

# Determination of whether Ramogi FM Radio Communicated Messages of Peace Building to Citizens during Conflicts in Presidential Elections in Kisumu County, Kenya

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of Ramogi Vernacular FM Radio Station and peace building interventions during conflicts arising from presidential elections during 2007, 2012 and 2017 presidential elections. Specifically, the study sought to determine whether Ramogi Vernacular FM Radio Stations used media interventions to communicate messages of peace building during presidential elections. The study was guided by Agenda setting theory and Uses and Gratification theory. The study used mixed method (triangulation) research design. Stratified and Simple Random sampling techniques were used to select the sample size of 384 respondents whereby 345 (89.8 percent) of the sample respondents returned questionnaires. Data for the study was collected by the use of questionnaires, interview schedules and document analysis. Validity of questionnaires was achieved through consultation with supervisors while reliability of questionnaires was tested during piloting in Kisumu County. A split-half correlation test was conducted whereby a coefficient of +0.80 or greater is considered good internal consistency. Pearson's *r* for reliability of piloted data was +0.89 for educationists, and +0.82 for business fraternity which indicated good internal consistency. Quantitative data was analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics and presented using tables, bar charts and pie-charts. Qualitative data was thematically analyzed using NVIVO and presented through thematic narratives which involved identification and interpretation of patterns and themes whereby inferential statistics was used to gauge influence. Document analysis was used to generate literature review, and understanding policy guidelines on media station operations. The finding showed that Peace building broadcasts geared towards cohesion was noticed but was unsatisfactorily rendered via FM media outlets during presidential elections. This study recommends policy formulation to fill gaps in media policies to facilitate freedom of press, political accountability, and the need to adapt inter-cultural dialogue to enhance social cohesion.

**Keywords:** Peace building, FM Radio Stations, presidential elections, Election Conflicts.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

According to King (2017) there is no single definition for Vernacular Radio, he echoes the concept of Buckley who is the president of World Association of Vernacular Radio Broadcasters (AMARC). Vernacular Radio is shaped by the environment, distinct culture, history and the realities it represents. The practices of Vernacular Radio are shaped by the

regulatory, legal and economic surroundings (Coyer, 2011). Restrictions on the setting up of Vernacular Radio Stations are a common phenomenon the world over. Sri Lankan government during the internal conflict objected the need for setting up Vernacular Radios (Pavarala, 2015)

Generally the unprofessional behavior of reporting/ broadcasting by journalists and media outlets was a major concern as it reflected an outcome of poor media regulation in Kenya which allowed untrained journalists, Celebrities, and disc-jockeys (DJs) hired by these radio stations to conduct talk-shows on topics that were topical and thought-provoking (Omwoha, 2017).

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The media mandated with peace-building initiatives can fight for human rights by regarding such rights as core to democracy. Irrespective of having approved numerous human rights tools that promise media freedom, the history of Kenyan related presidential political poll conflicts constrains the complete awareness of human rights. Toward reaching an official settlement or resolution to specific conflicts, what was to follow and which is the focus of this study was *peace-building*. Peace building; According to (Gawerc, 2006), is generally defined as external interventions that are designed to prevent the relapse or return of armed conflict, there are critical differences among actors regarding its conceptualization and operationalization. In this study, I would conceptualize peace building as the creation of a structure of peace based on justice, equitable distribution of resources, ethnicity, political power sharing and co-operation, thereby addressing the underlying causes of conflict so that they become less likely to relapse in the future. It is considered as dynamic and always changing in response to the situation at any given point. One point that all peace building researchers would automatically agree on is that it comes after a conflict. However its success is best hinged on a particular-point plan, which would include, undertaking immediate action to stop violence and restore fundamental human rights and liberties; taking immediate measures to address the humanitarian crisis, promote reconciliation, healing, and restoration; overcoming the political crisis; working on long term issues and solutions, such as poverty eradication, inequality, and unemployment (especially among the youth), as well as the need to confront impunity spearheaded by leaders, tackle land reform, and consolidate national cohesion and transparency.

According to Vernacular Radio professionals, the most crucial role of the stations during election time is to promote peace within the community. For the purpose of peace, programs are aligned to promote peace and propel the idea of coexistence. Vernacular Radios such as Koch FM and Pomona FM includes a program that is dedicated to peace promotion. News bulletins adopted by Vernacular Radio include a message of peace at the end of the program. Gustafsson (2013) states that peace can be promoted where inclusion and cohesion is molded and advanced through active participation of community members. As an outlet to express emotions, Media can allow people to express their fears and frustrations and share experiences and advice with others. It can also link people with power holders, enabling open communication and dialogue in the spirit of peace building. A case in the international domain currently for Kenya is close to breakage diplomatic relations between Kenya and Saudi Arabia in which there is emotional responses to the challenges facing several girls in Saudi Arabia in search of job opportunities leading loss of lives, sexual harassments and mistreatments. Politicians and citizens were brought together by their online demands for the girls to be returned while airing their dismay at the purported employer's racial discrimination actions.

The post-2007 crisis serves as a good case to exemplify the process from conflict to peace building. As illustrated by (Oriare & Ugangu 2010), the double role of the media as a constructive and destructive agent, and provides and provides a link between media freedom and human rights. The challenges of media freedom within fragile democracies were politics, poverty and ethnic differences that can influence the media agenda, While the use of "hate speech" in the media is not discounted as it has dominated the Vernacular Radio Stations as a whole (Fackler *et al.*, 2011).

This study entitled role of Ramogi FM in peace building does not discuss ethnicity as a theory, but rather uses the term ethnic violence, as a theme applied to describe political and ethnic tensions in Kenya during presidential election conflicts (Kagwanja, 2009). The concept of ethnic clashes has also been characterized as an element of civil conflicts by several authors in recent years (Grinin, & Grinin, 2022)

Kosgei (2015) notes that in line with the assertions above, it can be inferred that TV and radio content did not immediately adjust to promote or support peace building but rather focused on carrying out a post mortem of the violence. A study of TV and radio content also revealed that the media, in the first few months after the signing of the Accord, was dominated by reflections on the political agreement between Kibaki and Odinga. Towards the end of the year, TV and radio stations began to flag off discussion on the frameworks for a long term peace. Radio and TV stations hosted stake holders and experts in their studios with a view to building a bridge between the violent past and a stable and peaceful future. But again even at the beginning of a more beneficial relationship between the media and the post conflict situation the discussions were more of expert talk, at times laden with political overtones; the citizens at large were yet to be actively engaged in the discussions. Even though studio call-ins have traditionally been effective in collecting views from the citizens, most radio presenters recall that a lot of the sentiments that they pre-recorded still had shades of hate speech and could not be aired. Consequently, citizen participation was handled with caution. This was however not to be the case in the long run as the media eventually availed platform for meaningful engagement with the citizens. While there are many examples of how radio has been used in post conflict peace-building such as in South Africa, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Somali and so on, there is no study that clearly prescribes the best timing for the media’s entry into post conflict peace-building. In the Kenyan case, there was heightened tension immediately after the peace agreement. This limited the applicability of live studio discussions as reported by some radio hosts. This called for a different strategy: airing recorded programs that are carefully conceptualized and well thought through. This heavily borrowed from other cases where pre-recording had proved successful in managing information flow in a conflict environment. In West Africa, the NGO Search for Common Ground (SFCG) produced and aired programs on peace, disarmament and reconciliation in Liberia, using twenty two partner radio stations (Kimani, 2020). Such programs were also aired in neighboring Sierra Leone, which was also recovering from war.

Achieving peace involves a lot of stakeholders since even UN considered a holder of perceived power is considered as negative peace. For peace to be achieved, various stakeholders are brought in to put together solutions to solve that could be detrimental. Even though, the UN primacy to maintain global peace and security can hardly be questioned, AMARC (2018) argue that African nations have drawn a lesson from the Rwandan genocide. The African states have come to a realization of depending completely on the UN for the continent’s peace and security requirements. In so far, the media has pushed Peace and Security matters on the global agenda (Chakravartty & Sari kakis, 2007). A shared view of the media effects on fierce conflicts is presented in the 19<sup>th</sup> century William Randolph Hearst account; “*you furnish the pictures, I’ll furnish the war*” (Campbell, 2010). Hearst understood that conflict and media complement each other, a source of appealing news, the other a stage where opinions to end and sometimes promote policies on conflicts are discussed.

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Ramogi FM Radio Communication of messages of peace building was considered in this dissertation to understand whether Radio Ramogi FM communicated messages of peace building and if they did not, suggest possible remedies for the situation.

**Table 1: Peace building Contents broadcast during Presidential Election Conflicts.**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not at All Satisfied	38	11.0	11.0	11.0
Slightly Satisfied	100	29.0	29.0	40.0
Moderately Satisfied	121	35.1	35.1	75.1
Very Satisfied	63	18.3	18.3	93.3
Extremely Satisfied	23	6.7	6.7	100.0
Total	345	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data 2022

Table 1 showed through Likert Data that 38 respondents (11.0 percent) were not at all satisfied when asked if they witnessed peace building contents broadcasts. 100 respondents (29.0 percent) were slightly satisfied when asked if they witnessed peace building contents broadcasts during presidential election conflicts. 121 respondents (35.1 percent) were

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moderately satisfied when asked if they witnessed peace building contents broadcasts during presidential election conflicts. 63 respondents (18.3 percent) were very satisfied when asked if they witnessed peace building contents broadcasts during presidential election conflicts of 2007, 2012 and 2017 and 23 respondents (6.7 percent) were extremely satisfied with peace building contents broadcasts during presidential election conflicts.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Peace building Contents were broadcast in FM media outlets during presidential Election Conflicts of 2007, 2012 and 2017	345	1.00	5.00	2.80	1.070
Valid N (list wise)	345				

1.00= “Not at all satisfied”, 2.00= “slightly satisfied”, 3.00= “Moderately Satisfied”, 4.00= “Very Satisfied” 5.00= “Extremely Satisfied”

Source: Field Data 2022

The Five-Point Likert-Scale is considered an interval scale. The mean is very significant. The mean from 1 to 1.8 0 means not at all satisfied. From 1.81 to 2.60, it means slightly satisfied. From 2.61 to 3.40 it means moderately Satisfied. From 3.41 to 4.20, it means Very Satisfied and from 4.21 to 5 it means Extremely Satisfied.

In Table 2 the results showed that residents moderately satisfied when asked whether Peace building Contents were broadcast in FM media outlets during presidential Election Conflicts of 2007, 2012 and 2017. The mean coefficient of 2.80 showed that respondents were moderately satisfied that conflicts were broadcast. The descriptive statistics showed during presidential elections, peace building processes were not fully undertaken.

The following were qualitative responses on role of FM stations on peace building in Kisumu County during the presidential elections held in 2007, 2012 and 2017.

Media is generally charged with the responsibility of unveiling the misdeeds done to human beings everywhere in the society. In the event that the law is accepted to restrain journalists in doing their work, some governments and people in authority may mistreat fellow human but go free because it will not be exposed.

*Bodaboda Respondent BBR14*

BBR 14 discussed and supported that the responsibility of unveiling misdeeds and peace contents in in society is within the jurisdiction of the media. If the law states otherwise then it is wrong. People in authority may counter human right processes but the journalists would do their part.

Human beings must realize that peace is our gift that God gave us to our neighbors. Residents should avoid inflammatory remarks that may compromise peace.

*Primary Head-teacher Respondents 75*

Primary Head-teacher Respondent 75 suggested that peace is a gift from God. This comment gives us a religious perspective. This being a spiritual matter we need to come up with mechanisms to avoid inflammatory remarks.

Peace building messages involves solving injustices which are government oriented, transforms business, travelling, living which makes people be in harmony without conflicts, we can as well use dialogue in vernacular media to effect perception on ethnicity, change attitudes, and promote tolerance and mutual understanding. Vernacular media reaches almost everybody at a very low level, who are the majority and so it is possible. Vernacular radio need to broadcast and if possible suggest on the right cause of action to help save the situation.

*Secondary School Principal Respondents 21*

Secondary School Principal Respondents 21 argued that peace building messages involved solving injustices which the government may subject her people to. The respondent suggested there is need for dialogue in vernacular media to affect perception on ethnicity, change attitudes and promotion of tolerance and mutual understanding.

The study further established among various stakeholders, who had the responsibility for peace building in 2007, 2012 and 2017 general election. The findings were summarized in Table 3

**Table 3: Stakeholder responsibility**

Stakeholder	Yes		No	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Journalists	254	73.6	91	26.4
Listeners	58	16.9	287	83.1
Vernacular Radio Stations	300	87.0	45	13.0
News broadcasts	245	70.9	100	29.1
Tribalism	176	51.0	169	49.0
Ethnic Differences	107	31.0	238	69.0

Source: Field Data, 2022

Summary of stakeholder responsibility was as shown in Table 3. From the findings, vernacular Radio stations had the highest responsibility given those who affirmed were 300 respondents (87.0 percent). This was followed by journalists 254 respondents (73.6 percent), news broadcast 245 respondents (70.9 percent), tribalism 176 respondents (51.0 percent), ethnic differences 107 respondents (31 percent) and listeners 58 respondents (16.9 percent). The findings therefore imply vernacular Radio stations and journalists had the highest responsibility for peace building in 2007, 2012 and 2017 post-election violence.

The findings agree with Opiyo (2008), the media in Kenya is free to a point that journalists can express themselves as long as they do not go overboard to incite wananchi (citizens) over a national matter. There is convincing evidence that media freedom in Kenya has also catalyzed unfavorable ethnic commentary. The media, quite naturally, was expected to play a critical role. Specifically, the media had the duty of informing the citizens on the progress of relevant commissions, the justice and reconciliation process, and above all, offering a platform for the dissemination of peace messages. Framed within the “agenda setting” and “Marxist” theories of media, the degree to which the media succeeded in performing the functions above can be used as an indicator of whether or not the media made peace its agenda.

Further, descriptive analysis was used to ascertain whether peace building processes were undertaken to enhance peace building in Kisumu County. The analysis is shown on table 4.

**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attempts were made on peace building that was geared towards cohesion	345	1.00	5.00	3.14	.841
Peace building Contents were broadcast in FM media outlets during presidential Elections	345	1.00	5.00	2.80	1.070
The broadcast messages had contents that could enhance behavioral change	345	1.00	33.00	3.32	2.43
Valid N (list wise)	345				

1.00= “Not at all satisfied”, 2.00= “slightly satisfied”, 3.00= “Moderately Satisfied”, 4.00= “Very Satisfied” 5.00= “Extremely Satisfied”

Source: Field Data 2022

The Five-Point Likert-Scale is considered an interval scale. The mean is very significant. The mean from 1 to 1.8 0 means not at all satisfied. From 1.81 to 2.60, it means slightly satisfied. From 2.61 to 3.40 it means moderately Satisfied. From 3.41 to 4.20, it means Very Satisfied and from 4.21 to 5 it means Extremely Satisfied.

In Table 4, the results showed that residents were moderately satisfied when asked whether Peace building Contents were broadcast in FM media outlets during presidential Election Conflicts of 2007, 2012 and 2017. The mean coefficient of 4.4

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showed that respondents were very satisfied that attempts were made on peace building that was geared towards cohesion. The descriptive statistics showed that during presidential elections, peace building that was geared towards cohesion was witnessed. Further, the mean coefficient of 2.80 showed that respondents were moderately satisfied that peace building were broadcast in FM media outlets during presidential elections. The descriptive statistics showed that during presidential elections, peace building contents were unsatisfactorily broadcast in FM media outlets during presidential elections.

In addition, the mean coefficient of 3.32 showed that respondents were highly satisfied that the broadcast messages contents on FM media outlets during presidential elections could enhance behavioral change. The descriptive statistics showed that during presidential elections, contents were highly satisfactory and were geared towards developing behavioral change.

The study showed that Peace building should entail equitable distribution of resources, political, religious stability. Doing business freely and in many other areas, Peace building entails equitability distributions of resources. Political instability which makes citizens has their properties not destroyed. It makes people do business freely, Peace building should entails .People freely united without knowing racial discrimination when there is riot. Movement freely with commodities, sharing resources of Kisumu County equitably, being transparent during political elections [like presidency], Peace building should entail, avoiding instances of conflict, no tribalism, no bad sharing of countries resources, and no transparency in presidential election like this last one, Peace building would mean living in unity, bring commodities from other places and selling freely.

#### 4. FINDINGS

The study showed that vernacular FM stations communicated peace-building during conflicts in presidential elections in Kisumu County. However, statistical analysis was conducted to justify the level of significance. From the statistical findings, the R value was 0.640 at p 0.000. The value of R squared was 0.410, which implied that vernacular radio stations accounted for 41 percent of peace building during the presidential elections. The results registered an F-test of 212.849 at p 0.000, implying vernacular radio stations could explain peace building during presidential elections. The results show the t value when constant was 50.87 at p = 0.000. The value was reduced to -14.589 at p 0.000. The results therefore imply that vernacular radio stations played a negative role in peace building during presidential elections in 2007, 2012, and 2017.

In summary, the study exhibited that there is no significant impact of vernacular radio stations on peace building processes in Kisumu County.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that radio stations played a crucial role in creating a cohesive society and maintaining peace. Vernacular radio stations should provide a model for future broadcasts during elections. However, media ownership, ethnicity, and political expediency all hampered the media's ability to play the role of peacemaker.

#### 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommended that there is a need for Kenya to adopt an Inter-Cultural Dialogue Model which will make leaders have values for people from other ethnic communities before presidential elections. This would enhance peace in all facets of the political dispensation.

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