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In this issue

This is a collection of research articles authored by scholars from journalism and communication departments and schools at universities in Kenya and Uganda. The first article by Samuel Kazibwe (Uganda) examines how media laws can potentially contribute to self-censorship among journalists in Uganda. The study uses document analysis and in-depth interviews to achieve the purpose of the research. The article draws on coping theory as the theoretical framework. In addition to the methods, coping theory was chosen to guide the study. The second article by Dennis Danson Oketch, Lynete Lusike Mukhongo, and Nyakundi Nyamboga (Kenya) discusses public speaking in the African postmodernism context and interrogates whether eloquence among public speakers in Africa translates to persuasion, agency and impact. The study uses a critical discourse analysis and draws on the rhetorical theoretical framework to scrutinize one of Professor Patrick Loch Otieno Lumumba's most viewed lectures titled "Magufulification of Africa". The third article, a position paper by Wilson Ugungu, examines the role of local language FM radio in the lives of local communities in Kenya. More specifically, the paper uses a qualitative approach to explore the case of Vuuka FM- a Kenyan local language radio station that broadcasts in the Maragoli dialect of the Luhya tribe. The fourth article by John Obunga (Kenya), examines older viewers' perception of the female news anchors' attractive physical appearance especially the news anchors' facial expression, dress code and body movements; and how these nonverbal communication resources impact the attention to news viewership. The study applied the social perception theory to examine the perceptions of the older viewers on the body language of the TV news anchors using two top national television stations in Kenya namely, Citizen TV and KTN

Editor

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Regulation, self-censorship and journalism practice in Uganda: A focus on 2013-2023

Samuel Kazibwe

Abstract

The purpose of the study was to examine how media laws can potentially contribute to self-censorship among journalists in Uganda. Document analysis and in-depth interviews were employed to achieve the purpose of the research. In addition to the methods, coping theory was chosen to guide the study. Although there are many laws relating to the practice of journalism, the findings identified five major pieces of legislation as having the greatest effect on the profession. They include the Uganda Constitution (Uganda, 1995), Press and Journalist (Amendment) Act (Uganda, 2000), Penal Code (Amendment) Act (Uganda, 2007), Computer Misuse (Amendment) Act (Uganda, 2022) and Uganda Communications Commission (Amendment) Act, (Uganda, 2013). The findings revealed that the state and its agents have effectively employed these laws to instil fear among journalists in the period under study. It is evident that while some of the laws are direct in entrenching self-censorship, others are ambiguous enough to allow state actors to use them in creating an environment that forces journalists to censor themselves.

Key words: *Regulation, Self-censorship, Journalism Practice, Press freedom*

Introduction

Globally, sovereign states use laws and policies to regulate the media as noted by John Hartley (1982). The author states that “The main mechanism of state control of the media on a day-to-day basis is the law” (p. 54). In Uganda, there are a number of laws related to the practice of journalism. Some were enacted by the British colonial government between 1894 – 1962 and they have been maintained by successive post-independence governments. Others have been enacted in the last 50 years of Uganda’s independence. Over the years, these laws have been used to gag the press instead of regulating it, a claim persistently rebutted by the current government in Uganda (Gariyo, 1993; Karugire, 2010; Kakooza, 2012). To the government, the existing legal framework is meant to guide media operations with the aim to protect public interests (Uganda Government 2011b, p.4). A host of studies have examined the effect of media laws on journalistic practice in Uganda. Often, the focus has been on the general implications of the law on practice. For example, Kimumwe (2014) focused on regulation and general media practice in Uganda while Chibita (2006) explored the influence of the law on indigenous language programming in radio and television stations. The latter author’s study also examined the effect of the law on citizen participation in broadcasting. The present study’s analytical focus is specifically on how the existing media laws have potentially compelled journalists to engage in self-censorship. The discussion is based on the last 10 years, a period characterised by heightened tension between the state and the press in Uganda. The period is also critical because during this time Uganda has experienced rapid changes in regulation in response to the constantly changing media landscape in which digitalisation, convergence and globalisation have altered journalism practice and routines.

Literature review

Historicising journalism practice and regulation in Uganda

Formal media in Uganda was introduced by Christian missionaries and the British colonial government (Gariyo, 1993; Kiwanuka-Tondo, 1990; Mabine, 2003; Lugalambi and Tabaire, 2010; Sekeba, 2016). The Christian missionaries comprised of mainly two groups; the Church Missionary Society (Anglicans from Britain), and the Roman Catholics from France. The missionaries needed the media in spreading Christianity while the British colonists needed the media to foster development as well as deepening their penetration. The media further helped the British to gather information regarding the views of the local people and their conspiracies which enabled them to always respond in the most appropriate way (Mbaine, 2003; Lugalambi & Tabaire, 2010).

The first newspaper was *Mengo Notes*, a monthly published in English by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) in May 1900. This newspaper was later changed to *Uganda Notes* in 1902. CMS also published a monthly Luganda newsletter in 1907 called *Ebifa mu Buganda* which was later renamed *Ebifa mu Uganda* in 1934. The Catholic Church also produced its first newspaper called *Munno* in 1912 (Gariyo, 1993; Kiwanuka-Tondo, 1990; Mbaine, 2003; Sekeba, 2016). These newspapers focused mainly on religious issues as well as the religious rivalry between Catholics and Anglicans imported from Europe. The newspapers were never a threat to the British since the missionaries would not allow the publication of content that questioned the colonial administration (Mbaine, 2003).

The local people who had started demanding independence in the late 1920s felt left out in the existing media which transmitted the imperialist ideology of the British. They thus started publishing their own newspapers. Vernacular newspapers such as *Sekanyolya*, *Uganda Eyogera*, *Munnyonyozi*, *Gambuuze*, *Matalisi*, *Ddoozi lya Buganda*, *Baana ba Kintu*, *Tuula Nkunyonnyole*, *Buganda Nnyaffe*, among others, were started around this time. (Chibita, 2006; Gariyo, 1993; Kiwanuka-Tondo, 1990; Sekeba, 2016). The local language press challenged class privileges created by the colonists and also opposed the European and Asian monopoly over the economy (Chibita, 2006; Sekeba, 2016).

At this time, the British realised that the African owned newspapers had become a serious threat to their administration and thus started clumping down on them. For instance, the colonial government enacted the Press Censorship and Publications Act in 1949. The law was used to ban newspapers such as *Munnyonyozi* and *Mugobansonga* (Lugalambi & Tabaire, 2010). However, despite the passing of oppressive laws which resulted in the banning of several newspapers and incessant arrests of news editors and reporters, the local press stepped up their activism in the 1950s by becoming more critical of the colonial administration. Many of the newspapers also openly declared their support for different political parties (Kakooza, 2012). Therefore, there is no doubt that the local press played a major role in delivering Uganda's independence on 9th October 1962.

The first post-independence government in Uganda was led by Fredrick Mutesa II as President and Milton Obote as Prime minister (Karugire, 2010; Kyemba, 1997). However, despite the role played by the press in the struggle for independence, media suppression intensified after independence. Apart from using the existing colonial laws to suppress the media, the new government enacted tougher laws that further inhibited press freedom (Kakooza, 2012). This perilous situation was exacerbated by the political crisis of 1966 in which Prime Minister Milton Obote overthrew President Fredrick Mutesa II and declared himself President. In 1967, Obote suspended the constitution and led a military government that grossly violated fundamental human rights including press freedom.

The already precarious situation was worsened by the military coup led by Idi Amin in 1971. At the time of Amin's coup, most journalists were fearful and the surviving newspapers exercised editorial cautiousness (Tabaire, 2007). Unlike his predecessor, Amin never pretended to be democratic. He thus launched a series of attacks against the media, which were both legal and arbitrary. At the beginning of his regime, Amin issued the Newspaper and Publication Act (Uganda, 1972) which gave the Minister of Information the power to ban the publication of any newspaper critical of the government. Many privately owned publications were banned under this law. Worse still, many prominent journalists were murdered in cold blood. In 1973, Rev Father Clement Kiggundu, the editor of *Munno* newspaper was picked, murdered and dumped in a car wreckage in Namanve forest on the outskirts of Kampala city (Mbaine, 2003; Bichachi, 2013; Sekeba, 2016). His newspaper had variously criticised the lawlessness that had characterised Amin's government (Mbaine, 2003; Bichachi, 2013). The state violence against the media forced the press to 'abandon' journalism and to resort to doing public relations for government. Most media outlets became inactive with the exception of the government owned *Radio Uganda* and *Uganda Television*. A few magazines that were innocuous also remained in circulation focusing mainly on entertainment, business and sports (Chibita, 2006).

The defeat of Amin in 1979 heralded a new political direction with the balance of power shifting from the north to the south (Chibita, 2010; Bichachi, 2013). The new UNLF government restored the 1967 constitution albeit with some amendments. Newspapers such as *Weekly Topic*, *Agafa e Buddu*, *Saba Saba*, *Star*, *Munnansi*, *Economy*, *Forward* and *Ngabo* were established (Kakooza, 2012). However, as the 1980 general elections drew closer, media suppression intensified. The Military Commission which was in charge of government supported Uganda People's Congress (UPC) in the elections. Therefore, the state broadcasters had to prioritise UPC in their coverage over other political parties (*Daily Monitor*, 2015). After the elections which were won by UPC, the various ministers for information continued to censor the press as it had been the case in the previous regimes (Bichachi, 2013).

This trend of events only changed on January 26th 1986, when the National Resistance Army/Movement (NRA/M) rebel group led by Yoweri Kaguta Museveni captured power after a five-year armed struggle (Kayanja, 2002). Unlike his predecessors, Museveni allowed relative freedom and over fifty newspapers were established in the first three years of his military rule. The publications covered a variety of issues such as corruption, human rights violations by security agents and rebel activities. However, when critical voices increased, Museveni's regime felt threatened and started enacting oppressive media laws that have led to self-censorship. This study therefore seeks to examine these laws (Nogara, 2009; Sekeba, 2016).

Journalism and Self-censorship

Over the years, journalism as a trade has been used to bring about momentous change in society. Such change happens when journalists monitor the activities and intemperance of those in power as well as exposing the structural inequity and inequality perpetuating misery in society. In executing their watchdog role, journalists provide citizens with the necessary information for proper decision making (Andaleeb, 2014; Hartley, 1982). This ensures accountability in both private and public organizations (Andaleeb, 2014). McChesney (2008) also explained the kind of journalism necessary for a society as follows: "Society needs a journalism that is a rigorous watchdog of those in power and who want to be in power, can ferret out truth from lies, and can present a wide range of informed positions on the important issues of the day" (p.26). Unfortunately, in Africa journalism faces a myriad of challenges that limit its ability to play the watchdog role and one of these challenges is self-censorship.

The term self-censorship has no universally accepted definition. However, the definition by Skjerdal (2010) is more appropriate for this study. The author defined self-censorship as a situation where journalists withhold certain journalistic content due to the fear of external threats or pressure. The threats can come from both the state and private citizens. In Uganda for example, the state has successfully used media laws to cajole media into self-censorship. However, it is important to note that in reality all forms of journalism contain aspects of self-censorship. Standard journalistic practice demands provision of some details and omission of others. The news production process which entails gathering and editing of information always results into the inclusion and exclusion of some details of the story (Tapsell, 2012; Morris, 2016; Tuchman, 2002). This depends on factors such as taste, time, decency, space and clarity, among others (Tapsell, 2012; Morris, 2016). However, this study focuses on the unwarranted interference which is clearly distinguishable “from intentional routine editing which takes place in regular journalistic production” Skjerdal (2010, p.99).

Contemporary media regulatory trends

This section explores regional and international media regulatory trends. The aim is to illustrate critical areas of focus which Uganda can use to learn and consequently improve her media regulatory regime and institutional capacity. Relevant regulatory movements influenced by globalization are also examined with the hope that they could potentially assist in shaping Uganda’s legal regime.

Over the years, many countries across the globe have decriminalised defamation. In New Zealand, the law establishing the offence of criminal defamation was repealed in 1993 (Palmer, 2008). In 2013, Jamaica became the first country in the Caribbean to fully abolish criminal defamation (Kirtley & Carmody, 2018). Africa has also joined the global abolitionist movement to decriminalise defamation laws which were mainly introduced during the colonial period (Nyarko et. el., 2018). Ghana was among the first African countries to end criminal defamation in 2001 when parliament repealed the criminal libel law (Nyarko et. el., 2018). In Lesotho, criminal defamation had formed part of the country’s legal regime since 1884. The law was maintained in the statute books when Lesotho gained independence from Britain in 1966 until 2018 when the constitutional court nullified it (Nyane, 2018). In its ruling, the court held that the law violated section 14(1) of the Constitution which provides freedom of expression to everyone (Nyane, 2018). Several other countries including South Africa, Zimbabwe and Kenya have also abolished criminal defamation.

Another critical area of learning is the controversial practice of requiring journalists to be members of a *colegio* or professional body (Perkins, 1999). Yet, in many instances, for one to be admitted to a *colegio*, the laws require a certain academic qualification. Several countries including Uganda have passed laws setting minimum academic qualifications for anyone to join a *colegio*. For example, Uganda’s Press and Journalists Act 2000 states that: “A person shall be eligible for full membership of the institute if he or she is a holder of a university degree in journalism or mass communication”. These stringent measures consequently affect freedom of expression among individuals without the set qualifications. However, the controversy concerning obligatory-membership requirement was partly solved by the advisory opinion of the Inter American Court on Human Rights regarding the Costa Rica College of Journalists in 1985. The court held that the law establishing the *colegio* in Costa Rica was incompatible with fundamental human rights enshrined in the American Convention on Human Rights (Shale, 2008; Perkins, 1999). The ruling consequently became a guiding principle worldwide in defining the practice of journalism (Shale, 2008). It is worth noting that ten years later, the Costa Rica Supreme Court also declared compulsory membership to a *colegio* unconstitutional (Perkins, 1999).

Coping theory

The study is guided by the coping theory (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980). According to this theory, the idea of coping is as old as human existence. However, serious research on the process of coping emerged much later in the 1960s and 1970s due to the rising interest in stress. Drawing from this research, coping has been defined “as ongoing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person” (Lazarus, 1993, p.237). In other words, coping means the efforts made to tolerate, reduce or moderate internal and external demands (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980). Over the years, several strategies and mechanisms have been employed in the coping process. One of the most successful coping mechanisms for journalists in transitional societies with retrogressive media laws is self-censorship (Skjerdal, 2010). This makes the theory relevant for the current study given that it seeks to explore how laws in Uganda have forced journalists and media practitioners into self-censorship.

Method

The study used document analysis as the main method. The method was complemented with in-depth interviews. The documents analysed include the Uganda constitution, Acts of parliament, judicial decisions and legal opinions. In-depth interviews were employed to support findings from the document analysis. The interviews also helped the researcher to learn experiences and relationships of the respondents which could not be easily observed (Rosetto, 2014). Purposive sampling was used to choose the documents for review and the key informants. In this type of sampling, units are selected basing on “specific purposes associated with answering a research study’s questions” (Teddlie & Yu 2007, p.80). Six participants were interviewed for this study. They included two news editors, two talk-show producers and two news reporters. The researcher sought views on whether the existing legal regime in Uganda had potentially contributed to self-censorship in the media. The use of both document analysis and in-depth interviews helped to ensure that the findings are credible and dependable. Member checking (member validation) was also employed in validating the data. This is a technique where the researcher plays back the recorded data “to the informant to check for perceived accuracy and reactions” (Cho & Trent 2006, p.322).

Findings

The study examined five key pieces of legislation that have potentially compelled Ugandan journalists to engage in self-censorship. The laws are analysed in relation to the major objective of this study as well as the reviewed literature. This section further presents the respondents’ views on whether the regulatory framework in Uganda contributes to self-censorship in the media.

Coping The Uganda Constitution (1995)

The constitution in Uganda which was promulgated in 1995 provides freedom of expression which also includes press freedom (Uganda 1995 s.29). Uganda’s former Chief Justice Bart Katureebe (2015) noted that media freedom was entrenched in the supreme law of the land (the constitution) mainly because democracy can only thrive if citizens have the freedom to freely express their views. Katureebe, who also participated in the constitution making process in 1994/1995, observed that freedom of expression allows criticism and provision of new ideas necessary for improving the functioning of government departments. The constitution also guarantees the right to ask for, receive and convey information (Uganda 1995):

Every citizen has a right of access to information in the possession of the State or any other organ or agency of the State except where the release of the information is likely to prejudice the security or sovereignty of the State or interfere with the right to the privacy of any other person (s. 41 (1)).

Unfortunately, the constitution has also got contradictory clauses that limit the provided freedom resulting into self-censorship. For example, article 43 (1) states that: “In the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms prescribed in this Chapter, no person shall prejudice the fundamental or other human rights and freedoms of others or the public interest”. The biggest problem with this section is in its failure to define the term ‘public interest’. This has often given government the opportunity to suppress media freedom under the guise of protecting public interest (Kimumwe 2014; Tayeebwa 2012). Consequently, these contradictory clauses force journalists to engage in editorial circumspection which results in the exclusion of some important details in news stories.

In the last ten years, the parliament in Uganda has also used ambiguous sections in the constitution to muzzle the press. For example, article 90 of the constitution has been used by parliament to intimidate, summon and interrogate journalists who publish stories perceived to be critical of legislators and the entire institution of parliament. The article grants committees of parliament power to call upon private citizens and public servants for questioning on matters of national importance:

In the exercise of their functions under this article, committees of parliament – may call any Minister or any person holding public office and private individuals to submit memoranda or appear before them to give evidence; may co-opt any member of parliament or employ qualified persons to assist them in the discharge of their functions; shall have the powers of the High Court for – enforcing the attendance of witnesses and examining them on oath, affirmation or otherwise; compelling the production of documents; and issuing a commission or request to examine witnesses abroad (Uganda 1995 s. 90 (3)).

Members of parliament have misconstrued this article to mean that news reporters and editors can also be invited to appear before committees of parliament for questioning over their news reports. A good example was in October 2016 when parliament summoned news editors from four media houses to answer questions regarding stories perceived to be critical of parliament (Kaija, 2016). The media houses had written stories revealing the lavish expenditure of legislators while on foreign trips. The editors summoned included those from *Uganda Radio Network*, *The Observer*, *Redpepper* and *The New Vision*. However, apart from *The New Vision* editors, no other editor honoured the summonses. The defying editors argued that parliament lacked the authority to question them over their stories and advised legislators to go to court if they felt offended by the news reports. On a curious note, the term of parliament expired four years later without releasing the findings of its investigations or acting upon the three media houses that refused to honour the summonses. This probably suggests that the aim of the investigations into media activities was only to intimidate and instil fear among journalists using an ambiguous section of the constitution.

The supporters of the steps taken by parliament at the time argued that it was normal and within the confines of the law for parliament to invite journalists for questioning. The most prominent of these proponents was the director of communication in parliament Chris Obore. Obore, who practiced journalism for over ten years, strongly believed that article 90 granted parliamentarians authority to summon and question journalists (Obore, 2016). The author also expressed dismay over the actions of senior editors who refused to honour parliament’s summonses yet the law obligated them to do so by stating as follows:

It is not correct to cast journalists as people who are the beginning and an end to themselves. Journalists are part of society and are also expected to play by the established rules. For order to prevail there must be authority; whether in the newsrooms, homes, factories or even the marketplace. I feel deeply troubled when the media is depicted as people who must be defiant to authority all the time. The media is called upon to thoroughly play the watchdog role within the professional limits. [...] I am no lawyer but am told if a court summons you and you believe that it has no jurisdiction to try you, you first appear and tell the court that it has no authority to try you. You do not snub the summons. It becomes contempt of court. There is really nothing wrong to appear before any court if summoned unless one has something to hide.

A committee of parliament has powers of the High Court. This is a fact my colleagues should have put into consideration before joining the fray to say MPs have no powers (p.12).

While Obore (2016) held the view that the editors who declined to appear before parliament were guilty of contempt, a closer examination of the issue at hand rejects this view (Oloka-Onyango, 2016). One, contempt in Uganda's parliament applies when an individual acts in a way that prevents parliament from executing its oversight and law-making responsibilities. Yet, in this case, journalists only published news reports regarding parliament's wasteful expenditure. Two, according to Oloka-Onyango (2016) parliament violated a key tenet of natural justice when it acted as the accuser, prosecutor and judge in its own case. The author observed as follows:

Contempt of parliament was really intended to prevent behaviour that was disruptive of the operations of the legislature. This includes making sure that witnesses attend committees when summoned, produce documents they are asked to and to enforce other reasonable measures of compliance in order to ensure that Parliament is able to carry out its legislative functions. In other words, contempt of parliament is not designed to act as a form of punishment against those with whom Parliament or its members have disagreements. Once it is used in this manner, it obviously offends Article 29 of the 1995 Constitution (p.14).

Oloka-Onyango (20126) also noted that by inviting news editors for questioning over their news reports, parliament was reviving an outdated law of sedition which was nullified by court in 2010. He further explained that even before this law was declared null and void by the court it never protected the legislature from criticism. The author's argument corresponded with the views of Moses Khisa (2016) who reasoned that parliament's summonses were irregular. Khisa noted that the rules and discipline committee of parliament which invited journalists for questioning is only mandated to investigate issues concerning the behaviour of parliamentarians. The latter author wondered why the committee summoned people who were not members of parliament. The same author further advised legislators to find better methods of engaging with journalists if they are interested in learning and understanding news production processes stating that:

If parliament wants to interact with media editors to learn how the media does its work and challenges faced, then just hold a breakfast event and invite all print and electronic editors for a symposium. But to summon means you want the editors to go defend their work and account to a parliament that has no business meddling in the work of the media! Parliament's work is primarily to legislate – make laws. Its other function is to provide oversight against the executive and other public departments. [...] The few MPs who know procedure all too well and understand the basic tenets of modern government ought to come out and speak against this absurdity and counsel their overzealous colleagues to cut their losses (p.6).

The discussion above evidently demonstrates the ambiguity of article 90 of the constitution. Legal scholars, journalists and politicians have construed the article in different ways. While some contend that parliament has the power to call upon journalists for questioning, others reject this interpretation. Importantly, despite the ambiguity of the law, parliament has continued to claim that it can be invoked to summon reporters and editors for questioning if they publish news reports perceived to be negative thus entrenching self-censorship among members of the press (Respondent C, int.). This is because parliament is a big advertiser in Uganda and most media proprietors would want to have a good relationship with it to be prioritised in their budget for advertising. A respondent from one of the major television stations emphasized the importance of a big advertiser: "If a company [...] sponsors more than five shows on a station, any critical story about it will not run because these [media houses] at the end of the day are after money" (Respondent E, int.). As a result, many journalists choose to engage in editorial circumspection when producing news reports about parliament.

Press and Journalist (Amendment) Act, 2000 (Cap 105)

This law was enacted by the National Resistance Council (NRC) in 1995. At that time, NRC was the law-making organ in the then military government of Yoweri Museveni (Kayanja, 2002). Later in 2000, the parliament of Uganda declared it an Act (Anite & Nkuubi, 2014). In effect, the law revoked the heavy bonds required for the establishment of a newspaper and the provisions used by previous regimes to ban critical newspapers. While the Act was widely welcomed for repealing many earlier repressive laws, it also contained a few provisions that limit media freedom. For example, the Act set a minimum academic standard necessary for one to practice journalism in Uganda. According to this law, one must possess a university degree in journalism or mass communication to be allowed to practice journalism (Uganda 2000 s. 15 (2)). Although this law has not been fully enforced, some government departments have used it to instil fear among journalists. In 2016, parliament used this law to ban critical journalists without university degrees from covering its proceedings. However, during the interviews, Respondent C observed that the uncritical reporters who lacked degrees were allowed to continue reporting from parliament. This has led to self-censorship in a number of ways. Firstly, the reporters at parliament without college education have to censor themselves to avoid being suspended. Secondly, reporters covering other powerful government departments like the judiciary and the military have become overly cautious fearing the trouble that befell their counterparts in parliament as noted by Respondent C; “journalists [live] under fear that they can be thrown out any time” (Respondent C, int.).

Penal Code (Amendment) Act, 2007 (Cap 120)

This law was introduced by the British colonial government in 1950 and has remained in force until today. Successive post-independence regimes have only amended a few sections of it and the last amendment was made in 2007. The Act contains several provisions that force journalists into self-censorship. For example, section 41 of the Penal Code Act stops the news media from debating issues regarding nepotism and unfair allocation of resources on the pretext of discouraging sectarianism (Anite & Nkuubi, 2014). The Act reads:

A person who prints, publishes, makes or utters any statement or does any act which is likely to—degrade, revile or expose to hatred or contempt; create alienation or despondency of; raise discontent or disaffection among; or promote, in any other way, feelings of ill will or hostility among or against, any group or body of persons on account of religion, tribe or ethnic or regional origin commits an offence and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years (Uganda 2007 s. 41 (1)).

In the period under study, government has often used this law to stop discussions in the press about nepotism in the army. For example, in 2013 the law was used to shut down the *Redpepper* and *Daily Monitor* newspapers for ten days after publishing a leaked document written by Gen David Sejusa (the then national coordinator of intelligence services) discussing nepotism in the army and an alleged plan by President Yoweri Museveni to have his son, Gen Muhoozi Kainerugaba, succeed him with the help of some senior military officers. Police acted on an order issued by court following government claims that the publication of the military document could generate ethnic hatred and mayhem. During this time, no single employee of the *Redpepper* and *Daily Monitor* was allowed access to the premises of their companies. Nevertheless, government later lost interest in the case and the two newspapers were reopened after ten days. Respondent A explained why government has frequently used this law to discourage discussions on nepotism in the army by stating that:

The army we know in the political apparatus of the country kind of holds quasi powers in the superstructure. I would even place it above the known organs of the state because it holds the levers of power and many times the president has warned that if you dare write about the army and sensitive things that can cause rancour within the military establishment, he will send you six feet under.

The Act also criminalises defamation thus encouraging self-censorship among journalists (Uganda 2007 ss. 179-186). The state and its actors have all used this law to harass and intimidate journalists who write critical stories by continually dragging them to court under this law even when they stand no chance of winning

(Kimumwe, 2014). However, even though the state has lost most charges of criminal defamation brought against journalists in the period under study, the onerous court battles discourage many reporters from investigative journalism. In 2014, a journalist working with *Central Broadcasting Service* radio Ronald Sembuusi was convicted of criminal defamation in a Magistrates court for publishing a news report linking a local politician to a corruption scandal. He was consequently sentenced to serve one year in prison or pay a fine of about US\$400. Sembuusi immediately appealed against the court decision but he unfortunately died later that year before the appeal could be determined (Sempala, 2014). It is important to note that while Sembuusi may have wronged the politician in his story, defamation ought to be treated as a civil wrong if the freedom of the press is to flourish. Otherwise, the continued threat of imprisonment resulting from criminal defamation has forced many journalists to abandon their watchdog role. Respondent D explained that he recently abandoned a story about a labour exporting company which allegedly traffics Ugandans to the Middle East after the owners of the company threatened to work with the police to charge him with criminal defamation.

Uganda Communications Commission (Amendment) Act, 2013 (Cap 106)

The law was made in 2013 and it effectively revoked the Electronic Media Statute passed by parliament in 1996 and the Uganda Communications Commission Act which was enacted in 2000 (Kimumwe, 2014; Uganda, 2013). The Electronic Media Statute was concerned with the regulation of broadcasting stations while the Uganda Communications Commission Act of 2000 dealt with the allocation of frequencies to telephone companies and broadcasting stations. The two laws contradicted each other in several ways forcing government to harmonise them and create one law in 2013. The trouble with this Act is that it failed to address the weaknesses in the laws it effectively repealed when it came into force (Kimumwe, 2014). The law grants the minister for information, communication and national guidance excessive authority to control the board of the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) which leads to abuse of power (Anite & Nkuubi, 2014). The Act reads:

All members of the Board shall be appointed by the Minister with approval of Cabinet, one of whom shall be a person with disability and at least three of whom shall be women; a member of the Board shall hold office on the terms and conditions specified in the instrument of appointment; a member of the board shall hold office for three years and shall be eligible for reappointment for only one further term (Uganda 2013 s. 9 (3-5)).

Anite & Nkuubi (2014) noted that because the minister has the authority to appoint and dismiss board members, they resort to serving his/her interests in order to protect their jobs yet the UCC board is supposed to execute its duties independently. In the period under study, the different ministers in charge of information have used these excessive powers to issue several retrogressive orders on the media that result in self-censorship. For example, shortly after the general elections in February 2016, the minister for information, together with UCC, issued a ban on live coverage of all opposition activities. Later that year, UCC further banned radio and television stations from discussing several controversial topics and hosting some political activists considered hostile to the ruling government. For instance, in October 2016, UCC directed *NTV* television to stop all broadcasts involving a one Frank Gashumba. Gashumba was a social critic who regularly appeared on *NTV*'s evening news programmes to give perspective on the day's topical issues. Respondents at *NTV* revealed that government politicians had warned them severally to stop hosting Gashumba which implies that the UCC directive was influenced by politicians. In the letter written to *NTV*, UCC explained that they had carried out investigations which revealed that Gashumba's language was offensive, contrary to the broadcasting standards stipulated in the law (Mulema, 2016). Important to note here is that although UCC is mandated to regulate the broadcasting industry, in this case Gashumba and *NTV* were not accorded fair hearing. UCC was both the accuser and the judge. In effect, this action compelled news producers at *NTV* to become exceedingly cautious when inviting analysts to their news programmes.

The collected data further shows that UCC issued similar directives to many other television stations. Respondents revealed that during the general elections in 2016, UCC issued a letter ordering the management at *WBS* television to suspend Charles Rwomushana, a political analyst, from their premier talk-show named *Face Off*. Rwomushana, who is now a government critic, previously headed the political intelligence desk in the president's office. A respondent from *WBS* said that they were told to choose between Rwomushana and the entire programme (Respondent B, int.). Earlier, UCC had also suspended another political commentator Robert Kalundi Serumagga from appearing on *WBS* and all other electronic media in Uganda for allegedly inciting violence. As a result of these developments, many journalists hosting talk-shows have decided to shun important topics and opposition politicians in their shows to avoid persecution by the state and its agents as noted by Respondent D: "Of course we are now cautious. We are very selective of the people we invite. We are very selective of the topics. As a media house, we have to be cautious of what we talk about".

Computer Misuse (Amendment) Act, 2022 (No. 2)

The law was initially passed by parliament in November 2010 and entered into force in February 2011. It was later amended by parliament in 2022. The law was made to prevent abuse of information systems such as computers in today's digitalised environment (Uganda, 2011). However, the law has a number of ambiguous provisions that have given government the leeway to suppress the press freedom prescribed in article 29 of the constitution. In the period under review, section 25 of the Act has been used repeatedly by government to arrest and interrogate journalists who write critical stories. It states that:

Any person who wilfully and repeatedly uses electronic communication to disturb or attempts to disturb the peace, quiet or right of privacy of any person with no purpose of legitimate communication whether or not a conversation ensues commits a misdemeanour and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding twenty-four currency points or imprisonment not exceeding one year or both (Uganda 2011, s. 25).

The section gives police enough legroom to clump down on reporters and editors who produce news reports perceived to be negative by the government. During the interviews, Respondent E stated that: "This Act has been misused by police. When you publish anything online that the police consider anti-government, they use this law to arrest you". This is probably why majority of the journalists arrested and brought before court in the past six years have been prosecuted under this law. In May 2018, police employed this section to summon and interrogate four journalists working with different online publications. They included Andrew Irumba of *Spy Uganda*, Bob Atwine of *Spy Reports*, Tadeo Senyonyi of *Business Focus* and John Njoroge of *CEO Magazine*. The four were questioned over their stories that revealed bank transactions of a senior director in the central bank who was under corruption investigations in parliament (Human Rights Network for Journalists – Uganda, 2018). Evidence from the field revealed that such summonses and interrogations have scared some journalists and media outlets from investigating senior government officials. However, on a positive note, the constitutional court nullified section 25 of this Act on January 10, 2023. The court held that this section contravened article 29 of the constitution and consequently declared it null and void. Although this was a welcome development, several other problematic sections within the Act were not nullified especially sections 23 and 24.

Discussion

The paper examined how media laws have potentially contributed to self-censorship among journalists in Uganda. The discussion is underpinned by the coping theory (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980) to explain how self-censorship has been used by journalists as a coping mechanism. Five major pieces of legislation were identified as having the greatest effect on journalism practice. They include the Uganda Constitution (Uganda, 1995), Press and Journalist (Amendment) Act (Uganda, 2000), Penal Code (Amendment) Act (Uganda, 2007),

Computer Misuse (Amendment) Act (Uganda, 2022) and Uganda Communications Commission (Amendment) Act, (Uganda, 2013).

The study revealed that while the constitution guarantees press freedom in article 29, it also contains other claw-back sections that limit media freedom thus leading to self-censorship. The contradictory provisions include article 43 which allows government to suppress the media under the disguise of protecting public interest. As observed in the presented data, many times government uses this article as an excuse for suppressing views it perceives to be negative. Another problematic provision is article 90 which parliament has invoked to summon journalists for questioning over their stories. Although no punitive action has been taken by parliament against the journalists, the imminent threat of interrogation by legislators restrains some journalists from critical reporting which threatens democratic governance as rightly noted by Murdock (1992) as follows:” Without these basic legal rights to express dissent and to organise opposition, it is impossible to work towards a fully democratic society based on open debate” (p.20).

The data presented also showed that the Press and Journalist (Amendment) Act (Uganda, 2000) created perpetual fear among journalists by making it illegal for one to practice journalism without a university degree. A study conducted on the state of the media by the Human Rights Network for Journalists – Uganda (HRNJ-U) revealed that only 31% of the practicing journalists in Uganda had attained a university degree. The remaining 69% were either diploma or certificate holders (Human Rights Network for Journalists – Uganda, 2015). The net effect of this Act is that the majority of the journalists without college degrees have to avoid critical reporting otherwise the government would not hesitate to use this law to suspend them just like the parliamentary reporters who were banned under this Act in 2016.

Evidence from the field also illustrated how security services have manipulated several sections of the Penal Code (Amendment) Act (Uganda, 2007) to gag the press. Section 41 which discourages sectarianism and sections 179-186 which establish the offence of defamation have been successfully used to ban discussions about nepotism in government. The biggest problem with these provisions is that “being part of the Penal Code Act, they all invite criminal sanctions” (Chibita, 2006,p.140). This has scared many journalists from their watchdog role given that there is a threat of imprisonment. Related to this law is the Computer Misuse Act (Uganda 2011a) which has also been manipulated to detain and question journalists who expose wrong doing in government. Findings revealed that the Computer Misuse Act is currently the most effective tool used by state actors to instil fear among journalists.

The data presented further demonstrated how Uganda Communications (Amendment) Act (Uganda, 2013) has entrenched self-censorship especially in television and radio stations. Findings have revealed that the law gives the minister for information too much power over the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) yet this body is supposed to perform its duties without any influence. As a consequence of this overbearing influence, UCC has been reduced to an appendage of the ruling party with a brief to shut out opposing views in the media. There is therefore an urgent need to revise this law to make UCC “accountable to the public and not to the minister because it is executing its duties for the people at large and not to an individual” or a political party (Anite & Nkuubi 2014, p.46).

Conclusion

This paper has examined how laws relating to the media have potentially entrenched a culture of self-censorship among journalists in Uganda. It is observed that when the current regime had just captured power by the force of arms in 1986, it enacted several laws and policies that guaranteed press freedom. Prominent among these policies was the liberalisation of the broadcast media in the early 1990s. This resulted in the rapid increase in the number of broadcasting stations across the country. Currently, Uganda has over 40 television channels and about 250 licensed radio stations. The liberalisation was followed by the promulgation of the constitution in 1995 with a clear provision on freedom of expression under article 29. For the first time, this

allowed Ugandans an opportunity to freely express critical opinions in the media. However, when the opposing views increased, government embarked on a systematic process of enacting laws that inhibit the media freedom enshrined in the constitution. As noted in this paper, these retrogressive laws have impelled journalists to engage in self-censorship.

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Public Speaking Eloquence as Agency for Change: Analysis of Professor Lumumba's 'Magulification of Africa' Lecture

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Abstract

The communication abilities of public figures have often been acclaimed and censured in equal measure. This article discusses public speaking in the African postmodernism context and interrogates whether eloquence among public speakers in Africa translates to persuasion, agency and impact. In addition, it draws attention to the current discussions on decoloniality of language and its application to contemporary problems faced in Africa. By employing a critical discourse analysis as a method for scrutinizing one of Professor Patrick Loch Otieno Lumumba's most viewed lectures titled "Magulification of Africa," available on YouTube and delivered in Tanzania, this article seeks to add to existing literature on public speaking for change agency within the rhetorical theoretical framework.

Key words: PLO Lumumba, Pan-African speaker, public speaking eloquence, African public speakers.

Introduction

Through the ages, socio-economic and political revolutions have been triggered by the oratory efforts of gifted public speakers across the world (Gao, 2021; Mcgee, 1998; Tiruneh, 2014). Such speakers are acclaimed for their attributes including charisma and eloquence which have either led to positive social change or to perilous death, incarceration, stigmatization or ostracization (Kirk, 2004; Meer, 1990; van der Merwe, 1999). For example, Adolf Hitler's speechifying triggered mass atrocities in Europe (Fishman, 1964), Luther King mobilized inclusivity through his civil rights movement campaign in America (Kirk, 2004) while Winston Churchill's "we shall fight" speech buoyed public spirit after a near Second World War defeat at Dunkirk (Maguire, 2014). In Africa, besides gifted speakers such as Julius Malema, Vusi Thembekwayo, Benjamin Akande, Francis Egbokhare, Professor PLO Lumumba stands out amongst the most talented speakers at the forefront of social advocacy for positive change (*Africa Speakers Group - A Home for Star Speakers & Performers*, n.d.; Mooka, 2017; Singo, 2014).

Throughout history, public speaking was employed to transfer and document heritage in Africa and beyond (Abdi, 2007; M'begniga & Ling, 2021). Public speaking also facilitated transmission of messages, and inspired people to conform to desired behaviour which enabled coexistence in society (Barber, 1997; Peek, n.d.).

In the precolonial era, communication facilitated Africans to negotiate their simple non-commercial lifestyles which were characterized by shared existence, clear-cut roles, communal rites, responsibilities and self-regulation (Miller, 2002). To exploit the natural resources that abounded in Africa that could expand their territories, developed nations deployed a tripartite strategy comprising persuasion, religious imposition and brute force to occupy, control and exploit (Ocheni & Nwankwo, 2012).

Persuasion and talented public speakers employed by the colonial administrators became critical enablers of the colonization process (Kiambi, 2014; Shaw, 2009). A case in point is Senior Chief Koinange Wa-Mbiyu, a collaborator chief-turned-villain who, through oratory skills promoted serfdom in precolonial Kenya before disgruntlement settled in after he was replaced with Chief Waruhiu leading him to orchestrate insurrection against the British (Ochieng', 2002). Through the administrators, colonialisation significantly impacted Africa through infrastructure development, cross-continental commerce, and the establishment of political systems (Kiambi, 2014; Shaw, 2009). The colonial governance structure ensured total social, economic, cultural and political modification of the African continent to the benefit of the colonial governments through brute force and cleverly designed information systems driven by chiefs and information officers (Gadsden, 1986; Ngonyo & Oywer, 2017). However, upon enlightenment of the exploitative situation, eminent African public speakers including Koinange Wa-Mbiyu of Kenya, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Patrice Lumumba of the Congo, Leopold Senghor of Senegal and Kamuzu Banda of Malawi, mobilized themselves, resisted and overcame the colonist to win back their territories (Gadsden, 1986; Nyangena, 2003; Ochieng', 2002).

Having learned from colonial period African speakers whose speeches were impactful enough to trigger insurrection against colonialism to deliver independence for Africa, later day public speakers such as Julius Malema, Benjamin Akande, Ogho Okiti, Lucille Ossai, Shadrack Kubyane and Max Price amongst many others have emerged as revolutionary minded public speakers progressively initiating change in modern-day Africa in the academia, politics, socio-economic, development, technology and in cultural husbandry (Akande, n.d.; Crowell, 2012; Grossman, 2019; Kolade & Adepoju, 2022; Okiti, 2023; Price, 1986; Singo, 2014). Professor Patrick Loch Otieno Lumumba is one other neocolonial public speaker who has facilitated cross-continental thought-provoking lectures aimed at motivating Pan-African pride, self-dependency and development (*Africa Speakers Group - A Home for Star Speakers & Performers*, n.d.). Widely published and having spoken across the world (45 Million Strong, 2019), Professor Lumumba is most famous for his public lectures targeting post-independence leaders in Africa. His speeches are mainly delivered in institutions of higher learning where he also targets students as the potential leaders of the future.

These accomplishments notwithstanding, and though he is loved for his oratory talent, he is not without fault (Chanda, 2020). He was accused of plagiarising parts of the journal titled: From Jurisprudence to Poliprudence: The Kenyan Presidential Election Petition 2013 published (later withdrawn) in the *Law Society of Kenya Journal*, 11(1). Upon notification of the plagiarism, he withdrew the article from publication and apologised to the original author and the academic fraternity at large (Dzuya, 2017; Juma, 2017; Kaka, 2016a, 2016b; Nzomo, 2015). Apart from this article, none of his other publications have been flagged for plagiarism. Professor Lumumba's apology and withdrawal of the article illustrated his character.

Inferred from his numerous speaking invitations and his outspokenness on corruption and political truancy, Professor Lumumba is feared as he is respected for his influence (Onebunne, 2023). In September 2018, Professor Lumumba was denied entry into Zambia where he was scheduled to deliver a lecture at Eden University on Sino-African relations titled "Africa in the age of China's influence and global geo-dynamics." The Zambian government declared that he posed a threat to the nation which was enjoying significant Chinese investment (Ebatamehi, 2018). Picketers protesting Professor Lumumba's support for Uganda's anti-homosexuality bill held rallies in Cape Town, South Africa as the professor gave a talk during the tenth Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) political party's anniversary celebrations at that time (Felix & Charles, 2023). The attempt to stop him from speaking in these two incidents demonstrate the perceived influence he wields and his rhetorical impact on the continent.

It is thus on the power of his public speaking eloquence, contextualised within the rhetorical theoretical framework that this paper seeks to examine the impact and effectiveness of Professor Lumumba's oratory talent on African issues including governance, leadership, patriotism, integrity and Pan-Africanism.

The rhetorical theory is composed of a complex framework of strategies for audience persuasion that public speakers employ to communicate effectively (Crick, 2016). These strategies are enunciated by Kenneth Burke as a speaker's ability to analyse and understand audiences and consequently use of persuasion, rhetoric, and stylistic techniques for perception change (Hansen, 1996). Subsequently, the theory sets a broad outline for public speakers to engross and convincingly relate with audiences.

Literature review

Eloquence and its Position in Perception Change

Eloquence in message delivery is made possible by the speaker's tact and grasp of topical issues under discussion (Goodman, 2018; Pye, 2016). A speaker must be "tremendously enthused about worthwhile things concerning which he is thoroughly informed" (Mcfarland, 1961, p. 17). Research studies position eloquence as one of the most critical catalysts for provoking action. "The speech of one who knows what he is talking about and means what he says - it is thought on fire" (Mcfarland, 1961, p. 17).

Eloquence is also attained when the speaker is personally affected, passionate, or emotional about the issue under discussion (Carnegie & Esenwein, 2005). When a speaker depicts these attributes, the resultant speech attains an "emotional force" (Breckenridge, 1905) that is highly believable and motivates causal action. Professor Lumumba's lectures bring out his passion, strong emotions and connectedness to Pan-Africanism and the possibility for self-emancipation.

Not to be mistaken for the negro movements that agitated for civil rights and liberties in America, Pan-Africanism was an Africa-focused movement that arose from five Pan-African Congress conventions held in 1919, 1921, 1923, 1927 and 1945 in Paris, London, Lisbon, New York and Manchester which were driven by negro scholar Dr. DuBois (Shepperson, 1960). This was followed by the 1958 All-Africa People's Conference held in Ghana which was attended by over 300 participants from 28 African countries including Jomo Kenyatta, Kwame Nkrumah, Tom Mboya amongst others (Shepperson, 1960; University of Ghana, 2018). In tandem with Shapperson's explanation of the conference's objective to unify and support African countries into independence and self-rule, this paper operationalises Pan-Africanism as the contemporary efforts made to unify Africa into good governance, development and prosperity using rhetoric.

The currency of eloquent speech is structure, preparation, and message delivery (Mcfarland, 1961). This position is reinforced by Carnegie and Esenwein (2005) who posit that these attributes contribute towards creating awareness, motivating and inspiring situational change. Some of the great all-time eloquent public speakers include Martin Luther King Jr. who contributed towards reduction of racism, inequality, injustice and oppression faced by black people in America through his speeches (Freeman & Kolozi, 2018; Josiah & Oghenerho, 2015), Winston Churchill whose wartime speeches mobilised vigour and patriotism on the British battlefield (Maguire, 2014), Barack Obama whose talent at delivering highly emotional speeches mobilised significant votes and delivered an electoral victory (Alreza et al., 2019; Catalano, 2011) and President Abraham Lincoln whose landmark Gettysburg address inspired unity of purpose during the American civil war besides also addressing slavery, human rights, democracy and freedom for all Americans (Lincoln & Lambert, 1909; Schwartz, 2005; Youvan, 2023).

Others include Marcus Cicero and Socrates, known as the fathers of public speaking for their foundational contributions to the art of persuasion, debate and rhetoric, Adolf Hitler renowned for destructive mass manipulation using public speaking, John F. Kennedy who was greatly talented in 'political rhetoric'

and whose speeches motivated social action and responsibility, and Mahatma Gandhi who apart from encouraging social justice through his speeches, was considered a great advocate of non-violent communication (Blyth, 2010; Catalano, 2011; Josiah & Oghenerho, 2015; Kelsey, 1907; Maguire, 2014; Takala & Auvinen, 2016; Vaishnav, 2019; Zanura et al., 2023; Zhou & Kazemian, 2016).

Separate from eloquence, persuasion (also known as rhetoric) plays a role by temporarily or permanently changing people's worldviews and altering their behaviour. Scholar Aristotle suggests that ethos, logos, and pathos are constituent parts of persuasion (Ting, 2018). Confronting societal problems or challenges, outstanding public speakers conjure up and create a balanced mix of ethos, logos and pathos to persuade desired action by presenting oratory arguments rationally, emotionally and ethically.

Conceived by John Austin and enhanced by John Searle, the Speech-act theory outlines how speakers use words to inform and institute action (Alreza et al., 2019; Pratt, 1986). The theory comprises locutionary acts where public speakers express statements understandable by audiences; illocutionary acts which entail a speaker saying something with a clear purpose, for instance to inform, and lastly, perlocutionary acts which involve saying something to provoke an action (Mabaquiao, 2018; Pratt, 1986).

By consistently depicting credibility, depth of information know-how and emotional connection with his audiences, Professor Lumumba's lecture aligns with the locutionary and illocutionary acts (Alreza et al., 2019; Mabaquiao, 2018). However, for the leaders whom he hopes to provoke into Pan-African focused action, his efforts fall under the perlocutionary speech act (Josiah & Oghenerho, 2015; Mabaquiao, 2018).

Transition from Classical to Contemporary Public Speaking

Public speaking is a 2,500-year-old craft that began in Athens where the Greeks converged in open-air venues and eloquently articulated community and political issues besides defending themselves against social accusations (Ting, 2018). Oratory skills and a grasp of proper language also separated the gentry from the plebs. These baseline requirements fostered speaking tutors, a profession taken up by scholars such as Quintilian, Cicero and Aristotle who suggested public speaking guidelines generally known as rhetoric (Luscombe & Nonnenberg, 2015; Marcucci, 2019).

While Cicero argued for a balanced and eloquent delivery of content, suggested that a good speech must be characterised by a sound logical argument presented persuasively focusing on the audience's emotions, Quintilian proposed that effective public speaking combined ethical content with substantive and effective delivery (Blyth, 2010; Kelsey, 1907; Marcucci, 2019; Odgers, 1935; Ting, 2018). Combined, their published guidelines are still used in communication scholarship and also by majority eloquent public speakers (Blyth, 2010; Marcucci, 2019; Odgers, 1935).

As in ancient times, public speaking is celebrated today with talented speakers accomplishing milestones from their oratory skills (Mcfarland, 1961; Monroe, 1941). Driven by notable speakers since, it is still a significant pivot point in societal information transactions. Martin Luther King Jr., Winston Churchill, Barack Obama, Abraham Lincoln, Adolf Hitler, John F. Kennedy, Mahatma Gandhi and Julius Malema are examples of public speakers who attained fame or notoriety as a result of their talents in rhetorical public speaking (Catalano, 2011; Chaube, 1985; Freeman & Kolozi, 2018; Josiah & Oghenerho, 2015; Lincoln & Lambert, 1909; Maguire, 2014; Schwartz, 2005; Singo, 2014; Takala & Auvinen, 2016; Youvan, 2023; Zhou & Kazemian, 2016).

American Baptist minister and activist Martin Luther King's speech titled "I Have a Dream" presented to a mammoth crowd of over 250,000 people in 1963 called for racial equality and enjoyment of civil and economic rights by the black community in the United States (Josiah & Oghenerho, 2015). Ultimately, the speech was instrumental in redefining the American leadership view regarding justice and multi-racial

equality for all Americans. As a result of the speech, Mr. King was recognized as the Man of the Year by the Time Magazine and received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 (Josiah & Oghenerho, 2015).

President Barack Obama's "Yes, we can" slogan became very popular in his speeches during his presidential campaign (Alreza et al., 2019). The slogan endeared the American electorate to his campaign strategy and depicted his political power and ability to turn around the perceived governance weaknesses in America into national prosperity (Alreza et al., 2019; Bista, 2009). The slogan delivered in all President Obama's campaign speeches contributed towards his election victory in 2008.

Mahatma Gandhi gave a powerful speech titled "Quit India" in August 1942 in solidarity with fellow Indians agitating for freedom and independence from colonial rule. The speech called for peaceful defiance and noncompliance conforming to the Indian ideology of "firmness in a good cause" (Duarah, 2023; Rabbani, 2023). As a result of making the speech, Gandhi was detained by the British and the speech immortalized as the unifying call to action towards the independence struggle (Chaube, 1985). Afterwards, the venue of Gandhi's "Quit India" speech was rechristened as the August Revolution Ground.

Appreciating the crucial role played by professional and strategic communication in society, higher institutions of learning today include public speaking in their teaching curricula (Lyons, 2017; Miller, 2002). It is in one such institution that Professor Lumumba found a home as a resident lecturer besides also using such institutions as platforms for most of his public lectures and advocacy podia.

Today, skill set, achievement, and experience alone are not sufficient to elicit social change and impact (Islamov, 2020; Mcfarland, 1961). For influential leaders and opinion shapers, public speaking remains a crucial nexus point for mobilizing desired consensus, social change, public trust and confidence. Public speaking is thus the necessary currency in the contemporary socio-economic and political marketplace facilitating institutional and social change.

PLO Lumumba - The Pan-African Martin Luther King?

Born in July 1962, Professor Lumumba is a Kenyan scholar, teacher, lawyer and a global awardee of several recognitions (45 Million Strong, 2019). He has also served as a state officer and is a celebrated Pan-African development communication advocate (Otieno, 2022). The author further argues that Professor Lumumba academic foundation is based on an undergraduate degree and masters degree from the University of Nairobi in Kenya and a doctorate degree from the University of Ghent in Belgium (2022). He has served as a lecturer at the University of Nairobi, as a director of the Kenya School of Law and also as a director of Kenya's anti-corruption agency.

Professor Lumumba's Pan-Africanist discipleship is ministered and best unfurled on the speaking podium from where his powerful, eloquent and thought-provoking speeches highlight African problems and challenges often alluding to the fact that the solutions lie within the continent itself.

Professor Lumumba's numerous public speaking opportunities in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Core de Ivoire, Rwanda, South Sudan, South Africa, Nigeria, Gambia, Ethiopia, Zambia, Ghana, Sweden, United Kingdom, Ireland, Spain, Switzerland, Mexico and the United States of America which begun in 1992 with invitations from government institutions, institutions of higher learning, foundations, political parties and religious organisations indicate the growing need for reflective, independent and honest conversations on Pan-Africanist issues (45 Million Strong, 2019; Patrick, 2015).

Various scholars (Onebunne, 2023; Otieno, 2022) concur that Professor Lumumba's candour and ease of message delivery make him popular across the region. His bilingual strength aside, his speeches are characterized by a rich potpourri of unending stylistic flavour drawn from his mastery of language, idiom, situational analysis and contextual illustrations. These traits and talents cast him as a Pan-African reformist; particularly on the status of governance, integrity and development (Tshuma & Siambombe, 2016).

Furthermore, apart from being recognised twice as one of the most influential Africans, Africa Speakers Group, a group that propagates “knowledge and ignite the connections that link needs and opportunities with speakers, thinkers and performers” (*Africa Speakers Group - A Home for Star Speakers & Performers*, n.d.) lists Professor Lumumba on its website among the top ten eminent continental public speakers.

Methodology

The study employed the critical discourse analysis method to examine one of Professor Lumumba’s widely viewed public lecture titled; the “Magufulification of Africa” (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017). Discursive data from the lecture was collected through observation and recording of all the viewers’ written commentaries in the comments section of the YouTube platform. Out of the available 2,452 comments, 158 were analysed based on writer coherency. Confined within the rhetorical theoretical framework, the arising data is analysed and presented qualitatively with inclusion of the direct comments by the viewers for contextualisation of the arguments and establishment of whether Professor Lumumba’s eloquence translates to persuasion, agency and impact.

Findings

Sampling Lumumba: Impact on Social Change and Development in Africa

Professor Lumumba’s oratory presentations are powered by critical thought and delivered with a rich portfolio of lingual style and device besides scholarly and contemporary illustrations (Otieno, 2022). Viewers from the lecture laud Professor Lumumba for being informative and thought provoking. A viewer muses that “if only there were 100 men like Patrick Lumumba am of a great assurance that this very continent of Africa would be more than it is today” while another thinks he is an “unmatched African speaker of all times” (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017). Others applaud the lecture as thought-provoking and “a wake-up call to the youth of Africa and we are committed to changing our narrative and giving it a more positive feel” (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017).

Professor Lumumba has spoken widely across the continent on invitation by governments and higher institutions of learning mainly on Pan-Africanism and leadership. This is a testament of the impact, contribution to society and recognition of his unique advocacy attributes. This is captured by a viewer who comments that “Professor Lumumba is one formidable person I celebrate you and your contribution to democracy!” (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017). Another viewer registers the dearth of great speakers and motivators. He notes that “Africa needs more of such straight talk for Project 2063 to be realised. United States of Africa is still possible” (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017).

Professor Lumumba shows how he cares about his integrity when he notes during the ‘Magufulification of Africa’ lecture in Tanzania that he failed to clinch a parliamentary seat due to his refusal to bribe the electorate (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017). This exemplification of sacrifice for the greater good is used as an illocutionary speech act to reinforce his message.

Another example of his impact on social change was illustrated in July 2023 when pro-LGBTQIA sympathisers in South Africa protested against his lecture that supported Uganda’s anti-homosexuality bill (Felix & Charles, 2023).

Professor Lumumba’s lectures have ranged from good governance practice, leadership, patriotism, corruption to responsible Pan-African citizenry where the lectures inspire positive societal change (Otieno, 2022). To better understand Professor Lumumba’s motivation, advocacy, and impact in Africa, this paper analyses one of his most viewed lectures titled; Magufulification of Africa.

Contextualisation of the Magufulification of Africa Lecture

The over three-hour lecture was held in June 2017 at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. By June 2023, the three series video had over 9,541,619 million views on YouTube (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017). This mammoth viewership places it among Lumumba's most popular lectures and justifies it as a master piece and reference for other speakers. Though delivered in English in Tanzania a Swahili speaking country, its discussions and approach on topical issues affecting the continent arguably transfer its geographic scope to the entire continent.

The university hall lecture although attended largely by a student population who are envisioned to be the future continental leaders, also attracted a significant number of university staff and served as a platform to address the African leadership class courtesy of the ubiquitous internet proliferation. The over two and a half thousand comments and feedback largely supporting Pan-African development and admonishing the dearth of patriotic leadership on the continent validate the contemporariness of the topical issues under discussion.

Professor Lumumba sets the foundation of his argument during the long lecture on two of Africa's most celebrated leaders, Tanzania's Mwalimu Julius Nyerere and Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah and outlines his approach as "the rise and fall of Africa on account of the African politician." He frames his discussion under the clarion call for "the hygiene in African politics," and declares that his lecture can only be understood on the foundation of the historical exploitation of Africa, the fight and liberation from colonial occupation to explain the shortage of progressive Pan-African leadership.

Throughout his lecture, he qualifies his "Let Africa be great!" worldview and conversational position by his authoritative grasp and articulation of Pan-Africanist issues. He places himself at the heart of the revolution that is sustaining the attempt to restore African glory. For example, he claims that "... in 1994, we created what was called a rainbow nation" placing himself and the rest of Africa as interested parties in a free and independent Africa. Furthermore, by choosing to be a critic, he assumes an impartial position where he can extract himself from the African leadership problem to give it a critical analysis and therefrom propose his 'redemptive' views.

Professor Lumumba descriptively unpacks the perceived superiority of Developed Nations and the subordination of Africa in his description of the journey travelled towards post-colonialist Africa. He justifies delving into this history as necessary for the appreciation of the colonial liberation struggle, consequent emancipation and present-day retrogression. He further explains that independence was partially realised through imperialist miscalculation when numerous Africans including President Nyerere were airlifted for further studies only for them to come back enlightened and desirous for self-governance.

Professor Lumumba uses the lecture podium to contrast the current leaders against the loyal, selflessness and visionary orientation that the inaugural pre-independence African leaders had. He cites former President Julius Nyerere as one of the visionary leaders who could "see the future with exactitude like a Jewish prophet" (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017).

By explaining that "the leaders of the day were eloquent as they were clear that the reason why we were asking to be independent is because we wanted to take charge of our affairs" (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017), Lumumba verbalizes the philosophy of Pan-Africanism and its quest for "equality" and an independent and free Africa in control of its destiny. He however contrasts the pre- with the post-colonial worldview on Pan-Africanism citing that the present leadership in Africa is marred by selfishness, greed and self-interest.

He also explains the underlying driver for the fight for independence as a cross-continental yearning for self-governance, control, development of African standards and desirous "to take charge of our affairs"

(Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017). Lumumba however proceeds to note that though most African countries attained independence as a result of common effort, he accuses the colonial power of strategizing to recolonize the continent in what he calls the “neocolonial project” that has seen coup d’états and assassinations of prominent Pan-African leaders during the post-independence phase (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017).

He articulates the emergence of the African “politician,” describing him or her as increasingly declining in leadership caliber and characterized by selfishness, egocentricity, power captivity and self-aggrandizement often considered as “demigods suffering from the messiah complex thinking that they were brought to Africa to liberate her” (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017).

Apart from annihilating populations, Professor Lumumba blames African leaders for corruption, oppression, malpractice, disinterest in the electorate’s needs and the yearning for unconstitutional powers. He also blames the leaders for aiding the deterioration of the Pan-African culture and fabric.

He attributes the substandard public services, unemployment, lack of employment opportunities and the emergent dependency on the West for survival on Africa’s leadership to which he refers to as “horribles” instead of “honourables.” After proclaiming that “hygiene had disappeared in African politics,” he proceeds to give emancipating praise for some 1980s leaders for their attempt to restore integrity and proper governance. In this cadre, he includes Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki, Meles Zenawi, Jonas Savimbi, Ian Khama, Yoweri Museveni and the “high priest” Julius Nyerere of who “at one time it was suggested that he be made a saint of the Catholic church,” due to his high morals, patriotism and humility “almost like the humility of the carpenter of Nazareth” (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017).

After the model nineteen eighties’ leaders, Professor Lumumba bemoans the Pan-African leadership’s downward trajectory characterized by tribalism and classicism. At this point, he introduces the late President John Pombe Magufuli, the fifth Tanzanian president whom he refers to as a “bulldozer” with a quest to reform and unify the continent. He contrasts the Tanzanian situation under Magufuli against Kenya’s situation which he characterizes as tribally inclined and on the brink of “being destroyed by negative ethnicity” before prescribing an urgent need “for political hygiene” for Kenya (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017).

Lumumba prescribes for Kenya a visit to Tanzania for a “benchmarking tour and the president of the Republic of Kenya and all our parliamentarians should sit at the statehouse and be lectured by John Pombe Magufuli on the finer points of governance” (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017). By saying this, he suggests the establishment of a peer support mechanism across leadership structures in Africa as a catalyst for the positive change he envisions.

He bemoans what he terms as “runaway corruption and greed” evidenced among African leaders alluding that their desire for political office camouflages their true objective of accessing “lucrative” privilege and “sudden wealth.” He accuses this cadre of leadership as incapable of accounting for their wealth having “stripped their countries naked.” He illustrates this by citing one African president who, albeit starting his first decade in leadership by institution of positive change, turned out to be a corrupt and retrogressive leader focused on self-propulsion at the expense of his country. To reinforce the irony of his argument, he cites Zimbabwe as “a country which does not have a currency but has a central bank” (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017).

He calls for African self-determination by decrying Africa’s overdependence on foreign aid for its sustenance. Furthermore, Professor Lumumba profiles the dire situation in Africa ranging from its inability to produce, feed, and provide healthcare for its people besides fixing its poor infrastructure. He however identifies President Magufuli as one of the emergent revolutionary leaders committed to changing the

continent's situation. "I felt tall that there is an African leader who can stand up to international pirates" (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017), he says referring to international interests that had for over two decades allegedly harvested Tanzania's gems without paying commensurate taxes to the country.

Throughout his lecture, Professor Lumumba indicts most of the continent's leaders by contrasting their uninspiring leadership efforts against the Tanzanian president's stellar management philosophy. "John Pombe Magufuli is a breath of fresh air." "The first thing we must do is to Magulify our politics." "Let us have Africa Magulified!" (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017). By using President Magufuli as the ideal Pan-Africanist, and Magufulification as the necessary agency for revolutionary change, Professor Lumumba skillfully assigns responsibility for failure or idealized change upon African leaders.

Interestingly, arising from Professor Lumumba's conjured word 'Magufulification' a global phenomenon emerged with its adoption into academia, journalism, and by numerous influential personalities including politicians adopting it as their preferred term for neocolonial socio-political revolution (Alai, 2015; Fabricius, 2015; 'Hansards 2021 March', 2021; Ikhioya, 2021; Nyathi, 2017; Wyk, 2021). This illustrates Professor Lumumba's significance within the Pan-Africanist dialogic arena.

Lauding the president directly, he encourages steadfastness by calling upon President Magufuli, "to disrupt the agenda" of foreign exploitation, referring to foreign interests as a cancer needing exposure to chemotherapy even if Africans have to suffer a little discomfort in the interim. He also cites presidents Ian Khama, Yoweri Museveni and Paul Kagame as African 'political hygienists.'

Against these 'political hygienists' efforts, he proposes that, "Africa can be great, and Africa must be great; but Africa will only be great if we Africans do that which is good and right" (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017). Professor Lumumba also challenges leaders to undertake civic education to empower their electorate to make sound electoral decisions. Furthermore, using the example of President Nyerere, he outlines the critical role mentorship plays in shaping upcoming leaders. He reminds the current leadership: "You are not successful until your successor succeeds" (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017).

In addition, Professor Lumumba calls upon leaders to practice integrity as he emphasises the importance of creating inclusive, robust, and self-sustaining institutions. For African leaders, he prescribes the de-ethnicisation of politics for inclusivity and common purpose by metaphorically summing up thus, "to produce melodious music, you play the white of the piano and the black of the piano and lo and behold there is symphony and harmony and there is joy" (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017).

Professor Lumumba uses the symbol of first-world musicians and premier league football clubs to discourage the youth from blind idolization of alternative culture. He challenges them to model themselves into prosperity by developing their own unique talents and identity. He counsels the youth to nurture self-esteem as they prepare themselves to take up the challenge of leadership on the exit of the current leaders. "And to the young Africans, where are the young suckers that will grow when the old banana dies? because the future of Africa is in your hands" (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017).

Discussion

The rhetorical theory of public speaking roots itself in providing a message delivery framework for public speakers. It guides on how to use oratory assets such as persuasion, style, figures of speech, language and both verbal and non-verbal cues credibly, logically, and with the proper emotion to convince audiences to change their worldviews to provoke desired action (Buck, 1900; Hansen, 1996). Aristotle, one of the primary

scholars of rhetoric offered three modes for public speaking; ethos, logos and pathos as constituent parts of a guiding framework for speakers to observe for successful persuasion of their audiences (Braet, 1992; Ting, 2018). Accordingly, while speaking, orators are expected to observe morally acceptable ethical norms (ethos), portray suitable and appropriate emotions to the topic under discussion (pathos) in a logical manner (logos).

Cicero, a Roman scholar introduced the “De Oratore,” standard to form a basis for understanding the role of rhetoric in public speaking (cited in Aestimator, 1969). According to Aestimator (1969), the De Oratore standard, which contributes to forming the Rhetorical theory presented style, delivery, and figurative speech symbols as key ingredients for audience capture and persuasion. Throughout the lecture, Professor Lumumba employs a unique style of mixing historical facts as the baseline of his arguments, delivers his message artfully mixing languages and illustrations, and uses figurative speech to ensure that his message is understood. To advance Aristotle’s and Cicero’s contribution to the field of rhetoric, a third significant contribution to the Rhetorical theory emerged proposing that for public speaking to be successful, all arguments had to be offered persuasively by making a presentation of contextualised and fact-rich information that would appeal to the audiences’ mutual values and shared beliefs (Frank, 2004).

Throughout the lecture, Professor Lumumba presents his arguments on the principle of shared African values, beliefs, symbols and through contextualisation and domestication, and thus emotionalises the problems confronting the continent. Purposefully, Professor Lumumba applies the principles of the Rhetorical theory in his lecture in an effort to endear his message to his audience and encourage positive Pan-Africanism.

Besides the early scholars, renowned Uzbekistan scholar Otkur Islamov’s describes the components of eloquent speech as colorfulness, rich expressions, attention to language protocols, clear thought, solicitous delivery besides mastery knowledge and use of language and elegant arguments capable of mass influence (Islamov, 2020). On the other hand, American scholar Ann Miller proposed that public speaking can be be guided within Geert Hofstede’s dimensions of either individualism or collectivism with African speakers leaning towards collectivism (Miller, 2009). A critical analysis of Professor Lumumba’s speech embodies most of Islamov’s (2020) critical ingredients of a powerful and effective speech and at the same time align to collectivism where Professor Lumumba addresses Africa’s problems and challenges collectively with all Africans being the collective stakeholders in the remedial proposals he offers.

By using the collective ‘we’ throughout his lecture, Professor Lumumba aligns himself with his audience and with common ‘powerless’ Africans suffering the ravages of poor governance. This goes against the privilege enjoyed by most public speakers who subscribe to Hofstede’s power distance dimension that is characterised by speakers speaking from an abstracted position of power over less powerful audiences (Miller, 2009). In the lecture, Professor Lumumba shares his “thoughts” on Africa and the surmountable challenges bedeviling it. He employs numerous linguistic and stylistic devices with the objective of provoking reflection and consequent social change on the continent. Professor Lumumba portrays confidence, consistency, enthusiasm, empathy, delivery precision, fluency and proper articulation, connection with the audience and efficiency through inflection, pitch, tone, tempo, voice, pace, emphasis and a wide vocabulary. These attributes comprise Dale Carnegie’s ingredients of an excellent public speaker (Carnegie & Esenwein, 2005).

Overall, beyond Tanzania, the subject of Professor Lumumba’s lectures largely focuses on Pan-African socio-economic and political capacity, governance and sovereignty issues, corruption and the call to responsible citizenry. Berating the colonization and exploitation of resources on the continent, first by the colonial government and later by the political elite, he seeks to initiate a neocolonial movement against poor governance, greed and selfishness.

Throughout his lecture, he bases his arguments on history, situating them in the present and humanizing them by reference to future generations. His oratory performance attracts full attendance and

ovation from his audience measured by the sustained online views and comments accrued over time. Scrutinizing his public speaking arguments, and use of English in a Swahili speaking nation, it is clear that Professor Lumumba's deliberate strategy is to use the platform in Tanzania to reach audiences across the African continent, change their perception and provoke redemptive action across Africa. Professor Lumumba tenaciously attempts to recruit his audience to become Pan-Africanist disciples collectively and at a leadership level. This is an illustration of how he attempts to empower future and existing leaders with an emancipatory mindset. He purposely endeavours to articulate Africa's potential throughout his lecture, often illustrating existing resources and opportunities that can only be harnessed through the stewardship of visionary leaders. He contrasts this against the existing apathy which he squarely blames on past and present leaders.

Extrapolations from the Online Audience Views

Through inference, the two and a half thousand direct comments and reactions from across and beyond the African continent Professor Lumumba's lecture are an indicator of the mammoth influence he has. The fact that his constructed term 'Magufulification' grows into a global phenomenon reflecting in politicians' speeches and with a book, a thesis and several academic journals published points at the socio-political impact that Professor Lumumba and his lecture has had in society. One viewer records the impact thus, "His speeches has impacted the lives of many of ... young people in Africa and the world. ... I think we can use your inspirational speeches to change this world ..." (Magufulification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017).

Moreover, viewer feedback within and without Africa resonate with the lecture message and repeatedly reinforce his views which he articulates and delivers using illustrations that make the message emotional and believable. By expressing their wishes and online invitations for Professor Lumumba to visit their countries to address their leaders, the viewers establish the need for sustained dialogue on Pan-African emancipation citing the professor as one of the forerunners of rhetorical change agency Africa.

Other online viewers of Professor Lumumba's lecture cast him as an inspiration for emulation and as a hope for a better future for Africa. Interestingly, while claiming Professor Lumumba for his mentorship and his decision to model after him, one viewer brings to attention how eloquence positions itself as an agency for change and its consequent effect through the lecture. The viewer writes, Professor Lumumba "always inspired me, he is a great speaker. I wish our Africans politicians will listen to his speeches. ... I really really love this man. ... Long live my professor, I shall one (day) be like you talking for Africans in general. You are my mentor." This is a testament that revolutionary Pan-African advocacy is already taking effect.

An online viewer with the second highest opinion likes (80) challenges the audience's intellectual capacity sarcastically, "a great piece but only people with brains will digest." Another doubts if Tanzanians "really understand this English?" while another enquires, "who else thinks that quarter of the audience did not understand?" Though these and other online viewers criticise Professor Lumumba for presenting his lecture in English, a language only 15% of Tanzanians comprehend (Ngonyani, 1995; *The List of Countries Where English Is Spoken in Africa*, 2023), a critical analysis of the lecture establishes that its content focused on continental issues and not specifically to the host country - Tanzania. Additionally, the 10 million viewers drawn from across Africa and beyond point to an interesting strategy where the professor took advantage of the available platform, proliferation of the internet and his subject of choice 'Magufuli' to address himself on the continent and its Pan-African problem.

Additionally, blaming his 'perceived' poor choice of platform, some viewers fault the professor for making the arguments to an audience composed mainly of students who neither enjoy significant nor influential positions to sway the leadership decision-making process. An online viewer recommends that the Professor ought to address the leaders directly. He notes that "it should be mandatory for the current African

leaders to attend these sessions... they must wake up and guide us to the freedom land” (Magufification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017). This is reinforced by at least two other viewers who question the absence of leaders, “where are our leaders and African elites? We all need to stand up now and support Professor Lumumba and people like him with like minds that Africa must be great again” and “where are the African leaders to listen to these words of wisdom so they can follow Prof PLO Lumumba’s ... words and rule their countries easy and fair with equal and to serve with dedication?” All this is further cast into an executive problem by a viewer who ponders, “wish our governments would support his ideas instead of frustration.”

Significantly, many online viewers consider poor governance as the main attribute for underdevelopment in Africa. They blame the current crop of “greedy,” “corrupt” and easily “manipulatable” leaders with “unchallenged power” who “selfishly” serve the interests of foreign nations at the detriment of Pan Africanism. Referring to them as “looters on an industrious game,” one viewer underscores the problem that leaders must overcome and who eloquent speakers must confront for change to happen in Africa.

Still, many online viewers also blame Africa’s underdevelopment and dearth of leadership on political interference by the developed nations who still want leverage over Africa to tap her resources. One viewer notes that, “the imperialists, forced to abandon direct political rule, have tried to take advantage of their former colonies’ economic dependence in order to maintain indirect political control and thus keep them within the capitalist orbit” (Magufification of Africa by Prof. PLO Lumumba, 2017).

Interestingly, some viewers opine that though eloquent, the professor does not offer tangible proposals for Pan-Africanist emancipation in his lecture. A disappointed viewer discourses that Professor Lumumba “spent three quarters of his speech reciting names and a lot of memories and a little touch here and there. Little to quench on way forward we were thirsty for anyway, I must add.”

Conclusion

This lecture skilfully captures the unsustainable supremacy dilemma that exists among African leaders caused by underlying Pan-African myopia, narcissism and greed. Professor Lumumba articulates the apathy of declining economies, labour expatriation and the divergence from the Pan-African dream once mutually shared by post-colonial leaders. This lecture reveals the unsystematic leadership styles employed by current African leaders, indicts them for the situation, and challenges them to become emancipatory change agents for the continent.

Basing on the Magufification lecture, Professor Lumumba proves his ability to mobilise continent-wide discourse. The viewers’ comments confirm that he is talented, eloquent, and a knowledgeable public speaker who through these attributes confirms that eloquent public speaking is impactful and has effect. Symbolically, his impact and influence on Pan-Africanism is exemplified by his expulsion from Zambia and pro-gay protests in South Africa against him.

His argumentative structure delivered in English and Swahili, ability to criticize his own country’s leadership while glorifying others, and extensive use of rhetoric endears him to his audiences and renders believability to his lecture. Though Professor Lumumba paints a dire picture of Africa, it remains clear that he firmly believes in its potential. This view is also shared by Jayne, Chamberlin and Benfica et al. (2018), who document the notable but vastly unequal and unsustainable continental growth.

In conclusion, this paper establishes that eloquence, charisma, and oratory skills are effective in changing people’s perceptions and worldviews. The paper contributes to new knowledge in addressing why African leaders ignore public opinion and positive criticism, and what needs to be done to change their apparent indifference. Accordingly, while this paper does not claim to be exhaustive, the researcher desires

that it should inspire further research to explain why African leaders ignore public speakers despite their talented communicative ability and societal influence.

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An Assessment of Older viewers' Perception of Female News Anchors' Attractive Body Language and its Influence on Attention to News: A case of Two Television Channels

John O. Oyaro

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine older viewers' perception of the female news anchors' attractive physical appearance especially the news anchors' facial expression, dress code and body movements; and how these nonverbal communication resources impact the attention to news viewership. The study applied the social perception theory to examine the perceptions of the older viewers on the body language of the TV news anchors using two top national television stations in Kenya namely, Citizen TV and KTN. The target population consisted of older viewers aged 50-70 taken from the peri-urban of Awendo Sub County that watch Citizen TV and KTN. Purposive sampling was used to select 18 participants for in-depth interviews and 6 participants for one focus group discussion. The findings show that there are varied perceptions of older television news viewers on the attractive body language of the Kenyan female news anchors. While attractive news anchor is perceived to be attracting and holding viewers to news content, majority of the participants said it can be noise if not regulated. Hence, a simple-smart news anchor was overwhelmingly accepted and perceived as attracting and holding viewers to watch news.

Key words: *older viewers, news anchors, body language, attractive appearance, attractiveness, perception*

Introduction

The role of news is to relay information to the audience (Kirsty J. Anderson, 2024). However currently, the body language of news anchors in many countries including Kenya seems to be a deliberate attraction strategy to lure viewers (Garcia-Aviles, 2020; K'Okul, 2016). Although young people concentrate more on the physical appearance of the news anchors rather than the news content (K'Okul, 2016), it still remains unclear how the attractive appearance of the female television news anchors affects the older viewers' attention to news. According to Johnson & Koech (2022), the body language manifested in facial/dress attractiveness (striking make-up, jewelry as well as short tight-fitting clothes, low necklines etc.) plays a critical role in current female television news broadcast. The authors further argue that dress portrays who you are. Therefore, news anchor must have a dress code that demonstrates dignity, professionalism and should also be culturally relevant to the viewers.

Many news channels advise their anchors to dress modestly (Copland, 2013, Isani, n.d). To this effect, there are professional guidelines that have been proposed to maintain the core aspects of news. For example, according to the code of conduct and practice of journalism in Kenya (Obonyo & Nyamboga, 2011; Masaviru, 2015; Fidalgo et al., Journalism Code of Conduct, 2001), journalists including television news anchors are given clear instructions on how to be professional in their line of duty. Unfortunately, these guidelines seem not to have been properly observed by television anchors especially with regard to their physical appearance (MCA, 2012, 2020; Media Code of Conduct: Industry Steering Committee, April, 2001). Studies by K'Okul

(2016), Finneman (2019), and García-Avilés, J., (2020) show that young people are lured to watch news by the female physical attractive body that has sex appeal.

The study by K'Okul (2016) revealed that young viewers perceive the body language of female TV news anchors as having sexual innuendo, and although the attractive body language of the news anchors lure them to watch certain TV broadcasts, they find themselves distracted from news content. Consequently, the manner in which the female television news anchors appear physically attractive on the screen raises the main question as to whether the older viewers who watch television news concentrate on the news content presented, or they are distracted by the looks of the news presenters. Due to their age and experience, this class of people are opinion leaders either in active service or retired. To this effect, their influence (perceptions on certain issues) affects the decision making in the society. Unfortunately, there seems to be no research regarding their attitude towards the conduct of the news anchors' attractive appearance on the television screen and how this affects the audience viewership and cultural life of the society. Hence, this study attempted to fill this gap as it offers the voice of the elderly people to the news room for decision making (K'Okul, 2016; Finneman, 2019; García-Avilés, J., 2020).

The purpose of this study is to examine older viewers' perception of the attractive body language of Kenyan female television news anchors, especially the news anchors' facial expression, dress code and body movements and how these nonverbal communication resources impact on attention to news. The study focuses on a single research question namely; "What are the perceptions of the older television viewers on the attractive body language of Kenyan female television news anchors?"

Literature review

Theoretical Framework

The study uses Social Perception theory to examine older viewers' perception of the attractive body language of Kenyan female television news anchors. The theory stipulates that people learn about one another's feelings and emotions from the information we may gather from verbal and nonverbal communication that includes physical appearance. Dress/attire, gait, facial expressions, tone of voice, hand gestures, body position and proxemics are just but a few examples of the ways humans communicate nonverbally (Akpoghiran et al.).

The theory was first coined by Fritz Heider in the 20th century and developed by scholars such as Kelly and Bernard Winner (Kelly & Michela, 1980; Smith & Mackie; 2000 as cited in Akpoghiran et al., 2017). When talking about (SPT), attribution is an important concept that one needs to understand. Attribution is understood as attaching or explaining a person's behavior to some source or personality in which he/she is acting. One important thing to consider is that, social perception is informed (shaped) by one's motivation at the time, their emotions, and their cognitive load capacity. All of these elements combined will determine how people are attributing certain traits and how those traits are ultimately interpreted by individuals observing the other person. Noticeably, when people make attributions, they are in a position to make judgments as to what could have been the source/cause of certain behaviour. Attribution seeks to analyze and understand how people attach meaning to other peoples' behaviour or our own. In light of this study, social perception theory holds that television viewers make judgment of what they see and perceive of newsreader's physical appearance (Akpoghiran et al.).

Social Perception Theory Conceptual Model

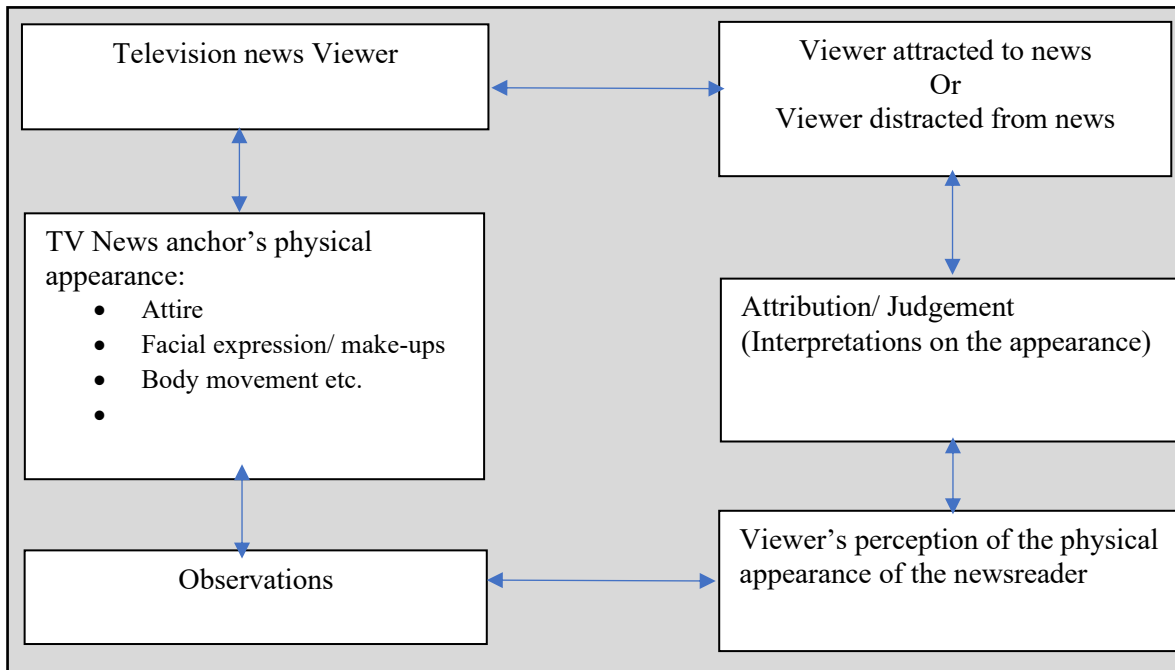


Fig1: The source is the author

Overview of Television news in Kenya

The oldest television station is the Kenya Broadcasting Cooperation (KBC) which originally started as a radio station in the British colonial era in 1927 (Wanyama, 2015). The station was key in giving informing white settlers about news from Europe. According to K’Okul (2016), by 1962, the station began to broadcast television as well. From the early 1960s to the early 1990s, people used to gather around the television sets in their neighbourhood to watch news at set times. This is because not every homestead had a television set. But, due to improved economic standards and increased incomes, many households in Kenya currently own television sets. According to Communications Authority of Kenya (CA, 2017) more than 4.3 million homes in Kenya had television sets. The number has gone to over 5.4 million.

Presently, there is intense competition in the Kenyan television industry following the policy to liberalize the media and the country’s migration to the digital technology (Ugangu, 2012). The KBC Television which was established in 1962, remained the sole television broadcaster until 1989 when Kenya Television Network was founded (Mwangi et a., 2021; K’Okul, 2016; Masaviru, 2015; Mbeke, 2008). Several other television stations (about 80 commercial television stations) have been established over the years. Some of the leading national stations include, NTV, Citizen TV, K24 and KTN. This means that adults and the youth viewers have a lot of television stations from which they can choose to tune for their preferred channel. For commercial reasons there has been stiff competition among the television stations (Ferraro et al., 2012).

Television content preferences among the Youth and Older Viewers

Preference in media content among the audiences is also a critical point television stations consider. The study for a given content preferred by a particular audience segment enables the television programs to come up with a strategy to attract this target audience group for content consumption (MCK, 2020). According to Marie-Louise Mares and Ye Sun (2010) audiences are prone to watch or listen to anchors of their age who they can identify with in terms of being socially relevant to trending issues. This research adds that “viewers of all ages may seek out in media content characters who are similar to them in age both for

emotional and information” (p.372). If age is anything to go by to attract viewership of some demographic, then, Jeff Koinange of Citizen TV who is fairly an old news anchor could be serving the purpose of drawing older viewers to his show. However, this thought can only be verified through research. Although Jeff Koinange of Citizen TV may be perceived as old (born 1966) and out-dated anchor on the screen, he seems to be much younger than the likes of Wolf Blitzer (CNN) born 1948 or Clive Augustus Myrie (BBC) born 1964 (See CNN or BBC news anchors biographies). Not only are most of the male television news anchors in the West fairly old, even female news anchors are also old. However, female news anchors in the West are judged by their physical appearance and age (Barnes, 2005).

While different television stations have come up with body language that has sex appeal as a strategy to attract the youth to their channels for commercial purposes because they form the majority of Kenyan viewership, the older people who may not be attracted by the suggestive body language of the anchors could mostly be negatively affected (K’Okul, 2016; Garcia-Aviles, 2020; Lewis et al., 2020). Therefore, this study seeks to examine older viewers’ perceptions on the attractive physical appearance of the television news anchors and how it influences their viewership using social perception theory to inform the analysis of the topic. The study gives brief information about KTN and CTV whose bulletins are under study. I start with KTN and then CTV.

Kenya Television Network

KTN belongs to the umbrella of Standard Media Group (SMG) which started as a newspaper (East African Standard) in 1901 (Otieno, et al., 2020). Kenya Television Network (KTN Home & KTN News), the first private television station in Kenya, was issued licence and frequency to operate within Nairobi by the Communication Authority of Kenya (CA) (former Communications Commission of Kenya -CCK) in 1990. It is the second most preferred channel for news after Citizen in terms of viewership (Maende & Nyambane, 2013; Mwangi, 2015; Otieno, et al, 2020, Mwangi, et al., 2021). Its average viewership is 10% (CA report 2020, Mwangi, et al., 2021).

Citizen TV

The other television channel whose bulletin is studied is Citizen TV. Citizen TV is owned by royal media an umbrella that owns fourteen radio stations that cover diverse communities; two broadcasting in national language while the rest are vernacular. It was started in 1999 and re-launched in June 2006. Since 2006 Citizen TV’s viewership has grown to be the country’s most popular television station in terms of audience preference commanding an unassailable 52% of television audience (Steadman Synnovate Report 2013, Otieno, et al., 2020). Citizen’s average viewership is 38.6% (CA report 2020, Mwangi, et al., 2021). According to Maende and Nyambane (2016), its growth is due to their emphasis on local talent and actors in its programming. As aforementioned, Citizen TV for many years has been ranked first based on geographical coverage and viewership. This is confirmed by some of the recent reports of performance ratings in percentage for example 2021(27%), 2022(36%) and 2023(38%) for being the top viewed television station in Kenya. Citizen TV is identified with the nightly news show Citizen *Nipashe* and the weekend version *Nipashe Wikendi*.

Clearly, there is intense competition in the industry to have the highest viewership and one of the strategies used by television stations to achieve this is through the use of the expressive (attractive) anchors’ body language that compels audience viewership (K’Okul, 2016). According to Akpoghiran et al. (2017) physical appearance is an important attribute of physical attractiveness in mainstream media notably television. Furthermore, television is still a medium that provides news for the majority of its audience as its sound and image features are appealing and persuasive to the viewers. The next section of the study reviews the literature on physical appearance and television.

Physical appearance and television

This part of the literature review looks at the nonverbal communication as in TV news anchor's appearance in dress and how it affects audience viewership of news-especially in light of how the audience perceives attractive news anchor. According to Kendra (2021) body language refers to nonverbal signs that humans use to communicate and make up a big part of our daily communication. The scholar adds that from face to body movements, the things we may not have said verbally can still convey volumes of information. The transfer and exchange of messages in any and all modalities that do not involve words like physical appearance in dress, hair, height, weight, eye, facial expression etc. (Foley et al., 2015; Matsumoto et al. 2013)

Television news anchor's attractiveness on dress and audience viewership

Kelly (2018) defines dress as any outward modification and/or any supplements on or around the body. Nitz et al. (2007) categorize dress/attire in three groups namely, "demure (nonsexual); suggestive (tight-fitting and revealing); partial and full nudity" (p.7). Hence, the kind of information relayed by dress and other body language of a person influences how individuals are perceived by the viewers and how one judges and perceives the self.

Finneman and Jenkins (2020) carried out a study in USA on 'Online Harassment and Its Implications for the Journalist–Audience Relationship'-especially on how the journalists meet harassments owing to their appearance in dress.' In this study the scholars make a follow up on Engstrom and Ferri's (2000) work by surveying local broadcast journalists in the US using a study sample of 7, 272 journalists randomly selected via email to participate in the research to explore their perceptions of viewers' emphasis on broadcasters' appearance and what role they believe social media play in these interactions. The study established that among the women journalists, the younger women experienced more incidences of harassment than the others. The leading forms of harassment included embarrassing comments about their appearances as well as offensive name calling. In regard to dressing the scholars found that the audience in many instances perceive news anchors differently as concerns how they appear on dress.

However, in their appearance on dress, journalists are professionally required to be well dressed and presentable (Copeland, 2013). In their research involving a sample of 69 journalists in the United States, Finneman and Jenkins (2020) further reported that the type of clothing a broadcaster puts on may be appealing, or one that distracts the attention of the viewer from the information being relayed. These previous studies confirmed the fact that the attractiveness of broadcasters has been largely influenced by audience research consultants who have put emphasis on the ratings individual anchors attain due to their appearance (Meltzer, 2010; Finneman et al., 2020). Significantly, 89% agreed that social media have increased viewer criticism about their appearance, and 98% believed women broadcasters receive more appearance criticism than men.

When broken down by gender, the research found that 87.5% of female respondents received criticism about their appearance compared to 57% of men. However, nearly all of those men said criticism came rarely, with a few saying they were critiqued monthly. The study further found that respondents were more closely aligned in other areas, with 91% of men and 87.5% of women agreeing that social media have increased viewer criticism. The study also found that all of the men and 97% of the women agreed women receive more appearance criticism than men. Lastly, the study revealed that comments from journalists of both genders indicated that they are primarily criticized regarding their clothing, weight, and hair, with some women indicating that viewer comments cross into sexual harassment. This criticism is quite interesting because it motivates my thinking to expect a similar case in Kenyan context as regards social media comments from the older viewers who watch TV news.

According to Mitra et al. (2014), older viewers comment on social media concerning the body language of female TV news anchors. This research found that for the oldest age category 61 and above, close to half the respondents (47%) thought that female news readers should be attractive. It was also found that more older males expressed a desire to see attractive female news readers whereas female respondents expressed a desire to see attractive male news readers. Furthermore, a woman in the 51+ age group suggested that in relation to male newsreaders, as long as they are neat and not distractive, it is better than being attractive. In addition, asked whether female newsreader should be attractive, a woman in the 51+ age group (according to the study in reference) answered, “attractive news anchor is easy on the face” (p.7). The study further reports that 76% of interviewees had the opinion that some newsreaders had been selected on account of how they looked.

Facial attractiveness and audience news viewership

Body language counts from 50-70% of all communication (Littlejohn, 2009; Patel, 2014; Foley, 2015; Cherry, 2019) of which the face is one of the most, if not the top most key areas central to human nonverbal communication. Patel, (2014) defines the face as the index of the mind, contending thus, the content of the mind (anger, sadness, fear, happiness, surprise, disgust, contempt etc.) is displayed by the facial expression. The experts of body language can read the face and distinguish a lying face from a sincere one (Wainflein, 2013). Although the aforementioned expressions were found in Ekman’s (1927) research, the study by Cherry, (2020) on facial expression confirmed Ekman’s finding and took the idea further-that we can share up to 16 facial expressions namely, amusement, anger, awe, concentration, confusion, contempt, desire, disappointment, doubt, elation, interest, pain, sadness, surprise, triumph, agitation etc. Facial attractiveness is an element of facial expression. According to Bakkenbull (2017) facial attractiveness is the leading of all body language in line with human interpersonal communication.

Furthermore, Wainflein, (2013) contends that through facial expression individuals can communicate up to 250, 000 different nonverbal messages. However, most of these features of the facial expression for example, eye movement and its varied messages can sometime be culturally interpreted. The study by Matri et al. (2014) and Finneman et al. (2019) found that what the audience says of age and youth is associated with that of beauty (physical appearance) and anchors are chosen based on their looks. While some audience respondents contend that newsreaders should be nice to look at - perhaps going by Dietl et al. (2020) theory that maintains that ‘what is beautiful is good’, other research audience participants identify with simple-smart news anchors with outstanding ability to present news. For instance, in the interview by Matri et al. (2014, p.50) a respondent commented: “They are chosen for their look[s] and beauty and [this is] one of the reasons why you only see young female presenters.

Bakkenbull and Kiefer (2017) explored the relationship between athletics performance and physical attractiveness for female tennis players using a sample size of 100 tennis players selected from professional Women Tennis Association (WTA) in America. Both personal and career information of the people used for the study was collected from the official WTA website (www.watennis.com). The research was carried for 35 weeks-equivalent to 8 months-5 days. This study found that there is a relationship between a physically attractive player and success and added that people with attractive faces are physically healthier than unattractive ones; that facial attractiveness is the leading of all body language which is why the professionals who have facial attractiveness draw high public attention-namely, they attract their social environment. And that the attractive people are supported by family members, managers and sponsors which in turn attract high revenues, hence, competition among the professionals. The finding of this study was consistent with an earlier study by Rosar et al. (2010) which found that the facial attractiveness of the athlete counted for his or success. Another key finding of this study was that women players with attractive face received advertisement and

sponsoring contracts (Mutz & Meier 2016; Bakkebull et al., 2017). Another study related to facial attractiveness and audience television viewership is the research by Akpoghiran, Umokoro and Okoro (2017). Akpoghiran et al. did a study in Nigeria with a focus on the viewers' perception of female newsreaders' appearance on television and its influence on attention to news. They watched and observed female newsreaders physical appearance on television for four (4) weeks and record their observations. Three leading cable television stations-known for coverage and programming namely Nigerian Television Authority (NTA); Channels Television and the Africa Independent Television (AIT) were selected for the study. The study found that young female newsreaders' facial attraction was more appealing and distracting from news and that female newsreaders' choice of colors, hair-style, lipstick, makeups, and facial expression (attractiveness) can be a source of audience' distraction or attraction to the news.

It is worth noting that six out of the eight male research assistants admitted that young female news anchors were sexually appealing to them to the extent that they could take some time admiring them without paying attention to news. In light of this, the study found that 25% of the male television viewers spend their first few minutes admiring the beauty of the female newsreaders. On the other hand, a bigger majority, 83.4% of the female news viewers/respondents were found being distracted by the newsreaders as they took time admiring their fashion in dress and facial expression-lipstick, eye contact in the camera, eye-lash, eye-brow, eye-shadow and general applications in the face.

Older viewers

Older viewers in this study are the audience both male and female between 50-70 years who watch television. The term older person may be defined from several perspectives. Lacking an acceptable definition, the scholars, for example, Kowal (2001) argues that in many instances the age at which a person is illegible for statutory and occupational retirement pensions becomes the definition by default. The definition varies from developing to developed world countries across the globe. The ages 60 and 65 are often used since the year 1800's through the mid1900's for the definition of older people. However, for about a century this definition has been debated and accused of its arbitrary nature just as many definitions on this subject matter. The scholar contends that there has not been yet a general agreement on the age at which a person becomes old. While most developed world countries seem to have accepted chronological age of 65 years as a definition of 'older' person, for example, in Britain where for pension scheme purposes age 60 or 65 years are used, the case in African developing countries is somewhat challenging because the definition is still being developed.

However, according to Kowal (2001) the more traditional African definitions of 'older' person correlate with the developed world countries chronological ages of 50-65 years depending on the setting, region or country. Furthermore, United Nations (UN) either has also not adopted a standard criterion of old age, but uses 60+ years to refer to older population (UN, 2001, 2015). While the UN definition of the older population in 2001 was 60+ years, 2015 report on new age classification standards holds that young age is 25-44 years; middle age is 44-60 and elderly age is 60-75 years (see Dyussenbayev, 2017)). The older population according to this definition would be 60+years which is 60-75 given the new classification of age brackets by the UN. Adding to the difficulties for the definition of older person, Gorman (2000) while contrasting the chronological age which marks the life stages in the developed world, contends that in most developing countries, individual is referred to be 'older' at the point when his/her physical active contribution begins to fluctuate with indicators such as health status. This study adopts the age 60-70 years to be the age for the older television viewers in Awendo. The next part focuses on the research methodology.

The study uses a qualitative approach based on social constructivist paradigm, specifically in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGD). The target population consists of older viewers aged 50-70 taken from the peri-urban of Awendo town in Awendo Sub County of Migori County. The study, which was conducted between May and June 2024, used a purposive sample of 18 participants for the in-depth interviews and 6 participants for the FGD. The interview guide for the in-depth interviews comprised of 10 open ended questions while the one for the FGD comprised of 8 open-ended questions. Besides notetaking, tape recording was used to capture the exact words of the participants. Ethical approvals were obtained from Daystar University and National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI). As part of ethical consideration, the participants were given research introduction and informed consent forms to sign. In addition, it was made clear that each participant was free to choose to participate in the study or decline at will. After data collection the data was coded and analysed.

Coding

Data analysis started with coding which is the initial step for qualitative data (Babbie, 2010). Coding was done by classifying all the participants as were labeled with identifying names (Source IDs) from the start of data generation. These were concepts generated from the literature review and from the field. The next step was axial coding.

Axial coding

Axial coding refers to exploring the relationship between the concepts or themes Mohajan and Mohajan (2022). In this data was reassembled into conceptual categories. This led to the third step - selective coding.

Selective coding

During this step categories were unified in a central 'core' category including those that were coded in step two-axial coding. The aim of selective coding was to integrate the various categories that were developed, elaborated, and mutually related during axial coding into one cohesive theory (Vollstedt & Rezat, 2019; Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2020; Mohajan, & Mohajan, 2022). The last step for data analysis was transcription.

Data conversion/Transcription

Apart from 'coding' the names of the participants into Source IDs as indicated above, the next step was the transcription. Transcription is the process of organizing, arranging and writing data into logical themes as they originate from the verbatim or recorded interviews, focus group discussions etc. (Bazeley, 2013; Guest et al., 2013).

Findings

Introduction

The findings are presented based on the research questions which the participants responded to during the interviews and FGDs and the themes that emerged for data analysis.

Interviews

Demographic data

The participants who took part in this study aged 50-75 with female participants being four while males were nine. The study found that the participants had access to more than one medium. It was established that a bigger majority of the participants accessed mobile phone, TV and radio respectively. However, newspapers, internet and Facebook were the least accessed media.

Access to TV for News

When it came to those who had access to TV for news, the study established that all the participants said they had TV for news. As for the preferred channel for news, majority of the participants preferred both Citizen

and KTN channels. While Citizen was preferred for news and adverts, one participant said “I prefer KTN for elaborate/detailed news and Citizen TV for news and ads”. Those who said they preferred Citizen were slightly more than KTN.

About the frequency of accessing media for news: How often do you access media for news?

The study found that a bigger majority watched KTN very often or often for news and another bigger majority watched Citizen TV very often for news. One of the participants said, “a part from Citizen TV and KTN, I watch Ramogi TV because news is read in vernacular and I can follow it well”.

When you open your television, what kind of news are you looking for?

This study established that older viewer sought different types of news items from television. The participants mentioned following kind of news sought from television: Politics, especially about the state of the nation; Current affairs; Agriculture; Business; Sports; and Health information. The study found that the participants were more gratified by politics and current affairs more than any other news. However, a few of them liked sports news like football and athletics. One of the interviewees said, for sports, “I am a fan of Gor Mahia FC”.

Viewers’ perception on the TV news anchors body language: dress code; body movements and facial expression- lipstick, eye contact in the camera, eye-lash, eye-brow, eye-shadow and general applications in the face.

About whether attractive physical appearance distracts viewer’s attention from news. When asked if a news anchor with attractive (dress code) appearance distracted their attention from news, a number of the participants agreed that they were distracted from news by attractive physical appearance of the female news anchors. But a few participants said they were not distracted.

About simple-smart female news anchor. As for simple-smart news anchor, all the thirteen participants said that they were encouraged to watch news presented by a simple smart female news anchor.

Attractive news anchor looks professional and makes me attentive to news. The study revealed that a bigger majority of the participants representing strongly agreed that attractive news anchor looks professional and makes them attentive to news. However, a few other participants disagreed. One participant during the interview said, “I am interested in news...not the reader’s appearance, if the reader is ugly but she presents well, I am still satisfied.”

Do you perceive female news anchor with attractive facial expression as unprofessional media worker and this distracts you from the news presented? The study discovered that a bigger majority disagreed. Another significant number of the participants said that news anchor with facial expression is perceived as unprofessional media worker and distracts them from news.

About news anchor with attractive body movements holding audience attention to news. When it came to news anchor with attractive body movements, the study found that a bigger majority said that news anchor with attractive body movements holds the audiences’ attention to news. One participant said, ‘Such a news anchor does not make you bored because she demonstrates a mastery of the news item.’ However, other participants argued that uncontrolled attractive movements distract attention of the viewers because the viewers will only concentrate on the movements of the news anchor but not news content.

About whether female news anchors are chosen according to how they look. The study established that eleven out of thirteen interviewees representing 84.6% said that anchors are chosen based on how they look except two participants who said “they are chosen for their ability and qualification-not how they look.” One

participant said “Beauty does not read news; I am concerned with the (news) content... it is the ability and delivery which is important.”

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): Perceptions of the Viewers on the body Language of Kenyan Female Television News Anchors-selected Participants.

There were six participants for the FGD-four males and two females who took part in this study. For the purposes of hiding the participants' identities, the names given are not their real names. The participants were: Irine, Oso, Ondiek, Kunga', Anne and Meshack.

About the preferred national TV tuned and why

This study established that all the six participants tuned to KTN for elaborate news bulletin and three out of six participants tuned to Citizen news.

On whether news anchors are chosen because of how they look-physical appearance

This study found that all the participants agreed that news anchors are chosen because of how they look. Participant by the name Ondiek (not real name) said that outward appearance is a factor that attracts audience. Kunga' also added that "Good looking people, especially ladies attract (catch) audience's attention."

About whether news anchors should be beautiful or handsome

The study revealed that all except one participant said 'No.' According to Oso, modest, presentable anchor improves viewers' attention to news. Kunga' added that 'beauty or handsomeness is key because communication begins with sight.' However, Meshack said that beauty/handsomeness is not a crucial factor, but presentability and articulation in communication is a key factor to be considered. Anne maintained that "We get glued to news because of beauty", hence, news anchors should be beautiful or handsome.

About gender and age in news anchoring

The study found that the participants agreed with any gender so long as news is presented well. When it came to the age of the news anchor, participants gave varied responses on this question. According to Oso, "it is the content and how it is presented, not age." Ondiek maintained that viewers follow news based on their age group. Anne on the other hand preferred mature (older) news anchor due to their emotional expressions. Meshack on the other hand said that "age does not matter; right training gives best output."

About whether there should be a prescribed dress code for news anchors

All the participants said dress code matters a lot for the news anchors. According to Irine, "dress code is a key factor because it complements communication and makes the news anchor look presentable." Kunga and Meshack said that there should be a dress code for news anchors and they should be as natural as possible. According to Meshack on the dress code, "many colors distract the attention of the viewers from news-there should be at most only three colors on dress."

About simple-smart news anchor

The participants gave varied responses regarding simple-smart anchor. According to Oso, 'Priority is news; however, a simple smart news anchor does not distract me from news.' Irine said, simple-smart does not distract the attention of the audience and added that where there is no exaggeration it allows viewers to concentrate on news. Kunga' on the other hand maintained that news anchor should not be too simple given the current trend... but should not be distracting. Anne in her own opinion said that modesty of a news anchor is what makes news. Meshack added that make-up should be used moderately.

About whether physical attractiveness makes a news anchor less professional

Meshack contended that appearance of the news anchor proves him or her professional, while Irine and Ondiek maintained that appearance matters because appearance and professionalism go together. However, according to Anne, physical appearance does not matter especially as regards the disabled audience.

About comfortability watching news with in-laws when it is anchored by an anchor whose appearance demonstrates sexual appeal

All the participants said that it is uncomfortable, disgusting and embarrassing. However, Kunga' said it depends on the age of the in-laws.

Discussion

The objective of the study was to examine the perceptions of the older television viewers on the attractive body language of Kenyan female television news anchors. The study used social perception theory which stipulates that people learn about one another's feelings and emotions from the information we may gather from verbal and nonverbal communication that includes physical appearance. Based on their perceptions on the news anchor's looks, the participants would be distracted, or attracted to news. In keeping with this theory, television news viewers observed the physical appearance of the female news anchors in dress/attire, facial expressions, general body movements and then made judgment on what they perceived the news anchors to be. Hence, then findings align with the tenets of the social perception theory.

When it came to access to media, the study revealed that an overwhelming majority of the participants had access to TV; another bigger number majority had access to mobile phone and radio respectively. The study also discovered that another substantial majority accessed newspapers and the Internet while the least accessed medium was the Facebook. The implication here is that the participants had access to various media to get news with an overwhelming majority watching TV for news, listening to radio and accessing mobile phone to get news.

About preferred TV channel for news, the finding of the study revealed that the TV channel that is accessed most for news is Citizen TV followed by KTN. The finding of this study concurs with the former study by (MCK 2014, 2022) which found that the most viewed channels for news are Citizen and KTN. Likewise, when it came to the frequency of accessing television channels for news, Citizen TV was the most accessed television followed by KTN. The study confirms the finding of the research by (CA, 2020; 2021; 2022; Mwangi et al., 2021; Otieno et al., 2020; MCK, 2022) which revealed that Citizen and KTN are the most frequently viewed channels for news. It is noteworthy that both data from the interviews and the FGD ranked the channels as the findings from the earlier studies. However, KTN is preferred in this study for elaborate news while Citizen TV is preferred for ads and for news. The study also found that participants sought for politics and current affairs as the main reason for tuning to their television. Kunga, one of the participants said, "It is the politics and current affairs from the TV that helps me know the state of the nation."

About simple smart and viewers' attention to news, this study found in both data from the one-on-one interviews and FGD that all the participants said that a news anchor who is simple-smart encouraged them to watch news. Oso and Ann (not their real names) said that priority is news. A simple-smart news anchor does not distract viewers from news. This finding concurs with Copeland (2013) who advocates for a simple-smart female news anchor. About whether attractive physical appearance distracts attention from news the study found that a bigger majority of the participants strongly agreed that a female news anchor with attractive physical appearance distracts viewers from news.

Coming to female news anchor with facial expression and whether this makes her unprofessional and distracts viewers from news, this study found that participants strongly agreed that a female news anchor with facial expression (putting a lot of makeup) is perceived as unprofessional media worker and distracts viewers from news. However, some of the participants strongly disagreed. The finding of this study can be interpreted that while there are viewers who are distracted by the attractive facial expression of the female news anchor, a bigger majority are comfortable with the attractive facial expression of the female news anchor. This study

contradicts the research by Akpoghiran et al (2017) which found that 84.3% of the female news viewers were distracted by the facial expression and the dress of the female news anchors. About whether female news

anchor with attractive body movements holds audience attention to news, the study found that majority of the participants agreed that a news anchor with attractive body movements holds audience attention to news while other participants strongly disagreed.

About whether news anchors are chosen according to how they look, a bigger majority of the participants maintained that news anchors are chosen based on how they look. On contrary, this study found that all the six FGD participants agreed that news anchors are chosen because of how they look. Furthermore, about the age and gender of the news anchor, this study found that when it came to gender, the viewers (all aged 51+) were comfortable with any gender so long as the content was presented well. However, as for age, there were varied responses.

About whether there should be a prescribed dress code for news anchors: this study found that all the six members of the FGD participants said that dress code matters a lot for the news anchors. This study confirms an earlier study by Finneman and Jenkins (2020). The implication of this finding is that the dress code of a news anchor has potential to attract the viewers to watch news, or distract them from news. In light of this, Coland (2013) says that dress code of a news anchor communicates one's inner motives thus making viewers to make judgments on them based on how they dress and consequently this dictates which channel they choose to watch.

About comfortability watching news with the children and in-laws when it is anchored by an anchor whose appearance demonstrates sexual appeal, this study found that older viewers watch news with their children and in-laws. All the participants both interviewed and FGD participants said that it is uncomfortable, disgusting and embarrassing watching news presented by a female news anchor whose body language is indecent.

Conclusion and recommendation for further research

The study found that there are varied perceptions of older television news viewers on the attractive body language of the Kenyan female news anchors. While attractive news anchor is perceived to be attracting and holding viewers to news content, majority of the participants said it can be noise if not regulated. Hence, a simple-smart news anchor was overwhelmingly accepted and perceived as attracting and holding viewers to watch news. Facial attractiveness, general body movements and dress code were found as significant index of the inner being, hence the character of the news anchor is judged by their body movements, facial expressions and dress code. About age and gender of the news anchor, most of the participants agreed that it is the ability of the presenter that is important. However, it was revealed that all the participants strongly agreed that female news anchors are selected based on their looks but not so much on the ability. Lastly, though the society dictates how they want the news anchors to physically appear, it was found that news anchors whose attractive appearance demonstrate sexual innuendo embarrasses the older viewers when they watch news with their children and in-laws.

There is high likelihood that majority of older viewers in Kenya avoid watching news with their children for fear of embarrassment when news is presented by news anchors whose appearance demonstrates sex appeal. Since this study was done in a single Subcounty, it might not have been representative enough of the whole country. Hence it is recommend that another study with a larger scope be done to investigate the perception of the older viewers on the appearance of the female news anchors and how this affects the moral values of the moral values of the future generations.

Lastly, television stations should consider having simple-smart news anchors to attract the older viewers because majority of them prefer simple smart who have the ability and knowledge of the art.

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Position Papers

Re-imagining “Home” and Community: Role of Local Language FM Radio in Kenya

Wilson Ugangu

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine the role of local language FM radio in the lives of local communities in Kenya. Specifically, the paper looks at the emerging forms of media culture associated with local language FM radio and how these have intersected with the daily struggles and other elements of social and cultural life, ultimately influencing how people view themselves, their communities, and how they construct their identities and define “home” in a broader, ever-changing national and global cultural context. To achieve this, the paper examines the case of Vuuka FM- a Kenyan local language radio station that broadcasts in the Maragoli dialect of the Luhya tribe. In terms of methodology, this study is exploratory and takes a qualitative approach. Data was collected using in-depth interviews with various respondents, including key staff of Vuuka FM, and select members of its audience base resident in Vihiga County of Western Kenya. The study’s findings assist us in revisiting the question of media culture, particularly in the context of local language radio. They reveal the same old forces of corporatist media consumer culture still at play. However, at the same time, we see new forms of media culture emerge, as local communities discover and potentially appropriate these spaces for cultural and self-expression in a changing world.

Introduction

Background of Vuuka FM

The word Vuuka translates to, a summoning by someone, or, by an authority directing an individual or whole group of people or community to, wake up! Vuuka therefore means arise! By implication, this is an allusion to the role and place of this radio station, which is to awaken the community by providing it with a voice, and enlighten, educate, and inform its members. Vuuka FM was established in 2011, and its programming is diverse – mixing elements of entertainment and music, information, and news in the Maragoli language. Vuuka FM is one of the fourteen (14) local language radio stations, under the Royal Media Services- owned by businessman Mr. S.K. Macharia. The station covers most of Vihiga county, in Western Kenya, and is also accessible in some areas of Kenya’s capital city, Nairobi.

New developments in technology have however made it possible for audiences to have access to Vuuka FM from any part of the world. Komodromos (2020) notes the impact that the proliferation of mobile phones in most of rural Africa has had on access to and fostered the interactive power of radio as a tool for mass communication. Social media networking sites have and continue to play a critical role in facilitating access to and use of radio. In this regard, *Vuuka FM* is available online via a live stream, and its audiences can interact with each other and the programme hosts through social media such as Facebook and Twitter among others. Consequently, Vuuka FM’s audience base has grown beyond the extent of Vihiga county, which is the home of the Maragoli sub-tribe- whose language it uses, to other parts of the world.

According to Participant 10, popular programs on Vuuka FM include *Vuuka vuchee*- which is a live show whose focus is current affairs. Most of the social economic and political issues affecting Vihiga county and nationally are introduced to listeners and generally, a studio host moderates the ensuing conversation, often interlaced with advertisements and popular Maragoli and or generally luhya music tunes.

According to participant 12 who served as the station manager of Vuuka FM, all programs on the station are quite popular with its audience base. However, live shows are the most popular as they mostly draw on the participation of listeners from the various stretches of Maragoli land. Other than *Vuuka Vuchee*, the other popular live shows include a mid-morning/early afternoon show called *Galaha Kumiinzi* – which translates to relax/enjoy as you work. *Zanzarika*- or in English, enjoy or have fun, is a popular program that mainly targets the youths and mostly addresses issues and concerns of this demographic.

According to information sourced from Vuuka FM's website, and corroborated by several of the participants interviewed for this study, most of the station's other programs are recorded shows, such as *Vuuka Kwigena*- which means Vuuka on the rocks. Vihiga County is known for its huge rocky boulders- which cover most of the central and South Maragoli areas. These rocky boulders have traditionally provided meeting places or some kind of open public square where men meet and informally chat, deliberate on the most current issues touching on the community of the country at large. *Vuuka Kwigena* is therefore an appropriation of this traditional public square- to borrow from Habermas's conceptualization of the public sphere. While traditionally, only members of the neighborhood would meet to chat and while away time sitting on the nearby rocky boulders, Vuuka FM has, in a sense, provided a useful link to a wider and larger audience, bringing together the entire Maragoli ethnic group in Vihiga, and its diaspora into this extended public space – *Vuuka Kwigena*.

In Habermas's conception of the public sphere, the sense of this space mediating between society and the state is a key consideration (see also Calhoun, 1992) It is within this space that public opinion forms, to bear on the state concerning various issues of importance to the particular society. Relating this basic understanding to *Vuuka Kwigena*, Participant number 12 observes that this programme has played an active role in mobilizing public opinion among the Maragoli community, particularly, with respect to issues of development within Vihiga County, and by extension, creating a certain sense of collective consciousness regarding identity, and the sense of home

As a result of the public opinion pressure that has been generated through this program, participant 10 observes, roads have been built, schools renovated and health centers developed and staffed by the county government. Again, and as is the case with Habermas's original thinking on the concept of the public, a contestation might arise as to the extent to which, *Vuuka Kwigena*, might be seen as an ideal public space, in terms of its composition. A specific question may relate to who listens to this program on Vuuka FM, and how the program is structured to draw on the views of a cross-section of its audience base. Generally, this is a program that targets a fairly mature and mixed audience group, and although it is recorded, views from different corners of the county are sought during the recording.

Other than *Vuuka Kwigena*, the other recorded programs featured on Vuuka FM include, *Agumukaunti* – which translates to, issues about the County. Here, issues related to Vihiga County are discussed. *Uvulamu Vuvwo* – which translates to; Your Health, is a magazine programme that covers health issues. *Uvulimi*- which broadly translates to, Agriculture/farming, covers the livelihood issues related to farming, and related issues such as access to markets and essential agricultural services by rural farmers in Vihiga County.

Methodology

This research is based on in-depth interviews conducted among various individuals selected using purposive sampling to gain a deep and nuanced understanding of the role and place of a local language radio - in this case, Vuuka FM, which broadcasts in the Maragoli language, a dialect of the Luyha tribe in western Kenya. The in-depth interviews involved twenty respondents, who comprised journalists, listeners, and fans of the radio station and a station manager of Vuuka FM.

The interviews were conducted face-to-face, recorded, and later transcribed for analysis. The interviews were held in various locations around Vihiga County- the area covered by Vuuka FM and the geographical region of Western Kenya settled by the Maragoli community. Due to various difficulties in locating respondents for this study, and the general expanse of the area to be covered, the interviews were spread over three months, from March to the end of May 2019. This study is, however, also broadly theoretical and exploratory, much in the same way, Moyo (2010) has examined the question of language, culture, and communication rights of ethnic minorities in South Africa.

Radio is generally regarded as the most popular and accessible information channel in most rural Kenya (see also Okoth 2015). Local language radio has only served to amplify this reality. It is therefore not difficult to see or sense a certain overt expression of ethnic (language) solidarity with these radio stations across linguistic groups in different parts of Kenya. This thinking guided the framing of the basic research question for this endeavor. However, despite this apriori thinking, the framing thoughts for this study remained flexible, mostly during the data collection process, as new ideas and thoughts emerged from the various interactions with the different respondents.

In this regard, and as has also been asserted by Taylor, Steven & Bogdan (2016) the specifics of our approach evolved as the study took shape. In other words, the fieldwork was not guided by any particular hypothesis or preconceptions. Appropriate questions were formed as interviews with various respondents progressed.

The station manager, Vuuka FM, at the time, was instrumental in assisting to identify and provide contacts of useful respondents in Vihiga. Given Mr. Tiego's popularity among the Vuuka FM radio fans - mostly as a result of his popular early morning show on the radio station- *Vuuka Vuchee*, which translates to, "wake up, it is morning!" Overall, the insights gained from the respondents were analyzed and provided a useful base of knowledge for understanding the new forms of media culture associated with local language radio, and how these have intersected with everyday elements of cultural life to influence how the Maragoli people view themselves, their community and perhaps, more importantly, how they construct their identity and define their collective understanding of "home."

Discussion

A Media and Cultural Studies Perspective

In an attempt to understand Vuuka FM's programming and the attendant following that the station enjoys among its committed audience base- united by language and cultural commonalities, this study draws on various theoretical perspectives in the broad area of media and cultural studies. Media and culture play an important part in contemporary life (Kellner & Durham, 2006), and there are many perspectives and theoretical positions from which this question can be explored. Oftentimes, as observed by Kellner & Durham (2006) critics take a single perspective to explore, make sense of, understand, or even to critic media and cultural texts. We have deliberately avoided this particular route, partly, because the question at hand requires a multi perspectival positioning. Any one particular theory or perspective would not adequately deal with the richness, complexity, variety, and novelty associated with new media cultures that are surfacing in today's

media landscape. The fan clubs associated with Vuuka FM, in our view, exemplify novel forms of media culture, voicing, and agency (see also Moyo & Moyo 2022) within an ethno-language radio audience environment.

The question of media and its place in society, is in general, a very complicated one. Understandings have shifted as new technologies have transformed the media landscape. However, some key questions always remain. For instance, as exemplified in Hall (1980) we are interested in the study of media audiences, not as was narrowly conceived by the early American empirical school's conceptualization. Halloran (1998) has indeed decried the narrow media-centredness, decontextualized, simplistic, psychological, and individualistic orientation of this approach. Inevitably, this thinking made it difficult to examine, "the social," of the media, placed in historical and sociological contexts. The focus on local language, and the context that it provides for understanding the place of media (in this case radio) in society, is an interesting one and potentially opens up the inquiry to many nuanced questions some of which the answers may not be discernible.

The phenomenon of the fan's clubs associated with Vuuka FM, which we shortly describe here illustrates an interesting phenomenon of how an audience (in this case a linguistic group) actively appropriates a media space, in an ethnolinguistic environment, to strengthen local solidarities and gives impetus to common cultural expression. In other words, we want to understand the complexities that define communication and more specifically the role of local language radio within such specific ethno-linguistic contexts. As Halloran (1998) has also asserted, it is only when research questions are defined within such nuanced parameters, that mass media research can move away from the narrow confines of the conventional, simplistic service research traditionally associated with the earlier, heavily positivist, effects-oriented research models. In this case, this enables us to explore questions such as what people do with media (as is the case with the fan clubs associated with Vuuka FM) as opposed to the effects school that narrowly concerned itself with what media does to people.

Vuuka FM's fans clubs are, by definition, organized groups of fans and supporters of the radio station drawn from its core audience base- which is the Maragoli ethnic group. According to Mr. Nyabera, the chairman of the Viyalo Vuuka FM fans club¹, these groups have evolved and been created out of the initiative of individuals who listen to and call into the various live radio shows on Vuuka FM, ostensibly to share their views and opinions. Each of these individuals identifies themselves as a fan of the radio station. A commonly cited reason is that the station communicates to them in a language that they understand and that the station's popular programmes address familiar issues, themes, personalities, and developments within their immediate environment.

According to Mr. Tiego, the Vuuka station manager, there are currently slightly over forty (40) such fan clubs formed by the radio station's fans dotted around Maragoli land and beyond. At the national level, a coordinating body named VUNAFAC – Vuuka National Fans Club has been formed to provide overall coordination of the various fan clubs.

Vuuka FM's Fans Clubs- a New Media Culture Logic?

According to Mr. Nyabera, the fan clubs have not only served to bring people together, but in the longer term, he sees the prospect of these fan clubs enabling a stronger sense of identity and ethnic nationalism among the Maragoli people. In a sense, and as further elaborated by the members of Viyalo fans club, the fan clubs have added a new and creative dimension to the traditional FM radio culture that emerged in the 1990s, and which mostly tended to privilege the trivial. Vuuka FM exemplifies a specific social-cultural utilitarian value that seems to draw from the strengthening of ethnic roots that have taken place with the creation of these fan clubs. In an age where cultural and linguistic artifacts associated with ethnic

communities are gradually being assimilated and hybridized in the context of the broader forces of globalization, local language radio stations such as Vuuka FM are seemingly playing a different role- that of rejuvenation of a community's core linguistic and cultural resources.

Kellner and Durham (2006) have ably argued the connections between media and culture, showing the important role that media forms - radio, television, and newspapers among others, and the attendant consumer cultures, play in the maintenance and reproduction of contemporary societies. Regarding the various forms of media culture, Kellner and Durham (2006) further observe and engage people in practices that integrate them into the established society, while offering pleasures, meanings, and identities. It is within this theoretical prism that one may want to look at the fan clubs associated with Vuuka FM. But there is also the question regarding the autonomy of Vuuka's fans club culture. According to Tiego, and members of the *Viyalo* fans club, the clubs have assumed a sense of autonomy from the management of Vuuka FM. They have organized and created administrative structures within their ranks which enable them to coordinate, engage, and carry out activities within the community as independent outfits.

According to Nyabera, the members of each fan club mobilize resources to support common development initiatives to benefit the members of the group and their immediate communities, as is the case with the *Viyalo* fans club. For instance, in the past, they have raised money through small donations paid monthly by each member into a common kitty. This money is used variously to support different income generation initiatives that benefit group members. Leaders of these groups will occasionally use the call-in programs on Vuuka FM to mobilize and motivate members of their groups to actively engage in group activities.

According to one ardent listener of Vuuka FM (interviewed at Boyani market)ⁱⁱ, most of the clubs have assumed an important status within the community. Their efforts are publicly acknowledged and supported by members of the Maragoli community. The leadership and general membership of the fan clubs play an active role at various social gatherings –such as funerals and burial ceremonies as well as the launch of varied community development initiatives such as roads and health centre facilities.

Given these overtly cultural/developmental roles within the community, the clubs have not only provided an important platform for participation in community matters but, according to a random listener of Vuuka interviewed at Majengo market in Vihigaⁱⁱⁱ, they have strengthened the sense of home, among ordinary people, which, according to members of the *Viyalo* fans club, was disappearing. The communal solidarity that draws from a strong feeling of home- “this is where we belong, and this is our language, has been rejuvenated,” adds the random listener of Vuuka interviewed at Majengo market.

According to Nyabera, the excitement associated with Vuuka FM as demonstrated by the enthusiasm and popularity of the fan clubs, is related to the fact that this is a pioneer radio station that has its entire 24/7 programming in the local Maragoli language. A respondent from Bukuga market observes^{iv}- that when a Maragoli has a problem, you are most likely going to hear it first on Vuuka FM, and this is subsequently picked up by the various fan clubs who, depending on the matter at hand, will mobilize general engagement and support from the broader community. Ultimately, given the central role that Vuuka FM plays, you are likely to hear, the strong sense of (communal) ownership of the station, as was the case in the interview with two random listeners in Mbale town, - “*yeye ne radio yetu*” - this is our radio station^v.

There is also a sense in which one could look at the uniqueness of Vuuka FM's fans club culture as a representation of the diversity and the emerging sense of innovation and flux, associated with a rapidly changing communications environment. McQuail (2003) in contemplating the new communications environment, talks of the appearance of new media and new landscapes that theory has not yet been able to incorporate within existing frameworks of thinking about communication and society. It is, partly, for this

reason, that we bring various perspectives to bear in our examination of the new media realities exemplified by Vuuka FM radio station. According to Nyabera, the fans who call into the station's programs, also just do it for the sake of entertaining themselves. Nyabera adds that this forms part of their daily fun/entertainment menu, and the different programs on Vuuka FM are created to cater to the needs of different demographics.

Fans Clubs Appropriated for Commercial Imperatives

According to Tiego, the fans clubs are an important dimension of the Royal Media company's marketing strategy. Generally, an almost saturated radio market in Kenya has continued to present challenges to upcoming radio stations. Indeed, over the last decade, a number of these have had to close or merge with the more dominant market players to ensure survival. However, local language radio has played a critical role in opening up a segment of the market that continues to show commercial viability. Innovative marketing strategies, however, are essential in ensuring that a radio station remains strong within the market.

This is where the Vuuka FM radio fans' clubs have provided an interesting and unique marketing potential for the Royal Media service. Tiego observes, that when the members of the Vuuka fans clubs attend different functions in the community, where they take on active roles, they market our radio station. Realizing this potential, the Royal Media Services management actively supports the activities of Vuuka FM fans clubs by investing in them for greater visibility. In this regard, the company provides branded shirts, caps, and other visibility items which are occasionally made available to members of the fan clubs with the aid of the company's field marketing teams.

Key hosts with the radio station, particularly those associated with the popular programs already mentioned here will in most cases organize events in Vihiga County where they meet with members of the various fan clubs. Additionally, the radio hosts normally coordinate with the leaders of the clubs to ensure Vuuka FM's presence at major cultural and political events in Vihiga County. In this regard, the radio hosts will be present and always get a slot to be introduced to and speak to their fans.

From the foregoing, it is nearly impossible to examine the question of local language radio in Kenya, based on one particular theoretical perspective. A political economy perspective is vital at this stage in assisting to understand Royal Media's strong influence in the local language radio landscape. More importantly, we can gain insight into what is a deliberate strategy by the company to leverage the radio fan clubs that have formed among its Maragoli language audience for commercial imperatives.

Consequently, drawing from our understanding of the political economy theoretical perspective, one discerns a deliberate push on the part of the ownership of Royal Media Services- the mother company of Vuuka FM, to commodify audience groups organized in the form of fan clubs. Kellner and Durham (2006) argue that media texts operate simultaneously on economic and cultural levels, with one circumscribing the other. This motive is subtle, but real in the context of the new audience market that has emerged in Kenya over the last two decades as a product of the expansion of local language radio.

Royal Media's thrust into and dominance of the local language radio market has enabled unrivaled control over the flow of news and information across a majority of the linguistic groups in Kenya. The fourteen local language radio stations under the company's name, suggest a strong paternalistic control of the sector and lays bare the company's goal of audience commodification to push up profits. In addition, and as observed by Kellner & Durham (2006) the connections between ownership, gatekeeping, and the production dissemination, and distribution of culture are quite apparent. We also see, that despite the strong sense of pride of ownership felt by most of the Maragoli target audience who follow and listen to Vuuka FM's programs, the logic at play is purely commercial. Media institutions, under a capitalist economic and political context, such as Kenya's, operate based on the profit motive. Cultural production is therefore organized and

dictated by the rules of the market. In this regard, cultural production and distribution is therefore profit and market-oriented.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, we have examined the question of local language radio and its role in an ethno-cultural setting. This in itself is a complex and deeply nuanced question, particularly when examined against the backdrop of most conventional media research that tends to define itself along the narrow lines of the effects of media on individuals. Such research may not allow us to examine how local communities variously appropriate media spaces (in the case of a local language radio station) by closely relating it to their daily lives, and ultimately assisting in defining its role in the context of the unique circumstances of their lives and communities. Commercial imperatives will always drive the media agenda; however, local communities own the language in which a local language radio station broadcasts.

This in itself gives them leverage over the agenda of the radio station, its programming, and how they decode its contents. Our case study of Vuuka FM, a commercial radio station that targets a specific linguistic group has assisted us to see this interesting interplay between the media and a local community. Broadly, from a social science research perspective, this has assisted us to see that questions about media effects cannot be studied linearly, as has been the case with traditional effects-based studies. This chapter ultimately shows that placed in a social ethno-cultural context, a radio station, assumes a different significance in the everyday life of a community.

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