viewers (Livingstone, 1990). One to the key beliefs of this theory is that television and the media as a whole creates status quo, rather than

challenge it. Ordinarily, the audience is not aware of the degree of their absorption of media, as they tend to perceive themselves as moderate viewers when, in reality they have heavy viewers.

Based on this theory, television and media has a small but noteworthy influence on the beliefs and attitudes of the society about the society. Heavy viewers are those that are significantly influenced (Miller, 2005). Cultivation theorists also argue that television has lasting effects which are small, steady, unintended but snowballing and momentous (Gerbner, 1998). These effects come to answer the questions posed by scholars on the weaknesses of the uses and gratification theory (Miller, 2005).

Important to note is the idea of lasting and aggregate effects of viewing television about reality, may limit proper appraisal of the effectiveness of a definite genre like satirical shows because the effect of long-term viewing of TV is analysed as a whole rather than isolating a specific television program like political news satire. Respondents in the current study acknowledged that viewing political news satire has shaped their opinions on their political standpoints. Arguably, exposure to political news satire has an effect on the viewers` s political perceptions.

#### Mobilization Theory

Mobilization theory states that “rising education levels and easier access to large amounts of political communication have helped to mobilize citizens both cognitively and behaviourally” (Newton, 1999, p. 581). Further, Newton`s study on British social attitude survey (BSA) established that television news appear to enlighten and mobilize and have a ubiquitous effect because a great number of diverse people watch it on a regular basis. The media mobilization theory posits that news media, acting as agents of

public mobilization, aim at encouraging the public to take part in politics and political discussions (Scheufele & Nisbet, 2003). Studies based on this theory have attempted to draw a link between how the public consume news relating to politics, and how they socialize with others around them following the consumption of such media content (Garramone & Atkin, 1986).

Garramone and Atkin (1986) studied the youth and their political participation trends. The study found that students in public schools were influenced to participate in politics through reading of newspapers and other broadcast media that contained issues pertaining to current events. They concluded that there is a link between political knowledge and exposure to media among the youth. In a different study, Choi and Becker (1987) studied the impact of media on the political participation of individuals, focusing on television and newspapers.

Choi and Becker (1987) concluded that newspapers had more impact than television on influencing individual's choices in voting through increased confidence on preferred candidates. In a different study using the same theory, Kenski and Stroud (2006) used data from the 2000 National Annenberg Election Survey to study the link of media exposure and decisions regarding political choices among the public. They concluded that there was a link between political participation, political efficacy, political knowledge and internet access as people used the internet as a medium for information access. Arguably, media mobilization theory posits that the media is likely to increase participation of the public on featured content. For instance, by publishing content about politics, the media is likely to increase public interest and participation in politics within the region of publication.

However, the Mobilization theory has been critiqued by the proponents of media malaise theory who argue that contemporary political coverage in news media offer a truncated and negative view of political process and stimulates citizens' political cynicism, declining trust and engagement (Small, Giasson, & Marland, 2014). Media malaise theory puts the media sources into view by questioning the packaging of politics and how the packaging is presented to the audience.

Political satirical programmes may more often than not portray the gaffes made by political leaders which may not be a positive attribute after all. Media malaise theory is among the most popular and very controversial issues in political communication studies. At its center is the notion that individuals have become more skeptical and suspicious of politicians as well as the political process in its entirety, thus political participation is decreasing (Day, 2011).

Day (2011) stated that this is in part blamed on the political presentation by the news media as a type of a game or contest where strategy has more significance compared to substantial issues. Thus, the media malaise theory suggests that this kind of coverage leads to a widespread political disparagement that makes individuals to lose interest. Nonetheless, Miller (2005) contested this argument by stressing that media can mobilize individuals politically while Forgette and Russo (2013) claimed that individuals tend to become more cynical but not essentially less engaged.

The manner in which the media covers news or put it across to the public has a negative effect on the entire society (Guggenheim, Kwak, & Campbell, 2011). In his study, Miller (2005) focused on the political atmosphere, the waning trust, the political cynicism as above mentioned among others. The current study established that

respondents are cognitively engaged which agrees to the mobilization theory, even though their behavioural engagement is influenced to some little extent. They acknowledged political news satire influences them to vote but it does not influence them to vie for political positions.

## General Literature Review

### Satire

Satire is a method employed by authors to illuminate stupidity and corrupt ways of an individual through the use of irony, humor, ridicule of exaggeration especially in the context of modern politics and other newsworthy matters (Miller, 2005). In essence, satire intends to enhance humanity through critiquing its idiocies and shortcomings. Normally, in a satire, the author uses fictional characters that represent real people, a country or even the entire world to expose and condemn lewd behaviour.

According to Miller (2005), satire is a comical way of writing that makes fun of a person or a community to expose its shortcomings as well as foolhardiness. Further, satire is playful distortion of reality and can be understood as an aspect of comedy that uses wit (Feinberg, 1967). While the sole intention of comedy is to cause laughter, satire goes deeper to illuminate social realities which are usually ills (Wood, 2007). Wood further identified satire as the use of irony, humor, ridicule or exaggeration to criticize and expose people's vices or stupidity more especially in the context of present day politics as well as other issues.

In the Kenyan context, satire is not new right from the times of *Redykyulass* in the 1990s to the contemporary satires spearhead by the lead satirist Gado and the *XYZ* show on NTV (Reinl, 2013). In Kenya, satires are also used in educating people about issues

that are very sensitive and government may not provide the space for discussing owing to their sensitive nature, for example, graffiti and cartoons. Besides, satirical songs are also popular in Kenya. For instance, *Nchi ya kitu kidogo* by Eric Wainaina and *Utawala* by Juliani are classic songs that have been used to attack corrupt government officials and dysfunctional public service yet to deliver mandates to the populace. The two songs are fun to sing but they have embedded message that calls the public to rise up and demand better services from the government (Njoya, Epstein, & Williams, 2017).

### Political News Satire in Kenya

Political news satire in Kenya has been explored using various media outlets, including television, radio, newspapers and graffiti. According to Reinl (2013), political news satire in Kenya began actively at the turn of the century during the last term of president Moi as noted earlier. Before then, there was little political satire, and critics using political satire against Daniel Moi were virtually unheard of. Supporting this view, Warner (2013) argued that political news satire in Kenya gained ground in the last two decades, with the onset of social media, and an increased freedom of speech during the Kibaki era.

Arguably, the works of satirists have mostly been focused on incumbent leadership, with the president, vice president and the prime minister getting the most attention during Kenya's post-Moi leadership. For instance, the retired president, Mwai Kibaki and the retired Prime Minister, Raila Odinga, were portrayed as tribal leaders who would steal from their people and lie to them and yet, they would still be voted into leadership. These sentiments came out as funny because of their perceived truthfulness (Warner, 2013).

### Political News Satire on Kenyan TV

While the use of satire to take a jab at the politics in Kenya has taken many platforms, it has never been more evident as on national television channels. Notably, the top channels in Kenyan television are Citizen TV, NTV, KTN and K24. Each of these channels has at least one program dedicated to political satire with some having more than one. Citizen, for instance, hosts *XYZ Show*, a program created and edited by Godfrey Mwampendwa, popularly known as Gado (Muriuki, 2017).

*XYZ Show* was launched in May 2009 and became an immediate success, with the first episodes including the portrayal of members of parliament fighting for conjugal rights with their wives, who decide to punish them for refusing to work together in the coalition government. It also portrayed Raila Odinga and Mwai Kibaki as being in prison at The Hague for their role in post-election violence, in an episode that was dubbed, “what if Kenya was perfect?”

On NTV, the most current political news satire program, *The Wicked Edition* which is a parody of national news takes a humorous approach to report the wickedness and the issues that are wrong with the country. The show is aired by Doctor King’ori and has been on air since November 2016. According to Doctor King’ori, *The Wicked Edition’s* secret is simply telling the truth but in a satirical way (Muriuki, 2017).

On KTN, political satire has been expressed in the program entitled, *Mock the Week*. The program was created by Wilson Mburu and has been aired since 2015, its theme being the political events making headlines in the week, through a comedic approach. According to Kimani (2015), Mburu’s show has a wide audience among Kenyans and the show has given the producer a bitter-sweet relationship with the politicians because of the sarcastic manner in which they are portrayed. The striking

similarity in these political news satires on Kenyan television is that they both aim to entertain and educate at the same time.

According to Wanjiku (2014), television producers have an intended or preferred meaning of the satirical programs which may be interpreted differently by the viewer's depending on the characteristics of satirical texts, literacy levels, age, perception and co-switching channels during news time. Satire on TV in Kenya is a fairly new concept whose popularity grew towards the end of President Moi's era (Wanjiku, 2014).

Observably, there are more satirical programs which are currently being aired on TV in Kenya and this may have been boosted by succeeding presidents after President Moi's regime where freer press has been nurtured as noted earlier. Wanjiku studied the elements satirical texts and she concluded that "indeed *Bulls Eye* is a satirical program that fits the key elements of satire which are; context, participants and knowledge" (Wanjiku, 2014, p. 113).

#### Political Trust

Political trust is defined as the extent to which people consider the government to be meeting their expectations (Hetherington, 1998). It was first conceptualised in the early 1960s and several debates have been put across covering such discourses as how researchers should measure political trust; the relationship that exists between the decline in levels of trust and other political variables that include participation or efficacy; and finally, the media's role in influencing political trust (Levi & Stoker, 2000; Moy & Scheufele, 2000; Moy, Torres, Tanaka, & McCluskey, 2005; Tsfati & Cappella, 2003).



## Political Efficacy

Political efficacy can be understood in two conceptual approaches: external efficacy and internal efficacy (Craig, Niemi, & Silver, 1990). External efficacy is the belief that the leaders“ adequately represent citizen interest while internal efficacy is individuals“ belief about one“s own competence to understand and effectively participate in politics (Craig et al., 1991). Political efficacy is the individuals“ faith and trust in the government as well as their belief that they can understand and affect political matters (Helonmore, 2014).

Political efficacy is usually measured through surveys and used as an indicator for the general health of the civic society. Holbert (2013) posited that when individuals have low political efficacy, they tend to lack faith their government and doubt that their actions influence the government and the actions of the politicians. However, when individuals have high political efficacy, they normally have faith in the government and are confident that they possess the ability to affect both the politicians as well as the government (Sulitzeanu-Kenan & Halperin, 2013).

According to Jones (2004), political efficacy can be expressed in a number of ways including; through media, possessing the right to protest, having the ability to establish petitions and through conducting free and fair elections (Klein, 2013). Regrettably, the lack of political efficacy leads to violence and is a demerit of having low political efficacy; hence individuals tend to have the feeling that they have no power in their own country. Lakoff and Johnson (2008) noted that feelings of political efficacy are linked to individuals“ participation in political and social life, nevertheless, research on this topic fail to indicate any correlation between the public confidence in the government or the politicians and voting. Normally, political efficacy differentiates policy preferences

as individuals with considerably high efficacy tend to have policy preferences that coincides with their ideological orientation and more extreme.

On the other hand, individuals with low political efficacy usually have moderate policy preferences. According to LaMarre, Landreville, and Beam (2009), political efficacy tend to increase with age. Other studies have shown that higher levels of political efficacy are connected with greater rates of voter turnout and higher levels of efficacy motivate political participation and engagement (Deshpande, Shah & McLeod, 2004). Moreover, external political efficacy, which is also understood as political cynicism, is often connected with exposure to horse race journalism or heavily framed media reportage that emphasizes on the political ploys games rather than the substance (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Iyengar, 1991; Iyengar & Kinder, 1987).

#### Empirical Literature Review

#### Comedy and Political Exposure

Previous research has explored the inferences of programs of satirical news and debates (Towner & Dulio, 2011), talk shows like *The Colbert Report* and *The Late Show* (Meddaugh, 2010; LaMarre, Landreville, & Beam, 2009) and *Seinfeld*, which is a comedy program (Olbrys, 2005). As acknowledged by Purdum (2011), several television programs that use satirical styling have engaged satire to address political issue in the American politics.

*The Daily Show* and *Colbert Report* are fresher of these programs which have provided a definitely altered viewer experience than programs like *The Late Show* and *The Tonight Show* which are more traditional (Hoffman & Young, 2011). Importantly, are the conclusions of these and other studies which reveal that watching satirical

political news programs may increase political knowledge and distrust (Hoffman & Young, 2011).

Studies have been conducted over the past decade and linked exposure to political news comedy with variables such as political interest, learning, cynicism, political participation and internal political efficacy. For example, Baumgartner and Morris (2006) conducted investigation that confirmed that viewing *The Daily Show* can undesirably influence the audience's judgments of the presidential candidates.

Moreover, Baumgartner and Morris (2006) found that exposure to *The Daily Show* increased young viewers' distrust towards the electoral system and news media. Baumgartner and Morris' (2006) research revealed that viewers' discernments and evaluations are influenced about politics but their research did not conclude whether exposure to *The Daily Show* could lead to an increase or decrease in political participation. They established that exposure to the show increases cynicism and mistrust, but did not correlate their findings to the concept of political participation.

Research conducted by Cao and Brewer (2006) revealed that exposure to political comedy shows is positively related to political participation. The exposure to late night comedy was measured by asking the respondents whether they agreed that they acquired new information about the presidential campaign or the candidate from comedy shows. Their results indicated that when the audience is exposed to American comedy there can be certain forms of political participation as a result which can also be based on age and race (Cao & Brewer, 2006).

A different scholar, Lee (2012), studied how late night comedy programs may affect political participation through interpersonal conversation and established that late

night comedy programs play no less an important role than do traditional news sources in fostering political participation.

### Political Satire, Efficacy and Trust

In recent years, decreasing levels of political trust have been shown to adversely influence political participation and stimulate a general distrust towards news media and elections institutions (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Torres, Tanaka, & McCluskey, 2005). Conversely, previous studies have revealed that greater levels of political confidence or trust are connected to a more positive assessment of the government, that is, less cynicism or higher levels of external efficacy and higher rates of civic engagement and or participation (Kenski & Stroud, 2006).

Further, previous research has revealed that undesirable depictions influence the public's opinion of politicians and government bodies. A study conducted by Miller, Goldenberg, and Erbring (1979) on the relationship between critical media and citizens' distrust of their government and institutions established that negativity fashioned by the media increases mistrust. Miller et al. (1979) noted that media criticism seems to lead people to interrogate whether their government is rendering their duties according to expectations. However, it does not directly sway government norms. Further, the study established that news reporting focused on conflict in politics which exerted noteworthy levels of distrust.

Researchers established that exposure to *The Daily Show* led to lower levels of external efficacy or more cynical perceptions towards the government institutions yet the same show increased the levels of internal efficacy. Findings on a study carried out by Holbert et al. (2007) revealed that internal political efficacy acts as an arbiter for handling

media content, with low-efficacy individuals recording weaker measures of political fulfilments after watching mainstream news, having first been exposed to content from *The Daily Show* (Polk et al., 2009). In other words, viewing *The Daily Show* may interrelate with one's feeling of political aptitude and usefulness, or ideas of internal efficacy and general belief in the media to sufficiently offer the political information.

The exposure to late night comedy and other forms of political comedy is connected with political efficacy (Cao & Brewer, 2008). As acknowledged by Baym (2005), the content of *The Daily Show* suggests that Jon Stewart the creator of *The Daily Show* contributes to a re-wakening of political trust with his journalism brand. Importantly, the late night comedy abridges politics by poking fun at politicians and institutions of government, eventually making the political world more reachable to the average viewer. Studies have established a co-relationship between media use and political cynicism (DeVreese, 2005).

With the flare-up of fresh formats of political entertainment media, there is a renewed curiosity in investigating the effects of distrustful attitudes on political participation and voting behaviour (Moy, Xenos, & Hess, 2005). Previous researches have dwelt on how political cynicism influences political behaviour of young voters who are both new to the electorate and recurrent consumer of political comedy (Hoffman & Thomson, 2009; Pinkleton & Austin, 2004). However, the arguments are yet to conclude a definite relationship existing between exposure to new media content, cynical attitudes and youth participation in politics (Elenbass & DeVreese, 2008).

## The Effects of Political Satire

### Communication and Satire

Notably, satire is inspired by the reflection of reality to demonstrate the humour that exists in everyday life. However, in contrast to general comedy, it blights certain instances and in some occasions with callousness, and emphasizes their undesirable aspects almost entirely (Ziv, 2010). Satirical communication is not a new field of scholarly concern since it has undergone considerable assessments that are within both historical and modern contexts that range from written analysis of novels to analysis of several satirical and news programs and television (Meddaugh, 2010).

### Political Cynicism

Political cynicism has mutated beyond the early concept of “inverse of trust in government” and has brought an ideology of the belief that government in general and political leaders in particular do not care about the public’s opinions and are not acting in the best interest of the people (Kaid, McKinney, & Tedesco, 2000). Furthermore, it has been defined as the absence of belief in government institutions and its officials and a feeling of helplessness over the process involved in the management and guidance of the country (Lariscy et al., 2011).

Previous studies have investigated political cynicism as a variable that is altered by exposure to news media (DeVreese 2004), political debates (McKinney & Rill, 2011), political advertisements (Schenck-Hamlin, Procter, & Ramsey 2000). However, the review of political cynicism as a valuable component of political communication research remains a key concept because of its possible connection to voting behaviour and civic activities (Yoon, Pinkleton, & Ko, 2005). Political cynicism has been argued to correlate

negatively with voting efficacy although it has inconclusively been related to the appraisal of media sources (DeVreese, 2005).

Important to note however is that the extent of the effects of political trust and cynicism has been posited to be affected by the context to which the political content is viewed (Towner & Dulio, 2011). As a result of the increasing significance and visibility of political satire programming, researchers in the field of communication have tried to understand the effects of the exposure to this kind of content on indicators of democratic citizenship such as political efficacy and trust in the government (Kaid & Postelnicu, 2005).

While evaluating the data from data collected from undergraduates of two major universities, Lakoff and Johnson (2008) established a positive correlation between the exposure of television political satire and political trust. Individuals have a wide range of news sources, from radio to websites and televisions and according to Moyer-Guse and Nabi (2010), a large percentage of American adults obtain their news from *Comedy Central; The Daily Show and Colbert Report*. Moyer-Guse (2008) stated that individuals actually learn from these television programs in addition to getting entertained.

There are some key facts and analysis about audiences to such programs including who views them, obtain information from them and those that trust them as the source of political news. First, about six in every ten individuals have heard of political satire programs such as *The Colbert Report* and 10% of them obtain news from the programs. Many individuals have heard of *Comedy Central* show compared to other news sources such as *Buzz Feed* or *The Economist* although some of these shows are not generally known as the top cable news channel (Young & Tisinger, 2006).

Even though the audience is not as large as those of major TV network, these shows attract a following similar to some national news outlets such as the *Wall Street Journal* or *USA Today*. Another fact is that young males tend to use and trust these political satire shows as a source of information about their government and politics. In a survey, Tsakona and Popa (2011) found that 22% of men between ages 18 to 29 obtain news on politics and government from shows like *The Colbert Report*. This is twice as many as females in these age bracket and considerably higher compared to any other age group. Similarly, these young men are more likely to trust these television shows as a sources of news of politics.

Further, Stewart (2007) found that individuals with unswerving liberal political views tend to use and trust political satire television shows. Approximately, 26% of these liberals are reported to obtaining news about politics and the government from these shows and this is far more compared to other ideological groups. In fact, just 1% of unswerving conservatives can claim that they obtain news from these shows. According to Tsakona and Popa (2011), trust follows the same pattern, since nearly 36% of unswerving liberals trust these political satire shows, compared to any other ideological group.

The study of the effects of politically-oriented media content has a long account. Notably, the contributions of Walter Lippman in *Public Opinion* formed the genesis of the investigations of the media effects. One set of researchers posit that programs with humoristic aspect bring politics closer to individuals and that they generate a better understanding of political themes (Forgette & Russo, 2013). As noted by Young and Tisinger (2006), in one of the episodes of *The Daily Show*, Job Steward chose to handle a



serious topic, “gun control”. During the show, the host talked on the absurdity of the arguments for reducing gun violence had become where some individuals rapidly changed the conversation from maintain safety to individuals looking after their own interest.

However, *The Daily Show* host was able to put this conversation back on track and handled the issue that was really important. With the normal coverage of such issues on media outlets, Young and Tisinger, (2006) claimed that it does not take long for individuals to forget such issues, or worse turn them into a political issue. While Jon Stewart’s role on these political satires shows like many other hosts is to be funny and entertaining, his comedy not only informs the audience but also it makes actual sense.

Holbert, (2013) argued that as the general politics becomes more diverged, news networks are becoming more subjective and some talking points are becoming facts among political leaders, lobbyists and experts. Thus, a path has been created from comedians to get deep on political matters that others are too terrified to handle and this aspect have increased viewership of these shows compared to other kinds of news coverage.

As a result, an increasing number of viewers are shifting their trust from mainstream media avenues like the cable and network news, magazines and newspapers to other sources, for instance, fake news, satirical websites, talk shows and tabloids (Holbert, 2013). Nevertheless, Jones (2004) noted that this phenomenon is not merely as a result of what the news outlets are doing incorrectly, but what the comedians are doing correctly.

A number of surveys have been conducted in learning institutions, asking individuals of the kind of news programs they view of television and well as asking the individuals to respond to some basic questions on both domestic and global news. The results of these surveys according to Helonmore (2014) showed that the majority of individuals who are viewers of political satirical shows are among the well-informed audience while frequent viewers of CNN, Fox News and MSNBC are among the worse informed viewers.

Hariton (2011) analyzed political satirical shows on televisions and observed that Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert among others are really legitimate news presenters as they provide the audience with information and not make facts up. According to Hariton (2011), these stories are funny since they are what really happens in politics and argue that if comedy was allowed to come naturally to the news, the jokes have the capability of tapping into the real issues.

Guggenheim et al. (2011) stated that satires do not have to be funny so as to keep the audience entertained. When an issue comes off as liberating and is able to pull at individuals' heartstrings, addition to comic aspect to that, can not only be humanizing but also very powerful. Thus, Forgett and Russo (2013) contended that in the times where viewers' span of attention is increasingly becoming shorter, emotional attachment is very necessary. As such, individuals do not watch dry news and even though they watch because of the jokes, the main purpose in to inform just as much as entertain.

According to Day (2011), what makes people to keep tuning in on these satirical shows is because politics is currently terrible and majority of news stations have political affiliations and really investigate the real problems if it does not align with their own

political agenda. *The Daily Show* is among the satirical television shows that increases the likelihood of young viewers' participation in politics.

In the past couple of decades, communication and political research have focused on evaluating the effect of watching political humour and results indicate that political satire is a merit for democracy. As such, Dahlgren (2009) claimed that tuning into political satire encourages young views to search for more news information from traditional sources and follow political campaigns, have confidence on their ability to take part in politics and be more inclined to take part in commitment oriented actions of political expression (Cao, 2008).

Becker, Xenos, and Waisanen's (2010) study on the impact of watching political leaders being interviewed on political satire shows in comparison to cable news outlets found that tuning to satirical interview increases the chances that young viewers will participate in a protest, demonstration or march, sign a written or email petition about a social or political issue. Further, Baumgartner and Morris (2006) noted that young viewers are more likely to remember facts about the political leader or political issue if they access to them as comedy compared to cable news.

Nonetheless, watching political satire can influence the audiences' attitudes towards both politicians and political issues in negative and positive ways, making them feel more cynical about the political institutions and are alleged to honor a biased political point of view. However, regardless of these demerits, political satire is perceived by many as a gain for democracy, not a bust (Baumgartner & Morris, 2006).

Political satire is significant for young viewers who are the foundation of these shows' audience. Baym and Jones (2012) reported that 39% of the audience of *The Daily*

*Show* is less than 30 years while 43% of *The Colbert Report* viewers are under age 30. There are numerous satirical television shows including spanning over four decades, poking fun at a number of political leaders. Essentially, watching political leaders make fun of themselves has become a valuable and real experience for voters who are increasingly seeking to identify themselves with the politicians running for elective positions (Baym & Jones, 2012). Judging by the 2012 campaign, Baek and Wojcieszak (2009) claimed that the effect of viral video content, for instance Mitt Romney version of Psy's *Gangnam Style* cannot be ignored. This content significant affects the attitudes of voters especially when a young viewer's previous dispositions towards the political candidates are thrown in the mix.

Studies have revealed that political programming that are satirical in nature may lead to an improved in-depth analysis and feelings of cynicism as well as better levels of political information. This would mean political news satire may be argued to be potent conduit for political information hence utilised with introspection by media enterprises. Satirical programs may shape the public opinion, perception and attitudes in regards to politics and politicians (Holbert et al., 2011). Viewer engagement has also been increased by political satire (Jones & Baym, 2010). More so, viewing political news satire has been found to increase the levels of political cynicism among audience (Jones & Baym 2010).

Satirical programs are anticipated to paint a ridiculous picture on their targets although there are chances of individuals who strongly support satirized politicians interpreting the programs as light-hearted intimations which do not necessitate serious attention (LaMarre et al., 2009). Previous studies have also revealed that the perceptions shaped by political satirical programs may act as forecasters to political behaviour, and

beliefs in regards to matters related to political communication as well as civic engagement (Hoffman & Young, 2011). With respect to targeted audiences, young viewers have been examined and analysed (Cao, 2008). However, studies to this effect have had variations as to whether the effect of viewing television hampers or incentivises political participation of viewers (Guggenheim & Campbell, 2011).

### Conceptual Framework

Rallis and Rossman (2012) defined a conceptual framework as a structure that organizes the currents of thought that provides focus and direction to an inquiry. It presents variables through diagrammatic presentations and also the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. An independent variable causes the changes to the dependent variable while dependent variable is the phenomenon that the researcher wishes to explain (Kothari, 2004).

In this study, the independent variable is viewing political news satire which entails viewing patterns of political news satire as well as attitudes towards political news satire in regards to the objectives of the study. The dependent variable is political engagements that entails voting, vying and attitudes towards political leaders.

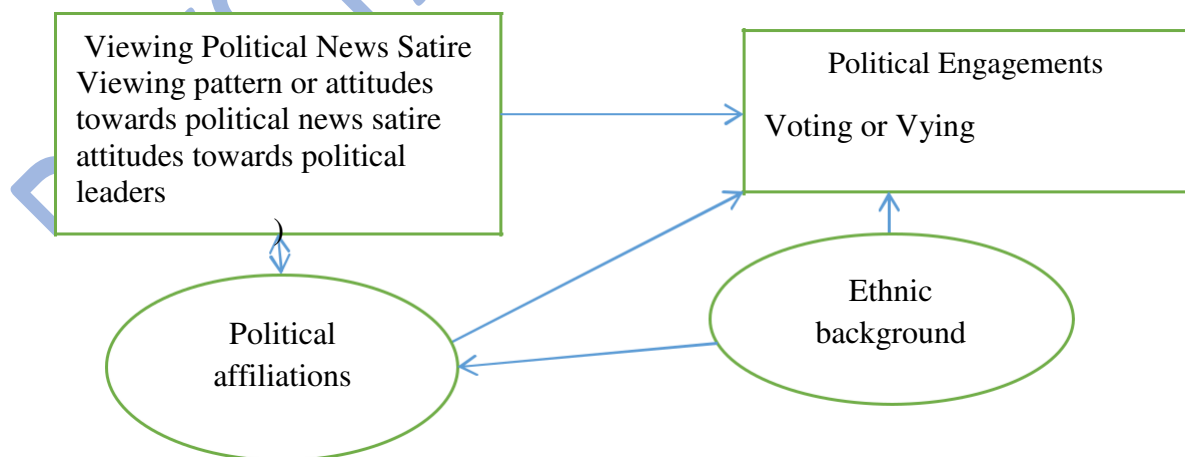


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

## Discussion

This study takes into considerations that there could be other factors that may contribute to political engagements like ethnic background and political party affiliations. An intervening variable affects independent and dependent variables and its effects either by strengthening or weakening them (Calmorin & Calmorin, 2007). Hence political party affiliations and ethnic background are the intervening variables in this study.

## Summary

This chapter reviewed empirical literature of past studies where global studies have been analysed. The chapter also explored the conceptualization of the independent and the dependent variables by analysing the relationships between the two sets of variables. The next chapter discusses the research methodology used to achieve the study's objectives.

DAYSTAR UNIVERSITY

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

This chapter gives an outline of the methodology that was used in this study. Research methodology as described by Kothari (2004) is a systematic way to solve the problem. It gives an outline of the research design, population, target population, sample size, sampling design and pre-testing used for the study. Furthermore, it describes the data collection instruments used, procedures employed in collecting the research data, data analysis and presentation and the research findings.

#### Research Design

A research design can be understood as the structure of the research (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). It can also refer to how data collection and analysis are structured in order to meet the research objectives through empirical evidence economically (Chandran, 2006). A descriptive design was used to find out and obtain data from respondents on the effect of political news satire on University of Nairobi students' political engagements due to its qualitative nature. The initial intention of carrying out in a cross-sectional style was challenged by logistical reasons hence the researcher collected the data in two phases, in the month of October 2016 and again the month of May 2017.

#### Population

Population is the entire set of individuals to which the findings of the survey are to be extrapolated (Lemeshow & Levy 2008). For the purposes of this study, the population was University of Nairobi students from the main campus. The researcher had

an initial plan to study all the campuses within Nairobi but due to logistical challenges, recalibrated to focus on students who reside in main campus only.

### Target Population

The target population is the specific population about which information desired is derived. It is a set of elements that research focuses upon and to which the results obtained by testing the sample should be generalized (Bless, Smith, & Kagee, 2014). This study targeted students who reside in University of Nairobi, main campus and aged between 18 to 35 years. Due restrictive logistical reasons, the researcher randomly selected four hostels from the twenty-four hostels to carry out the study. The selected hostels for this study were Hall 1 and Hall 8 for male which had a total capacity of 426 and for female Hall 5 and Stella Awinja Hostel that had a total capacity of 597 (University of Nairobi, 2017). Hence, the target population for this study was 1,023

### Sampling Techniques

Sampling is done as a representation so that conclusions are drawn about the entire population. According to Kothari (2004), the ultimate test of a sample design is how well it represents the characteristics of the population it purposes to study. This study used simple random sampling. The target population for this study was 1,023 students. Simple random sampling was used to select respondents of the study.

### Sample Size

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) posited that a final sample estimate should be calculated from a large population which comprises 10,000 elements or more. The formula suggested by Fisher as recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) is:



$$n = Z^2 * p * (1-p) / d^2$$

Where: n = Sample size for large population

Z = Normal distribution Z value score, (1.96)

p = Proportion of units in the sample size possessing the variables under study, where for this study it is set at 50% (0.5)

d = Precision level desired or the significance level which is 0.08 (8%) for the study

The substituted values in determining the sample size for a large population are as follows:

$$\frac{1.96^2 * 0.5 * 0.5}{(0.08)^2}$$

The researcher adopted the suggestions by Araisian and Gay (2003) that findings from 10% of the target population can be used to make generalization about a population. The sample size used in this study was 117 which was 11.43% of the target population of 1023.

#### Data Collection Instruments

Primary data is information gathered directly from the respondents (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). For this study the researcher used questionnaires. The primary data was collected through self-administered questionnaires containing both structured and unstructured questions.

#### Data Collection Procedures

Copies of self-administered questionnaires were distributed to the respondents by the researcher and collected later so that the respondents could have an opportunity to seek clarifications from the researcher during collection. The researcher employed the use

of survey questionnaires for data collection because it allows for “descriptive assertions to be made about characteristics of a large population (Cargan, 2007).

### Pretesting

The researcher carried out a pretest at the Technical University of Kenya to validate the questionnaire. To establish the validity of the research instrument, the researcher sought opinions of experts in the field of study especially the researcher`s supervisors. These facilitated the necessary revision and modification of the research instrument thereby enhancing validity. The subjects participating in the pretest were not included in the final study to avoid survey fatigue.

By pretesting, the clarity of the instrument items to the respondents was established. This was to enhance the instruments` validity and reliability. The pretest enabled the researcher to be familiar with the research and its administration procedure as well as identifying the items that required modification from which the results aided the research to correct inconsistencies from the instrument. This ensured that the instrument measured what it was intended to measure.

### Data Analysis Plan

Data analysis was qualitatively and quantitatively done using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 23 for descriptive statistics. Qualitative data was analysed using the descriptive statistics function in SPSS and presented through means, standard deviation, and percentages. The information was displayed on bar charts, pie charts, graphs and prose form. The display of data was made possible after the tallying of responses, computation of percentages of variations in responses, as well as description and interpretation of data in line with the study`s

objectives and assumptions. Qualitative data was coded thematically and then analyzed statistically. Content analysis was used to analyze data that is quantitative by nature.

### Ethical Considerations

Ethics are norms governing human conduct, which have a significant impact on human welfare that involves making a judgment about right and wrong behavior (Breakwell, 2006). It is the responsibility of the researcher to carefully assess the possibility of harm to research participants (Bryman, 2007). Bryman further stated that the researcher must take all reasonable precautions to ensure that the respondents are in no way directly harmed or adversely affected as a result of their participation in a research project.

The researcher ensured that the questionnaires did not require the respondent's names or details that may reveal their identity. Confidentiality was therefore upheld for all respondents and the names of the respondents in the study were not disclosed to any party. Also, before embarking on the study, the researcher sought permission from relevant authorities such as a research permit from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), approval from Daystar University's Ethics Review Bureau (ERB) and an introduction letter from the university.

### Summary

The chapter has discussed the research methodology used to achieve the study's objectives. It described the research design, population, data collection methods and procedures, sampling methods, pretesting and ethical considerations. The next chapter is on data presentation, analysis and interpretation.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

#### Introduction

This chapter documents and presents findings of the research based on analysis and interpretation of data collected. A total of 117 copies of questionnaires were administered with the assistance of two research assistants and 100 were retrieved, representing a return rate of 85.4%. A response rate of more than 70 percent is considered acceptable (Denscombe, 1983). The data collected was analyzed by use of SPSS software and the information presented in form of tables, graphs and descriptive statistics.

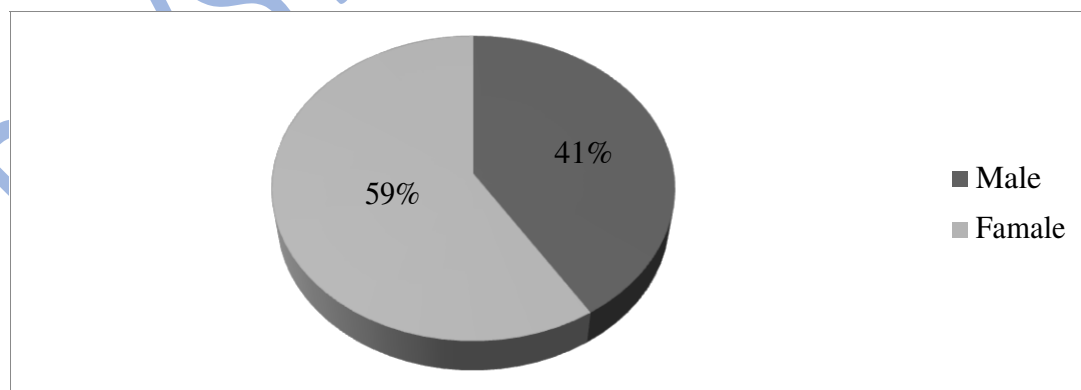
#### Presentation Analysis and Interpretation

##### Demographic Data of Respondents

The researcher sought information on demographic data of the respondents. This section presents the results on gender, county of origin and age of the respondents.

##### Gender of the Respondents

The study sought to determine the gender of the respondents. The results are presented in Figure 4.1.



*Figure 4.1: Gender of Respondents*

The results indicated that 41% of the respondents were male while 59% were female. This means that there were more female students at the University of Nairobi as compared to male students.

#### County of Origin

Table 4.1 shows the respondents' county of origin. It is evident from the results that 24 out of the 47 counties in Kenya were represented. It also shows that the highest number of the respondents came from Nairobi County at 19% followed by Bomet at 8%, Taita Taveta at 7% and Mombasa at 6%.

*Table 4.1: County of Origin*

County	Frequency	Percentage
Busia	5	5.0
Migori	4	4.0
Nairobi	10	10.0
Bungoma	19	19.0
Kakamega	2	2.0
Siaya	3	3.0
Nakuru	2	2.0
Kiambu	3	3.0
Kajiado	2	2.0
Nyandarua	4	4.0
Machakos	2	2.0
Uasin gishu	5	5.0
Tranzoia	2	2.0
Kisii	2	2.0
Homa Bay	2	2.0
Taita Taveta	7	7.0
Mombasa	2	2.0
Baringo	4	4.0
Kisumu	3	3.0
Muranga	3	3.0
Kericho	4	4.0
Laikipia	3	3.0
Bomet	8	8.0
Mombasa	6	6.0
Total	100	100.0

### Age of Respondents

The study sought to determine the age of the respondents. The findings are presented in Table 4.2

*Table 4.2: Age of Respondents*

	Frequency	Percent
18-22yrs	60	60.0
23-27yrs	40	40.0
Total	100	100.0

The results indicated that 60% of the respondents were aged between 18 and 22 years, and 40% were between 23 and 27 years old. None of the respondents were above 27 years hence the researcher classified the ages into two broad categories at five-year interval.

### Viewership of Political News Satire

As per the first objective of this study, which was to establish the viewing patterns of political news satire program on TV in Kenya, it was important to establish whether political news satire programs are watched and if so which ones and to what extent. Figure 4.2 shows the analyzed data indicating the percentage of political news satire watched in Kenyan TV.

The results revealed that the most watched political news satire was *Bulls Eyes* at 34% followed by *Truthmeter* at 27%, *News Shot* at 16%, *XYZ show* at 7%, *Flip Side* at 5% *Mock the Week* at 3%, *Kukuru Kakara* at 3% and others at 5%.

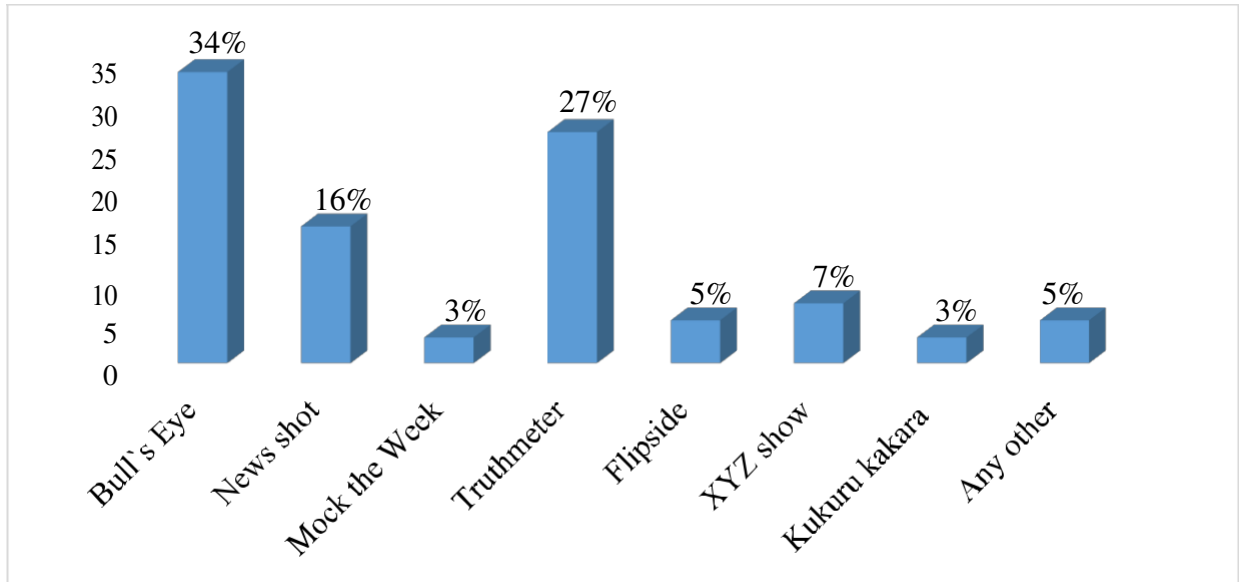


Figure 4.2: The Most Watched Political Satire

Interest in Politics

The study sought to establish the level of respondents' interest in politics which answered the objective on students voting behavior. Figure 4.3 indicates that 48% of the students were very much interested in politics, 24% were fairly enough interested, 15% showed little interest in politics and 13% had no interest in politics at all. This indicates that a total of 72% of the students were interested in politics. The implication of these findings was that respondents had some level of interest in politics.

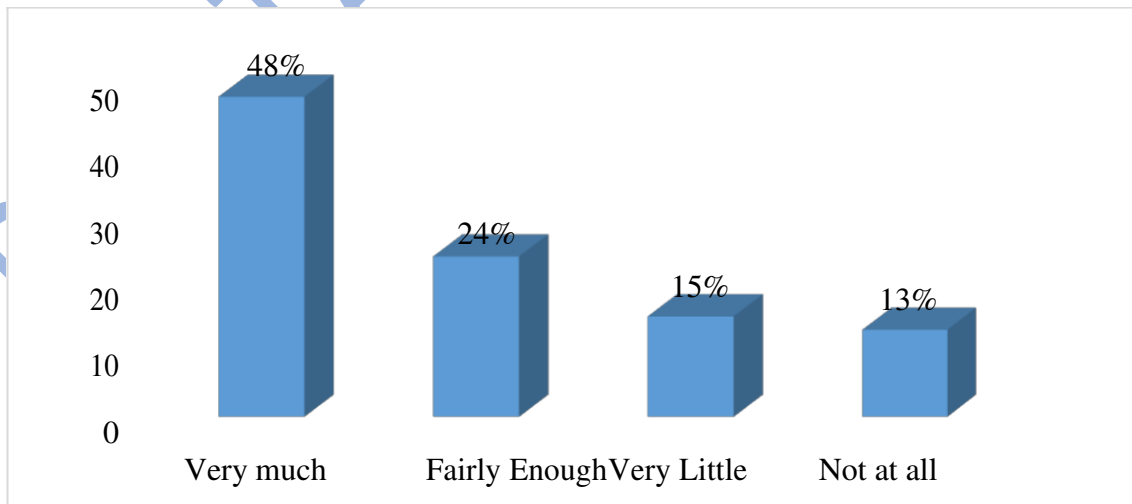
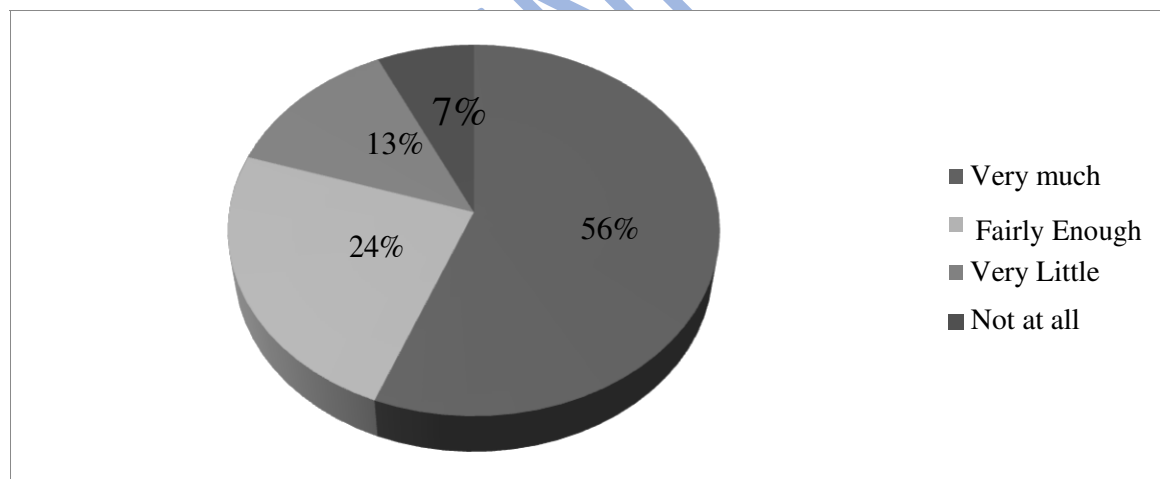


Figure 4.3: Interest in Politics

### Influence on Political Standpoints

The study investigated the extent to which respondents believed that political news satire influenced their political standpoints. This item addressed the objective on establishing influence of political news satire on students' attitude towards political leaders. When the respondents were asked if political news satire programs aired on media influenced their political standpoints, 56% agreed that political news satire very much influenced their political standpoint while 24% agreed fairly enough.

The findings showed a considerable percentage of respondents agreeing that watching political news satire influenced their political standpoints which in this study were the views towards political leaders and political issues. Those who acknowledged that it did not have any effect their political standpoints at all were 7% while 13% said it had very little influence.



*Figure 4.4: Influence on Political Standpoints*

### Political Engagements

The study sought to reveal the political engagements of the respondents. The results were interpreted from the items on the questionnaire that the researcher used to measure the political engagements of respondents. The data was presented in percentages



through bar graphs. The overall score for these items was analyzed through means as shown in Figure 4.5. The items on attending political protests and organizing political protests scored a mean of 1.002 and 1.301 respectively which was interpreted using Table 4.3 to indicate that they strongly disagreed with the suggestion that they attended political protests and that they organized political protests.

Observably, University of Nairobi students tended to be more active in political protests over the years although in this study they did not acknowledge the same. The items on participation in elections, attending political rallies, listening to political speeches, volunteering for a political candidate and watching television news to get updated on politics gave means of 3.921, 3.901, 3.866, 3.783 and 3.773 respectively. These findings imply that the respondents engaged in politics by voting, attending political rallies and listening to political speeches and not through political protests.

*Table 4.3: Mean Interpretation of Political Engagements*

1.0-1.70	Strongly disagree
1.75-2.74	Disagree
2.75-3.74	Neutral
3.75-4.49	Agree
4.50-5.00	Strongly agree

The details of each specific item were analyzed in percentages and presented through bar-graphs. The results are itemized in Figure 4.5.

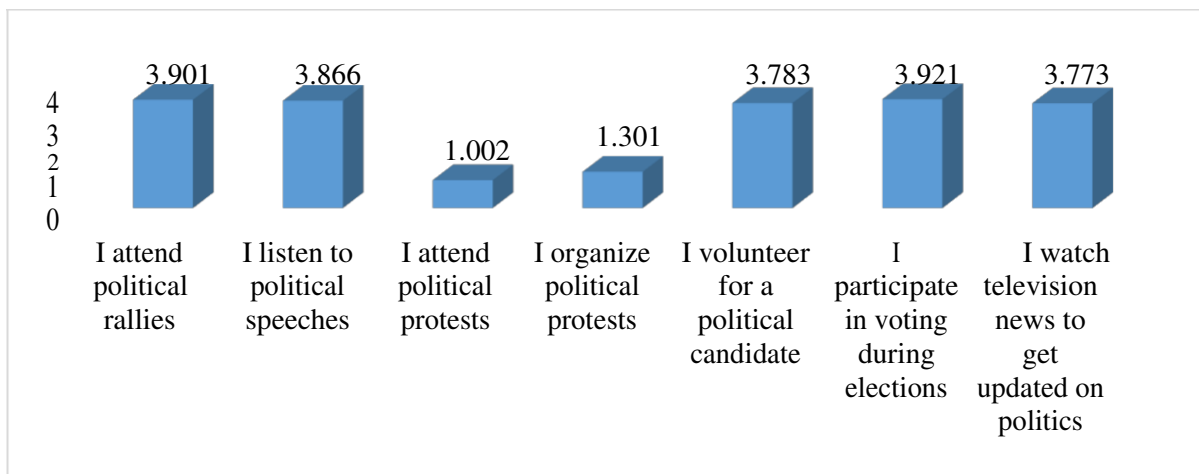


Figure 4.5: Political Engagements

#### Attending Political Rallies

The results in Figure 4.5 revealed the extent to which respondents agreed to attending political rallies. From the findings, that 28% of the respondents strongly disagreed that they attended political rallies, 16% disagreed, 4% were neutral, 30% agreed and 22% strongly agreed. In total 52% were in agreement that they attended political rallies which imply that a larger percentage of the respondents were politically engaged through attending political rallies. These finding suggests that the respondents to a large extent agreed to participate in politics by way of attending political rallies.

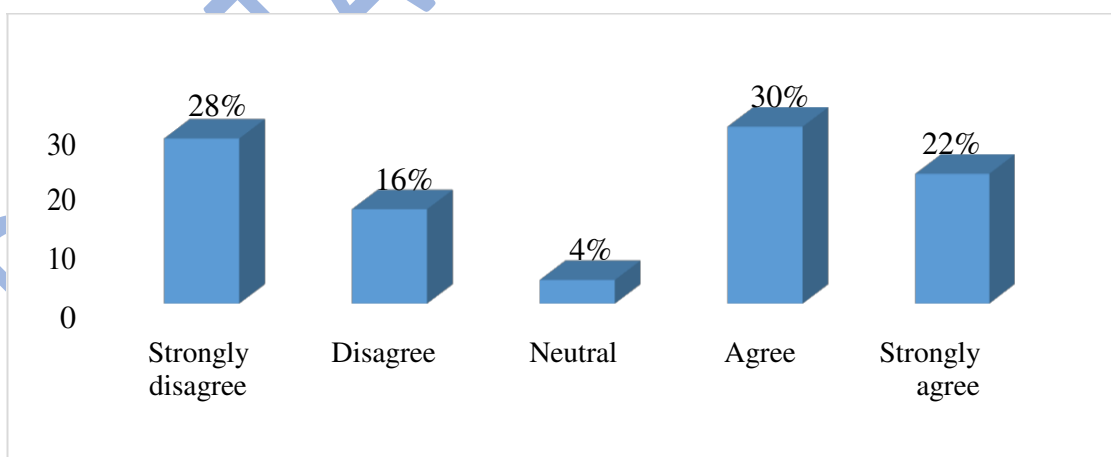


Figure 4.6: Attending Political Rallies

### Listening to Political Speeches

The respondents were asked if they listened to political speeches. The results revealed that 22% of the respondents strongly disagreed that they listened to political speeches, 19% disagreed while 7% were neutral. Those who listened to political speeches were 52% in total where 26% agreed and 26% strongly agreed.

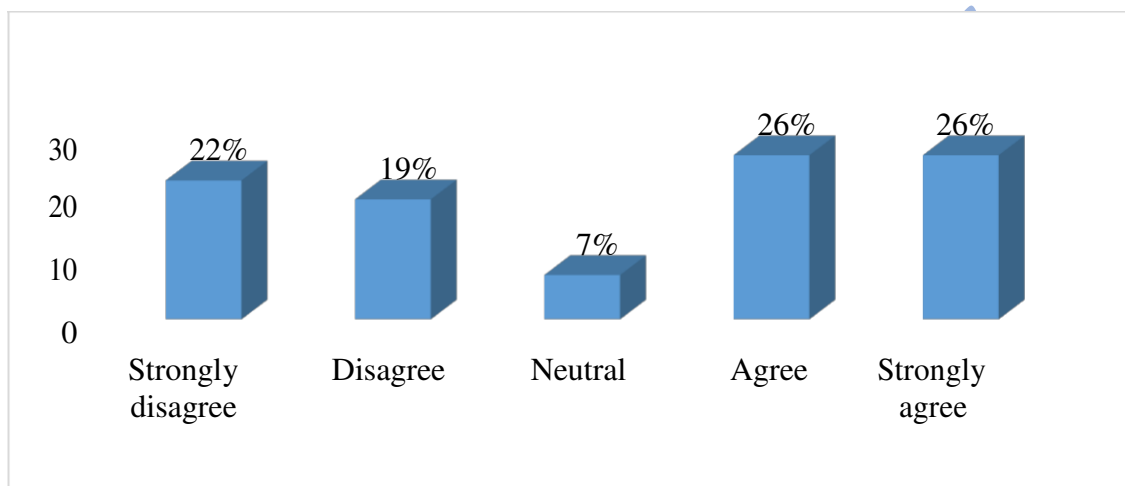


Figure 4.7: Listening to Political Speeches

### Organizing Political Protests

The study sought to determine whether the students organised political protests. The majority of the respondents at 75% disagreed that they organized political protests, 56% strongly disagreed and 19% disagreed. Those who agreed strongly were 6%, 12% agreed and 7% were neutral. The implication for this finding is that the respondents were not at the fore-front in regards to organizing political protests despite their interest in politics. The respondents did not agree on this item despite being active in political protests as noted before.

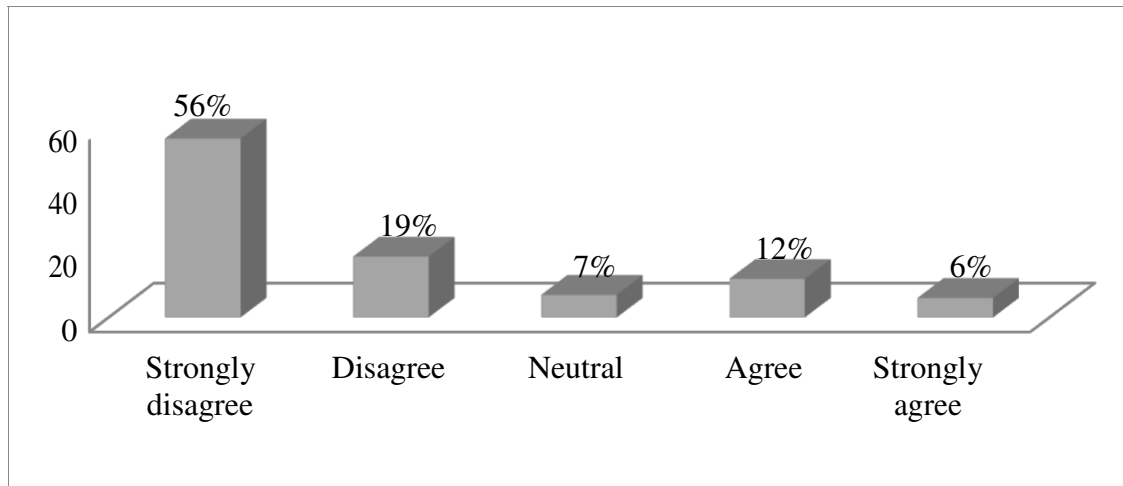


Figure 4.8: Organizing Political Protests

#### Volunteering for Political Candidates

The study sought to establish whether the students volunteered for political candidates. From the findings, 30% of the respondents strongly disagreed that they volunteered for political candidates while 19% disagreed. Elsewhere, 19% of the respondents were neutral 15% strongly agreed while 17% agreed that they volunteered for political candidates.

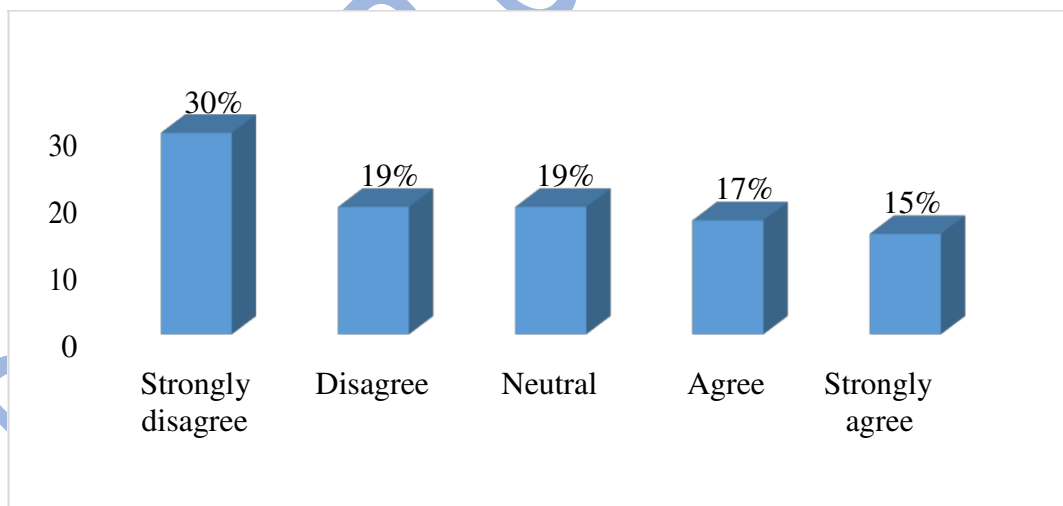
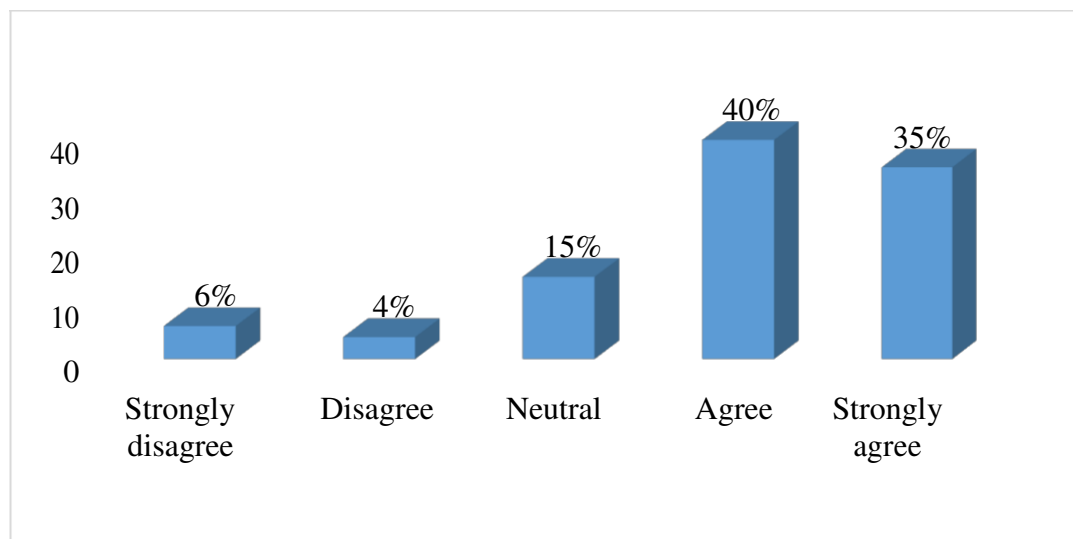


Figure 4.9: Volunteering for Political Candidates

### Participation in Voting

The study sought to determine whether students participated in voting. The results are presented in Figure 4.10.

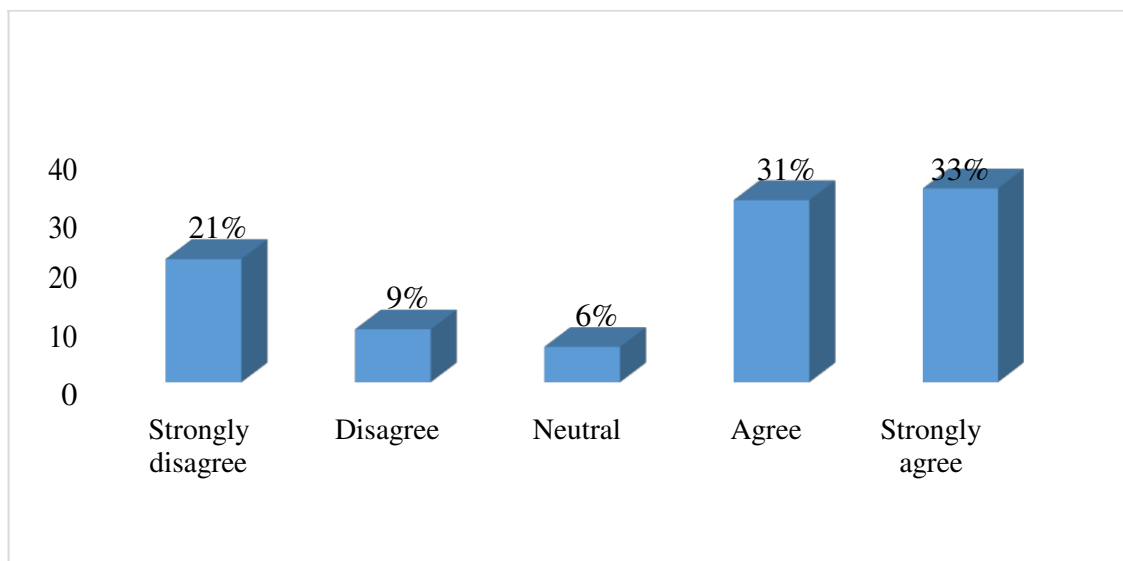


*Figure 4.10: Participation in Voting*

The respondents agreed with the proposition that they participated in voting with 40% agreeing and 35% strongly agreeing. Those who were neutral were 15% while 6% and 4% strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively. These findings indicate that the respondents were actively engaged politically through voting.

### Getting Updated on Politics through Watching Television News

The study sought to determine whether university students got political updates through watching television.



*Figure 4.11: Getting Updated on Politics through Watching Television News*

The study established that the majority of the respondents at 64% generally agreed that they got political updates from watching television news, 6% were neutral, 9% disagreed and 21% strongly disagreed. The results show that the majority of the respondents got political information from watching television news.

#### Perceptions towards Political News Satire on Kenyan Television

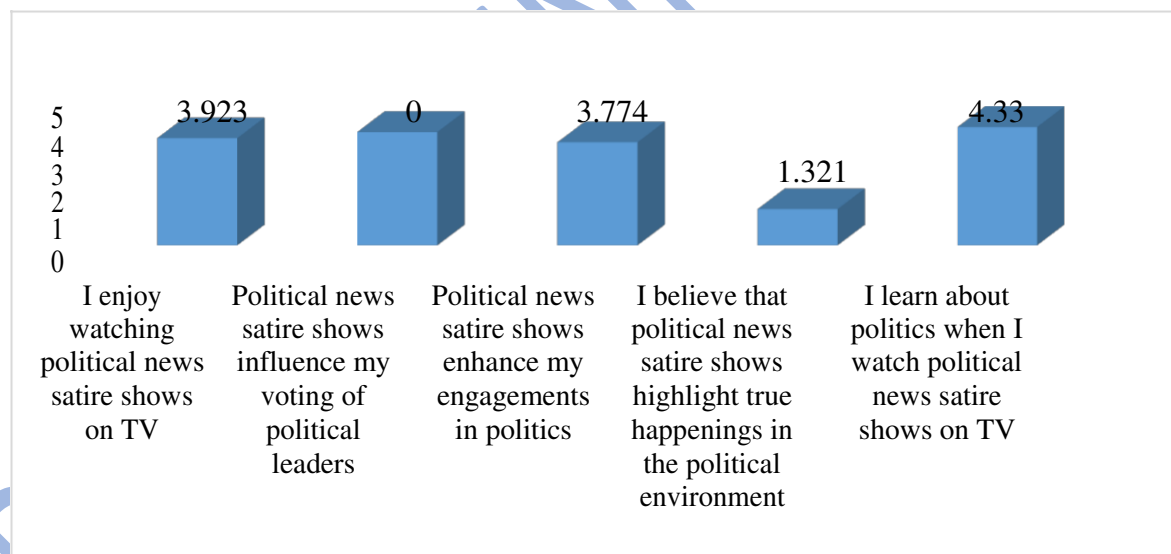
This section reveals the perceptions of respondents towards political news satire shown on Kenyan television as per the second objective of this study which was to establish the attitude of students towards political news satire programs. The highest mean of 4.331 was on learning about politics when political news satire was watched. This indicated that respondents strongly agreed on this item as interpreted using Table 4.4 and Figure 4.12.

The respondents agreed that political news satire influenced which political leaders they voted for and that it enhanced their political engagements with means of 4.15 and 3.774 respectively.

*Table 4.4: Mean Interpretation of Perception towards Political News Satire*

1.0-1.7	Strongly disagree
1.75-2.74	Disagree
2.75-3.74	Neutral
3.75-4.49	Agree
4.50-5.0	Strongly agree

However, the respondents strongly disagreed that political news satire highlighted the real happenings of the political environment with a mean of 1.321 which implied that it was possible that they watched the political news satire for entertainment purposes although the findings revealed that half of the respondents agreed. Hence, this score is inconclusive in establishing the respondents' belief of political news satire being a true reflection on the surrounding environment. In general, the study established the respondents' viewed political news satire as a source of political information and that it influenced their voting of political leaders.

*Figure 4.12: Perceptions towards Political News Satire Enjoying*

#### Watching Political News Satire

The study sought to determine whether the respondents agreed that they enjoyed watching political news satire. Figure 4.13 indicates that 36% of the respondents agreed,

21% strongly agreed, 9% were neutral, 22% strongly disagreed while 12% disagreed. The implication for this finding is that the respondents enjoyed watching political news satire hence they liked them.

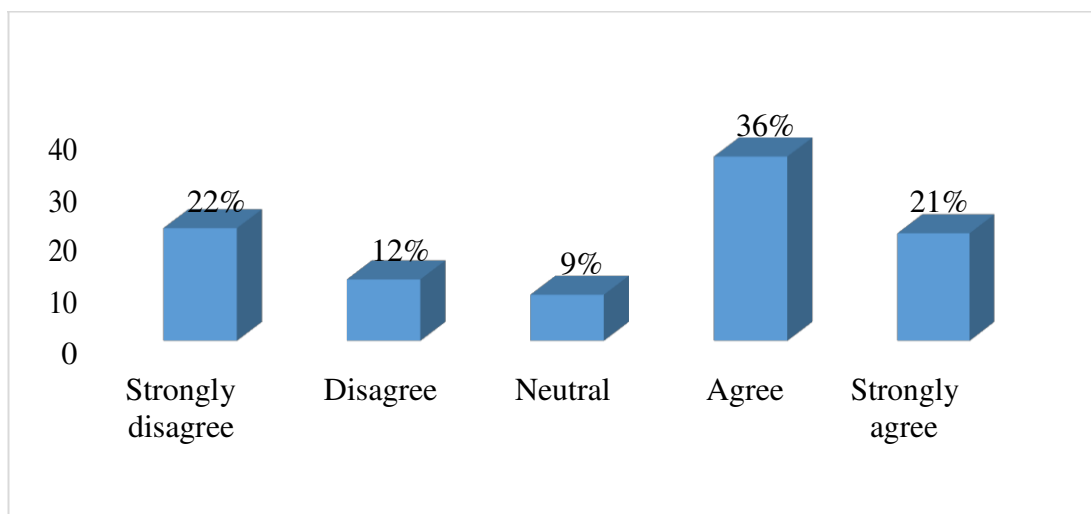


Figure 4.13: Enjoying Watching Political News Satire

#### Political News Satire's Influence on Voting of Political Leaders

When asked about the influence of political news satire on voting of political leaders, 15% of the respondents strongly agreed while 31% agreed. Those who strongly disagreed were 9%, 22% disagreed while those who were neutral were 23%. The implication of this finding is that watching political news satire influenced a majority of the respondents in their choice of political leaders to vote for.



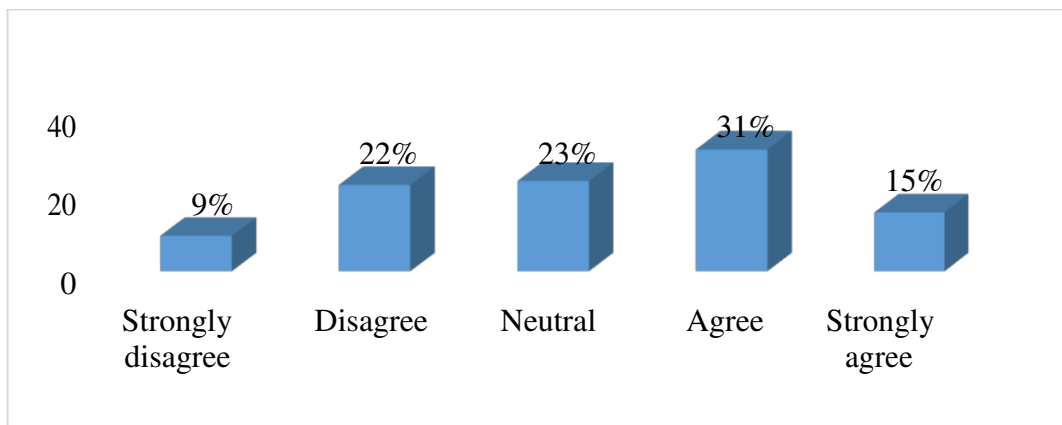


Figure 4.14: Political News Satire's Influence on Voting of Political Leaders

#### Political News Satire Shows on Engagements in Politics

Figure 4.15 reveals the respondents' belief that political news satire enhanced their political engagements in politics. From the findings, 11% of the respondents strongly disagreed while 26% disagreed making a total of 37% who found the suggestion disagreeable. Those who strongly agreed were 11% while 32% agreed meaning about 43% found the statement agreeable. Those who chose to be neutral were 20%. These findings indicate that there were more respondents who believed political news satire shows influenced their political engagements than those who believed it did not.

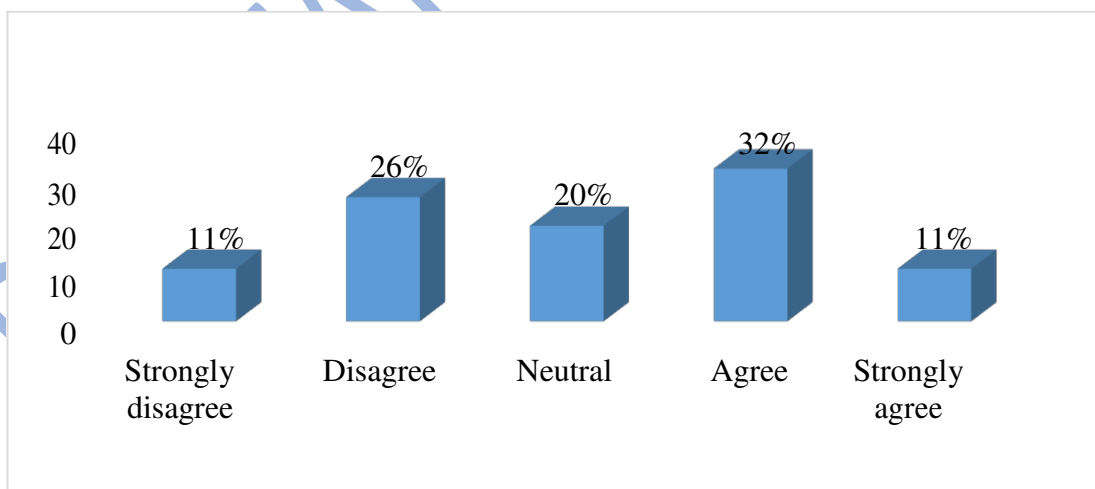


Figure 4.15: Political News Satire Shows on Engagements in Politics

### Political News Satire Highlight True Happenings in Political Environment

The findings in Figure 4.16 reveal that 18% of the respondents were neutral on the belief that political news satire shows highlight real happenings in the political environment, 32% disagreed, 13% strongly disagreed and 19% disagreed. Those who agreed were 50% where 14% strongly agreed and 36% agreed. However, as noted earlier in Figure 4.12 earlier, the mean rating for this item indicates that the respondents disagreed strongly that political news satire highlighted real happenings in the political environment with a score of 1.321 which shows that in general the respondents disagreed. This finding does not conclusively establish if respondents believed political news satire was a reflection of the true environment.

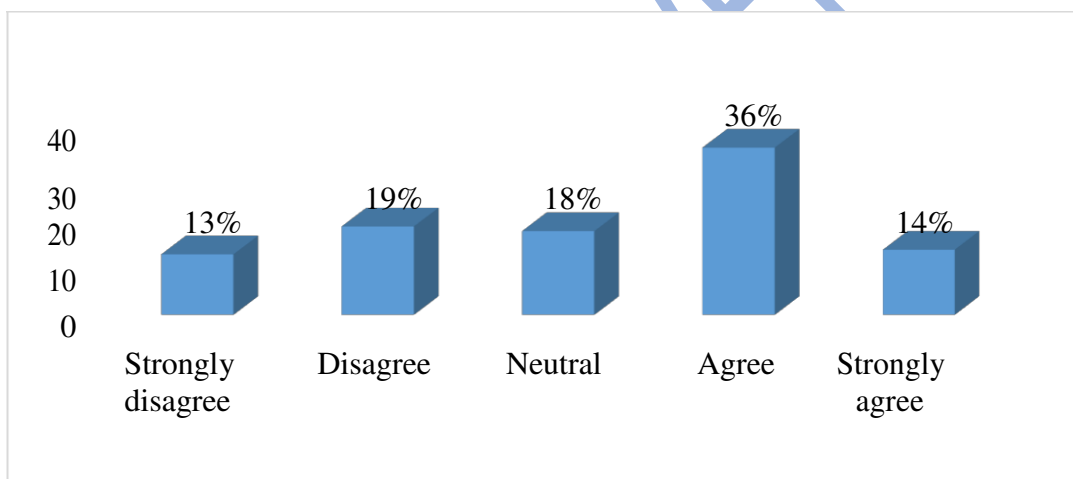
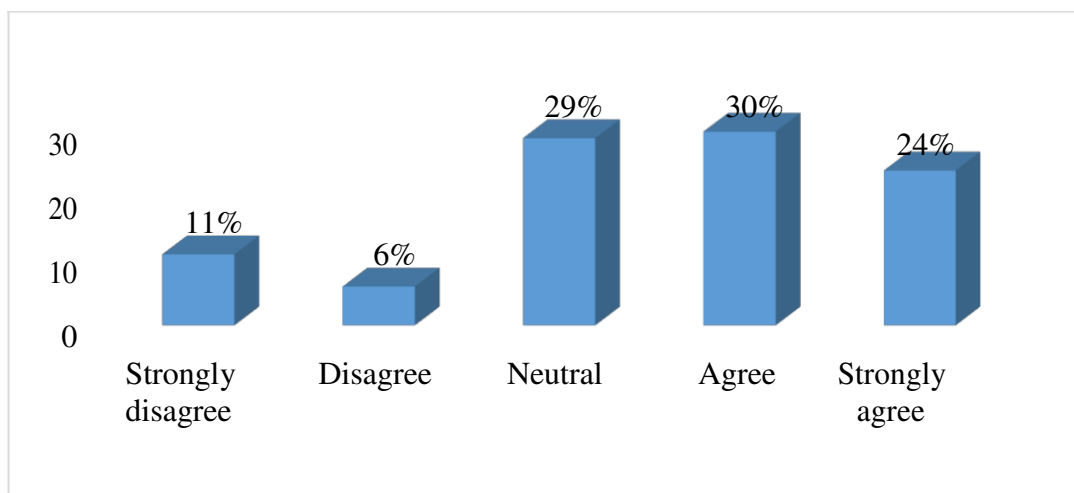


Figure 4.16: Political News Satire Shows Highlight True Events in Politics

### Learning About Politics when Political News Satire is Watched

The study sought to establish if the respondents learnt about political news when they watched political news satire. The results presented in the Figure 4.17 reveal that those who disagreed were 17% where 11% strongly disagreed and 6% disagreed. Those who were neutral were 29%, 24 % strongly agreed and 30% agreed that they learnt about politics when they watched political news satire on TV. This finding shows that the

respondents acknowledged political news satire as their source of political information since they agreed that they learnt about politics when they watched political news satire.



*Figure 4.17: Watching Political News Satire Creates political Awareness*

#### Perception towards Political Leaders in Regards to Political News Satire

The study sought to determine the perceptions of students towards political leaders as informed by political news satire. The mean scores for the different items that measured perception towards political leaders in regards to political news satire are shown in Figure 4.19.

The general finding through the means reveal that respondents strongly disagreed that they loved their political leaders despite how political news satire presented them with a mean of 1.19. This finding shows that there was a possibility that political news satire had an influence on their love towards political leaders. The respondent also disagreed that they voted for political leaders despite how political news satire presented them with a mean score of 2.02 which also implies that there was a possibility of influence of political news satire on their voting patterns.

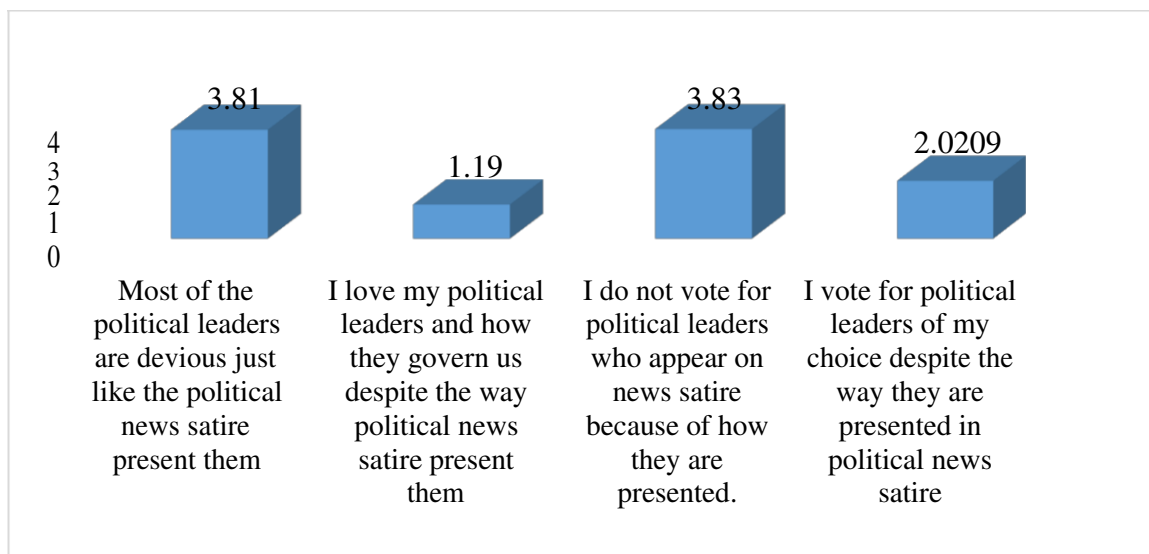


Figure 4.18: Perception on Political Leaders in Regards to Political News Satire

The respondents also agreed that most political leaders were as devious as political news satire presented them with a mean of 3.81 and that they did not vote for political leaders who appeared on the political news satire because of how they were presented with a mean of 3.83. The implication of this finding is that there was some influence of political news satire on respondents' perception towards political leaders as well as their not voting for them.

Table 4.5: Mean Interpretation of Perception towards Political Leaders

1.0-1.7	Strongly disagree
1.75-2.74	Disagree
2.75-3.74	Neutral
3.75-4.49	Agree
4.50-5.0	Strongly agree

#### Political Leaders are as Devious Political News Satires Present Them.

The findings in Figure 4.19 reveal that 36% of the students disagreed on the idea of political leaders being as devious as political news satire presented them. Also, 13% of

the respondents strongly disagreed that politicians were devious, 35% agreed and 5% strongly agreed while 24% were neutral.

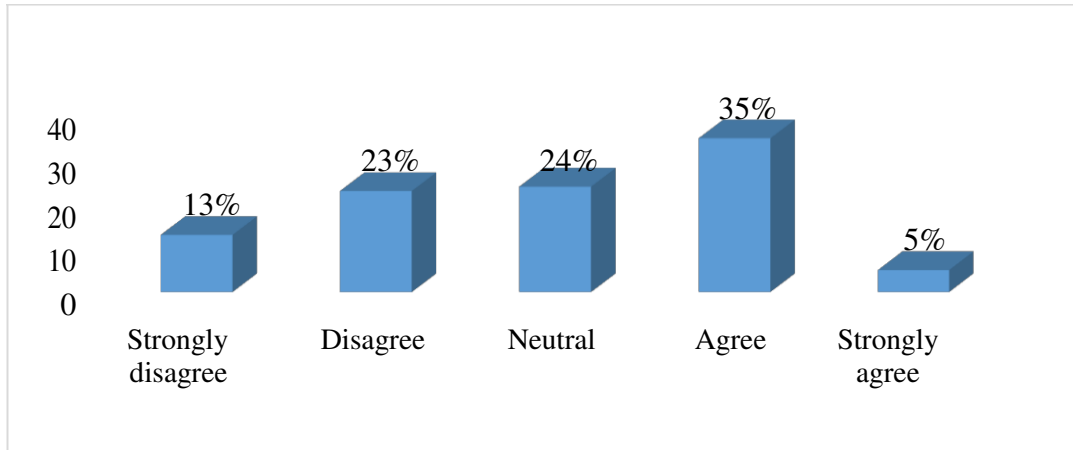


Figure 4.19: Political Leaders are Devious in Reference to Political News Satires

#### Political News Satire does not Change Love for Political Leaders

The respondents were asked to indicate whether political news satire did not change the love the respondents had for politicians. The findings are presented in Figure 4.20.

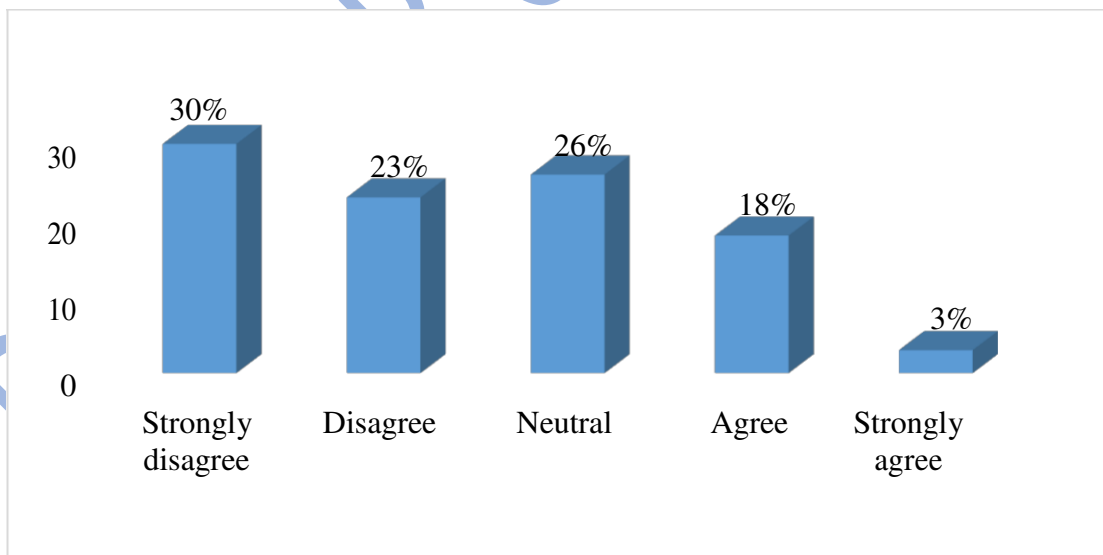
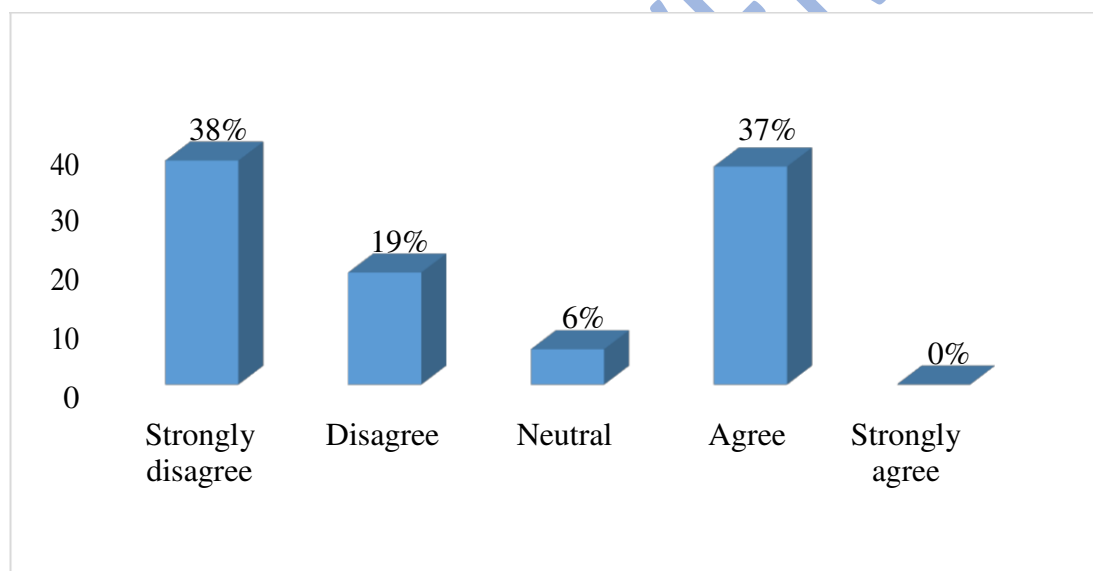


Figure 4.20: Political News Satire does not Change Perception about Politicians

From the results, 30% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement while 23% disagreed, 3% strongly agreed, 18% agreed while 26% were neutral. These findings indicate that the respondents disagreed with the proposition that they loved their political leaders despite how the leaders were presented in political news satire. The implication is that there was a possibility that political news satire influenced the respondent's attitude towards political leaders.

#### Not Voting for Political Leaders Because of Political News Satire

The study sought to determine whether political news satire swayed students from voting in their favourite politicians. The findings are presented in Figure 4.21.



*Figure 4.21: Not Voting for Politicians because of Political News Satire*

The findings revealed that the respondents disagreed that political news satire influenced them not to vote for their favorite political leaders. A total of 38% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement, 19% disagreed while 6% were neutral. Notably, the mean rating for this item as presented in Figure 4.18 earlier generally shows that the respondents agreed that political news satire influenced them not to vote for

political leaders with a mean rating of 3.8. This means that the respondents disagreed that political news satire influenced them not to vote for political leader.

#### Voting for Political Leaders Despite of Political News Satire

The study established whether political news satire influenced voting in of political leaders. The findings revealed that 45% of the respondents did not vote for political leaders despite of political news satire, 10% strongly disagreed and 35% disagreed. Those who were neutral were 18% while those who agreed were 26% and 11% strongly agreed. Notably, the fact 37% of the respondents agreed with the statement that they voted for political leaders despite how they were presented by political news satire indicates that news satire did not influence their voting patterns.

Also, 45% of the respondents disagreed that political news satire influenced their voting patterns. The implication of this finding is that political news satire to some little extent influenced which political leaders were voted for. This is corroborated by the findings revealed in the previous section where the respondents were asked if they believed that political news satire influenced them to vote for political leaders of which the majority agreed.

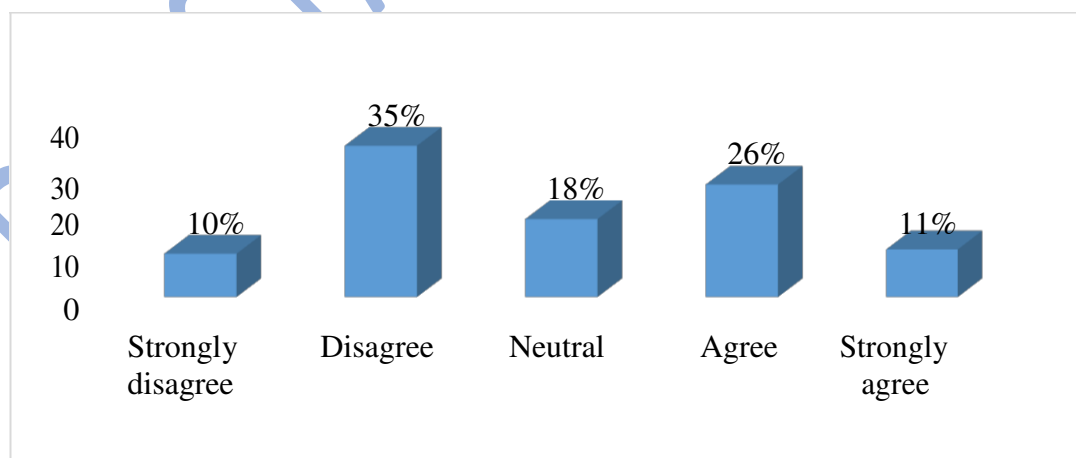


Figure 4.22: Voting for Political Leaders Despite Political News Satire

### Influence of Political News Satire on Vying for Political Position

The data provided in Table 4.6 reveals the influence of political news satire on vying for political positions. This section provides answers to the objective on influence of political news satire on voting behavior of students. The data is presented by use of mean and standard deviation. The mean response was 2.52 which means that the respondents strongly disagreed to the idea that political news satire has an influence on them vying for political position as interpreted using Table 4.5. *Table*

*4.6: Influence of Political News Satire on Political Aspiration*

1.0-1.7	Strongly disagree
1.75-2.74	Disagree
2.75-3.74	Neutral
3.75-4.49	Agree
4.50-5.0	Strongly agree

The standard deviation was 1.35 which was high, an indication that the respondents' opinions were varied on whether political news satire influenced political aspirations.

*Table 4.7: Influence of Political News Satire on Vying for Political Position*

	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev
I am motivated to vie for a political position when I watch political news satire	100	1.00	5.00	2.5200	1.35887

### Political Affiliations

The study also established political affiliations of the respondents. The findings in this section address the intervening variable on watching political news satire. From the findings, it was evident that the students could neither agree nor disagree whether they associated with Jubilee or CORD. The students also disagreed that they associated



themselves with other parties apart from Jubilee and CORD. The means in Table 4.8 for Jubilee was 3.361, CORD was 3.125 and for others was 1.063. As interpreted using table 4.8, the items had a neutral score. This indicates that the students did not want to reveal their political affiliations.

*Table 4.8: Mean Interpretation of Political Affiliations*

1.0-1.7	Strongly disagree
1.75-2.74	Disagree
2.75-3.74	Neutral
3.75-4.49	Agree
4.50-5.0	Strongly agree

However, the standard deviation was high at 1.621 for Jubilee and CORD 1.579 which indicates varied opinions on the items. The standard deviation for other political parties was slightly lower at 1.063 which shows that the views less varied.

*Table 4.9: Political Affiliations*

	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Jubilee	97	1.00	5.00	3.3617	1.62086
CORD	98	1.00	5.00	3.1250	1.57946
Others	94	1.00	5.00	2.1481	1.06351

#### Summary of Key Findings

The study established a high viewership of political news satire (92%) for the satirical programs that were listed in the study compared to other programs. Further, the respondents agreed that they participated in politics by voting, listening to political speeches, attending political rallies, volunteering for political candidates and watching television news to get updates on political matters.

Also, the study established that 72% of the respondents were interested in politics. This interest in politics was associated with the political news satire that was listed in the

study and included *Bulls Eye*, *Truth Meter* and *News Shot*. The programmes were rated as follows: *Bull's eye* at 48% was the most watched, followed by *Truth Meter* at 27% and *News shot* at 16%.

It was also established that viewing political news satire influenced political engagements of viewers to some little extent. The respondents acknowledged that viewing political news satire influenced them to vote. The respondents however did not agree that viewing political news satire influenced them to vie for political positions. Further, the study established that political news satire influenced the political standpoints of viewers where 56% of the respondents strongly agreed that political news satire influenced their political standpoints and 24% agreed.

#### Summary

This chapter has provided quantitative and qualitative analysis of findings from the research that was conducted. The tabulations presented accurately reflect the findings on the influence of political news satire on University of Nairobi students' political engagements. The key findings established in this chapter reveal that the respondents acknowledged to viewing political news satire to a little extent and that it influences their voting for political leaders but not vying for political positions. The next chapter discusses these key research findings and implications in light of the objectives of this study and theoretical framework discussed in chapter two. It also presents conclusions and recommendations and areas for further research.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

This chapter discusses the research findings in relation to the study objectives. The implications of the findings are deduced in light of the objectives of this study and the theoretical framework. Conclusions and recommendations are made in the context of the study in this chapter as well.

#### Discussions of Key Findings

##### Viewership of Political News Satire

The first objective of this study was to establish the viewing patterns of political news satire among University of Nairobi students. The study established that political news satire was highly viewed by University of Nairobi by the majority (92%) of the students compared to other programs. This may be explained by the fact that the researcher listed most of the political satirical programs that were airing at the time of the research or had recently been aired.

The viewing pattern of political news satire was established as follows: *Bull's Eye* was the most watched at 48% followed by *Truth Meter* at 27% and *News Shot* at 16%. The least watched programs were *Mock the Week* and *Kukuru Kakara* at 3% each. The respondents also acknowledged that they enjoyed watching political news satire as rated by a mean of 3.923. The findings to a large extent supported the idea purported by Jones and Thompson (2009) that political news satirical programs provide entertainment to viewers. Arguably, this is a possible motivation for the high viewership among university students.

Further, Njonjo (2012) argued that the main consumer of mass media in Kenya is the youth and that they mainly do it for entertainment purposes. Uses and gratification theorists propose that viewers watch television to meet diverse needs which includes affective needs that is pleasurable ((Katz et al., 1973). These findings on viewership of political news satire among the youth were key in establishing how satirical news influenced their political engagements.

#### Attitudes towards Political News Satire

The second objective of this study was to establish the attitudes of University of Nairobi students towards political news satire. The study established that the respondents agreed to enjoy watching political news satire which implied they loved them. The score for this item was a mean rating of 4.33 which indicated that they strongly agreed. As established earlier, the high viewership of political news satire would be credited to comedic approach in the political news satire programs which was also a possible reason for the students' delight in watching political news satire.

Further, the study established that the respondents agreed to learn about politics when they watched political news satire with a score of 54% which implied that they acknowledged political news satire as their source of political information. These findings support arguments made by uses and gratification theorists on cognitive needs where audiences acquire information, knowledge and understanding (Katz et al., 1973). Given that the respondents in this study agreed strongly that they learnt about politics when they watched political news satire with a mean rating of 4.331, it can be argued that besides the entertainment purpose, young people in Kenya watched political news satire for political information.

### Influence of Political News Satire on Voting Behaviour

The third objective of this study was to establish the influence of political news satire on voting behavior of University of Nairobi students. This study established that 72% of the students who participated in the research had interest in politics of which 48% were very much interested and 24% fairly interested. For this study, students' political interest in politics was associated with *Bulls Eye*, *Truth Meter* and *News Shot*. The implication of this finding is that students have a high internal political efficacy since they revealed that they have interest in political matters and also acknowledged that they learn from political news satire show when they watch them. Internal political efficacy includes a person's personal valuation of his or her political information, among other things such as the belief in one's behavioral skills and that the activities undertaken will have an effect (Reichert, 2016).

The above findings support those of previous studies which revealed that political news satire is a source of political information for young people and that it leads to higher internal political efficacy (Lee, 2012). Past research has documented effects of audience exposure to political comedy programs and the outcome was that it led to an increase in political knowledge and better appraisal of political leaders and political candidates (Baum & Jamison, 2006).

When the respondents were asked about the level of influence of political satire programs aired on Kenyan media on their political standpoints, it was established that 56% of the respondents agreed very much that political news satire influenced their political standpoints and 24% agreed that the satire influenced the standpoints fairly enough. Only 7% did not agree that they were influenced. This was one of the key findings of the present study, where 80% of the respondents agreed that watching

political news satire had an influence on political standpoints of viewers, in this case their (students) standpoints. In this study, political standpoints were the views towards political issues and leaders.

Cultivation theorists suggested that television is responsible for shaping viewers' conception of social reality (Gerbner, 1998). Further, Gerbner affirmed that over time, massive exposure of television to viewers subtly changes their perception. The findings of the current study seem to be in support of this theory where a larger percentage (80%) agreed that political news satire influenced the standpoints of viewers. Previous studies on political satirical programs established that viewing political satire programs shapes viewers' perception and opinions which in turn may forecast their political behavior and beliefs (Hoffman & Young, 2011). However, the idea of cultivation theory is based on television viewing in general and not the specific program or genre which might limit appraisal of this theory to political news satire program as a genre.

This study further established that the students agreed to a great extent (85%) that they participated in voting during a political process. Respondents agreed that they participated in politics by voting, listened to political speeches, attended political rallies, volunteered for political candidates and watched television news to get updates on political matters. The mean scores for these items were more than 3.7 which indicated that they agreed. The respondents however disagreed that they organized political protests and attended political protests. However, the findings on political engagements generally revealed that the students were politically engaged. When the respondents were asked if they believed watching political news satire influenced their political engagements, 43% agreed, 37% disagreed while 20% were neutral. This finding reveals

that students acknowledged that political news satire influenced their political engagements to some little extent.

When the respondents were asked if they believed that political news satire influenced them to vote for political leaders, they agreed as indicated by a mean rating of 4.15. This reveals that watching political news satire influenced voting of political leaders. The implications for this score suggest that news satire programs such as *Bulls Eye*, *Truth Meter* and *News Shot* influenced students' voting patterns. However, when the respondents were asked if viewing political news satire influenced them to participate in politics by vying for political positions, it was established that viewing political news satire did not influence the students to vie for political positions. The score for this item was a mean of 2.52 which indicating that they disagreed. These findings suggest that even though University of Nairobi students watched political news satires, the satires did not influence them to engage in political activities through vying for political positions but it influenced in regards to their voting behavior.

Political engagements in the current study entail voting and vying. While it can be argued that political news satire influenced political engagements of viewers, the current study established that voting of political leaders was influenced to some extent by the news but it did not influence them with regard to vying for political positions. Hence investigating the diverse aspects of political engagement as influenced by political news satire was undeniably necessary.

The uses and gratification theory suggests that audiences differ in the gratification they seek from the mass media and these differences are as a result of certain conditions and personalities (Palmgreen et al., 1985). The theory explains what the audience does to

the media as opposed to what media does to the audience. The findings of the current study revealed that watching political news satire had varied influence on political engagements in regards to voting and vying for political positions by the respondents. It could be argued that when the audience was exposed to political news satire, viewers were obliged to act in a certain way because of the ideologies in the political satirical programs.

#### Perception towards Political Leaders

The fourth objective of this study was to establish the influence of political news satire on students' perception towards political leaders. The findings reveal that the respondents agreed that most political leaders were as devious as political news satire presented them as shown by a mean of 3.81 and that they did not vote for political leaders who appeared on the political news satire because of how they were presented with a mean of 3.83. The implication of this finding is that there was an influence of political news satire on respondents, perception towards political leaders which also influenced them not to vote for them because of how they were presented in political news satire.

As argued earlier, this study established a connection between watching political news satire and political engagement of viewers. Studies on satirical political programs on television in regards to influencing viewers' political engagement have concluded that indeed viewing political satire shows increases viewer's political engagement (Jones & Baym, 2010). Further, viewing political satire shows leads to an increase in levels of political cynicism (Brewer & Marquardt, 2007), as well as intention to vote (Hoffman & Young, 2011). The findings of the current study support these arguments to a large extent that political news satire influences on viewer's perception towards political leaders.



## Conclusions

The study made the following conclusions:

- i. Exposure to political news satire to an extent provided political information to young people, making them knowledgeable on political matters and generating interest in them.
- ii. Political news satire influenced students' political standpoints and voting but it does not influence their voting for political positions.
- iii. Political satirical programs were watched by University of Nairobi students and that they did so to gain political information as well as entertainment purposes. This can be argued in line with uses and gratification theory where the students met their cognitive and affective needs.
- iv. Political satire programs played a vital role of communicating political issues to the viewers and providing entertainment. Political satirical programming on television served as a bridge between the people and their social construct
- v. Given that exposure to political satirical program led to a range of effects on viewers, further inquiry on specific variable affected by viewing such content was unquestionably necessary.

## Recommendations

Based on the study findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Since this study has revealed that viewing political news satire influenced students' political standpoints and voting of political leaders to some extent, there is need for news programmers to package the political news satire with this in

mind in a bid to have an effect on the nature of politics in Kenya. For example, news programmers can increase the frequency of political news satire programs to communicate political information and civic education.

- ii. Media enterprises should highlight pertinent issues affecting the young people through political news satire and satirical shows. As established by this study, young people watch political news satire for information and entertainment purposes hence it will be an appropriate tool to be used for message dissemination.
- iii. The issues affecting young people like dangers of drugs and responsible sexual behaviors can be conveyed by use of satirical shows. Also, political vices can be highlighted by use of political news satire in an effort to shape the young people who may have interest in political leadership.

#### Areas for Further Research

The study was not able to conclusively establish if political affiliations influence students political engagements but it was able to establish that political news satire influences them to vote, hence suggests another research on the same topic. Further, a study on mediating factors such as ethnic background and how it affects political engagements would be useful because the current study did not explore ethnic background of respondents. Further, the study recommends further studies to establish if factors like level of education and living standards contribute to political engagements of students since the current study only focused a public university hence another study in the private university will be prudent. Finally, this study recommends an investigation of how county of origin affects political news satire use.

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## APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Introduction Letter

Date.....

Dear Sir/Madam

P.O Box -----

Nairobi – Kenya

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION FOR DATA COLLECTION

I am Mercy Barasa a student at Daystar University, School of Communication and Languages. I am pursuing a Masters of Arts in Communication specializing in Media Studies and undertaking a research on *influence of political news satire on students` political engagement*. It would be of great value if you could share your wealth of knowledge by completing this questionnaire. Your answers will be handled with highest anonymity and confidentiality; this will be achieved by no indication of names. Kindly return the completed questionnaire to me.

Yours Sincerely,

Mercy Barasa

DAYSTAR UNIVERSITY



## Appendix B: Questionnaire

The purpose of this study is to identify the influence of political news satire on students' political engagement. This study asks your PERSONAL beliefs on how you view political news satire on television and your political engagements. DO NOT write your name on this questionnaire. Your responses will be anonymous and will be treated with confidentiality. Your participation is voluntary. Thank you for your cooperation.

## Section A: Basic Information

Please tick the most appropriate response

1. Gender (a) Male  (b) Female

2. County \_\_\_\_\_

3. Age

a) 18-22years

b) 23-27years

c) 28-32years

c) 33-35years

d) 36 and Above

4. Which of the following political news satire do you watch on TV? Tick as many as may apply.

a) Bull's Eye

b) News shot

c) Mock the Week

d) Truthmeter

e) Flipside

f) XYZ show

g) Kuku kakara

f) Any other.....

5. How much are you interested in politics?

a. Very much \_\_\_\_\_

b. Fairly Enough \_\_\_\_\_

c. Very Little \_\_\_\_\_

d. Not at all \_\_\_\_\_

6. To what extent do you believe TV shows on political news satire influence the political standpoints of their viewers?

- a. Very much
- b. Fairly Enough
- c. Very Little
- d. Not at all

### Section B: Political Participation / Engagements

7. Please indicate your agreement or otherwise with the following statements using the following likert scale.

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5
I attend political rallies					
I listen to political speeches					
I attend political protests					
I organize political protests					
I volunteer for a political candidate					
I participate in voting during elections					
I watch television news to get updated on politics					

### Section C: Perception towards political news satire

8. Please indicate your agreement or otherwise with the following statements using the following likert scale.

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy watching political news satire shows on TV					
Political news satire shows influence my voting of political leaders					

Political news satire shows enhance my engagements in politics					
I believe that political news satire shows highlight true happenings in the political environment					
I learn about politics when I watch political news satire shows on TV					

SECTION D: INFLUENCE OF POLITICAL NEWS SATIRE ON ATTITUDES TOWARDS POLITICAL LEADERS.

9. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements using the likert scale provided

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5
Most of the political leaders are devious just like the political news satire present them					
I love my political leaders and how they govern us despite the way political news satire present them					
I do not vote for political leaders who appear on news satire because of how they are presented.					
I vote for political leaders of my choice despite the way they are presented in political news satire					

Section E: Establish the influence of political news satire on vying for political position.

10. Please indicate your agreement or otherwise with the following statements using the following likert scale.

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5

I am motivated to vie for a political position when I watch political news satire					
---	--	--	--	--	--

11. To what extent would you associate yourself with the following political party?

Party	Very	Somewhat	Neutral	Not much	Not at all	Much
Cord						
Jubilee						

DAYSTAR UNIVERSITY



Appendix D: Authorization from University of Nairobi



**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**  
**OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY VICE - CHANCELLOR**  
(Research, Production & Extension)  
Prof. Lucy W. Irungu B.Sc., M.Sc., Ph.D.

P.O. Box 30197-GPO,  
00100, Nairobi-Kenya  
Telephone: +254-20-2315416 (DI), 318262

Fax: 0202317251  
Email: dvrpe@uonbi.ac.ke

UON/RPE/3/5

March 30, 2017

Mercy Barasa  
Daystar University  
P.O. Box 44400-00100  
NAIROBI

Dear Barasa

**AUTHORITY TO COLLECT DATA AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

I refer to your request dated March 29, 2017 to collect data at the University of Nairobi for your Masters Degree at the School of Communication, Daystar University entitled: *"Influence of Political News Satire on Students' Political Engagement."*

I write to inform you that your request has been approved.

You are however required to share the findings of your study with the University of Nairobi by depositing a copy of your research findings with the Director, Library and Information Services on completion of your study.

  
**LUCY W. IRUNGU**  
**DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR**  
**(RESEARCH, PRODUCTION AND EXTENSION)**  
**PROFESSOR OF ENTOMOLOGY**

Copy to: Vice-Chancellor  
DVC, A&F  
DVC, AA  
DVC, SA  
Director, Library & Information Services  
Chairman, Dept. Of Linguistics and Languages  
Registrar Administration



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DA

## Appendix E: Anti-plagiarism Report

## Mercy Barasa thesis

## ORIGINALITY REPORT

<b>11</b> %	<b>8</b> %	<b>2</b> %	<b>6</b> %
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

## PRIMARY SOURCES

<b>1</b>	Leslie A. Rill, Christopher L. B. Cardiel. "Funny, Ha-Ha", American Behavioral Scientist, 2013 Publication	<b>1</b> %
<b>2</b>	Submitted to Kenyatta University Student Paper	<b>1</b> %
<b>3</b>	etd.lsu.edu Internet Source	<b>1</b> %
<b>4</b>	Carme Ferré-Pavia, Marçal Sintes, Catalina Gayà. "The perceived effects of televised political satire among viewers and the communication directors of political parties: A European case", European Journal of Cultural Studies, 2015 Publication	<b>&lt;1</b> %
<b>5</b>	www.ijhssnet.com Internet Source	<b>&lt;1</b> %
<b>6</b>	hrmars.com Internet Source	<b>&lt;1</b> %
<b>7</b>	Submitted to Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman	

