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Media Audience as Consumers of Ethnopolitical Journalism in Kenya

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Abstract

The objectives of the study were to interrogate the utility of ethnopolitical Journalism to media consumers (audience) in Kenya. The study relied on the political economy of media theory by Vincent Mosco the propaganda theory by Herman and Chomsky and the theory of agenda setting by McCombs and Shaw. The study used descriptive research design with population of the study drawn from Nakuru Town Sub-County. The researcher used observation schedules to obtain data from the televised political analyses shows and propaganda political videos clip. Interview schedules were used for media practitioners (editors, reporters and media sellers) and politicians (MPs and MCAs), while unstructured questionnaires were used for the media consumers (audience). All qualitative data were processed and analysed using the critical interpretative approach, while the quantitative data were presented descriptively in tables, graphs, charts and percentages generated using SPSS software. The study findings indicated that the mainstream media employed ethnopolitical journalism in television analyses, which were largely ethnic considering; limiting panellists to issues around two political sides and five ethnic groups. The study recommends that media, being the most influential cultural institution and player in the political economy, self-regulates to minimise ethnopolitics dissemination. The output of this study adds to the existing knowledge in communication and media studies and the political economy of mass media. The findings should be able to inform policy formulation among the mass media industry and media regulatory bodies in Kenya.

Keywords: Media audience, Ethnopolitical journalism, Media consumers

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