

Media Contents and Diversity: Undermining Democracy through Vernacular Radios 'Metaphocidal' Political Campaigns in Kenya.

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Abstract

This paper commences from the premise that, although Kenya has a thriving mass media industry and very vibrant vernacular radio outlets, the diversity of mass media has failed to cement democratic ethos and values. It argues that, free and liberalised media market in Kenya has created a contradictory mixed bag - positive and negative forces - that both build and destroy democracy. It shows how the usage of metaphorical elements poisoned the democratic environment in Kenya and at the same time mobilised support for these candidates. The paper uses a coinage '*metaphocidal*' in order to stress the serious consequences from which ordinary usage of words can ultimately leads to political violence of genocidal magnitude. It concludes that, the new use of technology of radio to broadcast through vernacular language has brought new challenges that not only segregate the audiences into target blocks but also erodes patriotism, social cohesion and democracy.

Key words: Vernacular radio, Democracy, Politics, Elections, Violence, Metaphors, language, Social cohesion

Introduction

The 2008 post poll violence in Kenya destroyed fearfully the character of the Kenyan mass media as allies of democracy. The violence shattered the myth that, democracy thrives with vibrant, independent and pluralistic mass media. Kenya had them. In particular, the post poll violence struck at the heart of the Kenyan vernacular radio's operation particularly hard because, among the six Kenyan alleged to have borne the 'greatest responsibility' in funning the post poll violence was Joshua Sang. Sang was a successful vernacular radio journalist.

The rest in the now infamous list were: Uhuru Kenyatta, (the President of the Republic of Kenya for the period - 2013-2017; Mr Henry Kosgey, (then Minister for Industrialisation), Mr. Francis Muthaura; (Then Head of the Kenyan Civil Service and Secretary to the Cabinet, Mr William Ruto (the current Deputy President of the Republic of Kenya 1013-2017 and then Member of Parliament for Eldoret North constituency) and Major General Ali Hassan (the then Inspector General of Police

Whereas the list caused shockwaves across the country due to the high profile nature of the individuals named, Joshua sang was an odd inclusion. He lacked societal standing and stature befitting the rest. Despite his non equal demeanour in societal standing and stature, Joshua's inclusion sparked a fierce debate about the role of Journalists and media Institutions in a democracy.

This paper is a continuation of that debate and hopes to shed light on the operations of vernacular radio in Kenya in general and in particular demonstrates some of the vices associated with vernacular radio practices. The paper recognises that, vernacular radio uses many communication strategies in delivering their message but it focuses on the usage of metaphors.

The problem

Commentators about the likely causes of the 2008 post poll violence in Kenya identify the operations of mass media as one of the key ingredient in the menu of causes. For instance, The Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR 2008), a government-funded organization, released a report titled, "Still Behaving Badly." The report documented human rights abuses in the lead up to the December 2007 elections. Emerging on the top of the list were vernacular FM stations. The commission stated that vernacular radio stations used unsavoury language unabatedly. Koigi Wa Wamwere (2008) is of the opinion that, dictatorship can both emanate from a bad media as well as a bad executive, judiciary or parliament. He posits that, the enormous power of the media can be exercised either for the good or detriment of society. Subsequently, he believes that, laws should be enacted to protect society not just from evil people, but from bad media as well. Koigi warns that, bad media is a dictatorship that censors, lies, distorts, misinforms, kills good ideas, silences the nation, oppresses, discriminates, divides and drives people to war. 'The right balance must be struck between media freedom and national survival' he says.

Buyu (1999) supports Koigi's perspective when he observes that, privately owned media in Kenya have conditioned readers to be more interested in headlines that provoke conflict than those that resolve them. He cautions that, due to liberalization of airwaves in Kenya, there is a large corpus of ethno-political pamphlets whose trade mark is ethnic nepotism and emotion clap-trap.

The Kreigler's Report (2008) stated as follows in relation to people who work in FM Stations; 'There is a general view that most radio stations lack training in conflict reporting or moderation. Talk shows and call-in programmes require media personnel who are well versed in moderation and who are able to predict a change of tone that may lead to negative results. The report caution that, banning the vernacular radio may not be a solution but it is needed to control the contents of the messages broadcast for public consumption'.

The foregoing narratives indicate a dysfunctional media. They are warning signals that, some level of decay exist in the Kenyan media which urgently need curing if the mass media are to play their rightful role as the fourth estate. Consequently, the paper argues that, the Kenyan mass media may be suffering from what Gardner (1973) called 'functional blindness' or the inability to see their own defects. He says that, such institutions suffer this kind of blindness not because they can't solve

their problems, but because they cannot see them. The paper is intended to help the mass media see some of these functional blindness defects.

In Kenya, the 2008 post poll violence happened because the Kenyans as a people let warning signals pass unheeded. It had to take a tragedy to call our attention to the realities that, we had not adequately studied and understood the impact of immense progress in the mass media sector in Kenya, especially the vernacular radio. To use, Emile Durkheim's phrase of *solidaire* (individuals feelings of identification with his group), one wonders whether the sudden emergency of many vernacular radio stations in Kenya in last one and half decade up to the year 2005, had eroded a Kenyans *solidaire* with the Kenyan state in general and in particular with other different ethnic groups.

The concept of *solidaire* is important because that, from it, it is learnt that, the building of harmony and cohesion in any given society cannot be left to chance. Any society which vacates its responsibilities to seek and heals fractures in society – such as the ones demonstrated by the post poll violence in Kenya – abdicates its duty and is neglect. Thus, the paper studies metaphors in order to cast light on how some of the contents of vernacular radio may incites a movement away from higher value (say patriotism) to a lower value (of parochialism and self centeredness). The above can be restated: partisan media pursue different interests which sometimes may be detrimental to democracy and rule of law. The use of metaphors by vernacular radio is our entry point to this debate.

Metaphors

Webster (2000) argues that metaphors constitute imaginaries against which the real is judged. A metaphor is simply a figure of speech in which a word for one idea or thing is used in place of another to suggest a likeness between them, as in, he is an elephant of a man. Metaphors are constructed from ordinary phenomenon such as: fire, sea, river, the animal world, planting, growing, decaying, human anatomy etc. Evidentially, these elements are used to express danger, happiness, political preference, change or any other theme a communicator want to talk about. For instance, politicians often perceive the state as a ship that can sometimes be in troubled waters and therefore requiring new captain to steer it to safety. Some other time the state can be perceived as a human body capable of getting certain pathologies. Thus, one can hear such metaphors like, the body politics of a country is sick and requires a surgeon to operate on it.

The argument being made is that metaphors provide a language tool box containing instruction instruments tools capable of solving social problems and communicating about them. In his analysis of Tom Benson's article on 'poisoned mind', Hahn argues that the chosen image of the metaphor directly influences the kind of solution appropriate to the problem. Thus, if for instance pornography is poison, that term 'poison' compels the person making the argument to prescribe a solution compatible with the description. Therefore, when a metaphor is a disease-remedy metaphor, suggested solutions are treatment and sometimes removal of the sick part.

Indeed, in Kenya some years back those opposed to the government of the day were rhetorically projected in political gatherings as 'cancer' and therefore requiring to be 'cut out' of society. These

metaphors powerfully suggested how political opponents were to be treated. The Kenyatta (Mzee Jomo Kenyatta's 1963-1978) and Moi's (1978 -2002) regimes actualised the metaphor-suggested-remedies through detentions without trial, jailing and even alleged political assassinations. Inferentially, analysis of metaphors used in a given communication may reveal significantly the thought patterns of those making such communication. The paper retains the postulate that in 2007/08 political crises metaphors were deployed to poison the political environment. They, in essence, undermined the Kenyan democracy.

Metaphors, malfunction-media and the 2007 presidential campaign

It must not be misconstrued that the use of metaphor always results in negative communication. On the contrary, communicators use metaphors to signify, demonstrates, simplify or magnify communication themes. These themes sometimes generate negative communication. The paper largely focuses on metaphors which were used in the 2007 presidential campaigns. The metaphors attributed some delivered positive themes communication and others generated negative themes.

As form of representation of external reality, metaphors play a powerful role in helping to establish concepts of interpretations of an environment. They also provide a means to place the world in a comprehensible context. In others words, they (metaphors) help participants in a communication set-up to simplify the idea that they wish to share with others. They help audiences to internalise a complex phenomenon using knowledge they already have or a language they understand. Thus, in communication setup, metaphors are teaching and learning tools and facilities. They not only increase persuasive credibility of a given communication but also reproduce the world in a sensible way.

However, it must not escape our thoughts that, communicators have needs and wants, they have priorities and they belong or have solidarities. As such, in any given situation these variables affect how messages are generated. Inferentially, the metaphors communicators deploy, directly, reflects their immediate needs in a given time space. Sometimes the messages cause conflicts.

Perhaps, what is relevant to this paper is to ask the following questions: in which ways do metaphors create conflicts and in which way do they builds walls of solidarity and exclusion - which way do they shatter those walls. And finally, how can communicators understand them in order to reduce conflictual communications. Several perspectives could be used to explicate the above questions.

The first perspective is that, generally speaking all communications are geared toward achieving some objective(s). As such, the communicator employs many strategies to be persuasive. For instance, the framing process is an important persuasion approach. Here, a frame is described as the emphasis placed around a particular issue that seek to define what the issue is really about. To frame is to package groups of facts to create a story. Thus, frames are shared beliefs, values and perspectives familiar to the members of a societal culture over long periods of time on which individuals and institutions draw in order to give meaning, sense and normative directions to their thinking and action. Communicators use metaphors as indicants of what is being communicated.

Walter lipman (1922) argues that people see the world through certain frameworks and these frameworks affects what a person sees. People define not at random but according to stereotypes

demanded by their culture. Framing, like metaphors, define the issues at hand as well as suggests the solutions. Framing influences public opinion as well as individual behaviour.

Secondly, and this is linked to last statement, is that, metaphors provide images of interpretation. The implication of this is that, metaphors provides site of and for identification. In other words they provide a frame of 'seeing' what is being communicated. Olivier (2007) argues that since the world is revealed to humans through their senses, metaphors impart value to what is being seen. They are used as vehicle for looking at the world in a certain way.

From Olivier's perspective and very critical to this paper is that, metaphors help us to 'look'. It is this process of looking and being reoriented to look that generates boundaries of interaction and largely leads to conflictual communications. For instance, the desired look is the objectifying look. This look facilitates dialogue and provides information of abundance rather than deficit. In contrast, there is identifying look. This look is usually accompanied by feelings and intentions of rivalry, aggression and violence. The identifying-look, promotes the desire to possess and to colonize. Finally, metaphors are powerful because they are coded with a social message of position, expectations, and sobriety. Simply, metaphors help in 'visualisation' of what the society is.

Methodology

The study used a sample of 384 audiences of Kass and Inooro radio stations from Uasin- Gishu District. The District covers what is described as the epicentre of the 2007 post poll violence. The audiences were reached through survey questions. *Kass* and *Inooro* are commercial vernacular radio stations and each contributed 192 audiences. *Kass Fm* broadcast in *Kalenjin* language and *Inooro FM* broadcast in *Gikuyu* language. The *Kalenjins* are the Highland Nilotes. Nganga (2006, 307) states that, the *Kalenjins* consist of seven principal groups with numerous subdivision within them. They are: Kipsigis, Nandi, Tugen, the Pokot, the Marakwet, the Keiyo, and the Saboat known as Southern *Kalenjins*. The term *Kalenjin* and the concept of ethnic solidarity with which it is embodied appear to have taken root in the period during the *Mau Mau* emergency. The *Kalenjins* formed the bedrock support for the Orange Democratic Movement led by Hon Raila Odinga in the Rift Valley during the 2007 General Election. By extension *Kass Fm* was largely perceived to be supportive of the Raila's presidential Candidature.

The *Agikuyu* are the largest community in Kenya. They are central Bantus. Nganga (2006, 107) says that, their ancestral and spiritual homeland is in the present Central Province. They are also the second largest group in the Rift Valley Province. The *Agikuyu* formed the bedrock support for the PNU party led by Hon Mwai Kibaki during the 2007 General Election. Like *Kass Fm*, *Inooro fm* was perceived to support Kibaki's presidential bid.

These two tribes were technically the principal protagonists during the 2007 General Election. And since *Kass* and *Inooro* are the two leading radio stations that broadcast to these two tribes, then, they not only provide us with insights about how the presidential candidates and their supporters used the media but also shed some illuminating light on how the media institutions especially vernacular radio rallied supports for their preferred candidates. The papers' data is part of a wider

research in, a PhD thesis by the same author titled: *Vernacular Radio and Democracy: A Historical Reconstruction of Audiences Usage of Kass and Inooro radio stations in Uasin-Gishu District.*

The respondents were asked to name the metaphors that were used to describe various presidential candidates (in Kenya's General Election of 2007) by the vernacular radio stations that they listen to (*Kass* and *Inooro*). Simultaneously, they were also asked to state the impacts of such communication on their perceptions about the presidential candidates. The study concentrated on two presidential candidates; Kibaki and Raila.

The findings

The data generated found out that, during the periods of intense political competitions, Kenyans seem to have very little political commonality. All the things that divide them are glorified and the things that unite them demonized. The data is alarming because, it graphically captures a people at 'war' with each other

Metaphors in Kass FM

Metaphors were overwhelmingly used by both radio stations of *Kass*. For instance, in the airwaves of *Kass* radio, the following Kalenjin names were used metaphorically to deliver coded messages intended to portray the PNU presidential candidate (Kibaki) as weak, unworthy of leadership and unacceptable to the Kalenjin community: *tendeneiy* (a lean bullock), *ng'waleiy* (limping bullock) and *ng'ososeiy* (frightened bullock). The use of the name 'bullock' instead of a 'bull' was tactical, for it carried other cultural baggage. For instance, a bullock couldn't sire and its lineage was unwanted or has been stopped. One can see the implicit implications of such communication. Furthermore, the process of turning a bull into a bullock was not only unpleasant but was nevertheless sanctioned by the bull owner as a necessary procedure of containing and taming the bull. Deductively, some politicians and their supporters required to be tamed and contained.

Other Kalenjin names that reached the airwaves of *Kass* radio included: *Kimurkelda* (brown teeth), this was metaphorically used to describe the Kikuyu community and present them as lacking even in physical appearance. Coinage of terms such as *mwana wa meno meupe* which translates into 'son of the white teeth' were regularly used. For instance, we were informed in one FGD that, even in programs which appeared innocent such as greeting program in *Kass*, someone would send a greeting card and identify his name as 'son of the white teeth' from region A or B in Rift Valley province. The said audience would then pass a political message that, '*watu wa meno meupe wako kwa meli yao*' – translates to; People whose teeth were white are in the same political ship. In other words, they were in a specific political party. Note the exclusion expression of categorizing people into two groups – colored teeth and non colored teeth groups. Generally, a significant number of Kikuyus from central Kenya have brown teeth due to exposure to river and stream water from the Mt Kenya and Aberdare mountains in central Kenya which contains high levels of fluoride - which affects the coloration of teeth.

Tergegchat (A wild bird that cannot be domesticated, Kanga in Swahili) it implied that, even if one managed to incubate her eggs using the domestic hen, when the chick becomes of age, it will simply fly away to where it belongs. The message here is clear, politically a Kikuyu candidate is a *Kanga* you cannot bank on him /her. They belong to a different entity. The meaning was that, the two communities could not be together politically.

Lelwet (a Kalenjin word for Jackal), and *Margetet* (Kalenjin word for hyena), also found their place in the airwaves of *Kass*. Like in many other human societies, Jackals and Hyenas and the other animals of their kind are not very liked animals in the Kalenjin communities. First, they are predictor animals who either prey on the weak or snatch what other animals have killed. Second, they have very gratuitous appetite for food. Collectively, they are cunning animals; unwelcome in the communities of humans. Whenever, these animals and the human beings meet the consequences are grave- death and bloodbath. Thus, when used in political communication rhetoric, these two words deliver coded messages that implicitly suggest not only who the enemy is, but also suggests appropriate ways of fighting the enemy.

Other Kalenjin words in the airwaves included *kobil* (Kalenjin phrase for a weak clan/ or relatives from the mother's side). Mother's clan means that, although the people from your mother's clan are your relatives, they are nevertheless not very strongly attached to you. Indeed, the researcher was informed that, the Kalenjin culture required that in a real battle, you cannot be positioned together with the mother's clan for they can abandon you at your hour of need. On the other hand, people from the father's clan were presumed to be so strongly attached to you that they would be willing to fight beside you till the end.

Moseit (monkey), there was a vernacular song called 'monkey/babon leadership' that was very popular and was aired very regularly. The theme of the song was that, no people should accept leadership that lacked vision. It claimed that some leaders thought they had visions yet the political vision they had was similar to that of a monkey on a trees - a monkey's elevated vision is actually destructive because it spies on which maize farm has mature maize crops from where the troops can invade and steal the crops. PNU's leadership was literary equated to monkey leadership.

The word *limondo* (weed) was also regularly on air. *Kalenjins* are largely agriculturalist. They thus do farm preparation before, during and after planting. All the unwanted weeds are removed from the farm to make them more productive. Thus, when used in political communication, its implicit conclusion was that there were some political weeds that required to be removed from the political scene. Others words were; *kirki ne ingwoli* (limping bull), and *cherwon* (sleepy person). The list is long.

Kass radio station also used very positive phrases and words to describe its preferred presidential candidate - Raila Odinga.

Raila was also called *Ng'etundo* (Kalenjin word for lion). He was the almighty and powerful.

Above all he was the king of the Jungle. He was the all courageous and the one to take the dragon by the horn and kill it. Metaphorically the dragon was his main political opponent (Kibaki). Likewise, Raila was also projected as the prized *Kirkit* (Kalenjin word for bull), whose price was worth paying. Culturally, cattle's keeping is an important cultural aspect of the kalenjin culture. Farmers with prized bulls were highly respected. Raila was presented as a prized bull and therefore, a natural leader for the community. These forms of communication painted the picture of a strong, able and reliable leader.

In *Kass* radio, Raila Odinga was referred to as *boyot ab kokwet* (an elder who was accorded respect). He was referred to as *Arap Mibei* (which means a person from the river or lake). These special names created the impressions that Raila Odinga was a member of the Kalenjin Community. Therefore, it was alright to support him. He was presented to the community as a hero befitting in all aspect to be the natural leader of the wider community of Kenya. Very many other phrases and words were used to lend credence as to why the Kalenjin community should rally behind the candidature of Raila Odinga and rejects the candidature of Kibaki.

Metaphors in Inooro FM

Inooro radio also used metaphors to rally support for Mwai Kibaki (the PNU Presidential candidate and dissuade people from supporting Raila Odinga.

First, Raila Odinga was referred to as a *Kihii* (Kikuyu word for uncircumcised boy) or the many the variant of the same word such as *Kimwana* (a youth). The Kikuyu community culturally circumcises boys. Circumcision is a rite of passage that marks the transition from boyhood to manhood. Thus, anybody who has not undergone the initiation process was in the eyes of the community still considered to be a child who could not assume any leadership role. When used metaphorically, the term *Kihii* projects someone who has not matured, not ready with positions of responsibility and above all, who has no leadership role. Implicitly, the ODM presidential candidate was projected as not only unqualified to become a leader but also as totally out of order to even imagine he could lead the community. Accordingly, the implicit conclusion that the community was to deduct is that leadership was for men and Raila was not a man.

The word *Nduriri* (kikuyu word for foreigner) was also in the airwaves of Inooro. Raila was projected as a foreigner. The word and its related phrases were used to emphasize the otherness of the Luo community *vis-a-viz* the Kikuyu community. It also had religious and biblical connotations. For instance, when used in a spiritual sense, it projects the Kikuyu community as the Israelites in the Holy Bible; God's chosen people. To this end, the word *nduriri* carries the overtones of ethnic superiority. Therefore, Raila was like the Biblical Delilah, who will sneak into the house of *Mumbi* (a phrase used to refer to the Kikuyu ethnic group) learns the secrets of the house and leaks the same to the enemies of the tribe. The implicit conclusion of this metaphor was that, the candidature of Raila Odinga will contaminate the purity of the Kikuyu leadership. Therefore, he must be rejected *in toto* by the Kikuyu community.

The word *Nyamu* (Kikuyu word for a wild animal) also reached the airwaves of *Inooro*. The word when used metaphorically projected Raila as a wild animal. It was intended to invoke great fear among the people as a basis of rejecting Raila as a presidential candidate. For instance, a wild animal can injure, kill and maim humans, as such; the usage of the term was intended to present the character of Raila Odinga as an ogre, merciless and dangerous. Simply, the implicit conclusion to be drawn by the audience was, since Raila is non-human he should be rejected. In a focus group discussion one respondent told us that ‘I was brought up knowing that the Kikuyus were a superior race, and we are a superior people’ according to this respondent, the Luos were ‘outcasts for they did not circumcise and they were also uncivilised’. It is easy to infer why it was easy to call other people animals – they were not relating on the same human plane.

The word *Thuu* (Kikuyu word for enemy) also reached the *Inooro*'s airwaves. Metaphorically, Raila was presented as a political enemy for both the Kikuyu leadership and the Gikuyu community at large. As such, it was the duties of audiences to safeguard their community from Raila and the forces he represented. In addition, to emphasize that Raila was an enemy, he was regularly referred to as *the Nyamu ya thi/Muraru* (Kikuyu words for snake). Snakes are feared animals. Their sighting causes fear and panic. Whenever they intrude on the human community they are usually killed. Snakes also symbolises Satan in kikuyu culture. It was incredible the extent the vernacular radio stations were willing to go in order to dehumanise and demonise people from other tribes. It must be mentioned that much prejudicial words were passed through contemporary songs which were broadcasted over and over again by the vernacular radio stations.

Different from the dehumanising and demonising of honourable Raila, *Inooro* radio glorified and praised the candidature of Mwai Kibaki (the PNU candidate). It projected him as a reliable, wise and a natural leader. Kibaki was a *Jamba* (Kikuyu word for Hero). In many Kikuyu mythologies heroes are extra ordinary people to be revered and respected. They were also courageous and had demigod status. As such, the word was intended to project Kibaki as the saviour of the Agikuyu community. They had to rally behind him for he was the one to guarantee the community's survival. In addition, Kibaki was described as *muthuri mugathe* (an elder who has achieved a sage status). He was to be respected and accorded support. Usage of such words gave people confidence and faith that their candidate was unrivalled. Kibaki was *Muthaamki wi Gatu* (esteemed King/leader). Metaphorically, the picture that was presented to the audiences painted Kibaki as person with unquestionable leadership traits. He was the natural leader for the community. Kibaki was the perfect king for Kikuyu nation and by extension Kenya. Furthermore a, parable such as, an elder sitting on a stool sees far into the horizon than a boy on a tree top, which is roughly translated as (*muthuri aikareire chungwa onaga haraya gukira kihii kiri muti iguru*) were frequently used. Such parables though hilarious, were effective in communicating the perceived difference of the two candidates. Raila was visionless and therefore unable to lead people into the future while Kibaki was able to anticipate and perceive the future, a leader with a vision. Many other similar words and phrases were used.

Apparently, from a general point of view, it would be impossible for these kinds of radio contents to contribute positively to the growth of democracy and democratic governance in Kenya. Such

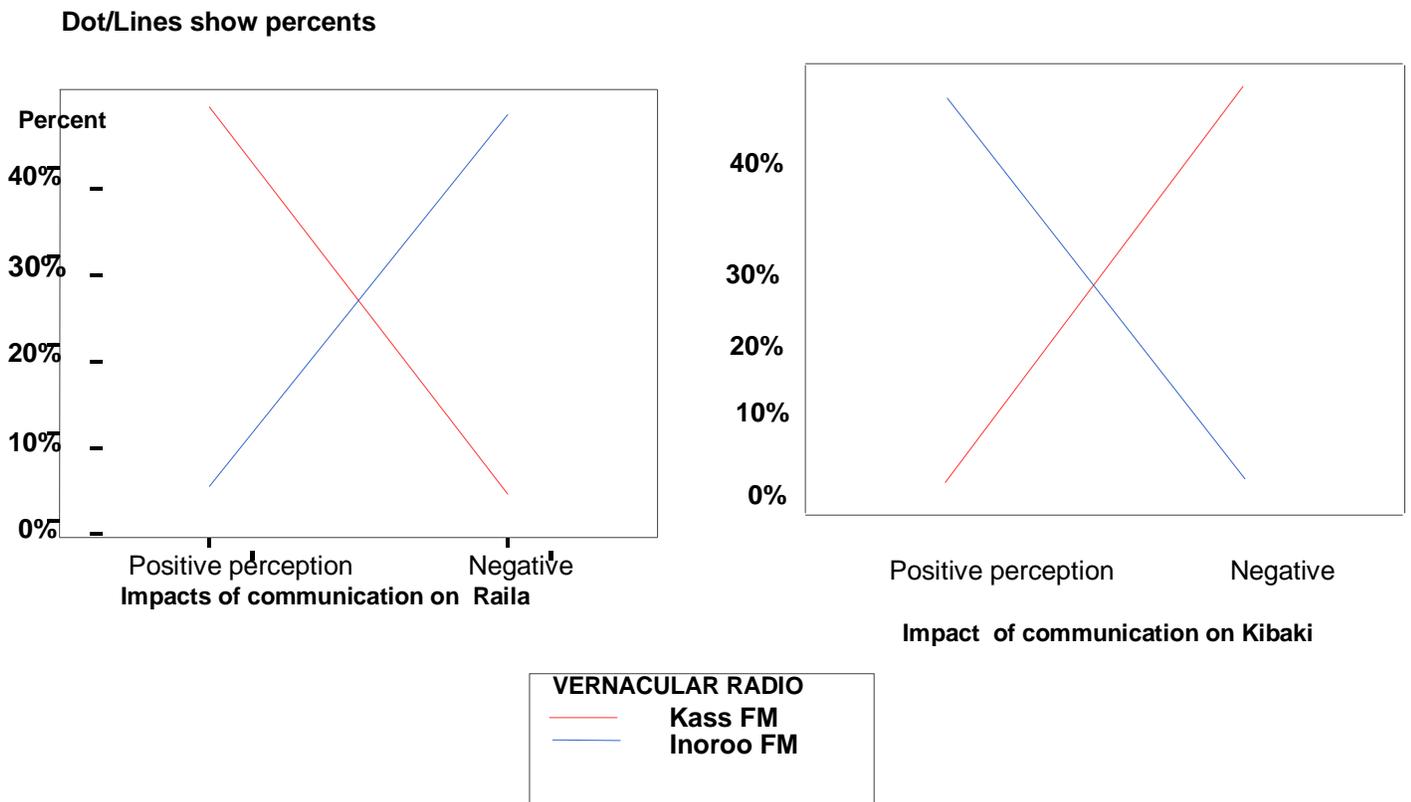
contents and the programmes that delivered them not only lacked the values that can build an environment conducive for democracy, but more worse they failed to provide contents that could facilitate the audiences in making informed, rational and balanced decisions.

The paper posits that the numerous uses of negative metaphors in vernacular radio stations failed to provide contents upon which a fruitful democratic dialogue, necessary for consensus building could be built. At the very least they failed to plant the seed of democracy at the grassroots.

Metaphors/ special names and Parables and their impact on audience’s perception

Audiences of *Kass* and *Inooro* showed a lot of unanimity in their responses to the question of how frequently they heard the above contents on air. About eight out of ten of all audiences (78%) said that the contents were aired very regularly. In addition, a close up analysis on the data about the impacts of negative contents on audiences indicates that the two stations produced diametrical effects on the two leading presidential candidates – Kibaki and Raila. For instance, whereas nine out of ten of *Kass*’ audiences thought that *Kass* radio produced positive perception about Raila, while a similar number of *Inooro*’s audiences thought that *Inooro* radio created a negative perception about Raila. Similarly, nine out of ten of *Kass*’ audiences thought the radio produced negative impact about Kibaki. Correspondingly, an equal number of *Inooro*’s audiences said the contents of *Inooro* radio station created positive impacts about Kibaki –see fig 1 below).

Figure 1. Impacts of radio content on the way a Candidate is perceived



Source: Authors’ data

Firstly, from figure 1, it is clear that, the two stations were working at cross paths. Each supported a different candidate and delivered contents that created positive perceptions about their preferred candidate and negative perceptions about the other candidates. The inferences drawn from this data are: it is true that vernacular radio did contribute to the formation of negative perceptions about presidential candidates and probably this had the effect of inflaming the tensions among different tribes. As a result, vernacular radio stations may have added fuel to the fire of violence.

Secondly, the data reveals that the vernacular radio stations were as polarised as the communities were along different ethnic and political inclinations. Thirdly, vernacular radios may have been reckless on the way they rallied support for or against the presidential candidates in the 2007 General Elections.

Clearly, the *Metaphorical* rhetoric elements lack both the capacity to build democracy and create consensus. In an ethnically diverse State like Kenya all such communications do is to create greater gaps in social distance between ethnic groups co-habiting in the same geographical and political space. The data also permits one to imagine that, the *solidaire* could be vacated when people start to classify themselves as autochthons and foreigners, immigrant, outsiders or as strangers with emphasis to opportunities such as cultural recognitions, voting and political representations.

From the data, it can also be inferred that, the use of metaphors by these two radio stations had a diametrical opposed consequence on the audiences mind. First, a community is set against another. Second, their (metaphors) rallying calls seems to draws deeply from the well of tribal ethnocentric interests. Clearly, metaphors were used as alienating tools. They were mechanics upon which the 'other-isation' of the ethnically different neighbours was actualised and lived.

Finally, journalists must appreciate that they belong to a different order from that of their audiences in the society's structures and process. Like priests and other societal leaders, journalists' duty to society is clothed with heavy responsibility. It must be performed in a very professional and reflective way. Consequently, journalists and the mass media houses they work for, can't, as the KNCHR report indicated in our problem section, afford to be careless.

Perhaps, our data permit us to say, the two vernacular radio stations dint reflect any social difference in the way they treated the two presidential candidates. They didn't flood the minds of their audiences with new imaginations full of scenes, figures and surmises very different from their loci. Scenes which could help audiences escape their ethnocentric mindsets or change the imaginary against which the real is judged.

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