

**THE RISE OF TABLOIDIZATION OF NEWS IN KENYA- A CASE STUDY OF *THE
NAIROBIAN***

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DECLARATION

This research project report is my original work and has not been presented for the award of a degree in this University or any other Institution of higher learning for examination.

Signature

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

Signature

Date

DR. TOM ODHIAMBO

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my parents for all they have done. Your love, prayers, endless support, encouragement, and for educating me and enabling me to reach this level. Thank you and May God bless you abundantly.

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ABSTRACT

This study intends to explore the rise of tabloidization of news in Kenya, a case study of *The Nairobiian*. It seeks to examine the rise of tabloidization of newspaper media which has led to the marketing and ‘shaping of news’ to cater to the tastes of audiences and advertisers. The study uses descriptive research design as a process of collecting data in order to answer research questions concerning the status of the subjects in the study. This type of research attempts to describe such things as possible behavior, attitudes, values and characteristics. The study established that tabloidization has been on the rise in Kenya, as the newspaper under this study, *The Nairobiian*, clearly shows from its headlines, its extensive reporting on Entertainment, celebrity gossip and other attention- seeking details regarding the prominent people in Kenya. The study concludes that tabloidization has been on the rise in Kenya, as the newspaper under this study, *The Nairobiian*. It uses persuasion as a deliberate attempt to modify the attitude, beliefs, or behaviors of its consumers through the transmission of some message, achieved by how they frame their eye-catching headlines. Based on the findings, the study recommends: Improved media literacy which will not only enable citizens to understand the messages and information being disseminated but will help them identify the bias, spin, misinformation or lies and also evaluate what gaps there may be in such media content and for a newspaper to maintain its editorial independence, it needs to be well managed, efficient and financially self-sustaining. It should be able to receive revenue from a multitude of sources and not solely depend on advertising and circulation revenues to avoid superficial content or tabloidization of news.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

A tabloid is a newspaper of small format giving the news in condensed form, usually with illustrated, often sensational material whereas tabloidization is communication that is condensed and sensationalized, as a characteristic of tabloid journalism (Spark, 2000). Tabloidization is a shift by the media away from national and international issues of importance to a more entertainment or gossipy style of journalism that focuses on "Lifestyle, celebrity, entertainment and crime/scandal". This shift is really a matter of concern because it gives rise to fear for the future of the media and the role and responsibility attached to it (Justice, 2006). This is because tabloidization has had an effect in the shift to more entertainment journalism rather than issues that are more significant such socio political reforms, economics, education or health care causing an overall decrease in journalistic standards.

The term 'tabloid' originally referred to a pharmaceutical trademark for the concentrated form of medicines as pill or tablet. This narcotic tabloid effect and the fact that it is easy to swallow were readily transferred to the media. In the first part of the 20th century, the term began being used in London to refer to the size of newspapers that could easily be read on trains and buses (Fang, 1997: 103). Tabloidization identifies a greater priority being assigned to the commercial aspects of media content and organizations, where the profit function is more important than any other outcome. More formally, tabloidization describes the shift in focus from hard news to salaciousness, sensation and entertainment (Hujanen 2005, 281). Tabloidization could be perceived as a derogatory term because tabloid-style coverage has a tendency to reduce critical argument to mere rhetoric (Thussu 2007, 8). It is a process affecting the mass media in general,

although the term is associated in the minds of the public with specific reference to newspapers (Harris, 2005).

Numerous international studies within the past decade have observed a globalized trend towards tabloidization (Rowe, 2004), particularly across Britain where the popularity of serious journalism has decreased substantially (Kelly and Truetzschler, 1997). Kenya has in the past often focused on serious journalism, although there is a threat this journalistic ethic has slowly started being eroded in recent years. The British and the American media industries have the longest histories of tabloids. The beginning of 'tabloidization' was seen in the Yellow Journalism in the USA during the 1890s (Picard, 1998). Its full development, however, first occurred in Great Britain when Lord Northcliffe established the *Daily Mirror* in 1903 and made it the first widely circulated tabloid. The idea of the tabloid returned to the US because of Northcliffe introducing the tabloid idea to Joseph Medill Patterson, a partner in the *Chicago Tribune*, who was serving with US forces in Europe during the First World War. As a result, Patterson returned to the US and started the Illustrated *Daily News* in New York in 1919 as the first real US tabloid. However, despite the segmentation of the newspaper audience, US tabloids were not able to maintain the interest of their readership. By the 1930s, most of the tabloids that dominated the previous decade had disappeared. (Picard, 1998)

Today, the traditional daily tabloid has all but disappeared from the US due to the development of Radio which became a more appropriate medium for reaching mass audiences. Four, now-tamed descendants survived the development of radio and later television: *the New York Daily News*, *New York Post*, *Boston Herald* and *Chicago Sun-Times*. (Carey, 1988) The closest living relatives to the traditional tabloids in the USA are the weekly 'supermarket tabloids', including the *National Enquirer*. These papers, however, ignore established news

values such as politics and current affairs to concentrate entirely on celebrities, human-interest stories, self-help news and fiction disguised as news (Bird, 1992).

The development of radio in the UK affected tabloids in the country differently because radio was established as public service broadcasting; it carried with it a social conscience and was not available to advertisers because of its non-commercial orientation. As a result, it did not displace British tabloids as an advertising medium for reaching mass audiences. This permitted the continuation and survival of the tabloid newspapers until this day (Inoue and Kawakami, 2004). In Other developing countries like India, China and Taiwan, the tabloid movement has seen rapid growth in the past 20years. It may also be noted that some countries may have experienced a decline in the circulation of newspapers hence a great concern lying in potential threats to standard journalism (Carey, 1988). Many fear that fierce competition for readers and profits in the news industry has fuelled a down-market slide towards the popular tabloid market. (Biressi and Nunn, 2008) If the bottom-line has come to dominate the decisions of newsroom executives, and profitability is the only criteria of corporate success, this may erode older standards of news journalism. 'Tabloidization' is a murky and often confused phrase, often bandied about for anything people disapprove of in the news media.

A trend that has emerged in Kenya in the recent past on the media scene is the publication of what, in Kenyan terminology, is called the gutter press but would be best described as "*now-you-see-them-now-you-don't*" press. The sheets are sold on newsstands and often on street corners for less than half the price of the daily newspapers. They are poorly written, poorly edited, poorly laid out, poorly printed, and contain poor pictures. Generally, they have no fixed address, no known publisher, and tend to focus on rumor sometimes making very spectacular claims (Durham and Kellne, 2001). They have no clear frequency, will appear out of the blue, make

some spectacular claim that regards either sexual or corruption scandal involving a prominent personality, then disappear. They may only occasionally write on current affairs. These are likely to be found in most major towns and in mainly the major languages besides English and Kiswahili. It is said that sometimes politicians who use them to launch a smear campaign against their opponents sponsor them. But there is no way of proving this (Uribe and Gunter, 2004). These papers have drawn the anger of the Kenyan government in no small way. As a consequence the government is moving to pass a Statute Law (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2001.

There has been a proliferation of other media in the country. The magazine industry has been vibrant not so much in its longevity as much as the frequency of magazines that have come up and gone under. *The Weekly Review*, probably the region's premier newsmagazine with a distinguished style of journalism during its lifespan was founded in 1975 (Abuoga & Mutere, 1988). Published by Hilary Ng'weno's Stellascope, *The Weekly Review* in the late 1970s and early 1980s had the best analytical and investigative journalism in the region (Faringer, 1991). As a consequence of its analytical reporting the government instructed firms in which the state had interest to cease advertising in the paper. This eroded the papers ability to survive economically. Later it toned down its critical re-portage and, in 1998 before it folded up, had become a mere shadow of its former self. Ng'weno chose to retire the title and focus on his other business interests including television. *Financial Review* and *Economic Review*, both now defunct, made a major impact in business journalism in the country until the former was proscribed and the latter disappeared from the news-stands in the latter part of 1998. Today, however, there is no towering news-magazine that would offer compelling reading like the *Weekly Review* did. The number of dailies has not changed much since 2000, while the number

of national weeklies has greatly increased, including the addition of the *Citizen weekly* (a gossip tabloid), *the Kenya Monitor*, *The Leader*, *the Independent*, *Nairobi News*, *The Nairobian*, *Game Yetu* (a sports tabloid) just but to name a few.

The Nairobian for example, has been received well by city dwellers as its content seems to bring a breath of fresh air away from the usual hard news and politics that fill up the traditional dailies and has been enjoying quite a good readership. This research may help determine whether the erosion of older standards of journalism has taken place as it studies the prevalence of tabloidization phenomenon in Kenya's own landscape through an analysis of Nairobi's most popular tabloid newspaper, *The Nairobian*. It will aim to highlight the extent to which the reporting of dramatic events has become tabloidized and sensationalized in content and layout in order to become more visually appealing to the consumers. Also, how this has affected the consumer and raised market pressures as compared to the past years.

1.2 Problem Statement

Journalists have always performed a balancing act between their duty to inform and the need to engage their audience (Bird, 2000). Some argue that tabloidization is the downfall of the media, while others argue that showing a personal side of public events is likely the most effective way for the audience to understand and remember the news (Clayman, 2002). There are at least three separate strands to the tabloidization argument, which need to be disaggregated and then challenged. First, the assumption that the 'bad' is progressively chasing out the 'good' i.e. that we are witnessing a process of displacement in which more emphasis is placed on entertainment, show business, scandal and prurience at the expense of more serious, challenging material like current affairs, policy issues, the arts, or foreign affairs.

The second argument is whether or not the volume of serious or challenging material has declined, its nature is being debased through various packaging and presentational strategies to make it more populist. Length and language then, are supposedly ingredients of the shift towards tabloidization, but again there is a different interpretation: that journalism and particularly tabloid journalism has a long history of making difficult concepts or stories ‘come alive’ for people who lack either the ability or inclination to read long-winded articles on complex subjects. The third argument is that, even if the quality of serious coverage has stayed constant and its nature remains uncorrupted, serious stories and programs are being given progressively less prominence (Langer, 1998). In an effort to ensure that the front pages do not alienate potential readers, they are given more entertaining, or more lurid, or more ‘human interest’ stories. Quality newspapers could give front page priority to important political debates, foreign stories or new policy initiatives, today’s are much more likely to be dominated by allegations of sleaze, the latest round of marriage break-ups amongst prominent leaders, a major crime or tragedy story, all belonging firmly to the tabloid tradition (Golding and Elliott, 2000).

Hence, this research will examine tabloidization and the possible effects that this type of news coverage may have. Through the findings of this research the academic world and the journalist community will have a better understanding of tabloidization and may be able to prevent it from distracting or potentially harness the public’s enthusiasm to better engage with news consumers.

1.3 Objective of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

The main objective of this study is to evaluate the rise of tabloidization of news in Kenya, a case study of *The Nairobiian*.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The study sought to achieve the following specific objectives

1. To investigate the status of tabloid of news in Kenya
2. To examine the use of tabloids for news, information and entertainment in Kenya
3. To explore the spread of tabloidization of news in Kenya

1.4 Research Questions

This study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. Is there a rise of tabloid journalism in Kenyan newspaper industry?
2. What factors influence tabloidization of news and can it be controlled?
3. What is the spread, accessibility and impact of tabloidization of news in Kenya?

1.5 Assumptions/ Hypotheses

1. Tabloidization takes place in the Kenyan media- news and its production or programs devoted to information about the most important events in politics, the economy and social life.
2. The Kenyan Consumer distracted by tabloid-style news may not be paying attention to the public interest issues and/or the actions and decisions of the elected representatives, hence being disengaged from their democratic government.
3. Tabloidization takes place under specific cultural and historical conditions. Dominance of local events especially would be a determinant of tabloidization of news.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The research confined itself to Nairobi. It specifically targeted *The Nairobiian* in order to identify the rise of tabloid style of journalism. The researcher samples sixty five *Nairobiian* articles, for the period between March 2013 to October 2015, which are published weekly. The researcher looked at the respective stories placed on the front page of *The Nairobiian*. In addition the study targeted the illustration of stories, headlines or caption use. The researcher used content analysis method to determine the presence of certain words on the headlines of this newspaper.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

During the course of this research, the researcher expects to encounter a few limitations. Due to time and money constraints, the researcher carried out a description and analysis of texts from *The Nairobiian* in order to represent its content. Hence, this was used to gather results in the study in an effort to determine if there is a rise in the tabloidization of news. A better study design would likely be an experiment, where elements of the media and possible media effects can be controlled.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

Any serious discussion of ‘tabloidization’ must begin with definitions, analytical indicators and conceptualizations. In that regard, tabloidization can be understood as a micro-or macro scale process. Taken at the micro-level, it can be viewed as a media phenomenon involving the revision of traditional newspaper and other media formats driven by reader preferences and commercial requirements. On the macro-level, tabloidization can be seen as a social phenomenon both instigating and symbolizing major changes to the constitution of society (signs being for example, attaching less importance to education and more to political marketing,

resulting in an increase in political alienation.) the present study prefers a more narrow, focused understanding in that, it means a change in the range of topics being covered (more entertainment, less information), in form of the presentation (fewer longer stories, more shorter ones with pictures and illustrations) and a change in the mode of address (more street talk when addressing readers) .

Hence, the tabloidization framework, as used in this study, is based on historian and sociologist Per Bakke's definition of the term. It is taken from his dissertation (Bakke, 1999: 248-252) and can be summarized in eight points:

1. Entertainment and news are blended together and entertainment is becoming more important as a whole.
2. The news is more focused on the individual, rather than on the subject of the matter.
3. More weight is put on banalities and bizarre rarities (such as accidents or freak weather changes). That is, A general decrease in real news and a construction of banalities into news.
4. Less weight is put on in depth analysis and political debate.
5. Increased focus on the 'dramatic', such as sex, violence and scandal.
6. Social and human tragedies are made into entertaining stories for the public to dwell on.
7. The news is taken out of its context.
8. Format before content that is- larger pictures and less words.

The definition mainly refers to the phenomenon of tabloidization, which constitutes the theoretical part of the present study. The last point however, refers to the format of tabloidization, and will not be undertaken in the present study.

1.9 Operational Definitions Terms

Tabloid- A tabloid is a newspaper of small format giving the news in condensed form, usually with illustrated, often sensational material whereas tabloidization is communication that is condensed and sensationalized, as a characteristic of tabloid journalism (Spark, 2000)

Celebrity- A famous or widely known person, especially in entertainment, politics and sports (Langer, 1998). In this text it is used to refer to a newsmaker.

Tabloidization- This is a shift by the media away from national and international issues of importance to a more entertainment or gossipy style of journalism that focuses on "Lifestyle, celebrity, entertainment and crime/scandal" (Justice, 2006).

A Journalist- A person who collects, writes, or distributes news or other current information.

Journalism- It is gathering, processing, and dissemination of news, and information related to news, to an audience.

Nairobiian- A fast growing newspaper in the country, launched as a tabloid by The Standard Group.

Media literacy- is a repertoire of competencies that enable people to analyze, evaluate, and create messages in a wide variety of media modes, genres, and formats.

Editing- is the process of selecting and preparing written, visual, audible and film media used to convey information.

An audience- A group of people who participate in a show or encounter a work of art, literature (in which they are called "readers") or academics in any medium.

Sensationalism- Especially in journalism is the use of exciting or shocking stories or language at the expense of accuracy, in order to provoke public interest or excitement.

Simplification The process of replacing an expression usually a language or vocabulary by an equivalent one, that is simpler (usually shorter).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews both theoretical and empirical literature related to the rise of tabloidization of news in Kenya. To understand these factors, relevant theoretical underpinnings and empirical studies are reviewed.

2.2 Empirical Literature

The development of tabloidization within media culture has been traced back to the end of the 19th century. It is at this point newspapers came to recognize the economic benefit of devoting sections to entertainment and sport news, leading them to consider readers as customers rather than an 'audience' (Esser, 1999). Tabloidization was initially used to describe a decrease in journalistic standards, it is now regularly applied to all types of popular media content including reality TV, talk-shows, celebrity magazines and even documentary (Biressi and Nunn, 2008). In relation to journalism, most studies define tabloidization in terms of a decrease in hard news, an increase in soft news and an emphasis on the private lives of both regular and famous people (Sparks, 2000). Other studies on tabloidization have included elements such as a feminization of content (Pantti, 2005), changes in journalistic behavior (Esser, 1999) and a dynamic layout (Schonbach, 2000).

It is argued that tabloidization causes a shift in the boundary of journalism, resulting in the serious press or media moving towards tabloid content and values (Spark, 2000). As noted, tabloids focus much of their attention on the personal and private lives of both celebrities and

ordinary people (Bird, 2008). Serious political, economic and social issues that lack a sensationalist element are relegated to small updates, or even avoided completely (Sparks, 2000). Tabloidization results in a greater number of infotainment and 'soft news' stories found in the serious press. According to (Franklin 1997:45), the "news media have increasingly become part of the entertainment industry instead of providing a forum for informed debate of key issues of public concern". This shift towards entertainment and soft news has been described as "news converted into entertainment" (Franklin, 1997:5). However, tabloidization, in terms of a shift in the boundaries of journalism, is not simply limited to a decrease in serious news and an increase of soft news. Tabloidization may also result in decontextualisation and personalization (Bird, 2000). In their study on UK tabloids and climate change, Boykoff and Mansfield (2008) highlight how tabloids frequently report climate change inaccurately, choosing what to report without providing context.

Esser (1999) further identifies an important consideration: the spillover effect of tabloid news into quality publications, which is a primary consideration. He examines the tabloid effect on the 'serious media' rather than the changing nature of tabloids. Tabloidization as a concept is more accurately applicable to quality media because it suggests an orderly evolution on the part of the quality media towards tabloid-style coverage. However, it may be a useful concept even when applied to 'tabloids.' To make a distinction, when referring to existing tabloid newspapers, the process of tabloidization can be described as an increasing focus on sex, scandal and sensation in news coverage (Johansson 2008, 402).

Currently there is a clear distinction between what are deemed characteristically tabloid newspapers and "broadsheets". While this classification primarily refers to their size and shape, it often represents their content and design. Small "tabloids" often contain significantly more

sport news, scandal and entertainment while broadsheets focus heavily on informing the public with serious language and tones (McLachlan and Golding, 2000). It is important to bring a multi-dimensional and flexible approach to this survey because the nature of tabloidization is not uniform. Different countries have experienced different processes in the 'downgrading' of news coverage (Thussu & Freedman 2003, 124). In fact, some studies have found that the media in some democratic countries, such as Germany, have not demonstrated much inclination toward tabloidization (Altmeyden 2010, 567-568)

The process of tabloidization is often associated with a decline in the standards of professional journalism (Olkkonen et al., 2011). An aspect of tabloidization is defined as a "change in the media's assessment of what they think the voters need to know to evaluate a person's fitness for public office" (Kurtz 1993 cited in Esser, 1999). In Britain, as in the US, nothing concerning the private lives of politicians is censorable. The media eagerly snatches stories about politicians' family problems; extramarital affairs and sexual activities are frequently exposed to provide maximum impact. People in public life do not have an automatic right to privacy. In fact, because sex boosts sales, whenever there is a scandal of a sexual nature, newspapers take the chance to make commercial gain from it (Leveson, 2012). That is a trend quickly catching up with our local media.

2.2.1 The Audience

Many authors agree that tabloidized content is created to appeal to the masses. At present, newspapers had better understand the market forces and also the need to reach out to the maximum number. The more the readership, the more the advertisers. The more the advertisers, the more the need for a large readership. This process is cyclic. The colonization of the mainstream media by tabloid values has led to the democratization of media as it includes the

non-elite people, issues and values (Biressi and Nunn, 2008). (Gans also cited in Serazio, 2009) mentions the term “popularization” and states, “After all, other cultural products have long been adapted for the simplified palates of a lower class strata.” There is therefore, a distinction made between the lower and upper strata of readers. (Gans, 1999) has distinguished between high culture, upper middle class culture and a combination of middle and low culture known as the popular culture. Tabloidized content caters to the popular taste as the audiences are greater in number as compared to those belonging to the elite culture. The popular media adjusts its content accordingly. It has been debated whether it is necessary to lower the standards and quality of news content to appeal to the masses. (Gans also cited in Serazio, 2009) believes that the substance of news must not deviate from the highest of standards, even as its presentation can accommodate less erudite publics.

2.2.2 Sensationalism

Sensationalism is used to attract and engage the reader. Sensational content has shock value. The writer aims at increasing the curiosity and heightening the emotions of his audience. (Jones, 2009) mentions the term McCarthyism which he says means a particularly nasty form of destructive demagoguery. Today, the term is used to describe the unfair allegations that the press has the power to impose. This is significant as this content reaches a huge number. One often finds the use of bold headlines, larger type and the bold use of colour on the front page of newspapers. A reader is more likely to pick up a paper that has bold attractive headlines and colour on the front page than an orthodox black and white design. (Josephson, 1996) notes that colour in a photo attracts the readers eyes. An object that is relatively bigger will be seen earlier by the reader (Lundqvist and Holmqvist, 2001). There are several prominent instances of sensational coverage of news events. The Arushi murder case in Noida, India is an appropriate

example. The Supreme Court of India, in 2008, criticized the media for sensationalizing the case. 14-year-old Arushi Talwar and her house help Hemraj were found murdered at the Talwar residence. The media speculated about an affair between Arushi and Hemraj and also between her father and his colleague. In an opinion piece by Jacqueline Oark, director, Asia Pacific, International Federation of Journalists, she opines, “The media abandoned its first responsibility to truth-telling in favor of crass sensationalism. Where they could potentially have served as a window for the public into the investigation, many media outlets instead chose to reproduce and regurgitate every half-formed explanation put out by the police force.” (Thakurta, 2009).

2.2.3 Simplification

The language quality and vocabulary is an important factor that contributes to readability. If a reader finds several incomprehensible words in the first few sentences, it is likely that he will not read any further. Therefore, in tabloidized content, simpler words and sentence structures are used to bring about clarity and to enhance readability. Jargon and other technical terms are either completely avoided or used sparingly along with simple definitions that are easier to digest. In general, Entertainment, sensationalism, talking about celebrities and personal issues can be interpreted as topics of gossip, and many of the tabloid magazines, specifically those focused on celebrities, are referred to gossip magazines (Feasey, 2008; Wilson, 2010)

Wilson (2010) speculates that the celebrity gossip magazines allow the reader to relish in the glamorous lifestyle of the Hollywood celebrity while also allowing the reader to evaluate and judge the personal and private lifestyles of the famous; an enjoyable activity. (Lippmann, 1921) conjectures that for a newspaper to be successful it must be the log of hometown happenings in that people with boring lives enjoy reading about others’ lives, especially high society. In addition, (Feasey, 2008) presents the idea that gossip, specifically gossip about celebrities, serves

as a normative function in creating togetherness between women through a common evaluation of the celebrities covered in the celebrity gossip magazines.

Fun and light-hearted human interest stories, along with bloody crimes and sexual intrigues, have always been a staple fare of the tabloids. Much of the current attack on the tabloid press echoes long-standing debates over the encroachment of popular culture on high culture, and taps deep-rooted ideological divisions between 'giving the public what it wants' versus the desire to educate, reform and improve. Rather than an inexorable drive down -market, developments in the tabloid (Norris, 2000).

Among the reasons for this process in Africa, which has been seen with the introduction of Commercial T.V in the 1950s is the heightened competition among various media platforms as a result of the introduction of new media technologies like the internet (Wasserman, 2012). Because print, radio and television are at risk of losing large parts of their audiences to new media, they are seen to be increasing their provision of entertainment, in an attempt to lure back their readers, listeners and viewers (Sparks, 2000). A further reason for the spread of tabloidization, one which requires some nuance in the African context, is the commercialization of news as a result of increasing global dominance of free-market capitalism, accelerated by the collapse of communism and deregulation of media markets (Conboy, 2008b, 2007). In a cut-throat commercialized landscape, media owners are seen to be restlessly chasing profits and driving down journalistic standards in the process (Sparks, 2000).

As a condition of entry into the professional field journalists have to display a certain attachment to journalistic norms and ideals. This process of identification with professional values is not without pain, though, as these values are often in discrepancy with the imperatives of

commercialization and tabloidization (Volek, 2007). Quality journalists declare that they feel some tension between a balanced, objective description of reality and the demands to strengthen readability and sale of media content. It is clear that this editorial-marketing strategy weakens power and autonomy of individual journalists on the one hand and inhibits individual activity and creativity on the other. A majority of interviewed journalists confirm that they do not like to adapt to market philosophy of their media but that they must do it (Volek, 2007).

According to Newbold et al. (ibid.), it is important to realize that by mediating for their audiences the 'real world', the media create a version of reality for them. Representations are selective simply in the sense that, out of a large amount of information, the media actually present very little (Newbold et al., 2002:261). The vast majority of events are not mentioned, and as a result selection immediately gives us a partial view of the world (Fowler, 1991:11). (ibid.,) notes that different newspapers report differently in both content and presentation.

A tabloid newspaper such as *Sunday Sun* (South Africa) is more likely to report about a popular singer's poor fashion sense than *The Star* or *Sunday Times* (South Africa). Similarly, an in-depth analysis of political floor-crossing by party members is more likely to be reported in *The Mail & Guardian* than *Daily Sun* (South Africa). Selection, as pointed out by Fowler (1991:11), is accompanied by transformation and differential treatment in presentation according to numerous political, economic and social factors.

It is not a fixed category which arises naturally, and neither is it found nor gathered as if it were already there. Instead, it is the product of professional ways of thinking, writing and composing which are all codes of behavior learned by news workers. (Bignell, 2002). News discourse is therefore an ideological representation of the world because it selects what will be reported, and

set the term of what is significant (Bignell, 2002). Fowler summarizes his views by making the following assertion: The world of the press is not the real world, but a world skewed and judged anything that is said or written about the world is articulated from a particular ideological position: language is not a clear window but a refracting, structuring medium (Fowler, 1991:10-11).

In Africa, the tabloid genre can be seen as one of several forms of popular culture, which includes, forms like music, television and theatre. African popular culture has seen as expression of “people’s disillusion and resentment” towards officialdom (Barber, 1987) and increasingly, as an emergent public space where citizenship is rehearsed and negotiated (Dolby, 2006). The mere choice of such popular style instead of a more formal one associated with officialdom can in itself be a “message of resistance” (West and Fair, 1993). Popular Culture can also be seen as either mediation between traditional and modern forms, or the space where the very meanings of “traditional” and “modern” can be negotiated (ibid., 107). However it is not the medium (in this case tabloids) that possess inherent characteristics that determines this process, but rather its location within a “nexus of political, social and economic relations” that determines which communicative resources will be available to whom, and what significance will be embodied in the generative forms invoked.

Because it is people using popular forms, rather than the forms themselves, that undermines officialdom, the government, and the status quo, popular media could also be used to support dominant class interests (West and Fair, 1993). This point is important to bear in mind when considering the amount of social change that one can expect in African tabloids, which are owned and managed by large commercial interests seeking profit rather than social justice. Tabloids in Africa, are a form of popular media and are ultimately linked to other communicative

processes in the society, therefore present a terrain where the meaning of culture, development and democracy is contested between local and global forces. (West and Fair, 1993).

These local circumstances are important to note when viewing the emergence of African (Kenyan) tabloids as related to a global trend towards tabloidization.

Newspapers in Kenya have experienced a gradual metamorphosis in terms of typography and overall graphics. Change of lifestyle and patterns of information retrieval have created readers who do not have time to absorb media in a linear, front- to-back-of-the paper way. Most readers are interested in the gist of the story. Kenyan newspaper publishers therefore have an obligation to cater for these readers by packaging content that will be reader friendly, relevant and graphically appealing.

In Kenya's newspaper industry, each publication seeks to establish an identity. Aggressive marketing techniques are being used and changed periodically to keep publications afloat. *The Standard* is the oldest mass circulating newspaper, started in 1902 to serve Indian civil servants, the business community in Mombasa and later the colonialists. *The Standard* offers very comprehensive news coverage. However, this newspaper is more critical of the government and is perceived as leaning more towards the side of the opposition. *The Daily Nation* is the most authoritative of all Kenya's newspapers, providing comprehensive and balanced coverage of Kenyan news. The newspaper is also arguably the most objective, independent, and unbiased in its news coverage.

Kenya, like many other countries, has its fair share of "gutter" or "street" publications whose content is not considered mainstream or newsworthy. Among these are *the Weekly Citizen*, *The Nairobiian*, *Nairobi News* and *Confidential* among others. They are less authoritative than their

mainstream counterparts, but often carry interesting local news that other newspapers do not find worthwhile to publish.

The Nairobiian as cited by the Kenyan Editor Blog in June 2014 had become the fastest growing newspaper in the country, one year after the Standard Group launched the tabloid. It had seen the highest circulation newspaper title in Standard Group overtaking *The Standard*, *The Saturday Standard* and *Sunday Standard*, according to internal circulation reports they had obtained.

The paper popularly known for sex scandals and other related escapades, had bucked the trend in an industry struggling with low sales. In May 2014, it sold a record 70,000 copies, dwarfing the group's flagship titles whose circulation had fallen by up to 20 per cent in the previous six months. *The Nairobiian* which hits newsstands every Friday has confounded admirers and critics alike with its giant leap in circulation at a time when established newspaper titles are struggling to stop hemorrhage in numbers. The weekly's first issue with the headline '*Secrets of city's exclusive dens*' sold about 12,000 copies but this shot sharply to more than 30,000 in the second issue with a headline that revealed former powerful Cabinet Minister *Raphael Tuju* had filed for divorce following his wife's alleged cheating with a younger man (who was a few months later found dead in a house belonging to the *Tujus*). The *Tuju* story, which was picked by other outlets, gave the new tabloid instant recognition. (ibid.,)

Finally, not only can tabloidization mean different things in different countries, but the process is also dependent on a combination of factors relating to media landscape, journalistic culture, and the economic and legal environment in various countries (Esser, 1999). Thus the process has played out differently in various local and international contexts.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

2.3.1 Agenda Setting Theory

This study uses agenda setting theory as an avenue to examine the effects of the tabloidization of news on the news consumer. Agenda setting asserts that the media have the ability to affect what the public is thinking about as well as how the public thinks about certain issues through its coverage (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). The news media are a gateway to the world, allowing the public to have contact with the world (Lippmann, 1921). The media informs the public of the actions of their elected officials; of events around the world, as well as matters that affect local communities. The media is even referred to as the Fourth Estate, due to its ability to influence society and politics through the information presented on society and government.

Lippmann (1921) further suggests that the media (newspapers specifically) is the voice, or mouthpiece, of direct democracy. Tabloid-style news does not inform the public of local, national and world event, but rather informs them of celebrity happenings and gossip; failing to be the voice of democracy and instead being the voice of gossip. The media informs individuals about the issues at hand and are able to influence how much importance an individual should and would attach to an issue through the amount of information that was found in the story, i.e. to set the public's agenda. In other words the media does not tell individuals what to think, but rather what to think about and how to think about it. (McCombs and Shaw, 1972)

According to agenda setting theory (McCombs & Shaw, 1972), the mainstream media would be responsible for increased attention to entertainment media. Coverage informs media users of entertainment news and the amount of information and content of the reporting effects the amount of importance placed on the issue, i.e. saliency. (Wu and Coleman's, 2009)

Furthermore, negative information, or gossip-based news, transfers the media's agenda even more strongly (Sheafer, 2007). However, audience demands and profits may be the driving force behind entertainment news's inclusion in mainstream media, that is tabloidization.

The Nairobiian for example, has gone full-blown tabloid. The weekly is known for splashing daring and often sensational stories on the racy (a pastor caught pants down or wife-swapping in Nairobi), the bizarre or scary (confessions of a mother who slept with her son, or claims that the 'Church of Satan' was opening a branch in Nairobi); and the scandalous (a Senator who raped his house help, why minister is divorcing his wife or a celebrity facing a child upkeep case). The back page also occasionally features scandals involving sports personalities, but most of the time attempts to find fresh angles to ongoing events or issues. A recent article alleging athlete *David Rudisha's* injury was inflicted by his wife after she discovered he was cheating is an example. The choice of articles is deliberately made to be different from what the mainstream newspapers cover, perhaps to retain the feeling of freshness. The logic of the newspaper's editors is to give prominence to articles that *The Standard*, *Daily Nation*, *The People* or *The Star* would either publish as briefs or not touch at all. *The Nairobiian* journalists also go out of their way to get comments from those adversely mentioned in some of their more salacious stories, or obtain documents to prove their claims, lending the content a lot of credibility that lacks in the numerous gutter newspapers sold in Nairobi or blogs.

The news stories are accompanied with big, interesting photographs and catchy headlines. A story on the county government's crackdown on public urination, for example, had the title '*Rest in pees*' while an ex-MP who was in court denying fathering a lovechild was pictured stern-faced under the headline '*Nothing could be father from the truth*'. Even the business news appears to cover unusual initiatives, or matters of personal finances like new money making ventures. The

newspaper also has a section labeled 'Life and style' that covers issues as diverse as film, gossip, books, health, theatre, music, visual arts, events diary and a human interest feature. Hence, the underlying theoretical assumption being that tabloidization is the result of amplified market pressures such as increased competition. These market pressures dictate that a newspaper's content, layout and tone must appeal to the widest market possible in order to retain and gain readers and advertisers (McNair, 2001).

2.3.2 Uses and Gratification Theory

The Uses and Gratifications Theory was introduced by Blumler and McQuail (1969). Blumler and McQuail (1969) studied the hopes and the wishes of people when watching politicians on television during the General elections in Britain in 1964. They also studied what made people avoid seeing other politicians during the same elections. The theory focuses on how people use the mass media and in other words "What Do People Do with the Media?"

Katz, Gurevitch and Haas (1973) defined five core social and psychological needs that mass media gratify audience with: First, the Cognitive need. Mass media has a function to satisfy audience mental needs to make them able to understand the surrounding events, the status quo and to attain information for more cognitive stability. Second, the Affection need. Mass media has a role to satisfy the emotional necessity of the audience. Mass media accordingly reduce the emotional instability and help audience to obtain pleasure and entertainment. Third, the Personal Integrative needs (Sparks and Tulloch, 2000). Another major need audience seek to gratify when using mass media is personal identity. Mass media has another role to reinforce personal reliability by gaining self-confidence and status. Fourth, the Social Integrative need. People look for social acceptance and for building social relationships to feel more secured. Media is a mean to affirm connections with peers, relatives, friends and family by having more common interests,

subjects to talk about. Thus, the media function as a source of information. Fifth, the Tension Release need. Mass media play an important role in helping audience to escape from life conditions, boredom and obtaining change from different stressful circumstances.

With this, tabloid content is easier to read than the content in broadsheets and the tabloids are more likely to employ sentimental language and big attention seeking headlines and photographs (“Algorithm Deems the Sun”, Cornish, 2012). The reader may not be interested in concentrating on the structure of the content. Rather, he may want to understand what the story is about. The idea behind this is that not many members of the audience feel the need to read news every day. Their purpose for watching news may not be to be updated about what is happening around them. The purpose may be to just stay abreast of issues and content that concern them, their immediate surroundings or to have a topic to start and maintain an engaging conversation. Therefore, it becomes important to understand that different types of audience use the media for different purposes. Denis McQuail, Jay Blumler and Joseph Brown (cited in Richard and Turner, 2010).

2.3.3 Framing Theory

The concept of framing is related to the agenda-setting tradition but expands the research by focusing on the essence of the issues at hand rather than on a particular topic. The basis of framing theory is that the media focuses attention on certain events and then places them within a field of meaning (D’Angelo, 2002). Framing is an important topic since it can have a big influence and therefore the concept of framing expanded to organizations as well. In essence, framing theory suggests that how something is presented to the audience (called ‘the frame’) influences the choices people make about how to process that information. Frames are abstractions that work to organize or structure message meaning (Scheufele, 1999). The most

common use of frames is in terms of the frame the news or media place on the information they convey. They are thought to influence the perception of the news by the audience, in this way it could be construed as a form of second level agenda-setting they not only tell the audience what to think about (agenda-setting theory) but also how to think about that issue. (Second level agenda setting, framing theory) (Pan and Kosicki,1993).

Communication itself comes with a frame. The elements of the Communication Frame include a message, an audience, a messenger, a medium, images, a context, and especially, higher-level moral and conceptual frames. The choice of language is, of course, vital, but it is vital because language evokes frames moral and conceptual frames. A motivation for this research topic stems from the personal interest in visual framing theory and the effects produced by visual news frames on public perceptions. (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996). This research may focus on pictorial media representations especially on front pages of newspapers, which may show the growing tabloidization, personalization and aestheticization trends in current political communication. Since visuals for example, expand their dominance in political journalism, framing analysis may be developed on digital photographs. In addition, images produce a superior effect on people's attitudes and opinions if compared to verbal messages.

Goffman states that there are two distinctions within primary frameworks: natural and social. Both play the role of helping individuals interpret data, So that their experiences can be understood in a wider social context. The difference between the two is functional. Natural frameworks identify events as physical occurrences taking natural quote literally and not attributing any social forces to the causation of events. Social frameworks view events as socially driven occurrences, due to the whims, goals, and manipulations on the part of other social players, people (Zaller,1992). Social frameworks are built on the natural frameworks.

These frameworks and the frames that they create in our communication greatly influence how data is interpreted, processed, and communicated. Goffman's underlying assumption is that individuals are capable users of these frameworks on a day-to-day basis, whether they are aware of them or not. The notion of framing has gained momentum in the communication disciplines, giving guidance to both investigations of media content and to studies of the relationship between media and public opinion.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the methodology and procedures that were followed when carrying out the proposed study. The purpose of this section was to provide procedures used in collecting data, research design and analysis of data.

3.2 Research Data

The study data was *The Nairobiian* papers. The study examined *The Nairobiian* as it's the fastest growing tabloid in the country; two years after the Standard Group (SG) launched it. *The Nairobiian* was preferred because it had become the highest circulation newspaper title in the Standard Group and hit newsstands every Friday. It has confounded admirers and critics alike with its giant leap in circulation at a time when the established newspaper titles were struggling to stop hemorrhage in numbers.

3.3 Research Design

Research design can be thought of as the structure of the research. It is used to show all the major parts of the research work together to try and address the central research question. It is defined by Trochim (2002) as the scheme, outline or plan that is used to generate answers to the research questions. This study adopted descriptive survey design which Gay (1983) defines as a process of collecting data in order to answer research questions concerning the status of the subjects in the study. This type of research design was chosen because it attempts to describe such things as

possible behavior, attitudes, values and characteristics. The focus of this research was on the headlines of *The Nairobiian* printed by the Standard Group.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

3.4.1 Sample Size

In this study, the number of *The Nairobiian* papers sampled was sixty five, as the concept of the all the newspapers is the same. The paper is popularly known for sex scandals and other related sensational articles. Hence the fact that the concept of all the newspapers is the same, the data sampled in the sixty five newspapers would give good reliable findings.

3.4.2 Sampling Techniques

Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individual represents a larger group from which they are selected. Sampling procedures provide a valid alternative to a census where it is impossible to survey the whole population. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample. The technique produced estimates of overall population parameters with greater precision.

This exploratory study follows an interpretative approach and, therefore, made use of qualitative data .The greatest media use and media audience contributions have been made within a qualitative framework (Tuchman, 1991). This framework enables the researcher to provide detailed and in-depth descriptions of media behavior, while simultaneously providing for interpretation and contextualization. (Johansson, 2007).

The researcher sampled *The Nairobiian* headlines. The researcher looked at *The Nairobiian* features, the way in which it presents it topics, that is, how they package the information. Further

seeking to establish how information is presented in bite-sized pieces and how the journalistic genres: that is, News stories, entertainment, sex, scandal, crime, celebrity, sport, nightlife, fantasy and space attacks, horror, gore and a probe into the personal lives of people were presented.

3.5 Data Collection

The information used for this study was from secondary sources. Secondary data analysis is a flexible approach and can be utilized in several ways; it is also an empirical exercise with procedural and evaluative steps (Doolan & Froelicher, 2009). The use of secondary data in this study entailed a review of *The Nairobiian* headlines. The researcher sampled *The Nairobiian* articles, articles for the period between, March 2013 and October 2015. Among features slated for study were the respective stories placed on the front page of *The Nairobiian*. The study targeted the illustration of the stories, headlines or caption use.

3.6 Data analysis

Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of information collected. It involves examining what has been collected and making deductions and inferences. The data collected for this study was qualitative in nature and therefore contents analysis technique was adopted. Babbie (2001) noted that the content analysis measures the semantic content or the “*what*” aspect of a message. Its breadth makes it a flexible and wide-ranging tool that may be used as a stand-alone methodology or as a problem specific technique.

The qualitative data collected from *The Nairobiian* was therefore edited and classified with regard to the objectives of the study. During the editing process, the researcher carefully

scrutinized the collected raw data from all the front stories with a key objective of ensuring it is accurate, uniform and complete according to the research themes.

Content analysis was then used to analyze the data as per the objectives of the study. The study made inter-textual comparisons between the different sources, and compared the considered elements to the relevant literature. The analyzed data was then presented in prose form.

The findings and recommendations in this study were expected to contribute to the current debates on media representation, sensationalism, tabloidization and related topics and also shed light on the possible influence the representations of African personalities by tabloid newspapers may have on society.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the study findings that have been discussed in line with the study objective themes.

4.2 Representation of the Tabloids on Kenyan Society

In regard to representation of the tabloids and their impact on the Kenyan society, the study sought to establish how *The Nairobiian* is structured and presented and how its presentation impacts on the society.

The study established that in *The Nairobiian*, editorial articles', the amount of space allocated to news text was reduced while more space was given prevalence to images and advertisements. Most issues show unambiguous dominance of images within the front-page composition, with image space nearly doubling that allocated to article texts. Photographs and posters are extensively used throughout the paper. The issue of 1/02/2014 illustrates this, where a big interesting photograph of *Professor Awuor* and *Bishop Margaret Wanjiru* occupy a better part of the front page, with the title "*The glory is fake-Awuor*" highlighted in capitals and bolded appearing far much bigger than any other text in the front page.

The issue of 14/06/2014, A story on *Pastor Kanyari* being alleged to impregnate a girl, for example, had the title '*Pastor linked to his daughter aborted child*' also highlighted in capitals and bold. The issue of 7/09/2013, A cover page photograph of two ladies with the title "*Chamas turn into sex clubs*" also in bold and highlighted. The issue of 24/04/2013 "*How my*

granddaughter stole my husband”, issue of 27/08/2014 “*How hawker conned Uhuru-Kabogo*” issue of 14/07/2014 “*Why Police plane picked my daughter in law*”, all the headlines are in bold and highlighted. The use of elements such as bold fonts and simplified wording are considered attractive to the consumer. This juicy headline captures the consumers’ attention, as a form of information and entertainment as well.

Further, the study established that *The Nairobiian* writers use leading questions to get a “*money quote*” from a source, or offer up the quote themselves and use it as long as the source agrees with them. The choice of articles is intentionally made to be different from what the mainstream newspapers cover, perhaps to retain the feeling of freshness and thus sell faster. *The Nairobiian* editors give prominence to articles that *Daily Nation*, *The People* or *The Star* would either publish as briefs or not touch at all. *The Nairobiian* journalists also go out of their way to get comments from those adversely mentioned in some of their more salacious stories, or obtain documents to prove their claims, lending the content a lot of credibility that lacks in the numerous gutter newspapers sold in Nairobi or blogs. Due to the flashy, catchy headlines that accompany this content, they tend to sell faster. However this does not mean that *The Nairobiian* does not carry political news and current affairs. Politics and business news is reported, although the tone used is highly personalized and the commentators are greatly opinionated. Thus there is no scope for objectivity and analytical coverage of news, and most often than not, it is about taking sides.

The Nairobiian also has a propensity to juxtapose fantasy and reality to arouse the interest and trust of their audience as well as inform its audience. A story on the issue of 6/07/2015 on how married women are looking for sex in places husbands least expects, its title reads “*These men sleep with your wife*”. Thus such story would seem untrue, but the writer of the article gives it a

captivating title that makes the whole situation come out more as a reality than just a story. Unchecked information sources, the success of the Kenyan tabloids, falling circulation and ratings numbers and the abandonment of quality in favor of speedy gossip have become major sources of contention in Kenyan media and are among the factors thought to have led to modern tabloidization. Despite differences of opinion as to its features and inception it is generally agreed that tabloidization is a powerful force, given the importance of the media to many as informer, entertainer and educator

4.3 The Use of Tabloids for News, Information and Entertainment in Kenya

This study sought to determine the use of tabloids for news, information and entertainment in Kenya. This was meant to establish what role the tabloids play in the Kenyan society, as the media are expected to perform many functions within a society

4.3.1 Providing an Alternative Public Sphere

The findings indicated that popular journalism can contribute to an alternative public sphere even while engaging in a sensationalist and emotional mode of address as *The Nairobiian* provides ordinary people with the opportunity to tell their story and bring the struggles of their everyday life into the public arena. This view is in line with a more cultural understanding of the public sphere than the dominant view of the news media as democracy's watchdog. Illustrated on *The Nairobiian* headings such as the issue of 20/06/2014, whose story is about a woman who claims a Member of County Assembly sired her children because the politician has one testicle just like her son: heading reads "*This nut fathered my two kids*". On the same page another story title reads "*Rachael Ruto- How woman used my skirts as curtains*". Also a story on the issue of 11/02/2013 about *Antony Chinedu's* ex-wife denying she deals in drugs and blames the media for

bad year: heading reads “*Akinyi speaks out on T.Z “unga”*”. Another story on the issue of 22/02/2015 where *Mueni, Quincy Timberlake’s* ex wife, describes *Timberlake* as her ideal husband and she says she’s willing to give him a second chance; heading reads, “*Quincy left me with three kids for Esther Arunga*”

The Nairobiian focuses on issues of importance to a section of the Kenyan population the majority, in fact who have been neglected by mainstream commercial media because they had not been seen as a lucrative audience. Thus *The Nairobiian* is a voice for these people, a channel for them to voice their concerns, battles, issues and problems. It’s a mirror that reflects the society in which these people live. Thus by providing ordinary citizens with a platform to open up, other readers learn from those experiences and consequently become informed.

4.3.2 Source of News

This study established *The Nairobiian* preference for what can be termed the “politics of the everyday” above formal political news of the kind found in mainstream newspapers. Readers seem to trust the *The Nairobiian* to bring them reliable information, up to date news that enables them to negotiate the sometimes harsh and precarious conditions of everyday life. *The Nairobiian* publishes more stories on sex, murders, drugs, rape, personal issues about prominent people and things that happen every day. The other newspapers don’t give enough attention to those problems. In addition it tackles issues that reflect the world of their readers and, in this way; they cater for the needs of individuals who, for the first time, have access to information. Evidenced from headings such as “*Why Muchai was killed*” issue of 19/02/2015, “*Fidel- his private life and troubled heart*” issue of 15/01/2015, “*How women rape men*” issue of 4/10/2013 “*Is adoption a curse for the rich*” issue of 23/04/2014 and “*How kids peep sex tips from Parents*” issue of

4/12/2014. Also the issue of 14/4/2015 headline reads “*Why am divorcing Joyce Lay*”, issue of 30/06/2015 headline reads “*How sex scandals made Obama the president*”

4.3.3 Source of Entertainment

The Nairobiian does not only have a strong focus on educating, uplifting and informing but also entertains and shocks from some of the human interest stories published. The paper mixes the educational articles and informational news with sensational, unbelievable and human-interest stories. Further the study found that *The Nairobiian* features stories with strong emotional appeal and human interest angles are common since they engage readers and hold their attention. Thus *The Nairobiian* reports on issues that are real to their audiences. This personalization and human-interest angle on stories provide ways of understanding the world which are different from the way the mainstream press works. These is illustrated by headlines such as, issue of 9/07/2015 where a story on *Laura Akunga* who became famous for buying her husband a birthday car worth millions, but then a businessman exposed her claiming she was a fraudster, that headline reads: “*How 10m car woman conned me- tycoon*” other stories on the front page read “*Lupita Nyong'o: 'I can't cook ugali'*”, “*President Obama's charcoal dealer aunt cries*”. Another story on the issue of 11/02/2015 headline reads “*I did not date President Kikwete- Ray C*”, another title on the same page reads “*Will Rosemary Odinga become Raila*”. The issue of 4/5/2014 headline reads “*Mandelas Nairobi in-law in South Africa*”, issue of 23/05/2014 headline reads “*Why rose Muhando aborted*”

4.4 The Rise of Tabloidization of News in Kenya

This study sought to investigate the rise of tabloidization of news in Kenya. This was meant to establish what characterizes the rise of tabloidization in Kenya.

The findings indicated that tabloidization has been on the rise in Kenya, as the newspaper under this study, *The Nairobiian*, clearly shows from its headlines, its extensive reporting on entertainment, sex, scandal, crime, celebrity, sport, nightlife, fantasy and space attacks, horror, gore and a probe into the personal lives of people. *The Nairobiian* is loud and brash, uses sensationalism as a tool, and gives prominence to anything that arouses public interest. This is evidenced from headlines such as,

“Secrets of city’s exclusive sex dens” Issue of 1/3/2013, which was the first article *The Nairobiian* published in March 2013, to catch the public’s eye.

“Secrets of Chinedu, Akinyi battle” Issue of 4/12/2013, they wrote on this controversial businessman fighting a custody battle with his ex-wife *Akinyi* when most media houses focused on the criminal charges *Chinedu* was facing for selling Narcotics.

“Top Model linked Mandela kin” Issue of 31/3/2014, this was published a couple of months later when the world was still talking of *Mandela’s* death.

“Sonko, “I love Shebesh as a sister” Issue of 30/9/2013, *The Nairobiian* took advantage of a scandal making rounds on social media which perceived that *Senator Sonko* and *The Nairobi Women Representative Rachael Sebesh* were having an affair.

“Why Swaleh Mdoe risks jail” Issue of 14/3/2014, this issue focused on a well-known media personality in Kenya, hence getting people’s attention.

Other headlines which capture sensationalism and sex scandals included,

“Mum stops daughter’s wedding to her Mpango wa Kando” issued of 2/04/2014

“Kenyan girl in sex slavery” Issue of 4/12/2014

According to the findings *The Nairobiian*, has been focusing more on issues that are infotainment compared to political issues. This decrease establishes a trend in line with Bakke theory of tabloidization, who states one clear indicator of the press falling prey to this phenomenon, is when less weight is placed on political content while more focus is placed on dramatic aspects and individualism. Further, there are two undeniable truths about the news business evidenced from *The Nairobiian*, first, even in its most socially powerful and financially successful form; journalism is at least as much about playing on the readers emotions as about the dissemination of information. Second, the best way to sell lots of papers is by entertaining the masses, not by enlightening them alone. *The Nairobiian* devotes relatively little attention to politics, economics and society and relatively much to diversions like sports, scandal and popular entertainment. This aspect of *The Nairobiian*, has thus led to an increase in its sales and a subsequent rise in tabloidization.

The back page also occasionally features scandals involving sports personalities, but most of the time attempts to find fresh angles to ongoing events or issues. *The Nairobiian* has created their own sensational stories through flashy wording and outrageous statements made by various staff reporters and columnists’, further blurring the line between what is presented as news and what is recognized as opinion or entertainment. *The Nairobiian*, tends to be filled with soft news, a type of news that is less hard edged or challenging and consisting of stories with a human-interest spin. A story issued on 1/3/2013 on exposed filthy rich men, who splash Kshs. 100,000 a

day, has a photograph of a lady dressed in a sleeveless top and its title read “*secrets of city’s exclusive sex dens*”. A story issued on 3/09/2014 on how moneyed wives turn to prostitution for pleasure, features an interesting photograph of an almost naked lady, holding onto a glass of seemingly wine, has the major headline as “*Nairobi’s rich married hookers*”, in addition other titles on the front page read “*meet city’s flashiest pastors*” featuring a photograph of reverend pastor *Kiuna* of *JCC Ministries* and another “*adult toys in demand*” featuring a photograph of a white lady. Thus such stories would attract the audience attention, as a human interest stories.

Of about the sixty five *Nairobi* articles analyzed as part of this study, many were found to be of an opinion-based nature. This may be considered a rather large reportorial segment, given the traditional view of newspapers as the purveyors of facts, necessary information and serious news. With the growing use of speculation, titillation and diversion, news seems to be increasingly based on entertainment or sensational values, a trend that in itself speaks toward the rise of tabloidization in the Kenya’s print media.

4.5 Spread and Effects of Tabloidization of News in Kenya

This study sought to investigate the spread and effects of tabloidization of News in Kenya. This was meant to establish what consequence the spread of *The Nairobi* has had in Kenya.

In regard to the spread and effects of tabloidization of news in Kenya, the study found that the tabloids attempt to captivate or persuade the masses with their colors and catchy headlines about wonderful, amazing, and even shocking stories. *The Nairobi* uses persuasion as a deliberate attempt to modify the attitude, beliefs, or behaviors of its consumers through the transmission of some message, achieved by how they frame their eye-catching headlines. Such stories are such of prominent persons in the political world or celebrity news, as illustrated by the following

headlines on *The Nairobiian*, issue of 23/12/2014 “*Politician face wife battering probe*”, issue of 5/06/2014 “*How Mps son stole my wife*”, 5/9/2013 “*Why am divorcing pastor Nganga*”, issue of 4/03/2014 “*First lady- Why am leaving Mutua*”, issue of 29/07/2014 “*Mp paid me to sleep with Pastor*”.

The study further found that, *the Nairobiian* has invaded on the privacy of the celebrities and politicians too. Thus, they have less privacy and own personal space as their personal lives are usually watched over by the paparazzi. For example this headline on the issue of 13/02/2014 “*sonko- I love Shebesh as a sister*” where the flashy Nairobi senator *Mike Sonko* states that he loves Nairobi’s women representative as a sister, he thus opens up on the romance rumours. Also the headline on the issue of 14/04/2014 “*I was used and dumped- Kajwang’ widow*” where *Faith Otieno*, widow to the late *Kajwang’* opens up on family issues. Hence, the celebrities and prominent people are somehow obliged to having a responsibility to portray good impression to the public due to their fame and popularity, it is important for them to keep a clean image of themselves to be able to have better opportunities in the media industry.

In addition, besides having an impact on the celebrities, the society is much affected as well as *The Nairobiian* may perhaps cover celebrity news because they are influenced on what society considers newsworthy and hence create confusion in the public’s mindsets. People do not know which news to trust, as they may be either false or true, as they end to give more concentration on sex scandals stories and gossip. *The Nairobiian* is among the tabloids that are changing the whole structure of the media environment. One of the biggest threats that *The Nairobiian* poses to the consumers is that it is blurring the gap between quality journalism and tabloid news.

Moreover, *The Nairobiian* may not tell people what to think, but what to think about hence not perform a primary function of journalism, which is to inform the people concerning the major issues of public interest. Another change that is very apparent is the lack of coverage of foreign news, of investigation and information that may not be of interest to people, but of public interest. *The Nairobiian* thus, has as a consequence led to the trivialization of the media by catering to just the choices or likes of people and not their welfare, as evidenced from most the Newspapers headlines.

Table 4.1: Sample Headlines of Newspaper Articles Analyzed

Date/Issue	Newspaper Headline
1/02/2014	<i>The glory is fake-Awuor</i>
14/06/2014	<i>Pastor linked to his daughter aborted</i>
7/09/2013	<i>Chamas turn into sex clubs</i>
24/04/2013	<i>How my granddaughter stole my husband</i>
27/08/2014	<i>How hawkker conned Uhuru-Kabogo</i>
14/07/2014	<i>Why police plane picked my daughter in</i>
6/07/2015	<i>These men sleep with your wife</i>
20/06/2014	<i>This nut fathered my two kids</i>
	<i>Woman used my skirts as curtains</i>
11/02/2013	<i>Akinyi speaks out on TZ “unga</i>
22/02/2015	<i>Quincy left me with three kids for Esther</i>
19/02/2015	<i>Why Muchai was killed</i>
15/01/2015	<i>Fidel- his private life and troubled heart</i>
4/10/2013	<i>How women rape men</i>
23/04/2014	<i>Is adoption a curse for the rich</i>
4/12/2014	<i>How kids peep sex tips from Parents</i>
14/4/2015	<i>Why am divorcing Joyce Lay</i>
30/06/2015	<i>How sex scandals made Obama the</i>
9/07/2015	<i>How 10m car woman conned me- tycoon</i>
	<i>Lupita Nyong'o, 'I can't cook ugali</i>
11/02/2015	<i>President Obama's charcoal dealer aunt</i>
23/05/2015	<i>I did not date president Kikwete- Ray C</i>
4/5/2014	<i>Will Rosemary Odinga become Raila</i>
23/05/2014	<i>Mandelas Nairobi in-law in southafrica</i>
1/3/2013	<i>Secrets of city's exclusive sex dens</i>
4/12/2013	<i>Secrets of Chinedu, Akinyi battle</i>

31/3/2014	<i>Top Model linked Mandela kin</i>
30/9/2013	<i>Sonko , “I love Shebesh as a sister</i>
14/3/2014	<i>Why Swaleh Mdoe risks jail</i>
2/04/2014	<i>Mum stops daughter’s wedding to her</i>
4/12/2014	<i>Kenyan girl in sex slavery</i>
3/09/2014	<i>Nairobi’s rich married hookers</i>
	<i>Meet city’s flashiest pastors</i>
23/12/2014	<i>Politician face wife battering probe</i>
5/06/2014	<i>How Mps son stole my wife</i>
5/9/2013	<i>Why am divorcing pastor Ng’ang’a</i>
4/03/2014	<i>First lady- Why am leaving Mutua</i>
29/07/2014	<i>Mp paid me to sleep with pastor</i>
14/04/2014	<i>I was used and dumped- Kajwang’ widow</i>
12/05/2015	<i>Mum of “Uhuru” son stuck in hospital</i>
25/01/2014	<i>Why Ediot killed lawyer wife</i>
3/09/2014	<i>Shame of city police strippers</i>
	<i>Raped and fired in posh Lavington</i>
	<i>Kenyans most pampered baby</i>

The table above shows the various headlines that have been analyzed in this study. According to the above headlines, the study found that the genres that the *Nairobiian* focuses on are entertainment, sex, scandal, crime, celebrity, sport, nightlife, fantasy and a probe into the personal lives of people.

4.6 Discussion of Findings

Tabloidization is a shift by the media away from national and international issues of importance to a more entertainment or gossipy style of journalism that focuses on "Lifestyle, celebrity, entertainment and crime/scandal" (Calabrese 2000). The findings indicate that tabloidization has been on the rise in Kenya, as the newspaper under this study, *The Nairobiian*, clearly shows from its headlines, its extensive reporting on entertainment, its extensive reporting on entertainment, sex, scandal, crime, celebrity, sport, nightlife, fantasy and space attacks, horror, gore and a probe into the personal lives of people *The Nairobiian* is loud and brash, uses sensationalism as a tool, and gives prominence to anything that arouses public interest.

The shift is really a matter of concern because it likely gives rise to fear for the future of the media and the role and responsibility attached to it. The fear behind this shift towards tabloidization lies in its implications. As evidence, headlines such as *Secrets of city's exclusive sex dens*, *Secrets of Chinedu*, *Akinyi battle*, *Top Model linked Mandela kin depict that The Nairobiian*, has been focusing more on issues that are infotainment compared to political issues. *The Nairobiian*, tend to be filled with soft news, a type of news that is less hard edged or challenging and consisting of stories with a human-interest spin. The effect of this shift to a more entertainment based journalism style is that the important issues such as health care education and issues relating socio political reforms which require to be addressed with seriousness have been given the back seat. The nation is deprived of information vital to reaching sound policy decisions. Our perception of society can vary greatly depending on the source of news and that bad information will inevitably lead to bad public policies.

A story issued on 19/02/2015 on exposed filthy rich men, who splash Kshs. 100,000 a day, has a photograph of a lady dressed in a sleeveless top and its title read “*secrets of city’s’ exclusive sex dens*”. A story issued on 3/09/2014 on how moneyed wives turn to prostitution for pleasure, features an interesting photograph of an almost naked lady, holding onto a glass of seemingly wine, has the major headline as “*Nairobi’s rich married hookers*”, in addition other titles on the front page read “*Meet city’s flashiest pastors*” featuring a photograph of reverend *Pastor Kiuna of JCC Ministries* and another “*Adult toys in demand*” featuring a photograph of a white lady. Thus such stories would attract the audience attention, as a human interest stories. This decrease establishes a trend in line with Bakke theory of tabloidization, who states one clear indicator of the press falling prey to this phenomenon, is when less weight is placed on political content while more focus is placed on dramatic aspects and individualism.

Further, there are two undeniable truths about the news business evidenced from *The Nairobiian*, first, even in its most socially powerful and financially successful form; journalism is at least as much about playing on the readers emotions as about the dissemination of information. Second, the best way to sell lots of papers is by entertaining the masses, not by enlightening them alone. *The Nairobiian* devotes relatively little attention to politics, economics and society and relatively much to diversions like sports, scandal and popular entertainment. This aspect of *The Nairobiian*, has thus led to an increase in its sales and a subsequent rise in tabloidization. Similarly (Lippmann, 1921) states the news media are a gateway to the world, allowing the public to have contact with the world, Lippmann (1921) further suggests that the media (newspapers specifically) is the voice, or mouthpiece, of direct democracy. Tabloid-style news does not inform the public of local, national and world event, but rather informs them of celebrity happenings and gossip; failing to be the voice of democracy and instead being the voice of

gossip (McCombs and Shaw, 1972). The media informs individuals about the issues at hand and are able to influence how much importance an individual should and would attach to an issue through the amount of information that was found in the story, i.e. to set the public's agenda. In other words the media does not tell individuals what to think, but rather what to think about and how to think about it. (McCombs and Shaw, 1972)

(“Algorithm Deems the Sun”, Cornish, 2012) found that, tabloid content is easier to read than the content in broadsheets and the tabloids are more likely to employ sentimental language and big attention seeking headlines and photographs. The reader may not be interested in concentrating on the structure of the content. Rather, he may want to understand what the story is about. The idea behind this is that not many members of the audience feel the need to read news every day. Their purpose for watching news may not be to be updated about what is happening around them. The purpose may be to just stay abreast of issues and content that concern them, their immediate surroundings or to have a topic to start and maintain an engaging conversation. This is in accordance to our study findings that *The Nairobiian*, editorial articles' amount of space allocated to news text was reduced while more space was given prevalence to images and advertisements. Most issues show unambiguous dominance of images within the front-page composition, with image space nearly doubling that allocated to article texts. Photographs and posters are extensively used throughout the paper. The issue of 1/02/2014 , illustrated where a big interesting photograph of *Professor Awuor* and *Bishop Margaret Wanjiru* occupy a better part of the front page, with the title “*The glory is fake*”-*Awuor*” highlighted in capitals and bold appearing far much bigger than any other text in the front page. Issue of 14/06/2014 cover page photograph of two ladies with the title “*Chamas turn into sex clubs*” also in bold and highlighted. The use of elements such as bold fonts and simplified wording are considered

attractive to the consumer. This juicy headline captures the consumers' attention, as a form of information and entertainment as well.

The study also found that the tabloids attempt to captivate or persuade the masses with their colors and catchy headlines about wonderful, amazing, and even shocking stories. *The Nairobiian* uses persuasion as a deliberate attempt to modify the attitude, beliefs, or behaviors of its consumers through the transmission of some message, achieved by how they frame their eye-catching headlines. Such stories are such of prominent persons in the political world or celebrity news, as illustrated by the following headlines on *The Nairobiian*, “*Politician faces wife battering probe*”, “*How Mps son stole my wife*”, “*Why am divorcing Pastor Nganga*”, This is in accordance with (D’Angelo, 2002; Scheufele, 1999) who stated the basis of framing theory is that the media focuses attention on certain events and then places them within a field of meaning. In essence, framing theory suggests that how something is presented to the audience (called ‘the frame’) influences the choices people make about how to process that information. They are thought to influence the perception of the news by the audience, in this way it could be construed as a form of second level agenda-setting they not only tell the audience what to think about (agenda-setting theory) but also how to think about that issue. (Second level agenda setting, framing theory) (Pan and Kosicki, 1993). In addition, images produce a superior effect on people’s attitudes and opinions if compared to verbal messages.

The study established that *The Nairobiian* does not only have a strong focus on educating, uplifting and informing but also entertains and shocks from some of the human interest stories published. These is illustrated by headlines such as, issue of 9/07/2015 where a story on *Laura Akunga* who became famous for buying her husband a birthday car worth millions, but then a

businessman exposed her claiming she was a fraudster, headline reads: “*How 10m car woman conned me- tycoon*” other stories on the front page read “*Lupita Nyong'o; ‘I can’t cook ugali*”,

According to the study findings represented in table 4.1, showing the various headlines that have been analyzed in this study. The study found that the genres that *The Nairobiian* focuses on are entertainment, sex, scandal, crime, celebrity, sport, nightlife, fantasy and a probe into the personal lives of people. Another aspect of the headlines is that they are all bolded and highlighted with color. More so the photographs accompanying the content are coloured, interesting and big enough for a consumer or reader to notice from afar. Similarly (Jones, 2009), asserts sensationalism is used to attract and engage the reader. Sensational content has shock value. The writer aims at increasing the curiosity and heightening the emotions of his audience. A reader is more likely to pick up a paper that has bold attractive headlines and colour on the front page than an orthodox black and white design. (Josephson, 1996) notes that colour in a photo attracts the readers eyes.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This section provides the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations from chapter four of the study. It further provides a recommendation on areas for further studies.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The study established that tabloidization has been on the rise in Kenya, as the newspaper under this study, *The Nairobiian*, clearly shows from its headlines, its extensive reporting on entertainment, sex, scandal, crime, celebrity, sport, nightlife, fantasy and space attacks, horror, gore and a probe into the personal lives of people. There seems to be a widespread acceptance of tactics that were once dismissed as unethical tabloid ploys; now rather than being referred to as tabloidization by those who are actually using these techniques, the use of elements such as bold fonts and simplified wording are considered to be attractive to the consumer, necessary marketing stratagems, and most importantly the norm.

As shown within this study, there the newspapers contained tabloidization cues in some form or another; yet, numerous referrals were made to the excessive, lewd and ridiculous coverage of the news as contained in other mediums. Tabloidization most certainly exists within the Kenyan print media and that the commonalities between tabloid and newspaper coverage will continue to become increasingly similar. Just as it does in television, the Internet and radio, tabloidization has taken a strong hold in the Kenyan print media that seems unlikely to fade or be cast out.

However, unlike these other media, print media more specifically newspapers continue to play the pious disseminator of serious news and information on one hand while eagerly delving into the tabloidization trough on the other. The quest for profit seems to have taken over any reservations the print media elite might have had, and they have instead elected to boost revenue by whatever means work best. Tabloidization, while not necessarily designated as such, continues to be a real, compelling force in today's Kenyan print media, as this study shows.

The Nairobiian has created their own sensational stories through flashy wording and outrageous statements made by various staff reporters and columnists', further blurring the line between what is presented as news and what is recognized as opinion or entertainment. *The Nairobiian*, tend to be filled with soft news, a type of news that is less hard edged or challenging and consisting of stories with a human-interest spin. With the growing use of speculation, titillation and diversion, news seems to be increasingly based on entertainment or sensational values, a trend that in itself speaks toward the rise of tabloidization in the Kenya's print media.

The study further established that *The Nairobiian*, editorial articles' amount of space allocated to news text was reduced while more space was given prevalence to images and advertisements. Most issues show unambiguous dominance of images within the front-page composition, with image space nearly doubling that allocated to article texts. Thus, three changes in journalism and news media are sounding alarms here. First, the shifting balance from hard news in favor of entertainment in news media content has rarely, if ever, been so apparent. Secondly, this shift has been accompanied by a related decline in investigative news journalism, which has virtually disappeared from some news media. Finally, this decline in news coverage and rise of

entertainment content has become evident across all news media, albeit to differing degrees (Franklin, 1997).

Tabloids and the embracing of their practices by other media are also being blamed for this downturn. What was once the occasional waiver, into the tabloid gutter has been institutionalized for much of the media (O'Brien, 1999). It is important to also recognize the influential relationship between different media and the fact that changes in one medium will likely have an effect on another. Coupled with the effects of tabloidization, this is seen as a dangerous means by which sensational practices may be spread amongst all media. The study found that *The Nairobiian* writers use leading questions to get a "money quote" from a source, or offer up the quote themselves and use it as long as the source agrees with them. The choice of articles is intentionally made to be different from what the mainstream newspapers cover, perhaps to retain the feeling of freshness and thus sell faster.

Due to the flashy, catchy headlines that accompany this content, they tend to sell faster. However this does not mean that *The Nairobiian* does not carry political news and current affairs. Politics and business news is reported, although the tone used is highly personalized and the commentators are greatly opinionated. Thus there is no scope for objectivity and analytical coverage of news, and most often than not, it is about taking sides. The study also found that, *The Nairobiian* uses persuasion as a deliberate attempt to modify the attitude, beliefs, or behaviors of its consumers through the transmission of some message, achieved by how they frame their eye-catching headlines.

The Nairobiian has preyed on the privacy of the celebrities and politicians too. Thus, they have less privacy and own personal space as their personal lives are usually watched over by the paparazzi. The study further found that, *The Nairobiian* has imposed on the privacy of the celebrities and politicians too. Thus, they have less privacy and own personal space as their personal lives are usually watched over by the paparazzi. Hence, the celebrities and prominent people are somehow obliged to having a responsibility to portray good impression to the public due to their fame and popularity, it is important for them to keep a clean image of themselves to be able to have better opportunities in the media industry.

The study also found that besides having various impacts on the celebrities, the society is much affected as well. *The Nairobiian* creates confusion in the public's mindsets. People do not know which news to trust, as they may be either false or true, as they end to give more concentration on sex scandals stories and gossip. *The Nairobiian* is among the tabloids that are changing the whole structure of the media environment. One of the biggest threats that *The Nairobiian* poses to the consumer is that it is blurring the gap between quality journalism and tabloid news. Moreover, *The Nairobiian* may not necessarily perform a primary function of journalism, which is to inform the people concerning the major issues of public interest. Another change that is very apparent is the lack of coverage of foreign news, of investigation and information that may not be of interest to people, but of public interest. *The Nairobiian* thus has as a consequence led to the trivialization of the media by catering to just the choices or likes of people and not their welfare, as evidenced from most the newspapers headlines.

5.3 Conclusion of the Study

The news journalists "follow orders" from the corporate owners and shape the news accordingly. The result is news media, which "manipulates information" to push the agenda of the corporations which is based on marketing themselves and their products. This is where tabloidization comes into play. In order to push their interests or to draw the attention away from the news that may in fact 'hurt' them, the corporations have created a news media that concentrate on attracting audiences through stories about sleaze, scandal and personal lives.

The study concludes *The Nairobiian*; editorial articles' amount of space allocated to news text was reduced while more space was given prevalence to images and advertisements. Most issues show unambiguous dominance of images within the front-page composition, with image space nearly doubling that allocated to article texts. Insensitivity to the content and focus on trivia are rampant today with media focusing more and more on illness and accidents of the famous at the cost of developmental issues. The coverage of personal life of celebrities more than needed only leaves the message that nothing else was happening in the country, which deserves its place in the coverage of news. The use of elements such as bold fonts and simplified wording are considered attractive to the consumer. This juicy headline is aimed to capture the consumers' attention, as a form of information and entertainment.

The study also concludes tabloidization has been on the rise in Kenya, as the newspaper under this study, *The Nairobiian*, clearly shows from its headlines, its extensive reporting on entertainment, celebrity gossip and other attention-seeking details regarding the prominent people in Kenya. In the media scenario, there is growing practice of masquerading paid publicity as genuine news. A large amount of media's contemporary problems may flow from the greed of this possibility. Surprisingly, the established ones with decisive market domination are very often

alleged, indulge in this pernicious practice of selling news columns. In this era of economic opening up, lobbyist or even foreign powers can fill news columns with such inspired stories.

In Kenya the media seem to have somehow deviated from the core mandate of journalism. It has commercialized and trivialized reporting of news. Such state of affair is to be noted with anxiety and grave concern. To say the least, this trend is not good because journalism is one of the continuing thought processes of civilization. The redeeming feature is that by and large the regional media, or the regional language media, which is also called the vernacular media, has not yet fallen to a reasonable extent to this trend of trivialization. But anxiety is how long this last pasture will remain comparatively green. Thus such stories would attract the audience attention, as a human interest stories. With the growing use of speculation, titillation and diversion, news seems to be increasingly based on entertainment or sensational values, a trend that in itself speaks toward the rise of tabloidization in the Kenya's print media.

The study also concludes that *The Nairobiian* has imposed on the privacy of the celebrities and politicians too. Thus, they have less privacy and own personal space as their personal lives are usually watched over by the paparazzi. In addition, besides having negative impacts on the celebrities, the society is much affected as well. *The Nairobiian* creates confusion in the public's mindsets. People do not know which news to trust, as they may be either false or true. *The Nairobiian* uses persuasion as a deliberate attempt to modify the attitude, beliefs, or behaviors of its consumers through the transmission of some message, achieved by how they frame their eye-catching headlines. Such stories are such of prominent persons in the political world or celebrity news, as illustrated by the following headlines on *The Nairobiian*: “*politician faces wife battering probe*”

The study concludes that besides having various impacts on the celebrities, the society is much affected as well. *The Nairobiian* creates confusion in the public's mindsets. People do not know which news to trust, as they may be either false or true, as they end to give more concentration on sex scandals stories and gossip as a reader quoted on social media. *The Nairobiian* is among the tabloids that are changing the whole structure of the media environment. One of the biggest threats that *The Nairobiian* poses to the consumer is that it is blurring the gap between quality journalism and tabloid news. Moreover, *The Nairobiian* may not necessarily perform a primary function of journalism, which is to inform the people concerning the major issues of public interest. Another change that is very apparent is the lack of coverage of foreign news, of investigation and information that may not be of interest to people, but of public interest. *The Nairobiian* thus has as a consequence led to the trivialization of the media by catering to just the choices or likes of people and not their welfare, as evidenced from most the Newspapers headlines such as; “*why Swaleh Mdoe risks jail*”, “*Oh God, I'm not Gay- Priest*”, “*Eastern politician caught pants down with 'mpango wa kando' in Umoja*”.

Lastly, the role of readers, assumes great importance in combating the malaise being discussed. The readers have important role to play. If they remain callous and meekly accept whatever is given to them by the media without any protest or critical estimate of the role of media, this unfortunate trend would continue unabated and perhaps with greater ferocity ultimately leading the readers to be insensitive to the real role required to be played by the media in building up a vibrant and progressive society. Eternal vigilance is not only the price of democracy but also the price for effective role.

5.4 Recommendation

Based on the findings, the study recommends:

- I. Improved media literacy which will not only enable citizens to understand the messages and information being disseminated but will help them identify the bias, spin, misinformation or lies and also evaluate what gaps there may be in such media content.
- II. For a newspaper to maintain its editorial independence, it needs to be well managed, efficient and financially self-sustaining. It should be able to receive revenue from a multitude of sources and not solely depend on advertising and circulation revenues to avoid superficial content or tabloidization of news although this still works well for these newspapers in the media.
- III. Editorial crew should take tabloid audiences and their media experiences seriously if they are to understand their media encounters, the impact of these newspapers on the media landscape, their place in the lives of their readers, as well as the future of newspapers in a technology driven media landscape.
- IV. It can be perceived that *The Nairobiian* readers are active, serious, critical and discriminating media users who select media that fulfill their expectations and needs. Thus the management of *The Nairobiian* should ensure quality tabloid journalism with inclusion of foreign news, of investigation and information that may not be of interest to people, but of public interest.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Research

This study recommends that more studies should be done to study the rise of tabloidization of news in Kenya and their influence on consumers. This study further recommends that an expanded version of this study would likely shed more light on the tabloidization phenomenon. Different tabloids and newspapers with tabloidic tendencies could be analyzed.

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APPENDIX

Appendix I: Newspaper Articles

THE NAIROBIAN
 No. 0001 Ksh. 25/00 March 1-7, 2013 www.standardmedia.co.ke

SECRETS OF CITY'S EXCLUSIVE SEX DENS
 Exposed: Filthy rich men splash Sh100,000 a day

11 DAVID OONG'OO

Cops to arrest Oduol's wife as assault probe turns messy, p9
Kenya's top most degree courses

THE NAIROBIAN
 No. 0007 Ksh. 35/00 August 30 - September 5, 2012 www.standardmedia.co.ke

SONKO: I LOVE SHEBESH AS A SISTER
 Flashy Senator opens up on romance rumours, p4-5

Inside Kibera's live sex shows

Irshad Sumra gift for Embakasi's dead, p12
Tyranny as Ugandans invade Kenyan Premier league, p17
Nairobians turn to homeschooling, p28

PAY YOUR NAIROBI WATER BILLS AND AVOID DISRUPTION

CAMPUS SEX: Rapists and goons on the prowl, p14
THE NAIROBIAN
 No. 00079 Ksh. 40/00 August 15 - 21, 2014 www.standardmedia.co.ke

Top male golfer stole my Sh8m, woman claims

Why KDF has no female Army General, p4
Fidel Odinga smashes fan's car at Dala Sevens, p23
Kenyatta Casualty Wing not for 'flu' - doctors warn, p12

NAIROBI'S TOP SECRET WIVES & FAMILIES
HIDDEN NECTAR: What drives a respectable man to keep another wife and family for years? p7

Why I burnt KQ pilot face with acid, p10
Cancer sticks: Why Kisii don't smoke, p28

World tycoon hideouts
 Home away from home: Find out the secret places where Prince William, Richard Branson and Bill Gates visit in Kenya, p18

Potbellied police: Are they fit to serve? p14

THE NAIROBIAN
 No. 00048 Ksh. 40/00 January 17-23, 2014

Uhuru smoked in my car - Mutahi Ngunyi

CHAMAS TURN INTO SEX CLUBS
MISCHIEF: Husbands clueless as meetings provide perfect cover for married women and their toy boys, p4

In the line of duty: Ailing KDF pilot never received dues, p11
Nairobi's 'commando' generation
 Army of city women who rarely wear underwear, p7

Bishop Kiuna: This is the year to be selfish, p41
The Betresexual: Poor Nairobi men can't date anymore, p17

Smell of money: Youngest millionaires in town, P28

THE NAIROBIAN
No. 00047 Ksh. 40/00
January 10-16, 2014 www.standardmedia.co.ke

CROSSFIRE: Bishop Wanjiru says Prophet is a 'one-day miracle man' after he blasts her at crusade.

THE GLORY IS FAKE - OWUOR

Female gangsters 'terrorise' police

Uhuru's diary man sued over upkeep

Danger zones: Police estate with thieves, bludge smokers, P7

Mechanic sues tribunal chief over Mercedes Benz repair cash, p10

It is the age of the Internet. According to police records, the Nairobi has attracted the attention of a group of female gangsters who are terrorising the city.

According to police records, these female gangsters who are terrorising the city are the same ones who are terrorising the city.

Uhuru's diary man sued over upkeep

Mechanic sues tribunal chief over Mercedes Benz repair cash, p10

Kenya's most pampered baby
Dad splashes over half a million on limo, champagne to welcome newborn son, P8

BUSTED: Headteacher attempts suicide after sex with student in lodging, P8

THE NAIROBIAN
October 3-9, 2014 www.standardmedia.co.ke No. 00048 Ksh. 40/00

SHAME OF CITY POLICE STRIPPERS

ARMED TO THRILL: Undercover investigations reveal secrets behind female cops licensed to kill by day but are lap dancers and sex objects by night, P4

Lengo would have killed me if he had a panga - Raila

10 MOST ELLIGIBLE BACHELORS

Woman busted with pastor now sought by police over fraud as husband is attacked by thugs, p9

Diamond Vodka
BE COOL! BE DIAMOND!
Distributors required all over the country. Diamond vodka also available in cream, lemon and black currant flavors.

What city women think of men and their tribes, p28

THE NAIROBIAN
No. 00049 Ksh. 40/00
April 6-12, 2014 www.standardmedia.co.ke

I died and resurrected
Pastor claims he woke up in his late dad's body, p7

How MP used me, destroyed my family

SENATOR STOLE MY HUSBAND...
But man insists he is marrying politician as second wife, P11

PCEA kicks out David Githii after Nairobi exposure

I make monthly periods painless, herbalist boasts, P12

Are these Nairobi's most feared buildings?

Kenya is a superstitious lot and it takes a few tongues wagging to cast a fictitious myth in stone, p14

Fashion crisis: Meet prominent personalities who need a makeover, P28

Playing with fire: Mombasa apostle strolled into Moi's State House, slept on Uhuru's verandah and warned Raila, p12

THE NAIROBIAN
October 24-30, 2014 www.standardmedia.co.ke No. 00050 Ksh. 40/00

MP PAID ME TO SLEEP WITH PASTOR

CONFESIONS: The plan was to trap rival in sex scandal but the man of God escaped by the skin of his teeth, p4

How Professor-politician dumped college girl

Mutua could make Kalonzo irrelevant in Ukambani, p11

Family jewels: Governor's kick could make me impotent

I did not sacrifice children to grow my church, p13

Woman bags Sh25 million in Kenya's expensive divorce settlement, p7

THE NAIROBIAN
January 9-15, 2015 www.standardmedia.co.ke
No. 106
Ksh. 40/00

DOWN MEMORY LANE: When Hararobe Stars first became the Africa Cup of Nations, P46

FARE THEE WELL: Family and friends grieve as all roads lead to Bondo to bid Raia and Mama Ida Odinga's eldest son bye, p4

Mum in trouble for naming son Uhuru Kenyatta

FIDEL: HIS PRIVATE LIFE & TROUBLED HEART

Justice denied: Mystery of court cases that drag on for decades explained, P14

City massage parlours that give women 'happy ending', P7

Not lovers: Jackie Maribe and I are just friends-Dennis Itumbi, P23

Slow down teacher: Vihiga man in court for sleeping with students, P10

MP Mwaura is romantic - fiancée, P7

FINAL LAP: Wanjari was murdered as wife claims foulness, p46

Some people are after my family-Sonko

Esther Passaris Sh35 million richer after court case

Meet Mombasa's youngest imam, P9

LOVERS' ROCK: The many crazy things city women do on Valentine's Day, P29

THE NAIROBIAN
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2015
Ksh. 40/00

IN COLD BLOOD: MP lived on borrowed time as enemies in politics, murder gangs, business, and real estate hunted him down, p4

WHY MUCHAI WAS KILLED

Esther Passaris Sh35 million richer after court case

Meet Mombasa's youngest imam, P9

LOVERS' ROCK: The many crazy things city women do on Valentine's Day, P29

Not lovers: Jackie Maribe and I are just friends-Dennis Itumbi, P23

Slow down teacher: Vihiga man in court for sleeping with students, P10

MP Mwaura is romantic - fiancée, P7

FINAL LAP: Wanjari was murdered as wife claims foulness, p46

Some people are after my family-Sonko

Esther Passaris Sh35 million richer after court case

Meet Mombasa's youngest imam, P9

LOVERS' ROCK: The many crazy things city women do on Valentine's Day, P29

HOW KIDS PEEP SEX TIPS FROM PARENTS

BEDROOM CRISIS: Single roomed houses blamed for child sex as study shows rise in HIV infections and Uhuru plans condoms for teenagers, p4

Kenyan Prisons Where Men Are Turned Into Wives

When daft KCSE students pen matusi

Governor throws Sh50 million on dog biscuits, p8

Baba Yaco Ferdinand Waititu wades into Kabene Embakasi style: Will he go for Kabogo in 2017? P12

General Obacajaji: Attending Kakamega burial got me jailed, p33

Sh230K Valentine bill: How Laura Oyler escaped ku-chonga viazi at The Intercon, P7

Baboons point 'fundamentos' at Nyeri woman, p8

Kakamega minister in sex scam

Judge halts Sh25 million divorce boom, p10

Sonko's Rescue: Vihiga legend Ojwang' Hatari hospitalised, P9

Nairobi liver slench turns Lavington, Westlands into slum, p14

IN OTHER NEWS: Popular TV anchor aborts for a second time, leaves hospital, P8

FORBIDDEN FRUIT
City girl charged in court for sending granny insulting text messages over grandpa love, p7

HOW MY GRAND DAUGHTER STOLE MY HUSBAND

Shocker of married men who keep male 'mistresses'

FAMILY CRISIS: Disturbing trend of jobless men who drive big cars because they are 'kept' toy boys for rich husbands, p4

Sh230K Valentine bill: How Laura Oyler escaped ku-chonga viazi at The Intercon, P7

Baboons point 'fundamentos' at Nyeri woman, p8

Kakamega minister in sex scam

Judge halts Sh25 million divorce boom, p10

Sonko's Rescue: Vihiga legend Ojwang' Hatari hospitalised, P9

Nairobi liver slench turns Lavington, Westlands into slum, p14

IN OTHER NEWS: Popular TV anchor aborts for a second time, leaves hospital, P8

not pregnant, P46

POISONED LOVE: The search for romance on the Internet led Laura to American man who flew her out to untold misery, P4

KENYAN GIRL IN SEX SLAVERY

Our son Obama must build his own hut in Kogelo – Luo Council of Elders, P12

I was dead drunk during my wedding — beauty queen, P34

BOOT CAMP: Two women fight over dead army pilot, P5

Kikuyu Council of Elders high priest dies after installation of woman politician as 'elder', P5

Pepe ya ngoma: House help accused of infecting 18 boys with HIV, P4

Woman arrested transporting cocaine in nyosh, P8

KILL-ME-QUICK: A sip of chang'aa exploded inside my chest in Siaya — Obama, P12

THE NAIROBIAN

FRIDAY, JULY 24 - THURSDAY, JULY 30, 2015

www.standardmedia.co.ke

HOMECOMING: We reveal how the scion of Kogelo 'bounced' into the White House, P4

HOW SEX SCANDALS MADE OBAMA PRESIDENT

Babies who grow up in prison

Kenya's sexiest preacher hit on by 'Team Mafisi', P9

BIDANYA BARASSA: Cancer is gone, now I can have babies, P34

Facebook lover sweeps music house clean, P10

Makali: Tabitha Karanja sips Vienna Ice daily, P11

My nephew helped thugs to rape me - businesswoman, P10

Landlord sues city controversial tycoon over rent arrears, P7

My wife has locked me in a pit latrine for six months - Kisii mzee, P8

GARISSA TERROR: Decorated army pilot, Col Mbiti, says he broke no law flying kin from Mombasa, p4

WHY POLICE PICKED MY DAUGHTER-IN-LAW

Men call me childless prostitute - Millie, P7

Was two-year-old defiled at daycare centre?

I warned Hon Anyanga about attack - Ugandan, P12

Uhuru nephew at Babu Owino victory party, P23

SIRKAL IN ACTION: Arrogant senator caught peeing by the roadside, P8

grave matters: 'I killed my wife out of love', P7

Drunk KDF soldier boxed and kicked me because of toilet paper, P10

TOURE DE FORCE: Sensational Man City midfielder 'Kape Toure' is in Mombasa to break his bones in the coastal sun, P46

MUM OF UHURU 'SON' STUCK IN HOSPITAL

Millionaire attempts suicide over cheating girlfriend - P5

Governor in child support battle

State House suppliers cry over delayed pay

OTONGLO TIME: sh200,000 bill

sdekenya

GSU boss takes 20 police cars and demands salute for his wife, pg 8

Pimped ride

THE NAIROBIAN
No. 00025
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Kenya's show their passion for cars at the East African Motor Show, P10

I DID NOT STEAL KABILA'S SH8B GOLD

REVEALED: In a rare interview, Paul Kobia clears his name over controversial 2.5 tonnes mineral saga, P4

MY NIGERIAN MAN TREATS ME LIKE A QUEEN: EMMY KOSGEY

Gospel artiste happy to marry widower twice her age, P9

Campus girls shun relationships for casual sex

On Viagra, 'Bensouda' Brins has official university residence in the university village for students that she is fond of. She is a model for the university. However, she medical student with a company body - all, beauty, and beautiful - she has been in Nairobi. She moved back to visit her mother in a multi-class house along Thika Road, where she plans to spend the weekend. She is not married. She is not in the government. She has a job in the university.

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Drug barons beat the law by using bhanga to bake cakes, cookies, p14-15

THE NAIROBIAN
No. 00010
Ksh. 25/00
May 3-9, 2013
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Secrets of CHINEDU, AKINYI CUSTODY BATTLE

Details of court decision in case pitting troubled Nigerian and his estranged Kenyan wife, Story P4-5

Tough march to the match

From volleyball kit to warders' uniform. Meet the Prisons team, p48

Big racket uncovered

Police have discovered a huge black market for stolen goods in the city. There are said to be up to 100,000 stolen goods in the city. The stolen items are sold without trace, making the identification difficult. See story on page 18.

3D tattoos

During Nairobi's new trend that has the potential to literally change the face of tattooing, P30

CELEBRITY LIFESTYLE | Gossip | Caught Out | SDE | VIDEOS | PULSE | EVENTS | TURUKA

Bedbug invasion: Why bloodsucking insects are threatening the comfort of city residents, p14

THE NAIROBIAN
No. 00024
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City's toughest policewoman

Meet 'Bensouda', cop who has put the brakes on matatu madness, p12

Female Viagra: Will it help?

The latest cure for sex drive and its implications for women, HEALTH, P40

NEWS: The pastor who performs miracles through his phone, P11

FEATURE: Artists showcase art considered unseizable, p32

The basketball babes in distress but still soaring high, p48

TOP MODEL LINKED TO MANDELA KIN

Speculation is rife beauty queen may marry icon's grandson
Full story on P4-5

THE BLANKETS & WINE NAIROBIAN LOUNGE IS SET
all you need is to buy a copy of Nairobi Uncovered

Motorbike robbers invade posh Karen homes as crime soars, P7

THE NAIROBIAN
No. 00018
Ksh. 40/00
November 8-14, 2013
www.standardmedia.co.ke

REVEALED: Moneyed wives turn to prostitution for pleasure, P4

Meet city's flashiest pastors

What the wealthy men and women of God say about their lifestyles, p28

Adult toys in demand

Flashback: All Saints' Cathedral's link to the Freemasons, P25

IN-DEPTH: Streets turn into animal farm, p14

NAIROBI'S RICH MARRIED HOOKERS

I love my 'Simpsonian' man, fiancée says, p11

WASTED: *Siasa killed Sh5bn Aids cure hospital, p13*

THE NAIROBIAN

No. 00071 Ksh. 40/00 JUNE 20 - 26, 2014 www.standardmedia.co.ke



RAISING WITH BEAUTY: P45

THIS 'NUT' FATHERED MY TWO KIDS

COURT DRAMA: Woman claims MCA sired her children because politician has one testicle just like her son, p10

Rachel Ruto: How woman used my skirts as curtains, p8



Meet Juju spy for mpango wa kando
If you have been chatting, your days are numbered. Juju can bust you anywhere.
Full story on page 8

Immortal: Suicide freak who won't die
I tried killing myself five times, p12

City CEO 'hit with wine glass' at top hotel, p9

Classroom sex: Randy cheats who teach our children



UNIQUE IN NAIROBI: Miss Buryay Bura was in Nakuru to cheer rugby players, but KARI BUSSES stayed away, p46

NO JOY FOR BILL: Love runs dry for cute Taita politician as husband, 63, throws in towel, p4

DEATH AT DAWN: WAS IT AL-SHABAAB OR SHIFTA?



BY STAND WITH GARISSA UNIVERSITY
BY PAUL MUTALA AND HAZIM KIBISI
They creep in like thieves, shooting and killing. By the time the KDF and Special Forces arrive, let's say, moved down by ruthless terrorists who spend months in the shadows.
In the wake of the horrendous slaughter of Garissa University students that shocked the world, Kenya are wondering whether it is the Al-Shabaab or a succession plan similar to the 1990s Shifita war.
Continued on pages 2, 14 and 15

WHY I'M DIVORCING JOYCE LAY

Mutula wife starving lions - Kilnzo Jnr
The late lawyer and former Justice Minister Mutula Kilonzo was a ruthless adversary in the courtroom and political podium. But he had a soft side few Kenyans know about.
He loved wild animals and kept lions and cheetahs on his sprawling ranch which are over 100 million worth of money ready.
Now his widow wants KWS to take them off her hands.
Story on page 7

Sh20 million bill: Baby's three-year ICU ordeal, p9

Time Files: How television stars age right before our eyes, p33

Flexing biceps: I clobbered my wife for deleting her mpango wa kando's text messages, P10

'Baba Returns': America has sent back 'Messiah' - Moses Kuria, p11

THE NAIROBIAN

No. 00071 Ksh. 40/00 May 30 - June 5, 2014 www.standardmedia.co.ke



THE NAIROBIAN SPORTS

PASTOR LINKED TO HIS DAUGHTER'S ABORTED CHILD

Man of God survives lynching after neighbours claim he impregnated his girl. His wife is accused of helping to terminate the pregnancy, p4-5

We shot Maina Njenga, Mungiki's 'Jeshi' claims
A group of Mungiki members have taken revenge for the death of a woman.
The group, which is based in the area around the village of Mungiki, claims that Maina Njenga was the man who impregnated the woman.
The woman was lynched and her body was found in a ditch.
The group claims that they shot Njenga because he was the man who impregnated the woman.
The woman's wife is accused of helping to terminate the pregnancy.
Story continued on p7

Did prophet lose his 'love child'?
Neighbours attack Salvation Church Ministries' bishop as he tries to take away dead baby's body from woman in Umoja, p5



Vera unveils new 'tint': How she got her new 'yellow, yellow' look, p23
Inside Nairobi's small bunge at city hall, p12

I love you mum: Betty Tett son on death row speaks from Kamiti Prison, P11
Thank you Freemasons: Why Nairobi should stop being suspicious and admire these great masons, p14-15

THE NAIROBIAN

November 7-13, 2014 www.standardmedia.co.ke No. 00071 Ksh. 40/00



BOPIING SCANDAL: Athletics Kenya does as running nation is spilled, p46

THESE MEN SLEEP WITH YOUR WIFE

MARRIAGE CRISIS: One in four married women is looking for sex in places husbands least suspect, p7

I never cheated on Kanyari - Betty Bayo
Betty Bayo's husband is a man who has been in the news for a long time.
But the wife of TV's 'The Prince and the Pauper' says she never cheated on him.
Betty Bayo, who is Kanyari's wife, had been cheating on him.
Full story on page 5

Parents beware: Kasarani perverts 'milking' boys' privates in ritual to sire sons, police warn, p9
Drunk Kenyan threatens to jump off plane, p10

Finger of God founder in child 'kidnap' drama, p4
Kenya's most feared mganga
Lethal witchdoctor who spent three months with spirits under the sea danced for presidents, P35