



# Assessing the effects of Brown Envelope Journalism on television news reporting in Kenya

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## KeyWords

Brown envelope journalism, Brown envelope reporting, Brown envelope journalism effects, Cash for coverage, Junkets and Freebies, Journalism, Unethical reporting.

## ABSTRACT

The study assessed the effects of brown envelope journalism on television news reporting in Nairobi, Kenya. Journalists are bound by a code of conduct to inform society by giving accurate information without any bias, this has; however, as this study found out, brown envelope journalism has changed this. The study objective was to identify how various forms of brown envelope journalism had affected television news reporting in Kenya. The research was guided by the deontological theory of duty developed by German philosopher Emmanuel Kant. This theory talks about decisions and morals in work; it is something a journalist needs in everyday life. The study used a mixed methods study using questionnaires and in-depth interviews to collect data. The study used stratified random sampling to sample 280 journalists from Citizen Television, Nation television, KTN, and K24 television by using a survey questionnaire and purposive sampling to select 8 editors from the above television stations. Data from respondents and informants were analyzed thematically, with quantitative and qualitative data analysis applied.

55.9% (113) agreed they had taken part in brown envelope journalism practice before. That is, more than half of the participants signaled brown envelope journalism was actually something that had been happening over time. On the forms of brown envelope journalism, 81.5% (165) agreed that cash as a form affects television news reporting. Regarding freebies and junkets, 58.1% (118) of journalists agreed as a form of brown envelope journalism; they also have some effects on television news reporting in Kenya. Poor remuneration and economic hardship currently facing the country were linked with the high number of cash as a form of brown envelope journalism. Just like cash, it was agreed that a journalist's integrity and objectivity are also put to the test when he takes freebies and junkets. The study recommended that it was high time the media owners reviewed journalists' salaries to avoid brown envelope incidences.

## 1.0 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

According to Okoro and Onuoha (2013), "Journalism is a veritable tool for information dissemination, social mobilization, and control. It is also a "means of public education and sensitization on important issues affecting the lives of the people." (p.130) additionally, the Oxford dictionary defines *journalism* as writing for newspapers, magazines, or websites or preparing news to be broadcast. Journalism is the gathering, organizing, and distributing of news (Universal, 2021).

Over the years, journalism has developed exciting angles. Nyanjom (2012) suggested that media ownership had seen the media downplay specific stories that could benefit the larger community. Conflict of interest between the media station and the advertisers has undegraded media deemed nonfunctional. Not to talk of brown envelope journalism, which to an extent, has affected the quality of television news reporting in the media industry (Nyabuga, 2017). According to Davison (2020), media have an enormous influence in helping to shape public opinion and underlying sentiment. In addition, Taylor (2018) agrees that journalists are an instrument for disseminating truth and good messages and values that promote respect or well-tempered dialogue and discussion. Park (2020) generally noted that they are expected to educate, entertain and create awareness among the public.

The media is far from performing its role in society, and it is becoming clear that the media actively frame issues and promote news stories that serve the needs and concerns of the elite (McChesney, 1989). Noam Chomsky and Herman Edward (1988) argued that media bias arises from the preselection of right-thinking people, internalized preconceptions, and the adaptation of personnel.

Brown envelop journalism, which is deviant from the real meaning of journalism, has led to an increasing interest in the phenomenon among media researchers (Skjerdal, 2010). Omanga (2015) suggested that brown envelope journalism is when news sources or newsmakers transfer rewards to individual journalists intending to appeal the local decision-making in exchange for positive or uncritical media coverage. Besides cash, the brown envelope is related to other forms of news influence that may challenge editorial independence (White, 2012). According to Skjerdal (2010), Freebies are one such incentive. They are small material benefits such as free meals, gifts, and travel holidays given to journalists. However small, freebies are seen as a significant conflict with journalistic interests.

Western countries rarely report brown envelope journalism cases, it may have disappeared, but research shows it earlier existed in the 17th and 18th centuries (Sanders, 2003). A study by Kruckeberg and Tsetsura (2003) suggested that the evil influence of editorial content was perceived to be more of a problem in Eastern Europe and Latin America than in North Western.

Chequebook or checkbook journalism, commonly known in the United States of America, is a practice often controversial, like news reporters paying sources for their information (Frazier, 1995). In the United States, it is generally considered unethical since it may impact the quality of television news reports (Wilmington, 1994).

Red envelope journalism or *hongbao* is cash for coverage in China. The red envelope is customarily given with a cash amount to workers, family, and friends on occasions like New Year, birthdays, and so forth (Wu, 2010). According to Peng (2010), the practice was initially for all people in China until it became more common among journalists in the 1990s. Eventually, more collective and organized groups led to bribery growth in the Chinese journalism practice. The practice is not taken seriously in line with traditional media practice (Zhao, 1998).

Contrarily, Uko (2004) believed that brown envelope journalism may have originated in Nigeria during the Second Republic (1979-1983) when journalists started to demand brown envelopes as a condition for conducting an interview. Skjerdal (2010) once said that the practice might have originated in West Africa. Barimo (1997) agrees that brown envelope journalism came from secretly enclosing bribe money in brown envelopes among Ghanaians. The problem of '*payola*' in South African newsrooms did not start recently but is a practice that has existed for years (Leshilo, 2012). Makhanya (2012) suggested that proving such corruption is nearly impossible since witnesses are unwilling to come forward, fearing it might negatively affect their businesses. Brown envelop journalism continues to affect Egypt, "Egyptian society either remain invisible or are misrepresented within the national public sphere" (ibid 2013, p.105).

A national survey by Kioko Ireri (2015) from 2012 to 2013 examined the prevalence of corruption in journalism practice in Kenya. His findings showed that most respondents (74%) from a sample size of 504 journalists believe corruption is rife in Kenyan media. Nearly 46% of Kenyan journalists learned the art of corruption through the source journalist relationship, followed by the legacy inherited from older generations (20.3%). Cash (40%) is the most common form of corruption, and politicians are the top bribe-givers to local journalists, followed by businesspeople. More than 77% of Kenyan journalists say corruption in the local media compromise objective journalism.

Therefore, the perceived practice of news coverage necessitated assessing the effects of brown envelope journalism on television news reporting in Kenya.

## 1.1 Study Objective

The research aimed to identify how various forms of brown envelope journalism affect television news reporting in Kenya.

## 1.2 Research Question

At the end of the research study, the following question was addressed; how have the various forms of brown envelope journalism affected television news reporting in Kenya?

## 2.0 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Forms of Brown envelope journalism in Kenya

Different studies show that the practice of journalism in most of African nations is primarily characterized by corruption in the

form of cash money (40%). Freebies (29.4%) followed by free trips and holidays (10.6%), job offers (3.9%), and lunches and drinks (3.9%) (Ileri, 2015). According to Ileri (2015), the corrupt culture in which journalists operate influences their corrupt behavior. This is mainly because media organizations are part of the society, which includes corrupt cultures and organizations (Jarson, 2010).

### **2.1.1 Cash, Freebies and Junkets**

Cash for coverage is a significant factor contributing to brown envelope journalism in television news reporting. However small or big the money seemed, sadly, it is still seen as a significant influence on television news coverage. A journalist's integrity is questioned once he or she takes cash to cover a news story. The story may also lose credibility since the journalist will bow to pressure and report in favor of the news source's needs.

The overwhelmingly dominant explanation for brown envelopes in African journalism practice is the poor salaries for journalists (Skjerdal, 2010). For example, in Kenya, it is common for journalists to go unpaid for months. They, therefore, consider other ways of securing a reasonable income. This frequently leads to conflicting interests (Ileri, 2016). In this regard, Simons (2009) created a ground for seeing various factors together when analyzing brown envelope journalism.

Ssebawami (2018) agreed that the current working conditions of Kenyan journalists present a significant impediment to them upholding professional ethics and obligations. Some pitiful salaries owed for months at a stretch have seen brown envelope journalism gain traction.

Helander (2010) added that in Kenya, "Corruption ranges from petty sums in order to influence journalists to the more serious cases of large bribes for specific stories" (p. 534).

Freebies and junkets are a common way of enticing journalists to give positive coverage. It is not always about money all the time. Times the journalist may get to taste what life has to offer in the first lane. For example, a source can give him a treat of his life by offering him a first-class air ticket, free lunch at Kempinski hotel, or a free holiday at Serova White sands Mombasa. All these enticements may positively or negatively affect television news reporting.

#### **2.1.1.1 Poor Remuneration**

Harwood et al. (2017) noted that one of the factors influencing the decision-making of an editor was financial considerations. This is handy with Skjerdal's (2010) study, which gave poor remuneration as the primary contributor to brown envelope journalism in African countries. Ssebawami (2018) once said that with the pitiful salaries journalists get in Kenya, it was challenging for them to uphold standards and remain objective, something that Ileri (2016) found to bring some conflict of interest. With poor remuneration on site and they also need to take care of their needs, journalists are always left with no option but to supplement their salaries elsewhere (Ileri, 2016). The easy way out is always the brown envelope journalism in the form of cash and other freebies, affecting television news reporting in Kenya.

#### **2.1.1.2 Credibility**

A journalist's credibility is questioned whenever an opportunity for brown envelope journalism in cash or freebies arises. Credibility is one of the core values a journalist needs to practice and is even included in the Code of Conduct for the Practice of Journalism in Kenya. Citizens yearn for credible news stories. The mainstream media they trust can do that (Thabo, 2012). This is because, in the digital era where citizen journalism is encouraged, everybody can report anything, even if not credible (Othieno, 2012). When separating truth from lies, the mainstream media has it. Most people tend to believe mainstream media and, in our case, television to be truthful (Smith, 2008). The problem comes when a journalist has received *payola*, *manipulating* the story and losing credibility (Thabo, 2012). When it comes to this, the television news story is affected and may mislead the audience, who will believe the story is credible enough.

#### **2.1.1.3 Integrity**

Integrity forms an essential part of human development. Everybody in society, including journalists, is expected to be men and women of high integrity (Matteson, 2021). People value men of integrity, and this is no different with journalists. Your integrity is tested when the source wants you to manipulate a story in his favor (Okoth, 2007). Most news sources, especially in the political class, believe journalists are underpaid and do not live the life they may desire; regarding this, they lower their integrity (Mainye, 2015). A journalist of high integrity at one time of need may be tempted to take brown envelope journalism in the form of cash or freebies and junkets to influence a television story. According to Kristin (2018), a journalist's integrity is questioned when he takes the brown envelope since the whole television story is affected.

### 3.0 CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Research Design

The study employed a sequential explanatory design where data was collected over two consecutive phases (Ivankova, Cresswell, and Stick, 2006). The researcher first collected quantitative data using a survey questionnaire and then embarked on the second phase, which was qualitative data, using in-depth interviews. The second phase was guided by data obtained from the first phase. In this approach, the researcher implemented the in-depth interview guide in the qualitative phase to explain initial quantitative results in more depth. The researcher chose this method since data from the survey questionnaires, which focused on journalists, was to be corroborated by the informants, in this case, editors, in the second phase of the study.

The research design involved the use of survey questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The survey questionnaire was used to get the views of journalists on the forms of brown envelope journalism affecting television news reporting in Kenya, the levels of journalists involved, and if the methods taken to curb the practice affected television news reporting in Kenya. Editors used an in-depth interview to corroborate respondents' findings in the first phase.

#### 3.2 Study Site and Population

This study was conducted in Nairobi since it is the capital city of Kenya. The decision to choose this location was because of its proximity to the media stations, making it easier to access the respondents. Also, Nairobi is the headquarters of all the major media houses, both local and international. The respondents of this study were journalists in Nairobi, Kenya. Reaching them directly brought in the much-needed information on the effects of brown envelope journalism on television news reporting in Kenya.

According to the Media Council of Kenya (2021), there were 5,837 active journalists registered in Kenya. Of this number, 2,919 practicing journalists were based in Nairobi, with 1,775 journalists falling under the broadcast category and 1,019 journalists under the television category.

#### 3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

The study sampled 280 journalists in Nairobi, Kenya, and employed a stratified random sampling technique in the first phase, which was quantitative. The stratified random sampling technique was unique in that it allowed the researcher to stratify journalists into two strata, according to the level of work, senior journalists and young journalists, in a disproportionate manner. It was an advantageous technique because it gave a minor estimation error. The study further employed purposive sampling in the second phase, which was qualitative to sample 8 editors, three editors from Citizen Television, two each from the Nation and KTN, and one from K24. The researcher settled on this because the flexibility of purposive sampling allows the researcher to save time and money while collecting data.

##### 3.3.1 Sample Size

This research used 280 journalists in four broadcasting media houses in Nairobi, Kenya. Therefore, a sample in this study was a smaller group drawn from an actual procedure from the population. The elements making up this sample were those studied since the population under study was likely to face the challenge of brown envelope journalism in the field and even their workstations. According to the Media Council of Kenya (2021), there were 5,837 active journalists registered in Kenya. Out of the number, 1,019 practicing television journalists were based in Nairobi. The study adopted this calculation using the following formula from Survey Monkey for the sample size n:

$$n = \frac{[Z^2 * p(1-p)] / E^2}{1 + [Z^2 * p(1-p)] / E^2 * N}$$

Where

$$n = \frac{[1.96^2 * 0.5(1-0.5)] / 0.05^2}{1 + [1.96^2 * 0.5(1-0.5)] / 0.05^2 * 1019}$$

$$= \frac{[3.8416 * 0.25] / 0.0025}{1 + [3.8416 * 0.25] / 2.5475}$$

$$= 384 / 1.37$$

$$n = 280.29$$

$Z_{\alpha/2}$  was the critical value of the Normal distribution at  $\alpha/2$  (e.g., for a confidence level of 95%,  $\alpha$  was 0.05, and the critical value was 1.96), MOE was the margin of error at 5%,  $p$  was the sample proportion, and  $N$  was the population size of 1,019 television journalists in Nairobi representing a sample size of 280 respondents.

##### 3.3.2 Sampling Techniques

The study employed stratified random sampling as a probability sampling method. It was used in the first phase of the study, which was quantitative. The respondents were divided into two strata; categorizing journalists according to their level of work, i.e.,

senior and junior journalists. In the second phase, the researcher employed a non-probability sampling method, which was purposive sampling. The eight editors were selected with recommendations from journalists who participated in the study's first phase based on their expertise in the study area.

### 3.4 Data Collection Methods

This study employed a mixed-method approach with qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection and analysis. A mixed method design combines at least one qualitative and one quantitative research component. According to Johnson et al. (2007);

*Mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e. g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the general purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration. (p.123)*

The mixed method was advantageous because the two methodologies validated each other, i.e., quantitative provided numerical data while qualitative provided details (Creswell, 2010). "Qualitative data collection methods play an important role in impact evaluation by providing information useful to understand the processes behind observed results and assess changes in people's perceptions of their well-being" (Kabir, 2016, p. 202).

### 3.5 Data Collection Instruments

This research used the following instruments to get its data. Data collection was done using the following techniques: Questionnaire and in-depth interviews.

#### 3.5.1 Questionnaires

The research used closed and open-ended questions that were distributed to the respondents; this was used to capture data on how various forms of brown envelope journalism affected television news reporting in Kenya and if the level of journalists involved in brown envelope journalism affected television news reporting in the country and if methods are taken to curb the practice affected television news reporting in Kenya. A questionnaire was appropriate considering it could reach a more significant number of respondents, simultaneously assured anonymity, and had no interviewer biases (Guest, 2006). A reasonable response rate of 50% and above was acceptable, according to Willott (2019) hence, a questionnaire quickly achieved that.

#### 3.5.2 In-depth Interviews

The researcher interviewed eight editors from the four media stations as informants. This enabled the researcher to have an in-depth understanding of this practice. Why most journalists resorted to brown envelope journalism also helped to understand how the practice had affected television news reporting in Kenya and if the methods taken to curb the practice affected television news reporting. This helped the researcher dig into more information that was left out of the other data collection method.

### 3.6 Reliability of the Research Instruments

According to Middleton (2019), reliability refers to how consistently a method measures something. In other words, is the same result consistently achieved using the same methods under the same circumstances? This was achieved, and therefore the measurement was considered reliable.

The questionnaire was reliable since it achieved the same result while conducting the pilot test on samples in the same study area. The study also yielded reliable and valid results because of positive shaping by criticism from the informant's perception and understanding throughout its formulation. In the second phase of the study, the researcher used in-depth interviews. Peer reviews and agreements on the study's components further reinforced the authenticity of this study's results (Kothari, 2014). External validity was achieved through an assessment that an external examiner carried out.

### 3.7 Validity of the Research Instruments

Validity is concerned with the extent to which the devices would yield results. It also determines whether the research instrument truly measures what it was intended to measure (Payne & Payne, 2004). The credibility of the study findings was assured in the quantitative phase since the researcher used a questionnaire that ensured evidence and detailed information (Kothari, 2014; Creswell, 2007; Simons, 2009). Data was recorded using responses from questionnaires with the advantage that they allowed a researcher to refer back to records in case an issue was unclear.

In qualitative research, validity is the degree to which the data is credible and trustworthy hence can be defended when challenged (Payne & Payne, 2004). In the second phase of the study, an in-depth interview was used in recording data with the advantage that it captured some elements that were left out in the questionnaire hence making the study valid. The validity and reliability of this study were ensured through the selection of the study area, sampling of the respondents, and piloting of the research instrument.

### 3.8 Data Analysis and Presentation

Data analysis brings order, structure, and meaning to the mass collected information (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999, p. 203). During data analysis, quantitative and qualitative data analysis was applied. This approach usually yields comprehensive and rich data, thus complementing results (Wimmer, 2011). Data from open-ended items in questionnaires provided non-numerical responses.

Quantitative data was analyzed according to emerging themes in the questionnaires with a focus on how various forms of brown envelope journalism affected television news reporting in Kenya, if the levels of journalists involved in brown envelope journalism affected television news reporting in Kenya, and if the methods taken to curb the practice affected television news reporting in Kenya. The Cross tabulation data analysis method was applied in that the researcher looked at data that had some connection with each other and tied them together. Text analysis was also used in quantitative data analysis to put down open-ended data into easily understandable data.

An inductive approach was used to analyze qualitative data. The inductive approach involves analyzing data with little theory, structure, or framework, and at the same time, it uses the actual data to derive the analysis structure (Burnard et al., 2008). The researcher analyzed transcripts by identifying themes in the data collected with a focus on various forms of brown envelope journalism's effects on television news reporting, if the levels of journalists involved in the practice affected television news reporting and if the methods are taken to curb the practice affected television news reporting in Kenya. Examples of the identified themes were then gathered together from the text.

The quantitative data were presented using pie charts, while qualitative data key findings were presented under each central theme using appropriate quotes to illustrate those findings.

## 4.0 CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the results, findings, interpretations, and discussion according to the objective and research question of the study. The research objective was to identify how various forms of brown envelope journalism affect television news reporting in Kenya. The research question was, how have the various forms of brown envelope journalism affected television news reporting in Kenya?

The quantitative phase of this study was dominant; in the first phase, a survey was distributed to 280 respondents, and data were analyzed. In the second phase, an in-depth interview targeting eight informants was used to explain the quantitative results more. It is worth pointing out that the connection between the two data sets happened in two places; the first connection was using quantitative results to create the in-depth interview questions. The second connection was the mixing after the qualitative data were collected and analyzed. The results were connected to better understand the findings from both phases.

### 4.1 Response Rate

Out of the 280 respondents targeted in the first phase of data collection, which was quantitative, only 203 questionnaires were returned, posing a 72.5% response rate. Fifty-one respondents (25.1%) each were drawn from Nation TV, Kenya Television Network, and K24, while 50 (24.7%) were from Citizen TV. This was sufficient data to proceed to analysis. A survey response rate of 50% and above should be considered excellent in most circumstances Willott, (2019). The researcher conducted in-depth interviews with all eight informants in the study's second phase.

## 4.2 Analysis of the Quantitative Study Variables

1. Have you been involved in brown envelope journalism practice before?

202 responses

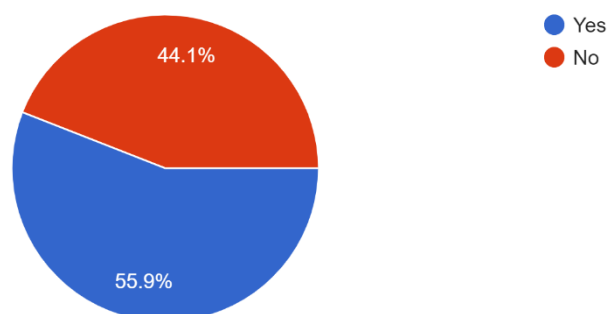


Figure 1. Practice brown envelope journalism before. Source: Researcher (2022)

Before analyzing the study variables, it is essential to note that 113 respondents (55.9%) admitted to having taken part in brown envelope journalism practice before, as presented in figure 1. 89 (44.1%) were yet to be involved in the practice. From the first phase of the study, one respondent opted not to answer this question.

### 4.2.1 Cash Money

2. Do cash money as a form of brown envelope journalism affect television news reporting in Kenya?

203 responses

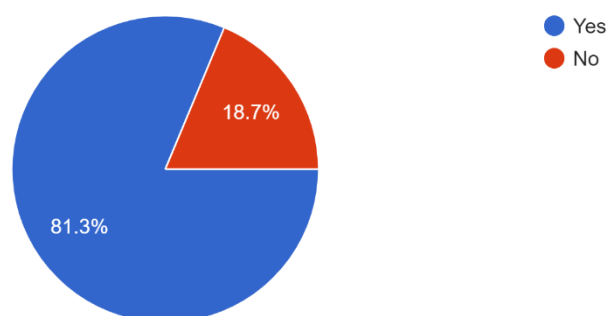


Figure2. Cash. Source: Researcher (2022)

The highest of its nature shown in figure 2, almost all the respondents, 165 (81.3%), agreed that cash is one primary form of brown envelope journalism that affect television news reporting in Kenya. 38 (18.5%) said no. When asked how this form of brown envelope journalism affects television news reporting in Kenya, R89 said,

"With the cash at hand, you are expected to know the necessity to compromise news, and by doing so, you have affected the story in one way or another."



#### 4.2.2 Freebies and Junkets

3. Do other forms of brown envelope journalism like free gifts, holidays and junkets affect television news reporting in Kenya?

203 responses

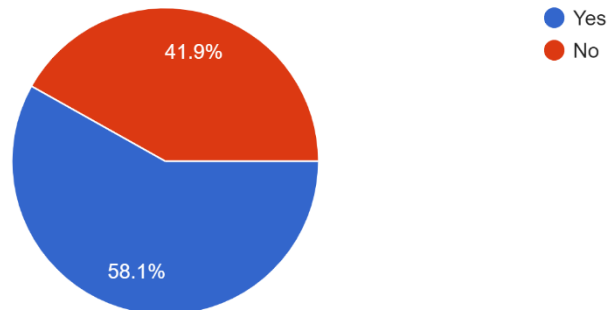


Figure 3. Freebies and junkets. Source: Researcher (2022)

Regarding freebies and junkets, 118 respondents (58.1%) said yes, meaning these forms can affect television news reporting in one way or another. This was followed by 85 respondents (41.9%) who said no, meaning these forms of brown envelope journalism do not necessarily affect television news reporting in Kenya. Freebies, in this case, are those expensive gifts given freely to journalists without any charge. On the other hand, junkets are extravagant trips offered to journalists at the expense of public funds to kill a story.

Upon asking how this form of brown envelope journalism affects television news reporting in Kenya, R57 responded by saying,

*"Once someone does you such a favor, you will want to please him even if it means giving false information; by doing this, you have already affected the television news report."*

#### 4.3 Analyses of Qualitative Study Variables

Interestingly, all eight informants remained adamant not to have participated in the brown envelope practice before this study's second phase.

##### 4.3.1 Cash Money

A follow-up question was asked about how this form affects television news reporting regarding one respondent who said that with the cash at hand, you are expected to compromise the story. When asked to explain more on this during the second phase of the study, informant C had this to say,

*"...the rule is universal, it does apply everywhere, I scratch your back, and you scratch mine, you see, when I give you money to favor me in your report, that money has to be paid back, the only way to pay me back is to return the favor, and what is the favor, in this case, compromising the news story, so it is that simple..."*

When asked about why the high number at 81.3%? The majority of the informants attributed this to poor pay. When asked the same question, informant G had this to say,

*"...we all know how dismal the pay is for journalists compared to other professionals. It will be a lie to say that a journalist must survive with that little pay. This may tempt the journalist to look for other sources of income. The easiest way to do that we all know so many people, especially in the political group, want positive stories for a milestone. That makes the work easier since he will compromise the story for pay, and the whole news is affected..."*

Informants H and B attributed this trend to economic hardship. Informant B had this to say on this particular matter,

*"...you know, a time we have to contribute it to the country's economic hardship, it becomes almost nearly impossible to put food on the table, especially now that we are facing the world pandemic. As a journalist, I have some tempting and ready income just looking at me. What will be wrong then if I go against my morals even just one time to compromise the story just*



*for one day and may not have an impact and in the long run gain some cash to feed my family?..."*

Most informants said this cash might be given to the journalist to use as facilitation and not necessarily for influencing a story. Informant A was very vocal on this,

*"...why are you so hard on us? I do not see why cash for coverage should influence the story. I remember my time gathering news. I would take this money as a way of facilitation and in no way change the storyline. For some, it may be true that they can kill the story after that, but once you are objective, there is no way you will change that story but rather report it how it is, so in some way, it does not affect how television news is reported..."*

When asked on their take whether cash would affect television news reporting in Kenya, the majority of the respondents agreed that as a form of brown envelope journalism, it had some effects. Informant D had a similar thought,

*"...this is like a business. I pay for the service, and in return, you offer me that service, so once you have the cash, the next thing is payback time. In other words, you must pay back what you have taken and what is this payback or service? Compromising the story, and what happens once you have changed the storyline? You have affected that news report in one way or another, so you are probably right when you say this cash as a form of brown envelope journalism affects television news reporting in Kenya."*

#### **4.3.2 Freebies and Junkets**

The majority of the informants agreed that, in some way, this form of brown envelope journalism affects television news reporting in Kenya. Expounding on this, informant E said,

*"...just like cash, freebies and junkets can also compromise a story, people do not see it as a big deal, but I tell you it is possible. How on earth will you want to miss another holiday in Sarova Whitesands hotel in Mombasa and flying in a first-class trip, not to forget that expensive old fine wine you were given as a gift?"*

Informant C was also in support of this by saying that,

*"A journalist will probably need this life that he is not used to, to get it over and over again, he will be in a position always to do what the master wants him to do so that no favors will translate to no gifts and junkets. By doing this, your integrity and objectivity are questioned because you will report nothing but an unbiased story full of compression. So, it is right that freebies and junkets probably affect television news reporting in Kenya..."*

### **4.4 Discussions and Interpretation of Findings**

#### **4.4.1 Cash Money**

Almost all the respondents, 165 (81.3%), agreed that cash is one major form of brown envelope journalism that affect television news reporting in Kenya. The majority of the informants attributed this to poor pay. When asked the same question, informant G in the second phase of the study said that journalists were easily swayed into brown envelope journalism because of their dismal salaries compared to other professions; hence they had to look for alternative ways of survival. This is in line with Skjerdal (2010), who once discovered that the overwhelmingly dominant explanation for brown envelopes in African journalism practice was poor salaries.

The majority of the informants said this cash might be given to the journalist to use as facilitation and not necessarily for influencing a story with Informant A during the in-depth interview phase confessing that during his time, he would take money not to change a story but perceived it as a facilitation fee. This is in line with a study by Mwesige (2004) in Uganda who found that 75% of the respondents justified being paid by a source to facilitate the information gathering process, whereas 5% would accept payment to change the story.

#### **4.4.2 Freebies and Junkets**

Regarding freebies and junkets, 118 respondents (58.1%) said yes, meaning these forms can affect television news reporting in one way or another. The majority of the informants agreed that, in some way, this form of brown envelope journalism affects television news reporting in Kenya. Expounding on this, informant E, during the in-depth interview, said that, just like cash, freebies and junkets were also major compromisers of television news stories even though it was something that people never take seriously. This confirms White's (2012) thoughts, who once said that apart from cash, the brown envelope is related to other forms of news influence that may challenge editorial independence. According to Skjerdal (2010), Freebies were one such incentive. Informant E's

thoughts are also in line with Skjerdal (2010), who found out that however small it may look, freebies were still seen as a significant conflict with journalistic interest.

## **5.0 CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents the summary of the study's significant findings guided by the research questions, conclusions, recommendations, and study gaps or suggestions for future studies for future researchers.

### **5.1 Summary of Findings**

55.9% (113) agree they have participated in brown envelope journalism practice meaning more than half of the participants' signal that brown envelope journalism has been happening over time.

In the research question of the study on how the various forms of brown envelope journalism affect television news reporting in Kenya, a whopping 81.5% (165) agreed that cash as a condition affects television news reporting. Regarding freebies and junkets, 58.1% (118) of journalists decided as a form of brown envelope journalism; they also have some effects on television news reporting in Kenya. These high numbers were attributed to the economic hardship the country is currently facing and poor remuneration.

To find out how they affect television news reports, the agreement in the two phases of the study was that once you are paid for the service, you have to deliver, and what is this delivery? In this context, compromising news. Once the information is compromised, a journalist will not be objective in his story, a big concern in the industry. By not being accurate, a journalist will manipulate the story to best suit the message's source. In the long end, the consumers of that news report who could have been the beneficiaries fail to because the information may now be inaccurate or not balanced. In other words, a few people will benefit, while the larger society in which the journalist is responsible for informing what happens in the community will be left out. By doing so, the whole television news report is affected.

### **5.2 Conclusions**

Brown envelope journalism practice is an issue regarding television news reporting. This is evident in the high number of journalists (55.9%) from the study who agreed that they had taken part in brown envelope journalism before.

Cash was cited as the most form of brown envelope journalism (81.5%) affecting television news reporting in Kenya. The country's poor remuneration and economic hardship were linked with the high number. It was discovered that once the journalist takes the money, the source will need him to return the favor and, by doing that, compromise his objectiveness and influence the story, affecting the news consumers.

Freebies and junkets were also seen as a tremendous brown envelope journalism form influencing a television news report at 58.1%. Just like cash, it was agreed that a journalist's integrity and objectivity are also put to the test. Once a journalist is given that treatment of his life, he will want it again and again. In exchange, he will always compromise the story whenever demanded. The researcher found that such a trend will affect television news reports since the news consumers will not benefit from it once compromised.

Cash being cited as the primary form contributing to brown envelope journalism compared to other forms and this being linked to poor remuneration. The researcher recommended media owners to review journalists' salaries since it may help the situation.

Researcher also recommended media owners to look for an alternative way of treating their journalists to avoid the temptation of freebies. They should also reward outstanding journalists for avoiding picking gifts from sources.

This study mainly focused on journalists, future research can look at the role of media houses in the fight against brown envelope journalism.

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