

**THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY RADIO IN COUNTERING
MISINFORMATION ON THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A CASE OF ANYOLE
RADIO**

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**A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Award of Master of Arts Degree in Journalism and
Communication of Chuka University**

**CHUKA UNIVERSITY
OCTOBER 2024**

DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Declaration

This thesis is my original work and has not been previously submitted to award of a diploma or degree in this university or any other institution.

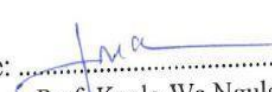
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Recommendations

This Research thesis has been examined, passed and submitted with our approval as the University supervisors.

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DEDICATION

This piece of work is dedicated to my dearest parents Julius Kibisu and Florah Kibisu for being strong pillars in all my endeavors. I also dedicate it to my family; my sister Marion Kibisu, my brothers Wesley Kibisu, Lewis Kibisu and my companion Alice Munatenyi. I pray that this work would inspire an insatiable quest for knowledge in their academic and social journey.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Glory to God for his abundant grace, favor and good health granted to me through the academic journey. I would be dishonest not to mention how tough the journey has been especially with a significant part of this journey being taken in an active Covid-19 era in the middle of health measures, restrictions and lockdown.

I want to acknowledge the guidance, effort and commitment from my supervisors Prof Kyalo Wa Ngula and Dr Nabea Nkoru who like a parent have walked me through this academic phase with admirable courage and knowledge. To my classmates specifically Sabina Kemunto and Simeon Mabea, your assistance and cooperation greatly contributed to this work.

Appreciation goes to the Media Department, Chuka University, all the lecturers that have walked me through the post graduate journey, my research assistants; Philemon Onzere, Moses Ombogo, journalists at Anyole radio and all respondents who gave in their input; to you I am forever indebted and grateful.

ABSTRACT

The emergence of Covid-19 as a global pandemic triggered a misinformation outbreak, “the infodemic”. Unlike most of the previous global pandemics, Covid-19 emerged in the digital era, the era of instantaneous communication and information flow. With an unrestricted flow and unlimited sources of information, the Covid-19 pandemic provided a unique challenge to mitigation and control. This study therefore sought to investigate the role played by Anyole Radio in countering the infodemic on the Covid-19 pandemic. The study objectives were to identify infodemics/ misinformation, identify the strategies employed by Anyole radio in countering misinformation on the Covid-19 pandemic and to discuss challenges faced by the community radio in countering misinformation on the Covid-19 pandemic. This study was anchored on the Agenda Setting theory with conclusions being drawn from the media and policy agenda setting types of the agenda setting theory. The theory was used to evaluate how the media filters and shapes information that it relays to its audience. This was then used to analyze how community radio shaped perceptions on the Covid-19 pandemic and how it countered misinformation, influenced behavior, and perceptions. The study employed a descriptive study design on a sample size of 384 respondents out of a study population of 250,000. A case study research design was employed with the case for the study being the role of Anyole Radio in countering misinformation during the Covid-19 pandemic. Criterion sampling was used in selecting respondents that meet the three criteria (listeners, journalists or health specialists) who were recruited through networks with the radio station. A mixed method sampling approach was incorporated combining quota sampling and purposive sampling. Questionnaires and interviews were used as the research instruments with interviews supplementing questionnaires in the data collection procedure. The study sought to evaluate the performance of community radio in the Covid and post Covid era. Community radio listeners, health practitioners and community radio journalists within the broadcasting range of the community radio in study were interviewed and questionnaires administered to investigate the presence of misinformation from several sources, among them community radio. The findings were then analyzed vis a vis factual information provided in community radio to establish how community radio is countering misinformation or propagating the same. A regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the strategies used by Anyole radio and the effectiveness in countering misinformation. From the findings, it was concluded that misinformation poses a real threat to health communication especially in a pandemic situation. It was observed that misinformation is widely spread through internet sources and social media. Further, it was deduced that Anyole radio played a role in countering misinformation by combining multiple strategies. Anyole radio’s use of local and simple languages, along with clear explanations, significantly contributed to the

effectiveness of countering misinformation as compared to other strategies. While it was observed that Anyole radio is faced with operational challenges such as inadequate resources and informational challenges such as rumors and conspiracy theories, proper mitigation would enhance its role in countering misinformation