

THE IMPACT OF MEDIA ON THE EVOLUTION, AND  
DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURE.  
CASE STUDY: THE KIKUYU CULTURE OF KENYA.

BY

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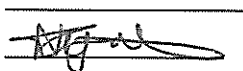
## DECLARATION

I Wachege Nyambura Teresiah declare that this research report is my own initiative achieved through research and personal reading and has never been presented for the award of degree, diploma, or their equivalent in any university, college or institute of higher learning.

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DATE

  
29<sup>TH</sup>, Aug, 2007

## APPROVAL

This project has been submitted with my approval as the University supervisor

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Metta

## DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my loving parents, Francis and Rachael Wachege for their constant moral and financial support all through, especially in this course. Thank you once more.

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Foremost I wish to thank the Lord for the love, care, good health and strength he has always given to me.

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## ABSTRACT

Degradation of local indigenous culture is a problem that is prevailing everywhere on the African continent, and other developing countries. There has been great loss of local indigenous culture in the developing countries and absorbing of the western culture.

Media in itself is a very powerful force in this 21<sup>st</sup> century. Technological advancement of the media has made the world a global village, making interaction of people and culture much easier and faster. The western countries being the most developed have pushed their culture and ideologies to developing countries like Kenya.

This project basically studies the kikuyu population of Kenya, found in central province, and the role of media in the evolution of culture. The study identifies media as being the predominant figure when it comes to influencing change. The specific objective of the study is to find out the effects of change of culture. Both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection are used to carry out analysis of the information acquired.

The local Kenyan media has been standing by helping the west to bring in low budget programs and movies to the local Kenyan market, continuing to confirm and backup the notion that western culture is more superior to any other culture. This has affected the kikuyu population adversely and has created conflict between the younger and older generation. Indigenous language and culture has also been lost in the process.

At the end the research study gives recommendations to the different factions of society especially the media, which should be concerned or take responsibility on the problem of degradation of indigenous Kenyan culture. It is also hoped that the findings will be used as a guide by the government, educators and media council to formulate policies in encouraging and promotion of local Kenyan culture.



## ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

<b>AIC</b>	African Inland Mission
<b>BBC</b>	British Broadcasting Corporation
<b>Clitoridectomy</b>	Female circumcision where clitoris is cut off
<b>FGM</b>	Female Genital Mutilation
<b>FPAK</b>	Family Planning Association of Kenya
<b>JETC</b>	Japan Telecommunications Engineering Consultancy
<b>KBC</b>	Kenya Broadcasting Corporation
<b>KBS</b>	Kenya Broadcasting Services
<b>KIMC</b>	Kenya Institute of Mass Communication
<b>KNA</b>	Kenya News Agency
<b>KNCHR</b>	Kenya National Commission on Human Rights
<b>KTN</b>	Kenya Television Network
<b>LNC</b>	Local Native Councils
<b>MCK</b>	Media Council of Kenya
<b>Ngai</b>	God
<b>RMS</b>	Royal Media Services
<b>Wazungu</b>	White man

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

From the olden days culture was passed on from one generation to another generation orally. Children were taught their culture through folk tales from their grandparents, riddles, proverbs, music and stories. With the advent of media and globalization this has greatly changed. Through print and electronic media the young get to absorb new cultures far from their own since what is being put out to the public is mostly information from other parts of the world primarily the western world.

The media has vast roles and responsibilities towards the society. Its role is to inform, educate, act as a link between government and the public, entertainment, acts as the fourth estate, mobilize people, forms opinions for the public, acts as a sounding board for the public to voice out their views and grievances and it also acts as a socializing agent.

Media in Kenya has had a great role in influencing the change of the kikuyu culture. From their lifestyle, mode of worship, way of dressing, marriage, form of education and language, bringing in a new form of culture. The kikuyu have changed politically, socially and economically in short all spheres of their life have changed. Since the media is a socializing agent it has been able to socialize the kikuyu into absorbing culture from other parts of the world.

### **BACKGROUND**

One of the first broadcasting stations in Kenya was the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation, which has both television and radio. The Kenya broadcasting corporation is a state corporation established by an Act of Parliament CAP 221 of the laws of Kenya to undertake public services. It provides the public with innovative, high quality programs that enhance development of local cultural values, facilitating the dissemination, preservation and conservation of authentically indigenous values. KBC also contributes to the economic, educational, cultural, and social well being of Kenyans. Kenya broadcasting corporation promotes the “Universal access to information for all” through

provision of free to air services and promote an effective approach to the use of radio and television as tools for national development. (Wanyeki ML: 2000)

English radio broadcasting begun in 1928, the broadcasts targeted white settlers from their home and other parts of the world. The first radio broadcasts targeting Africans came during the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war to inform parents and relatives of African soldiers what was happening at the war front. (Wanyeki ML: 2000)

In 1953, the first broadcast service was created for Africans. African broadcasting services carried programs in Kiswahili, Dholuo, Kikuyu, Kinandi, Kiluyha, Kikamba and Arabic. In 1954, the Kenya Broadcasting Service (KBS) was established. Regional stations were set up like Mount Kenya Station in Nyeri, where most of the kikuyu population is found. (Maja-Pearce A.: 1992)

The Kenya broadcasting corporation (KBC) was formed to take over broadcasting services from the government controlled Kenya broadcasting services. In 1962, Television was introduced in Kenya. The first transmitting station was set on a farm house in Limuru and the station transmitted a radius of 15miles. On 1<sup>st</sup> July 1964, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation was nationalized into Voice of Kenya through an Act of Parliament. In 1970, a new television station opened in Mombasa to relay programs and produce local dramas, music, cultural and other programs. In 1989, the Voice of Kenya changed back to Kenya Broadcasting Corporation through an Act of Parliament.

In 1989, a contract was signed between KBC and Japan Telecommunications Engineering consultancy service (JETC) for improvement and expansion of the national medium wave frequency radio broadcasting network. In 1991, KBC signed a contract with Marubeni Corporation of Tokyo, Japan for upgrading or medium wave transmitting stations and construction of new ones. In 1993, KBC embarked on a major modernization project to upgrade its transmitting station, construct new ones and improve on switching and rooting network. In 1996, KBC commissioned Metro FM as a 90% music radio. In September 2000, KBC commissioned Metro Television as a Sports and entertainment channel. In December 2000, KBC started Coro FM, transmitting in Kikuyu language to Nairobi and Mount Kenya Region. (Wanyeki ML: 2000)

## 1.1 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Media plays different positive roles in society, making the community we live in a better place. It acts as the fourth estate, acts as a sounding board for the public to voice out their grievances, informs, educates, and mobilizes people. Although media has all this positive roles it also plays a very huge role in the degradation of culture.

Culture in Kenya has totally evolved over the years, bringing in a new system of politics, business and social way of life, totally different from what they were used to. The media practitioners are to blame for this new foreign culture since it is them who allow programs to be broadcast that will erode the indigenous culture yet they have an important role of forming the public's opinion. They can easily influence what the public thinks. So far the media has made the public form an opinion that the western culture is more superior to the African culture and we should try and copy what the whites do.

The local media does not quite take seriously the social effect of bringing in programs from the west; their main interest is in making profits for the media companies. Being profit oriented has made them forget their professional ethics and their role in society. Local indigenous culture is usually lost and people adapt to a new way of life since both the local and international media portray the western culture to be more superior to any other culture.

Even when the local media practitioner goes to an international broadcasting station to work there, like BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation), they still want to portray African culture as negative. The coverage shows that there is nothing good that comes from Africa just problems. They demean the different cultures of mother Africa and show them to be barbaric, native and useless, which is totally wrong since Africa has a rich and diverse culture that has made humanity live together in peace and understanding.

It is important to understand that this has affected the structure of the indigenous kikuyu and has acted negatively on the society. Because some of the new cultures are negative and have degraded the morals of the young kikuyu generation. Individualism may have worked for the western people but the Africans are used to living in a social community.

## **1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

### **1.2.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVE**

With specification of the research topic, the general objective of the study is to establish what political, social and economic changes the media has brought to the kikuyu culture.

### **1.2.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

The specific objectives include;

- Finding out the effects of change of culture.
- Avenues media use to influence change of culture.
- How culture has affected the media.

## **1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

- To the target population the research study will be of benefit to them because the problems that they face will be clearly defined and also the best way to coexist and move forward for the development of the kikuyu people, combined with education will bring about change and improvement on the quality of life in general.
- To the researcher the study will help me gain more knowledge and give me a different outlook on the research topic and as a student of mass communication; it will enlighten me on my role as a mass communicator or media practitioner and my duties to society, especially when it comes to promoting and conserving our indigenous culture.
- For the media the research will identify exactly how they can influence positive culture to the population. Identify that wrong attitude that the media has for making money and not looking at the needs of the kikuyu in the name of bringing in low cost programs to increase profits and reduces expenses at the expense of culture.

## **1.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The study was conducted in Nairobi, central province, where we find majority of the kikuyu population in Kenya. The kikuyu population was used in this study because they are believed to be the most 'westernized' tribe in Kenya and have the highest population in Kenya. The media has identified this tribe in Kenya and has catered for their needs by creating media specifically for the kikuyu community. The case study is on Coro Fm because it is a radio station whose target audience is specifically the Kikuyu population.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the literature related to the contribution of media in the evolution of culture; this study particularly focuses on what part the media takes in the degradation of kikuyu culture. The research seeks to clearly define and simplify the problem being researched on. The various sub topics will be able to explain further the topic.

#### 2.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE KIKUYU CULTURE

The ancestors of the Kikuyu can be said with some certainty to have come from the north, from the region of the Nyambene Hills to the northeast of Mount Kenya (Kirinyaga), which was the original homeland of all of central Kenya's Bantu-speaking peoples, viz. the Meru, Embu, Chuka, Kamba and possibly Mbeere. The people are believed to have arrived in the hills as early as the 1200s. They are mostly found in the central region of Kenya, the most fertile parts of the country, thus making them farmers. The kikuyu lived well together and had a good integrated society. They had a council of elders that looked over all the matters of the community. Practiced circumcision, prayed facing Mount Kenya since they believed *Ngai* (God) lived on top of the mountain. Had different festivals like birth ceremonies, harvesting and marriage ceremony where there was exchange of bride price. The kikuyu lived well and flourished. (Jomo Kenyatta: 1978)

The coming of the white man is what first started changing the culture of the kikuyu. They came with their own lifestyle and wanted to impose it on the indigenous kikuyu. This brought conflict to the land and an organization called the mau mau was formed to fight against the white man. The Mau Mau rebellion can be seen as the result of a violent result of a clash of cultures between the British and the kikuyu. (African Affairs, Vol.89, No. 335, April 1990, pp. 227-245)

This clash existed from the beginning of British involvement in Kenya, but reached a breaking point in 1929, when the British banned female circumcision, one of

the Kikuyus' most cherished customs. Prior to the circumcision ban, the religious and cultural integration that was initiated by the British and their missionary supporters was proceeding. Perhaps the most flagrant example of British destruction of traditional beliefs, which drove a huge wedge through Kikuyu Society, was the ban of circumcision. From 1929 on, political and cultural divisions within the Kikuyu crystallized, and Priests fought actively against Mau Mau in what they perceived as a holy war against Satan, the British set up concentration camps which often attempted to "Christianize" Mau Mau detainees to "cleanse" them of their radical ideology and faith, and the religion of a Kikuyu was seen as a loyalty statement. (Hobley, C.W:1910)

It was not the Mau Mau battling the external enemy of British culture and political power that consumed most of fighting, but the internal struggle for the identity of the Kikuyu. The British, in targeting religious customs so strongly, altered Kikuyu culture at a relentless pace. By the 1950s Kikuyu society had been changed to such a big degree. (Silvana: 1984)

## 2.2 KIKUYU TRADITIONAL CULTURE

Still, there were certain customs that remained unchangeable. Even if a Kikuyu prayed to Christ, chances were that they were still practicing traditional Kikuyu customs, be they polygamy, the drinking of local brews, or, most significantly, female circumcision. So, before the late 1920s, it was usually possible for anyone to go to church professing to be Christian. Although some stricter missions actively sought to remove people they did not see as Christian from their churches and schools, there didn't exist a central church or state policy to deal with the problem. (The Journal of African History, Vol 39, no 1 (1998))

Of all the traditional customs, circumcision is one of the most important to a Kikuyu. It was the process by which a boy or girl becomes a man or woman, an initiation. Without being circumcised, a Kikuyu is not an adult. This most important of Kikuyu customs also happened to be the one that was most strictly opposed by the missionaries, especially the Catholic Church of Scotland, and the British colonial government.

In his book *Facing Mt. Kenya*, Jomo Kenyatta, the nationalist and first president of Kenya, lays out a passionate defense of the practice as essential to Kikuyu identity. No



Kikuyu, he says, would “*dream of marrying a girl who has not been circumcised, and vice versa.*” It is taboo for any sexual relations to occur among men or women who have not been initiated, and if this does occur, the offending persons must go through a “purification ritual” to once again set things right.

The institution of circumcision was the social glue that held together the entire society. Without it, Kikuyu society would completely collapse, a reality the British did not seem to understand. Without clitoridectomy there would be no marriage, and without marriage there would be no transfer of brides wealth, the exchange of livestock and goods given to the family of the bride by the family of the groom. This dowry exchange held social life together, binding families over the longer term in relationships of obligation and reciprocity. To the Kikuyu, the developing opposition to cliterodectomy by the missions seemed to be a direct threat on the reproduction of society and their survival as a people. (KNA PRO/CO/533/418/2 *Memorandum on Female Circumcision*. The Kikuyu Mission Council, Church of Scotland, December 1, 1931.)

The British government also tried hard to get the local Kikuyu governing bodies, Local Native Councils (LNCs), to urge their people to reject female circumcision, something they were often reluctant to do. (KNA AR/278/KBU/13 *Annual Report Kiambu 1919-1920*)

*The East African Standard*. August 29, 1929.

## 2.3 MODERN KIKUYU CULTURE

Yet they are also something of a paradox, for in spite of the wholesale changes that Kikuyu society has undergone since the British arrived over a century ago, their sense of cultural identity has remained strong, and the Kikuyu have also been the most successful at adapting to Kenya’s new economic, social and political realities. The kikuyu are known throughout Kenya for working hard, and for managing money well: they are easily Kenya’s wealthiest people, and own the majority of the nation’s businesses. As a result, they are regarded by many outsiders with a mixture of jealousy and distrust.

Having long been in contact with the *Wazungu* (white men), there’s a wealth of printed information available about the Kikuyu, much of it now historical. Although at first traditional kikuyu culture could at first glance be seen as dead and buried, there are notable exceptions where aspects of traditional culture and society have changed and

adapted rather than disappeared. Kikuyu traditions are adapting to rather than disappearing in the modern context. The kikuyu community culture has changed greatly over the years. The media has greatly influenced the change of kikuyu culture for the better and also negatively. Making the kikuyu leave their own beautiful culture to adopt a foreign way of life. International and local media are the culprits who have brought in new cultures through news, movies, music and internet. The kikuyu community has greatly evolved over the years from religion or mode of worship, way of dressing, marriage and family life. All in all their social, political and economic life has greatly changed. (Andrew F.: 1979)

Numbering about six and a half million – about 20% of the national population – the Bantu-speaking Kikuyu of central Kenya are the country's single largest tribe, as well as one of the most 'westernized'. (Andrew F.:1979)

## **2.4 KENYAN MEDIA AND THE KIKUYU.**

The electronic media like the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), and the Kenya Television Network (KTN), are owned by the ruling class and therefore churns out ruling class propaganda while a good proportion of other electronic media has fallen on private hands following the "*liberalization of the air waves*". Although the Nation TV and Citizen TV (which are both on private hands) have local programs, 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. (Maja-Pearce A.: 1992)

The different media both electronic and print have been able to greatly influence change, especially television which has both audio and visual aspects, which tends to be a great advantage. The youth watch and want to ape what they see on television. When it comes to traditional practices like circumcision the media has been able to erode or fight this culture through media campaigns and advertisements on television and radio. Advertisements are used to implore the parents and community to do away with such barbaric acts. The media campaigns are used to educate the society on different issues that affect them, for example the dangers of girl circumcision. This are carried out with funding help from the government of non governmental organizations. Also other

practices like polygamy and early girl child marriages have been faced out with the help of media since media is good at mobilizing the masses, forms opinions for the public and can easily influence change. (Maja-Pearce A.: 1992)

The international community has got involved and identified FGM more and more as a harmful traditional practice, and a violation of the fundamental human rights of girls and women. Global efforts to bring an end to the custom of female genital cutting are increasing, with many nations putting in place legislation against the practice, and a number of international organizations making the elimination of FGM a priority. The United Nations has designated 8 February as the "International Day of Zero Tolerance of Female Genital Mutilation".

Use of folk media has been used to, fight against circumcision. Female circumcision is a rite accompanied by pomp and pageantry – songs, dances and funfair. FPAK Family Planning Association of Kenya adapted the existing traditional activities of song and dance to educate community members on the drawbacks and dangers posed by FGM. Women groups in the project sites have been sensitized and have composed songs, dramas, poems and skits with messages to eradicate FGM.

The end result is that European and American cultural imperialism is constantly under promotion on private television 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. (Mapambano newsletter)

Radio stations transmitting in various ethnic languages are infested with broadcasters well schooled in ethnic chauvinism. Although these stations have a positive side in the sense that they promote local languages and culture, they are at the same time used to deepen ethnic differences through a program line-up throbbing with ethnic based politics and solidarity appeals which, in the end, serve tribal chieftains heading ethnic contraptions called political parties. (Mapambano newsletter)

For example Coro FM a sub sect of the Kenya broadcasting corporation, was put in place for the kikuyu population. Programs and music are in the kikuyu language. The stations primary role is to help save the kikuyu culture from extinction. Programs are in

kikuyu language and the presenters have to speak in this language thus there is promotion of this language. Traditional kikuyu music is also aired and can be requested by the listeners. Many kikuyu tune to this station especially in the rural areas since this is a population that loves and wants to promote their culture. Through all this the media is able to reach out to the kikuyu and promote their culture. (Maja-Pearce A.: 1992)

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter contains a description of the research design used; population targeted by the researcher. Study was conducted through survey, interviews, and data analysis.

#### **3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The use of both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection to carry out analysis of the information was employed by the researcher. Since one research methodology alone was not sufficient to produce an authentic and a more balanced scientific report.

#### **3.2 TARGET POPULATION**

The study was conducted among the Kikuyu community found around central province. Highest population of kikuyu is found in Nairobi which is the capital city of Nairobi. Fifty (50) respondents were chosen to participate in the study using purposive and expert sampling method. The informants included media practitioners, the old generation of kikuyu and the young generation of kikuyu.

#### **3.3 SAMPLE DESIGN**

The study being a qualitative and quantitative one, expert sampling strategy was used; reasons being the respondents were informed on the situation and could give enough information since they are experts on this.

### **3.3.1 SAMPLE SIZE**

The researcher took a sample of 50 individuals, twenty respondents from the old kikuyu generation, twenty from the young generation and ten media practitioners who mainly cover the issue of culture.

### **3.4 DATA METHODS**

Both primary and secondary data collection instruments were used in the research. Primary data involves participatory observation, group discussions while secondary data collection involved library research, journals, reports and newspapers.

#### **3.4.1 DATA INSTRUMENTS**

##### **INTERVIEWS**

Face to face interviews were carried out with the target population. This consisted of individual interviews and group interviews of the older age sect, media practitioners and the young age sect. A thorough interview was made so as to lead to reliability and validity of instruments used in collecting data.

##### **OBSERVATION**

This technique was carried out during focus group discussions where the researcher was able to observe the participants behavior during the discussions. Participatory observation was also done.

##### **LIBRARY RESEARCH**

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

### **3.5 DATA ANALYSIS AND PROCESSING**

Quantitative and qualitative methods were used. Data analysis and processing were analyzed personally through interviews, observation and interacting with respondents. Data collected was continually transcribed and analyzed right from data collection to presentation stage. This was aimed at making the result easy and simple to comprehend. Quantitative data was analyzed. The data was analyzed carefully to make sure respondent's opinion and views are not misrepresented during the writing of the final research report. This was done by reviewing the notes written during discussions.

### **3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

In carrying out my research I did uphold 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 used ethical methods to get the information I needed from only willing participants. I have tried to maintain objectivity and avoided any stereotypes in any part of the research study.

### **3.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

As anticipated the following were the setbacks encountered during data collection.

- There was a problem of non-response whereby many respondents frankly said that they had no time to read through and answer the questions due to their tight working schedules. This was experienced mostly in newsrooms of various publications' offices.
- There was also lack of adequate funds to finance the entire research study and make up follow ups of non response, and provision of logistics were also limited.
- Another setback was the unavailability of some respondents whom I had scheduled the time for meeting (interview/questionnaires) with the excuse of having commitments elsewhere.
- Lastly, the load shedding currently being carried out in power was a major setback in computation of the data collected and this made the report writing drag on.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ANALYSIS PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

#### 4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings that were gotten from the field, concerning the role of media in the evolution of Kikuyu culture. The methods used to get data from the field are; interviews, observation, library research and group discussions.

Analysis and interpretation of data was collected in order to fulfill the requirements of the research objectives set in chapter one. The Information was acquired from a sample size of fifty respondents that included twenty old age Kikuyu, twenty youth and ten media practitioners.

The research has been arranged systematically to the set objectives, beginning with the effects of change of culture, where the data from the respondents was tallied into 100% for each group of respondents. These three groups are; media practitioners, old age Kikuyu and the youth.

#### 4.1 ANALYSIS ON EFFECTS OF CHANGE OF CULTURE

The results from the field study show that the effects of culture are both positive and negative. The different groups felt differently on how media has affected the society as a whole. A number of media practitioners felt that the media has brought about 80% of positive change. A radio presenter from *Kameme fm* said that;

“I take so much pride in working at the radio station, because the management there takes the role of media in society, very seriously. The radio station identity jingle already speaks for itself- *kayu kamuigi ... kameme fm* which means *kameme fm ... the people's voice* - meaning that our radio station mostly works at giving the people a chance to air out their grievances and also acts as a voice for the voiceless.” (Interview with a radio presenter from *Kameme fm*)



In my research I found another example, *Inooro* fm, which has a program called *Hagaria*, hosted by Gathoni wa Muchomba. This is a breakfast show that is highly analytical, informative and critical and addresses hard-topical, socio-economic, and, political issues. The show features news bulletins from 6am; weather, newspaper reviews, traffic updates, and many more features until 9am.

Other positive effects of media are that the society is more informed and educated on different important issues that affect their everyday life. This information gives them the knowledge to be able to fight for their rights since they have already been educated on them. (KNHCR AR/210/12 Annual Report 2001-2002)

New technologies like the Internet have made communication much easier and faster. In the book, *The State of Broadcasting in East Africa*, the author, Mr Wanyeki ML writes that, "*The world has become a global village since news travels from one part of the world to the rest like bush fire.*" People in society nowadays make more informed choices. Media is also able to mobilize the masses for a worthy course.

Although to some 20% of the media practitioners do believe that there are negative effects that come with the media. The secretary of the media council said that;

"There is a high percentage of degradation of indigenous culture, pornography and women have been used as nothing much but sex symbols to sell music videos, in the local media. Our branch that deals with media censorship is having a hard time doing its work, due to corruption and some of its agents don't take their work seriously. That is why you find that children still get access to adult movies, which is totally against the law. Yes I do agree the media market is full of pornographic material but we cannot be entirely blamed for this since the society loves watching movies and soaps from the western countries thus the media houses bring these programs to attract viewers." (An interview with Ms Esther Kamweru)

The old generation feels quite the opposite about media; 90% feel that the media has brought a lot of bad things to the local indigenous society. One Kikuyu veteran, Mr. Muturi Muiiri really complained and got quite emotional saying that,

"The morals of society have been thrown to the winds, society is no longer conscious and the young generation has lost direction and all its values. From lifestyle to marriage;

sexual pervasion, single families, abortion, pornography, infidelity, indecent mode of dressing, debauchery and using women as sex symbols, things that one could not hear of happening during my generation.” (An interview with Mr. Muturi Muiiri)

He continued to not only blame the media but also the parents for not being good role models to the younger generation.

There was the 10% of the old generation who all agreed that the media to some extent has a positive side to it. One old Kikuyu respondent said that,

“I learnt from my teenage grandson that there are also websites on the Internet, for example [www.mashada.com](http://www.mashada.com), which are solely for the Kikuyu who are within and outside the country to exchange their views and old ancient proverbs, riddles, taboos and customs. Our culture nowadays can be passed on to the new generation in an easier and faster way. The media also provide some good entertainment on television and radio. I have my favorite radio station, *Coro fm* where they bring Kikuyu songs and speak the Kikuyu language.” (An interview with a respondent)

On the other hand 70% of the youth feel that the media is the best invention ever, to be made especially when it comes to communication and entertainment. Albert Theuri one of the youth respondents felt that for him entertainment has moved to another new level with music videos, video games, soaps, comedies and movies. He also says communication has been made much faster through the Internet where one can easily send and receive letters within minutes unlike the olden days where one had to wait months before receiving a letter.

Some 30% of the youth respondents feel that the media has brought more problems to them than good. Some feel that these changes have been influenced by both internal and external factors, including western education and its attendant values, individual freedoms, human rights and women empowerment among others.

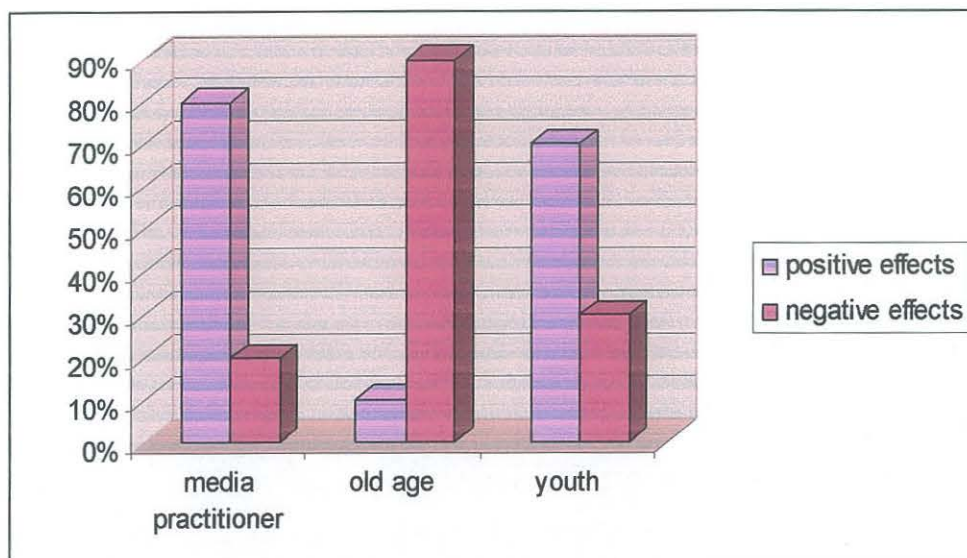
To them this has seen the gradual breakup of the traditional values and cultural prohibitions. As a result the role of elders and significant others in guidance and counseling of the young have been replaced by other institutions including the school, media, religion and their peer groups. These formal institutions unlike the traditional setup lack adequate capacity to enforce societal values that were religiously cherished

and observed in the past. Ms Reginah Macharia, a student at Kenya Institute of Mass Communication (KIMC) said that,

“There is a lot of peer pressure to do what is in the music videos for one to be accepted. From the way one dresses, talks and lifestyle one has to do it according to what is there, otherwise one is tagged old fashioned or from the village. Everything has changed for our generation. Young men can only be looked up to or are supposedly macho when they are drunkards, sleep around with many women and use all kinds of hard drugs. We young women have been made to become sex symbols in the music videos and in advertisements. There are no responsible role models for us and our parents are busy making money what is left is the media as a role mo What is portrayed in the media is disgusting to some and though most youth try hard to follow what is on the media so as to fit in with their peers, they get into many problems.” (Interview with a student of KIMC)

The table below clearly shows how the numerical data has been arranged. There were the three main groups; media practitioners, old age and youth respondents. In each group, data was tallied out of a total of 100% and was divided into two sides the positive effects and negative effects. The information was then presented in the graph below, with each group showing their feelings on the effects of culture whether positive or negative. For example the media practitioners had 80% positive change and 20% negative change making a total of 100%.

<b>PARTICIPANT</b>	<b>POSITIVE EFFECTS</b>	<b>NEGATIVE EFFECTS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Media practitioner	80%	20%	100%
Old age	10%	90%	100%
Youth	70%	30%	100%



Source: primary data

#### 4.1.1 ANALYSIS ON THE AVENUES MEDIA USE IN INFLUENCING CHANGE

Media uses different avenues to influence change either through print or electronic medium. As shown in the pie chart below television is the highest when it comes to influencing change it serves 50%. A television reporter from Kenya Television Network said that;

“Television has such a high percentage because it has an advantage of being audiovisual. This means it has both sound and visual this makes it a more engaging media than all the rest. Television has very many programs that aid in influencing change of culture. For example music videos, movies, soap operas and advertisements, from the western countries aired on our local television which influences change and a new way of life for the youth.” (an interview with a television reporter)

Magazines, under the print medium stand for 20%. These are mainly fashion and lifestyle magazines for both men and women. These magazines are usually very attractive and very glossy, and carry a lot of content on the latest fashion, the latest model car, the hottest places to be and what is cool by the definition of the editors of these magazines.

Editor of Insyder magazine confirmed this by saying that;

“We came up with the Insyder magazine to mainly target the youth. It is actually the first teenage magazine in Kenya. Content mainly includes, the newest fashion, local celebrity gossip, beauty tips, latest music and many other things. We have even formed a new form of language that only the youth can understand called ‘sheng’. This is basically a mixture of English and Kiswahili in a corrupted way. The lifestyle of the Kenyan youth has been revolutionized bringing in a mixture of Kenyan and western culture. The Insyder magazine has been effective in influencing change because it is very attractive and glossy and it is full of soft news, things the youth love to read about.” (An interview with the editor of insyder magazine)

He continues to say that;

“The Internet takes a 10% share in influencing change. It also has an advantage of being audiovisual. This media is still new and expensive to the developing countries and most youths cannot access it easily. That is why the percentage is so low; if it were cheap and easily accessible it would also be very high in influencing change. This I know because the magazine itself has a website where readers can still access it online but we do not have many youth accessing it on the Internet. The Internet has a lot of websites, from chat sites, pornography sites, dating sites, movie sites, and music video sites to celebrity sites. All this sites tend to influence the youth one way or another.” (An interview with the editor of insyder magazine)

Outside broadcasting is also another effective medium and stands at 10%. It includes mainly billboards placed in specific places; once you pass through this place you cannot avoid seeing this billboard. They are mostly advertisements that try to get some to change behaviors or conform to what lifestyle is there, for example coke advertisements put on billboards, and these advertisements say if you want to be cool drink coke soda. (KNA AR/158/NRB/25 Annual Report Nairobi)

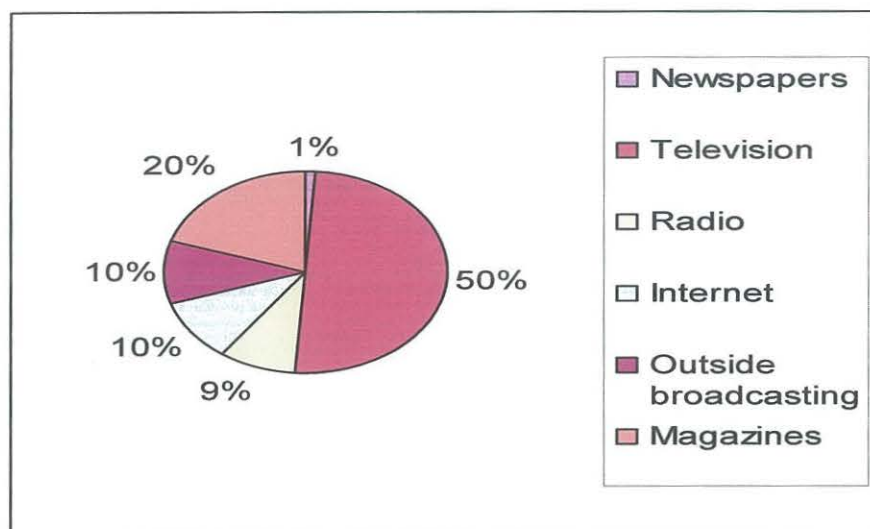
Radio has 9% mostly because it is not visual one only listens you cannot see the presenter or the programs, and it is not as convincing as the other mediums. As found out in the group discussions the youth do not listen to the radio often, they would rather watch television or go to the cinemas. Radio is mostly listened to by the old generation.

The youth only listen to radios that play non-stop music hits. Although radio does influence change to some extent it is not as high as the other mediums, it mostly influences the kind of music one should listen to. (KNA AR/158/NRB/25 Annual Report Nairobi)

The newspapers have quite a low percentage of 1% because mainly adults read them. When asked, the youth feel that newspapers mostly carry hard news, which they find very boring. The youth will only buy newspapers to read the lifestyle inserts put in newspapers during the weekends. This lifestyle papers talk about what is the newest fashion, it talks about the local celebrities, interior décor, gossip and relationships. To influence change a medium should be appealing to the youth and newspapers are not really appealing to them. (KNA AR/158/NRB/25 Annual Report Nairobi)

The table below summarizes the written information in numeric form. Research was done on six mediums; television, magazines, internet, outside broadcasting, radio and newspapers. The chart after the table then clearly gives each medium its percentage and shows the percentage they take out of 100%. Television had the highest percentage when it comes to influencing change with 50%, followed by magazines with 20%, internet 10%, outside broadcasting 10%, radio 9% and newspapers 1%. The pie chart then clearly presents the portion each medium takes as shown in the table.

MEDIUM	PERCENTAGE
Television	50%
Magazines	20%
Internet	10%
Outside broadcasting	10%
Radio	9%
Newspapers	1%



Source: primary data

#### 4.1.2 ANALYSIS OF EFFECT OF CULTURE ON MEDIA

The different cultures have made a mark in Kenyan media by making media proprietors to create sub-stations that cater for the different local languages. For example, Mr. SK Macharia owner of Royal Media Services said that,

“Royal media Services Company has been able to grow bigger with the creation of new substations that cater for the different local tribes. We only started off with Citizen Television and Radio yet now he has *Ramogi fm*, *Inooro fm*, *Musyi fm*, *Mulembe fm*, *Chamgei fm*, and *Egesa fm*. All this individual radio stations cater for a specific tribe from Kenya. *Pwani fm* is for the coastal people; *Coro* and *Inooro fm* cater for the Kikuyu and *Ramogi fm* for the Luo.” (An interview with the proprietor of RMS)

This clearly shows that culture has affected the media by making them create substations to cater for the different indigenous cultures, without the different indigenous tribes of Kenya, there would not be any substations to cater for this target groups. A radio presenter from the same station added on and said that;

“This has influenced media content of media programs they make it according to the needs and specifications of the target audience. If it’s the Kikuyu population they would love to have their programs in Kikuyu language and they have specific type of music they would like to listen to. The Luo tribe mostly likes call-ins where they can call the presenter on air and send greetings to their loved ones.” (An interview with a reporter from *kameme fm*)

Mr. SK Macharia continued to say that the different substations have increased sales for him since advertisers come to his media company because his media company can reach a variety of target groups. This ethnic radio stations have created more income for the different media companies since advertisers who have a specific target group, would opt to go for them. This growing cultural radio stations have created jobs for many media practitioners and have enabled the media practitioners to play a role in conserving indigenous culture.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

#### **5.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter is mainly a summary of what is found out after research was done on the role of media in the evolution of kikuyu culture. The objective of the research was to find out the role of the media in the evolution of kikuyu culture. It mainly focuses on issues that have to be looked upon to ensure that media practitioners identify their role in cultural degradation, and how best they can try to preserve positive indigenous culture.

In summary the research study has shown that media does play a very big role in influencing change of culture, mainly because it forms opinions for the public and is good for mobilizing the masses. The set objectives have been researched thoroughly and data has been analyzed numerically. The information below is a summary of each set objective of the research study.

#### **5.1 SUMMARY ON EFFECTS OF CHANGE OF CULTURE**

Effects of change of culture were identified to be both positive and negative by the information that was gotten from the three groups of respondents. Media practitioners felt that to some great extent change of culture has been positive. This is true, especially where the media has been able to help the community lose some of the barbaric indigenous culture that only brought harm to the society. This negative indigenous traditions are like; girl circumcision, polygamy and early girl child marriages. Doing away of these cultural practices has made society a better place to live in especially for the girl child.

A small portion of the same group, felt that change of culture has brought about negative effects like loss of local languages. Nowadays everyone wants to speak English, the Whiteman's language. Individualism has taken over among members of society, yet long ago people used to live together and care about each other. Drug abuse, sexual

pervasion and women being portrayed as sex symbols, are other negative effects of the western culture.

The old age felt quite the opposite; a majority felt that the effects of culture have been negative. They complain that there has been a lot of, drug abuse, high rape cases, abortion, single families and disrespect of the young for their elders. In conclusion they feel society has too many evils.

Majority of the youth say they like the new culture from the western world which gives them more freedom to do what they want unlike in the olden days where what a parent said was the law and no one could object.

A small percentage feels that there is a lot of peer pressure, and outside pressure to indulge in activities they would not normally do. An example of such activities is drug abuse, which has become a big problem among the Kenyan youth. All in all the effects of culture are both positive and negative. Although this research shows that the negative outweigh the positive.

#### **5.1.1 SUMMARY ON THE AVENUES MEDIA USE IN INFLUENCING CHANGE**

Media use different avenues in influencing change, both print and electronic media. The research study has shown that television is the highest medium in influencing change, due to its audio visual advantage. This means one can both see images and hear voices. The youth identify television to be their most entertaining media, since they can watch movies, soap operas, and music videos.

The lowest media in influencing change was the newspapers, mainly because it only carries hard news like politics, business, industrial development and socio economic issues. Newspapers do not attract a lot of young readers, because the youth would rather read magazines which are more entertaining.

Magazines are usually very glossy and attractive. They often carry soft news which includes celebrity gossip, latest fashion, reviews on restaurants, beauty products and news on all the hot entertainment spots around town. Magazines attract wide youth readership and have shown to really influence change, since teenagers would love to be or do what is on the magazines so as to fit in. This is especially so, since the youth of

today lack proper role models. Their role models are mostly pop musicians, models, actors and actresses, who cannot really be identified as good role models.

### **5.1.2 SUMMARY ON EFFECT OF CULTURE ON MEDIA**

Culture has had some positive effects on the media. For example it has made small media companies, expand with the creation of substations that cater for the local indigenous tribes like the kikuyu, Luo, Luhya, Kamba, Kalenjin and many more.

These smaller substations have created jobs for the young media professionals who graduate from school every year. This is a great advantage since developing countries have a very big problem of job creation.

Culture has also influenced program content especially for radio stations whose target is the local tribes. In short the media practitioners in these stations have to clearly identify their program content specifically according to the needs of their target audience.

## **5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations and solutions have been put across so as to fight the degradation of indigenous kikuyu culture through the media. Recommendations have been put forward to the media fraternity, parents and educators, the community and government and have been arranged accordingly.

### **5.2.1 MEDIA PRACTITIONERS**

To the media council they should take press censorship seriously, and ensure that their journalist members carry out their work professionally, and follow the codes of conduct for journalism. They should ensure this by enforcing the rules and regulation of the media, through creation of a body that will deal with any journalist that has gone against the code of conduct. Media practitioners should know they have a very important role in society. They shape the youth and define where the future generation is heading to, since it has the power of forming opinions.

Media proprietors should stop concentrating on making money; they are the culprits who have commercialized media. This influences what the media practitioners give to the public since they have to ensure they attract many viewers, readers or listeners so as to make huge sales for the media company.

### **5.2.2 PARENTS AND EDUCATORS**

Parents should ensure that they take time from their busy schedules to monitor what their children are watching or listening to. They should also take heed to the program ratings of the different movies or soaps that have been put forward by the broadcasting stations.

The youth need role models; this is what they lack most. Parents and relatives should be available to nurture, and help the youth grow by giving them constant counseling and guidance. This will help a lot since it ensures that the youth are not influenced negatively.

Educators should have policies that will help incorporate local indigenous culture in the school curriculum. They should stop brainwashing students with western culture, and identify an education system that is relevant and of benefit to the youth of the country.

### **5.2.3 COMMUNITY**

The whole community should try and chip in for the positive development of society. They have a voice which can be used to voice out their grievances. The community should unite and fight against this western culture by getting involved and lobbying against it. They can complain to the government, who in turn have a duty to society, to take action and solve this issue.

#### **5.2.4 GOVERNMENT**

The government should get together and partner with the media for the betterment of society. The Kenya film and censorship board should take their work seriously and follow the law to the letter and avoid corruption. Government should also try to put aside money in the annual budget, to sponsor and promote production of local films or programs in Kenya.

#### **5.2.5 NEED FOR FARTHER RESEARCH**

More research needs to be done on this problem by other researchers. The problem can always be looked at from different angles, and other researchers might find more information, that can help us understand the problem better and know how to go about solving it.

#### **5.3 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion media should try and accept that they do play a role in degradation of culture. They should find means and ways to promote and uphold indigenous culture. Society should not look at only the negative side of the media but also the positive side of media. They should welcome the positive change that comes with the media and shun away negative change.

The Kenyan government to some extent has tried to promote local culture. For example the ministry of information started a campaign to unite Kenyans and be proud of their culture with banners like, “najivunia kuwa mkenya” which means I am proud to be Kenyan.

The education department has also tried to do its best at promoting Kenyan culture, by creating the Kenyan music festivals. This is a festival where high schools, colleges and universities from different parts of Kenya come to compete against each other in performing different cultural songs from the various tribes of Kenya. There is

also the drama festival that takes place annually for students to compete for the grand prize, in acting.

All in all we should identify that our own indigenous culture is rich and beautiful and all sectors of society should fight to preserve it. It would not make sense if different parts of the world had the same culture. There would be no diversity in the world.

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## **APPENDIX ONE**

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE**

My name is Wachege Nyambura Teresiah pursuing a Bachelors degree in Mass Communication at the Kampala International University. I am carrying out research on The Media and its role in the evolution of kikuyu culture in Nairobi.

Could I kindly ask you a few questions?

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Sex \_\_\_\_\_

Marital status \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

What do you understand by the term culture?

What are the roles of the media in society?

What does globalization mean to you?

What influences your program content?

What does professionalism mean to you?

Do you feel you play a role in influencing change of culture?

Who is responsible for program content censorship?



## APPENDIX TWO

### INTERVIEW GUIDE

My name is Wachege Nyambura Teresiah pursuing a Bachelors degree in Mass Communication at the Kampala International University. I am carrying out research on The Media and Evolution of Kikuyu Culture in Nairobi.

Could I kindly ask you a few questions?

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Sex \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

What is the most entertaining media to you?

What do you feel about your culture?

What do you feel about the media?

Which radio station do you listen to?

Are you familiar with the internet?

Do you feel that the media has affected your lifestyle in any way?



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## *FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES*

To.... *WHOM IT MAY CONCERN*.....

This is to introduce to you Mr/Miss *WACHEGE NYAMBURA TERESIATI*.... 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

*Dr. Ongora J.B.*  
*Associate Dean*

