



MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY

**REGULAR UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS
2021/2022 ACADEMIC YEAR
SECOND YEAR FIRST SEMESTER**

**SCHOOL OF ARTS, HUMANITIES, SOCIAL
SCIENCES AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES
BACHELOR OF COMMUNICATION &
JOURNALISM**

COURSE CODE: CMJ 2103-1

**COURSE TITLE: MASS COMMUNICATION
THEORIES AND APPROACHES**

DATE: 1ST APRIL, 2022

TIME: 1100-1300HRS

1. “The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place”. **Using the illustration** of the communication process:
 - a) Explain how each of the elements in the communication process can impact on the above statement. (10mks)
 - b) How can mass communication theories help in explaining the role of each component in the communication process. (10mks)
2. Consider the following media report and respond to the questions

Media looks OK but independent journalism is under attack in Kenya



Adrian Bloomfield grabbed a copy of his favourite newspaper but didn't like what he read. He is East Africa correspondent for *The Economist*.

“What has happened to *The Star*? It was once a fearless newspaper that dared to challenge the government when it needed to be challenged. It didn't put this kind of guff on its front page,” Bloomfield tweeted.

He was reacting to Lion Place's top story on June 9 headlined, “Covid-19 kills libido, ruins fun in the bedroom”. The story was based on an Amref study that found declining activity between the sheets across the republic. It is a strange study. Haven't people been reading headlines about a boom of “Covid babies”?

When someone pointed out to the journalist that lovemaking is serious business that merits front page treatment in a national newspaper, Bloomfield shot back that, “Reproductive

health is a serious issue that should not be characterised in a headline as 'fun in the bedroom'. Such a headline is designed to titillate not to inform".

But that was not exactly what got Bloomfield's goat. *The Star* has styled itself as a political newspaper. "Independent, fresh, different," its tagline says. Francis Atwoli can't call a press conference to talk about laundry. Rumba maybe. Or Chief Justice Martha Koome to wax lyrical about the joys of mbuzi and booze. Politics is supposed to be *The Star's* forte. But just four days after Bloomfield's beef, on Sunday, June 13, the paper pulled down an acerbic political commentary from its website and Twitter hours after the article caused a massive storm online. It was headlined, "Uhuru should resign or be forced out through civil disobedience".

Lion Place never bothered to explain to its readers why it took down the article, as a sign of accountability and good faith. Readers should go figure, they decided.

The Observer is reliably informed that the article was pulled down after an avalanche of phone calls from powerful people issuing threats to editors. Days later, *The Star* editorial pontiffs were summoned to a high-level meeting.

Nobody may say it out loud but censorship is widespread and systematic in Kenya, despite robust guarantees of freedom of the media and of expression in the Constitution. Some powerful people still sneer, "Constitution kitu gani?"

Former Mukurwe-ini MP Kabando wa Kabando was the lone guest on Jeff Koinange Live show on Citizen TV on June 16 discussing Mt Kenya succession. The producers cut short the show after the former University of Nairobi student leader made points certain people obviously found uncomfortable.

Kabando later tweeted: "I thank [@KoinangeJeff](#) for hosting. Jeff is a globally renowned journalist and author. We celebrate his affable mien. That the interview was abruptly ended and 'exit' protocols blocked should worry, interest us to DEFEND MEDIA FREEDOM. We reject PLOT to return [#DarkDays](#) + [#RejectBBI](#)."

News anchor Anne Kiguta of K24 TV became the first prominent casualty of media censorship surrounding the BBI project. On October 19 last year, her bosses cancelled an edition of the weekly current affairs talk show, Punch Line. She had invited Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro, a critic of BBI and an ally of Deputy President William Ruto.

Anne read out an apology to her viewers and exposed the TV station as compromised. She later quit.

Neither the media honchos at Lion Place nor Jeff and his producers showed similar courage in the latest blatant and illegal interference with independent journalism in Kenya.

Kabando said: "That there are numerous concerns on risks for [#SpeakingTruthToPower](#) says volumes about Kenya's [#StateOfDemocracy](#). More reason why we must [#SpeakOut](#) unreservedly".

(Retrieved from: <https://mediaobserver.co.ke/index.php/2021/06/28/media-looks-ok-but-independent-journalism-is-under-attack-in-kenya/>)

a) Which normative theory explains the above scenario? (2mks)

b) Support your answer in (a) above using the tenets of the stated theory (7mks)

c) Which theory has been advanced to correct the scenario? (2mks)

d) Explain your answer in (c) above (4mks)

3. The *State of the Media 2021* report released by the Media council of Kenya shows that... **“About 35% of the respondents preferred social media and the internet as the main source of information. Most of the social media & Internet users being male whereas female respondents spent most time on television. The younger age groups (18-34 years) are more into social media & internet whereas the older respondents aged 35 years and above preferred radio.”**

a) Using the tenets of the Uses and Gratifications theory, explain why there is a difference in media preference between the two age groups. (10mks)

b) How do you think the communication and media industry has capitalised on these preferences? (5mks)

4. ‘The news media have the power to set a nation’s agenda and influence the public agenda.’ Basing on the current electioneering period in Kenya, use the tenets of the agenda setting theory to discuss how the Kenyan media have set the agenda on:

a) Individuals (5mks)

b) Issues (5mks)

c) Events (5mks)

/////END/////