

**THE AGENDA-SETTING ROLE OF THE KENYAN
MEDIA IN THE 2007 GENERAL ELECTION:
A CASE STUDY OF THE PRINT MEDIA**

**BY
FELISTAS MWENDE MUSYOKA
K50/71352/2008**

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE
AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES OF THE
SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION,**

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

2010



FD-35757

AF

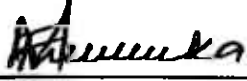
JF

1001

.M67

DECLARATION


This research paper is my original work and has never been submitted for examination in any institution.

Signed:  Date: 15/11/2010

Name: FELISTAS MWENDE MUSTOKA

Reg no: KSD/71352/2008

This project has been submitted for assessment, with my approval as the research supervisor.

Signed:  Date: NOV 16, 2010

Dr. M. Ngugi
Lecturer, School of Journalism and Mass Communication
College of Humanities and Social Sciences
University of Nairobi

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research paper to my father Patrick Musyoka, Mother Jullianah Musyoka, Sisters Angela, Magdalene and Anastasia, my friends Emily, Mariam, Faith, George, Catherine and Anne for their tireless support, input, encouragement and understanding and without whom I wouldn't have successfully completed this research paper.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration.....	i
Dedication.....	ii
Acknowledgments.....	Vii
Abstract.....	Viii
List of Abbreviations.....	ix
List of Data Tables.....	x
List of Figures.....	x
List of Photographs.....	xi
Data tables by The Daily Nation, The Standard, and The People Daily	
Table 1:.....	37
Table 2:.....	37
Table 3:.....	38
Table 4:.....	39
Table 5:.....	40
Figures on media and Election 2007	
Figure 1:.....	41
Figure 2:.....	42
Figure 3:.....	43

Figure 4:.....	44
Figure 5:.....	46
 Photographs on Election Violence 2007	
Photograph 1:.....	16
Photograph 2:.....	20
Photograph 3:.....	24
Photograph 4:.....	25
Photograph 5:.....	27

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background of the study.....	3
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	4
1.3 Purpose and scope of the study.....	5
1.4 Research questions.....	5
1.4.1 Primary research question.....	5
1.4.2 Secondary research questions.....	6
1.5 Limitations of the study.....	6

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 Literature Review.....	7
2.1 Introduction.....	7

2.2 History of Agenda setting theory.....	7
2.3 History of Elections in Kenya.....	15
2.4 Kenya’s Electoral system.....	19
2.5 Political parties.....	19
2.6 The Electoral campaign.....	21
2.7 Voting behavior in the election.....	23
2.8 The Election results and its aftermath.....	24
2.9 The referendum.....	29
2.10 Opinion polls.....	30
 <u>CHAPTER THREE</u>	
3.0 Methodological approach.....	32
3.1 Newspaper readership in Kenya.....	35
3.2 Coverage of campaign issues in the newspapers.....	36
3.3 Candidates image in the newspapers.....	39
3.4 Presidential opinion polls.....	40
3.5 Platform for campaigning as shown by the Daily Nation, The Standard and The people Daily.....	41
3.6 Media’s influence on voter decision.....	42
3.7 Media objectivity and partisanship.....	43
3.8 Voter ethnicity as portrayed in the media.....	44
3.9 Voter Bribery.....	46
3.10 Question of media bias.....	47
3.11 Market demands.....	48

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 Introduction..... 49

4.1 Data Analysis and Findings..... 49

4.2 Primary research question 1..... 51

4.3 Secondary research question 1..... 53

4.4 Secondary research question 2..... 56

4.5 Secondary Research question 3..... 56

4.6 Secondary Research question 4..... 57

4.7 Secondary Research question 5..... 58

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 Conclusion 59

5.1 Recommendation..... 61

References..... 62-67

Acknowledgments

It is through the support of many kind people that writing this research paper was a success. Therefore, I am deeply indebted and sincerely thank the following people whose support academically, materially, and morally were magnanimous.

My gratitude goes to my supervisor Dr. Ngugi who with knowledge, patience, skills and criticism guided me in writing this research paper. Your advice and guidance cannot go without a word of thanks.

I will always be grateful to Faith Mbithe for her crucial help in as far as analyzing the independence of the media in covering news related to presidential aspirants in Kenya, was concerned.

I cannot forget to thank George Onchwari for providing constructive ideas and for shaping the angle of this research. For this outstanding value I say, thank you. Many thanks also go to my sisters Angela, Magdalene and Annastasia for always believing in me and supporting me in my every endeavor. I can never ask for more than what you have done for me my sisters.

To my mum Julianah, I will always love you mum for the endless support and encouragement you gave me in my years of school. There are times I thought I wouldn't make it but you were always there to encourage me and lift my spirits; Thank you mum. To my dad, Patrick Musyoka, I will forever be indebted to you for the immense financial support you gave me when I was carrying out my research. This research paper would not have been possible without you, so may God bless you abundantly for always giving me the best. Thank you for making this dissertation a success.

ABSTRACT

This study focused on the agenda-setting role of the mass media. It is based on the 2007 General that plunged the country the country into serious unrest and widespread destruction of land and property, displacement and death. The study is founded on the media agenda-setting theory which stipulates that the media shapes the issues that are considered important and thus these issues are ranked highly by the audiences. The study focused on presidential aspirants Mwai Kibaki, Raila Odinga and Kalonzo Musyoka. The bone of contention was on eight issues on which they ran their campaigns. *The Daily Nation*, *The standard* and *The People Daily* were analyzed in this study. To establish whether the media set the agenda during the elections, the study employed Spearman's Rank Correlation. Results showed no significant evidence of influence in public opinion. Voter opinion was not influenced by the print media or by issues ranked highly by the media. The three Dailies therefore set the agenda in the 2007 General Elections but not the agenda that was considered important.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ECK	Electoral Commission of Kenya
IIEC	Interim Independent Electoral commission
MCK	Media Council of Kenya
NMG	Nation Media Group
KANU	Kenya African National Unity
PNU	Party of National Unity
ODM	Democratic Movement
ODM –K	Orange Democratic Movement of Kenya
KPIP	Kenya Patriotic Trust Party
KPP	Kenya Peoples Party
WCPK	Workers Congress Party of Kenya
SKS	Sisi Kwa Sisi
CCUP	Chama cha Uzalendo Party
RPK	Republican Party of Kenya
KBC	Kenya Broadcasting Corporation
KHRC	Kenya Human Rights Commission
MP	Member of Parliament
NARC	National Rainbow Coalition
KTN	Kenya Television Network
NARC – KENYA	National Rainbow Coalition of Kenya
CAPF	Coalition for Accountable Political financing

DATA TABLES

- Table 1:** The Daily Nation, The Standard and the People Daily Ranking on Prominence of Campaign issues: December 3-24, 2007.
- Table 2:** Cumulative frequency of campaign of issues: December 3-24, 2007.
- Table 3:** Official results of the Kenya Electoral Commission alongside the ones put by the Orange government January 29, 2008.
- Table 4:** Candidates Image Frequency on *The Daily Nation, The Standard and The People Daily*.
- Table 5:** Opinion poll of the most favorite candidate: (October 2006- December (2007)).

LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1:** Platform for the 2007 general election campaigns (October 2007)
- Figure 2:** Image frequency graphs for the three presidential aspirants Mwai Kibaki, Raila Odinga and Kalonzo Musyoka as seen on the Daily Nation, The Standard and the People Daily (November 2007)
- Figure 3:** Graph on the Media's influence on voter decision (September 6, 2007)
- Figure 4:** Media Objectivity and partisan
- Figure 5:** A map showing Regional voter decision in the line-up to the 2007 General Election

PHOTOGRAPHS

- Photo 1:** Photo of Mwai Kibaki and Raila Odinga in the run up for office in parliament.
Photo by Eric Mwangi (Daily Nation, 2007, September 6)
- Photo 2:** Photo showing President Mwai Kibaki and Rival Raila Odinga minutes after they had agreed to a power sharing deal following the Post election violence stalemate. Looking on is Chief Mediator Koffi Annan who brokered the deal.
A Photo by Simon Maina (*The Standard*, 2008, February 29)
- Photo 3:** A photo showing voters lining up at a polling station to vote on Thursday 27th December 2007. A photo by Eric Omondi (*Daily Nation*, 2007, December 28)
- Photo 4:** A photo showing youths in Mathare slums carrying *Rungus and Pangas* following the violence that broke out after the 2007 elections. A photo by Ndungu, J (*Daily Nation*, 2008, February 24)
- Photo 5:** A woman cries outside the Kiambaa church where several people were burnt to death in January 2008. A photo by Dennis Odunga (*Daily Nation*, 2008, January 3).

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Kenya's December 2007 general elections saw voters participate in the fourth elections since multi-party politics were re-introduced in 1991. Voters cast ballots for the president and their members of parliament. There was little violence on Election Day and the process was civilized and well orchestrated. Results published by the media showed Raila taking a lead over Kibaki and Kalonzo. The haphazard inauguration of Mwai Kibaki as president sent waves of animosity among Kenyans who believed that the election was marred by vote rigging. Chief justice Evan Gicheru rubbished claims that he haphazardly swore in the president. He defended himself saying that it was his mandate to swear in the president and waiting a day or two would not have made any difference whatsoever. He said that the responsibility of swearing in the president was in the constitution itself. He further explained that no one else could swear in the president apart from the chief justice (*Daily Nation*, 2010, October 8).

According to the *Kenya National Commission on Human Rights Report* (2008) the swearing in of the president on the evening of 30 December gave impetus to forcible evictions and mass displacements of people not indigenous to particular regions. Violence became a strategy for remedying political and resource grievances which the electoral process might have been unable to address. There was a clear nexus between elections and commission of violence and the intention to perpetrate violence for political objectives was clearly discernible as violence was between the opposing sides. This violence left 1,162 people dead and about 350,000 displaced. The report recommended concrete measures to improve performance and accountability of state security agents in the future.

Raila Odinga had maintained a strong lead in vote counting on December 28 and his party the orange democratic movement (ODM) had declared victory for Odinga on December 29. This was a wrong move since the ECK is the only Commission that had the right to declare victory and announce the winner of the elections. On December 30, the chairman of the Electoral Commission, Samuel Kivuitu declared Kibaki the winner and placed him ahead of Odinga by about 232,000 votes. On the same day, Odinga accused the government of fraud, urged Kibaki to concede defeat and called for a recount.

Kibaki was sworn in for his second term saying that he had been told by his people that he had won, calling for the verdict of the people to be respected and for healing and reconciliation to begin. Speaking from State House after being sworn in as president, Mwai Kibaki urged all Kenyans to set aside the diverse views and opinions that people had during the campaign period. He asked the citizens to embrace one another as brothers and sisters. In sharp contrast to the chaos and violence caused by the delay in releasing the results and allegations of fraud, Kibaki applauded the *Electoral Commission of Kenya* for carrying out the election process with integrity. He added that the freedom of choice, the openness and the peaceful manner in which the Kenyan people had conducted the election had raised the country's democratic profile throughout the world. (*Daily Nation*, 2008, January 28).

Reconciliatory and peace messages descended all over the country as everyone called for the violence to end. While a few media houses carried out the exercise of covering the post election violence responsibly, others were irresponsible and fueled the animosity by highlighting ethnic violence (Oriare, 2008).

Kibaki and Raila hammered out a deal in February 2008 to end the political crisis and Chief Mediator Koffi Annan helped to broker this deal. This process gave way to the mediation that sought to address the underlying issues that had plunged the country into chaos. Professor Makau Mutua the *KNCHR* chairman had called for calm and called on president Kibaki to initiate dialogue with his ODM rival, Raila Odinga. He said that Kenya was on a knife edge and this was in contrast to the reputation that Kenya held of being a beacon of hope in a turbulent region. (*The Standard*, 2008, January 12)

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

This study focused on how *The Daily Nation*, *The Standard* and *The People Daily* covered the general election for the three month campaign period leading up to the December 2007 elections. It focused on how the three presidential aspirants – Mwai Kibaki, Raila Odinga and Kalonzo Musyoka, were covered and whether that had an impact on voter decision.

These three dailies have high readership across the country. *The Daily Nation* was first registered in 1959 by Micheal Curtis and Charles Hayes. It is East Africa's largest newspaper and has a daily circulation of 184,000 copies. It is owned by the *Nation Media Group (NMG)*. The oldest mass circulating newspaper is *The Standard*, started in 1902 by a Persee migrant, A.M. Jevanjee. It is owned by the *Standard Group* and has a daily circulation of 54,000 copies. *The People Daily* is the younger of the two and is the third largest newspaper owned by people limited. It is owned by *K24*. It started out as a weekly but turned daily with a Sunday edition in December 1988. It has a daily circulation of 30,000 copies (*Media Council of Kenya*, 2010).

This increasingly assertive and self-confident media has played a huge role in making information accessible and being a mediator between the citizens and the state. The Kenyan citizens have therefore invested enormous credibility on the media than any other information source. A report done by the *Steadman Group* slated the media as the most trusted institution. Steadman's Group A's Managing Director, George Waititu said that the media scored highly in trust ratings undertaken by Steadman. The media scored a trust rating of 84 percent with those being interviewed expressing confidence in the Kenyan media (*Steadman poll, 2006, July 21*). This media carried out a substantial election monitoring exercise and journalists were placed at strategic polling stations to receive results first hand and broadcast them instantly. Journalists risked their lives to bring information to Kenyans on the elections unrest. "I can celebrate the fact that the media used its freedom to get out there in the tear gas with the people reporting what they saw and that was commendable." Absalom Mutere, *The Media council of Kenya*. (*Daily Nation*, 2008, February 4).

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This research paper focused on the agenda-setting role of the mass media during the campaigns for the 2007 general election. It aimed at establishing a connection between election issues ranked highly by the three dailies, *The Daily Nation*, *The Standard* and *The People daily* on public opinion. The study correlated the agenda-setting influence of the news media about the three presidential candidates to a Strategic Research poll of December 20 2007. In the same vein the research focused on issues that were the basis of the campaign and which the citizens had a bone of contention with.

The issues were economy, infrastructure, corruption, majimbo, education, health care, tribalism, religion and a new constitution. The three presidential aspirants therefore campaigned on the platform of these issues promising to deliver each one of them and effect substantial change in the country. The mass media sets the agenda on what issues are important and which aren't. They represent a high point for political communication on political parties, leaders and election campaigns. Throup and Hornsby say that the news media are a "key electoral weapon for those who control them" (1998:36).

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to fill in the knowledge gaps left by researchers who have conducted an investigation on this study. Its aim is to add to the wealth of knowledge already available and to deduce conclusions based on facts.

The findings will benefit other researchers and citizens who may require information on the Media's influence on voter opinion as well as enlighten them on the agenda-setting role of the media.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.4.1 PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTION

1.4.2 How did the coverage of the 2007 general election campaign by the issues in *The Daily Nation*, *The Standard* and *The People Daily* influence or affect public opinion?

1.4.3 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How were the attributes of presidential aspirants Mwai Kibaki, Raila Odinga and Kalonzo Musyoka covered in the three newspapers and how did they influence public opinion?
2. Which of the three newspapers coverage of the 2007 general elections showed a significant correlation to public opinions?
3. What issues were more prominent? Were they issues that were used as a platform for campaign basis or the attributes of the three presidential candidates?
4. Did the results show any substantial influence in forming opinions during the 2007 General elections?
5. Were the three dailies objective and independent in covering news related to the three presidential aspirants?

1.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

In the course of this study, myriads of limitations were encountered which include:

For conclusive data on the media and elections a lot of backdating had to be done. Politics and media are very wide topics to cover for research since past events always crop up in present ones.

The People Daily did not have productive information on the three presidential candidates and it was therefore difficult to make inferences based on the Daily.

For future research into this study, the factors that hamper media coverage during an election period should be addressed because the media plays an important role during election campaigns and in the election process.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews literature on the agenda-setting theory and the literature on the Media's influence on public opinion.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This research will give an insight on areas researched on and covered on this topic. It will focus on works of great minds and identify possible intervention on filling the knowledge gaps found.

2.2 HISTORY OF AGENDA-SETTING THEORY

Renowned communication scholars, Maxwell Mccombs and Donald Shaw conducted the Chapel Hill study in 1968 to examine the power of the mass media in telling us what is important and what is not. Walter Lipmann explains that it is the mass media which dominates in the creation of the pictures of public affairs (Mccombs and Shaw, 1977, P.5). This is true because the media gives prominence to issues and thus tell us what to think about.

In 1948, Harold Laswell, a political scientist at the *Chicago University* produced a five-model of communication. It focused on who said what to whom through which channel and to what effect. "Who, "what", "whom", "which" and effect were his main pillars. He believed that the media had a critical role to play in giving prominence to issues" Dearing and Rogers, 1996, P 11).

The defining event in the conceptualization of the agenda setting process occurred in 1967 while Maxwell McCombs was an assistant professor of journalism at *UCLA*. Over an after-work drink, McCombs and another junior colleague speculated as to why a particular news event had not had a greater impact on the public. They examined that day's front page of *The Los Angeles Times* that had downplayed the news event (a minor scandal in the Johnson administration) with just a small photograph and a minor headline. Two other news events had been given major play on that day's front page of the Los Angeles Times. If an individual had read a different newspaper that day-for example, *The New York Times* – he or she might have considered the scandal a much more important issue. This discussion of media agenda setting led McCombs to walk into the UCLA bookstore to purchase a copy of Cohen's (1963) book which contained the now famous metaphorical statement about agenda setting. Soon, McCombs was off to the University of North Carolina where he was to collaborate with Donald Shaw in conducting the Chapel Hill study.

A scientific revolution occurred in the study of how the mass media affect public opinion. From the 1930s to the early 1970's, the dominant direction of mass communication research was to investigate direct effects of the media on audience's attitude and overt behavior. This research direction was set in motion in the 1930s by Paul F. Lazarsfeld, arguably the founder of mass communication research (Rogers, 1994). Originally, scholars expected to find strong findings only supported a minimal effects model. The media appeared to affect attitudes and behavior directly only for some individuals in some circumstances (e.g., television violence was found to affect children's aggression). This anomaly led to dismay with the paradigm of direct media effects and as Kuhn (1970) would predict, led to a search for new paradigm.

A 1972 agenda setting study by McCombs and Shaw in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, established a paradigm that was adopted mainly by mass communication scholars and to a lesser extent by political scientists, sociologists and other social scientists. This paradigm which we term the hierarchy approach to agenda setting research offered a new way to think about the effects of mass media so that “familiar objects are seen in a different light” (Kuhn, 1970, p 111). Mass communication scholars were attracted to investigate the agenda-setting process because it was an alternative to the existing paradigm of limited effects of the media which represented anomalies in explaining short term attitude change and overt behavior change.

The agenda-setting perspective directed mass communication research toward indirect cognitive effect, impacts of the media that scholars like McCombs and Shaw and colleagues felt were more reasonable to expect. Early agenda setting publications by mass communication researchers were justified as an attempt to overcome the limited effects findings of past mass communication research. For example Maxwell McCombs (1981) concluded that agenda settings initial empirical exploration was fortuitously timed. It came at that time when disenchantment both with attitudes and opinions as dependent variables, and with the limited effects model as an adequate intellectual summary, was leading scholars to look elsewhere. The new paradigm sent mass communication researchers in the direction of studying how media news coverage affected an issue’s salience on the agenda rather than direct media effects on audience members’ attitudes and behavior change.

What are the main elements in the basic paradigm for agenda setting research as set forth in the classic study by McCombs and Shaw (1972)? The central research question for McCombs and Shaw was to explore the degree to which the media agenda, measured as the number of news stories about each of the five issues in salience. A longitudinal approach to agenda-setting focuses on changes over time in the salience of issues on: (a) the media agenda, (b) the public agenda, and (c) the policy agenda. An issue is a social problem, often conflictual that receives mass media news coverage (Dearing & Rogers, 1996). The five main issues investigated by McCombs and Shaw in their Chapel Hill study were foreign policy, law and order, fiscal policy, public welfare, and civil rights.

The Chapel Hill study was cross sectional in its methodological design, that is, data about the media agenda and the public agenda were gathered at approximately the same point in time (during the fall months of the presidential campaign in 1968). Although agenda setting was conceptualized by McCombs and Shaw (1972) as a process their research design ignored time. Gradually however time became an important additional variable that was incorporated into agenda-setting research. Instead of measuring variables such as the media agenda and the public agenda at a single point in time, scholars began to measure these variables over time, such as the 91 months from 1981 to 1988 for the issue of Acquired Immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) (Rogers, Dearing & Chang, 1991) or the 192 half months from 1985 to 1992 for the issue of global warming (Trumbo, 1995). In ensuing years, agenda setting research continued to break out of the McCombs and Shaw (1972) methodological and conceptual mode by incorporating real-world indicators, intermedia agenda setting, the polling agenda, and the science agenda.

The Chapel Hill investigators combined two already well known communication research methods: (a) content analysis of the news media important in Chapel Hill, and (b) survey interviews with a sample of 100 undecided voters, chosen for study because McCombs and Shaw were deliberately trying to maximize the possibility of finding media effects (Tankard, 1990). The University of North Carolina scholars found a high correlation between (a) the rank order in salience of the five issues reported in news coverage of the presidential campaign and (b) the salience rank order of these issues that the undecided voters said they were the key issues in the campaign (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). The investigators concluded that the media agenda set the agenda for the public. Thus, the basic paradigm for agenda setting research was born.

Mc Combs, Shaw & weaver (1997) say that there are two levels of agenda setting, they say “The first level of agenda setting deals with the transfer of object salience from the media to the public agenda and the second involves two hypotheses

- (a) The way an issues covered by the media and affects public opinion and
- (b) The way an issue is covered in the media and how it affects public agenda) Mc combs, Shaw and weaver (1997) P. 4)

The “central concept of most public opinion research remains the attitude” (Norrander and Wilcox, 2002, P3). In agreement, Teer and Spencer say that “essentially opinion polls are concerned with the measurement of opinions, behavior, beliefs, attitudes and occasionally facts by means of surveys” (1973:9).

A dominant paradigm in any scientific specialty can be dangerous in that a single approach to a central research problem may become prematurely standardized (Kuhn, 1970). Agenda-setting research may have been, for some time, overly stereotyped around the McCombs and Shaw (1972) paradigm. By 1992, Rogers, Dearing and Bregman (1993) identified 223 agenda setting publications, most completed since 1971. Many of these studies, especially in the 1970s and early 1980s, followed the McCombs Shaw multiple issues, cross sectional approach, combining a content analysis (to measure the media agenda). Thus the first period of the normal science stage of agenda-setting research consisted of a more or less literal application of Bernard Cohen's often cited observation about the press influencing what people think about" (Trumbo, 1995:4). The main objective for McCombs and Shaw (1972) was to establish that the media agenda influenced the public agenda. The methodological progression in agenda-setting research has been from cross sectional studies to more sophisticated research designs that allow more precise exploration of agenda-setting as a temporal process.

The original McCombs and Shaw (1972) study was highly aggregated in that both the media agenda and the public agenda were measured by pooling data on the five issues (foreign policy, law and order, fiscal policy, public welfare, and civil rights). All 100 undecided voters' issue priorities were pooled into one composite ranking of the five main issues' salience on the public agenda. The number of news stories in the nine mass media study was also pooled into one aggregated salience ranking of the five issues.

The core theoretical idea underlying agenda setting is that elements prominent in the media picture become prominent in the audience's picture. The assertion is that the priorities of the media agenda influence the priorities of the public agenda. Over time, elements emphasized on the media agenda to come to be regarded as important on the public agenda. Theoretically, these agenda could be composed of any set of elements.

The original study of agenda-setting by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw(1972) during the 1968 presidential election found a nearly perfect rank order correlation (.97) between the issues considered most important by voters and the coverage of those issues in the news media used by those voters.

Complementing these two studies of local communities during a presidential election, Ray Funkhouser (1973) conducted a national study that examined an entire decade – the turbulent 1960s. He found considerable correspondence (.78) between the media agenda and the public agenda. How news frames affect public opinion is the emerging second dimension of agenda setting. The first dimension is, of course, the transmission of object salience. The second dimension is the transmission of attribute salience, as this new research frontier broadens our perspective on the agenda-setting role of the news media; Bernard Cohen's famous dictum must be revised. In a succinct summary statement that separated agenda setting from earlier research on the effects of mass communication, Cohen (1963) noted that although the media might not tell us how to think about some objects. The consequence of this is that the media do tell us what to think. A separate look at the 1976 presidential primaries (Becker & McCombs, 1978) also found considerable correspondence between the agenda of attributes in *News week* and the agenda of the attributes in New York Democrats' descriptions of the contenders for their party's presidential nomination.

Especially compelling in this evidence is that the correspondence between the two agendas increased from 64 percent to 83 percent from mid-February to late March among their panels of Democrats. Toshio Takeshita and Shunji Mikami's (1995) study of the 1993 general election in Japan begins with a traditional agenda-setting look at general issue salience. Takeshita and Mikami (1995) used a more stringent test that takes into account a key corollary of agenda setting. Grounded in a long-standing assumption of media affects research, their corollary hypothesis asserts that the salience of the political reform issue among members of the public is directly proportional to their level of exposure to the news media.

The exposure measure was further strengthened by the addition of a measure of each respondent's level of political interest. This combination of an exposure measure and a political interest measure yields a measure of attentiveness to political news. Now, the hypothesis to be tested asserts that the salience of the political reform issue among members of the public is positively correlated with their level of attentiveness of political news. Analysis based on 650 Tokyo voters supports this hypothesis. For attentiveness to TV news, the correlation with the salience of political reform is .24. For attentiveness to newspapers, the correlation is .27. The partial correlations controlling for party identification education, age, and sex are identical. With evidence in hand that exposure to the news media influenced the salience of the political reform issue on the public agenda, Takeshita and Mikami (1995) moved on to another research. Voters learn from campaigns because they know how to read the media and the politicians, because they can reason about what they see and hear, they can learn about policies and character and competence. Campaigns may lead voters to the "obvious" decisions, but that does not diminish the importance of the campaign.

2.3 HISTORY OF ELECTIONS IN KENYA

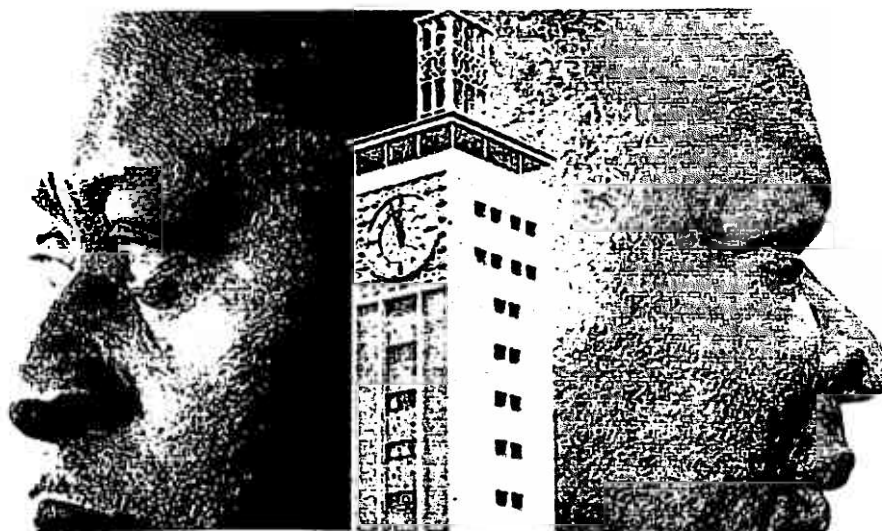
After negotiation with the British since 1957, the British allowed 'one person, one vote' elections in 1963. The first elections saw Jomo Kenyatta being elected as the first president of Kenya in 1964. Under his leadership, competitive elections slowly disappeared as various political parties either joined or were suppressed by KANU. This consolidated single-party system was reaffirmed in an amendment to the constitution in 1982 which made Kenya a one party system. Kenya was a British Colony until 12 December 1963. General elections were held in May 1963, and in June 1963, Kenya was granted internal self government. Kenya gained independence on 12 December 1963 and became a Republic on 12 December 1964.

Kenya re-introduced multi-partism in the 1990's. In 1978, Daniel Arap Moi of the Kenya National Union (KANU) became president on a one party state.

In 2002, National Rainbow coalition (NARC) headed by Mwai Kibaki, Raila Odinga and Kalonzo Musyoka defeated the KANU contenders. The NARC coalition however disintegrated owing to constitutional opinions the Bomas convention and the referendum saw Kibaki being defeated by 58% by Raila Odinga in the 2005 referendum. Ahead of the 2007 elections Kibaki formed the Party of National Unity (PNU) which included members of Moi Regime and Kenyatta's KANU. ODM named themselves the "Pentagon because they had spread to all areas: Odinga from Nyanza, Musalia (Western), Ruto (Riftvalley) Nyagah (Eastern), Balala (coast) and Ngilu (Eastern). Kalonzo Musyoka left ODM and formed ODM-K but he was not very successful in gathering support in Eastern Province.

According to the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) University Of Nairobi (2010), there was a wide variance between the 2002 and the 2007 media coverage. In 2002, the media covered the elections as a transition from a forty year rule by Daniel Arap Moi. Coverage of issues was in safe conditions while in the 2007, all live broadcasts were suspended indefinitely following the chaos that erupted after the elections. Pressure mounted such that journalists were arrested and shot at while covering the riots.

Photo 1: Photo of Mwai Kibaki and Raila Odinga in the run up for office in parliament. Photo by Eric Mwangi (Daily Nation, 2007, September 6)



President Mwai Kibaki declared on January 26, 2007 that he would be running once again for the presidential ticket. This declaration came even after he had stated in the 2002 elections that he needed only one term as president. Former president Daniel Arap Moi made clear his 'support for the re-election of Kibaki,' his former political enemy in late August 2007 (*BBC News*, 2007, August 28).

September 16, 2007 saw Mwai Kibaki announce his intention to stand as a candidate of a new alliance, PNU which included KANU, DP, NARC – Kenya, Ford- Kenya, Ford people and Shirikisho party. He began his presidential campaign on September 30 at Nyayo stadium in Nairobi (*BBC News*, 2007, September, 16). In October 6, 2007 Raila Odinga launched his presidential campaign in *Uhuru Park* (Anthony Kaikai, 2007, October 6). Pius Muiiru, a Bishop and leader of the Kenya people's party (KPP), launched his campaign bid on October 21, 2007 at Kamkunji grounds. He told voters to “send off Kibaki and his team” (*The Standard*, 2007, October 22).

On Tuesday October 23rd Parliament was dissolved to pave way for the *Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK)* to announce the date on which the elections would be held. The election date was set on Thursday December 27, 2007 (*Daily Nation*, 2007, October 26). Presidential candidates presented their nomination papers on November 14th and 15th to the ECK and 9 candidates were cleared to be on the ballot in December (*Daily Nation*, 2007, November 16).

Looking back, the first president Jomo Kenyatta ruled the Nation of Kenya until his death on August 22, 1978. Daniel Arap Moi, who was then the Vice president took over and ruled for a long time of twenty four years until the year 2002. He ruled on a defacto, one party state from 1968 to 1982. In December 2002, president Moi stepped down and Uhuru Kenyatta (Son of Kenya's first president, Jomo Kenyatta lost to Mwai Kibaki. Uhuru Kenyatta was KANU's Presidential candidate. These elections ended the forty years of KANU's leadership and it was a relief among many Kenyans who saw it as a relief from bureaucratic chains of oppressive leadership.

In November 2005, ODM defeated the government - backed draft constitution and it was a humiliating defeat for NARC. Professor Makau Mutua in his book, Kenya's quest for democracy says that the referendum vote "was a rare repudiation of a democratically elected regime in an African country" (2008, P. 229).

Mwai Kibaki was so angered by the defeat that he dissolved his entire cabinet. This move saw some ministers who had opposed the draft constitution fired. Those fired included Raila Odinga (Roads and Public Works) Kalonzo Musyoka (Environmental and Natural Resources), Prof. Anyang Nyong'o. Ochillo Ayacko, Najib Balala, William Ole Ntimama and Jebii Kilimo.

In Kenya there are three types of elections, namely the presidential, parliamentary and civic elections. All these are held at the same time. The elections are held every five years and thus on Election Day, voters elect their president, their Member of Parliament and councilor.

After the blood bath in the 2007 General elections. The ECK was disbanded in 2008 and the *Interim Independent Electoral commission (IIEC)* was formed to established appropriate electoral reforms for the next elections, slated for 2012.

Standing as a change candidate in 2002 election, Kibaki ran on the platform of providing a new constitution and universal free primary education for Kenyan children, when he came to power, there was a high rate of unemployment and poverty. He however failed to curb corruption when corrupt parliamentarians remained in office. He did not act accordingly and decisively in the Anglo-leasing and Goldenberg scandals. Raila Odinga thus focused on Kibaki's shortcomings and promised to clear corruption if he became the president.

2.4 KENYA'S ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Kenya's electoral rules states that to be elected president, a candidate must win the most votes in a nation-wide count and get at least 25% of the vote in five of any of the eight provinces. The candidate who wins the presidential bid must also win the parliamentary seat in his/her own constituency. Kenya elects on national level a head of state and a legislature. The president is elected for a five year term by the people. *The National Assembly* has 224 members, 210 members elected for a five year term in single seat constituencies. There are 12 appointed members and 2 ex officio members (ECK 2007).

2.5 POLITICAL PARTIES

Kibaki ran on the party of National Unity (PNU) ticket which included members of the Moi and Kenyatta regime. Raila Odinga ran on the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM). Kibaki garnered a lot of support from central province. ODM was seen to be the favorites of Western, Nyanza and Rift valley provinces.

Kalonzo's ODM – K garnered only a few votes outside Eastern province. It was seen to be a tribal election where voters supported candidates from their tribe.

The media was also not any different. *The Daily Nation* mainly supported Mwai Kibaki, *The Standard* Raila Odinga and *The People Daily* had immense support for Mwai Kibaki. The political aspirants invested highly in advertising with the print media during election campaigns. In turn the media made robust profits and thus gave the candidates enormous coverage. Politicians always have vested interests in media houses when it comes to their political ambitions. They use the media to launch their campaigns and manifestos.

Photo 2: A photo showing President Mwai Kibaki and Rival Raila Odinga minutes after they had agreed to a power sharing deal following the Post election violence stalemate. Looking on is Chief Mediator Koffi Annan who brokered the deal. A Photo by Simon Maina (The Standard, 2008, February 29)



2.6 THE ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN

Kenya registered the highest support for a presidential candidate in the 2002 victory that saw Daniel Arap Moi being thrown out of power after ruling for many years. Kenyans from all walks of life came out in numbers to vote and support the bid to remove Moi from power. The swearing in of Mwai Kibaki was an emotional and liberating time for Kenyans. In 2007 however, many citizens were not enthusiastic about Kibaki's achievements in office. They accused him of causing and encouraging corruption and not dealing with corrupt officials in his government. Kenya's economic successes and challenges featured significantly in the campaign period. Kibaki ran on the platform of enhancing a robust growth rate while Raila Odinga charged Kibaki with helping the rich and ignoring the country's poor. He promised a corruption free state. According to the Steadman poll, President Kibaki is more reliable, experienced, honest, development conscious, trustworthy and not tribally aligned. Kalonzo has good religious ideas and is more eloquent in public speech. Raila on the other hand is most courageous and energetic than the rest of the pack (Steadman poll, 2006, July 21). Coverage of these issues by the media highlighted the attributes of the three presidential aspirants. They however did not form the voter's decision since the final decision was on the voter. The media simply told voters what to consider but did not incline them to vote for a certain presidential candidate.

The constitution was also a platform of campaign. Kibaki's version of the constitution confirmed that the government remained too powerful and centralized. Raila Odinga promised to revise the constitution. This is what has brought to light the August fourth Referendum that has seen members of parliament conflict on matters of opinion on issues in the proposed draft.

Raila Odinga promised Majimboism where he would reduce the power to local units. In response Mwai Kibaki charged Raila with tribalism stating that “Majimbo” would divide Kenya along ethno – regional lines. Although education was a benchmark for Kibaki’s performance, poor teacher training, poor supplies and poor infrastructure marred this program. It also saw corrupt officials embezzle the free primary education funds set aside for the program. Teachers complained of having too many pupils in a classroom and reports by the Ministry of education shared that the quality of education was deteriorating at an alarming rate.

A Report by the *Kenya National Examination Council* revealed that seven out of every 10 children or 70 percent regularly miss school for reasons ranging from sickness to lack of uniform. According to the council, 60 percent of the pupils enrolled have repeated a class, signifying high wastage in the school system. The findings demonstrated that more than half the children cannot read properly (*The Daily Nation*, 2010, Tuesday June 22).

The free primary education has come with its successes and failures. In as much as it is providing education for all, teachers cannot pay close attention to all pupils and thus private schools are performing way better and producing eloquent bright children.

In the campaign period, Mwai Kibaki tried to win the youth with his “vijana na Kibaki” movement but Raila Odinga was more successful bringing to light the jobless and urban poor. He saw it as a “change” election where young voters could overthrow a corrupt political class.

2.7 VOTING BEHAVIOUR IN THE ELECTION

Voters who voted for Raila Odinga and Kalonzo Musyoka had a negative evaluation of the nation's economy and economic situation. The voters saw a corrupt government that did little to help the common citizens. Kibaki's supporters thought the government had done a good job. They said that Kibaki had fulfilled his promises since the last election. Raila and Kalonzo's supporters differed on this issue stating that Kibaki had done little to fulfill the promises but instead had plunged the country into tribalism ethnicity, corruption and even more poverty (*Steadman Poll, 2006*).

A Steadman poll conducted in 2006 showed that those who chose Raila Odinga and Kalonzo Musyoka had generally negative evaluations of the nation's economy. Kibaki's supporters had positive evaluations of the nation's economy. Odinga and Kalonzo's voters gave negative ratings on the central government's performance on service provision while Kibaki's voters thought he had done an excellent job.

Voters for Odinga and Kalonzo were clearly dissatisfied with Kibaki's tenure in office while Kibaki's supporters said he had fulfilled his promises since appointment in office. The voters cited that the CDF disbursement was marked by corruption and voters' minds were clearly set on which presidential candidate they preferred and why.

The candidates garnered votes in their own ethnic groups. Kibaki garnered 94% of the Kikuyu vote and 88% of Meru. Odinga 98% of the Luos and Musyoka 86% of the Kambas (*Steadman poll, 2006, July 22*).

Photo 4: A photo showing youths in Mathare slums carrying *Rungus and Pangas* following the violence that broke out after the 2007 elections. A photo by Ndungu, J (*Daily Nation*, 2008, February 24)



The Electoral commission of Kenya Chairman Samuel Kivuitu reported that Kibaki, Odinga and Musyoka all won parliamentary seats. It also reported that Kibaki had 225,174 more votes than Odinga thus having a 46-44% win. Kalonzo Musyoka was a distant third with an 8.9% vote (*E.C.K 2008*).

ECK reported that Mwai Kibaki garnered the 25% needed in every province except Nyanza province. Raila got 25% in all provinces except central and Eastern provinces, Kibaki was declared the winner with 4,584,721 votes against Raila's 4,352,993 votes. Kalonzo got 879,903 votes. In the parliamentary elections, ODM carried the day getting 99 seats, PNU got 43 and ODM-K 16. In January 15, 2008, Kenneth Marende the Emuhaya MP in Western province won the powerful post of the speaker of the National Assembly over Francis Ole Kaparo by 105 to 101 votes. Kaparo had served the house for fifteen years. PNU had given him full support to retain his seat but ODM outdid them. ODM refused to accept the presidential election results stating that there were flaws in the tallying. They instead asked Kibaki to resign as they felt the election had been stolen (Mutua 2008, P.247). The country saw a dark Kenya during that period. There was massive death, destruction of property and thousands were displaced. The intervention of the UN saw Kofi Annan, the former UN secretary general help the two rivals agree to a power-sharing deal in form of a grand coalition government.

The post of the prime minister was created for Raila Odinga and sharing of the cabinet on a 50-50 basis. It also saw the creation of two deputy prime-minister posts that went to ODM's Musalia Mudavadi, a local government Minister and PNU's Uhuru Kenyatta. The ECK's inability to maintain confidence in the votes produced the protests and violence. The power-sharing agreement brokered by Kofi Annan in February 2008, helped to stop the violence. The PNU-ODM accord recommended a new government of national unity that would give way to the needed reforms investigate the electoral commission of Kenya, draft a new constitution, formulate a new land policy and create a truth and reconciliation commission.

Photo 5: A photo showing a woman standing outside a church in Kiambaa where people were burned to death after the 2007 General election violence. A photo by Dennis Odunga (*Daily Nation*, 2008, January 3)



The Kriegler Commission (Independent review commission) investigated the post election violence and the ECK conduct of the elections. In their September 2008 report, they found ECK incompetent and thus recommended its dissolution and re-constitution.

The Commission of Inquiry on Post Election Violence investigated the violence and has evidence that implicated six cabinet ministers of planning to execute the violence. The ministers denied these charges (Namunane B, 2008. August 31).

The KrieglerTeam reported that “widespread bribery, vote-buying, intimidation and ballot – stuffing compounded by defective data tabulation transmission and tallying – impaired the integrity of the electoral process and irretrievably polluted the results”. “Even if you fired the entire Electoral Commission of Kenya and you appointed new people to conduct an election under the same circumstances, they will fail,” Kriegler has been quoted saying (Agina & Omanga, 2008, Paragraph 7). The report stated that Kenyan people needed to change their attitude and the way they view and conduct elections.

On December 15, 2008, the parliament voted out the ECK after 169 members of parliament passed the constitution Amendment Bill (2008) which replaced the ECK with the *IIEC*. Samuel Kivuitu the ECK chairman was sent home packing together with his team of twenty one commissioners. The *IIEC's* mandate includes electoral reforms, fresh voter registration and new system for vote tallying to ensure free, fair and credible elections in future.

The Kriegler commission had recommended a complete overhaul of the country's electoral system. This change became evident in the August 4, 2010 referendum and the September 20 2010 by-elections where the *IIEC* conducted fresh voter registration prior to the election and installed an electronic system of receiving votes from different tallying centers.

The Waki report concludes that the post-election violence was more than a mere juxtaposition of citizens' opportunistic assaults. These were systematic attacks on Kenyans based on their ethnicity and their political leanings. This situation was fueled by lawlessness stemming from an apparent collapse of state institutions and security forces. According to the Report, the post-election violence was a story of lack of preparedness of, and poor coordination among, different security agencies. The effectiveness of the Kenya Police Service and the Administration Police was also negatively affected by the lack of clear policing operational procedures and by political expediency's adverse impact on the policing priorities.

2.9 THE REFERENDUM

In 2005, the NARC government lost a popular national constitutional referendum by 42 to 57 percent to ODM. The government which was supporting the document and was known as "Yes" camp used the banana symbol as a tool to garner support for the document. The ODM side which was the "No" camp used the Orange symbol to campaign against the document. The "No" camp won in six provinces namely: Nairobi, Coast, Western, Nyanza and Rift valley. The "Yes" camp won in central and Eastern provinces only. Executive authority was a major issue in the referendum campaign. The "No" camp campaigned on reducing the excessive powers of the president and sharing them between the president and the prime minister. ODM argued that "power needed to be shared out. So that one person could no longer dominate the country as in the past. Thus they said would help fight corruption – a big problem in Kenya" (BBC, 2005, Para 4).

Similarly the year 2010 has seen the new referendum brought to light as August 4th is the day slated for the country's referendum. This time around however, the symbols are simply yes and No. The colour green shows support for Yes and the colour red for No.

This comes amidst claims that the 2005 referendum saw a lot of farmers and fruit vendors lose market for their bananas and oranges as a result of affiliation of the fruits to the two referendum camps. Interestingly the 2010 referendum has seen some members of parliament being referred to as "water melons" as they have unclear support of both the yes(green) and No (red) camps; same way a water melon is green on the outside and red on the inside.

2.10 OPINION POLLS

Public opinion polls are used to measure public agenda. A sample of individuals is chosen to answer specific questions upon which conclusions are drawn. This becomes an indication on where members of the public stand on specific issues affecting their social and political life. Most opinion polls have been associated with political issues and the electoral process. Teer and Spencer (1973) say that "essentially opinion polls are concerned with the measurement of opinions, behaviours, beliefs, attitudes and facts by means of surveys" (p.9), opinion polls thus, influence voting patterns, policy actions by governments and decisions made by political parties when choosing their candidates.

They also bring to light the stand of the public on key issues during election campaigns. Opinion polls have also been a source of controversy many a times. Political candidates not favored in the polls have trashed the polls as flawed and baseless. For example ODM-K presidential candidate, Kalonzo Musyoka dismissed the Steadman polls as a mockery of Kenya's intelligence.

The Steadman polls showed that Musyoka had only 10% chance of winning the 2007 general elections. Kalonzo termed the poll as “uncredible” stating that only 2,000 people were interviewed. He said “I am confident I will win this year’s presidential race since I believe in God and not in purported results of unreliable polls” (Mwaniki, 2007, P.6) .Come the 2007 election and Kalonzo was trailing with only 879, 903 votes. On the other hand, Teer and Spencer 1973) say that opinion poll can result in the “boomerang effect” Which encourages voters to “change sides and support the underdog (pg 129).

Opinion polls therefore play an important role during an election period by stating what the public think about an issue of national importance or a political candidate (Cresp, 1989). Pollsters focus on accurately predicting who will win an election. Opinion polls have time and again been used in Kenya to bring to light the citizen’s view or take on an issue. The polls always bring a sense of panic to affected parties and they are always ready to contradict the results of the polls or more to directions that dismiss the results of the polls.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This study employed the 1973 Ray Funkhouser methodology approach where content analysis was used to examine coverage of major issues in three major magazines in the United States: *Time*, *Newsweek* and *U.S News*. Funkhouser related the news media coverage of fourteen issues to opinion polls by Gallup organization. Similarly, but in a different political context, this study correlated *The Daily Nation*, *The Standard* and *The People Daily's* coverage of nine issues during the 2007 disputed Kenyan General Election to the December 11 strategic Research poll. These nine issues are: corruption, education, economy, poverty, infrastructure, security, health care, job creation and constitution. At the same time, this study correlated salience attributes of the three presidential candidates to Strategic Research's December 20 poll. The most important problem was originally designed by George Gallup, the father of opinion polls. (Norrander & Wilcox, 2002, p.3) .The "most important problems" facing Kenya were published in figures by the strategic poll assumed to signify the relative importance of each issue in the public domain. Strategic Research poll was commissioned by the Nation Media Group to conduct opinion polls ahead of the 2007 General election.

The salience of issues and attributes correlations were determined through Spearman's Rank Correlation. This statistical device helped to show whether issues ranked highly in three newspapers have an effect on what voters thought was the "most important problem."

The Spearman's Rank Correlation helped to establish the strengths of relationship involving salience of issues in each of the publications involving cumulative salience of issues to the same polls. The same procedure was followed to determine the frequency of the images of the three presidential candidates in each of the newspapers as well as cumulatively. Spearman's Rank Correlation was also used to determine correlation strength involving the frequency rank of candidates images to the opinion poll released on December 20. Spearman rank order correlation is a nonparametric measure of association based on the ranks of the data values.

In the formula, R_i is the rank of x_i , S_i is the rank of y_i , \bar{R}_i is the mean of the R_i is the mean of the S_i values. So as to establish strengths of relationships in values and line with the data provided, that is, as described above, the formula was programmed into packaged software. The software used was SAS version 9.1.

Three newspapers –*Daily Nation*, *The Standard* and *The People Daily* were analyzed by counting the frequency of the nine issues appearing in all election related articles on pages 1, 3, 5 and the back page of each publication during the official campaign period. For example the analysis looked at how many times the issue of economy was mentioned on the four pages of each newspaper. Also the analysis involved counting the frequency of how many times the presidential candidates were mentioned on page one as well as their image appearance on the same page. Through analysis of campaign related articles in the three newspapers, first, the exercise established how many times an issue –education for example appeared in each publication within the three week campaign period. What followed after scrutinizing all of the election related articles was ranking the nine issues in order of their frequency in each of the publications.

The issue that received the highest mention or frequency count was ranked 1st while that with least appearance/frequency was ranked last, or ninth. From there, each of the newspapers ranking of the nine issues was compared to the ranking of the same issues by the strategic research poll, which strived to identify the “most important problem” facing Kenya. For example, in term of frequency, corruption ranked 1st in *The Standard*, 2nd in *The People Daily* and 4th in the *Daily Nation*. The same issue was ranked 3rd by Strategic Research.

Cumulative frequency of the nine issues and attributes of the presidential candidates was created through tallies of these new papers. This then provided an indication of what issues and candidates attributes the news media were emphasizing during the period under study. Then, the cumulative tally was compared to opinion polls to give a glimpse of issues or candidates attributes the newspapers and the polls gave more weight to during the campaign. The mass media are the most common source of information, about election campaigns in democracies and societies in transition around the world. The media often represent a high point for political communication.

In established democracies, the media has been used as the main basis to establish the most important issues in campaigns. Balance and bias in the news at election times are often about political parties. The media in any election plays an important role therefore of informing the public on issues that are being debated in political campaigns as well as the opinions and statements of the candidates running for elections. Otieno says that “the place of the media in development and indeed in the democratization process cannot be underestimated” (2007:19).

During the reign of President Daniel Arap Moi, Kenya was characterized by direct censorship, intimidation, physical threats, attacks, media closures prosecution and detention of journalists and confiscation of media materials and equipments. “The media’s right to operate and function freely and independently was circumscribed by limitation and restrictions imposed of its ability to criticize actions or inactions by the government, political parties and individuals and therefore to operate independently” (Aling’o 2007, p 110)

The Kenya human rights commission (KHRC) analysis showed that “between 1994 and 1995 journalists were harassed, assaulted, arrested and their equipment confiscated. Multi party democracy ushered in a diverse independent media that could report freely and licensed to operate.

Prior to every election campaign citizens must not only decide the party or candidate they wish to vote for, they must also decide whether they will vote at all. In Kenya there is no compulsory voting so the citizens decide upon themselves whether they will vote or not. For this reason presidential candidates post adverts and messages for citizens to acquire their voter’s card. In addition, they carry out nation-wide campaigns to request citizens to vote for them. The media play a “crucial role in covering these events and bringing first hand news to the public on their presidential aspirants” (Mutere, 2007).

3.1 NEWSPAPER READERSHIP IN KENYA

According to a survey by the *Media council of Kenya* conducted in 2006, only 66 percent of Kenyans can read text in English and only 46 percent of this population read the newspapers. The report shows that 55 percent of urban dwellers read newspapers compared to 36 percent in the rural areas.

This study focused on the *Daily Nation*, *The Standard* and *The People Daily*. The *Media Council of Kenya* report puts the *Daily Nation* as the most favorable newspaper read by 80 percent of Kenyans, 40% read *The standard* and 7% *The People Daily*.

The three newspapers coverage of the poll, the campaign period and the three presidential aspirants therefore were a necessary tool in this research. They helped to determine whether the media did indeed influence the public's decisions on whether the voter decisions were purely independent of the media.

3.2 COVERAGE OF CAMPAIGN ISSUES IN THE NEWSPAPERS

Prominence was given to education, infrastructure and a new constitution in the *Daily Nation* between December 3 and 24. These issues appeared more than five times within the three week campaign period. Corruption followed closely and job creation ranked last yet it was the most contentious issue among the Kenyan public. In the *Standard*, corruption was more prominent followed by infrastructure and then education. Healthcare came in second last and job creation last.

The issue of economy was not even mentioned in *The Standard*. *The People Daily* gave prominence to the economy and a new constitution; yet again, job creation ranked last. A strategic research poll carried out on December 20, 2007 showed the issues ranking differently in prominence. Job creation which ranked first in the poll was a mere last in the *Daily Nation*, *The Standard* and *People Daily*.

Table 1: Ranking on prominence of campaign issues. (The Daily Nation, The Standard and The People Daily).

CAMPAIGN ISSUES	PROMINENCE IN RANKING		
	DAILY NATION	THE STANDARD	PEOPLE DAILY
Corruption	7	7	4
Infrastructure	8	6	2
Education	8	5	4
Security	4	3	3
Health care	3	2	0
Constitution	8	1	4
Poverty	4	1	2
Job creation	0	1	1
Economy	4	0	5

TABLE 2: Cumulative Frequency of campaign issues

CUMULATIVE FREQUENCY	CUMULATIVE RANK
Corruption	18
Infrastructure	16
Education	17
Security	10
Health care	5
Constitution	13
Poverty	7
Job creation	2
Economy	9

The cumulative perspective shows the issue of corruption topping with a frequency of 18 on *The Daily Nation*, *The Standard* and *The People Daily*. Education follows with a rank of 17. Infrastructure, constitution and security follow with a rank of 16, 13 and 10 respectively. Economy follows with a rank of 9. Poverty, healthcare and job creation follow with a rank of 7, 5 and 2 respectively.

TABLE 3: Following are the official results as of January 29, 2008 from the Electoral Commission of Kenya alongside the ones put out by the Office of the Government.

Party	Candidate	Votes(ECK)	Votes (KIBAKI GVT)	%
PNU	Mwai Kibaki	4,578,034	4,584,721	47%
ODM	Raila Odinga	4,352,860	4,352.993	44%
ODM -K	Kalonzo Musyoka	879,899	879,903	9%
KPTP	J. Karani	21.168	21,171	0.2%
KPP	Pius Muiru	9,665	9,667	0.09%
WCPK	N. Omar	8,624	8,624	0.087%
SKS	K. Matiba	8,049	8,046	0.081%
CCUP	D. Ng'ethe	5,976	5,976	0.06%
RPK	N. Kukubo	5,926	5,927	0.06%

Controversy therefore emanated as a result of the different results produced by the poll. On January 2, the then ECK chairman Samuel Kivuitu said that he had been pressured by PNU and ODM-K into announcing the results without delay, declaring Kibaki as the elected winner, claiming he did not personally know who really won. Within minutes of this declaration, Kibaki was sworn in and tribe based violence broke out across Kenya.

Raila Odinga announced that ODM would declare him the 'peoples' president on December 31. In his part, Kibaki on New years 2008 dictated his importance in seeing peace, stability and tolerance prevail. Odinga said that ODM would not negotiate with Kibaki unless he resigned.

TABLE 4: Candidates Image Frequency

Candidate	Daily Nation	The Standard	People Daily	Cumulative
MWAI KIBAKI	26	36	16	78
RAILA ODINGA	25	31	14	70
KALONZO MUSYOKA	16	28	7	51

3.3 CANDIDATES IMAGE IN THE NEWSPAPER

In December 20, Kenyans were placed on a poll and asked "If elections were held today, who would you vote for as your president?" This was done in the December 20 strategic Research poll. Raila led with 43%, Mwai Kibaki with 39% and Kalonzo with 15%. The newspapers however had a different view. *The Daily Nation* showed Kibaki leading with cumulative image frequency of 78 with 26 appearances in *The Daily Nation*, 36 in *The Standard* and 16 in *The People Daily*.

3.4 PRESIDENTIAL OPINION POLLS

Kibaki garnered 50.3% of the votes compared to Raila's 40.6% according to an exit poll conducted from 310 polling stations in 139 constituents (out of 210). The June 2007 poll also featured a head-to-head poll. Kalonzo Musyoka and Raila Odinga scored 45% having a dead-tie with Kibaki.

TABLE 5: Opinion Polls (October 2006 – Dec 2007)

MOST FAVOURITE CANDIDATE

POLL DATE	MWAI KIBAKI	RAILA ODINGA	KALONZO MUSYOKA
October 2006	41%	13%	20%
December 2006	42%	14%	20%
March 2007	51%	17%	14%
April 2007	44.3%	18.7%	15.3%
June 2007	45%	28%	14%
July 2007	45%	25%	11%
August 2007	42%	25%	11%
August 2007	47%	36%	13%
September 2007	38%	47%	8%
October 13 2007	37%	53%	8%
October 23 2007	39%	50%	8%
November 9 2007	41%	45%	11%
November 21 2007	41.4%	40.7%	14.7%
November 17 2007	42%	45%	11%
November 23 2007	43.3%	43.6%	11.4%
December 7 2007	42%	46%	10%
December 18 2007	43%	45%	10%

This poll shows different timelines across the run up to the 2007 general elections. ODM-K, Kalonzo Musyoka did not have much of a difference in candidate preferability during the period October 2006 and December 2007. PNU's Mwai Kibaki and Raila Odinga's ODM however alternated especially during September to December 2007 where Raila was the most favorite candidate slated to win the elections.

3.5 PLATFORM FOR CAMPAIGNING AS SHOWN BY THE DAILY NATION, THE STANDARD AND THE PEOPLE DAILY.

Every election brings with it promises of a better future for the citizens of Kenya. Presidential Aspirants therefore campaign on the basis of issues that they promise to change to ensure a more productive state. Many a times these promises are hardly met as the elected candidates forget why they were chosen in the first place. The following figure shows the issues to campaign for the 2007 elections

Figure 1:

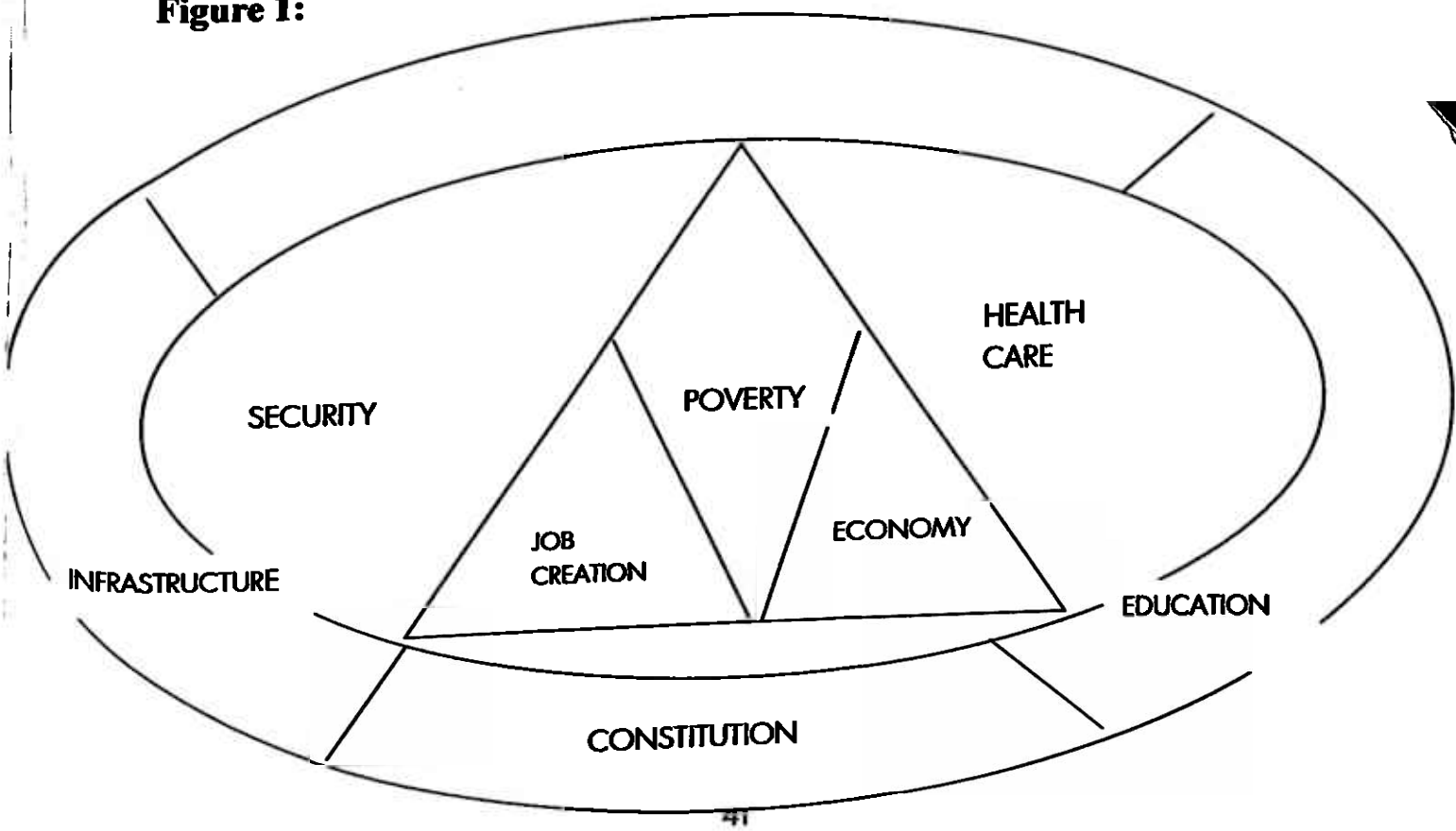
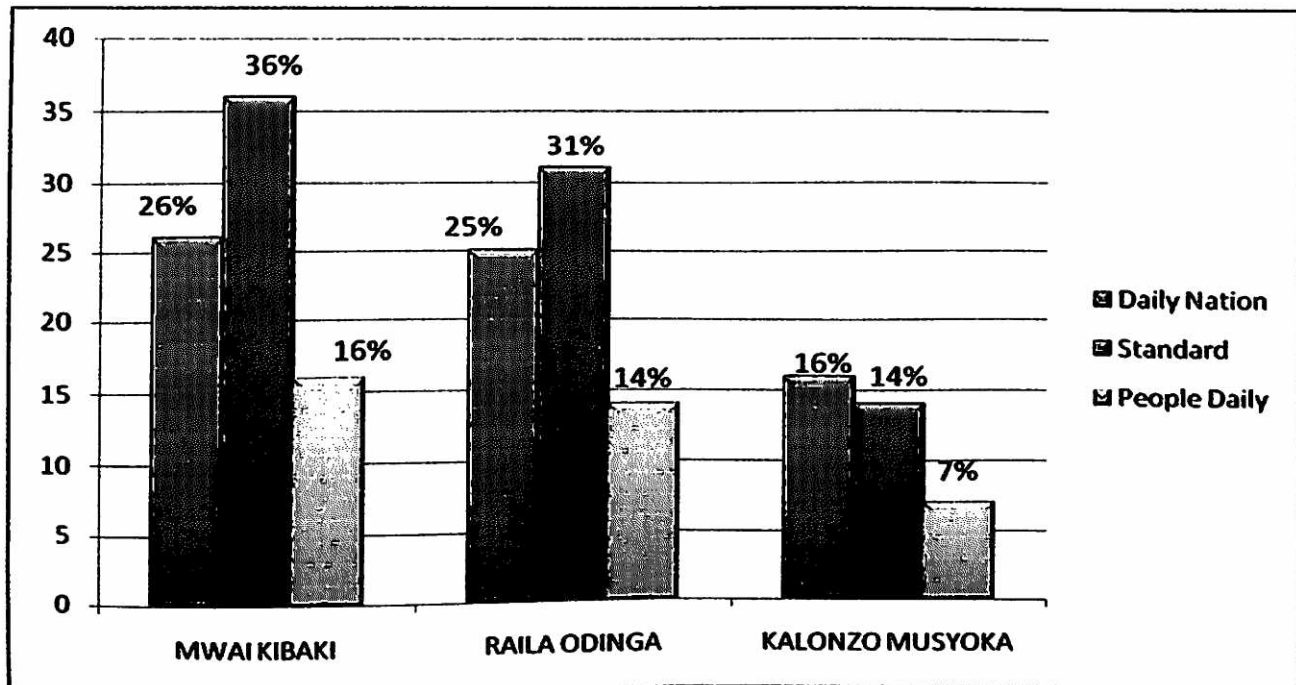


Figure 2: Image frequency graph for the three presidential aspirants as seen on the Daily Nation, The Standard and The People Daily.



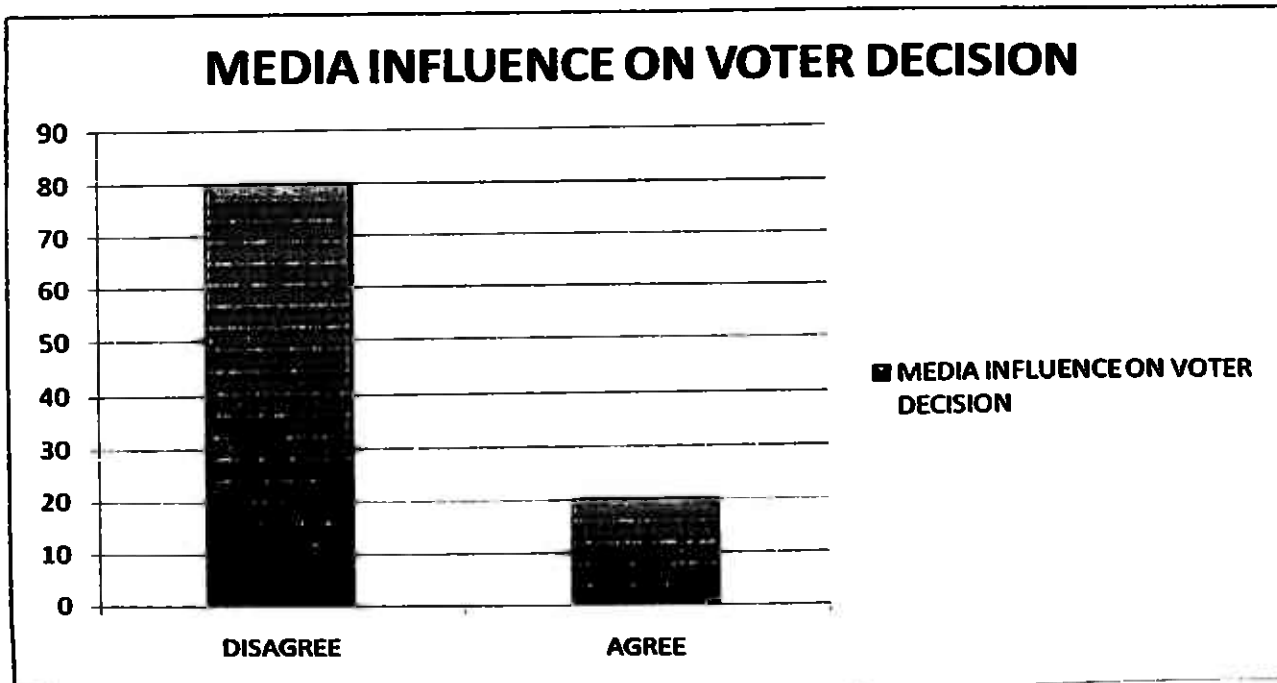
From the graph, the overall assessment is that Mwai Kibaki received major image prominence in the three dailies with a cumulative frequency of 78%

3.6 MEDIA'S INFLUENCE ON VOTER DECISION

The Steadman poll of September 6, 2007 showed that the media had no significant influence on the decisions that Kenyans made on their preferred candidate. It further showed that the decisions made by Kenyans were independent of any influence by the media.

Figure 3: Graph on media influence on voter decision.

Did the media influence you on voter decision?



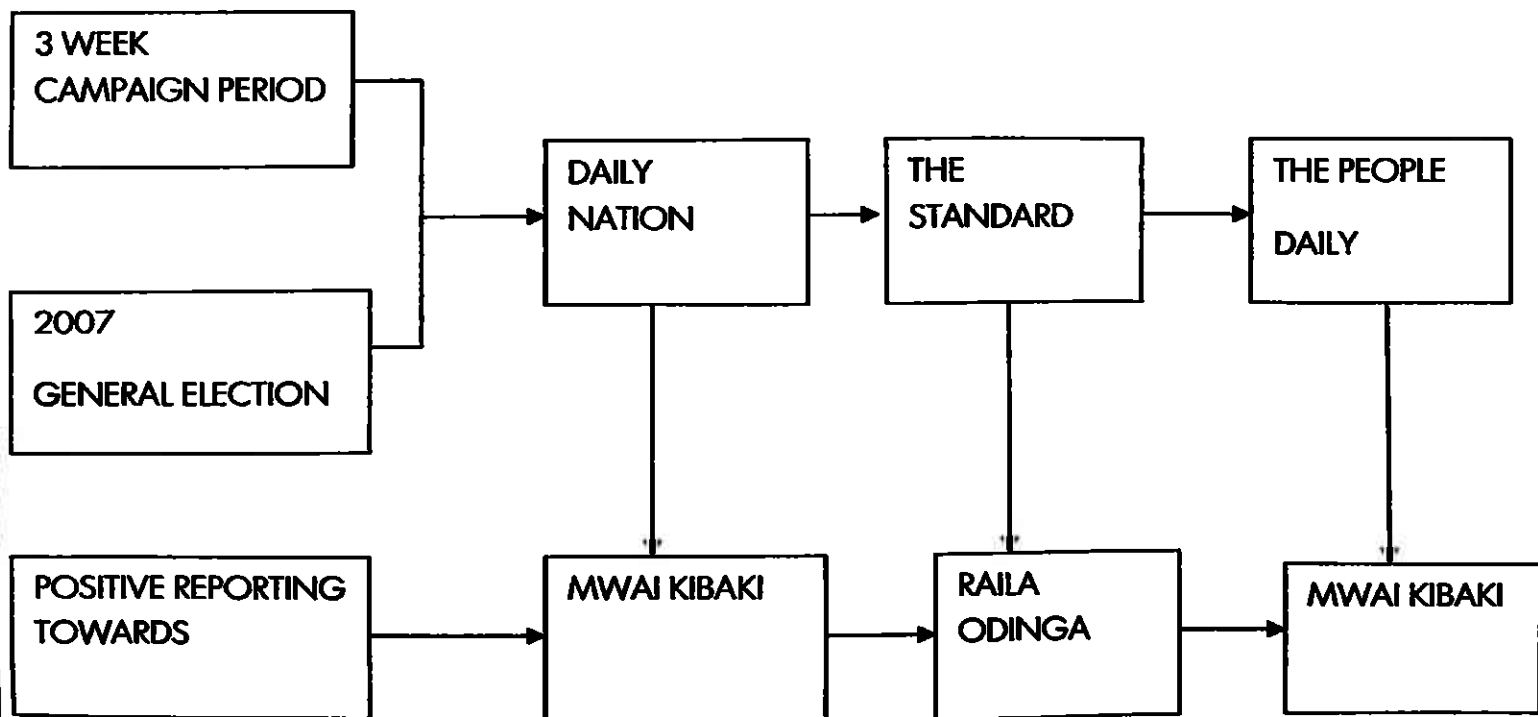
The graph shows that 80% of Kenyans disagreed on the media's influence on their decisions on who to vote for in the 2007 General Elections only 20% agree.

3.7 MEDIA OBJECTIVITY AND PARTISANSHIP

During the line up to the 2007 general elections the media was questioned on its ability to be objective and not partisan by the international community.

It was evident that *The Daily Nation* owned by NMG supported PNU's Kibaki, *The Standard* owned by *The Standard Group* Supported ODM's Raila Odinga and *The People Daily* owned by Kenneth Matiba Supported Mwai Kibaki. Kalonzo Musyoka was not a favorite of the three Dailies.

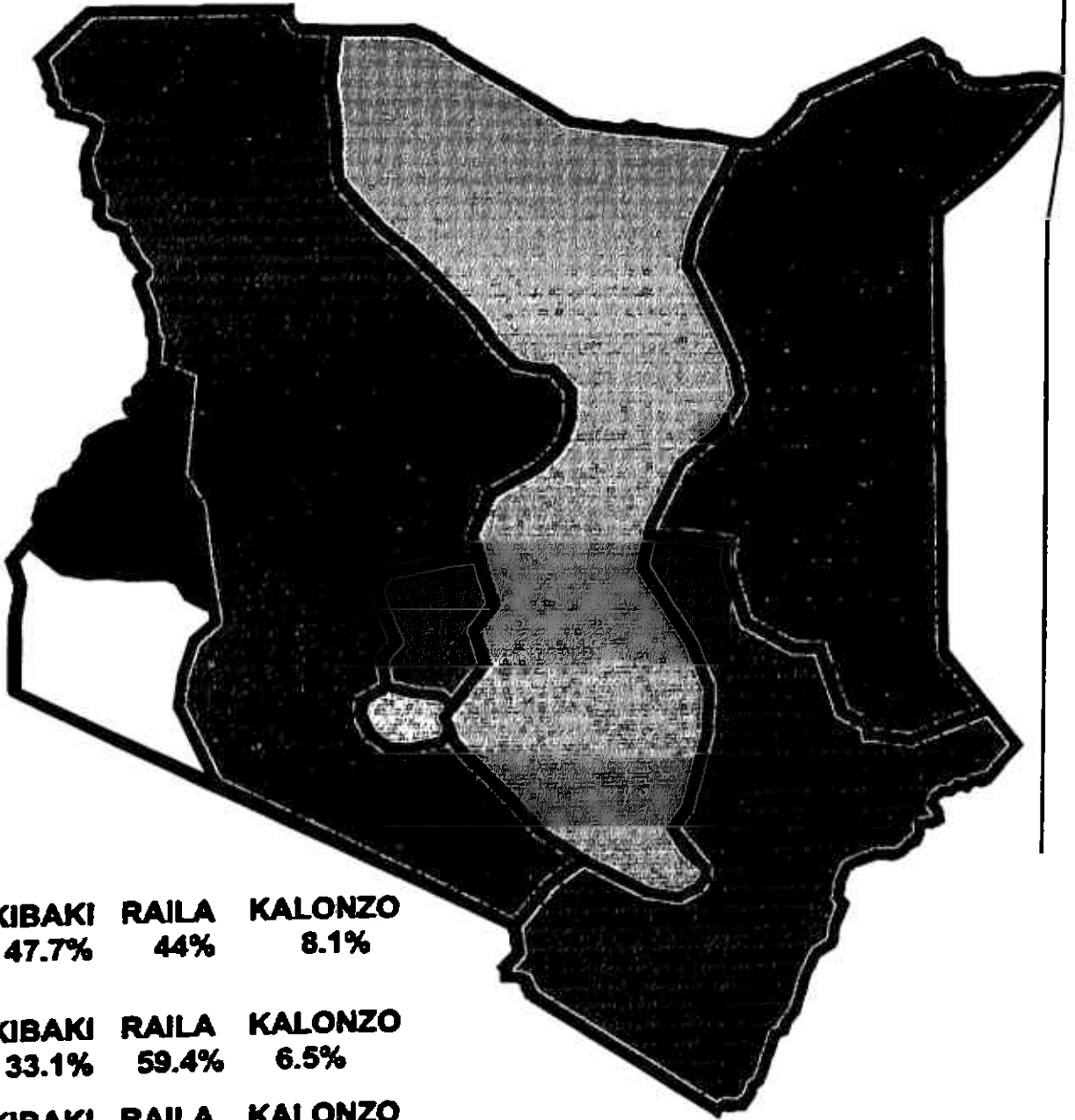
Figure 4: Media Partisanship



3.8 VOTER ETHNICITY AS PORTRAYED IN THE MEDIA

The Daily Nation on January 30, 2008 published provincial results provided by the Electoral Commission of Kenya. The map shows that voters supported presidential candidates based on tribe as seen in Central province where Kibaki garnered 97% support, Nyanza province supporting Raila with 82.4% and Eastern province supporting Kalonzo with 43.8% and Kibaki with 50.4%. Western province supported Raila Odinga with 65.9%. Voter decision was therefore influenced by tribal lines. Obonyo (2007) said “I am embarrassed to admit the reality, which is that polls will chiefly be decided on grounds of ethnicity (Obonyo, 2007, Para 12).

Figure 5: Regional Voter Decision



KIBAKI	RAILA	KALONZO
47.7%	44%	8.1%

KIBAKI	RAILA	KALONZO
33.1%	59.4%	6.5%

KIBAKI	RAILA	KALONZO
50.3%	47.2%	2.3%

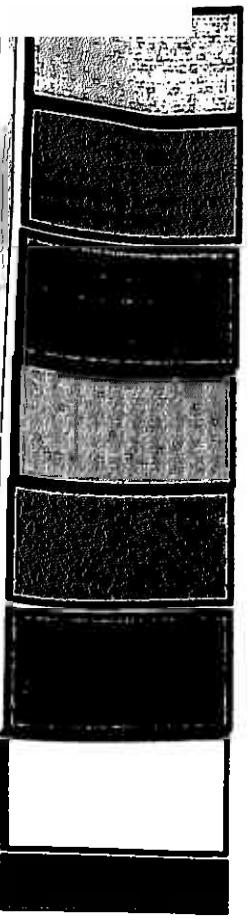
KIBAKI	RAILA	KALONZO
50.4%	5.0%	43.8%

KIBAKI	RAILA	KALONZO
97.0%	1.9%	0.7%

KIBAKI	RAILA	KALONZO
33.5%	64.6%	1.4%

KIBAKI	RAILA	KALONZO
16.9%	82.4%	0.3%

KIBAKI	RAILA	KALONZO
---------------	--------------	----------------



On 24th October 2007, the *Sunday Nation* carried a story showing how ethnicity influences voting patterns in Kenya. It is seen as one of the factors that influenced voter decisions in the 2007 general election. Dr. Amukowa Anangwe of ODM said that the election would not be issue-oriented but ethnicity based". Barasa and Wachira observed that the strategic Research chief executive, Caesar Handa speaking to the Daily Nation states that "people believe it is only a candidate from their community who will enable them to tap into natural resources"

Former chairman of the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights Maina Kiai said "Kenya's politics is organized around ethnicity and political parties have no ideological organization" (Barasa & Wachira's 2007, para 16)

The pentagon that sweeps the whole country comprising of ODM's officials is 'meant to show that all main groups are represented at the core of power" (Kanyinga, 2007, Para 12)

.9 VOTER BRIBERY

Incidents of rampant voter bribery marring the country were reported. It is seen as one of the factors that influenced voter decisions in the 2007 general elections. Presidential candidates bribed the citizens with cash, foodstuffs and other amenities. They were further promised more if they voted in favour of the candidates. In my constituency Kitui central, Charity Ngilu bribed the constituents with foodstuffs like maize flour and cooking oil. In return the voters were to vote her in as the Kitui Central Member of Parliament and vote in Raila Odinga as president. This move saw a lot of Kambas from Kitui central vote for Charity Kaluki Ngilu and Raila Odinga. (*The Daily Nation*, 2007, December 4).

Similarly citizens in most provinces voted according to the “three piece voting”. The presidential parliamentary and civic elections take place at the same time. Therefore citizens preferred to vote for people from the same party they were supporting. For instance a voter would vote in the President, Member of Parliament and Councilor from the same party like ODM. On December 21, 2007 Raila Odinga asked his supporters to follow the “three-piece” voting system (*The Standard*, 2007 December 21).

The media had little evidence to show it influenced any voters’ decision because it simply brought to light what the presidential candidates said without having any direct influence. Watchdogs were angered by the voter bribery (Mathenge, 2007) University of Nairobi scholar Kithaka Mbeeria notes that “rich politicians lured voters in marginalized areas through hand to hand campaigns” (Gekara & Wachira, 2007 Para 4).

3.10 QUESTION OF MEDIA BIAS

The bias of ladies and gentlemen of the press is not a yester thing. However reporters are often anxious to preserve their own credibility “They have to deal with “objectivity to both sides of ongoing political struggles” (Richard Reeves, 2007). Journalism is “big business (Bagdikas Ben, 2007). As a result those in political power advertise extensively in the media and are able to suppress the views and perspectives contrary to their interests. Reporters must at all time show proficiency in dealing with matters concerning candidate’s personal and private lives; many a times they do not do this.

In 2006, Kenyans awoke with a shocking revelation that the government had attacked the Standard Group. *Kenya Television Network (KTN)* was put off air, the printing plant was disabled and their newspapers burnt at their Likoni road premises. The government took responsibility with the then Security minister John Michuki declaring “if you rattle a snake, you must be prepared to be bitten by it”. It was the darkest moment in Kenya media history. Similarly the first lady Lucy Kibaki walked into a media house and slapped a journalist and prevented them from airing any news about her. It showed the absurdity of a deranged first lady.

3.11 MARKET DEMANDS

In a newspaper set up, there must be exchange value of news in that income and profit are derived. The challenge is getting more and more people to read your newspaper.

There has to be a very precise distinction with your newspapers.

Look at facts, balance and news value; that is why *The Daily Nation* is the preferred newspaper as it encompasses these attributes. The challenge newspapers face is advances in technology. The introduction of advanced technology has threatened the extinction of newspapers. For instance newspapers are maximizing space to make money through advertising. This has boosted newspapers to avoid becoming obsolete and extinct.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

Campaigns may lead voters to make decisions on their preferred candidate but the media is only a communicator of these candidates' efforts. The media has a direct influence on a voter but does not influence their final decision to vote for a preferred candidate.

4.1 DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter consists of data collected on the objective of identifying a possible correlation between the mass media and the public in forming public opinion in the 2007 general elections. The overall research results identified knowledge gaps and were strictly related to the objectives. As noted in chapter three, this study employed the 1973 Ray Funkhouser methodology approach where content analysis was used to examine coverage of major issues in three major magazines in the U.S. Funkhouser related the news media coverage of fourteen issues to opinion polls by the Gallup organization. Similarly, this study correlated news media coverage of nine issues during the 2007 Kenyan General Election to the Strategic Research poll. Funkhouser concluded that "the data cited here suggest that the amount of media attention given to an issue strongly influences its visibility to the public" (1973:74). This means Funkhouser's study supported the hypothesis that topics receiving much attention in the media, also receive similar attention from members of the public, thus no major similarity between the two studies. It also disagrees with the hypothesis that news media influence people's opinions.

From the findings presented in this chapter, it can be concluded that both the media and the public had different agendas in the 2007 Kenyan elections. While the media, through its election coverage advocated for the issue of corruption, Kenyan voters put the issue of job creation on top of their election agenda.

The job creation issue, however, received the least consideration from the three newspapers as well as cumulatively. It is this contrast in the media agenda and the public agenda that explains the lack of any significant correlation between the two, in as far as issue salience and attributes agenda-setting about the presidential candidates was concerned.

This study found little evidence of the mass media's influence on voter decision in the 2007 elections. Other factors like revenue generation were seen to influence voting pattern. This is so because the three daily newspapers highlighted corruption issues that touched on the three presidential candidates.

In so doing they prioritized the issues on pages 1, 2 and 3 of the newspapers. This made voters buy more and more newspapers to get full information on the traits of the candidates they voting for. *The Nation*, *The Standard* and *The People Daily* were motivated by the factor of revenue generation.

They therefore gave prominence to issues that attracted high readership. When the party of National Unity launched its manifesto, ODM dismissed the manifesto as "an inadequate promise" (*The Standard*, 2007, Para 1). These controversies may have swayed the voter's decision but had absolutely no direct impact on their preferred candidates.

4.2 PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTION 1

The primary research question was how the issues in the *Daily Nation*, *The Standard* and *The People Daily* influenced or affected public opinion in the 2007 General Election. The data analysis based on the Spearman Rank Correlation indicated that the correlation involving salience of issues on the three newspapers to the Strategic Research's poll was weak, that is, there was no significant evidence in correlation. The correlation of 0.12552 was weak.

Spearman's Rank Correlation Analysis of Campaign Issues

TOP ENTRY: SPEARMAN CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS, N = 9

BOTTOM ENTRY: p-value under HO: TRUE CORRELATION = 0

DAILY NATION	STANDARD	PEOPLE	CUMULATIVE
-0.13859	0.11065	0.24790	0.12552
0.7221	0.7769	0.5201	0.7476

As presented in chapter three, corruption emerged as the issue that was given a lot of weight in *The Daily Nation*, *The Standard* and *The People Daily*. It ranked top with a cumulative frequency of 18. Through opinion surveys however, the voters put the issue of job creation first. They wished for job creation to be given first priority by the new government. The contradiction comes about when it's evident that the three newspapers gave the least consideration to the issue of job creation.

This contrast then means that there was a contrast of agendas between the media and the public. Education, a new constitution and infrastructure were ranked first in *The Daily Nation*.

In *the Standard* the corruption issue topped while Economy was ranked highly in *The People Daily*. There was therefore little correlation between the media agenda and the public agenda. The public called for job creation to be addressed to minimize the levels of unemployment and there of the Soaring levels of poverty in the country.

Factors like voter bribery, revenue generation, three piece voting system and ethnicity played an even greater role in swaying voter decision than the media did.

Looking at ethnicity, major tribes in Kenya have a tendency of voting for their own.

“President Kibaki enjoyed an unsurpassed backing in Central province, a region dominated by his kikuyu tribe. In this same province Raila scored a shameful 8%. In Nyanza Province, Raila enjoyed a 78% vote, a region largely dominated by the Luo community.

Kalonzo on the other hand enjoyed a 45% vote in Eastern province, a region dominated highly by the Kamba community, his own. Voters vote for their own because they assume that only candidates from their community will be able to tap into the natural resources and develop them as a province.

Voter bribery was best demonstrated by a report by *Coalition for Accountable political Financing (CAPF)* that says Kajiado North constituents were the most bribed in the 2007 elections. The report dated April 2008 indicates that bribes of sh. 200 were given to at least 20, 190 voters from a parliamentary candidate. CAPF’s report says the money was meant to “influence the voters to vote for the candidate dishing out cash” (Wachira, 2007 para 6). Voter bribery henceforth tilted the voting patterns in the 2007 general elections.

The three piece voting system required voters to vote for the presidential parliamentary and civic candidate from the same political party. Since ODM was popular in Nyanza province, voters decided to vote for the three ODM candidates. Popular political parties see candidates being voted in whether their performance record is known or not. Being a part of the popular political party is sufficient enough to garner support and votes from constituents in the election. Revenue generation is the other factor that may have swayed agenda. This is to say that *The Daily Nation*, *The Standard* and *The People Daily* gave prominence to issues that attracted high readership. In turn this boosted newspaper sales and cumulated to revenue generation.

The news reporters are very aware how graft issues and other vices committed by the governmental officials hurt the public. This is why they continuously give prominence to these issues and always run these stories. They act as gatekeepers and on the other hand increase revenue generation through soaring newspaper sales. Reporters evoke people's emotions with "catchy" headlines prompting the public to buy newspapers to read more about the perpetrators of this economic crimes and what justice is being brought against them. The issues in *The Daily Nation*, *The Standard* and *The People Daily* had therefore no significant influence on public opinion.

4.3 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 1

The first secondary research question was of the attributes of the three presidential candidates Were covered on the three dailies and their influence on public opinion. The result showed a Correlation of 0.50000 which was also weak though positive, meaning that there was little Evidence in correlation involving the attributes of the three presidential candidates to the opinion Poll. The correlation recorded was 0.12552, a very weak one, though positive.

A correlation is confined between -1 and +1, and its strength grows moving away from zero point towards the two extreme limits, -1 and +1. So, in this case, the correlation of 0.12552 is Very close to the zero point and away from +1, meaning that it is very weak.

Spearman's Rank Correlation Analysis of Candidates' Images

TOP ENTRY: SPEARMAN CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS, N = 3

BOTTOM ENTRY: p-value under HO: TRUE CORRELATION = 0

DAILY NATION	STANDARD	PEOPLE	CUMULATIVE
0.50000	0.50000	0.50000	0.50000
0.6667	0.6667	0.6667	0.6667

The Daily Nation, The Standard and The People Daily gave prominence to presidential candidates Kibaki, Raila and Kalonzo. They were slotted in pages 1, 2, 3 of the dailies and further given prominence on the last page of the dailies. This is so because the public focuses on these pages more than any other page. The newspapers reported on the traits of the three candidates whether positive or negative and highlighted their efforts in forming a better Kenya and influencing decisions that will bring positive change to the country.

The political aspirants used the three dailies as a platform to launch their manifestos and campaigns. The media in turn did a good job of reporting and being the link between the presidential aspirants and the public. The Goldenberg scandal was an unprecedented financial rip-off in Kenya's history of corruption. In the graft controversy, Nairobi business man Kamlesh Pattni was the architect of the scandal (Ireru, 2004, P.1).

The media council of Kenya did a baseline survey on the Kenya media to determine the influence of the media in political campaigns. The survey clearly indicated that the media was assertive in bringing to light corruption vices and other anomalies concerned with presidential candidates but they did not in any direct way influence public opinion (*Media Council of Kenya, 2005*). In November 2007, the media portrayed Kibaki in 'best light' and this was seen as an act to sway the voters to favor him. When questioned on the streets of Nairobi by reporters, the public clearly stated that it was mind-set on voting for the candidate that will impact positively on their lives and they would not be influenced by anyone (Otieno & Barasa 2007)

The Daily Nation and *The Standard* were subjective to the controversial 2007 political campaigns. *The Daily Nation* gave Mwai Kibaki more prominence and portrayed him in the best of light. Similarly *The Standard* portrayed Raila Odinga in the best of light. Irrespective of this, voter decision was not swayed at all.

The public made independent choices on their preferred presidential candidates. It is thus safe to say that other factors like voter bribery may have had an even bigger influence on the results of the 2007 election but not the Media's influence. The three dailies portrayal of the three presidential candidates attributes had no significant influence on public opinion and voter decision.

4.4 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 2

The question aimed to find out which newspaper among *The Daily Nation*, *The Standard* and *The People Daily* showed a correlation to public opinion. *The People Daily* registered the strongest correlation of 0.24790 on campaign issues. However, in actual fact, this is a weak-positive correlation.

The Daily Nation put the issue of job creation last. *The Standard* and *The People Daily* put the job creation issue second last. The public agenda gave prominence to job creation thus putting it first. This imbalance between the media agenda and the public agenda shows that no newspaper had any significant correlation to public opinion.

4.5 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 3

The question aimed to find out the prominent issues and if they were used for a platform for campaigns. In every campaign, presidential aspirants launch their manifesto in which they promise a fruitful administration that will address one or more issues. The prominent issues were corruption, infrastructure, education, security, health care, a new constitution, poverty, job creation and economy. Mwai Kibaki ran on the platform of providing free education for all and a new constitution for Kenyans. Kibaki was able to launch the free education program which is the main success he has been identified with during his regime. Although the program has been marred with irregularities, graft allegations and other controversies, it has created a chance for Kenyans from all walks of life to get educated.

The promise to provide a new constitution was not fruitful for Mwai Kibaki as he lost in the 2005 referendum. The fight though is still on to provide one following the referendum on August 4, 2010.

Raila Odinga promised a corruption-free administration and job creation for all young Kenyans. Kenya's presidential aspirants have been known over years to give empty promises to its citizenry especially when trying to garner votes in upcoming elections.

To answer the Research question, indeed these issues were used as a platform for the 2007 General Elections. The public, however, had a different agenda compared to the one portrayed by the media.

The issues ranked highly by the media were the less prominent ones to the public. The public gave prominence to job creation and the media ranked it last. There was therefore no similarity in agenda in the 2007 General election. The issues were independent of agenda setting in the elections.

4.6 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 4

The question aimed at finding out whether the results showed any substantial influence in forming opinions during the 2007 general elections. As discussed in research questions 1, 2 and 3 there is no significant influence by the media. Public opinion was independent of *The Daily Nation, The Standard and The People Daily's* reporting during the run up to the 2007 General Election.

4.7 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 5

The question asked if the three Daily Newspapers were objective and independent in covering news related to three presidential aspirants. In the line-up to the 2007 elections, the International community questioned the Kenyan Media on its ability to be prejudice-free, objective and independent when covering the General Elections. It became evident that the media was biased and this culminated into contempt of the three dailies. Each daily had its presidential candidate that it portrayed in the best light. Rumors even were round that Raila Odinga had vested interests in the Standard and had paid them a large sum of money to portray him in the best light. Similarly Mwai Kibaki was seen to have more “friends” in the *Nation Media Group* and as a result they bore immense favourism for him.

During the run up to the General Elections, newspaper sales were fluctuating day and night because some publics detested seeing their preferred candidate dragged in the mad. It is no wonder that *The Daily Nation* poll put Kibaki leading with a soaring margin and *The Standard* poll gave the impression that Raila Odinga would be unsurpassed in the coming Elections.

Objectivity in the media is a better pill to swallow as many a times; reporters are driven by profit generation or personal preferences and therefore are not independent of these luring factors. To answer the question, indeed the media did an outstanding job in reporting during the campaigning period and the line-up to the elections but they lacked objectivity and professionalism. The media should always be objective irrespective of their personal emotions, feelings and preferences. The public relies solely on the media for information. It is therefore the media’s mandate to give bias-free information and objective news stories at all times.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that the mass media play a crucial role in the society by informing, educating and entertaining the masses. It exerts its influence on the audience and in so doing gives prominence to pertinent issues. It provides a platform for proponents and opponents to battle contentious issues. The media attaches importance to an issue that becomes a basis for debate by the public. The findings of this study show that the agenda set by *The Daily Nation*, *The Standard* and *The People Daily* did not have an impact on the audience. From the findings, it can be concluded that the public and the media had very different agendas in the 2007 general elections.

The issues of voter bribery, revenue generation, ethnicity and three-piece voting system were found to have probably watered the media agenda in forming public opinion in the 2007 Elections. This is to show that the issues highlighted in the news are not directly adopted by the public as a standard by which they judge politicians for elective office. That being said, there is massive civic ignorance where the public are not concerned with political information yet it impacts directly on their every day life. The public, however, had a different agenda compared to the one portrayed by the media. The issues ranked highly by the media were the less prominent ones to the public.

The public gave prominence to job creation and the media ranked it last. There was therefore no similarity in agenda in the 2007 General election. The issues were independent of agenda setting in the elections.

The agenda-setting theory asserts that the priorities of the media agenda influence the priorities of the public agenda. Its core theoretical idea is that elements prominent in the media picture become prominent in the audiences picture. This research and its findings however negate that as no significant influence was identified in forming the public agenda in the elections. The Spearman's Rank results clearly indicate that there was a weak influence on public opinion. From the findings, the print media played a crucial role in telling voters what to think about and focusing on campaign issues. The media further highlighted the candidates' image and manifestos and in so doing brought to light the promises the presidential candidates were making.

The research findings clearly show that the media had an insignificant effect in swaying the decision of voters. That said, the media gave prominence to issues and therefore had the effect of telling voters what issues to consider when selecting their preferred presidential candidate. Focusing on the campaign issues, while the media gave prominence to certain issues like education, the voters thought that poverty and job creation should be more prominent. This difference in views therefore indicates that the media had little influence on public opinion.

Many a times the presidential candidates use the media expecting it to lure gullible voters to vote for them. In Kenya, newspaper readers are more likely to purchase one newspaper. Each newspaper runs its story differently and this creates a proliferation of information.

If the newspaper reader is to trust what is written in all the newspapers and vote on the basis of that, then there would be evidence that the media does actually influence public opinion. Since this exercise does not happen, conclusive effects on the Media's influence on public opinion cannot be made. This study found little evidence of mass media influence on voter decision. As discussed in chapter 3, other factors like ethnicity, voter bribery, revenue generation and three piece system of voting were seen to have an even greater influence on voter decision. The agenda-setting function of the mass media was thus not successfully seen in the 2007 general elections. It was on the premise that the mass media sets the agenda that this study examined the agenda setting function of the mass media in the 2007 elections. The findings thus negate that there was a significant influence on voter decision and public opinion.

5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

To achieve more reliable data on the agenda –setting function of mass communication in a political context like Kenya, other factors need to be explored as they may actually set the agenda more than the media does.

The media is an important periphery for information on politics but it may not set a political agenda as outstandingly as other mediating factors do. Future studies should scrutinize other correlating factors of agenda. This will ensure a richer data and therefore yield more evidence of correlation existence in a study.

REFERENCES

- Agina, B, & Omanga, B (2008, September 17). Kriegler: Shock verdict on Election flaws The Standard.
- Aling'o P. "Role of the media in the Electoral process. "In Muli, K & Aling'o, P (2007). Media and Democratic governance in Kenya, Nairobi, Kenya Lino typesetters (K) Limited.
- Ansolabehere, S, & Iyengar, S. (1995). *Going negative: How attack ads shrink and polarize the electorate*. New York: Free press.
- Barasa, L & Wachira, M (2007, December 10) Charity begins at Home for Top contenders. Daily Nation.
- BBC, (2005, November 22): Kenya Referendum BBC News. Website: [Http://news.bbc.co.uk](http://news.bbc.co.uk)
- BBC, (2007, August 28); "Ex rival backs Kibaki's re-election"
- BBC, (2007, September 16): "Kenya President eyes re-election".
- Becker, L., & McCombs, M. (1978). The role of the press in determining voter reactions to presidential primaries. *Human Communication Research*, 4, 301-307.
- Bishop tells voters to "send off Kibaki and his team. (The Standard, 2007, October 22)
- Cohen, B (1963). *The press and foreign policy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University press.
- Daily Nation, (2007, October 26): "Election date set for Thursday December 2007"
- Daily Nation, (2007, November 16): "Nomination papers presented finally"

Daily Nation, (2008, July 11): "Kenya election was rigged, U.S envoy says"

Daily Nation, (2010, June 22): "School disaster in the making". A Research by the Kenya National Examination council

Daily Nation, (2008, January 28). *Kibaki urges Kenyans to embrace one another as brothers and sisters.*

Daily Nation, (2008, February 4). Absolom Mutere *applauds the media for commendable reporting during the 2007 general elections.*

Daily Nation, (2010, October 8). *Chief Justice Evan Gicheru speaks on the haphazard swearing in of Mwai kibaki following the 2007 general election*

Davie.M & Maher, M (2006). Maxwell Mccombs: Agenda-setting Explorer. Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic media. 50, 358 – 364)

Dearing, J, & Rogers, E (1996) Agenda setting. London: Sage publications.

Dearing, J.W., &Rogers, E.M. (1992). AIDS and the media agenda: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Electoral Commission of Kenya, (2005) Results of the 2005 constitutional referendum, Nairobi, Kenya.

Electoral Commission of Kenya, (2007). Registered voters and Polling stations per constituency, Nairobi, Kenya

Electoral Commission of Kenya, (2008) Results of the 2007 General Election Nairobi, Kenya.

European Union Electoral Monitoring mission, (2008, January 1): Report on General Election 2007.

Funkouser, G. R. (1973). An exploratory study in the dynamics of public opinion. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 37, 62-75

Gekara, M, & Wachira, M (2007, December 15), Money factor in Parliamentary Race. Daily Nation.

Gibson, C.C & Long J.D (2007). The presidential and parliamentary elections in Kenya Independent Review Commission (2007, December, 2007): General Elections held in Kenya. Nairobi, Kenya.

Ileri, K (2004, September 24). Kamlesh cannot explain Sh. 10b. The people Daily.

Kakai, Anthony, (2007, October 6): "ODM party launches its presidential campaign"

Kanyinga, K (2007, December 22). The issue that will shape election outcome this week. Sunday Nation.

Kenya Human Rights commission, (1998). Media censorship in a plural context. A Report on the Kenyan media. Nairobi, Kenya.

Kenya Human Rights Commission, (1997) shackled messengers: The media in multi party Kenya. Nairobi, Kenya.

Kenya Human Rights Commission, (2008). A Report on *The aftermath of post-election violence* in Kenya. Nairobi, Kenya.

Kenya Media Council of Kenya, (2009). *A Report on Newspaper circulation in Kenya*. Nairobi, Kenya

Kriegler Report, (2009). *The Conduct of the Electoral Commission of Kenya during the 2007 elections*. Nairobi, Kenya.

Krippendorff, K (2004). *Content Analysis*. London; United Kingdom: Sage publications.

Kuhn, T. S. (1970). *The structure of scientific revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago press.

Lippman, W (1992). *Public opinion*. New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace & Company.

Mathenge, O (2007, December 9). *Voter Bribery Angers Watchdogs*. Daily Nation.

Media Council of Kenya. (2005) *Baseline. Survey of Media in Kenya*. Nairobi, Kenya. Almond Print limited.

McCombs, M, & Shaw, D (1972). *Communication and the political process*. *Public opinion quarterly* 100-108.

McCombs, M, & Shaw, D (1977), *the emergence of American political issues*. St. Paul's, MN: West publishing Co.

Mc Combs, M, Shaw, D & Weaver, D (1997) *Communication and Democracy*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Mc Combs, M (2004) *Setting the Agenda*. Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing Inc.

McCombs, M., & Shaw, D. (1972). *the agenda-setting role of the mass media*. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36, 176-185,

- Mutere, A. "Media and Policy" In Muli, K & Aling'o (2007). *Media and Democratic governance in Kenya*, Nairobi, Kenya: Lino typesetters (K) Limited.
- Mutua, M (2008). *Kenya's quest for Democracy*. Boulder, Co. Lynne Rienner Publishers
- Mwaniki, M (2007, December 8): "Kalonzo dismisses opinion poll" *Daily Nation* page 6.
- Namunane, B & Shiundu, A (2008 December 16). Finally the Disgraced Kenya's ECK is disbanded. *Daily Nation*.
- Ndii, D & Kanyinga Karuti. (2010). *Difference in media coverage between the 2007 and 2002 elections*. Institute For Development Studies: University of Nairobi
- Neuendorf, K (2002). *Content Analysis guidebook*. London, United Kingdom: Sage publications
- Neuman, W. R. (1986). *The paradox of mass politics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Obonyo, O (2007, December). Factors that will tip the scale on Election Day. *The Standard*.
- ODM Dismisses PNU Manifesto. (2007, November 12). *The Standard*.
- Oriare P, (2008). Report on the *Conduct of the Media* in the 2007 elections in Kenya
- Otieno, J (2007, December 10). Jobs top the list of Demands by Kenyans. *Daily Nation*.
- Otieno, J & Barasa, L (2007, November 28) Media portray Kibaki in best light, says study. *Daily Nation*.
- Otieno, J (2007, December 18). US firm put Kibaki ahead. *Daily Nation*.

Otieno, O. "Media and governance" In Muli, K & Aling'o, P (2007) Media and Democratic governance in Kenya, Nairobi, Kenya, Lino typesetters (K) Limited

Steadman Report, (2006, July 21). *Report on the attributes of Mwai Kibaki, Raila Odinga and Kalonzo Musyoka*. Nairobi, Kenya.

Steadman Report, (2006, July 21). *The media as the most trusted institution*. Nairobi, Kenya

Steadman Report, (2008). A report on *Presidential Elections in Kenya*. Nairobi, Kenya.

Takeshita, T., & Mikami, S. (1995). How did the mass media influence the voters' choice in the 1993 general election in Japan? : A study of agenda-setting. *Keio Communication Review*, 17, 27-41.

Tankard, J. W., Jr. (1990). Maxwell McCombs, Donald Shaw, and agenda-setting. Journalism educators and their ideas (pp.278-286). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

The end of three piece vote system (2007, November 22) The Standard

The Standard, (2008, January 3). *Professor Makau Mutua calls for calm and dialogue in the country*.

Three -piece voting system (2007, December 21). "Raila asks his supporters to follow the three-piece voting system"

Throup, D & Hornsby, C (1998). Multi-party. Politics in Kenya Nairobi, Kenya East African Educational Publishers.

Trumbo, C. (1995). Longitudinal modeling of public issues: An application of the agenda-setting process. *Journalism Monographs*, 152 pp.1-57.

Waki Report, (2009). A Report on *Post-election violence in Kenya*. Nairobi, Kenya.