



**MEDIA CENSORSHIP IN THE DEVOLVED SYSTEM OF GOVERNANCE IN
KENYA**

OBALA ROSELYNE NDISI

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM
AND MASS COMMUNICATION IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN
COMMUNICATION STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

2017

DECLARATION

This project is my original work and has not been presented for examination in any other university.

Signature

Date.....

Obala Roselyne Ndisi

Reg No.: K50/74704/2014

This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor.

Signature

Date.....

Dr. James Oranga

Supervisor,

School of Journalism and Media Studies,

University of Nairobi.

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my family and friends for their love, support and encouragement during the entire period of my studies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foremost, I am kindly grateful to God for His blessing, strength and wisdom. I would also like to acknowledge the constructive criticism, support and assistance of my supervisor Dr. James Oranga throughout this study. Thank you again Dr. Oranga. Similarly, I express my unreserved thanks to Dr. Elias Mokuu, SJ for his comments and questions which were very beneficial. The mutual aid of my fellow classmates, family members and friends are also highly appreciated.

ABSTRACT

Various democratic states globally such as Kenya have espoused devolved governance as a system of devolution for development. The 2010 Kenyan constitution marked an important achievement in Kenya's history. It has considerably been perceived as a breakthrough in the devolution of power and resources. While devolution is the key vehicle for addressing spatial inequities including public expenditure, media's watchdog role as a key player in ensuring prudent use of public resources is still undermined by various factors. Thus, the aim of the project was to investigate whether unprincipled journalistic practices as well as the utilization of media organizations by several vested interests such as county governments are the source of the failure of the media to discharge its watchdog role. The research utilized descriptive survey. Quantitative as well as qualitative methods of data collection were utilized. Simple random sampling was utilized to identify journalists from the mainstream media. Descriptive statistics was used in the data analysis. The results revealed that there exists limited access to the county budget documents prior to being tabled in the county assemblies for debate and passage. The study found out that, the county governments always allocate funds for advertisement and that there are stories that are not aired due to the advertisements from the county governments. The study established that county governments monitor the media houses and companies and essentially place their advertisement with media houses and companies that do their bidding. Therefore, media houses that air or publish negative stories always face the threat of losing out on advertisements revenues from the county governments. This has not only resulted in self-censorship, but study also found out that there are instances when county governments were called to comment through the media to report on certain expenditure stories to attract advertisements revenues from the county governments.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	i
DEDICATION.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	xi
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Overview	1
1.2 Background of the Study.....	1
1.3 The Statement of the Problem.....	6
1.4 Objectives of the Study	7
1.4.1. Main Objective	7
1.4.2 Specific Objectives	7
1.5 Research Questions	8
1.6 Significance of the Study	8
1.7 Scope and Limitation of the Study	8

CHAPTER TWO	10
LITERATURE REVIEW	10
2.1 Overview	10
2.2 Media and Good Governance.....	10
2.3 Historical Overview of Devolution in Kenya	15
2.4 Media and Government.....	16
2.5 County Governments and Distortion of News Coverage.....	17
2.6 The Watchdog Function of the Media.....	19
2.7 Media a Reflection of Government Policy and Elite Corporation	22
2.8 Role of Media in Enhancing Transparency.....	23
2.9 Media and News Coverage	26
2.10 Mass Media Contribution to Transparency.....	28
2.10.1 Politics and News Coverage in Kenya	29
2.10.2 Theoretical Framework of the Study	31
2.10.3 Gate keeping Theory	31
2.10.4 Manufacturing of Public Consent.....	32
2.10.5 Spiral of Silence Theory.....	35
CHAPTER THREE	38
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	38
3.1 Overview	38
3.2 Research Design.....	38
3.3 Research Approach	39

3.4 Study Population	39
3.5 Sample Frame.....	40
3.6 Sample Procedure.....	40
3.7 Research Instruments	42
3.8 Reliability and Validity of Research Instruments	42
3.9 Sampling Techniques	43
3.10 Data Collection.....	43
3.10.1 Data Analysis	44
3.10.2 Ethical Issue	44
CHAPTER FOUR.....	46
DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION.....	46
4.1 Overview	46
4.2 Demographics.....	46
4.3 Age of the Respondents.....	46
4.4 Educational Level	47
4.5 Position in the newsrooms and media houses	48
4.6 Work Experience	48
4.7 Media outlets that the Respondents Work for	49
4.8 The Influence of Mass Media on our Ways of Life of their consumers.....	50
4.9 Journalism Independence	51
4.10 Advertisement	64
4.10.1 Source of Information on County Government’s Public Expenditure	66
4.10.2 News Coverage and Censorship.....	67

CHAPTER FIVE	46
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	46
5.1 Overview	70
5.2 Summary	70
5.3 Conclusion.....	74
5.4 Suggestions for Further Research	76
5.5 Recommendations	77
REFERENCES.....	78
APPENDICES	84
Appendix 1: Introductory Letter	84
APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE	85
Appendix III: Certificate of Fieldwork	90
Appendix IV: Certificate of Originality	91
Appendix V: Certificate Of Correction	92

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Number of Journalists who Participated in the Study	41
Table 3.2: Response Rate.....	41

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1: Age of the Respondents.....	47
Figure 4.2: Educational Level.....	47
Figure 4.3: Work Experience	48
Figure 4.4: Media Outlets that the Respondents Work for	49
Figure 4.5: The Influence of Mass Media on our Ways of Life	50
Figure 4.6: Reporting on County Expenditure.....	52
Figure 4.7: Threat on Journalists by the Authorities.....	53
Figure 4.8: Journalists Attacked by the County Government.....	54
Figure 4.9: Cases Where Journalists had to Change Stories to fit External Interests	57
Figure 4.10: Harassment and Intimidation on Stories Concerning County Governments	58
Figure 4.11: Journalists access to report on county budget documents prior tabling	59
Figure 4.12: Journalists following of County Assembly Proceedings on Expenditure	60
Figure 4.13: Public Participation in the County Development and Integrated Plan	61
Figure 4.14: Complaints Regarding Budget Making and Its Implementation.....	62
Figure 4.15: The Political Climate in Kenya	63
Figure 4.16: Requirement not to Report on Expenditure Stories.....	65
Figure 4.17: Kenyan Media's Effectiveness	67
Figure 4.18: Perceptions on media coverage of facts regarding political issues without bias.....	68
Figure 4.19: Perceptions whether Journalists usually self-censor stories.....	69

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

IREX	International Research & Exchanges Board
KADU	Kenya African Democratic Union
KANU	Kenya African National Union
KBC	Kenya Broadcasting Cooperation
KCA	Kenya Correspondents Association
KTN	Kenya Television Network
NTV	Nation Television
NYT	New York Times
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
CoK	Constitution of Kenya (2010)
CSOs	Civil Societies Organizations

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This chapter outlines the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objectives, research questions, limitation, justification and significance of the study.

1.2 Background of the Study

Various democratic states globally such as Kenya have espoused devolved governance as a system of devolution for development. The 2010 Kenyan constitution marked an important achievement in Kenya's history. It has considerably been perceived as a break a breakthrough in taking power and resources closer to the people. Decentralization is at the heart of the 2010 Constitution and is the key system of governance for addressing injustice including public expenditure. Subsequent to the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution (CoK, 2010) and the Kenyan general election held in 2013, the new Constitution brought about two levels of governance, the County government and the national government. The national government ensures equitable access to its services in the whole country while the 47 counties are charged with the responsibility of executing the devolved functions at the county level.

The counties run by the County Executive Committees, headed by an elected governor also have 47 legislative county assemblies headed by the Speakers and they include: Nairobi, Kisumu, Kakamega, Busia, Vihiga, Bungoma, Uasin Gishu, Elgeyo/Marakwet, Nandi, Baringo, West Pokot and Turkana. Others are Taita Taveta, Mombasa, Tana River, Kwale, Kilifi, Marsabit, Isiolo, Mandera, Wajir, Garissa, Kitui, Bomet, Kericho, Machakos, Makueni, Embu, Meru,

Tharaka/Nithi, Kajiado, Narok, Samburu, Laikipia, Nyeri, Nakuru, Kisii, Nyamira, Siaya, Homabay, Kiambu, Kirinyaga, Nyandarua, Lamu, Muranga, Trans Nzoia and Migori.

Since the inception of devolved governments, the national government has allocated over Sh. 1 trillion, taxpayers' money to counties, a fact that was affirmed by the national government during the State of the Nation Address in Parliament (2016). However, the expenditure of the devolved resources by the county governments has not been interrogated as much as Kenyans would wish and censorship has been utilized to formally control and stifle information that is capable of endangering the order of the state, in this case county governments. In the past, censorship has been utilized to check the public, control public familiarity and to silence the opposition.

A lot has changed since Kenya's independence in 1963 when colonial media pretentiously disregarded local content and any narrative that was anti the colonial rule, which was characterized by media diet that advanced the colonial agenda. Nevertheless it is worth noting that under former president Daniel Arap Moi rule, the media was under attack. There was a countrywide crackdown on journalists and media houses leading to arbitrary arrests and incarceration of journalist and publishers by State officials, with some being detained in the infamous 'Nyayo House' (Mungai & Gona, 2010).

The Constitution (CoK) has guaranteed free press and access to information and therefore for media to play its role effectively as a watchdog; hold county governments accountable on the use of public funds and the Public Procurement and Disposal Act, the media must maintain a high level of independence (Public Finance Management Act, 2012).

It is commonly believed in most democratic systems of governance that the mass media operates as an impartial news provider and autonomous watchdog over the public officials. In

addition, although “the media is perceived to be functioning without any form of propaganda and manipulation, attributes linked with state controlled media in oppressive governments.” (Mullen, 2009), it is still not clear whether the media fulfills its watchdog function, especially as far as the political elites are concerned. It is also worth underscoring that the challenge in view of the Propaganda Model is “privately owned media in liberal and democratic systems, such as the United States, is equally controlled by the interests largely from the political and corporate elite, and is utilized as a public manufacturing consent.” (Herman & Chomsky, 1994). In Kenya, the media’s role as the “Fourth Estate” and as a channel for public discourse is not in dispute among scholars.

However it is arguable that the media’s place as defender for public interest, as watchdog, and “as a channel of communication between county governments and the governed is entrenched notwithstanding its propensity for skullduggery, melodrama and frivolity” (CoK 2010; MCK, 2015; KICA, 2015).

As watchdog, journalists have a very crucial role in promoting the cause of good governance in counties in Kenya. A democratic governance system, such as Kenya, necessitates that citizens have the right to be acquainted with the activities of the county governments, in particular, decisions that concerns their life, liberty and property (CoK 2010).

The Media thus informs people on the subject of what is taking place around them, socializing them with the principles of development and furnish them with the fundamentals of modernism. As a result of “publicizing the information, the media additionally makes public services more open to citizens scrutiny.” (Njogu, 2013). Journalists plays a crucial role in enhancing governance through shaping views, attitude, and behavior change of leaders and policymakers, mid-level bureaucrats, and citizens toward supporting good governance aims. Journalists link the “general public, government and civil society, creating a structure for national

dialogue through which well-versed public opinion is shaped.” (Weiss, 2000) and the county administration can therefore be accountable to the citizens as envisaged in the Constitution (CoK 2010).

The media functions as a branch of government which supervises the other arms of government: the Executive, Judiciary and Legislature and now the independent offices and commissions. Is this the case presently? To uphold such a function, the media should shun county government’s influence. This is not easy given that 90 percent of media outlets in Kenya are privately owned and consequently reliant on advertisements from both the corporate world and the government to generate income. Windeck (2010) on the other hand argues that in a democracy the media take on the fourth estate role and “control those in power and report to the citizens.” (p. 1). Windeck asserts that the fourth estate role requires some institutional independence from the political system which is always problematic because of the “symbiotic link between the media system and political system, the media is dependent on the supply of information from politics, while politicians are dependent on the media conveying their message to the electorate.” (Windeck, 2010, p. 2). The media thus has an association with the national government and the county governments and therefore calling the media’s dependence on the county governments advertisements for survival and the attendant subtle “influence ‘capture’, creates the conditions required to avert it.” (Besley & Prat, 2006).

Nevertheless, the watchdog function of the media assists to ensure good governance since it entails the principles of accountability, transparency and participation (Ashraf, 2014). Indeed, majority of research shows that “*the media promote government transparency, accountability, and public scrutiny of decision-makers in power, by highlighting policy failures, corruption by public officials, corruption in the judiciary, and scandals in the corporate sector.*” (Norris, 2007).

Freille, Haque & Kneller's (2007) study found that "*restrictions in media freedom lead to higher corruption levels.*" Stapenhurst (2000) also found that "*the role of the media is critical in promoting good governance and controlling corruption.*" It is worth to note that "good governance may be hindered by the blight of corruption, which disrupts the free flow of information, destabilizes answerability for decisions and disallows participation in the decision making process" (James, 2005). Moreover, while "all aspects of good governance are facilitated by the existence of a strong and independent media." (Dunu, 2013, p. 184), it is worth underlining that the existing literature is still insufficient to explain whether a free media necessarily leads to good governance or factors that may hinder the media from fulfilling its watchdog role. For instance, there are countries where media freedom is highly restricted yet they are less corrupt while on the other hand, there are countries that relish media freedom yet they are still one of the most corrupt in the world. For instance, according to European Commission (2014) report, Czech Republic and Spain, for instance, are "one of the most corrupt in the European Union." yet according to Freedom house (2013) report, one finds that press freedom is absolutely free in Czech Republic and Spain. According to Freedom House (2013) report, press status in Rwanda is not free while press status in Kenya is partly free yet, "Rwanda is the least corrupt country in the East African Region and in the whole African Continent." (Ministry of Local Government, 2013) while Kenya is still considered the fourth most corrupt country in East Africa and yet Kenya's press status is partly free compared to Rwanda where press status is absolutely not free and media freedom is highly restricted in Rwanda than in Kenya.

1.3 The Statement of the Problem

Corruption undermines good governance (James, 2005) and still remains one of the biggest hurdles in the actualization of devolution in Kenya. Can the media assist in promoting good governance and aid in the fight against corruption Kenya? In Nigeria for instance, the media has evidenced a massive achievement in “bringing public officials to account by exposing corruption.” (Santas, 2014). Moreover, the media indicted the former senate president over accusation of corruption and embezzlement of funds and when he refused to resign, and it is remarkable that “it took the intervention of the media that mounted pressure on him to vacate office.” (Santas, 2014, p. 187) and was eventually impeached due to media pressure yet in Kenya, according to statistics by the Kenyan Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission, the Commission has completed investigations in twenty counties of which 75 corruption cases have been concluded and action recommended, while 304 are still under investigations. The Kenyan media was also accused by the Council of Governors (CoG) in March 2017 at the Fourth Annual Conference in Naivasha, Nakuru County of only focusing on negative stories of devolution creating an impression among Kenyans that devolution is failing and only provides an avenue for people to loot from public coffers. It is widely acknowledged that owing to the fact that the media is an imperative source of information, it is expected to be a medium to advance the deepening of good governance (Ashraf, 2014). It has also been shown that that “*restrictions in media freedom lead to higher corruption levels.*” (Freille, Haque & Kneller, 2007). Furthermore, “*the role of the media is critical in promoting good governance and controlling corruption.*” (Stapenhurst, 2000) and that good governance may be hindered by the blight of corruption, (James, 2005). However, while “all aspects of good governance are facilitated by the existence of a strong and independent media” (Dunu, 2013, p. 184); the existing literature or studies is still insufficient to explain whether a free

media necessarily leads to good governance or whether there is a relationship between the watchdog function of the media and good governance or factors that may hinder the media from fulfilling its watchdog role. This perspective has also been raised elsewhere that “these studies also fail to explain the existence of significant exceptions, for instance Singapore, which is extensively known as having moderately low levels of corruption in spite of restrictions on media.” (Scott, 2014). There was a need, therefore, to ascertain whether unprincipled media practices as well as the utilization of media houses by different vested interests such as county governments are the source/contributing factors to the incapability of the media to discharge its watchdog role as well as to identify factors that influence the media’s role in ensuring prudent use of public funds at the counties.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1. Main Objective

The main objective of this study was to evaluate media censorship in the devolved system of governance in Kenya.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

- i. To find out the extent of interference in news reporting on county government public finance
- ii. To investigate the role of county governance in reporting on public finance
- iii. To explore how journalists navigate news reporting in public finance in the area devolution.

1.5 Research Questions

- i. To what extent is there interference in news reporting on county government public finance?
- ii. What is the role of county governance in reporting on public finance?
- iii. How do journalists navigate news reporting in public finance in the area of devolution?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The existing literature is still insufficient to explain whether a free media necessarily leads to good governance or whether there is a relationship between the watchdog function of the media and good governance or factors that may hinder the media from fulfilling its watchdog role.

The study was thus important because the findings will help explore and discuss the challenges the media faces and the existing gaps in reporting public finance at the counties. The findings will also inform the public, key devolution stakeholders and media practitioners on the challenges and intricacies inherent in coverage of public finance and expenditure in the devolved government system. It may also be useful to policy makers, scholars, media managers and the Media Council of Kenya (MCK) in analyzing how County governments have influenced the news coverage in Kenya.

1.7 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The study attempted to establish the extent of media freedom in coverage of public finance in the devolved system of governance in Kenya. First, the researcher focused on the news outlets which are operational within the Counties; the target population was mainly the journalists in

mainstream media. Secondly, the sample size and time constraints limited the study to 150 journalists based in the regional offices of the media houses targeted (former provinces) and across platforms such as TV, Radio, Newspapers and Online of the major media houses namely: Nation Media Group, Standard Group, Radio Africa Group, Royal Media Services, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) Capital FM and Media Max. These media houses run some of the country's vibrant news coverage outlets across the county. The companies also have the largest population of traditional and online journalists, including editors. In addition, due to time constraints, data collection from CSOs and advertising agents was not possible. However, the researcher obtained sufficient data from the journalists to draw conclusions.

Journalists busy and sometimes round the clock schedule in their duties was a limitation in the current study as the researcher missed out on some journalists who would have given information either due to uncooperativeness or unavailability. This limitation did not affect the study in as far as the findings are concerned, but certainly prolonged the data collection process.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

This chapter positions this study within existing research and provides a framework for not only understanding media freedom in the devolved system of governance in Kenya but also the issues affecting the media's capability in strengthening good governance. It draws on different literature which have already been studied and which connect the aim, research objectives and questions in this study to a wider research perspective.

2.2 Media and Good Governance

The “media is viewed as a watchdog which is capable to help in exposing and controlling corruption to enhance good governance as well as playing a crucial role in enhancing the quality of governance through dissemination and transmission of information; it can as well be said a catalyst to amplify informed liaison between the government and the governed.” (Vyas-Doorgapersad, Tshombe, & Ababio, 2013, p. 118). For instance, it was the media that uncovered the corrupt practice that “exalted Ibrahim Sanusi to the position of Speaker House of Representatives in 1999.” (Akani, 2017, p. 44). Furthermore, Senate President Evan Ewerem “lost his position when the media exposed that he had a double identity.” (p. 44). These exposure eventually motivated efforts for the resignation and later trial in court. In the end, the senate president lost the position (Akani, 2017).

Moreover, a study by Santas (2014) found out that the media in Nigeria have evidenced a massive achievement in bringing public officials to account by exposing corruption. Moreover, “a corruption charge was leveled against Chief Obafemi Awolowo by the media which

led to the investigation of the association between the Chief and the National Investment and Property Company, a private venture that was supposedly indebted to the Western Regional Government.” (Santas, 2014). The government investigated the matter as was exposed by the media and eventually “Chief Awolowo was charged by the commission and as a result, all the property owned by the National Investigation and Property Company were acquired by the Western Regional Government.” (Sowunmi et al, 2010, as cited in Santas, 2014, p. 186).

Therefore, in discharging its oversight role, the media exposed graft in the senate by indicting the former senate president, Dr. Chuba Okadigbo in reports where he was accused of embezzlement of funds.. (Santas, 2014). Okadigbo “assumed office as senate president following the resignation of his predecessor, Chief Evans Enwerem, in incidents comparable to that of Alhaji Salisu Buhari.” (Santas, 2014). The media beamed its searchlight on the investigation of the matter by monitoring closely the Idris Kuta Panel set up to investigate into the matter. Following exhaustive investigation, the panel indicted the president of the senate for spending an unauthorized thirty million Naira to acquire cars and another thirty seven million to furnish his official residence (Santas, 2014). Although the senate president was indicted, he refused to resign and it is remarkable that “it took the intervention of the media that mounted pressure on him to vacate office.” (Santas, 2014, p. 187) and because of pressure from media, Okadigbo was impeached. Again, “the media recorded a major milestone in holding public figures accountable, which in turn promotes democratic accountability and transparency” (Santas, 2014).

To this end, “corruption among state officials has received great attention by the Nigerian media and the spotlight of the media has time and again monitored activities in the National Assembly.” (Santas, 2014). In “2007, the speaker of the house of representative, Mrs Patricia Etteh was suspected to have awarded a contract of 628 million for the renovation of her

official residence and that of her deputy and the media closely monitored the investigation of the issue, in so doing bringing to the notice of the public every detail of the investigation and the findings of the committee indicted the speaker of the house of representative and her deputy..” (Santas, 2014). The conclusions of the committee discovered that “due process was not followed in the awards of the contracts.” (Santas, 2014). Although speaker of the house of representative “refused to recognize the judgment of the committee, pressure from the media and some members of the house forced her to step aside.” (Santas, 2014). This endorsed Stapedurst (1999) as cited in Santas (2014) position that “the media plays an important role in ensuring good governance and curbing corruption by investigating and reporting cases of corruption ethically and professionally.” (p. 188).

Furthermore, the watchdog role of the media is vital in a democracy where citizens must know what the government is doing (Ashraf, 2014). The key function of the media is to act as a watchdog on the government. The media ought to monitor the activities of the government, and boldly make public the abuse public resources by government authorities (Ashraf, 2014). The more government “dealings and operations are transparent, visible and open to scrutiny, the more viable it is to expose, deter and contain bad governance.” (Oso & Pate, 2011, p. 68). The media thus operates as a watchdog on the state and playing this role, the media holds the state answerable (Oso & Pate, 2011). By playing this role, the media assists to ensure good governance which “entails the principles of transparency, accountability and participation” (p. 41) as well as lack of corruption (Norris, 2006 as cited in Bezabih, 2017). Nonetheless “without a free media, achieving the aspirations of governance will be a wishful thinking.” (Oso & Pate, 2011, p. 68). Moreover, in this “era of globalization, the media have a greater role to play in governance.” (p. 68).

Furthermore, existing literature appears to indicate that there exists a link between media freedom, corruption and good governance. For instance, Freille, Haque & Kneller's (2007) study found that "*restrictions in media freedom lead to higher corruption levels.*" Stapenhurst (2000) also found that "*the role of the media is critical in promoting good governance and controlling corruption.*" and that:

"In all countries where the media is restrained with protective laws, the media cannot function effectively and the fight against corruption cannot be won." (Anassi, 2004, p. 325).

If "good governance may be hindered by the blight of corruption" (James, 2005, p. 7) and "corruption is both a cause and a symptom of bad governance" (Ilan, 2016, p. 135), does this imply that a free media can fight corruption and promote good governance? In spite of studies demonstrating the existence of a significant relationship between media and good governance, the results of such studies have very real limitations because they cannot justify why or how media is associated to the particular principles of good governance (Scott, 2014). They cannot, for instance, ascertain which role of the media is most essential— "watchdog, agenda-setter or civic forum, or indeed, any alternative function." (Scott, 2014). These studies in addition fail to elucidate the existence of imperative exceptions, for instance Singapore, which is known as "having relatively low levels of corruption despite restrictions on press freedom" (Scott, 2014; Norris, 2010, p. 386) as well as cases for instance "Mali, Papua New Guinea, and the Philippines, which continue to be afflicted with corruption in spite of a comparatively thriving independent media." (Norris, 2010, p. 386). Similarly they fail to account for the fact that countries like Czech Republic and Spain, for instance, are "one of the most corrupt countries in the European Union" despite having no restrictions on media freedom as well as Rwanda which is the least corrupt in the East African region despite having restricted media freedom. To this end, it is worth underlining that:

“Intellectuals and practitioners in the field of media, communication, public administration, and political science believe in the impact of media on governance, yet not many studies have been carried out that examine the relations between media and the process of governance.” (Vyas-Doorgapersad, Tshombe, & Ababio, 2013, p. 123).

Nonetheless, county governments have an obligation to report, explain and account for the expenditure made on behalf of the communities they represent. While Devolution is envisaged in the Constitution (CoK 2010) to devolve power and resources to the counties, media has a significant role to: educate, inform the public and set the agenda. The mass media especially “print media has become the most effective tool to disseminate information to the citizenry” (Njogu, 2013). Consequently, the researcher sought to establish how media has covered public finance in counties despite the latter being a source of revenue (advertisement).

Media is an importance institution that can and should strengthen and enhance financial accountability at the counties. The media categories in Kenya today include print Media, electronic media and online. In a nutshell, the ability of the public and the private sector to oversight government institutions with a view to hold them accountable. The role of the mass media identified by Lasswell (1948) & Wright (1960) many decades ago indicates that the media is capable of playing a critical role as a watchdog to strengthen governance. Therefore, by upholding the watchdog role, “the media has a responsibility to help guard public interest by ensuring there is accountability at powerful decision-making levels. For instance, cases of malfeasance, misadministration and corruption, thereby strengthening the transparency and effectiveness of governance.” (Lasswell, 1948; Wright, 1960).

2.3 Historical Overview of Devolution in Kenya

In 1963 during independence, in an introduction to a paper on the Kenyan Constitution entitled “Devolution in Kenya’s New Constitution.”, devolution was placed and pluralism in opposition to a robust central state at the center of political discourse. It depicts how the Constitution offered for the rights of ethnic minorities to counter manipulation by the larger tribes.

The party that backed the Kenya African Democratic Union devolution disbanded in 1964 and incorporated with the Kenya African National Union, leaving the devolution of government powers devoid of a champion. On the contrary, the Constitution concerned was known as ‘Majimbo’ Constitution by those who opposed it. The Constitution under debate had a pessimistic undertone, as it was professed as an attempt by the colonialists to establish and to formulate separation between African people in the country, with the key purpose of safeguarding the interests of the white minority in the country.

Between 1964 and 1970, the Kenyan government got rid of the regional governments, federal authority due to finances, and got rid of the Senate. Moreover, “proponents of the independence Constitution believed that regional administration sought to empower their communities through devolved leadership” and as Nanz & Steffek (2004) assert, good governance is a key concept for democratic and economic developments in many nations as witnessed globally in the past. Kenya is one of the countries’ that has embraced devolution in Africa, others includes South Africa, Nigeria, Ghana and Rwanda.

Other scholars who have conducted research in the same field of media freedom in devolved system of governance, these two variables are significant in the field of development communication in ensuing the public is adequately informed. It can therefore be argued that media can enhance good governance at the counties through improved transparency in public finance as

well as enhance “freedom of expression and enlarge opportunity for public participation.” (Soola, 2009).

2.4 Media and Government

Mass media enables a country to transform and develop. Balan (1992) notes that “wherever there is a progressive economic development; there is a progressive mass media system, which is independent of all powers”. Thus, the mass media and national development are interlinked and mutually dependent on each other. The media, by virtue of its role, can stimulate growth and progress. As a matter of policy, the mass media ought to be part and parcel of the nation’s socio-economic development. Kenya is not an exception as it is an emerging democracy, as well as a developing country.

The media in Kenya plays a major role in enlightening, appraising and entertaining the citizens and as Sihanya argues the Kenyan private media has been effervescent in educating the Kenyan public about the new constitutional dispensation and other gray areas such as the devolution (2012). The World Bank (2010) report underscores the significance of the news media in emerging nations, noting that:

“In complex modern societies, the existence of the independent news media can be regarded as a necessary condition to guarantee a lively and effective public sphere. Over the years, many rival normative standards have been developed for evaluating the performance of media systems.”

The study is a valuable addition to the discourse on the role of the media and how it has guaranteed an effective public sphere for the evaluation of the county governments in Kenya.

2.5 County Governments and Distortion of News Coverage

How the counties influence news coverage results in distorted information to the public. County Governments are the main source of revenue for over ninety percent of media outlets in Kenya. The crux in coverage is first the correctness of what is reported and secondly, the amount of reportage or prominence given to the issue of public expenditure. Cognizant of the fact that it is unlikely that media Houses are ready to cover controversial news, which can later be quashed, the purpose of the study is to ensure media reports are factual. The government may provide inaccurate facts to manipulate information and intentionally mitigate prolonged coverage of issues. For instance, if a media house is concerned regarding the correctness of its content and realizes the information it receives are vague, it might choose not to publish or air the story. It can distort audiences' trust in media coverage (for example, no coverage means there was nothing bad that happened). Likewise, the government can influence level of coverage it gets by twisting the importance of the event.

Journalists are therefore limited in their work. Like the US coverage, of its ally Zaire (Democratic Republic of Congo) during the Cold War can be described by increasing the relative importance of persecutions by the Marxist government in Ethiopia; a concept described by Stromberg (2004) as crowding-out of news. To influence the inducement of the media houses, the government can influence the publication of negative stories by suppressing them in exchange for positive stories (e.g. to be called on during a presidential press conference) and "in a more extreme scenario, the government can explicitly punish journalists that write stories against its interests and this seems extremely implausible given the many examples of how the government has tried to manipulate the media." (Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2008).

In Kenya, citizens have petitioned the national parliament or filed cases in Court on financial mismanagement at the Counties which the media failed to highlight at the County Level according to Auditor General's report 2012/2013, 2013/2014 and quarterly reports by the Controller of Budget (CoB) 2013, 2014 and 2015.

In other instances media houses can just be incapable to get independent information and therefore forcing the reporters to infer the truth based on any other available reports. The simplest rule of thumb is to weight the amount of information from the alternative sources. In other cases the county governments can incentivize media houses to give them positive coverage. For instance, the state may offer cheap news worthy content to other agencies if the local media does not comply. A journalist would easily rely on information that is less controversial to obtain.

Journalist rely on government sources even if will be highly correlated with the distorted government reports. Extreme scenarios have been witnessed where media owners or managers work closely with the government. And in turn hinder independent news coverage.

Journalists have received threats when covering government events. A recent example of the threats and attacks is the case of John Kituyi who was killed by unknown assailants. Going by police reports, Kituyi was attacked by unknown assailants as he was leaving his office at the headquarters of *The Mirror Weekly*, a newspaper in the Kenyan city of Eldoret. He was murdered, and assailants took his cell phone and left his belongings intact in the car.

A number of journalists reported to the police instances of harassment which is also on the rise. According to Kenya Media Programme (2013) survey which polled close to 300 journalists from across the country found that "more than 90 percent had been threatened because of their stories, mostly related to politics, corruption and the divisive land issues."

In the case of Kituyi, colleagues believed he was murdered due over a story he published in April 2015 about the Deputy President William Ruto, case on crimes against humanity at the Hague. Another recent case is that of Standard journalist based in Kilifi Joseph Masha who died in mysterious circumstance after he was warned to stop filing some stories hitting on politicians. To a large extent one realizes that even in a democracy journalist are safe only to the extent that they cover story that do not antagonize the establishment and the political elites. These elites silently supply cheap and distorted information which they are happy to have published.

2.6 The Watchdog Function of the Media

The watchdog role of the media is to ensure transparency and accountability by exposing policy failures, maladministration by public offices. Since Edmund Burke, the 'Fourth Estate' has been considered as a means to audit the government. Investigative journalism has helped maneuver to ensure scrutiny of internal government records and expose them to the public for scrutiny.

Brunetti & Weder (2003) amongst others, found out that "there was less corruption in nations with free press as journalists' played their watchdog to promote transparency and accountability in government and in so doing exposed theft of public funds and scandals".

In competitive multiparty democracies world over, the electorates can utilize information offered by the media to hold their elected leaders to accountable by voting them out. On the other hand, media control is employed to strengthen the power of tyrannical regimes and to discourage "criticism of the government by independent journalists, through official government censorship, state ownership of the main radio and television channels, legal restrictions on freedom of expression and publication limits competition through oligopolies in commercial ownership and the use of outright violence and intimidation against journalists" (Brunetti & Weder, 2003). In

Malaysia, human rights observers report shows that the government has manipulated the media to suppress internal dissent and forced journalists working for international press to adjust or restrain news stories unattractive administration.

Countries like Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Saudi Arabia, among others, the government usually put grave limitations on freedom of the press, barring them from criticising it through official legal restrictions and state sponsored censorship. The demand for governments to censor online communications still remains aloof, however countries for instance China and Cuba, are state-controlled monopolies who offer internet services only when necessary and therefore filter both access and content.

It has been argued that the watchdog function of the media is “entrenched in its independence and definition as the Fourth Estate, which reflects public expectations to keep a cynical eye on powerful individuals and groups within society.” (Norris, 2010). The media enacts this “by revealing their wrongdoings, public’s interest is consider and protected from misinformation, incompetence and corruption.” (Bennett et al, 2007). This role “is the real representation of the media’s sociopolitical role through its ability to act as a catalyst to inspire changes in laws and regulations.” (Bennett et al, 2007).

Conventionally, the watchdog role is “held as the avenue to exposure governments’ transgression, as knowledgeable citizens can gauge their effectiveness in public duty and hold the administration accountable.” (Norris, 2010). Possibly, the most well-known form of oversight is through investigative journalism. These “journalists’ reveal how and why individuals and institutions fail to report when things go wrong, who is responsible, how the wrongdoing was committed and its consequences.” (Norris, 2010), “drawing attention to larger patterns of incompetence or corruption and the systemic failures that underpin these” (Norris, 2010).

Furthermore, the “watergate incident is frequently regarded as the epitome of watchdog role in investigative journalism which resulted in the resignation of former US President Richard Nixon. It was the product of investigative journalists’, government investigators and Congress..” (Norris, 2010). While “some critics argue that Watergate was driven more by political insiders than the media, it continues to be observed as the leading example of the power of freedom of press in a democracy.” (Norris, 2010).

However, the watchdog function of the media in Kenya is increasingly controlled by the political class and the elite in society. For instance, the ‘Nation Media Group, is the leading independent media house in East and Central Africa, the Daily Nation platform makes a lot of revenue from advertising which represents its greatest source of revenue. Advertisers, especially governments and government-owned enterprises-wield huge influence, which often allows them to quietly control what is published and what is not.” (Obonyo & Nyanboga, 2011). Advertisers “offer lucrative ads to sweeten any coverage or threaten to stop them if a paper writes critically about them.” (Obonyo & Nyanboga, 2011).

The apparent “dangers of powerful media sources for the watchdog role were articulated in 1947 in the Hutchins Commission: a US private commission of inquiry, which was done by Robert Hutchins, Chancellor of Chicago University” (McQuail, 2005) and its findings were critical of the media for always falling short of upholding its watchdog role by being so limited in the access. It provided an opportunity to voices outside the circle of a privileged and powerful minority among other things” (McQuail, 2005). Furthermore, the report “coined the term ‘social responsibility’, specifying that the media does not simply just meet the immediate needs of its own readers and listeners but in addition report on cohesion, the representation and expression of its diversity in society.” (McQuail, 2003).

News media is more and more avoiding to prioritize the watchdog imperatives (Bennett et al., 2007). The “driving force behind any new story is often derived from officials in powerful positions within the institutional decision-making arenas.” (Bennett et al., 2007). The caution that Bennett and colleagues put across is “that the press is increasingly developing an unhealthy link with powerful sources, with potentially pessimistic consequences on the watchdog role.” (Bennett et al., 2007). The utilization of “official sources who are driving the news agenda increases the potential for the press to become complicit of the government or the market, not the people” (Bennett et al., 2007). This then “undermines the watchdog function, as it becomes difficult for the press to uphold a skeptical eye on powerful individuals and groups within society if they are being used as primary sources.” (Bennett et al., 2007). This has presented a precarious situation to journalist who cover county governments, given that they have to be close to the news sources at the county level without compromising their watchdog role.

2.7 Media a Reflection of Government Policy and Elite Corporation

The problem of examining the mass media plays in political communications and their effects on national issues, especially election campaigns, is gaining traction in many societies as the economic pressures have limited the muscles of the media in its watchdog role. Anywhere globally, the media has at all times been involved in “politics, formation of public opinion, perception of images of candidates, the definition of social reality and social norms, the education, information, enlightenment and entertainment of the public, as well as the presentation and clarification of issues, values, goals and changes in culture and society/some kinds of communication on some kinds of issues, brought to the attention of some kinds of people under some kinds of conditions have some kinds of effects” (Berelson, 1948). Media is assumed to carry

out its watchdog function and as also referred to as the fourth estate. The media acts independently to make sure other institutions serve the public. However, “there has always been apprehension that the media may be challenged by elites or that the media may embellish government ideals.” (Baron & Davis, 2009). James Curran redefined the traditional media as a watchdog when he wrote:

“While the watchdog role of the media is important, it is perhaps quixotic to argue that it should be paramount...Most modern media are now given over mainly to entertainment. Coverage of public affairs accounts for only a small part of even news media content, and only a proportion of this takes the form of critical scrutiny of government...a large number of media enterprises are now tied to core sectors of finance and industrial capital” (as cited in Baron & Davis, 2009, p. 109).

How could the media criticize corporations who own them, or the government they represent without compromising on their profits making endeavors? For example, “in the US, evident is that fact that the media was dependent upon government policy and was demonstrated by the conflict between the Reagan administration and the Sandinistas in Nicaragua; the American press preferred using government officials as opposed to many other sources to disseminate messages to the public.” (Baron & Davis, 2009, p. 109). This of course means that the media was treading the thin line between a government mouthpiece and a purveyor of accurate and credible information.

2.8 Role of Media in Enhancing Transparency

A politician would understandably want to divert attention from the real information that is damaging to other interests whereas the media has equal role to on transparency by informing the public; it would thus be interesting for the media to simulate transparency. Nevertheless “the media’s collective efforts also undermines the political values of transparency, even - and maybe particularly - when media and politicians view each other as antagonists.” (Postman, 1985).

Unfortunately, eventually, “television coverage of politics stories tend not to concentrate on substantive policy, but more and more shifting the focus on methods of securing political advantage and political viability.” (Fallows, 1996; Bennett, 1996). Television coverage has been “dominated by concentrating on ‘whose winning’ and how are they attaining this victory whereas stories regarding backstage political maneuvers and spin control, offer a kind of transparency, since they claim to give their viewers an ‘inside’ account of the strategic considerations of politicians and public officials, while on the other hand they redirect attention from substantive policy debates” (Fallows, 1996). Owing to the “limited time available for broadcast and the audiences’ attention, ‘inside’ stories about strategy and jockeying for political advantage tend to crowd other stories with substantive development issues.” (Fallows, 1996; Bennett, 1996).

Additionally, since politicians are familiar “with how important media have become in terms of power and citizens’ influence, television has assisted to create a new reality populated by spin doctors, pollsters, pundits and media consultants. The ultimate political life begins to match more intimately as it mirrors politics on television.” (Bennett, 1996). Television “portrays a world of image manipulation and spin control largely without substantive debate or reasoned analysis and since television is so central to successful mass politics, it eventually assists to produce the very elements that it portrays” (Bennett, 1996).

For instance, Kenya Correspondents Association has raised alarm over the increasing incidences of intimidation and threats to journalists based in the counties, which may significantly undermine “press freedom and access to information for the citizens”. A number of journalists based in different counties in Kenya have reported increasing threats and intimidation by the emerging powerful elite in the counties, some of them, sitting governors, senators, MPs and other

political leaders who have expressed interest in contesting various positions in during the August 8, 2017 General Elections.

Competing political players in various counties have launched determined efforts to persuade journalists to report favorably on their activities and, in the process, endangering the lives of journalists. In some counties, the political competition is so vicious that some of the actors have begun to control, through threats and intimidation, what should be reported and what should not. Journalists attending ongoing Media Round Table forums organized by KCA have painted a picture of fear, intimidation, physical attacks and increasing self-censorship following increasing threats from some of the leaders.

KCA held a series of media forums to sensitize journalists based in the regions on their rights and safety ahead of the August 2017 General Elections. The first of the media forums was held on Friday July 8, 2016 in Machakos County, and it drew participants from different media outlets and the counties in the Lower Eastern Region. The second forum was held in Mombasa on Friday July 15, attended by journalists drawn from the Coast Region Counties. Journalists attending these forums said many of them were growing fearful of covering certain leaders and particular issues due to fear of attacks or outright threats and intimidation. They said some county leaders and their rivals had repeatedly warned journalists about reporting on some issues where they had interests and expressed fear that the situation will become “more dangerous” as the General Elections approached.

KCA Chairman William Oloo Janak cautioned journalists against forging alliances with various competing political camps saying this will expose them to danger. He however said KCA will monitor and intervene in cases where any political or other actors are involved. KCA has launched the Media Round Table Forum initiative with support from the UNESCO Regional

Office for Eastern Africa based in Nairobi. The sensitization forums are meant to help bridge the information gap among the journalists on their rights and the need for basic safety and security awareness at work, given the increasing patterns of conflicts in many parts of the country which continue to pose risks to them. The sensitization also includes creating awareness among journalists on the policy and legal advocacy initiatives in the media sector, and other emerging challenges facing journalists as the country moves towards the General Elections.

2.9 Media and News Coverage

The “mass media, especially the print media, serves as valuable sources of information and a powerful mode of communication.” (Oriare, 2008). It is worth to note that “this power controls much of what people consume as daily occurrence around the globe.” (Oriare, 2008). Companies and “journalists are in a position to determine what stories are considered newsworthy and how much prominence or space to be allocated; researchers have also been able to study the influence of mass media in the formation of public opinion.” (Oriare, 2008).

News is “what is published in the newspaper every day.” (Oriare, 2010). It is what television and radio news programs talk about. News is part of the “homeostatic system that keeps society in balance by interacting with other social institutions to keep things as they are now, with the exception of encouraging ‘progress’, that is a dressed-up way of saying that news constrains social change and if the speed of social change can be controlled by organizations and people who hold power, then they can use change to their advantage.” (Perry, 2002).

News outlets “employ journalists to do their work, even as they support a myriad of related industries that would not exist if there were no news.” (Boeder, 2005). Therefore, “the power of news organizations extends beyond their own boundaries. News content distracts people with bits

of information taken out of context, which makes concentrating on issues, problems and solutions very difficult.” (Boeder, 2005). Key stakeholders “legitimize the existence of news by making it part of the university curriculum and by endlessly studying it and even those who write critical articles take advantage of its social capital to gain promotion and tenure at their universities and to enhance their reputations.” (Boeder, 2005).

According to Boeder (2005), wherever “there is a progressive economic development, there is a progressive mass media , independent of all powers. To this end news coverage enables a country to transform and develop”. This translates to the growth of a country, thus playing a vital role in the socio-economic transition and development. Therefore, the mass media and national development are interlinked and inter-dependent with each other. The media, by virtue of its role, can stimulate growth and progress. As a matter of policy, the mass media ought to be “an essential part of the country’s socio-economic” development. Kenya is not an exception as it is an emerging democracy, as well as a developing country.

The media in Kenya indeed plays a critical role in enlightening, apprising and entertaining the citizens and the Kenyan media (exclusively the private media) has, for instance been effervescent in educating the Kenyan public about the new constitutional dispensation and other gray areas such as the devolution (Sihanya, 2012). In 2010, The World Bank presented a report based on the significance of the news media in emerging nations which most importantly stressed on the need for an independent news media which the report argued is as a necessary “condition needed to guarantee a lively and effective public sphere and that over the years, many rival normative standards have been developed to evaluate the performance of media systems with mixed results.” Nyabuga (2015) for instance found out that the media in Kenya does not serve the poor and marginalized and he underscores the elite journalism argument when he notes that “hyper

commercialism diminishes the media credibility as a trusted purveyor of information” (p. 1), essentially arguing that the opinion that the media ends up forming is elite opinion and not public opinion.

2.10 Mass Media Contribution to Transparency

Transparency in the sense of the interest of the current study is a metaphor that is three faced: “informational transparency; participatory transparency and accountability transparency. Informational transparency encompasses the knowledge about government actors, decisions and access to information. It can be furthered by requiring public statements of the reasons for government action, or requiring disclosure of information the government has collected.” (Anon, 1998). Moreover, “participatory transparency is the capability to take part in political decisions either through fair representation or direct involvement, while accountability transparency is the ability to hold government officials accountable - either through legal means or public opinion - when they violate the law or when they act in ways that adversely affect people’s interests.” (Anon, 1998).

Theoretically, “mass media can make the political system more ‘transparent’ in all three respects: it can help people understand the operations of government, participate in political decisions, and hold government officials to account.” (Goodman, 1998). In practice however, its effects are frequently quite dissimilar. In the age of mass media, “democratic governments may find it constructive to simulate the political virtues of transparency through rhetorical and media manipulation.” (Goodman, 1998). Regrettably, notes that the simulated transparency does not serve the underlying political values that motivate the metaphor of transparency but instead, it is a transparency that obscures and obfuscates, that frustrates accountability and hides important

information in a mass of manufactured political realities which is a form of transparency that is not transparent at all.” (Goodman, 1998).

In line with this, in October 2013, former Chief Executive Officer of the Media Council of Kenya Dr Haroun Mwangi did a presentation at a media workshop in Naivasha, Nakuru County where he stated that “newsrooms are increasingly becoming money oriented as opposed to credible news content.” This is mainly due to the fact that “most media owners are also big time business players”. Mwangi noted: "They only concentrate on issues of public concern in the media as long as it bears profits so as to cut costs, investigative journalism has been curtailed and replaced by public relations exercises, with ‘news’ fed to reporters”. Increasingly, Mwangi added that “media companies are encouraging their staff to attain degrees in business rather than journalism based on work experience with Kenyan editors and journalists at the council.”

2.10.1 Politics and News Coverage in Kenya

There has been growing concern over the misrepresentation in the Kenyan Legislature (Strömberg, 2002). Researchers have tried to establish the blame for women’s underrepresentation in politics with early studies finding out that male politicians received more total media coverage than women politicians. Newer studies have suggested that coverage for women politicians has improved over time (Strömberg, 2002). While the coverage for women politicians was said to have improved, less has been done to establish the coverage of women in Parliament as compared to their men counterparts in the context as a developing country such as Kenya and more especially within the new constitutional dispensation.

Even though the new constitution puts a lot of emphasis on and advocates for equal political participation by men and women, the same has not been achieved as the representation is below the two thirds majority requirement. In the 11th Parliament, there are 86 women parliamentarians (both at the Senate and the National Assembly), the highest number of women representation since the independence of Kenya, compared to 330 men parliamentarians. Despite the rise in numbers, the 30 percent gender rule as envisaged by the Constitution has not been achieved.

The low numbers of women in leadership result to low numbers in decision making institutions and by extension their participation in power structures is hindered. The Constitution paved way for affirmative action seeking to have gender equity among men and women in decision making spheres and in politics. Some studies have pointed out that “the media has portrayed women as beneficiaries of the affirmative action instead of focusing on their contribution to decision making in their capacities as people’s representatives while others have noted that their involvement in decision making is good for the nation at large”.

According to Kiragu (2006), women have also improved their skills and access to the diverse media that highlight women issues. However, some studies have shown that “despite the population of women in countries like Kenya being higher than that of men, there continues to be disparities between men and women in governance and that most news coverage have featured little to do women with reference to the political sphere”. Many have been compromised by politicians in news coverage. For example, according to Dr George Nyabuga, a lecturer at the University of Nairobi ‘s School of Journalism, “if you follow the Standard Media Group, you will not see negative coverage of former President Moi and the same applies when you follow Mediamax, because of the current leadership (President Uhuru Kenyatta).” However, Standard Media Group Chief Editor and Mediamax head of news both have denied this assertion.

2.10.2 Theoretical Framework of the Study

This thesis applied gate keeping theory and manufacturing consent theory as well as a brief discussion of the spiral of silence theory by Noelle-Neuman (1974) which is also relevant to the present study.

2.10.3 Gate keeping Theory

Gate keeping theory “refers broadly to the process of controlling information as it moves through a gate or filter.” (Barzilai-Nahon, 2008) and is linked “with exercising different types of power such as selecting news, enforcing the status quo in parliamentary committees, mediating between professional and ethnic groups, and brokering expert information.” (Barzilai-Nahon, 2008). The existing research on this theory is in terms of fragmented epistemologies, “theories and models, vocabularies, heuristics, and research challenges both within and between disciplines and fields because discourse on gate keeping is conducted within each discipline, in relative isolation.” (Barzilai-Nahon, 2008).

Shoemaker (1991) defined gate keeping theory as the “process by which the billions of messages that are available in the world get cut down and transformed into the hundreds of messages that reach a given person on a given day.” Ten years later, Shoemaker still acknowledged a broader concept of gate keeping arguing that “the process is also thought of as consisting more than just selection.... In fact, gate keeping in mass communication can be seen as the overall process through which social reality transmitted by the news media is constructed, and is not just a series of ‘in and out’ decisions.” (Shoemaker, Eichholz, Kim, & Wrigley, 2001).

White (1950) suggested a “simple model to explain the selection process in newspapers and argued that news items were rejected for three reasons: personal feelings of the gatekeeper,

insufficient space, and whether the story had appeared previously.” Therefore the “primary effect of gate keeping and also regulation is that it changes the media’s original message in some way. What readers read in the newspaper is thus seldom an accurate reflection of reality.” (White, 1950).

This theory “decides which information will be made public, and which will not, i.e., a gate keeper in a social system decides which of a certain commodity, materials and information – may enter the system and thus gatekeepers (editors and journalists) are able to control and shape the public’s knowledge of the actual events by letting some stories pass through the system but keeping others out.” (Baas, 1969). Gate keeping shows that the news we read in our newspapers regarding the county governments is in the final analysis of someone’s view of what is important and what will attract the attention of audiences. In some instances, editors may regard news involving the county governments as not newsworthy regardless of how informative or educative it is.

2.10.4 Manufacturing of Public Consent

The media “serves as a system for communicating messages and symbols to the general public and plays the role to amuse, entertain, inform and to inculcate the values, beliefs, and codes of behavior that will integrate into individuals and institutional structures in society.” (Herman & Chomsky, 1994). In a “world of concentrated wealth and major conflicts of class interest, the propaganda model works best.” (Herman & Chomsky, 1994).

This Model focuses on the disparity of wealth, power and its multi-level effects on mass media interests and alternatives. It traces the channels by which money and power are filtered out in news content, marginalizing dissent, and allow only information that fits the government and elite interests to be reported to the public (Chomsky & Herman, 2002, p. 2). The propaganda model argues that before ‘the raw material of news’ is reported, they first pass through five filters that

eventually shape the news the public consumes. These sieves determine what events are deemed newsworthy. The key point here is that the media tend to marginalize dissent and allow the government and corporate interests to get their messages across in a way that promote hegemonic constructions and suppress critical voices that might threaten their interests.

Propaganda is normally utilized to neutralize the opinions and views of those who are critical of the government and to marginalize dissent. The propaganda model depends on five filters to enable the final information disseminated to the public to reflect the interests and views of the elites. These five filters include: 1. “the size, concentrated on ownership, owner wealth, and profit orientation of the dominant mass-media firms.”; 2. “advertising as the primary income source of the mass media.”; 3. “the reliance of the media on information provided by government, business, and ‘experts’ funded and approved by these primary sources and agents of power.”; 4. “flak as a means of disciplining the media.”; and 5. “Anti-communism as a national religion and control mechanism.” (Chomsky & Herman, 2002, p. 2). Furthermore, Chomsky (2002) asserts that since “most of the media are owned by the elites.”, the media’s reporting of political issues normally reflects the elites interests. Chomsky & Herman (2002) further asserts that the information the public receive as news “is the reproduction of the hegemonic interests of the elite”. Most of media reporting suppresses news that might negatively threaten the interests of the elites. Thus, instead of functioning as the watchdog over the elites, the mass media functions as mass propagandist, serving as the mouthpiece for the elites (Chomsky, 2004).

It is expected that free press would aid in the development of the political economy. In the case of Kenya, free press is one that is capable of expose corruption, ineptitude, bribery, mismanagement and the outright embezzlement of public funds in county governments’ development by public officers.

What has partly accounted for the disappointing level of development in Kenya is the fact that its political leaders mismanage and embezzle the resources that should have been used to improve the level of modernization as well as the overall social and material well-being of the generality of the people. Almost every Kenyan leader sees the state as an apparatus for private capital accumulation. This perspective has also been emphasized elsewhere that in order to acquire wealth in Africa one has to get to state power apparatus and stay there (Zuckerman, 1986).

This is why this paper hypothesizes that it is the mandate of the press to expose intended and perceived corruptive behavior of the elites as it is vital in the growing the economy. Moreover, financial accountability reportage can only be enhanced in a free public sphere where the media is independent of government manipulation. In Kenya, County governments attempts to control the Fourth Estate impedes in its ability to expose graft, bribery, mismanagement and official stealing inherent within dominant ruling bourgeoisie despite the existing laws to curtail the same. A free press will therefore be more capable of unearthing corruption in the government. A free press will also be capable of criticizing misconceived development projects. In these ways, a free press, more than a controlled press can be more effective in assisting the economic development because the embezzlement of money that would otherwise be squandered by corrupt government officials will be nipped in the bud or prevented and as Freille, Haque & Kneller (2007) found out restrictions in independence of the media lead to rampant corruption levels.

Consequently, the political, social and economic “restrictions the media face in liberal societies can lead to the manufacturing of public consent.” (Herman & Chomsky, 1994). This implies that the Propaganda Model theory is “frequently misconstrued to identify the media as non-adversarial and biased.” (Herring & Robinson, 2003). Herman & Chomsky (1994) rejects this

interpretation and indicates that the filters identified in the Propaganda Model form the underlined media structure.

Although the “use of the mass media as a propaganda tool is commonly associated with autocratic regimes.” Herman & Chomsky (1994) contend “mass media in democratic societies face economic and political challenges that lead to the manufacturing of public consent.” In the context of Kenya’s county governments’ governance reporting by all the media houses have been accused of being biased in their reporting and instead acting as faithful servants to the County governments. In order to assess whether all forms of media outlets produce public consent, a study on coverage on the commercial coverage by the media outlet like KTN, NTV and CITIZEN TV, and the state-owned media KBC was analyzed.

2.10.5 Spiral of Silence Theory

Spiral of silence theory concentrates in the manner the media influence public beliefs (Potter, 2012). In spite of this, the spiral of silence theory in addition “moves into elucidating how public beliefs influence public discourse” (p. 75). Noelle-Neuman (1974) created this theory subsequent to examining precedents of news reporting in Western Europe (p. 75) and clarified that when the media shun covering some issues, “people characteristically will avoid expressing their beliefs on that issue although those beliefs are vastly imperative to them” (p. 75). They will continue being quiet, with the view that they are in the minority and abstain from expressing their beliefs for fear of being not accepted then silence leads to more silence, and the belief that the issue is not imperative gets reinforced over time (Potter, 2012).

To this end, the media is capable of swaying public opinion on any issue by simply reporting that issue (agenda-setting) or reporting that issue in a certain way (framing) (Geer, 2004).

Media can in addition shape public opinion by “virtue of their reporting of public opinion, i.e., reporting of what everyone else perceives offers imperative cues for the expression of public opinion” (p. 29). The basic principle of the spiral of silence theory is that “one’s readiness to publicly express one’s view on contentious issues for instance politics, race, affirmative action is a role of how one discerns public opinion” (p. 29). Noelle Neuman as cited in Geer (2004) asserts that in any type of society, “people continually scrutinize their social environment to discover what majority of people think regarding imperative issues the media, certainly, are the most straightforwardly available source for such information” (Geer, 2004, p. 29). If citizens perceive a majority of the general public to hold a belief incompatible with their own, or if they notice a trend in that direction, they will be less probable to publicly express their individual opinion (Geer, 2004). This personal unwillingness to converse in “public translates into a prejudiced perception of public opinion that will gradually silence people with minority opinions (Geer, 2004). The theory is anchored numerous suppositions. The first is the assumption that nearly all civilizations are typified “by some level of social control, or what Noelle Neumann calls *threat of isolation*” (pp. 29-30). Any creation of personal opinions and attitudes is consequently typified by “the fear of individuals to separate themselves within their social environment” (pp. 29-30). In addition, due to fear of isolation, “individuals with their quasi-statistical sense, constantly monitor the delivery of opinions in their environment as well as the future trends which can involve paying attention to media reports, direct observation of daily happening or interpersonal discussions.” (p. 30). Lastly, individuals have a tendency “to openly express their opinions when they perceive their view to be central or on the rise and when they sense minority view is on the decline, or they become careful and silent.” (Geer, 2004).

Consequently, this theory depicts individual's "readiness to express their opinions in public when they are of the view that majority of others hold an opinion dissimilar from theirs." (Li, 2016). The theory thus posits that "people who view their opinions as minority opinions that will not gain support from the public are less likely to express their views and so become increasingly." (p. 286). Studies have tested the propositions of the theory with emerging controversial issues. Fear of isolation was confirmed to be negatively related to the willingness to speak out, and the effect of fear of isolation was modified by self-identity (Fox & Warber, 2014 as cited in Li, 2016).

Therefore, the 'spiral of silence theory' is a "social psychological one that proposes that the mass media do not reflect opinion but create it" (Berger, 1995, p. 70). Thus according to Noelle-Neumann (1994), "The social-psychological mechanism here called the 'spiral of silence, 'in the media context have been seen as creating public opinion; they offer the environmental pressure in which people react with enthusiasm, or with agreement, or with silence" (as cited in Berger, 1995, p. 70)

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

The main objective of the study was to assess media censorship in the devolved system of governance in Kenya. This chapter discusses the methods that were utilized in the collection and analysis of data to achieve objectives of the study. It explains the research design, target population, the sampling procedures and data collection procedures that were utilized in the study as well as validity and reliability of the instruments.

3.2 Research Design

Research is the “scheme outline or plan that is used to generate answers to research problems.” (Orodho, 2003). This study utilized descriptive survey, which attempted to “describe or define a subject, often by creating a profile of a group of problems, people, or events, through the collection of data and tabulation of the frequencies on research variables or their interaction.” (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). Thus, this approach was appropriate in describing and assessing media censorship in the devolved system of governance in Kenya without manipulation of variables (media censorship in the devolved system of governance in Kenya). Descriptive study is “appropriate where the study seeks to describe the characteristics of certain groups, estimate the proportion of people who have certain characteristics and make predictions.” (Churchill, 1991). The choice of research design “descriptive survey was used based on the fact that in the study, the researcher is interested in the state of affairs already existing in the field and no variable would be manipulated.” (Orodho, 2004). Further, “concerned with determining the relationship between variables.” (Bryman & Bell, 2003) in this case media censorship and governance. Therefore the

choice of descriptive research design in this study attempted to find out the influence of county governments in news coverage in Kenya.

The study utilized mixed data collection method which allowed for triangulation of data. This provided a better chance to understand whether unprincipled journalistic practices as well as the utilization of media organizations by several vested interests such as county governments are the source of the failure of the media to discharge its watchdog role.

3.3 Research Approach

The study utilized mixed method, both qualitative and quantitative data collection method which allowed for triangulation of data. This provided a better chance to understand whether unprincipled journalistic practices as well as the utilization of media organizations by several vested interests such as county governments are the source of the failure of the media to discharge its watchdog role.

3.4 Study Population

A target population refers to the population which a researcher wants to generalise the findings to. This could be a group, or individual to whom the study applies. It is the element of population where the study seeks response from in relation to the set research questions. The target population for the study was all journalists covering devolution sampled from the main media houses' regional offices (Bureaus) in Kisumu, Mombasa, Nairobi, Nyeri, Kakamega, Eldoret, Nakuru, and news desk at the head offices. The population was 500 respondents.

3.5 Sample Frame

The sample frame of the study consisted of Human Resources (HR) staff list from the Standard Group, the Nation Media Group, Media Max, Radio Africa Group, KBC/ KNA and Royal Media Services (RMS). The total listing of all the correspondents was 500.

3.6 Sample Procedure

According to data from Meida Council of Kenya and Kenya Correspondnets Association, there are over 1000 journalists spread across the country. In the major towns, Royal Media has 93 journalists, Standard Group 97, Nation Media Group 90, Media Max 80, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation/KNA over 150 as shown in Table below 1 below.

The sample was drawn from sampling frame of 500 journalists as shown in Table 1 below. As indicated in Table 1 below, out of 93 journalists from Royal Media Services, the study targeted 70 respondents and 40 respondents. Out of 65 journalists targeted from Standard Group, the researcher managed to get 43 respondents. 47 respondents filled and returned questionnaires out of the targeted 50 respondents from Media Max. Out of the targeted 60 respondents from Nation Media Group, 40 journalists filled and returned questionnaires. Out of targeted 90 respondents from Kenya Broadcasting Corporation/KNA, the researcher managed to get 47 journalists who filled and returned questionnaires.

Table 3.1: Number of Journalists who participated in the Study

Media House	Number of Journalists	Targeted Respondnets	Response Rate
Royal Media Services	93	70	40
Standard Group	97	65	43
Media Max	80	50	47
Nation Media Group	90	60	40
Kenya Broadcasting Corporation/KNA	150	90	47

Out of the 335 questionnaires distributed, targeting 335 respondents, 217 were returned as shown in Table 1.2 below which represents a response rate of 65 %. This “response rate is considered satisfactory to make conclusions because as a 50% response rate is sufficient, 60% good and above 70% rated very good.” (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). It also collaborates assertions that a “response rate of 50% is sufficient, while a response rate over 70% is very good and based on this assertion, the response rate of 65 % is good.” (Bailey, 2000).

Table 3.2: Response Rate

	Frequency	Percentage
Questionnaires filled and returned	217	65
Neutral	118	35
Total	335	100

3.7 Research Instruments

Primary data collection instrument that was utilized was in the form of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was structured and had both open and closed ended questions. Closed-ended questions was preferred since they are simple to inquire and fast to answer. They in addition made data analysis straightforward. Open-ended questions on the other hand was preferred because they permitted the respondents to answer in detail and clarify responses. The open-ended questions also permitted an unlimited number of possible answers. The researcher utilized mailed questionnaire. Mailed questionnaire was preferred because of ease of distribution, low cost, and reduction of bias.

3.8 Reliability and Validity of Research Instruments

Reliability is the “extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study.” (Joppe, 2000). In research, reliability suggests that “outcomes of the study that can be reproduced under similar methodology in which case the research instrument will be considered to be reliable.” (Joppe, 2000). Kirk and Miller (1996) identify three types of reliability which includes, “the degree to which a measurement given repeatedly remains the same, stability of the measurement over time and similarity of measurement within a given time period.”. To determine reliability, this study adapted split half approach, and the researcher also conducted a pilot study among journalists based in Nairobi and was not part of the sampled population to ensure the instruments had high consistency and accuracy of the test scores.

Validity determines whether the research truly measured that which was intended for the study or how truthful the research is (Joppe, 2000). On the other hand Weiner & Braun (1989) describe “the validity in quantitative research as the construct validity.” The pilot study was

carried out in order to find out whether the questions in the questionnaire were eliciting the right responses based on the objectives of the study. Questions that were not aligned to the initial concept, notion, and research questions were reframed, while others were deleted altogether.

3.9 Sampling Techniques

A sample is a small-subgroup chosen for study (Denscombe, 1998). Owing to the fact that it is not feasible to collect data from all the groups covered by a research problem, a study can draw precise inferences from a fairly small number of groups (a sub-group) when the sub-groups precisely represent the applicable characteristics of the whole group and generalise the findings to the whole group (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996). Consequently, the “basic principle of sampling is that it is viable to generate accurate findings without the need to collect data from each and every member of a study population” (Denscombe, 1998). Simple random sampling

The study utilized simple random sampling to pick journalists who participated in the study. The researcher preferred to choose the journalists to participate in the study owing to the fact that they had information on the research subject. They therefore offered the most valuable data on the research subject.

3.10 Data Collection

Before the study was undertaken, the researcher obtained introduction letter as well as clearance certificate from the University of Nairobi and sought consent from media Houses, explaining that the study was for academic purposes only. Further, the researcher notified the respondents that their responses would be treated with anonymity and confidentiality.

3.10.1 Data Analysis

Data analysis means “categorizing, ordering, manipulating and summarizing of data to obtain answers to research questions.” (Karlirger, 2000). The researcher organized data according to the methodology in the study. This involved the scrutiny of questions in order to detect and reduce as much as possible, errors, incompleteness, and misclassification in the information that was obtained from the respondents. Qualitative data generated from open-ended questions were analyzed and the emerging themes were categorized based on the identified similarities and differences that emerged. Quantitative data was scrutinized for completeness, accuracy and uniformity. The Qualitative data was studied using the qualitative content analysis and presented using the narrative prose format while Quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and the generated data was presented in percentages displayed in tables, graphs and figures.

3.10.2 Ethical Issue

This study utilized human participants in generating data to assess media censorship in the devolved system of governance in Kenya. The study was conducted after obtaining permission from the University of Nairobi, School of Journalism and Mass Communication. The project was defended and the researcher was cleared by the Board of Examiners and issued with a Field work Certificate before data collection. The Certificate of Fieldwork is attached in Appendix 3. During the data collection, the respondents were informed of ethical considerations such as voluntary consent to participate in the study, confidentiality of collected data. The study utilized questionnaires to collect data which is attached as Appendix 2. The project was also defended after field work before the Board of Examiners after which certificate of originality was issued after

plagiarism test. The Certificate of originality is attached in the Appendix 4. Corrections from the Board of Examiners during the defence were complied with and a certificate of correction attached in Appendix 5 was also issued which cleared the project for printing and binding for final submission.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Overview

This chapter focuses on the analysis, presentation and an interpretation of the data gathered from the questionnaires. The information sought to satisfy the research objectives which were: to assess the extent to which journalists feel independent and free from censorship in reporting county governments' public finance; to determine ways in which the county governments are attempting to control news reporting; to find out the extent to which the county advertising to the media is a factor in news media practice at the county and to recommend ways in which media can overcome the challenge of control to retain freedom in public finance scrutiny.

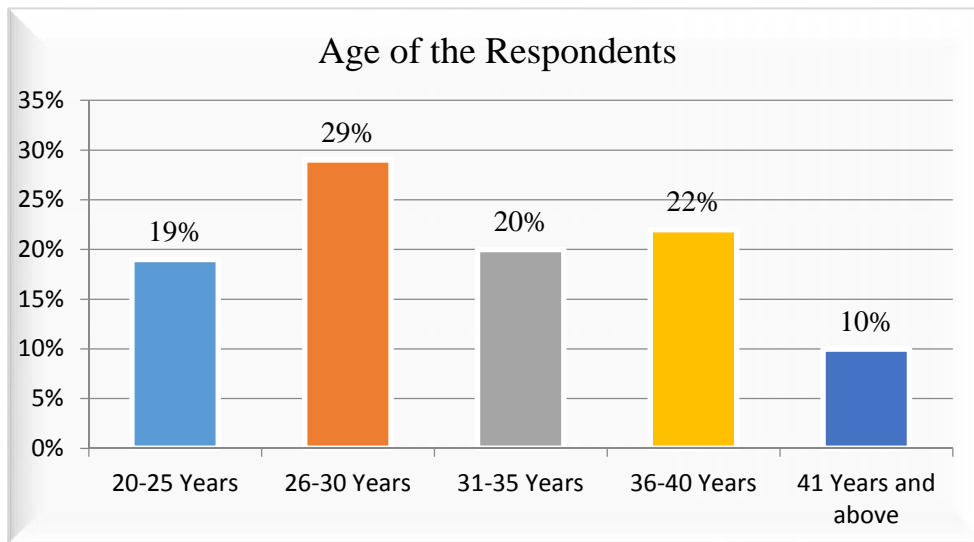
4.2 Demographics

The study sought to obtain the background and demographic information from the respondents which, points at the respondents' suitability in answering the questions.

4.3 Age of the Respondents

The respondents were requested to indicate their age. The finding shows most of the employees in media houses are aged between 31-40 years as shown Figure 4.1 below. Twenty nine percent of the respondents were between the ages of 26-30 years, 22% were aged between 36-40 years, 20% were aged between 31-35 years, and 19% were between 20-25 years while 10% were aged above 41 years.

Figure 4.1: Age of the Respondents

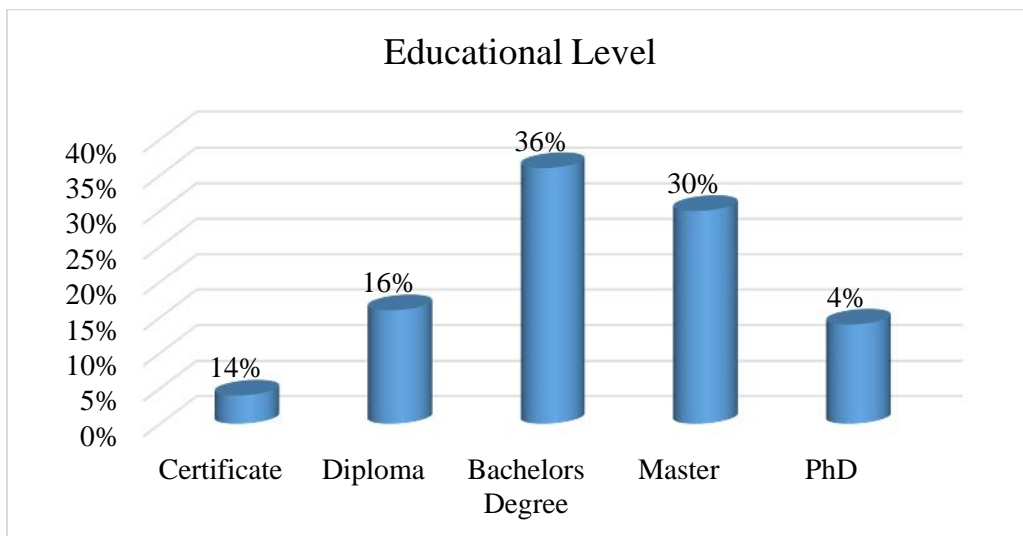


Source: Research Findings (2016)

4.4 Educational Level

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of education as shown in Figure 4.3 below.

Figure 4.2: Educational Level



Source: Research Findings (2016)

Figure 4.2 above, indicates that 36% of the respondents had bachelor's degree, 30% had master's holders, 16% were diploma holders, and 4% PHD holders while the remaining 14% had certificates. These findings indicate that majority of the respondents in the media industry are well trained and well-grounded in issues to do with media censorship in the devolved system of governance in Kenya. It was therefore safe to conclude they provided reliable and valuable information.

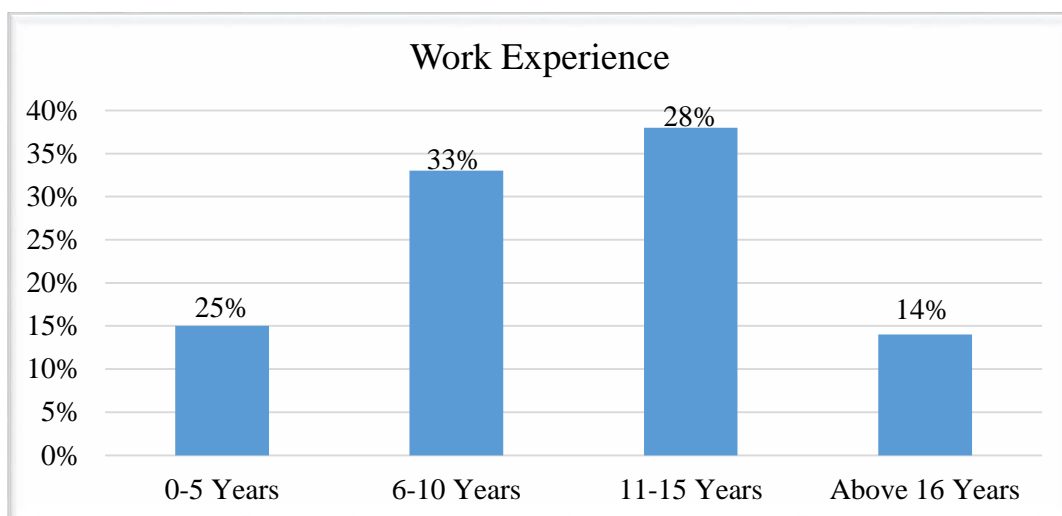
4.5 Position in the newsrooms and media houses

The study further requested the respondents to state their occupation. Majority of the respondents were news correspondents while others were staff writers, editors and anchors. This implies that most of the respondents provided reliable data since correspondents are always on the ground in the field and are aware of the current happenings.

4.6 Work Experience

The researcher sought to find out the level of work experience of the respondents as shown in Figure 4.3 below.

Figure 4.3: Work Experience



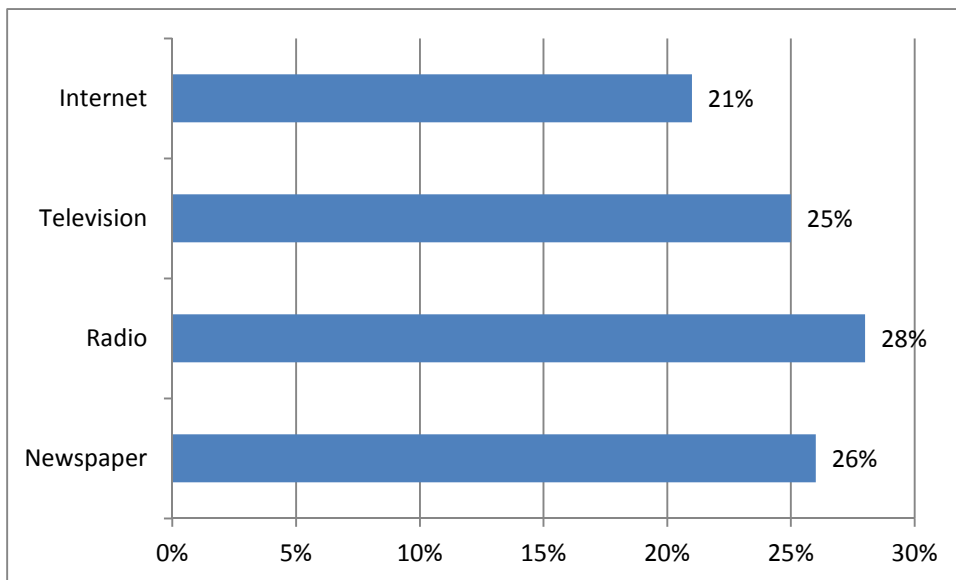
Source: Research Findings (2016)

Figure 4.3 above indicates that 28% of the respondents had between 11-15 years of work experience while 33% had 6-10 years of work experience. These findings imply that most of the employees in the media industry have worked for a period long enough to be familiar with the dynamics in their coverage of specific areas such as county governance. This implies that the respondents offered reliable data on the research subject based on their work experience in the media industry.

4.7 Media outlets that the Respondents Work for

The study sought to find out the media outlets that the respondents work for as shown in Figure 4.4 below.

Figure 4.4: Media Outlets that the Respondents Work for



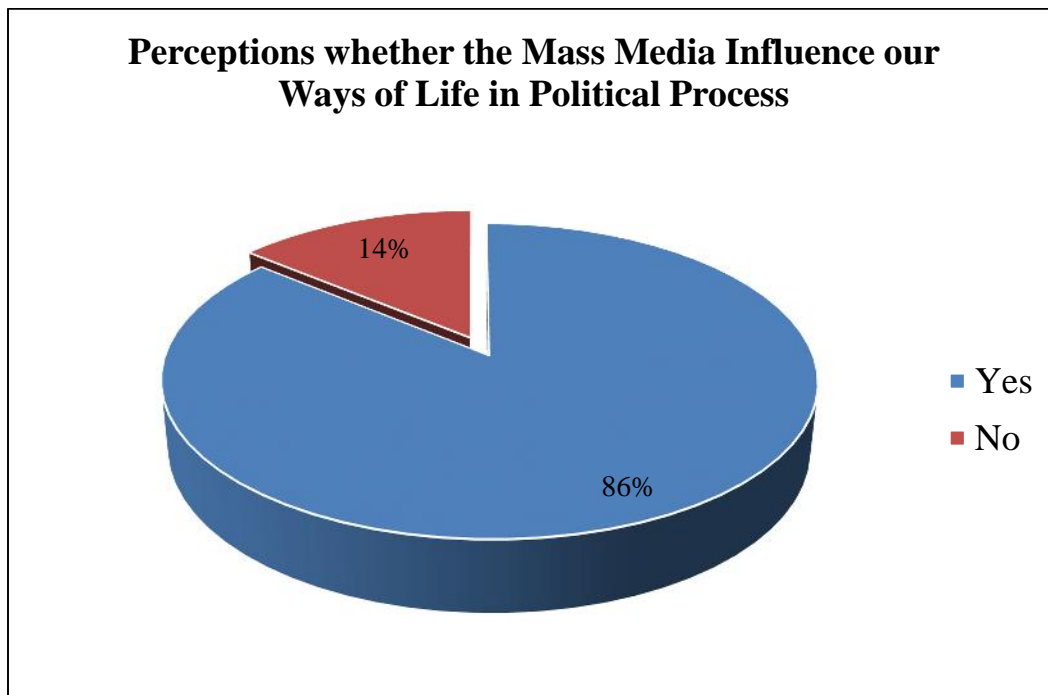
Source: Research Findings (2016)

Figure 4.4 above shows that 28% of the respondents preferred radio as the channel to reach the public. From the response of this open-ended question, the internet was also mentioned as the most preferred medium when journalists want to disseminate information to the public very instantaneously. These views were held by various journalists from the mainstream media houses. This finding implies that the respondents provided valuable data owing to the fact that majority of Kenyans listens to radio.

4.8 The Influence of Mass Media on our Ways of Life of their consumers

The study further tried to find out how journalists perceive media influence on the audiences' way of life, thinking and participation in the political process as shown in Figure 4.5 below.

Figure 4.5: The Influence of Mass Media on our Ways of Life



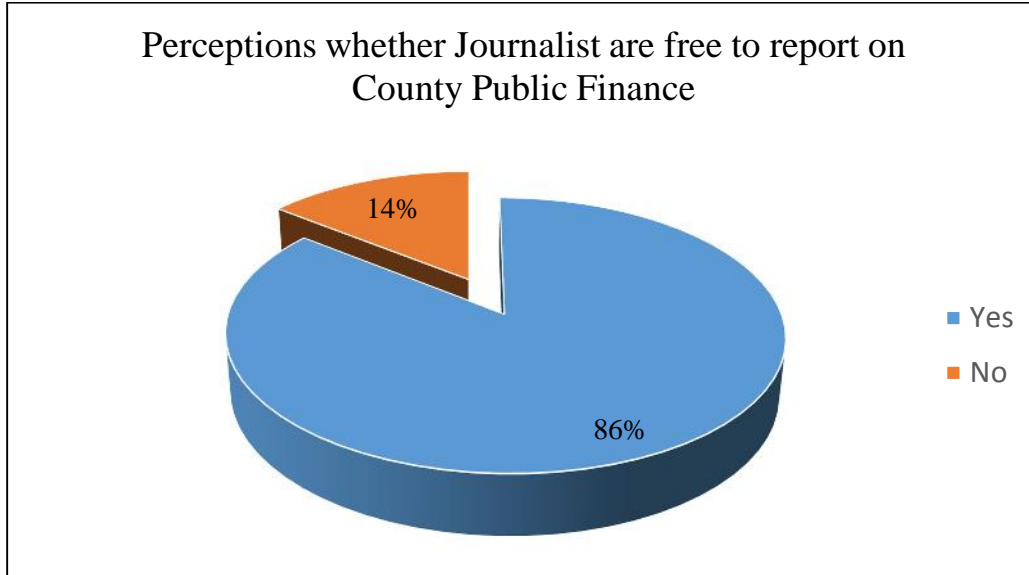
Source: Research Findings (2016)

Figure 4.5 above shows that 86% of the respondents were of the view that mass media influences our ways of life, our thinking and participation in the political process while 14% were of the view that mass media does not influences our ways of life, our thinking and participation in the political process. This finding implies that if the media can influence how individuals act and think, then the media can educate and change the citizens' perceptions about corruption which undermines good governance. These finding are in line with Steinberg (2006) who found out that the mass media influences the way individual act and think. The finding in addition supports the spiral of silence theory which concentrates in the manner the media influence public beliefs (Potter, 2012). Furthermore, the study asked the respondents to explain why they were of the view that the mass media influences or does not influence our ways of life, thinking and participation in the political process, it was stated that the media are the opinion shapers; they frame the current happenings as they are absorbed by the public in the same context, and exposes people to various ways of life. These views were held by a number of journalists from the mainstream media houses. As a result people will want to choose a way they consider superior, stylish or simply the best.

4.9 Journalism Independence

The first objective of this study was to evaluate the extent of interference in news reporting on county government public finance. In order to achieve this objective, the respondents were first asked whether they are free to report on the county governments' public finance without external interference as shown in Figure 4.6 below.

Figure 4.6: Reporting on County Expenditure



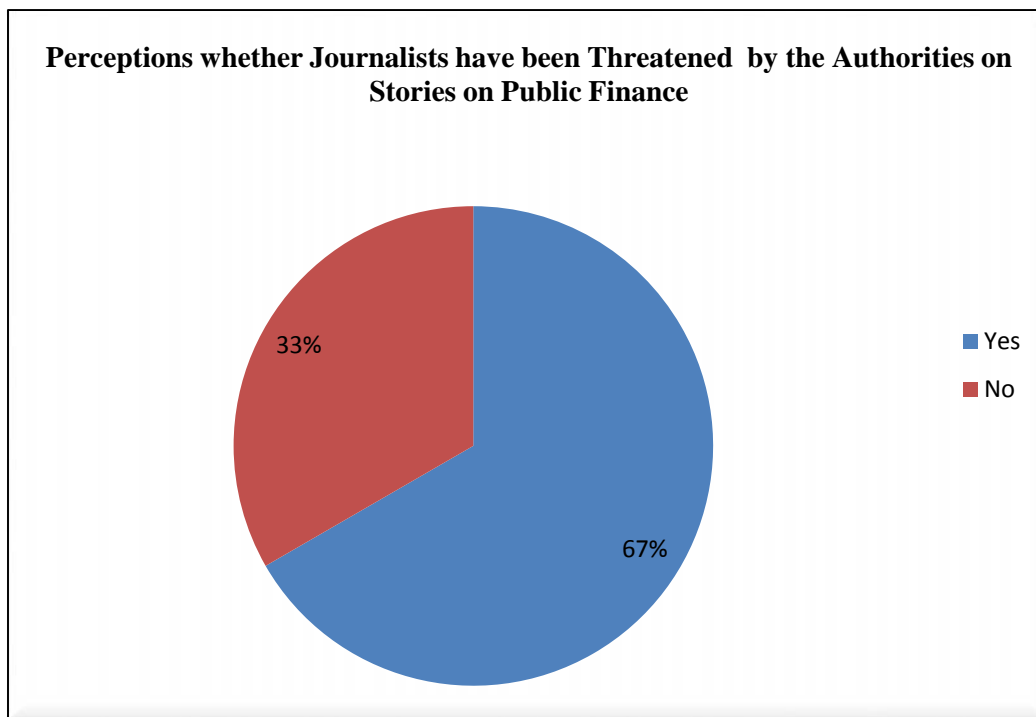
Source: Research Findings (2016)

Figure 4.6 above shows that 86% of the respondents were of the view that they are free to report on county public finance while 14% were of the opinion that they do not have the freedom to report on public finance. Furthermore, when the respondents were asked to explain their views as to whether the respondents are free to report on county public finance, the respondents who were of the opinion that they have the independence to report on the county public finance explained that they do report on how the national and county governments are spending public funds since documents on county expenditure are always accessible and available. However, it was noted that the problems with the disguised way in which the data is presented. These views were held by various journalists from the mainstream media houses. On the other hand, the respondents who indicated that they do not have the independence to report on the county finance explained that they are not free to report on the issue of expenditure since they fear for their life due to the threats they have received from the relevant authorities. This shows that to a large extent, the freedom to report on public finance by the journalists is not guaranteed. These findings to some

extent supports the Propaganda Model by Herman & Chomsky (1994) in the sense that the county government tend to shape the information that the public receives.

In addition to freedom of journalists, the study also sought to find out whether the journalists have been threatened by the authorities on stories touching on public finances as shown in Figure 4.7 below.

Figure 4.7: Threat on Journalists by the Authorities



Source: Research Findings (2016)

Figure 4.7 above indicates that 67% of the respondents were of the view that they have been threatened by the authorities on stories on public finance while 33% indicated that they have never been threatened. This undermines the threatening of good governance since incidences of bad governance such as corruption will not be reported due to fear of an attack. Indeed, KCA chairman Oloo Janak, Media Council of Kenya (MCK) and other rights groups have raised the

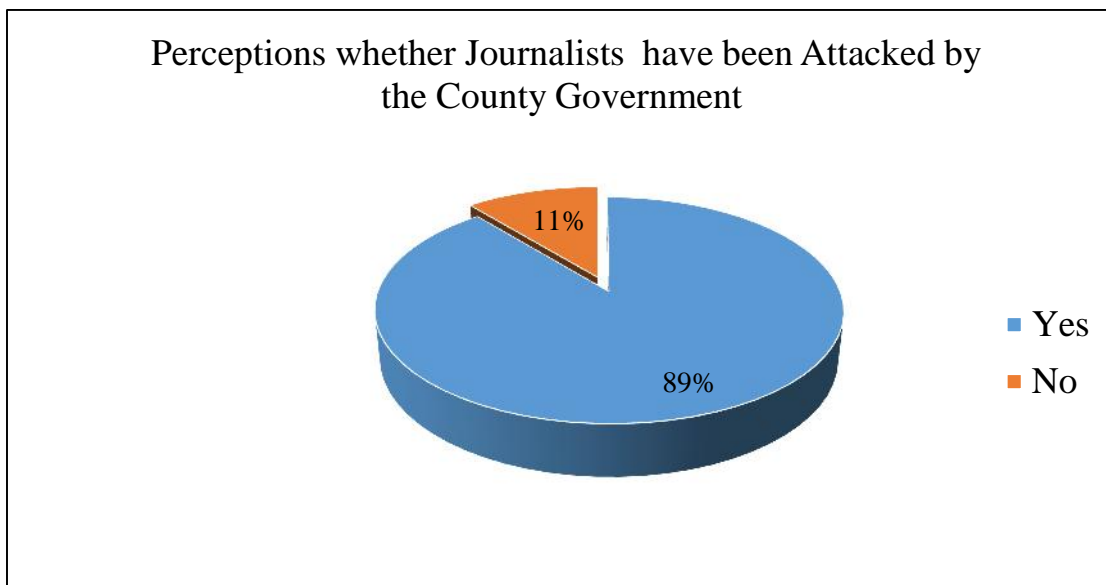
same concerns, arguing that a number of journalists are receiving threats from county government when reporting on financial expenditure is increasing by the day. This finding has also been emphasized elsewhere by Media Council of Kenya (2014) report where it was found that:

58% of the respondents pointed out that political threats, media censorship and attacks on journalists; impede the investigative role and reports on bad governance stories (p. 4).

Moreover, Nation Media reporters were kicked out of Nyeri County Assembly by the Speaker for allegation of inciting the public against them because of a report by both NTV and the *Nation* that exposed how each ward representative would manage Ksh.6 million as a ward development fund and Ksh.15 million for public participation as well as the media house highlighting a report by the Controller of Budget illustrating how Members of the County Assembly pocketed Sh. 3 billion in allowances (Wambui, 2015).

The study also sought to find out whether journalists have been attacked by the county government as shown in Figure 4.8 below.

Figure 4.8: Journalists Attacked by the County Government



Source: Research Findings (2016)

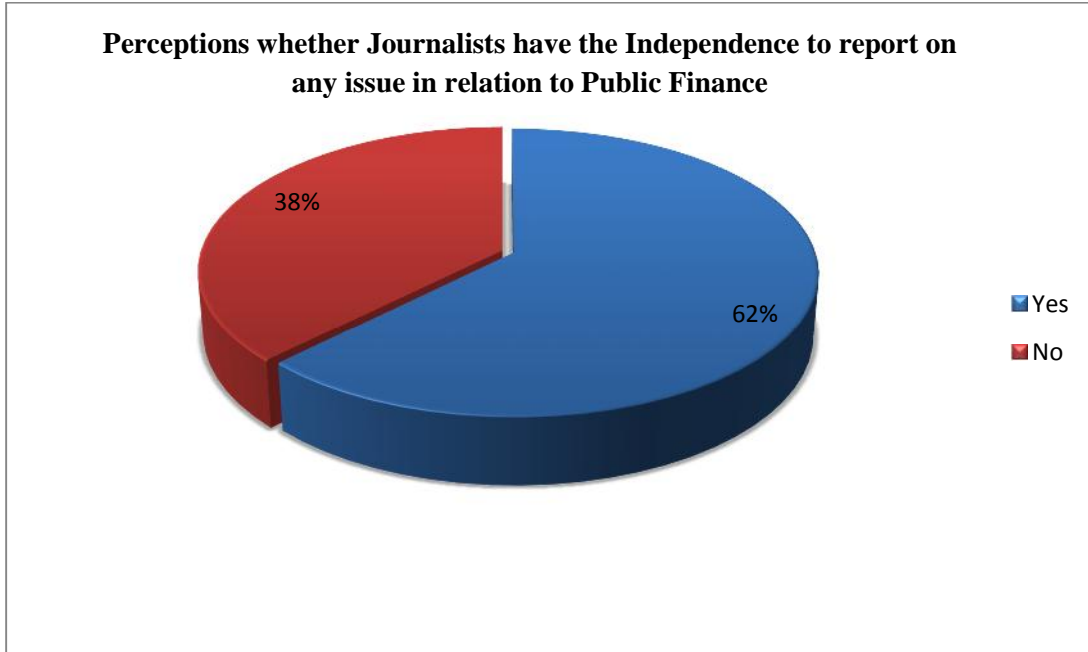
Figure 4.8 above shows that 89% of the journalists were of the view that they have been attacked by the county government while 11% were of the opinion that they have never been attacked. This has also been emphasized elsewhere this year where a journalist from the Standard Media Group was allegedly attacked over negative stories (Baraza, 2017). In the words of Journalist Isaiah Gwengi as quoted in Baraza (2017):

They asked for my phone prior to ordering me to follow them. I unwillingly followed their orders. I was slapped in the face, forced into a waiting police vehicle and taken to Usenge AP post where I was beaten and tortured for four hours.

Moreover, when the respondents were asked to explain, it was stated that the county governments always had problems with stories touching on the government negatively. Such attacks have not been physical, but verbal anytime the journalist portrayed the county negatively. Moreover, because of continuous threats to journalist a lot of the journalists have ended up self-censoring for fear of their lives. These views were held by a number of journalists from the mainstream media houses and the findings suggest that the independence of the journalists is always put at stake hence making it difficult for journalist to fulfill their watchdog function.

The study further sought to find out whether journalists have the independence to report on any issue regarding public finance as shown in Figure 4.9 below.

Figure 4.9: Reporting of any Issue Relating to Public Finance

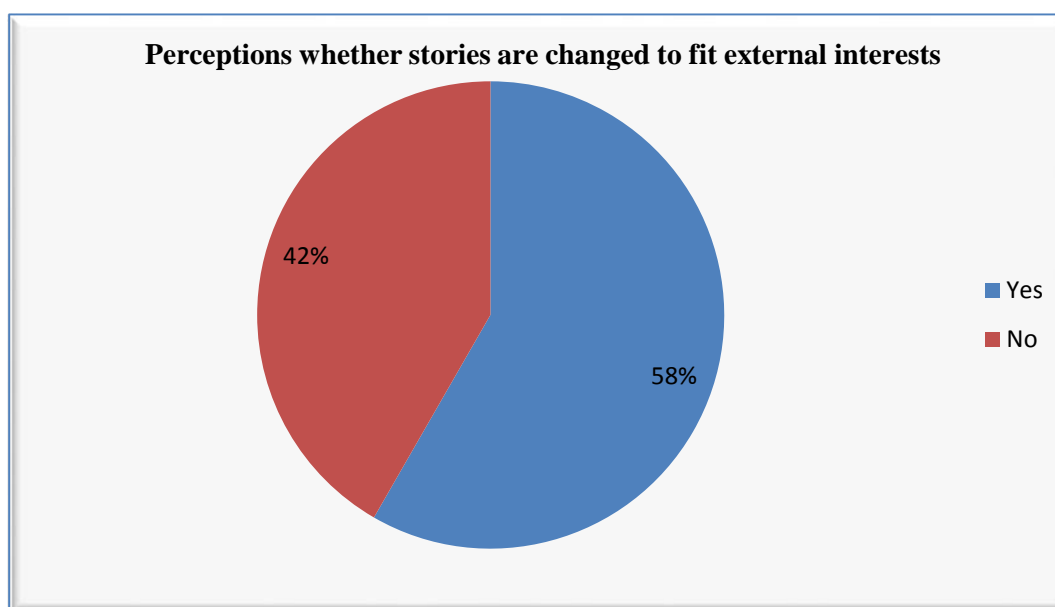


Source: Research Findings (2016)

Figure 4.9 above shows that 62% of journalists were of the view that they do have the independence to report on any issue in relation to public finance while 38% of journalists were of the view that they have the independence to report on any issue related to public finance.

The study further asked the respondents whether they experienced incidences when stories were changed to serve specific county government interests as shown in Figure 4.10 below.

Figure 4.10: Cases Where Journalists had to Change Stories to fit External Interests



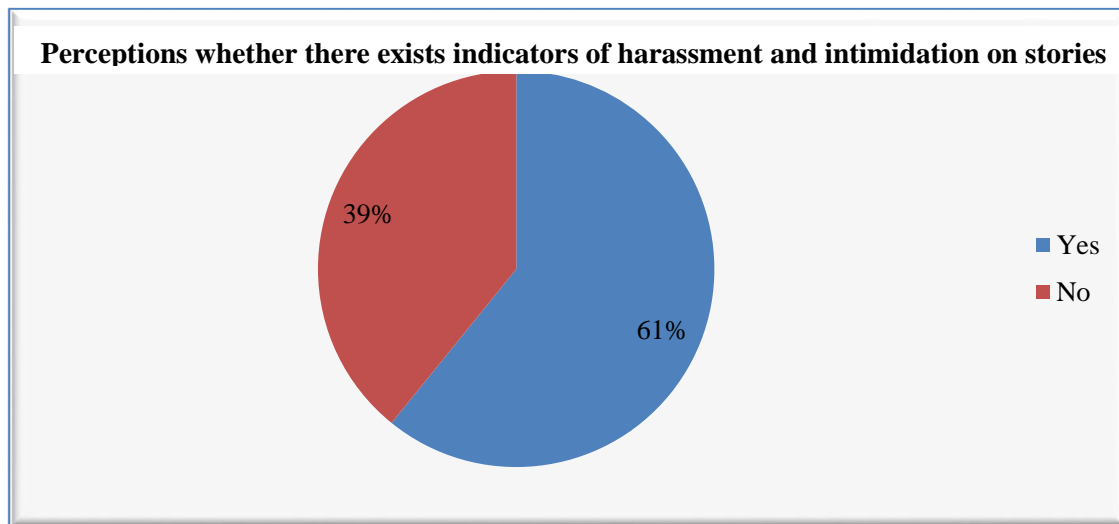
Source: Research Findings (2016)

Figure 4.10 above shows that 58% of the journalists were of the view that there are incidences where stories are changed to serve other interests other than objectivity in certain incidences while 42% were of the view that there are no incidences where stories are changed to fit other specific interests. When asked to explain, it was stated that this is a common occurrence in the newsrooms, when a major advertiser, including the county government, has to be pleased just to safeguard the company's source of revenue. These views were held by the three main media houses. This shows that, the independence of the journalists is in jeopardy despite the provisions in the constitution and other acts of parliament that guaranteed the independence to access to information. Furthermore, one journalist stated further that journalists in numerous circumstances do not have the liberty to report on stories accurately, in fairness and objectively which undermines the freedom of journalists in performing the watchdog role. This finding supports the Kenya Media Programme (2013) survey conclusion that:

Journalists in Kenya face various challenges in their profession. For reasons being they act as public watchdogs and face special risks, which include legal suites, harassment and at times, physical attacks in line of duty to defend public interest (p. 35).

The study also sought to find out whether there are indicators of harassment and intimidation on journalist because of stories touching on the county governments as shown in Figure 4.11 below.

Figure 4.11: Harassment and Intimidation on Stories Concerning County Governments

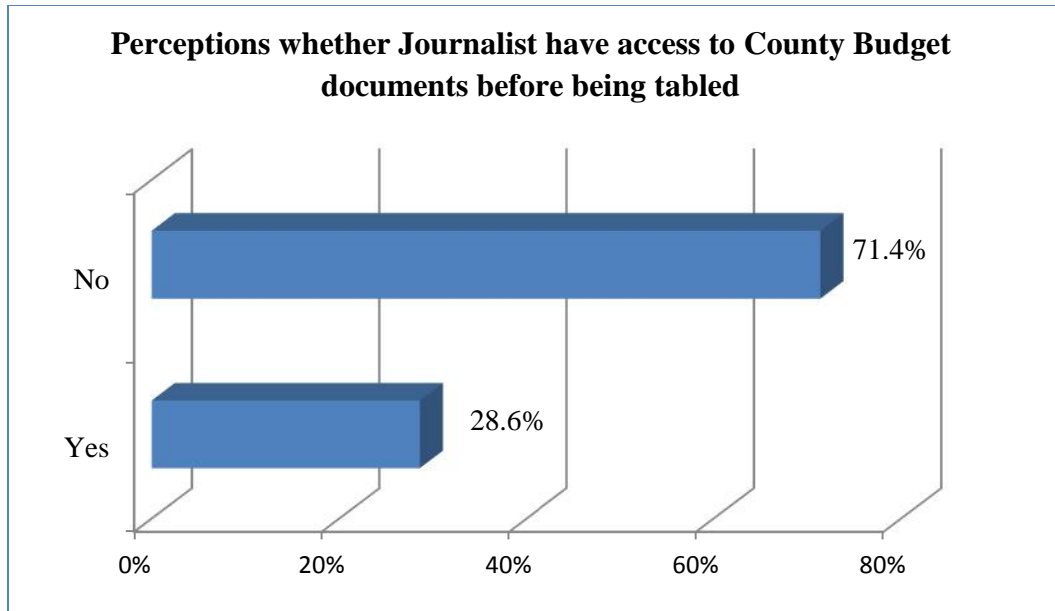


Source: Research Findings (2016)

Figure 4.11 above indicates that 61% of the respondents were of the view that there are indicators of harassment and intimidation on stories touching on the county governments while 39% were of the opinion that there are no indicators of harassment and intimidation on stories touching on the county governments. This has also been emphasized elsewhere by Freedom House (2015) report that “political pressure coupled with threats and intimidation has encouraged self-censorship on sensitive stories in the media.”

Moreover, the researcher asked the respondents whether they have access to county budget documents prior to being tabled in the county assemblies for debate and passage as shown in Figure 4.12 below.

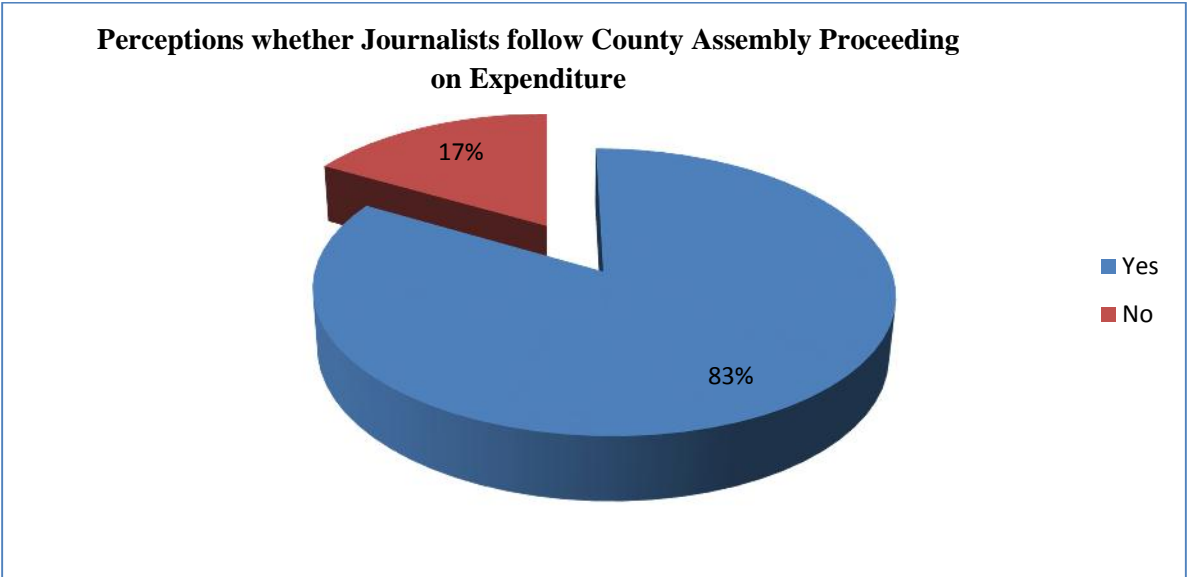
Figure 4.12: Journalists access to report to county budget documents prior tabling



Source: Research Findings (2016)

Figure 4.12 above, shows that 71.4% of the journalists were of the view that they do not have access to county budget documents before being tabled in the county assemblies while 28.6% of the journalist were of the opinion that they have access to county budget documents before tabling os such documents in the assemblies. These implies that majority of journalists have limited access to the county budget documents prior to tabling in the county assemblies for debate and passage. The study then sought to find out whether journalist do follow the proceedings of county assemblies on expenditure and as shown in Figure 4.14 below.

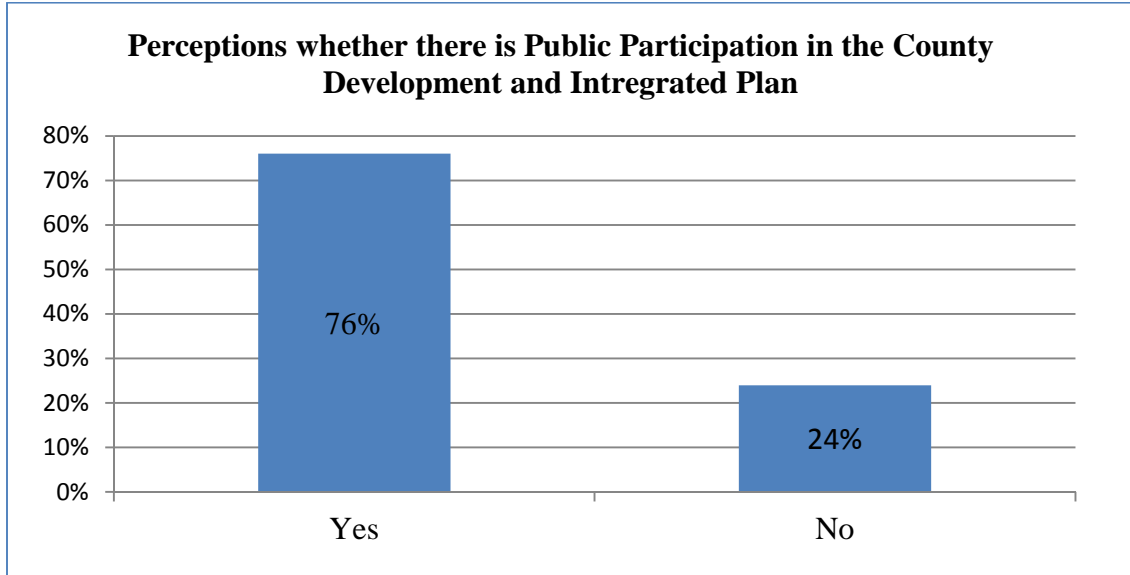
Figure 4.12: Journalists following of County Assembly Proceedings on Expenditure



Source: Research Findings (2016)

Figure 4.12 above shows that 83% of the journalists were of the view that they follow county assembly proceedings on expenditure while 17% were of the opinion that they follow the county proceedings on expenditure. The respondents were further asked whether there is public participation in the county development and integrated plan, budget process and approval of other projects by the county government as shown in Figure 4.15 below.

Figure 4.13: Public Participation in the County Development and Integrated Plan

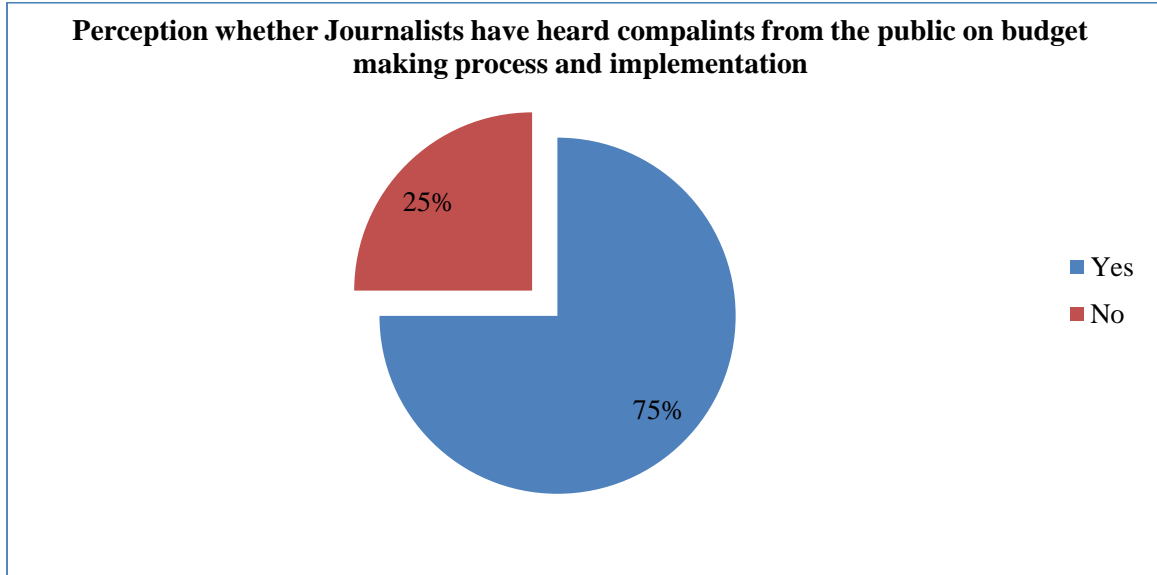


Source: Research Findings (2016)

As shown in Figure 4.13 above, 76% of the journalist indicated that they are of the view that there is public participation in the county development plans while 24% were of the opinion that there is no public participation in the county development and integrated plan. This was also emphasized elsewhere by Media Council (2014) report finding that “National and county governments engage the public through the media to facilitate good governance.” (p. 4).

The researcher further sought to find out whether the journalists have heard complaints from the public on the budget making process and its implementation as shown in Figure 4.16 below.

Figure 4.14: Complaints Regarding Budget Making and Its Implementation

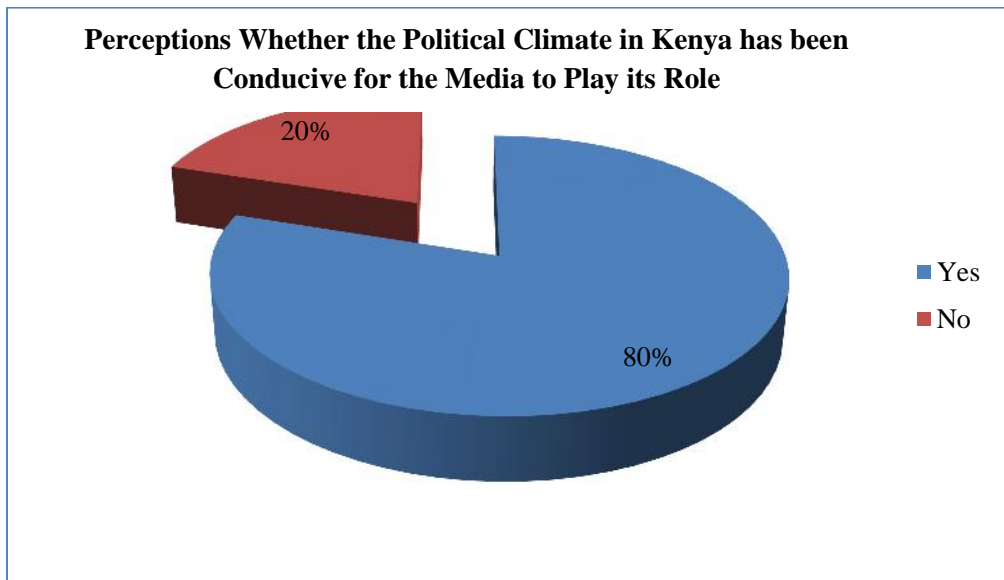


Source: Research Findings (2016)

Figure 4.14 above shows that 75% of the respondents have heard complaints from the general public in relation to budget making process and its implementation while 25% have not heard of complaints from the public. Furthermore, when asked to explain, a journalist from one of the major TV stations stated that MCAs are usually paid to pass double allocations and white elephant projects and that most of the time the public felt their views were not adequately incorporated in the budget making process and its implementation. The public petitions to Parliament, the Controller of Budgets report and that of the Auditor General's supports these findings. Recently, Nyeri County Executive Committee Members were jailed for three years for breach of the financial and procurement laws.

The study further asked the respondents whether the political climate in Kenya has been conducive enough for the mass media to play its role as shown in Figure 4.15 below. the political climate has not been conducive enough to enable the media to play its role as shown in figure 4.15 below.

Figure 4.15: The Political Climate in Kenya



Source: Research Findings (2016)

Figure 4.15 above shows that 80% of the respondents were of the view that the political climate in Kenya has been conducive enough for media to play its role while 20% were of the opinion that the political temperature in Kenya has not been conducive enough for the media to play its role. This perspective has also been emphasized elsewhere by Freedom House (2015) report that the leading media outlets in Kenya are “pluralistic, rigorous, and bold in their reporting”.

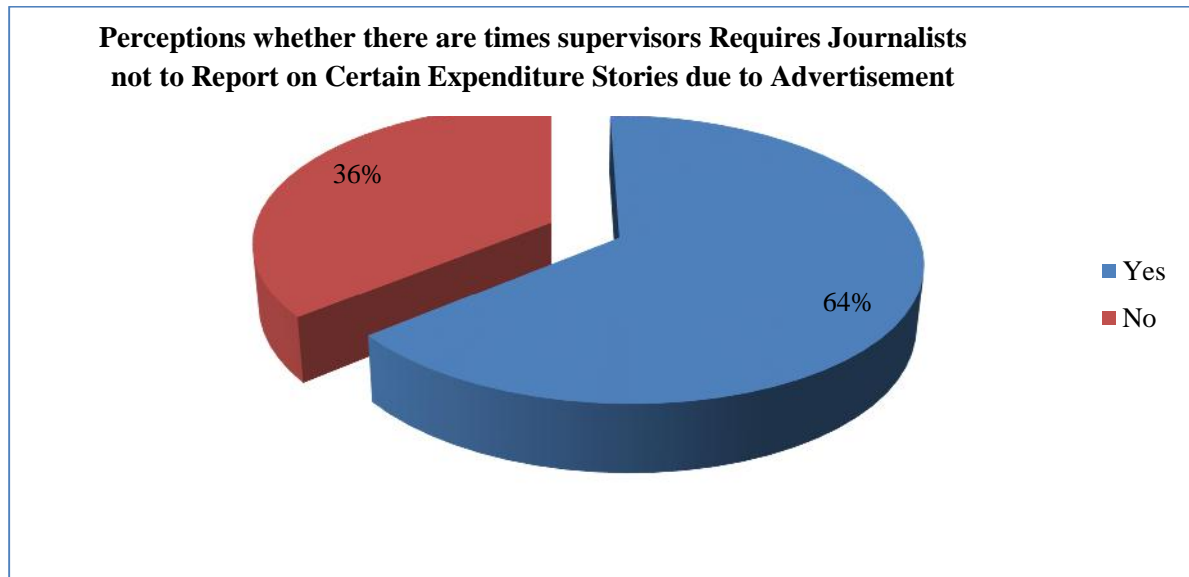
4.10 Advertisement

The second objective of the study was to investigate the role of county governance in reporting on public finance. It was noted that the county government allocated funds for advertisements and would threaten to withdraw advertisements whenever the media covered or published stories that portrayed the county governments negatively. These views were held by three journalists from two of the major TV stations. Moreover, one journalist from one of the TV station was of the view that some journalists have lost their jobs, at the behest of the county executives, for going to press with negative stories, while in extreme case a few have lost their lives in mysterious circumstances in the course of reporting on county finances. This finding supports Rusbridger (2017) who quoted David Makali, a former director of the Media Institute in Nairobi while equating the current situation with the former President Kibaki's era ("somewhat tyrannical, but subtle") and that of Daniel Arap Moi ("atrocious repression") that:

Today, these new guys have resorting to co-opting journalists. They have perfected the art of censorship since they intervene level in the newsrooms using the state levers of advertising and manipulation. You publish, the sanctions are immediate.

Moreover, the study attempted to find out whether news room editors instruct journalist and reporters not to report on certain expenditure stories because of advertisement revenue generated from the county governments as shown in Figure 4.16 below.

Figure 4.16: Requirement not to Report on Expenditure Stories



Source: Research Findings (2016)

Figure 4.16 above shows that 64% of the respondents were of the view that editors and supervisors from the commercial division of media houses require the journalists not to report on certain expenditure stories due to advertisement revenue from the county governments while 36% were of the opinion that the editors and supervisors do not require them not to report on certain expenditure stories due to advertisement. When asked to explain, a number of journalists from the mainstream media houses stated that there are times they have been told to report on certain expenditure stories because of the advertisements given by the counties. These findings support Freedom House (2015) report that “Kenya’s leading media outlets often pander to the interests of main advertisers and influential politicians, particularly at the editorial level.” This perspective has also been emphasized elsewhere by Rusbridger (2017) from the Committee to Protect Journalists that advertising is withdrawn when the media steps out of line and that no one openly censors

anyone and that the newspapers act in response to the potential withholding of revenue by censoring themselves.

4.10.1 Source of Information on County Government's Public Expenditure

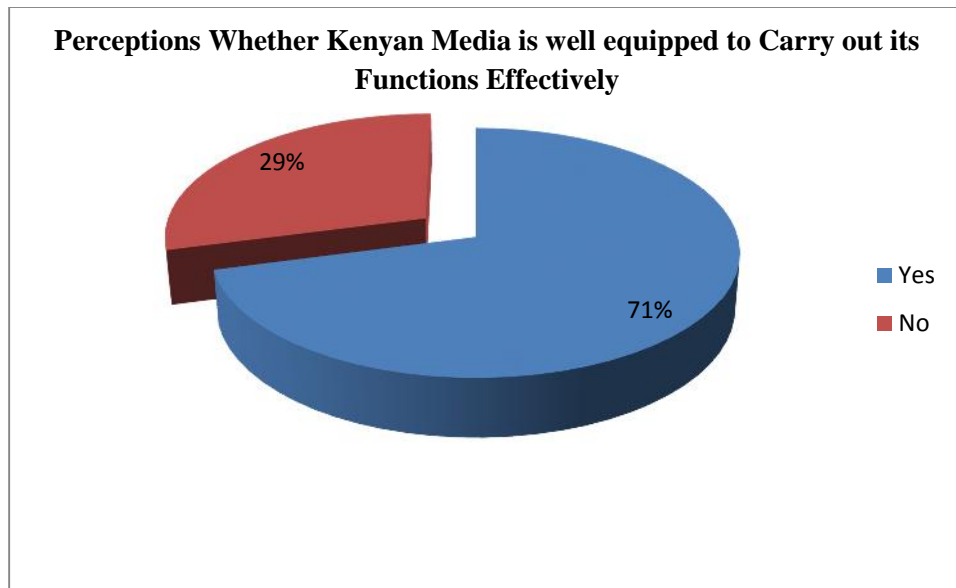
The study also sought to find out the sources of information on county government's public expenditure. It was stated that stories on public expenditure were from the governors, County Assembly Speakers, Clerks and sometimes from the accounting officials and oversight groups. These views were held by a number of journalists from the major TV stations. It is worth to underline that this heavy reliance of official sources of information undermines the deepening of good governance because it denies the ordinary citizens the opportunity to voice their concerns on issues of good governance. This finding in addition supports the Propaganda Model by Herman & Chomsky (1994) which states that the media heavily relies on official sources of information.

The study in addition sought to find out the number of public finance information that journalist sought weekly for their stories and the approximate number of government stories. The responses indicate that there are two to three stories done every week on public finance of which journalists seek information. Out of the stories on finance, government stories are done once in a month. The study also found out that there are several private audit firms in every county that always help in news reportage by giving information to journalists. These are mostly owned by individuals who do stories for sell to the main media houses. These views were held by a number of journalists from the mainstream media houses. One journalist also was of the view that most of the issues on public expenditure in counties are reported online where most Kenyans can access them.

4.10.2 News Coverage and Censorship

The study also sought to find out whether Kenyan media are well equipped to carry out their functions effectively as shown in Figure 4.17 below.

Figure 4.17: Kenyan Media's Effectiveness

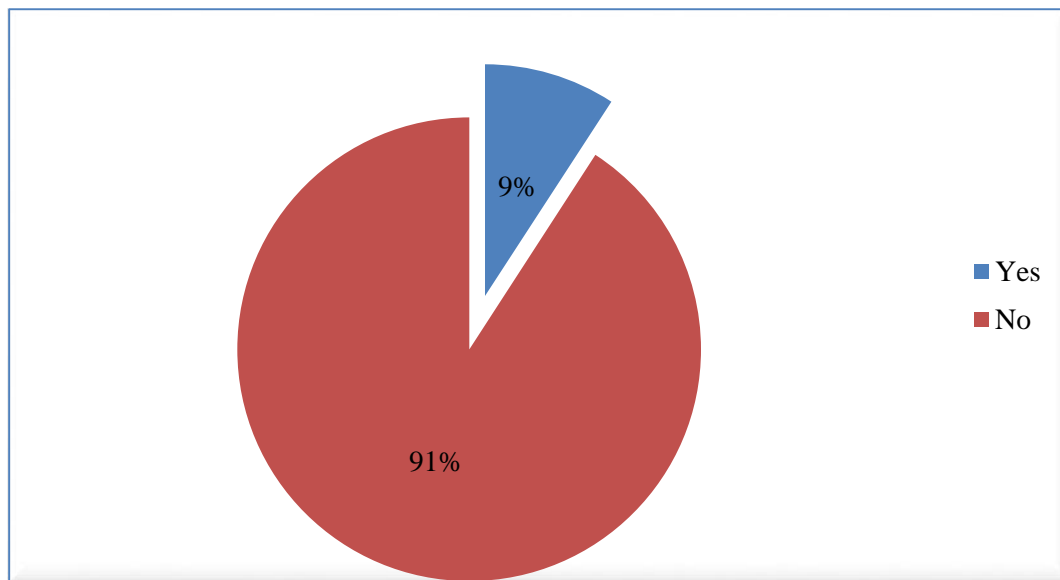


Source: Research Findings (2016)

Figure 4.17 above show that 71% of the respondents view the Kenyan media as well equipped to carry out its functions effectively while 29% of the respondents indicated that the Kenyan media is not well equipped to perform its functions effectively. While Figure 4.20 above indicates that majority of the respondents were of the view the Kenyan media is well equipped to perform its functions effectively, one journalist from one of the main TV station was of the view that in terms of capacity, they still require training on financial management and financial data reporting. Interpretation of data news is still a challenge, which gives the county officers leverage to distort information.

The study further sought to find out whether the Kenyan media has covered political issues without any bias as shown in Figure 4.18 below.

Figure 4.18: Perceptions on media coverage of facts regarding political issues without bias

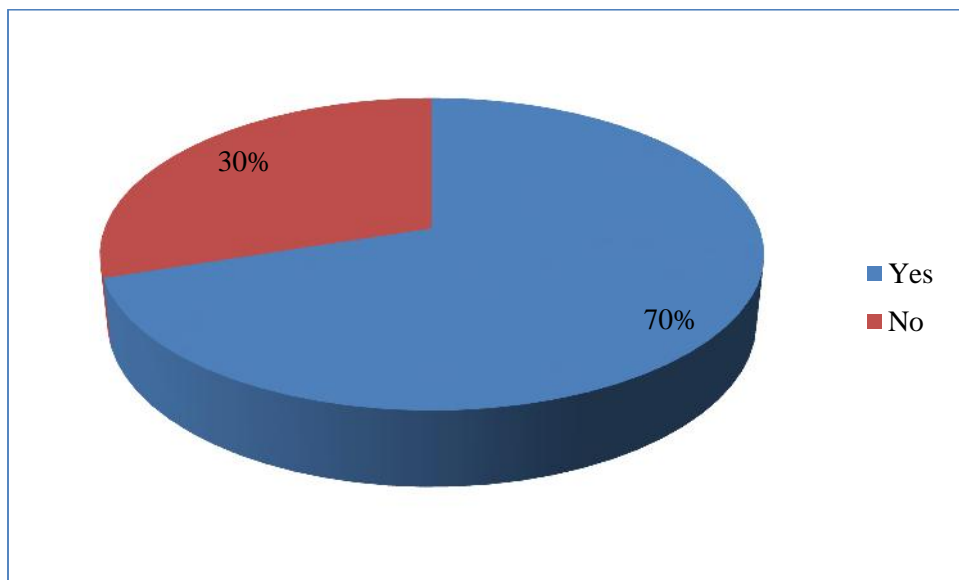


Source: Research Findings (2016)

Figure 4.18 above shows that 91% of the respondents were of the view the Kenyan media has not reported facts concerning political issues in Kenya from a neutral perspective while 9% of the respondents were of the view that they have reported facts regarding political issues objectively. Moreover, it was stated that some of the challenges the Kenyan media battles with that prevent the media from carrying out its responsibilities are; poor remuneration of journalists which leads to compromise in reporting, lack of cooperation from sources, lack of access to source documents, political biasness which affects coverage and the influence of the advertisers who threaten to withdraw advertisements when media refuse to heed to their bidding in news coverage. These views were held by various journalists from the mainstream media houses.

The study then sought to find out whether journalists usually self-censor stories. It was found that because of the above challenges, especially the threat from the advertisers, including the County Governments, journalist do self-censorship on the stories and more often than not spike or edit out sections of the story to protect big advertisers like the county governments as shown in Figure 4.19 below.

Figure 4.19: Perceptions whether Journalists usually self-censor stories



Source: Research Findings (2016)

Figure 4.19 above shows that 70% of the respondents were of the view that they usually self-censor their stories while 30% were of the opinion that they do not usually self-censor. When asked which type of stories that are censored most, a number of journalists stated that political stories touching on individual politicians, government finances, corporates and investigative stories about these corporates and the most censored while positive stories on human interest, health and development go to press or on air with little or no gate keeping. This was also pointed out by the Kenya Media Programme (2013) survey that the media is recurrently self-censoring on fundamental issues for instance politics, corruption, and land.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Overview

The study sought to identify factors that influence the media's role in ensuring prudent use of public funds at the counties. This chapter presents the summary of research findings, conclusions, suggestions for further research and recommendations.

5.2 Summary

The overarching objective of the study was to assess media censorship in the devolved system of governance in Kenya. To this end the study made five key findings on whether unprincipled journalistic practices as well as the utilization of media houses by different vested interests such as county governments are the source of the failure of the media to discharge its watchdog role. First, the study found that to a large extent, the freedom to report on county expenditure by the journalists is being curtailed through various forms of censorship. This is a common occurrence in the newsrooms, when a major advertiser has to be pleased just to safeguard the company's source of revenue, and this study confirms that journalists do not have the freedom of writing stories as objectively as the facts and events present themselves due to threats by interested parties at the county government who inadvertently force the journalist to employ self-censorship at the individual level or force the news editing process to spike the stories. This undermines the freedom journalists have and put their jobs in jeopardy.

The study further found that journalists reporting on county government's public finances have no freedom or independence in access to vital documents and information and are always forced to censor their stories especially when the stories touch on public finance and public

procurement to guarantee any little access to filtered information in their future stories. The journalists are often harassed and intimidated on stories they broadcast or publish concerning the county governments. These crackdown, intimidation and sometimes attacks on journalist who cover the truth that portray the county governments in bad like echoes the arguments by Mungai and Gona (2010) who asserted that President Daniel Arap Moi regime was characterized by countrywide crackdown on media houses and journalists who attacked the Nyayo government. Even though there is little evidence of incarceration of journalist evidence abound of journalist who have been attacked, threatened and even killed because of their coverage of issues either at the national government level or at the county government level, and it is safe to conclude that the county governments have borrowed from the previous one party autocratic regimes unorthodox methods of clamping down on journalist who expose misuse of public finance.

These findings are in line with Herman & Chomsky's (1994) assertion that the bureaucrats and the elites in power provide the raw materials for news after a succession of filtering that leaves only what if communicated to the mass public will not pose a threat to their privileged position in power. These elites in the county governments who essentially occupy positions of privilege only give this filtered information to journalist and media houses who do their bidding and these media houses are essentially coase through advertising revenue as flak to go slow on corrupt county government officials on budgetary and expenditure issues.

Second, the study found out that journalists have limited access to the county budget documents prior the tabling of such documents in the county assemblies for debate and passage. Though the journalists are allowed by county governments to follow the county assembly proceedings, the fact that they have limited knowledge of the budgetary documents discussed during such proceedings make their trade difficult. Even after the discussion and passage of the

budget in the county assemblies journalist rarely have access to further information and the only other time they get to access information about county budget and expenditure is through such statutory bodies like the office of the Auditor General, the Controller of Budgets, Senate Committees and other reports from independent audit firms. This basically means that journalist can only report as third parties and to a large extent cannot perform their watchdog role given the limited access to information.

It is therefore evident that such limited access to vital information at the county level makes it impossible for the media to guard the public interest as envisioned by scholars like Bennett et al (2007). And certainly limited access to information on county budget documents prior the tabling makes it difficult for the media to expose any financial transgressions, incompetence, misinformation and corruption by the county government officials who handle finance. It is therefore safe to conclude that county governments frustrate the media's watchdog role by hoarding information and only providing that which does not help them media hold them accountable and responsible. These findings are in agreement with Herman & Chomsky (1994) tenet of propaganda model that is critical of the media's the reliance on information provided by government which essentially renders the media toothless in its watchdog role. This is because the information from the government does not provide the media with an avenue to put the government to task.

The third key finding of the study is that the main news sources in the counties are the governors, deputy governors, County Assembly Speakers, Members of the County Assemblies (MCAs) and the clerks. The Executive members (ministers) and accounting officers were found to be relatively mean (media shy) with information. It is possible that these technocrats may be having the right and accurate information, but since their owe their positions to governors and

other political figures in the county governments they are compelled to run the facts and figures with the politicians who then frame the facts and figures to serve their political interests. Therefore it is clear that the political class at the county level make it impossible for journalists to get information on time, and the right information.

Further, the study also found out that the public still trusts the media to provide adequate information on public expenditures, in order to hold their elected leaders to account. The public is not actively involved in the county activities as provided in the (CoK) and the County Governments Act, as most of the time they feel their views have not been adequately incorporated in the budget making process and its implementation.

The watchdog function of the media is affected by the advertising revenue from the county governments. The fact that the county governments allocate funds for advertisement to media houses that do their bidding has curtailed the watchdog functions in two ways. First journalist who collect stories find it hard to convince their editors to run stories that are likely to affect the media house's revenue stream. Secondly because both the county bosses and the business executives in media houses threaten individual journalist, these journalist have learnt to self-censor and turn a blind eye to stories that would antagonize their bosses in the media house or put their life at risk given the threats from the political class. To a large extent the media ends up in a relationship of mutual economic benefit with the county governments because the economic and political constraints make it impossible for the media to survive without advertising revenue from the county government. Therefore there are stories that are not reported due to the advertisements from the county governments and essentially the media, due to economic and political constraints, end up working with the county governments and consequently aid in the manufacture of public

consent (Herman & Chomsky, 1994) that allows the mass public sit comfortably with economic plunder by the county government elites.

Lastly, the study found out that in as much as the media in Kenya is well equipped to carry out its functions effectively, the mass media has not reported the facts concerning political issues in Kenya from a neutral perspective because of intimidation and the threatens from the powers that be on the media and the media investments. To this end the media has silently used its massive investment and equipment to dwell on human stories or the positive stories touching on the powers that be. Important to note also is the finding that all the journalist involved in the study raised the issue of lack of proper remuneration which they claim leads to compromised reporting and coverage of issues. The media should thus leverage on their massive investment by paying their journalist better and helping them make the best out of the equipment in their watchdog role.

Overall, the study found that the censorship by the media denies the public the right to information; most of the journalist in the study admitted that due to fear of attack, political stories touching on government finances and other political and investigative stories are always censored. Positive stories, human interest stories, and development stories pass censorship easily and are used by media houses and journalist reporting on county finances to crowd the news (Stromberg, 2004) and make it impossible to have many critical stories that expose the county government.

5.3 Conclusion

Overall, while it is widely believed that the watchdog function of the media can assist to ensure good governance since it operates on the principles of accountability, transparency and participation. This is not necessarily the case according to the present study findings. Furthermore, while it has been stated that “*the media promote government transparency, accountability, and*

public scrutiny of decision-makers in power, by highlighting policy failures, corruption by public officials, corruption in the judiciary, and scandals in the corporate sector.” (Norris, 2010), there are various factors that undermines the media from advancing the deepening of good governance in Kenya or fulfilling its watchdog function. For instance, the Manufacturing of Public Consent undermines the media’s capability to strengthen good governance in the sense that advertisements are the source of revenue to the media companies while at the same time, advertisements are at times withdrawn when the media reports on negative stories such corruption or highlighting incidences of bad governance. Consequently, the publication of negative stories attracts threats from the county governments to withdraw advertisements and the findings and literature point to instances when the powers that be at the county governments have directed the editorial slant of certain expenditure stories because of the advertisements cash channeled to the media houses. Moreover, the reliance by the media on official sources of information for instance the governors, County Assembly Speakers and Clerks resembles the manufacturing of public consent because one of the five filters in the Propaganda Model states that for media to source of information, they rely heavily on information provided by official sources (Chomsky & Herman, 2002). As a result, the information the public receive as news is the reproduction of the hegemonic interests of the elite (Chomsky, 2002). This practice encourages bad governance because the views from the ordinary citizens are often neglected.

Moreover, while the media in Kenya is well equipped to carry out its watchdog function effectively, they have not reported the facts concerning political issues in Kenya from a neutral perspective since they fear the consequences of ruffling the political class. Consequently, the public cannot depend on the media to hold the county governments responsible and help in the fight against corruption and hence the deepening of good governance because the media is

constraint by both economic and political factors that has rendered it a partner in the manufacture of public consent. However, while Freille, Haque & Kneller (2007) found that “*restrictions in media freedom lead to higher corruption levels.*” and elsewhere that “*the role of the media is critical in promoting good governance and controlling corruption.*” (Stapenhurst, 2000), it is worth noting that there are countries that are less corrupt yet media freedom is highly restricted. For instance, at the official opening of the International Press Institute's (IPI) 43rd world congress in Cape Town, South Africa by the International Press Institute executive director, Alison Bethel McKenzie, in her report, criticised lack of press freedom in Rwanda (International Press Institute, 2014). Yet, Rwanda is still one of the least corrupt countries in Africa. Moreover, in Europe, Spain is still “one of the most corrupt countries in the European Union” yet media freedom is highly present. This study therefore infers that while media censorship undermines the deepening of good governance in Kenya, media freedom on the other hand is not a guarantee of good governance. It appears therefore that media freedom alone does not necessarily reduce or determine the level of corruption in a country without the support of other institutions that is, law enforcement and the judicial system because the press is capable of exposing corruption but cannot prosecute individuals involved in corruption.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

Since this study confined itself to media censorship in the devolved system of governance in Kenya with regards to public expenditure on the function of media in reducing corruption in the devolved system of governance in Kenya, further case study is urgently needed in order to examine why there are countries with highly restricted media and are less corrupt while on the other hand why there are countries which enjoys media freedom yet they are the most corrupt.

Nevertheless, the present study takes a step toward a better understanding of the media's contribution to the deepening of good governance in the devolved system of governance in Kenya.

5.5 Recommendations

The study recommends that:

- (a) Press freedom is fundamental in any democratic society and should strive to have the provisions in the constitution fully implemented to provide access to information, especially at the county level where access to filtered information is anchored on positive coverage. This perspective has also been emphasized elsewhere by Article 19 (2014) that "there appears to be a lack of political will to wholly implement the Constitution – or to amend parts of it as necessary. There have been cases of violations of the Constitution in general and in the media particularly" (p. 29).
- (b) Media must intensify collegiality among practitioners and institutions in its quests to fight for a society where the political elites will find it hard to manipulate individual media houses and co-opt the whole industry into their manufacture of public consent because of advertising revenue.
- (c) In discharging its duties, the media must remain cognizant of national security issues and the people's welfare.
- (d) Media practitioners should not be influenced by ownership interests, both government and corporate. This is important because media ownership is just one of the likely causes of bias on media content. For this to be realized there is need to statutorily regulate media ownership in the country. Furthermore, applicants for media licensing should be obligated to pronounce their political affiliations as well as associations to politicians.

REFERENCES

- Albarran, A. and Mierzejewska, B. (2004) 'Media Concentration in the U.S. and European Union. A Comparative Analysis', available at:
http://www.cem.ulaval.ca/pdf/albarran_mierzejewska.pdf
- Arnold, A.-K., & Lal, S. (2012). *Using Media to Fight Corruption*.
- Article 19. (2014). The impact of Kenya's legal and institutional frameworks on media freedom.
- Ashraf, P. (2014). The Role of Media in Good Governance: Paid News Culture of Media and the Challenges to Indian Democracy. *International Research Journal of Social Sciences*, 3 (3), 41-43.
- Atton, Chris. "Alternative and Citizen Journalism". *The Handbook of Journalism Studies*. Eds Karin Wahl-Jorgensen and Thomas Hanitzsch. New York: Routledge. 2009. 265-279. Print.
- Balkin, J.M. 1992: What is a Postmodern Constitutionalism? *Michigan L. Rev.* 92: 1966.
- Baron, S. J., & Davis, D.K. (2009). *Mass communication theory* (5th ed.) Boston, MA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Bell, A. (1991). *The Language of News Media*. Blackwell.
- Bennett, W. L. (1996). *News: the politics of illusion*. New York: Longman.
- Bennett, W. L., Lawrence, R. G., & Livingston, S. (2008). *When the Press Fails: Political Power and the News Media from Iraq to Katrina*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Berger, A. A. (1995). *Essentials of Mass Communication Theory*. London: SAGE Publications, Inc.

- Boeder, P. (2005). Habermas' heritage: The future of the public sphere in the network society. *First Monday*, 10(9).
- Brunetti, A., & Weder, B. (2003). A free press is bad news for corruption. *Journal of Public Economics*, 87(7), 1801-1824.
- Chomsky, N. (2002). *Media control: The Spectacular Achievements of Propaganda*. New York: Seven Stories Press.
- Chomsky, N., & Herman, E. S. (2002). *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Constable, Pamela "The Demise of the Foreign Correspondent", Washington Post, Sunday, February 18, 2007; B01.
- Denscombe, M. (1998). *The Good Research Guide for Small Scale Social Research Projects* (4th Ed.). Berkshire, England: Open University Press.
- Dickson, S. H. (1992). Press and U.S. policy toward Nicaragua, 1983-1987: A study of the New York Times and Washington Post. *Journalism Quarterly*, 69(3), 562-571.
- Dunu, I. (2013). Good Governance in Nigeria: What Role for the Media. *European Scientific Journal*, 9 (32).
- European Commission. (2014). EUROPEAN COMMISSION. Online available at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/organized-crime-and-human-trafficking/corruption/docs/acr_2014_en.pdf
- Fallows, J. M. (1996). *Breaking the News: How the Media Undermine American Democracy*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Frankfort-Nachmias, C., & Nachmias, D. (1996). *Research Methods in the Social Sciences* (5th Ed.). London: St Martin's Press, Inc.

Free Press (2012) 'Ownership Chart: The Big Six', available at:

<http://www.freepress.net/ownership/chart/main>

Freille, Haque & Kneller. (2007). *A Contribution to the Empirics of Press Freedom and Corruption*.

Geer, J. G. (Ed.). (2004). *Public Opinion and Polling Around the World: A Historical Encyclopedia, Volume 1*. California: ABC-CLIO.

Gentzkow, M., & Shapiro, J. M. (2008). Competition and Truth in the Market for News. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 22 (2), 133–154.

Herman, E. & Chomsky, N. (1994) *Manufacturing Consent*, London: Vintage.

Herring, E., & Robinson, P. (2003). Too polemical or too critical? Chomsky on the study of the news media and US foreign policy. *Review of International Studies*, 29 (4), 553–568.

Ilan, K. (2016). *Disaster Prevention*. New York: Routledge

James, B. (Ed.). (2005). *Media and Good Governance*. Paris: The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Kenya Media Programme. (2013). *Safety and protection of Kenyan journalists: Is it common sense or common cents?* Nairobi: Hivos.

Li, X. (2016). *Emerging Media: Uses and Dynamics*. New York: Routledge.

Mbeke, P. O. (2010). *Mass media in Kenya: systems and practice*. Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation.

McNair, Brian. (2005). What is journalism? In Hugo de Burgh (ed.), *Making journalists*, London and New York: Routledge, pp25-43.

McQuail, D. (2003). *Media accountability and freedom of publication*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.

- McQuail, D. (2005). *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory* (6 ed.). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Ministry of Local Government. (2013). Rwanda is the least corrupt country in Africa. Online available at:
http://www.minaloc.gov.rw/index.php?id=469&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=288
- Mullen, A. (2009). Editorial. *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture*, 6 (2), 1744-6716.
- Njogu, K. (Ed.). (2013). *Citizen Participation in Decision Making: Towards Inclusive Development in Kenya*. Nairobi: Twaweza Communications.
- Norris, P. (Ed.). (2010). *Public Sentinel: News Media & Governance Reform*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.
- Oriare, Peter. (2008). *The Media, Legal, Regulatory and Policy Environment in Kenya*. School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Nairobi, Kenya. Commissioned by the BBC World Service Trust
- Oso, L., & Pate, U. (Eds.). (2011). *Mass Media and Society in Nigeria* (2nd ed.). Lagos: Malthouse Press Limited.
- Perry, D. K. (2002). *Theory and research in mass communication: contexts and consequences* (2 ed.). Mahwah, N.J.; London : Erlbaum.
- Postman, Neil 1985: *Amusing Ourselves to Death*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Potter, W. J. (2012). *Media Effects*. London: SAGE.
- Protess, Ben and Jessica Silver-Greenberg. "New York Fed Faces Questions Over Policing Wall St." *The New York Times*. 25 July 2012: B1. Web. 1 November 2013.

- Protest, David, Fay Lomax Cook, Jack C. Doppelt, James S. Ettema, Margaret T. Gordon, Donna R. Leff and Peter Miller. *The Journalism of Outrage: Investigative Reporting and Agenda-Building in America*. New York: The Guildford Press. 1991. Print.
- Rusbridger, Alan. (2017). *The Kenyan government withdraws advertising when newspapers step out of line*. Committee to Protect Journalist. Online available at:
<https://cpj.org/2017/04/fiscal-blackmail.php>
- Santas, T. (2014). The Media, Corruption and Democratic Accountability in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. *African Journals Online*,3(1).
- Schramm, W. (1964). *Mass Media and National Development: The Role of Information in the Society*. California: Stanford University Press.
- Scott, M. (2014). *Media and Development*. London: Zed Books Ltd.
- Sihanya, Ben. (2012). *Constitutional implementation in Kenya, 2010-2015: Challenges and prospects*. Nairobi: Kenya Occasional Paper, No. 5. 2012.
- Stacks, D. W., & Salwen, M. B. (Eds.). (2009). *An Integrated Approach to Communication Theory and Research*. New York: Routledge.
- Stapenhurst, R. (2000). *The Media's Role in Curbing Corruption*. WBI working papers, Washington, DC.
- Strömberg, D. (2002). Mass Media Competition, Political Competition, and Public Policy. *The Review of Economic Studies*, 71 (1), 265-284.
- Stromberg, David (2004) "Radio's Impact on Public Spending", *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 119(1).
- Vyas-Doorgapersad, S., Tshombe, L.-M., & Ababio, E. P. (Eds.). (2013). *Public Administration in Africa: Performance and Challenges*. CRC Press.

Wambui, M. (2015). *Keep off Nyeri County Assembly, Speaker tells NMG reporters*. Online
Available at: <http://www.nation.co.ke/news/1056-2905268-jp5ug7z/index.html>

Wanta, W., Golan, G., & Lee, C. (2004). Agenda Setting and International News: Media
Influence on Public Perceptions of Foreign Nations. *Journalism & Mass Communication
Quarterly*, 81 (2), 364-377.

Weiss, T. G. (2000). Governance, Good Governance and Global Governance: Conceptual and
Actual Challenges. *Third World Quarterly*, 21 (5), 795-814.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Introductory Letter

Dear Respondent,

RE: DATA COLLECTION

This interview guide is designed to gather information on the media freedom in Kenya's devolved system of governance. The study is being carried out for a Master Degree in **Journalism and Media Studies**, University of Nairobi.

You have been selected to form part of this study. This therefore, is to kindly request you to assist me to collect the data by answering the questions in the interview guide. The information and data provided will be exclusively used for academic purposes. Your assistance will be highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Roselyne Obala

Appendix II: Questionnaire

Part I: Demographic Characteristics

1. Age 20-25 Years 26-30 Years 30-35 Years
36-40 Years 41 years and above
2. Sex Male Female
3. Marital status Single Married Divorced
Widowed
4. Educational level Secondary Certificate Diploma
Degree Master PhD
5. Occupational level_____
6. Work experience 0 - 5 Years 6 – 10 Years 11 – 15 Years
16 years and above
7. Which form of mass media do you work for? Newspapers Radio
Television Internet
8. Which of the medium do you consider as the best channel of reaching out to the public?

9. Do you really think the mass media influence our ways of life, our thinking and
participation in the political process? Yes No
Explain_____
10. How would you rate your interest in issues that affect you especially with regards to the
government policy and decision making process?

Part II: Journalism Independence

1. Are you free to report on county expenditure? Yes [] No []

Explain

2. Are there incidents when your stories are changed to serve specific interests? Yes

[]

No []

Explain

3. Have you been rebuked by authorities on stories on public finances Yes []

No []

4. Has your friends been attacked by the county government of misunderstanding on story reported. Yes [] No []

Explain

5. Are there issues you can't report on relating to public finance.

Yes [] No []

6. Are there incidences or indicators of harassment and intimidation on stories?

Yes [] No []

Explain _____

7. Have you been approached to tone down your critic on public expenditure in counties?
Yes [] No []

Part III: Media and News Coverage

1. Do you have access to county budget documents prior to being tabled in the county assemblies for debate and passage? Yes [] No []

2. Do you follow proceedings of county Assemblies on expenditures?
Yes [] No []

3. Do you make a follow up after the county assemblies pass their budget?
Yes [] No []

4. Is there public participation in the county development and integrated plan?
Yes [] No []

5. Have you heard complaints from the public on the budget making process and its implementation? Yes [] No []

Explain _____

6. Do you think the political climate in Kenya has been conducive enough for the mass media to play its role? Yes [] No []

Explain _____

Part IV: Advertisement

1. Do county governments allocate a budget for advertisement?
Yes [] No []

2. Are some stories not filed due to advertisement? Yes [] No []

Explain _____

3. Are there times the boss/supervisors require that you don't report on certain expenditure stories because of advertisement. Yes [] No []

Explain _____

4. How does the county government contribute to media revenue?

Part V: Source of information.

1. How are most stories sources on public expenditure?

2. How many stories do you source on public finance weekly and of this how many are approximately government stories.

3. Are there other private and audit organizations in the counties that help in news reportage.
Yes [] No []

4. How do you report other issues on public expenditure in counties?

5. How conducive is the Kenyan political climate for effective operation of the mass media?

Part VI: News Coverage and Censorship

1. Do you think the mass media in Kenya are well equipped to carry out their functions effectively? Yes No Explain _____

2. Do you think that the mass media have reported the facts concerning political issues in Kenya from a neutral perspective? Yes No
Explain _____

3. In your own view, what challenges have the mass media in Kenya had to battle with in carrying their responsibilities? _____

4. To the best of your knowledge, how can the mass media survive through the challenges to live up to their responsibility? _____

5. How does the censorship impact on our reporting? _____

6. Do you usually self-censor the stories as you are afraid of censorship will chop your stories? Yes No

7. Which kinds of news stories are censored most? _____

8. Which kinds of news stories usually pass censorship? _____

9. What is your opinion on news censorship? _____

Thank you for Participating

Appendix III: Certificate of Fieldwork



**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES
SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM & MASS COMMUNICATION**

Telegram: Journalism Varsity Nairobi
Telephone: 254-02-3318262, Ext. 28080, 28061
Director's Office: +254-204913208 (Direct Line)
Telex: 22095 Fax: 254-02-245566
Email: director-soj@uonbi.ac.ke

P.O. Box 30197-00100
Nairobi, GPO
Kenya

REF: CERTIFICATE OF FIELDWORK

This is to certify that all corrections proposed at the Board of Examiners meeting held on _____ in respect of M.A/PhD. Project/Thesis Proposal defence have been effected to my/our satisfaction and the project can be allowed to proceed for fieldwork.

Reg. No: KSO/74704/2014

Name: OBALA ROSELYNE NDISI

Title: MEDIA CENSORSHIP IN THE DEVOLVED SYSTEM
OF GOVERNANCE IN KENYA.

Dr. James Oranga
SUPERVISOR

[Signature]
SIGNATURE

June 30th 2016
DATE

Dr Samuel Sirugi
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

[Signature]
SIGNATURE

30/6/2016
DATE

Dr. Ndletti Ndletti
DIRECTOR

[Signature]
SIGNATURE/STAMP

30.6.2016
DATE

Appendix IV: Certificate of Originality

Turnitin Originality Report

- Processed on: 19-Dec-2017 13:39 EAT
- ID: 897979884
- Word Count: 18956
- Submitted: 1

MEDIA CENSORSHIP IN THE DEVOLVED SYSTEM OF GO...

By K50/74704/2014 Obala Roslyne N

Similarity Index

13%

Similarity by Source

Internet Sources:

13%

Publications:

4%

Student Papers:

7%

[refresh](#)

■ 2% match (Internet from 11-Apr-2016)

<http://www.ajol.info>

■ 1% match (Internet from 03-Mar-2017)

<http://jtc501.pbworks.com>

■ 1% match ()

<http://instruct.westvalley.edu>

■ 1% match (Internet from 10-Jun-2017)

<https://cpj.org/2014/02/attacks-on-the-press-advertising.php>

■ 1% match (Internet from 25-Nov-2011)

<http://jonathanstray.com>

■ 1% match (Internet from 29-Aug-2017)

https://dspace.library.colostate.edu/bitstream/handle/10217/80305/Richardson_colostate_0053N_11923.pdf?isAllowed=y&sequence=1



Appendix V: Certificate Of Correction



**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES
SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM & MASS COMMUNICATION**

Telegram: Journalism Varsity Nairobi
Telephone: 254-02-3318262, Ext. 28080, 28061
Director's Office: +254-204913208 (Direct Line)
Telex: 22095 Fax: 254-02-245566
Email: director-soj@uonbi.ac.ke

P.O. Box 30197-00100
Nairobi, GPO
Kenya

REF: CERTIFICATE OF FIELDWORK

This is to certify that all corrections proposed at the Board of Examiners meeting held on _____ in respect of M.A/PhD. Project/Thesis Proposal defence have been effected to my/our satisfaction and the project can be allowed to proceed for fieldwork.

Reg. No: KSO/74704/2014

Name: OBALA ROSELYNE NDISI

Title: MEDIA CENSORSHIP IN THE DEVOLVED SYSTEM
OF GOVERNANCE IN KENYA.

Dr. James Oranga
SUPERVISOR

[Signature]
SIGNATURE

June 30th 2016
DATE

Dr Samuel Sirugi
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

[Signature]
SIGNATURE

30/6/2016
DATE

Dr. Ndletti Ndletti
DIRECTOR

[Signature]
SIGNATURE/STAMP

30.6.2016
DATE