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An Assessment of the Kenyan Journalism Training and Gaps Filled by Other Professionals: A Study of Selected Fm Radio Stations

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An Assessment of the Kenyan Journalism Training and Gaps Filled by Other Professionals: A Study of Selected Fm Radio Stations

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of the study was to determine whether gaps exist in the Kenyan journalism training that are now filled by other professionals.

Materials and methods: The three study sites were local FM radio stations - Radio Citizen, Radio Jambo, and Radio Maisha. Using a 2014 Media Council of Kenya study of radio talk shows in Kenya as a background, the thesis placed more emphasis on the radio presenters and their content. The study applied Social Responsibility Theory which posits that media should be more responsible and accountable to the society. The study employed a descriptive survey using qualitative and quantitative approaches. In this study, four presenters, two key personnel from the Media Council of Kenya were interviewed, as well as a sample of their radio talk show content.

Results: The media council of Kenya lacked the capacity to ensure that only trained radio broadcast journalists were hired by media houses. In addition, despite MCK having developed a curriculum for middle level journalism training institutions, its impact in standardising training had been negligible.

Recommendations: The study recommended improvement of the journalism curriculum as well as embracing of the MCK curriculum by middle level colleges.

Key words: *journalism, gaps, training, other professionals*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

From 2004, when a change in legislation brought about licensing of many radio stations in Kenya, FM stations went on air, creating more jobs for presenters. The kind of presenters hired were not well prepared to take up radio jobs, according to a critical reflection on Kenya's liberalized radio space by Okoti and Onego (2013). The stations opened up to public discussion fora due to public demand (Minderhoud, 2009). They became outlets for 'active citizenship' in the form of public debate and opinion platforms (Kodi, 2005, p. 24). These fora provided an opportunity, through phone-in conversations, for listeners to join public debates and express their opinions, in what has become characteristic of private radio stations (Minderhoud, 2009). When radio stations provide a platform for such debate, listeners air their diverse views that are moderated by presenters.

While training did not seem to provide media houses with their desired calibre of personnel as radio talk show presenters, it remains the common ground upon which qualifications for media presenters can be developed. It is also through systematic formal training that responsibility and accountability guided by a code of ethics can be achieved. Thus, among other pursuits, this study sought to examine whether there were gaps in journalism training that caused media houses to hire non-trained personnel to run radio talk shows.

Further, the education and training deficit in parts of the Kenyan media were noted by Berger (2009a). He drew support from the sentiments of the regulators, quoting the then MCK Chairlady, Esther Kamweru, who noted a "call for regulating journalism education in Kenya" brought about by complaints from media players that most training institutions were offering sub-standard courses and flooding the industry with "half-baked professionals" (Berger, 2009b, p. 273).

According to Howard and Rolt (2005), radio talk shows are a form of journalism. Therefore presenters require education, training and experience and should adhere to professional standards of accuracy and impartiality. In the MCK's (2013c) publication entitled, 'Training and Welfare of Journalists', journalist as well as media practitioner in different training forums and workshops agree with Howard and Holt that, to be able to achieve professionalism, training was a critical component for the industry. The MCK research was done in response to the outcry of the media practitioners over "professional skills gaps, career progression, specialisation in journalism, employment criteria for journalists, payment structures and training needs" (MCK, 2013c, p. 3). This study therefore looked at training as a vital component for determination of the status of talk shows through commercial FM stations in Kenya.

UNESCO had named three quality media training institutions in Kenya: the University of Nairobi's School of Journalism, Daystar University, and the Kenya Institute of Mass Communication. The first two, UON and Daystar, had the privilege of being identified as centres of excellence. But there was still dissatisfaction, not just from the regulators, but from employers, too. Nation Media Group became the first to create what it called a "media lab" in which to recruit and develop its own trained resources, signalling dissatisfaction with the training

at tertiary institutions. Later, it paired with the Aga Khan University to develop a journalism school that would meet its training needs. According to Berger (2009a), such in-house training should serve as a wake-up call to other media training institutions, including universities. They should concentrate on the competition they are getting from such in-house training programmes, rather than conforming to licensing by regulatory bodies.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

According to the code of conduct and practice of journalism in Kenya, a journalist shall not publish obscene or vulgar material unless such material contains news, but unfortunately, this is not always the case with radio talk show content. In a recent study by the MCK, radio talk shows in Kenya have been found to be products of a “lack of quality control and respect for moral and cultural sensitivities loaded with race, religion, and ethnic stereotypes, disability, physical appearance or social status” (MCK 2014, p. 4). As such, the content was regarded by a broad range of listeners, and by the Media Council itself, as constituting violations of decency (MCK, 2014).

The manner in which the radio presenters air content raised questions on the morality and ethics of their practice, both in generating content, and in managing it as it came from livephone-in contributions. The main question raised was whether there existed gaps in journalism training that resulted in media houses recruiting outside the market of graduates of media programmes

To put more emphasis on media adherence to the MCK’s journalistic code of conduct, a separate code of regulation for broadcast media by the Communications Authority of Kenya (CA, 2016) was developed on 1 July, 2016. The new code recognized pre-existing regulatory codes and did not seek to supplant them. It states this explicitly in the second paragraph of its Section 1.2:

This Code will not apply where a broadcaster is a member of a body which has proved to the satisfaction of the Authority that its members subscribe and adhere to a programming code enforced by that body by means of its own mechanisms... (CA, 2016, p.6).

In addition, it was well noted that training had deficiencies in theoretical and ethical aspects of journalism as well as insufficient ability to equip graduates with the skills for practising journalism. The need for professionalism and journalists training cannot be underestimated yet it has not been practised and taken with the seriousness that it deserves both at the recruitment stage of a journalist and even while at the job. This has therefore contributed to the unethical issues in the delivery of talk show content

Using in-depth interviews and content analysis, this study critically examined the three selected radio talk show presenters’ content and conduct, against the prescribed code of ethics for practice of journalism in Kenya. The study is a test of existing gaps in the Kenyan journalism training, how well journalist training has been conducted and by what bodies and whether there are measures to boost and sustain it since it is the only way to bring back professionalism and ethical standards in radio talks.

1.3 Objective of the Study

1. To determine whether gaps exist in the Kenyan journalism training that are now filled by other professionals.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The study applied social responsibility theory (SRT) to explain the research problem, and later to interpret the findings. The SRT focused on the social aspect of morality where personal ethical values are subjected to societal values. The theory proposed that media principles should work for the greater public good as well as ensure that media practitioners are held accountable by the wider society. The theory focused on the social aspect of morality, in the sense that it would 'sublimate' personal ethical values to societal values. It entails being responsible to society, and holding the press accountable.

2.1.1 Social Responsibility Theory

SRT as one of the four theories of the press was first formulated in 1956 by Siebert, Peterson and Schramm (Middleton, 2009; Baran & Davis, 2015, p. 73). In the theory, ethics are emphasized since media is controlled by community opinion, consumer action, and professional ethics (Ochieng, Gachoka, & Mureithi, 2014 p. 9). One of the functions of this theory was to foster professionalism of journalists and media contributors to seek fairness, objectivity, accuracy, balance, and apply "news values" to all news they published. The SRT made an appeal to media practitioners to be united in the service of cultural pluralism even if it meant profit reduction or antagonism to the social elites (Baran & Davis, 2015, p. 73). It was not however clear on how to successfully provide a socially responsible media from such measures (AL-Ahmed, 1987). Many questions were raised concerning the implementation of SRT in the area of professionalism and ratification of the code of conduct. In an attempt to answer them, Adam-Bloom and Clearly, (2009) proposed changes in SRT in two diagrams.

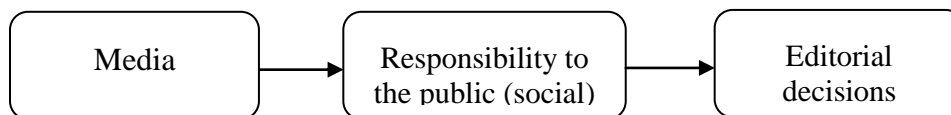


Figure 1: Traditional model of SRT (Baran & Davis, 2015, p. 78).

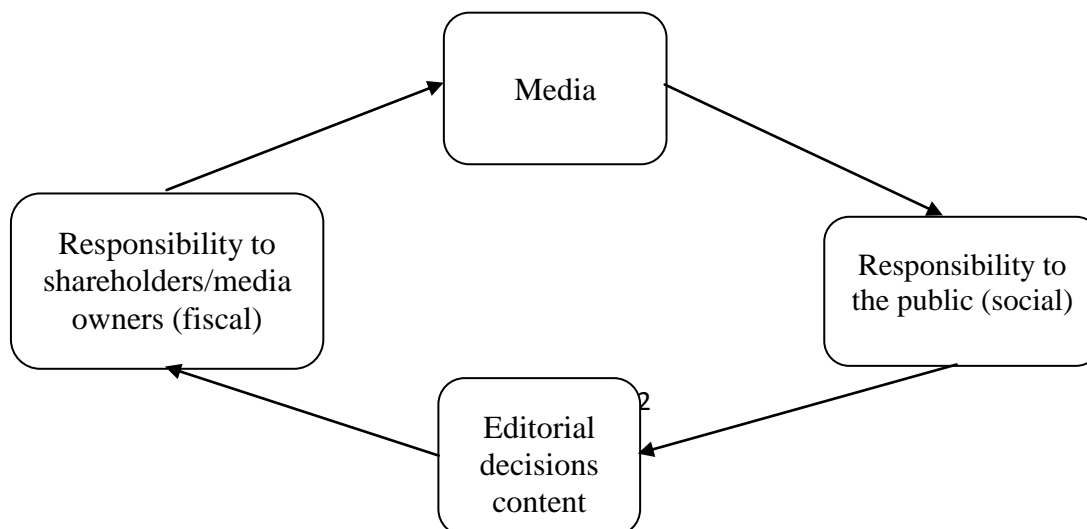


Figure 2: Dual Responsibility model (Baran & Davis, 2015, p. 78)

Adam-Bloom and Clearly(2009) updated the SRT theory to a ‘Dual SRT’ that upholds high ideals, while recognising economic realities. The new position emphasizes media responsibility to the public as well as to shareholders and media owners, without compromising on quality of content. As a result, media institutions would have an obligation to operate in the best interest of all stakeholders. Profit maximization need not be the main goal. The Dual SRT opens media houses to a wider berth of ethical business practices and good corporate citizenship (Baran & Davis, 2013).

2.1.2 Application of SRT

This research used the SRT theory to prompt radio talk show hosts to be more responsible and accountable to the greater population. That entailed being answerable to the audience, the government that provides licenses to broadcast, and to themselves as media professionals, for the sense of satisfaction of having done a job well. Through the findings of this research, presenters of radio talk shows would be sensitized to the expectations of their product, which is the content that they generate and moderate on FM radio stations.

2.2 General Literature Review

2.2.1 Media Regulation and Accountability

Flenger concluded that media accountability in the digital age was achievable through a decentralised network, using both media professionals and users, and ensuring preservation of media freedom.

2.2.2 Status of Radio Presenters in Africa

At the onset of the new liberties of radio talk shows, presenters were poorly paid, and poorly organised in professional and trade unions (Myers, 2008, p. 6). Monies were paid to journalists to cover stories positively. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, such patronage is referred to as ‘coupage’; in West Africa, it is called ‘gombo’ (Nyamnjoh, 2005); while in other places it is called the ‘brown envelope’ (Myers, 2008, p. 20; Gondwe, 2014). In Zambia, this also came in the form of cash payments or free meals, *per diems*, or in other gifts or favours, which placed journalists in compromising situations. They had to act in the interests of business and local politics, thus impacting on neutrality and quality of content (Gondwe, 2014).

One of the motivators for entry into journalism was notoriety that could be positive or negative such as hate-talk that led to post-election violence in Kenya 2007 (Myers, 2008, p.20 citing Abdi & Dean, 2008). Such entry into journalism results in commercial ‘shock jocks’ (opinionated and outspoken DJs who attract high audiences) and generate higher advertising revenues (Myers, 2008, p.20). Conditions faced by radio journalists include poor training or no training due to low

job security, high turnover, and brain-drain to other professions. The need for training continues to grow (Myers, 2008). According to Myers, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of United Nations, (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Association *Mondiale des Radiodiffuseurs Communautaires* (AMARC), World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters, Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), RFI, BBC, and others have developed training materials for the African context.

Most African countries had one main (government sponsored) national journalism/broadcasting training institute or university (Myers, 2008, p. 20). Other privately owned training institutions that offer journalism/media training are of questionable quality. Training had deficiencies in theoretical and ethical aspects of journalism as well as insufficient ability to equip graduates with the skills for practising journalists (BBC, WST 2006, p. 39).

2.2.3 Radio Broadcasting in Kenya

Radio in Kenya has undergone tremendous growth, both in popularity and numbers. According to the MCK's (2015) publication, *Ethics in Ethnic Media* over 300 radio frequencies and licenses have been issued by the Communication Authority of Kenya, which include those not yet utilized. Starting from 1959 when the Kenya National Broadcasting Service (KBS) was established by the British colonial administration, radio became the first public broadcaster. Today, the Kenya government boasts of 120 radio stations (Nyabuga & Booker 2013, p.18). After independence, the corporation was named Voice of Kenya (VOK) and became a government mouthpiece as a department of the Ministry of Information, Broadcasting and Tourism. Even though government adopted a capitalistic approach to economic development, private ownership of broadcasting was not allowed (Oriare, 2008).

2.2.4 Advent of Talk Shows in Kenya

By 1996, with the liberalisation of the airwaves globally, the Kenyan government started issuing licenses to private radio. The first few licenses were issued to government supporters (Situma & Ndeta, 2010). At that time 13 private radio stations broadcasted around the country. These stations came as a challenge to Kenya Broadcasting Corporation due to their nature of programming. By 2004, the first community radio was licenced, paving way for more vernacular FM radio stations (Ng'ang'a, 2016). These stations broadcasted in local languages, breaking the monotony of English and Kiswahili that had previously been dominant.

The new FM stations which are commercial in nature, brought 'stiff competition in the congested and continuous narrowing market' Wafula (2005), to KBC in the sense that, even though the national broadcaster had already operated vernacular stations across the country for many years, it was perpetuating an unpopular government agenda. KBC became an inefficient propaganda tool' and was therefore abandoned by the government as a Public Service Broadcaster (PSB) in the liberalised media environment (Wafula, 2005). Due to their interactive nature, new FM stations that aired of citizens' concerns Situma and Ndeta (2010), gained popularity.

As a platform for public discussion, these commercial FM radio stations use talk shows and phone-ins to allow the audience's voice to be heard. These talk shows which have become outlets for public debates are also used for expression of voices suppressed for a long time (Abdi & Deane, 2008; Omwoha, 2014). The voices were 'angry, disaffected and determined for

change' (Abdi & Deane, 2008, p. 4). The commercial FM radio stations took centre stage for democratic power and encouraged the public to shed off a culture of silence (Odhiambo, 2007).

Digital technologies introduced the use of mobile telephony and the internet, increasing the pace of information dissemination (Nyabuga & Booker, 2013). Due to digital technology, there is an increased user generated content which has resulted in media organizations seeking to cultivate new relationships with audiences. Audiences now regularly contribute content or are encouraged to do so. Radio listeners can now call in and discuss their views and concerns about issues that affect them (Situma & Ndeti, 2010, citing Media Debates, 2005).

Nyabuga and Booker's (2013) empirical look at the post-modern media configurations in Kenya noted that direct legislation on media ownership is lacking. As a result, large established media owners have taken advantage of the situation to engage in cross-media ownership. Examples of such organisations that have print, radio, and television include Nation Media Group, the Standard Group Limited, and Radio Africa Media Group (Nyabuga & Booker, 2013). According to the authors, the media council's CEO Haron Mwangi, stated that media ownership is dominated by the private sector, while the public media is underdeveloped due to underfunding. Also cited was Professor Levi Obonyo's, (a past chair of the MCK) observation that, "the liberalization of airwaves was done without the benefit of legislative statutes to guide the operations of FM stations, which now number 200" (Nyabuga & Booker, 2013, p. 67).

It is a challenge for radio stations to adhere to professional ethics. Sensational programme formats and commentating on information has increased (Situma & Ndeti, 2010). The liberalisation of airwaves opened up audience comments from anyone, thus democratizing the media space. Urban commercial radio hosts the 'Shock-Jock' on live phone-in programmes who are opinionated and outspoken DJs that attract high audiences. As a result, they earn higher advertising revenues. Taking advantage of their substantial access to the public, these presenters can, and sometimes do, misuse their privileged positions, for instance by turning to hate speech to deride real or perceived opponents, as was the case in the post-election violence in Kenya in January 2008 (Myers, 2008).

2.3 Empirical Review

The MCK (2013c) is a study entitled; *Training and Welfare for Kenyan Journalists* which sought to establish training needs of practicing journalists. The training needs were looked at in relation to, among others, their job placement, specialisation needs, working conditions, welfare, health and safety. The study was prompted by the recurring themes during the MCK's various training forums of journalists and stakeholders where the issues of professionalism and journalists' training featured.

According to the study, entry into journalism was not restricted. Whereas MCK was mandated to accredit journalists; both foreign and local, media houses had their own accreditation systems. Entry qualifications into media houses varied from degree to diploma holders to no degree or diploma. Experience from other media houses, knowledge of media house hierarchy or corporate sections of media houses were considered. The kind of scenario exhibited portrayed lack of precise guidelines followed in the hiring of media personnel in Kenya.

The study observed that such flexibility of entry and practice provided artistes and comedians free entry into the media practice, masquerading as journalists. That resulted in terrible consequences for the profession, where mixing journalism and comedy was noted to have had a negative effect on the image of journalists.

Regarding professionalism and journalism training, qualifications among media personnel raised concern as it ranged from high school certificate to diploma in journalism. Gondwe (2014) noted that the training offered was Western curriculum that compelled students to take western journalists as models. Most panellists had not experienced any vice in ethics during the training. They felt that introduction of African ethics “ubuntuism” would not guarantee ethical reporting. The research lamented that classroom learning of ethical behaviour did not translate into practice. Issues of values and moral decadence were seen to be influenced by what was learned in the journalism practice in the field. Globalisation was cited as the reason behind break-up of the community spirit, and loss of language, that also led to the loss of African values. Lack of ethical considerations reflected the kind of society to which one belonged.

In a study by Simiyu (2014), media ownership was interrogated, as well as the relationship between journalistic freedom and media concentration in Kenya. Using the propaganda model as well as the Media Ownership Theory, Simiyu (2014) noted that media ownership and concentration constricted diversification of viewpoints in Kenya during the 2013 General Elections. Simiyu observed that as early as 2009, media concentration on politicians rose as they eyed the 2013 elections. The politicians took advantage of media liberalisation to secure a foothold in the media and buttress their political positions. Such hegemony, Simiyu (2014) warned, could lead to individuals exercising unchecked power. The objective of the study was to explore the relationship between journalism freedom and media ownership concentration in Kenya.

Simiyu’s (2014) findings showed that 71 percent of journalists believed that media diversity in Kenya was at a risk, while 69 percent of the respondents believed that the risk was due to media ownership in Kenya. Most journalists interviewed felt that independence of media was an important aspect of democracy, while 52 percent felt that media owners had direct editorial influence. The study perceived that existence of distrust in mainstream media, leading to more questions on journalistic independence, was as a result of the growth of media concentration in Kenya. Media owners were considered as having an influence on choice of media content on radio talk shows.

Simiyu’s (2014) study recommended that the MCK needed to be funded by the government, instead of the Media Owners Association, for it to exercise independence as a regulatory body, and to establish clear guidelines for monitoring hate speech. The study posits that media owners have an influence on generation of radio talk show content (2014). Moreover, the study states that media owners exercise some control over the regulatory body, MCK due to their funding. Therefore the MCK is held at ransom and it may be biased to or against media regulations which is an indication of internal challenges.

Similar research was done by Ochieng, Gachoka and Mureithi (2014), on the adherence to ethical principles, with special emphasis on the print media. The researchers conducted a social responsibility audit on how media collected and published information, noting that the assigning

of media responsibility to individuals in media houses qualified it as a public interest and watchdog institution. The study distinguished media from other industries by the fact that it provided information to citizens that they needed to know. Therefore, journalism was intertwined with democracy and governance of a country.

Ochieng, et al. (2014) concluded that, being socially responsible could contribute to enhancing the professionalism of the media in Kenya. The study concluded that although the MCK had set up ethical principles, adherence by most media platforms was problematic. According to practitioners, 'public interest' was not clearly defined in the MCK code of conduct and needed revision. The findings of the study showed that there existed awareness of the MCK code of conduct by reporters, but editors did not involve reporters in the formulation of policy matters. For further research, the study recommended the development of a relationship between adherence to the code of ethics and the level of journalism training.

The study by Ochieng, et al. (2014) differed from this research because it was based on print media, and its main concern was on the adherence to the code of conduct. A look at social responsibility as an enhancement for professionalism in media brings out similarities between their study and the study at hand. Further, public interest was not clearly expounded in the current code of ethics, which left a loophole in the ratification of the clause (Ochieng, et al., 2014). The study provides an example of an area in the code that is not well executed. The welfare and working environment were among the many issues brought up that affect media practice in Kenya. However, implications of presenters and content were not addressed in the study, as its area of concern was print media, as opposed to broadcast media.

A study by Wefwafwa (2014) sought to evaluate the training standards, capacity, facilities, and manpower of Kenyan media colleges. Inadequate training facilities were noted, coupled with the trainees' lack of knowledge of their audience, presentation skills and lack of content upon which to report. The learners were subjected to theoretical work and not practical work that would better equip them for the electronic media practice.

According to Wefwafwa (2014), Boston University was considered to have the best journalism training in the world because it stressed on strong writing and speaking skills. The University considered Liberal Arts Education as a solid ground and as the building block for journalism training. Students in the university covered 70 percent of an area outside communication in order to have something to report on. The study findings showed that 91.5 percent of the trainers felt that there was need to improve training facilities for the media courses they taught. Additionally, 94 percent of the student respondents concurred with the trainers that more facilities were needed for journalism training. Concerning the level of contentment with journalism training by media houses, 77.2 percent of student respondents felt that lack of facilities affected the training quality. The formation of trainers' networks to support each other was recommended by the study. Wefwafwa (2014) also opined that the hiring of more experienced trainers, especially in electronic media, was essential. Even though this study provides useful information on the status of journalism training in Kenya, it does not bring out a clear picture of the discrepancies as well as specialisation and the training gaps in the profession.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed a descriptive survey using qualitative and quantitative approaches. The population of this study was represented by FM radio stations in Kenya which number 120 (Nyabuga & Booker, 2013). The study used three samples. The first sample size for presenters was derived from 10 leading FM stations (Ipsos/Karfi Survey, 2015). Three privately owned radio stations that air breakfast talk shows were selected on the basis of audience ratings from January 2015 (Synovate/Ipsos, 2015). The first three radio stations' rating were: Radio Citizen at 40 percent, Radio Jambo had 28 percent, while Radio Maisha was at 21 percent. The second sample size was from morning radio talk show content. The sample was derived from content aired in the year 2016. The weekdays in the year numbered 261 days. The 10 percent of 261 days was 26 days. The study therefore considered 26 days content out of the month of January, 2016. For each radio talk show, three hourly slots were selected, which amounted to 78 hours. For each of the three radio stations, 26 hours content was selected. Purposive sampling was used for selecting radio stations, out of which radio talk show content and presenters were selected. Senior MCK officials with comprehensive knowledge were also selected for interviews. Presenters from all the three sampled radio stations numbered six, one main presenter and a comedian for each. Radio talk show content was sampled using a simple random sampling procedure. The selection of the period of time for radio talk show pre-recorded content was purposively sampled, where the hourly slots with relevant content were derived. Structured in-depth interviews were used in the research. The research addressed interviews as primary data from presenters in radio stations, MCK officials as well as pre-recorded raw content from the three selected radio stations. The data were both qualitative and quantitative. Four radio talk show presenters were interviewed: one from Radio Jambo, two from Radio Citizen, and one from Radio Maisha according to their availability. The developed thematic framework was used to record quantitative (manifest) data and qualitative (latent) data through coding and highlighting unique messages in the pre-recorded radio talk show content. Listening to the radio talk show samples for an overall pattern of content, and then listening again to choose content by themes, and to record frequency of occurrence, gave access to sub-topics in the data from which emerged patterns of response and meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Themes such as graphic language, obscenity, gender stereotyping, and ethnicity or hate speech were examined to find out their implication for media practice in Kenya. Thereafter, presenters' in-depth interviews were carried out. Lastly, MCK senior officials were interviewed, namely, the Legal Officer and the Media Monitoring Officer. Pre-recorded radio talk show content was pre-processed by eliminating music content, lengthy commercials or extended hourly slots with invited guests. After selecting relevant data, it was then transcribed and typed into visual presentations, namely tables using SPSS software.

Explanatory design analysis was applied to data from radio talk show content (qualitative converted to quantitative) and qualitative data from interviews. Qualitative data from presenters and MCK officials' interviews were used to confirm quantitative data from radio talk show content once the three sets had been analysed. Qualitative data from interviews were presented using tables and analysed by key words being converted to themes. They were then presented using descriptive analysis.

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Data from Presenters' Interviews

Presenters' responses from interview questions were tabulated in a descriptive format using SPSS data software and interpreted using recurring themes.

4.1.1 The period of time presenters had worked with the radio station

The question below was used to determine the period of time that a given presenter had worked for the radio station.

How long have you worked with the station?

In Table 1 above, respondent one and three had worked for six years while respondent two and four had worked for five years each in their respective stations. That means they had gathered experience as radio talk show presenters in their respective radio stations which could contribute to mastery in the field.

Table 1: The period of time presenters had worked with the radio station

Respondent	Response
1	I have worked on this radio morning show for six years.
2	I have worked on this radio morning show for five years.
3	I have worked for six years at the breakfast show in this radio station.
4	I have worked as a radio presenter in this station for five years.

4.1.2 Training background before joining the radio station

The question below was used to capture the presenters training background before joining the radio station.

Explain your training background before you got this job?

Respondents two and four in Table 2 below had broadcast training while respondent one and three had no prior broadcast training before joining their respective radio stations. The training background of the presenters was an indication that media houses preferred to hire for other reasons perhaps such as good voices, or comedians to work as radio talk show presenters. It was proof that media houses were infiltrated by non- media practitioners. There seemed to be a training gap between presenters employed by radio stations, and the trained journalists from local learning institutions in Kenya, a finding which answers objective two of the study.

Table 2: Training background before joining the radio station

Respondent	Response
1	I trained as an actress/comedian and in film production.

Before being employed as a radio presenter, I acquired a Diploma in broadcast journalism.

2

3 I had no prior training as a radio presenter before joining this radio station.

1. I started working as a radio presenter in the year 2002 before I acquired any formal training.

2. Before that, I had been trained in drama directing prior to joining high school.

3. Throughout my high school I directed and trained people in drama.

4. Later on I joined Deutsche Welle Radio in Bonn, Germany in the Kiswahili Department where I also trained for one year.

5. When I came back, I joined a radio academy by Phil Matthews, which is one of the best in the country.

4.1.3 Training background after joining the radio station

The question below was used to investigate whether there was further training for the presenters while at the work place.

After getting this job, have you had any further training? Please explain

It was evident from Table 3 that media houses provided tailor-made training programmes for their employees, in addition to their prior experiences or broadcast training before joining the radio stations. They contracted trainers with the desired experience to train their radio personnel, for instance for respondent one and two who had in-house training from an experienced presenter, while respondent three was trained by an expatriate consultant brought in by the respective media house. The rest of the training was on specialised areas such as specialised reporting, media ethics, editorial policy, communication skills, public mass communication, and media marketing on air. MCK provided some of the short courses with an aim of building radio presenters' professional capacity.

Table 3: Training background after joining the radio station

Respondent	Responses
1	1. Yes, after joining the radio station, I underwent in-house training in radio production.
2	1. After employment as a radio presenter, I acquired a Bachelor of Arts in Communication. 2. I underwent further training on coverage of specific topics such as the general elections, and constitution process by the committee of experts. 3. I have also had an in-house training on media ethics and editorial policy.

1. After being hired as a radio presenter, I got on-job training by a radio specialist (40 years' experience) from America on radio presentation.
2. External training includes communication skills, public mass communication
- 3 and how to sell on air.
1. Due to my experience in drama as well as formal training and experience in radio production, I was confident that I could do everything with my body, voice and facial expression. That experience has helped me as a radio
- 4 presenter.

4.1.4 Presenters' exposure to the MCK code of professional ethics

The study was facilitated by the exposure question below.

Have you had exposure to the MCK code of professional ethics?

Three of four respondents in Table 4 above had exposure to the MCK code of ethics, through both formal and in-house training. This evident that they are mostly aware of the code of conduct they need to adhere to as they perform their duties.

Table 4: Presenters' exposure to the MCK code of professional ethics

Respondent	Response
1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The media house took us through the MCK code of regulations. 2. We were made to sign that we will abide by them.
2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We had an in-house training that integrated media ethics with the editorial policy for talk show and radio presenters.
3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes, I have had exposure to the MCK code of regulations. 2. The Company inducted us on the regulations.
4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I first had exposure to MCK code of conduct and professional ethics when I worked as a radio presenter, way back in 2002, before acquiring formal training as a radio presenter.

4.1.5 Holding of short courses on radio talk show content generation by the MCK

How often does the MCK hold short courses on talk show radio content generation? How do the short courses influence the quality of the content generated after the training?

Table 5 below interrogated whether or not the MCK holds short courses on content. The respondent confirmed that the MCK holds short courses but the frequency could not be determined. Respondent one stated that the MCK had not evaluated the implementation of the 'Cheap Talk or Talk Shows' publication. However, the publication caused radio stations to reduce the use of foul language.

Table 5: Holding of short courses on radio talk show content generation by the MCK

Respondent	Response
	1. Short courses are sometimes offered to presenters on content generation, but we have not done monitoring and evaluation for their success.
	2. After the release of the report ‘Cheap Talk or Talk Shows’ the use of foul language
1	reduced because of spotlighting of talk shows.

5.0 DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This study findings point to the need for diverse modes of training for the radio talk show hosts which includes both formal as well as informal and short courses such as those offered by the MCK in specialised areas. That approach would hopefully help improve the radio talk show presenters’ adherence to the MCK’s journalist code of ethics. However, formal training offered in Kenya needs to be improved as echoed in a study by Wefwafwa (2014), which stated that 91.5 percent of the trainers felt that there is need to improve training facilities in the media courses they teach. Additionally, 94 percent of learners concurred with the trainers that the facilities in journalism training institutions needed improvement. Such observations are not in isolation. The BBC’s training also found that there are deficiencies of theoretical and ethical aspects of journalism as well as insufficient practical lessons that could equip graduates with the skills as practising journalists (BBC, WST 2006, p. 39).

Although the MCK developed a diploma in Journalism, the impact is yet to be seen. The MCK had earlier warned that, if all middle level colleges offering journalism training failed to implement the curriculum, they would face closure (Ngila, 2015). A move such as this, which sought to standardise journalism training was likely to yield better results for the profession in Kenya. Media houses were more likely to get better trained personnel for hiring who can be held accountable, since the code was tailor-made for trained journalists who would be eligible for the MCK accreditation.

As the media situation in Kenya stands, it would take a while before professionalism in radio broadcasting in Kenya could be taken seriously by media owners, since they hired whomever they thought would increase their revenue earnings rather than on the basis of professional qualifications.

5.2 Conclusion

Gaps do exist in journalism training in Kenya. One presenter interviewed observed that to be a radio talk show host takes more than academic study. It requires creativity and an ability to appeal to listeners’ tastes in order to remain relevant. Presenter one claimed that her humour appealed to listeners. Also observed was that listeners trusted presenters enough to allow them to counsel them when they were in distress, especially on family and relationships matters. That called for some level of maturity and knowledge of counselling by presenters.

5.3 Recommendations

Media houses need to consider the role of media in society, not just for profit making, but also for social developmental. They need to be accountable and responsible to the society by adding value, and not merely using the radio platform to increase revenue through advertising. They should work closely with training institutions to ensure that they are provided with appropriately trained journalists. This can be achieved through their funding of journalism training institutions to enable them to acquire the right equipment and provide some of their personnel as trainers.

Similarly, journalism training institutions need to overhaul their curricular, to include more practical sessions that would fit the need for suitable personnel for hire by radio stations. Media houses hire orators, actors, comedians, musicians and people who have excelled in other fields. This kind of scenario calls for trainers to include Liberal Arts in broadcast journalism training, as was suggested by Wefwafwa (2014).

5.4 Areas for Further Research

Further research could be done by the CA on the following areas:

The handling of listeners' complaints at media houses is an area of study that can be undertaken since it was not clearly highlighted by radio presenters during the interviews. Such information may require a different approach, since presenters may not be very explicit in their responses.

Another study area that can be carried out is to examine the challenges faced by the MCK as a media regulatory body and necessary interventions to improve media practice in Kenya.

Media researchers could study how socialisation of radio talk show presenters is reflected on the content and the effects of the agendas they set during talk shows to the political atmosphere in society.

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