Kenya Media Week
2018 REPORT

Expanding Spaces
New Voices
Financing Models
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## Abbreviations and acronyms

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>BAKE</td>
<td>Bloggers Association of Kenya</td>
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<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>British Broadcasting Corporation</td>
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<td>C4D</td>
<td>Communication for Development</td>
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<td>CAK</td>
<td>Communications Authority of Kenya</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBD</td>
<td>Central Business District</td>
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<tr>
<td>CNN</td>
<td>Cable News Network</td>
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<td>FM</td>
<td>Frequency modulation</td>
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<td>KARF</td>
<td>Kenya Audience Research Foundation</td>
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<td>KBC</td>
<td>Kenya Broadcasting Corporation</td>
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<td>KTN</td>
<td>Kenya Television Network</td>
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<td>MFA</td>
<td>Media Focus on Africa</td>
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<td>NED</td>
<td>National Endowment for Democracy</td>
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<td>NMG</td>
<td>Nation Media Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>NTV</td>
<td>Nation Television</td>
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<tr>
<td>PWDs</td>
<td>People Living With Disability</td>
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<tr>
<td>PWC</td>
<td>Pricewaterhouse Coopers</td>
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<td>SGR</td>
<td>Standard Gauge Railway</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>URL</td>
<td>Uniform Resource Locator</td>
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The Kenya Media Week was held over three days in September 2018 and drew together practicing and aspiring members of the media fraternity. Their focus was to discuss matters affecting contemporary Kenyan journalism around three thematic areas, namely: fake news and the media; money and the media; and media and democracy. The National Endowment for Democracy (NED) supported the event, which was the brainchild of Media Focus on Africa (MFA).

The event was held at the Kenya National Theatre and had been preceded by three roundtable discussions held in different locations in Nairobi between March and May 2018. This report captures highlights from the various deliberations and contributes to MFA’s efforts to design and produce contextualized media programmes for social change.

MFA promotes the concept of communication for development (C4D) as a reciprocal process of dialogue through positive influences on people’s beliefs, attitudes and behaviour. The organization also runs multi-media campaigns that harness the potential of television, radio, print, mobile phones, and the Internet. These campaigns are combined with a strategy to strengthen the capacity of key actors who are able to influence the behaviour, beliefs and perceptions of the public at large.

MFA provides space for people to voice their aspirations on issues of leadership and governance, free and fair elections, peace building, and reconciliation while mainstreaming gender and socio-economic justice. More information on MFA may be found on the website: http://www.mediafocusonafrica.org
Kenya Media Week panelists and paper contributors

Uduak Amimo  
Veteran journalist and media consultant

Juddy Bissem  
Postgraduate student in Project Management at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology with a background in communications

Nancy Booker, PhD  
Senior lecturer at Aga Khan Graduate School of Communication

Terry Ann Chebet  
CEO, Fanaka TV

Victor Chege  
Reporter BBC

Patrick Gathara,  
Cartoonist, Editor – The Elephant

Kezia Wangui Githinji  
PhD student

Frenny Jowi,  
Journalist Media Focus on Africa

Kennedy Kachwanya  
CEO, Bloggers Association of Kenya

Wangeci Kanyeki  
Postgraduate student in Media Studies at Daystar University, journalist and published researcher

Kalekye Kasina  
Health blogger

Gladysse Kemunto  
Lecturer, Multimedia University

Shitemi Khamadi  
Blogger, digital media expert and Internews journalist

Njeri Kierieni  
Researcher, KARF

Henry Maina  
Article 19 East Africa

Harrison Manga  
Project Manager, Media Focus on Africa

Jesse Masai  
Postgraduate student in Media Studies, and published author with interests in digital migration

Julie Masiga  
Journalist and lawyer

Mufasa  
Spoken word artiste

Luke Muleka  
Founder, Signs TV

Aurelia Munene  
Founder, Eider Africa

Jessica Musila  
Executive Director, Mzalendo

Johnstone Mwakazi,  
Speaker and communications trainer

Lynette Mwangi  
Lawyer and CEO, Media Owners Association

John Allan Namu  
Co-founder, Africa Uncensored

Jeremy Nganda  
Vision Group Uganda, MA Communication

Mwende Ngao  
Creative entrepreneur and lifestyle blogger

Patience Nyange  
Kenya National Commission on Human Rights

Yvonne Okwara  
Journalist and news anchor

Laban Cliff Onsarigo  
Nation Media Group- Business News Anchor

Churchill Otieno  
Nation Media Group Digital

Caroline Oyugi  
Journalist, Africa Women and Children Feature Services

Njeri Rugene  
Journalist and consultant editor

Alfred Shiundu  
Africa Check

Dennis Sila  
Journalist

Wilson Ugangu, PhD  
Associate Dean, Multimedia University

Paul Wafula  
Investigative journalist

Wambui Wamunyu, PhD  
Daystar University

Julia Wanjiku  
Producer KBC

Emmanuel Yegon  
Winner, Top Story content & co-founder, Mobile Journalism
Journalism has been practiced in Kenya for well over a century, and through varying political and socio-economic contexts, has survived and thrived. It has also become big business, even as it grapples with the emergence of new trends and players, and the role it can play in young democracies. It is these considerations that laid the groundwork for the inaugural Kenya Media Week 2018, organized by Media Focus on Africa. Held in September 2018, the event focused on three themes namely, fake news, money and media, and journalism’s role in democracy.

Three roundtable discussions had been held in previous months, each tackling one of the three themes.

The outcome was a rich discourse that recognized the unprecedented scope and fast spread of fake news, the possible alternatives to funding journalism beyond advertising, and the continued need for journalism to play a key role in providing information and empowering citizens in young democracies.

The roundtables laid the groundwork for the Media Week, by bringing together a wide variety of participants from bloggers to mainstream journalists, and academic researchers to students undergoing journalism training. #MediaMattersKE was the hashtag used around the roundtables and became a trending topic during the Media Week. Alternative and previously marginalized voices such as web-exclusive websites and small broadcasting outlets provided additional perspectives on expanded varieties of news content, the needs of niche audiences such as people living with disability, and media outlets free of commercial and political interests.

These conversations deepened during the Media Week, informed as they were by an increased range of participants, the inclusion of research or reflective essays, and the focus on the work of various seasoned journalists.

Fake news was understood to be a concept that has long been part of the news process, but has acquired greater prominence in recent years thanks to technology, the repeated use of the term by a powerful global figure (in this case the US president), and the impact it creates. Damaged reputations, decline in credibility, and revenue losses were among the negative outcomes of the rise and spread of fake news in journalism. A study based in Nyandarua County underscored the reach of fake news and the need for more information about journalism as practised outside of Nairobi. But panelists made recommendations towards curbing the impact of fake news, including the investment in media literacy among journalists and the citizenry, enabling them to recognize and debunk fake news. Among other suggestions was the development of research and fact-checking desks in news media houses, devoted to quickly verifying information.

Various discussions also addressed the revenue challenges faced by journalism today and in Kenya’s media context. Leading commercial media outlets have restructured and retrenched staff in the recent past due to insufficient earnings on digital and/or mobile platforms, and advertising losses on legacy platforms. The government’s role as a leading advertiser across media platforms illustrated the vulnerabilities commercial media houses face in not ruffling too many feathers so as to avoid losing revenues. However, the different types of news entities in existence today - from advertising-centred media outlets to donor-funded web-exclusive platforms - demonstrated how traditional and new funding models could co-exist.

There were also discussions around the fact that quality journalism also costs money, of which media houses are not always willing to invest. However, the entry of new types of media outlets – such as Africa Check, Africa Uncensored and The Elephant – illustrated two key issues: that there are audiences willing to consume long-form, analytical or investigative pieces; and there are new approaches in funding journalism, such as donor funding and producing content for paying clients. Paywalls, subscription models, and new platforms such as Viusasa were also discussed with the acknowledgment that audiences would in turn demand high-quality, local content.

There was a link made between the political regime and the extent of media freedoms experienced in the country, with discussions pointing to a shrinking of the space to express oneself freely even within a fairly liberal Constitutional framework. The subtle forms of authoritarian control over media content was exposed, such as in discussion of the withholding of media advertising. The work of independent/alternative media houses in running investigative journalism and news analyses that legacy media would shy away from was seen as a way to continue media’s core function of keeping government and political officials accountable, and protecting citizens’ interests. These new journalism entities – enabled by social media applications and mobile telephony - illustrated that digital technologies have allowed new voices to share previously-untold stories and widened constricted spaces.

The discussions and spotlight on different investigative reporters also confirmed that in spite of the various challenges encountered in the course of their work, there remain individuals and media institutions committed to producing high-quality journalism in Kenya.
The history of journalism in Kenya dates back to the late 1800s, starting with newspapers which thrived under government and non-governmental ownership through colonial times into the post-Independence eras. Radio and television were introduced by colonial authorities in the late 1920s and late 1950s respectively, and stayed in the hands of government until the early 1990s with the liberalization of the media. It was during the 1990s that the Internet was introduced into the country, and it enabled the entry of new journalism platforms, including social media and mobile phones.

Through these times, journalism has experienced multiple transformations within the transforming political, socio-economic and technological contexts. It is these changes that provoked the creation of a series of dialogues that assessed particular contemporary challenges that were emerging namely: a heightened awareness of the spread and reach of fake news, the struggles of journalism companies to make money on digital platforms, and the continued reflection as to what purpose journalism serves in this context.

Media Focus on Africa begun with a series of roundtable discussions, each focused on one of three themes, as follows: fake news, monetizing news, and democracy and news. The roundtables drew together a cross-section of participants from civil society, academia, media industry, and included students from different tertiary institutions. The conversations exposed different perspectives around the issues and confirmed the continued need for collaboration by various media players. Excerpts from these conversations are captured in the 2nd chapter.

The conversations also served as a preview of the inaugural Kenya Media Week, held on Sept. 12-14 2018. Over the course of three days, journalists, postgraduate students, civil society actors, and other interested parties engaged in discussions that were prompted by research, informed by practice, and devoted to exploring new ideas. Highlights from the Kenya Media Week and two select papers are presented in Chapter 3 and the appendix section respectively.

The outcome of the conversations was an increased understanding of the challenges faced by journalism, an enhanced appreciation for the various forms in which it is practiced, and a recognition that journalism remains relevant and essential in the digital age.
There were three roundtable discussions held between March and May 2018, each one revolving around one particular theme. The discussions allowed for participants from different media sectors – including industry, civil society, and academia – to engage in dialogue around current and emerging trends, which in turn proved beneficial in building up to the larger Kenya Media Week.

This chapter provides an overview of the discussions held during the roundtables.
The first of the roundtable discussions was held on March 9, 2018 and focused on business models in journalism. Traditionally, for-profit media houses relied on advertising as the primary source of revenue, with subscription as a secondary source. However, the presentation of content on online and digital platforms has led to declines in advertising and subscription revenues. This has affected the ability of commercial media houses to make money efficiently and predictably, requiring greater investment in qualitative and quantitative research to be able to assess funding models and audience trends.

The roundtable had three key sessions kicked off by a presentation from Ms. Njeri Kierieni who discussed media trends data gathered by the Kenya Audience Research Foundation (KARF). Three panelists from academia, consumer research, and industry then discussed media trends data and journalism training. The panelists were Mr. John Allan Namu (representing broadcast media), Ms. Njeri Rugene (representing print media), and Dr. Nancy Booker (representing academia), a panel discussion, and a question and answer session with the audience. The audience then participated in the discussion in a question and answer session.

The link to the full proceedings may be found here:

https://www.facebook.com/MFAMediaFocusOnAfrica/videos/1625246690896294/
Ms. Kierieni provided an overview of the work of KARF, which is mandated to provide audience measurement research. She observed that the shift from analogue to digital media in Kenya had led to disruptions including audience shifts from free to paid television. One illustration was from 2015, when viewership trends shifted away from traditional media houses to more digital media platforms. Following the digital migration of 2015 – where the regulatory authority require television to switch from analogue to digital signals - estimated television viewership had grown to approximately 6 million, partly due to the larger range of channels available. There were four primary local television channels but more than 66 channels registered. Radio had grown, particularly in the number of stations broadcasting in vernacular languages, with at least 274 registered radio stations. Online consumption of content had also increased with a large number of Kenyans consuming content on social media.

Challenges included the fact that the number of television channels with unique or niche audiences, amounted to approximately 5%.

The observation from Ms. Kiereini was television content production did not target unique audiences. Additionally, gambling companies were observed to be a significant funder of sports content, which was attracting audiences but exposing them to a betting culture.

Data from KARF indicated that gambling contribute the largest share of advertising spend on radio and television. Other highlights from the data were that so-called smaller television stations were experiencing steady rises in audience numbers, and that local news was a key draw for audiences as well. Radio station content was noted to be consumed more in the mornings.

Online, various applications, websites, and search engines were the most consumed platforms online. These platforms included Whatsapp, Facebook, Google, Sportpesa, Tuko.com, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Gmail and Yahoo.

The KARF presentation
This session revolved around a discussion with panelists from academia, and industry. Ms. Rugene’s 25-year experience at Nation Media Group provided perspective on the challenges traditional media houses face. Restructuring and retrenchment have been experienced in several media houses in the past few years. Election periods, which have historically been seasons of increased sales, have experienced negative change such as in 2017 when print sales were significantly low despite the prolonged electioneering period. The difference was the high-volume traffic on social media where citizens shared information online, and the resultant pressure on journalists to work harder to break more news online and to produce more current content more frequently.

Audiences are also increasingly young, but traditional media have not all successfully grown those audiences.

The result was that traditional media houses have become more aggressive about adopting new strategies to make money. “Perhaps the most positive aspect has been the fact that editors and journalists have been driven to become more innovative, more creative and more inspired,” she said. She pointed to efforts including NMG’s introduction of online newspapers with web-exclusive content on their ‘digital-first’ platform.

“This means that one story is done for print but using a different angle. It is first published online. This has had its own challenges as online writing requires a unique style. The editor has had to undergo a transformation as they too have to provide editorial guidance to the reporters,” she said. Other approaches include providing more human-interest style content such as on Page 3 of the Daily Nation.

Mr. Namu presented his experience as a former senior journalist with a leading traditional media house who had turned media entrepreneur using a primarily web-exclusive platform. His company Africa Uncensored, relies on a blend of revenue sources including producing content for traditional media houses and donor funding. Mr. Namu observed that media faced external and internal influences that affected the moral high ground that it needed to function effectively.

He noted that as a contributor to the development of KTN News, he and his team members recognized that local media audiences appreciated local current news. His view was that KTN News was enjoying consistent growth because it provided much-needed analysis and context to news.

The funding challenge, in his view, stemmed from the change in content distribution platforms from which audiences consume news. “The shift is that the media no longer has a monopoly of sharing news,” said Mr. Namu. “Take Netflix for instance. Anyone, anywhere in the world can access the best content produced anywhere in the world for as little as Ksh1, 100 per month. This has changed the content landscape. The traditional media is losing talent to platforms like Netflix which is providing the very best in content.”

His prediction was that Netflix would continue to spend large amounts of money in content acquisition.
Whereas content has moved online, the media is facing challenges in transforming online audience traffic to money.

Dr. Booker
Participants expressed frustrations with the limited collaboration between the media and academia, further explaining that perhaps it is the social media that filled the vacuum left when the mainstream media was shutdown. The global is becoming local, and what is local is becoming global. This must be reflected in ingoing media discourse as traditional media struggles under the weight of advances in technologies.

The issue of journalists and sponsored content was also raised affirming that in their own capacities journalists are becoming increasingly aware of where the audience is, as well as where the money is. One of the participants put it this way: “content is king but distribution is King Kong” effectively explaining where challenges and solutions lie.

The large number of new and young reporters in the newsroom exposed the need for more experienced practitioners who can provide greater context to stories with Ms. Rugene observing that newsrooms often received scathing feedback from audiences. “People say that we oversell stories, a big headline that is thin on content,” said Ms. Rugene. “But editors must get involved in this crisis and work with people with institutional memory for specific stories.”

Participants also raised the concern that the media is no longer setting the agenda, has invested too much on sensational content, and has not resolved how to make money while a significant number of their target audience is to be found on social media.

Mr. Joshua Komen, a lecturer at the Kenya Media Training College, suggested that changes in content contributed to why the audiences had changed platforms. On another note, he proposed that the emphasis on academic papers, rather than skill and experience, had also had a negative impact.

Regarding media practitioners, talent is now secondary to certificates. One must have a degree as a minimum requirement to work in the media even though they might have a natural eye for the news, said Mr. Komen. “It is for this reason that journalists are now unable to put things into context.”

Ms. Christine Nguku, a veteran journalist who has also owned a media business, observed that the practitioners of media executed policies developed by business people who did not have an understanding of the needs and challenges on the ground.

“We are practitioners in the media implementing a business plan by people not sitting at this media roundtable,” she said. “The people who conceive these business plans must be at the table. As a journalist I never had to wonder about where the money is. I concentrated on producing a good product and somebody else
The panelists emphasized that it is not solely that advances in technology have affected the manner in which news is consumed, but it has also affected the expectations that media owners and the public have of the journalists. Journalists are now content creators and entrepreneurs. They must identify and pursue stories that ‘sell’. All these dynamics demand for an all-inclusive media roundtable that involves each and every player, from the person who identifies the news, editors, marketers, business owners, academia and more importantly the audience who is now a participant that can no longer be ignored.

Journalists are now contending with significant challenges, their employment appraisals are tied to the digital platform. They must have an active social media platform where their stories must attract significant online traffic. Challenges that journalists face as media trends change must form part of the discourse. It was particularly emphasized that the current media platform and the challenges it is facing will be effectively resolved through a multi-sectoral approach where a variety of stakeholders collaborate.

Some business models that we develop will fail because we have consistently excluded the people who crunch the numbers.

John Allan Namu
Fake news and public interest driven journalism

April 13, 2018 roundtable

The link to the full proceedings may be found here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l8phrZMgOpI&t=613s

The April 13, 2018 roundtable focused on Fake News and interest-driven journalism in Kenya. The forum provided an opportunity to assess whether accuracy, truth and credibility have been compromised by the changes that have taken place in journalism, particularly those driven by various digital technologies.

The roundtable included participants from academia and law as well as the mainstream, community and alternative media. They interrogated ways in which to mitigate fake news. The Chief Executive Officer of the Media Owners’ Association and a digital media expert were among the contributors to the discussion around the media multiplier effect and how the media consequently becomes important in informing the public and shaping opinions in the era of fake news. The legal sector has become an important partner for the media in the wake of fake news to help protect the integrity of the media as well as to protect media owners and practitioners from crippling law suits. During the roundtable, stakeholders sought to interrogate the impact of fake news, the capacity of audiences to identify fake news, and the question of whether legacy media still retained credibility as key sources of accurate news. The discussion also addressed how the media can debunk fake news.
Introduction

In the introductory section of the event, Ms. Frenny Jowi of Media Focus on Africa explained that the traditional media has been slow to digitize which had created room for social media digital platforms to take root. These social media platforms are accessible to the public and break news instantly providing significant complications for the traditional media who are expected to debunk fake news.

The verifiability of information shared in both social media platforms and traditional media platforms has become difficult to achieve. It is for this reason that media stakeholders including partners from the legal sector and academia participated in the roundtable to establish a path way forward in order to strengthen the gate keeping role of the media.

Ms Mwangi, a lawyer, indicated that stakeholders must now begin an introspective interrogation of issues that affect media freedoms. She spoke about the changing times particularly changes in technology that have changed how information is disseminated and consumed, how the platforms have expanded as well as increased appetite for instant information.

Traditional media platforms have been slow to digitize which has created an information vacuum filled by citizen journalism and the spread of information on social media and other digital platforms. This has further affected credibility of the information that people consume.

She also observed that fake news is not a new phenomenon since print media in the past included publications that were not based on fact. Today however, the speed and scope of fake news have been enhanced in the digital age. It is for this reason that the role of trained journalists in keeping information both relevant and accurate cannot be over-emphasized.

Various illustrations were provided in the course of the forum of various types of fake news and there was the agreement that the impact of broadcasting or publishing those stories damages the media’s credibility and exposes them to legal costs.

However, the political and economic environment in which the media operate emerged as significant challenges. Many media platforms are commercial enterprises dependent on advertising, a significant amount of it coming from the government. This leads to a delicate balance where the media is not in essence free from political interests. There was a call for the media to work beyond commercial and political interests to focus on driving the agenda of the citizenry, and to do so by reclaiming its space as a trusted source of information.

The objectives of the roundtable were:

To interrogate the extent and degree to which fake news have affected the verifiability of news in general.

• To drive discussions on ways to control fake news and its impact on the Fourth Estate.

• To explore the dynamics of fake news and public interest driven journalism in Kenya.

Presentations

Lynnette Mwangi-CEO Media Owners Association

Ms Mwangi, a lawyer, indicated that stakeholders must now begin an introspective interrogation of issues that affect media freedoms. She spoke about the changing times particularly changes in technology that have changed how information is disseminated and consumed, how the platforms have expanded as well as increased appetite for instant information.

He contextualized the information and discussions by sharing some examples of fake news, and observing that the agenda behind fake news is not always very clear. Some of the ways in which fake news is created and shared is through the creation of parody accounts of public figures, character assassination of famous individuals, and election season content that is misleading or not credible and is designed to provoke emotion and serve certain interests. Fake news has significantly taken root in the political scene and has been used to whip up emotions.

Mr Khamadi talked about the thin line between fake news and propaganda further explaining that fake news has gained traction because it relies on digital platforms that are instant and accessible to the masses. The proliferation of the blogging sector has further complicated the scenario.

Key players in public-interest driven media include politicians, bloggers and journalists. Using photos and texts is the most expedient manner in which the fake news phenomenon has captured the attentions and minds of the public. At the moment, there are no strict laws that monitor online platforms and hold those that run them accountable for the information that they share.

Shitemi Khamadi, a blogger, digital media expert and journalist with Internews, is heavily involved in digital driven content creation, dissemination and consumption. He has also been actively involved in processes to analyse ways in which to monitor and control the proliferation of fake news. He noted that announcing the death of public figures online is one of the areas where fake news has significantly taken root.

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Key players in public-interest driven media include politicians, bloggers and journalists. Using photos and texts is the most expedient manner in which the fake news phenomenon has captured the attentions and minds of the public. At the moment, there are no strict laws that monitor online platforms and hold those that run them accountable for the information that they share.

Many such platforms include popular online sites such as Kenyan online websites, blogging platforms, mainstream journalists as well as social media particularly WhatsApp. He spoke about how clever bloggers link with trusted media platforms to advance certain interests.
The presentations paved way for a vibrant plenary session from veteran journalist Churchill Otieno-Digital Editor from the Nation Media Group, Prof. Wilson Ugangu –Associate Dean at the Multimedia University of Kenya, and Kennedy Kachwanya-Chairperson, Bloggers Association of Kenya.

Prof. Ugangu emphasized the importance of understanding the basics of fake news, how it looks like and how to identify it. He explained the manner in which the politician defines fake news making reference to President Donald Trump who has popularized the term. Prof. Ugangu further explained that politicians tend to label what does not serve them as fake news.

Prof. Ugangu explained that what is today defined as fake news is going to change as dynamics are bound to change. Using the media to ground issues that affect people’s day to day lives is basically what public interest driven journalism entails. In a context infused by information that is not verifiable, the information that people are exposed to, there will be a problem in regard to how people will act and especially within a political context. The integrity of democratic process is affected by such fake news. In a fragile democracy such as Kenya’s, when institutions begin playing on popular platforms to leverage negative ethnicity, they create a context where people cannot think and act rationally.

It was nonetheless made clear that fake news is not a new phenomenon with Mr Churchill Otieno explaining that fake news and traditional media is defined by the intention of those that are creating and disseminating it. If an individual is pushing untruths it is because they have certain interest that they would like to achieve. He said that fake news has become a nuisance because it is easier to disseminate compared to the past where digital platforms as content disseminators were more limited.

The manufacturing of fake news has created an industry that negatively affects the lives and reputations of individuals and institutions, and also leads to revenue losses. Fake news speaks to the emotions, riling people up to act in a certain manner to an extent where people’s definitions of their concept as Kenyans vary depending on their ethnic identities. The biggest social media platform globally is Facebook, but recent developments are showing that how Facebook moves forward will determine how long it survives, without investing in verifiability the social media giant is bound to face significant speed bumps. Mr. Otieno explained that for journalists, verification must be a duty to the public, to confirm that indeed what has been communicated is accurate.

The supposed need to break news first has affected the capacity for journalists to verify breaking news.

“Until two or three years ago, the trend was that a story that goes viral, whether true or not was normalized for as long as you were not the one responsible for sharing it,” he said. “We just turned a blindeye to fake news as long as they were not coming from our desks. But for as long as it is the public and our audiences that consume this news, there is a duty for mainstream media to debunk fake stories.”

The role of bloggers in the proliferation of fake news was discussed with Mr Kennedy Kachwanya explaining that it is important to first understand how the internet works. Research findings have found that information spreads faster on social media applications such as Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp. He further explained that misinformation put online has a wide reach compared to more mainstream media platforms.

He spoke about how whistle blowers have been labelled as fake news peddlers particularly in lifting the lid on scandals. Mr. Kachwanya also pointed to a study done in 2016 on how Kenyans tweet, which revealed that most of the information in the Kenyan Twitter-sphere is political.

He explained that there is a need to develop a system through which people are able to identify information as credible and this can done through training. The internet has opened up the creative industries but at the same time affected the credibility of information. A significant number of young people rely on the internet to earn a living but at the same time they have boosted the growth and proliferation of fake news.
Key Reactions, Comments and Recommendations

- Participants agreed that there is a need for a multi-faceted approach in addressing the fake news phenomena.
- There is a need to understand and interrogate best practices on how other countries are mitigating the growth and proliferation of fake news.
- The issue of fake news in a young forming democracy such as Kenya that became a multi-party democracy in 1992 is a sensitive one as the wrong information in the hands of the masses can lead to devastating results.
- Fake news has taken away a sense of civility and replaced it with a militant and emotive approach to issues.
- The media business model is not about growing numbers; their media model must also speak to public interests and serve as the go to sources for credible information. Fake news is exciting and must be taken as a challenge by the media to improve content creation and firm up their gate keeping role.
- There is a contest around the truth but where is the media around that contest? Are they at the helm of that contest? A time is coming for those who are managing media to change how they operate. For instance, a particular journalist is intrinsically linked to the media that they serve. The journalists that are there today have a presence on social media platforms but this is something they do not seem to be alive to. So they have further served as agents of fake news whether deliberately or by default.
- The task of empowering the public to determine what is truthful and what is fake news lies squarely on the media.
- Participants spoke about Group Kenya and Raila Think Tank which are Facebook groups with more than two million followers that spread a lot of fake news.
- There are those who felt that digital platforms have done more harm than good.
- There was a moment of awakening when it was mentioned that the Nairobi News is a blog that runs fake news, Mr Churchill Otieno found this to be confounding since Nairobi News is a digital platform run by the Nation Media Group, it was reported that a rogue blog had taken advantage of the popularity of the media house to advance certain interest.
Way forward/emerging issues

The panelists emphasized that there is a need to invest in verification tools and to build the capacity of journalists to do so. They said that fake news is here to stay and that even with laws to tighten the loopholes, there is a need for the media to reclaim its gatekeeping role. The role of the media as a watchdog seems to no longer exist, and players in content creation must protect themselves from proliferating fake news.

There is a duty that the media has to the public to remain truthful, accurate and verifiable. Panelists agreed that the roundtable was a good beginning in improving the seriousness with which media stakeholders address and approach the fake news industry.

“Verification must be a duty to the public, to confirm that indeed what has been communicated is accurate.”

Churchill Otieno.
Media and Democracy
May 11, 2018 roundtable

The link to the full proceedings may be found here:

The May 11, 2018 roundtable continued the discussions around contemporary journalism in Kenya by focusing on media’s function and place in a growing democracy. The capacity of the media to hold governments and institutions accountable remained integral to the function of journalism, though as was observed, the issue of democracy is often reduced to the question of elections yet there are multiple governance issues that require daily media attention.

Public interest journalism is therefore critical in providing checks and balances. This particular roundtable sought to address whether the media can and should speak truth to power, how skilled and ethical were journalists, and are journalists safe even as they seek truth from powerful actors.
Panel discussion

The roundtable began with a panel discussion comprised of Uduak Amimo (journalist), Yvonne Okwara (media practitioner and moderator of the panel), Henry Maina (Regional Director, Article 19) and Wambui Wamunyu (academic). The discussion was followed by a question and answer session with the other participants.

According to Mr Henry Maina, the media’s freedom reached its peak in the 2000/2003 general elections, and contrasted that with the current environment where he held the view that the media landscape had become reminiscent of the 1990’s where the freedoms of expressions were much more limited. He described 2017 as a difficult year for journalists where there were 94 incidences of attacks against journalism in the months of April and May compared to 54 in 2016. Many of those attacks were perpetrated for political reasons, and exposed the vulnerability of journalists who seek to write accurate and objective stories, even for sensational stories.

In assessing media performance, Mr. Maina gave a mixed review indicating that the Kenyan press was progressive compared to counterparts elsewhere on the continent in adopting and using various technologies. But he added that the media is also contributing to stifling democracy by being partisan, and by lacking consistency in following up on stories or connecting individual cases to larger issues.

Mr Maina said that the media must extract itself from partisan coverage as part of the solution to these violent attacks. He said that it is now as clear as day which media support whom.

There was also the observation that journalism undergoes changes over time. Questions over the definition of the journalist, and the context in which a journalist operates, emerged.

Dr. Wamunyu observed that in past years, journalists were hidden figures because they were mostly in the print media. But the entry of broadcast and digital platforms, came greater exposure and name recognition for journalists and some expansion of space. It became easier to become a journalist and to adopt the moniker of ‘media personality’ where the emphasis was on appearance rather than ability to analyse critical issues.

Ms Amimo said that in the 70’s and 80’s there was a unity of purpose, an agreement that what was taking place in the country was not good for Kenya. Many were awake to the agitation for change. But in 2006 the country lapsed into ‘it is our time to eat’ as corruption took root in the country and the media began to take sides. The situation, she said, took a turn for the worst as 2007/08 election divided the country right in the middle.

The role of the media in fuelling conflict, particularly community and vernacular radio is well documented. She therefore explained that all these issues taking place in the country have had an impact on the media landscape.

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She said that the situation in 2013 and 2017 are as a result of the mistakes made in 2007/08. The fact that the media relies on advertisements and that the government is also the leading advertiser is problematic. Ms Amimo also alluded to restructuring and retrenchments in the media industry, some of which have been related to individuals speaking up on issues the government is not happy about.

Concerning the definition of a journalist, Ms. Uduak Amino explained that there is a code of conduct guiding the work of journalists. She said that traditional more mainstream journalists are regulated and liable to legal actions unlike social media actors who still remain unregulated. She explained that traditional media conforms to a template that is well defined and consumers are aware of what to expect. But in this day and age as long as a person has a smart phone, they essentially become journalists. But she was also quick to emphasize that contradictions in law and practice are not new.

In regard to the evolution of journalism, the political climate was discussed as a significant contributor. In 2002 the country experienced a political transition of power from the presidency of Daniel Arap Moi to that of Mwai Kibaki. In that period and even before, the role of the journalist had changed.

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From the panel discussion, there were various challenges faced by journalists that emerged. These included:

- The need for journalists to more deeply interrogate issues rather than take matters at face value. Ms Okwara said: “The glamorization of the media needs to be discussed. We need to discuss what it really takes to be a journalist that it is not just about lights and camera. But about critical and analytical thinking.”

- The dominance of commercial legacy media to the exclusion or marginalization of smaller, alternative voices such as community broadcasting outlets.

- ‘Parachute journalism’ where legacy media considered more mainstream moves into a community and quickly moves out without fully understanding the context. The issue of content/context and analysis is no longer considered a tenet of good journalism.

- The issue of training has been a common thread throughout the media roundtable and in this particular meeting, a participant raised the issue of revisiting the kind of journalists that are graduating from various institutions.

- Social media has been another common thread. The need to put in place checks and balances to ensure that social media does not destroy that gains that the media has done is still a priority.

- The Kenya Media Sector Working group was urged to be more vigilant and provide a path way forward for the embattled media practitioners.

- The impact of advertising on the type of content that is published or broadcast, and the possible censorship that takes place to avoid offending an advertiser.

- The need for media to be unencumbered by commercial and political interests, and to be protected by both employer and government.

- There seemed to be disagreement among participants that 2002 was still not the zenith or golden year for the media in Kenya. Many felt that the media has not proactively defended its spaces and have appeared to take political sides rather than strive to report in the interest of the public.

- The issue of content/context and analysis is no longer considered a tenet of good journalism.
Emerging issues in law, training and professional development

Way forward and emerging issues

The panelists emphasized that there is a need to invest in research and collaboration among all stakeholders in the media. They said that collaboration and not competition will provide a pathway forward for the media today. The roundtable tied up all the three roundtable series by interrogating the issue of practical and viable business models, investing in investigating journalism as there are pieces of journalism that require more resources and mitigating fake news. The issue of democracy is complex and the media is right at the center of it.

Laws are constantly changing and the media practitioners must find ways to commit a portion of their profits to ongoing professional development.

#MediaMattersKE was a treading topic on twitter which served to show that the topic of the day had significantly resonated with social media users.

...in 2006 the country lapsed into ‘it’s our time to eat’ as corruption took root and the media began to take sides.

Uduak Amimo
Chapter Three
The three-day event ran from Sept. 12 – 14, 2018, building on the issues raised during the March, April and May 2018 roundtables. The event drew researchers, students, media industry practitioners, and members of civil society who engaged in a variety of interactive sessions and essay or research presentations. During the Media Week, each of the three key themes was addressed on a particular day as follows:

Day one: Preserving the truth in the media
Fake news has become a phenomenon that is diluting and contaminating news content across media platforms. The conference was seeking innovative solutions to this challenge.

Day two: Money and media
How can journalists and editors break free from the clutches of commercial and state funding that limit journalistic independence? Is independent reporting feasible?

Day three: A free media and democracy
How can journalism stand up to interventions from powerful interest groups in order to preserve Kenya’s democracy?

The daily format for the forum generally comprised of three sessions as follows: a presentation of research findings or a reflective essay; a panel discussion; and a spotlight on a journalist. On the third day, participants were also treated to a spoken word presentation by Kenyan poet Mufasa. The organizers sought to include a wide range of voices and perspectives with panelists and contributors chosen based on the topics under discussion.
THEME: PRESERVING THE TRUTH IN THE MEDIA (combating fake news)
Paper highlights:

More from the paper may be found in the appendix section.

The study location was justified on the grounds that Nyandarua County is a hub, serving as an access point for many counties including Nyeri, Kiambu, Muranga, Laikipia, Kirinyaga and Nakuru. Among the study highlights were that fake news often revolves around politics, with contenders portraying their opponents negatively. Commonly used platforms for fake news are Facebook and WhatsApp groups. The researchers also observed that among citizens, identifying fake news was a challenge and this was seen to be an area worth further research. Recommendations made included: the need to define and differentiate fake news from rumours and gossip; and educating the public on how to identify fake news.

The moderator acknowledged the novel nature of the study which was undertaken outside Nairobi with individuals from different disciplines. Suggestions made included incorporating county data on residents’ socio-economic status, internet access, and literacy levels. Additionally, the researchers were asked to review of the methodology section to incorporate more in-depth interviews. This would enable a deeper qualitative study and more nuanced understanding of how journalists define fake news.
Mwende Ngao:
Creative entrepreneur and lifestyle blogger

The panelists began with definitions and assessments of the term ‘fake news’ while offering various illustrations. Alphonce Shiundu observed that the term can be fluid and that his organization considers it to cover a spectrum that includes misinformation, mal-information, and disinformation. Disinformation refers to information that is false and meant to hurt someone, misinformation is false but not intended to cause hurt, while mal-information comprises of facts and reality altered or distorted to hurt another. Laban Cliff Onsario also described what fake news is not: it is not factual, checked, trusted, and sourced.

The panelists observed that fake news is not a new concept, but its present prominence comes from the incentives it provides to its originators, including money, power, and fame. There is a lucrative industry that has developed around the creation and dissemination of fake news. Fake news affects perceptions and may thrive because consumers may not know or have sufficient time or ability to verify it. Social media enables the fast spread of fake news which is why there is need for research teams within media houses and explains the rise of fact-checking organizations such as Africa Check.

However, the pressures faced by media houses to provide information quickly can inadvertently lead to the spread of unverified information or fake news. However, journalists should constantly check their sources of information, and exercise diligence in verifying those sources and the information they share.

Suggestions were that there should be increased awareness of consumers on how to spot fake news and how to verify information. Media houses should also invest in research units that can verify and confirm information quickly before dissemination. The panelists further suggested that these units can invite the public to send information that needs verification.

Imposing regulations on fake news was not viewed as a successful strategic approach in curbing it. The panelists advocated for greater media literacy and the encouraging of consumers and media houses to engage in verification of information.
Focus on a journalist

This session allowed the spotlight to fall on KTN Investigative journalist Paul Wafula. The session was moderated by Julia Wanjiku of the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation.

Paul has a background in business reporting. He wrote a ground-breaking story on billions of shillings lost in the development of the Standard Gauge Railway, a story which also highlighted allegations of racism by the Chinese workers against Africans working on the railway. These allegations included the segregation of the two types of workers, with the Africans being denied opportunities such as to operate the trains despite having been trained to do so. The story can be accessed through this link: https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001287119/exclusive-behind-the-sgr-walls

Here are edited excerpts of the conversation between Ms. Wanjiku and Mr. Wafula:

**Moderator: If you are not able to provide the sources how does the editor decide if the story is fake news and how do they verify the information?**

Paul Wafula: The journalist can get the story first hand or provide images of being there. If you get the News yourself then the editor is able to swiftly pick up the story. Have documents to support the story such as by proving two out of the three managers were in the room when you conducted your interview. If you cannot guarantee your source protection, then it is not worth it to publish the story.

**Moderator: Media ownership affects the information the public gets**

PW: Media house owners have influence over which stories may be given preference at various media houses. To remain objective, it is a viable approach to give your story to another media house, or an international media house, if you feel it will not be published in the country due to the sensitivity and then try follow up from a local perspective.

**Moderator: Our roles as media; inform educate and give information/facts. What happens when we prioritize revenue?**

PW: We do acknowledge that media houses are businesses for profit making. Shareholders push for making money, we cannot sweep that fact under the carpet but journalists need to make a personal initiative to go beyond the revenue generation.

**Moderator: Do you have any best practices for personal protection due to high level information?**

PW: There are some measures one may take to ensure they stay safe. Through WhatsApp calls or those other international platforms which cannot be easily tapped. Change your movements from time to time. Take time off. Have connections and request police for protection. Have someone to check up on you periodically, especially when you are dealing with a very sensitive story.

**Moderator: For Corruption issues, who should investigate? What’s the role of media in consumer protection? What are the positives from your work impact?**

PW: Sometimes a story has no impact or it goes nowhere after the investigation and publication, but sometimes there is action as some people are being prosecuted. As journalists we have a role to play by owing the public the truth but how the information is used is beyond the journalist.
Moderator: Is the Kenyan environment conducive for investigative journalism?

PW: The environment has really improved and support can be cited but as investigative reporter you really have to be determined and push through the challenges you encounter. What I was involved in was a story on tetanus vaccines that Catholic leaders were vocal about [the Catholic Church in Kenya had raised concerns about a vaccination campaign, on the grounds that the vaccine could cause sterility in young women. The government had denied those claims]. We tried to take the samples to South Africa for testing but it became so expensive we had to drop the story.

In concluding the session, Paul Wafula indicated that some of the best stories are never written for various reasons. In regards to accountability, he gave the following tips as factors to consider when doing a story:

1. Journalists should always challenge the story to get the facts.
2. Don’t reveal the sources as it will cause them issues i.e some sources may end up being fired by their companies or even have their lives endangered.
3. Always record all the information you can get.
4. Civic education is important to consider when it comes to alternative media.
DAY TWO

THEME: MONEY AND MEDIA

Topic: The Business Model Question
By Harrison Manga- Project Manager MFA,

**Highlights**

More from the paper may be found in the appendix section.

The paper by Harrison Manga sought to examine whether the commercial nature of Kenya’s mainstream media made it difficult to serve its different audiences. The mainstream media had experienced great growth in the period between pre-Independence to early 2000s in terms of revenue and profitability. Journalists were not involved in the business aspect of the media business. But the entry of digital technologies in the news media opened up new content platforms causing disruptions to revenue generation and audience reach. The increase in number of smartphones available in the market – in a sector supported by the regulatory framework – enabling increased access to Internet. Legacy platforms had minimal innovation, and advertising – the primary source of revenue for commercial media companies – became insufficient to sustain the businesses as ad spend began to drop in legacy media and began to increase in digital media. The outcome was cost cutting measures in various media houses including layoffs of journalists, platform closures, and reduced investment in investigative journalism and innovation.

**Possible options available as seen in other media contexts include:**

**Charging for content through a paywall scheme.** There are different models that may be applied such as subscribers paying fully for all content; a hybrid model that allows for some free content and some paid content. Paid content would need to be high-quality, specialized and analytical to draw paying audiences.

**Crowd-funded journalism** – where journalists source for small payments from audiences to fund reporting on matters of public interest. Digital platforms such as Kickstarter have been used to raise funds for such projects.

**The publicly funded media model where the government would support independent journalism, as is the case with the BBC.** However, given the media system in which the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation operates, and the challenges it faces in receiving government subsidy while still having to raise revenues, the question is whether this is a viable model in this media context.

**The non-profit option, such as evidenced in organizations such as Africa Uncensored and The Elephant.** These types of organizations draw their funding from donor organizations including philanthropic institutions, and foundations. The non-profit media houses are free from commercial pressure, but would then be susceptible to the agenda drawn by the donor organization.

The various options have their strengths and drawbacks, and the area remains ripe for more experimentation and research.
Moderator: How did you define commercialization of media services?

HM: News is not a product that can be sold on its own, but, news and matters surrounding public interest is what ultimately attracts the audience to a platform. They will come to a platform because that is where they access what is critical for them, for the society, community and their country. The number that is attracted to the platform is essentially what is translated to commercial value through advertising. Media houses don't have control over the digital platforms and their audience. They should tap into content to bring more revenue.

Moderator: What is the problem with commercialization

HM: High value content would be a mitigating factor, but the question is what content is the consumer looking for and are the media stations able to create such content Media houses are businesses and they face challenges just like any other business. They focus on cost cutting as a natural reaction and part of how they do this is by laying off journalists, and not keeping money aside for investigative journalism or research for the content the consumer wants. They end up losing the audiences which is counteractive. In the long run the cost reduction becomes very expensive then it becomes harder to attract commercial value.

Moderator: Have alternative media opened new avenues for media financing?

HM: Community radio stations which are not-for-profit (majority vernacular stations are commercial) are not being able to find an alternative sustainable source of revenue making their survival pretty difficult. One of the challenges they face is not being able to attract and retain talent. So their programming is not the level of the quality that can then attract sustainable support. Struggle for funding is being experienced by both the mainstream and the alternative platforms.

Moderator: Is it sustainable to introduce gaming, and digitized entertainment content.

HM: It is not clear whether the revenue generated from gaming especially by Royal media services is channelled in to funding journalism. Nation Media Group also tried running the betting and gaming but it wasn't confirmed if the profits were pumped back to supporting journalism as immediately after, they laid off staff. During the discussion, Royal Media Services Swahili news anchor, Swaleh Mdoe confirmed that gaming at Royal Media - shabiki.com is not used for funding journalism but proceeds generated through the mobile video on-demand platform Viusasa are used to supporting journalism.

Moderator: What are some of the experiences globally where government is involved in funding media?

HM: BBC being a public broadcaster gets its funding from the British government; other countries which have been known to fund the media include Norway, Finland and France. There is direct and indirect support; direct support in terms of tax going directly to fund journalism, while indirect support in terms of tax incentives of government paying the journalists working for some media organisations. Questions have been raised regarding the sustainability of government funding and an example would be here in the country where the government of Kenya is currently struggling to raise money to run the country.

There is also the issue of how to safeguard the interests of the media houses given the control that would come with government funding. We need to be aware of the power the government can exert on the media which will also realign the media independence when involved with the government. In cases of inflation, the money would be channeled into other things. Government funding is one of the suggested ways of funding journalism but it is not conclusive on how it would work as it would mean different things in different jurisdictions.

Moderator: The revenue from digital advertising is projected to increase. Are our audiences across media technologically literate?

HM: Revenue from digital platform is an opportunity to be tapped into and be exploited to generate revenue for a sustainable model. The content makers need to see the need in that space and be able to exploit it in order to generate revenue to perpetuate a sustainable model.

Moderator: How would commercializing the stories affect the content?

HM: Commercializing the stories does not necessary affect the content. Platforms that put high quality news attract the most revenues. The two work together both for advertisers and media houses. Listen to the audience and what they want to consume. Audience driven content should be prioritized by media houses. In addition, the content put on air should be to attract viewers then advertisements will come in.

The conversation wound up with the view that there is a need to define news; whether it is a commodity or public good. Media should focus more on the content and ensure it is audience driven and that it can attract audience through the content. With regards to pay walls, the media houses need to realize there is no monopoly when it comes to news production and distribution. When it comes to funding journalism, there is no clear-cut answer as to whether foundations is the way to go or non-conventional ways of funding media is what should be explored. These issues have not been conclusively summarized; therefore, more forums like this might play a big role in coming up with a way forward.
Mr. Muleka described the beginnings and work of Signs Media Kenya, which is the only TV station in Kenya that broadcasts content in sign language, including music, film and news. The decision to start the media station was influenced by the fact that his older sister was born without the ability to speak or hear.

He said that persons with disabilities are hardly considered in the creation and decision making of media content. These persons are often viewed as beggars or misfits in society, and Mr. Muluka said that this perception can be changed by the media partly through a readjustment of broadcasting methods.

The biggest challenge for persons living with disability is stigmatization, and his presentation illustrated multiple challenges faced by people living with disability including their struggles using and access public transport and the association with witchcraft that many people living with disability experience in different communities.

Mr. Muluka indicated that media can play a role in reducing stereotypes and raising awareness such as in the scripting of broadcast content. They should engage in sensitizing the wider society on matters that touch on PWDs so as to reduce stigmatization and discrimination, and increase awareness and sensitivity. In conclusion, perceptions regarding PWDs, should be changed so that they are engaged socially, economically, politically and even they be given opportunities to be writers so that they can tell their stories.
The panel discussion raised the matter of commercial media houses operating as business entities, and the implications on content that then emerged. When newsmakers also serve in the operations or boards or of advertising companies, this has implications on the editorial independence of the journalists who are cautioned to tread carefully on certain stories, sometimes by their own media owners. Additionally, the media landscape has changed where audiences have moved to digital platforms, but the money has not followed them there. New revenue-generating streams beyond advertising are urgently needed to keep the media businesses viable.

The poor pay characteristic of the journalism profession also leaves journalists open to being compromised. One observation was media houses may require journalists to declare gifts received, and in the case of business journalists, to limit the buying of shares from companies they cover. However, these requirements are not consistently implemented, and under-the-table transactions still take place. While institutional protection and support are essential to journalists’ ability to work impartially and ethically, participants also observed the need for journalists to have a strong value system which would keep them grounded amidst the pressures of the work.

Panelists also observed that news should be content driven, which attracts audiences and in turn advertisers. However, finding the right balance between appealing content while ensuring objectivity remains a challenge. Among the approaches used is using non-traditional actors in journalism. Fanaka TV uses Njugush, a well-known comedian, which brings a comic aspect to the content and draws a particular crowd. Another way to address the needs of journalism is through providing funding in priority areas such as: on-the-job training for particular beats; business journalism; public service news; content creation; community broadcasting stations; and audience research.

However, there are challenges that come such as when media ignore particular audiences. The discussion also addressed the needs of People Living With Disabilities, who tend to receive little attention in discourses around journalism. Mr. Muluka observed that those living with disabilities tended to be ignored but they too were consumers of news content, and were interested in good content.

Participants also observed that individual journalists are also increasingly becoming brands or entrepreneurs, and this needs to be well managed within media institutions. One illustration was from the BBC which provides training to new hires within the first month to ensure impartiality and accuracy in their work. Conflicts of interest among journalists should also be declared before not after the content is disseminated.

The discussion also addressed the government’s relationship with media, with participants maintaining that there should be a healthy distance between the two entities, particularly because of the power government can wield over media. The relationship can also be a positive one, in ensuring that particular policies and laws are supportive of media.

The media can also play a role in presenting information related to government clearly. One illustration came from the current government’s Big Four Agenda, which can be broken down into layman’s language by the media.
This session focused on Johnstone Mwakazi, a former television news anchor who has expanded his journalism career to include motivational speaking and other entrepreneurial activities in the communication sector. The session was moderated by Faith Oneya.

Following is a summary of Mr. Mwakazi’s presentation.

Mr. Mwakazi told the audience that as one starts their career in media, one should ensure it is not only about becoming famous or wealthy, but should also be about their passion for the work. He shared his personal story of how his career expanded from journalism to include being a speaker, trainer, activist and brand ambassador, and attributed his success to God. He gave several pointers to aspiring journalists including:

- Having a sense of identity and willingness to sacrifice something for a worthy cause, by: being grateful, seeking truth, seeking inspiration, reading widely, appreciating those who have invested in your journey.
- Developing personal ability, by having high standards, focusing on personal strengths, and spending time polishing one's skills.
- Being ready for opportunity, by honing technological skills, having more than one skill, and being willing to take risks.
DAY THREE

THEME: Media and Democracy
Topic: To regulate or self regulate: The new media dilemma

Research paper presentation; By Jeremy Nganda

Vision Group Uganda: MA Development Communications Daystar University.
What role do we play as the public to stop the spreading of fake news?

Does it mean that journalism has lost its role of disseminating credible information? Who is to blame that fake news is being received by the public? We are all to blame as journalists. Good journalism can help eliminate fake stories. In terms of the public, we all have a role to play when it comes to fake news. Media Owners also contribute significantly to the type of news that will be disseminated. Some news content will not see the light of day because media owners ensure it does not get to the headlines. Journalists should practice good tenets so as to uphold good journalism principles. The use of technology has also contributed to spreading of fake news on the other hand it can also be used to combat fake news by using different tools to thoroughly fact check. Hence it important for every individual to self-regulate. It is important to realize that media is not just a business but it has a responsibility to ensure the masses get the content they deserve.

What is the Difference between fake and false news? There is no difference between the two the terms are both interchangeable.

When it comes to Self-regulating how can we better ensure that we not only: allow the masses to have a say on what is fake and true? We can probably have an international code to regulate social media in future as recommendation because we cannot run away from the governments role to ensure social media is regulated.

Conclusion

Fake news is all around us and is seen to also be on the rise in our country, we realise we all have a responsibility to play first from the journalist, it is important to always fact check and verify any information at their disposal. For the public to be actively involved it is important to sensitize them on how to deal with any kind of news and verify as to whether it true or not. As much as we currently do not have a policy when it comes to verifying information from social media, it is important to self-regulate.
This session focused on how journalists can preserve Kenya’s democracy while undertaking their duties.

**Is the onus on the press to defend democracy?**

The task of the media in a democracy is not to ease the part of those who govern but to make life difficult for them. By constant vigilance to have them exercise the power to hold in trust for the people. Sovereign power belongs to the people they execute their power directly or indirectly to the duty bearers the democratically elected officials. Media is a very important tool in enhancing Democracy, there is a lot of public trust on the media. The role of media in promoting democracy is a key Role but might not be the only role but it’s critical. The media has a responsibility to help ‘mwananchi’ understand the matters that affect them, break it down to the common person.

**Is the media independent?**

To some extent yes but for privately owned media we often experience instances where media owners influence news items that make it to the news room as to whether the story will be aired or not. The fact that the government is one of the major spenders when it come to advertising, most media houses feel obliged to tend towards what the government relays to them. The big question to ask is how private is private media. Being a give and take kind of business then we realize there is a lot of interest which compromises media independence. The government on the other hand should understand the role of media as watch dogs and the responsibility they have in the society hence journalists should not be silenced or persuaded to move towards a certain direction. In this age we see a lot of brown envelope journalism whereby a journalist or an editor is bribed a certain amount of money to change a story or even discard it completely. The bottom line is as long as we have shareholders and media owners privately running the media house then then media independence is not possible.

**How many stories can go for airing without influence?**

The truth is that brown envelope journalism is here to stay. Every journalist has to uphold their integrity. There are many stories that go on air without influence from any source where editors sit together and review every story then conclude which one is important to the viewers. Depending on the weight of the story, the direction on which story is to be aired and which one should be extinguished come from the bosses. The media is partially to blame for only having one focus when it comes to issues politics and most of issues. E.g. after parliament sessions, a certain number of individuals are asked for their opinions whereas others are not. The media needs to be the people’s representatives.
Who sets the agenda?

Ideally the journalist should set the agenda but as is now, the journalists are following the agenda. This is because there is interest from various parties hence restricting journalists from discharging their mandate. The agenda is people driven. It is not the role of the media entirely to set the agenda. The audience should also demand for good content and shape the narrative and own the narrative.

The country has just marked one year since the general elections and already we are having the conversation about 2022. Journalists should focus on the pertinent issues and not let politicians drive the media. One of the roles the media is playing to occupy the democratic space is trying to unearth graft issues and scandals. But it is important for the media to be consistent and sustain the conversation till the end. Politicians also ride on the fact that the nation easily forgets hence they know they will get away with it.

How do you draw the line between genuine appreciation and brown envelop journalism?

These appreciations cuts across the spectrum whereby not only in the political realm but also with some of the NGO’s who facilitate journalists to cover a story. This may end up compromising the journalist from giving an objective angle to the story. There is a very thin line between genuine appreciation and brown envelop journalism. We should probably have policy to restrict journalists from taking any gift from any individual. Will we have journalists who uphold integrity or those who will be compromised it is a personal decision for the journalist to determine whether to go for the envelop or not.

Conclusion

It is important for the media practitioners to uphold the responsibility that is expected of them by the public without being swayed and influence by the brown envelope wave. It’s important for the journalist to abide to the ethical code and even ensure that their integrity is not compromised. We realise that when it comes to private media we experience a lot of interests when it comes to the stories to be aired which also points out how some stories do not see the light of day.
Social media activism: does it help improve our democracy?

The session focused on social media activism and the impact it has on democracy.

How do you monitor the impact on the ground after all the noise in the social media?

The big question is after the trend is over what is the impact? After the bloggers get their cheque and essentially, they finish their job and no one cares about the trend anymore. It is important to verify all the information that is gotten from social media. It is equally good to take responsibility when one does a wrong posting on social media.

Is social media is regulated?

The internet is a free space owned by no one, thus it’s hard to regulate it. The internet never forgets; therefore, it is important to be sure of the content before we publish anything on the internet. Different social media platforms are usually monitored by authorities, although some of the content may slip through without being noticed, every individual journalist should take it upon him or her-self to self-regulate.

Editorial teams should always ensure every information that is sent to the public is appropriate for the audience and if not, they should communicate the same by informing the viewers or sieving the images they post.

The global use of social media in the world is to inform people of the happenings in the world. How do social media platforms help the mainstream media in terms of morality and vice versa?

There are media policies that guide the media. When an accident occurs, the journalists witness graphic images. Media houses should censor the accident scene images for the public especially ones that may be of disturbing to the viewers.
The various discussions over the course of the roundtables and Kenya Media Week allowed for multiple conversations around the topics of fake news, funding challenges in the media, and the role of media in a young democracy. A wide range of participants livened up the conversations and allowed for different perspectives to be explored. Research or reflective papers presented by postgraduate students or media practitioners informed discussions and interactive sessions that included seasoned legacy journalists; media entrepreneurs; civil society actors; academics; student journalists, bloggers; and other interested parties.

The discussions enabled a critical assessment of the fake news phenomenon in the Kenyan context and revealed that the debate around fake news takes various forms. The concerns that fakenews raises relate to credibility of individuals and institutions and the negative impact that may take place due to misinformation, dis-information, and mal-information campaigns. While greater regulation of news platforms and content have been proposed as ways to curb fake news, the participants in the Media Week forums advocated instead for greater training and awareness campaigns in media houses and among the citizenry. Additionally, the various media were challenged to reclaim their position as the go-to source for credible information that is in the public interest.

Making money off new digital platforms is an ongoing challenge faced by legacy and emerging news media. Diversifying revenue streams – such as the Royal Media House partnership with the mobile on-demand platform Viusasa – as well as donor-funded entrepreneurial activities show that the news media is experimenting with new ways of making money even as traditional advertising spend goes down. Media houses should also invest in researching what the audience want and develop well-researched content that will attract audiences.

The ways in which media remains integral in serving the public interest was illustrated by the different types of investigative and analytical work being done by journalists in traditional and digital media outlets. However, ethical concerns – such as those that relate to brown envelope journalism (which amounts to taking bribes) – were raised repeatedly as indicators that the journalists were vulnerable to deep compromise. Providing better pay and working conditions, declarations of conflict of interest, and the promotion of higher standards of integrity were among approaches proposed to address this situation.

The range of participants during the different Media Week forums reinforced the value of collaboration between industry, civil society, and academia. The event also revealed the need for more research in and beyond Nairobi to inform thinking on matters journalism, underscoring the continued need for industry-academia collaborations to better understand and manage the various disruptions to journalism occasioned by digital technologies and regulatory frameworks. The training of students for the contemporary journalism context was emphasized with the additional observation that teaching faculty also needed to keep abreast with trends and developments in journalism while receiving additional training themselves, such as in the use of digital technologies.

Veteran journalists called on journalists in the newsroom to understand that the current dynamics demand that a media practitioner also become an entrepreneur who understands audience trends but can also provide high-quality, public-interest content. The participants confirmed that overall the media roundtable was an eye opener in building dialogue towards effecting positive changes within the legacy and digital media.
Appendix
Appendix I: Call for papers 2018

Media Focus on Africa and Daystar University’s Department of Media and Film Studies jointly issue a call for papers focused on business, content and democratic concerns related to contemporary journalism in the region. These papers will be presented during the Kenya Media Week to be held on August 1 – 4 in Nairobi.

Practitioners, academics and postgraduate students in the media sector are invited to submit abstracts of 250-300 words covering the following areas:

- New business models for professional journalism
- Combating fake news in journalism
- The future of journalism and democracy in Kenya

Abstracts accepted will be developed into full papers to be presented at the Kenya Media Week. Six of the papers will be the foundation for 6 panel discussions, & 10 other papers will be presented in other sessions. The full papers may take one of two tracks as follows:

- Empirical/or, theoretically grounded papers
- Fact-based argumentation papers designed to provide solutions

The presentations will be done as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Panel and Discussion</th>
<th>Academic Papers</th>
<th>Policy Papers</th>
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</thead>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The best three academic papers will be selected to lead three of the panel discussions. Postgraduate students at master’s and doctoral levels are particularly encouraged to submit academic papers.

Abstracts to be sent to: kenya@medialweek@gmail.com

Submission deadline: June 20 // Notification of successful submission: June 26

Presentation of papers: August 1 – 4

Format for abstracts: Word count: 250-300 words // Focus of the paper / problem addressed by the paper // Summary of the main points/ findings

Process: To ensure objective review, the abstracts should be submitted in two Word documents as follows:

- Title page with the title of the paper, author(s) name, institutional affiliation (e.g. university, college, workplace, etc.), phone number and email address. If a student, provide this information as well.

- Abstract page with the title of the paper and other details as above. No identifying information should be on this document.

Guiding structure for full papers:

- Name and institutional affiliation // Word count: 3,500 – 5,000 words // Background information // Issue being addressed/problem statement (Theoretical and methodological approach – for empirical, theoretically grounded papers) // Argument / Findings // Conclusion and recommendations // References
Appendix II: Kenya Media Week Program

Day 1
Wednesday, 12th September 2018

Theme: Preserving Truth in the Media

Living in the information age means ease of access to news content. But how much of it is accurate and truthful? Fake news has become a phenomenon that’s diluting and contaminating news content across media platforms. This conference is seeking innovative solutions to the challenges.

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<tr>
<th>Time slot</th>
<th>Session/ topic</th>
<th>Facilitator/ speakers</th>
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<tr>
<td>7.00 am – 8.00 am</td>
<td>Arrivals and registration</td>
<td>Innocent Mwikali (Media Focus on Africa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.00 am – 8.10 am</td>
<td>Welcome remarks/ recap of day?</td>
<td>Simon Goice - Media Focus on Africa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 8.10 am – 8.30 am  | Media speech of the day How can the media advance the needs of persons with disabilities? | Luke Kitto Mulska - Founder Signs TV (SIGNS MEDIA KENYA LIMITED) has identified and realized that the media is a tool to entertain, inform and educate and has performed duelly at trying to cater for the population that has got hearing impairments thereby making them not access information, which is considered a human right in our constitution. Signs media intends to create an electronic media interface which will enable broadcast through Kenyan Sign Language (KSL), English Language and the Kiswahili Language which we intend to run bilingually.
| 8.30 am – 8.45 am  | Research paper presentation                         | Harrison Manga - Media Focus on Africa                     |
| 8.45 am – 10.00 am | Panel discussion                                     | Moderator: Dr Wambui Wamunyu – Lecturer Daystar University  |
|                   |                                                     | Panelists: Jussi Maasai - Daystar University M.A Communication student
types of media perspectives from the media industry | Wangeci Kenyatta - Daystar University M.A Communication student

Day 2
Thursday, 13th September 2018

Theme: Money and Media

Media houses are businesses. How can journalists and editors break free from the clutches of commercial and state funding that limit journalistic independence? Is independent reporting feasible?

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<tr>
<th>Time slot</th>
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<th>Facilitator/ speakers</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
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| 8.30 am – 8.45 am  | Research paper presentation                         | Harrison Manga - Media Focus on Africa                     |
| 8.45 am – 10.00 am | Panel Discussion                                     | Moderator: Gladysse Kemunto Lecturer Multimedia University |
|                   |                                                     | Panelists: Harrison Manga- Media Focus on Africa
|                   |                                                     | Martha Njiru- PhD Scholar, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

#MediaMattersKe #FreePress #KenyaMediaWeek18
## Theme: A free media and democracy

How can journalism stand up to interventions from powerful interest groups in order to preserve Kenya’s democracy?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time slot</th>
<th>Session/ topic</th>
<th>Facilitator/ speakers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.00 am - 8.00 am</td>
<td>Arrivals and registration</td>
<td>Innocent Mwikali (Media Focus on Africa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.00 am - 8.10 am</td>
<td>Welcome remarks/ recap of day 2</td>
<td>Simon Gicia – Media Focus on Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.10 am - 8.30 am</td>
<td>Speech of the day Kenyan Parliament Watch by Mzalendo</td>
<td>Jessica Musila – Executive Director, Mzalendo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.30 am - 8.40 am</td>
<td>Research paper presentation 1</td>
<td>Hesbon Hansen – PhD Student, Daystar University.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.40 am - 8.50 am</td>
<td>Research paper Presentation 2</td>
<td>Jeremy Nganda – MA Development Communications, Daystar University.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.50 am - 10.30 am</td>
<td>Panel discussion</td>
<td>Aurelia Munene – Panelists:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Hesbon Hansen – PhD Student, Daystar University.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Kezia Wangi Githinji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Jeremy Nganda – MA Development Communications, Daystar University.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.30 am - 11.00 am</td>
<td>Tea/networking &amp; Media Exhibition</td>
<td>Innocent Mwikali/ Virginia Wangui – Media Focus on Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.00 am - 12.30 pm</td>
<td>Panel Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moderator: Julie Masiga – Writer, Lawyer, Journalist.</td>
<td>Panelists:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Jessica Musila – Executive Director, Mzalendo.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Dr Wandia Njoya – Daystar University.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Patience Nyange – Kenya National Commission on Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.30 pm - 2.00 pm</td>
<td>Lunch/ media exhibition &amp; networking</td>
<td>Innocent Mwikali/ Virginia Wangui – Media Focus on Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00 pm - 2.10 pm</td>
<td>Spoken word performance</td>
<td>Mufasa- Kenyan Poet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10 pm - 3.30 pm</td>
<td>Twitter Warriors In action on digital. Can social media activism enhance democracy and free press in Kenya? Some of Kenya’s most active social media activists share their insights.</td>
<td>Moderator: Caroline Oyugi – Africa Women and Child Feature Service</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Emmanuel Yegon – Winner, Top Story Contest</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sam Kisambé - BBC News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Laban Cliff Omosho- NTV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.30 pm - 4.15 pm</td>
<td>Closing remarks</td>
<td>Dr Wambui Wamunyu- Daystar University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.15 pm - 4.25 pm</td>
<td>Vote of thanks</td>
<td>Simon Gicia – Media Focus on Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.25 pm - 5.30 pm</td>
<td>Tea/ photo session/ networking/ departure</td>
<td>Innocent Mwikali</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Appendix III: Empirical study

Combating fake news: Lessons from journalists in Nyandarua County, Kenya

Jesse Masai (Daystar University), Wangeci Kanyeki (Daystar University) & Juddy Bisem (Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology)

This is an abridged version of the full paper.

1.0 Introduction

With the backdrop of electoral events across the world, fake news may be defined as content featuring the style of conventional news intended to deliberately misinform, i.e. fabricated information that astutely mimics news and taps into existing public beliefs to influence electoral behaviour (Waisbord, 2018). While the phenomenon of fake news has been around for millennia, it has been noted that the speed, scale and massive proliferation and consumption of false information disseminated on dominant digital platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and now WhatsApp unvetted by conventional news organizations has gained wide presence and is easily accessible with ordinary citizens contributing to misinformation by curating and sharing them.

With the Kenyan government’s commitment to develop the country’s information and communication technology infrastructure as a tool for socio-economic and political growth (Kenya ICT Board, 2018), backed by an increasing penetration of mobile telephony, there has been a rapid widening of the space of public engagement and dialogue. According to Internet Stats, Kenya has the highest internet penetration in Africa, with over 43 million internet users accounting for a 13.7 per cent penetration rate. Kenyans are also among the most active users of Facebook and Twitter (Miniwatts Marketing Group, 2018).

Away from Kenya’s media capital, Nairobi, most counties are increasingly being regarded as a haven for manufactured consent, fuelled by false dialogues that spring from social media. This study focused on Nyandarua County, located an estimated 150 kilometres away from Nairobi. According to its County Integrated Development Plan (County Government of Nyandarua, 2018) however, “ICT infrastructure in the County remains weak as demonstrated by weak Grams per Square Metre (GSM) signal in certain areas, and lack of 4G network.” It had a poverty index of 46.3 per cent – slightly above the national average of 45.2 per cent by 2017- and with only 22% of the population having post-secondary school academic qualifications (Kimemia, 2017).

Data from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2018) indicated that three out of four Kenyans 18 years and above own information communication technology equipment. The most commonly used equipment are the radio and mobile phone, reported by 79.3 per cent and 68.5 per cent of individuals aged 3 years and above, respectively. Much like their counterparts across the country, residents of Nyandarua have found various development uses for ICT. Close to 30% of the residents were reported to be actively using ICT.

Nyandarua County has had its fair share of disruption through fake news, including salacious stories about county leaders (Gitonga, 2015).

This study sought to explore the following:

1. The effect of social media on the practice of journalists in Nyandarua County
2. The occurrence of fake news within Nyandarua County
3. The principles journalists use to avoid distributing fake news
4. Recommendations on how to combat fake news

Methodology

This was an exploratory study conducted in August 2018, focused on journalists working with established media houses based in Nyandarua County. These outlets – owned either by government or commercial entities - are as follows: Kenya Broadcasting Corporation; Kenya News Agency; Home News; Mediamax; Nation Media Group; Njata Television; Radio Africa; Royal Media Services; Sauti ya Mwananchi; and Standard Media Group.

Twenty journalists based in Nyandarua County and working with television, print, radio, and digital platforms were approached to fill out questionnaires. Fourteen of the journalists responded. Highlights from the findings are presented below. As this is an exploratory study with a small sample size, the findings may not be generalized.
## Key findings

### Demographics

The age, gender, education status, and job titles of the respondents are presented in Tables 1-4.

#### Table 1: Age of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 – 30</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 and above</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
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</table>

#### Table 2: Gender of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Table 3: Education status of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education attained</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
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</table>

#### Table 4: Self-reported job titles of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job titles</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correspondent</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information officer</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporter</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing editor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most of the respondents surveyed worked on one platform, either print or radio, while the 4 of them indicated they worked across multiple platforms as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Media in which respondents work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medium / media</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Print</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print, TV, &amp; radio</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print &amp; TV</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print, radio, &amp; online</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 13 respondents who indicated which media platform they were most comfortable using, 11 of them (84%) indicated print and radio while 1 indicated print, television and radio. Seven of the respondents indicated that they post stories on other media platforms other than their editorial platform with some of the alternative platforms used being Facebook and WhatsApp.

**Effect of social media on journalistic practice**

The respondents outlined both positive and negative ways in which social media has affected journalistic practice with the positive being that social media is a quick source of information where stories can be broken in a timely manner; increased readership; news tips can be gained; and developing news items can be tracked or shared with audiences. Negative aspects included susceptibility to subjective stories, under-developed or incomplete stories as well as the platforms making it easy for fake news to spread.

Two respondents indicated that their media houses ensure engagement of professional journalists in addition to providing frequent training and workshops for journalists. Two other respondents also indicated that their media houses do not discourage the use of social media as a source of news, but only use stories generated by professionally engaged journalists.

Most of the 14 respondents indicated that their media houses did not use any technology – apart of editorial processes and policies – to verify suspect stories. Two of the respondents indicate that the use of technology to verify suspect stories included the monitoring and authentication of social media content.

**Occurrence of fake news**

The study sought to establish the experiences the respondents had with fake news. Thirteen of the 14 said they had received fake news with most of it consumed on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and Telegram. The bar chart below provides more information.
Some of the indicators which enabled the respondents to doubt the veracity of the news received included the following: the headline disagreed with the body text, the story was not properly sourced, and the body text was unrelated to the headline.

Four of the respondents reported that they had knowingly spread fake news with the media they had used ranging from mainstream media (print or radio) to social media (Facebook or WhatsApp).

On whether respondents double-check facts to ensure they do not distribute fake news, 11 respondents agreed that they did, while 2 disagreed with the statement. All of the respondents indicated that they had consumed stories which they thought were fake.

**Principles the journalists used to ensure they are not distributors of fake news**

The main principle highlighted by 12 out of the respondents was consulting reliable and verified sources - including authorities - to ensure a story was balanced and with ascertained facts, and using multiple primary sources. Two of the respondents also added employing journalistic ethics to verify potentially fake news. Two respondents indicated that they ignore and do not engage with social media respectively.

Seven of the respondents indicated that their media houses have editorial policies and processes requiring verification of sources, use of multiple sources and confirmation of details before stories are disseminated.

Recommendations from respondents on how to combat fake news while optimizing civic education and public participation included:

- Establishment of official platforms for communicating with the masses and quick response to queries.
- Encouraging members of the public to confirm and verify news first before they circulate the same.
- All journalists confirming with authorities and news sources before posting stories; abandoning stories which cannot be verified or where sources are unwilling to talk for no legitimate reason; and probing news sources.
- Media houses not taking social media as a source of news; prioritizing content from their employees; establishing monitoring desks; conducting civic education for journalists and media houses on alternative media; etc.
- The National Government, through the Communication Authority of Kenya (CAK) making the public understand that disseminating fake news is a criminal act that might jeopardize national security; blocking all pseudo social media accounts; holding social media operators like Facebook to account; accrediting journalists; etc.

**Summary**

Fake news is a real phenomenon within Nyandarua. On the other hand, journalists in the County are increasingly applying self-regulation in their quest to combat fake news. Interventions they have suggested – including public awareness, media agency and law enforcement - could greatly enhance civic education and public participation in majority poor contexts.
References


Lion Gu; Vladimir Kropotov; Fyodor Yarochkin. (2017). The Fake News Machine:How Propagandists Abuse the Internet and Manipulate the Public. TrendLabs, 4-6.


Appendix IV: Reflective essay

Harrison Manga (Media Focus on Africa)

Introduction

For news organizations the early part of the 21st Century has seen the emergence of persistent questions over the viability of their revenue model. At the end of the 20th century news media had mainly relied on what Professor Picard describes as the mass media financing model, whereby news is paid for by advertising sales. Professor Picard argues that the last 25 years of the 20th century were especially profitable for news media enterprises. These enterprises grew, created large organizations with heavy overheads. They became publicly traded firms, built fine facilities and increased number of personnel. This trend was also seen in Kenya. Nation Media Group one of Kenya’s leading news media enterprises at one time ran 2 television and radio stations in addition to its daily and weekend edition newspapers in English and Kiswahili.

The emergence of the web 2.0 and consequently the digital disruption has put the mass media revenue model under threat. Audience fragmentation has resulted from consumers having a widening range of choices for content and platform. News media enterprises can no-longer boast of a monopoly of large batches of eye balls. Consumers no longer automatically and frequently opt for newspapers and the television for their news. Today media owners are demanding that their journalists do more with less. Kenya’s leading news media enterprises have undertaken major staff layoffs and shut down certain platforms in a bid to remain profitable. Important niches like investigative journalism are no longer a priority.

Alternative revenue models

In response there are a number of revenue models under discussion and consideration by both the industry and academia to varying degrees.

The slash and burn approach

News media enterprises react to declining revenues by increasing their focus on cost reduction. This includes laying off journalists, cutting spending on research and development and investigative reporting. Over the last 5 years all leading news media enterprises in Kenya laid off hundreds of journalists. They have also done away with investigative desks and shut down some platforms all together. However, this model is unsustainable because the cut in spending on research and innovation as well as loss of talent in the long run harms the news media enterprise. The loss in talent and inability to be creative and innovate results in news media losing audiences which is what ultimately translates into commercial value.

Pay walls model

Charging for content has been touted as possible revenue model. The metered model in particular has been discussed i.e. where readers have free access to a certain number of online pieces after which they have to pay to access other pieces. The other version is where consumers who have active print subscriptions get free access to the online version of the print. Industry and academic research indicate that there is little acceptance of pay walls by consumers. Many of the studies indicate that media users are not ready to pay for news and are more likely to move away from platforms that require them to pay in order to access news. Other studies indicate that pay walls only deliver 10% of media companies’ revenues. For instance, while a print subscriber generates 1100$ a year, the equivalent figure for a digital subscriber is 175$. There is also the question of whether journalism should exist in a ‘walled garden’. The high quality, incisive, analytical and thoroughly investigated journalistic work which are the ones likely to end up behind a pay wall are the very ones key to our democracy and should be publicly available for free. Other studies also suggest that user spending on media will never significantly grow given the pressures on incomes as a result of significant household and business budgets. Charging for content it seems offers at best only a partial revenue model for news media enterprises.

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Nonprofit media organizations

These media organizations are free from commercial pressure. Their revenue comes from foundations, philanthropists and donor organizations among others. Examples in Kenya include Africa Uncensored (africauncensored.net) and the Elephant (theelephant.info). The 2 platforms have received funding from the FORD FOUNDATION and the Kenya Media Programme. These platforms focus on public interest journalism through incisive analysis and/or investigative reporting. The draw back for this model is the reality that foundations, philanthropists and donor organizations can withdraw their support abruptly or even significantly draw back if their circumstances change.

Conclusion

The focus in the debate on sustainable revenue models for journalism should be on the underlying functions of news and ensuring the public access to news and information. This is what is important to our societies and our democracy. The focus shouldn’t be on the less important question of the form/type of organization this is pursued. News media enterprises going forward will need to be smaller and more agile. Innovation in terms of news products and services shall also be key going into the future. News media must focus their efforts on providing news and information not available elsewhere in a better form than on other platforms and of better quality. Pragmatism should be way in dealing with the question of revenue models. Journalists must not lose sight of the ‘righteous’ work that is journalism^{12}.

^{12}The Changing Business of Journalism and its Implications for Democracy University of Oxford Reuters Institute for the study of journalism
KENYA MEDIA WEEK 2018

#MediaMattersKE #KenyaMediaWeek18

New Voices, expanding spaces, funding possibilities.

Welcome to the inaugural Kenya Media Week.

Media Focus on Africa, Daystar University and The National Endowment for Democracy are delighted to host Kenya Media Week. This conference explores key issues facing journalism in Kenya today. We are harnessing insights from academic research, the experience of journalists as well as the bold voices of audiences and citizen journalists who use digital platforms to shape Kenya’s democratic space.

This national media conference will foster collaboration among media owners, journalists, audiences and the academia.

THE CHALLENGE:

We are seeking innovative solutions to emerging challenges facing journalism namely:

• Day 1: Combating fake news. How can journalism respond to misinformation while tapping into the digital mine to advance in the information revolution age?

• Day 2: Sustainable funding models for journalism. How can newsrooms break from the clutches of interest-driven funding?

• Day 3: How can journalism stand up to interventions from powerful interest groups in order to preserve Kenya’s democracy?

EXPLORE:

Some of Kenya’s leading journalists and researchers will share their findings, insights and reflections on the future of Kenya’s journalism and media trends.

ENGAGE:

This conference is for you. It’s the space for sharing ideas, asking questions and debating. We want to hear from new voices and alternative media. There’s a special call out to journalism students, the future of journalism is yours, start making your voice count now. Attend the career talk by talented Johnson Mwakazi.

CONNECT:

There will be many opportunities to network throughout the 3 days. Good journalists have contacts, so please make use of this chance to make many new contacts as possible.

VISION:

Learn. Get inspired. Go out and make a difference.

Enjoy the experience and let’s work together in supporting journalists and a free media.

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