

**THE PERFORMANCE OF THE NATION NEWSPAPER IN ITS COVERAGE
OF PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES IN THE AUGUST 2017 ELECTIONS
IN KENYA**

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research is my original work and has not been presented for a degree or any other examination in this or any other university.

Signature

Date.....

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MA/FA/00115/015

DECLARATION BY SUPERVISOR

This research project is submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

Dr. Charles Nyambuga

Signature.....

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am forever grateful to the Almighty God for the gift of life and never-ending mercies. I thank God for offering the opportunity, resources, life and good health as I pursued this. I appreciate my parents Benter Arunga and George Arunga for giving me a good education foundation. I thank my husband Phelix Ochieng Jangu for his endless support throughout this study. I want to offer special thanks to my supervisor Dr Charles Nyambuga for his dedication, passing through your hands has made me a better person. May God bless you. I also thank my two children for their understanding especially when they could not get my full attention as I worked on this study.

Thank you and may God bless you all.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my wonderful husband Phelix Ochieng Jangu for his unending support, commitment and encouragement since I began this journey. This also goes to my loving children Austin and Victoria who endured my tight schedule as I worked on this study.

ABSTRACT

This study focused on the performance of the Nation Newspaper in its coverage of the August 8th 2017 presidential elections. It could be that the framing of the presidential candidates could have influenced voting patterns. There may be a possibility that the electorate expressed dissatisfaction with the presidential election results due to lack of proper knowledge about the process. Several studies on media coverage of elections have been done in the past but they have not expressly focused on the presidential elections. The general objective of this study was to assess the performance of the Nation Newspaper in its coverage of the August 2017 presidential elections. The specific objectives were to establish the extent to which the Nation newspaper undertook its informational role in regards to voter education; determine the influence of the Daily Nation content on readers views on the various presidential aspirants; establish how the Nation Newspaper framed the coverage of the presidential aspirants. The study used the Media Systems Dependency theory which helped explain the relationship between the media and its audiences. The framing theory was also used to explain how the media packaged and delivered information about the presidential elections. The research adopted a descriptive design which helped describe the coverage as it was. The study population for this research was obtained from Kisumu Central Constituency in Kisumu County. Kisumu County had a total of 539,210 registered voters, purposive sampling was used to select the registered voters of Kisumu Central Constituency. Kisumu Central Constituency has 120,023 registered voters. The researcher sampled respondents from all the six wards in the constituency. The Newspaper sample size was obtained from 77 copies of the Nation Newspaper published between 28th of May 2017 and 12th of August 2017. The Yamane formula for sample size calculation was used to determine the actual sample size for the study which was 399 respondents from Kisumu Central Constituency and 65 copies of the Nation Newspaper. Data collection was done using questionnaires and coding sheets. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the coded information as well as the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires. The statistical analysis software, SPSS was used for data analysis. The findings were that the Nation newspaper gave more attention to only two candidates and the tone of the articles analyzed were also more negative than positive. General articles were covered more than educative and informative issues. In conclusion it is suggested that the press need to offer balanced coverage to all candidates, work on having positive stories and report on important themes rather than campaign issues.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE PAGE.....	i
DECLARATION.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ABSTRACT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	viii
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES.....	x
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	6
1.3 Research Questions	7
1.4 Objectives of the Study	7
1.4.1 General objective of the Study	7
1.4.2 Specific Objectives.....	7
1.5 Significance of the Study	8
1.6 Scope of the Study.....	9
1.7 Theoretical Framework	9
1.7.1 The Media Systems Dependency Theory.....	9
1.7.2 Framing Theory.....	13
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	15
2.1 Introduction	15
2.2 The Information and Education Role of the Media during Elections	15
2.3 The Effect and Impact of Media Coverage of Presidential Candidates	18
2.4 Media Framing of Presidential Elections	20
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	25
3.1 Research Design	25
3.2 Area of Study.....	25
3.3 Study Population	26
3.4 The study Variables.....	26
3.5 Sampling Procedure	27

3.6 Sample Size	27
3.7 Data Collection Instruments	29
3.7.1 Questionnaires	29
3.7.2 Coding Sheets.....	29
3.7.2.1 The Coding Process.....	30
3.8 Reliability and Validity of the Data Collection Instruments.....	31
3.9 Methods of Data Analysis	31
3.10 Ethical Considerations.....	31
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION	33
4.1 Introduction	33
4.2 The Role of the Newspaper in Information and Education.....	33
4.2.1 The Topics that Influenced Newspaper Readership.....	37
4.2.2 The Level of Interest in the August 8 th General Elections	38
4.2.3 Interest in the Various Elective Positions.....	39
4.2.4 Factors that influenced the choice of a presidential candidate	40
4.3 The Framing of the Presidential Elections by the Nation Newspaper.....	41
4.3.1 Presidential Coverage in Terms of Space Allocated per Article per Candidate ...	44
4.3.2 The Coverage Tone per Presidential Candidate	45
4.3.3 Position of Articles for Each Candidate as Done by The Nation Newspaper	47
4.3.4 Use of enhancements in covering presidential candidates	48
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	50
5.1 Introduction	50
5.2 Summary of Findings	50
5.2.1 Media Coverage Of Elections	50
5.2.2 Role of Media in Information and Education.....	51
5.2.3 Influence of Media Coverage on Voter Perception.....	53
5.3 Conclusions	53
5.4 Recommendations	54
REFERENCES	56
APPENDICES	62

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

- MCK** - Media Council of Kenya
- UNESCO** - United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- IDEA** - International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
- IEBC** - Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission
- EU** - European Union

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Sample Size Kisumu central constituency.....	29
Table 4.1 The length of article allocated to each candidate	33
Table 4.2 Tone of article per candidate	36
Table 4.3 Position of articles in the newspaper	44
Table 4.4 Position of articles per candidate	47
Table 4.5 The frequency of themes in the nation newspaper articles	47
Table 4.6 The coverage of various political and election topics	48

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1 Distribution of articles per presidential candidate	35
Figure 4.2 Proportion of length of the article	37
Figure 4.3 Proportion of the article tone	38
Figure 4.4 Proportion of article enhancement	39
Figure 4.5 The effectiveness of nation newspaper in providing political information...	40
Figure 4.6 Demographics of Nation newspaper readers	41
Figure 4.7 Topics that influenced newspaper readership	43
Figure 4.8 The level of interest in the 8 th August 2017 elections	45
Figure 4.9 The level of interest in the various elective positions	46
Figure 5.0 Factors influencing voter's choice of a given presidential candidate	49

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This study assessed the performance of the nation newspaper in the coverage of the August 2017 presidential election. Performance in this study will look at whether the nation newspaper framing of the presidential elections was balanced meaning no presidential candidate was given preference over the other. Performance will also be determined by how well the Nation Newspaper educated the electorate prior to the elections. This section will provide the background to the study, The statement of the problem, theoretical framework, significance of the study as well as the scope of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Despite the power of influence accorded to the Newspaper, exposure does not necessarily translate to an understanding of the electoral process. Elections coverage may not be enough to enable citizens participate fully in the process because the coverage offered by the Nation Newspaper may not contain adequate voter education information. This implies that the citizens probably don't get to know what is expected of them as well as their rights as voters. It could also be that the coverage was biased and as a result made people perceive things differently and changed their voting patterns. Numerous studies have been done to determine the performance of the media in covering the elections in general. Few studies have specifically focused on the performance of Newspapers and particularly the Nation Newspaper. This study thus restricted itself to the August 2017 presidential elections in Kenya.

According to UNESCO, media coverage of elections is not just a matter of the media chasing news stories but an issue of democratic participation. The manner in which journalists play their role in elections greatly determines the future of a nation. UNESCO further emphasizes that the best way to reduce problems related with elections is to make journalists an integral part of the process (UNESCO, 2013). The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) also stresses the important role the media play in an election. These roles go beyond just educating the masses and providing an open forum for discussions. The media also scrutinizes the process and ensures accountability (IDEA, 2015). This study seeks to

determine the nature of media coverage given to the August 8th 2017 presidential elections in Kenya.

According to the European Union Elections observation mission, Kenya is blessed with a very vibrant media. The Union also notes that censorship has taken a center stage and the media do not therefore report independently. The final report on the August 2017 elections noted that journalists reporting on political matters were either harassed or threatened in the course of their duty. (EU, 2018). According to the EU, Kenya has a wide media landscape but self-censorship is common and journalists are always threatened or harassed especially when reporting on politics.

The EU elections Observation Mission on its final report on the Kenya 2017 elections dated 10th, of January 2018 notes that a few months after the August elections amid rising tensions, The Communications Authority of Kenya gave a directive that all media houses stop live coverage of election related events. On a positive note the European Union notes that the Kenyan media did a thorough job as far as the coverage of the 2017 elections were concerned. They properly scrutinized the election process as a whole including the tallying and announcement of results. The EU also noted that journalists did not sail through without trouble, after the August elections they were restricted from accessing certain areas and even assaulted by security forces. The EU report further expounds that on the 9th of October a journalist was physically assaulted and several others tear gassed as they tried to cover NASA demonstrations in Kisumu. According to the EU the jubilee team also went against the legal framework by sponsoring numerous paid advertisements just before the August elections. This they felt gave the president undue advantage over his competitors. This report by EU clearly states the kind of preparations the Kenyan media had towards and even during the election. Its findings do not show the nature of media coverage offered to the various presidential candidates as it did not highlight that. This study therefore bridged that knowledge gap by analyzing the nature of coverage offered to each candidate by the Nation newspapers.

A policy brief by the Institute for Security Studies pointed out that, ahead of the 2017 elections the media council several stakeholders came together in a bid to come up with acceptable guidelines for media coverage of elections. Some of the stakeholders involved included the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission, media

houses, Kenya Union of Journalists and others. This was to ensure that media houses understood the possibility of violence and report responsibly to avoid sparking any. (Herzenberg, C., Alingo, P., & Gatimu, S. (2015)). A media monitoring report by Peace Pen Communications on the coverage of the 2017 elections pointed out that the media coverage of the August 8th elections was viewed to have presented the public with lots of false information. As per the report, some media houses relied on fake information circulating on social media and didn't even take their time to corroborate the sources. For example, on July 3rd, 2017 the Nation Media Group used a fake tweet that alleged that businessman Jimmy Wanjigi had threatened a reporter. (Peace Pen Communications, 2017). Generally, Kenyans came up in arms against the local media for being biased in its coverage of the August 8th elections. They claimed the media either leaned on one side of the political divide or assisted in spreading fake news. (Makokha, 2017). This policy brief focused more on preventing political conflict and failed to address media coverage.

A report by Peace Pen Communications also alleged that media also didn't look into the issues that were rocking IEBC especially in relation to how well it was prepared for the August elections. The report points out that civil society organizations complained that the media was listening more to government when it comes to IEBC performing its mandate and did not come out to strongly condemn the problems found in the voters register as well as the audit of the register. The mainstream media ignored issues that were important such as procurement of election materials and the numerous court cases against IEBC. Instead they carried on with the 2013 narrative of maintaining peace and adhering to the rule of law. Also highlighted in the report is that during the August 2017 elections the media was also criticized for bowing to government threats not to make public the elections result as announced at the various polling stations and constituency tallying centers. This report did not openly describe media coverage of the presidential candidates for this particular election. Instead it generalized the weaknesses of the media.

According to the report these threats were issued via the Communications Authority and even the ministry of education. A number of media houses the Nation Media Group included had earlier on reported that they have invested heavily in elections monitoring technology. On the contrary they never relayed any results and instead only publicized the disputed results from the IEBC national tallying center the Bomas of Kenya. If the

media had come out to publicly declare what they had gathered from the field then there could have been more transparency and another way of verifying what IEBC was presenting. Unfortunately, they chose to remain silent. A few weeks after the elections the Nation Television accidentally flashed a clip that showed the final tally of NASA to be at 8.5M while that of jubilee to be 7.1M. They quickly pulled it down but it had already gone viral and the clip was circulating on social media sites.

A report by the BBC World Service Trust notes that Elections in Kenya are bigger than a mere journalist or even an editor of a publication such as the daily nation. Editorial policies of major media houses have been outlined and discussed in boardrooms in the presence of people who are closely associated to political parties. Even senior editors and some key persons in media houses have taken hardline political stands and these affects how they cover elections. (BBC, 2008).

According to a National Baseline Survey Report released by Hivos on the safety and protection of journalists in Kenya, another issue that compromises elections coverage in Kenya is the safety and security of journalists which has become a major concern in the recent past (Hivos 2013). Apart from physical attacks, judicial terrorism has also become an issue to contend with. This is a situation whereby the courts impose heavy fine on media houses and journalists unnecessarily. The report proposes that something needs to be done about the security and safety of journalists before it leads to obvious self-censorship and violation of media freedom and consequently the freedom of expression. It also cites laws put in place that acts as a hindrance to elections coverage hence journalists must tread carefully in their work of informing the world. Defamation is one such law which restricts journalists from curtailing other people's freedom of speech in the interest of their rights worthy of protection. Therefore, in cases of defamation, courts are called upon to strike a balance between the protection of the right to dignity, right to privacy and the right of freedom of expression.

The report by Hivos further states that journalists were scared to cover press conferences planned by the opposition. Little was covered on the police brutality and aimless killings of innocent citizens in parts of Nairobi and Nyanza. On the contrary the media bought the government idea and propaganda that those killed were looters, organized militia and criminals. This media blackout on police brutality prompted NASA leaders to call on their supporters not to consume all Nation Media Group products on August 20th 2017.

European Union Election Observation Mission Preliminary Statement noted that “Journalists in most countries engage in self-censorship when reporting on election or politics because of the threats they receive. Self-censorship in that they automatically know what to report and what not to. This could be used to explain why the Kenyan Media was not quick to provide information on the post-election violence and protests that erupted in different parts of the country. Some journalists also cited the interference by security forces in their bid to access such information. (EU, 2017). Peace Pen Communications also noted that in 2015 the Government Advertising Agency of Kenya was introduced with the intention of controlling media content. Early 2017 just before the elections, the GAA came up with a government owned publication known as MyGov. This publication has all government advertisements and was circulated by all the major media houses in Kenya. Sadly, this publication cannot be edited by the media hence gave room to the spread of fake and unbalanced information on what the government has achieved. The presidential unit delivery also used documentaries to highlight the President Uhuru Kenyatta’s achievement over the last five years.

A study on the performance of the nation newspaper and East African Standard on the coverage of the 2010 referendum in Kenya revealed that the newspapers focused more on political conflict and not valuable information that would have empowered the electorates to participate fully in the referendum. 60% of the respondents agreed that the newspaper caused political conflicts. (Nyambuga, 2011). The study by Nyambuga also concluded that there could be a possibility between the content of the Newspaper and the views and actions of readers thereafter. This study therefore attempted to find out if such a relationship exists and specifically during presidential elections.

An analysis of the 2016 US presidential elections showed that the media tried to be as objective as possible in its coverage of the elections. Trump was portrayed as a political outsider with a tainted personality. Hillary Clinton on the other hand was presented by the media to be an extraordinary candidate whose presidency would give America the first ever female president a milestone as significant as that of Barack Obama. The media in the US at that time defended themselves saying the coverage of trump was negative but rather objective because that is who he was (Lilleker et al, 2016). It would be important to test the power of media influence in Kenyan presidential elections. This is a knowledge gap that the study intends to fill.

The Nation Newspapers (Taifa Leo, Daily Nation and Sunday Nation circulates in all parts of Kenya. The daily nation newspaper has been in existence since 1958. It began as a Swahili publication known as Taifa published by Charles Hayes who later sold it out to His Highness the Aga Khan in 1959. The Aga Khan upon acquiring it changed the name of the publication to Nation Today. Later it was changed to the daily nation and published by the East African newspapers ltd. Nation newspaper is considered the most influential newspaper in Kenya and this is why it was considered for this study. It has the highest circulation of up to 150,000 per day and greatly helps in the formation of public opinion. Most Kenyans have continued to purchase this newspaper because of the loyalty they have developed for it over the years Even after the introduction of other newspapers they still have kept their trust for the daily nation.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Communication scholars while analyzing whether newspapers inform the electorate more than broadcast, note that newspapers offer detailed coverage. This power accorded to Newspapers by various scholars makes it key to voter participation during an election process. Despite this power the electorate's exposure to newspaper may not necessarily mean that they understand the process since the people's understanding of the election process determines how well they participate. This understanding is determined by the nature of coverage which this paper sought to determine. Elections coverage may not be enough to enable the citizens participate effectively. Probably the Daily Nation's newspaper coverage has never provided enough as far as voter education is concerned. The electorate may have been going to the polls without the knowledge of what is required of them as well as their rights. It could be that the coverage before, during and after elections has an effect on people's views. This therefore could to lack of informed participation as well as the dissatisfaction that comes thereafter. According to a report by the Human Rights Watch, a lot of dissatisfaction with the presidential election results in 2017 came from the opposition stronghold this anger led to a loss of 37 lives in these areas. Kisumu County came in as the second highest county having lost 3 people to post election violence. A number of studies on media coverage of elections such as the one conducted on the 2015 Nigeria elections have concluded that indeed the media is a powerful source of information for the electorate.

They have also shown that the media is important as it increases voter participation. They have however failed to single out the performance of newspaper coverage of presidential elections, being that newspapers offer more detailed coverage, have a wide circulation and Newspaper readers are always literate, intelligent more informed and alert. The studies have failed to analyze the framing of presidential candidates. The nature of media coverage could be the reason why Kenya faces post-election violence related to the presidency after each election since they have no understanding of the process and cannot accept the outcome. In a bid to fill in the knowledge gaps, this study will analyze the performance of the nation newspaper in the coverage of the August 2017 elections in Kenya. Journalists may learn more on the relationship between media coverage and elections. The Communications Authority of Kenya may also use the findings to come up with policies on media coverage of elections. It may also be of great value to scholars by filling the gap in literature on media coverage of elections.

1.3 Research Questions

1. To what extent did the Nation newspaper perform its information role as far as voter education is concerned?
2. What was the influence of the Nation newspaper's content on reader's views on the various presidential aspirants?
3. How did the Nation Newspaper articles frame the coverage of the 2017 presidential elections in Kenya?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General objective of the Study

To assess the performance of the Nation newspaper in the coverage of the presidential candidates in the 2017 elections.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

1. To establish the extent to which the nation newspaper undertook its informational role in regards to voter education.
2. To determine the influence of the Daily Nation content on readers views on the various presidential aspirants?
3. To establish the framing of Nation newspaper articles on the coverage of the 2017 presidential elections.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study was done to assess the role of the Nation Newspaper in the coverage of the 2017 August elections. The findings of this study may be of importance to media outlets and the Daily Nation newspaper in particular by helping them identify areas of good and bad practice. This can positively impact their coverage of upcoming presidential elections. Communication practitioners, journalists and editors included may focus more on coverage that is educative, informative and objective. Based on the findings of this research it may also provide the foundation for more meaningful and insightful debate on the topic by the key stakeholders. Some of the targeted stakeholders include conflict managers, peace journalists, humanitarian interveners, educators, and politicians so that they all adopt best practices. It can also be of importance to communication scholars as the finding may form a basis for further studies. In this way it will fill in the gap in literature on print media coverage of elections.

It would enlighten journalists on the importance of writing balanced stories and reporting on the elections without any fear or favor. The study also focuses on encouraging researchers to contribute their knowledge and offer practical efforts in ensuring free and fair elections with the media stepping up its watchdog role. There is also need for more research on media coverage of elections regionally and internationally.

The findings from this study may be useful to policy makers in coming up with policies that govern the media in reporting on elections. Organizations such as the Communications Authority of Kenya and the Media Council of Kenya may be more focused on not only formulation but also enforcement of guidelines. In reference to the three key pillars of Kenya Vision 2030, this study is crucial since presidential elections and their outcome have an impact on the economic, social and political pillars.

The results from this study may also be crucial in helping Kenya achieve the 8 Millennium Development goals. If Kenya gets to conduct free and fair presidential elections then this can lead to peace. The environment will therefore be conducive for achieving the MDG goals which include eradication of poverty, promoting gender equality, primary education for all, reduced child mortality rate, improved maternal health, disease eradication, ensuring environmental stability and global partnership.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The research was done to assess the performance of the nation newspaper on its coverage of the August 8th, 2017 presidential elections in Kenya. This study was limited to the analysis of the performance of the Nation Newspaper on its coverage of the 8th August 2017 presidential elections in Kenya. This research restricted itself to the content of the Daily Nation. It looked at regular news articles, the editorial content, letters to the editor, as well as letters written by columnists and critics. Other areas of interest for this research will include regular political news, Election Day stories, political statements, manifestos, and issues of voting. The content analysis was done from the period starting 28th May- 12th August 2017. The period has been informed by the fact that official campaigns started on the 28th of May, elections were done on the 8th of August and on September 1st the presidential elections were annulled by the supreme court of Kenya. The study will also get the views of registered voters in Kisumu Central Constituency in Kisumu County.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

1.7.1 The Media Systems Dependency Theory

The media dependency theory was used in this study to explain the role of the media during the electioneering period. It also helped explain why media coverage of elections is important. The theory was formulated by Sandra-Ball Rokeach and Melvin Defleur in 1976. The theory studies the effects of mass media on audiences as well as the interactions between media audiences and social systems ((Rokeach & Defleur, 1989)).

According to Rokeach and Defluer people depend on the media for information especially when the need for social change is high. The level of dependency however varies depending on how well a given mass media outlet meets the needs of an individual. Two levels of dependency are identified by the theory, they are the interaction between the mass media and its audiences as well as the interaction between the mass media, audiences and the larger social system. The theory also asserts that media use in most cases is never a personal decision, but is influenced by other intervening factors. The media in this case is regarded as the source of information and has to attract the Audience with appropriate information. Rokeach and Defleur talks about three major types of media effects that arise as a result of increased media

dependency. They are the cognitive, affective and behavioral effects. This study will look into these effects and how they influence decision making in political matters.

Newspapers contribute to the public good by giving out information and provide platforms for people to question public officers. Citizens who read newspapers are more aware and active participants in political matters (Flemming, 2009). (Calder, 2001) asserts that newspaper readers are distinct from consumers of other media such as radio. They have high or middle income, are mostly mature adults, and are educated. These characteristics of newspaper readers explains why they will have a high dependence on newspaper especially during elections. The media dependency theory stresses that the demand for information is much higher during periods of social instability. This is because there is a lot of uncertainty and people turn to the mass media for reassurance. It is during this time that people turn to the media as a source of information. Just before the 2017 August 8th presidential elections, the Media Council of Kenya together with other stakeholders released a guideline that was to be followed by journalists while covering elections. According to the MCK these guidelines were meant to assist media practitioners to provide a detailed, accurate, fair and balanced coverage thus enabling voters make informed decisions as they went to the polls (MCK, 2017).

The media dependency theory states that the decision to depend on a certain mass medium is in most times not personal. It is defined by an individual's social status as well as environment (Loveless, 2008). Loveless notes that when there are alternative sources of information other than the media then this may affect the level of dependency. He specifically points out political parties and social organizations as the major competitors to the mass media when there is political instability. Due to this competition, the media must therefore understand the nature of their audience and hook them up with the right information. Newspapers are believed to be more influential than other information sources such as television. The printed word is considered more superior especially when it comes to exerting cognitive effects on its audiences. Since newspapers focus less on events and present information in a given context, they increase public confidence and are therefore regarded as better political informants (Newton, 2013). This study looked at the kind of content offered by the nation newspaper that could have made its readers depend on it during that period of heightened anxiety.

Rokeach and Defleur also talk about the effects that come as a result of media use. The media systems dependency theory goes a notch higher than the uses and gratifications theory and looks at not only the relationship between the media and individual but also with the entire society. People are active users of the media, the more they realize how important that media is to them and the more they are influenced by it (Baran & Davis, 2012). Cognitive effects refer to the shift in attitudes, beliefs and values of audience. This Rokeach and Defleur explains that include the transformation brought about by the media as it sets the political agenda. Affective effects are a result of fear or anxiety especially due to media messages that show the likelihood of violence after an election. Behavioral effects on the other hand are those that lead to deactivation and make people refrain from doing certain things. The theory posits that individuals who get behavioral effects refrain from doing what they had planned to do when they get exposed to certain media messages. A good example would be someone not voting while they had initially planned to vote. This theory may be able to explain the kind of effects the residents of Kisumu central constituency had as a result of exposure to various messages presented by the nation newspaper.

A cognitive media effect is when the exposure to media messages affects their way of thinking. This has to do with how they acquire information that they consider factual from the messages presented to them. The mind can retain this information through memorization and can go a notch higher by generating knowledge from the memorized information.

Mass media messages can also be organized by the human mind in different ways so as to come up with new meanings. In a nutshell, cognitive effects are basically the psychological processes that the human mind goes through when trying to comprehend new facts, develop a new perspective towards something and consequently make decisions. Affective effects are the feelings or impressions that people get from the exposure to mass media messages. The media is known to create emotions and moods such as fear, anxiety or even joy. Again, the media as a source of information has a way of managing these effects mostly by providing entertainment. Behavioral effects explain the change in attitude or beliefs. Attitudes are the judgements we make or have about someone or something. For example, the character and capability of a given political candidate.

When the media tells us more about people and events, they trigger our judgement process especially on controversial matters as well as political candidates. Beliefs are the opinions we hold about the likelihood of someone or something being linked to a given attribute. The media has been known to shape people's beliefs by presenting to them more about the world than they are able to discover themselves. Rokeach and DeFlauer discuss two major behavioral effects, the activation and deactivation effects. Activation is when you do something you had not intended to do because of exposure to media messages. For example, joining a protest because of a poster persuading you to do so. Deactivation on the other hand is when you refrain.

During social transformation the media also works hand in hand with the available social systems to provide citizens with adequate information. The media dependency focuses on the dependency as a relationship in which the achievement of goals of one party is reliant on the resources of another. In this case the social systems or institutions have first-hand information which they give to the media. During the August 8th 2017 elections the media had to coordinate with various stakeholders to provide them with first-hand information for dissemination to the public. According to IEBC, (2017) the major stakeholders of the elections included political parties/candidates, Parliament, treasury, Judiciary, security agencies, civil society organizations, election observers, and the elections commission itself.

The media systems dependency theory was developed to help shed more light on media effects on society. The MSD is closely related to the uses and gratifications theory as well as the agenda setting theory. Elihu Katz uses and gratifications theory examines the way audiences' uses different media to satisfy their need placing more importance on the Audiences, it does not examine the three-tier relationship that exists between the media, audiences and society (Thomas, 2000). The agenda setting theory on the other hand studies how the media can play around with the beliefs and attitudes of the audiences by giving them what to think about and not necessarily telling them how to think about it.

The researcher used the MSD as a theoretical framework for this study because it expands on the relationship between the mass media and its audiences. It does this by examining the media as a source of information, the audiences as active information seekers, the various levels of dependency, and the important role of the media during

periods of social change, the relationship between the media and social institutions as well as the types of effects on the audiences as a result of this dependency.

1.7.2 Framing Theory

Framing theory was first brought forward by Goffman. It states that the media focuses its attention on given issues and then attaches a meaning to them. It suggests that the way people process information and make choices about certain things is determined by how its presented/ framed (Goffman, 1974). Frames basically give meaning to messages. Framing is commonly used by the news media to convey information to its audiences. The way the news is framed will influence its reception by the targeted audience. Framing is regarded as a second level of agenda setting. Agenda setting theory simply tells the audience what to think but not how to think about it. Framing on the other hand goes a notch higher by telling them how to think about it as it puts it in a certain way. Goffman's assumption was that people digest the information going on around them based on the primary framework. The primary frame is a stand-alone frame that is not influenced by other frames (Arowolo, 2017).

The framing theory has been used by the researcher in this study to give a picture of how the nation newspaper covered the various presidential candidates whether positively or negatively. Just as Goffman put it, the way the news media covers a given candidate determines the readers perception concerning that candidate. The researcher attempted to find out how the nation newspaper utilized this second level of agenda setting.

According to (Saunders, 2006) the media portrayal of the candidates makes the news seem more dramatic and interesting. The media pits the candidates against each other in a bid to make the electorate decide for themselves who is winning as well as losing as

the elections approach. Saunders argues that these frames determine how the amount of coverage varies among candidates. Those who lead in opinion polls dominate press attention as the possible winners for the presidency.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focused on reviewing the various literature related to the study. It encompasses the issues of media coverage, the role of the media in society as well as the media effects. This is in a bid to help identify the role of the print media in elections and the effects of election related media content on the electorate. The literature review was done in three sections namely Media coverage to help identify how the presidential elections were covered, the role of the Media in information provision and voter education to ascertain the type of electoral knowledge availed to the public, and the effect of Newspaper coverage on voters' views and actions.

2.2 The Information and Education Role of the Media during Elections

The media is believed to have three critical roles in society. Firstly, it provides people with information about the election. The media reports on the campaigns of the various candidates. In doing this it has to ensure neutrality so as to give people the opportunity to make an informed choice. The media also uses columnists and critics to provide people with different views and a detailed analysis. In providing information, they have to liaise with the electoral commission to provide them with all the information about the elections.

Secondly, the media acts as a watchdog in ensuring a free and fair election. It is not expected to take sides. It should watch over the candidates as well as the elections commission.

Thirdly the media should act as a voice to the voters. This is done by giving them a platform to express their desires. People should be allowed to state what they expect of their leaders and communicate about the various social issues bothering them. So, in general the media should focus on the candidates, issues and voters during an elections period. (Brandit, 2006)

Voter education is considered a core responsibility of the election management body. However, the elections commission cannot achieve much without the support of various stakeholders. The media in this case is a very important stakeholder in voter education. It is important that all voters understand what it means to hold an election and what is expected of them. They must be equipped with the knowledge necessary to

participate in the whole process. Voter education is required more in countries that have experienced post-election violence (Agyiri, 2012).

According to a report by the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, the media does not monopolize provision of information. There are other sources as well only that the media is more powerful. The media keep citizens informed on what is happening around them. During elections the information role of the media becomes magnified due to the importance attached to this process. During elections the media is expected to perform its watchdog role by enlightening the public and ensuring the accountability of election officials. The report further points out that election officials are public officers and therefore anything they do while in office is of public interest. The media should ensure transparency of the electoral process. For instance, the media should be present at polling stations and tallying centers and report objectively on the events as they unfold. As much as there is a cold relationship between the media and politicians, they both need one another during elections. The media will go in search of the candidates if they consider their stories newsworthy. The candidates on the other hand rely on the media to publicize them as they campaign.

A few months to the August 2017 general elections a, section of the civil society organizations observed lack of voter education which they said could greatly interfere with the general elections. They said that the elections could be faced with irregularities because a notable section of the voter's population did not understand the procedures. (Obala, 2017). Another journalist also wrote on the Standard newspaper that with only 20 days to the election the voters still show a sign that they lack understanding on what is expected of them (Anami, 2017). Trejo stresses that it is also important to look at the relationship between the media and electoral authorities. During an election this relationship becomes very delicate. Due to its ability to reach a wide group of people the media can either make or break an election. He groups this relationship between the media and electoral authorities into three categories. Firstly, the electoral officials are a news item and sometimes newsmakers to the media. Secondly the election officials also have a great influence over the media because they are in charge of the process. Thirdly, the media are relied on by the election's management body to relay information to the public (Trejo, 2009). It is also important to note that the media is not always unbiased because they have their own interests as well. Based on the interest

they are serving the media can distort a message before it reaches the audience. During an election therefore the media should be treated as a candidate, agent or political party. Citizens will always gauge their leaders by action and behavior which is in most cases made known to them by the media. Their judgement of a given leader can eventually have an impact when it comes to decision making at the polls because there are also other competing factors that weaken their power. These include environment, colleagues, friends, and family. This can explain why good media coverage of a candidate does not automatically translate to an election victory.

Trejo further elaborates on the roles and responsibilities of journalists during an election which he says are very crucial. During campaigns the media should provide information about candidates and even simplify their agendas so that citizens can make sound decisions. Articles in newspapers should be information oriented so that the citizens are educated on the elections and what is to be done on that day. They should know how to register and even cast their ballot. An educated and informed electorate ensures good participation by the people in the entire process right from registration to voting. Journalists should interview different candidates and get the help of experts to analyze the speeches they make. Journalists should note that information should be two way and that elections are not just about politicians; the citizens also need to be heard. It should therefore provide a platform for people to express their views and expectations. The election does not only concern the participating candidates and the political parties. It is at this time that the people can talk about what is important to them and the kind of society they want. In doing so journalists should give opportunity to special groups such as the disabled, youth, children, women and marginalized communities.

A Study on the media coverage of the 2015 elections in Nigeria showed that the media was filled with election related information. According to the study the media in Nigeria at that time was not only used as an information tool but also to popularize political parties. This election was considered different as it was the first time in the country's history that an incumbent was defeated. Furthermore, the media is believed to have played a critical role in ensuring free, fair and credible elections in the 2015 Nigerian elections. According to the study the media in Nigeria was used by the people to gauge and place politicians (Issa, 2016). These studies in Nigeria are proof enough that citizens rely a lot on media coverage during elections. These studies in Nigeria

looked at media coverage in general and did not specifically cover newspapers. This is a knowledge gap which this study intends to fill.

Another study conducted on the role of voter education in voter participation in Zambia revealed that voter education if done properly increases the level of participation by the electorate. During the study 50 respondents were interviewed from a given ward and most of them were between the ages of 19 to 49 (Hills, 2011). Most of the respondents agreed that voter education should be a continuous process. This study contributed more knowledge on the role of voter education in electoral participation.

2.3 The Effect and Impact of Media Coverage of Presidential Candidates

Newspapers are highly valued as channels for disseminating electoral information. This is because they educate, entertain and act as a bridge between the government and its people. Newspapers promote literacy as they provide an avenue for reading and dialogued. This is why in most towns it's a norm to find people gathered around Newspaper stands, reading and discussing the contents. Awolowo further states that Newspapers can promote critical thinking and allow people retain as much information as possible. (Awolowo, 2002)

According to Khalid, Newspapers play a crucial role as agenda setters. He argues that the manner in which newspapers provide detailed information in all societal matters explains it's significant. He further cites the importance of Newspapers in the formation of public opinion and ensuring that people are thoroughly updated on matters of social concern. (Khalid, 2014)

Another scholar, Okore writes that Newspapers helps citizens demand for justice, quality services and accountability from the government. In 2004, the World Bank conducted a campaign on Ugandan Newspapers and their role in informing teachers about education grants.

The study also looked at the role the newspaper would have in improving the education system. The assumption was that if the teachers were well informed then they would ensure Government officials are held accountable on the use of education grant Funds. This would in turn minimize shortage, graft and mismanagement. The study found out that newspaper campaigns have a great impact on making people aware of their rights. In this case teachers started demanding for improved education services as well as infrastructure since they knew funds were availed by donors. Another finding of this

study was that the proximity of the newspaper vendor to the target audience also greatly impacts reading. Most teachers who could not get access to Newspapers during this campaign cited proximity as a major issue. This study is important in affirming the strong effect that newspapers have on readers. This study was important in asserting the role of media in informing and educating people and specifically talked about newspapers. It however talked about teachers who probably have a union that advises them on what to do. It failed to tackle the angle of people's reaction towards political information. This is a knowledge gap the researcher intended to look into and contribute more knowledge on the effect of newspaper framing of political candidates on the electorate. Guided by the media systems dependency theory which clearly talks about media effects the researcher attempted to prove/disapprove the theory's assumptions of possible cognitive, affective and behavioral effects on the electorate.

David Stromberg did a study on the role of the media in making citizens pro-active in 2004. Information pertaining to good leadership was put on various communication channels such as radio, newspapers and Television. The results were that when people are more informed, they will vote. Due to that the elected leaders will also be very accountable. It was discovered that governors properly used relief funds and initiated development projects in regions where the campaign was run. In regions where the information was not put on either newspaper, radio or Television, governors misappropriated funds and did nothing meaningful to the citizens. (Okore, 2014). This study by Stromberg did not look at the effect this media coverage had on the people, there is no evidence of whether the citizens considered the actions of the leaders to be genuine or not. The study on the 2016 US presidential elections put the power of media effects to test as the candidate with the most negative coverage ended up winning the election. This study also looked at media effects in a different context. The media systems dependency also talks of the fact that at times of uncertainty the media is not the only source of information for the electorate, there are other intervening factors such as the political parties and acquaintances. The study by Stromberg also focused on various media channels, this study however restricted itself to Newspaper coverage of 2017 presidential elections in Kenya.

The framing of the different candidates could have planted certain perceptions about the whole process and may have a long-term influence on voter choice and perceptions

of various candidates. According to Chandrappa, media coverage does not necessarily change the views and opinions of the readers that much. He says that the media is perfect at setting the agenda but not telling people how to view the agenda. Chandrappa also asserts that different media take different stand and this bias sometimes affect people's views. He further states that the media is only good at dictating what people should think about but is very poor in shaping ideas (Chandrappa, 2014). According to Chandrappa, the media can be an advantage to some candidates and a disadvantage to others. The disadvantaged ones have their opportunities for succeeding compromised by less coverage. He cites opinion polls as another way through which the media can use to increase or reduce the popularity of a candidate. Kelley writes that the media is normally used by politicians to spread propaganda to the people. Again, the media is very selective in how it offers opportunities for candidates to transmit propaganda. Due to this, candidates considered to belong to minor parties or independent runners are rarely given time to be heard (Kelley, 1962). The results from this study will help fill the knowledge gap that exists in the level of influence that media coverage has on voter's views and actions. The assumptions of Chandrappa and Kelly about framing of political candidates puts to test the theories used in this study. The framing theory talks of how the information is packaged and delivered to the audience while the Media Systems dependency theory believes that these packaging can lead to certain effects. The study therefore sought to find out the relationship between framing and voter perception or choices hence contributed more knowledge in this field of study.

2.4 Media Framing of Presidential Elections

Many researchers have made reference to the role of the Kenyan media in the post-election violence of 2007. The conduct of journalists during that time was questioned more when the International Criminal Court confirmed its charges against a Kenyan journalist. The 2007-2008 post elections crisis in Kenya sparked discussions on the role of the media in covering the election process. According to Reporters without Borders (2008), the media was over careful and consequently failed to unearth the truth behind the disputed elections. The journalists felt that by playing the role of peacemakers they will be off the government's radar. Roberts (2009), argues that in order for the media to play their role of responsible elections reporting they must strictly stick to the ethical codes of conduct. Experience over the years has made Kenyans accept that the

executive always triumphs in an election and that those in power will do whatever it takes to remain powerful. The International Foundation on Electoral systems observes that the media has always been identified as a key pillar of democracy and greatly influences elections (IFES, 2015). It has now become common knowledge that the media sets the agenda, how then did the Kenyan Media cover the 2017 presidential elections? Before the elections it did an amazing job by giving the candidates a platform to be heard by the people and even released the opinion polls. In an article published by the star Newspaper, George Gathigi believes that since the events of 2007-2008 the Kenyan media has always been accused of promoting post-election violence. This he says is because, the media was said to have aired hate messages and fostered ethnic animosity. (Gathigi, 2017).

A study on the 2015 Nigeria elections showed that the media put in place everything for the coverage of the elections, this included provision of guidelines by the Communications regulation authority (Issa, 2016). His study notes that despite the guidelines on elections coverage issued to the Nigerian media, professional hitches were still identified. The study found out that Nigerian media was not objective in its coverage of the 2015 elections and was used more to transmit propaganda to the public by politicians. According to the Media Systems dependency theory the media is tasked with providing all the necessary information during periods of uncertainty. During the elections, Nigerians truly needed an assurance that all will be well whether Jonathan good luck wins or someone else does so. This is a knowledge gap that the researcher intends to fill by specifically scrutinizing the kind of information the daily Nation provided to Kenyans during the 2017 presidential elections. Issa further adds that the Nigerian media was not objective at all in its coverage of the 2015 elections, despite having 14 contenders for the presidency the Nigerian media only focused on Muhammadu Buhari. The framing theory by Goffman (Goffman, 1974), asserts that the way the media frames other candidates determines whether they win or not. The less popular candidates are always disadvantaged. In Kenya most studies have focused on the role of the media in conflict resolution, they have not shown us how media framing affects the participation of the electorate. This is a knowledge gap the researcher intends to address.

A study on the performance of the nation newspaper and East African Standard on the coverage of the 2010 referendum in Kenya revealed that the newspapers focused more

on political conflict and not valuable information that would have empowered the electorates to participate fully in the referendum. 60% of the respondents agreed that the newspaper caused political conflicts. (Nyambuga, 2011). This study contributed great knowledge to the performance of the media in general, how it does its educational role based on the various thematic areas of analysis as well the influence of Newspaper content on readers. The findings showed that the media still had a lot to do when it comes to coverage of elections and political related issues. It however did not focus specifically on the role of the Nation Newspaper on the coverage of presidential elections. This is a knowledge gap that the researcher intends to fill. The study by Nyambuga also concluded that there could be a possibility between the content of the Newspaper and the views and actions of readers thereafter. This study therefore attempted to find out if such a relationship exists and specifically during presidential elections. Nyambuga's study recommended that the media should have a clear guideline to follow when reporting on elections as this would help avoid reporting issues of less value such as political gossips. In 2017 a few months prior to the August 8th, 2017 presidential elections, the Media Council of Kenya released a guideline that was to be followed by media house in the coverage of elections. This study attempted to find out if the Newspaper changed its mode of coverage based on how it framed the candidates, informed the electorate and the influence of such on the electorate. The study by Nyambuga also made a suggestion that future researchers should focus on the relationship between media content and people's actions. This study therefore sought to fill this knowledge gap by examining the influence that Nation Newspaper could have had on its readers prior to the 2017 presidential elections in Kenya.

A study by scholars Lilleker, Jackson, Thorsen and Veneti on the 2016 US presidential elections also put the power of media influence to test. The mainstream media painted trump as a joker and racist who was not good enough for the presidency, many negative stories were reported about him. Hillary on the other side stood out as a serious and gave the United States the possibility of having the first ever female president in history. She too had negative stories touching on her conduct as the former secretary of state and some issues to do with the Clinton Foundation (Lilleker , Jackson, Thorsen, Veneti, 2016). Despite the power of influence accorded to the media it's positive coverage of Clinton did not yield fruits. Trump probably had his hidden strengths having being on TV shows and also had clear policies for change. Lilleker and his

counterparts argue that Americans were looking for someone who could change America and Trump had a well-defined plan for that (Lilleker et al, 2016). The study also focused on the role of the media in voter education arguing that millions of Americans failed to vote due to lack of the required identification. This study by Lilleker and the other scholars was done in the American context which is quite different from the Kenyan one, it would therefore be interesting to find out how framing of political candidates, voter education and media influence plays out in the Kenyan Arena. The researcher therefore considered this a knowledge gap to be addressed hence necessitating this study. The US 2016 elections study also went against the key tenets of the framing theory that asserts that how a candidate is framed is proportional to the electorates voting patterns. This is also an interesting aspect that this study looked at to probably understanding if Kenyans vote based on how a candidate is framed or not.

On the 10th of August, 2017 just a few days after the presidential elections in Kenya, the Common Wealth Observer Group released its interim statement. In its statement it noted that the election campaigns were peacefully but greatly criticized the call by NASA to its supporter to “adopt a polling station”. The report showed that the media was a buzz with fake news as different political camps struggled to capture the attention of mass media audiences (Common Wealth, 2017). The studies, reports, articles and surveys analyzed such as the one on the US 2016 and 2015 Nigerian presidential elections gives an insight into media coverage and its importance during an election. This study contributed more knowledge by specifically assessing newspaper coverage of all the presidential candidates who contested the August 8th , 2017 elections in Kenya. According to Ogol, (2017), it is during political campaigns that the mass media is widely used as a social mobilization tool the world over. This can be attributed to its wide coverage and diversity as well as the ever-increasing use of Political advertising by those vying for leadership positions to woo the electorate. Robinson and Levy in (Druckman, 2005) argue that newspaper readers tend to be more knowledgeable in political matters than consumers of other media. This they attribute to the in-depth coverage of news offered by newspapers. On media influence during political campaigns Chandrappa argues that the media has a way of shifting people’s beliefs by the amount of media coverage, and positioning of articles. The framing of the election’s coverage would also determine whether the media actually performs its roles in the

society such as information and education. Past studies have dealt mainly on the role of the media in promoting peace and conflict resolution after elections in Kenya. They have failed to tackle the root problem which should begin by looking at the performance of the media in the coverage of presidential elections. This is a knowledge gap that the researcher attempted to fill in by looking at the Nature of coverage accorded to the August 2017 presidential elections by the Nation Newspaper. It could be that lack of a balanced and good media coverage is the reason as to why elections are disputed and the losers are never satisfied. An analysis of the 2016 US presidential elections showed the more negative publicity the news media gave to the Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, the more popular he became. According to the media they were only reporting the truth as far as the personality of Donald Trump was concerned (Lilleker et al, 2016).

According to the Media Council of Kenya, the Media' plays three important roles during elections which all sum up to its information and education role. They ensure transparency so that voters get all the information they need to participate in the electoral process. The media also provides a platform for campaigning which makes voters educated on the objectives of various candidates thereby making informed choices. It makes available a forum for open debate and discussions so that citizens are able to exchange their ideas and share views on different election matters (MCK, 2017). During the electioneering period the newspaper has an obligation to fulfill to the candidates, citizens as well as the nation at large. The citizens should be empowered with information so that they choose wisely by ensuring they understand the electoral laws, voting process as well as political campaigns. The citizens should directly be given a voice to be heard. They should therefore be given a chance to contribute to the political debates. To the candidates the media need to give them an equal opportunity to be heard as well as interrogated, this publicity should be given equally to both the major and minor candidates. They should work hard before, during and after an election to ensure that the country remains stable by reducing instances of conflict and polarization (MCK, 2017). Past studies have not expressly focused on the level of information and knowledge that the media provides to the electorate. This study therefore filled this knowledge gap by establishing the extent to which the Nation Newspaper undertook its information role as far as voter education was concerned.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive research design. In this study the design functioned to accurately portray the nature of coverage offered by the Nation Newspaper during the August 8th 2017 elections. The research adopted a mixed method approach which involved collecting and reviewing quantitative data. The data obtained from the questionnaires and Newspapers were quantitative. The content analysis method was used to determine the nature of media coverage as well as help determine the extent to which the Nation Newspaper undertook its information role. Questionnaires on the other hand were useful in getting the views of the voters on how the nation covered the elections.

3.2 Area of Study

The study area was Kisumu County which is found in the Northern Nyanza part of Kenya and is one of the city counties of Kenya. The county has an area of 2,407 km² (KNBS, 2013). The 2009 census indicated Kisumu County's population to be at 968,909. Its neighboring counties are Vihiga to the North, Nandi to the North East, and Kericho to the East. It also borders HomaBay County to the South West, Nyamira to the South and Siaya to the West. Kisumu County has seven sub counties namely Kisumu Central, Kisumu West, Kisumu East, Seme, Muhoroni, Nyakach and Nyando (Sitati, Partrick & Oruru, 2017). The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission statistics state that Kisumu County had a total of 539,210 registered voters for the 2017 general elections (IEBC, 2017).

Kisumu is one of the three capital cities of Kenya and is inhabited by people from all parts of the country. Kisumu as a county is also bordered by other communities such as the Kisii, Kalenjin, and Luhya. These people all have different political affiliations (Nyong'o, 2015). Kisumu County was selected for this study because of the perceived attitude towards the nation newspaper, it being more prone to electoral violence and the controversies surrounding the county. According to the Kenya National Human Rights commission most electoral violence spark in opposition strongholds. In 2007/2008 Kisumu county lost 400 lives in 2017, 3 lives were lost due to police brutality

(KNHCR, 2017). The human rights watch further states that the lives lost could be more only that some were not recorded (HRW, 2017).

3.3 Study Population

The study targeted a total of 539,210 registered voters in Kisumu County. The study population for this research was comprised of the Nation Newspaper readers. The study restricted itself to the use of registered voters as they are more informed on electoral matters. The samples were obtained from Kisumu Central sub County of Kisumu County since it's more centralized and provided a good representation of the diversity of the communities residing in the county. Kisumu central also has the highest number of registered voters in the county, a total of 120,023. (IEBC, 2017). According to a report released by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics and the Society for International Development, in 2013, Kisumu central constituency has 62% of its population employed (Ngugi, 2013). As per the 2009 census the literacy levels are not bad either with 52% of the population having formal education (KNBS, 2009). This made Kisumu central suitable for this study because literacy is one of the key characteristics of newspaper readers.

The Newspaper content was also analyzed. According to White, Marilyn & Marsh, (2006) content analysis is a highly flexible research technique that is commonly used by communication researchers. This research specifically relied on qualitative content analysis of the Nation newspaper. This study scrutinized the content of the Nation newspaper from 28th May 2017 to August 31st 2017. The nation Newspaper was purposively chosen for analysis because it is the most read Newspaper in Kenya. According to a survey by Geopoll Nation Newspaper has an average readership of 4,379,400 a day which translates to 40% of the Market share (Geopoll, 2015).

3.4 The study Variables

The study relied on two major variables, the dependent and the independent variables. In this case media coverage, which involved the analysis of media content was the independent variable. The performance on the other hand was the dependent variable. The performance was tested based on how the nation newspaper readers felt that the Nation newspaper covered the various topics that were important as far as their active participation in the electoral process was concerned. This means that performance depended on coverage and coverage remained a constant throughout the study. The

independent variable was measured through the content analysis of the Nation newspaper articles to determine how the various presidential candidates were framed. This was gauged by tone of the article, length, how many focused-on a given presidential candidate, and positioning. The dependent variable was examined by the use of questionnaires. Voters were asked to rate the nation newspaper based on its coverage of various topics considered informative as well as how it covered voter education.

3.5 Sampling Procedure

Purposive sampling was specifically be used to select registered voters in Kisumu Central constituency within Kisumu County since it's more urban than the other sub-counties. Kisumu Central also adequately represents the diversity of the people residing within Kisumu County. Due to the high number of registered voters in Kisumu Central constituency the researcher was unable to collect data from the entire population. Statistics from the Independent Elections and Boundaries Commission indicated that there was a total of 120, 023 registered voters in Kisumu central constituency (IEBC, 2017). The voter distribution in Kisumu central within the 6 County Assembly Wards were as follows, Railways 22,952, Migosi 16,654, Shauri Moyo Kaloleni 16,479, Market Milimani 28,992, Kondele 20,252, and Nyalenda B 14,694.

3.6 Sample Size

In order to obtain the required sample for the Nation Newspapers to be analyzed, the researcher used the Yamane formula for sample size calculation. According to Israel, (2003), the Yamane (1967) is simplified to help determine sample sizes for finite populations. The formula as was proposed by Yamane is,

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Interpreted as follows:

n = the required sample size

N = the size of the population

e = the sampling error

1= a theoretical or statistical constant

Using the Yamane formula and putting into consideration our population size for the Newspapers to be sampled as 77. The target newspaper population is the Nation newspaper printed on a daily basis from the 28th of May 2017 to the 12th of August 2017 which totals to 77 copies of the Nation Newspaper. The required sample size should be obtained as follows,

$$n = \frac{77}{1 + 77(0.05)^2}$$

$$= 65(\text{rounded})$$

The researcher then used systematic random sampling on the sample size of 65 to determine which specific Nation newspaper editions were to be analyzed. All the newspaper editions from 28th of May to 12th of August were listed in excel and the excel function =RAND () was used to generate random dates. Once generated the researcher picked the top 65 dates.

To get the required sample size for the 120,023 registered voters of Kisumu central constituency, Yamane's formula of sample size calculation was used. Given that N= 120,023 then the needed sample size was,

$$n = \frac{120,023}{1 + 120,023 (0.05)^2}$$

$$= 399(\text{rounded})$$

The researcher then used judgmental sampling to evenly distribute the 399 questionnaires in households in all the wards within Kisumu central constituency. Each household was accorded one interview. In order to identify which households to be considered for the study the researcher employed a skip interval of 2. This implies that from the starting point the research assistants skipped two households then sample the third one. This was done until 395 households were achieved. A household in this study comprised of one or more people living in the same house sharing meals and resources. The persons to be interviewed in each household were identified using the Kish grid method. The table below shows how the sample size was picked from the 6 wards in Kisumu central constituency.

Table 3.1: Sample Size Kisumu central constituency

County	Assembly	Number of registered voters	No of people to be interviewed
Market	Milimani	28,992	94
Railways		22,952	76
Migosi		16,654	56
Shauri	Moyo	16,479	56
Kaloleni			
Kondele		20,252	67
Nyalenda		14,694	50

The sample size for this study was therefore 399 registered voters and 65 copies of the Nation Newspaper.

3.7 Data Collection Instruments

The researcher collected primary data from voters using questionnaires. Secondary data was obtained from sampled Newspapers using coding sheets. Secondary data was also collected from reports that were published on the August 8th 2017 general elections, books, journals and website articles.

3.7.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires were used to collect primary data from voters in Kisumu Central constituency. Questionnaires were considered suitable for this study because they can effectively gather data quickly from a large number of respondents. Questionnaires are also very economical. They also provide for anonymity which increases the likelihood of getting honest and objective answers from respondents. The researcher relied on the questionnaire to determine the role of the nation newspaper in voter education and information provision during the August 8th 2017 elections. It also assisted in finding out the impact of the daily nation coverage on reader's views and actions. The questionnaire contained closed ended questions to help tackle the two objectives mentioned above.

3.7.2 Coding Sheets

The content analysis method was used to gather secondary data from the daily nation newspaper and the researcher was the sole coder. The data was collected from the daily

editions of Newspapers covering the selected period of research starting on 28th of May 2017 and ending 12th of August 2017. The coding sheets analyzed the kind of election related information about the given presidential candidates that was contained in the Newspaper during this time. The scrutiny focused on various content categories which included type of article, placement of article, size of the article, tone of the article, bias and type of enhancement. The units of analysis for the various content categories was any straight news article, editorial, opinion/column, letter to the editor and the opposite editorial that made reference to any of the presidential candidates and their running mates. The content analysis further looked at the amount of coverage offered to each presidential candidate by the Nation Newspaper by looking at the number of articles assigned to a given candidate. This quantification was done to determine the nature of coverage accorded to the presidential candidates by the Newspaper. Only the articles found in the main section of the newspaper were considered, no other sections such as sports, lifestyle and business were considered.

3.7.2.1 The Coding Process

Type of article – The researcher classified the type of article as a news article, Editorial, opposite editorial, opinion article or letter to the editor.

Article size– This was considered as the full length of the article or the space taken by the story. Any photograph, cartoons, or documents accompanying the story were also factored in. The size of the article was classified as more than a full page, full page, half a page, quarter a page and three quarter of a page.

Position of the article – This refers to the page occupied by the story. Article positioning was classified as front page (lead article), front page (other), center spread, back page and other pages.

Article Enhancement – The types of enhancement the coder looked for included documents, photographs, or cartoons accompanying the article

Tone of the article – This focused on the general tone of the story such as positive, negative, neutral, or biased. A positive story should be one with a friendly and encouraging tone while a negative one is hostile and confrontational. A neutral story merely gives the needed facts and does not have friendly or hostile words. Biased

articles will be those found to be slanted on one side more than the other, either favorable or unfavorable.

3.8 Reliability and Validity of the Data Collection Instruments

The data collection instruments were tested to determine their accuracy, suitability and clarity. According to Heale, Roberta & Twycross, Alison. (2015). validity is the extent to which the data collection instruments accurately measures what they are intended for. Reliability on the other hand looks at the consistency of the data collection instruments when used over a long period of time. The questionnaire will be pretested among selected registered voters.

The researcher therefore conducted a pilot study to determine the reliability and validity of both the questionnaires and coding sheets. The pilot study helped the researcher know whether the questions are easy, straight to the point and consume the allocated time. Based on the findings of the pilot study, the researcher adjusted the questionnaire and the coding sheets accordingly. Any unnecessary information, ambiguous and confusing questions was recast.

3.9 Methods of Data Analysis

This study described the performance of the Nation Newspaper in the coverage of the August 8th 2017 presidential elections in Kenya. The data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Data was imported into SPSS and Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the coded information as well as data from the questionnaires. Cross tabulation was done to determine the relationship between the two variables. The data was presented in tables, graphs and pie charts.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The researcher adhered to the relevant ethical considerations throughout the study. Ethics is important to any researcher intending to perform a valid and meaningful research (Drew, Hardman & Hosp, 2008). The researcher conformed to ethical issues related to the research itself, the participants as well as the process. The researcher did not create, falsify, or manipulate data, materials or findings of the study. Acknowledgement of other sources used in this study was done as required to avoid any issues of plagiarism. It is important that the anonymity, confidentiality and privacy of the research subjects is maintained (Akaranga & Makau, 2016). The participants for this study were therefore told the truth and the benefits of this study clearly explained to

them. All participants were allowed to participate voluntarily by seeking their informed consent. Permission to conduct the research was sought from the relevant authorities and a letter of consent obtained from Maseno University.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of this study as was exhibited on the questionnaires and coding sheets. The data analysis was done using the statistical package SPSS.

4.2 The Role of the Newspaper in Information and Education

The topics discussed in the various articles were analyzed to help determine the role of the Newspaper in educating and informing the electorate. The table below shows the findings of the analysis. Most articles focused on general campaign issues. These kinds of articles simply highlighted the candidate's campaign destinations, their strategies, campaign teams and anything that was general about campaigns.

Table 4.1 The frequency of various topics in the nation newspaper articles

variables	freq(n)	Percent (%)
Topics of the articles		
Corruption	15	10.6
Unemployment	0	0
Political conflict	19	13.5
State of the Economy	6	4.3
Campaign Issues	41	29.1
Manifestos	15	10.6
Development tract record	1	0.7
Security	8	5.7
Health	0	0
Infrastructure	5	3.6
Education	4	2.8
Gender and Youths	1	0.7
Peace	4	2.8
concern on free and fair elections	18	12.8
Ethnicity	4	2.8

This shows that the Nation newspaper was more concerned with campaigns and letting the electorates know how the various candidates were campaigning more than any other issues. The topic concerning free and fair elections followed, some of the presidential candidates if not all were worried about the possibility of a free and fair election. Political conflict came in third. The most dominant themes were campaign issues at

29.1%, concern on free and fair elections 12.8%, political conflict 13.5%, corruption 10.6%, Manifestos 10.6% and security 8%.

In an excerpt from one of the articles in the daily nation Raila is quoted as having said;

“This time they will not steal, they have successfully done so in the previous elections but it will not be business as usual this time” he said

Mr Odinga further said that there will be another team charged with making sure no one remains at home on the election day. (Kazungu, Daily Nation, June 9, 2017). The role of educating people to ensure they go and vote is that of the electoral body and by Raila insisting that they will ensure the elections are free and fair it implies that the electorate may not have received adequate voter education to enhance their participation in the process.

Another excerpt also implied that enough voter education had not been done and the IEBC was not ready. 22 days to the election and voter education was still being rolled out.

A study conducted on the role of voter education in voter participation in Zambia revealed that voter education if done properly increases the level of participation by the electorate (Hills, 2011). Its recommendation was that voter education should be a continuous exercise. The Media Systems Dependency theory also states that the media should continuously provide its audience with the relevant information.

The role of nation newspaper educating and informing the electorate was also determined using the questionnaire. The researcher wanted to determine if the nation newspaper was effective in providing political information. Out of the 332 questionnaires that were completed 172(51.8%) rated nation newspaper as an average provider of political information. 99(29.8%) said that it provided just a little political information, 43(12.9%) were of the opinion that nation newspaper is a great provider of political information. The results match the findings of the content analysis that was done which also indicated that the nation newspaper is a poor provider of political information. Figure 4.1 below shows how the respondents reacted to the effectiveness of Nation newspaper in providing political information.

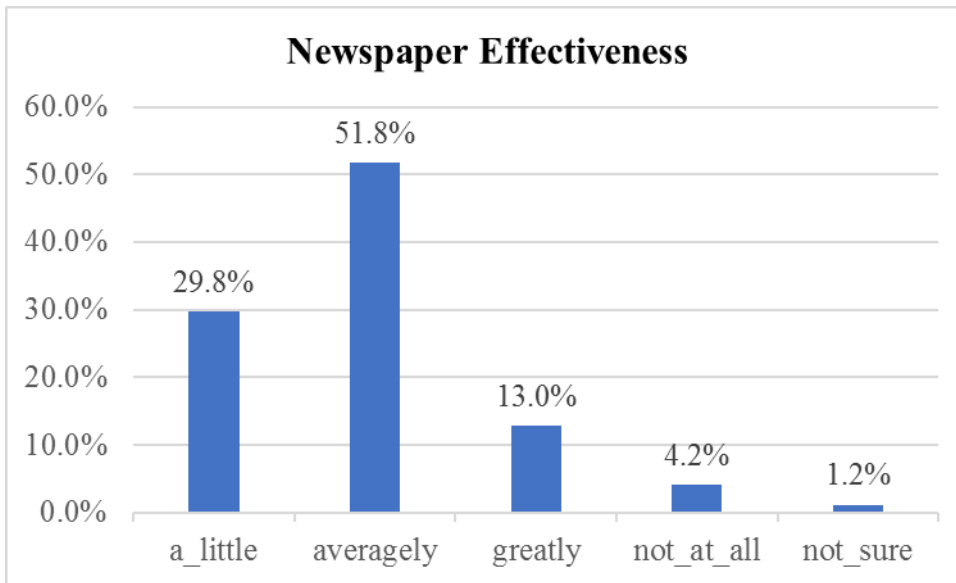


Figure 4.1 the effectiveness of nation newspaper in providing political information

The questionnaire also assessed the respondents on how they felt the nation newspaper covered various political topics. The topics included voter education, political advertisements, political gossips, state of the economy and factual information about candidates. Political advertisements were greatly provided at 116(34.9%), followed by political 132(39.8%). Other topics such as voter education, state of the economy and factual information about candidates which could have been important in helping people participate well in the electoral process were given little or just average coverage.

Table 4.2 The coverage of various political and election topics by the nation newspaper

Variables	Not at all	Not sure	A little	Averagely	Greatly
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Political topic					
Daily nation effective in providing political information during the 8th, August 2017	14(4.2)	4(1.3)	99(29.8)	172(51.8)	43(12.9)
Daily nation covered factual information candidates	15(4.5)	5(1.5)	145(43.7)	103(31.0)	64(19.3)
Daily nation covered voter education	3(0.9)	14(3.9)	67(20.3)	160(48.3)	88(26.6)
Daily nation covers political advertisement	6(1.8)	24(7.2)	62(18.8)	124(37.3)	116(34.9)
Daily nation covers political gossips	9(2.7)	81(24.4)	36(10.8)	74(21.7)	132(39.8)
Daily nation covers the state of economy	9(2.9)	80(17.9)	45(14.7)	73(23.8)	125(40.7)
Election topic					
Daily nation covers requirements for you to be registered as a voter	2(0.6)	48(14.5)	101(30.4)	86(25.9)	95(28.6)
Daily nation covers official documents you should produce at the polling station	1(0.3)	51(15.4)	50(15.6)	111(33.4)	119(35.3)
Daily nation covers How to vote	1(0.3)	49(14.8)	44(13.3)	145(43.7)	93(28.0)
Daily nation covers different kind elections that you were going to vote in	4(1.2)	20(6.0)	56(16.9)	116(34.9)	136(41.0)
Daily nation covers the types of electoral offences and the penalties	5(1.5)	89(26.8)	38(11.5)	59(17.8)	141(42.5)

On the coverage of electoral information which were specific to voter education, the questionnaire gauged the peoples on their knowledge of the voting process. The electoral topics included requirements for voter registration, documents required to vote, how to vote, the different kinds of elections and electoral offences. On the requirements for voter registration 2(0.6%) believed it did not provide any information at all, 101(30.4%) said it provided a little information on that topic, 86(25.9%) rated it average, 95(28.6%) rated it as an effective provider of that information. Generally, the nation newspaper was rated averagely, in that it provided the required information but not as much as the people would want to.

Trejo emphasizes that articles in newspapers should be information oriented so that the citizens are educated on the elections and what is to be done on that day. They should know how to register and even cast their ballot. An educated and informed electorate ensures good participation by the people in the entire process right from registration to voting (Trejo, 2009).

This is in line with the Media Systems Dependency theory which clearly states the role of the media in provision of information during periods of uncertainty. As much as voter education is the responsibility of the electoral body the theory also stresses on the need for the media to consider the electoral management body as one of its stakeholders.

4.2 The influence of nation newspaper coverage on the perception of the various presidential candidates.

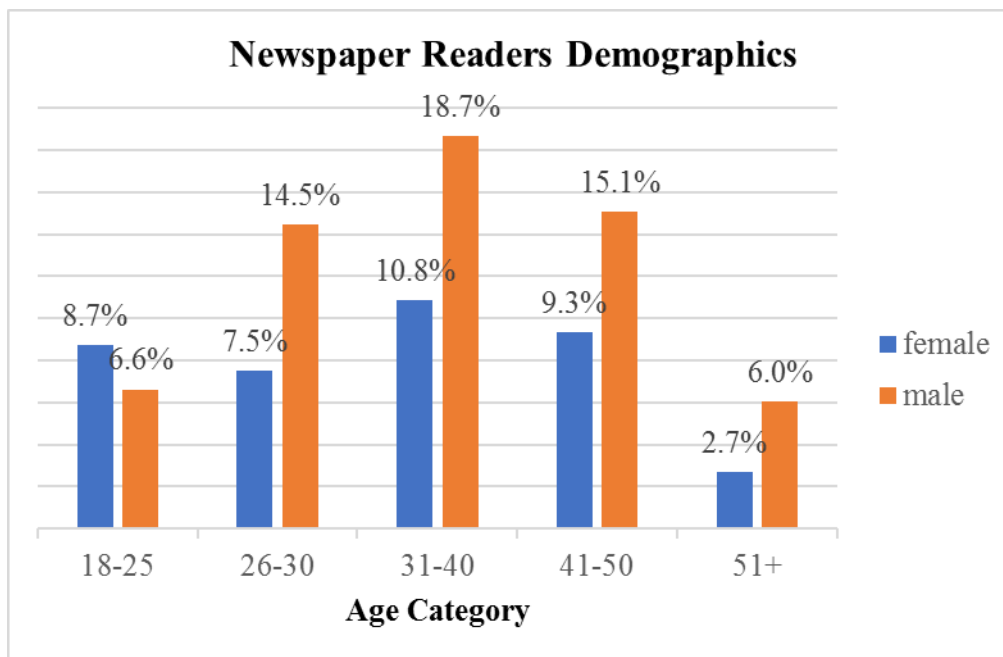


Figure 4.2 demographics of nation newspaper readers

4.2.1 The Topics that Influenced Newspaper Readership

In order to determine the influence that nation newspaper had on its readers it was necessary to know what topics made them read the Nation newspaper. The figure below shows the topics that influenced newspaper readership among respondents.

From figure 4.2 above, it's evident that most people were greatly in search of political information and that motivated them to read the nation newspaper. Political information was the greatest influencer at 216(65.1%), social news followed at 154(46.4%), and Business information at 106(31.9%).

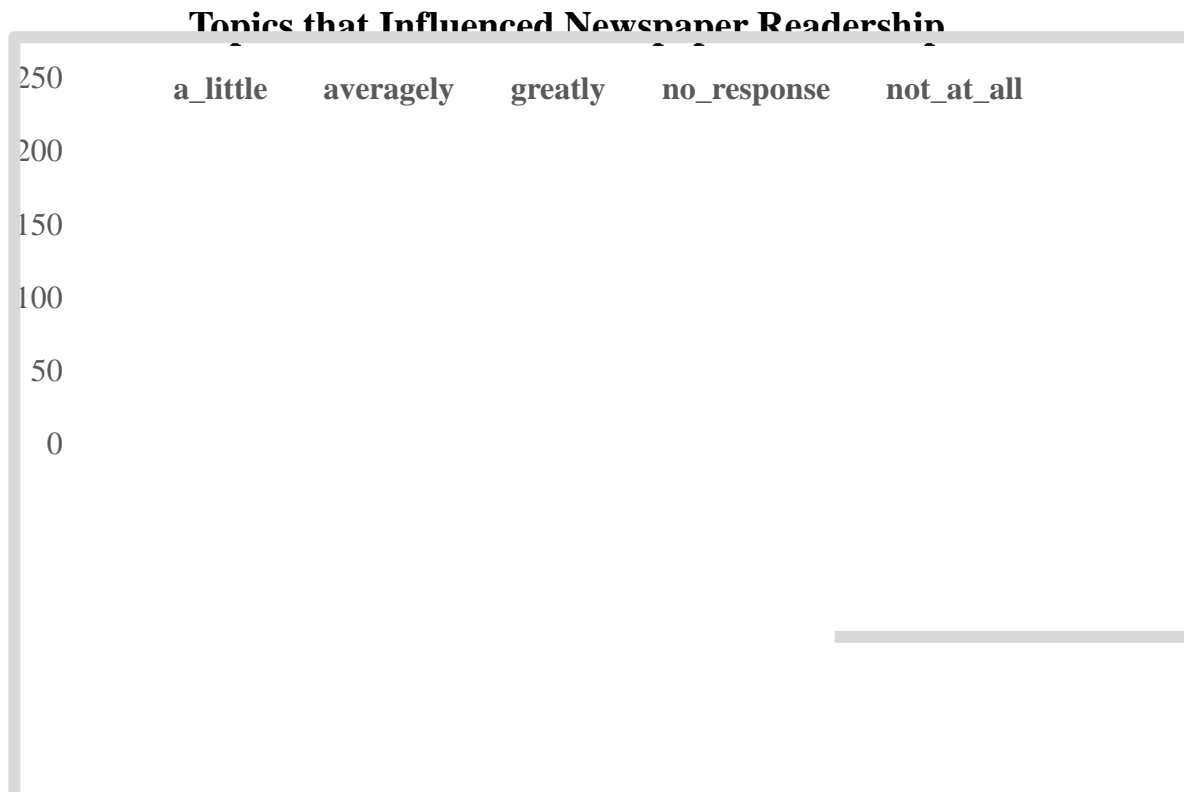


Figure 4.3 topics that influenced newspaper readership

4.2.2 The Level of Interest in the August 8th General Elections

The level of interest in the 8th of August general elections was also examined so as to know if people would really seek information about the process. Figure 4.4 below shows the results of that assessment.

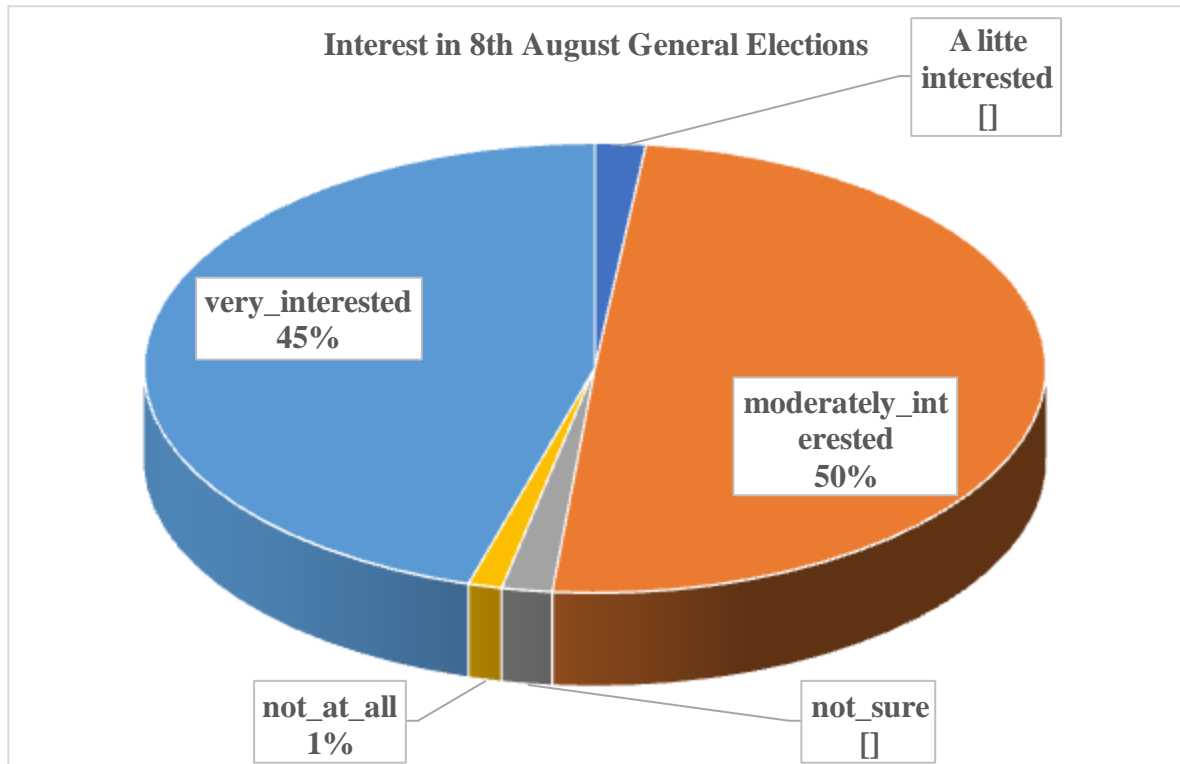


Figure 4.4 the level of interest in the 8th august 2017 elections

Out of the 332 respondents 149(45%) were very interested, 7(2%) were a little interested, 166(50%) were moderately interested, 7(2%) were not sure, while 3(1%) were never interested in the elections at all. The findings show that most people were interested in the elections and this explains why most people were in search of political information as shown in figure 4.4.

4.2.3 Interest in the Various Elective Positions

Figure 4.5 below shows the level of interest that the respondents had on the various elective posts. The findings indicate that people were greatly interested in the presidential elections. The interest in the presidential was overwhelming with 305(92%) of the respondents indicating that they were only focusing on the presidential election

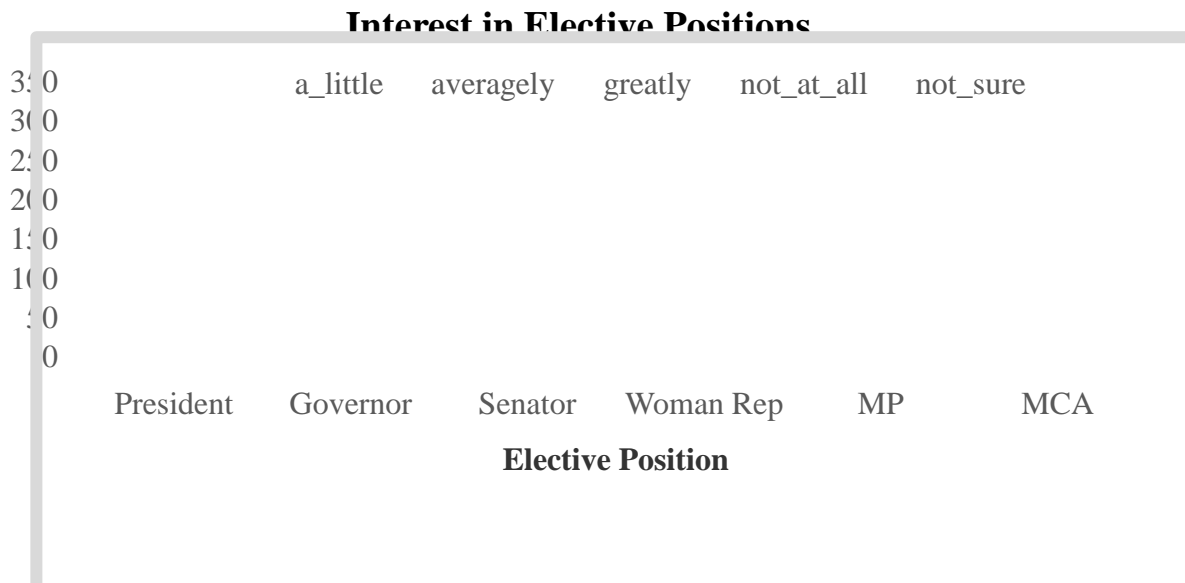


Figure 4.5 The level of interest in elective positions

This is a clear indication that the presidential elections are important to almost every citizen hence the need for proper coverage and education from the press.

4.2.4 Factors that influenced the choice of a presidential candidate

The respondents were questioned on the factors that made them settle for a given presidential candidate. Factors such as newspaper coverage, party affiliation, ethnic ties, and development track record influenced them just a little. The manifestos of the candidates greatly influenced the decision of the voters. This implies that a voter chose a given candidate because of the understanding of their objectives and future plans. Out of the 332, 227(68.4%) voted for a particular candidate because of their manifestos. The interest of the researcher was however on the influence of Nation newspaper. The nation newspaper performed poorly in influencing the Choice of a presidential candidate through its coverage. Out of the 332 respondents 156(47%) felt that it had a little influence, 112(33.7%) were of the opinion that it was average, 36(10.8%) believed it did not influence them at all and 26(7.8%) believed it was a great influencer. Compared to other factors nation newspaper was the least influencer.



Figure 4.6 factors influencing voter’s choice of a presidential candidate

4.3 The Framing of the Presidential Elections by the Nation Newspaper

Out of the sampled 65 copies of the Nation Newspapers only 43 copies articles related to the presidential elections. The actual coded Newspapers accounted for 67% of the intended sample size. A total of 142 articles were sampled from the 43 Newspaper editions. Out of the 142 articles only 106 had a clear focus and were specific to a given presidential candidate. Out of the 106 articles Uhuru Kenyatta got the highest coverage with 63(59.5%) articles talking about him, Raila came in Second with 38(35.9%), Abduba Dida had 2 articles (1.9%), Michael Wainaina, Cyrus Jirongo, and Ekuru Aukot each had 1(0.9%) articles each. Michael Wainaina and Joseph Nyagah had no articles at all.

On June 9th, 2017 the nation wrote that;

Three leading presidential candidates will now battle it out in a face off before millions of Kenyans on television and radios after media houses released guidelines for 2017 presidential debates.

To guard against a crowded debate that may not offer Kenyans a chance to interrogate what the candidates stand for, the media houses have capped at five percent the support for a candidate in two national opinion poll results conducted by reputable research firms for one to be included in the debate.

Candidates with less than five percent popular support showing in opinion polls will take part in separate single pool debates to be conducted on the same day. The presidential debates steering committee said in the guidelines released yesterday. (Langat, Nation, June 9th, 2017). As per the tenets of the framing theory, the Nation newspaper was already putting the presidential candidates into a particular frame that will make people view them differently. This excerpt showed that some contenders were more important than others. This also meant they were being denied a platform to address the public.

The Nation team in an Article titled “why jubilee and Nasa teams have focused their campaigns on five regions” wrote that;

The jubilee and Nasa teams have held more rallies in five regions than in any other part of the country convinced that the regions could hold key to poll victory. (Nation team, Sunday nation, 21 October, 2017). The newspaper was already dividing the country into five regions and focusing only on Raila and Uhuru Kenyatta.

Another article wrote that President Uhuru Kenyatta and his deputy William Ruto yesterday took their hunt for votes to Kakamega county, a perceived national super alliance stronghold and told the opposition to prepare for another defeat come 8th August.

Nasa presidential flag bearer Raila Odinga completed his two-day tour of Tharaka Nithi and Meru Counties with a promise to revive the region’s economy if elected on August 8th. (Amadala, daily Nation, 18 June, 2017)

The distribution of articles per presidential candidates is shown in Figure 4.7 below.

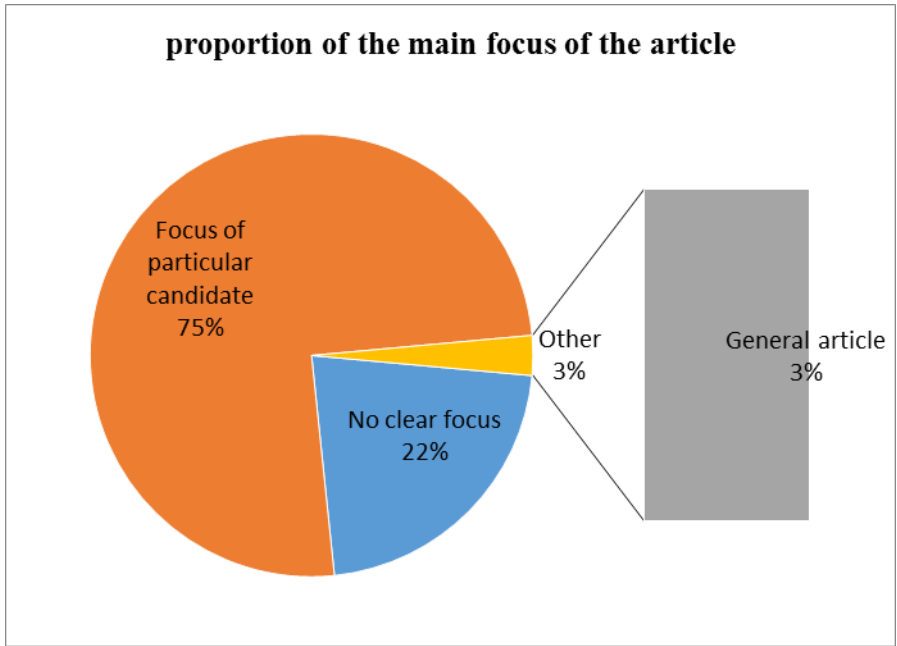


Figure 4.7 Distribution of articles per presidential candidate

Key

- Focus on a particular- candidate represents articles that were specific for one presidential candidate.
- No clear focus - these were focusing on more than one candidate.
- General articles - Were just general about the presidential elections and did not talk about any candidate

Scotts argues that candidate’s appearances in newspapers towards election times usually generate public focus and attention. He further says that regular newspaper readers will likely identify with a candidate who is given frequent coverage (Scotts, 2002). Figure 4.7 above therefore clearly shows that Uhuru Kenyatta got more attention and coverage. This does not discriminate between the positive, negative or neutral articles. Based on Scotts assumption, it could be that Uhuru Kenyatta’s popularity increased due to the highest coverage he got from nation newspapers.

The 2015 study on Nigerian elections (Issa, 2016) also showed that the media focused more on two candidates despite having 14 contestants for that election. The results from this study also show that despite having eight candidates for the presidency, the media only focused on two. It could be that the framing theory played a big role, based on how the nation newspaper framed the different candidates.

4.3.1 Presidential Coverage in Terms of Space Allocated per Article per Candidate

Table 4.1 below shows how the candidates were covered based on the size/length of article accorded to each candidate. Out of 106 articles analyzed, most articles occupied a full page and this accounted for 33 (31.13%) while articles occupying three quarter of a page were the least at 1(0.94%). Other articles were distributed as follows less than a quarter of a page 29(27.4%), Quarter of a page 27 (25.5%), More than a full page at 13 (12.3%), and half a page at 2(1.9%).

Table 4.3 the length of article allocated to each candidate

Variables	Length of the article						
	Overall	three quarter of a page	half a page	quarter of a page	less than a quarter of a page	a full page	more than a full page
Presidential Candidate	N (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Uhuru Kenyatta	63(59.5)	0(0.0)	1(1.6)	15(23.8)	19(30.1)	20(31.8)	8(12.7)
Raila Odinga	38(35.9)	1(2.6)	1(2.6)	12(31.6)	10(26.4)	11(28.9)	3(7.9)
Abduba Dida	2(1.9)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	2(100.0)
Michael Wainama	1(0.9)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	1(100.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
Joseph Nyagah	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
Ekuru Aukot	1(0.9)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	1(100.0)	0(0.0)
Japheth Kaluyu	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
Cyrus Jirongo	1(0.9)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	1(100.0)	0(0.0)

Articles that were more than a full page were considered to contain more and detailed information in total they were 13 in this regard Uhuru Kenyatta had more of them at 8(61.5%), Raila had 3(23.1%) and Abduba Dida 2(15.4%) the rest had none. This means that in terms of extensive coverage Uhuru Kenyatta had more detailed articles than his counterparts. Articles allocated less than a quarter of a page were considered the shortest, and on this end again Uhuru Kenyatta took the lead with 19(65.5%), and Raila had 10(34.5%). This means that in both Extremes Uhuru took the lead.

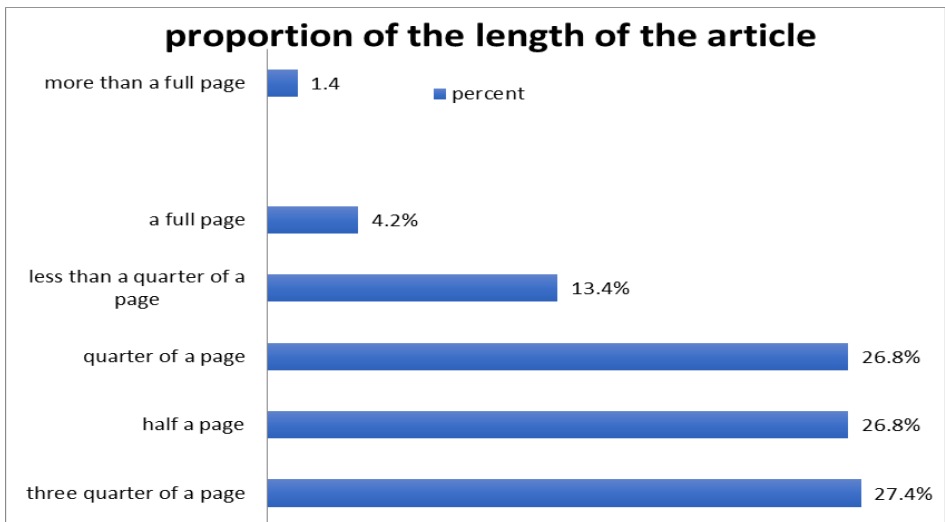


Figure 4.8: Proportion of length of the article

The concept of length of article or space allocated is an important technique used by the press to get into the mind of the audience. Generally, the results of space allocation indicate that the two candidates Raila and Uhuru were given a special attention. Since readers associate space to importance, the two are portrayed as more important than their counterparts (Scotts, 2002). This implies that the newspaper placed the two candidates in a special frame, that information about them dominated the articles that were coded. This proves the assumption of the framing theory that well-known candidates get more attention than less known ones.

4.3.2 The Coverage Tone per Presidential Candidate

All the 106 articles that were coded for the various presidential candidates were analyzed for Tone to determine whether they were Neutral, Positive or Negative.

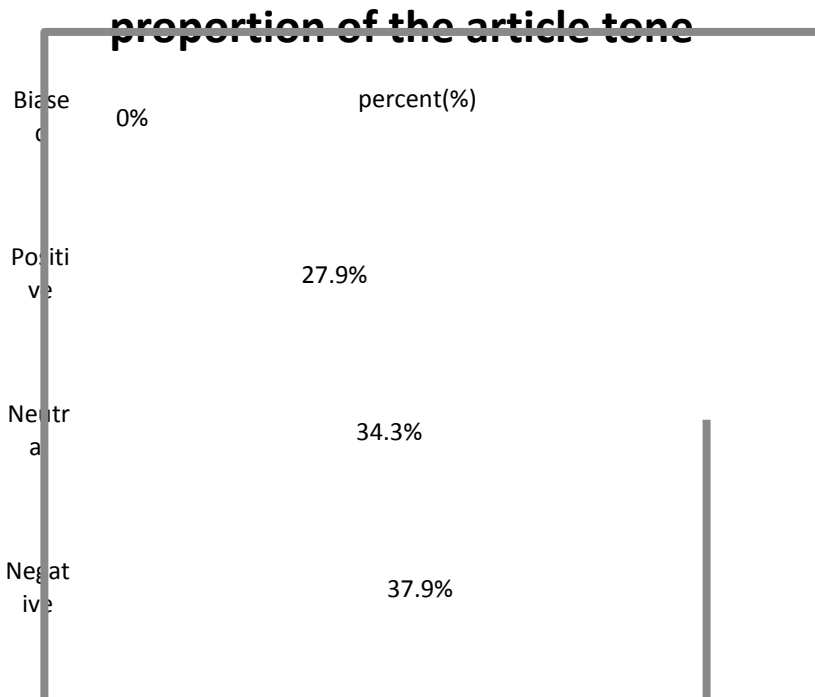


Figure 4.9 Proportion of article tone

Out of the 63 articles that focused on Uhuru Kenyatta 18(29.0%) had a neutral tone while 19(30.7%) had a positive tone and 25(40.3%) had a negative tone. Raila Odinga had 38 articles out of which 9(23.7%) had a neutral tone, 12(31.6%) had a positive tone and 17(44.7%) had a negative tone. Abduba Dida had a total of two articles out of which 1(50%) was positive and 1(50%) was negative. Michael Wainaina had only 1 article which was positive and Ekuru Aukot also got a 100% positive coverage.

Out of the 106 articles 27 (25.5%) had a neutral tone, 34(32.1%) had a positive tone, and 44(41.5%) had a negative tone. According to the table below more articles had a negative tone and very few had a neutral tone. When comparing the two top candidates Uhuru Kenyatta had most of his articles negative at 40% and Raila had most of his articles negative at 44.7%. The tone of the article was determined by looking at the general tone of the story such as positive, negative, neutral, or biased. A story with a friendly and encouraging tone was considered positive. On the other hand, a story that is hostile, or blames the candidate for something was classified as negative. A neutral story merely gave the facts and had no hostile or friendly words. These were purely information loaded. In terms of positive framing, the difference between Raila and Uhuru was not that significant but they led in positive stories. This means that they

were framed to be the only possible winners of the presidential race despite the existence of six other candidates.

Table 4.4 Tone of article per candidate

Variables	Tone of the article				
	Overall N (%)	Neutral n (%)	Positive n (%)	Negative n (%)	Biased n (%)
Presidential Candidate					
Uhuru Kenyatta	63(59.5)	18(29.0)	19(30.7)	25(40.3)	0(0.0)
Raila Odinga	38(36.3)	9(23.7)	12(31.6)	17(44.7)	0(0.0)
Abduba Dida	2(1.9)	0(0.0)	1(0.0)	1(0.0)	0(0.0)
Michael Wainama	1(0.9)	0(0.0)	1(100.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
Joseph Nyagah	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
Ekuru Aukot	1(0.9)	0(0.0)	1(100.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
Japheth Kaluyu	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
Cyrus Jirongo	1(0.9)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	1(0.0)	0(0.0)

The results in the table therefore shows that Raila and Uhuru Kenyatta had most of the articles favoring them using hostile and confrontational language. Most of their articles blamed them for not doing something right. However, Raila was leading with negative articles at 44.7%.

4.3.3 Position of Articles for Each Candidate as Done by The Nation Newspaper

The articles were also analyzed for their position on the newspaper. Out of 106 articles 84 were news articles but not on the front page. 2 were opinion articles, 5 were letters to the editor, 4 were on the front page but not leading, 7 were lead stories on the front page and 4 were at the back page.

Table 4.5 Position of articles in the Newspaper

variables	freq(n)	Percent (%)
Type of the article		
News article (not on the front page)	102	72.3
Opinion/Column article	6	4.3
Letter to the editor	9	6.4
Editorial	1	0.7
Opposite Editorial	0	0
Front page article (other)	4	2.9
Front page (lead article)	15	10.6
Back page/last page	4	2.8

According to the table below Uhuru had more articles on the front page compared to his counterparts. Uhuru Kenyatta had the highest percentage of articles in each category. The table also shows that more articles were news articles even though not on the front page this could have been on page 2 onwards. News articles not on the front page accounted for 84(79.2%), while those on the opinion/column pages were 2(1.9%), Letters to the editor had 5(4.7%), Front page other had 4(3.8%), front page lead had 7(6.6%), and back page 4(6.6%).

Table 4.6 position of articles per candidate

Variables	POSITION OF THE ARTICLE								
	Overall	News article (not on the front page)	Opinion/Column article	Letter to the editor	Editorial	Opposite Editorial	Front page article (other)	Front page (lead article)	Back page/last page
Presidential Candidate	N (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Uhuru Kenyatta	63(59.5)	50(79.4)	1(1.5)	4(6.3)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	3(4.8)	2(3.2)	3(4.8)
Raila Odinga	38(35.9)	30(78.9)	1(2.6)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	1(2.7)	5(13.2)	1(2.6)
Abduba Dida	2(1.9)	1(50.0)	0(0.0)	1(50.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
Michael Wainama	1(0.9)	1(100.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
Joseph Nyagah	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
Ekuru Aukot	1(0.9)	1(100.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
Japheth Kaluyu	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
Cyrus Jirongo	1(0.9)	1(100.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)

In terms of story allocation per candidate, Uhuru had more in each category, a clear indication that he generated more issues and debates.

4.3.4 Use of enhancements in covering presidential candidates

Out of the 106 articles analyzed for enhancement 29(27.4%) had no enhancements while 77(72.6%) were found to have been enhanced using photographs. Figure 4.10 below shows that there was no other type of enhancement used such as documents, certificates or cartoons.

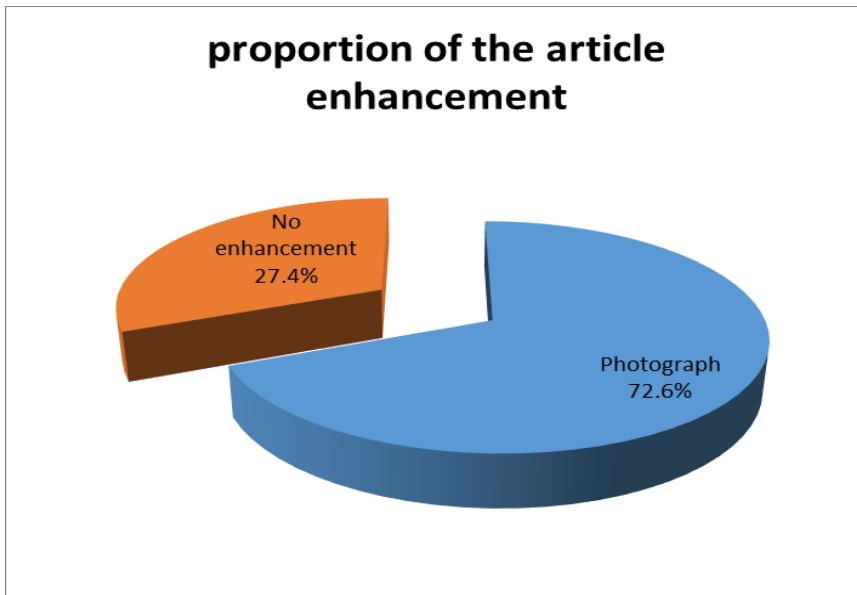


Figure 4.10: Proportion of article enhancement

In looking at article enhancement per presidential candidate, Uhuru Kenyatta had the highest number of articles accompanied by a photograph. Out of the 77 articles that were enhanced using photographs, Uhuru had 47 (61%), Raila had 27(34.2%), and Michael Wainaina, Ekuru Aukot and Cyrus Jirongo each had 1 (1.3%). Photographs play a very crucial role in print media since they help relay the most accurate information especially during campaigns. It is a very effective weapon of persuasion and helps attract the attention of more people to a particular news item (Padil & Azahari, 2014). It is therefore evident from the findings that Uhuru had an advantage over all the other candidates as far as enhancement of articles is concerned.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This section gives the summary, conclusion and recommendations and uses the findings of the study as a baseline. It brings to the fore the key findings of the study and makes recommendations for future research and actions. The purpose of this study was to determine the performance of the nation Newspaper in its coverage of the presidential elections on 8th of August 2017.

5.2 Summary of Findings

This section provides the summary of the findings in line with the three main objectives of the study.

5.2.1 Media Coverage Of Elections

In terms of coverage of presidential candidates, it has been noted that negative coverage was more common. The most common explanation for negative articles is the belief by the media that negative articles sell more than positive ones. The notion is that candidates now disagree on policies more than they did years back. (Lyengar, 2011). Geer, however notes that negative coverage can stir controversy and create conflict even amongst the supporters of a candidate. He argues that public attention to negative stories does not come from the fact that they are generated at campaign rallies, the attention is determined by how the media cover it. This he says includes the position of the article, the space allocated and lastly the tone (Geer, 2009).

It emerged that Uhuru and Raila got more coverage than the other six candidates. 94% of the articles went to only two candidates leaving only 6% to six candidates. This is a sign that the nation newspaper was favoring only two candidates. Uhuru Kenyatta has also been given more prominence as he scooped the largest share of articles at 60% which was almost twice those of Raila who had only 36% of the articles discussing him. This clearly shows that the nation newspaper was biased in its coverage of other candidates. Going by the allocation of articles per candidate, the nation newspaper made it appear like only two candidates were important. (Pedderon, Mortensen & Thessen, 2015) Argue that during media coverage of elections the press should strike a balanced coverage of all candidates. Failure to do this contributes to what they refer to as the incumbency bonus, whereby the incumbent receives more coverage than the rest

of the candidates. Based on their argument it could be possible that Uhuru Kenyatta benefitted from the incumbency bonus. The scholars also state that the incumbency bonus sometimes is not deliberate but comes as a result of the media striving to fulfill their watchdog role to the society. As a result of this they end up covering the incumbents more because responsibility lies on them at that particular time. Their argument can also explain why Uhuru Kenyatta got more coverage. It could be that the nation newspaper was prioritizing societal problems and their possible solutions. Uhuru Kenyatta could not go unmentioned because he was the president and hence meant to provide solutions to Kenyan problems.

In terms of space allocation Uhuru led in both extremes having the highest number of detailed articles and also the largest number of smallest articles. The tone of the articles was distributed amongst the candidates and Raila led with the most negative articles at 44% Uhuru followed closely at 40%. This clearly indicates that Raila received more negative coverage than the other candidates. Uhuru also led with positive articles at 41.3%. Uhuru Kenyatta on the other hand was covered more positively. Uhuru Kenyatta not only had the highest number of articles but also had the highest in terms of positive coverage.

In terms of positioning Uhuru Kenyatta had most articles on the most important pages of the nation newspaper. In total Uhuru Kenyatta had 63% of all the articles allocated to him and 50% of all the front-page articles were focusing on him. These includes the opinion, letters to the editor, and front pages. Unfortunately, all the articles that were found on the editorial page had no clear focus, a sign that the editorial team avoided taking a stand on any presidential candidate. According to Granner, 2009 articles that are considered more important, significant and attention catching are placed on the front page. The nation newspaper therefore considered Uhuru Kenyatta important and newsworthy hence allocating him more articles on the front page.

5.2.2 Role of Media in Information and Education

The role of media in educating and informing the electorates was determined by the method of content analysis. The various themes covered by the nation newspaper were considered important in educating and informing the people about the various presidential candidates.

The findings indicated that most newspaper articles talked about general campaign issues. These were not the pertinent issues at the centre of the presidential elections. Other themes that were highlighted included corruption, concern for a free and fair elections, education, development track record, political conflict, ethnicity, security, state of the economy, manifestos, infrastructure, and gender. These themes should have been given more coverage since they impacted on the general good and well being of the Voters. Instead the Nation Newspaper focused more on the presidential candidates campaign destinations, strategies and their teams. Manifestos for instance had only an allocation of 15 articles, the media should have extensively covered that topic so as to ensure the citizens are properly educated on the intentions of the various candidates. Scholars Takens and Hoofs explain that the kind of coverage which focuses more on individuals than on pertinent issues is referred to as contest coverage. This implies that the media only view the election as a contest between political figures. As a result they focus more on individual politicians and not the issues of interest to the electorate ((Takens & Hoof, 2013)).

Results from the questionnaires indicated that the people were not confident with the nation newspaper when it comes to availing political information. They believed that the nation was not very effective in providing political information. Nation newspapers ranked average in its effectiveness as a provider of political information. Newspapers have the responsibility of providing the electorate with adequate political information so that they are empowered to vote wisely (Kleinen, 2015).

Nation newspaper also performed poorly in its coverage of specific political topics that would have enabled the voters make an informed choice. Instead they corroborated the findings of the content analysis which indicated that the nation Newspaper focused on political advertisements and gossips.

The findings on the role of nation newspaper in provision of information and voter related education reveal that the newspaper failed to meet the needs of voters at that particular time. The Media systems dependency theory states that people dependency on a certain media channel is determined by the kind of information provided. As per the assumptions of this theory therefore, the Nation Newspaper failed to performing its information and education role.

5.2.3 Influence of Media Coverage on Voter Perception

The findings indicated that more men read the nation newspaper during the elections period. Most of the readers were between ages 31-40. The findings also showed that most readers were in search of political topics and were less interested in others such as business, advertisements and social news. According to the media systems dependency theory the level of dependency in media systems increase to periods of social transition such as an electioneering period. The dependency exists between the media, its audiences and the social world (Defleur, 1989). This explains why most of the respondents interested in political information. They wanted to understand the manifestos of the different presidential candidates.

The findings also indicated that the level of interest in the general elections was very high and this explains the high demand for political information. On rating the level of interest on the various elective posts it emerged that the presidential elections were the most followed. The position of the woman member of the national assembly had the least interest. The high level of interest in the presidential elections indicate the need for proper coverage by the media.

Most of the respondents also agreed that newspaper coverage did not influence their perception of a given presidential candidate. Instead their choice of a given candidate was influenced by the manifestos of the various aspirants. Looking at the relationship between media coverage and voter perception, the assumption is that people actually turn to the media to look for information. Unfortunately, the media fails to provide issue-based coverage that would act to educate and inform the readers.

The findings of this study are in line with the literature reviewed on the effect of the media on the electorate. The results of the elections in the United States in 2016 proved that people did not heed to the negative media reports concerning Donald Trump. The findings also go against one of the tenets of Media Systems Dependency theory which believes that media content has a strong effect on people's attitude, beliefs, and the actions they take.

5.3 Conclusions

The coverage accorded to the different presidential candidates was important in determining the Nature of coverage offered by the Nations newspaper. The theory of Media Systems Dependency argues that the people depend on the media during

uncertainty and intend to get some sort of reassurance. The Nation Newspaper in this case provided the required information by giving the various candidates different levels of coverage. It is obvious from the findings that two presidential candidates were given preferential treatment over the other six. These two were Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga. In terms of overall coverage Uhuru had it better as he was leading by the total number of articles, he had the most positive articles about him, had more detailed articles and bagged more on the front page. Raila came in closely but had the most negative coverage by virtue of leading in negative toned articles. Brandit argues that the media in informing the electorate should ensure neutrality in the coverage of all candidates in order to allow voters make an informed choice (Brandit, 2006).

The findings also indicated that the newspaper was sloppy when it comes to educating and informing the people. Only 10% of the articles had a focus on corruption issues which could have been very valuable information to readers. On the other hand issues to do with campaigns were allocated 29% of the articles. Newspapers are highly valued as channels for disseminating electoral information. This is because they educate, entertain and act as a bridge between the government and its people (2002). The Nation Newspaper on the contrary focused on campaign issues and ignored others that could have been very crucial in helping citizens make an informed choice on who to vote for.

In conclusion it was noted that the link between media coverage and voter perception is weak. This could be because the media does not provide the information as required by the audience. In addition, most nation newspaper readers believed that the newspaper had no great influence on who they voted for.

5.4 Recommendations

The findings of the study established that the nation newspaper automatically made the presidential elections a competition between two people. It is clear from the findings that the coverage in itself was not balanced. It is recommended that the Nation newspaper and even other publications should offer balanced coverage to all candidates. The gap between the two leading candidates and the rest was alarming. The difference between the total number of articles per candidate should not be that significant. The same should apply to space allocation, length of article, positioning and tone.

The incumbent was offered more coverage. It is recommended that the media avoid coverage that focuses on individuals and instead highlight issues of interest to the electorate. This will enable them to balance the coverage of various candidates based on how they advocate for certain issues. The framing of the two candidates could be the reason they topped the race and the other six lagged behind.

Based on the findings, the nation's newspaper did not offer adequate information and education to the citizens. This was against the tenets of the Media Systems Dependency theory which gives the media responsibility to provide the required information during an election. The citizens were depending on them to provide all the necessary information about the presidential election and the candidates. During elections the newspaper should focus on themes that are more informative and educative. Instead of simply highlighting general campaign issues they should discuss issues that make the electorate understand why they should vote. This study also recommends that the media engage the public as the elections approach so that they understand the issues affecting various publics.

Based on the findings on the people's perception of media influence, it is necessary that a research on the power of the media be done to determine if it is actually influential or not. A research on other sources of influence or electoral information during elections should also be done. In addition to that it would be interesting to analyze the contents of live television or radio programs during elections to understand how broadcasters also convey information to the citizens. A comparative analysis of coverage by other local newspapers can also be done by future researchers.

A study on the other sources of information should also be conducted in order to determine where the electorate obtained the political knowledge that enabled them to effectively participate in the election process.

In terms of voter education and information the media should work hand in hand with key stakeholders especially the electoral commission to ensure they get the right information to relay to the audiences. Future research can also focus on the possibility of the media making voter education a continuous process.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER OF CONSENT

Department of Communication and Media Technology,

Maseno University,

Maseno.

Dear Respondent,

RE: LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

I am a post graduate student at Maseno University, Department of Communication and Media Technology. I am conducting a study on the role of the Nation Newspaper in the coverage of the presidential candidates in the August 2017 elections in Kenya.

This is to request you to participate in filling in the questionnaire voluntarily. Kindly respond to the questions in the best way you can. The research is purely for academic purposes and as such your individual views will remain confidential. Your consent to respond to the questionnaire will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you.

Yours Faithfully,

Zaida Atieno.

APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR REGISTERED VOTERS IN MARKET MILIMANI WARD OF KISUMU CENTRAL CONSTITUENCY IN KISUMU COUNTY

This study assessed the performance of the Nation newspaper in its coverage of the presidential elections in August 2017.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICS

Kindly mark with X where appropriate

1. What is your age bracket?

18-25	1
26-30	2
31-40	3
41-50	4
51 and above	5

2. What is your gender?

Male	1
Female	2

3. What is your source of income?

Employment	1
Business	2
Student	3
Retired	4
Other(specify)	5

4. What is your highest level of education?

Primary	1
Secondary	2
Tertiary College	3
University	4

5. Do you read the Nation Newspaper?

Yes	1
No	2

SECTION B: EXPOSURE TO NEWSPAPERS DURING THE ELECTION PERIOD

6. Which Newspaper do you like the most?

The Standard	1
The East African	2
The Nation Newspaper	3
Taifa Leo	4
The star	5
Business Daily	6

7. Which factors determine the type of newspaper that you read?

Price	1
Content	2
Availability	3
Political influence	4
Other factors (specify)	5

8. To what extent does each of the following influence your decision on which newspaper to read in order to get political information?

	<i>Your:</i>	<i>Not at all</i>	<i>A little</i>	<i>Some extent</i>	<i>Greatly</i>	<i>NR</i>
1	Spouse	1	2	3	4	00
2	Parents	1	2	3	4	00
3	Siblings	1	2	3	4	00
4	Other relatives	1	2	3	4	00
5	Friends	1	2	3	4	00
6	Workmates	1	2	3	4	00

9. How much time do you spend on reading a newspaper?

Less than 30 minutes	1
30 minutes to an hour	2
2 hours or more	3

10. What are some of the major reasons for reading a newspaper?

Business related information	1
Sports news	2
Political information	3
Advertisements	4

Social news	5
Crosswords	6
Obituary	7
Others (please specify)	8

11. Did you read your favorite Newspaper between 28th May 2017 and 30th August 2017?

Yes	1
No	2

12. How many days in a normal seven days week did you read the Newspaper?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

13. What are some of the motivating factors that made you read political information in Newspapers?

Reasons why you look for political information on Newspapers	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	No response
Get facts about candidates	1	2	3	4	00	11
Get voter education	1	2	3	4	00	11
Check political advertisements	1	2	3	4	00	11
Get entertainment from humorous political stories and events	1	2	3	4	00	11
Enable you engage in meaningful political debates with other people	1	2	3	4	00	11
Know and understand the state of the economy at that time	1	2	3	4	00	11

SECTION C: NATURE OF NEWSPAPER COVERAGE

14. Were Newspapers effective in providing political information during the 8th, August 2017 elections?

Not at all	Very little	To some extent	Greatly Effective	Not sure	No Response
1	2	3	4	00	11

15. To what extent did your favorite Newspaper cover the following political topics

Political topics	Too much	No coverage	Moderate coverage	Enough coverage	No response
Factual information candidates	1	2	3	4	11
Voter education	1	2	3	4	11
Political advertisements	1	2	3	4	11
Political gossips	1	2	3	4	11
The state of the economy	1	2	3	4	11

16. What is your take on the general newspaper coverage of the 2017 general elections?

	Yes	No
Balanced	1	2
Fair	1	2
Informative	1	2
Educative	1	2

SECTION D: ROLE OF THE NEWSPAPER IN VOTER EDUCATION

17. Did your preferred Newspaper provide the following political knowledge that enabled you to effectively participate in the election process?

	Yes	No	No Response
The requirements for you to be registered as a voter	1	2	11
The official documents you should produce at the polling station	1	2	11
How to vote	1	2	11
The different kind elections that you were going to vote in	1	2	11
The types of electoral offences and the penalties	1	2	11

SECTION E: VIEWS AND ACTIONS OF ELECTORATES AS A RESULT OF NEWSPAPER COVERAGE

18. To what level were interested in the August 2017 elections?

Not at all	Very interested	Moderately interested	Don't know	No response
1	2	3	4	11

19. What elective post were you most interested in during the August 8th 2017 elections?

Governor	Woman representative	Member of County Assembly	Member of parliament	Senator	President	All	No Response
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	11

20. To what extent did the newspaper coverage affect your level of electoral participation? Explain in your own words whether this change was negative or positive.

Thank you for your participation

APENDIX III

CODER GUIDE

SECTION A-IDENTIFICATION OF ARTICLE

Q1. Type of article

1. News article
2. Opinion/Column article
3. Letter to the editor
4. Editorial
5. Opposite Editorial

Q2. Article title

Note down the title as it appears in the publication

Q3. Date of Publication

YYMMDD

Q4. Source of the article.

1. Wire Service e.g. the Associated Press, Kenya News Agency
2. A local reporter with the Nation Newspaper
3. An expert
4. Reader (especially for letters to the editor)

Q5. Length of the article

1. More than a full page
2. A full page
3. Three quarter of a page
4. Half a page
5. Quarter of a page

Q6. Position of the article

1. Front page (lead story)
2. Centre spread
3. Back page
4. Front page (other)
5. Other

Q7. Article Enhancement

1. Photograph
2. Document (letters, certificates)
3. Cartoon
4. No enhancement

Q8. Tone of the article

1. Neutral
2. Positive
3. Negative
4. Biased

SECTION B- IDENTIFICATION OF PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

Q9. Does the article have a clear focus on a specific candidate? (The article only discusses one candidate)

0. No clear focus (if more than one candidate is mentioned in the article)
1. Yes

Q10. If yes to question 8 above which Presidential Candidate is the article about?

1. Uhuru Kenyatta
2. Raila Odinga
3. Abduba Dida
4. Michael Wainaina
5. Joseph Nyagah
6. Ekuru Aukot
7. Japheth Kaluyu
8. Cyrus Jirongo

Q11. What does the article discuss about the presidential candidate if it has a clear focus?

1. Personality trait
2. Campaign issues
3. Candidate's stand on issues
4. Development track record

Q12. If no to question 8 then which presidential candidates are discussed in the article?

Indicate their names

Q13. Out of the candidates discussed in the article, who has the most mentions?

Indicate the name (coder should count the number of times a candidate is mentioned)

Q14. What was the general topic was discussed in the article?

1. Corruption
2. Electoral crimes
3. Democracy
4. Ethnicity
5. Peace and reconciliation
6. The economy

