

**THE IMPACT OF THE MEDIA ON INFLUENCING POPULAR CULTURE  
AMONG THE YOUTH.  
CASE STUDY: NAIROBI CITY, KENYA.**

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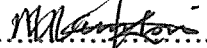
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### DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this is my original work and that it has never been presented to any university or any other institution of higher learning for any academic award. I acknowledge all information from other sources and those which I have worked with.

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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents Mr. and Mrs. Karogo, my late grandmother, my dear uncle Dunstan Magu Ngumo and my loving brother Njeru.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My heartfelt gratitude goes to my parents Mr. and Mrs. Karogo and my uncle Magu for their guidance, financial, moral and material support they gave me through out my life, including my studies. My love goes to my brother Njeru for his advice and support, and Ngumo.

I am thankful for the patience, educational guidance and the time spared from my supervisor Dr. Jerome Ongora.

I am grateful to the real friends who have been there for me during my campus life...they know themselves.

Above all, I thank God for taking me this far and protecting me from the destruction so abundant in this world.

### **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

GYPA: GLOBAL YOUTH PARTNERS KENYA

ICT: INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

KTN: KENYA TELEVISION NETWORK

KBC: KENYA BROADCASTING CORPORATION

MTV: MUSIC TELEVISION

UN: UNITED NATIONS

WPAY: WORLD PROGRAMME OF ACTION ON THE YOUTH

CBD: CENTRAL BUISNESS DISTRICT

## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 4.1 .....	18
Table 4.2 .....	19
Table 4.3 .....	21
Table 4.4 .....	22

**LIST OF CHARTS**

Chart 4.2 .....19

Chart 4.3 .....21

Chart 4.4 .....23



## ABSTRACT

The study is concerned with the social behavior of the youth as influenced by the media with regard to popular culture.

The variables under the study were the social effects that popular culture has on the society as well as its effects on the social behavior of the youth, both in the negative and the positive aspects.

The supportive respondents consisted of mainly the young people who are consumers of the media and are therefore mostly influenced by popular culture as depicted by the media, as well as media representatives who are responsible for the messages that influence the youth.

Popular culture has affected not only the youth but the society as well, in both negative and positive ways. Improved literacy, self development of the youth and improved global communication are some of the positive aspects brought about by Popular culture as depicted by the media. Cultural disenfranchisement, sexual pervasiveness, drug abuse as well as violence and crime among the youth in society are some of the setbacks of popular culture.

The recommendations put forward in the research study will be helpful to the concerned parties in society including the government, in trying to understand the issues affecting the youth and therefore curbing the problems caused by the influence of popular culture as spread by the media among the youth in Nairobi.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

### **CHAPTER ONE**

1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	4
1.1 BACKGROUND.....	4
1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	5
1.3 STUDY OBJECTIVES.....	6
1.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY.....	6
1.5 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY.....	6
1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	7

### **CHAPTER TWO**

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	8
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	8
2.1.2 THE YOUTH, MEDIA AND POPULAR CULTURE.....	8
2.1.3 MEDIA USED TO SPREAD POPULAR CULTURE.....	10
2.1.4 POPULAR CULTURE AND ITS CHALLENGES.....	13

### **CHAPTER THREE**

3.0 METHODOLOGY.....	13
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	13
3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN.....	14
3.3 SAMPLE.....	14
3.4 SAMPLE TECHNIQUE.....	14
3.5 DATA COLLECTION METHODS.....	14
3.6 DATA ANALYSIS.....	16
3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	17
3.8 ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.....	17

### **CHAPTER FOUR**

#### **DATA, ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION**

4.0 INTRODUCTION.....	19
4.1 PRESENTATION&DISCUSSION OF RESULTS.....	19
4.2.1 POPULAR CULTURE AND THE SOCIAL BEHAVIOR OF YOUTH.....	19

4.2.2 MEDIA CHANNELS USED IN POPULAR CULTURE.....	21
4.2.3 SECTORS OF SOCIETY AFFECTED BY POPULAR CULTURE.....	23

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

<b>SUMNMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>25</b>
5.0 INTRODUCTION.....	25
5.2 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.....	26
5.2.1 STATUS OF INTERNET & THE BROADCAST MEDIA.....	27
5.2.2 ANALYSIS ON POPULAR CULTURE, MEDIA&VIOLENCE.....	27
5.2.3 ANALYSIS ON POPULAR CULTURE & SEXUALITY.....	27
5.2.4 ANALYSIS ON POPULAR CULTURE & DRUG ABUSE.....	28
5.2.5 ANALYSIS ON POPULAR CULTURE &SELF DEVELOPMENT.....	28
5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	28

## **REFERENCES**

## **APPENDICES**

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter gives a brief background of the research study, showing what the study entails, the issues dwelled in the research and a general outline of both the positive and negative of popular culture among the youth in Nairobi.

#### **1.1 Background**

This research dwelled on the role of the media in influencing popular culture among the youth in urban society in Africa, with specific reference to Nairobi.

In Kenya, the youth make up about more than half of the general population, mostly concentrated in the urban areas. In Nairobi, the youth aged between 16-30 years of age are the majority; therefore, these groups of people influence most aspects of society either directly or indirectly. The youth take up the concepts that are provided through the media and they adopt them through a process that is active, creative and which produces a new product. Popular culture is the new approach which sees the young people mixing and matching as they take from the media those images and ideas that they want to use in constructing an identity, which will serve them as they navigate their way from childhood to adulthood. This is a cultural product that is present in every modern society undergoing rapid social and economic change, as experienced in most cities in Africa today.

The media has played a big role in culture. Culture is described as learned behavior of members of a given social group. Many writers and thinkers have offered expansions to this definition, such as; Culture is learning socially acquired traditions and lifestyles of the members of a society including the patterned repetitive way of thinking, feeling and acting. Virtually all definitions of culture recognize that culture is learned. Creation and maintenance of more or less common culture occurs through communication, mass media, when we talk to friends, family and other members of society.

Popular culture consists of widespread cultural elements in any given society. Such elements are perpetuated through the society's vernacular language or an established 'lingua franca'. More over, popular culture comprises the daily interactions, needs and desires and cultural moments that make up the everyday life of the mainstream.

Popular culture may include a number of practices, including such practices as cooking, consumption, mass media and the many facets of entertainment, such as sports and literature. Popular culture is spread through, mostly the media.

In Kenya, with greater reference to Nairobi, the society is undergoing rapid social change, such that complex, modern technology is replacing the past methods of doing things. The modern way of life has become fast with widespread technological advancement such as ICT, mobile phones and the internet. Consequently leading to a strong dissimilarity with parent generations, such that for the youth smooth transition to adulthood is no longer possible. Nairobi is one of the many cities in Africa undergoing rapid cultural and social changes especially among the youth due to globalization. The world is becoming increasingly interconnected, reflecting the process of globalization. Globalization is paradoxically exerting simultaneous pressures towards unity and fragmentation. Cultural globalization is one of the major factors in the diversification that is evidenced within the world of youth culture.

Modern fashion, hip-hop music and entertainment culture, gun culture, drug culture and the like are mostly influenced by the media and have become the expressions that most youth in Nairobi identify themselves with. One does not have to look so hard and deep into this, you just have to walk through the streets of Nairobi and view the images of the young people in every building and every street...Baggy trousers, loud music, flashing i-pods, laptops and the like, spotted mostly by the famous entertainment stars portrayed by the media, whom they desire to be like. The question that comes to mind is, are the youth in Kenya searching for a new identity to fit into the New World Order, or are the youth just confused about where they come from and who they are?

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Popular culture has attracted much criticism. Aspects of popular culture such as gun culture, drug culture, sexually oriented subculture and the rave sub-culture have raised much concern in Kenya, with greater emphasis on Nairobi, especially when crime, drug abuse and sexual offenses are on the rise. This trend has further aggravated the situation with the internet, the media and growing peer pressure among the youth. Media violence is one of the problems associated with the youth in Nairobi, where it has been observed that the media have significantly contributed to violence in combination with other social and psychological factors. An area of concern is where the mass media exuberates the gun culture by portraying guns as glamorous, effective, omnipotent devices. More over, the media portrays casual sex and sexual subversive ness as being normal and cool as issues about romantic love and sexuality have been brought out in the open more so than in the past. Pornography, sexual crimes and the HIV Aids pandemic has now, more than ever become a growing threat among the youth, with most of them being either infected or affected.

Cultural disenfranchisement is also one of the adverse effects of popular culture faced in society as the youth lose their rich cultural heritage and the systems of meanings, support, and social control that were part of tradition society. The indigenous culture which has been around for decades and the mother tongue is dying out as most of the youth today are confused about their roots, their cultural beliefs, norms and values which I believe as Africans we should uphold.

## **1.3 Study Objectives**

### **1.3.1 General objective**

To analyze the impact of the media, in influencing the social behavior of the youth.

### **1.3.2 Specific objectives**

1. To identify the major types of media used in the spread of popular culture among the youth in Nairobi.
2. To determine the relationship between the media and popular culture and what part they play in influencing the youth.
3. To identify which aspects of the society have been mostly affected by the spread of popular culture as disseminated by the media among the youth in Nairobi today.
4. To recommend ways in which the media can positively influence or portray popular culture among the youth today and how this popular culture can be of good use to society.

## **1.4 Scope of the study**

The research paper looked generally at the aspects of popular culture as influenced by the media to the youth, and the relationship between the media and the youth in relation to the effects of popular culture on the rapid social and economic changes facing the Kenyan society, drawing attention specifically to the youth in Nairobi. The researcher covered the Central Business District (CBD) of Nairobi and the surrounding environs. The study took place from January 2007 – June 2007

## **1.5 Justification of the study**

The study intends to build upon prior research done by sociologists, psychologists, governments and NGO'S associated with youth studies, on the relationship between the media, popular culture and the youth in society today.

1. The study is important since it will bring to light the problems faced by the youth in the African Urban societies, specifically in Nairobi.

2. The research will be useful to the local authorities and the society at large as it will enable a clear understanding of the issues facing the youth and it will raise further awareness on these issues.
3. It will help sociologists, educators, parents and social workers working with the youth to employ better methods or device more practical ways to reach out and help the youth to deal with their problems through knowledge of their trends, perceptions and the youth's general viewpoint of the society.
4. It will benefit the society and the local authorities in curbing the problems experienced in Nairobi that are associated with the youth.
5. It will be useful to the media and the media proprietors, since they will be more careful about the programmes and the messages they disseminate to the public in the effort to avoid influencing the youth negatively.
6. This research is beneficial to the society at large as it will make them realize the changes happening in the society and how they are affecting their youth.
7. The study will find solutions to the problems brought about by the spread of popular culture among the youth to the society, such as drug abuse, sexual pervasiveness, violence and the like.

## **1.6 Research Questions**

1. What role do the media play in influencing the youth's social behavior?
2. Which mediums are effectively used by the media to influence popular culture among the youth in Nairobi?
3. What are the effects of popular culture on the youth in Today's society?
4. Will the youth develop alternative subcultures that are less materialistic?



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviews the existing work that has been done by other scholars but related to this study. The study is focusing upon the findings and views of other researchers and is derived from secondary data, i.e. from books, journals and the internet.

##### **2.1.1 The youth, the media and popular culture**

The world is challenged by the youth phenomena and Kenya is by no means alone. Of the 6 billion people in the world today, 1 billion comprise young people between the ages of 15-24. What is worrisome however is that of this number, 850 million live in developing countries and it is estimated that in the next 30 years, this number will have grown to 1.2 billion - mostly in developing countries. Today one person in five is between the ages of 15 and 24 years. Altogether there are over one billion youth and they constitute a formidable force. Nairobi being one of the cosmopolitan cities in Africa, has a population of 33million of which the youth make up 65 % ( UNDP, 2004). This situation bears certain implications not only to the youth but to the society as a whole. How is the media responsible for the changes in society and more specifically to the youth in this cosmopolitan city. The media plays a crucial role in modern society, and the youth are usually the most frequent consumers of the media, hence they are influenced directly or indirectly by messages disseminated by the media. The media in Nairobi have become a formidable force, and affect the youth both socially, economically and even shape the youths political views or opinions. According to Ms Peris Wakesho (Global Youth Partners Kenya), noted that the global mass media is a powerful tool for development and self expression, now that the youth are in developing countries as Kenya are exposed to Global Youth Media Culture, the youth are hungry for information and so seek for access to it.

In Nairobi, the changing global media is shaping the socialization process, values and activism of young people, and impacting on young peoples decisions on education choice, employment, leisure as well as various aspects of life (UN Global Youth Media Report, 2004).

The media plays a crucial role in contemporary society, hence as frequent consumers of the

media; the youth are influenced directly by messages disseminated by the media. In Nairobi, the media have grown considerably large and varied, and have amassed greater power by shaping the political views and opinions of the Kenyan society. It is in the same manner that the media find the youth to be the most vital target for their messages or information. The mass media shapes the youth's views, ideas and behavior by framing topics, raising issues and taking sides. Centralized and conventional media also influence the youth by shaping the wider publics' view of them. Magazines, television, movies, videos, radio and the internet portray an image of the youth to others in society.

Popular culture is the phenomenon which occurs as the youth get more exposed to the media and produce their own culture as they receive images and ideas from the media. The youth take up the concepts that are provided through the media and they adopt them through a process that is active, creative and which produces a new cultural product, which is more optimistic than the older more pessimistic (Van Cagle, 2004). In Nairobi, the youth have not been left behind as western concepts as depicted through music, film, fashion and art by the media, has notably changed the behavior and perceptions of the Nairobi youth, who have now embraced *Hip hop* culture, *Rasta* culture as well as formed their own lingua (language), *Sheng* which is well used by the youth all over Nairobi and gradually being accepted and recognized by older members of society all over the country.

Cultural globalization, which has popular culture as it's by product, is gradually and rapidly altering the youths' tastes, lifestyles and some of their values. The youth in Nairobi have gone through considerable change beginning with their perception of life, the world, their culture and in all aspects of their daily lives (Diversi, 2002).

In a world where the internet, mobile phones and fast food restaurants have replaced the way people once communicated, the conventional way of life and such. The young people begin to search for new identities that are relevant to fit into the current social content. Hence, the youth have and are putting more emphasis on art, music, global communication systems, via the internet and the mass media. The role of the media in influencing popular culture among the youth is therefore a catalyst rather than the sole cause.

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### **2.1.2 Types of media used in spreading popular culture.**

The youth in Nairobi have access to numerous and varied media channels, as the society has undergone numerous economic changes which have led to industrial growth, making communication facilities, especially the media to be readily available to the youth in Nairobi. The societal change with both positive and negative implications for the youth in relation to the spread of popular culture, is the growth of the electronic media in Nairobi. This includes the "old" media, such as television, radio, telephones and magazines, that are finding their way into the most isolated villages and rural areas, bringing images of a materialistic world culture (Altman, 2001). It also includes the "new" media such as computers, E-mail, chat rooms, CD-ROMS, satellite television, paging devices, and video games.

#### **Print media**

At the moment, the mainstream print media is dominated by the 'Daily Nation', 'The Standard' and 'Kenya Times', three major publications which, although very informative in news and analysis, are publications that project a one-sided ideological point of view. Predictably, the alternative "gutter press" that has mushroomed in Kenya has specialized in sensation and trivia, a profile that renders them incapable of contributing qualitatively to the on-going struggle against Neo-colonialism, Capitalist exploitation and constant Imperialist intervention in our politics, economy and culture (Mapambano newsletter, 2004). Newspapers are a major source of information in Nairobi, although it is not very popular among the youth as it basically focuses on politics. However, the newspapers are targeting the youth by publishing magazines, such as 'Buzz', 'Pulse', 'Young Nation' which are very popular among the youth in Nairobi, which

concentrate on gossip, entertainment and various aspects of popular culture. Magazines are also very popular among the youth in Nairobi and they play a large role in influencing popular culture among the young people in Nairobi. Magazines like, 'True Love', 'Drum', The Insider, Buzz, The Beat and many more, mainly target the youth and capitalize on showbiz (sensational news), entertainment and fashion, spreading an entirely materialistic culture among the youth in Nairobi.

### **Television**

The electronic media like the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) and the Kenya Television Network (KTN) are owned by the government and therefore churn out ruling class propaganda while a good proportion of other electronic media has fallen on private hands following the "liberalization of the air waves", examples are Nation TV, Citizen TV, Metro TV and Family TV. However, these privately owned stations have local programs, but a good chunk of their broadcast is a representation of European and American culture which urban youth consume round the clock with devastating psychological consequences. The end result is that European and American cultural imperialism is constantly under promotion on private TV stations and at the expense of local culture and the revolutionary struggle.

In certain instances, foreign films transmitted through these stations have resulted in serious cultural shocks and collisions leaving parents in a state of confusion with their children especially on issues that touch on African morality.

### **Radio**

Radio is also an influential medium among the youth as the main focus in their programmes is western music, entertainment news and largely sensational material, especially in privately owned radio stations such as 'Kiss FM', 'Capital FM', 'Easy FM', 'Y FM', 'Citizen Fm', 'Classic FM' and 'East Africa Radio'. However the radio is also very effective in awareness programmes and in youth enlightenment about various issues which affect the youth and the society as a whole (United Nations Report on Global Youth,2004). Government owned radio station such as KBC FM (Kenya Broadcasting Corporation), is rapidly following the same trend apart from being the ruling parties mouthpiece, so as to win listener ship.

## **Internet**

The internet or the World Wide Web, is described as the network that connects computers all over the world, hence has led to the world getting closer to becoming a global village. The internet is becoming the most popular mediums among the youth in Nairobi, hence it is the main source of popular culture among the youth in Nairobi. As much as the development of ICT has led to the development of Kenya as a whole, it has also brought about a lot of cultural disenfranchisement and immorality among the youth. Online technology has the capacity to facilitate obsessions and escapes, so it is unhealthy to some (Markam, 1998). The youth are most often exposed to explicit sexual interactions via the internet especially through private chat rooms which provide an unusually safe social context for persons of all ages including the youth (Online Victimization, 1999). Western culture in form of music, dance, film and language is fast spreading amongst the youth in Nairobi who are internalizing the messages they receive via the internet and equally applying them in their daily lives.

## **Film and Video games**

Films have become very popular among the young people in Nairobi and are responsible in altering the behavior and perceptions of the youth, as they take in the ideas that are disseminated through the films they view and use them to fit into their current lifestyle. These mediums have brainwashed the youth into having a utopian way of thinking as they believe in fiction and ape what the Hollywood stars do in their movies. For example, a growing number of youth is addicted to either smoking and drinking, as this is termed as 'cool' according to the manner in which these drugs are portrayed in the movies, shown by the media. Issues of morality are also affected as premarital sexual affairs among the youth is seen as okay and acceptable making unwanted pregnancy, abortion and the HIV-Aids a force to reckon with. Movies also exacerbates the gun culture by portraying guns as glamorous, effective, omnipotent devices (Media, Crime and Criminal Justice, 1992).

Video games which are becoming common from children up to adults is also a form of popular culture which has drastic effects especially in the socialization process in Children as they become addicted to these games and isolated from other activities.

### **2.1.3 The challenges of popular culture on the youth and society.**

All over the world, mass culture is used by the youth to create an identity, and this is rapidly becoming the trend in most African cities. In most African urban societies, Nairobi being one of them, the rate of change in society also impacts on the creation of subculture groups, for example the Rastafarians, hip-hop subculture, cyber age and so forth, which are experimenting with these kinds of identities already, as a sort of rehearsal for when they will be more common, where large sectors of the society will be heading for the future.

The youth are often on the front lines of new developments.

#### **Drug Abuse**

Drugs and drug addiction is one of the biggest problems facing the youth in Nairobi today. Drug culture being one of the products of popular culture, is a growing threat among the young people in Nairobi, where drug peddling and consumption is mostly targeted to the youth as these drugs are made readily available in most venues where the youth are likely to be at, for example, in recreation facilities, discotheques, concerts and even around schools. Alcohol consumption and smoking are a normal occurrence among the youth in Nairobi with children as young as 10 years being addicted to alcohol and marijuana. (Nation Media archives, 2007)

#### **Sexual Subversive ness**

Popular culture portrays casual sex and subversive behavior as being normal and 'cool' as romantic love and sexuality are brought out in the open more so than in the past, especially via the media. Popular culture has made sex the topic of films and TV, billboards, advertising and basically most things surroundings, even the sexual behavior of national leaders is openly discussed, and pornography is easily available to all via the internet. Moreover, this makes the HIV Aids pandemic a growing threat among the youth with most either being infected or affected by the ravages of the virus. The youth who are infected are likely to experience stigmatization and discrimination as they are shunned in society.

#### **Materialism**

Materialism is a system whereby an individual or group of people believes in an endless accumulation of wealth or material things to an extent that even social morality and ethics are not



highly regarded. The youth in Nairobi have fallen prey to materialism due to the influence of Popular Culture as portrayed in the media, such that they will go to great length to acquire what the Pop stars and such celebrities have, wear and use in their elite lifestyle. Some attribute this criticism to the sheer breadth of its availability; others posit that the very notion of 'pop-culture' is merely an arbitrary construct used to perpetuate elitism. For example, in Nairobi, the youth are changing their perceptions about life, career and in every aspect mostly aspiring to be in the entertainment business as rappers, actors like famous movie stars so as to acquire that desired celebrity status, hence the aspect of elitism in popular culture.

### **Sensationalism**

Popular culture stems more from sensationalism and narcissistic wish fulfillment fantasies than from soberly considered reality and mature personal and spiritual development. Cultural items that require extensive experience, education, training, taste, insight or reflection for their fuller appreciation seldom become items of popular culture. This is observed in the current trend of the youth, as they are more drawn to fame and life on the fast lane, with less emphasis on career choices such as medicine, engineering and the like. The youth end up drifting from reality which expects everything to be achieved through hard work and sweat (Arthur, 1990)

### **Threat to Indigenous Culture**

Furthermore, popular culture is threatening the rich indigenous culture that we as Africans have long held on to. Traditional African culture has been adversely affected by the media and is quickly becoming extinct, as it is being replaced by popular culture as portrayed by the broadcast and print media.

### **Violence and Aggression**

Research on violent television and films, video games and music reveals that media violence increases the likelihood of aggressive and violent behavior in both immediate and long term contexts (Sonya S. Brady, 2007). Violence is a cultural product. The media are reflections of the culture and engines in the production process. Although they are not the only or even the most powerful causes, they are tied into other violence-generating engines and the youth pay particular attention to them (the media)

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This part of the research was concerned with the way in which the study is to be conducted. It offered a clear description and explanation on the data collection methods, as well as an analysis of the research design.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

This study focused on descriptive research design, using both qualitative and quantitative research methods. My research design based on the topic was mostly through the results found in the field.

#### **3.3 Sample**

The sample population consisted of the young people in Nairobi Province, Kenya, aged between 15-30 years of age. It also includes some of the media personalities from local broadcasting networks. A sample of 50 respondents was used.

#### **3.4 Sampling technique**

Random sampling was used in the research study. A sample of the youth from both sexes will be chosen randomly between the ages 15-30 years, only from Nairobi. The respondents were strictly from Nairobi province.

#### **3.5 Data Collection Methods**

##### **Interviews**

I used interviews to get most of the information on the research study. I will interview some media personalities from the local media networks in Nairobi, as they are the sources of most of the information to the youth and hence play a major role in influencing their attitudes. I also interviewed the young people who were willing to participate in carrying out this research as they are ones who are affected by the issues discussed in the research study.

Reasons for using interviews



- Interviews are fast and effective as no confirmation is needed
- One is able to get first hand accurate information from the source.
- It is possible to get additional information from respondents
- You will be able to relate with the experiences of the respondents

### **Participatory Observation**

I keenly observed the trends and behavior of the youth as well as participate in their activities, because, as being part of the young population, I experience the same challenges and opportunities concerned with popular culture as perpetuated by the media, as the youth that I am focusing my attention upon. Participatory observation is essential particularly in dealing with matters concerning the youth as by the interaction and face to face communication with the participants, I will be able to gain their trust and confidence and most importantly get accurate first hand information from the source.

### **Reasons for using participatory observation**

- Information is accurate as it is obtained directly from the source
- One is able to share the experiences of the respondents, therefore understanding the situation better from a personal level.
- Information is not tampered with or modified.

### **Focus Group Discussions**

I used group discussions with the youth so as to converse with the affected groups and create an open atmosphere which will help me to collect the data. I gathered willing participants into a group of 10 which will consist of young people from both sexes, between the ages of 15-30 years from different social backgrounds to discuss the issues concerning the youth and popular culture as depicted by the media.

### **Reasons for using focus Group discussions**

- It gives room for brain storming and exchanging ideas
- It provides greater understanding through interaction with the respondents
- It is possible to get additional information and personal experiences or testimonies from the respondents.
- The information received is accurate as it is first hand from the respondents

### **Library Research**

Library research was used to collect secondary data on the previous work and findings by other researchers on popular culture and the youth. I collected information from books, journals as well as various websites and any published material. This helped me gain greater ground on the study, as well as know how to go about carrying out the research.

#### **Reasons for using Library research**

- Library research provides room for comparison from other authors
- Additional information and new ideas from previous studies are available
- The information received from books gives further insight into the study

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

After the collection of data, it was systematically interpreted, organized and summarized in a comprehensible language and manner, through the use of facts and figures obtained through observation from the field and research. I used frequency distributions tables and charts to present the data diagrammatically.

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

In carrying out my research I upheld the rights of privacy for all the respondents, especially when interviewing them or holding group discussions to collect data, by keeping them anonymous. I strictly used factual and accurate information in my research study and use ethical methods to get the information I need from only willing participants. I maintained objectivity and avoided any stereotypes in any part of the research study.

### **3.8 Assumptions and Limitations of the study**

1. Financial constraints since the research are individually sponsored.
2. Failure enough respondents to participate in the interviews and take part in the group discussions.
3. Hostility of the respondents towards giving out personal information.
4. Failure to access larger samples, who were willing to give out information.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the actual findings from the field, analysis and interpretation of the data that was collected in response to the research questions, in order to fulfill the requirements of the research objectives set in chapter one.

#### **4.1 Presentation and discussions of results**

As guided by the research methodology, in chapter three, my research was based on the information acquired from a sample size of 50 participants , who were divided into equal numbers of male and female respondents from each age category as shown in the table below.

**Table 4.1: Table on the sample size of the study according to gender and age.**

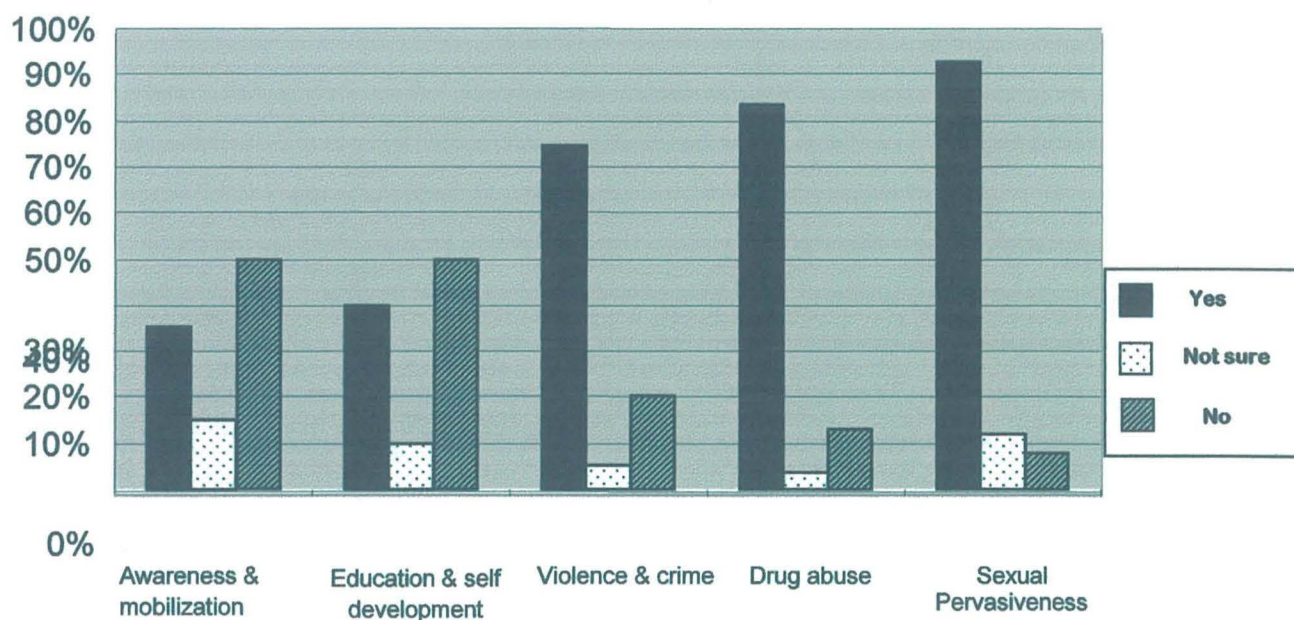
Age group	Boys	Girls	Total	Sample size
15-19yrs	10	10	20	50
20-25yrs	10	10	20	50
25-30yrs	5	5	10	50

##### **4.2.1 Analysis on the influence of popular culture on the social behavior of the youth in Nairobi.**

The findings relating to the social behavior of the youth and popular culture was captured and presented in percentages using frequency counts in the form of table 4.2 and chart 4.2 below.

**Table 4.2: Status of the effects of popular culture on the social behavior of the youth in Nairobi.**

No	Effects	Yes	Not sure	No	Total %
1.	Awareness & mobilization	35%	15%	50%	100%
2.	Education & self development	40%	10%	50%	100%
3.	Violence & crime	74.5%	5.2%	20.3%	100%
4.	Drug abuse	83.5%	3.5%	13%	100%
5.	Sexual pervasiveness	92.5%	12%	8%	100%



Above:

**Chart 4.2: Status of the effects of popular culture on the social behavior of the youth in Nairobi.**

From chart 4.2 above, the respondents agreed that the influence of popular culture as portrayed in the media, especially in Television and movies, has led to violent or aggressive behavior among the youth. The respondents also agreed that drug abuse and sexual pervasiveness was also influenced by the popular culture spread by the media. On the other hand, 18 respondents agreed that popular culture is used to raise awareness and mobilize the youth on certain issues of concern in society; either through music, film or art. 20 respondents agreed that popular culture can be helpful to the youth in terms of self development and literacy or education, especially with the demand for ICT in our economy, the emphasis that popular culture lays on the digital age, will encourage the youth to acquire knowledge and skills essential for building themselves and the economy. The youth are also able to realize and develop their talents through art, entertainment and Global communication.

However, 50%, that is 25 respondents did not agree that popular culture could be used to raise awareness and mobilize the youth. 25 respondents also did not agree that education and self development was one of the effects of popular culture. According to 10 respondents, popular culture as spread by the media was not a catalyst for violent and aggressive behavior among the youth in Nairobi. The respondents argued that such violent or aggressive behavior stemmed from immediate environmental factors or the community with which they grew up in, i.e. societal norms, rather than from popular culture depicted by the media. 6 respondents did not agree that drug abuse was an effect of the influence of popular culture as portrayed by the media. 4 respondents disagreed that sexual pervasiveness among the youth in Nairobi was a catalyst of popular culture in the media.

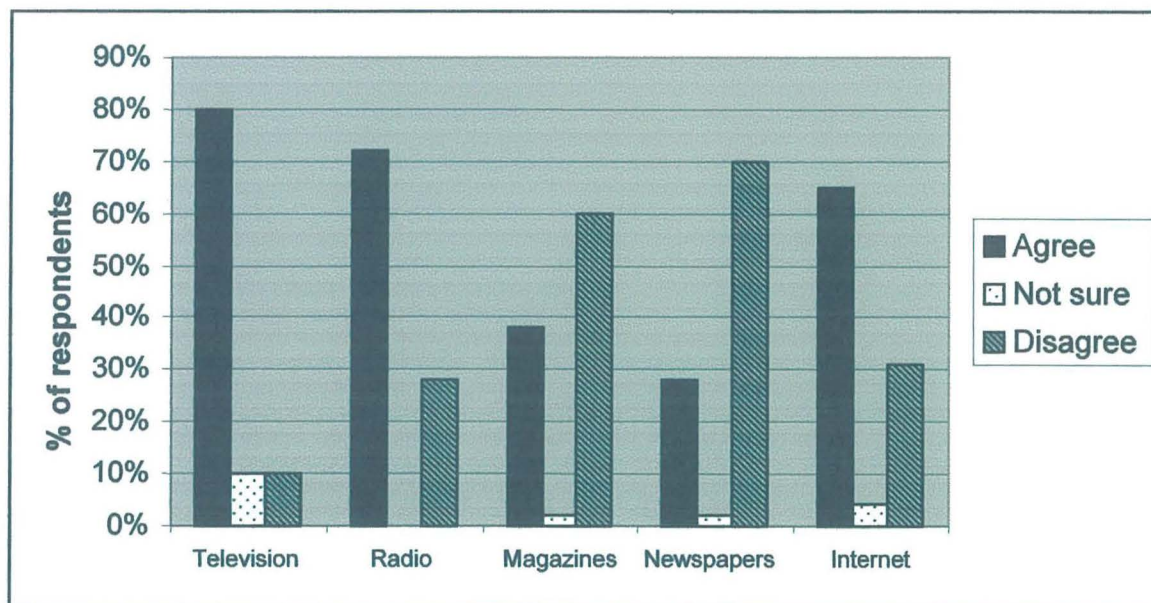
#### **4.2.2 Analysis of the channels used by the media in influencing popular culture among the youth in Nairobi.**

In Nairobi various media channels have been targeted to the youth and actually play a primary role in influencing popular culture among them. However, my research findings show that some channels have a greater and more powerful impact on the youth than others, in relation to popular culture and the behavior and perceptions of the youth in Nairobi. These findings have been illustrated in Table 4.3 and Chart 4.3 below.



**Table 4.3: Status of the mediums with the greatest impact on the youth on popular culture.**

Medium	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Total %
Television	80%	10.0%	10%	100%
Radio	72%	0.0%	28%	100%
Magazines	38%	2%	60%	100%
Newspapers	28%	2%	70%	100%
Internet	65%	4%	31%	100%



**Chart 4.3: Status of the mediums with the most impact on the youth on popular culture.**

Results from table 4.3 indicate that most of the respondents, 40 of them, agreed that television and film had the greatest impact on the youth and is the medium that is consumed most by young people in Nairobi. The respondents argued that television was the most effective medium in spreading popular culture among the youth, due to its audio visual qualities and creativity in terms of message production. 5 respondents did not agree to the above. Radio was also shown to be a powerful medium to the youth through the use of music to spread popular culture with 36

respondents in agreement. 33 respondents agreed that the internet has become very popular among the youth in Nairobi and is also used to influence aspects of popular culture amongst the youth.

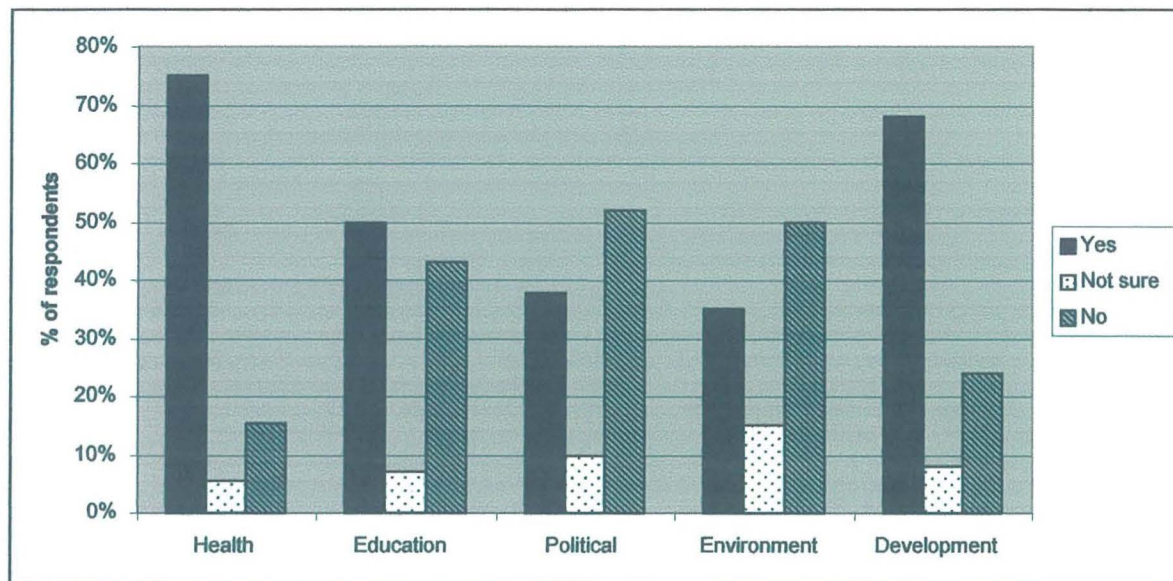
According to the research findings, newspapers were the lowest medium consumed by the youth in terms of influencing popular culture. 35 respondents disagreed with newspapers as being influential mediums in terms of popular culture arguing that newspapers mainly focused on hard immediate news and did not appeal to the youth. 19 respondents agreed that magazines on the other hand had a greater impact and focused on popular music, fashion, celebrities and sensational news which the youth are interested in. 30 respondents disagreed, arguing that magazines were fairly expensive and not as readily available to all young people as compared to Television or the internet. Therefore the findings indicate that Television, radio and the internet are the most influential media channels that spread the concepts of popular culture to the youth in Nairobi.

#### **4.2.3 Analysis of the sectors of society affected by the influence of popular culture among the youth in Nairobi.**

**Table 4.4: Status of the sectors in society affected by the spread of popular culture in Nairobi.**

No	Sectors of society	Yes	Not sure	No	Total %
1.	Health	75%	5.5%	15.5%	100%
2.	Education	50%	7%	43%	100%
3.	Political	38%	10%	52%	100%
4.	Environment	35%	15%	50%	100%
5.	Development	68%	8%	24%	100%

**Chart 4.4: Status of the sectors of society affected by the spread of popular culture in Nairobi**



According to the findings as illustrated in Chart 4.4 above, the respondents agree that popular culture among the youth who make up majority of the population in Nairobi, affect the health, education, political and development sectors of the society. 38 respondents agreed that the health sector was largely affected by popular culture as portrayed in the media, arguing that the media messages on popular culture influence sexual pervasiveness, drug abuse and violence as being ‘macho’ or cool, leading to the spread of the HIV-Aids pandemic which has mostly affected the youth in Nairobi, as well as health risks relating to drug abuse and violence.

25 respondents, that is, 50% of the participants agreed that the education sector was also affected by popular culture, basing their argument on the fact that the growing entertainment industry, a by-product of popular culture is portrayed by the media to be very attractive thus luring the youth to drop out of school so as to be rappers, actors or artists of the entertainment world. On the other hand, 21 respondents disagreed with this arguing that the media, the internet and the arts have further developed the literacy and education of the youth through Virtual learning, ICT and self actualization of the youth as they realize and develop their talents.



34 respondents agreed that popular culture had led to a substantial increase in economic development in Nairobi, as the youth through popular culture have embraced ICT skills which increase literacy, education and communication hence bringing about economic development. The entertainment industry and the arts have also opened avenues for the youth to be entrepreneurs of their trade through using their talents and in the long run chipping in the revenue into the local economy. 12 respondents disagreed that popular culture among the youth affects the development of society in any way.

Overall, according to the results from the field, we see that popular culture affects the sectors of society in one way or another either positively or negatively.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

The overall objective of the study was to analyze the impact of the media in influencing the social behavior of the youth in relation to popular culture, with specific response to Nairobi province in Kenya. This chapter therefore reviews the key findings of the study, drawing the appropriate conclusions, before making the desired recommendations.

#### **5.2. Summary and conclusions**

Based on the research findings, we see that the media's influence on popular culture to the youth in Nairobi has indeed affected the social behavior of the youth as well as the society. The media plays a key role in this issue in Nairobi as, according to the study results, the broadcast media, as well as the Internet and magazines have a powerful impact to the youth by using popular music, film, art, fashion and various popular memes. The youth have taken up these concepts that they receive from the media and adapt them in a process that is active, creative and which produces a new product which is popular culture. Popular culture is no longer an issue but a way of life.

In my view, this study proves that popular culture as spread by the media, has affected the behavior and way of life of the youth in one way or another, either positively or negatively. Positively in that, it has made the youth more aware of the world and the issues which affect them. Knowledge of the internet and media studies has opened the doors to further development, especially in literacy and communication. Popular culture in some form has increased the level of independence of the youth as they have acquired new ideas and skills which have in turn helped them develop their talents and become young entrepreneurs in the entertainment industry, fashion and art. These industries are growing rapidly both at a national and in a global level.

However, the influence of the media in spreading popular culture has also led to the development of certain antisocial behavior among the youth in Nairobi, which has detrimental effects in society, such as drug abuse, sexual transmitted infections (STI'S), crime and poverty. This is mainly due to big corporations and the media pushing popular memes in order to generate huge

profits through the mass consumption of harmful media messages, products and services.

#### **5.2.1 Status of the broadcast media and the internet in influencing popular culture among the youth.**

Based on the findings of the study, television, radio and the internet are the media channels that are most appealing and impacting to the youth. From this we can conclude that, there is great potential for these mediums to be used effectively in the spread of popular memes and popular culture targeted to the youth, as well as being channels for communication and self expression. We can conclude that television remains by far the dominant medium for young people today, followed by radio. The internet is fast catching up due to the level of economic development in Nairobi, as many young people have access to and frequently use the internet in Nairobi.

#### **5.2.2 Analysis on the impact of popular culture by the media on violence among the youth**

The results from the study illustrate that influence of popular culture as spread by the media has induced feelings of aggression and violence and led to crime among the youth. 74.5% of the respondents agreed that violence was one of the effects of popular culture. Violent television and films, video games and music reveals unequivocal evidence that media violence increases the likelihood of aggressive and violent behavior in both immediate and long term contexts. The media plays a huge role in this by giving the impression of attractiveness of gun culture and the perpetrators. In recent years violence and crime among the youth in Nairobi has escalated due to the desire to live life on the fast lane as the famous icons of popular culture do as portrayed by the media.

#### **5.2.3 Analysis on the impact of popular culture on the youth's sexuality.**

Based on the findings, the sexuality of the youth is affected by influence of the popular culture as depicted in the media especially broadcast media, in films, advertisement and music. 92.5% of the respondents agreed that sexual pervasiveness among the youth in Nairobi today is on the rise and is triggered by popular culture as depicted by the media. Sexual relationships are the themes for film, TV and billboards, and pornography is easily available to all, with the means to be on the internet. Popular culture in the media portrays a lot of sex to the youth and the youth perceive it as free and easy as it seems. The internet provides a new vehicle for meeting partners,

engaging in romantic relationships and developing intimacy skills which is detrimental in HIV/AIDS risk

#### **5.2.4 Analysis on the impact of popular culture on drug Abuse among the youth.**

Based on the research, 42 respondents agreed that popular culture influences the abuse of drugs, especially cigarettes and alcohol among the youth, mainly because the media portrays smoking and drinking to be cool,' macho 'and mature .Television advertisement and films as well as billboards give an attractiveness to smoking and influences the youth to do the same .This goes hand in hand with alcohol abuse .Rave culture which takes an integral part of popular culture, sees the youth going out ,attending parties in which most often than not alcohol is readily available leading to alcoholism. Hard drugs like Ecstasy and L.S.D are also becoming popular among the more affluent youth who are targeted drugs and rave scene.

#### **5.5 Analysis on the impact of popular culture on self-development of the youth.**

Based on the research, the influence of popular culture has to a substantial extent led to the self actualization and development in the youth in Nairobi .Popular culture lays special emphasis on the modern or digital age hence computers and the internet are rapidly becoming a nearly universal presence in young people's lives. The youth have been able to develop a wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding of the digital world due to practices related to popular culture the media new technologies .The youth are more aware of themselves and what they can do. They identify and develop their culture so as to build their own careers and be more independent be it in entertainment, art or digital technology.



### **5.3 Recommendations**

The following recommendations have been put forward in order to curb the concerns and negative effects of the influence of popular culture among the youth as portrayed in the media.

Censorship and filtering of the media messages has proven to be an effective recommendation, as it has been implemented in Kenya, but it has not completely tackled the issue at hand. Education in media literacy may be a more effective strategy than blocking or filtering. The youth should be educated and made aware of the media and the risks involved when accessing some information. Media studies will help the youth make the difference between representation and reality, hence increasing their knowledge of the real world and reducing the materialism brought about by popular culture. The government should also set up schemes and offer adequate funding for youth groups at a national level. The current programme for youth group funding projects by the Ministry of Youth Affairs in Kenya is a good start and a positive way forward for the Kenyan government to the youth.

Parents should support the youth's interests in popular culture, the media and new technologies through the provision of resources, moral support and constant interactions with the youth. Parents should also offer guidance and monitor the youth's consumption of the media, regarding the use of TV and the Internet. Communication and understanding is vital between parents and the youth. Educators should introduce popular culture and Media studies in the school curriculum, so that the youth are the more informed about the media, popular culture and their implications.

Media sensationalism of drugs, violence and sex should be avoided and stopped. Media corporations and advertisers should stop banking on popular themes in order to make profits from the mass consumption of harmful goods and services by the youth. Media corporations should expand their focus on addressing the issues affecting the youth, so as to design programmes to raise awareness, educate and mobilize the youth towards a greater, useful and common goal in society. Media corporations should also provide avenues for the youth to explore their talents, in the media, so that they could build themselves in positive manners.

The community should abstain from making “circles of blame” either to the media, the youth or the government and work together to support the youth in the society, by listening and understanding their views rather than ignoring and rebuking their values. The community should be at the fore front for the youth programmes, and offer opportunities for the youth to grow. The community should strive to gain more insight into youth culture, the media and the new technologies so as to understand the youth and also more ahead with the rest of the world, as it is rapidly turning into a global village.

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**APPENDICES**  
**APPENDIX ONE**  
**INTERVIEW GUIDE**

My name is Marion Wambui Karogo pursuing a Bachelors degree in Mass Communication at the Kampala International University. I am carrying out some research on The Media and Popular Culture in Nairobi in Relation to the youth.

Do you mind if I ask you a few questions?

Could I please have your

Age .....

Sex .....

Marital Status .....

Occupation .....

Address .....

- What do you understand by the term Popular Culture?
- Do you think that this culture exists and is spreading among the youth?
- Do the media play an active role in influencing popular culture either through music, language and fashion in the behavior of the youth in society?
- Which media channels do you think are mostly consumed by young people and are the most influential in influencing the youth towards Popular Culture.
- Do you think that the media influence how the youth behave? Give reasons please.
- The youth are facing various challenges in Nairobi today, like drug abuse, sexual abuse, HIV-Aids, violence and marginalization. Do you think that the spread of popular culture through the media play a part in this?
- Do you think that the media should be regulated so as to curb these problems facing the youth? What other suggestions could you offer apart from regulation?
- Do you agree that media liberalization and western culture has a role to play in the influence and spread of Popular Culture among the youth in Nairobi?
- Can Popular Culture be of any benefit in the society today? If so, why and how?
- Do you think that what you do, the perceptions you hold on different things and how you dress is affected by the popular messages you receive from the media?

## APPENDIX TWO

### Interview guide for media personalities

My name is Marion Wambui Karogo pursuing a Bachelors degree in Mass Communication at the Kampala International University. I am carrying out some research on The Media and Popular Culture in Nairobi in Relation to the youth.

Do you mind if I ask you a few questions?

Could I please have your

Age .....

Sex .....

Marital Status .....

Occupation .....

Address .....

- What in your view is the major cause for the spread of Popular culture among the youth in Nairobi?
- Do you think the programmes that you disseminate to the public have a big part to play in this?
- What criteria does the media choose for the programmes in the TV or the radio
- Are the youth the major target for the programmes especially as far as the entertainment industry is concerned?
- How, in your view, can the media support the youth without influencing deviant behavior and materialism which is abundant in popular culture?
- Do you think the media can bring about positive change and behavior among the youth in Nairobi?
- How can the media achieve this?

Thank you so much for your cooperation

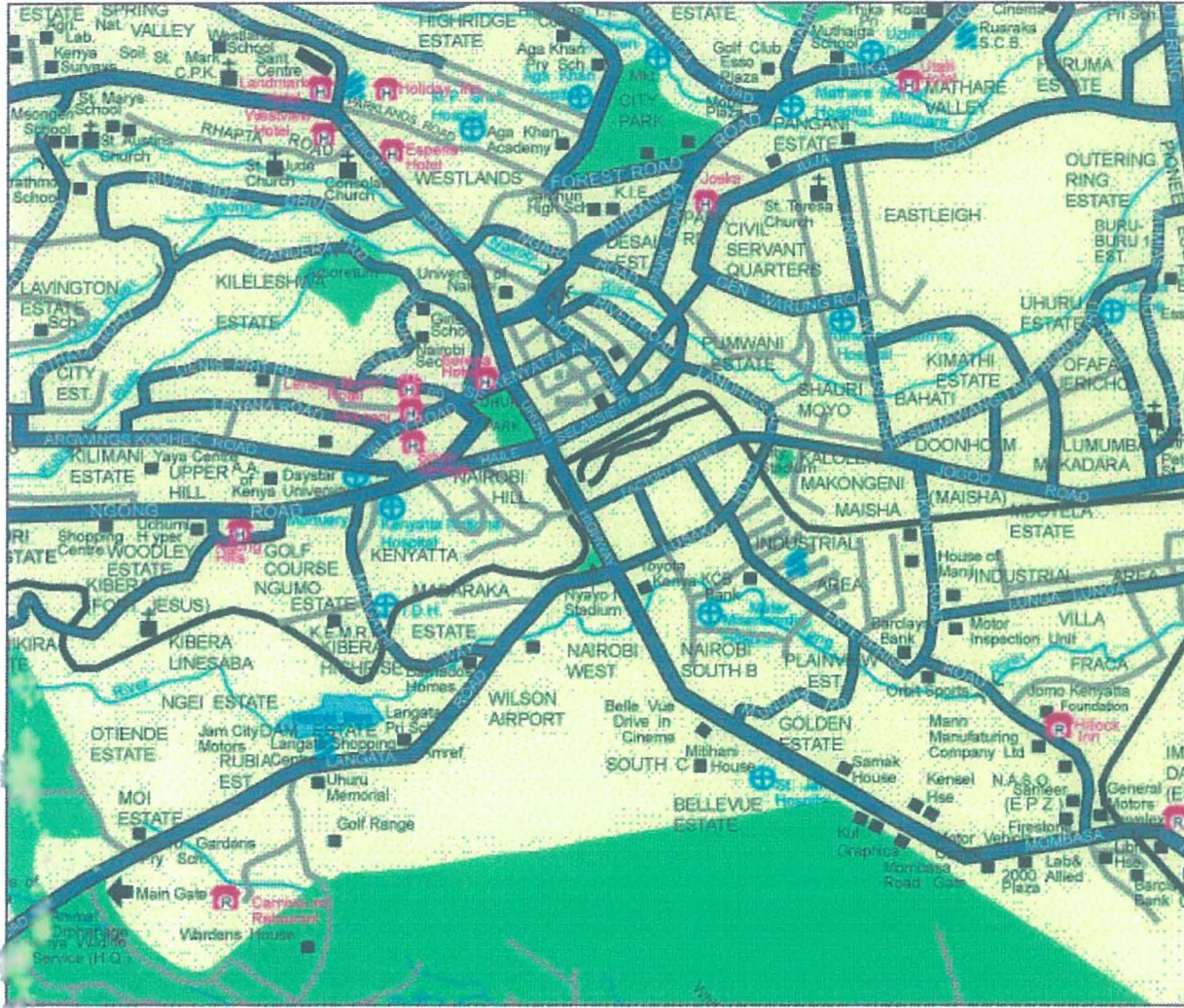
**APPENDIX THREE**  
**FINANCIAL BUDGET**

<b><u>ITEM</u></b>	<b><u>AMOUNT(KSH)</u></b>	<b><u>AMOUNT(UGSH)</u></b>
Transport	2500 ksh	50000 UGsh
Stationery	1000Ksh	25000 UGsh
Internet	3000Ksh	60000 UGsh
Typing	500Ksh	10000 UGsh
Printing	2000 Ksh	40000 UGsh
Binding	1550 Ksh	36000 UGsh

**Total Amount: 10,550 Ksh**

**Total Amount in Ug sh: 256,000UGsh**

APPENDIX THREE  
MAP OF NAIROBI



***FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES***

To.....

.....

.....

This is to introduce to you ~~Mr/Miss~~ *Marion Karogo* who is a bonafide student of Kampala International University. He/She is working on a research project for a dissertation, which is a partial requirement for the award of a degree. I here by request you, in the name of the University, to accord him/her all the necessary assistance he/she may require for this work.

I have the pleasure of thanking you in advance for your cooperation!

Yours sincerely,

*Bongora*  
Dr. Ongora J.B  
Associate Dean