Patterns of Production and Consumption of Local Language Radio in Kenya: A Comparative Study of Rural Audiences

By

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A Thesis Submitted to the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of Nairobi

November, 2011
DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented anywhere for a degree.

Hezron Mogambi

Signature

29-4-11
Date
Declaration

This Thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

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ABSTRACT

Liberalization of the media industry in Kenya that started in the 1990's has seen tremendous and unprecedented developments in the broadcasting sector in the country. At the centre of these unprecedented developments has been the need to ensure most of the population get information.

One segment of particular interest in Kenya has been the rural audience that makes up 68 per cent of the country’s population (KNBS 2010). Using a multi-method approach to capture data for the research, I comparatively examined the patterns of production and consumption of local language radio in two rural settings in Kenya with an objective of finding out how these patterns of production and consumption feeds into people’s lives in rural Kenya. Data was collected using interviewing, focus-group discussions, observation methods, and documents analysis. Clearly, consumption patterns of radio programmes in the rural areas vary from one individual to the other. Listeners tune-in to a wide range of radio stations. The local language stations have the highest listenership, but listeners also listen to the national stations as well as the urban English stations sometimes, almost interchangeably. People in rural Kenya listen to radio more during certain times of the day when they are available and are likely to make sure that they tune into their preferred program when it is on air. Most radio listening occurs in the early morning hours before people start their daily activities and in the evenings after work. There are no major differences between the amount of time spent listening to radio during the weekdays (Monday to Friday) and during the weekend (Saturday and Sunday). Many listeners are free from their work during the weekends and one would expect that they would listen more during this time. However, this is not case. However, male listeners spend more hours listening to radio than women.

This research concludes that media liberalization and commercialization of radio in Kenya has led to the emergence of a competitive radio industry which provides multiple local
language outlets and a wide variety of content in local languages from which people can choose. Secondly, the study found public access to radio in rural Kenya is most assured when local languages are used, content is appropriate, and feedback mechanisms are in place. Of particular importance, cell phones played a key role in connecting audiences to the station especially in far flung rural areas and vice versa. At the same time, patterns of consumption are related to language of broadcast, content, and timing for programmes in local language radio.

Therefore, the research argues that a true Kenyan broadcast system that allows for mass participation can develop only if radio producers, broadcasters and policy makers address the cultural and local language elements within Kenya’s radio broadcasting system.
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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACCE-African Council for Communication Education
AMDI-African Media Development Initiative
BS-Broadcasting Station
BBC-British Broadcasting Service
CCK-Communication Commission of Kenya
FAO-Food and Agricultural Organisation
FGD-Focus Group discussion
KARF-Kenya Audience Research Foundation
KBC- Kenya Broadcasting Corporation.
KDHS-Kenya Demographic Health Survey
KICA-Kenya information Communication Act
KNBS-Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
LR-Local language radio
PBS- Public Service Broadcasting
PEV-Post-elections Violence
QTR-Quarter
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the thesis. It starts by offering a background to the study, while explaining what inspired it. It also outlines the study objectives and research questions. The significance of the study in general, and specifically to the study is also elaborated. The section further spells out the scope and limitations of the research, while giving a vivid delineation of the study. Rationale for the study is made while also explaining the key words and how they have been used in the study. A summary of the whole thesis is also given outlining what to expect in each chapter.

1.1 Background

The increase in the number of local language radio stations in Kenya since the year 2000 has seen the introduction of broadcasting in a variety of languages. Previously, FM LLR was only in major languages such as Kikuyu, Kalenjin, Dholuo and Luhyia. Today, there are additional FM stations in Kimeru, Kikamba, Gusii, Somali languages (Bourgault, 1995; Odhiambo, 2002). LLR programming formats differ from one LLR station to another and between languages. For instance, some Kikuyu and Kalenjin local language stations have 100 per cent local language content such as music, drama, and news. Other stations have predominantly Kikuyu and Kalenjin content but include Kiswahili and English content in songs and news. The choice of programming format is upon LLR managers. However, some local language stations cannot sustain round the clock broadcast with local language content because there are not enough programming materials (Gathigi, 2009). As a result, they have to ‘borrow’ some of the content from other languages and mix them accordingly as happens in the Kalenjin local language station Kass FM and Kameme FM which broadcasts in Kikuyu.
Access, which refers to the ability of community members to listen to and provide feedback about the programs broadcast by the local language station (Berrigan 1981) to most LLR stations is high because of the use of local languages as shown by local language stations, for instance in Mali (Berque, 1992), Australia (Browne, 1990) and Canada (Foy, L'oiseau, Barette, & Boivin, 1992) and content and audiences' needs.

Radio has proven itself as a developmental tool, particularly with the rise of community and local radios, which have facilitated a far more participatory and horizontal type of communication than was possible with the older, centralised broadcasting model of the 1960s and 70s (Myers, 2008). Local language radio provides an opportunity for people to interpret the world on their own (Hendy, 2000; Hochheimer, 1993).

In Kenya, local language stations provide added opportunities to the rural population because they are more proficient in their local language than English (Gathigi 2009). Targeting rural audiences is important because settlement patterns in Kenya are in such a way that audiences who use a given local language are likely to be concentrated in particular region. (Audiencescapes 2010:21).

The location of the local language radio station, which facilitates frequent contact between the target audiences and the RS, is often vital. Jankowski (2002) says that most LLR were "predominantly located within a relatively small, clearly defined geographical region, although some community networks attract large and physically dispersed audience" (p. 7), as do FM stations Inooro FM, Coro FM, Kameme FM, Kass FM, and Chamgei FM in Kenya. Local languages are spoken by different sections of the Kenyan population who usually belong to the different communities. Since the liberalization of airwaves, FM LLR stations in Kenya have dotted the broadcasting scene with quite a number broadcasting in Kiswahili. Previously, only the government's owned Kenya Broadcasting Corporation ran a Kiswahili broadcasting station. (Nabea 2009)
Because LLR is the most popular mass medium (Odhiambo 2002), local language radio stations broadcast in assorted languages with stations covering major towns in Kenya apart from being the most dominant media in the rural areas (African Media Barometer: Kenya, 2009). The multiple languages used in broadcasting affect the size of audience that broadcasters can possibly reach because of the multiplicity of languages and the number of audiences that are reached. Most Kenyans rely on broadcast media for news. Until recently, the liberalization of broadcasting had a limited impact outside of Nairobi but some private networks now have near-national coverage broadcasting in local languages (Audiencespaces, 2010).

Linguistically, there are over 60 languages and dialects spoken in Kenya (Githiora, 2002). The use of local languages as broadcasting strategy can help in penetrating the rural areas where 68 per cent of Kenyans live (KNBS, 2010). Therefore, there has always been a need for wide media coverage using local languages that can address diverse local dynamics of the plural Kenyan population. This is so because local language radio remains the most powerful yet cheapest mass medium for reaching large numbers of people in isolated areas (FAO: Voices for change: rural women and communication accessed 25.11.10).

As a result of the upsurge of radio stations in Kenya due to of liberalization of the airwaves, listeners now have a wide range of listening choices, particularly entertainment services. Regionally-based local language stations previously considered a threat to state security now abound and continue to open (African Media Development Initiative, 2010).

Although Kenya has a long history of LLR broadcasting that dates back to 1928 during the colonial period (Bourgault, 1995), full-fledged local language broadcasting is a relatively new phenomenon that only emerged in the last ten years (Gathigi, 2009). LLR broadcasting has become an established and important component of the broadcasting industry in Kenya today (Synovate, 2009). The status of the LLR industry in Kenya today represents a rapid
departure from a state-controlled monopoly that existed until the early 1990s (Abdi and Dean 2008). As a result, there is little research on the current state of Kenya’s local language radio industry and patterns of production and consumption of radio by rural audiences in particular.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Studies that focus on rural audiences in Kenya and other similar environments have addressed the use of LLR in two main ways. First is the use of specially designed programs dealing with particular issues such as education, family planning, and outdated cultural practices like female genital mutilation. These programs are usually driven by government, non-governmental or international organizations such as the UN bodies (Bourgault, 1995; Young, 1991) and are executed through the mainstream language radio that serves the general population (The local language radio may be commercially owned or public). The second focus is on the use of this as avenues to access rural populations and address local needs. These studies are based on the premise that the local population has specific needs that can be addressed at the local level (Alumuku, 2006; Kasoma, 2002, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1990). Use of LLR is especially important because it allows for participation of the local population, it can address specific interests of local rural audiences and it gives the community control over the content, and patterns of production in the LLR (Alumuku, 2002). The absence of profit motive in management practices is viewed as a guarantee that the interests of the audience will be served.

Beyond these two models, commercial broadcasting is not necessarily viewed as an important component for broadcasting to the rural population. The proposed research addresses that gap by looking beyond the two approaches of reaching the rural people, (i.e. use of mainstream local language radio for specially designed and directed information) and the use of local language radio to address local needs. Despite the commercial orientation, local language
radio broadcasting that attends to the rural audience can influence the rural population. In the Kenyan context, local language broadcasting, which principally sets rural audiences at the centre of its operations, is a compelling area of investigation. This study goes beyond the thinking that profit making is the sole motive of commercial broadcasting.

1.3 General Objective

The general objective of this comparative study was to investigate and identify the patterns of production and consumption of LLR in two different rural settings in Kenya.

1.4 Specific Objectives

1. To examine whether LLR patterns of production provide an outlet for the rural populations to get more coverage of the issues that concern their daily lives.

2. To establish whether what local language producers do in their work often shape debate and promote issues of public interest.

3. To find out whether LLR’s patterns of production shape how the audience receive and consume LLR messages.

4. To examine what role if any, broadcasting in Kiswahili has, in the way rural audiences receive LLR messages and consume them.

1.5 Research questions

The study further seeks to answer the following questions:

1a. What LLR station(s) do audiences in the area(s) under study listen to?

1b. Why do they listen to the LLR stations mentioned in (1 a)?

2. What role does LLR play in the everyday life of the listener?

2b. What content do audiences seek from LLR station they listen to?
3. How does consumption of LLR messages relate to patterns of production in the LLR stations?

4. Does the use of Kiswahili in broadcasting in Kenya influence the way rural audiences receive radio messages and consume them?

1.6 Significance of the Study

LLR is the most important source of information for the majority of Kenya population and for most rural dwellers, it is the only reliable source available (Odhiambo, 2002). For many rural folks however, years of savings to acquire the device (radio) represents economic wealth while the information availed ensure the only practical connection with the outside world (La Pastina, 2005; Spitulnik, 1998).

The development of the LLR industry in Kenya has the potential to provide the rural population with the benefits of the medium. Potentially these include increased access to information through both mainstream and LLR stations. Today, rural populations have more LLR outlets to choose from, something that was not available before liberalization of the media in Kenya (KDHS 2009, Abdi and Dean 2009).

According to Robinson (1996), language is a vital parameter that reflects the social realities and structures of the rural settings. The size and nature of the marketplace for LLR in Kenya has enlarged significantly since the year 2000 with about 34 new stations coming on-air, bringing the total in 2005 to 49 (Republic of Kenya 2006b; CCK 2010). In particular, there has been an increase in LLR stations, and the proliferation of these stations reflects a push towards addressing the various interests in the country (African Media Development Initiative, 2010). Trends also show that rural people are most likely to tune into stations broadcasting in local languages hence the popularity of local language which is now an important instrument of reaching rural majorities [Kenya AMDI Report BBC, 2010].
Commercial audience research in Kenya has devoted little interest to rural audiences. If viewed from the traditional media economic model where audiences are commodities to be sold to the advertiser (Webster, Phalem & Lichty, 2006), rural audiences are of marginal concern to commercial media research in Kenya where poverty levels in rural areas are considerably high. Thus, rural audiences have limited purchasing power compared to their urban counterparts. Consequently, even in media research carried in Kenya by the Synovate Group, the only entity recognized by the industry draws its largest sample from the urban population (Synovate, 2007). According to sampling the frame used by Synovate in 2007 for example, a population of 2,050 was selected from six urban areas while 1,510 were selected from 12 rural areas. In terms of settlement, the ratio of urban to rural population was 1:4. Even barring the distribution of LLR stations, which are concentrated in urban areas, in Kenya, rural audiences are still underrepresented in Synovate’s research.

LLR is one of the main appeals of the medium because it can reach local people in the local language(s), a concept referred to as narrowcasting (Quarmyne, 2001).

In particular, LLR broadcasting can contribute to positive media steps towards information, entertainment, and education provision (Gathigi, 2009). In addition, use of multiple languages in broadcasting has increased the proportion of local materials carried by LLR channels. Spitulnik (2004) has argued that transmission of African material such as folklore through new media can contribute to cultural and linguistic preservation and revival as well as functioning as a tool for national integration and education.

1.7 Rationale and justification

LLR is the most accessible of all information-sharing sources and instruments on the African continent, yet its importance is underestimated during development policy formulation (Manyozo, 2007, Yordy, 2007). Until recently, access to information in these languages has
come either through informal community networks or from the Kenyan Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), which is owned and controlled by the Kenyan government. KBC is, in varying degrees, distrusted by many people communicating in these languages. A substantial proportion of the population of Kenya—typically the poorest, the most politically marginalized, those who feel the most aggrieved and excluded from Kenya’s economic success—have for most of the country’s history had access only to a media controlled by a government they distrust. This is no longer the case. (Abdi and Dean, 2008). Therefore, the development of the LLR industry in Kenya has the potential to provide the rural population with the benefits of the medium.

Due to settlement patterns in Kenya, audiences who use a given local language (except Kiswahili) are likely to be concentrated in particular regions. Thus, while LLR can possibly reach relatively large dispersed audiences in any part of the country, its potential exists in rural areas. Different local languages are also widely spoken in the highly homogenous rural areas with the exception of a few heterogeneous areas. An important determinant of a LLR audience in Kenya is the language used because it limits its audience members. Thus, most Kiswahili stations broadcast countrywide. This situation combined with the fact that local language stations broadcast to large masses made this study worth pursuing.

This is one way of developing a body of knowledge on how this broadcasting situation is affecting the rural audiences. It is also important to study local language LLR broadcasting component due to its ability to influence governance at local level.

The ethnic crisis in Kenya after the controversial general elections in December 2007 points to the danger presented by the broadcast media just as witnessed by the Rwandan LLR Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) role during the 1994 Genocide (Gourevitch, 1998; Kellow & Leslie, 1998). LLR can provide a platform where parochial ethnic-based nationalism can be promoted. The aftermath of the Post-Election Ethnic Violence in Kenya
has seen the broadcast media come under close scrutiny and this research would be furthering
that scrutiny objective. This at the same time, with the mushrooming and growth of local
language L.I.R stations in Kenya underscores the need to study the phenomenon, especially as
an aspect of Kenya media reform—for, of, and by the listening community in Kenya.

Research findings on audience and language listening habits by Audience Research
Foundation (KARF 2009) showed that broadcasting in Kiswahili was leading in attracting
audiences with 48 per cent of listeners in the country meaning that Kiswahili and other L.I.R
stations had overtaken their local language and English language counterparts in popularity.
English and L.I.R stations had 38 per cent and 14 per cent of the audience respectively. The
research asserted that. "Kiswahili has grown rapidly after the storm over local language
stations. However, the major reason why Kiswahili is doing well is because the stations have
repackaged their content to suit the modern listener". (KARF 2009). Does this mean that
local language broadcasting has totally taken over the broadcasting landscape in Kenya?
What are these production patterns and packaging of content in the L.I.R stations that have
endeared the listeners to them? How have the audiences reacted and consumed L.I.R
messages in the areas under study? What role, if any, has language to do with their patterns of
consumption?

1.8 Scope and Limitations of the study

This study focused on the patterns of production and consumption of L.I.R in two rural settings in
Kenya-Ndia of Kirinyaga County and Ndanai of Bomet County. The research only dealt with
local language rural audiences that are settled in a homogenous area. Not every rural
population in Kenya is homogenous, which means patterns of media consumption may vary.
Therefore, the study limited itself to rural populations only. Although rural audiences make
up 68 of the Kenyan population (KNBS 2010). Kenyan L.I.R stations have audiences in urban
areas (Synovate report, QTR1 2011) which it did not focus on. The study was also aware that despite ethnic diversity in the Kenyan population, which is also represented by I.I.R broadcasting in a number of local languages, it only captured local language radio production and consumption among rural audiences section that speaks local language(s) in those areas mentioned.

The use of ethnographic approaches in the research allowed for a deeper investigation that yielded rich data while focusing on two populations living in two different settings of rural Kenya. The use of a combination of methods such as interviewing, observations and focus group discussion provided an opportunity to capture complex relationships between media use in the cultural context of the Kenyan people and how ones’ local language identifies a people.

1.9 Chapters Summary

The first chapter provides a background to this research and the media industry in Kenya. This chapter has offered an overview of all the chapters in the thesis. It started by offering a background to the study by pointing out what factors motivated it, its problem and the objectives that it set for itself. It also spelt out the scope and limitations of the study, showed its significance in contribution to knowledge, and its potential benefits to Kenya, in specific.

The section also delineated the study. It further offered some traces of the methodology employed for the research and provided shades of the research findings in summation. The main purpose of the chapter was to acquaint the reader with sketches of the thesis content and organisation.

Chapter two presents the literature used in this study by placing rural audience research in Kenya in the field of mass communication. Various media reception studies that have used the ethnography methodology are explored. In order to understand the place of media among
the rural audiences, this chapter looks at conditions that define Kenyan rural population. As a key determinant of media reception and use, the language situation in Kenya and its effect on broadcasting is addressed. Apart from ethnographical perspective, the chapter also takes a look at other theoretical foundations that inform the study.

Chapter three discusses the methodology that was used in this research. The study presents both Ndia and Ndai as the study sites of data collection while the last section in chapter three addresses the specific audience ethnography methods that were used for data collection in the settings. These methods are observation, interviews, observation, focus group discussion, and document and content analysis.

Chapters four and five provide the research findings. Chapter four puts forward the findings on patterns of production and consumption of LI.R for the people of Ndia and Ndai. This chapter shows how radio is used as a source of information and education by the audience and the reasons that radio is an effective medium for this role. Specific information on agriculture and health is discussed. The next section details how radio is used for companionship inside and outside the domestic setting. This section also takes up the increasing role of radio as a social platform showing the different interactions that are facilitated by the medium. The chapter looks at the role of radio in civic engagement that mainly stems from listeners’ interest in political content and participation. The last part examines ways in which radio is used by the audience in problem solving.

Chapter five examines the relationship between radio programming format, content, and audience’s patterns of listening. The chapter examines the various kinds of formats employed by broadcasters and different content found on the radio stations that are listened to both in Ndia and Ndai areas. The next part looks at listening patterns among the audience as well as specific content such as news, humor and religious material on the radio. The last part of
the chapter examines the radio listening trends reported by Ndia and Ndanai audiences in relation to some few selected findings from Synovate *Quarterly Monitoring Report* for the third quarter of 2010 and first quarter of 2011. It also examines the connection between audience’s radio listening and the languages used in broadcasting apart from examining the role of radio in popularising, disseminating, and validating the language used in everyday conversation. The chapter also addresses the perception of LLR broadcasting by listeners and the challenges that local languages face in presenting technical content.

The last chapter is a summary of the research and the main findings. The chapter also makes recommendations based on the research findings showing which areas are for further research.

1.10 Definition of Terms

Basic terms used in this research are hereby operationally defined to give a meaningful interpretation of the concepts presented.

**Commercial local language station:** A LLR station whose main goal is to generate profits for the owners through earning from promotions, advertising, airtime and other operations.

**Local language station:** A LLR station that broadcast to section of a population, which speak the same local language and listen to broadcasts in Kenya’s national and official language, Kiswahili.

**Development communication:** Any organized efforts to use communications processes and media such as LLR to bring about social and economic improvements of the target population.

**Participation:** Sharing of information, encouraging participation by proving a platform for debate, analysis, and exchange of ideas and opinions among members of the community:
assist people in sharing their experiences and success stories for information and guidance of their peers.

**Promote good governance**: Soliciting of responses from listeners about local government meetings, helping local people obtain their just right by giving them a platform to air their grievances and plays community watchdog role, making local authorities and politicians' conscious of their public responsibilities.

**Local language**: All languages indigenous to and spoken in Kenya, particular to a community, and the national and official language. Kiswahili.

**Community**: There are various definitions of an ethnic community or group. For the purpose of this study, an ethnic community is a group of people who share a common ancestry, culture, traditions, and language.

**Public radio station**: A station that is run as an autonomous or semi-autonomous government institution and in which the government has a say in it's daily management activities.

**Rural areas**: Areas that are not under the jurisdiction of local government administration in Kenya. Rural areas in Kenya are characterized by, among other factors: limited access by tarmacked roads, and limited services such as hospitals, schools and public transport.

**Rural audiences**: People who live in rural areas and listen to LLR.

**Local languages**: Local languages spoken as the native language of different ethnic communities who are traditional inhabitants of Kenya.

**Lexicon**: words used in context to explain an issue
RADIO STATIONS OPERATING IN KENYA
1. Radio Citizen
2. East Africa FM
3. Easy FM
4. QFM
5. KBC Kiswahili
6. Family FM
7. Hasy K M
8. Ql M
9. KBC Kiswahili
10. Radio Waumini
11. Metro FM
12. Capital FM
13. Ramogi FM
14. KBC English
15. Classic FM
16. Kameme FM
17. Inooro FM
18. Hot 96/Y FM
19. Biblia Husema
20. Hope FM
21. Iqra FM
22. BBC
23. Sayare Radio
24. Coro FM
25. Jesus is Lord
26. Bahasha FM
27. Voice of America
28. Radio Rahma/Pulse
29. Pwani FM
30. Sheki FM
31. Baraka FM
32. Sound Asia FM
33. Frontier FM
34. Radio Free Africa
35. Home Boyz Radio
36. Radio China
37. KBC Western
38. Rock Mambo UG
39. Lake Victoria/Osienala/ Dunga
40. KBC North Eastern
41. Radio Pamoja
42. East FM
43. Mulembe Wanga
44. Deutche Welle(DW)
45. Sauti ya Mwananchi
46. Radio Umoja
47. KBC Central
48. Ghetto FM
49. Radio Maria
<p>| 49. TBC TZ       | 50. Hosana            |
| 51. KBC Eastern  | 52. Kass FM           |
| 53. Mbaitu FM    | 54. Radio Tanzania    |
| 55. Musyi FM     | 56. Radio Star (Garissa) |
| 57. Radio Umoja  | 58. Kisima FM- Kisii  |
| 59. Radio Mang’elete | 60. Muuga FM  |
| 61. Kaya FM      | 62. Injili FM         |
| 63. Sahara FM    | 64. Radio One         |
| 65. Mwanendu FM  | 66. Wimwaro FM (Embu)|
| 67. Chamgei FM   | 68. Milele FM         |
| 69. Imani FM     | 70. Egesa FM          |
| 71. Mandeq (Mandera) | 72. X FM       |
| 73. RFI          | 74. Cloud TZ          |
| 75. West FM/Bungoma FM | 76. Touch FM   |
| 77. Fish FM      | 78. Kili FM           |
| 79. Syokimau FM  | 80. Chetambe FM       |
| 81. Turkana FM   | 82. Step FM           |
| 83. ECN Radio    | 84. Sifa FM           |
| 85. Koch FM      | 86. Relax FM          |
| 87. Tripple A    | 88. Light and Life    |
| 89. Mmust FM     | 90. Namlolwe FM       |
| 91. Amana FM (Garisa)   | 92. Bahari FM        |
| 93. Maendeleo FM  | 94. Maa FM            |
| 95. Radio 316    | 96. Mwangaza FM       |
| 97. Radio Djibouti | 98. Radio Ethiopia    |</p>
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CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the literature used in this study by placing rural audience research in Kenya in the field of mass communication. Various media reception studies that have used the ethnography methodology are explored. In order to understand the place of media among the rural audiences, this chapter looks at conditions that define the Kenyan rural population. As a key determinant of media reception and use, the language situation in Kenya and its effect on broadcasting is addressed by looking at language policy in Kenya since independence and how it has affected audience reception and radio broadcasting in Kenya. Theories that inform the study are also explored and analysed in the context of the study.

2.1 LLR in Africa

LLR plays the most significant role of any communication technology in the transfer of information in African countries because the spoken word on broadcast LLR is the principal means of information transfer where literacy rates are low (CTA 2006). Listening to LLR or having access to one is affordable across all African countries, with some receiver units now costing approximately $5 plus the cost of batteries (Kenny 2002; Sposato and Smith 2005). Local language radio in Africa actively promotes different forms of African traditional culture. Mano (2004) illustrates how the use of local language radio as an educative platform for promoting African traditions. This situation as explored by Mano in Zimbabwe advances African traditions by providing a discursive space. It also serves to educate those who are not well versed with African traditions. This study shows how public radio in Zimbabwe adapts material from the past and uses them as illustrated in a talk program.

The ability accorded to listeners by local languages to participate in social settings has decreased the significance of physical presence in the experience of people and events (Mano
Broadcasting traditions in Africa have been found to be important because people look up to the media as a source of explanations, advice, and an arbiter of social morality (Spitulnik 2004). At the same time, radio in Africa actively promotes different forms of African traditional culture. Mano (2004) illustrates the use of radio as an educative platform or promoting African traditions. Radio in Zimbabwe advances African traditions by providing a discursive space. It also serves to educate those who are not well versed with African traditions. Mano’s study shows how public radio in Zimbabwe adapts material from the past and uses them as illustrated in a talk program that was modeled after the Shona tradition of *dare*. In the radio program, the *dare* tradition is re-invented on a national scale for the purpose of reviving and upholding the tradition. The program illustrates how electronic media re-arrange social forums, allowing people to get into contact with one another in new ways. In this way, radio overcomes some of the difficulties presented by face-to-face communication (Mano 2004). The ability accorded to listeners by radio to participate in social settings like *dare* has decreased the significance of physical presence in the experience of people and events (Meyrowitz, 1985; Mano, 2004). Broadcasting traditions in Africa have been found to be important because people look up to the media as a source of explanations, advice, and an arbiter of social morality (Meyton, 1983; Spitulnik, 2004).

In the same vein, Spitulnik (1996) shows how local language radio promotes the circulation of media discourse in popular culture. Drawing again from language in Zambia, Spitulnik analyzes how media language is recontextualized, reinterpreted, and played within everyday discourse focusing specifically on the recycling of radio in expressions such as program titles, broadcasters’ phrases, and broadcasters’ turn-taking routines in two major languages of ChiBemba and English. She considers several cases in which phrases and discourse styles are extracted from local language broadcasting and then recycled and reanimated in everyday usage, outside of the contexts of radio listening. Her study shows that mass media, due to their extensive accessibility and scope, can serve as both reservoirs and reference points for the circulation of words, phrases, and discourse styles in popular culture. African media environment is characterized by pluralism, which is exhibited by broadcasting in multiple languages.
Mano (2005) in a study of how daily and weekly schedules of local language radio networks in Zimbabwe (RZ) reflect and affect rural and urban listeners found that the format coincided with key moments in the actual Zimbabwean day. The schedule analysis found that national I.L.R broadcasters anticipated rural listeners in two languages of Shona and Ndembele and reveals challenges involved in reconciling two different audiences at a national level. RZ achieved a degree of success in providing programming that was relevant to their listeners. Majority of the listeners interviewed in Mano's study identified with RZ scheduling because of its language. Music and talk programs fitted in with their lifestyles. The station was helping to forge a national public life with a uniform sense of time. Noting the particularity of contexts such as Africa, Spitulnik (2000) argues that audience ethnographies ought to investigate how features of the media technology enable or inhibit certain kinds of audience engagements. She sees a possibility that social context is just as much a factor in active audience engagements as is any kind of individual interpretive process.

Spitulnik argues that “… one of the greatest hazards of conventional reception studies which have their origins in literary criticism, printed texts, the single text interpreting reader and assumptions …...is that they encourage a kind of egocentric (or subject-centric), rather than sociocentric, account of reception practice.” (Spitulnik 2000, pp. 145). We need to understand “media reception” as a constellation of processes which includes: direct responses to media content; decodings of media messages; phenomenological comportment towards media technologies/appliances; social relations among groups of media users; and the material economic and cultural conditions of media ownership and use. It is possible to produce different kinds of ethnographies of media audiences, depending on which aspect of this reception constellation is stressed. While moving towards documenting the ethnography particulars that may chip away at notions of the generic homogenous audience, questions of
cultural patterns, economic determinants and shared forms of social organization should not be discarded.

The local language radio ethnographic studies discussed earlier (Mano 2004, 2006; Spitulnik 1997, 1998, 2000) are instructive of the African audience environment. They also reveal very important aspects of radio listenership especially through the discussion of the pluralistic environment, rural life, language dimensions, and economic situations in Africa. However, given the media environment in Zimbabwe and Zambia, they do not wholly capture some of the current emerging issues in African broadcasting afforded by a liberalized media market. According to Ndlela (2007), both Zambia and Zimbabwe have failed to enact meaningful broadcast reform. The political crisis in Zimbabwe since 2000 has limited democratic policy reform processes and liberalization of the broadcasting media. In Zambia, the liberalization process has been termed as unsatisfactory because it has failed to open up real space in the broadcasting industry.

Consequently, these significant African audience ethnography studies have been carried out within a constricted media environment. The African ethnographic researches conducted elsewhere are very instructive and provide a starting point that informs future researches. But it is important to note the situational differences in the environment.

At the same time, the most important democratic functions that we can expect the media to serve include surveillance of socio-political developments, identifying the most relevant issues, providing a platform for debate across a diverse range of views, holding officials to account for the way they exercise power, provide incentives for citizens to learn, choose, and become involved in the political process, and resist efforts of forces outside the media to subvert their independence.

However, there is a growing concern that the mass media are not fulfilling these functions properly. Media critics claim that commercial mass media controlled by a few multinational
conglomerates have become an anti-democratic force supporting the status quo (Herman and Chomsky 1988). The news is more entertaining than informing, supplying mostly gossip, scandals, sex, and violence. Political news is more about personalities than about their ideologies. In the absence of serious debate, voters are left with paid political propaganda containing only meaningless slogans making them indifferent and cynical about politics. It is also claimed that the watchdogs are barking up the wrong tree.

The media hunt for scandals in the private lives of politicians and their families, but ignore much more serious consequences of the politicians' policies. They go after wounded politicians like sharks in a feeding frenzy. All too often, the media make us afraid of the wrong things. Minor dangers are hysterically blown out of proportions, while much more serious dangers in our society go largely unnoticed (Glassner 1999). The exaggerated fears often lead to unnecessary measures and legislation and "gonzo justice" (Altheide 1995, 2002; Altheide and Michalowski 1999).

Critics also complain that the media fail to report wrongdoings in their industry. For example, many media have suppressed information about the health hazards of smoking due to pressure from advertisers (Cirino 1973). Even more alarming is the claim that certain mass media (especially women's magazines) are promoting worthless alternative health products, thereby effectively conspiring with the industry to defraud consumers of billions of dollars every year (Barrett and Jarvis 1993; Jarvis 1992). The normative expectations for a democratic press, as proposed by Gurevitch and Blumler (1990), are not universally accepted (McQuail 1993, 2003; Norris 2000; Skogerbo 1996). If all these claims have any merit at all, then we have to drastically revise our view of the way our democracy works. The Concise Encyclopedia of Democracy (Dehsen 2000) makes only brief mentioning of the possibility of political, commercial or other influences on the mass media. The political and cultural consequences of this alleged misinformation of the public are not fully explored. What are
the effects of the commercialization of news on the democratic process and political culture? Which way does this influence push the development of our society politically? The study of these questions is difficult because it must integrate findings from many different scientific disciplines.

2.2 Classifying radio in Kenya

The increase in the number of radio stations in Kenya in recent years has produced a changed media terrain intensifying competition between the players in the market. As more players join the industry, the audiences are increasingly becoming segmented. As a result, radio stations are defining and re-defining themselves in an attempt to capture a particular audience to consolidate their market share or break into their competition's market (Gathigi 2009). To understand radio broadcasting in Kenya, it will be helpful to categorize the different radio stations as the industry, which has been unstable since the advent of liberalization, works to re-establish itself. In examining the radio industry in Kenya today, there are various factors that determine which group of listeners a station will appeal to. Using these factors, this study come up with different categories of radio stations.

The factors include broadcast philosophy or ownership, language of broadcast, the station's reach, and the broadcast content (agenda). The factors above are not necessarily mutually exclusive; there are instances where several factors may overlap and one radio station will fall into two categories. This section examines characteristics of each category based on the identified factors. This categorization is useful as it illustrates how radio broadcasters evaluate their audience and attempt to provide a programming that is relevant to the target group. It also shows various programming styles can be adopted by stations in the same category.
2.2.1 Classification based on broadcasting philosophy and funding: Public, commercial, and community radio

Media in Kenya can be classified based on the station's broadcasting philosophy and the method of funding its operation. In this classification, there are public service, commercial and community radio. This is the three-tier broadcasting classification that has been implemented in many different countries (Ndlela 2006). Prior to media liberalization, radio was a public medium where government held the monopoly since independence. However, there were some efforts in the early 1960s, led by United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to establish community radio stations mostly in the rural areas, but the project did not materialize (Bourgault 1995).

Media liberalization in the 1990s saw the opening up of the FM spectrum and the first commercial stations were established. The post-liberalization period has seen establishment of more community radio stations.

2.2.2 State-controlled public service radio stations

Public broadcasting in Kenya is represented by two KBC stations, the General Service that broadcasts in English and *Idhau ya Taifa* (National Service) which broadcasts in Kiswahili. With the change of radio environment in Kenya, KBC opened its commercial wing of radio broadcasting where it runs other main stations such as Metro FM and *Coro* FM but its flagship stations have remained the General Service and *Idhau ya Taifa*. These stations have continued to uphold the public broadcasting philosophy. As state-controlled public service broadcasters, they are not driven by profit but the goal of providing information and education to the population of Kenya. Also, although unstated, the stations have continued, in different ways, to represent and amplify the state's voice on different issues that are more likely to be divergent from the other media outlets.
The state-controlled public service broadcasters receive part of their funding from the government to offset some of their running expenses. In the recent past, the stations have increasingly sought to increase revenue generation by improving efficiency in their operations. The stations are required to air what is considered as content in the public interest. Such content includes the Parliament’s proceedings and Annual National Budget presentations and government functions such national celebrations. The stations also air content such as broadcasts to schools that is part of the continued government effort to increase education access to all. The General Service devotes most of its weekdays during the school year airing the broadcasts to school, working in conjunction with the Ministry of Education and Kenya Institute of Education KIE (Gathigi 2009).

In the recent past, the level of government involvement and control in the public radio stations has significantly declined from past years and managers make most of the decisions. This is a departure from the single government-controlled media days where stations had to follow the wishes of senior government functionaries (Gathigi. 2009). The stations are still tied to the government’s objectives that do not fit well within the stations’ broader ambitions in a competitive market. For instance, during the weekdays, the two KBC stations relay live feeds from Radio China for one hour between 5:00 PM and 6:00 PM.

Public service broadcasters hold the view that the public is in constant need of information, education and entertainment and it is the responsibility of radio to provide the content, irrespective of social, economic or any other factors that define the audience. The public service broadcaster’s audience is not targeted and less defined. Topista Nabsoba, KBC Kiswahili assistant station manager described the station’s target audience as follows:

We target different groups in terms of age groups and economics. We target children, the youth as well as senior citizens. We also have specific programs such as farming programs that target farmers who are a rural audience. Our audience is general given
the national reach. The defining limits are in terms of programs. We have youth, women, and religious programs for Christians and Muslims. We try to take care of everyone given our mandate as public service broadcaster; we target a national audience which is diverse in itself.

While the public service broadcasters continue to pursue the broad goal of public interest, their future is uncertain because of the challenge they face in a competitive market. KBC already runs two commercial stations which are more competitive when it comes to income generation. For a long time, KBC Kiswahili commanded the highest listenership but has been surpassed by Radio Citizen (KARF Report 2010). Changes in KBC are likely to involve movement towards commercialization.

2.2.3 Commercial radio stations

Commercial radio stations in Kenya are owned by a wide range of entities including individuals, holding companies, institutions, and bodies established by Act of Parliament like KBC. The main goal of commercial radio stations is to deliver to the audiences while maximizing profits for the owners or the shareholders. The commercial stations generate most of their revenue from advertising. In Kenya, the centrality of profit defines a key difference between commercial stations and public service broadcasters as it determines how they view the audience. Commercial stations are likely to be more targeted in their audience definition. Generally, however, commercial radio stations in Kenya exhibit different levels of targeting. Commercial audience research in Kenya has devoted little interest to rural audiences. If viewed from the traditional media economic model where audiences are commodities to be sold to the advertiser (Webster, Phalem & Lichty, 2006), rural audiences are of marginal concern to commercial media research in Kenya where poverty levels in rural
areas are considerably high. It is estimated that 56% of the Kenyan population lives below the poverty line and most of these live in rural areas (KDHS, 2008).

Looking at how the urban based English language radio stations operate in Kenya, it is clear that they are very particular with their audience in the way they programme their content. On the other hand, those that use local language and a few English commercial stations (those that seek a broader national audience) have two definitions of their target audience. As managers from different radio stations aptly put it, there is “paper” definition and the “practical” definition. From an analytical point of view, the the paper definition of audience is what is used to seek business from the advertisers. In practice however, the stations reach a wider audience. Marketers within various radio stations in Kenya explained that the paper definition of audience is narrow and therefore stations do not strictly adhere to it when designing programs as they seek a wide range of audiences in order to improve the scope of listenership. It is clear that flexibility in the radio stations is the name of the game.

Seemingly, with the advent of cut-throat competition radio presenters are always thinking of ways to outdo each other, be it in presentation style or even properties. It is because of this that some presenters find it easy to delve into social issues or politics as a topic for discussion. The more the audience, the more the revenue as well.

Most English urban commercial stations have a specific segment of listeners that they seek to appeal to and their definition is consistent with practice.

Two sister stations, Kiss FM and Classic FM, which are two leading urban FM stations, are also specific on their target audience. Commercial urban English FM stations are predominantly entertainment driven with music as the main content. Local language commercial stations attempt to balance information, education, and entertainment content. There is more emphasis on news in these stations compared to the urban English FM radio stations.
2.2.4 Community radio stations

Despite the entry of multiple players in the Kenyan radio industry today, some sections of the populations still feel the desire to have an avenue through which very local and specific needs such as agricultural, youth, agribusiness, cultural be catered for. Community radio stations have provided this. Community radios are small in their operations and are run by the local people for the local people. The content varies from education, information, and entertainment. The information is mainly locally generated content that addresses issues that are relevant to the local population. Community radio stations are low power with a limited reach compared to other radio stations. Some community radio stations broadcast within a radius of ten kilometres whereas larger stations can be heard within a radius of more than 500 kilometres. Community radio stations are extensively used as tools for raising public awareness on issues that affect their community (Dagron, 2001; Servaes, 1996).

There are numerous community radio stations in different parts of Kenya. Community radios are becoming popular in low income informal settlement areas of Nairobi like Ghetto FM in Majengo, Pamoja FM in Kibera and Koch FM in Korogocho. Pamoja FM for instance, serves the Kibera slum, the biggest slum informal settlement in Subsaharan Africa. Radio Pamoja is run by community volunteers and its broadcasts do not go beyond 10 kilometers outside the slum. Radio Pamoja’s content addresses issues that are of interest to the Kibera slum dwellers. They air programmes such as health and sanitation, leading issues that confront the slum dwellers. Another community radio, Koch FM, broadcasts from Korogocho slums in Nairobi, the second largest informal settlement in Nairobi. Like Pamoja FM, Koch FM is run by a group of unpaid volunteers and provides news and information about what is happening in Korogocho. The station also airs programs of community interest in areas such as health, education and sanitation.
According to Geoffrey Etale of Pamoja FM, community radio stations in different parts of the country have added a new dimension in the industry because they are targeting a small section of the population in small communities and narrow down their programming to target communities. He says that community radio puts community interests first. (Geoffrey Etale, personal communication. July 19, 2011) Other examples of community stations include Kaya FM at the Kenyan Coast, Sauti ya Mwananchi in Naivasha, and Shinyalu FM in Western Kenya.

2.3.0 Classification using language: Mainstream and local language stations

Language has become a major factor that influences the audience that a radio station can reach. Due to multiplicity of languages in Kenya, broadcasters have identified language as a way to segment listeners into smaller groups. Using language classification, stations that use Kiswahili and English language can be termed mainstream stations because they transcend ethnic language barriers. On the other hand, a number of stations use other local languages targeting a population that speaks that language. These are referred to as local language radio stations. However, most stations which use mother tongue also use use Kiswahili, the official and national language of Kenya, in their broadcasts. This is especially when they have interactive programmes when callers use Kiswahili thereby forcing broadcasters to use the same. This creativity in language use is a step in endearing themselves to the audience.

According to Nyongesa King'asia, Head of Kiswahili radio at KBC, this language mix is a ploy by radio stations to endear themselves and win audiences:

There is cut-throat competition in the radio industry in Kenya since liberalization of the airwaves. Every radio station is trying to out-do the other in the fierce competition and any method, including code switching and mixing would do.
2.3.1. Mainstream radio stations

Mainstream radio stations belong to a broad category of stations that broadcast in a language that can be understood by the majority of the population across the nation (Gathigi 2009). In Kenya, English and Kiswahili are two languages that cut across populations and regions because they are official languages (Wa Njogu 2004). Mainstream radio stations are programmed to address general audiences in terms of socio-cultural backgrounds but they share common factors such as economic status and religious beliefs. Mainstream stations can be national in reach. Most English language FM stations are mainstream and tend to do well in highly cosmopolitan areas. Nairobi region, which is the most cosmopolitan area, has always been dominated by mainstream radio stations. The current top Nairobi stations including Classic FM, Kiss FM, Radio Citizen and Easy FM are all mainstream (Synovate, 2011). Other Kiswahili mainstream stations include Q FM, Radio Umoja, Radio Maisha, Milele FM and Jumbo FM. (CCK report, 2011)

2.3.2 Local language radio stations

Local language radio stations broadcast chiefly using a local language to a target audience that understands the language of broadcast. Local language stations tend to broadcast to a community that is also defined by a common culture. The content such as news and different types of programs is mainly in the local language. The degrees to which the stations use the language vary from station to station. For some stations such as Inooro FM, a Kikuyu station, the broadcasts are in the Kikuyu language while Chamgei FM broadcasts in Kalenjin. The presentation, news and informational programs, and all the music played on Inooro FM are in the Kikuyu language. Other stations, however, will present some of their content in other languages mainly English and Kiswahili especially in news presentation. A good chunk of music is also in Kiswahili and English like happens on Kameme FM (Gathigi, 2009).
Most local language stations tend to assume a regional nature because settlement patterns in Kenya are such that people of a given ethnic group are concentrated in one settlement region. Thus, the Luo audience is found in the Nyanza around Lake Region, the Kalenjin in the Northern and Southern Rift while the majority of Kikuyu audience is found in Central Kenya region. Local language stations in Kenya have the highest listenership in areas where their languages of broadcasts are widely spoken (Synovate, 2011).

According to Synovate reports (Q1, 2011), Inooro FM is the most listened to station in Central Kenya ahead of two other Kikuyu stations, Coro and Kameme FM. In the Lake Region, Ramogi FM that broadcasts in Luo language has the highest listenership.

An interesting development in radio broadcasting in Kenya is Kiswahili radio overtaking local language radio in popularity in their areas of influence. According to the Synovate reports (2010 and 2011), Radio Citizen which broadcasts in Kiswahili has now overtaken local language radio stations in their hitherto perceived “areas of influence”. According to this reports, the situation is already obtaining in South Nyanza where Radio Citizen leads Egesa FM with 86 per cent to 76 per cent; in Upper Eastern, 70 per cent to 62 per cent; South Rift, 70 per cent to 39per cent; North Western 41 per cent to 22per cent; Upper Eastern, 70 per cent to 62 per cent; Western 73 per cent to 60 per cent. However, local language stations still attract more rural audiences because the local language languages are widely spoken in these areas. There is also an urban audience, but this audience is more contested because it is the same audience that the mainstream stations seek to satisfy. Most local language stations broadcast from the capital Nairobi and use transmitters to relay the services to the regions with their target population. None of the vernacular stations has access to national frequencies except those that broadcast in Kiswahili, the national and official language. There is a strong rapport between local language stations and the listeners. Due to the cultural connections, local language stations have become reservoirs of a community’s culture.
teaching the listeners different aspects of their culture and traditions. The content is also highly targeted and because of this, some local language stations exhibit some of the characteristics of community radio. Most local language stations have increasingly adopted a more sensitive broadcasting where they involve the targeted community in content generation. For instance, there is more local level reporting for most stations in the grassroots levels. The stations content reflect the targeted audiences’ way of life. Thus, Kikuyu and Kalenjin local language radio stations are heavy on agricultural oriented programs because their target audiences are farmers. According to Lincoln Njogu who is a producer at Radio Citizen, stations are also increasingly “moving outside the studio” where the audience is unseen to a more intimate broadcasting that deals with the daily or actual happenings in the community.

2.4.0 Classification by reach: National and regional stations

Radio stations in Kenya have varied reach. The Communication Commission of Kenya (CCK) grants frequencies to the stations to broadcast to specified regions which limits the population they can reach. Some stations are allocated frequencies to broadcast multiple regions in the country while other stations can only reach one region. Defined by the reach, the two main categories are the national stations and the regional stations.

2.4.1 National radio stations

National radio stations have a wide reach that extends to the whole country or most parts of the country. They have transmitters and repeaters distributed across the country. Although their frequencies may not be received in some particular areas, they are generally available in most regions in the country. Currently, there are only three stations with national reach. These are Radio Citizen, KBC English, and KBC Kiswahili.
The position of Radio Citizen as a national radio is evident in the Synovate monitoring report. During the first quarter report (2011), Radio Citizen was the station with the highest listenership in five out of ten listenership areas and competed with the top station in two or more areas. These stations target heterogeneous audiences and use languages that cut across regions and ethnic lines. They also tend to broadcast an all inclusive content as they cater to people from different backgrounds. They try to balance religion, education, social and economic backgrounds as well as age.

National radio stations provide information, education, and entertainment in their program in order to cater to a wide audience's needs. National radio stations broadcast content of national interest. For instance, they cover important political events such as general elections more widely than other stations. Although they have their political leanings, national radio usually attempts to present issues from a national perspective. For instance, pitching for a certain political position is sold in terms of the benefit that will be realized by the nation as opposed to a particular group. As a result, national broadcasters attract listenership across the country. National radio stations use highly standardized language and are very particular when selecting broadcasters in order to ensure neutrality. This appears to be the case at Radio Citizen and KBC Kiswahili service both which broadcast in Kiswahili across the country.

2.4.2 Regional stations

Regional radio stations in Kenya have emerged as an attempt by broadcasters to take care of a wide section of audience who are concentrated in a certain geographical area. Regional stations take advantage of shared culture, religion and language in a population. For example, a number of radio stations broadcasting in the coastal part of Kenya such as Pwani FM, Radio Salaam, Baraka FM and Kaya FM have emerged and gained popularity providing stiff competition to the national stations such as KBC English and Radio Citizen which broadcasts
in Kiswahili. Whereas people in Coastal Kenya have different cultural backgrounds, the cultures are closely related. They are also predominantly Muslim and use Kiswahili widely. Coastal people have a distinct music preferring genres such as bongo and taurab. Regional radios in Coastal Kenya tend to play popular coastal music genres and use Bongo, a slow tempo music genre that has resulted from the fusion of local Bantu music in the Kenya coast with taurab and Portuguese music. Taurab is a music genre that is popular in the East African coast. Taurab has its origins in the Island of Zanzibar in the late 19th century and later spread in other places such as Pemba Island and along the Kenya and Tanzania coastline (Nlaragwi, 2008). They use a Kiswahili variety that is particular to the regions. Regional stations provide more news from the region to which they broadcast. It is also worth noting that although local language stations do not meet the strict definition of a regional area, mainly because they broadcast to a homogeneous population, they also do assume a regional dimension. Some tend to broadcast to one specific region and also dominate that area in terms of popularity. This is the case in Eastern Kenya where Muga FM, Musyi FM, and Mbaitu FM dominates the airwaves.

2.5.0 Classification based on content: Split, religious, and entertainment/music programmers

Radio stations can be classified based on the content they carry in their programming. Radio stations have varied balances among information, education and entertainment. Some stations have split programming with a wide range of content. Other stations specialize in a particular kind of content. Information oriented stations tend to provide news and current affairs programs while entertainment-inclined stations mainly air music content.
2.5.1 Split programmers

Split programmers are those radio stations that emphasize information, education and entertainment content in their broadcasting. Split programmers are usually stations that have a relatively wider reach. They also broadcast to large group of audiences who have different needs and profiles. For national stations, the audiences belong to different cultural backgrounds, religion and economic class. Local language and regional audiences may belong to a common cultural background but from different economic and educational backgrounds. The main idea behind split programming is to meet the needs of the audiences which are diverse. The composition of education, information, and education content vary in different stations. The national stations such as Radio Citizen, KBC English and KBC Kiswahili have more education and information and less entertainment. Local language station such as Inooro FM, Coro FM, Kass FM, and Chamgei FM try to balance the three content types while Kameme FM has more entertainment than information and education. Except for KBC English, which devotes most time of the day during school sessions broadcasting educational content, split programmers have their content intermixed throughout the broadcasting hours.

2.5.2 Religious Programmers

Religious stations give spiritual content to their audiences. In Kenya, the religious stations are mainly Christian and Islam based. Due to a large Christian population in Kenya, most religious stations are also Christian. Some of the stations identify themselves with a particular church while others broadcast to the general Christian population. Some of Christian stations are individually owned while others are sponsored by religious organizations. Some of the popular Christian stations include Family FM which is privately owned and broadcasts to a general Christian audience. Waumini FM broadcasts to a particular Christian community-
Catholic audiences - and is sponsored by the Catholic Church in Kenya. Hope FM is sponsored by Nairobi Pentecostal Church. Biblia Husema FM is sponsored by the African Inland Church (AIC). Iqra FM broadcasts to the Muslim faithful. Wilson Rotich, Producer at Sema Radio which brodacasts in Kericho and Bomet Counties and surrounding areas says that there are other pockets of Christian based radio stations especially in the Rift Valley, most of which are sponsored by evangelical churches like Sema Radio 88.9 FM owned by Excel Media Services Limited, Radio Injili owned by The Africa Gospel Church, Light and Life Radio Owned by the Chrisco Church, and Just FM owned by the Faith Church and Ministries.

2.5.3 Entertainment/ Music Programmers

While most stations in Kenya have entertainment content in varying degrees, there are few stations that are purely devoted to entertainment programs such as Home Boyz Radio and Mtaa FM and Relax 103.5FM. These stations broadcast in Nairobi. These have emerged in Kenya in the last three years with Relax FM, the latest entering the market just last year. These stations can also be referred to as music programmers because the bulk of their programming is music content with limited talk. Their programming differs from entertainment-oriented urban FM stations, which have a large proportion of music based on format. For instance, they have very few insertions such as advertisements during the music sessions and therefore tend to play continuously. Entertainment stations have more sessions where music is manipulated.

News is limited to entertainment news such as events, music releases, movie-guides, and celebrity gossip. Classifying radio stations in Kenya is a daunting task due to the numerous overlaps in reach, presentation style and content. Waweru Mburu, Head Radio Citizen, explains that the lack of clarity in some stations between broadcasting philosophies and business goals can be attributed to the liberalized radio industry in Kenya which is in its take-
off. With new radio stations coming up, there is constant reshaping. Nyongesa King'asia of KBC sees the situation as positive because with increased competition, there is a change in styles of broadcasting towards those that are more appealing. This allows for creativity in the industry as increased competition has pushed broadcasters to come up with new and innovative formats.

Broadcasters have varying views on the future of the Kenyan radio market. Some view the current system as a transitional one, which will stabilize with time. According to Chrispus Yankem of QFM, one of the local language stations in Kenya, stations will become more targeted because of the increased competition as well as because of expansion and mergers.

I even foresee a situation where people will be forced to merge their radio stations to form a bigger group which is already happening for example with the Royal Media Group. When Royal Media walk to Safaricom, they can give a better deal. Nation [Media Group] has also realized and will follow suit.

Other broadcasters also feel that there ought to be a form of regulation in the industry. There are many mushrooming radio stations, a situation that may not necessarily improve listeners' choice as Nyongesa Kingasia, cautiously sees opportunities in the Kenyan radio.

The future is very bright but we need to know where we are coming from. It is not bad to grow but it is also good to grow healthier. We need to look at the growth [of radio stations] versus the purpose of having the radio stations in the first place. When they are many, we get diversity. But let's not forget the purpose of all this. Let's not forget that after the 2007 General Election the country almost went to the dogs because of some of these local language stations. This only shows how powerful they are.

Clearly, broadcasting philosophy, language, reach and content are factors that seem to shape and define radio broadcasting system in Kenya.
2. 6.0 LLR Broadcasting in Kenya

The centrality of language and culture in national broadcasting reforms has been extensively researched in the United States and Europe (Grant 1994; Owen 1977; Schudson 1994; Thomsen 1989) and Asia (Kamin 1996; Lee and Youn 1995; Servaes and Wang 1997). On the contrary, very little research has been done on similar broadcasting issues in sub-Saharan Africa (Leonard, 1996). Arguably, language and culture are the most visible and most problematic forces for societal integration. Schudson argued, ‘Culture, that is, the way of life of a society, brings individuals and families of varying circumstances and backgrounds together in a collectivity with which people may strongly identify, take primary meanings from, and find emotionally satisfying’ (1994:64). Likewise, the importance of language in any society can scarcely be overestimated. According to Anderson, ‘The fatality of human linguistic diversity’ has strongly guided the formation of nation states (1983:46).

By origin, practice and convention, broadcasting systems are very much national institutions that respond to cultural, domestic, political and social pressures and to the expectations of their audiences (McQuail, 1993). Ugboajah (1985) argued that the structure and content of broadcasting systems should reflect the cultural character of the societies within which they operate. Thomsen (1989) also noted that as broadcasting systems become pluralized they cease to reflect the culture and the circumstances of their intended publics and may even undermine local language and cultural identity as a result of the transnational flow of content. Similarly, theories dealing with cultural integrity and imperialism typically have been concerned with matters of cultural quality of the media’s content, its authenticity in real life experiences and the cultural task of broadcasting.

Underlying these theoretical positions is a strong belief that languages and cultures are both valuable collective properties of nations and vulnerable to alien influences (McQuail, 1993).
Throughout the history of broadcasting development, we see these ideas deeply rooted in arguments for protecting national languages and cultural identities.

Language plays a very critical role in national broadcasting systems (Abeku, 2005). A minimum condition of democratic citizenship is that people have access to information on issues that shape their lives (Deane 2006). Without it, they cannot make informed democratic choices. Citizenship also requires people to be able to communicate their perspectives and have spaces for public discussion on issues that most affect them. In the absence of such spaces, democratic discourse cannot take place. For most of the Kenyan population, these conditions have not existed for large parts of the country’s history (Abdi and Dean, 2008).

Kenya has two official languages, English and Kiswahili, but a large minority of people in the country do not speak or understand English. For a majority of people, especially in the rural areas, English is language used as a lingua franca but not a preferred language of communication.

Media liberalization in Kenya was an initially gradual process, with the first private (English language) FM station, Capital FM, being licensed in 1996, followed by the steady growth of other English and then Kiswahili language stations. In 2000, Kameme FM, a Kikuyu language station, broke the state monopoly on local language broadcasting. A heated national debate ensued focused on whether such stations would stir ethnic conflict. However, although Kameme was suspended for a time in 2001, precedents had been set, and the floodgates of local language media had opened.

In 2004, a new law further liberalized the media and opened the way for a wave of new local language stations targeting listeners from the main ethnic communities: Kikuyus in Central Kenya, Luos in the West, Kalenjins in Northwest, Kambas in Southeast, and Kisiis in Southeast. Commercial incentives, rather than development or political ones, drove the opening of these stations. The majority of the new stations were founded as profit-making
enterprises and principally as entertainment vehicles (Abdi and Dean 2008). Some new local language stations are government owned, like Cooro FM, and a handful are community broadcasters.

The largest group of such stations is run by the Royal Media Group, which runs nine stations in different local languages and in different parts of the country. I.L.R stations immediately attracted large audiences and by 2007 had 27 percent of the radio market (compared with 33 percent held by mainstream radios) (BBC Monitoring Database, 2008).

Early content of these stations was music and entertainment based, but audience demand quickly encouraged these stations to focus much of their airtime on popular public discussion forums. Nearly all these stations have highly popular talk shows and phone-in programs, often in the morning prime-time slots. Ramogi FM, a Nairobi-based Luo language station calls its talk show, “Baraza,” meaning “informal assembly.” Lake Victoria FM, another Luo language station, calls its morning talk show “Just Say It!” Inooro FM has “Hagaria” (“Sharpen”) and Kameme FM calls its main phone in show, “Arahuka” (“Wake-Up!”).

2.6.1 The Language Situation in Kenya

Language is a very important tool in any given society as it stores and transmits people culture. Dione (1984) asserts that “in Africa, each language tends to become the property of a given ethnic group. It owes its birth to this group, it conveys its culture, it is the stamp of its identity, the expression of its distinctive personality, the roots which anchor it to the past, the umbilical cord attaching it to its ancestors.” Meanwhile, Mazrui and Mazrui (1998) state that “language is sometimes regarded as a reservoir of culture which controls human thought and behaviour and sets boundaries of the world view of its users.”

Besides its importance in the realm of culture, language is equally important in the dissemination of knowledge. For example, in traditional African societies, language was used
alongside participant observation tools to pass knowledge from one generation to another. It is for this reason that there is formulation and planning of language policy in various countries, the world over. Considering that language and education are integral, it follows that language and education policies work hand in glove (Nabea 2009). Education is generally transmitted through language, and it would be inadvisable to address the question of literacy or literacies without making reference to language.

Focus on Kenya’s language situation and policy was imperative taking into consideration in this study that this determines the way communities in Kenya listen to radio and patterns of production from radio stations. The invention of Sheng and English patois in Kenya has a strong bearing on production patterns and listening to radio messages in Kenya. This is true especially as regards to Kenyans’ appropriation of both English and Kiswahili, which enrich the language’s vocabulary (Nabea 2009). It is in view of these reasons that a focus on language policy in Kenya obtains.

2.6.2 Distribution of Languages in Kenya

Kenya is a multilingual country in which over 50 languages are spoken; however, English and Kiswahili dominate in that they are given official recognition, while indigenous languages do not (Nabea 2009). English is used for official purposes and international communication, while Kiswahili is the national and official language and is used in the country by people from different ethnic groups to communicate. Indigenous Kenyan languages, however, have not been officially recognized (Kembo 1999). They are used at the household level and for interethnic communications. Even though recently, English and Kiswahili have been regarded as languages of prestige and privilege because of the languages’ potential for economic benefits, Kenyans place great value on their ethnic languages which carry their culture and identity. According to Kembo (1999), language does
not only serve as a means of communication but as a marker of identity amongst the communities of Kenya.

Among the bigger communities whose local languages are spoken widely are Kikuyu, Luhya, Luo, Kalenjin and Kamba. Influential languages have been standardised and are used in schools, though at different classes. Conversely, minor languages lack official recognition, are not standardised, and little writing, if any, is done in them. They are also used by members of ethnic groups with small populations in comparison with the majority languages. Classification and enumeration of Kenya’s languages and dialects has been a controversial exercise, occasioning varying figures pertaining to their number. This is as a result of political, ethnic and national interests: failure to notice languages that are used by small populations, as well as the methodologies that have been employed to carry out the categorizations (Mazrui and Mazrui 1998, Ogola 2003). It is in the light of this that Mbaabu (1996) puts the languages of Kenya at approximately 40, while Ogola (2003) puts the figure at around 42. However, Gordon (2005) places the figure much higher at 61.

According to Heine and Möhlig (1980), Kenyan languages can broadly be classified as belonging to three genetic families: The Bantu, the Nilotic and Para-Nilotic, and the Cushitic. Heine and Möhlig argue that the Bantu are approximately 65 per cent, the Nilotes about 30 per cent, while the Cushites are about 3 per cent. However, these percentages are unconvincing bearing in mind that there are other languages used in Kenya, and which they fail to mention because the remaining languages can not account for only 2 per cent. Among these are languages that are outside the genetic classification of Kenya’s languages like English, Gujarati, Punjabi, Urdu, Hindi, German and French, which were documented earlier by Gorman (1974). There is need also to note that the population of Kenya has risen quite drastically since 1980, providing more evidence that the percentages may not be so reliable, though they offer an overview of the language situation in the country.
Except for Kiswahili, other African languages are marginal in the sense that they are not designated as official or national languages. English and Kiswahili are the country's lingua franca, with Kiswahili being the preferred language by the masses, while English usage is largely the province of the elite. From the period of colonialism, English, Kiswahili and the mother tongue have existed in a dominant-subordinate relationship, with English invariably enjoying the advantage (Nabea 2009).

2.6.3 Historical Basis of Language Policy in Kenya

Language policy in Kenya cannot be addressed without taking a historical perspective. Though there is agreement that African local languages have their basis in particular African communities that use them, there has been controversy over the dichotomy between a Kenyan (local) or African language and a non-Kenyan (non-local) or non-African language. While it is generally agreed that English for example, is a foreign language in Kenya, there are scholars who would like to view it as an African language considering that there are Kenyans, though few, who speak it as the first language. However, in view of the argument that is raised with regard to language policy in Kenya in this thesis, English is an example of a non-Kenyan or non-African language.

Going by the accounts that Mbaabu (1996) documents on the first Arab contact in this coast, arguably Kiswahili was already in use in 5th Century, when the first Arabs of Omani ancestry arrived in the locality. There occurred interaction between Africans and Arabs leading to trade and intermarriages between the two races, and in the process, Kiswahili benefited a great deal from the Arabic culture, religion and language, especially in the lexicon. Kiswahili spread into the interior of East and Central Africa during the long distance trade when Arab caravans started moving inland. There was trading in ivory, minerals, cloth, pottery and slaves. In most cases in Kenya, those who joined the Arab caravans to provide services as
Kiswahili became the lingua franca, especially in urban centres, where it facilitated communication between the Arab traders and members from different communities in the Kenyan hinterland. During this trade, the East African coast was under the jurisdiction of the Zanzibar-Arab Sultanate. Over time, Kiswahili grew in spread, usage and literature. For example, there is evidence that the language has enjoyed a long tradition of writing as seen in its written poetry of *Herikali* (1728), *Humziya* (1747) or *Al Inkishafi* (1800). The poetry was first written in the Arabic script, but with the advent of Christian missionaries, it was rendered in the Roman script. The Arab occupation of the East African coast preceded the coming of Europeans who arrived in the Kenyan coast in the 15th Century, after Portugal's Vasco da Gama had made the first journey by sea to India. The Roman script was introduced by the likes of Reverend Krapf, who published the first Kiswahili grammar in 1850 and the first Kiswahili dictionary in 1882. Meanwhile, Bishop Steere published his *Swahili Language Handbook* in 1870. In this regard, Christianity and the building of the Kenya-Uganda railway which began in the late 1890s also contributed to the growth and spread of Kiswahili.

2.6.4 Colonial Language Policy: Domination-Subordination

The colonial language policy has its basis in the scramble for Africa by European powers, which took place towards the end of the 19th Century. The boundaries of the continent were defined by Europeans in the Berlin Conference in December 1884–January 1885. In 1886, a joint commission comprising representatives from powerful European nations like Britain, Germany and France, met to deliberate on the Zanzibar's Sultan authority on the East African coast. Britain and Germany entered into agreement over each empire's sphere of influence in East Africa. Kenya fell under the rule of Britain, promulgating the colonial language policy, especially in the realm of education.
However, this language policy kept vacillating over the years as a result of the interests of several players and some realities on the ground. The realities in question derive from historical, social and economic forces. This is as a result of the fact that language policy has mainly been informed by decrees and exhortations of powerful people such as political leaders and scholars. Njoroge (1990: 257) argues:

A language policy might be taken to refer to decisions made by people with administrative and judicial responsibilities, decisions that regulate language choice in various state controlled domains such as schools, the parliament, law courts etc. and that since these are national institutions, the policy affects that national or official language choice.

Language policy was closely tied to colonial education, which was introduced by missionaries such as Bishop Steere, Reverend Krapf and Father Sacleux. Language in education was discussed during the United Missionary Conference in Kenya in 1909. The Conference adopted the use of mother tongue in the first three classes of primary school, Kiswahili in two of the middle classes in primary, while English was to be used in the rest of the classes up to the university (Gorman 1974).

The missionaries also boosted Kenyan languages by according them orthography based on the Latin alphabet. Local languages received a further boon when the colonizers started publishing firms. While English language was the major beneficiary of this venture, Kenyans also started producing creative works in local languages, though under the watchful eye of the administrators lest the works undermined colonial rule (Ngugi 1978). Examples of such works, and which were later published, include Kiswahili plays like *Nakupenda lakini* by Henry Kuria or *Nimeologwa Nisiwe na Mpenzi* by Gerishon Ngugi. This was a substantial boost for Kiswahili, the plays’ failure to tackle the theme of commitment notwithstanding.
While the mother tongue, Kiswahili and English, were used with ease at various levels of education; the colonial administration grew apprehensive over the teaching of English to Africans shortly before the 1920s. There was realisation that English education interfered with the goal of maintaining a subordinate class of workers, forcing it to review the education policy. Kenyans who had imbued a lot of English book-learning were reluctant to do menial work, while preferring to take up white collar careers.

2.6.5 Language Policy in Independent Kenya

Following the attainment of independence in 1963, the Ministry of Education took several steps towards language planning in the country. However, the government continued with the colonial language policy with no change worthy of mention for over twenty years (Ogola 2003). In 1964 for example, there was the Ominde Commission, whose findings revealed that many Kenyans wanted a trilingual approach to education. Mother tongue was preferred for verbal communication especially in rural areas, while English and Kiswahili were preferred for education from lower primary up to the university. Kiswahili was especially favoured in education for purposes of national and regional unity. Mazrui and Mazrui (1996) reveal that Kiswahili was also seen as the appropriate language for the Pan-Africanism dream. However, the findings further revealed that most people were in favour of English being the medium of instruction from the beginning class in primary school to the university. Mazrui and Mazrui (1996) explain that the Ominde Commission threw its weight behind English language arguing that it would expedite learning in all subjects, by ensuring smooth transitions from “local languages,” and owing to its “intrinsic resources.” The Commission recommended that mother tongues were most important in verbal communication and recommended that they get incorporated into the curriculum of lower classes, especially for story telling sessions.
The Ominde Commission further made a lukewarm recommendation for the use of mother tongue and Kiswahili in the education system. For instance, Kiswahili was not considered for examination at the end of primary school education, unlike English, a factor that stifled its growth. It is no wonder that in some schools; Kiswahili was not taught at all putting into account that it was never examinable at the end of primary schooling. Further boost for English at the expense of local languages occurred when the Prator-Hutasoit Commission of 1965 advised that English be the only language of instruction in all school grades, starting from beginner classes in the primary schools, heralding the New Primary Approach, better known as the English Medium Approach. To implement the new curriculum, more teachers were to be trained in English, while their first language was viewed as a premium in the teaching of lower primary schools. Arguably, this was another step in consolidating English supremacy in Kenya.

The question of attitude has also had a bearing on language policy in Kenya. Hemphill (1974), states that there were cases of some teachers viewing the mother tongue as an arcane subject in the curriculum, while Kiswahili was dismissed as a language that served no important purpose. It is for these reasons that the mother tongue and Kiswahili were allotted little or no time in the school timetable. This was contrary to English which was accorded compulsory status, besides being an examination subject in both primary and secondary education. Nonetheless in 1967, The Kenya Institute of Education (K.I.E) started producing books in various mother tongues, Kiswahili inclusive; for use in primary schools. In the same year, Kiswahili was pronounced the language of Adult Education, alongside mother tongues (Gorman 1974).

Another Report that focused on language policy in post-independent Kenya was that of Wamalwa, which was constituted in 1971. The Report advised that Kiswahili training among civil servants be emphasised since some bureaucrats had exhibited handicap in its usage.
especially when dealing with the public. This led to the introduction of Kiswahili courses for civil servants in some colleges. Additionally, the Report recommended that international communication be considered through the use of French and German. In this regard, French and German studies were introduced in some designated secondary schools as well as in some post-secondary institutions.

English preponderance in the Kenyan education system was nevertheless entrenched following the Gachathi Commission in 1976, which proposed that the tongue becomes the language of instruction from the fourth grade in primary school to the university. The Commission also urged that each language be taught in view of its areas of catchment. In the light of this, urban areas were viewed as catchment areas for Kiswahili, while rural areas were deemed as catchments for mother tongues. English demand rose especially when it became an important determinant for admission into secondary school.

The Commission stressed Kiswahili as an important subject in primary and secondary classes, and recommended that it should be compulsorily taught and examined in the final primary school national examination. This increased the number of Kiswahili students in schools and in the university. However, the language received inferior status when compared with English in the school curriculum. While English was allotted 8-10 periods out of the 40 hours per week, Kiswahili was allotted a paltry 3 hours (Chimerah, 1998). While all this was happening, many mother tongues were marginalized and it is not surprising that to date, a good number of them have never been reduced to writing.

2.6.6 Language Policy: National and official Language

In spite of its declaration as the national language in 1965 through a Parliamentary decree, Kiswahili faced several hurdles. Powerful people in the independent government were mainly scions of English education and were therefore averse to the incorporation of Kiswahili into
the school curriculum. The language was frustrated by some prominent personalities who opposed it (Nabea 2009). Chimerah (1998) cites the example of the former Attorney General Charles Njonjo, who was quoted as having said that there was no need of giving Kiswahili much attention as anybody could pick it up in the street. Such a pronouncement from a senior government official had certainly a negative impact on Kiswahili, a boon for English.

Furthermore, there has been a lackadaisical commitment to the question of the Kenyan national language by both Kenyan officials and intellectuals, especially those who were churned out of the English education system. Promotion of any local language was feared as a risk for their careers, resulting in their covert opposition to such endeavours.

Kiswahili as a national language was also faced with a number of problems. While there was no clear language policy in Kenya, the language was derided as borrowing heavily from other languages while its authenticity as a Kenyan language was normally questioned. In regard to attitudes, it was rejected as incapable of facing technological challenges, as being the language of former slave masters and the language of tricksters (Ogola 2003).

However in 1981, the Mackay Commission recommended the introduction of a new education system in post-independent Kenya. It advised that there be 8 years of primary school, 4 years of secondary school and 4 years of university education (8-4-4). This was a shift from the previous 7 years of primary schooling, 4 years of secondary schooling, 2 years of high school and 3 years of university education (7-4-2-3). The Commission passed that English remains the language of instruction, while Kiswahili was made a compulsory subject in both primary and secondary education. This resulted in thousands of children getting a chance to learn Kiswahili from tender ages. The policy was also followed by the production of Kiswahili books to meet the increased demands of both students and teachers. The teaching and examination of Kiswahili in schools, colleges and universities got underway.
According to Njoroge (1990), the Mackay Commission further advised that mother tongue be used in lower grades of primary schools, in areas where this was possible. The Kenya Institute of Education also produced more instructional materials in Kiswahili alongside several Kenyan languages in the wake of 8-4-4 education system, increasing the readership of these languages. The requirement that those who wanted to pursue particular courses in the university must pass either English or Kiswahili also propelled interest in the learning of the latter. Additionally, good performance in Kiswahili became a requirement to join a number of career training institutions, encouraging its study further.

However, while most of the views about lapses in Kenya's language policy hold water, there are some that are untenable and misrepresentations of facts. For example, Rhoades (1977) is concerned that Kiswahili was made the national language of Kenya without collating the opinion of the people. "Swahili is Kenya's national language, but this was done by government action as part of a deliberate effort to build national identity rather than on grounds of popular sentiment based upon an existing identity with Swahili."

This concern is unfounded because Kenyans embraced Kiswahili as a national language and there has been no serious grievance against it. There were a few grumbles however, immediately after independence as a result of political and ethnic affiliations. Nonetheless, Mazrui and Mazrui (1995) and Ogola (2003) correctly affirm that Kiswahili was endorsed in all corners of Kenya owing to its neutrality status. This is due to the fact that Kiswahili language is not ascribable to any particular ethnic grouping in the country, and therefore, it cannot be accused of aggrandizing the interests of any specific community at the expense of others, unlike the majority of other Kenyan local languages.

In a similar vein, Eastman (1985) unconvincingly argues that Kenya's linguistic scenario is faced with the challenge of divisive diversity. He claims that there exist sociolinguistic generational gaps in Kiswahili which bode ill for the country. The gaps in question are said to
involve the Kiswahili that is spoken by the traditional coastal communities, the standardised or the one that is taught in schools, and the pidginized form. He argues that each of these divisions accords various users different identities, and there has not been an effort to bridge the gaps. He also claims that there are several coinages that fail to be arrived at through consensus between Kenyan and Tanzanian experts. However, going by the situation today, Eastman's views are hollow. The diversity in the Kiswahili that is spoken is a feature of many other languages, English inclusive. For example, Mazrui and Mazrui (1998) and Griffler-Brutt (2002), demonstrate that there are several 'Englishes' that are spoken in Britain, let alone the world over, but they all subscribe to one generic language called English. Granted, there are also several 'Kiswahilis' in Kenya, not to forget others in East and Central Africa, yet they all answer to the title Kiswahili.

2.6.7 Multilingualism and Language Policy

Language policy is hindered by spatial distribution of many people who speak varieties of languages that must be factored in when drawing its strategy. Njoroge (1990) calls this situation "spatial multilingualism," implying the existence of many languages within a geographic area. In such heterogeneity, it becomes difficult to mount a language policy considering that it cannot to meet the interests of everybody in the scenario. Such distribution is also found in the classrooms, making it difficult to implement a language policy in view of the mother tongue, which is prevalently used in a given area. In such situations after all, the language policy is apt to be rejected if it is deemed to be aggrandizing the interests of one group at the expense of the interests of other groups within the area. Amid these concerns, it only becomes imperative to identify Kiswahili the country's lingua franca for use. Going by this, it is evident that multilingualism impacts on language policy, especially when the dichotomy between a language and a dialect is hazy.
Ethnicity has also impinged negatively on a clear language policy. Chimerah (1998) states that when Kiswahili was pronounced the national language in Kenya, there were arguments that languages like Dholuo, Kikuyu or Kamba were equally national, and therefore, warranted equal status. This was partly precipitated by the fact that Kiswahili belongs to the Bantu family of languages unlike the Nilotic or Cushitic languages, which are also used in Kenya, as earlier mentioned. Chimerah observes that such questions were politically motivated putting into account that Tanzania had over 120 ethnic groups, yet there were no qualms in executing Kiswahili as the national language there. However, as has already been stated, Kiswahili was endorsed as the national language in Kenya mainly as a result of its neutrality in regard to ethnic affiliations.

2.6.8 Impact of Unclear Language Policy on Broadcasting

Bogonko (1992) argues that several years into independent Kenya, there was fear that segregation based on social stratification had replaced racial segregation. This is because there were a few schools which were the exclusively for the sons and daughters of the affluent in Kenya, as opposed to the rest of public schools. Taking into consideration that the broadcasting sector impacts other important sectors in any country, it would be prudent to assess the effect of Kenya’s language policy in the way language is used especially in broadcast media. While there are many domains that could be put into perspective, in this study, it is the media sector that is illuminated.

2.7 Media and language use

The development of media in Kenya has been influenced by the population composition and external factors such as colonialism, globalization, and national policies that have been
adopted by the state. In mediated communication, language is a central factor in determining the number of people that can be reached by a given medium (Gathigi 2009).

In Kenya, different perceptions toward different languages have developed over time, which has influenced their development and how they are utilized in communication processes. There are an estimated 60 local and foreign languages that are spoken in Kenya (Githiora 2002). The language situation in Kenya is related to the ethnic composition of the country (Michieka 2005). The Kenyan population is divided into 42 ethnic groups. The five largest ethnic groups are Kikuyu, Luhya, Luo, Kalenjin and Kamba representing 72 per cent of the total population with the rest making up 28 per cent (KNBS 2010). The African languages spoken in Kenya have been categorized into four broad linguistic groups: the Bantu language, the para-Nilotic languages, the Nilotic languages and the Cushitic languages (Githiora 2002; Whiteley, 1974). The Bantu comprises the largest language group and is spoken by approximately 65 per cent of the population (Githiora, 2002; Heine & Mölig, 1980; Michieka, 2005). Bantu languages belong to the Niger-Congo family and include languages such as Kikuyu, Luhya, Kamba, Meru, Gusii, the Mijikenda languages and Swahili. The para-Nilotic languages include Maasai, Teso, and Kalenjin. The only Nilotic language is Luo. Cushitic languages include Boran, Somali, and Rendile. A number of Indian languages such as Punjabi, Hindi, and Gujarati are spoken mainly in the urban centers (Githiora, 2002). Swahili is Kenya’s national and official language and the universal lingua franca. Swahili is also spoken in East and Central African countries in Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, Malawi, and Democratic Republic of Congo. Kiswahili belongs to East African coastal sub-family along with languages such as Chonyi, Giriama and Digo. Kiswahili developed to become the common coastal language since the 13th century following the interaction of the Arabs and East African coast Bantu. It, however, incorporates a wide range of words from...
Hindi, Persian, Portuguese, and English (Githiora, 2002). The ability of Swahili to adapt has influenced its position among the languages of East and Central Africa.

English is the most widely spoken foreign language and is used as Kenya’s official language. English is also the language of instruction in upper primary classes, secondary schools and tertiary education institutions, the language of government records, reports, and other forms of written correspondence (Musau, 2005). Until 2002 when the Kenyan constitution was reviewed, English was the only recognized official language while Kiswahili was the national language. The special position accorded to English in Kenya has been a long subject of debate (Musau, 2003; Wa’Thiongo, 1986).

The situation of the media, especially radio, defies any documented statistics considering that it is a sector that is growing rapidly by the day (Nabea, 2009). For example, statistics provided by Mazrui and Mazrui (1996), Chimerah (1998) or Ogechi and Bosire-Ogechi (2002), Nabea (2009), Gathigi, (2009) have since been overtaken by time, following the fast growing media industry. Even at this moment of writing, there is information that there is burgeoning of more radio stations into the Kenyan airwaves, while there are media operators who are waiting to launch their stations in the near future. However, what is apparent is that the Kenyan media was structured in line with the colonial media immediately after independence. For example, there was a single electronic media station, the Voice of Kenya, with one television station, and a few radio channels all under the control of the Kenyan government.

The radio channels were the Kiswahili or National Service, the English or General Service; and the few stations broadcasting in mother tongue. The local languages channels broadcast in some designated zones of Kenya, for a few hours each day. The Voice of Kenya broadcast its programmes at the behest of the government pointing to the fact that the electronic media lacked freedom. In the print media however, were the *East African Standard*, *Daily Nation*, *...*
Baraza and Taifa Leo, which exercised some freedom since they were privately owned. In 1985, the government attempted to start publications of rural newspapers in Kiswahili, courtesy of Kenya Rural Press Extension Project. The project was short-lived, and though there is literature in mother tongues today, it is produced out of private or non-governmental organisations initiatives, with the aim of dealing with specific concerns like HIV/AIDS, local news, poverty alleviation or conflict management. While the situation of the media in Kenya can be said to have been grim in view of little or no freedom several years after independence, it has since improved substantially. There has been maturation from the monolithic state-controlled radio and television stations, which dedicated most of the time to English programming, to a multiplicity of radio and television channels, most of which are privately owned.

The new broadcasting stations have become popular following the liberalisation of the air waves in the 1990s, in the wake of multiparty politics. There are nearly one hundred radio stations, most of them broadcasting on frequency modulator (BBC World Service Trust 2010). The stations broadcast in mother tongue, Kiswahili and English. However, television stations are apparently tilted in favour of English language. Of the six mainstream television stations, two broadcast in English, while the rest broadcast in both English and Kiswahili, with the latter receiving a paltry air time. This happens as a result of the many European and American-made programmes that are televised by most of these stations.

In addition, the situation of the print media remains dismal as far as local languages are concerned. For example, of the five daily newspapers which enjoy countrywide and out-of-country readership, there is only one Kiswahili paper. The English dailies are Daily Nation, The Standard, The People Daily, Kenya Times and The Star, while the sole Kiswahili paper is Taifa Leo. Recently, the Standard Group introduced a The Standard County Weekly, which is a weekly newspaper with news from across the counties in Kenya. In a similar vein, there
are many English urban-based magazines and newspapers, against a dismal backdrop of similar papers in Kenyan languages. There are also dozens of English weeklies and monthlies such as *Drum, Parents, Move, True Love, News, Adam, Real Men, Revival Springs* and so forth. There are also foreign magazines available on newsstands such as *The Economist, BBC's Focus on Africa, Time, Newsweek or Newsafrica*.

However, there are hardly magazines of such stature in Kenyan languages. One can agree with Bogonko's (1992) assertion that the English newspapers and magazines are an index of the luxury of the rich in urban areas, and would not fit in the realm of mass media in Kenya. However, the technology remains a monopoly of the middle and upper classes of society, particularly in urban centres. It characterises the lifestyles of this cluster of people, in their homes, offices and in institutions of learning.

In view of the foregoing, it is discernible that the media industry in Kenya remains a disservice for now to quite a substantial percentage of the population. Most broadcasters' visions and missions revolve around the tenets of informing, educating and entertaining. However, considering that the mainstream media is heavily tilted towards the use of English, while the majority of the population does not understand the language, one can argue that the media is also in a way an agent of exclusion (Nabca 2009). The situation has not been helped by the advent of internet technology which is solely patronised by the people of some particular social class in society. However, the heavily-inclined English programming could change, taking into account that there are rising numbers of Kiswahili programmes, among them soap operas, as the stations continue to compete for wider audience. Such a trend in Kiswahili programming is already evident on Citizen TV, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation and NTV.

While English supremacy in Kenya's broadcasting scene goes on, there appears to be disjointed attempts to negotiate with it. There is also evidence of mediation and contestation
against Kiswahili whose dominance is building up (Nabea 2009). One example of negotiation with both English and Kiswahili is the development of Sheng, deriving from the acronym ‘Sh’ for Swahili and ‘eng’ for English, by the Kenyan youth especially in urban centres. Investigations have however, revealed that Sheng also sources its lexicon from other Kenyan languages including Kikuyu, Dholuo, Kamba, Kisii or Luhyia (Ogechi 2005, King’ei and Kobia (2007). Sheng is based on the morphosyntactic structure of Kiswahili, which is akin to those of other Bantu languages. Radio stations broadcasting in the country in either Kiswahili or English have ended up using this language associated with the youth.

On the one hand, Sheng can be seen as a contestation against the standard co-official languages in Kenya, English and Kiswahili. It breaks the rules of these languages by thriving on what would be deemed as non-standard by many scholars. Mbaabu (1996) argues that the development of Sheng was occasioned by lack of a focused language policy in Kenya. Considering that people have not been provided with a clear position pertaining to language, the author argues that they opted to create their own direction with argots like Sheng. There is fear that Sheng is bound to impact on any move to draw a language policy in Kenya since it is growing pretty fast. However, such concerns are unfounded because Sheng is transient and divergent in terms of micro and macro-places where it is used in Kenya. A case in point would be the Sheng that is spoken in Nairobi’s Southlands at any given time and which is bound to be different from the one that is used in Eastlands at the same period, and the vice versa.

Mbaabu (1996), King’ei and Kobia (2007) and Momanyi (2009), argue that Sheng is impacting negatively on the teaching of languages in Kenyan schools. One could also argue that that could be what is ailing the broadcasting industry as graduates of the school system end up in broadcasting houses. Mbaabu (1996) adds that the argot even affects the development of Kiswahili more than that of English considering that it uses Kiswahili
grammar, and therefore to distinguish it from Standard Kiswahili among learners is difficult. At the same time, the patois is stigmatised as a language of the lowly and misfits (Momanyi, 2009). However, putting into account that Sheng obtains its lexicon from Kiswahili, English and mother tongues; and thrives on the Kiswahili morphosyntactic structure, it becomes manifest how people are making use of the dominant languages to express themselves in their own fashion. Mbaabu and Nzuga (2003) argue that the youth use Sheng to cut off adults who are not conversant with it. They go on to caution that the argot should not simply be viewed in a unidimensional manner as if it is simply a threat to mainstream languages in East Africa, but should be seen as a future reservoir for Kiswahili lexicon.

In the light of this, one can deduce how societal members who subscribe to the standard norms, and in this case English and Kiswahili, denigrate variants like Sheng while its users are at home defying the standard especially now that it is used in some radio programmes and even Television stations. This defiance can be seen in a broader context as a protest against hegemony, bearing in mind that a language such as English remains the reserve of the elite as has already been stated. What is interesting about this contestation against hegemony is that those who use Sheng are able to offer themselves an identity that is distinct from that of those who use Standard English and Kiswahili. It is also a defiance of the standard, which also indicts the elite in the Kenyan society, who are normally accused of thriving at the expense of the poor masses, just as was the case in colonialism (Bogonko 1992).

The entry of Sheng into radio broadcasting in Kenya can be seen in the same breadth with Engsh (deriving from abbreviations of English and Swahili) argot. Abdulaziz and Osinde (1997) assert that unlike Sheng whose origin is ascribed to low income estates in Nairobi's Eastlands, Engsh's origin is attributed to the affluent suburbs of the city. This does not only distinguish it from Sheng as a different argot, but also in regard to its user's identities. For example, it is the reserve of the sons and daughters of the well-to-do parents in the
neighbourhoods of Nairobi. The only commonality between Engsh and Sheng is that both are creations which have obtained from standard languages, and which are arguably appropriating or contesting against Standard English and Kiswahili even in the radio broadcasting scene in Kenya. They also use a code that is indistinct to people who are only conversant with the standard language usage, and who are screened out by the variants.

Nevertheless, Article 7 of Kenya’s Constitution identifies Kiswahili as Kenya’s national and first official language while Article 120 identifies Kiswahili and English as official languages of Kenya’s Parliament. These renewed efforts, coupled with the increase in radio broadcasts in Kiswahili might change the radio broadcasting scenario in the coming years.

2.8 I.E.K and the contestation of the national

The social and political re-arrangement that followed the radical shift to multi-party politics in Kenya in 1992 gave rise to diverse responses in the field of creative arts. Popular local language, especially on FM radio, was at the forefront in both the contestation of the status quo and in the configuration of emerging socio-political spaces and identities (Freedomhouse, 2009). By 2002, the year of the election that ended Daniel Arap Moi’s twenty-four year grip on power, numerous local language FM Radio Broadcasting station had come into being, thanks to the waning state control of the media industry. One immediate consequence of this was the popularization of ethnic music and the consolidation of ethnic identities through such music and through live call-in programs. Local language popular music and the local language FM Radio stations relaying it became powerful sites for constituting new spaces of expression alternative to that authored by the nation-state (Currey 1998).

I.E.R participates in the consolidation of local identities by recasting the collective national space which include political elites, party politics, political parties and politics of belonging—as governed by the nation-state—as a sphere of influence potentially injurious to imagined local cultural and economic interests. It becomes music of identity that resorts to
history, mythology and narration as a means of reshaping the community self-definition and culture. But while paying attention to these forms of local language self-definition and how they are used to counter the homogenizing and hegemonizing logic of the national space, there is need also addresses the contradictions that circumscribe this local language's gesture towards the pure ethnic while operating from a space that is already hybrid and multicultural, shaped as it were by a confluence of other communities' ways of life, values and ideas.

Emergence of such new sites of power brokering has challenged the nation-state's governance of the public domain (Cohen 1985). As would follow any cultural construction, community traditions were invented and histories reconfigured to establish social cohesion and a sense of group membership. This "symbolic construction of community" as Cohen (1985) would call it, by the political elite in the twilight of British colonialism in Kenya was, like similar moves among the other Kenya ethnicities, necessitated by the need to address "local rural grievances and aspirations" (Ogot 2003). It was also by the inevitable strategic re-alignment and power brokering ahead of independence.

2.8.1 I.L.R and the communities' culture

In analogue, local language FM radio broadcast has a local setup and is suited to particular communities, sharing a specific local language in the country. Schudson (1994) reminded us that language is itself the fundamental human mass medium. It is the mass medium through which all other media speak. No other medium is so deeply rooted, so emotionally fraught, so insistently the basis for political aspirations, or so much an impediment to the efforts of states to use modern media for hegemonic control.

Therefore, in Kenya, as in other societies in Africa and the rest of the world, the use of a local language should not be seen only as a neutral medium for communication, but a highly charged cultural object to be harnessed for development and civic participation. How has this
characterization of language played out in Kenyan political arena, particularly with the proliferation of the local language FM radio stations? Arguably local language and culture are the most visible and most problematic forces for societal integration. Schudson (1994) argued that, "Culture, that is, the way of life of a society, brings individual and families of varying circumstances and backgrounds together in collectivity with which people may strongly identify, take primary meaning from, and find emotionally satisfying." Likewise, the importance of language in any society can scarcely be overestimated.

According to Aderson (1983), "The fatality of human linguistic diversity has strongly guided the formation of nation state." According to Mc Quail (1993), by origin, practice and convention, broadcasting systems are very much national institutions that respond to cultural domestic, political and social pressured and to the expectations of their audiences. Ugboajah (1985) argued that the structure and content of broadcasting systems should reflect the cultural characteristics of the societies within which they operate.

Thomsen (1989) also noted that as local languages broadcasting systems become pluralized they cease to reflect the culture and the circumstances of their intended publics and may even undermine local national language and cultural identity, as a result of transnational flow of content. Similarly, theories dealing with cultural integrity and imperialism typically have been concerned with matters of cultural quality of media's content, its authenticity in real life experiences and cultural task of broadcasting. Underlying these theoretical positions is a strong belief that languages and cultures are both valuable collective properties of nations and vulnerable to media influences (Mc Quail 1993). Throughout the history of broadcasting development, it has been seen that these ideas were deeply routed in arguments for protecting national languages and culture.
According to Tomlinson (1991), African Societies have developed historically and continue to exist on the basis of strong cultural, linguistic and ethnic bonds. Many nations self-consciously use language policy and mass media to integrate citizens and their countries.

2.9 Theoretical Framework

This study used various theoretical foundations to understand the patterns of production and consumption of local language radio in Kenya.

2.9.1 Uses and Gratification Theory

This theory places more focus on the consumer, or audience, instead of the actual message itself by asking “what people do with media” rather than “what media does to people” (Katz, 1959). It assumes that members of the audience are not passive but take an active role in interpreting and integrating media into their own lives. The theory also holds that audiences are responsible for choosing media to meet their needs like they do when they choose which radio station they want to listen to. The approach suggests that people use the media to fulfill specific gratifications thus probably explaining why listeners switch from one radio station to another or one radio programme to another. This theory would then imply that the media compete against other information sources for viewers’ gratification. (Katz, E., Blumler, J. G., & Gurevitch, M. 1974). There are three main paradigms in media effects: hypodermic needle (i.e., direct, or strong effects), limited effects, and the powerful to limited effects.

2.9.3 The Ecological model of the communication process

The Ecological Model of the Communication Process was first introduced by Davis Foulger (2002) as a unified model of the communication process. Foulger (2004) restructures that model and presents it as a unified ecological model of communication process. Fouger (2004) says that communication is the process of by which people (Homo Sapiens or other intelligent
communicators) construct representations of meaning such that other people can interpret those representations. The ecological model of communication, asserts that communication occurs in the intersection of four fundamental constructs: communication between people (creators and consumers) is mediated by messages which are created using language within media; consumed from media and interpreted using language. This model is, in many ways, a more detailed elaboration of Lasswell's (1948) classic outline of the study of communication: "Who ... says what ... in which channel ... to whom ... with what effect". In the ecological model, the "who" are the creators of messages, the "says what" are the messages, the "in which channel" is elaborated into languages (which are the content of channels) and media (which channels are a component of), the "to whom" are the consumers of messages, and the effects are found in various relationships between the primitives, including relationships, perspectives, attributions, interpretations, and the continuing evolution of languages and media. According to this model, the roles of consumer and creator are reflexive just like is the situation in radio listening. People become creators when they reply or supply feedback to other people (like radio station broadcasters). Creators become consumers when they make use of feedback to adapt their messages back to consumers (just like radio programme producers operate when they take care of their audience feedback to improve or change). People learn how to create messages through the act of consuming other people's messages. According to this model, the roles of consumer and creator are introspective. Creators of messages create messages within the context of their perspectives of and relationships with anticipated consumers of messages. Creators optimize their messages to their target audiences. Consumers of messages interpret those messages within the context of their perspectives of and relationships with, creators of messages. This, in effect means that the relationship between local language programme producers and their audiences become cyclic and interdependent. Consumers make attributions of meaning based on their opinion of the
message creator. People form these perspectives and relationships as a function of their communication as shown in Fig below:

**Figure 2: Ecological Model of the Communication Process**

A number of relationships are described in this model:

1. Messages are created and consumed using language
2. Language occurs within the context of media
3. Messages are constructed and consumed within the context of media
4. The roles of consumer and creator are reflexive. People become creators when they reply or supply feedback to other people. Creators become consumers when they make use of feedback to adapt their messages to message consumers. People learn how to create messages through the act of consuming other peoples messages.
The roles of consumer and creator are introspective. Creators of messages create messages within the context of their perspectives of and relationships with anticipated consumers of messages. Creators optimize their messages to their target audiences. Contextualised within the 1.1.R operational framework, the relationship between audiences and radio programme producers is interdependent.

1. Consumers of messages interpret those messages within the context of their perspectives of, and relationships with, creators of messages. Consumers make attributions of meaning based on their opinion of the message creator. People form these perspectives and relationships as a function of their communication.

2. The messages creators of messages construct are necessarily imperfect representations of the meaning they imagine. Messages are created within the expressive limitations of the medium selected and the meaning representation space provided by the language used. The message created is almost always a partial and imperfect representation of what the creator would like to say.

3. A consumer’s interpretation of a message necessarily attributes meaning imperfectly. Consumers interpret messages within the limits of the languages used and the media those languages are used in. A consumers’ interpretation of a message may be very different than what the creator of a message imagined.

4. People learn language through the experience of encountering language being used within media. The languages they learn will almost always be the languages when communicating with people who already know and use those languages. That communication always occurs within a medium that enables those languages. This is what has led to a special form of language which is particular to L1.R in Kenya like Sheng’ and specific phraseology.
5. People learn media by using media. The media they learn will necessarily be the media used by the people they communicate with within a LLR interactional framework.

People invent and evolve languages. People invent new language when there is no language that they can be socialized into as happens in radio talk and discussions. People evolve language when they need to communicate ideas that existing language is not sufficient to.

People invent and evolve media While some of the modalities and channels associated with communication are naturally occurring, the media we use to communicate are not.

A medium of communication is, the product of a set of complex interactions between its primary constituents: messages, people (acting as creators of messages, consumers of messages, and in other roles), languages, and media. Even messages can be regarded as complex entities, but its complexities can be described entirely within the scope of languages, media, and the people who use them. This ecological model of communication is, in its most fundamental reading, a compact theory of messages and the systems that enable them.

Messages are the central feature of the model and the most fundamental product of the interaction of people, language, and media. But there are other products of the model that build up from that base of messages, including (in a rough ordering to increased complexity) observation, learning, interpretation, socialization, attribution, perspectives, and relationships. This theory explains clearly what happens in LLR's patterns of production and consumption of messages.

2.10 A conceptual framework for a LLR stations' patterns of production

The following local language broadcasting system was conceptualized on the basis of a local language communication framework whose ultimate objective is to understand patterns of production and consumption of LLR and how it relates to audiences. Such a framework is
useful to LLR during and after both production and consumption of radio messages. In addition, this framework can provide a model to guide and support activities developed elsewhere in pursuit of a LLR audience system. The conceptual framework illustrated below models the system on the basis of content, context, process and language.

Fig 3: A conceptual framework for a LLR station patterns of production.

**Source:** The conceptual framework is adapted from the “A Framework for a Community-based Radio Distance Learning System” retrieved on 27/06/2010 from:
Website: www.fao.org/docrep/005/ac789e/AC7

**2.10.1 Content**
Content in this research refers to the subject matter, and other relevant materials that are in the central message or theme of the local language programme. Content refers to the substance of what is to be broadcast. These are the ideas, concepts and values that trigger the
broadcast process and how they are produced. The formulation and conceptualisation of the content is highly dependent on the needs and aspirations of the people targeted or the audience.

2.10.2 Context
Context refers to the analysis of the situation or the environment where the local language programme is broadcast to. The context presupposes environmental scanning that is inclusive of the people’s situation, educational background and capabilities, current problems, issues of interest to the audience, aspirations and dreams and their culture. Also of relevance is the existence of popular figures and natural leaders in the community, as well as the people's values and beliefs. Basically, the context offers a ‘situationer’ where the needs of the people (audience) are first determined and an understanding of the local language and culture in the community is molded. The context is in harmony with the tenet ‘start where the people are’. Chronologically, the context should be studied first, before the formulation or design of the actual L.L.R programme (the content) and patterns of production.

2.10.3 Format
Format primarily refers to packaging or how the producer packages the content of the message. Format deals with how to transform a dry material into something popular, acceptable and interesting to the audience. How to convert a dull subject into something entertaining. Different forms or formats can be used in L.L.R broadcasting to enable different topics to come out in a certain context. Format also refers to how the programme puts into a ‘format’ the thinking and feeling of its audience.

2.10.4 Process
Process figuratively refers to the cement that will ensure the success of the local language programme. Education becomes an empowering process when people are able to analyse the data given to them and when they have the ability to formulate decisions following proper
analysis. It is when people are able to discover what they know and what they have learned through systematisation of local language programming. The process is as important to the retentive aspect of LLR programming. A truly evocative and participatory communication process enables the co-operator-community-participant to value his/her worth, experience and life itself. Local language broadcasting is in this, a process of empowering people by ‘giving back’ their respect and dignity. In a sense, it is ‘giving back’ their humanity and culture.

Content and process are the two most important elements in the framework. In reality, however, content belongs to the inner core of the framework and is dependent on the context. The process provides the cementing factor between content and context. The format is what immediately gets in contact with community senses. The format is, therefore, only important as a package to attract audience attention and create interest so that an image may be formed. What is more important than format is the process that will be created by the broadcast activity and the content. The context attests to the usefulness, the efficiency and effectiveness of the content as transferred to the community.
I. Producer: Focused information to influence listening and knowledge gains by use of local language.

Type of programme and patterns of production

- Information feedback (calling the station, talking etc in local language)
- Behaviour change through LLR debates on local issues and governance
- Listening patterns of locals and their consumption habits

Presenter Traits

Choice of radio station, programme and time of listening

Changed behaviour (personal or audience empowerment) and further patterns of production and consumption.

(Source: Researcher, 2010)

2.11 Chapter Summary

The chapter attempted a categorization of radio in Kenya as an attempt to understand radio broadcasting in Kenya in general and LLR in particular. This is because the industry in Kenya which has been unstable since the advent of liberalization, is trying to re-establish itself.
This chapter has demonstrated that language policy in Kenya has been an integral part of the broadcasting regime, which is involved in the question of the language of and for broadcasting in the country. It has shown that the country has never had a clear language policy, a situation that has favoured English for a long time. This is as a result of the fact that language policies formulated by both colonial and postcolonial governments were skewed in favour of English, propagating hegemonic status of the language in all spheres. It has been argued that this supremacy goes hand in glove with language of broadcasting in Kenya, putting into consideration that though the Kenyan government has attempted to seek independence of its education system through the constitution of a number of investigative commissions, the sector still smacks heavy of colonial hangover. A case in point is the preponderance of English not only in the education sector, but also in other key governmental sectors in the country which impact directly on the way media uses the language.

It has however been shown that English domination in Kenya is largely at the service of a section of the society. In this case, the language is elitist, exclusive and serves best the interest of the powerful people in the country. Nonetheless, this work has also demonstrated that language dominance is being negotiated in mediation and contestation by the common people, as exemplified by the evolution of Sheng’ and Engsh and Kiswahili’s swing to become a force in the evolving of a broadcasting system in Kenya. This development has been shown to tally with similar manifestations that were discovered about respondents’ language choice and station of broadcasting during this research. Theories which inform this study are also analysed and situated within the framework of the study. There is also a conceptual framework to show the relationship between LLR station patterns of production and the variables in consumption of radio messages by audiences.
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology that was used to conduct this research. Its purpose is to orient the reader with the research design. To achieve this, it starts by offering the demographic situation of the area of study within the broader map of Kenya. It also offers insight into the people who live in the place with respect to their socio-economic activities, shades of their language usage. The first section addresses the ethnographic approaches to studying media reception by looking at the methodological assumptions of the communication research. The second section discusses the research sites, Ndanai and Ndia, and its population. The third section attends to the researcher’s position in the field revealing how different positions and relationships were negotiated during the fieldwork. The fourth part deals with specific data collection methods of audience ethnography that were used in this research and the kind of information they were used to reveal. It focuses on methodological perspectives. The use of ethnographic fieldwork through participant observation and qualitative interviewing is discussed. This chapter also includes a comprehensive self-reflexive report pertinent to my field observation experience.

The last part summarizes the content of the chapter. There is also an account of the research basis. In this respect, there is a description of the population and size of the respondents, the sampling procedures used, as well as the research methods adopted. The section also describes how data was finally organised after field research in preparation for analysis.

3.1 Comparative ethnographic audience analysis

This study was a comparative analysis of rural listeners’ everyday interactions with radio. Media consumption occurs within a particular environment and patterns of production and
consumption of radio are shaped by a myriad of factors, both internal and external to the group. In order to understand radio patterns of production and consumption of the listeners within their social group, audience ethnography method provides tools that allow the researcher to examine multi-layered aspects of radio listening in audiences' everyday life through the use of observation, interviews, discussion groups, document and content analysis. These different methods reinforce each other in different ways and provide a wide range of data necessary to construct a deep understanding of an audience's media consumption.

About the audience ethnography method. Moores (1993) has noted that while the ethnographic approach to investigating the social world of actual audiences is a relatively new tradition, ethnography has a long history in other disciplines such as anthropology. Ethnography is a description and interpretation of a cultural or social group or system where the researcher examines the group's observable and learned behaviour, customs, and ways of life (Miller & Salkind, 2002, p. 162). The objective of ethnography is to understand a culture from the native's point of view, trying to grasp people's subjective concerns of the social environment (Moores 1993, p. 3). Ethnography involves recording the interests and interpretations of others. In communication research, Audience ethnography is an integral means for understanding the everyday world of social groups, their patterns or interpersonal communication, and their uses of the mass media. The purpose of ethnographic studies of mass communication is to allow the researcher to grasp as completely as possible, with minimal disturbance, the 'native's perspective' or relevant communicative and socio-cultural matters indigenous to him. (Lull, 1980, p. 199, quoted in Schroeder et al., 2003).

In addition to conceptual assumptions, the usage of the term ethnography in audience research differs from the general meaning in other fields. The term ethnography used in media and communication research also refers to a variety of methods that include in-depth
interviews and short-term observation as well as longer-term participant observation. Audience ethnography approach is closely intertwined with the method.

Ethnography has been widely proposed as the most promising qualitative method for audience studies (Fiske, 1988; Grossberg, 1988; Morley, 1986; Radway, 1988). A consistent and fundamental thesis of ethnographic reception studies is the rejection of the notion of 'audience' as a unified aggregate that receives fixed messages from the media (Spitulnik, 2000). Press (1996) views this departure along the qualitative-quantitative dichotomy. She argues that communication researchers have become increasingly discontented with a demographic approach to audience studies. Instead, "they are more interested in investigating the ways in which subjectivity is constructed at the sites at which the audience constitutes itself- a realm somewhat resistant to quantitative methodology" (Press, 1996, p. 113). As a result, the term audience has been challenged due to its emphasis on the passivity of this group that does not allow opportunities for studying the subjectivity of the audience (Ang, 1996; Fiske 1987; Grossberg, 1988; Radway, 1988; Lindlof & Meyer, 1987). This has led to a much broader interpretation of audience leading communication scholars to borrow from the human sciences such as anthropology.

According to Press (1996), a broader definition of audience in communication research which views them as a human community has become important. Focusing on the constitution of this community as a mass, audience per se yields only one facet of the whole. A subject "[of] greater interest though is the integration of this audience-aspect into the whole lives of individuals and communities, the interplay between dimension 'as audience' and meanings, rituals, practices, struggles and structural roles and realities that make up the rest of their lives" (Press, 1996, p 13). This approach typifies what Ang (1996) calls culturalist audience studies, which are empirical and interpretive works that start out from the acknowledgment that media consumption is an ongoing set of popular cultural practices. The "significances
and effectivities," according to Ang, only take shape in the "complex and contradictory terrain, the multidimensional context, in which people live out their everyday lives" (Grossberg, 1988, p. 25 quoted in Ang, 1996). For Ang, to turn audiences from 'an abstract hunch' into more concrete knowledge and more tangible understanding, we need to contextualize the media not as a series of separable independent variables that have more or less clear-cut correlations with another set of dependent audience variables (1996).

Audiences, as social subjects, produce meaning when they interact with media materials. In order to address meanings produced by social subjects and the daily activities they perform, qualitative researchers have frequently sought to explicate those significances and practices by locating them in relation to broader frameworks of interpretations and to structures of power and inequality (Moores, 1993, p. 4). This is one mark of critical ethnography (Harvey, 1990), an approach that recognizes the significance of media interpretations that are constructed by consumers in their everyday routines. At the same time, critical ethnography is not afraid to interrogate and situate media consumers' spoken accounts (Moores, 1996).

Audience ethnography researchers are interested in the realm of day-to-day life and household cultures of media use (Lull, 1980). Ang (1992) refers to this as the social world of actual audiences. This realm cannot be measured because it exists as a dispersed domain of lived experiences and cultural meanings as opposed to calculable meanings. In order to get 'behind the ratings' (Morley, 1990) and to explore these experiences and meanings, researchers adopt methods that have very different purposes. In television reception studies, for example, Morley (1990) notes:

The kind of research that needs doing would involve identifying and investigating the catch all phrase 'watching television'. We all watch television but with how much attention and with what degree of commitment, in relation to which types of programs
and occasions? ... Research needs to investigate the complex ways in which television is embedded in a … range of everyday practices (p. 8).

Spitulnik (2002) has however shown that audience activities can extend beyond the household realm. In her research on the use of radio in rural Zambia, Spitulnik observes that “radio in Zambia is not strictly, or even primarily, domestic technology but a machine that circulates far beyond home and enters into a variety of social relations and social situations beyond the same-residence family” (p. 160). These findings are in contrast to claims from Western societies where radio as a technological device is restricted to the domestic settings (Morley & Silverstone, 1990).

3.2 Location of the Research

Fieldwork was conducted in Ndanai division, Bomet County, Kenya and Ndia Division of Kirinyaga County of central Kenya.

3.2.1 Ndanai Area

Ndanai Division comprises three locations: Abosi, Ndanai and Gelegele. Ndanai land is partly flat with fertile ridges. Like many places in the Rift Valley region, the main spoken language in Ndanai is Kalenjin. Ndanai division residents speak Kipsigis dialect of Kalenjin. A very small population that speaks other languages can be found in pockets of the area. There are Maasai and Kisii who are their neighbours from either side of the division. Ndanai town is the administrative center for Ndanai Division. Other centres include Obosi, Kipsingei, Rotik, Korgor, Suimosiek and Makutana. The transport infrastructure in most of Ndanai division is underdeveloped. The populated areas are mainly connected by all-weather roads. Only a small population lives near the Bomet-Ndanai tarmac road which cuts across Ndanai division. Relative to its population, Ndanai division has a low number of public
primary schools, slightly less than many rural areas in Kenya but this is a common characteristic of Bomet County. The post-secondary institutions include a few youth polytechnics that mainly offer short term craft courses. The research was done in Ndanai and Abosi locations.

3.2.1.1 The people of Ndanai

The locations where the research was based are: Kamungeno and Tiriytaboita in Ndanai location and Abosi and Chesono in Abosi location. Ndanai division is one of the divisions that are inhabited by the Kipsigis people. Other districts in the Bomet County region are Sotik, Mogogosiek, Konoin and Bomet. Figure 1 (Appendix) shows the locality of Ndanai and Abosi on the location on the map of Bomet County.

Ndanai division was selected as the research site because of its rural setting characterized by limited infrastructure development and dependence on agriculture. These characteristics are very similar to what one can find in other rural areas in Kenya. In terms of the Kenya Rift Valley region that is inhabited by Kalenjin language speakers, Ndanai division has special attributes such as mode of production where residents’ agricultural practices involve crop cultivation and rearing livestock on freehold farms. These practices are widespread in other areas of Kenyan such as the Central, Western, Eastern, and North Eastern regions. Doing a study in Ndanai division therefore provided a good basis for future research in other similar populations. Ndanai division as a research site presented an area with limited urban influences, allowing the researcher to concentrate on rural audiences’ distinct situation. Ndanai division population lives in similar conditions as many other rural populations in different parts of rural Kenya. Radio is a popular medium to residents; most of who have limited access to other media forms such newspapers and television.
A great portion of Ndani is a high potential area, with agriculture being the main source of livelihood. Cash crops grown in the area include tea, wheat; while the main food crops are maize, beans, potatoes, bananas, passion fruits and avocado. Ndani villagers are largely peasants, who practise small scale farming. However, crop farming is not concentrated in one area, but is distributed in several zones of the region. The peasants are also involved in rearing of livestock on a small scale. Besides these vocations, they also engage in other trades like shop-keeping, tailoring, and chicken-keeping and selling, especially among the youthful lot.

All these attributes were important for the research as they were found to have a bearing on the villagers' patterns of consumption of radio messages. Most residents in Ndani are aged below fifty years. There is a very small elderly population in the area. The youthful population in their twenties who are to be found in the area are mostly unemployed or waiting to enrol in college. Those who are unemployed work as casual workers but such jobs are usually temporary and rare (Bomet District Strategic Plan 2005-2010).

The majority of the unemployed youth are those who could not proceed with education past the secondary school mostly due to many factors. A sizeable number of the young people with whom I interacted have an eighth grade education and did not attend high school. Many students who finish high school did not enter into any form of college due to the high costs. I also met a number of men who went to college and were employed previously in different industries but have lost their jobs through retrenchment. During the fieldwork, I observed particular gender differences between men and women. With respect to women, those who were interviewed had less education than men. Due to poverty and patriarchal nature of the Kipsigis community, women tend to get married early. During the FGDs, a married women's group age would range between 20-24 while the same group for men would comprise range of 27-32. Women have a different view of life compared to men. At the time of the fieldwork,
most people were facing hard economic times. Men and older women tended to raise the economic issue more often during the discussions. However, young women, especially those who are married, seemed to view the issue in a different way. In talking to people, some argued that because being a housewife, which involved taking care of the family members and property at home, women faced less pressure to generate income compared to men who have to go looking for work every day. This does not mean that women are lesser contributors in the domestic arena. They are responsible for taking care of the farms and therefore produce food that is consumed in the family. In the family, husbands tended to be slightly older than their wives and are mostly likely to have a few more years of education. There are few instances where the woman was more educated. Education experiences between men and women were almost similar in all research areas. The education inequalities are partly attributed to parents' preference to educate male children compared to the female children. If a parent has two equally able children, male and female, the boy takes preference (Richard Ngeno, personal communication, June 25, 2010). Residents blamed this on the limited economic power where most parents are unable to afford education costs for two or more children at the same time. They would therefore be forced to make tough decisions.

3.2.2 Ndia Area

Ndia division is one of the four divisions that make up Kirinyaga County of central Kenya. The others are Gichugu, Mwea and Municipality. Ndia division has six locations. The population is mainly comprised of low-income families spread throughout the area with 72 per cent of the population involved in agricultural production while the rest are in commercial and public sector. Kirinyaga district is one of the poorest districts in Central Kenya with Mwea being the poorest followed by Ndia (Kirinyaga District strategic plan 2005-2010).
Ndia division land is partly flat with fertile ridges that are on the slopes of Aberdares Mountains. Like many places in the Central Kenya region, the main spoken language in Ndia division is Kikuyu. Ndia division residents speak Kirinyaga dialect of Kikuyu language. A very small population that speaks other languages can be found in pockets of the region.

Baricho town is the administrative center for Ndia Division. Urban centres in the division are Sagana, Karima, Kiangwache and Kibigothi. The transport infrastructure in most of Ndia division is underdeveloped. The populated areas are mainly connected by all weather roads. Only a small population lives near the Sagana-Karatina-Nyeri tarmac road which cuts across Ndia division.

3.2.2.1 The People of Ndia

The main economic activity in Ndia area is agricultural production. Depending on the area, residents of Ndia either practice commercial or subsistence farming. In Kibigothi, the majority of the families cultivate crops such as maize, beans, wheat, and potatoes whose harvest is consumed at home. When there is a good harvest, the surplus produce is sold. Some residents also engage in small scale commercial tree growing. There are also few sheep and goats. The cows produce milk mainly for domestic consumption. Despite the proximity to other parts of central Kenya, high altitude nature of the area has endowed the residents with highly productive farming land. Crop cultivation is practiced all year round. Residents specialize in farming short term produce such as cabbages, tomatoes, pepper, carrots and onions. They also grow cash crops such as coffee and tea and keep dairy cows for milk production.

In addition to the small freehold farms, there are a number of large farms spread all over Ndia Division that are mainly owned by wealthy local individuals. They grow cash crops such as vegetables and horticulture for export, and crop trees such as blue gum. There are few wage
employment opportunities in Ndia. The most common forms of formal employment are with the government and a few private facilities such as health centers. There are a number of teachers who are employed in government and private schools in the area. Other civil servants work with various government departments such as the police, the wildlife service, agriculture, provincial administration and the Ministry of Health. These are however found in the small towns where the government services are located. A large section of residents make their living through trade mostly done in the local shopping centers. The largest shopping center in Ndia is Baricho town. However, more people are likely to visit during the day as they conduct their business. Businesses include transportation, foodstuff, retail business, and service industry that include bars and food outlets, hairdressing and barber shops. There are also maize and wheat mills, building materials, agricultural and veterinary supplies. On Mondays and Thursdays, there is an open air market where people from the larger Kirinyaga region bring products such agricultural products, domestic wares and clothes to sell. The market is also open during the other days of the week but the activities are very limited.

Data in this research was collected in Ogachiku, Onchiro, and Githuaini villages. Just like Ndanai area Ndia was selected as the research site because of its rural setting characterized by limited infrastructure development and dependence on agriculture. These characteristics are very similar to what one can find in other rural areas in Kenya. In terms of the Kenya Central province that is inhabited by Kikuyu language speakers, Ndia division has special attributes such as mode of production where residents’ agricultural practices involve crop cultivation and rearing livestock on freehold farms. These practices are also widespread in other Kenyan areas such as the Rift Valley, Eastern, and North Eastern

Doing a study in Ndia division therefore provided a good basis for future research in other similar populations. Ndia division as a research site presented an area with limited urban influences, allowing the researcher to concentrate on rural audiences’ distinct situation. Ndia
population lives in similar conditions as many other rural populations in different parts of Kenya. Radio is a popular medium to residents: most of who have limited access to other media forms such newspapers and Television. Ndia receives a high number of radio stations signals compared to other rural areas due its proximity to Nyeri town where other stations broadcast from. Doing research in the area allowed the researcher to capture various dimensions of radio listening as will be discussed later.

Figure 2(appendix): A map of Ndia showing the research locations.

Most residents in Ndia are aged below fifty years (Kirinyaga District Strategic Plan 2005-2010). There is a very small elderly population because the area was only inhabited in the 1980s by people from the larger Kirinyaga District whose population has exploded since the 1960s. The youthful population in their late teens and early twenties who are to be found in the area are mostly unemployed or waiting to enrol in college. Those who are unemployed work as casual workers but such jobs are usually temporary and rare.

The majority of the unemployed youth are those who could not proceed with education past the primary or secondary school mostly due to lack of school fees. A sizeable number of the young people with whom I interacted have an eighth grade education and did not attend high school. Some dropped out of high school mostly in the first two years because they could not afford to pay school fees. Failure to achieve adequate level of education is largely as a result of financial constraints. Many students who finish high school did not enter into any form of college due to the high costs. I met a number of men who went to college and were employed previously in different industries but have lost their jobs through retrenchment. Many of the young people whom I met had at one point migrated to the cities. During the fieldwork, I observed particular gender differences between men and women. With respect to women, those who were interviewed had less education than men. Women tended to get married early in the area. During the FGDs, a married women’s group age ranged between 20 to 39 years.
At the time of the fieldwork, most people were facing hard economic times. Men and older women tended to raise the economic issue more often during the discussions. However, young women, especially those who were married, seemed to view the issue in a different perspective. In talking to people, some argued that because being a housewife, which involved taking care of the family members and property at home, women faced less pressure to generate income compared to men who had to go looking for work every day. This does not mean that women are lesser contributors in the domestic arena. They are responsible for taking care of the farms and therefore produce food that is consumed in the family. In the family, husbands tended to be slightly older than their wives and are mostly likely to have a few more years of education. There are few instances where the woman was more educated. Education experiences between men and women were not similar in all research areas. In Sagana and Kiangwache, young men interviewed had more education than women. According to education officials in the area, the education inequalities are partly attributed to parents' preference to educate male children compared to the female children. If a parent has two equally able children, male and female, the boy takes preference. This was also blamed on the limited economic power where most parents are unable to afford education costs for two or more children at the same time. They would therefore be forced to make tough decisions. In making such a decision, Kabare feels that parents will reason that the girls will grow up and get married one day. In this case, the girls will leave the home but the boys will marry and stay. If a girl chances to be married to an able man, she has an opportunity to take care of her family. Therefore, educating a man, from the parents' point of view, is a more prudent investment. Such logic appears as part of the patriarchal society point of view that does not treat men and women equally. Only in a few instances will the girl take preference such as when they are more academically gifted.
3.3 Data Collection

The audience ethnography method was used to collect data in Ndanai Division of Bomet County in the Rift valley region and Ndia of Central Kenya region. Audience ethnography as data collection method allowed the researcher to closely interact with audiences within their natural settings by being a part of their daily lives. During an eight-week research period in Ndia and Ndanai, the researcher was able to integrate and interact with the people in the area. I visited local shopping centers, homes, and social places. I listened to the radio with some families and engaged in discussions of radio content when they arose. Because I speak both Kikuyu and Kipsigis languages fairly comfortably, I easily participated in different aspects of these interactions. In addition, clear knowledge of Kiswahili helped where Kikuyu and Kipsigis languages could not be used.

As a researcher, I facilitated interactions in order to generate data relevant to my study as explained in the following sections. Ethnographic methods gave me the opportunity to explore radio content by listening to the programs as well as interviewing local broadcasters to get a deeper understanding of participants’ media behaviour.

The specific ethnographic methods that were used are short questionnaires, interviewing, observation, and FGDs. These methods are well-suited to answer the questions raised by this research. In addition to understanding listener’s choices based on the available radio stations, this research went beyond the surface by investigating the factors behind the choices made to provide what Spitulnik (2000) has called a “sociocentric” account rather than “egocentric” or “subject-centric” accounts of the audience (pp. 145). This research was interested in qualitative and not just quantitative accounts (Fontana & Frey, 1994) through the emphasis on description as opposed to numbers only. To understand radio patterns of production and consumption of radio among rural listeners in Kenya, the research followed other studies that have used audience ethnography in African settings to capture a multi-layered understanding.
of radio in listeners' everyday life (Mano, 2004; Spitulnik, 2002a, 2002b). Questionnaires were used to give the researcher a general view of radio listening choices. Through the use of interviews and group discussions, it was possible to explore the role of the radio as perceived by the listeners. Observational methods provided everything from issues that are directly observable to subtle ideas among the audiences. Observations were more revealing because they allowed the researcher to discover even deep rooted functions during the course of interactions (Spitulnik, 2000, 2002a).

I found interviews as a useful method as I sought to identify themes of the lived daily world from subjects' own perspectives (Kvale, 1996). Interviews and focus groups discussion methods were used in seeking to understand how listeners interpret different radio messages from radio stations and whether this plays a part in shaping their identity. Interviews were useful methods of eliciting information that arose during various discussions allowing the researcher to probe further. In-depth interviews with the broadcasters provided different perspectives of the BS which could not be captured from the listeners' standpoints alone. Document analysis such as looking at the latest media monitoring research was used to bridge the gap among my own findings, the audience, and the broadcasters. In addition, content analysis through listening to the programs enabled me to follow up what I had found from the research. To be able to understand the listeners' perspectives on certain programs for instance, it became necessary for me to listen to these programs.

3.4 The Language Situation in Ndanai and Ndia

Ndanai villagers speak Kipsigis, one of the dialects of Kalenjin while those in Ndia speak Kirinyaga dialect of Kikuyu language.
3.5 Population and Size

The research was conducted among 30 informants, 24 from villages in each research location and 6 among radio correspondents in the local language broadcasting sector, and who were based in urban areas. Radio correspondents were chosen for study for comparative reasons. Such journalists occasionally double as grassroot correspondents for their local language stations. Accordingly, it was considered prudent to get their opinion in regard to patterns of consumption of L1R vis-à-vis the opinions of the villagers. Informants among the villagers were categorized in some demographic levels to make the data diversified and as representative as possible. The categorization involved the level of education, age and gender. This was motivated by the fact that literacy skills have been documented as showing substantial variation in regard to age, educational level, social class, gender and ethnicity (Beller-Hann 2005). With respect to age, there were the following brackets: 21-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60 and above 60. Educational categorization was done as follows: colonial primary and secondary; independent primary, secondary, and post secondary. Pertaining to gender, there was identification of 12 women and 12 men in the villages.

3.6 Piloting

The main research was preceded by piloting whereby a quick survey was conducted in order to learn some basics about the people. During piloting, it became necessary to establish how the villagers organised themselves and whether they engaged in multiple listening to L1R. Piloting was also a forum for acquainting the researcher with the villagers. It is from this early survey that some research questions were generated. It is also within this phase that clear geographical and conceptual boundaries were drawn. For example, while there was the objective of conducting research in all the six villages of Ndanai Location, this was obviated after realising that all the villages never offered any distinct variants in regard to social.
political and economic undertakings. This showed that covering some villages of the zone was adequately representative of the whole location and even beyond it, the district.

It was also during piloting that the decision to involve teachers and LLR correspondents to help with the sampling of the respondents was arrived at. Piloting was also invaluable in the testing of the various tools that were to be used to conduct research. For example, there was random testing of the questionnaires using only few cases. Satisfied that the respondents could fill them without many problems, the questionnaires were distributed during the last days of the piloting phase so that they could be filled in the subsequent two weeks. It is also during piloting that the sound working of the digital recorder for interviews and FGD was tested, while ensuring that data could easily be transferred from it and stored in the laptop.

3.7 Sampling Procedure

There was need to make the data as representative as possible. In connection with this, the researcher liaised with six local radio correspondents in order to get respondents with all the required variables with respect to age, levels of education and gender. The radio correspondents were best placed to offer this information putting into consideration that they knew the villagers well since they are in constant touch with them. Despite the help from the journalists and local teachers who the researcher knew, sampling was done through snowballing and purposive method. The two methods were used to complement each other. Snowballing was used when one informant provided information about other possible informants in regard to the attributes that were in line in with the interests of the research. To this end, it was possible to identify respondents who had variables in different categories, making the data quite representative.
3.8 Ethnographic Approach

Since the problem of the research was patterns of production and consumption of L.I.R, it became necessary to strategise such that the information sourced would be descriptive. In this connection, an ethnographic study proved appropriate in which case the daily lives and ways of listening to radio by the villagers were investigated as a group culture. To facilitate this, it was found necessary to live, participate and observe the villagers patterns and ways of listening to L.I.R. The goal was to describe their social activities from an insider’s point of view. Besides participant observation, there was also use of interviews, and focus group discussions. This triangulation helped in crosschecking data, comparing and contrasting information, before using it as a premise for forming knowledge base. Triangulation also helped to check on possible bias since every method was finally given an independent analysis and its results compared and contrasted with the rest. However, the findings from all the methods were more corroborative of each other than variant.

The research was conducted in two phases. The first phase ran between July-September 2010, while the second phase ran between February and May 2011. In both phases, field work was done while the researcher was living with the villagers. The first three weeks of July 2010 were spent doing piloting. In the subsequent weeks, the main research started in form of in-depth interviews, whose questions were generated from the filled up questionnaires. There was also participant observations and writing of field notes. The study was extensive and was done both day and night. The night study was necessitated by the fact that the villagers had been observed as engaging in demanding socioeconomic chores during the day, provoking interest as to what and how they listened to radio at night when they were not on the farms, markets or in community projects. In the course of the research, it also proved necessary to pull back occasionally in order to make sense of the recorded and observed data, before returning to the field with rejuvenated ideas.
3.9 Researcher’s position in the field

Ethnographic research studies require the researcher to address his or her relationship with the informants in the field. Prior to conducting the fieldwork, I spent a considerable amount of time thinking about my identity during the research. From the beginning, I considered myself both an insider and an outsider in the field. My position as an insider derives from my close relationship with the Kikuyu community. I was born and brought up amongst the Kalenjin (Kipsigis) in Kericho and later the Kikuyu, in Nakuru though Iam Kisii. The researcher went to the field well versed with the culture of the communities and their languages. This proved to be important from the time The researcher went into the two communities and throughout the research period. During the fieldwork in Ndai, my interactions were both in Kikuyu and Kiswahili, Kenya’s national and official language; while in Bomet, I conversed in both Kipsigis and Kiswahili. Secondly, my position as an insider derives from my close relationship with the Kipsigis community. I was born, brought up and educated amongst the Kipsigis in Kericho County. During the fieldwork in Ndanai (which neighbours my rural home in Kisii), my interactions were in Kipsigis which I speak and understand fairly well. Where I had doubts, my research assistants came in handy while I also used Kiswahili where need arose.

In Ndai, interviews and FGDs were conducted in Kikuyu and Kiswahili, with all the help research assistants. Understanding the culture and the language facilitated smooth integration into the community around me. The researcher’s daily interactions were easier than what a person from a different culture would encounter. Cultural competency came in handy especially in interpreting cultural phenomena as well as picking subtle clues. For instance, during discussions with women, I knew which issues were hard for them to discuss even though they would not tell me so. My research assistants, who were local and very well versed with local culture helped me when need arose.
At the same time, I was aware that I am also different, because of my positioning as an outsider. While I am a Kisii who grew up among both the Kipsigis and Kikuyu communities, it was in a heterogeneous population setting in an area whose original inhabitants were the Kalenjin people. It was also the researchers’ first time to live and research in a predominant Kikuyu and Kalenjin setting. The researcher has spent his time in cosmopolitan settings. These differences become clear when the researcher got to Ndia and Ndanai, as he experienced during his first visit. After arriving in Ndia, he visited a village called Ogachiku and he was introduced to my research assistant. My research permit was still in process and therefore I could not start the fieldwork immediately and I had to go back to Nairobi. In the company of my research assistant and a friend, we happened to walk past two older women in a home near the road. Instinctively, I greeted the women using a common Kikuyu greeting form, *mũrĩ ega* (how are you?). The women hesitated for a few seconds before they answered. Immediately, I realized I had made a big mistake. In the Kikuyu that I understand, it is acceptable to use this form of greetings to anybody in the society. However, in the Kirinyaga Kikuyu dialect, people who are older are greeted differently from people who are young. Men and women are also greeted differently. Therefore, I should have greeted the older women using the acceptable form *(m)wakĩ ṭau maitũ*, which means *how you are my mother(s)*, a form of greetings that appreciates the fact that I am young enough to be their son. Thus, my greetings could be interpreted as disrespectful to the Kirinyaga Kikuyu speakers. The researcher immediately discussed the issue with the assistant and he got a lesson on greetings, something that he says was almost impossible to learn or get used to because over the whole fieldwork period, he struggled to adapt to the new greetings format. The issue is complicated by the fact that the greetings mean that in every encounter with people, you need to make a quick and accurate judgment of their age so that you can correctly greet them. They too should also have a good idea of your age. The researcher faced a number of challenges. One
was that he was slow to discern some peoples' age especially when dealing with the older people. Men were not keen on the appropriate greetings protocols as women were. He could note that local people did not follow the "greetings rules" most of the times. In one incidence, a woman who was only three years older than him confronted and insisted that he should use a different kind of greetings because she was old enough to be my mother. To escape the greetings quagmire, he resorted to waiting to be greeted rather than initiating the greetings which minimized my chances of making mistakes.

The situation was a bit different in Ndai. The researcher is very well versed with Bomet County and the Kipsigis language which he speaks very well. Accompanied by my research assistant, knowing the culture of the people having been born there, brought up and educated among the Kipsigis gave me an edge in the research.

The prevailing economic conditions affected the research. When we organized focus discussion groups for instance, people would ask for some form of compensation. Some argued that they would have to leave their work while some would have to walk a distance to come to the meeting place. Initially, the researcher had grappled with ethical questions of compensation and decided that it is not a good idea to compensate people because it was likely to set a pattern where anyone coming after me would have to do the same especially with dwindling research funds. On the other hand, he needed to give a form of consideration to some participants who were foregoing some of their daily activities and routines to accommodate my needs. The first two focus discussion groups were not compensated. These were held at a shopping center in a restaurant from where we bought drinks and snacks. It also comprised people who worked within a few meters. Some would step out once in a while to check their work, which was a different case with the people in the village.

The researcher could afford some little compensation as a sign of appreciation. The researcher’s first thought was to use a method that would not involve actual exchange of cash
such as buying household commodities like sugar, maize or wheat flour. We would either personally buy the goods and have them at the venue of the focus discussion groups or arrange with a shopkeeper in the nearby shop and give coupons to participants which they would in turn redeem at the shop. This was based on the idea that in rural Kenya, people use such gestures to show appreciation. However, this became practically difficult because the groups were organized at different locations including homes based on convenience. We therefore decided to give a little cash to the participants.

The research assistant suggested that the amount should be minimal and people will still appreciate. He also took the role of the facilitator so that I did not deal with the group directly when matters of compensation came up. The participants appreciated the compensation although we were careful to distinguish between “payment” and “appreciation”. Ours was a token of appreciation. Our rapport also increased. In his village, my research assistant would be thanked by some participants as a person who “minded their welfare”.

The researchers’ gender was also an issue. Younger women were more reluctant in discussing issues of a family nature with me. Being an insider for them meant that he had to follow the Kikuyu cultural norms where subjects such as sex are taboo. When I openly raised such topics, he was acting as an outsider which allowed the discussants to discuss such issues more freely to someone who is not necessarily one of their own. By playing an insider or outsider position, the researcher was also able to get both men and women to open up on gender issues. For men, he was always assumed to be an insider and it was possible to get strong opinions, such as men domination. Most men believed that they are entitled to be the dominant figures in the family set. However, he found that most of the time, he had to come out and raise a different opinion, because men discussants that had a differing opinion chose not to amplify such issues. When addressing the question of male domination in the women groups, playing an outsider allowed me to raise issues that are unconventional for a man from
the same village to discuss. By delving into questions such as male domination, women opened up and challenged such positions as well as revealing the strategies they use to balance between keeping peace at home, while resisting at the same time.

The researchers' experiences in the field are part of what Karin Narayan (1993) calls multiplex identity. She argues that “a person may have many strands of identification available, strands that may be tugged open or stuffed out of sight” (Narayan, 1993). Ethnographic field experiences have shown that data are mediated by the researcher's relations with the research participants (Choi, 2006). Data are not only mediated by social categories such as age, gender, class, and education background but also by ‘invisible positioning’ such as the researcher’s hunches, preconceptions, prejudices, cultural beliefs, theoretical predispositions and common sense (Choi, 2006, pp. 446). It is hard to divorce research from the researchers’ position. While preparing to go to the field, the researcher was aware that these issues would arise but he could not tell how they would exactly play out and to what extent.

3.10 The research assistants as co-researchers

When you are new in a place, it takes time to integrate, regardless of your social and interpersonal skills. Coming into Ndia and Ndaini areas as an outsider, the researcher needed someone who would help to integrate with the community as soon as possible, given the little time there was to do the fieldwork. The researcher was blessed that he had friends from the areas who in turn introduced him research assistants, Mr. Wanjohi and Mr Ngeno respectively.

The research assistants proved to be very helpful throughout the study. Not only did they understand the area, but they were also outgoing persons and therefore had good relationship with the residents. During the fieldwork, they played an important role during the actual
contact with the people. When we started doing the preliminary interviews and administering questionnaires, the most important part was doing the introduction. Introducing myself to the people, telling them who I was, what I was doing, and why I was doing it did not appear to be a big task for me before the actual process began, but I learned otherwise afterwards. In the very first interactions, I sought to explain my mission, using language such as “research” and the need to write a final “thesis” or “dissertation” before I can “graduate” from my program. I also had to tell my respondents that I was not representing any radio station, something that seemed hard for them to understand. They wondered what help it would be for someone to just go and collect data on radio without directly dealing with the radio stations.

My research assistant quickly sensed the challenges I was facing and took over the introduction part. Because I was not necessarily their neighbour, the informants responded to me by proxy. They were also able to break things down to the language and concepts that people in the rural area understand. For instance, they knew that students or trainees are sent on field attachments because they have seen teachers, agricultural extension officers, and nurses, doing their attachment in the area and interacted with them. This experience however presents an ethical dilemma of a kind regarding the researcher’s mission disclosure. It also brings out the possible incongruence between the ethical principles as we view them before going to the field and the actual practical experiences that one is likely to encounter. As much as I wanted to disclose what I was doing to the people in the greatest details, it was not possible to do so without using the language of the academy. But this could only be done in lay language whose concepts and meanings are not exactly the same. In most cases, people were not very interested with the details at all. Although we always tried to obtain verbal informed consent before administering the questionnaires, doing formal interviews or conducting FGDs, the respondents were unconcerned. They would brush it aside with
statements like “you just go ahead: I have known Mr. Wanjohi or Mr Ngeno (the researcher assistants) for many years.” Others were just excited that they would be tape recorded.

Research assistants definitely made the work easier for the researcher and facilitated interactions. However, research assistants did not participate in all the processes in order to minimize their influence on data. During the FGDs, the research assistant did not sit in the group. In some places, he was needed for introductions but left when the actual discussion started.

This was the same experience I had in Ndanai. I know the area very well having been born, brought up and schooled in the Kericho County. I am also well versed in Kipsigis culture and language with many of my former classmates in high school having their homes in Ndanai as primary or secondary school teachers, nurses, civil servants or in other capacities. Local language stations’ reporters in the field who I was introduced to by senior editors and producers in Nairobi proved very helpful. They quickly identified informants and helped to form FGDs and led them just like was the case in Ndia.

3.11 Specific Data Collection Methods

This study used an ethnographic approach, where different methods were used to collect data on radio consumption in Ndia and Ndanai areas. According to Drotner (1994), media ethnography draws on a variety of classical anthropological and ethnological methods of investigation: participant observation, informal talks and in-depth or life course interviews, diaries kept by the informants as well as self-reports kept by the researcher. In addition, he or she may apply textual analysis of, for example, selected television programs, musical scores or magazines genres (Quoted in La Pastina, 2005, para. 16). Specific methods used are questionnaires, interviews, observation, discussion groups. (Murphy, 1999) document analysis and content analysis. These methods are discussed in detail in the following section.
3.11.1 Questionnaires

There is limited information on the details of radio listening among the rural audiences in Kenya. The closest information that is available on radio listening is the quarterly media monitoring data that is provided by Synovate Company. The Synovate data is however too generalized and deals with a very small sample. Synovate’s reports provide highlights that include the popular stations in areas such as Central Kenya and Rift region and which programs are listened to. To get a better understanding of individual radio listening choices, questionnaires were administered to 108 randomly selected listeners through house-to-house visits in three sites in Ndia and Ndanai: Ogachiku, Onchiru and Githuaini and Abosi, Kamungeno, and Kapkisembe respectively. The decision to use questionnaires was taken once the researcher arrived in the field. The initial idea was to use preliminary interviews to get the overview of radio listening and use of other media. Due to time limitations, it was difficult to carry out comprehensive preliminary interviews as originally planned. To administer the questionnaires, several different homes were visited to find respondents. I also sought individuals at different locations such as shopping centers. Both the researcher and a research assistant filled in the questionnaires.

The questionnaires were used to gauge important audience patterns. Important population information included the language proficiency among the listeners, the level of education, occupation and household size. The questionnaire also focused on different areas of radio listening and media use. They sought data such as household and individual ownership and use of televisions, mobile phones and fixed telephones. Establishing the ownership of different media devices was important in order to compare their use and influence on radio listening. Also, mobile phones were found to complement some aspect of radio listening, such as participation by giving the audience a means to interact with the broadcasters. The listeners were also asked about newspaper access, how often they bought them, and where
they obtained them to read if they did not buy them. The energy used to power the radio was captured in the questionnaire which revealed the sources of energy that are available to listeners in Ndia and Ndanai. Availability of energy is important in determining the time spent listening to the radio. These issues were probed further during interviews and FGDs. Specific information regarding individual radio listening was sought using the questionnaires. The number of hours that people spent listening to the radio during the weekdays and weekends, the specific stations listened to in the past seven days, favourite stations, the reasons for preferences and specific programs were all captured. In ethnographic research, these kinds of questions do not tell much about audiences’ everyday radio consumption. However, such information gives the researchers different pointers on the issues to delve into. The questionnaire information was immediately tabulated with a preliminary analysis.

3.11.2 Interviews

A total of 30 interviews were carried out in each site, 24 with the villagers and 6 with field local language correspondents who were used for comparative purposes in each research site. The interactional nature of interviews allowed the researcher to have a dialogue at the research sites. This involved one-to-one dialogue with an individual or a number of individuals. Among the rural audience in Ndia and Ndanai, I took advantage of the informal style of interviews because they have an appearance of face-to-face conversation or discussion as opposed to formal question and answer format. People in rural Kenya are generally sociable and tend to be uncomfortable in formal situations. Formality can restrict the level of interaction and people’s willingness to participate thereby limiting quantity of data that can be obtained. Interviews allow the researcher to do follow-ups on issues that arise as well as probe when there is a need to get into depth on an issue. In interviewing different individuals, I was able to focus on different specific details relevant to each individual.
Interviews allowed me to build relationships with people which were important for collection of data. Interviews provided a good starting point in an area that I was not very familiar with. I used three interviewing methods: preliminary interviews, conversation interviews and in-depth interviews to generate different kinds of information.

3.11.3 Semi-structured preliminary interviews

Semi-structured preliminary interviews were used to elicit panoramic understanding of radio listening by the audience (Murphy, 1999). Initially, I had planned to employ structured interviews using a pre-designed interview protocol to conduct interviews lasting approximately 20 minutes, preferably in a household setting. After arriving at the research sites, I realized that being new, it was important to make sure that I provided a more relaxed environment when trying to elicit information from the people. I did, however, maintain the goals of the preliminary interviews to have a better understanding of the status of radio ownership among individuals and families. To establish what channels are received in the area, individual radio listening patterns such as what channels are generally preferred and by whom, and what content is on the channels that are listened to, the interviews proved to be very informative. In addition, the panoramic information included exploration of the prevalence of other media devices such as televisions and mobile phones among the listeners because they are likely to affect the use of the radio.

The preliminary interviews were designed to capture a diverse segment of listeners in terms of age, gender, and education background. These interviews were conducted at different locations such as homes, shopping centers, markets, in public vehicles, and other social places such as restaurants. During my first visit to Ndia and Ndanai, my friend(s) from the area accompanied me so that he could introduce me to people. After such conversations, I would take notes. Due to the unstructured nature, the length of these interviews differed from
person to person. They were, however, important because they provided highlights of
audiences’ radio listening practices. They could be conducted anywhere, which allowed me
to interview different kinds of people. Preliminary interviews formed the foundation for other
data collection methods. They presented pointers to radio listening behaviours and routines.

3.11.4 Semi-structured conversational interviews

Semi-structured *conversational interviews* with different listeners derived ideas and
information from preliminary interviews, the questionnaires, observations and at times, the
FGDs. These interviews assumed different forms. Sometimes, they were loose, less
scheduled in approach and informal (Murphy, 1999). At other times, they were scheduled and
conducted in formally.

Conversational interviews lasted between 20-45 minutes long. Initially, I had thought that the
conversational interviews would follow a linear order; that they would occur immediately
after the preliminary interviews. However, I ended up using them at different points of the
fieldwork as they proved to be a useful avenue to conduct an in-depth look at various issues
based on the primary research questions. Conversational interviews were helpful in getting
deeper explanations of different issues that come out at different times and using different
methods. For instance, while filling the questionnaires, some listeners would stress one
particular issue in their patterns of consumption of radio. When such points became
common, I would take an opportunity and have a conversation that revolved around it. For
example, religion became a common issue that I had not anticipated throughout my proposal
writing. It emerged that the LLR has huge chunks of religious content and some listeners
specifically sought out this content. Conversational interviews were used to follow-up such
emerging issues. For instance, after administering a questionnaire to one middle-aged
woman, I had a conversational interview with her that focused on the question of religious
content on the radio as well as her religious beliefs and how this blended with her radio listening habits.

During some FGDs, I would notice some participants who demonstrated a deeper understanding on some issues. Some would not only mention a phenomenon but would give a deeper explanation of what they viewed as causes of the same. After the focus group, I would use a conversational interview with the individual to help me deconstruct some of the issues that were raised or discussed. In one discussion with the young people at Sagana, many discussants argued that the local language stations are boring. One of them however, followed a different route and tried to explain why his colleagues had what he called a "twisted view". After the discussion, I invited him for a drink and we had a deeper discussion of the same topic and other issues that are particular to the Kĩine area. Conversational interviews helped me to concentrate on the emerging issues and identify informative sources. They also allowed me to react to those issues immediately and utilize the information sources that were available. They are also representative and diverse and were conducted in a relaxed manner, which made respondents comfortable.

3.11.5 In-depth interviews

Structured in-depth interviews were conducted on a few individual listeners and on radio programme producers. An in-depth interview allows person-to-person discussion. The interviews with the broadcasters went beyond the main emphasis of this research on the listener's perspectives. It was important to have an understanding from the broadcasters' perspective as they make key decisions that affect what audiences receive. Broadcasters decide what content is broadcast based on different criteria that include economic concerns, laws and regulations, and audience choices, among others. They are also constantly in touch with listeners. Using in-depth interviews to gather information from the radio broadcasters
shed light on all these issues. The interviews with the broadcasters were semi-structured where I used some predetermined questions but also dealt with other issues that are specific to the radio station I was discussing. Informants were encouraged to talk at length about their radio station.

The in-depth interviews with the broadcasters were conducted after the fieldwork with the listeners. This strategy was adopted so that listeners' preliminary information would be used to identify the radio stations and programs that are popular. Out of the field research, a total of twelve radio stations were identified as the "most listened to stations" in Ndia and Ndanai area. These stations were diverse and ranged from urban inclined English and Kiswahili FM stations, Kikuyu local language stations, Kalenjin local language stations and national mainstream stations. All these stations are based in Nairobi. The broadcasters' interviews in general were more difficult to schedule but this differed from station to station. Out of the twelve stations, three are under the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation, two apiece are owned by Royal Media and Media Holdings respectively. The remaining five are private individual entities.

Out of the twelve stations identified, I was able to interview ten broadcasters' representatives. I interviewed five station heads, two assistant station heads, one operational manager, three producers and three presenters. The interviews lasted an hour each. Generally, the more aggressive and competitive the station is, the more responsive the representatives are. Conservative stations such as those run by KBC had shorter interviews, while their counterparts were very aggressive and also tried to market their stations during the interviews. Some representatives were more willing to provide extra information voluntarily. Generally, the representatives were helpful and would share materials that I requested such as program line-ups. Some even went as far as recording some of the programs I requested. The in-depth interviews with the representatives were important in bridging the details gap
between the content broadcasted and what the listeners receive. They helped to explain the reasoning behind some decisions such as inclusion or absence of different kinds of programs in the radio broadcasting. These interviews with the broadcasters' representatives allowed me to compare how they perceive the audiences versus the audiences' actual experience.

### 3.11.6 Observational Methods

A large part of data collection involved the use of observational methods, either as a participant-observer or just an observer. Mason (2004) notes that observation method is not limited to the process and technique of observance, it is also a social interaction process. One is "variously involved in observing, participating, interrogating, listening, communicating as well as a range of other forms of being, doing and thinking (p. 87)" in the fieldwork setting. The role of the researcher is less clear-cut than in other methods, such as interviewing and involves processes of negotiation and renegotiation. Participant observation allowed the researcher to examine radio listening in different social settings. In the domestic setting, it allowed me to see how people listen to the radio at home and how the construction of a family affects or relates to radio listening. In Ndia and Ndanai, like in many other places in Kenya, radio is ubiquitous in small businesses such as local kiosks, hair salons, and shops. Through participant observation, these types of social settings were accessed. In the observational process, the sites were not viewed in isolation. While observational settings were very significant for this study, some interactions of interest that are related to radio occur "outside" the settings. Different orientations, motivations, cultural rules, norms or discourses may emanate from elsewhere. In this regard, patterns of radio consumption are also influenced by the broadcasters' decisions on formats and content. The outcomes of such decisions have to be interlinked through observing the listeners as well as understanding the
broadcasters' viewpoints. Also, the processes that are happening in the country at large affect people at the local levels.

Observations were therefore not limited to what was happening in Ndia and Ndanai areas but what was also happening in rural Kenya. At the same time, The researcher went to the field aware of what I was going to observe. For observational sites to be productive grounds, the research was selective on what to note from the observation. Not every observation experience yielded data for the study and time in the field had to be used in a focused way. What was being observed was linked with the research questions and other sub-questions in the research. For instance, by observing the number of people in the shopping center, I noted that always there were more men than women. By the evening, shopping centers were almost exclusively populated by men. In asking questions regarding the use of media such as television, I found higher access to television among men was mostly explained by the fact that they watched television in public places like the bars and restaurants in the evening. Such observation is important in answering the questions on differences in overall media consumption which narrows down to varying patterns of radio listening between men and women and provides a possible explanation of such differences.

In turning the observations into data, field notes were extensively used. The field notes that form data of this research include detailed descriptions of what was happening, discussion of my own feelings and impressions, and my own analytical ideas. Where possible, field notes were written on-site. In most cases, field notes were written at the end of the day. In addition to field notes, I had initially intended to take photographs but I realized that carrying a digital camera would disrupt the research process. It would represent me as a “tourist” and cement people’s view of me as an outsider.
3.11.7 Field Notes

Field notes were recorded by the researcher in the course of field work. They were used to document information that was not captured by the rest of the research methods. They were used to record profiles of the respondents as well as emergent analytical threads such as themes, hunches, ideas, propositions and so forth. The notes also collated information regarding the surroundings, scenario and the atmosphere that pervaded in data collection, whether tranquil or troublesome. For instance, field notes recorded information on the rough terrain of some villages, data collection which was done in darkness at night or occasional interruptions. The notes proved handy in entering snippets of observations, for example during interviews, in readiness for later clarification, instead of bothering the speaker with incessant interruptions. There is need to note that field notes were the second method used on local language correspondents also, besides the interviews. In short, field notes proved an invaluable research method because it was difficult to register and recall all that transpired during data collection, thereby providing an important recollection and retrieval system of the gathered materials.

3.11.8 Focused group discussions

FGDs were conducted with informants from three locations in Ndia and three others in Ndanai sites. These groups brought together different people who were selected based on their age and gender. One FGD was however conducted with a group of teachers. Initially, I expected to organize the groups into male and female young adults and male and female adults. The young adults were viewed as those who are aged 18 - 30 years while those who are aged over 30 years would belong to the adult groups. However, my initial experiences led me to alter the groups because the classification appeared too general. During the preliminary interviews and filling the questionnaires, there were identifiable differences that were not
based on age but other factors such as marital status. Thus, a married twenty year old man might have a very different radio listening pattern from his single counterpart because he has to incorporate his wife in the process. At the same time, young married couples were likely to have different patterns of consumption of radio from older married couples. Older couples, for instance, would have to incorporate their grown-up children while young couples with young children did not have to include them in their radio listening. In addition to the four segment groups that took into account the age and the gender of participants, the marital status variable was added leading to six segments.

The first grouping comprised the young people starting from 18 years, divided into male and female segments. In the men young adult groups, participants were as young as 18 years and as old as 30 years. These groups in Kiangwache and Karima in Ndia were made up of young men who were single. Most of them lived alone or with their families. In Kibigothi shopping centre town, most of them were working as businessmen and assistants in the small businesses in the town. In Karima, most participants were out of school waiting to go to college while others were working as teachers or casual laborers but they stayed with their parents or relatives. In Sagana, some were working as mechanics and farmers, while others were unemployed. The young women segment was made up of girls aged from 18 years to 25. In the two locations of Ndia, especially in the urban centres, many of the girls worked as hairdressers, a very common occupation with young women. In these groups, some of the girls were single mothers but all were staying with their parents. In Ndanai, the situation was the reverse. It was difficult to find young single mothers staying with their parents. I therefore ended up interviewing unmarried young women in their twenties who were in college or had just finished tertiary training. The men were easy to find. They were to be found in trading centres, while some were shopkeepers, mechanics, or small scale traders.
The second grouping comprised men and women who were married but did not have grown up children. A discussion group of married men was conducted in Kiangwache of Ndia with participants aged 27 – 37 years of age. Most participants had children aged below ten years. The women group in Kiangwache had participants aged between 22 and 32 years old while Sagana participants were aged 30 to 42 years old. In Ndai, participants of the married men discussion group had children below 7 years, with most aged between 25-31 years while women group discussion at Abosi was aged between 28-38. The last groupings took into account middle aged and older adults. In Sagana town, it was not possible to organize older population since they are rarely found in town unless, they are busy attending to some task and will usually go back home just as it was at Ndai town. This group was therefore easy to find elsewhere such as the farm areas. However, both women and men groups were organized in Kiangwache and Sagana. Participants were aged between 45 and 85 years. In addition to these groups, one discussion was held with teachers of a primary school in Kiangwache andat Ndai secondary school. In the Kiangwache and Abosi areas which are populated by people who are mainly farmers, they use their farms whose average size is five hectares for farming. The population density is low. People who may not own land either rent one or live with their family or friends. In the group, there were ten women and one man which is the whole staff excluding the school head who sat out of the group.

Gender, age and marital status stratification helped in characterising focus groups. It allowed me to obtain key information that relates to specific group dynamics. In all the groups, I acted as the moderator, using the interview guide. Due to the need to have people at the same location, the discussants were recruited mainly from one area.

Also, every group had their own modalities in the recruitment and interviewing places. The timing and place of the interview were important and determined whether we would succeed in organizing the groups or not. In the village setting such as Karima, my research assistant
used word of mouth to gather residents in one home. For instance, groups of the married women and married men were held at his house. In organizing the groups, male groups in Kiangwache were held in the evenings. The young men were interviewed in a small shop where they like to gather every evening. They had to be interviewed after work, around 7:00 pm. The married men were interviewed starting 8:00 pm because most of them work far away. The older men were interviewed at a neutral open space near a local shop after most of them had come from the grazing field. Older men would not agree to go to somebody’s home for the interviews. It was easy to recruit some informants when it came to a town like Kibigothi.

However, not all segments of the population were found here. Young men and women were easily found in town, while older population was hard to find. It was easy to organize an acceptable venue for men. They could sit in a bar, a restaurant or any open space. Women on the other hand, were picky and avoided public places. They had to be interviewed privately in a home. The informants were given some incentives for participation. For the group that was held in Kibigothi town, the participants were not keen on incentives; buying soft drinks was enough. In the villages near Kiangwache shopping centre and Sagana town, participants were keener on monetary incentives. However, this is understandable because most participants in the town are employed while those in the farms are not likely to have constant source of income. They are therefore likely to be interested in money. Having a research assistant who knew the people facilitated easier organization of the groups. In places where he did not know the people, we used local people to identify and convince people to participate, a strategy that also worked. Table (1) shows the classification of participants in FGDs.
Table 1: Classification of participants in FGDs in Ndia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>No.of participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Karima</td>
<td>All unmarried</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kibigochi</td>
<td>All married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Kiangwache</td>
<td>6 married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Karima</td>
<td>All married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Sagana</td>
<td>5 married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kariti</td>
<td>4 married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kangochi</td>
<td>All married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Classification of participants in FGDs in Ndanai.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>No.of participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Abosi</td>
<td>All married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Lelechewet</td>
<td>5 married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Chesonoi</td>
<td>6 married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tiriya Tabmoita</td>
<td>All married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Kipsingei</td>
<td>All married</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kamungeno</td>
<td>All married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Kapksemebe</td>
<td>3 married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.11.9 Document analysis

There are various documents that are produced in the media industry. These documents provide relevant elements of the radio industry in Kenya. Broadcaster’s decisions are widely shaped by outcomes of media monitoring surveys, which are conducted by Synovate. I have relied on Synovate’s quarterly monitoring report to keep up with the fast changing media industry in Kenya. The reports are one of the most up-to-date sources of information on the number of radio stations in the country.

The media reports also provide information on which radio stations are popular in different areas of the country. In a place where the media have become highly segmented, the media diaries are helpful because they capture all the radio stations in all regions and therefore provide a quick map on what is happening nationally. Media monitoring reports also provide the broadcasters with an overview of the radio industry performances for every radio station, demographic data of the audiences and provides information to individual broadcasters about their competitors. From my conversations with radio executives, the monitoring findings are the broadcasters’ report card. Absence of other alternative sources of information in Kenya has left Synovate’s reports as the most credible source of information on broadcast media.

There are also reports which document the household ownership of radio, its usage and general media issues which are contained in reports by Kenya Demographic Health Surveys, and the Kenya Population Census reports (KNBS report, 2009) which proved very helpful in sorting out my research sites’ issues, location boundaries, and other demographic issues central to this research.

However, I am aware of the epistemological and methodological divergence between audience ethnographic research on one hand and the traditional market research on the other. Synovate’s data are an example of market research. My use of market information does not go beyond pointers such as where different radio stations are popularly listened to. The
reports are also central to understanding the broadcasters' perspectives and the basis of some of their decisions and getting a current appraisal on the Kenyan radio history. Examining the previous reports has enabled me to follow the progression of the radio industry in Kenya over the years.

Internal documents that were available from the broadcasters such as present and future business plans, programming schedules, and advertising costs, among others revealed business decisions and responses to different audience needs. These documents could not be obtained from all radio stations because of bureaucratic reasons. Also, there are differences in the details available from what I obtained. My aim was to get as much information as possible and therefore worked with whatever I could get. I also made extensive use of newspaper articles that discuss past and present issues in and on the media as well as different opinions. For instance, the debate on the role of LLR stations in the Post-Election Violence in January 2008 has been widely documented in the print media in Kenya. Newspaper articles from different media houses were used to follow this debate.

3.12 Data Organisation

Several steps were taken after fieldwork was completed. With regard to the interviews and FGDs; there was transcription of the data. This was done by replaying the interviews, which were already stored on the computer and typesetting them word for word. The transcription concentrated on words and avoided suprasegmental materials like pauses, intonations or laughter, because they were not considered necessary going by the study objectives and research questions. Storage was done sequentially, starting from the first interview to the last. Each set of data was identified just in the course of its generation and allied as per its type. To this end, there were interviews, face to face interviews, participant observations, and in-depth interview notes. Each set was headed with an abbreviated name of the respondent, the site or
the village, and the date of collection. The data was then filed in five different folders with respect to its type. Formatting and filing proved handy in data retrieval, especially in the stage of familiarisation, in which all the data were studied and reviewed several times. However, raw interviews remained stored on the computer and could be retrieved whenever necessary for review. This arrangement helped in the coding of features that were prominent in each data type, before comparing and contrasting them.

In the phase of familiarisation, memoing and summaries were made at the margins in readiness for the main analysis. There was also cross-referencing of information in such a way that one file could show where similar information could be found in a different file. The annotations captured an overview of the data by highlighting both the nitty-gritty issues of the study in the form of themes, suggestions, propositions, ideas, hunches and so forth. Memoing helped in corroborating evidence and in drawing a rough trajectory of the direction that the results were likely to take. Through repeated study of the data, it was possible to garner some early insights, impressions and intuitions as was mentioned earlier in the section of research methods.

In preparation for the main analysis, summary charts were drawn for some types of data. Miles and Huberman (1994), state that data summary charts expedite analysis as they allow the analyst to capture several characteristics of the data in a single display. The charts were drawn and entries of the main features of the data were made on them. For example, in the case of the interviews, there were segments for the serial numbers, anonymisation, the type of data, the time it took to collect it and the village of respondents. There were also dockets for demographic information of respondents in regard to occupation, gender, level of education and age.

The charts provided an invaluable overview of all the characteristics of the data. They helped in highlighting the categories in which different types of data were considered or left out.
They also offered key to codes and abbreviations which stood for words which could not be captured as a result of spatial constraints. Besides providing summarised overviews and ideations about the whole data, the charts also proved helpful in the retrieval of all types of data, especially in cross-referencing.

3.13 Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed ethnographic methodology and approach used in data collection among listeners in rural Kenya. I have discussed the research sites, Ndia and Ndanai in the Central and Rift Valley regions of Kenya respectively and the population that inhabits the area. Ndia and Ndanai areas were selected as the research sites due to their rural setting that is characterized by factors such as limited infrastructural development and dependence on agriculture. The area receives a sizeable number of radio signals from different stations broadcasting from Kenyan capital Nairobi. Data was collected in two locations in Ndia and Ndanai each that provided different population dimensions. The chapter has also addressed the researcher’s position in the field and negotiation of these positions during the fieldwork. I also discussed the role of my research assistants as co-researchers.

The last part of the chapter has discussed in detail the research methods used. These methods include questionnaires, interviews, FGDs, observation, document analysis and content analysis. The methods have produced a wide range of data. Questionnaires and interviews yielded data on different dimensions of individual’s media and radio use. As the following chapters will show, people in rural Kenya depend on radio for most of their informational needs. Other media forms such as newspapers and television are only accessed by a small section of the population.

Listeners in rural Kenya have a wide range of stations and content preferences that vary depending on factors such as age and education level. Interviews with broadcasters provided data that helped me to relate the content that is sent to audiences and how they receive, use
and interpret it. FGDs were used to elicit a different type of information, some of which was hard to get individually. Information on taboo and muted subjects for instance, needed a form of group assurance for people to open up. Observational methods yielded some of the most important data as they provide information that helps in understanding the peoples’ ways of life in rural Kenya. By observing and participating in everyday interactions, various relational aspects could be noted. For instance, the gender relations and division of labour in a domestic context were observed when I spent time with families. These are important in analysing how patterns of radio consumption relate to the culture of the listeners. Different methods complement and reinforce one another, allowing for a multifaceted consideration of the issues that emerged.
CHAPTER FOUR

PATTERNS OF PRODUCTION OF RADIO PROGRAMMES

4.0: Introduction

In chapter three, methodology which was used in collecting data about the patterns of production and consumption of radio in Ndia and Ndanai areas of rural Kenya is examined. The multiple uses of radio are facilitated by the ability of the broadcasters to communicate using the content they transmit to the listeners. There are a variety of radio stations at listeners’ disposal at any given time to choose from. In this chapter I take a closer look at Kenyan radio stations’ programming format and content and how this renders itself in audiences’ patterns of listening. The first part identifies the programming formats, program content and presentation styles of the most listened to radio stations in the two areas of rural Kenya.

Three categories of formats (the traditional, the local language and the urban format) are identified. The next section examines the consumption patterns of radio messages reported by audiences in rural Kenya. From the findings, patterns of radio listening emerge in different times of the day. This chapter also examines the time spent listening to the radio during the weekdays and during the weekend and compares audiences across age, gender and education levels. Finally, the chapter examines the content and program choices that were reported by listeners. Using research data captured, I compare the Central Kenya’s Ndia area audiences’ patterns of listening with those found in Rift Valley’s Ndanai area.

Radio stations in Kenya have different programming formats and content based on their target audience. The program format and content of the 12 most listened to radio stations in rural Kenya that were identified in this research can be grouped into three categories that largely depend on the type of station. I use the terms traditional format, local language format, and urban format to categorize the programming. The formats are characterized by
the type of content that is found on these stations and their timings every day. The stations’ programming content includes information, education, and entertainment and varies in emphasis and proportion. The traditional format emphasizes education and information content while the urban format stresses entertainment.

Local language stations balance the three different types of content. The content presentations and delivery also differ. The local language format uses local languages and includes large proportions of locally generated content as opposed to urban format that uses English language for presentation and has a high amount of foreign content. Urban and local language formats use strong personalities strategically placed during the prime time periods. There are minor differences between radio stations that use the same programming format mainly based on the content specificity. For example, in urban format the dominant entertainment content is music but the type of music played on different stations varies widely based on genre and place of origin.

4.1 The traditional Format

The traditional format is found on the national stations. These stations have a wide reach and appeal to a general population. There are three stations that fit into this category: KBC English, KBC Swahili and Radio Citizen. In the traditional format, there is more information and education content and less entertainment. Because of their wide appeal, there are higher instances of content mixing as these stations try to cater for various tastes and preferences.

A typical hour of broadcasting may comprise 15 minutes of announcements, 15 minutes of music, and 15 minutes of an educational program and another 15 minutes of music. Radio stations that follow the traditional BS seem to derive their popularity from the relevance of the content they broadcast, which usually cut across the population. They also rely less on the station’s personality popularity with the listeners. This is particularly true with the KBC
stations which have a high presenter turnover due to lack of financial muscle, compared to the private radio stations. KBC also appears comfortable with their role as the training ground for Kenyan broadcasters in addition to its broadcasting mandate and therefore has shown less effort in trying to retain their personnel.

KBC English service is an education and information station. The station devotes most of its weekday daytime hours airing broadcasting to school programs which takes up to 60 per cent of the airtime during the week. The rest of the time is divided between information programs and a small portion for entertainment. For KBC Kiswahili programs, 60 per cent of content is information and education while 30 per cent is entertainment. However, KBC Swahili format is somewhat unpredictable due to its responsibility in broadcasting government related content. The station runs live broadcasts of state functions and Parliamentary proceedings during its daytime programming. However, Kenya’s Parliament only sits for three days a week when it is in session. This leaves the slots open when it is on recess and also makes it difficult for the station to arrange for a long-term programming schedule. There are also various government functions which do not follow a specific program and at times the station does not get adequate notice of upcoming events.

The two state public broadcasters, KBC English and KBC Kiswahili, have a closely similar program format in their daily broadcasting. The first session is the morning show that runs between 5:00am and 9:00am. This session consists of music with tips on health, education, and fashion and a review of the daily newspapers. There are news briefs and full bulletins at 7:00am and 9:00am, sports news and weather forecasts for the day. The two stations also have game shows where listeners participate through call-ins and short messaging (SMS). There are also local celebrities who are in studio to spice up the morning with their own interpretations of events happening in the country.
When schools are in session, KBC English Service transmits broadcasts to school from 8:45am until 12:30pm. Next, a one-and-a-half hour interlude is filled by music and a 15 minute news bulletin at 1:00pm, followed by announcements and music. The broadcasts to school resume at 2:00pm to 4:00pm and then from 5:00pm to 5:30pm. When schools are on holiday, the mid-morning sessions run between 9:00am and 12:00pm and content includes African music from the 1980s to the present, chat on continental news, views and events as well as debates on African culture. Between 2:00pm and 4:00pm is a music segment when the schools are not in session. The afternoon session between 4:00pm and 7:00pm is a musical presentation starting with a two hour fast-paced music followed by an hour of slow music. The evening session between 7:00pm and 10:00pm has a 15-minute news bulletin at 7:00pm and 9:00pm, announcements and feature programs interspersed with music. The China Feed programs run from 7:30 to 8:30. The late night program runs between 10:00pm and 12:00am and features slow tempo romantic music with limited dedications, love messages and inspiration. Listeners make calls and send short messages, some of which are read by the presenters.

The weekend programming is dominated by music and feature programs. KBC Kiswahili content in the midmorning between 9:00am and 12:00pm is dominated by music. There is a 15-minute news bulletin at 9:00am and news headlines at every top of the hour. The early afternoon session runs between 12:00pm and 2:00pm and consists of music from East Africa, celebrity gossip and the East African top ten count-down. There are also discussions that center on business, education, touring opportunities, people, culture, patterns and lifestyles in the East African region. There is a salaams session where listeners send greetings which are read on air. The late afternoon session between 2:00pm and 7:00pm continues with music with emphasis on genres such as taarab and reggae. The session also includes a presenter-
driven talk show that focuses on social issues interspersed with traffic updates, news highlights and business tips ending with one hour of uninterrupted easy listening music.

The evening session between 7:00pm and 10:00pm consists of information and feature programs on topical issues in health, education, environment, economic empowerment, and gender issues. There is a complete news bulletin at 9:00pm followed by station productions, current affairs news, parliamentary report, business and sports, interspersed with music and promotions. The late night program between 10:00pm and midnight is interactive, addressing relationship issues, promos, and station indents capped by an hour of slow music until at midnight. Radio Citizen is the only commercial station that has a traditional format and that reaches most parts of the country. The station has over 80 per cent information and educational content and 20 per cent entertainment, with news broadcasts at every top of the hour around the clock and numerous informational programs, usually paid for by the advertisers. It is the only station in Kenya that has presenters around the clock. Unlike KBC, Radio Citizen is not bound by state obligations, but has taken it upon itself to broadcast events of national interest whenever they can access them. Radio Citizen also broadcasts programs with huge demand such as international soccer matches.

4.2 The local language format

The local language format identified in this research is found in the Kikuyu and Kalenjin radio stations. These stations carry content that can be termed as all-inclusive and balanced between information, education, and entertainment. This kind of programming is common on Kikuyu and Kalenjin local language stations that include Bahasha FM, Coro FM, Inooro FM, Kameme FM, Kass FM and Chamget FM. The stations have longer sessions than those found in the national stations owing to the inclusion of wide range of content. The programs in
these stations are arranged to compete with other local language stations hence they are highly similar.

The local language stations open at 5:00am, playing Christian inspirational music until 6:00am when the news headlines are read. During this hour, listeners also call in to send early morning greetings and dedications. The morning show falls between 6:00am and 9:00am and is one of the most important segments. Morning shows on the Kikuyu and Kalenjin stations consist of information in the form of news briefs at the top of the hour and a full news bulletin at 7:00am. With the exception of Bahasha FM, the Kikuyu and Kalenjin local language stations feature a comedian in the morning who co-presents with the main presenter.

Morning shows in all radio stations using Kiswahili as the language of broadcasting feature a presenter with a well-known comedian who entertains the audience with antics about happenings in the country's political, social, and economic issues. The morning content includes music, talk, review of the major newspapers top stories, and constant traffic updates. Because the morning shows attract higher sponsorship from advertisers, there are various sponsored games where listeners call in to win money and other prizes.

The midmorning show falls between 9:00am and 12:00pm. This is a slow session with music, discussions on social issues, and informational programs on education, health, and agriculture. There is a complete news bulletin at 9:00am and news briefs at the top of every hour. The period between 12:00pm and 2:00pm is slow-paced and dominated by music with a full news bulletin at 1:00pm. The midmorning and the early afternoon sessions on Kikuyu and Kalenjin local language stations are generally slow tempo and are presented by less prominent presenters. The afternoon session starts at 2:00pm and runs until 7:00pm and generally features prominent broadcasters. On Kiswahili radio stations, the midmorning and the early afternoon sessions are generally slow tempo and are presented by young presenters who discuss social issues with a political touch. For example, at QFM, one of the fastest growing
Kiswahili radio stations which started operating three years ago targeting the rural folk and the urban poor, the focus is talk. As head of News at QFM, Chrispus Yankem explained, mid-morning sessions are geared towards discussions on social issues:

Besides that, [hard news], human interest features make part of the programming. At the moment QFM is the only radio station in the country that has talk show that runs for four straight hours uninterrupted—ie this is a dry talkshow without any music. During this show that airs daily from 9.30am to 1pm various issue that affect the target audience are discussed.

The afternoon segment starts with slow tempo programming playing music fused with presenter-guided talk and starts to pick up after the 4:00pm complete news bulletin. The session after 4:00pm has more talk and game shows where listeners call in to win prizes, as well as constant traffic updates because of proximity to Nairobi where they have a sizeable audience. The evening session runs between 7:00pm and 10:00pm. This segment is dominated by informational and educational programs. It also includes news, announcements, and feature programs on health, agriculture, economic, gender issues, and environment. Chrispus Yankem explains that though QFM it has various shows, the most popular program on QFM is Tabaradi. This is an evening show that kicks off at 4pm to 8pm featuring music, light humor, gameshows and discussions on social issues. The show has grown within a very short time owing to what he calls “the lively presentation and comedy that comes with it. The presenters are also engaging and do not seem to be at work but guys just having fun. The co-presenter who is a comedian is also funny. His jokes revolve around daily happenings.”

Local language radio stations have death and funeral announcements that run in two sessions, usually between 7:00pm and 8:00pm and between 9:00pm and 10:00pm. The late night shows run between 10:00pm and 1:00am and include slow music, romantic dedications and discussion topics mainly on relationships with contributions through telephone calls from
listeners. Late night shows are the last programs that are presented live. Because the stations operate for 24 hours, the stations play non-stop music between 1:00am and 5:00am when the stations open.

4.3 The urban format

The urban format is found in the English urban FM stations which are entertainment oriented. Urban stations’ dominant content is music played around the clock. As discussed in this chapter, the urban English FM stations have a very carefully designed program content and format that is aimed at maintaining their competitiveness in the radio industry. In the recent past, the market share of the urban stations has been shrinking as more players join the market. The urban English FM stations include Capital FM, Classic FM, Easy FM, Kiss FM, and Metro FM. Music programming forms the main content of these stations, interspersed with talk shows, short news on politics, sports, and business. They also feature health and beauty tips. New Stations like Relax 103.5 FM Play music uninterrupted through the day and night. Like in the local language format, the sessions on the urban radio tend to be divided into longer blocks of at least four hours.

On-air presenter programming starts at 5:00am with an hour session of uninterrupted music until 6:00am. An important aspect of urban stations’ programming is the level of emphasis they put on the morning show which runs between 6:00am and 10:00am and the afternoon show from 2:00pm and 7:00pm. The urban radio competition is intense in these two segments and capturing the early morning and afternoon audience is very important for entrenchment in the market. The morning shows are presented by the most popular presenters and a comedian. They include a review of daily newspapers, weather forecasts, politics, sports and business news and traffic updates in Nairobi. Lately, urban FM stations are providing eyewitness traffic reports for different parts of the city, mainly the busy spots, to keep listeners
updated on what is happening on the roads. Lately, the stations have been encouraging motorists to send in text messages or call to give information about the traffic situation where they are. The morning session is a staple for advertisers and therefore heavily features sponsored games and give-away competitions. Using the main presenter and the comedian, the morning shows bring out discussions on topical issues, today mainly on relationships. Listeners call in live to contribute their experiences, views, and opinions. The midmorning/early afternoon session runs from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. While the morning session is fast paced, highly interactive and has a lot of information, the midmorning/early afternoon session is slow paced, low key and music oriented. In most stations, this session also features a number of thirty-minute uninterrupted music sessions. The session has a single presenter on air. It is also common for stations to feature a particular genre of music. The afternoon segment which starts at 2:00 pm and runs until 7:00 pm is another important session on the urban English FM stations. The segment starts at a slow pace, picking up around 4:00 pm. This session usually features two presenters and also incorporates fun in the programming. Second presenters may not be outright comedians but are usually funny in their own right. Easy FM features three presenters on the afternoon drive session. The afternoon drive has more advertisements boosted by alcoholic beverage makers who are not allowed to advertise on radio before 3:00 pm. There are political, business and sports news mainly recapping what has been happening during the day. There are also numerous game shows and competitions. Other stations feature discussions with listeners’ contributions through phone calls for songs request and dedications through short messaging. There are traffic updates due to the evening rush hour after 5:00 pm with eye-witness reports from various city locations. The evening session starts at 7:00 pm and runs until 10:00 pm. This session has more music content and less talk. Today, all urban English FM and Kiswahili stations have a top songs countdown during this session going by names such as Top Six at
Six. Top Seven at Seven, Top Eight at Eight, and Top Nine at Nine at the top of the mentioned hour. These countdowns are usually sponsored by leading companies mainly beer makers and fast moving consumer goods manufacturers. The evening session also includes limited political, sports and business news. The late night program between 10:00pm and 1:00am is a music and talk session. The late night programs do not feature any informational content such as news. They consist of slow romantic music with discussions on family and relationship topics. The discussion topics involve listeners' participation through telephone calls, email and text messages. It is common for listeners to phone in a problem and the presenter will open up the topic for discussion through phone calls and email contributions. Other sessions feature expert counsellors who answer questions from the listeners.

The weekend broadcasting on urban FM is relaxed and different from the weekdays. The main presenters are off the air and stations tend to feature different music programming, playing genres that are not commonly found on the stations during the weekdays. Thus, genres such as jazz, soul, gospel, and African classics are common during the weekend broadcasts. These sessions are usually presented by guest presenters who are not on air during the week. Some stations air syndicated foreign music programs. Capital FM airs American countdown shows such as Rick Dees Weekly Top 40 on Saturday mid-mornings and Walt "Baby" Love on Sunday mornings. There are fewer discussions, news and information programs on urban radio during the weekend. Normal programming resumes on Mondays at 5:00am.

An examination of the rural Kenya's patterns of radio consumption suggests that they are related to the stations' programming formats. Rural Kenya's audience patterns of consumption of radio also conform to the listening patterns of the wider rural Kenya audience. These patterns are influenced by factors such as availability of the audience to listen when the program is on air, the relevance of the program content, and the popularity of
the program based on the content and presenter(s). The radio audience in rural Kenya chooses programs from multiple stations. While some stations are more dominant than others, there are instances when lesser listened to stations will command higher audiences at specific times when the program and content attract more listeners. Programmes such as KassKuskong, Twolyot, and Tigitiotah Bambaniat on Kass FM, Tabaradi on QFM or Tushauriane section in “Good evening Kenya” on Radio Citizen are popular on their own account. Popular presenter of Radio Citizen, Jeridah Andayi, attests to this:

Programming generally is tailored according to the target audience of a particular radio station. This essentially means that largely the audience influences programming, whose various properties are geared towards responding, addressing and satisfying that particular audience.

Consumption patterns of radio programmes in the rural areas under study vary from one individual to the other. Listeners tune in to a wide range of radio stations. The local language stations have the highest listenership, but listeners also listen to the national stations as well as the urban English stations sometimes, almost interchangably. People listen to the radio more during certain times of the day when they are available and are likely to make sure that they tune into their preferred program when it is on air. Most radio listening occurs in the early morning hours before people start their daily activities and in the evenings after work. No major differences were found between the amount of time people spend listening to the radio during the weekdays (Monday to Friday) and during the weekend (Saturday and Sunday).

On average, respondents to the questionnaire both in Ndia and Ndanai spend an average of 6.8 hours per week on weekdays compared to 6.4 hours per week on weekend days. Many listeners are free from their work during the weekends and one would expect that they would listen more during this time. However, this is not case and various explanations were
advanced. Some women reported that they are likely to be busy during the weekends because they have to take care of the children who are not in school. During the weekdays, mothers spend the day alone at home, but these changes during the weekend when children are at home. For people who are formally employed, such as teachers, civil servants, the "free time" during the weekend does not actually amount to being free. This time is used to perform other duties that they are not able to fulfill during the weekdays. During the weekends, it is common to find men doing various activities at home such as doing domestic repairs, taking care of animals, or working on the farm, among others. For others like James Kariuki, a 35 year old mechanic and a father of four from Ndia, the weekend is spent with the family and working on the farm.

The weekend is the only time I am ever at home. The rest of the week, I leave home very early before 6:00 am when it is still dark and will not come dark until 7:00 pm when it is dark again. I do not even get to see what is happening around my compound. Also, most of the times I will come home and the children are sleeping, same when I leave in the morning. The weekends are therefore sort of busy for me and it is hard to find time to pay much attention to the radio. I spend the weekend with my children. I also use the weekend to work around the farm. You will find me mending fences.

Saturday in rural Ndia is a busy day with numerous activities. Saturday is a market day in Kibigothi town and many people reported that it is the day they go to the market. The market days are significant, especially for those who live in the farm areas as they are the only days that one can find public transport to Kibigothi Shopping centre and other centres.

When people want to transport goods, they do it during the market day (Tuesday and Saturday in Kibigothi and Monday in Sagana). Saturday is also the best day to purchase different products because there are more vendors and prices are competitive. On a market...
day. Kibigothi is busy and vibrant while on other days, except Sundays, it is just another sleepy rural centre. Saturday is also the day for social activities which tend to occupy members of the community. These include church activities, wedding ceremonies, family gatherings, school meetings, among others. These take people away from home.

In comparing the average number of hours spent listening to radio across gender in both Ndia and Ndanai, this study found that male listeners spend an average of 7.2 hours on weekdays while women listeners spend 6.2 hours. During the weekend, female and male listeners spend almost an equal average time with 6.5 hours and 6.4 hours for men and women respectively as summarized in on the table below:

Table 3: *Average Time Spent Listening to the Radio across Gender per week*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Men/hrs/week</th>
<th>Women/hrs/week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekdays</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekends</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Female listeners reported that they mainly listen to the radio when they are at home. Male listeners, on the other hand, listen to the radio at multiple locations. Those in business are likely to listen to the radio at their business premises. However, men are more likely to be found manning the business in towns and shopping centers in both Ndia and Ndanai than women. Since women such as housewives spend a lot of time at home and reported tuning to the radio, it would be expected that the average time spent by female listeners would be higher than males who reported being away from home most of the time. Individually this appears to be the case. At the household level, females reported listening more than their male counterparts.
However, male listeners who are operating business reported listening for extended hours while some young male listeners reported that they never turn off their radio. At the same time, there are more male listeners in town and shopping centers where there is electricity supply which makes it possible to have the radio on for extended hours. Many housewives are found in the farm areas where there is no electricity supply. Such occurrences possibly account for the higher average time spent listening among the male listeners. The average time spent listening to the radio by listeners of different age groups and education levels in Ndia and Ndanai differ. Younger listeners aged between 18 and 30 years spend an average of 6.1 hours during the weekdays and 6.2 hours during the weekend. Those aged between 31 and 45 spend an average of 7.3 hours during the weekday and 6.8 during the weekend, while older adults aged 46 years and above spend 5.9 hours during the weekday and 6.6 during the weekend. These results do not indicate marked differences in the time spent listening to the radio among the three age groups in Ndia and Ndanai during the weekend. However, listeners aged 18-30 years and those aged 30-45 spend more time than the older people. Older people’s shortened listening time may be accounted for by such factors such as less interest in the available content. Older listeners only reported interest in news, announcements and cultural discussions while expressing little interest in content such as music and youth talk. However, younger male listeners aged between 18 and 30 years are less likely to be at home compared to those aged between 30 and 45. When they are not working, they prefer to hang out with friends in public places, while their older counterparts are mostly married and tend to spend a little more time at home when they are not working.

There are differences in the length of time spent listening to the radio across listeners with different education levels. People with primary school education reported the highest number of listening hours during the weekdays and weekends with an average of 8.0 hours and 7.8 hours respectively. Listeners with high school education spend an average of 7.5 during the
weekdays and 7.4 hours during the weekend. People with college education have the least
listening hours with 4.2 in the weekdays and 4.7 during the weekend.
The difference between the length of time spent listening to the radio by listeners with
primary school education and those with high school education is small. However, college
educated people spend over three hours less than their primary and high school counterparts.
One possible source of the difference is the fact that many college educated people are in
formal employment such as teaching, health or administration which leaves them with fewer
hours to listen to the radio. College educated people also reported having more access to
other type of media, especially print. People with more education also reported feeling more
comfortable watching television. People who are not well educated are often less interested in
television because it predominantly broadcasts foreign content. Unlike the radio, Kenyan
television stations use English language in their programming with limited use of Kiswahili
in a few programs and none of the rest of the local languages such as Kikuyu, Kalenjin or
Ekegusii.

4.4 Content and program choices among listeners
Listeners in rural Kenya have varied preferences on radio stations that they listen to.
Listeners have a favourite station, but they will usually listen to a number of radio stations.
Listeners reported to have listened to an average of four radio stations a week, while some
listen to as many as eight radio stations. Listeners’ popular preferences point to particular
kinds of content that is popular across all segments, regardless of what radio stations they
appear on. To better understand people’s consumption patterns of radio programs, I will
examine particular programs and patterns. Although listeners reported some level of loyalty
to certain stations which is also confirmed by listenership numbers from the 2010 and 2011
Synovate Reports, such generalities do not reveal the whole picture. To illustrate this, I am
going to use three content types that were prominently mentioned by listeners in rural Kenya. These are news, humour, and religious content. Programs and sessions that feature this kind of content are very popular.

4.4.1 News

News is ubiquitous on radio stations and one of the most sought after content types. Radio stations provide news in varying length and depth. On most radio stations, there is some news that is read at every top of the hour. Comprehensive news on some radio stations are spread out from the morning to late evening hours. KBC English and Swahili services broadcast 15-20 minute news six times a day at 7:00 am and pm, 9:00 am and pm, 1:00 pm, and 4:00 pm. a format they have maintained for more than 20 years. The new radio stations have also taken the same format with Coro FM, Inooro FM, Kameme FM, and Metro FM, Kass FM, Chungei FM, Egesa FM reading their main news on the same times slots. Because radio is the main source of information for many rural people, listeners in Ndia and Ndanai reported daily activities that are organized around the news schedule. John Kirui, a 45 year old farmer from Kapkesembe, Ndanai, explained his daily radio listening patterns and emphasized the timing of news:

I listen to the radio from 6:00-7:30 in the morning. After the news, I get ready to go to the farm and take care of the animals. If I have time, I listen to the 1:00 PM news and from there I go back to work. Then from 7:30 pm after coming back from the shopping center where I socialize with the people, I am back home to listen until 9:30 or 10:00 at night.

43 year- old businesswoman, Agnes Mwangi from Kibigothi also reported a schedule that is organized around the news programs:
I wake up around 6:30 and start the morning chores. At 7:00, I listen to the Inooro FM morning news on my home radio. By 8:00 I leave the house to go to open the shop. I listen to the radio in the morning switching between stations but at 1:00, I listen to Inooro FM news again. In the evening, I will listen to Coro Matūraini. I have to listen to the news in the morning, during the day and in the evening.

For other people, different stations offer varied news perspectives. Different language stations put emphasis on different content. Radio stations broadcasting in Kikuyu and Kalenjin concentrate on local news in their localities while the English and Kiswahili stations are more nationally and internationally oriented.

John Ndirangu, 27 year old from Sagana listens to news in Kiswahili, Kikuyu and English languages:

I tune my radio on before 6:00am but at that time I am not listening to something specific. Between 6:15-6:30 I listen to Leo Magazetini (Today in the Newspapers) on KBC Kiswahili. Then at 7:00, I will listen to news on Coro FM and then leave the house around 7:30AM. At 1:00 PM, I like to listen to KBC English news and in the evening, I also listen to Radio Citizen News at 7:00 in the evenings.”

Asked why he switches among the different stations, Mbogo explains:

There is a lot of information on what is going on in different places and they cannot be put in one broadcast. Listening to different stations’ news, they are all different. The Kikuyu stations for example always give more information about Central Kenya while KBC Kiswahili will tell you about the government and the country as a whole. Radio Citizen’s news are almost like KBC except that they do not talk about the government all the time and can even say negative things about the politicians. Listening to all of them gives me more information than I would get from listening to one only.
This view is shared by Caroline Chelangat, a 29 year old nurse at Ndanai Health Centre.

Ndanai:

I can not listen to one radio station throughout. In the morning for example, I listen to *Kass FM* which broadcasts in Kalenjin because it (station) discusses what is happening in Kalenjin country. After that, I change to Citizen Radio broadcasting in Kiswahili to listen to their music and news which covers the whole country. This helps me keep abreast with what is happening in the entire country.

Most of the extended news timings are in times when listeners can be free to listen. In the morning, most people will not have left home. At 1:00pm people are on lunch break while in the evening, people are done with their daily chores. News content preference cuts across gender, age and education in the population.

4.4.2 Humor

Humor is another popular content type on the radio. Prior to the emergence of FM broadcasting, radio stations did not consider presenter-driven humour as an important part of their content. Because KBC was the only broadcaster, much of the time was devoted to information and education with little entertainment. Entertainment was mainly in the form of music with a few radio drama programs. However, the recent years of broadcasting have seen stations adopt a more laid back presentation that has also expanded the definition of entertainment. Radio stations strive to combine both serious and humorous content, sometimes on the same programs. Humorous content is present on all stations during the breakfast segment. Stations have adopted a format where the breakfast session is presented by a main host and a comedian. The breakfast show incorporates information and entertainment. The main presenter-comedian combination allows radio stations to address serious issues in a relaxed manner, including commentary on the current news in other media such as television.
newspapers, internet as well as the previous day’s events. This is a very popular radio production pattern which has now been adopted by many radio stations across Kenya.

Breakfast sessions have been used as a platform for political critique, one way in which radio calls into question politicians’ actions. Unlike other programs, breakfast shows are less likely to attract controversy. The comedian, a buffoon like character, usually throws the punches while the presenter will take an objective position. This way, two sides of the argument are discussed. In some cases, the comedian is also used to raise taboo topics such as sexual issues. Jokingly, he calls on the listeners to respond, sometimes on air. This is very popular with Radio *Maisha*, Citizen Radio, Classic FM, Kiss FM, many of these stations that have been broadcasting for the last ten years. Due to this, Classic FM has taken over as the most popular urban station in the breakfast hours followed by Citizen Radio and then Kiss FM.

Head of Radio Citizen, Waweru Mburu explains:

> The most important thing people want is fun and entertainment. Someone has just woken up and need their spirit lifted up. How do you do this? You need to cater for what people want. Most people want information, so you need someone who is like an anchor, the serious person who will deliver the information and give it some credibility, someone with authority. You also need someone who can provide fun and entertainment. That is where the comedian fits in. You need that person who makes people laugh in the morning. Not necessarily a funny guy, not a clown. A very sharp and smart person... people, who brings out things, makes you remember something that had happened in the past and you had forgotten.

Listeners reported that they listened in the morning to the comedians spread across the many FM radio stations. But when they were asked why they liked the comedians, they reported that these comedians lightened up their mornings. Many breakfast shows were also identified with the comedians. Rarely were the main presenters mentioned. Mwalimu
Petronila Getena (Egesa FM), Mwala (Radio Citizen) and others were clearly identified with their radio stations. These comedians’ performances contribute to the listening levels of their radio stations especially in the morning shows.

4.4.3 Religion

Although none of the popular radio stations identified in rural Kenya is a specifically religious station, there is a lot of religious content, especially on the LLR stations. Preference for religious content was reported among the listeners in both research settings. The station heads of Coro FM, Inooro FM, and Kameme FM, Kass FM, Chamgei FM and other small radio stations described the Kikuyu and Kalenjin listeners as “highly religious” and these stations have responded to this by including religious content in their broadcasting. As a matter of fact, I discovered during my research that in Kericho County for example, there are over 5 religious stations within a very short broadcasting area of coverage. Many of the local language stations have also responded by apportioning time on the programming schedule to religious content. A clearly discernable pattern of production among the local language FM stations targets Sunday. Almost all the stations now have what one of the stations describe as “Gospel Sunday.” There appears to be fierce competition among LLR stations throughout Sunday as they try to outdo each other on this aspect.

Because most of their target audiences are Christian, the religious content is Christian. This was reiterated by audiences when they were asked what kind of content they would prefer to hear on the radio.

Listeners reported that religion should be an important part of the content and that religion is a foundation of other aspects of living. To James Rotich of Kipsingei, Ndanai, religion amounts to fear of God which in turn would make society better. Given a chance to make a
decision on what content to include on the radio. Rotich said: “I would like radio stations to teach people on religion and the fear of God. This can be a starting point for harmony and peace in communities and the country at large.” Similar views were expressed by Hellen Ndung’u, a 52 year old teacher from Kiangwache, Ndia, who described radio content from a religious perspective. She would like local language stations to cover issues which target the family. This, with other religious content, she opines, would help to cultivate peace and harmony within communities and fulfil what she calls “the will of God.” She avers that, this is the only way of ensuring tranquillity.

The most popular religious content is music. LLR stations have found it easy to incorporate gospel songs in their programming because they do not necessarily have to be presented in a stand-alone segment but are fused even with the secular music. This is mainly the case during the listener’s request programs. A radio station Like Radio 316 FM which is a pure religious station plays uninterrupted listeners’ request back-to-back every Friday morning between 8.00am to 10.00am. A song that is requested is always played regardless of the genre within the specific religious music. This differs from urban FM stations which have some slots set aside for certain music genres. All local language radio stations start the day’s broadcasting with some gospel content, which is played during the first hour of the stations’ broadcast between 5:00am and 6:00am.

Religious content is very popular on Sundays. Listeners in rural Ndia and Ndai listen to different religious programs on Sunday as a part of their religious rites. All LLR stations have different programmes covering the whole day where gospel music and other religious programming like preaching and bible discussions which are highly interactive are aired. For Many listeners who are Roman Catholics like Agnes Njoki, a 47-year old woman from Karima, listen to the Mitha (Mass) program which is a radio mass that airs on the Kameme FM on Sunday morning and that Agnes listens to without fail before she goes to the Church.
Agnes: Because I am a Catholic, one program that I must listen to every Sunday is *Mitha* on Kameme FM.

**Interviewer**: Do you go to church or is radio worship enough?

Agnes: I don’t miss the service. I go to Kiangwache Church every Sunday without missing.

**Interviewer**: The Catholic mass which you get on the radio is the same thing that will be repeated in your local Church. Why do you bother to go to church again?

Agnes: The teachings are the same and the readings I hear on the radio are exactly the same in my Church. However, I feel comfortable when I worship with others in a communal way in mass at the Church.

For other listeners like Chris Mwangi, radio has revolutionized the way he attends his church and religious functions. “These days one is able to follow the mass from home and miss church when and if it is not possible something that was impossible before.” Apart from the Roman Catholic mass, there are other sessions with preachers from different denominations leading sessions on the LLR stations. One LLR station which is leading the pack in this aspect is *Milele* FM which broadcasts in Kiswahili language. The station plays religious music throughout the day on Sunday with religious talk and interruptions here and there. The station has a preacher who comes on air and preaches to the audience at 11.00am. The audience has a chance to talk back through call-ins and text messages to comment. In the afternoon from 2.00 PM. there is *shangwe na utukufu* section where gospel music is played uninterrupted till 7.00 PM. It is instructive to note that most of the music played is by local gospel musicians who sing in Kiswahili.

### 4.5 Patterns of consumption of radio

Radio is a communication device that was present in every home I visited during the research. Also, nearly all individuals encountered in the study reported to have listened to the
radio in the past two days prior to my interview session. I remember encountering only one
individual, a woman teacher, who said she usually does not listen to the radio although she
has a set at home. This section aims to unpack listeners’ interactions with the medium. In
these interactions, the researcher found that listeners seek information, education, and
entertainment from the radio.

Listeners depend on radio to stay in touch with what is happening in their locality and
beyond. They also seek pertinent information on their health and well-being from the radio as
well as gathering information on agriculture, their economic mainstay, from various
programs that address the subject on the radio. Radio acts as a companion to listeners
especially when they are alone and cannot find another human company. The Kikuyu and
Kalenjin LLR is changing the social milieu of the listeners, allowing some to move beyond
the interpersonal relations to build new mediated networks. Radio has extended the social
sphere of listeners in rural Kenya, sometimes reinforcing interpersonal relationships by
identifying people within a locality who share common interests and bringing them together.

4.5.1 Radio as a source of information and education

Radio is the most common information and telecommunications device found in the areas
under this study. It was apparent that since the cost to buy a set is relatively inexpensive, this
medium has becomes widely available to people who have low income. Among the people of
Ndia and Ndanai areas areas radio is a relatively affordable device to buy and there are
different choices available from the market. Radios are sold in electronic shops and open-
markets found in small towns and shopping centers.

According to Samuel Nderitu, a mobile open-air market radio vendor in Sagana says the
prices of radio sets he sells range from Kenyan Shillings 100.00 (US$ 1.50) for a pocket radio
to Kenya shillings 2,500.00 (US$ 35.00). Findings from the questionnaires administered at
the beginning of the research indicate that all respondents had access to a radio set and had listened to the radio the previous day. Among the same respondents, only 46 per cent had access to a television. Out of those who had access to the television, only 59 per cent had watched TV the previous night. TV ownership in Ndia and Ndanai areas does not necessarily mean that the audiences are able to watch. This is mainly due to energy limitations. Most of those who reported to own a TV yet did not watch attributed the minimal viewing time to limited energy availability such as low battery to power the sets. People who are close to towns and shopping centers watch television at public places such as bars and restaurants.

The other source of information is newspapers. Newspapers are however a limited source of information for most rural Kenya people. Only 32 per cent of those who answered the questionnaires (sample size was 108 respondents) had read newspapers in the past one week period prior to the research. Out of those who had read, only 10 per cent had actually bought the newspaper themselves. Most read the copies that their relatives had bought, from public places like restaurants, borrowed from friends or read from the newspaper vendor. Reading of the newspaper is also mainly restricted to scanning the headlines. Many people said they would love to read newspaper more, but they cannot afford to buy a copy whose average cost is Kenyan shillings 40.00 (US$ 0.50), a price that is beyond the reach of common people in an area where an eight-hour day of work pays an average Kenyan shillings 150.00 (US$ 2.5). The availability of newspapers is also a factor since they can be found in only a few towns. There are many areas where copies do not reach so even those who may want to buy cannot access them.

As a result, people who live in or close to towns are likely to access newspapers compared to those who live in the farm areas. Forty-one percent of questionnaire respondents from Sagana town reported to have read a newspaper in the past week, compared to 30per cent in Kibogothe and 27 per cent in Kiangwache areas. As expected, Sagana, which is a moderate
sized rural town, has more readers, followed by Kibigothi, which has a small town and farms and Kiangwache, a farm area, has the least as shown in table below:

**Table (4a): Newspaper Readership in the Three Locations of Ndia in a month**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Read Newspaper</th>
<th>Did not read Newspaper</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sagana</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kibigothi</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiangwache</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher, 2011

**Table (4b): Newspaper Readership in three Locations of Ndanai in a month**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Read Newspaper</th>
<th>Did not read Newspaper</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ndanai</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lelechwet</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kipsengei</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher 2011

To access the newspaper, those who live in the farms in the rural areas must travel to the town or get one from someone who was in town and bought one. For those who are engaged in the farms for the whole day, it is not possible to access the newspaper as Michael Gitau, a 46 year old casual worker from Kiangwache told the researcher. “I have not been to town for weeks now, so I have no way of getting a newspaper” (M. Gitau, personal communication, June 23, 2010). Beyond access, a large section of the population cannot read and write well while most commonly available newspapers are the English language ones. As expected.
people with more education are likely to read newspapers compared to those with low education. Only 16.3% of the people with class 8 education and less (primary school level) read newspapers compared to 43% for those with 9th-12th grade education (secondary school level) and 53% with at least college education. Thus, those who have more education are likely to read newspapers compared to those with low education as summarized in the table below.

Table (5a): Newspaper Readership Based on Level of Education in Ndia in a month

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of education</th>
<th>Read</th>
<th>Not Read</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher, 2011

Table (5b): Newspaper Readership Based on Level of Education in Ndanai in a month

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of education</th>
<th>Read</th>
<th>Not read</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher, 2011

The limitations of alternative sources of information leave radio as the most reliable source for the rural people in Ndia and Ndanai. Radio can be accessed without the need to leave home. This medium provides information through assorted languages and listeners have the freedom to choose the language that suits them most. Because of proficiency in different
languages, many listeners consume information in various languages. According to the listeners, news and feature programs provide the most information and education. News programs provide current information on what is happening locally, nationally and internationally. Feature programs on agriculture and health are also popular with the listeners in rural Kenya. Male listeners reported seeking current news more often than women. Listeners identified news coverage as one reason behind their choice of radio station as their favorite. Clarence, a 24 year old from Kibigothi preferred a station that carried news frequently. This he says is why his choice of radio station is Metro FM, which has news after every 15 minutes. He also likes the station because it has both national and international.

For Michael, 20, the comprehensiveness of news is important. "There is no other station with comprehensive news like Inooro FM as far as I am concerned. The news is both local and international". Listeners with college education showed more interest in political news. Anne Njogu, a 43- year- old primary school teacher described her liking for political news in a very personal way. "First I like politics. Injūkaga wega mūno. Also, in Inooro FM, there is a program between 10 pm-12 midnight with Professor Ngugi. I also listen to Koigi wa Wamwere who I like politically". The phrase injūkaga wega mūno is hard to translate to English, but the closest meaning is "it works magic on me". Her colleague, Mr. Wamae is also a fan of politics which he follows on the radio. "I love politics a lot on Inooro. At times they bring a politician and interview them. I feel empowered because I am able to understand politics. When I listen to Inooro, I look for those programs".

One of the most popular programs among listeners in rural Ndia area is Coro Matūraini (Coro at the grassroots); a one-hour news magazine program which utilizes reporters on the ground from major areas where the station broadcasts. The program which goes on air at 6:00 p.m-7:00 p.m. on weekdays was always cited by listeners as one of the most comprehensive news program on the radio. Listeners were particularly impressed with the program because
of its ability to penetrate the rural areas which are usually less likely to be covered. There is also limited filtering of news because the information comes straight from the reporters on the ground. Listeners reported that Coro Matūraini has provided more coverage of their locality than any other program as Margaret, 40 year from Kiangwache cited a recent case she heard on the radio:

Coro Matūraini covers every part of the country. The other day I heard a story about the grazing issue in the government land, right here behind us where a group of women from the area disarmed and arrested a police officer who had been exploiting them when they went to collect firewood. It was interesting to hear the news first from the radio as opposed to a word of mouth. Programs such as Coro Matūraini are changing the listeners’ view of what news is. Before such information was available, news mainly reported items that involved the outside world.

As Ms. Alice Muthoni, a teacher at Kibigothi Secondary School noted, “…. news on the radio is about everywhere from the villages, cities and even other parts of the world.

In Ndanai, one of the most popular programmes is Lee Ne Emet (‘what is the world/Country saying’). This is a Morning Show Program that runs through from Monday to Friday every morning from 6.30 am to 9.00 am. The show is hosted by two presenters and it touches on topical issues, such as current affairs mainly political, social, and educative and at times touches on economy, depending on the topic of discussion of the day. This show is of interest to a majority of audience in the larger Kalenjin country. It is informative, educative and it elicits debate which shapes the opinions of the audiences. It has been the most popular programme in Kalenjin country when lead presenter Joshua arap Sang was the presenter up and until he was named by the International Criminal Court as a prime suspect in Kenya’s 2007/2008 Post Election Violence.
In this morning programme, the presenters introduce the topic of discussion to ensure it is being understood without giving own opinions or being subjective. The audience is then allowed to give their own views through the call-ins, SMS, Mail and Teleconference for both the local and diaspora through the designated codes. The show is very popular since it gives the audience a chance to express themselves in an open, fair, transparent manner, regardless of divergent views. The show also incorporates the invitation of guests from different fields including political, financial or business, education, agriculture and several other professionals. On Wednesdays in particular, the Topic is Sub-titled 'Ongilititigei'(Let us correct ourselves) which seeks to correct unwarranted or wayward behaviours in the society.

4.5.2 Farming Information

Agriculture is the main economic activity in Ndia and Ndai where people cultivate crops and keep livestock. Listeners reported that they listen to the agricultural programs on the Kikuyu and Kalenjin local language stations especially Coro FM, Inooro FM and Chamgei stations because they provide practical information that they need in their daily farming activities. Accessing information on agriculture helps farmers to improve production and to stay updated on the industry as a whole. Listeners quoted agricultural programs such as Mugambo wa Muru (Farmer’s Voice) that is aired on Inooro FM daily on weekdays between 7.30am and 8.00am. Munyu wa Urimi (Salt of Agriculture) aired daily at 8:15 p.m-8.15 p.m on Coro FM. and Chamgei FM’s Longetah Kabotik(Farmers Issues) as some of their favorite programs. The last mentioned is a programme which invites experts on studio to talk about agricultural issues affecting farmers in many ways. Farmers and listeners call and text their concerns which are answered by the experts in studio. Agricultural programs are popular because they provide important and sensitive information that is practical to farmers. Farmers seek information on the best ways to use agrochemicals such as fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides. Agricultural programs on the radio advise farmers on how to use fertilizers.
and manure to improve soil fertility in a way that ensures continued productivity and preserve the soil. Information on different diseases that affect crops was identified as important as well as the use of pesticides. In these programs, farmers are taught how to identify, prevent and treat different crop diseases. Farming programs discuss ways in which farmers can prevent the spread of such diseases during the outbreak and for potential future outbreaks. Agrochemical companies send their experts to the programs to clarify to farmers how to use such products. Generally, the programmes tackle all farmers’ problems besides teaching farmers about best practices, new agricultural practices and techniques. Jane Njambi, a 40-year old teacher argued that the radio programs are filling an information void that existed before. “The agricultural programs are very important because most people do not have any other ways to learn about new agricultural practices. The experts who are invited and talk on radio programmes in our own local languages have really been helpful.”

This view is shared by Agnes Chepkorir, 45-year trader at Ndanai who is an avid listener to Kass FM’s Longetab Kabotik (Farmers issues).

“What I hear in this programme has been very helpful to me. Instead of going to look for an agricultural extension officer, I always listen to the programme. I even now understand how to use pesticides, when to use them and the quantities. It is very helpful to the farmers in this area.”

Agricultural programs address issues of animal husbandry. Farmers learn how to improve their livestock rearing and raise production of milk and other products. In Ndia and Ndanai, farmers keep livestock mainly for milk and meat. Farmers in the rural areas are usually handicapped by lack of information. Livestock keepers tend to continue to follow animal rearing practices which fail to maximize livestock potential and the overall production. One of the areas that the livestock farming information has challenged is breeding. Farmers traditionally use their own animals to breed but this has been found to produce subsequent
inferior breed. With the new farming methods, farmers are encouraged to use artificial insemination where they can get different breeds that are specifically suited for an area with its climatic condition. Teresia Nduta, 49, a livestock keeper explained how she is learning to change:

We hear from the radio every day what experts suggest as best practices. Farmers from different places also talk of their experiences when they call the program or when they are interviewed. This is very beneficial...before, we would just do what we thought or heard from others without expert advice. Now, I know better. I use the little money I have and in exchange, I get a better breed.

Radio programs also address what can be viewed as basic knowledge such as feeding the animals, which constitutes one of the most important aspects of livestock rearing. For many livestock keepers, feeding the animals involves releasing them to the grazing fields and watering them. However, farmers are being challenged because grazing on grass only does not provide the animals with all the nutrients they need. In the dry season, the grass is dry and less nutritious. By being able to constantly access information through radio, farmers are becoming more enlightened in their production.

Livestock information on the radio has allowed farmers to share information. Many farmers in Central and Rift Valley regions of Kenya keep animals and some have been very successful. Program such as Mügambo wa Mürini and Longetah Kahotik identify the successful farmers and interview them on their practices. This allows the listeners to get first hand experiences. Some of the farmers explain the changes they have adopted and how this has influenced their animal productivity.

Other issues on livestock production that are addressed on radio included livestock diseases. Livestock diseases are one of the biggest challenges that farmers face. An outbreak of a disease can wipe out the entire animal population in an area. Farmers receive information on
how to deal with the problems if they should arise and how to prevent an outbreak. For instance, farmers are advised to spray their animals to minimize vectors such as ticks which transmit most of the livestock infections. Catherine Chepngetich, 57-year-old farmer from Ndanai put farming into perspective:

A lot has changed here in terms of livestock. In the past, we took our animal to a common community cattle dip for tick control. We paid a minimum amount to have our animals get the spray so we did not have to buy the chemicals. Nowadays, we have to spray our animals individually. We had to learn how to mix and spray. The radio programs are very useful because they remind you what to do. They will also tell you that you need to change the chemical you use after sometime for it to be effective. We do learn a lot from these programs.

To many farmers in Ndia and Ndanai, the information accessed from radio programmes on farming and how it impacts the economic outcomes of their activities is very important. Cattle dips have slowly disappeared in many areas, leaving farmers to take care of their animals on their own. As agriculture continues to play a central role in the economic production of the population in Kenya, especially in rural areas, the programs that address the topic remain important. Radio is in this sense an effective avenue to address agricultural issues.

4.5.3 Health Information

Radio provides health information to the listeners. Health information was mainly identified by women as one of the content topics they listen to. In particular, the listeners reported that they listen to information on traditional health practices such as use of herbal remedies that is available on the local language stations. Listening to information on traditional health practices on the radio allows them to learn about remedies which are readily available in their
localities which they can easily turn to when they are in need. To some listeners broadcasting
of traditional health information is a way of preserving the indigenous knowledge which is
increasingly being lost rapidly. Radio programs are bringing the information back as well as
diffusing it.

Most listeners of health programs reported interest in nutrition. Women said that they learn
more about nutrition especially how they can utilize locally available food to maximize diet
in their families. These programs use experts such as nutritionists to explain the topics which
provide authoritative information that the listeners want. Gladys, 44, a primary school teacher
in Sagana, Ndia, quoted the authority of the doctors who appeared in these programs. “I like
programs on health especially the doctors who come to inform us on how to eat well and live
a healthy life.”

Josephine Chepkosgei, 47, a resident of Gelegele, Ndanai had a liking for Citizen Radio’s
Vidokezo vya Afya, a 10-minute daily programme aired on different aspects of health. She
reported that she liked the way the programme was presented, especially the simplicity with
which it was aired and the various aspects of health it touches on.

There was less discussion of health content by male listeners. There was also less mentioning
of health problems such as specific diseases on radio programmes. I was keen on finding out
whether the increase in LLR stations may have affected the coverage of the HIV/AIDS
pandemic and whether this would be mentioned by the listeners. However, there were very
few references to the disease that were made on this issue. After directly interacting with
more than 150 listeners, there were only three instances that the issue of HIV/AIDS was
raised. In these instances, HIV/AIDS was mentioned by young women when asked about the
kind of content they would like to hear on the stations.

Although Coro FM has a five-minute program on HIV/AIDS from Monday to Friday at 2:30
pm and 10:30 pm, listeners did not mention this program. Apart from the above: current
affairs, agricultural and health information. Other listeners like Njogu, a 23 year old man from Kiangwache area, Ndii, were attracted to business news. "For me the radio station I love most is Capital FM. They have comprehensive business news such as micro-enterprises that young people are interested in. They also do analysis and offer advice." With such views, my first guess was that Njogu was a businessman. However, it turned out that he works on a farm, but his future plans are to open his own business. Parents of young children reported that they encouraged their children to listen to programming focused on children that usually airs on Saturday morning from 9.00am on local language stations because it provides an opportunity for them to learn. For Charles Kinyua, a 36-year-old father, radio on Saturday morning hours belongs to the children because that is when the children programs are aired.

4.5.4 Radio and companionship

Radio occupies an important place in audiences' daily lives. Listeners in Ndii and Ndani have a kind of personal relationship with the radio device to an extent where it is interpreted as a cherished companion. Many conversations about the radio device were punctuated with description in Kikuyu such as "karedio gakwa" (my sweet small radio). This statement conveys more than possessing the radio. By adding the prefix ka- before the noun radio, listeners illustrated their love for the device. Ka- in Kikuyu signifies diminutive marker or something good, but generally "small" is implied to be good. Thus, "karedio gakwa" statement that was repeated over and over demonstrated listeners' affinity to the radio.

Listeners made the distinction between a radio set that is personal versus one that belongs to the family. The intimate set is identified with a member of the family and whose location appears to be defined. For Samuel Kariuki, a 68 year old man who spends most of his day grazing his animals, his radio does not leave him. "Karedio gakwa gatiumaga mühuko mùthenya wothe (My little small radio never leaves the pocket for the whole day). At the
domestic level, radio companionship is defined in terms of spaces that are curved from the larger domestic spheres. For many women head of households, that space is the kitchen. For young men, that space is in their small houses which are outside the main house where they sleep. Some men head of the households are “mobile” where their radio tends to follow them wherever they would be within the home. For instance, in the evening, most men will be sitting outside the compound just before dark. In the Kikuyu culture, young men (usually from 12 years old onwards) are likely to have their own small house, commonly referred as cubicles that are built within the family compound. Traditionally, from age 12 boys are circumcised as a part of rite of passage to adulthood. After circumcision, they live in their secluded house because it is considered awkward for a grown up man to live in his parents’ house. They, however, continue to eat from the parents’ house and can spend their time there, but, ordinarily will not sleep there.

After dark, they will move to the living room with their radio and take it with them to the bedroom when they retire. Hellen, a 42 year old teacher and a mother of a grown up girl and two boys, describes her home where there are multiple radios for different members of her family. Her description reveals different spaces that are specific to different members of the family. “In my home no one has to decide for the other on what to listen to. We have been forced to have many radios so you stay where you are with the radio. I have mine in the kitchen and my husband has his in the living room. If it is the young men, they have their own in their small house. We have at least four radios: mine, my husband’s, the boys’, and the girls’. These spaces are gendered. For women, radio provides companionship when they are in the kitchen preparing meals for their family, mainly the breakfast and dinner as well as daytime when they are at home alone. In the rural Ndia and Ndanai areas, the setting of a home is different from other places. For those households that have television, the set will be put in the living room. For households without television, but have a number of radios in the
house, one radio will always be in the living room. In Ndia and Ndanai, in addition to a kitchen room in the main house, there is usually a separate one outside the main house.

*Riiko ria nja* (the outside-kitchen) as is commonly referred, is a small house built a few meters from the main house because most families use firewood for cooking and would want to keep smoke away from the main house. Since women do the cooking, being in this small house separates them from the rest of the family, where they enjoy the company of the radio as the rest of the family engages in different activities. I observed this in different interactions with various families.

On many evenings, I would spend time with my research assistant at his home. His main house is a three roomed house, with a living room and two bedrooms. Outside the main house is a one room kitchen where the family cooks. On this particular evening, Mr. Wanjohi had two other visitors, two young men who spent most of their day in the grazing fields. They had come to bring his family part of the meat from an impala they had caught during the day. Four of us sat in the living room conversing and watching the small rechargeable battery powered black and white television set. Mrs. Wanjohi, on the other hand, was preparing the dinner in the kitchen. The couple’s two daughters aged four and six moved back and forth between the kitchen and the living room. After about an hour, the dinner was ready and Mrs. Wanjohi brought the food for the four us to the living room. After serving us the food, she left. She did not join us in the living room as we ate, but instead ate her portion from the kitchen and only came to collect the utensils. Throughout the meal preparation, she had a small radio on in the kitchen keeping her company except for a few interruptions by the children.

Radio keeps many women company for most of the daytime. A large section of women in rural Kenya are housewives and the daytime consists of a long period of time when they are at home alone. Those who have young children take care of the children during the day.
Ordinarily, housewives spend their time either at home or taking care of their farms. In most parts of the year, there is little work to do on the farms and this leaves more time to spend at home. Furthermore, the past few years have seen failed rains which diminish the amount of work to do at home. Husbands and children leave home early, usually before 8:00 am. A woman wakes up before six in the morning to prepare the family breakfast and the children for school. After the rest of the family has left, the woman spends the rest of the day alone. Wairimu, 44-year-old housewife and a mother of two from Karima explains the role of radio during her lonely daytime hours:

During the weekdays, I find myself alone at home with little to do. My husband leaves the house at seven o' clock in the morning and my two children are gone to school shortly after. Shortly after they leave, I will be done with the domestic chores. My youngest child comes from school around 2:00 pm while the elder one will be home after 4:30 pm. For all the time that I am on my own, the only thing that keeps me busy is my radio. I just don't know how it would be without my radio.

Similar views are echoed by Jennifer, a 46 year old housewife from Chesono. For Jennifer, radio provides a presence at home when everyone but she has deserted the place:

I just don't know what I would do without a radio. When the radio doesn't have batteries, I feel like I can go crazy. You see, during the day the village is so quiet and again I am here all alone. The only noise that I can hear is probably an animal somewhere, apart from that it's all hollow. With the radio, I have company because I will be listening to what is going on, different programs or music. I don't even have to concentrate to listen; the sound of the radio makes the place habitable.

Most men in rural Kenya use radio as a companion in their places of work. Men who take animals to fields carried the radio with them. It helped to keep them company in the far-away
For me radio is like a friend. For years I have been grazing the animals and what keeps me company is this small radio. If you have ever grazed, you know that the day can be very long. You are almost doing nothing but following the animals around. For eight hours that can be extremely long. But with the radio, everything appears organized. You listen to music for this hour, at 1:00 pm I will be waiting to listen to the news and so on. Just like that the day will be gone. But even when I go home, I don’t leave my radio. It has become part of me.

Others will carry the radio to the farms. Of those interviewed, I found that men were more likely to carry the radio when going to the farm than women. John Gitari, a 55-year old farmer in Kibigothi always carries his small radio to the farm. He explained that he carried his small portable radio whenever on the farms to keep him company.

I observed a number of people on the farm who took the radio to the farm. Usually, the set was covered with a cloth to protect it from dust and positioned within a certain distance of the working person. As the worker moves to different parts, the set was moved too.

In some occupations, radio is synonymous with a tool for the job. Daniel, a father of three who works as a security guard, has taken a radio with him to work for the last ten years. He says that radios are very popular with security guards in every part of the country. The security guards prefer the pocket radio because they are easy to carry. Usually, the pocket radios do not have headphones or ear phones so they are always glued to the ear as David Chirchir of Ndanai reiterates:

I have been working as a security guard at the Seminary for more than ten years now and carry my small radio every day to work. As you know, radio is synonymous with
us guards. Every guard that I know has one. It helps us to stay awake through the night although we have to listen to it close to the ear.

Several young men interviewed reported that the radio plays the role of a companion in their everyday life. Youthful men who are not married are more likely to spend their free time in the evening, the period between getting home and going to sleep, listening to the radio. After spending most of the day at work or with friends, they are usually alone in the evening.

Ngunjiri, a 26-year-old mechanic from Sagana explained his interaction with the radio in the evenings. “I spend most of my day in town working. At around 5:00 pm, I will be done working and this is the time that I hang around with friends, talking, and socializing. Sometimes I will go home around 8:00 pm. Sometimes I eat, other times I just go straight to my house. I just relax with my radio until I fall asleep. Most of the times I fall asleep while the radio is still on.”

For Nick, a 25-year-old shop attendant in Kibigothi shopping centre, radio fills the void left by not having his family near him:

None of my family is here so I am used to being alone at home. There is only the radio to give me company. ...I never turn it off when I am at home. When I am not working, I am usually with friends or at home. When I go home, I start listening to my favorite station.

The examples above show radio filling the social gap that is left when the young men are alone. During most part of the day, they are able to interact with other people in their work place or at the social places mostly in the shopping centres. When they go home, they find themselves alone and radio fills the void, becoming the only form of interaction available as it “talks to them”.
4.5.5 Radio as a social platform

Radio has assumed a social role among listeners in Ndia and Ndai. Radio was reported as a platform where listeners get in touch with other people outside their immediate environment, made acquaintances, discussed issues of common interest and exchanged ideas. Radio also captures a changing social environment among rural populations. People in the rural areas have been known to be the custodians of the traditional way of life. While migration to and from rural Kenya areas has disrupted the traditional ways of life, rural communities have generally maintained many aspects of the traditional culture and interactions.

In rural Kenya, people agree that the nature of social interactions is changing. Today, things are different from what communities have traditionally known. The family structure, for instance, is changing with nuclear family taking center stage and extended family moving apart. The relationship between parents and children is different. The role of the wider community in a child’s upbringing has diminished, with the roles going to the nuclear family level or taken over by teachers.

These changes are interpreted in different ways. For the older generation, there is a sense of panic. They are worried that a new generation is emerging that does not understand the traditional Kikuyu culture. To them, the young people do not have a grip of their community’s underlying social systems and their experiences are increasingly becoming disconnected from their parents’ and grandparents’. With these changes, people agree that communication mediums such as radio have now become a part of the new social sphere where interactions that were conducted through interpersonal relationships in the past find their place today.

For the young people, these changes are not only inevitable but are necessary in order to cope with the rest of world as Kibathi, a 24-year-old from Kiangwache, Ndia, illustrates in his view:
We are not just a part of the village we live in; we are a part of a larger society. It is beyond the ethnic group we belong to and it is beyond the region we come from. It is even beyond nationality as Kenyans. At every point, we seek to associate with a community that is larger than our immediate environment.

As Kibathi argues, radio has given listeners platforms where they are able to interact with people who are not necessary within their immediate environment. Aided by the rapid growth of mobile telephony, people have found a forum where they are able to share life experiences, find common interests, discuss issues and learn from one another. As a social platform, radio is bringing together people from different locations and with diverse experiences to a common space where they can interact.

The position of radio as a social platform has been enhanced by the rapid development of the mobile telephone industry. The rural population has increasingly become connected using cell phones. More than 81 per cent of the people who filled the questionnaire reported that they owned a cell phone. This has in turn contributed to participation in the radio programming through which their voices are heard. Some of the popular social discourses on radio include listeners groups, various discussion forums, and salaams.

Listeners groups consist of a group of people from an area who are fans of a given radio program. The members are spurred into a group by a common interest in the program. Many listeners do not have prior contact with each other before participating in the programs. For example, Metro FM which before August 2008 was an all reggae station had a big listenership among the younger people, aged between 18 and 30 years.

In Kibigothi centre, I found a group of youths who were ardent listeners of the station. According to Kim, a 23 year old shop attendant, many of them started participating in the program through sending requests for their favorite songs. This was done through text messages (SMS) or phone calls. Kim said that he participated in live call-ins and sent text
messages every day. When one calls the station, they identify themselves with the place they come from. With time, people who come from a similar location start identifying with each other and start dedicating songs to each other.

According to Kim, a number of people from Kibigothi shopping centre became regular contributors to the program and they ended up connecting with each other, meeting at one of the local bars. Although the group had become inactive by the time I was conducting the fieldwork after some of its members had moved from the town, Kim felt that the group provided a forum for social networking for people like him. “In the group, we all had something in common first because we love reggae music. At the same time, we are all young, in a way we understand each other and what is happening in our lives. I feel bad that we don’t meet anymore but I still contribute in the programs. I send big-ups [greetings] to other people who I have not met but it feels like I know them through the radio.”

The pattern of having listeners groups has gained popularity especially among the I.L.R stations. According to Mr. Geoffrey Onditi, a producer at KBC, the stations groups are organized into what is called Shabiqs clubs in areas where the station has higher listenership.

We have had Shabiq’s fan clubs complete with members for a long time. They meet to assist one another, enjoy the programs and give us feedback. We visit them; we give them airtime and socialize together. Next week we are going to have a focus group of about 20 key listeners, senior managers, ordinary managers, farmers and ordinary folks, just to sit down and hear from them. We want to hear what they think about their station. We will use that feedback to tweak the programming.

Kameme FM and Coro FM have strong listeners’ group. According to the Jane Mumbi, the Head of Coro FM, the fan clubs are distributed all over the country. “We are very close to our listeners. We have fan clubs all over where we get to know what our listener need through them. Each club has a chair who reports to one representative who is a producer of a program.
in Coro FM. The clubs are very effective and twice every year, I meet the clubs in a party organized by them. Once in a while we meet with the chairpersons who present the fans' grievances. We have about 40 fan clubs in different areas where we have reach and they have one national chairman. Most local language stations have these fans' clubs which are very effective; they meet the clubs in a party organized by the station as frequent as the fans feel like. Once in a while, they meet with the chairpersons who present the fans grievances to the station management. There are many fan clubs in different areas where every station has reach and they have one national chairman or co-ordinator to co-ordinate activities.

Listeners groups are not a new phenomenon in the Kenyan broadcasting. They also existed during the KBC monopoly broadcasting reign. However, most clubs were virtual groups that did not involve actual contacts of the members. Members only sent greetings to KBC using special cards which were bought from the broadcasters. A few, however, managed to meet. Also, some groups were organized based on particular programs. The main difference between the new fans club and the older clubs is the level of listeners and broadcasters involvement. Broadcasters utilize the groups for feedbacks. Coro FM and Kamene have very active fans clubs.

Listeners also use radio to keep in touch with friends and loved ones. With the increased listeners' participation, radio stations provide more calling times on air. For instance, early morning radio shows in all LLR stations, between 5:00am-6:00 am are interactive with call-ins and short messaging.

Listeners in Ndia and Ndanai areas reported that they use these programs to send messages to their friends and relatives who are away. Nyambura, a 28 year old designer in Sagana is a regular contributor to Kamene FM early morning show. “I call Kamene FM in the morning once in a while to send messages to my sister Anne who works in Nairobi. She is also a fan of Kameme FM and she will once in a while do the same. It feels good to hear my name
mentioned. Although we talk on the phone often, having a dialogue on the radio has a different form of satisfaction. Again, it is odd for someone to call you before six in the morning. But on the radio, I can give her some words of encouragement and blessings for the day." Kimutai, 29 year old barber at Ndanai shopping centre and a fan of Kass FM is also a regular fan of the morning programs where he sends morning wishes to his friends and family.

I am an early riser and sometimes I will be listening to the radio even before 5:00 am. My business is not something I can open at 7:00 in the morning because I don’t have early customers here. So, I just relax listening to the radio for some hours before I can go to work. After listening to people sending morning wishes on Kass FM for sometimes, Kimutai says that he also started contributing. Now, he is a regular contributor: a situation which allows him to wish his friends and family a good day in the morning. “If I cannot call, I will send SMS. It is not easy to get through on the phone at least once every week. I send SMS at least twice every week. I like it now: it’s almost a daily ritual.

Kennedy Rotich, 30-year-old trader at Lelchwert, Ndanai, is another fan of sending messages through morning programmes. “Every morning as I wake up to walk to my shop to open to people. I make calls to Chamgei FM greet my friends and send greetings almost on a daily basis. It is self satisfying.”

Men were found to be more likely to participate on the radio interaction activities than women. Also, the younger listeners reported to calling the stations more often, which means they are more interested in the radio social activities than older listeners. At the same time, many contributors to the radio are those who had a regular source of employment found in the small towns and shopping centers. This group contributes more often to the radio
social activities such as greetings, requests and dedications compared to those who live on the farms.

Another social aspect of radio was reported mainly by the youth, which involves what they termed as "discussion of issues of common interest". These are wide-ranging issues that include education and career choice, dealing with parents, drugs and alcohol abuse, health, HIV/AIDS, relationships, among others. Tony, a 22-year-old man from Sagana town, is a fan of Radio Citizen. Apart from listening to African music, he likes the different discussions that come on the radio which he feels target young people:

I can say that I like Citizen because of the kind of music which is played. But it is not just music all the time, there are very many discussions on the radio on issues that are relevant to young people like me. The presenters usually raise these issues or get them from listeners. It is encouraging to hear people calling and contributing different points of views. I also find it interesting because, no matter where that person is, you just hear as if they are talking about you. .....Sometimes they will be talking about dealing with your parents and friends, next time about relationship. These affect us all.

Stella, a 21-year-old from Karima, Ndia likes to listen to Coro FM because she feels that the station provides her with a place where she can follow different discussions that are related to the youth. "I like to listen to Coro FM because as a young person, I get to listen to discussions from different people on issues that I identify with." She gives an example on ways to protect herself from dangerous liaisons with men and their associated risks. "I have listened to girls of my age recount not so good experience and others who have managed to evade the same. These are issues that I might not hear from my friends who I interact with everyday because they have not had similar experience. And even though people here in Karima may have experienced the same. I don’t know them or they don’t talk about it."
Boniface, a 20-year-old from Kongatik. Ndanai is a fan of the discussions on the radio. His main interest is in education. He finished high school in 2010 and works as an untrained teacher in a local primary school as he waits to proceed to college. For Boniface, his current dilemma is choosing the best course to study. Being in the rural area does not give him the exposure he would like in order to make the best career decision.

He discusses this in relation to some of the content that appeals to him on the radio. “Let us be real. When you are living in the village in a rural area like this, you are away from the radar and sometimes you cannot know what is happening elsewhere. But youth have the same dilemma. You just finished high school and want to go to college but you do not know how to make the right choice. I have heard good discussions about different careers on radio. Someone will call with the dilemma and they get other people, some who were in the same position or some who are involved in training giving them the possibilities. I like that because when I am in the village, I do not have access to much information.”

One of the important attributes of the radio here for the young people is the ability to aggregate the shared experience and address a broader audience. Youth in the rural areas get a chance to interact with their fellow youth across the country and get more than what their daily social interactions will provide within their own locality. While these kinds of interactions continue in the youths daily settings, they are incomplete because they are not as rich and diverse. They are also limited in terms of space. In Kiangwache, Ndia area, which is dominated by farms and is more of a village setting: young men come to hang out at a small shop every evening at 6:00 pm after everyone is done with the day’s work, where they play darts and converse for a few hours. Other points of social interactions are bars but they do not provide a space for much serious interactions. For a whole week, I observed the same group of friends. By nature of an undersized group with limited information, they are therefore not likely to have something new or different to talk about within the small circle.
Most of the young men who hang together in Kiangwache had known each other for many years having attended primary and secondary school together. Typically, an external experience is when one goes to Kibigothi shopping centre. But even here, the time for interactions is limited. Young women are more restricted in terms of interactions. Unlike the young men, they are usually expected to be home before dark. They are also not likely to hang out in a public place like outside the shop because this is considered unacceptable. Girls therefore tend to socialize with friends at home or semi-public places like hair salons.

Weekend late-night shows are one of the most popular programs with the listeners of Kikuyu LLR.

The two leading Kikuyu and Kalenjin radio stations-Inooro FM and Kass FM respectively-have family programs during the weekend night which have gained strong roots among listeners. According to the latest the 2011 second quarter Synovate Report, the night late programs attract the highest numbers of listeners (Synovate, 2011). These programs consist of what is a new form of social sphere that allows people to discuss issues that are rarely discussed in the daily interactions. Lincoln Njogu, a producer and presenter at Radio Citizen FM notes:

Most people do not like to talk about issues that are related to sex. They shy a lot from that. We were the pioneers in [local language] radio to talk openly about sex. We thought that since people do these things and others do them without the necessary knowledge, how will they get the necessary knowledge? We took it upon ourselves to bring these issues to the limelight. Other people say that Kenyan people are not romantic, so we wanted to know what romance is from our listeners. Other people say that our women are over-reserved and do not show emotions when it comes to sex appeal. So we wanted to know why they suppress the feelings, we wanted to give them a forum to express themselves. What is sex, how do they relate with the opposite
sex. People liked it through our ever popular night show *Good evening Kenya* because people came out in the open which was very surprising. (Lincoln Njogu, Personal communication. August 1, 2011)

Radio in Kenya has since become an effective social platform where listeners now discuss sexual issues that are of concern to their life experiences. During the course of an ordinary day, issues that relate to sexuality are rarely discussed openly, especially across age groups, genders and within family, for instance parents and children. Sexual subject matter is difficult to negotiate because many African societies are conservative on the issue. Even my conversation with Mr. Njogu who is a producer at Radio Citizen includes carefully chosen language as referents. He, for example, includes substitution of sexual references such as “sexual intercourse” with general terms such as “these things”. “To hear women saying that I do not like to be handled this way. I like it this way, such that even men can know where they usually fail.” Mr. Njogu explained. The quote above illustrates another set of carefully chosen words, where phrases such as “this way”, “where” are substitutes to descriptive sexual text from the listeners that the broadcaster is not ready to repeat.

During the interviews and focus discussion groups in Ndia, two late-night programs in *Inooro* FM, *Ithau rířa kwibanga* (Time to be smart) and *Hutia Mündũ* (Touch someone) were identified as listeners’ favorite programs for a number of young listeners, majority of married young people and middle aged respondents, but usually without direct reference. When the question *What is your favorite program?* was posed, many respondents would give a winded response because they are uncomfortable talking about the exact nature of the program, partly because it is of sexual nature, as illustrated by the following dialogue:

The first dialogue is within a FGD with young men at Sagana where I pose a question to Jackson, a 24-year-old mechanic at Sagana in Ndia.

**Interviewer:** What radio program do you like to listen to?
Jackson: News, people like Mũnyūrūrũ, a comedy type of a program. And there is *gaka gokaga ūtukũ* (this program that comes at night.)

**Interviewer:** Which one?

(The respondent giggles, like he is trying think about something deeply...)  

Jackson: *(Smiling).* It is about family and stuff like that...enh...

(Is it *Hutia Mũndũ*...? or are you talking about...enh...interjection from another member of focus group).

Jackson: No, it is a different one that comes very late at night and people are interviewed, like what women or women like, such things.

**Interviewer:** Are you married?

Jackson: No

Another section of the people interviewed identified the program with the main presenter. For example, *Ithaa ría Kwibanga* was identified with Pastor JJ, as the presenter is popularly known. In most instances, I had to probe further using free talk tactics before I could get the listeners to name the program. The following excerpt is from a FGD with young women in Kiangwache, Ndía:

**Interviewer:** How many people in this group listen to Pastor JJ’s program?

*(Four discussants raise their hands)*

I see four. What is Pastor JJ’s program about?

*(Silence for a while)*

Sarah: It is about man and his wife and how they should live.

**Interviewer:** When does the programme come on air on radio?

Sarah: It is on air on Saturday from 9:30 PM.

**Interviewer:** Who can tell me the name of the program?

Sarah: It is called *Hutia Mũndũ.*
(The group bursts into laughter).

**Interviewer:** What issues are discussed in the programme? What things have you heard on the program since you started listening?

**Sarah:** Hmmm... they are enh...they are difficult to explain.

(The group bursts long laughter. There is another long silence)

**Interviewer:** Are you feeling shy? We are all adults here. Therefore, you can talk freely.

**Sarah:** The program has many different experiences. For instance, when a wife refuses enh.. like to have sex with her husband or when a husband refuses to have sex with his wife. It gives such examples.

**Interviewer:** What else, from another person? Sheila?

(Silence, then short laughter)

**Interviewer:** Winnie?

**Winnie:** The program helps people.

**Interviewer:** How? Explain.

**Winnie:** It advises a man and a wife how they can live together in a family

(Another long silence)

**Interviewer:** How, in which ways. Sarah, please tell us.

This interview excerpt, like the preceding one, reiterates the difficulty that people find in discussing sexual topics. In the focus groups of eight people, there was only likely to be one person who was bold and it took this person for the others to talk. In the case of this group, it was Sarah who was showing some level of boldness which helped to open up the discussion. Hence my probing focused on her although she also struggled. Listeners agreed that the sexual subject is hard to talk about in the real life. However, such content can be discussed on the radio without people feeling the same pressure.
I encountered the same or similar responses from a FGD in Ndanai, as the following excerpt from a FGD with young men in Ndanai reveals:

**Interviewer:** Which programme do you like listening to in your favourite station?

**Joseph:** My favourite is News...because it makes me aware of happenings in the county and what is happening nationally. Then *miten kipindit age nenyun* at night (there is another programme which comes at night).

**Interviewer:** Which one?

(The respondent scratches his head as if thinking of something...)

**Willis:** *(Smiling shyly)*. I like *Twoliot* because it is about many things like family life and such things...

(Is it *Twoliot* or are you talking about...enh *Tigitiotab Bambaniat*?...interjection from another member of focus group).

**John:** No, it is this programme which is aired on Tuesdays from 10pm to 12am and is presented by 3 presenters who speak on social issues. Sometimes they even talk about serious issues like...enh... sexual matters (some seconds of silence). They generally touch on sensitive matters between the married people.

**Willis:** We are talking about the same programme. It is called *Twoliot*.

**Joseph:** I think I prefer *Tigitiotab Bambaniat* which runs on Thursday from 10pm to 12am. It is captivating as it deals with issues of family. I love it especially because it connects or hooks up the love birds who have in most cases ended together and confirmed on air that indeed the relationships have worked.

**John:** *Tigitiot ab Bambaniat* is educative, informative, entertaining and it is an eye opener as a majority of the audience at the end of the program will learn something new. They learn new
tricks of approaching a man or a lady, how they should treat their spouses and also learning the dos and the don’ts.

**Interviewer:** Tell me, are you married?

**Joseph:** No

In another FGD the level of boldness among older women was low. Women in Ndai found it extremely difficult to discuss sexual topics; many barely struggled to express themselves in a roundish way trying not to talk about sexual issues in a direct way. Comparatively, I found women in Ndai more liberal compared to women in Ndai in this aspect. However, in an overall sense, listeners agreed that the sexual subject is hard to talk about in real life. However, such content can be discussed on the radio without people feeling the same pressure. The following excerpt is from a FGD with young women in Ndai:

**Interviewer:** How many people in this group listen to *Tigitiot ab Bambaniat* program?

*(Discussants keep quiet looking at each other).*

**Interviewer:** There is nobody here who listens to “Bob Arap Kemei, “His Excellency” Winnie Ruto alias “Koririo”?”

*(Two discussants raise their hands)* Okay, two of you. What is Winnie and Bob’s program about?

*(Silence)*

**Margret:** It is...it is...(smiling and looking down) it is... about many things...

**Interviewer:** Things like what? Who can tell me?

**Florence:** Hmmm...*(looking at the other participants)*

*(The group bursts into laughter).*

**Interviewer:** What issues are discussed in the programme? What things have you heard on the program?

**Margret:** Hmmm... they are difficult to explain...
The group bursts long laughter. Total silence follows

Interviewer: Are you feeling shy? We are all adults here. Please feel free and let's talk.

Alice: The program has many things like many things in the family...

Interviewer: What else, someone else?

(Silence, then short laughter)

Interviewer: Nancy?

Winnie: The program helps people.

Interviewer: How?

Winnie: It advises a man and his wife how they can live together in a family peacefully.

(Another long silence)

Many people in rural Kenya would like to hear and be free to discuss topics that are viewed as taboo and what can be called muted subjects in this context. Taboo topics are those that would be considered offensive or disrespectful to ask or talk about, such as sex and sexuality.

Muted subjects comprise topics that are not necessarily offensive and can be discussed within a controlled setting such as when one is with his age mates, close acquaintances, or members of a group. These include issues of rites of passage such as circumcision, relationships, diseases, sexually transmitted infections, and HIV/AIDS.

Isaac Ngetich, a 39-year-old businessman in Bomet town and who is well versed with the Kalenjin community, decried the lack of open discussion of taboo topics and mute discourses. He identified some taboo and muted subjects he has observed such as extra-marital affairs, fertility problems, and single motherhood. “We cannot openly talk about issues of sexuality and reproductive health, yet these are some of the most important issues that affect our families and the community in day to day life. Interestingly, although they are important issues, most people here prefer to talk in a coded way, in whispers or not talk about such issues at all.”
The late-night family programming is a new kind of content on the LLR and includes explicit content, too sensitive for children and underage to listen to.

When taboo topics are listened to on the radio, the environment is altered to make sure that they do not disrupt the certain norms, such as who can hear what and with whom in the vicinity.

At home, listeners in Ndia treated listening to this program like a ritual. Wairimu, a 34-year-old mother of two children aged 12 and 9 described her Saturday evening before her favorite program, Huitia Mündü. "Every Saturday I have to prepare to listen to the late night program, Huitia Mündü, I make sure that I feed the children early and prepare them to go to bed in good time. At 10:00 pm, my husband and I start to listen to the program together."

A similar view was expressed by 36-year-old Nancy Chebet, who teaches at Kelongate, a local primary school, about Ittoo (Bed) which airs from 10pm on Kass FM.

"This is an adults-only programme. So what I do is to ensure that my three children are asleep by that time. Then when the programme starts at 10pm, I listen with my husband."

The urban FM stations have had similar type of content but their programming has been different. The urban FM stations late-night program address taboo topics but directed towards younger people, presented by regular presenters and are usually spontaneous arising from what listeners have contributed either during the day or earlier days. According to Winnie Kungania of Muuga FM, LLR stations' approach is different. The programs are organized, carefully selected and researched and are targeted more towards the family or those who are thinking about having a family in future.

In order to address the taboo nature of the subjects, two popular late-night family programs that appear on Inooro FM and Coro FM are co-hosted by Christian preachers who are also trained psychologist. Pastor Kuria presents Huitia Mündü program, which airs on Inooro FM, while Ithaa rúa kwibanga on Coro FM is presented by Pastor JJ. Kass FM and Chamgei FM
have **Sobet ab Gaa** (Family matters). Radio Citizen which broadcasts entirely in Kiswahili has similar programme which airs between 8.00pm-10pm and the programme was hosted by Pastor Marita from Nakuru for a long time. Bringing religion into program on the sexual discourse has made it more acceptable to many listeners who are also Christians.

According to the Lincoln Njogu, a producer and presenter with Radio Citizen, the station made a conscious decision to have a religious figure on the program for various reasons. “We use the Pastor to present the program because he is trusted, he is chosen. What he addresses are issues that are based on the Bible and not his personal views”. The late-night programs were the only programs that married couples reported listening to together. Married women mostly reported to have introduced their husband to the programs. “There is one program that I introduced my husband to. the one by Pastor JJ. It comes on air every Saturday once a week” says Florence, a 29-year old mother of one. Through the radio, listeners get a chance to participate actively and passively in the taboo subjects that they would ordinarily not in the everyday discourses. Those who listen are able to follow up the subjects of discussion. Others actively participate through callings or text messages, where they ask questions or air their views and opinions.

Muted subjects are addressed in a variety of programs and are more easily discussed than taboo topics. Sexually transmitted infections and related issues are addressed in health programs in different radio stations. *Inooro* FM and *Chamgei* FM. for instance, have different slots where doctors tackle various health issues. HIV/AIDS has been widely addressed on the radio but rarely in the day-to-day social interactions. People in the rural areas, for instance, are always reluctant to discuss the issue in public (Muturi, 2002). This perhaps explains why a programme on *Chamgei* FM. *Itook* (Bed) which has been a hot date on late night in the station has been been rested. Instead, the more “sobre” *sobet ab gaa* (family matters) is aggressively being promoted. African cultural issues such as rites of passage are constantly
addressed on cultural programs in the LLR but the discussants will not delve into the details. For instance, presenters and contributors will talk about circumcision as a rite of passage but will not address what it really involves. In this case, the details of the practice are taboo. Listeners constantly identified Coro FM and Kass FM as stations that address the Kikuyu and Kalenjin cultural issues.

Radio assumes the role of an extended social sphere to address taboo and muted subjects that are not easily dealt with in the daily interactions. Through this, the medium is breaking the barriers, which has in turn spurred dialogue in the community. At the family level, spouses reported increased communication on issues that they had not been able to discuss in the past. Collins Gathua, 29 and his wife Mary, 24, revealed how they started listening to the program on Coro FM and Inooro FM.

Mary: When these programs were new, I would once in a while listen but did not pay attention. Then people started talking about them. When we went to women group meetings, people would talk about how they address family issues. Then there was talk of people listening with their husbands or encouraging them to listen. I became a regular listener and started listening with my husband.

Collins: It is my wife who introduced me to these programs. I was not interested initially because most weekends I would stay out with my fellow men. However, after listening for a while with my wife, I was hooked. Later, we both got used to the discussions on radio to a point of discussing the issues in the program freely at home.

Older people interviewed during the study noted a shift in their society, where the traditional avenues of interactions are disappearing. Mr. Joel Ngenyé, 71, pointed to this ensuing disconnect. “There are many changes today, and we older people can notice them. When we were growing up, old men would sit down with young people and have a dialogue and pass knowledge to them. Today, if you want to find a young a man, I do not know where to find
one. With these changes in social spaces and limited interactions, radio is an alternative site where culture is passed on and learned.”

4.5.6 Radio for civic engagement

A significant outcome of the liberalized broadcast industry can be noted in the opening up of broadcast media as a public sphere. "a discursive space in which individuals and groups congregate to discuss matters of mutual interest and, where possible, to reach a common judgment" (Hause, 1998, p. 86). The public sphere can be seen as a stage in modern societies in which political participation is enacted through the medium of talk (Fraser, 1990) and a realm of social life in which public opinion can be formed (Asen, 1999).

While the first urban FM stations were entertainment oriented, new stations such as Radio Citizen, a national Kiswahili station was started in 1999, do not shy away from engaging in political discourse. According to the station’s head, Waweru Mburu, the station’s inception was motivated by the need to provide an alternative political voice to the ordinary people. However, in the consequent years, new LIR stations have also included programs that address politics and other issues of public interest.

Listeners in rural Kenya demonstrate a lot of interest in politics as well as engagement in public deliberations. People are interested in what is happening in their immediate environment, nationally and globally. They also constantly questioned their politicians and their government. They felt that the performance of the government and local leadership directly influence their lives.

Radio stations provide a forum where listeners can engage in public discourses about daily happenings that affect their lives in the locality, nationally and globally. The significance in these public interest subjects has led the stations to come up with programs that give the people a chance to contribute and deliberate on them. Radio Citizen was constantly
mentioned as the most preferred station for political content. These findings are consistent with the content of the radio and the extent to which the station gets people involved in discussing different issues as the head of the station: Waweru Mburu described the station thus:

Radio Citizen is the common man’s radio. That is why we give the ordinary person a forum to participate in what directly affects them. Programmes like Bunge la Wananchi (The People’s Parliament) and “Jambo Kenya” (Good Morning Kenya) where listeners call in to contribute to different issues that are affecting the country are very popular.” Producer and Presenter at Radio Citizen. Lincoln Njogu agrees: “Radio Citizen focuses on the common man. We started a programme like Ajenda ya Mageuzi (Reforms Agenda) in 2010 for purpose of sensitizing people in the counties about Kenya’s new constitution and more specifically on leadership. The programme runs from the counties and involves the people expressing themselves and their governance problems.” (Lincoln Njogu, personal communication August 1, 2011).

Mr. Josephat Kirui, a 47-year-old teacher at Ndanai Primary school likes this programme.

Interviewer: Tell us more about politics.

Kirui: I love politics and that is why I listen to Citizen a lot. They have different programs where we participate by calling or texting to talk about different things on politics.

Interviewer: Do you have a particular program in mind.

Kirui: Yes. My favorite is Ajenda ya Mageuzi (Reforms Agenda) and Jambo Kenya (Good Morning Kenya). I have called to contribute many times. There are always vibrant debates going on and we have different views from people in different parts of the country. In a time like this when we shall be having elections next year, we all will get a chance to air our views about different subjects.
Through different programs, radio gives people the opportunity to comment on the functioning of the government, criticize it, demand accountability from the leaders and scrutinize leaders' performance. For a number of years, Radio Citizen has had a number of critical programs that are directed to the leaders in various walks of life. Its morning programme, “Good Morning Kenya” also delves into political and governance issues of the day. In the programme hosted by two presenters, listeners send their complaints through letters, text messages or calls about an issue, usually a failure of a public figure, and this would be read on the program naming the person, and the accusation. These types of radio programs have enabled the common folks to say what they would like to say to the ruling class, a group that they ordinarily cannot reach. “Gichinka” – A pre-recorded feature on what people understand about the newly formed counties is also a hit in Muuga FM which broadcast to the larger Meru region. Another late night show kumaurira, where leaders like Member of Parliament, Councillors, Chiefs and others are hosted for one hour in the “You and your leader” program is very popular with the audience. The audience is given a chance to comment on the issue of the day and ask them questions. This keeps the leaders accountable.

At Kass FM, their ever popular morning show is purely dedicated to issues of governance. In fact, the most popular programme with the highest listenership at the station is the morning show. Lee ne Emet (What is the country saying) that runs throughout the week from Monday to Friday every Morning 6.30 am to 9.00 am. The Show which is hosted by two presenters, touches on topical issues, such as current affairs mainly political, social, and even educative depending on the topic. The stations’ producer and news presenter and producer, Timothy Chepsol, says that the programme format has endeared itself to the audience:

This is one of the most popular shows that we have at Kass FM. The show is very popular because it gives the audience a chance to express themselves in an open, fair.
transparent and in a democratic way, regardless of divergent views. The show also incorporates the invitation of guests from different fields including political, financial or business, education, agriculture and several other professions. The audience is also allowed to give their own views through the Call-Ins, SMS, Mail and Teleconference for both the local and diaspora through the designated Codes.

James Korir, a 46-year-old farmer from Ndanai, one of the ardent listeners to this programme attests to this: “Every morning, I wake up early and tune to Kass FM waiting for Lee ne Emet. This programme educates me about governance and the issues which affect my daily life. The programme is part of my daily schedule.” Chamgei FM’s ‘Nee netesetai’ (What is happening), touching on current issues airing between 7am to 9am every morning, Monday to Friday, is also popular in rural Rift valley. The programme mainly covers politics and development.

At Bahasha FM which broadcasts in Kikuyu language, the morning show addresses issues of public interest. Julius Mathenge, a 55 year old farmer from Kiangwache in Ndia likes this role of the radio. “I like Bahasha FM because they tell the news as it is. There is also a program by Muthoni Wa Mucomba that is called The Boss. The program highlights people who have erred, depending on the complaints they receive. When the presenter receives complaints, she takes the issue and directs it to the mentioned person, be it a policeman, the chief or even the president. She is able to put forward to the relevant authority issues that the affected people cannot.”

Radio, usually through popular presenters, acts on behalf of the listeners by raising different issues with those who are concerned. Broadcasters have the ability to pursue matters with those who are in power in a way that a common person cannot. Failure of the affected party to respond to an issue would result to them being called out publicly on radio which will lead to negative publicity. This situation has been perfected by certain presenters who have their
own style of presenting which has become popular with their audiences as Lincoln Njogu of Radio Citizen observes: “Presenters are a very important component here. We have presenters in the local language broadcasting scene who are popular in their own right. They have such a following that their word is just enough... people switch to listen to them and once they are through, they switch elsewhere. This is why the governance debate and issues have now taken center-stage in local language broadcasting which is helpful to our country’s political development.”

4.5.7 Radio and problem solving

Since LLR derives most of its listenership from the rural audience, the stations have assumed a community-centered approach that allows them to stay close to the people. The approach aims at ensuring that the different needs of the people are catered for broadly. Limited access to services and resources has seen the listeners increasingly turn to the broadcasters whom they now regard as responsive to their needs. According to Nyongesa King’asia, of KBC, radio in Kenya is acquiring new roles beyond the traditional roles of informing and educating. He explains that radio is now serving new frontiers where it has become socially responsible, working for the public. This, he says, is why presenters now have new burdens which were not there before but they have taken them on as if they are our own.

A recent situation where radio in Kenya was used in social responsibility is the media initiative by Kenyan media to address the drought situation in northern part Kenya in July 2011. LLR was at the forefront in broadcasting message for help to the northern Kenya people. Although the target was Ksh 500,000,000, it was later to be revised to 1 billion because of overwhelming response from Kenyans opines King’asia.
This new form of social responsibility goes beyond a one-off action. Every day, there is someone in the audience who needs something. When asked what his favorite station was, Mr. Ngeno from Kapkelei, Bomet County cited the responsiveness of Chamgei FM.

I like Chamgei because of their programming and the way they broadcast in a simple and straightforward way which appeals to an individual. Chamgei helps people locally in the villages, especially where there is urgent need. Those things have made Chamgei stronger by the day in this area.”

These kinds of sentiments were voiced by Kipsang, a 27-year-old man from Rongena, Bomet, who cites Radio Citizen which broadcasts in Kiswahili, as the best bet nationally. In discussing the radio station that feels close with most, he points to Chamgei FM and Radio Citizen.

Chamgei FM is our radio at the county level because of the issues that they discuss …

The other station which deal with peoples’ problems at the national level is Radio Citizen. If your child is lost, you just text these two stations and even when something else is on air, they will interrupt just to make an announcement about the same.

The broadcasters realize that people especially in the rural areas are more handicapped when it comes to response to emergency. With the availability of the mobile phones, calling the stations allows the broadcasters to mediate for a more rapid response. “We always encourage them to inform us on what is happening in their locality”, says Lincoln Njogu.

A few days ago, (June, 2011) there was a kid who fell into a pit latrine in Kiambaa area and she needed help. If one has to go to the police and fire brigade, it’s a long process. But if you call Inooro FM, we have the phone numbers of the police, the Fire Brigade, everyone. We were able to respond very fast and that kid was rescued.

There are other challenges that the general population face. If you lose your job unfairly, and your union seems to be toothless, your hope is someone at the radio station who will follow
Radio is taking the role of addressing the issues that would be addressed by leaders and other prominent people in the society. Listeners appear to be finding radio closer and responsive than they would find their leaders.

In a popular programme which is hosted by Chiku Muiruri, “Busted”, run on Classic 105 FM, aired on 29/06/2011 at 5.45pm; a cheating woman was busted by her husband on air. At the end of the story, the man was desperate to the extent that he wanted to end his life and that of his son “to clear the suffering that I am facing. I feel like doing something…” The presenter urged him not to kill himself or even hurt the child. The presenter offered words of advice to the husband and even suggested that he sees a counsellor. She asked that the husband takes the child to her for safety reasons. Listeners called and gave advice to the husband and suggestions to the presenter on how and where he could go for help. This was radio as a problem solver at its peak.

4.5.8 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed the patterns of production and consumption of LLR for the people of rural Kenya. Radio is a ubiquitous device in people’s homes and is used as a source of information and education. Other uses of radio include companionship, a social platform where different issues are discussed, and a public sphere for civic dialogue. For other people, radio provides a means through which they can seek help when they have challenging problems in their daily life.

Through the radio, people in rural Kenya learn what is happening in their locality, in the country as a whole as well as the rest of the world by listening to news programs. Listeners who are interested in local and international politics use the radio to follow political news. Listeners in Ndia and Ndanai areas use radio to obtain information on farming, their main economic activity. The LLR stations have programs on farming that target farmers in rural
Kenya. Farmers find these kinds of programs useful because they discuss their daily farming practices on crop cultivation and animal rearing. Farmers use radio to follow current agricultural information such as commodity prices in different parts of their country, which helps them in making marketing decisions. Other listeners find radio useful in providing information on health issues, especially on nutrition and traditional health practices.

We have also seen that radio is used as a companion and many people have a very close relationship with the device, which is a part of their lives. In the domestic sphere, women in rural Kenya use radio as company in their kitchens and during long periods of the day when they are home alone. The sound of the radio creates an added presence in homes during the quiet times of days. At the same time, radio is a close companion for men whose days are spent in the grazing fields, those who work in shops or around shopping centres and those who work as security guards.

It has been captured that radio has captured the changing social environment among rural people. Radio is redefining social interactions and opening up social spaces through which people engage with each other and different issues. Radio is helping to keep listeners in touch with the wider social environment as members of a society that goes beyond their local environment. Through the radio, listeners interact with their peers who are in different places bringing together people who are separated by distance. Radio has extended the possibilities of sharing different social experiences despite distance barriers.

People are brought together by common interests and use radio as a launch pad to form social groups such as fan clubs. It was also seen how LLR has taken dialogue on taboo and muted topics such as sex to a different level. Through programs that openly address sex and family issues, radio has allowed people to open up and discuss these issues more often than they have done before. However, this does not mean that people are ready to break away from the cultural norms that govern such discourses. As shown during the interviews with the
researcher, restraints on these topics still remain. At the family level, dialogue between couples was reported to have increased. The role of radio as a public sphere has also been discussed. The present radio industry in Kenya has given listeners a platform where they can discuss matters of common interest. People are using the radio to send messages to their leaders and government, make their complaints and dissatisfaction heard, and question each other as citizens. Through various programs, radio stations act as people's voice by directing questions to different public leaders as requested by listeners. Finally, it has been noted that radio has become a place where listeners can run to when they have problems. Most rural people are poor and lack access to various resources. Radio has become a facilitator, sending pleas on behalf of the people in need. Radio presenters have also used their positions to follow up on specific issues raised by listeners. These illustrate that local language radio plays an important role in the lives of the people of rural Kenya.
CHAPTER FIVE

PATTERNS OF CONSUMPTION OF RADIO PROGRAMMES

5.0: Introduction

This section examines radio patterns of listening reported by listeners in Ndia and Ndanai by juxtaposing them with selected Synovate Report (2011) findings on aggregate data for the Rift Valley and Central Kenya media region. Synovate Reports on listeners from Rift and Central Kenya are general and therefore may not capture special characteristics and differences that exist among audiences from a smaller population. At the same time, the listening trends allow us to explore differences, similarities and explanations of the listening trends reported in Ndia and Ndanai. Using data from research findings, this part provides some graphical representation of Ndia and Ndanai audiences’ patterns of listening to L.I.R.

In comparing the Ndia and Ndanai listeners’ reported trends and those of Central and Rift Valley areas of Kenya in the Synovate Report (2011), there are a number of consistent findings. First, the radio stations that were identified as the most popular in Ndia and Ndanai are similar to the Synovate data on these regions. The Synovate Report goes further to provide a breakdown of hour to hour listening, information that was beyond the scope of this research but one that I find useful in comparing the popularity of some programs that were reported in the two areas under study. Secondly, using the graphical hourly sketches, I am able to track different radio stations audience levels and their nuances during the weekdays and the weekends.

The rise and fall in audience levels can have different interpretations such as when people have turned off their radio sets, when they are busy and therefore not able to listen to the radio, and where they might be at a particular time. By comparing individual radio stations, the study was able to match the listenership levels and compare them with the reported popular programs on various radio stations.
5.1 Language and radio listening in Ndia and Ndanai

Like most people in Kenya (Githiora, 2002), Ndia and Ndanai populations are largely multilingual. Since the population is predominantly Kikuyu and Kalenjin (Kipsigis) respectively, the first language for most of the people in the areas is Kikuyu and Kalenjin (Kipsigis). These languages are spoken at home and outside the home during daily interactions. The second most spoken language is Kiswahili; it is used mainly for interaction with people from different ethnic communities and at times among the youth. English comes in as the third most spoken language that is ordinarily acquired when one joins school. English is the language of instruction in schools and also the second official language in Kenya. All 100 listeners who responded to the questionnaire had the knowledge of local language. 95 per cent spoke Kiswahili, and 80 per cent had some knowledge of English. Thirteen percent of the respondents reported that they spoke at least four languages. For people who are born in both the research settings, exposure to the Kikuyu and Kalenjin language is from a young age. For the young population who are in the primary school (usually aged between six and fifteen years), Kikuyu and Kalenjin are the preferred languages but Kiswahili and English are highly encouraged in school. Apart from Kiswahili, all examined subjects in primary school are in English language. When I visited in Kiangwache primary school, students spoke in Kiswahili and English. This was also observed at Karima Primary school. According to the teachers, students are banned from using their mother tongue (Kikuyu). In the Kenyan education system, standardized national examinations after class eight determine the kind of high school a student gets admitted to. The high schools have a tier system of national, provincial, district and local schools. The national schools only admit high performers across the nation. National schools have more resources and have a good record for the standardized high school examination which determines entry into the public university. Thus there is pressure to perform exceptionally well and teachers use all
means possible to ensure the students are competitive. In rural areas, one of the ways to improve performance has been to stress students' language proficiency in English and Kiswahili. Rural students are less exposed to English and Kiswahili compared to their urban counterparts. This has in turn meant discouraging the local mother tongue by all means.

People from outside the Ndia and Ndanai areas, especially those who have lived there for a long time have learned Kikuyu and Kalenjin languages. Proficiency in different languages is largely dependent on the level of education and age. The older population is likely to be less proficient in Kiswahili and English. These are mainly people who have not interacted with other people outside the Kikuyu and Kalenjin speaking populations or those who have not gone through formal schooling. Since independence in 1963, standard of education in Central and Rift Valley areas of Kenya has been high compared to other areas. People in a homogeneous rural setting like Ndia and Ndanai are relatively less exposed to different languages, except Kikuyu and Kalenjin Kiswahili, and English.

The degree of proficiency in different languages varies and may be hard to establish especially in English. People exhibit disparities between spoken, read, and written English language. For instance many people can read from sources such as the local English newspapers which are more easily available than Kiswahili newspapers. The main challenge with English is speaking. In describing his language proficiency, Kimiti, a 25-year old man from Kibigothi said, "I understand English [spoken] very well, but when it comes to speaking, it is a bit hard.... As for fluency, Kikuyu comes first, then Kiswahili and English comes last." Many older people aged over 65 years do not understand English at all. The majority of the population is proficient in spoken Kikuyu and Kalenjin, but not as proficient in reading and writing the language.

The older segment of the population is mostly proficient in spoken Kikuyu and Kalenjin. Some young people, on the other hand, reported not being good in Kikuyu or Kalenjin.
beyond the language of ordinary general conversation. Proficiency in Kiswahili among Ndia and Ndanai people lies between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin and the English language extremes. Over 90% of the people I interacted with understood their local languages well. They can read and write easily and most can speak. These language dynamics come into play during radio listening. In the following section, I discuss the listeners’ language preferences and the reasons behind them and how this influences their radio listening patterns.

5.2 Language as a determinant in radio listening

Other than the availability of signals, one factor that determines the choice of the radio station that audiences listen to is the language of broadcasting. Among the questionnaire respondents, 71% picked a Kikuyu or Kalenjin local language station as their favourite station. Those who preferred local language stations cited the ability to comprehend content as one of the major reasons behind their choice. To the older population, the emergence of LLR broadcasting has provided an avenue where for the first time they could listen to the radio on their own without relying on an intermediary. The old broadcasting system in which radio broadcast were mainly in English and Kiswahili left out a huge section of the older population. They had to rely on those who could understand the languages to tell them what was going on. The following comments reflect some of the views of the older people. For Nelly, 77-year-old grandmother from Lelechewet in Ndanai, the new broadcasting has changed the radio.

"The good thing about the new Kalenjin stations is that even as old people, we can now listen to the radio without asking anyone to explain what was said. I will just sit here with my radio and get everything that is said. Before, things were very different, the radio was a device that just made noises, now it speaks to me." Stephen Ndungo, a 62-year-old man from
Kiangwache explained this too, contrasting the old times when there was little to choose from and the current times where there are many choices of radio stations:

The local language stations are good because before, we had KBC that broadcast in English and Kiswahili and not everyone is educated or can speak Kiswahili or English. So there will always be a time when people listen to the radio, but miss something. But since the day we got local language broadcasts, there is no way you will hear someone asking what was said because even little children now can say I heard this and that on the radio. So the local languages make life and radio listening easy.

Struggling with English is not restricted to those who said they did not understand the language at all. Some listeners said that despite understanding English, they have not attained the proficiency level where they are able to understand everything that is said on the radio. From those who reported a modest understanding to teachers and young people who have a higher proficiency, these sentiments were shared across board. Michael, a 20-year-old teacher at Kapkesembe primary school, Ndanai, who is also a university student said that language is critical in influencing his choice of radio stations. He contends that some stations use English which is a little complicated for him. Because of this, he ends up tuning to a Kalenjin or Kiswahili station which he understands with ease.

Lilian Chepkorir, a 53-year-old teacher at Mosonik primary school, captures the language situation through what she calls “deep meanings” she gets and the “taste” of her language. Kalenjin, compared to English. She also talks of “feeling the language getting in her” that signifies cognitive proximity to the speech as it is delivered and the ease with which listeners understand their language:

Kalenjin or Kiswahili for instance. I listen mostly not because I cannot understand English but I feel that I can get the deepest meaning in Kalenjin. For instance, in
Kiswahili there are words that you might not understand. Also, in English someone will put in an accent. But with Kalenjin, it is simple and clear. And there is also a different taste in Kalenjin because it is our local language. For instance, I listen to *Kass* FM because I feel the language getting in me" and I will never ask what was said. Sometimes, I also listen to broadcasts in Kiswahili in programmes which I like. But English is the last resort.

For some listeners, the choice of language is determined by those are around you and the language norms. Young listeners like 26-year old Bernard Karibe from Kibigothi pointed to what they view as the sensitivity of Kikuyu language, which they believe mutes discussion of topics that are freely addressed in other languages. He asserts that the use of Kikuyu language is appropriate because culturally, there are shared language norms (in Kikuyu) that have to be adhered to:

> When a language that is deemed inappropriate in the Kikuyu culture is heard on the radio, young people feel uncomfortable if they are in the company of older people. However, there is no such discomfort if one is in the presence of her or his peers.

However, it all depends on which language is being used on the radio.

Benard says that based on what is discussed on the radio and the language in use; there are things that can be freely said in English. However, if the language of broadcasting was Kiswahili or Kikuyu, it would feel shameful to listen. He therefore avers that if such was broadcast in English, then he is free to laugh without hiding or feeling any shame. He for example notes that there are some things which can not be said in Kikuyu when parents are around.

Young people, on the other hand, argue that Kikuyu language, like the culture, is more conservative, while English language is liberal in the discussion of taboo topics and muted discussions identified in the preceding section. They feel more uncomfortable using the local
language to discuss sexual issues than older people. Even concepts that are not necessarily considered unacceptable in the day-to-day speech are hard for many young people to use while the elder people do not have the same problem. Mr. Kariuki, a 68-year-old from Kariti argues that Kikuyu language is not necessarily blunt: instead it is the young people who do not understand their culture:

Our language is not blunt. I think some parents have taught their children that our language is blunt. Our children have lost our culture and that is making things so difficult. One day I told a young man something and he was so mad because he thought I had insulted him by telling him he depends on his mother. When the researcher went to visit his home, he was asked to prepare me a cup of tea but refused and said I insulted him. When he repeated what I had said, his mother reprimanded him asking him who else he depended upon. Our children just don’t understand.

It is also interesting to note how some of the young listeners view broadcasting in local languages. Some are resistant to their local language on radio. For them, the language is too mundane; they hear it every day in their lives and would rather listen to something different. Some do not even want to be associated with listening to such stations because among their peers, it is not considered a “cool” thing to do. In contrast, listening to English language FM stations has a sense of prestige. According to Lilian Chepkorir, a 22-year-old lady from Kipsingei, Ndanai, listening to local language stations for a young lady feels awkward. “Even young men are not impressed when they find you listening to local language stuff.” Nduati, a 24 year old young man from Kiangwache thinks there is too much Kikuyu on radio. For Nduati, such presence results in people all over the country learning the language which erodes any uniqueness of the Kikuyu community.
"I don’t know how I feel about Kikuyu stations because I do not listen to Kikuyu stations. And after all, this Kikuyu talk has gone overboard making me feel like I can turn off the Kikuyu stations."

Nduati feels that young people should not associate so much with the “local” including their local language. He feels that young people need to be different and one way of doing that is using a different language for communication, such as English, which is considered “prestigious”. When asked, many young people expressed the desire to move away from the village, probably to join their friends in the urban areas where life is considered more flashy and interesting. There are assumptions that more employment opportunities exist in the urban areas. As Gitari, a 40-year old farmer from Kangocho, Ndia, explained that since many young people do not manage to go away from the village physically, the consumption of urban content serves as a psychologically compensatory act that partly fulfils their mental wish.

However, others feel that in this kind of rift, broadcasting in Kiswahili will be the best way forward. Benson Mbogo, a teacher at Kiriti Primary school, Ndia, believes that broadcasting in Kiswahili can help foster national intergration:

Broadcasting in local languages is good because it reaches many people and penetrates all types of barriers. However, since Kiswahili is now both national and official language of Kenya and that many people understand the language even in rural areas, the best way to go is that route. This will help in national intergration and cohesion. Already, a programme like Waweru Mburu’s Yaliyotendeka [What has happened] on Radio Citizen is popular throughout Kenya."

5.3 Diffusing LLR from the stations to the people

The first years of local language broadcasting were largely experimental, as broadcasters tried out forms of content and modes of presentation that would work best for the audience.
One of the challenges in these early years was determining how much local language to include in the presentation. As a result, the very first LLR broadcasted in mixed languages. When *Kameme* FM started broadcasting in 1998, they used Kikuyu, English, and Swahili for presentation and wide range of content in these languages. Radio Citizen which started in 1999, found itself in the same predicament. The subsequent radio stations found themselves in the same position. Initially, there was a feeling that local languages would not suffice in broadcasting without borrowing from other more established language (Waweru Mburu, personal communication, August 3, 2011). This situation can be attributed more to the lack of prior experience with local broadcasting as opposed to a gap in language or content availability. A lack of precedence in an environment that was dominated by English and Kiswahili also tempted the broadcasters to work with what listeners were used to.

Over the years, local radio stations have slowly made progress and managed to cultivate their own broadcasting identity. Local language stations have become more comfortable with their language of broadcast to an extent where some stations such as *Inooro* FM, Radio Citizen, KBC Kiswahili, Radio *Maisha*, Radio *Umoja*, now broadcast close to 100 per cent local language content round the clock. These stations have also attracted a base audience. Listeners have connected with the radio stations and are now accustomed to hearing broadcasting in their own local language of choice. With these developments, LLR has become a site where popular language is being constantly defined. Through the radio platform, radio personalities such as presenters, comedians and musicians invent or popularize the language that ends up in popular discourse.

During the early days of my research, I started to notice a prevalence of local language terms and phrases that were being used in the daily conversation in a way that was different from the normal local language. My research assistants informed me that the terms were being used by people from Nairobi as much as they were used by the Ndia and Ndanai populations.
On further listening to LLR stations. I noticed a language that is similar to what people were using out there. Radio was in fact the source of this language. In Ndia and Ndanai, these new popular radio-inspired terms are mostly employed by the younger population under 40 years of age. A lot of phrases come from the names of programs and shows. There are also different expressions. This language is not literally new but involves changing the context of the usage. The new context is then popularized on radio and moves into the ordinary conversation.

During individual interviews and FGDs in both settings, one of the questions that I asked the listeners was what program they listened to and liked the most. Then I would follow the question by asking the listeners to explain why they liked the program. From many people, a common simple answer was given as “ni kinjakaga” in Gikuyu or techon agoneton in Kipsigis (it builds or constructs me). This was a little confusing at first because “building” normally relates to structures. In my research, the term was used in different contexts. In one way, it was used to explain a positive outcome of listening to radio content such as music, religious programs, informational or educational programs. When deconstructed, these benefits include enlightenment, empowerment, spiritual uplifting and motivation. In the radio usage, these terms in both Kalenjin and Gikuyu is what has been popularized to relate to the individual level. Listeners thus described a program as nĩ kinjakaga (Kikuyu) or oritechon agoneton (Kipsigis) (it builds or develops me), to mean that they derive something positive from listening to radio. Of the favorite presenter it was said, nĩ anjakaga or kitechon agoneton (she or he builds me) meaning she or he motivates me. Of religious songs, it was said nĩ cĩnjakaga or technon tiendo (they build me), meaning they entertain and spiritually uplift me and so on. The use of the term gwaka (Gikuyu) or techon (Kalenjin) for these concepts appears to derive from the need to convey a particular meaning(s) within the radio sphere. There is hardly a precise Kikuyu or Kalenjin term that communicates the concepts of
enlightenment, empowerment, spiritual uplifting or motivation that can be derived from processes such as listening to the radio.

Another popular term I encountered in daily interactions in Ndia is *kuumiria*, a term that is used in the farms during harvesting where the produce is moved from deep in the farms to a central collection point. The phrase is commonly used in tea and coffee growing areas. *Kuumiria* (to move something from a deeper place) is a transitive verb, but is also used in the farm context as an intransitive verb. The phrase found its way into local language language broadcasting and popularized in its use to refer to the late afternoon session, *the drive time*. From the radio, the phrase has been picked in the ordinary language discourses to mean movement. So, instead of one saying *nindathii* (I am leaving or going), people will say *nindaumiria*. In the compound phrase *ni-nda-umiria* (I-have-moved [something]), the active verb *umiria* is a transitive verb and thus would require a direct object. However, the phrase *nindaumiria* in the new meaning is used as a reflexive since *n*- refers to the subject and there is no object. The new literal meaning would be *I am moving myself.*

In Ndanai and all Kalenjin local language stations, presenters have coined words like 'Esekiel', a character who comes in handy to sexually satisfy a woman who has been neglected by the husband. *Riib kaangung asimait Esekiel* (Take care of your wife or else Esekiel will take over). Esekiel is a non existent individual within Kalenjin country. The fictitious Esekiel character (symbolizing extra-marital affairs) has now been symbolically used on radio talk in Kalenjin to the extent that in village talk, the term is used the same way.

Another term which has gained popular usage through radio talk in the rural Ndanai and Rift Valley areas among Kalenjin community is *Twoliot* (a bell). Because of the fact that it is almost taboo to talk directly about the subject on radio sex and intimate love issues, the referent and symbolism of the act of sex in Kalenjin radio is now the bell. Therefore, in all programmes in Kalenjin language, especially those late night programmes in *Chamgei FM*
and Kass FM. Sema Radio 88.9 FM. Radio Injili. Light and Life Radio, and Just FM callers refer to Twoliot (a bell) whenever referring to sexual act.

5.4 Looking at the language of radio

Whereas some younger listeners felt that the local language on the radio was too complicated, the older population was more critical of some of the presenters who do not use "pure" language. To some older people, the young presenters do not use proper language, probably because they are not as highly proficient. Samuel Kariara, a 68-year-old from Kibigothi described such language when commenting on what he would like to hear from the radio:

My station would be in Kikuyu language and teach people the Kikuyu culture the way I know it as I was taught by my parents and grandparents. That is the same way I would also teach my children because there are some on the radio who speak Kikuyu and they speak the opposite. You get a feeling that their Kikuyu language is not straight; it is being forced upon them. I feel it is because they are young people who are still learning the language, or it happens that they did not get what they were taught in the correct way. I would like people who speak the proper and original Kikuyu.

This view was also shared by 65-year-old Johana Kipkorir of Mosonik. Ndanai, whose problem is about the purity of the language used in broadcasting in Kalenjin and the multiplicity of dialects available for use by presenters. He says that the presenters who are mostly young people in the radio stations do not maintain the purity of the language. He also sees another problem to do with which particular dialect the presenter is using which will make it easier for one, or confusing. This can be attributed to the fact that Kalenjin has many dialects.

There are other language challenges that local language broadcasters face, especially in presenting informational content. In many informational programs, the broadcasters invite
experts to the programs to talk to listeners on various subjects. Although some of these experts are Kikuyu or Kalenjin speakers, many of them struggle to address technical issues in the local language. Such programs usually end up being highly punctuated with English making it hard for the listeners to follow. Some argue that this mixing is a result of failure to develop local languages so that they can also address technical issues. In other instances, there is a lack of experts who are proficient in the language and who can address technical issues. Sarah Chebet, a 59-year-farmer in Kapkisembe, Ndanai, argues that although the experts are people from the community who can speak the language well, they end up using English which alienates many listeners:

That is a big problem. They come to the radio as experts to explain many technical issues in a language which we understand. However, they end up speaking half English and half Kalenjin or sometimes Kiswahili which is not very helpful to some of us because the messages are distorted and lost and the presenters do more correcting than listening.

Teresah Wangechi, a 60-year old retired teacher in Karima, Ndai, expressed some of the frustrations listeners have to contend with when language becomes a hindrance to effective presentation of programs. She cites a medical program on Inooro FM. Because the presenters are educated in different ways, they mix Kikuyu language with the other languages.

They want to mix everything. Some also want to appear as if they are experts, but they know very well their language is coming from picking bits and pieces from different places. Like last night [night of 21.02.2011] there was someone who was talking about medicine. He is a doctor. And all the time the he spoke, he was speaking as he was being corrected by the presenter all the time. If he wanted to say something is concentrated, he would go, 'What do I say?' and he would be answered. If he wants to say someone is in great pain, he cannot say it. You get the feeling that they want to
present themselves as if they know foreign languages better than Kikuyu and therefore will not speak three Kikuyu words without bringing in a foreign word. So, it is not Kikuyu, it is not English or Kiswahili, it is just some mixed-up language. I remember listening to the said program as well and noticed the doctor’s struggles. The whole program is distorted because the messages are lost and the presenters do more correcting than moderating the program. But this doctor’s first language was not Kikuyu. The extent to which people can understand the content is therefore hampered by the language barrier.

However, some listeners understand the challenges that local language broadcasters face in discussing technical fields like health and medicine. Wangui, a 49-year-old teacher gives an example of naming diseases, some of which she thinks did not exist among the Kikuyu people and therefore have no names. “I also think most of the diseases are new, they have come after the colonial period. In the past those diseases were not there. There are also diseases I used to hear my grandmother talk about, but never got to know them. Like she would mention a disease called heeho and even today, I cannot tell what kind of disease it is even in English. But even in hospital, it is hard for the doctor to explain the whole illness to a patient in the local language.”

Wangui’s view is that some of the challenges encountered in dealing with complex language can be solved if those who are involved in broadcasting took time to prepare their content, including the technical parts. For example, some broadcaster recommended that doctors who came on air to inform audiences about health and diseases issues should learn the terms used in the local language about the health concerns so that older women and men can learn because the English they insert will make them loose track. It is also recommended that health experts and other professionals who are hosted on LIR take time to learn the language if they are going to communicate with the people.
But other broadcasters do not see this as a problem. Waweru Mburu, thinks the phenomenon has got to do with growth of African languages:

I do not see that as a problem. The languages [local] are growing quite fast and will soon catch up. The most important thing is to pass the message. If the audiences get the message, then everything is okay. Language is connected to the culture and the traditions of the people. It is also influenced by other systems such as education. People who belong to the current generation have interacted with culture differently. They have also undergone a different kind of education which stresses different issues that may not be consistent with the traditional culture that is being promoted on the radio. The education system is dominated by formal schooling, whose demands take them away from their native language and steers students towards Kiswahili and English. LLR stations find themselves at crossroads. They have to fit within the general scheme that recognizes different languages but at the same time, local languages are not accorded enough opportunities to thrive. The same parents who want to hear the best Kikuyu and Kalenjin language on the radio want to see their children acquire the highest proficiency in the languages that matter in other terms. Yet it is the same system that feeds the stations with the broadcasters. It is a difficult act to balance for the broadcaster, also given the diversity of the listeners.

The majority of the listeners seem to have has accepted the LLR stations' status quo and understand the challenges that broadcasters face. With time, the stations are likely to improve just as they have done since their inception.

5.5 Competition for audiences

In Kenya, radio stations compete at national, regional and local levels. Competition is influenced by technology, regulations and economic factors. Radio frequencies are only
capable of reaching a geographic audience within a specified range. National reach in Kenya requires use of transmitters and repeaters in multiple regions. Reach is also a function of regulation. The range of frequencies that a station has access to is determined by the licensing limitations. Economic factors also influence radio operations. There has to be a demand for radio broadcast content from the audience. Radio advertisers may need audiences within a specified proximity. The nature of population and their geographic setting has become an important factor in radio competition as will be discussed in the following sections.

Radio competition in Kenya can be viewed from different dimensions. First, there is competition at the three-tier broadcasting, among the public broadcasters, private broadcasters and community stations. At this level, KBC as public broadcasters has lost most of its market to the commercial stations as they have developed their own audience over the years following liberalization.

For example, in 2002, KBC Kiswahili service commanded an audience share of over 70 percent and KBC English service came second with 57 percent. With the new FM stations restricted to the urban areas, the commercial station with the highest listenership was Metro FM which had 10 percent of the listening audience (Steadman, 2002). KBC was able to hold this sizable portion because only its two stations could transmit to most parts of the country in both Kiswahili and English respectively, while the commercial stations had frequencies in restricted areas. In the subsequent years after liberalization, commercial stations have extended their reach countrywide. The rise of national commercial stations such as Radio Citizen has completely altered the radio landscape. By June 2011, Radio Citizen had the highest reach in Kenya, with a listenership share of 65 percent with KBC Swahili second with 40 percent reach. In the period between December 2010 and June 2011, most radio stations appear to have lost audience share and a few gained.
Table 6, reconstructed using Synovate’s (Quarter I. 2011) report, shows the fluctuations in listenership for selected stations at the national level in the preceding one year. The table shows that with the exception of Radio Citizen and *Kass FM*, leading radio stations have lost their audience share. These losses are a result of entry into the market of more radio stations. There are a host of stations including community radio stations that have taken away segments of audiences that leading radio stations attracted. A telling decline can be noted with KBC English whose listenership has decreased considerably since 2002.

### Table 6: Selected radio stations’ reach in 2010 and 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Dec. 2010 per cent Reach</th>
<th>April Reach 2011 per cent</th>
<th>per cent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radio Citizen</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KBC Kiswahili</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>+8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiss FM</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>+5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy FM</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro FM</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inooro FM</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classic FM</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coro FM</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KBC English</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kass FM</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Synovate first quarters’ monitoring report, 2010 and 2011

Fluctuations in listenership for selected stations at the national level continued after 2010 as shown in table 6. The table shows that with the exception of Radio Citizen and *Kass FM*, leading radio stations seem to have slightly lost their audience share. These losses are a result of entry into the market by more radio stations especially those that broadcast in Kiswahili, Kenya’s national and official language. There are a host of stations including community radio stations that have taken away segments of audiences that leading radio stations
attracted. A telling decline can be noted with KBC English whose listenership has decreased considerably since 2002.

In contrast, the situation has been improving for local language stations with most of them increasing their percentages in listenership in both Rural Kenya. For example, while in Ndia listenership of LLR showed improvement as shown in QTR 1, 2011 statistics from Synovate, stations broadcasting in English lost their audiences. In Ndia, Inooro FM broadcasting in Kikuyu language was the station of choice (70 per cent), followed by Coro FM whose audience dropped to 50 per cent from 59 per cent which audiences seem to have been picked by rival kikuyu station Kameme FM which increased from 48 per cent to 55 per cent in the QTR 1, 2011 Synovate's report. In the same location, Radio Citizen broadcasting in Kiswahili had a marginal increase in audience from 35 per cent to 36 per cent.

The situation in Ndanai is quite interesting. LLR stations have tremendously increased their audience over the years. Radio Citizen, KBC Kiswahili service, QFM and Radio Jambo which all broadcast in Kiswahili had 56 per cent, 28 per cent, 19 per cent, and 16 per cent listenership respectively in the QTR 3, 2010 Synovate report making it almost look like tables had been turned for Kiswahili broadcasting. At the same period, local language station Kass FM followed closely at 12 per cent listenership. These figures changed drastically in the QTR 1, 2011 Synovate Report to 70 per cent, 39 per cent, 36 per cent, 23 per cent, 17 per cent, Chamgei 16 per cent for Radio Citizen, KBC Kiswahili service, QFM, Radio Jambo and Chamgei FM respectively. Overall, what this means is that Kiswahili radio stations are increasing their audiences faster by the day. Cumulatively, the figures show that LLR had a share of more than 85 per cent of the audiences in Ndanai according to the Synovate Report for QTR 1, 2011.

Comparatively therefore, LLR continued to add on audiences although that seems to gather more steam in Ndanai than is the situation in Ndia, according to the Synovate report (QTR 1, 2011).
The situation in Central regions' Ndia is that the local language stations seem to be picking up listeners more than Kiswahili or English stations. However, in the overall sense, local language stations are increasing their numbers in the region by the day in the same area.

A number of local language stations now have more listeners than KBC English. Competition is not only limited to stations with different philosophical orientations. There is high competition among local language stations as exemplified by the four Kikuyu and two Kalenjin languages stations in the named reports about radio listening in Rural Kenya. They have to reckon with each other in addition to national and urban radio stations. In other language broadcasting such as Luo, the leading radio station, Ramogi FM, has also seen a decrease in listenership. Broadcasting from Nairobi and relaying its signals to Nyanza region, Ramogi FM is now facing competition from stations that broadcast from the region like Lake Victoria FM.

While swings in the number of people listening to one station suggest one aspect of competition, there are other important facets such as the different viewpoints represented by radio stations. Different radio stations offer the listeners varied points of view in their broadcasting. A contrast can be made between the KBC stations for example, and private stations in covering political issues. Due to the connection with the state, KBC coverage is usually pro-government and not likely to be critical. Private stations, on the other hand, are able to take a more critical position because they do not enjoy such close ties. This does not mean that all private stations are objective in covering the government, but the probability of bias is low because a variety of points of view are likely to emerge.

Therefore, competition in the Kenyan radio industry has at the same time led the broadcasters to move away from the traditional economic model of targeting listeners who are viewed to have superior economic power. The media market has extended from a small urban population with stable employment to include the rural low income population. The local
language stations are adept at this by bundling listeners from different socio-economic statuses. These stations have changed their view of poor rural audiences as listeners from a forgotten locale into one of the most sought after segments due to their sheer numbers and consumption of vital products such mobile telephones services. If the current data is anything to go by, none of the radio stations are assured of their position in the coming years. This can only be a positive outcome for listeners.

5.6 Diversity

Diversity is a fundamental principle underlying evaluations of the performance of mass media systems and objectives of policy making. It is an important measure of the quality of the offering that is available to the audience (Levin, 1971; Napoli, 2003). Diversity is closely related to the doctrines of economic liberalism and political pluralism. Its appeal can be made on neglected minorities and of consumer choice, or against monopoly and other restrictions (McQuail, 1992:142). Hoffman-Rien (1987, quoted in McQuail, 1992) identifies four dimensions of diversity: (i) The format and issues dimension refer to the difference between media functions such as provision of entertainment, information and education. (ii) The content dimension relates to opinion and topics of information and news. (iii) The persons and groups dimension relates to both access and representation, while (iv) The geographic dimension has to do with coverage and relevance. These dimensions can be used in examining the Kenyan radio today. The current Kenyan media system provides different media formats as identified in chapter five. The three formats identified – traditional, local language and urban – emphasize different proportions of information; education and entertainment avail a variety of choices to the radio listeners in Rural Kenya and extend to a majority of listeners in the country. Kenyan radio stations have also broadened the range of
content. There are different opinions and perspectives that vary with radio stations, different topics of information, as well as news.

In Rural Kenya, different groups are catered for by different radio stations. The difference in patterns of listening between the younger population and the older population exemplifies this issue. Pluralistic mass media can contribute to diversity through reflection of differences in society, giving access to different points of views and offering a wide range of choice (McQuail, 1992). This has also been termed "representative diversity" (Jacklin, 1978) which corresponds to the structure of diversity in society. Diversity of access involves the ability of a media system to make available channels through which separate groups and interests can express and keep alive their cultural identity. There is plurality in Kenyan radio today with a variety of languages from which listeners can choose, which enhances the different aspects of diversity. The Kenya broadcasting regulations have few guidelines that are geared towards promoting language diversity. Despite the lack of policy, Kenyan LLR stations provide a degree of diversity of language, but not all communities are represented. The establishment of the local language stations is also driven by the political economies of the targeted communities, leading to some imbalances. However, the presence of Kiswahili in the mix has helped in aiding the listeners converge through the national language.

LLR stations are promoting cultural identity of listeners through the use of local languages, local materials and cultural education. However, other aspects of diversity on the Kenyan radio such as religious representation can be lost when local language stations for example act as de facto Christian stations, leaving the voices of other religious beliefs out. To a large extent, this is compensated for by other stations such as regional radio stations whose broadcast is also skewed towards their majority audience’s inclinations. Diversity of choice and channels has grown tremendously in the past few years as can be seen from the growth in
the number of radio stations from 46 in 2006 to over 110 at the end of 2010 (Strategic Research, 2010).

5.7 Localism

Localism is one of the central guiding principles in communications policymaking. Localism is not envisaged as an end in and of itself but rather as a means of achieving broader social objectives (Napoli, 2004). Localism as a principle harbors political and cultural relevance and has factored prominently in the design and operation of social institutions. The role of language in promoting localism on the Kenyan radio relates to the content based definitions of the principle. Importantly, local orientation to the design and functioning of social institutions can serve a cultural function. Localism in radio is crucial in the preservation of distinctive cultural values and traditions within particular communities (Napoli, 2004; Stavisky, 1994). Like with other principles, the Kenyan media regulations do not specify local content requirements for broadcasters. Media have powerful influence on culture and values in an environment which supports the rationale for local content. This is important in African settings such as Kenya where local culture has been threatened by infiltration of negative foreign cultures especially from the West propagated through imported materials such as music, television programs and film. To a large extent, LLR stations which use local language are helping to tip the balance between local and foreign content on radio. Through the use of local languages such as Kikuyu, Kalenjin or Kisii, there is content originating from different parts of the country that end up in the day-to-day programming. In the first years of media liberalization, content in the Kenyan broadcast media was predominantly foreign fuelled by the English FM stations (Synovate, 2002). Today, the increase in the number of radio outlets has rendered irrelevant the argument that was constantly raised in the past that the local content is not easily available and what is available is of poor quality and hence
cannot support the broadcasting business. During the period of urban radio stations’ dominance, broadcasters questioned the ability of locally produced materials such as music to maintain audience interest in their programming. With calls from local artists, producers and other activists for the control of foreign materials, proponents, mainly the broadcasters, argued that such measures would lead to loss of audience (Kimani, 2001). But the situation has now changed.

Today, the Kenyan radio industry appears to have found a way to balance itself to the extent that control measures may not be necessary. However, the television industry is still dominated by foreign content. Another operationalization of the localism principle has to do with the nature of the content product provided by local programmers. Under this operationalization, the localism principle can only be said to be satisfied if the programming addresses the distinctive needs and interests of a local community (Napoli, 2003). There is evidence that the Kenyan radio stations are responding to the needs and interests of the audiences in various ways. Through the use of local languages, LLR stations respond to informational needs of all segments of the population. As the older section of the population in rural Kenya reported, the current radio system allows them to access information that they could not access during the state broadcasting era. Radio stations are also responding to the local needs as exemplified by various issues that are discussed on the ILR. In rural Kenya, LLR now more than ever before addresses civic issues that are relevant to the people of the area. The presence of programs such as those that deal with agriculture, an activity that is directly relevant to audiences, also illustrates the sensitivity to the audience. Many morning shows on Kiswahili radio stations are now specifically on the governance theme.

Another important dimension of localism can be seen in commercial radio stations’ response to listeners’ problems. The responsiveness exhibited goes beyond the traditional content found on the radio. Only stations that understand their audience are able to perform such a
function. This is one of the factors that have blurred the line between L.I.R and community broadcasters. Traditionally, it is community radio that constantly responds to listeners' immediate needs.

The principle of localism can be looked at from the political perspective as an important value in the distribution of control in a nation. This is tied to the need to disseminate political power and promote political participation and education among citizenry (Napoli, 2003). Media being a significant political institution, the function of localism as a communication policy can be linked to ideals such as preservation of national interests, forging national unity and achieving the democratic objectives such as enhanced participation (Napoli, 2003). This is partly realized through the role of radio in promoting civic discourse.

The opening up of the airwaves in Kenya happened in the same period as it did in other African countries under very similar conditions, part of the push for democratization process. The liberalization of airwaves in Africa has tended to solve some of the language barriers in communication that were not addressed by the government media. As a result the evolution of radio from state controlled broadcasting in Kenya is similar to what happened in Zambia. With the licensing of private media there, the government media were left to compete in the new industry. One of the results is the shrinking of the audience share of the national broadcaster. The Zambian National Broadcasting Service (ZNBC) radio continues to maintain different services that take into account the language needs of the population (Pitts, 2002). The government radio in Zambia consists of three services. Radio One, a local language service broadcasting in the seven dominant local languages; Radio Two, primarily airing English language programming; and Radio Three, FM service primarily for residents along the line of rail towns of Livingstone, Lusaka, N’dola and Kitwe (Pitt, 2002). Different entities that have taken advantage of the liberalized media in other African countries are very similar.
These include private owners, religious organization and communities (through nongovernmental and community based organizations).

Listeners in rural Kenya use radio for their information and education content. They listen to news and current affairs programs to stay abreast of what is happening around them. Radio is an important source of information in Africa, both in the rural and urban settings. Pitt (2002) in his research in Zambia found that people got most of their news from the radio. In addition, they thought that radio is the fairest source of news, with television coming second and newspaper third. The study of Rural Kenya confirms that in the rural areas, no other media form can be accessed as easily as radio and therefore it is the single most important source of information. In Kenya, the privatization of radio has transformed news delivery. There are more news programs available for listeners on different radio stations that also offer diverse points of view compared to the government controlled broadcasting era. The situation in Kenya is different from Pitts’ (2002) conclusion on Zambia that “the presence of private radio does not guarantee a multiplicity of news voices” (pp. 157), where private stations tended to depend on government news sources. The private radio stations in Kenya do not rely on government news sources, but have instead built their own networks of reporting.

Although the Kenyan government had built its own network through the Kenya News Agency, the history of lack of objectivity and proclivity towards political issues has over time made the agency an unreliable source. The new radio news gathering networks at times penetrate deep into the population and hard to reach areas. News reporters can be found in the rural areas as illustrated by local language stations such as Radio Citizen, Coro FM, Inooro FM, Kass FM, Chamgei FM that have reporters in Rural Kenya. This has resulted in more inclusive news with a local angle according to Shadrack Mutai of Kass FM:
In an effort to ensure that the hitherto marginalised areas [rural areas] are catered for, LLR has reporters in most rural areas which serve to report about events in those areas. It is our work to cover all type of stories and keep our audiences in the Counties updated. (Shadrack Mutai, Kass FM reporter, Kericho County, Personal Communication March 21, 2011)

The content listened to by Rural Kenya audience shows how broadcasting in a liberalized media environment has changed the role of radio in development. One of the goals of the state controlled broadcasting was to foster education and development of the nation through the use of mass media. To date, the state controlled KBC stations continue to pursue this goal through information and education programming. Many of the KBC programs continue to use the development communication approach, the practice of systematically applying the processes, strategies and principles of communication to bring about positive social change (Melkote & Steeves, 2001). Theoretically, liberalization of the airwaves and the associated increase in the number of radio stations would be expected to have a number of implications including improved role of media for social change. First, the increase in the number of media outlets through multiple stations broadcasting in a variety of languages offers more platforms through which to provide the necessary information and education content. This content can be easily targeted to suit the needs of a specific population.

Secondly, the entry of private and community stations in Kenya takes away some of the limitations such as limited availability of air-time experienced before, with only two main radio stations. In the restricted market, the cost of airing programs was high and so was the cost of creating them due to limited infrastructure. The cost of the airtime and the cost of production were the two largest items of the budget. With liberalization and the attendant competition, the cost of buying air time from the stations and producing programs would be expected to be lower.
Thirdly, with over 100 radio stations available, one would expect more information on critical topics such as health, education, economic development, among others. Findings from Rural Kenya point to different aspects of the relationship between increased number of radio stations and social change related programming. Rural Kenya audiences as we have seen have at least twelve stations to choose from at any given moment. The stations have varied types of content including information and education.

The most common information and educational content sought from the local language stations is on health and agriculture which are readily available on the LLR stations. The health and agricultural information that is available to the listeners today differs from what listeners accessed 15 years ago. In the past, health and agricultural programs were carefully and consciously designed and transmitted through the national broadcasters. They were usually targeted towards a wide population in the whole country. Listeners in Rural Kenya today listen to agricultural programs that are narrowly targeted. At most, these programs are targeted to the rural population. The agricultural content is directly relevant to the listeners.

With more radio outlets, there is more content available.

The entry of multiple players into radio broadcasting has addressed the limitations that existed with fewer stations. There are more outlets through which those willing to put information out there can use. However, there is little evidence to show that organizations such as NGOs that use media platforms to transmit informational programs have reaped the benefits of competition. On the contrary, the competition has increased the pressure for media companies to generate revenue. Private media stations are, therefore, not easily accessible because of the cost of the air time. For programs that are targeted to a wider population, a segmented market presents an added challenge. For instance, during the single broadcaster era, a program on KBC Kiswahili station for a certain amount of money was likely to be
heard in every corner of the country. The station gave a wider reach in terms of geographic location as well as actual listeners.

Instead, issues such as nutrition dominated what they view as health education content. It appears that radio stations are providing some form of information in health, agriculture, and education. However, liberalization has led to a major shift in delivery of message that is tied to social change. The information that is available today is the type that can “sell” to the audience as consumers of goods and services. This is the kind of information that attracts program sponsors and advertisers through its direct ties with products that are on the market.

A viable program is one that can generate revenue for the radio station and advertisers. On Kikuyu and Kalenjin LLR stations listened to in Rural Kenya, nutritional informational programs are prominent. These programs are usually sponsored by companies that are making food products. As the companies encourage people to adapt what they call “healthy behavior”, they are also persuading listeners to buy the products they are making, which are available in the local retail outlets. Information on HIV/AIDS has found few sponsors. A possible explanation is that there are few commodities that can be tied to this which would appeal to rural people. One would, however, expect to find sponsors such as condom manufacturers who advertise heavily on television and billboards in the major Kenyan cities, but this has not been the case. In agricultural programming, most information sponsorship is likely to sell and attract a variety of business opportunities for agricultural equipment makers, as well as manufacturers of crop chemicals, animal products and fertilizers.

Health and agricultural programs found on most radio stations are different from agricultural programs that appeared on KBC stations in the past in other ways as well. On the commercial radio stations, there is less involvement of government and developmental organizations such as the NGOs and international organizations. Previously, these were the bodies that funded the programs. This, however, does not mean an overall reduction on the number of the
programs such bodies sponsor, given that they are dealing with over 100 stations as opposed to two in the past. In the current media system, it is easy for a good program to lose prominence regardless of the station they appear on. There also appears to be more programs that are produced in-house by the radio stations mostly in collaboration with the sponsors. Short term sponsorships are more prevalent. Secondly, lack of sponsorship of educational programs on the commercial stations may lead to less rigorous program preparation. There is less input in terms of research in the design of the programs. A number of health and agricultural programs found on Ciro FM, Kass FM, Chamgei FM, Egesa FM, for example, involve guest experts, an approach that is cost effective. The subjects and themes of these programs are also more likely to be broad than specific. In contrast, many past programs on KBC stations were based on the development communication models such as entertainment education, carefully designed programs with specific goals, pretested, and constantly monitored and evaluated. Education programming by KBC English today follows the same rigors, but programs are produced by experts from the Kenya Institute of Education.

There is a shift in the motivation behind producing social change programs. Most programs today, including some on KBC, are designed by the radio stations as a response to the target audience's needs as well as to the stations strategic business considerations. If Kikuyu and Kalenjin radio stations want to reach their target audiences who are predominantly farmers, they have to include programs which touch listeners' everyday economic activities. By transmitting such programs, the Kikuyu and Kalenjin radio LIR stations are improving their position in the radio industry and increasing their chance to maximize profits. At the same time they are responding to the listeners' immediate needs by providing relevant information on an important subject. This explains why Kikuyu and Kalenjin LIR stations have more agricultural oriented programs while Luo LIR stations have programs on fishing as well as agriculture. There are two factors which have made social change programming viable on the
Kenyan private radio. First is the need for radio stations to reach a wide audience. Secondly, private companies are seeking consumers for their goods which lead them to sponsor social change programs as a form of advertising. The availability of sponsorship solves funding challenges associated with airing these programs which have posed problems for broadcasters and development communication practitioners in the past.

High listenership of agricultural programs in Rural Kenya supports the view that radio plays a central role facilitating communication in rural Africa. Majority of their respondents in rural Kenya admitted that they gained some new knowledge through listening to the programs. Agricultural information in Africa is important for the rural population because these areas are economically struggling. Agriculture has the potential to increase productivity which would in turn help to improve the living conditions of the rural people.

Agriculture is an evolving industry that requires the practitioners to stay up-to-date with various developments. There are multiple channels that have been employed in the past such as use of extension officers, farmer-to-farmer contact, print media (newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, leaflets, posters), and electronic media (radio, film, television, film strips) to disseminate information (Olowu & Oyedokun, 2000). Agricultural knowledge gains on crop planting, correct application of fertilizers, diseases and pest control and improvement of crop and livestock varieties are part of the gains farmers have.

5.8 Radio and civic engagement

The role of radio in civic engagement can be viewed within the broader discussion of the effects of broadcasting changes on political development. With economic liberalization in Africa, media scholars have presented differing assessments of the possible outcomes of such process (Andriantsoa et al., 2005). A pessimistic assessment holds that privatized media lack the impetus to advance and address the interests of the general population. Media control by
foreign interests concentrate on content that is of less political relevance such as music. Control by local elites also causes another risk where rich and powerful media owners are driven by the desire to advance their own interests rather than those of majority population who are poor and who were formerly served by the public broadcasters under the public mandate (Andriantsoa et al., 2005; Barnett, 1998; McFadden, 1998).

In Kenya, there is an increased role of radio in promoting civic engagement and the overall democratization process, a product of newfound freedom in the broadcast media. As Rozumilowicz (2002) argues, the development of free and independent media is associated with freedom of expression. In democratic theory and practice, freedom of expression is an inherent and universal human right. Rozumilowicz identifies two important functions of an independent media. It is necessary in order to provide a public forum where people can express and deliberate different opinions, beliefs and viewpoints.

It is also essential in order to inform, educate and entertain by which people’s lives can be enriched (2002: 13). Thompson (1995) identifies “publicness” or “visibility” in society as one of the consequences of increased media access. This entails “the enhancement of transparency in regard to politics, the power structure and ‘society’” (Quoted in Dahlgren, 2005: 318). Through the media, the public is rendered more visible. We are offered ongoing symbolic constructions that portray who we are and how we think. The notion of mediated public brings into play the analytic tradition of the public sphere which is closely tied to the concerns of democracy (Dahlgren, 2005). Viewed through this perspective, radio is a communicative space that permits the circulation of information and ideas. Civic and political processes are among the information and ideas that radio audiences in Rural Kenya engage in. Radio in Kenya advances this process in two ways. L.I.R stations produce and air programs in the form of news, commentaries and critiques on different political issues and leadership. Radio stations also grant the public platform to air opinions and participate in
political debates. In these ways radio act as information sources and facilitate the
communicative link between the citizens and power holders in the Kenyan society. Listeners
in Rural Kenya not only get to know what is happening and debate associated issues, radio
stations also invite various political leaders and public figures to studio to discuss or explain
different issues. In addition to listening to such figures, the radio audience gets the
opportunity to participate by asking questions and making comments.
In analyzing the role of Kenyan media in the civic and political process, Dahlgren's (2002)
conceptualization of the public sphere as consisting of three constitutive dimensions is useful.
These dimensions are structural, representational, and the interactional (pp. 319). Using these
dimensions, this section analyzes the extent to which radio in Kenya has played the role of a
public sphere during two broad periods of radio broadcasting. These periods are the state-
controlled broadcasting era (1963-1990) and the post 1990s liberalized era. The structural
dimension relates to formal institutional features of the public sphere which include media
organizations, policies and issues of their financing and the legal frameworks defining the
freedoms and constraints of communication. The legal frameworks also relate to issues of
ownership, control, procedures of licensing, and rules governing access.
Beyond the organization of the media themselves, however, the structural dimensions also
analytically encompass the society’s political institutions, which serve as a sort of “political
ecology” for the media and set boundaries for the nature of information and forms of
expression that may circulate. At this level, the public sphere entwinement with society’s
overall political situation comes into view. A society in which democratic tendencies are
weak is not going to give rise to a healthy institutional structure in the public sphere.
(Dahlgren, 2000:319) In analyzing the structural dimension, the state-controlled broadcasting
era in Kenya constituted a restricted public sphere where the flow of information was
controlled by the government machinery through strict regulations of ownership and limited
This era was characterized by absence of democratic practice. Although the
government held elections every five years, the outcomes of such elections were always a
foregone conclusion (Ahluwalia, 1997; Atieno-Odhiambo, 2002; Steeves, 1997). With the
advent of liberalization and democratic reforms, the legal framework procedures of licensing
and ownership were altered making it possible for private entities to own media outlets.
Broadcasting licenses are no longer the preserve of the government and a few well-connected
individuals as was the case before 1990 and the following few years of multiparty politics. As
a result, the radio industry in Kenya today has diverse ownership that includes the state,
organizations such as private and faith-based, individuals and community groups.
The representation dimension refers to the output of the media in form and content. The
representation dimension includes issues of media output such as fairness, accuracy and
pluralism of views. Dahlgren (2002) argues that modern societies find themselves in a
historical situation where social relations are dependent on various forms of media. The use
of and interaction with media constitutes a great part of most people’s everyday life. Social
life and institutional activity accommodate themselves to the general requirements of media.
Thus, media has become the language of the public culture and “the grammar of this
language affects the way we experience and think about the world and about ourselves” (p.
320). The evolution of radio in Kenya from “a tool for repression” (Odhiambo, 2002) to
“common man’s radio” (Waweru, Mburu, personal communication, August 4, 2011)
characterizes a changing public sphere. Radio output from the Kenyan radio exists in various
forms expressed in different languages of broadcasting and diverse formats of programs.
There are various examples of political programs that are found on Kenyan radio that appeal
to listeners in Rural Kenya. There are open forums such as Bunge la Mwananchi
(Commoners’Parliament-Radio Citizen) and Bunge la Maisha (The People’s Parliament-
Radio Maisha), an exchange between citizens and Yaliyotokea,(What occurred) a political and
social critique, both aired by Radio Citizen. During the morning segment every weekday, a Kikuyu L.I.R station Bahasha FM airs a public accountability program, Boss. The confidence in these programs expressed by the audience in Rural Kenya is derived from perceived fairness, accuracy and diversity of views.

While the current representation in Kenyan radio is far from perfect as characterized by power inequalities between the rich and poor, and those who have access to telephones and those who do not have (hence cannot participate in radio discussions for example), it is still a major step from what the country had before. Also, the presence of multiple radio outlets and voices makes it difficult for politicians or news producers to manipulate information because they will be contradicted by other outlets. Plurality of outlets has for instance rendered the KBC stations irrelevant in political competition, as exemplified by the debate on Constitution Referendum debate in 2005 and the 2007 General Elections where an attempt by the government of the day to use KBC to further interest came a cropper as other media channels were used by competitors to sell themselves.

With the emergence of alternatives to KBC, private radio stations have proved that they can play a critical role in the democratic processes such as general elections. Private radio stations in Kenya have been used to communicate timely and accurate electoral results. A similar example can found in Madagascar during the electoral process in 2001. In addition to opposition candidates having access to media through private outlets, the conclusion of the process was contested when the Ministry of Interior issued misleading elections results which showed no outright winner between the incumbent president Didier Ratsiraka and Marc Rovalomanana, the former mayor of Antananivo. However, the results by an independent Church-led Consortium showed Rovalomanana had won convincingly. Without the stranglehold of the media that the government enjoyed before, an uprising over the contested results could not be silenced (Andriantsoa et al. 2005).
The interaction dimension consists of two facets. The first one involves citizens’ encounters with the media. This is the communicative processes of making sense of and interpreting the output. The second facet is the interaction among the citizens themselves. Dahlgren follows Dewey (1954) and Habermas (1989) in the conceptualization of “a public” where it is more than media audience. The public here exists as a discursive interactional process: atomized individuals consuming media in their homes do not comprise a public in as far as they do not engage with each other. Only an informed citizenry can actively engage with political output on the media. The state-controlled broadcasting provided very few encounters with the media because they offered a single dimension and a biased view friendly to the ruling party and government of the day. For the larger part, there is also little suggestion of critical engagement with political output (Odhiambo, 2002; Wanyande, 1995: 1996). Instead, there was a large section of citizens who sang the ruling party slogans even when the government left a lot to be desired in its leadership. The rural audience in Rural Kenya shows a high level of engagement with political content and close scrutiny of public figures, elected leaders and the government as a whole. Through radio forums such as Bunge la Mwananchi, listeners engage in deliberation and discussion with each other. Such forums allow for political participation through vibrant debate during times such as competitive general elections, a practice that is crucial for democratic leadership (Schumpeter 1987).

The concept of civic culture does not presume shared interests among its citizens. Rather, it assumes that there are many ways in which citizenship and democracy can be practiced. The concept, however, suggests the need to have minimal shared commitments to the vision and procedures of democracy, which in turn entails a capacity to see beyond the immediate interests of one’s own group and its concerns. Successful use of radio for civic engagement is good for Kenya’s democratic growth. This also allows audiences to develop as citizens. The development of democracy depends on a fruitful interplay between the civic culture of...
everyday life and the formal political system. The two processes are linked by the public sphere (Dahlgren, 2002: 324). With a functioning public sphere, the physical space is not the condition for communal engagement. Citizens can show support for a movement or express discontent with their government from their homes (Winocur, 2005). From the domestic sphere, the individual is able to bridge the distance with the world. For a communicative space to function well, citizens need a way to connect with each other. Lack of an avenue to connect can be a barrier to civic participation. This is the case in many parts of Africa and the developing world in general, more so in the rural areas (Wanyande, 1996). In Kenya, the increased availability of cell phones is slowly enabling rural citizens to participate. Through telephone calls or sending text messages, their voice is heard, as illustrated by radio listeners from Rural Kenya.

There is no doubt that radio has provided audiences with an important avenue for political participation. But while we acknowledge these positive steps, it is also true that the medium has more ground to cover in promoting the democratization process in Kenya. There has to be a media structure that is free from interested parties' interference. These include government, business, or dominant social groups in order to maintain and support competitive and participative elements that define the concept of democracy and the related process of democratization. Media democratization is not yet fully realized. Although the government has loosened its grip, it still controls the state-broadcaster KBC. There is also visible political alignment in the private stations. As Dahlgren (2005) argues, free and independent media are not ends in themselves. They are good to the extent to which they support other and more intrinsic goals of the society. These goals include democracy, a particular economic structure, wider cultural understanding, and human development of a nation. Free and independent media should reinforce these greater societal objectives and areas. Processes of civic engagements are in their nascent stages in places like Rural Kenya and Kenya in general.
This situation shows us the relationship among media, public sphere and democracy that is starting to develop.

5.9 Radio consumption process and space

Radio listening in Rural Kenya is not experienced as a single daily activity but is connected to other daily activities. Domenget (2003) describes this as a part of "bundle" of activities. According to Domenget, "bundling" refers to the fact that the activities (such as listening to the radio and carrying out some other domestic activity) are so interlinked that it would be wrong to attempt to separate them. This is a real integration, merging of two practices leading to the creating of a "new, specific practice which cannot be reduced to constituent parts".

Domenget's study of radio patterns of consumption of radio of retired people identifies bundling at the domestic space. Listeners in Rural Kenya exhibit bundling both in the domestic space and outside the domestic space. Women bundle when they are at home doing domestic chores.

Bundling in work situations happens when people are working on farms, when tending livestock, guarding at night, and at their business premises. The grazing fields and the farm are mobile spaces where the radio does not stick at one point. In the farm, a radio is usually carried from home and stays close to the listener. It is kept at a distance at which the listener who is working can hear it. In the grazing fields, radio occupies both "fixed" and mobile positions. The listener carries the radio with him in his pocket or shoulder strap. However, the listener moves as his herd moves. Mobile L.I.R consumption in Rural Kenya is a predominantly male habit. It represents one aspect of gendered radio listening. The gendered listening observed here is related to the division of labour between the male and the female members of the society.
Usually, it is men who take animals to the grazing fields and work as guards, two occupations where radio is popular. However, both men and women work on the farms, but women are not likely to carry a radio to the farms. Patterns of consumption of radio in Rural Kenya do not indicate significant differences in the desire to listen. The time spent listening favoured men due to access. This reflects the gender power relations between men and women among the Rural Kenya population. Since men are the head of the household and usually claim ownership of family property such as the radio sets, they have the freedom, for instance, to take the device away from the house. In a case where women take a device away from home, she will have some explaining to do if a man cannot access it. However, the power relations in many households is negated by the presence of multiple as well as preference of small pocket radios for mobile listening while bigger sets are kept at home. The pocket radio is also cheaper and affordable. In this case prevalence of mobile listening in Rural Kenya among the male is based on the population’s socialization that it is a male behavior.

The mobile nature of radio in settings such as rural Kenya is one way in which patterns of consumption in rural settings differ from those in urban settings. Radio listening in the rural areas is not only restricted to the domestic space, while in urban areas, radio listening is mainly in the domestic space. The mobility of radio in Rural Kenya is similar to that observed by Spitulnik (2000) in Zambia where radio circulated beyond the domestic space. However, the circulation that Spitulnik observed in Zambia involved a circulation that is fuelled by the act of sharing among members of the community. In her study, the radio could be borrowed from the owner usually by relatives. In a day, one radio could be seen in different locations with different people. Radio in Rural Kenya is personal. There are very limited instances of sharing even in the domestic sphere where most members of the family
have one of their own. This difference is also explained by the difference in accessibility to the set. Without scarcity that was found in rural Zambia, the need for sharing is diminished.

The mobility of radio in Rural Kenya does not negate the importance of radio in the domestic space. Listeners in Rural Kenya demonstrate the entrenchment of radio listening in domestic space.

5.10 From face-to-face to mediated interactions

Radio in Kenya has become a forum for interaction between people who share a culture, common interests, and those who need to stay in touch with each other. It is a place where various social issues are addressed. For these reasons, radio becomes an extension of the everyday's social exchange. The role of radio as a social platform for the Rural Kenya audience points to the entrenchment of media in their lives. The first role that came out was radio as a cultural mediator between disconnected generations, a disconnection that is exacerbated by a rapidly changing society. The interplay between the traditional forces on one hand and modernity forces on the other is realized in the differences between rural and urban way of life. The rural population in Kenya is usually likely to follow emerging cultural trends that are defined by the educated and urban folk.

This does not mean that rural people are always willing adherents of the modern ways of life. They also exhibit resistance to the new cultural trends that are usually inconsistent with their way of life. This resistance is, however, not sustained and represents a dissonance between generations evidenced in Rural Kenya by divergent points of view of listeners of different age groups. Culture is at the center of this, including how it is being transmitted. There are two views of culture in Rural Kenya, one held by the older generation and another by the younger people. The older people view culture as a rigidly bounded set of values and linguistic or folkloric practices which is the organizing principle and end property of a particular group
(Dolby, 1999). On the other hand, the young people’s view of culture is related to the cultural studies formulations of culture not as a unity, entity, or deposit, but as a set of processes involved in the production of images and as a site where identities are elaborated in the new globalizing context that has overtaken the nation state (Hall, 1991; 1992; Morley & Robins, 1995).

Rural Kenya audiences recognize the diminishing role of interpersonal communication as a source of cultural education, as illustrated by constant mention of fewer interactions between members of the older and younger generations. This lack of interpersonal communication does not mean that there is an absence of social capital because there are as many older people who have the requisite knowledge to pass to the younger generation.

In the same vein, it would be misleading to assume that the current generation is made up of uninterested young people who are indifferent to their culture. Rather, society’s dynamics have changed. The constituents of the social organization such as the family and the community today are different. For example, the concept of home today is different from the traditional serene place where family members retreat after hard day of work, a place where they can have time for each other. Rather, even a rural home is a hybrid place that constitutes different translocated spaces such as school and workplace. The time at home in a Kikuyu and Kalenjin family’s home in Rural Kenya today is spent doing school work (parents more likely to assist their children with homework), a parent doing some of his daily work at home or catching up with domestic work they have not had time to do. Seldom will the family be seated at the fireplace exchanging fairy-tales. The need of a home to serve these different functions dominates the traditional role of cultural exchange. The evening time is scarce, split between doing homework and going to bed early because by 6:00am the children would be leaving for school. It is within the new redefined home that radio fits, fulfilling some of the functions of interpersonal communication.
One can also argue that interpersonal communication alone may not be adequate for today’s society members. In Rural Kenya, what we see are people who are increasingly defining themselves as a part of a larger community. This is what is expressed by the younger people for whom radio listening and participation conveys an extended view of identity. There is also presentation of a dual identity. The first identity is based on age where a person views himself as a youth. His views appear to be constructed from his exposure and also what he perceives as his peers predisposition. In comparison with his friends from Kiangwache, Ndia, he can be considered fairly travelled. However, there are many young people whom I encountered that share similar views, although they may not have travelled outside the area. This position is supported by many instances of interactions I had with youth from Rural Kenya. The youth’s identification with culture and cultural materials including fashion and music that is beyond local and national points to a global orientation. The second form of identity is ethnic. After a young person initially denied the tribal identity, he comes back to it in the discussion of language. Although he appears to be protective of his ethnic roots from people who have other roots, he does not seem to view the ethnic identity as very important, despite the obvious manifestation in his subconscious.

The increase in rural listeners’ participation on different radio platforms indicates the changing nature of interactions in the Kenyan society. Interpersonal communication in rural areas between members of the community has traditionally been defined by face-to-face communication. It is one of the social pillars of the rural communities, illustrated by close ties between people beyond the family. Radio consumption and participation suggest such ties may be loosening. Also, increased migration of family members and people who share common identity such as ethnicity makes radio an important way to stay connected. Thus, listeners in Rural Kenya use radio to reach people who are within their environment and beyond. This is one attribute that face-to-face communication lacks. Media studies have
posed that the nature of interactions on mediated platforms such as talk radio provides an interpersonal character:

Talk radio is one of the few public media which allows for spontaneous interaction between two or more people. Any time two people interact: they must perceive and respond to one another in some consistent and appropriate manner. One person’s communication becomes data for another person’s verbal response which defines a symbol system for the interactants (Avery, Ellis, & Glover, 1978: 5).

Interactive programs amount to defining a social reality, which is significant for the communicators. Interactions through phone calls and message exchanges in greeting programs constitute important events for those who communicate (Avery et al 1978).

Audience participation on LIR among Rural Kenya audiences also indicates that presenters play some role in influencing the interaction. Previous studies have shown that the extent to which the listeners interact with each other is influenced by the radio presenters. Listeners in Avery et al. (1978) study reported calling hosts that are not likely to cut them off or treat them with disrespect. Their study concluded that talk radio is not just an outlet where people air their opinions. It is a medium for interpersonal communication. Thus, radio callers are likely to be attracted to a presenter who is perceived to be agreeable, positive, reinforcing and less dogmatic because they produce a communication which is conducive to relationship development (Avery et al., 1978).

Rural Kenya listeners support Avery et al. findings through closeness expressed with presenters who were perceived as friendly. On the other hand, they complained about presenters who were snobbish and therefore would not call these stations. Rural Kenya listeners are more likely to call the LIR stations than the English FM stations. However, the higher instances of participation reported for station like Metro FM is consistent with the stations commitment to reaching ordinary people. On the other hand, English medium
stations such as *Kiss* FM are popular with the younger people, but very few presenters are viewed as approachable. Listeners for instance, said they would never call during a particular lady presenter’s program because they thought she was rude and demeaning to listeners.

There are also inherent disparities between presenters of different radio stations that the Rural Kenya audience listens to. These disparities may affect listeners’ interaction with the station. The LLR presenters are people that rural listeners can easily identify with. Based on their presentation styles, they are just like individuals whom listeners interact with physically in everyday life. This is also how KBC’s Nyongesa King’asia defined his presenters. “They are common people who seem unsophisticated as their audiences. Urban presenters, on the other hand, appear sophisticated to the rural folk. Most of these presenters have either grown up in rural areas or have acclimatized there. Even when they have not, they understand the rural life.”

The argument is also supported by the results of the survey of radiolisteners in Accra (Abeku 2005). Out of the 408 radio listeners following discussions on phone-in talk programs, nearly 75 percent attributed the primary reason for never contributing to the phone-in discussions on radio to their inability to speak good English, for fear of making mistakes. The majority of those who phoned-in were regular contributors to the phone-in programs. Yet over 85 percent of Ghanaian broadcasters and media scholars interviewed continue to believe that the use of a native language like Akan for broadcasting would exclude more linguistic minorities from the audience.

Presenters on the urban FM are mainly urban in upbringing or have a predilection for urban way of life. An article that appeared in Kenya’s *Daily Nation* newspaper on the expensive vehicles that a certain class of Nairobians drives gives a glimpse of how some urban presenters view themselves. “I feel like my behind is scraping the tarmac whenever I do
normal cars.” he once said on radio. *(You are what you drive, Daily Nation, January 29, 2009).*

Maina is a presenter on Classic FM radio station which, despite its urban orientation, attracts a sizable listenership outside urban settings. Unlike their colleagues in public, LLR and regional stations, some urban stations' presenters are very well paid and therefore can afford an expensive lifestyle. Even though comments about “scraping the tarmac whenever I do normal cars” were definitely made with an intention of humor, listeners in rural settings are likely to find them arrogant. Expensive lifestyles are commonplace topics on the urban station, but rare on LLR stations. Rural listeners in particular can hardly relate to issues of motoring, let alone luxury cars. For the majority of listeners in Rural Kenya, any car is a luxury.

Rural Kenya listeners' participation on Kenyan radio is also influenced by language used on the station. Listeners' ability to express themselves during their participation and to understand each other makes them feel a part of the community. The use of Kikuyu, Kalenjin or Kiswahili languages on the LLR stations makes communication easier for listeners in Rural Kenya. On the other hand, the English stations, in many cases, require the listeners to speak in a language that they are not very comfortable using. The effect of language is also clear in the inconsistency between the young people's radio language preferences and participation. Some young people interviewed in Rural Kenya expressed indifference to listening to radio in Kikuyu or Kalenjin, and instead preferred English language broadcasts. However, they do not participate in the English radio programs that they widely listen to through call-ins because they are not very proficient in. They participate in content such as radio discussions as passive observers. I observed that this could be partly due to the young people's compensatory consumption that somehow connects them with the urban lifestyle they yearn for. shows the quandary presented by multiple radio choices to a rural youth. The
radio industry in Kenya today evidences changes that have occurred in the country altering the traditional positions of different languages.

The use of local languages on radio has increased, thus challenging the hegemonic position of the English and Kiswahili languages in the process. While the majority of radio stations broadcast in Kiswahili or English, these languages are no longer in the same dominant position they occupied in the media before the entry of local language radio stations. Changes relating to language are not unique to the Kenyan broadcasting system alone, but have been experienced in many African countries that are inhabited by heterogeneous populations.

Broadcasting language changes in Kenya are a result of market forces rather than a policy outcome. Kenya shares linguistic characteristics like many countries where high degree of linguistic complexity with multiplicity of languages spoken and with the geographical differentiation of these languages. Multilingualism is a common feature with a large proportion of the population capable of communication in at least three languages.

According to Barnett (2000), the formal language policies are not necessarily the most influential factors in determining changing language practices. The influence of non state agencies, such as private corporations and mass media are critical in shaping the development of language use in multilingual societies. In Kenya, the single most recent important factor in changing language practices has been not as a result of formal language policies, but of the private media institutions. However, this does not discount the role of official policies because they act as either an enabler or barrier to language promotion.

The high level of language multiplicity in Kenya raises the question of practicality of having all the languages addressed in a broadcasting system. A monopolistic Public Service Broadcasting system was ill equipped to address even a section of the more than 42 languages spoken in Kenya. Free market broadcasting on the other hand has adopted various strategies including focusing on shared languages where a high degree of intelligibility exists.
For the sake of broadcasting, multiple languages are collapsed into a single cognate entity through the use of standard dialects as illustrated by Luhya and Kalenjin LLR broadcasting. This approach is capable of generating large audiences and therefore is efficient.

Radio consumption in Rural Kenya through the African local language, Kikuyu, Kalenjin and Kiswahili, illustrates different dimensions of the interplay among mediated communication, language, and culture. The presence of more cultural based content is as a result of proximity of LLR to a specific defined population. But radio as a mediated interaction is not as strictly bound by the same cultural norms and taboos found in face-to-face communications.

However, the content on LLR is more scrutinized, leading to sensitivity constraints in listening that English stations do not face. To negotiate sensitive content such as taboo and muted topics, the LLR can be seen to function as a counter public sphere. It challenges long held cultural and language norms, subverting them by bringing them to the public from the private realm where they are traditionally negotiated. It is, however, important to note that discourses on taboo and muted topics are not necessarily proscribed; rather their use is strictly defined. The language norms define who can use certain words in which place and in whose presence. In Kikuyu culture, for instance, vulgar language could be freely used during the circumcision ceremonies and employed in songs related to certain dances such as mūthuũ, sung by athuuri (the elders] and mūnbūro, sung by ithũ (the uncircumcised boys). Outside such settings, such language is not socially sanctioned (Kabira, 1995; Kenyatta, 1962; Muriuki, 1974).

Cultural factors are responsible for the difference in the reception of taboo and muted topics compared to the rest of the content found on the LLR. Taboo content and muted topics are not publicly negotiated. The case of late night family talk programs is a good example. Despite their popularity, these programs remain highly contested among the listeners as illustrated by the debate on the appropriateness of such topics such as sex, marriage, and
divorce and parent-child relationship on the radio. The taboo topics were initiated by the stations inviting the listeners to participate in the dialogue using a “cautious” approach, as seen through the use of Christian religious figures to present the program. By invoking religion in the programs, the stations succeed in making such topics palatable to most listeners by removing them from the concerned community’s social realm and positioning them in the religious realm. In many listeners’ definition, the late night shows are therefore religious programs and therefore appropriate. Wilson Rotich, a producer and presenter at *Sema* Radio which broadcasts from Kericho town to a wider Rift Valley region says that religious personalities step in as authorities in late night programmes because of their positions in society:

Because religious people have been suppressing public talk on sex for a long time, this has kept populations in the dark about bedroom issues. And because religious people claim to be custodians of morality, they therefore can discuss the topics within those parameters in an acceptable manner.

Some listeners argued that the religious or secular distinction is not important. Relationship issues that are raised by the listeners can be interpreted in different ways. In addressing issues that go beyond the social sanctions, content such as late night programs also challenge the status quo. Underlying the debates on the appropriateness of the late night programmes on LI.R today is the real and potent challenge to the nature of the social organizations, issues such as the place of patriarchy in modern day Kenyan society. Jeridah Andayi of Radio Citizen agrees:

It is also true that LI.R is very influential in shaping the lives of rural people. Ordinarily, late night radio programming is skewed towards adults because it is believed children have already gone to sleep. This is therefore believed to be the best time to counsel couples who most likely are listening to radio together either in bed o
as they prepare to go to bed. Sometimes, some of the programmes have ended up challenging the status quo in marriage and society in general.

In a patriarchal setting, late night programs might constitute a subversive public sphere that threatens men's dominion by empowering women. Such forums offered by late night programs as sources of women's empowerment in the family are proving to be quite important. If anything, it is women who reported listening to the program first and encouraging their husbands to listen together and participate in discussions that are pertinent to the family.

5.11 Connecting content with the language

The language preference patterns among Rural Kenya listeners underscore the importance of diverse languages in the media that provide adequate choices to the population, especially in the rural areas. Language is, however, not just about what people speak and how they communicate with each other; it is also a form of cultural communication. Cultural interactions differentiate communication from mere exchange of information. This is complicated by the fact that communication is coded and patterned differently in different cultures. The varied coding and patterning applies to both the verbal and non-verbal aspects of interaction. Kirch (1973) argues that some of the differences are obvious while others occur beneath the level of awareness.

In verbal communication, the unconscious differences may interfere with the communication process because they are difficult to analyze, perceive, teach and learn. Verbal differences come into play in communicative processes such as radio listening. The phonological aspects, for instance, are easily sensed by a native speaker of one language. Radio listeners, whose native language is for instance, Kikuyu or Kalenjin, associate the English spoken on the English FM radio with something foreign. To them, the kind of accent found on some of
these stations cannot be associated with what is perceived as “local” but with foreign culture such as American or British culture. The dichotomy between “local” and “foreign” may also assume the rural-urban dimension. In this case, the urban is equated to foreign because rural people view their urban colleagues as people who do not maintain aspects of African culture.

The importance of LLR broadcasting is that it is able to capture the cultural value of the local languages. As an entity with an existence of its own, language finds a home in local language stations when they act as a space where it is stored and shared. In an era when the local African language had been relegated to a second-class status, the rise of LLR in Kenya has given local languages a new lease on life. Local language radio provides a platform through which listeners can learn their local language or encourage others to learn, as James Githaka, a 67-year-old retired teacher from Kiangwache argued:

> When the white man came, we joined schools and before we knew it, we were learning foreign languages i.e. English and so there are some of our cultural issues that we still don’t know so well. I would say that right now the radio is doing a good job educating the young and old about their culture in our own language.

This study found out that listening to the radio in the local language is not just about hearing a language that one understands well. Listeners make a connection between the messages received and the extent to which these are consistent with their beliefs. For example, Joseph Rono, a 69-year-old man, from Lelechwe, Ndanai felt that he is able to make a connection between his role as a parent and the radio messages. For him, a radio message that is presented in a language that is consistent with his own makes a big difference in parenting.

He says that the way LLR stations broadcast is the same way he teaches his children because they merely reinforce what advice he gives to his children verbally. “So the child is able to understand that if dad says we should not do this, it is true for it is being reiterated. That is why I like our local language radio broadcasts.”
Rural Kenya audiences' interaction with cultural content illustrates how LI.R in Kenya has become an active platform for the promotion of African culture. The LI.R in Kenya actively promotes African culture in the same way Mano (2004) found with radio in Zimbabwe. With the easeness that is provided by the local languages, LI.R in Kenya provides a discursive space where cultural issues are brought. Among the Kikuyu people, for example, the discursive space existed in the domestic sphere and social sphere. The parents and grandparents would pass some knowledge to the young ones through stories, fairytales and direct advice (Kabira, 1995; Muriuki, 1974).

The young people would pass cultural knowledge to each other during the rite of passage, such as the period immediately after circumcision. However, these spaces have slowly disappeared as people in Rural Kenya revealed in this study. At present, there appears to be a knowledge gap between different generations. The older people are a product of the traditional informal education as well as formal education. The current generation is a product of formal education. What radio has done is to fill the discursive gap left by providing people with constant information about culture. Radio is able to merge both formal and informal systems of education by employing a rich cultural capital that is available. Radio compensates for the absence of face-to-face communication among members of the community (Mano 2004). As a result, the primacy of a social setting where cultural information is circulated has been diluted because physical presence is not a requisite for the exchange (Meyrowitz 2000).

5.12 Chapter Summary

Media liberalization in Kenya has stimulated a myriad of activities in the radio industry. Beyond the obvious change of the broadcasting system, policy making process and regulation weaknesses in the system have been exposed as clearly illustrated by the relationship between
two legislations on broadcasting in Kenya, the Kenya Information Communication Act and KBC Act. This chapter has discussed how a Kenyan broadcasting system that is dominated by commercial radio continues to fulfil some of the traditional functions of radio in a developing world. The functions of radio that include provision of information and education are, however, implemented using a different approach from what was experienced with public service broadcasting. The new approach is necessitated by the need to balance between revenue generation and taking care of audiences' needs and tastes. While the difference in approach has skewed the type of information available to the audience, there are significant parallels with the traditional role of radio in the delivery of agricultural information.

Rural Kenya audiences interact with radio in the domestic sphere and beyond, similar to what other ethnographic studies have found in Zambia and Zimbabwe. Despite their unique patterns of listening, listeners in Rural Kenya share characteristics with listeners that have been studied in other parts of the world in their use of radio in the domestic sphere. Here, LLR can be personal and used as a landscape to create an environment for domestic living. The study of patterns of production and consumption of radio consumption in this research goes on to capture the role of technology in a changing social environment. This radio use captures the intersection of interpersonal and mediated communication. Local language radio in a pluralistic setting like Kenya has come with its own concerns such as the danger of creating divisions between different ethnic groups (CIPEV Report 2008).

The determination of language of broadcasting can be a function of political processes that are concerned with policymaking. In multilingual environments such as Kenya's, competing languages are accorded different positions based on the language policy or lack of one. A choice of language for broadcasting is essential in order for radio to reach audiences and serve as an effective communicative tool. That choice extends to the relationship between language and culture. The relevance of local language broadcasts is based on the proximity to
listener's culture. Culture determines audience perception of different radio content just like in everyday life interactions. We have also discussed how the use of radio can act as an alternative platform for cultural exchange where face-to-face interactions are not possible. It is clear from the discussion that Kiswahili, which is Kenya's national and official language, is providing a means through which inter-communal and national integration is being pushed (Wafula, 2009, Mogambi 2009).
CHAPTER SIX
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary

This research set out to examine patterns of production and consumption of LLR in rural Kenya. The study compared listeners in Ndia and Ndanai of Kirinyaga and Bomet Counties respectively. The study was framed within a changing media environment that has experienced an increase in the number of local language stations, a situation that has created a wide range of choices for the rural audiences. This study has demonstrated that local language radio remains the most dominant information and communication medium for the people of rural Kenya. Factors such as language of broadcast, content, cost, presenter traits, accessibility, and ease of use make radio popular and effective in rural Kenya.

In chapter 1, it was noted that the increase in the number of radio stations in Kenya since the year 2000 has seen the introduction of broadcasting in a variety of languages. As a result of the upsurge of radio stations in Kenya due to liberalization of the airwaves, listeners now have a wide range of listening choices, particularly entertainment services. Regionally-based local language stations previously considered a threat to state security now abound and continue to open (African Media Development Initiative 2010).

Chapter 2 addressed literature used in this study by situating rural audience research in Kenya in the field of mass communication. It also put forward the theoretical foundations used in the study. Various media reception studies that have used the ethnography methodology are explored. In order to understand the place of media among the rural audiences, the chapter looked at conditions that define Kenyan rural population. As a key determinant of media reception and use, the language situation in Kenya and its effect on broadcasting is addressed. It is mentioned that the policy is integral to the study of patterns of production and consumption of Local language radio. It was explained that Kenya is both multilingual and
multinational, whereby there are dominant and minor languages. The dominant languages were distinguished as English and Kiswahili, plus other local languages with high populations of users. As for English and Kiswahili, their preponderance was said to be accentuated by their status as co-official languages, not to forget that English was documented to be the medium of instructions in schools. It was clarified that the organs are tilted in favour of English, a language that is barely understood by a quarter of the population (Ogechi 2002). In spite of this situation, the chapter aptly demonstrated that Kenyans have not passively acquiesced to the disparate language situation. It was shown that they negotiate with dominant languages through linguistic configurations like code-switching, code-mixing or through evolution of argots like Sheng and Engsh. Using the uses and gratification theoretical foundation and the ecological model of communication, it is explained how producers produce programmes and how the audience choose programmes from the many that are available. A conceptual framework is developed to explain how the variables intermix to explain the whole production and consumption of local language radio scenario.

Chapter three discussed the methodology that was used in this research. The study presented both Ndia and Ndanai as the study sites of data collection while the last section in chapter three addressed the specific audience ethnography methods that were used for data collection in the settings. These methods are observation, interviews, FGD, and document and content analysis. Chapter 5 presented data analysis and results. It showed that data analysis also involved triangulation in terms of various data corpuses, qualitative and quantitative methods, and in regard to respondents as LLR producers, listeners, local language reporters and correspondents in the rural areas, and producers in Nairobi.

In view of research question 1, the chapter brought to light the centrality of language in the choice of local language radio station that audiences in rural Kenya choose to listen to. It was clear that the rural audiences in question preferred local language radio to radio broadcasting.
in English or other foreign languages. In both settings, broadcasts in Kiswahili were the most preferred as a neutral language; a factor which explained why sometimes they switched from their preferred radio station to one broadcasting in Kiswahili. Presenter traits and connection with rural audiences was another clear factor for the cyclic relationship. The evidence of these was elicited from interviews, FGDs, and patterns of listening.

Regarding research question 2, the chapter showed that there were discernable patterns of consumption of local language radio messages. These included use of radio for their information and education. They also use local language radio for companionship, social interactions and civic engagement. However, it was revealed that use of local language radio was faced with challenges like lack of competence in experts and professionals who participate in LLR programmes.

With respect to question 3, the chapter reported that Kiswahili radio was gaining ground in popularity within the LLR broadcasts in Kikuyu and Kalenjin in the areas studied. The opening of new radio stations broadcasting in Kiswahili was considered a step in the right direction as it opened up new horizons for audiences especially with new programmes. The results also showed that Kiswahili radio was more popular with the younger population and the middle aged in the rural areas under study, perhaps, because of the education levels while the older generation tended to prefer broadcasts in mother tongue. Here, presenter traits also played a major role as the study revealed that when certain presenters were on studio, listenership went up drastically or dropped because of the presentation styles.

6.2 Conclusions

It is clear from this study that production and consumption by audiences of local language radio programmes are interrelated elements. Popular programmes can be said to be so because the patterns of production (content) takes care of the needs of the people. Therefore,
ideas, concepts and values that trigger the broadcast process and how they are produced is critical for radio listening in rural Kenya.

The formulation and conceptualisation of content is highly dependent on the needs and aspirations of the people targeted or the audience. Analysis of the situation or the environment where the local language programme is to be broadcast to is important in successfully taking care of rural audiences. This means that the context presupposes environmental scanning that is inclusive of the people's situation, educational background and capabilities, current problems, issues of interest to the audience, aspirations and dreams and their culture. The fact that production in local language radio takes care of the existence of popular figures and natural leaders in the community, as well as the people's values and beliefs is also critical. This is in harmony with the tenet, 'start where the people are'.

The formats also played a big role in acceptability, the audiences' responses and tuning to the radio stations as the uses and gratifications theory expounds. Popular formats are the ones which fill in on rural audiences' expectations and needs. Such formats must also take care of their patterns of listening, which are in turn, critical in production processes. In short, understanding the audiences' lives is important in producing radio programmes for them.

Most listeners in rural Kenya also see local language radio as a cultural and empowering process. They would like to see a truly evocative and participatory communication process which enables the co-operator- community-participant to value their worth, experience and life itself. They see local language broadcasting as a process of empowering them by 'giving back' their respect and dignity. In a sense, it is 'giving back' their humanity and culture. The more this element is exemplified in radio production process, the more the acceptability. This explains why some local language stations have a high acceptability than others in rural Kenya.

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### 6.3 Recommendations

From the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations have been put forward. Some of these recommendations were presented by listeners and broadcasters and supported by the findings reported in this study.

The present radio scenario in Kenya presents a complex media environment with more interactions between the medium and the population. In the current radio system, there are various dimensions of the relationship between broadcasting and politics, culture, language, regionalism and religion. A decade ago, rural people such as those of Ndia and Ndanai considered their lives simple and uneventful, unlikely to attract the attention of the media. Listening to radio news meant interacting with events happening far away, mainly in the cities. Today, rural people in Kenya attract as much attention as any other segments of the population in radio broadcasting. Rural areas are likely to make news on many LLR stations than before. The rural people are also the point of focus for local language programmers as they come up with content with this segment of audience in mind and consider the tastes and preference of this core segment.

Thus, a few conclusions can be made from this study regarding the functioning of LLR in Kenya. In doing so, I will examine the position of broadcasting media today since the advent of liberalization. The question has been whether the new media dispensation fronted by commercialism will be able to serve the education and cultural functions (ACCE 1995). To a large extent, the findings of this research provide data that can be used to draw a report card on the implications of media liberalization in Kenya in the two areas addressed by ACCE paper. Education and cultural issues are central to the rural population. Given the information access inequalities between urban and rural people, this research which centers on rural areas is very instructive.
As this research has shown, the role of radio in providing informal education to rural audiences has improved with media liberalization. Commercial LLR stations are proving to be adequately suited in this role as they have the advantage of proximity to the communities they serve. This quashes some of the doubts raised regarding the extent to which commercial radio might do this.

Commercial stations in Kenya demonstrate that they can perform education roles in addressing social, health and economic production issues. However, commercial LLR can still make improvements in these areas. There is a need for more information on critical issues such as HIV/AIDS, inter-communal harmony and civic responsibility. Radio broadcasting is a medium that penetrates the society to the lowest level of the communities as LLR stations do in Ndai and Ndanai. Rural populations in Ndanai and Ndai have shown that the demand for news runs from local, regional and national levels extending to international affairs through multiple stations. Access to international news is possible beyond BBC World Service and Voice of America which were the only places where people could go for such news in the past years. This was evident in Ndai and Ndanai as listeners easily made references to current news on what is happening in countries all over the world. In addition to the availability of content, there are also different perspectives from multiple outlets.

According to the ACCE paper, "Radio and television are cultural tools, and the recent arrival of private stations has many significant implications, among which are cultural imperialism, cultural pride and political stability" (ACCE, 1995:12). Findings on Ndai and Ndanai suggest that one of the outcomes of diverse stations is a new balance between local content and foreign content, an important step in containing cultural imperialism. Multiplicity of content enables local material to compete with foreign material. There is high level of content differentiation. LLR stations mainly provide local content while urban English stations are internationally oriented. Beyond cultural imperialism, it is also important for listeners to
interact with a wide array of materials from all over the world. Local material is not inherently good, neither is foreign material inherently bad. It is important for the audiences to have access to a wide range of content addressing multiple issues given the interconnected nature of the world today. At the same time, the increase in local material cannot be addressed without reference to technological exchange.

The improved technological capabilities in Kenya have allowed the local producers to come up with quality material that can compete in the market. Part of the absence of local content and resultant poor quality was exacerbated by lack of production facilities, higher costs of production and limited human resource. The School of Journalism, University of Nairobi has started a degree in 2010 in Broadcast Production which is a step towards the human resource capacity building issue. The improved technological infrastructure evidenced by many production facilities not only make the content available, but also ensures that the product meet high standards. Beyond purely local cultural materials, Kenyan local industry is alive with hybrid culture such as local hip-hop music, which creatively fuses local and foreign material, creating a product that can satisfy local and global tastes.

This research has shown that the rural people in Ndia and Ndanai have a good connection with traditional aspects of life. This partly explains the positive reception of radio cultural content because listeners can readily identify with the material. The increased role of LLR in promoting African culture reflects a form of cultural renaissance that has taken off in the country. An example is the Cultural Nights phenomenon which has gained popularity in Nairobi. Most of these Cultural Nights are sponsored by leading LLR stations featuring a particular community theme. They go under banners such as Kalenjin Night, Kikuyu Night, Luo Night, Kamba Night, Kisii Night and others. People dress in traditional attire and are served with traditional food and drinks. The events feature music and dance exclusively from the community concerned. Such events are part of what has been dubbed "going back to the
roots". These occasions are attended by people from across many communities further boosting national integration in Kenya.

Along with this endeavour, LLR stations should diversify their guests and experts, inviting guests and leaders even from different ethnic groups to allow the emergence of alternative voices that do not necessarily pander to a particular ethnic group’s beliefs and way of life. This can be done by identifying speakers of the radio station’s language outside a said community or resorting to interpretation. In the same vein, local-language stations which do not use Kiswahili as a language of their broadcast should devote a number of hours to Kiswahili programming.

Ndia and Ndanai listeners’ inclination towards LLR broadcasting and perception of their local language shows positive signs. Giving the local languages equal exposure on the radio helps in empowering them and makes them visible. This way, the population is able to interact with the languages at various levels. However; it is still evident that English is still viewed as a prestigious language. Some young people in Ndia and Ndanai still harbour negative attitudes towards their local language. Also, without entrenching the local language in the broadcasting law, there is no guarantee that the commercial broadcasting will continue to operate in a way that is friendly to their advancement although Kenya’s constitution calls for promotion of Kenya’s indigenous languages. It is therefore important to institute concrete policies that will encourage information access in local language in the same vein as national languages. Kenya’s new constitution which calls for the development of and enhancement of local languages is an important step towards this direction.

However, the promotion and development of local languages cannot be left to the media alone. As listeners in Ndia and Ndanai revealed, the education system is one of the most important language socialization institution. As Mogambi (2009) rightly argues, LLR broadcasting in Kiswahili have contributed to the sorry situation that the development of
Kiswahili in Kenya. This arises from the fact that many of the broadcasters working in stations that broadcast in Kiswahili have contributed to the mess that the development of teaching of Kiswahili finds itself in (2009:4). Changes in the education system will have far reaching implications on the languages, outcomes that will eventually trickle down to the media. With the diminishing role of public broadcaster, the ability of commercial radio stations to meet the challenge of providing political information that is crucial for the promotion of democracy is critical. So far, there are encouraging signs on the role of LLR in democratization process.

In addition to political education, involvement in civic discussions by the listeners in rural Kenya may also suggest that there has always been a need for participation. What was lacking is the means and platform. A combination of LLR and cellular phone technology provides a good system for civic engagement, bridging distance and space at the same time. The level of civic engagement on commercial LLR station disproves the assertion that public radio has been “a reliable medium for public affairs and civic education”.

The rapid developments in the radio industry need to be matched with equivalent intellectual engagements in order to build a better understanding of the media and their relation with the society. The Kenyan radio industry has remained undefined in areas which are critical both from theoretical and praxis perspectives. One of these areas is in the classification of radio stations. Because different types of radio stations are closely related in the ways that they operate, the existing classifications have failed to capture some of the distinct characteristics of particular stations.

One problematic area has been the tendency of LLR stations to represent themselves as community radio stations. While this is partly for marketing expediency, this study has shown that there are various functions that local language radio fulfils that are traditionally carried out by community radio. However, this does not qualify LLR stations as community
radio mainly because such functions are overridden by the profit motive. In this case, it is important to separate what can be viewed as primary and secondary goals of radio stations. Commercial radio stations’ primary objectives are to maximize profits. Serving the community is a secondary objective because they can only be served within a profitable environment. Having a clear classification of radio in Kenya is also important from the policy making and regulation standpoint. The Kenya Information and Communication Act contain one basis of classification of broadcast media. Three-tier broadcasting classification identifies the public, commercial, and community broadcasters. As such, the provisions of the Act are applied to the extent that different radio stations conveniently fit within this limited classification.

This has far-reaching implications as the Act misses out on numerous issues that not only define radio practice in Kenya today, but the population as a whole. By failing to acknowledge the difference between LLR and mainstream radio for instance, the Act cannot come up with specific regulations that are relevant to those stations. If broadcasting regulations are to be effective, they must capture the complex nature of the radio industry in Kenya. This will include drawing up clear distinction of broadcasters in Kenya. The gap in policy related to definition is evident in recent literature and reports on the 2007 post-election violence.

Radio and LLR stations in particular, have been identified as platforms that were used to fan ethnic tensions through uncontrolled discussions, biased coverage and rumour mongering (Abdi & Dean, 2008; CIPEV, 2008). It will, however, be difficult to rein in over LLR stations within the current regulatory framework because the KICA is absolutely silent on the issue of language of broadcast. Also emerging from this research is that there is a need to explore the future of public broadcasting in Kenya. With the rapidly changing radio terrain characterized by cut-throat competition, the public broadcaster KBC, need to institute some form of
changes if it is to remain relevant in the market. At the same time, it is apparent that Kiswahili radio is the future of broadcasting in Kenya if national integration is to be taken seriously. In the areas that the research was conducted, many were very supportive of Kiswahili radio explaining why recent research shows that Kiswahili radio is leading in L.I.R listenership countrywide. There is need to study how broadcasting in Kiswahili can be a basis for future broadcasting system in the Kenya.

This research shows that the coverage and reception of development-related topics such as health, nutrition, and agriculture by rural listeners has shifted development communication. Radio listeners in Ndia and Ndanai receive information on development topics through local language radio stations that use an approach that is different from the traditional development communication. The traditional approach to development communication centers on the systematic practice of applying the processes, strategies, and principles of communication to bring about positive social change. However, the processes and strategies that are being employed by commercial L.I.R stations do not fall within the strict definition of development communication, but they do have similar outcomes. The agricultural information delivered to farmers in rural Kenya has the potential to effect social change in the population. Therefore, studies that look at this changing approach to development communication in free market environments are necessary.
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APPENDIX A: LISTENERS’ PANORAMIC QUESTIONS GUIDE

Listeners’ Panoramic Questions Guide

In a household setting

1. How many people live in the household
2. How many house units do you have?
3. Do you have a radio set?
4. How many radio sets do you have in the household?
5. Do you have a television(s)?

Individual or household communication devices

For radio owners

1. Does the radio have a cassette player?
2. Do you play cassettes on the radio?
3. Does your radio have a CD player?
4. Do you play CD on the radio?

Television and telephone ownership

1. Do you have a TV?
2. Do you watch TV as a together as a family?
3. Do you watch TV with your neighbor(s) in your house?
4. Do you have a mobile phone?
5. Do you have a landline phone?
6. Do you have Telkom wireless phone?
7. Do you share with your neighbors?
Energy Source

1. What is your energy source in the house

2. What energy does your radio set run on?

Radio listening

1. In a typical 5 days of a week period, how many hours do you spend listening to the radio?

2. In a typical weekend, how many hours do you spend listening to the radio?

3. Name the radio stations that you have listened to in the last one week

4. What is your most favorite radio station?

5. Why do you prefer this station?

6. Name your most favorite programs and the stations they appear on

Radio content and stations listened

Where do you usually listen to this type of radio content?

1. News and current affairs

2. Music

3. Informational programs

4. Announcements

5. Death & funeral announcements

6. Local politics

7. International politics

8. Agricultural information

9. Sports

10. Health

11. Religious programs
12. Greetings

13. Drama and comedy

*Use of print media*

1. How many times did you read a newspaper?

2. How many times did you buy a newspaper

3. *If you read the newspaper but did not buy,* where did you obtain the newspaper

4. What language(s) is the newspaper you read?

5. What kind of information do you look for in a newspaper?

*Television viewing*

1. How many hours did you watch TV yesterday?

2. Where did you watch the TV?

3. What program type of programs did you watch?

4. What program type do you usually watch on TV?

5. Why do you watch the program(s)?

*Audience participation in radio*

1. Have you ever written a letter to a radio station(s) *If yes,* which stations and how many times?

2. Have you ever called a radio station? *If yes,* which stations and how many times?

3. Have you ever sent an SMS to a radio station(s)? *If yes,* which stations and how many times?

4. Have you ever participated in radio competitions? *If yes,* name the station(s)

5. Have you ever won a prize in radio competition? *If yes,* name the station(s)

6. Do you know someone who has won a prize in radio competition?
APPENDIX B LISTENERS’ PANORAMIC QUESTIONS GUIDE

Panoramic Questions Kikuyu Translation

Ciũria cia úthikĩrĩria wa kameme

Mũciũ

1. Nĩ andũ aigana maikaraga gũkũ mũciũ ūyũ?  
2. Mũciũ ūyũ ũrĩ nyũmba cigana?  
3. Nĩ mũrĩ radio?  
4. Mũrĩ radio ciigana mũciũ ūyũ??

Indo cia úkinyanũrĩria cia mũciũ

Ene radio

1. Radio yaku nĩ īrĩ kaseti?  
2. Nũuθakaga mĩkwa ya kaseti radioĩĩ?  
3. Radio yaku nĩ īrĩ CD?  
4. Nũuθakaga CD radioĩĩ?

TV na thimu

1. Nĩ mũrĩ TV??  
2. Hũndũ ũrĩ úkwirorera TV, wĩroraŋũra wĩ wiki kana mwĩ ta bamiĩrĩ?  
3. Nĩ mwĩroraŋũra TV na andũ angĩ a itũra gwaku?  
4. Nũurĩ thĩmũ ya gũoko?  
5. Nũurĩ thĩmũ ya nyũmba?  
6. Nũurĩ thĩmũ ya Telkom wireless?  
7. Nĩ mũhoyanaga thĩmũ andũ a itũra?
Kiriita titumiraga gwakia na guota

1. Gükü mści mütümagira kii gwakia tawa na kürüga?

2. Nayo radio yanyu itümäfira kii?

Úthikiriria wa radio?

1. Òthiini wa thiku ithanö cia wiki r. (Wambere nginya wagatana) úthikagiriira radio mathaa maigana?

2. Míthenya ya Juma na Kiumia r. tu. úthikagiriiria radio mathaa maigana?

3. Gweta ceceni cia radio iria úthikirirrie wiki ino ìhîîkite?

4. Ní kameme karikü wendete múno?

5. Ní kíi gígûkenagia radio în în?

6. Njíra tabaríra iria wendete múno na ceceni iria cíkoragwo?

Úngienda gûthikiriria maíndü maya. úhîngûragira kameme karikü?

1. Maîhoro na maíndü kuuma kündü na kündü

2. Nyîmbó

3. Tabaríra cia úthomîthania?

4. Matangatho na imenyíthia

5. Imenyíthia cia iküü

6. Maíndü wa ûteti ma gükü maturainí na bûrûri

7. Maíndü wa ûteti ma thî cia na nja

8. Úhoro wa ürîmi

9. Mathako

10. Úhoro wa ûgíma wa mwirî

11. Tabaríra cia ndìni na wîtükia

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12. Ngeithi

13. Mathako wa kamemeini na mathekania

Čthomi wa ngathiti

1. Wiki irahütukire ri, úrathomire ngathiti maita maigana?

2. Í kūgūra úragūrire maita maigana?

3. Angikorwo niurathomire ngathiti na ndunagura ri. warutire kū ngatheti?

4. Ngathiti irìa úrathomire irlari ya růthiomi růrikú?

5. Nī ūhoro irlíku úthomaga múno ngathitiini?

Kwirorera TV

1. Ira úrooreire TV mathaa maigana?

2. Úreroreire TV kū?

3. Nī tabaríra irlíku úreroreire

4. Nī tabaríra cia múthembá irlíku wírorágíra múno TV iní?

5. Wírorágíra tabaríra ici niki?

Athikiriria kūnyítanira úmemerekianí

1. Niūrí wandikiira ceceni ya radio marúa? Angikorwo niūrí wandika, Wandíkrite maita maigana?

2. Niūrí wahúra thime? Ceceni irlíki na maita maigana?

3. Niūrí watúma SMS radioiní? Ceceni irlíki na maita maigana?

4. Niūrí waingrra macindano ma radio? Ceceni irlíku?

5. Niūrí wacinda kínde macindano iní ma radio? Ceceni irlíku?

6. He múndú Û ūrí wega Ûrí wacinda kínde macindano iní ma radio?
APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW/GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Interview/Group Discussion Guide

1. What is your favorite radio station?

2. When you are alone, which radio station(s) do you usually listen to?

3. Why do you listen to this radio station(s)?

4. What stations do you listen to when you are with your family?

5. Can you explain why?

6. In the family setting (at home), how are decisions made about which radio stations to listen to? Who decides? When are they likely to decide or not?

7. What type of programs do you find in different radio stations?

8. What are the differences and/or similarities from one station to another?

9. What type of content do you like to listen to? Why are you interested in this type of content? Which radio station do you feel gives you the best of this content?

10. Among all the radio stations available, which one that you feel most associated with?

11. What attributes of the radio station(s) make you feel this way?

12. Can you name the particular program(s) that you listen to? Explain what they are about.

13. How would you describe your ideal radio station?

14. We have different languages that are used on the radio. How does language influence your everyday radio listening?

15. How does radio shape you identity as a member of Kikuyu ethnic community?

16. In which circumstances would you prefer a L.R stations to Swahili/English stations?

17. In your view, how does the content of L.I.R stations compare to that of (a) Swahili radio stations (b) English radio stations
18. Have you changed your radio listening habits in the recent past? What is the relationship between the recent violence we experienced in the country and your (a) radio listening (b) feelings and perception of the place or radio?

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW/GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Interview/Group Discussion Guide Kikuyu Translation

1. Nǐ tabarĩra īrĩkũ wendete makĩria?

2. Hindi īrĩa wĩ wiki rĩ. nĩ kameme karĩkũ āthikagĩrĩria?

3. Āthikagĩrĩria kama gaka nĩkĩ?

4. Nĩ kameme kariku múthikagĩrĩria rĩrĩa mwĩ hamwe ta bamiĩrĩ? Nĩkĩ?

5. Rĩrĩa mwĩ. mūcĩ rĩ. mútuaga atia ecenci īrĩa ikũhĩngũrĩrwo? Nũũ ugaga? Nĩmahinda marĩkũ matũaga?

6. Thĩnĩ wa tũmeme tũrĩ tũrĩ kuo rĩ. ni tabarĩra cia múthemba ūriku ikoragwo kuuo?

7. Tũmeme tũtũ tũhananáne na tũtigănĩte atia?

8. Įthikagĩrĩria tabarĩra cia múthemba ūrikũ? Ūcĩendeire kĩ? Nĩ kameme karĩkeũiguaga Įthikagĩrĩria mãendũ mau ũkaigwa ũiganĩre?

9. Thĩnĩ wa tũmeme tũother. nĩ karĩkũ ũiguaga ke hakũhi nawe makĩria? Nĩkĩgĩtũmaga ũigue ũguo?

10. Njũra tabarĩra ũmwe wendete gũthikĩrĩria? Ŭmiendeire kĩ?

11. Kameme karĩa gakinyaŋrũkürĩ we kangukorwo kahana atia?

12. Thiomi irĩaĩ itũmagĩrwo kũmemerekia gũkonainie atia uthikĩrĩria waku?

13. Įthikĩrĩria wa radio witanĩtwo atia na gũkorwo wĩ Mũgũkũyũ?

14. Nĩ mahinda marĩke wendaga gũthikĩrĩria na rũthiomi rwa Gũkũyũ na ti Gĩthũŋũkũana Gĩthweri?
15. Ukiona ri. ceceni cia maundu maria matangathagwoni ceceni cia
Gikuyu maringithanite atia na ceceni cia (a) Githweri (b) Githungu

16. Úthikiriria waku wa kameme niucenjetie kwa njira o yothu matuku mahitukite?

17. Ungiurio ri. mbirika iria ironekanire thutha wa githurano ni ikonainie atia na
šmemerckia?

INTERVIEW/GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. Ainon keteshetah redio ne chome missing?
2. Yon ini kityon ikose keteshet ainon kobo kora?
3. amune sikose keteshoto kobo kora?
4. Okose keteshosek achon yon omi ak kaitangung
5. Ororun amune
6. En kaitangung ke amuondono chakwanet ah keteshosek che kikose, ngo ne amuoni
oko kasarta ainon ne keamuoni?
7. Kipindishek cheune cho kose en keteshosek?
8. Ne pesyet ak kerkeindo en keteshosek che terter?
9. Tukun cheune en redio cheichome ikas ako amune sichome choton, keteshet onton
neikosen choto ichome?
10. En keteshosek tugul ko oinon ne ichome missing.
11. Ne netinye keteshonoton ne yoin icham?
12. Tot itetu kipindisyek che chome ikasi ak iaroru ngalek che aroru?
13. Ictun ole nyolundo kou keteshet nakararan
14. Redio koboishen kutuswek che terter, tos tilu kutit ne keboisyen en redio yanichenge
ketesvosoeki?
15. Tos tilu ne redio en ateptab bororyet
16. Ne neyoin icham ama kosorwek achon neikose ketesvoyosek chengolole kutit
APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW/GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Listeners’ Questions Guide

In a household setting

1. Obik ata en kai?
2. Otinye korik ata?
3. Otinye redio?
4. Otinye redioishek ata?
5. Otinye televisioni?

Individual or household communication devices

For radio owners

1. Tinky rediongung tepiti?
2. Ochesoni tepisyek eng redioi?
3. Tinky rediongung CD
4. CD eng redio

Television and telephone ownership

1. Tos itinye TV
2. Tos okere TV akongung tuguli?
3. Tos okere TV ak bikab kokweti?
4. Tos itinye simoitab mobaill?
5. Ani tos itinye simoitab ko?

6. Tos Itinye nebo Telkom wireless?

7. Ananoboisyen ak kokweti?

Energy Source

1. nen noboisyen kogon maat?

2. Boisyen ne redio ngung?

Radio listening

1. En wikit kwenet betusyek mut ikose redio saisyek ata?

2. Ani en jumamos ak jumombili ikose redio saisyek ata?

3. Tetun ketesyosek chekoikas en wikit agenge nekoibata?

4. Ainon ketesyet ne chome missing?

5. Amune sic home ketsyetnoton

6. Kipindisyek achron chei chome missing?

?ano olegosen kipndisyechoton?

1. Ngalekab emet

2. Teynwokig

3. Kanetisyosek

4. Kabarstaet

5. Kabarstaet ab meet.

6. Bolotet

7. Bolotosyek ab bitonin

8. Kanetisyosek ab temisyet

9. Ureryet
10. Tililindo

11. Kipindisyek ab kanisa

12. Greetings kokotyet

13. Ureryosek chemile biik

*Use of print media*

1. Isomoni kasetit konyil ata?

2. Iyole kasetit konyil ata

3. Yan kesoman kasetit agomeyal isikchini ano?

4. Isomoni kutiswek achon en kasetit?

5. Ne neichikili en kasetit

*Television viewing*

1. Koiger television saisyek ata amut?

2. Koigeren ano

3. Koiger kipinsyek achon?

4. Kobo kora ikere kipindisyek achon?

5. Amune sikere kipindisyec choto?

*Audience participation in radio*

1. Kiisirchini barwet ketesyosek ab radio? Achon ago konyil ata?

2. Kiibirchini simoit ketsyetab redioi?ketesyet aionon ago konyil ata?

3. Kiisirchini sms redio? Redioit aionon ago konyil ata?

4. Kiichute baatinasibu en redio?ketesyet aionon?

5. Kiibore an baatinasibusiek che kiichuti ago en redioit aionon?

6. Inge chi age tugul ne kigobor en baatinasibusiek che kigochuti?
APPENDIX F: BROADCASTER QUESTIONNAIRE QUESTIONS

Broadcaster Questionnaire Questions

1. Please give a short description of your radio station.

2. Who are your primary target audiences? Has there been any change on the targeted audiences at any point of your station’s broadcasting?

3. In your view, what is the most important determinant of your target listeners? (Probe on factors such as age, region, settlement, and economics).

4. In your view, how does your radio station compare with other radio stations in the industry today?

5. What is the core content in your broadcasting? Has this changed in the past?

6. How do listeners participate in your programming?

7. How would you describe the relationship between your station and the listeners?

8. Looking back to the last few years of broadcasting, what are the emerging directions in radio broadcasting in Kenya?

9. What is your station’s perception of rural listeners?

10. How do you envisage the future of radio broadcasting in Kenya?