NEWSPAPER FRAMING OF A HEALTH CRISIS AND PUBLIC PERCEPTION IN KENYA: THE CASE OF KENYATTA NATIONAL HOSPITAL WRONG-PATIENT BRAIN SURGERY

KEVIN CHARLSE MUDAVADI

A Thesis Submitted to the School of Communication, Cinematics and Creative Arts in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts in Communication Studies

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY–AFRICA

SUMMER 2019
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SUMMER 2019
Student’s Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college, institution or university other than the United States International University-Africa (USIU-Africa) in Nairobi for academic credit.

Signed: ……………………………… Date: …………………………………………

Kevin Charlse Mudavadi (ID. NO.: 653449)
This thesis has been presented for examination with my approval as the appointed supervisor.

Signed: ................................. Date: ........................................
Kioko Ireri, Ph.D.
Supervisor

Signed: ................................. Date: ........................................
Kioko Ireri, Ph.D.
Chair, Department of Journalism and Corporate Communication

Signed: ................................. Date: ........................................
Prof. Valerie P. Adema
Ag. Dean, School of Communication, Cinematics and Creative Arts
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I must admit that, this research idea, was born in the crisis communications class, instructed by Dr. Stephen Kimotho, an Assistant Professor, at United States International University - Africa. His encouragement and suggestion that I move forward with this idea
played a great role towards its achievement. His unimaginable understanding of crisis communication and passion dedicated to this area is not only superb but inspiring too. A graduate student pursuing corporate communications would rather choose a lion’s jaw than miss that class!

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Dedication

This research work is dedicated to all those who have played a greater role in my quest to reach this level. They include; my family members especially my mother, father, brothers, sister, nephews and nieces (Kevin Brown, Jayline Khendi, Malia and Melania, Rayan Scheupelle, and Hailey Rose), friends, and USIU-Africa fraternity.
Table of Contents

Student’s Declaration.............................................................................................................. iii
Approval Page........................................................................................................................ iv
Acknowledgements............................................................................................................... vi
Dedication.............................................................................................................................. x
List of Tables ........................................................................................................................ xv
List of Figures ....................................................................................................................... xvi
List of Abbreviations and Acronyms.................................................................................... xvii
Abstract................................................................................................................................. xviii
CHAPTER ONE ..................................................................................................................... 1
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY .................................................... 1
Introduction............................................................................................................................. 1
  Crises in Health Field........................................................................................................... 3
  About KNH Wrong-Patient Brain Surgery Crisis................................................................. 5
  The Newspaper Landscape in Kenya................................................................................... 6
Statement of the Problem...................................................................................................... 9
Study Purpose ........................................................................................................................ 10
Study Objectives .................................................................................................................. 11
Rationale of the Study............................................................................................................ 11
Research Significance............................................................................................................ 12
Scope of the Study................................................................................................................ 13
Definition of Terms............................................................................................................... 16
Plan of the Study.................................................................................................................... 17
CHAPTER TWO ..................................................................................................................... 19
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW ......................................... 19
Introduction............................................................................................................................ 19
### TABLE OF CONTENTS

- **Framing Theory** ................................................................. 19
  - History of the Framing Theory ............................................. 19
    - Sociological Roots .......................................................... 20
    - Psychological Roots ......................................................... 21
    - Goffman’s Concept of Framing .......................................... 22
    - Framing as an Applicability Process ................................ 22
  - Framing vs. Related Concepts ............................................ 24
  - Theoretical Concepts of Framing ....................................... 25
  - Media Frames ..................................................................... 29
    - Valence Framing .............................................................. 31
  - Media Frames vs. Public Perception .................................... 33
  - Strengths and Weaknesses .................................................. 35
- **Attribution Theory** ............................................................ 36
  - Attribution Process ............................................................ 37
  - Attribution Theory in Crisis Communication ....................... 38
- **Literature Review** .............................................................. 41
  - Frame Prevalence .............................................................. 41
  - Valence Framing ............................................................... 44
  - Media Framing vs. Public Perception .................................... 46
- **Conceptual Framework** ..................................................... 49
- **Chapter Summary** ............................................................. 50
- **CHAPTER THREE** ............................................................... 52
- **METHODS** ......................................................................... 52
  - Introduction ......................................................................... 52
  - Research Design ................................................................... 52
  - Research Approach ........................................................... 53
- **Data Collection Techniques** .............................................. 54
  - Quantitative Content Analysis .......................................... 54
    - Sampling Design ............................................................... 55
    - Sampling Frame ............................................................... 56
    - Research Sample ............................................................. 56
    - Research Procedure ......................................................... 57
    - Operationalization of Categories .................................... 58
  - Measurement and Reliability .............................................. 61
Dominant Newspaper Tone vs. Negative Perception ................................................................. 99
Conclusion ................................................................................................................................. 105
Recommendations ....................................................................................................................... 106
Areas of Further Research ......................................................................................................... 108
REFERENCES ............................................................................................................................ 110
APPENDICES ............................................................................................................................ 126
   Appendix I: Study Questionnaire .............................................................................................. 126
   Appendix II: Interview Guide .................................................................................................... 130
   Appendix III: Researcher’s Introductory Letter ........................................................................ 132
   Appendix IV: Code Book .......................................................................................................... 133
   Appendix V: List of all Universities in Nairobi County ............................................................. 136
   Appendix VI: List of Sampled Universities (20) ....................................................................... 137
   Appendix VII: Consent Form for Interview Participants ........................................................ 138
   Consent Form for Interviewees ................................................................................................. 138
   Appendix VIII: Debriefing Form for Interview Participants .................................................. 141
   Appendix IX: Institutional Introductory Letter ......................................................................... 144
   Appendix X: Institutional Review Board Certificate ............................................................... 145
   Appendix XI: NACOSTI Certificate .......................................................................................... 146
   Appendix XII: Linkert Scale Results ........................................................................................ 148
   Appendix XIII: Operationalization of Variables ....................................................................... 149
List of Tables

Table 4. 1: Frame Prevalence in KNH Crisis ................................................................. 87
Table 4. 2: News Tone in the Coverage of KNH Crisis ............................................. 87
Table 4. 3: Respondents’ Perception towards Media Covered of KNH Crisis ............. 88
Table 4. 4: Respondents’ Perception towards Kenyatta National Hospital ............... 88
Table 4. 5: Correlation between Media Coverage and Public Perception ............... 89
Table 4. 6: Dominant Negative Perception by Demographics .................................. 90
Table 4. 7: Correlation between the Most Dominant Valence and Public’s Perception... 91
List of Figures

Figure 2.1: The Conceptual Framework ................................................................. 50
## List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BP</td>
<td>British Petroleum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRB</td>
<td>Institutional Review Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JCI</td>
<td>Joint Commission International</td>
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<tr>
<td>KNH</td>
<td>Kenyatta National Hospital</td>
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<tr>
<td>NACOSTI</td>
<td>National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>RQ</td>
<td>Research Questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package for Social Scientist</td>
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<td>US</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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Abstract

This study investigated the role of newspapers’ frames on public perception of Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) during the wrong patient brain surgery crisis. To be specific, the study examined the most prevalent crisis frame featured during KNH wrong-patient brain surgery crisis. Second, it examined whether the four newspapers’ (The Daily Nation, The Standard, People Daily, and The Star) coverage of KNH wrong-patient brain surgery crisis was reported negatively or positively (valence framing). In addition, the research investigated how the most dominant public perception towards KNH varied by demographics of gender, age, religion, and year of study. Lastly, it examined whether there was a significant correlation between the most prevalent newspaper valence and the dominant public’s perception. Findings show that attribution of responsibility (35.10%) was the most dominant frame during the crisis period. The coverage of the crisis was overwhelmingly reported in a negative tone (81.34%) while the correlation between media coverage and public’s perception of KNH is a weak positive correlation (+.23). Relatedly, there is also a strong positive correlation (+.81) between the most prevalent newspaper valence reporting and the public’s dominant perception. By demographics; male (50.65%), first years (36.28), those aged 18-20 (54.7%), and Christians (88.3%) recorded the highest negative perception towards KNH. Media coverage of the surgery, organizational crisis history, poor response strategy, individual experience, negative relation history, negative word of mouth, and diminished expectations are the reasons why the public held negative perception towards KNH. This should formulate a base from which organizations approach crises, as they determine the public’s perception of the organization. The youth are interested in issues of public interest. As such, this is a challenge to crisis managers who are required to balance their approach towards different types of stakeholders in terms of message creation and dissemination. The outcomes of this study show that media frames shape how the public perceive organizations. As such, this demonstrates the reasons why it is important for crisis communication managers to treat news media with utmost seriousness, as they define how institutions or organizations are perceived by the public.
Chapter One

Introduction and Background of the Study

Introduction
Crises are inevitable in organizations (Coombs, 2006b). It is just a matter of when and not if they are to happen. Organizations are bound to anticipate crises and formulate better ways or approaches to addressing them. Crises however, are not a new thing as they have faced organizations worldwide. As noted by Ramesh (2009), some notable examples of crises include; the 1997 Asian Economic Crisis that caused Indonesia’s reversal economic growth from 7.8% in 1996 to -13% in 1998, and Malaysia’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contraction by 9% in 1998, compared to growth of over 7% in the early 1990s. As such, crises are present all over the world and organizations are bound to prepare to address the situation or fight the restoration of their reputation and savor public’s perception of them. When faced with these crises, the audience turn to the media for further information and clarification. Therefore, there is need to understand how the media relay information during crisis as they help managers to decipher valid strategic information that would allow them to be in control of the situation.

Organizations today are faced with a rather difficult time (especially in this digital era) when it comes to crises; as preparations, addressing of the crisis, and stakeholder satisfaction play a greater role on the future operations of the organizations. A crisis can be defined as a “major occurrence with a potentially negative outcome affecting an organization, company, or industry, as well as publics, products, services or good name. It “interrupts normal business transactions and can sometimes threaten the existence of the organization” (Fearn-Banks, 1996, p.1).
The media play an important role in the dissemination of information to the public especially during crisis period. It is during this time that they are more eager to find out further information about the crisis, its implications, and the mechanisms that the organization is putting in place to handle the situation and its adverse effects. In the process of relaying this information, the media constructs certain themes that help define the way the audience or publics interpret the information and the decisions that they take. Many questions linger when they decide to publish information, for instance; will they relay it justly? Will they focus on specific aspects of the debate and avoid others? What manner or approach will they assume? These and more other salient questions that put organizational reputation at stake arise. If not handled with utmost care, the operations of the organization may be adversely affected.

Coombs (2010) posits that, “the news media are drawn to crises and are a useful way to reach a wide array of publics quickly” (p.5). The author further postulates that, it is logical for crisis response research to devote considerable attention to the media because it reaches a wide range of stakeholders by getting the message out quickly to as many people as possible. Therefore, analyzing the media coverage of the crisis is important as it defines how the public view an organization (especially) during crisis period.

The media in one way or another engage in news framing. Framing is a powerful tool that allows the news media to call attention to certain aspects of issues or events while excluding other features (Entman, 1993). Framing theory asserts that the media select and highlight certain items of an event or issue over others, in effect, elevating them in importance to the audience (Entman, 1993; Chong, 2007). These items of an
event can either be positive or negative and can play an important role towards how the public interpret or judge an organization during crisis period, an area that this study looks to examine.

Bearing in mid the importance of the media on its audience, it is logical to connect crises and attribution (Coombs, 2007) because stakeholders are most like to attribute the causes of a crisis to specific individuals or organizations responsible for the crisis (Coombs, 2010). This means therefore, that, questions during crisis will arise, for instance; was the crisis a result of situational factors? Or was it something the organization did? Indeed, extant research forges a link between attribution theory and crises (see, Bradford & Garrett, 1995; Coombs, 1995; Hartel, McColl-Kennedy & McDonald, 1998; Jorgensen, 1994,1996; McDonald & Hartel, 2000; Stockmyer, 1996). The attributions stakeholders make about crisis responsibility have affective and behavioral consequences for an organization (Coombs & Holladay, 2005; McDonald & Hartel, 2000). If the organization is deemed responsible, the reputation will suffer, resulting to stakeholders exit or negative word-of-mouth. This explains why management has a vested interest in preventing either of these two negative outcomes (Coombs, 2007).

**Crises in Health Field**

Crises facing organizations, especially hospitals, are not a new thing, they are occurrences, though unexpected, that are bound to happen any time. For instance, in Gaza, thousands of lives were at risk as hospitals faced fuel and electricity crisis (WHO, 2017). This meant that 40 surgical operation theatres, 11 obstetric operation theatres, five hemodialysis centers, and hospital emergency departments serving almost 4,000 patients daily were forced to stop critical services. In a report submitted to the United States
Senate Committee, financial crisis at rural hospitals that are driven by inadequate
government funding, is hurting millions of Americans (Felig, 2018). This has made it hard for them to access quality healthcare.

A research conducted by the University of Cape Town in 247 hospitals in 25 counties, and published in The Lancet in 2015, showed that patients undergoing elective surgery in Africa were twice likely than global average to die after the operation. To add to this, medical errors, as noted by a study carried out by the John Hopkins Medicine researchers in 2016, is the third leading cause of deaths in the US (McMains, 2016). In Kenya, cases of wrong surgery have been reported on numerous occasions. For example, doctors at the Nairobi Hospital conducted a botched surgery on a patient and left her to die after withholding her land title dead (Mutai, 2018). On June 5th, 2019, Dr. Martin Ajujo serving in a clinic without license in Kenya conducted a breast surgery that led to the death of June Wanza Mulupi (Wasuna, 2018). Perhaps, the one that caught the public attention was the wrong-patient brain surgery at the Kenyatta National Hospital where doctors’ and nurses’ mishap led to a crisis that affected the operations of the organization. A report by the World Health Organization (WHO) in collaboration with Joint Commission International (JCI) on patients’ safety solutions, volume 1 of 2007, notes that, negligence of patient identity continues to cause medical errors, testing and transfusion errors, and wrong person procedures to the wrong families all over the world. The report points out that the emergence of technology will play a greater role towards ensuring rightful patients’ identification.
About KNH Wrong-Patient Brain Surgery Crisis

Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) faced a crisis on the early morning of March 1st, 2018 when its surgeons operated on a wrong-patient. Pressure from all circles demanding for further information from the organization resulted to dire consequences that defined its way forward. The institution has been through previous rough patches but no serious steps were taken to address the issues. Unlike before, this crisis meant that, there was more action, as media gave it extra attention, stakeholders craved for more serious actions to be taken, and resulted to the change of operations in the organization.

The Cabinet Secretary (CS) for Health, Cecily Kariuki offered a public apology to the families and the patient who had been wrongly operated on. The Cabinet Secretary (CS) went on to suspend the services of Chief Executive Officer Lilly Koross and Facilities Director of Clinical Services Bernard Githae to pave way for further investigations and directed the board through its chair to deliver a full report in a week’s time. She further appointed in acting capacity Dr. Thomas Mutie and Dr. John Ongech as their replacement, respectively, to ensure that there is no repeat of such an occurrence.

Kariuki expressed her concern to the victim and the family and promised to investigate the matter further to establish the root cause of the matter and take necessary steps. This she hoped will be provided to her in a week’s time by the committee that would conduct the investigations.

The wrong-patient brain surgery at KNH exposed other critical issues within the medical facility that had been neglected for a long time. Issues such us, poor hospital services, laxity of nurses and doctors, and weak response mechanisms to issues afflicting
the organization all popped up. The wrong-patient brain surgery disrupted the operations of KNH (Kenya’s biggest referral hospital), leading to the suspension of the doctors and nurses in charge while constituting the formation of an investigation to determine the actors responsible.

KNH is a world class patient-centered specialized care hospital located in Kenya’s capital city, Nairobi, that serves a mission to optimize patient experience through innovative, evidence based specialized healthcare, facilitate training and research, and participate in national health policy formulation. Its core values include; customer focus, professionalism and integrity, teamwork and team spirit, equity and equality, and safety.

**The Newspaper Landscape in Kenya**

The origin of Kenya’s media can be traced in the 19th Century when it was first started by the Missionaries and British (Ochilo, 1993). One of the earliest papers to be published was by Rev. Robert Stegal of the Church Missionary Society in 1885. It was known as the *Taveta Chronicles*. This publication was so powerful in that, the church up-to-date still practices written publication. For instance, the National Council of Churches in Kenya (NCCK) founded *Target* and *Lengo* while the Catholic church at one time owned *The Seed* and the *National Mirror*. The interest in the press system grew further, such that by 1952 there were 50 newspapers in the country. However, when Kenya attained its independence, majority of them folded up (Ainslie, 1966).

Before Kenya became a republic, the press was categorized into three: European press, Indian press, and African press (Faringer, 1991) where the European press was the leading followed by the Indian and African press. The objective of the European media
was to provide legitimized information to colonial masters and offer them sufficient channels for settlement, that is, social communication (Ochilo, 1993). The Indian press on the other hand, was well known for the “One Man, One Vote!” premise with its major contribution being to end colonial rule in Eastern Africa (Bushan, n.d.). The African press based its publication on political matters especially on political independence as notes Ali (2009). Its issues, according to Makali (2003) were well distributed in Nairobi in the period between 1925 and 1945. With its growing importance, leaders started newspapers to propagate specific views and concerns (Karanja, 2000). The African press issues include: Muigwithania, a Kikuyu newspaper started in 1925, African Chronicle, Tangazo, Luo Magazine, Pamoja, Sauti Ya Mwafrika, Habari Za Dunia, and Afrika Mpya (Makali, 2003).

In post-independence, the media worked under very stringent environment full of political and legal demand (Aling’o, 2007). During the regime of independence, Kenya’s second president Daniel Arap Moi who ruled the country for 24 years, press freedom was not afforded such that, critics of the government had no room at all. His administration muzzled journalists and their outlets (Kalyango, 2011).

The Kenya African National Union (KANU), the ruling party in 1983 bought and renamed Hillary Ng’weno’s Nairobi Times as The Kenya Times (Abuoga & Mutere, 1988). It became the sole mouth of the government at that time and KANU. It did not survive, however, as when the KANU government was ousted in 2002 its life limits hit zero in 2010.

Since the emergence of the multiparty system in 1992, the media industry became more diverse and vibrant and much growth has been noted in the sector (Moggi &
The liberalization of the media sector has contributed to press freedom in Kenya and meant that journalists are free to practice their profession in Kenya (Ibelema, 2009; Paasch, 2009). As posited by Ismail and Deane (2008) “the Kenyan media is one of the most respected, thriving, sophisticated, and innovative media in Africa” (p. 320). Many see the media as a “principal indicator of the democratic vitality of Kenya” (Ismail & Deane, 2008, p. 320). Similarly, Cheeseman (2014) observes that Kenya has one of the most-engaged, well-produced, and widely consumed media on the African continent. Mutambo (2012) also notes that, Kenya is a preferred destination for journalists fleeing mistreatment from other countries. These reports however, are quashed as Freedom House (2014) reports shows that Kenyan press freedom is only partly free.

Today, Kenya has six daily newspapers (The Daily Nation, The Standard, The Star, People Daily, Business Daily, and Taifa Leo), a number of magazine, and weekly publications. Obonyo (2003) notes that, there are four sectors in Kenyan print media: the regular daily newspapers, the magazines, the regional newspapers, and the printed sheets that also seek to pass for newspapers in urban centers. However, Kenyan newspapers have no any ideological leanings to differentiate them from each other (Obonyo, 2003).

Established in 1902, The Standard newspaper is the oldest while The Daily Nation newspaper is the most prestigious and influential in the East African region. Nation newspaper, was established in 1960, just three years before Kenya’s independence in 1960. It is often hailed as the New York Times of Kenya’s newspaper industry (Onyebadi, 2008, p.20). Newspaper readership in Kenya, as of 2008, stood at a dismal 23% (Mbeke & Mshindi, 2008). The Media Council of Kenya (2005) indicate that 55% readers are urban dwellers while 36% are in rural areas. The People Daily was
established in 1993 by politician Kenneth Matiba, a then presidential candidate. It was a weekly newspaper but then transformed into a daily paper in 1998. It was famously known for its bold approach often criticizing president Moi’s leadership.

**Statement of the Problem**

A crisis as defined by Fearn-Banks (2002) is “a major occurrence with a potentially negative outcome affecting an organization, company or industry, as well as its publics, products, services or, good name” (p.2). Coombs and Holladay (2004) further postulate that a crisis “an event for which people seek causes and make attributions” (p.97). To understand satisfactorily the causes of the crisis, the stakeholders turn to the media for further clarification of information being relayed (Mitroff, 2004). It is therefore important to assess how the media “frame a crisis, the cause of the crisis, and the actor responsible for it because those frames influence the public’s perception and impressions of the organization” (An & Gower, 2009, p.107).

Coombs (2006) posits that, it is important to look at how the media frames a crisis event, the cause of the crisis, and the actor(s) responsible for it because those frames influence the public’s perception and impressions of the organization. Furthermore, previous studies (An & Gower, 2009; Ireri, 2013; Schultz et al., 2011; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000) have concentrated more on frame valence and prevalence but have not investigated the relationship of these frames to the public’s or audiences’ perception of an organization especially during crisis period.

In crisis communication, as Boyd (2000), Coombs (2006a) and Hearit (1994) point out, framing analysis can provide crisis managers with useful insights into the appropriate crisis response strategies to minimize the damage to an organization’s image.
“Research in the field of public relations (PR) focuses on analyzing the interplay between PR, news, and publics “(Schultz et al., 2011, p.2). The authors emphasize that, “this is regarded as successful [because] framing of press releases resonates as intended in the news and hereby affects also stakeholders’ perceptions of and reactions towards organizations” (p.2). This study focuses on the outcomes of KNH wrong-patient brain surgery crisis and contents of corporate communications especially framing processes. Therefore, there is dire need to venture research on this area considering how important media frames are towards creation of strategies needed to address crises that face a good number of organizations today. With the seriousness of crises and media frames on organizational reputation, it is surprising that less studies have been done in line with media framing versus public perception in Kenya and as such this present research addresses this situation.

**Study Purpose**

This study investigated the role of newspapers’ frames on public perception of Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) during the wrong patient brain surgery crisis. To be specific, the study examined the most prevalent crisis frame featured during KNH wrong-patient brain surgery crisis. Second, it examined whether the four newspapers’ (*The Daily Nation, The Standard, People Daily, and The Star*) coverage of KNH wrong-patient brain surgery crisis was reported negatively or positively (valence framing). In addition, the research investigated how the most dominant public perception towards KNH varied by demographics of gender, age, religion, and year of study. Lastly, it examined whether there was a significant correlation between the most prevalent newspaper valence and the dominant public’s perception.
Study Objectives

This study’s objectives were to:

1. Determine the most prevalent frame in the newspapers’ coverage of the Kenyatta National Hospital wrong-patient brain surgery crisis,

2. Find out (from a valence perspective) whether the coverage of Kenyatta National Hospital wrong-patient brain surgery crisis was positive or negative,

3. a) Investigate whether newspapers’ framing (positive or negative) played a role on the public’s perception of Kenyatta National Hospital during the wrong-patient brain surgery crisis,

   b) Examine whether the dominant organizational perception (positive or negative) vary by demographics, and

4. Find out if there is a correlation between newspapers’ most prevalent valence and dominant public’s organization’s perception.

Rationale of the Study

As posited by Knight (1999), frames are powerful entities that can help to define problems, solve them, and thereafter shape public opinion. The analysis of these frames can provide great guidelines especially to crisis managers who attempt to gunner much better strategies in addressing a crisis within their organizations (Boyd, 2000). It is important to study frame building processes especially in a crisis, because crises threaten an organization’s high priority or primacy goals (Seeger, Sellnow, & Ulmer, 1998) and result in high media attention and corporate attempts to communicatively repair organizational legitimacy (Patriotta, Gond, & Schultz, in press).
According to An and Gower (2009), “people seek information about the crisis and evaluate the cause of the event and the organizational responsibility for the crisis based on media coverage of the crisis” (p.107). As such, this study investigated the role of newspapers’ frames (negative or positive) on public’s perception of Kenyatta National Hospital during the wrong-patient brain surgery crisis.

**Research Significance**

The findings of this research provide useful insights on the public’s perception and impressions of organizations during crisis period. These two areas are important especially during crisis communication as they determine the perception that the public will have on the organization.

This study is significant as it contributes to the growth of the framing theory and further provide more information to scholars with an interest in this area of research. Researchers, will have a clear understanding of the role of media on the public’s perception of the organization, especially during crisis. The findings of this study, will support the premises of the framing theory and in the process, contribute to its growth while providing a discussion arena for scholars with an interest in the role of newspaper frames on public perception.

The findings more so, will inform crisis managers of the effect of news coverage on audiences’ perception and impressions of their organizations and thereafter lead to the strategic handling of the media during crisis period. This study is important as the analysis of crisis frames provide great guidelines especially to crisis managers who attempt to garner much better strategies in addressing crises within their organizations (Boyd, 2000).
Moreover, the study is significant as it provides a great platform for understanding the Kenyan media coverage of organizations during crises. As such, it provides crisis managers in Kenya with useful insights into the appropriate crisis response strategies to minimize the damage to an organization’s image and/or reputation (Boyd, 2000; Coombs, 2006a; Hearit, 1994;).

Furthermore, this study shows the importance of newspaper framing of a crisis and its cause to not only crisis managers, but also, crisis communications students, and crisis communication studies and scholars. The results of this study, strengthen and open paths to further studies in this area and a growth in interest to matters crises and their implications on the audience.

How newspapers frame a crisis and its cause are important because they contribute to the public’s perception and impressions of the organization. By pointing out the role of public perception on organizational future and/or reputation, the current study findings will invoke crisis managers to give utmost attention to the media to avoid mistakes that could otherwise be dealt with before they become a burden to the organization and/or its reputation.

**Scope of the Study**

This study narrowed down to Kenyatta National Hospital wrong-patient brain surgery because: (1) It led to a huge amount of media attention and a clear spread of crisis discourse from an organizational or corporate level to a political one and (2) Medical errors, as noted by a study done by the John Hopkins Medicine researchers in 2016, is the third leading cause of deaths (McMains, 2016). The KNH wrong-patient mishap, attracted both stakeholder attention and demanded for a quick response. More so, this
specific crisis resulted to the immediate reshuffling of the hospital’s management structure and formulation of a professional conduct parliamentary committee that would oversee an overhaul in the hospital’s leadership and a return to order in an already cluttered stakeholder field. The crisis unlike before in KNH’s history, was also monitored by The Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentist Board (KMPDB) that provided a fully detailed report and recommendations on the way forward for the organization. The report would then proceed to find KNH as culpable of wrong-patient brain surgery and tasked the hospital with the mandate to take charge of duties and create clear measures towards ensuring patient certification and an orderly approach towards surgery verification. This crisis more so, resulted into KMPDU constituting a Professional Conduct Committee provided for under rule 4A of the boards rules that consisted of Dr. Mubashir Qureshi, Dr. David Oluoch-Olunya, Dr. Nilesh Kumar Mohan, Dr. Elly Nyaimu Opot, Commissioner Kagwira Mbogori of the Kenya National Human Rights Commission, and Legal Advisor Mr. Peter Munge.

The study focused on four national daily newspapers including the weekend editions: The Daily Nation, The Standard, People Daily, and The Star. The choice of newspapers was based on several factors, key amongst them being readership; with Daily Nation being the largest newspaper by readership, trailed by The Standard (Nyabuga & Booker, 2013). The Standard and The Daily Nation moreover, according to Media Policy Research Center (2015), are the leading English national dailies in the country, with high circulation numbers and readership. The Daily Nation is the most influential newspaper and has been described by Onyebadi (2008) as ‘The New York Times’ of Kenya’s newspaper industry and further commands over 55% of the newspaper circulation in
Kenya (Media Policy Research Center, 2015). The *People Daily* and *The Star* were also included since, according to Nyabuga and Booker (2013), have a significant circulation of about 50,000 copies daily. Kenya’s print readership yielded a figure of 9 million for weekend and daily newspapers. Out of that 9 million, *The Daily Nation* attracted 5.5 million readers and *The Standard* 3.2 million readers (Media Policy Research Center, 2015). More so, the *The Daily Nation* and *The Standard*, have been the main local dailies since independence and therefore, have a nationwide spread and good readership across the country which made them suitable for this study. Additionally, the selected newspapers are publicly accessible and have searchable digital databases that allowed the researcher to have access to past publications. Besides that, these newspapers were selected because they were on the market during the study period. Therefore, these four were adequate representative of all newspapers and deemed sufficient for this study.

This research was conducted in Nairobi County which was selected because of its cosmopolitan nature, that means, it was possible for the researcher to have access to individuals with different desirable characteristics, for example; gender, tribe, and region which meant that the sample represented the salient characteristics of the accessible population (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Another reason is because, students studying in universities based in Nairobi are exposed to a variety of media than other regions, reason being; many media houses are head-quartered in Nairobi.

This study mainly focused on Kenyan undergraduate students studying in universities based in Nairobi County. Undergraduate students were selected because previous studies (see, Binsardi & Ekwulugo, 2003; Kiwanuka-Tondo, Albada, & Payton, 2012; Muobike, 2017; Price, Tewksbury, & Powers, 1997; Sadaf, 2011; Valkenburg,
Semetko, & De Vreese, 1999) have used them as a sample in measuring the effects of framing on public perception. More so, they were selected due to their desirable characteristics to suit the study, for example; media exposure, literacy, and their conscious engagement on issues touching the public affairs. To add on that, a study by Ireri, Roberts, and Ochieng’ (2019) point out that the youth are more interested on issues that touch on public interest such as crises.

This study was limited to undergraduate students who read newspapers. This meant that, those who do not read newspapers but listen to radio, watch television, and have access to social media were left out, yet they are key to understanding media messages and therefore, have their public perception significantly affected. However, it is relevant to note that newspaper readers do listen to radio, watch television, and have access to social media, and their responses regarding the media are shaped and influenced by the same broadcast media.

**Definition of Terms**

Newspaper – refers to a printed publication containing news, articles, advertisements, and correspondence that is issued regularly and circulated usually once a day or once a week (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2016).

Public - refers to Kenyan undergraduate students studying in universities based in Nairobi Area.

Perception – refers to a process of interpretation of a present stimulus based on (past) experience (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2016).
Crisis – This is “a major occurrence with a potentially negative outcome affecting an organization, company or industry, as well as its publics, products, services or, good name” (Fearn-Banks, 2002, p.2).

**Plan of the Study**

This study is divided into five chapters; where the first chapter provides an inclusive background to the problem, the problem statement, the purpose of the study, research objectives, study rationale, its scope, and definition of terms as used in the study.

The second chapter presents the theoretical framework and an extensive review of literature related to the problem and purpose of the study. It also includes the empirical review that gives room for previous studies conducted in this area to be linked to the study’s purpose, problem and research questions.

The third chapter presents a detailed explanation of the methods and procedures used to undertake the research. This section contains; the research design, its approach, population and sampling design, and data collection methods and instruments. In addition, chapter three gives light to the operationalization of variables that serve to provide clear definitions and measures used to interpret the data collected. It furthermore, consists of the research procedures, data analysis methods, and the ethical considerations that the study adopted to ensure protection of human subjects or study sample and swift collection of data without legal restraints or plagiarism acclaims. Chapter four on the other hand, presents the study findings in relation to the research questions.

The fifth chapter presents two sections: discussions and conclusion. The conclusion captures four things: it revisits the study purpose, the findings, limitations,
and recommendations of how future research should overcome the identified limitations. It confers the implications of the findings, connects it to literature, and makes empirically informed conclusions and recommendations for practice or improvement. More so, this chapter provides the recommendations for further research based on the findings, flaws in research, proposing similar studies, and expansion of the framing theory.
Chapter Two

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter mainly carries two things: (1) The theoretical framework and (2) The literature review. The purpose of theoretical framework is to theorize the concept of framing – in relation to what it is, its major characteristics, different perspectives from scholars and the future of the theory. On the other hand, literature review analyzes past similar studies within the contexts of media frames, valence framing and public perception in relation to framing theory and crisis communication. Therefore, the current research is founded on two theoretical concepts – framing theory and attribution theory from media studies and corporate communication perspectives,

Framing Theory

The roots of framing theory according to Foss and Littlejohn (2009) are “often attributed to the sociologist Erving Goffman, who argued that, interpretive designs constitute central elements of cultural belief systems” (p.407). Born on 11th June 1922, Goffman, was a sociologist and writer best known for his contribution to social theory through the study of symbolic interaction. He was also the 73rd President of The American Sociological Association. He began his career as a professor at the University of California at Barkley in 1962. Six years later he chaired the Sociology and Anthropology Department in the University of Pennsylvania in 1968.

History of the Framing Theory

In 1974, Erving Goffman, published a book titled; Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience, which has since become one of his well-known works. The
book describes how conceptual frames structure an individual’s perception of society. It used the concept of a picture frame to explain the framing theory. Goffman (1974) established the frame concept in which he described the frame as a representative structure that is used to hold together an individual’s context of what they are expecting in their life as represented in the picture. Goffman stated that people interpret occurrences through primary framework. He states that there are two distinctions within primary frameworks; natural and social, with the differences between them being functional and play a role on how the audience interpret information. Natural frameworks, identify events as physical occurrences taking natural quote literally and not attributing any social forces to the causation of events. Social frameworks, on the other hand, view events as socially driven occurrences, due to the whims, goals, and manipulations on the part of other social people or players.

Framing theory has its roots in a number of disciplinary traditions and different scholars have defined framing as a concept at different level of analysis (Scheufele, 1999). To be specific, the various approaches to framing according to Bryant and Oliver (2009) can be classified into two: disciplinary origin (psychological vs. sociological approaches) and explanatory model (applicability models vs. other effects model). The disciplinary origins of this theory can be traced to (1) Micro-level or otherwise known as psychological approaches and (2) Macro-level or sociological approaches.

**Sociological Roots**

Sociological approaches to framing, as Pan and Kosicki (1993) refer to, draw heavily from the assumption of attribution theory (Heider, 1958; Heider & Simmel, 1944) and frame analysis (Goffman, 1974). Human beings process information in their everyday
work by reducing judgement to social attribution (Heider, 1958). The author further emphasizes that, the responsibility to observed actions can be attributed to personal or societal factors. The difference is what Iyengar (1991) portrays in episodic and thematic frames. These frames are key in the media: an episodic frame—definition of an event frame—and a thematic frame, which places an issue in a wider context of public discourse

Goffman’s own interpretation of the sociological approaches; relies on simple attributions of causality, where individuals have a broader spectrum of interpretive schemas known as “primary frameworks” (1974, p. 24). Humans beings use these frameworks to classify news information. Their relevance is two-fold; (1) They serve as important tool for information processing and (2) To influence audience interpretation (Bryant & Oliver, 2009).

**Psychological Roots**

These roots are summarized in the works on “framing of reference” (Sherif, 1967) and prospect theory (Kahneman, 2003; Kahneman & Tversky, 1979). As Sherif (1967) shows, all judgements and perceptions occur within certain frames of references. Therefore, there is a likelihood that “social situation will be reflected in the perceptions and judgement of the individual (Sherif, 1967, p. 382).

Kahneman and Tversky (1984) expanded on this when they introduced the aspect of “perception is reference-dependent” (Kahneman, 2003, p.459). This is to mean that; individuals idea of reference dependency will be interpreted differently depending on the schema that he or she applies. To be specific and at the same time insert importance on
this, Sheufele (2008) adds that, different schemas can be invoked by framing the same message in different ways.

**Goffman’s Concept of Framing**

The central concept for frame analysis is named “key” by Goffman. After the subject identifies the connection of a specific event, he or she uses a group of rules in which an activity changes to another one that takes the first as a mode, but the subjects consider them almost different (Goffman, 1991, p.52).

Goffman (1974) argued that, interpretive designs constitute central elements of cultural belief systems. He called these interpretive design frames that are used in day-to-day experience to make sense of the world. He further postulates that, frames help to reduce the complexity of information, but serve as a two-way process: (1) Frames help interpret and (2) Reconstruct reality.

Goffman’s concept of frames has its conceptual roots in phenomenology, a philosophical approach that argues that the meaning of the world is perceived by individuals based on their lifeworld beliefs, experiences, and knowledge (Foss & Littlejohn, 2009). The authors further underline that framing theory has “become important for a variety of sectors within today’s transnational media society [and that] knowledge about framing theory is crucial for the planning of media campaigns in advertising, public relations, and political sectors” (p.408).

**Framing as an Applicability Process**

*Information effect:* Framing theory emerged in the mass media age of the 1970s. In the United States, this was a time when media research moved away from a unidimensional
media-effects model and began to address quite specific forms of media influence on audiences. Among other issues, media research began to address the powerful role of national mass media in shaping political issues within the national public.

News stories about events and issues, on a day to day basis contains both the information and the frames. The difficult part is how to distinguish between the two. The elites and how the media use arguments, information, symbols, metaphors, and images to characterize an issue (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987). A frame is what unifies information and presents it in a way that can influence the audience (Bryant & Oliver, 2009). This suggest that frames are devices that build the associations between concepts, that is, news relies on frames to build association.

**Persuasion effects:** According to Hovland, Janis, and Kelly (1953) framing contains many elements that characterize basic persuasion processes. They both are associated with the presentation of content and how it can influence attitudes. Framing literature suggest that audiences of news frames are often not aware of the presence of frames and the influence that they can yield (Tewksbury, Jones, Raymond, & Vig, 2000).

**Agenda setting effects:** McCombs (2004), Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007) aver that, framing effects may most clearly but superficially resemble agenda setting effects. A relationship that has most garnered attention. Agenda setting is the process by which audience exposure to news about an issue raises its accessibility (Price & Tewksbury, 1997).
Framing vs. Related Concepts

McCombs and Shaw (1972) operationalized issue salience among audience members as judgments about the perceived importance of issues. A later study, replaced perceptions of importance with terms such as salience, awareness, attention, or concern (Edelstein, 1993). Priming, according Scheufele and Iyengar (2012) can in many ways be seen as a logical extension of agenda-setting processes. “When a concept is primed, activation tags are spread by tracing an expanding set of links in the network” (Collins & Loftus, 1975, p.409). Put somewhat differently, if media coverage makes an issue more salient in people’s minds, this issue is also more likely to be used as one of “the standards by which governments, policies, and candidates for public office are judged” (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987, p. 63).

Agenda setting and priming, as salience-based effects, are often grouped with framing. They all mark a transition away from media effects theories, such as the Spiral of Silence (Noelle-Neumann, 1973, 1974) or Cultivation (Gerbner & Gross, 1974), which hypothesize unidirectional and unmediated media effects on various perceptual and behavioral outcomes. In spite often being grouped together, however, agenda setting, priming, and framing outline effects models that are also based on clearly distinguishable theoretical premises. McCombs (1992) for example, argues for conceptualization of framing as an agenda setting effect. He decries that, “the news not only tells us what to think about; it also tells us how to think about it” (p.8).

Agenda setting and priming are accessibility-based effects (Iyengar, 1990). Media coverage can influence perceptions of salience among lay audiences, either for issues (Funkhouser, 1973a, 1973b) or attributes of issues (Kim, Scheufele, & Shanahan, 2002).
Framing, on the other hand, is an applicability effect (Price & Tewksbury, 1997). The idea of applicability implicitly draws on this intellectual tradition and assumes that the effects of particular frames are strengthened or weakened, depending on how applicable they are to a particular cognitive schema (Scheufele & Iyengar, 2012).

**Theoretical Concepts of Framing**

Framing, as notes Scheufele (2004) has become a significant fertile ground for research in mass communication and it is “considered to be one of the most prominent features within the field of communication science” (p.401). Reese (2007) notes that the concept of framing has “gained popularity in both the scholarly literatures and the public imagination” (p.148). It has become more common than agenda-setting and priming – two other leading communication theories. The use of framing rose from two articles being indexed in Communication Abstracts from 1976–1980, to 76 from 1996–2000 and 165 during the period 2001–2005 (Weaver 2007). This shows how much “framing studies have far outstripped” the other related mass communication theories in overall use over the past ten years (Weaver, 2007, p. 146) and have been broadly and often used to interpret crises (Entman, 1991; Edy & Meirick, 2007; Ruigrok & van Atteveldt, 2007; Schaefer, 2003;) as a basis for understanding how media covers crises and how organizations response affects its reputation. Framing theory provides an opening into the “selection, emphasis, and exclusion that furnish a coherent interpretation and evaluation of events” (Norris, Kern, & Just, 2003, p. 4). More so, frames have played a greater role on how the audience interpret information (Pfau et al., 2004).

Research in framing is divided into two categories, media frames and audience frames (De Vreese, Peter, & Semetko, 2001). The present research focuses on five media
frames, that have been examined in previous research. They include: attribution of responsibility, conflict, human-interest, economic consequences, and morality frames. Media frames mostly contain inherent valence, which suggests either a ‘positive or a negative’ portrayal of an issue, object or situation as notes De Vreese and Boomgaarden (2003, p.363). The authors posit that, some media frames are inherently valenced, while others are neutral. Valence frames thus evaluate political issues or situations in either positive or negative terms (Schuck & De Vreese, 2006).

Several studies have been conducted using framing theory to show the importance of frames and their consequence on public’s interpretation of issues, crises, and events (see, An & Gower, 2009; Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Iyengar & Kinder, 1987; Ireri, 2013; Neuman, et al., 1992; Patterson, 1993). Literature on framing theory more so, is extensive (Norris, 1995; Entman, 1993; Callaghan, 2005) for instance, news framing has been researched regarding many types of news coverage, including “political campaigns, terrorist attacks, international events, and domestic policy issues” (Norris, 1995, p.358).

Entman (1993) defines framing as the “selection of some aspects of perceived reality to make them more salient in a communication text” (p.52). Reese (2000) goes a step further to define framing as an “organizing principle that is socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world” (p. 11). The criteria, concept, and scope of framing, however, are inconclusive and still hotly debated in scholarship (Reese, 2007).

News frames are “conceptual tools which the media and individuals rely on to convey, interpret, and evaluate information (Neuman et al., 1992, p.60). They create parameters “in which citizens discuss public events” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000,
The authors further outline that frames can “shape public perception of political issues or institutions” (p.94). While in the process of selecting what to publish, emphasis is placed on certain items or news reports that choose to “exclude certain ideas, feelings, and values” (Ireri, 2013, p.112). This then “encourage trains of thought about political phenomena and lead audience members to arrive at more or less predictable conclusion(s)” (Price, Tewksbury, & Powers, 1997, p.483). Gamson and Modigliani (1987), on the other hand, see frames as “a central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events [such that they] suggests what the controversy is about and the essence of the issue” (143).

Conferring to Entman (1993), “to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (p.52). He further points that, “frames highlight some bits of information about an item that is the subject of a communication, thereby elevating them in salience” (p.53). Iyengar (2010) agrees with this when he posits that, the media can convey information that represents different perspectives on some event or issue, simply through framing of issues or events. Lakoff (2004) on the other hand notes that, “we know from cognitive science that people do not think in facts. People think in frames. To be accepted, the truth must fit people’s frames. If facts do not fit a frame, the frame stays, and the facts bounce off” (p.4).

Based on selection processes and working routines, journalists provide an overall context for an issue within public debate through the classification of information (see, Price et al., 1997 & Tewksbury et al., 2000). This is then characterized as the “process by
which a communication source constructs and defines a social or political issue for its audience” (Nelson et al., 1997a, p.221). Thus, a news frame is more than just an isolated argument or position on a topic—it represents a coherent construction of an issue (Nelson & Kinder, 1996; Pan & Kosicki, 1993).

Journalists, as Tewksbury and Scheufele (2009) argue, “choose images and words that have the power to influence how audiences interpret and evaluate issues and policies” (p.17). Great emphasis is placed on their work when they decide to select specific frames that they hope the audience would consume (Tewksbury & Scheufele, 2009). Considering this, Nelson, Clawson, and Oxley (1997) view frames as important determinants of public opinion. Frames more so, help audiences to “locate, perceive, identify, and label flow of information around them” (Goffman, 1974, p.21) and thereafter enable them to “narrow the available alternatives” (Tuchman, 1978, p.156).

As posited by Knight (1999), frames are powerful entities that can help to define problems, solve them, and later shape public opinion. Coombs and Holladay (1996) note that crisis response strategies have been developed through critical analysis of frames and their understanding. The authors further emphasize that typologies of crisis response strategies have been developed and successfully tested through framing research. In times of crisis, “people seek information about the crisis and evaluate the cause of the event and the organizational responsibility based on media coverage of the crisis” (An & Gower, 2009, p.107).

Framing theory, stimulates the decision-making process while highlighting specific aspects and eliminating others, for instance, framing plays an important role on how an issue is represented before the people and how they choose to perceive it
Framing is unique because of its “diachronic nature and cultural resonance” (Entman, 2010, p.391). The media can at times “actively set frames” (Scheufele, 1999, p.105), and the information from which the journalists choose to present often comes from political elites (Entman 2010). Kuypers (2002) posits that, “facts remain neutral until framed; thus, how the press frames an issue or event will affect the public’s understanding of that issue or event” (p.7). Through framing, the media establishes boundaries within which a public policy issue will be discussed (Callaghan, 2005). Framing can serve as a “strategy to manipulate and deceive individuals, or it can refer more neutrally to a learning process in which people acquire common beliefs, as in the coordination of people around a social norm” (Chong, 2007, p.120). These theoretical concepts of framing underline the importance of framing towards public perception. As such, strengthen the need for studies of this nature to be carried out and pinpoint the salience of media coverage on public perception and the role that this has on organization and/or its operations.

**Media Frames**

Framing research as pointed out by de Vreese, Peter, and Semetko (2001) is divided into two categories; media frame and audience frame. Audience frame can be defined as a schema of interpretations that enables individuals to perceive, organize, and make sense of incoming information (Pan & Kosicki, 1993). Research into audience frames (which form the basis of this study) aims to investigate; how and to what extend media frames influence audience perceptions of events, crises or issues, and as such aims to identify
why certain media frames are main replications of audience frames (Scheufele, 1999). Media frames on the other side are “a particular way in which journalists compose a news story to optimize audience accessibility” (Valkenburg, Semetko, & Vreese, 1999, p. 550).

Journalists place “figurative picture frames around the ever-moving target of events and actions, thereby focusing our attention on particular issues, ideas, and individuals while obscuring what lies outside the frame” (Boykoff, 2011, p.345). News frames are interesting as “they constitute an exercise [intentional or, unintentional] of journalistic power; frames can draw attention toward and confer legitimacy upon particular aspects of reality while marginalizing other aspects” (Lawrence, 2000, p.93). Texts can make “information more salient by placement or repetition, or by associating them with culturally familiar symbols” (Entman, 1993, p.53). An individual’s own memory or schemata that contains existing beliefs and values define the way they interpret media frames or the idea that is emphasized by the media (Entman, 1993). This plays an important role especially during crisis times where organizational reputation plays a critical role on how the audience interpret organizational actions (Coombs, 2007). However, as Druckman (2001) asserts, “framing effects may be evidence of citizens seeking guidance from credible elites,” and not just the orchestration of the negative connotation of framing as manipulation (p.1061).

Reese and Lewis (2009) note that journalists, in their process of conceptualizing news items socially construct meaning for their audiences through the emission of components that result to the news stories that are disseminated. This process of social constructivism, as Scheufele (2000) notes, has clearly paved the way for the construct of framing. Many individual factors that entail a journalist’s “beliefs and values, attitudes,

Frames, according to Entman (2004) exercise the power to control and shape public policy debate. Interestingly, journalists often frame their own pursuit of “truth” as a “heroic” quest in the face of obstacles including sources with political agendas the journalist must see through” (Peterson, 2007, p. 256). From a media values viewpoint, the reporter knows that framing inherently offers traction to any media story (Epkins, 2008), therefore, arguably, “elite newspapers can influence other news organizations and the policy makers in each country” (Dimitrova & Stromback, 2008, p. 207) and there after result to media copying coverage.

Valence Framing
Valence refers to casting the same information in either positive or negative light (Druckman, 2004). “Media frames mostly contain inherent valence, which suggests either a positive or a negative portrayal of an issue, object or situation” (Ireri, 2013, p.113). De Vreese and Boomgaarden (2003) describe valence frames as indicative of ‘good and bad’ and as carrying ‘positive or negative elements’ (p.363). The authors further emphasize that some media frames are inherently valenced while some are neutral. Druckman (2004) argues that valence framing incorporates casting the same information in either a positive or negative light which has a salient role on how the audience react to media content.
Schuck and Vreese (2006) pinpointed that, studies in marketing, psychology, and health communication have “found considerable effects of valenced frames on perceptions, judgments, evaluations, and behaviors” (p.6). In addition, previous researches have revealed that news frames can affect the evaluative direction of thoughts (see, Price et al., 1997; Valkenburg et al., 1999), interpretations (see, Rhee, 1997) or perceptions of an issue (see, Nelson & Kinder, 1996; Nelson et al., 1997b). As Bowe, Fahmy, and Mathes (2015) posit, “the most important implication is that journalistic convention of balance plays out through competing frames rather than with one frame” (p.46).

Scheufele (2000) further points out that models of framing effects must pay more attention to the individual orientations and attitudes of media users that exist prior to the exposure to certain news frames and which play an important role in determining the negative or positive influence of frames on the target audience. “Judgements and evaluations of situations were found to be affected by the way a decision or problem is framed” (Schuck & Vreese, 2006, p. 8). Furthermore, the authors point out that “frames were operationalized as carrying identical information in either positive or negative terms” (p.8). Positive attribute framing, for example, consistently leads to more positive product evaluations compared to negative framing within factually identical scenarios (see, Levin & Gaeth, 1988), therefore, “on a more general level, it demonstrates that negative and positive framing influence people’s judgements” (Schuck & Vreese, 2006, p. 8).

While framing results to impact on decision making, the resultant opportunity and risk frames are well evident (Schuck & Vreese, 2006) in the field of communication.
Schuck & Vreese, (2006) further assert that, “risk frames raise concerns and emphasize potentially negative consequences of the enlargement process such as high costs, increase of crime, and instability” (p.10). Opportunity frames on the other hand raises hope and confidence with an aim to emphasize hypothetically affirmative consequences that result from an issue or crisis (Schuck & Vreese, 2006).

**Media Frames vs. Public Perception**

The analysis of frames can provide great guidelines especially to crisis managers who attempt to gunner much better strategies in addressing a crisis within their organizations (Boyd, 2000). Gamson (1989) supports this by pointing out that, facts alone have no meaning of their own, it is only through being placed in some context through emphasis or focus as part of a frame that facts take on relevance. This explains why crisis response strategies have been developed through critical analysis of frames and their understanding (Coombs & Holladay, 1996).

According to Coombs and Holladay (2004), a crisis can be defined as “an event for which people seek causes and make attributions” (p.97). To understand satisfactorily the causes of the crisis, the stakeholders turn to the media for further clarification of information being relayed (Mitroff, 2004). This is further highlighted by Combs and Holladay (2004) who aver that in crisis communication, people will look out for information regarding the crisis and attribute it to the organization. It is therefore important, to assess how the media “frames a crisis, the cause of the crisis, and the actor responsible for it because those frames influence the public’s perception and impressions of the organization” (An & Gower, 2009, p.107). Communicators, hence, give salience to
how they shape information as frames must adjust to the needs of the society or the framing will potentially be lost or misunderstood (McCarty, 2013).

The fact that the larger percentage of information received by stakeholders originates from the media, makes the entity an important component of crisis communication and reputational management (Carroll, 2004; Carroll & Coombs, 2003; Meijer, 2004). Entman (1993) points out that, how information is framed in a communication text influences the way that the public perceive an issue. Kim and Cameron (2013) further point out that, public’s perception of an organization is heavily pegged on the way the media describes the crisis and Holladay (2001) agrees further by noting that crisis periods and relationship history affects the perceptions of the crisis as well as the organization facing the crisis. Entman (1993) even highlights that, how information is framed in the news, has the potential of affecting public’s perception.

Much of the research on framing has focused on media frames in relation to public policy issues, although framing research is also potentially useful for identifying the strategic messages created by public relations practitioners (Hallahan, 2010). Coombs and Holladay (1996) note that typologies of crisis response strategies have been developed and successfully tested through framing research. In times of crisis, “people seek information about the crisis and evaluate the cause of the event and the organizational responsibility based on media coverage of the crisis” (An & Gower, 2009, p.107).

Media frames are important because of the differences in how media represents or frames issues or events that have consequences for the reasoning and beliefs of media consumers regarding events (McCombs & Ghanem, 2001). Media ownership may
influence news values, target audiences, and journalistic practices — all identified as concomitant factors with news production (Shoemaker & Reese, 1991; McCombs, Lucig, & Wanta, 1995). Particularly in Africa, “media ownership has an influence on news frames due to variations in press freedom and government-press relations, the presence of foreign news organizations, and cultural differences among and within countries” (Kiwanuka-Tondo, Albada, & Payton, 2012, p. 362).

A study by Price, Tewksbury, and Powers (1997) provides compelling evidence that frames play a major role on the respondents’ thoughts, feelings, and actions which further emphasize the way they perceive set institutions. Valkenburg, Semetko, and Vreese (1999) further underscore that, “it is just as conceivable that news frames influence audience recall as they influence readers’ thoughts” (p.554). Scholars generally agree that, media overwhelmingly impact the formation of opinion regarding the public agenda (Iyengar, 1987; Patterson, 1993). As Kern et al. (2003) record, media framing is “consequential” and influences “the political process, public policy, and international affairs” (p. 298). In fact, Liebes and Kampf (2007) posit that media “coverage has turned from black and white to shades of grey in which the traditional villain is not exclusively evil and the hero is not exclusively righteous” (p. 115) and this has an influence on how the public perceive persons and/or organizations.

**Strengths and Weaknesses**

The framing theory, according to Johnson (1995) contains several strengths, first, an issue can be highlighted to emphasize on certain events, second, framing can regulate the audience’s perception and the acceptance of a meaning of a message, and third negative framing can create a large impact on the people since the media plays an important role in
the audience’s understanding. This theory too, like any other has its weakness, first is that biased media can negatively frame an issue that later has influence on a large group of people, second, the intuition and careful interpretation of the audience are inevitable when it comes to framing, and third, the media is a powerful tool, so the content must be framed with values as it influences and controls the audience.

There have also been a number of critics concerning framing as a theory; (1) Studies taking an inductive approach that refrains from analyzing news stories rely on too small a sample which makes it difficult to replicate (Hertog & McLeod, 2001), (2) Strategically framed news focuses on winning and losing, includes the language of war, games, and competition, contains ‘performers, critics, and audiences’, focuses on candidate style and perceptions, and gives weight to polls and candidate standings (Jamieson, 1992). As such, media houses that take sides are likely to impact framing studies.

**Attribution Theory**

In his book titled “The Psychology of Interpersonal Relationship” Fritz Heider conceptualized the attribution thinking for psychology (Heider, 1958). Prior to Heider, a number of studies were concerned with the perceived casualty of issues or events (Michotte, 1946). The roots of attribution theory can be traced in the works of Kurt Lewin, Julian Rotter, John Atkinson, Fritz Heider, Harold Kelley, and Bernard Weiner whose major premise suggests that “people systematically, even if unknowingly, make judgments about why others do what they do” (Sellnow & Seeger, 2013, p.91–92).
**Attribution Process**

Hedier (1958) postulated that people try to identify the dispositional properties that underlie observed behavior by attributing them to either external or internal causes. The attribution process consists of two major concepts: the internal and external attribution. The internal attribution also known as dispositional attribution happens when one believes that someone’s behavior was caused by something such as personality upbringing or attitude while the external attribution also commonly referred to as situational attribution is linked to the behavior or outside circumstances associated with the individual or item under consideration (Foss & Littlejohn, 2009).

Fritz Heider was only interested on how individuals develop an impression of the other (Foss & Littlejohn, 2009). The authors emphasize that Heider’s impressions revolved around a three-step model: first was the observation of one’s behavior, second, the determination if his or her behavior was deliberate, and third, whether the categorization of the behavior was motivated by internal or external factors.

Weiner’s Attribution Model consisted of antecedent conditions, perceived causes, causal dimensions, psychological consequences, and behavioral consequences:

**Antecedent condition:** About the antecedent conditions, more pertinent is the consideration of some psychologically based antecedent that gives rise to causal beliefs with major shift in hedonic concerns (Weiner, 2010). The various beliefs that an individual hold since his or her birth will determine the way he or she makes attributions.
Perceived causes: There are several causes for an individual’s success or failure: his or her ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck. All these play a role on how individuals interpret information (Weiner, 1986).

Causal dimension: The causal dimension, a critical property of this theory, has a complex relation to the individual’s feelings with its results dependent on the emotions of the target (Weiner, 2010). An individual is usually dependent on his or her internality, controllability or stability. This can be further impacted by his or her beliefs, emotions or behaviors. Attribution according to Weiner (1972) can be classified along three causal dimensions: (1) Locus of control (internal versus external factors), (2) Stability (implies if causes change over time), and (3) Controllability (causes on can control versus those one cannot control).

Weiner (2010) postulates that when one succeeds, he or she attributes successes internally while when one makes a mistake, he or she is certainly going to attribute the causes to external factors than blaming themselves.

Attribution Theory in Crisis Communication
Explanation to issues maybe based on causes or rather reasons as to why things are transpiring even though the reasons provided maybe based on philosophical intricacies (Buss, 1978). For instance, a student is likely to say that the reason he or she selects a course is because of the teacher or that it contributes to his or her major (Weiner, 2010). In explaining daily matters, individuals refer to current issues associated with the cost and benefits of it and whether they selected it freely or when forced by someone (Malle, 2004).
Attribution theory revolves around the causes that are invoked to explain the outcomes or end results (Weiner, 2010). These include; the successes or failures of the individual or organization. Research demonstrates that individuals search for causes or events in a variety of domains (Hobbs, 1995; Weiner, Perry, & Magnussons, 1988). During crisis, for instance, that employs two critical traits (unexpectedness and negative outcomes) drive peoples’ need to search for causes (Weiner, 1985, 1986). Coombs (2007) postulates that, it is logical to relate crises to attribution. These attributions have affective and behavioral consequences for an organization (Coombs & Holladay, 2005; McDonald & Hartel, 2000). For instance, “if the organization is deemed responsible, the reputation will suffer. In turn, stakeholders may exit the relationship and/or create negative word-of-mouth” (Coombs, 2007, p.136). The author further emphasizes that, the management must have “vested interest in preventing either of these two negatives” (p.136).

Researchers have shown that crises bear negative effects on market share, sales of the recalled product, stock prices, purchase intention, and sales of other products by the company (Dawar, 1998; Siomkos & Kurzbard, 1994). Furthermore, Coombs (2007) insists that planned crisis response can reduce or eliminate these negative effects and as such, recommends that management researchers look beyond reputation (character) to include other variables such as public perception of organizations during crisis.

Weiner (1986) in his attribution postulates that individuals link internal causes with low attribution of responsibility while external causes with high attribution. This means that individuals are not likely to take responsibility of negative events but will look to attribute them to things that are around them especially in cases of crises that hold negative outcomes. People tend to judge events based on three categories; locus
(classifies events as taking place inside or outside of the organization), stability (measures whether the company has control over the crisis or if the crisis is outside the company’s control), and controllability (whether the cause of the crisis is always present or changes over time) (Coombs, 1995). The locus and controllability are relevant to the score of the crisis because they determine the causes of the crisis and can control if the public hold a positive or negative perception towards an organization (Coombs, 1995).

Coombs (2007) posits that the first step in assessing reputational threat the responsibility attached to the crisis as this surrounds the stakeholder attribution of the crisis. The author further states that, each crisis contains predictable levels of responsibility. The way an organization conducts itself during crisis plays a bigger impact on how they are viewed by their stakeholders who turn to the media for information about the crisis (Coombs & Holladay, 1996). The stakeholders are more concerned with how the organization conducts itself during crisis (Coombs, 2007).

This is why it is important to note that a media coverage with a positive tone will improve corporate reputation (see, Fombrun & Shanley, 1990; Wartick, 1992; Carroll & McCoombs, 2003) or lead to a higher relative return on average assets (Deephouse, 2000). On the other hand, if the organization is in the news through failure or negative reasons, its reputation will deteriorate, an aspect that Lazarsfield, Berelson, and Gaudet (1944) refer to as bandwagon effect. Fombrun and van Riel (2004) note that, organizational reputation which rests on the public’s perception is formed through the information that stakeholders receive from the news or media sources, interaction with the organization, second hand information, that is, a result of word of mouth and social media or new media. This underlines the importance of investigating the role of media on how stakeholders view organizations during crises.
Literature Review

“Framing is a potent tool for swaying how people think about issues” (Brewer, 2002, p.305). Therefore, several studies have focused their attention in this area. Some that shift their dominant focus on negativity in news hence an increase of cynicism among the public which later serves to demobilize target audience (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997), others focus on valence framing (De Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2003; Rossler, 2001; Tiung & Hasim, 2009), and others focus on frame prevalence (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000) and notes the following previous studies:

Frame Prevalence

In a study done by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) that investigated the prevalence of five news frames that content analyzed 2,601 newspaper stories and 1,522 television news stories in the period surrounding the Amsterdam meeting of European Heads of States in 1997, attribution of responsibility frame was found to be the most commonly used followed by conflict, economic consequences, human interest, and morality frames respectively.

Like in Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), this frame (attribution of responsibility) was also prevalent in a study conducted by An and Gower (2009) on “how do the media frame crisis,” where a total of 247 news stories were analyzed to examine which of five news frames (attribution of responsibility, human interest, conflict, morality, and economic) and level of responsibility (individual and organizational level) were used by the media according to crisis type.

Myers, Nisbet, Maibach and Leiserowitz (2012) conducted an experimental study titled “A public health frame arouses hopeful emotions about climate change”
investigated how unique audience segments emotionally react to news articles crafted to reflect three distinct climate change message frames: (1) A traditional environmental frame, which emphasizes the consequences of climate change to ecosystems, (2) A national security frame, which highlights the risks to U.S. national security, and (3) A health frame, which stresses the health risks associated with climate change and the potential benefits to health of adaptation and mitigation-related actions. Findings showed that the health frame was the most likely to generate feelings of hope, followed by the environment frame, and then the national security frame.

A frames analysis of local and national print media was utilized to examine the framing of “legacies” around the 2010 Vancouver Winter Paralympic Games by Misener (2012). The analysis shows that despite the rhetoric from the host committee and the Canadian Paralympic Committee about the increased media attention of these Paralympic Games, very little attention was given to legacy concepts despite an increasing discourse about its importance for all types of events. The framing of Paralympic legacy centered upon “othering” athletes with a disability through the supercrip narrative, highlighting potential opportunities for legacy and focusing on tangible economic developments.

During 2008–2010, US newspapers covered the financial issues confronting their own industry extensively such that it attracted the attention of scholars. Chyi, Lewis and Zheng (2012) grasped this opportunity and examined how the Wall Street Journal, USA Today, and the New York Times framed the newspaper crisis. The research indicated that coverage focused on short-term drama over long-term trends, lacked sufficient context, shifted blame away from newspapers themselves, invoked “death” imagery, and altogether struggled to capture a holistic portrayal of newspapers’ troubles.
A content analysis of the coverage of a public health crisis in Korea from September 1999 to December 2000 by Logan and Shin (2004) explored six hypotheses about news reporting and topic selection mostly derived from qualitatively based literature. The findings suggest that two Korean daily newspapers (Chosun Ilbo and Hankyoreh) emphasized governmental officials and physicians as news sources, underemphasized other news sources, and limited in-depth reporting.

Li and Tang (2009) examined how national and local newspapers in the United States framed Chinese product recalls in 2007. The study first reviewed literature on international communication and framing. Second, it content analyzed the presentations of the Chinese product recalls in two leading national newspapers, including the New York Times and the USA today, and six major newspapers from five Southern states, including Georgia, South Carolina, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. Third, it compared media representations of Chinese products in the two national newspapers with those in Southern newspapers. The authors found that American media are still dominated by stories from the U.S. perspectives. They also established that Chinese sources are less likely to be cited. Even though, Southern newspapers play an important role in constructing local knowledge, their limited scope of coverage and perspectives constrain their role in reporting international news.

In their study titled; “The Framing of the Euro Crisis in German and Spanish Online News Media between 2010 and 2014: Does a Common European Public Discourse Emerge?” Kaiser and Kleinen- von Königslöw (2017) investigated how the Euro Crisis was framed and determined who participated in the discourse during the crisis between 2010 and 2014 in German and Spanish online quality newspapers. Based
on a content analysis of 7,256 statements in 961 articles, frames were identified in a data-driven approach. Findings showed that German and Spanish media have Europeanized their framing during the crisis and mainly support Europe's policy.

When they sought to determine how the BSE outbreak (The Cow that Stole Christmas) was framed by the news media Ashlock, Cartmell, Dwayne and Kelemen (2006) found that the BSE issue was framed as an industry crisis and that the tone of the articles and headlines portrayed the beef industry negatively. When compared to the other two newspapers, USA Today framed the issue differently, with economic calamity being the dominant frame.

**Valence Framing**

About valence, a study conducted by de Vreese and Boomgaarden (2003) investigated how European Union Summit was framed by Britain, Germany, and Netherlands. The research study results showed that the audience subjected to negative frames showed less support to European Union where as in the new countries a new pattern was found. More so, Chong and Druckman (2007) emphasize that, “Public opinion often depends on how elites choose to frame issues” (p.99).

Similar results were also found in a study done by de Vreese, Banducci, Semetko, and Boomgaarden (2006) when they analyzed news coverage of the 2004 European parliamentary elections in all 25-member States of the European Union (EU) based on an analysis of three national newspapers and two television newscasts in the two weeks leading up to the elections. Results showed that, news in the old EU-15 was generally negative towards the EU, whereas in the new countries a mixed pattern was found.
In Ruigrok and van Atteveldt (2007) content analysis of the associative framing that emerged from the impact of “the global event of 9/11,” findings indicated that, the 9/11 attacks created “a strong framework of Muslims as terrorists in all investigated media.” (p. 86).

Bowe, Fahmy, and Mathes (2015) examined in their study how Islam is covered in 18 large circulations in the United States of America (USA) newspapers. The results found six frames that drew a nuanced picture of how Islam is framed in the news media. Two frames were negative, one was positive, and three were neutral.

Another study that was done by Grbesa (2010) examined how the major newspapers in Croatia used certain frames to report about the two front-running candidates in the second round of the presidential elections in Croatia in 2010. The paper, first examined if there were any differences between Ivo Josipović and Milan Bandić in terms of their visibility in newspaper reports. Secondly, the paper investigated if and how newspapers employed valence frames to report about the candidates. The results showed that three valence news frames dominated the news coverage about the candidates: success frame (winner – loser), suitability frame (suitable – unsuitable) and integrity frame (honest – dishonest). Although Milan Bandić was the most visible candidate, the press favored Ivo Josipović, framing him as suitable for the position, honest and decent, and as the likely winner. On the other hand, Milan Bandić was framed predominantly as dishonest, unsuitable, and the loser. This pointed towards news framing of the candidates as a major contributor to the victory of Ivo Josipović.

A crisis is “an event for which people seek causes and make attributions” (Coombs & Holladay, 2004, p. 97). Therefore, during crisis, “people seek information
about the crisis and evaluate the cause of the event and the organizational responsibility for the crisis based on media coverage of the crisis” (An & Gower, 2009, p.107). When they turn to media houses, who have the sole responsibility to decided what to publish, they absorb negative frames that “raises concerns and emphasize potentially negative consequences of the enlargement process such as high costs, increase of crime, and instability” (Schuck & Vreese, 2006, p.10).

**Media Framing vs. Public Perception**

Regarding framing (negative or positive) versus public perception, Valkenburg, Semetko, and Vreese (1999) investigated whether and how journalistic news frames affect readers’ thoughts about and recall of issues. A sample of 187 participants was randomly assigned to one of four experimental framing conditions, which included conflict, human interest, attribution of responsibility, and economic consequences, as well as a control condition. The study found that frames played a significant role in the readers’ thought-listing responses, and they defined the ways that readers presented information about both issues. With emphasis on the impact that can be caused by human impact frames on the ability to recall. Similar results were obtained from a study by Rimal et al. (2008) in which the authors sought to understand the role of media in shaping consumers’ food risk perception and behavior. 1,200 adult Americans from all 50 states were interviewed via telephone between November 8th to 29th, 2006. The results showed that the risk profiles of households were shaped by media usage.

In an experimental study carried out by Bizer, Larsen, and Petty (2011), using an election context, the research tested whether valence framing influences attitude resistance specifically or attitude strength more generally, providing insight into the
effect’s mechanism and generalizability. Experiment 1 showed that, negatively framed attitudes were held with more certainty than were positively framed attitudes, while Experiment 2, conducted among a representative sample of residents of two U.S. states during political campaigns, negatively framed attitudes demonstrated higher levels of attitude certainty and attitude-consistent behavioral intentions than did attitudes that were framed positively. Such is the impact that the media can have on its audience!

Mohamed and Gunter (2009) found a perfect correlation (Spearman rho = +.74) between media and public agenda when they examined the main Egyptian newspapers’ (state and opposition) coverage and the public agenda. The study interviewed 400 Egyptians to investigate for public opinion. The findings supported a positive correlation between media agendas and public agendas at the aggregate level. Still, the results indicated a significant correlation between the opposition newspaper's agenda and that of its readers. Little support however was found between governmental newspaper's agenda and that of its readers.

Furthermore, Happer and Philo (2013) conducted a study on the role of the media in the construction of public belief and social change. Findings across research areas showed the way in which the media shape public debate in terms of setting agendas and focusing public interest on subjects. The results also showed that the media severely limit the information with which audiences understand these issues. More so, the alternative solutions to political problems are effectively removed from public debate hence, determine public belief and social change.

In a study done by Sadaf (2011) on public perception of media role specifically focusing on the issue of judiciary in Pakistan that broke out in 2007, that is, “did media
play the same role as what people perceived about it through its coverage of issue of judicial restoration?” the study aimed to identify whether there is any correlation between media framing and public’s perception of the organization. Results indicate that public perception was mostly in the favor of a notion that media, specifically newspapers, highlighted the issue in a much better way and the coverage was constructive towards restoration. As such, the role of the media on public perception was very well evident as the two coincided.

Vossen and Schulpen (2019) conducted a study titled; “Media frames and public perceptions of global poverty in the UK: Is there a link?” that investigated the relationship between media frames and public perceptions of global poverty. The study, built on a frame analysis, reconstructs prevailing poverty narratives in British news articles and non-governmental organizations’ (NGO’s) advertisements between 2011 and 2013. The findings show that there is a strong connection between media frames and public knowledge and perceptions of global poverty. More so, both the media and the public define poverty in developing countries in terms of destitute victims, lack of development and bad governance. Both suggest that the causes of poverty are internal to developing countries and imply that there has been little progress in reducing global poverty.

Price, Tewksbury, and Powers’ (1997) study titled “Switching Trains of Thought: The Impact of News Frames on Readers’ Cognitive Responses,” that investigated how journalistic story frames can affect the thoughts and feelings of readers. Two hundred and seventy-eight students participated in a study split into reading and responding to fictitious story about possible reductions in the state funding of their university. The
stories were presented in one of four assigned versions containing the same information but varying in their opening and closing paragraphs according to the frame assigned to each, that is, human interest, conflict, or personal consequences. In the first study, results indicated that news frames, although had no influence on the volume of cognitive responses, had significantly affected the typical focus and evaluative implications of the thoughts generated by the study sample. The second study, which involved evaluation and opinions offered by the participants, showed that news frames could also subtly affect audience decision making about items covered especially in matters of public policy. This clearly shows the role of media frames in shaping public perception or opinion.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a hypothesized model identifying the variables under study and their relationships, that is, dependent and independent variables (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The dependent variable under investigation is ‘public perception’ while the independent variable is ‘newspaper frames.’ The intervening variables include; frame prevalence and valence. The news frames, their prevalence and valence play a role on how the public perceive an organization during crisis. Frames as well, have an impact (with or without the intervening variables) on the public perception. This is well illustrated in Figure 2.1:
Therefore, the above review of literature paves the way for five research questions:

RQ1: What is the most prevalent frame in the newspapers’ coverage of the Kenyatta National Hospital wrong-patient brain surgery crisis?

RQ2: From a valence framing perspective, how did the newspapers cover Kenyatta National Hospital wrong-patient brain surgery crisis??

RQ3a): To what extend did valence framing of the crisis shape the public’s perception of Kenyatta National Hospital?

RQ3b): To what extend does the public’s dominant perception vary by demographics of age, gender, religion, and year of study?

RQ4: What is correlation between newspapers’ most prevalent valence frame and the public’s dominant perception?

Chapter Summary

This chapter provides the scholarly approach on the area of newspapers’ frames and public perception. It also focused on the role of newspapers’ frames on public’s perception of KNH during this crisis period and whether the coverage of the crisis was of
negative or positive impact. Furthermore, it included the theoretical framework, empirical literature review, and the conceptual framework.
Chapter Three

Methods

Introduction

This chapter provides the various steps that were adopted to study the research problem along with the logic behind them. It includes; the research design, research approach, population and sampling design, data collection methods and instruments, and measures (operationalization of variables). More so, it comprises; data analysis and research’s ethical consideration. As defined Kothari (2004) research methodology as “a way to systematically solve the research problem” (p.25). As such, this chapter will provide methods used by the research to answer the research questions.

Research Design

A research design is the conceptual structure within which the research is conducted or the way researchers go about analyzing data to achieve research objectives (Chandran, 2004). It is “needed because it facilitates the smooth sailing of the various research operations, thereby making research as efficient as possible, yielding maximal information with minimal expenditure of effort, time, and money” (Kothari, 2004, p.49).

This study adopted a descriptive research design. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), descriptive research is a systematic collection and analysis of data to answer questions concerning current status of a program, project, or activity. More so, it seeks to obtain information that describes existing phenomena by asking individuals about their perceptions, attitude, behavior, or values (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). This type of research design depicts the state of affairs as it exists (Kothari, 2004). Furthermore, it helps provide answers to the questions of who, what, when, where, and
how associated with a research problem. However, it does not conclusively ascertain answers to why.

In descriptive research design, the researcher has no control over the variables and can only report what has happened or what is happening. It is used to obtain data useful in evaluating present practice and providing basis for decision (Shaughnessy, 2003). For example, in survey research, descriptive approach doesn’t deal with manipulation of variables (Kerlinger, 1967).

**Research Approach**

There are three types of research approaches namely; qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method or what is referred to as triangulation. Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007) agree with Leedy and Ormrod (2005) that “no single study perfectly fits all of the elements of either a qualitative or quantitative study” (p.28). As such, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) recognize a third research approach and posit that, “if one prefers to think categorically, mixed method research sits in a new third chair, with qualitative research sitting on the left side and quantitative research sitting on the right side” (p.14).

This study adopted the mixed method. This enabled the researcher to include both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection, that is, quantitative content analysis, survey, and in-depth interviews. Barker (1999) defines mixed method as, “drawing together multiple types of evidence gathered from different sources using different methods of data collection” (p.483). As pointed out by Ezzy (2013), mixed method increases the “validity of research and its findings” (p.38). This approach enabled the researcher to examine framing theory variables (valence and prevalence), conduct
survey, report study results in statistical procedures, and reduce subjectivity of the entire research process (Ezzy, 2013).

Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007) provide the following as merits of mixed method; first is that the words and narratives can be used to add meaning to the numbers gathered, second, the numbers can be used to add precision to words and narratives, third, the study can test and generate a grounded theory, fourth is that, the research can answer broader and more complex set of questions because the researcher is not confined to a single method or approach, fifth and lastly is that, stronger evidence for a conclusion can be provided through the convergence and substantiation of findings. As such, the researcher found mixed method as the most appropriate approach for this study.

Data Collection Techniques
This research employed the use of quantitative content analysis, survey, and in-depth interviews to gather data necessary for the study. Content analysis was used to find out the most prevalent frame in the newspapers’ coverage of the KNH’s wrong-patient brain surgery crisis and determine whether their coverage was done in a negative or positive tone. In the process, it provided answers to research questions one and two. Survey was used to investigate the role of newspapers’ frames on public’s perception of KNH. In-depth interviews, on the hand, provided additional data on the reasons why the public held negative perception towards the organization in crisis.

Quantitative Content Analysis
Berelson (1952) defines content analysis as a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication. Krippendorff (2004) asserts that, content analysis is a “research technique for making
replicable and valid inferences from texts to the contexts of their use” (p.18). This technique more so, allows the researcher to study social behavior without influencing it and generate conclusions that can be generalized to other situations (Neuendorf, 2001).

Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) provide merits of using content analysis. First, content analysis is an unobtrusive research method. Second, it is useful in analyzing interview and observational data. Third, the researcher can interpret the social life of an earlier time by delving into records and documents. Fourth, content analysis can be relatively economical in terms of time spent and resources as the data materials are readily available in the form of books, periodicals, newspapers, and more. Fifth, content analysis data is readily available and possible to replicate the conditions adopted for content analysis.

This technique therefore, was used to find out the most prevalent crisis frame and valence that was associated with Kenyatta National Hospital’s wrong-patient brain surgery crisis. The method was selected because it has been successful in previous manifestation of content in communication (Mason, 2009). More so, a number of framing studies have used content analysis to examine the prevalence of media frames (see, Boykoff, 2011; Chong & Druckman, 2007; De Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2003; De Vreese, Peter & Semetko, 2001; Entman, 2010; Gamson, 1989; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).

**Sampling Design**

When conducting content analysis, census was adopted as the sampling design. Census is “a complete enumeration of all items in the ‘population’” (Kothari, 2004, p.55). This
design was preferred because “it can be presumed that in such an inquiry, when all items are covered, no element of chance is left and highest accuracy is obtained” (Kothari, 2004, p.14).

The sampling period is defined as March 1st, 2018 to March 30th, 2018. This period, is the duration within which the wrong-patient brain surgery lasted or occurred. As such, it enabled the researcher to include all the articles that featured during KNH wrong-patient brain surgery crisis. The stories included all those that featured in four local daily newspapers including the weekend editions (The Daily Nation, The Standard, People Daily, and The Star). The Standard and The Daily Nation were selected because they are the leading English national dailies in the country, with high circulation numbers and readership (Media Policy Research Center, 2015). The People Daily and The Star on the other hand, were picked because of their significant circulation of about 50,000 copies daily (Nyabuga & Booker, 2013).

**Sampling Frame**

A sampling frame, also known as a sampling list, is a list that “contains the names of all items of a universe” (Kothari, 2004, p.73). Kothari (2004) further emphasizes that the list ought to be “comprehensive, correct, reliable, and appropriate” (p.73). More so, it is extremely important for the source list to be as representative of the population as possible (Kothari, 2004). This study’s sampling list or frame contained all the 62 KNH crisis articles that featured on the four daily local newspapers.

**Research Sample**

A research sample is a subset of a group, which is part of a population whose characteristics are to be investigated to know the attributes of the entire population.
(Creswell, 2007). The use of census as this study’s sampling design meant that the research sample for this study included all the articles (62) published on KNH wrong-patient brain surgery crisis. The Daily Nation produced 21 articles, The Standard produced 11 articles, People Daily and The Star produced 15 articles each.

**Research Procedure**

The unit of analysis for identifying the most prevalent frame was a sentence. A sentence was selected as the unit of analysis because it provided enough data considering the crisis period (1\textsuperscript{st} March 2018 to 30\textsuperscript{th} March 2018). A frame type was identified and counted once in a sentence. If in a scenario, a sentence carried different frames, each frame was coded distinctly. The same rule applied to positive and negative tones in the selected sentences. For instance, if there were two positive mentions in a sentence, they were coded as one, whereas negative and positive mentions were each coded separately. Neutral frames were not coded as this would result to enormous data that may not have been relevant to the study.

First, all the 62 articles were listed down in terms of the assigned identity number, the date of publication, the title of the article, page number in which it featured in the specific newspaper, and the name of the writer. Aided by the online randomizer, six articles which denotes 10\% of the total news items (62) were selected for inter-coder reliability exercise. Wimmer and Dominick (2011) recommend between 10-25\% as the subsample for this exercise. The online randomizer was used to avoid bias during selection of news articles. If during the exercise, the two coders disagreed on the news frame, tone, and prevalence, the directions and definitions of the subject were improved to strengthen the variable.
Two columns for two coders were then created. Each frame was coded differently including the positive and negative frames. The results for each frame were then saved differently via Microsoft Excel program, that is, the comma separated (.csv) format. The results were then tabulated via the dfreelon.org website. An online website that enabled the researcher to compute ratio-level, ordinal, nominal, and interval data. It consists of independent schedules compatible for different sets of data and is compatible with SPSS, Microsoft Excel, Spreadsheet, Google Docs or any other application that can support comma-separated (CSV). More so, it provides the researcher with results translated in different formats or formulas, for instance, percentage agreement, Scott’s Pi, Cohen’s Kappa, and Krippendorff’s Alpha (nominal). The website was adopted because of its reliability to produce accurate results. The researcher ascertained the results to ensure they did not fall below the required threshold (.85).

**Operationalization of Categories**

This study operationalized categories into well-defined frames. Operationalization is the process of creating measures; in this case of human content analysis, the development of a coding scheme that comprises a codebook and a coding sheet (Neuendorf, 2002) (see, Appendix IV). The codebook is a document that provides coders with instructions of how and what to code and describes the variables, categories as well as the definition of terms and concepts of the study (Dominick & Wimmer, 2011).

To further define the frames adopted in the coverage of this crisis, the study espoused the five media frames examined by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) in their study that analyzed five national newspapers and television news stories in the period surrounding the Amsterdam meeting of European heads of state in 1997, namely;
attribution of responsibility, conflict, human interest, economic consequences, and morality frames. This is because the study is a standout and operationalization employed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) has been adopted by other studies that analyzed frame and framing effects on study sample (see, Schultz et al., 2011; An & Gower 2009).

**Attribution of Responsibility:** This refers to “a way of attributing responsibility for [a] cause or solution to either the government or to an individual or group” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 96). Iyengar (1987) posits that, the news media shape public understanding of who is responsible for causing or solving social problems. This frame more so, was the most prevalent in Semetko and Valkenburg’s (2000) study.

**Economic Consequences:** It “presents an event, problem, or issue in terms of the economic consequences it will have on an individual, group, institution, region, or country” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 96). News is often framed in terms of the actual or potential economic impact or consequences on the audience (Neuman et al., 1992). The economic impact of an event has an important news value (Graber, 1993), and it has been suggested that news producers often use the economic consequences frame to make an issue relevant to their audience (Gamson, 1992). In addition, it reflects a pre-occupation with profit and loss caused by an event or item (Neuman, Just, & Crigler, 1992). In this case, the impact that KNH crisis had on current and potential customers. This impact would derail its current and future operations.

**Morality Frame:** It “puts the event, problem, or issue in the context of morals, social prescriptions, and religious tenets” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 96). In addition, Neuman et al., (1992) found that the morality frame was frequently used by
journalists incidentally through quotations or inference, rather than unswervingly because of the journalistic norm of objectivity.

**Conflict Frame:** This one “emphasizes conflict between individuals, groups, or institutions” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 96). This frame is conceptually related to what is called strategy coverage (Jamieson, 1992; Patterson, 1993). This kind of coverage makes winning and losing the central concern; the language of wars, games, and competition is featured, with an emphasis on the performance and style of a party or an individual (Jamieson, 1992). The ‘conflict’ frame emphasizes disagreements between individuals or groups as a means of capturing audience interest (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). Conflict, more so, is a prominent determinant for identifying events which attract media coverage and attention (McManus, 1994).

**Human-Interest Frame:** It “brings a human face or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue, or problem” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 95). In crisis scenario, for instance, the frame fuels the psychological pulse of people, which eventually leads them to a more negative assertion towards the crisis (Padin, 2005). “Framing news in human-interest terms is a way to personalize, dramatize, and emotionalize the news” (Valkenburg, Semetko, & Vreese, 1999, p. 551). Also described as the “human impact frame” by Neuman et al. (1992), it was found to be common in news, as it influenced participants’ emotional response, and as An and Gower (2006) note, it is a significant predictor of blame and responsibility especially in a transgression crisis. It is salient to study frame, framing, and frame building processes especially in a crisis, because these crises threaten an organization’s high primacy goals (Seeger, Sellnow, & Ulmer, 1998) and result in high media devotion and corporate attempts to
communicatively repair organizational legitimacy and public perception (Patriotta, Gond, & Schultz, in press).

**Measurement and Reliability**

Data collection was carried out at the manifest level of the KNH crisis articles content analysis. Items that featured the crisis were listed based on the mention of the crisis and the period within which it occurred. Presence and frequency of the information was determined within the article with respect to the sentences featured.

A code book (see, Appendix IV) comprising of coding definitions, terms, concepts, and instructions was devised to serve as training tool for the other coder (hired graduate student). This was done during pilot testing. The training session was used to train the coders on the study’s purpose, what was to be coded, and provision of clear regulation on the administration process. The pilot study was solely meant for removing problems associated with the methodology, acquaint the coder on study loopholes, and ensure efficiency and effectivity of the tool (Dominick & Wimmer, 2011).

Weber (1990) notes that, to make valid inferences from the text, it is important that the classification procedure be reliable in the sense of being consistent. According to him, reliability problems usually grow out of the ambiguity of word meanings, category definitions, or other coding rules. For content analysis to be objective, its procedures and measures must be reliable (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011).

One of the measures of reliability in content analysis is the inter-coder reliability. Inter-coder reliability is a measurement of the extent to which independent data coders (or data collectors) in content analysis methodology give the same score to the same variables (McHugh, 2012). To achieve this reliability, a pilot exercise, known as the
inter-coder reliability was done. The procedure consisted of 6 articles, obtained from 10% of the 62 articles that were selected (see, Dominick & Wimmer, 2011). The inter-coder reliability (ICR) testing was necessary to ensure the “repeatability and strength of the coding book” (Deacon, 1999, p.128). More so, the test demonstrated the code book as thorough, defined and the validity strong enough to be replicated (Decillia, 2009; Krippendorff, 2004).

The study utilized the ReCal, an internet based inter-coder reliability web service obtained from Freelon (2010). It is designed specifically for content analysis studies. Since the pilot study meant for this study involved two coders, inter-coder reliability was calculated using the ReCal version designed for two coders, that is, the ReCal2. The results comprised percentage agreement from Cohen’s Kappa, nominal Krippendorff’s Alpha, and Scott’s pi that are the most reliable co-efficient for nominal data or studies (Freelon, 2011).

The pilot coding exercise yielded a mean Scott’s pi reliability coefficient of .85 for the five frames. Morality frame = .92; economic consequences = .76; conflict = .93; human interest = .82; and Attribution of responsibility = .84. The reliability coefficients for valence framing were negative frame = .92 and positive frames = 1.0. According to Wimmer & Dominick (2006) minimum reliability coefficient of .75 is acceptable when using Scott’s pi.

**Data Analysis**

Babbie (2010) asserts that “in content analysis, communications – oral, written, or other – are coded or classified according to some conceptual framework” (p.338). The researcher therefore, critically studied the data collected it manually by accessing newspapers from
the USIU-Africa Library, made notes, and organized articles according to the date of publication, the title of the article, the name of the write, date and page of publication. The date was later analyzed manually according to frames and valence types. This included organizing the frames in order of frequencies to determine the most prevalent crisis frame. The researcher also looked out for metaphors, catch phrases, and terms employed to described KNH (see, Appendix IV) and later classified frames obtained from the sentences according to Semetko and Valkenburg’s (2000) media study frames (see, Appendix IV). The positive and negative valence was also identified through positive and negative mentions (see, Appendix IV) pointed out in the article sentences, vetoed in frequencies, and later the data presented in chapter four in form of tables.

**Ethical Considerations**

The aspect of data collection is particularly vulnerable for manipulation. To avoid this, the researcher was guided by research’s ethical principles. A code of ethics is a “formal statement of the profession’s values regarding ethical behaviors which focuses on principles and values that govern the behavior of a person or group with respect to what is right or wrong” (Shachaf, 2005, p.514). Wallace and Sheldon (2015) in their journal publication titled “Business Research Ethics: Participant Observer Perspectives,” provide recommendations to researchers which require them to develop confidence and some form of co-operation during study period. As such, the researcher and the research were free from bias or prejudice to achieve neutrality or objectivity aspect of research which is critical in framing studies.

The researcher ensured honesty during the process of data collection and analysis and reported the data as it appeared. The analysis of the data and research processes also
operated within the confines of research, for example, the inter-coder reliability exercise was done before analysis and was within the recommendations provided for by scholars.

**Survey**

Survey can be defined as the method of “securing information concerning a phenomenon under study from all or a selected number of respondents of the concerned universe” (Kothari, 2004, p.95). In a survey, the investigator or researcher examines phenomena under study which exist in the universe independent of his or her action.

To gather data on the role of newspapers’ frames on public perception of KNH during the wrong-patient brain surgery crisis, and provide answers to research questions 3 and 4 of this study, questionnaire (see, Appendix I) was adopted as an instrument for data collection. A questionnaire is a pre-formulated set of questions to which subjects record their answers independently or with the help of the researcher (Mbwesa, 2006). This involved self-administered questionnaires that entailed a written list of questions that the respondents were required to fill in their answers. This method was preferred because self-administered questionnaires attract high response rate which is critical in survey research.

According to Pointdexter and McCombs (2000), the use of a standardized questionnaires in research allows for variables about respondents to be collected. These include factors such as; opinions, characteristics, and behavior. Furthermore, questionnaires were used because they are easy to administer (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). To add to that, they guarantee respondent anonymity and as such encourage them to participate in the study. In addition, this also contributed to a better research response rate.
**Sampling Design**

There are two types of sampling designs or techniques, first is probability sampling and second, non-probability sampling. The difference between the two is that, findings from probability sampling can be generalized to the entire population, whereas those from non-probability cannot. The most commonly used probability sampling techniques include simple random sampling, stratified random sampling, systematic sampling, and cluster sampling. Examples of non-probability techniques are convenient or accidental sampling, quota sampling, purposive or judgmental sampling, and snowballing.

Non-probability purposive sampling was adopted when conducting survey. Purposive sampling also known as deliberate sampling involves, “purposive or deliberate selection of particular units of the universe for constituting a sample which represents the universe” (Kothari, 2004, p.32). This study sampling technique was chosen because it enabled the researcher to choose the sample based on those that have the desired characteristics to suit the study purpose (Kothari, 2004).

O’Sullivan, Rassel, and Berner (2008) opine that sampling depends on the researcher’s judgment regarding who to include in a sample. The researcher therefore, identified respondents “who have characteristics deemed suitable for providing the required information” (Johnson & Christensen, 2004, p.215). This consisted of undergraduate students from universities based in Nairobi and who have access to newspapers at least three times a week. Undergraduate students were selected because previous studies (see, Lizzio, Wilson, & Simons, 2002; Price, Tewksbury, & Powers, 1997; Sadaf, 2011; Vallone, Ross & Lepper, 1985) have used them as study sample in measuring the role of media on public perception. More so, they featured due to their
desirable characteristics to suit the study, for example; media exposure, literacy, and their conscious engagement on issues touching the public affairs (Ireri, Roberts, & Ochieng’, 2019).

**Sampling Frame**

A sampling frame, also known as a sampling list, is a list that “contains the names of all items of a universe” (Kothari, 2004, p.73). The list ought to be “comprehensive, correct, reliable, and appropriate” (Kothari, 2004, p.73) and more so, informed by the research objectives, research questions, and research design.

The sampling technique that was used to determine the study sample, that is, purposive or judgmental sampling, does not require a sampling list as such the research based the study’s sample on undergraduate students pursuing their studies in 40 universities (see, Appendix V) based in Nairobi County and who have access to newspapers at least three times a week.

**Research Sample**

This study mainly focused on Kenyan undergraduate students pursuing their studies in 20 universities (see, Appendix VI) based in Nairobi Area. The researcher selected 20 universities because according to Borg and Gall (2003) at least 30% of the total population is representative. The 20 universities were selected through simple random sampling where all universities in Nairobi County (40) were listed and accorded numbers that were later shuffled and selected. This helped eliminate bias. The researcher ensured that the study targeted only Kenyan undergraduate students pursuing their studies in universities based in Nairobi Area. They were more so, expected to have access to newspapers at least three times a week as this formed a key indicator for the study’s
purposive sample. This meant that the researcher formulated and followed keenly a screening guide that locked out respondents who do not have access to newspapers at least three times a week.

Therefore, a sample size, according to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) must represent the salient characteristics of the accessible population. Kumar (2005) posits that, sample size is determined by three factors; first is the level of confidence with which the researcher wants to test the results, second is the degree of accuracy the researcher requires to estimate the population parameters (which forms this study’s major approach), and third, is the estimated level of variation with respect to the main variable being studied. Guided by this principle, this study’s sample size (2,100) meant that the margin of error was +/-2.2 while the confidence level was 95%, as provided for by the sampling tolerance (error) for random samples of various sizes (see, Ngulube, 2005, p.135; Wilhoit & Weaver, 1980).

Previous similar studies, more so, (see, Lizzio, Wilson, & Simons, 2002; Price, Tewksbury, & Powers, 1997; Sadaf, 2011; Vallone, Ross & Lepper, 1985) formed the basis under which the sample size was selected because they used similar sample sizes that were deemed enough and/or requisite for those studies. Furthermore, Kothari (2004) stresses that, the larger your sample size (“especially in case of larger variance”), the surer you can be that the results reflect the study population (p.73). Therefore, a purposive sample of 2,100 (where each of the 20 universities had an equal share of 105 questionnaires) undergraduate students was deemed sufficient for this study by the researcher.
Research Procedure

This study’s questionnaire (see, Appendix I) was modelled along the one developed by Sadaf (2011) in a study that aimed to establish the role of media on public perception. The questionnaire involved closed-ended questions that provided the ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answers and the respondents were required to tick the appropriate category.

This method narrowed down to the core purpose of this study as questions concerning public perception, the rate at which the respondents have access to newspapers, and its role on them majorly featured. It also addressed the relationship between the dominant public’s organizational perception versus demographics and provided room to show if there was a correlation between dominant public’s organizational perception and the most prevalent newspaper valence. This study’s questionnaire also featured contingency questions, also known as filter questions which enabled the researcher to probe more information concerning the role of newspapers’ frames on public’s perception of KNH. The perception was measured on a 4-point Linkert scale which consisted of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree.

With the help of five (5) trained research assistants, the researcher visited Kenyan undergraduate students of the 20 randomly sampled universities in Nairobi County (See, Appendix VI). The data collection period was from February 13th, 2019 to February 25th, 2019. The researcher and the assistants, as guided by the ethics of research, were required to do an introduction (explaining, the study purpose, research questions, and its significance to the respondents) or provide an introductory letter by the researcher (see, Appendix III) to the respondents, and there-after administered the questionnaires. Before visiting the selected universities, the researcher booked appointments earlier than the day
when the questionnaires were administered by sending an email to the selected institutions. This required the researcher to have in possession an introductory letter from the institution (United States International University-Africa) supporting the researcher’s intention to conduct the study (see, Appendix IX), the Institutional Review Board (see, Appendix X) and NACOSTI (see, Appendix XII) certificates, and the researcher’s introductory letter (see, Appendix III).

The five research assistants underwent rigorous training for five days (4\textsuperscript{th} February 2018 to 8\textsuperscript{th} February 2018) before being allowed to help in the data collection process. This training involved the following crucial areas:

1. The training was done in groups rather than individual to make it uniform and help to standardize the procedure,
2. The trainees were required to explain the study, its purpose, general guides, and procedures to the respondents,
3. They were required to go through the questionnaires, question by question to internalize the topic and study purpose and where possible, requested to point out emerging probing questions,
4. They were required to prepare specifications to accompany the questionnaire. This included explanatory comments on the ways that the interviewer would handle certain situations during the data gathering period,
5. The trainer, being the researcher, demonstrated how the research assistants were required to administer the questionnaires,
6. After the demonstrations, the research assistants were paired off to practice on each other, and
7. Finally, during fieldwork, the research assistants were required to check with the researcher (who was in the area) to ascertain whether they are doing the right thing.
Of the 2,100 questionnaires that were distributed, a total of 1,950 were correctly filled and returned. This translated to a healthy response rate of 92.9%. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) cite a response rate of over 50% as adequate for data analysis and reporting, while a response rate of 60% is considered good enough and over 70% is taken as an excellent response rate. This study’s excellent response rate of 92.9% was therefore, deemed requisite for this study.

The excellent response rate was a result of respondents’ ability to fill in the questionnaires without the help of the research assistants and/or the researcher. In addition, with the help of research assistants (five), the researcher personally visited the study population, shared the questionnaires, and collected them immediately after they were filled. The questionnaires’ anonymity feature and closed ended questions also served as a catalyst for the respondents to fill in their rejoinders easily and quickly hence contributed towards achieving this response rate.

**Measures**

Measurement is the process of mapping aspects of a domain onto other aspects of a range according to some rule of correspondence (Kothari, 2004). This study integrated the ordinal scales in the measurement of data as the objects of measurement were ranked along defined dimensions. Ordinal scales according to Dominick and Wimmer (2011) are appealing as they represent the property of order among the categories.

The perception was analyzed on a two-point scale, which is, negative and positive using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient (PMCC) measures, that is used to measure the strength of association between two sets of rankings (Stempel, Weaver, & Wilhoit, 2003). The correlation co-efficient was worked out in two steps, that
is, first computing the numerator, and then the $S_x$ (negative perception) and then the $S_y$ (positive perception). Then, the PMCC was used to compute the correlation between the two sets of perception. The correlation strength varied from “-1 (a perfect negative correlation) to +1 (a perfect positive correlation) with a value of 0 indicating no association between the two variables” (Stempel, Weaver, & Wilhoit, 2003, p.166) as is on a correlation co-efficient index.

The advantage of Pearson Correlation measures over other measures of association such as gamma is that it takes ties into account and are generally more conservative measures of association than the other ordinal measures (Stempel, Weaver, & Wilhoit, 2003). More so, Stempel, Weaver, and Wilhoit (2003) point out that, Pearson Measures are a significant test that maybe calculated, assuming random sample data and that it can also be used in partial correlation, where one is measuring the strength of association between two variables (which is the case between dominant perception and most prevalent valence) while statistically controlling for a third variable.

More so, a 4-point Likert-type scales construction technique was employed (see, Appendix I). A respondent was asked to respond to each of the statements in terms of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree (Kothari, 2004) with each point carrying a score. The reason for choosing this technique was because it is reliable and it more so, generates more information concerning the area of study (Kothari, 2004).

**Instrument Validity and Reliability**

Yin (2011), asserts that, a valid study is one that has properly collected and interpreted its data, so that the conclusions accurately reflect and represent the real world that was
studied. Kothari (2004), provides three types of validity, that is; content validity, criterion-related validity, and construct validity.

To enhance content validity, the researcher asked the supervisor to appraise the instrument with the ratings and comments expected to assess them. As regards external validity, which contained the representation of the sample regarding the target population, a pilot study that comprised 10 undergraduate students who were “not included in the final research study sample” was done (see, Wimmer & Dominick, 2006, p.166). This pilot study was meant to establish the suitability, efficiency, and effectiveness of the study instrument (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006).

This study’s reliability more so, was checked by ensuring that external sources of variation are minimized in as much as possible. To achieve this, all participants were given similar instructions on filling out the questionnaire as this was expected to improve the study’s equivalence aspect. This ensured that the instruments were comprehensive and thorough to collect the requisite data. Study administration process furthermore, was similar on all aspects to ensure the sample was afforded an equal measure throughout. This encompassed a strict research assistant training that made sure the administration of the research process was similar.

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) defines reliability as a measure of the degree to which a research yields consistent results after repeated trials. Kothari (2004) and Kerlinger (1967) posit that for research data to be reliable it must have the ability to consistently yield the same results when repeated measurements are taken under the same conditions to test reliability of the instruments. Best and Khan (1989) further agree by stressing that the longer a test is the more internal consistency it has. Based on this,
additional tests were done to capture information that may have been left out during this study and correct the mistakes pointed out. To achieve this, the researcher conducted a test-retest method, where the questionnaire was first administered to 10 study respondents (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006) who shared similar characteristics as study sample and there after the responses recorded. The researcher then re-issued the same tool one week after to the same group. The results from both tests were correlated and thereafter coefficient of reliability determined using the Spearman Rho formula. A perfect correlation (+1) was established. This assured the researcher of instrument reliability and results replication in case the study is re-done in the future.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis entails analysis of quantifiable data. The approach of computer software that aids the analysis process has been in use for a long time (Jones, 2007) and the common software as shown by Jones (2007) is the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). This study specifically used SPSS version 25. This method offered the possibility of a wide range of statistical analysis of variance. Furthermore, it was used because of its effectiveness and ability to produce accurate and convincing results. SPSS provided room for measures of central tendency, which included incorporation of mean, mode, and median that provided a summary of the variables under investigation. SPSS more so, enabled the researcher to incorporate measures of relationship that included the Spearman Rank Method and the PMCC that helped address the relationship between dominant perception and public’s demographic and show if there was a correlation between the most prevalent valence and the dominant perception.
The first step of the data analysis involved categorizing the responses by transliterating the data from the questionnaire. This was done by assigning characters (numerical codes or letters). After that the screening and cleaning of the data was done to make sure that there were no errors. The data was later analyzed based on the research questions.

Categorizing the data provided a platform for identifying similar patterns from the answers to the questionnaires and as such provided an arena where themes were developed. Groups were then formed from the identified themes and the various responses (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003). Each theme was assigned a numerical code or letter (Byrne, 2001) that was entered into the computer using the SPSS software. Each code or letter represented a theme, that is, a tag assigned to related views by a group of respondents on a given question.

The analysis of data was then done after entry of all the questions was completed and the results saved in SPSS and MS Excel format. Descriptive statistics formed the basis for presenting the data gathered or collected. Frequency and percentage distributions indicating the number of occurrences of each category used to reveal the patterns and thus enabled the researcher to interpret and/or discuss data in the form of tables in chapter four and five respectively. The descriptive statistics was generated by the SPSS software.

**Ethical Consideration**

Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007) suggest that an ethical research design is one that “adheres to the ethical guidelines stipulated by organizations such as Institutional Research Boards for the integrity of the research to be maintained throughout and that all
sample members are protected” (p.306). Carlin (2003), further stresses that an ethical research design focuses on ensuring individuals’ “anonymity, maintaining confidentiality, gaining access to settings for research purposes and informed consent, protecting individuals from harm caused by participating in and presenting the research, and examining the relation between the researcher and the researched” (p.4), all of which were keenly observed. As such, honesty was upheld especially during the interpretation of quantitative data analysis content to avoid manipulation and forceful reporting of data to align with researchers wish.

The study ensured voluntary participation of research subjects or respondents and made sure that there was no coercion or force of any kind when administering the questionnaires. Furthermore, the researcher ensured the information they provide was their own and not favorable out of fear or a sense of obligation to meet expectations of the research, by affording them enough freedom to fill in the data.

Also, it assured and maintained confidentiality to enhance the credibility of both the research and the researcher. Their identities if provided were cloaked. Bradburn, Sudman, and Wansink (2004), assert that informed consent “implies that potential respondents should be given sufficient information about what they are actually being asked and how their responses will be used” (p.14). As such, the openness of the intent of the research was also observed to ensure the respondents had the right to know the identity of the researcher, the researcher’s intention, and their role(s) in the study.

The researcher more so, gave credence to all the sources or sites used to gather necessary information to the completion of this study. This was done through in-text citations and references at the end of the study.
Furthermore, the survey was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of United States International University – Africa (see, Appendix X) and The National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) (see, Appendix XI) which meant protection and welfare of human subjects was observed.

**In-depth Interview**

An in-depth interview “involves one-on-one verbal interaction between the researcher and the respondent” (Melville & Goddard, 2001, p.49). The authors emphasize that, they are known to produce answers to the how and why “from the inside” of an interviewee (p. 10). Even after gathering data using the questionnaire the researcher found the need to ask the respondents more questions especially concerning the reasons why they selected a negative perception toward KNH during the wrong-patient brain surgery crisis. In-depth interview was the most appropriate method in obtaining the answers to these questions because of their ability to produce responses from the inside of an interviewee (Melville & Goddard, 2001).

Conducting individual discussions helped the researcher to create a mutual relationship and as such, gain access to rich and useful data. This made it easier to talk about this sensitive matter in a much easier way with the interviewees (McCracken, 1998). More so, Kothari (2004) posits that, in-depth interviews provide many advantages including; provision of in-depth information, enable the researcher to measure the level of knowledge, provide clarity to questions, has no limitations on whether the respondent is literate or illiterate, and that sample can be controlled more effectively.

Silke (2001) noted that, when conducting interviews, the researcher has access to much better flexibility, control and wider room to explore much more ideas. However, it
carries a number of demerits including participant-researcher difficulty, deceptions, and researcher luck of experience when it comes to asking of questions and listening. There can also be the disadvantage of copious and unwieldly data that produces lower quality data (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Silke (2001) further warns that interviews are attached with a lack of anonymity and can fall victim to opportunity sampling, bias, and great expense.

Even with these demerits, Rubin and Rubin (1995) point out that, interviews semi-structured trait and the fact that they are iterative, allow for shared circumstantial meaning to naturally appear, one trait that makes it worth for support data mechanism. In a study of this ilk that needed support to data obtained from survey, they provided an instrument suit for this aspect. Therefore, the in-depth interviews provided detailed information that was vivid and nuanced (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). As such, the researcher was convinced of its ability to produce the answers required for this study.

**Population and Sampling Design**

Population is the total number of individuals or items that have similar characteristics (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). This study’s population included 1,945 respondents who chose to be part of a follow-up study by willingly filling in their phone numbers in the questionnaires (that politely requested the respondents to provide their contacts if they would wish to be part of a follow-up study) (see, Appendix I).

Non-probability purposive or judgmental sampling was adopted when conducting in-depth interview. Purposive sampling also known as deliberate sampling involves, “purposive or deliberate selection of particular units of the universe for constituting a sample which represents the universe” (Kothari, 2004, p.32). This study sampling design
was chosen because it enabled the researcher to choose the sample based on those that have the desired characteristics to suit the study purpose (Kothari, 2004). Out of the 1,945 who provided their telephone numbers for a follow-up study, 1,024 (52.6%) featured in the dominant negative perception that was of interest to this study.

**Study Sample**

A sample is a subject of the target population which the researcher intends to generalize the findings (Cohen & Marrison, 1994). There is no singly acceptable number of participants to be interviewed in a qualitative research enterprise. It depends on what the researcher believes can settle the demands of research (Emmel, 2014). Cresswell (2008) suggests 5 to 25; Alder and Adler (2007); Baker and Baker (n.d) suggest 12 to 60 and 30 as being the mean consecutively. Glaser and Strauss (1967) on the other hand, assert that, a researcher can stop interviewing in the event that the information they are getting has reached a saturation point, that is, the results start recurring and the study has gathered all the perspectives and cases under consideration.

The researcher bearing in mind the gender and the number of times the respondents had access to newspapers a week, then randomly (using online randomizer) selected 10 (see, Creswell, 2008) interviewees, from the 1,024 undergraduate students who willingly accepted to be part of a follow-up study that probed further information concerning the reasons why respondents selected negative perception towards KNH. The researcher selected those who featured in the negative perception towards KNH and had access to newspapers at least three times a week. Creswell (2008) recommends 5-25 as a sufficient sample for qualitative studies. Five of the 10 students were male, while the other five were females. Of the 10 students, five were first-year students, three second-
year, two third-year students. Of those interviewed, five who were the majority were Christians, followed by two Muslims, and two Indians.

**Research Procedure**

Rubin and Rubin (2005) argued that, for a study to be reproductive and produce the richest of data, then, they have to seek the individuals with a first-hand experience and utmost knowledge of the issue under investigation. Hence, only undergraduate students who featured in the ‘dominant negative’ perception and had access to newspapers at least three times a week were selected for the in-depth interview (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002; Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

Upon direct communication, the researcher informed the participants of the purpose of the study, the role they would play in this study, and the impact that this study would have to the society. The researcher also made sure that they knew the study received an IRB and NACOSTI consent, assured them of confidentiality, and reminded them that their participation would be voluntary, as is the ethics of research (See, Appendix II).

To ensure an ethical, respectful interview, the researcher undertook precautions. All interviews were done in-person and in a relaxed, silent place, and at a period that was convenient to participants, such as in their school classes, cafeteria, under a tree shade and during lunch or break hours (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Each interview lasted for at least 30 minutes. An interview guide (See, Appendix II) was used to administer the questions. The in-depth interviews lasted for 5 days, that is, from 11\textsuperscript{th} March 2019 to 15\textsuperscript{th} March 2019.
Prior to each interview the researcher shared the study’s purpose, objectives, and the roles they would have in the study, and then briefly provided an overview of the interview questions. Before conducting the interview, the researcher made sure that the interviewees read the consent form (see, Appendix VII) and there after signed it. Before ending the interview, participants were politely asked to sign of debriefing form (see, Appendix VIII) which contained an explanation of what the research was all about and the contact information of the researcher and the IRB for follow-up and any complaint purposes consecutively.

During the interview, the researcher ensured to stick within the structure of the guide unless in the event, the interviewees wanted additional information. To keep time, the researcher spent less time on questions that needed less attention and narrowed down to questions with more insights. During the data collection process, the researcher uninterruptedly traced the large capacity of data (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002) by utilizing word documents through labeled data management. For reference and evidence, the researcher, upon polite request of the participants, recorded the interviews.

The interview guide began with an overall tour of questions aimed at achieving researcher-participant rapport (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). To ensure a more relaxed conversation, the researcher kicked-off the interviews with more relaxed topics for instance, the weather at the time of the interview and pleasant rapport topics like trending issues. This was done to provide a much more relaxing environment to probe for more data and give room to the introduction of more follow-up questions (see, Appendix II). As the interview went on, the question scaled down as the research also lessened participant susceptibility. At the end of the questioning, the researcher, offered the
interviewees the opportunity to revisit the session and asking or discuss anything pertaining to the areas of discussion. The researcher asked the for permission to conduct any follow-up for issues clarification, if needed. This also included asking if it is possible for the interviewee to refer someone else to be considered for an in-depth interview.

Finally, during the session, the researcher was keen with facial expression while at the same time recording the interviews to ensure that participants feel the recognition of both being heard and understood. The enabled the researcher to have a smooth closure of the session and ramping down of the interview process (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). These steps were strictly followed to evade “the participants telling what they think will be right and [that it is what the researcher] want[ed] to hear” (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002, p. 195).

After the interview, the researcher personally thanked the participants for their time and for agreeing to participate. More so, the researcher found out if it was possible for a follow-up or clarification session.

**Instrument Validity and Reliability**

Yin (2011), asserts that, a valid study is one that has properly collected and interpreted its data, so that the conclusions accurately reflect and represent the real world that was studied. To enhance content validity, the researcher asked the supervisor to appraise the interview guide with the ratings and comments expected to assess the instrument. About external validity, which contained the representation of the sample regarding the target population, a pilot study that comprised two undergraduate students who featured in the ‘dominant negative’ perception. This pilot study was meant to establish the suitability, efficiency, and effectiveness of the study instrument (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006).
Kothari (2004) and Kerlinger (1967) posit that for research data to be reliable it must have the ability to consistently yield the same results when repeated measurements are taken under the same conditions to test reliability of the instruments. An interview guide (see, Appendix II) was conceptualized. It comprised open-ended questions and incorporated a detailed explanation of the study at the beginning to keep the interviewees well informed of the research and research’s intention (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002; Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Wolcott, 2001). To ensure instrument reliability, the interview guide was pre-tested among two undergraduate students who featured in the ‘dominant negative’ perception. The two undergraduate students were not part of the final data collected. This was done to adjust the wording of the guide that would help avoid participant confusion and provide richer results. Furthermore, the pre-test improved the efficiency and effectivity of the instrument hence enhanced its reliability by allowing the researcher to make changes to areas that caused confusion.

Much of the interview guide was orderly conceptualized to probe further information as to why the interviewees selected a negative perception towards the organization (see, Appendix II). Much attention was given to the introduction part of the guide to enable the research to build rapport with the participant and enable easy question to answer session and ensure high levels of confidence from the participants are achieved.

To ensure effective interview guide administration, the researcher was the only one to conduct the in-depth interviews. This aimed to save on time meant to train research assistants on this critical area and further ensure that the study sticks to a common asking mode.
This study’s reliability more so, was checked by ensuring that external sources of variation are minimized in as much as possible. To achieve this, all interviewees were given similar instructions and the interviews conducted by the researcher only and not the assistants. This ensured that the instrument was comprehensive and thorough to guide the interviewer.

**Data Analysis**

According to Lewins and Gibbs (2005), qualitative data analysis is “the range of processes and procedures whereby we move from qualitative data that have been collected into some form of explanation, understanding or interpretation of the people and situations we are investigating”. Byrne (2001) explains that qualitative studies are unique hence, unique data analysis strategies are often used. Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003) express similar sentiments when they indicate that “there is no single or best way” of achieving order and understanding when analyzing and interpreting qualitative data, but it requires creativity, discipline, and a systematic approach. Nevertheless, Byrne (2001) states that qualitative data analysis consists of identifying, coding, and categorizing patterns found in the data. The analysis process as per Taylor-Powell & Renner (2003) consists of the following steps: “[first is to] get to know your data, [second is to] focus the analysis, [third is to] categorize the information, [fourth is to] identify patterns and connection within and between categories, [fifth and lastly is] interpretation, that is, bring[ing] it together” (p.76).

Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003) indicate that the choice of either analyzing qualitative data manually or using a computer program such as MS Word processing program, relational database management program (for example, MS Access) or special
qualitative data analysis program depends on the size of the data set, the available resources, preferences, and the level of analysis needed or warranted. While it is agreed that specialized qualitative data analysis software enhances the analysis of large volumes of data (Byrne 2001; Pope, Ziebland, & Mays, 2000), researchers are urged to be mindful of the fact that qualitative studies are not undertaken with a view to generalize findings and that the responsibility of interpreting the data by a process of analysis is entirely their jurisdiction (Byrne, 2001; Pope, Ziebland, & Mays, 2000).

The researcher used Microsoft Word to transcribe the responses. Thereafter, read all the responses to identify common themes (Hancock, 2002). Hancock (2002) explains that, the process of content analysis involves continually re-visiting the data and re-viewing the categorization of the data until the researcher is sure that the themes and categories used to summarize and describe the findings are a truthful and an accurate reflection of the data. After analyzing the themes and finding a commonality, Microsoft Word was used to group similar themes together by simply copying and pasting related themes so that they would then be analyzed.

**Ethical Considerations**

The researcher strictly complied with USIU-Africa’s Institutional Review Board guidelines which meant that before conducting and recording any interviews, the researcher sought consent from the participants (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002; Rubin & Rubin, 1995) was done. Interviewee identities were concealed by according them numbers or codes and confidentiality of their responses assured. The study was explained to them and to their satisfaction and the researcher ensured voluntary participation as guided by the ethics of research. To further give them room for follow-up to the study results, the
interviewees were given a debriefing form (see, Appendix VIII) containing the researcher’s contact and IRB communication means, just in case they faced any difficulties during the interview sessions.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided the research design, research approach, population and sampling design, data collection methods and instruments, and measures (operationalization of variables). More so, it included the data analysis plan and research’s ethical consideration.
Chapter Four

Findings

Introduction

This chapter consists of the findings presented in relation to the five research questions. The first approach identifies the most prevalent crisis frame featured during KNH wrong-patient brain surgery crisis. The second, examines whether the four newspapers’ coverage of Kenyatta National Hospital wrong-patient brain surgery crisis was reported negatively or positively. The third, investigates the role of newspapers frames (negative or positive) on public’s perception of KNH during this crisis. The fourth, investigates how the most dominant perception varies by demographics of gender, age, religion, and year of study. Lastly, it examines whether there was a significant correlation between the most prevalent newspaper valence and the dominant public’s perception.

Frame Prevalence

Research question 1 asked for the most prevalent frame in the newspapers’ coverage of the Kenyatta National Hospital wrong-patient brain surgery crisis. Table 4.1 shows attribution of responsibility as the most dominant frame (35.1%) that featured during KNH wrong-patient brain surgery crisis while the economic consequence frame (2.14%) featured least. This shows that during crisis, individuals look to attribute responsibility to others.
Table 4.1: Frame Prevalence in KNH Crisis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attribution of Responsibility</td>
<td>557</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Interest</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morality</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Consequence</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,587</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Valence Framing

Research question 2 examined whether the coverage of Kenyatta National Hospital wrong-patient brain surgery crisis was presented in a negative or positive tone. Table 4.2 shows negative tone (81.3%) way above the positive tones (18.7%).

Table 4.2: News Tone in the Coverage of KNH Crisis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>876</td>
<td>81.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,077</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Newspaper Framing vs. Public Perception

Research question 3a asked whether newspapers’ framing (positive or negative) shaped the public’s perception of Kenyatta National Hospital during the wrong-patient brain surgery crisis. First, an analysis was done on how the respondents perceived the media coverage by being asked, how they think the media covered the wrong-patient brain surgery crisis. Their perception was measured on a two point-scale of positive or negative. As Table 4.3 shows, the vast majority (76.5%) of respondents perceived the
media coverage of the crisis as negative while 3.5% of them had a positive perception of how the media covered the wrong-patient brain surgery crisis at KNH.

Table 4.3: Respondents’ Perception towards Media Covered of KNH Crisis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>1,485</td>
<td>76.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,941</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: 9 respondents did not report the media coverage perception*

Second, the respondents were further asked, from the question above, to select their perception of Kenyatta National Hospital. Their perception, measured yet again in positive and negative scale. Over three quarters (75.3%) of respondents indicated that they had a negative perception towards KNH, while close to a quarter (24.7%) reported positive perception towards the institution in crisis (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4: Respondents’ Perception towards Kenyatta National Hospital

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>1,462</td>
<td>75.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,941</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: 9 respondents did not report their perception towards KNH*

To answer research question 3a that asked whether newspapers’ framing (positive or negative) played a role on the public’s perception of Kenyatta National Hospital during the wrong-patient brain surgery, a correlation was done between the public’s media perception and public’s organizational perception. Table 4.5 shows a positive correlation between media coverage and public perception (r = .227, n = 1,941/1,940, p = .000).
Table 4.5: Correlation between Media Coverage and Public Perception

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Respondents’ Media Perception</th>
<th>Respondent’s KNH perception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents’ media perception</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.227**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>1941</td>
<td>1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents’ KNH perception</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.227**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>1940</td>
<td>1940</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Dominant Public Perception vs. Demographics

Research question 3b investigated whether the dominant public perception (negative perception) varied by demographics. Analyzed by gender, findings as shown in Table 4.6 indicate a slight difference between male (50.6%) and female (49.4%). Those aged 18-21 years (54.7%) formed more than half of the negative across the three age brackets examined. When it comes to religion affiliation, the vast majority of Christians (88.3%) had a negative perception towards the institution. They were followed by Muslims (7.6%), other religious faiths (2.4%), and Hindus (1.7%). In terms of the year of study, Table 4.6 shows that first years (36.3%) as the most dominant group followed by second years (27.2%).
Table 4.6: Dominant Negative Perception by Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>735</td>
<td>50.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>716</td>
<td>49.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,451</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (years)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-21</td>
<td>796</td>
<td>54.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-25</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>37.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 and older</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,456</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>1,285</td>
<td>88.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,456</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year of Study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First year</td>
<td>529</td>
<td>36.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second year</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third year</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth year</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,458</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Negative Framing vs Negative Public Perception

Research question 4 investigated whether there is a correlation between newspapers’ most prevalent valence and dominant public’s perception. As reported above, the most dominant valence reporting is negative, while the negative perception dominated the public perception towards the hospital in crisis. As such a Pearson correlation was done between dominant valence and dominant public’s organization’s perception and findings as shown by Table 4.7 indicate a positive correlation between the most prevalent valence and the most dominant public’s organization’s perception ($r = .811$, $n = 1,941/1,071$, $p = .000$).
Table 4. 7: Correlation between the Most Dominant Valence and Public’s Perception

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant Selection</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Participant's KNH Perception</th>
<th>The Most Prevalent Tones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant's KNH perception</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.811**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Most Prevalent Tones</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.811**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>1071</td>
<td>1077</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Chapter Five

Discussions and Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter encompasses five sections: discussions, limitations, conclusions, areas of further research, and recommendations. It confers the implications of the findings, connects it to literature, and makes empirically informed conclusions and recommendations for practice or improvement. Furthermore, this chapter provides the recommendations for further research based on the findings, flaw(s) in research, proposing similar studies, and expansion of the framing theory.

This study investigated the role of newspapers’ frames on public perception of Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) during the wrong patient brain surgery crisis. To be specific, the study examined the most prevalent crisis frame featured during KNH wrong-patient brain surgery crisis. Second, it examined whether the four newspapers’ (The Daily Nation, The Standard, People Daily, and The Star) coverage of KNH wrong-patient brain surgery crisis was reported negatively or positively (valence framing). In addition, the research investigated how the most dominant public perception towards KNH varied by demographics of gender, age, religion, and year of study. Lastly, it examined whether there was a significant correlation between the most prevalent newspaper valence and the dominant public’s perception.

Prevalence of Media Frames

Findings showed attribution of responsibility as the most prevalent frame in the newspaper coverage of Kenyatta National Hospital wrong-patient brain surgery crisis. This frame was also the most prevalent in previous study conducted by An and Gower...
(2009) that identified the use of crisis news frames by empirically analyzing the various types of crises based on news coverage. Attribution of responsibility featured prominently considering the nature of the crisis where different stakeholders (doctors, nurses, health workers unions, and politicians) attributed the blame to each other for causing the crisis.

Unlike in An and Gower’s (2009) study that had human interest as the second most dominant frame followed by conflict, the present study showed conflicting results where conflict frames were more dominant compared to human interest frames. The reason why conflict frames (28.99%) featured more than human interest (26.72%) is because different stakeholder (doctors, nurses, health workers unions, and politicians) in this crisis chose to blame each other and refused to take responsibility for the wrong-patient brain surgery mishap. Be that as it maybe, human interest frames (that featured at a distant third) have been known to fuel the psychological pulse of people and eventually leading them to more negative assertions towards the crisis (Padin, 2005). The human approach of reporting could explain why majority of the respondents had a negative approach towards KNH as none of them was ready to take responsibility of the crisis.

When examining news frames in the coverage of the SARS virus by newspapers in China and the United States (US), Luther and Zhou (2005) found evidence of the economic consequences, responsibility, conflict and human-interest frames. They reported, however, that the economic consequences and responsibility frames were more common in the US newspapers, while the Chinese publications carried more human-interest frames. Unlike these results, attribution of responsibility was the most dominant
frame and human interested came in a distant third with reasons being the nature of the crisis.

The fact that attribution of responsibility is the most dominant frame in this crisis, supports the framework for attribution theory which holds that, people will always peg attributions on events they encounter, especially negative events (Kelley, 1972; Weiner, 2006,1986). The locus of control is the basis upon which attribution theory rests and in this case, the control of the crisis was within the hospital’s ability as such explains why there was need to attribute responsibility to specific persons or individuals.

Valence Framing
From the findings, the four newspapers employed negative tone in covering the crisis. In exploring, from a valence perspective, how the media covered KNH wrong-patient brain surgery crisis, findings showed negative tones at a glaring difference of the positive tones. Similar results were also found in a study done by Banduci, Semetko, and Boomgarden (2006) where coverage was dominantly negative. Determining whether the media covers crisis in a negative or positive manner is important as according to Chong and Druckman (2007), “public opinion often depends on how the elites chose to frame issues” (p.99). It explains why respondents (M=2.23, SD=1.035), thought that articles published on newspapers during this crisis period were negative towards the organization (see, Appendix XII).

Media tone coverage is important as it determines how the public’s view an organization. For instance, a coverage with a positive tone will improve corporate reputation (see, Fombrun & Shanley, 1990; Wartick, 1992; Carrol & McCoombs, 2003) or lead to a higher relative return on average assets (Deephouse, 2000) while negative
tone lead to poor reputation. This underlines the importance of media as an entity to organizational operations. That negative coverage can result to negative perception that affect organizational operations. This is in concurrent with results from in-depth interviews that indicate a negative motive that was because of KNH’s negative previous history of crises and operations.

These findings further boost framing theory concept, that asserts, the media select and highlight certain items of an event or issue over others, in effect, elevating them in importance to the audience (Entman, 1993; Chong, 2007). These items (positive or negative) play a salient role towards how the public interpret or judge an organization or an individual especially during crisis period. The portrayal of this crisis in a negative fashion serves to justify Ireri’s (2013) argument that media frames “mostly contain inherent valence, which suggests either positive or a negative portrayal of issues, objects, or situations” (p.113). Tewksbury and Scheufele (2009) stress that “some artists take great care in how they present their work, choosing a frame that they hope will help audiences see the image in just the right way. Journalists – often subconsciously – engage in essentially the same process when they decide how to describe the political world” (p.17). This premise supports the findings of this study which shows a selected manner (negative) of reporting the crisis by Kenyan print media (printing press). This manner of presentation has impact on audiences who in turn have selected perceptions towards individuals or organizations.

**Negative Coverage vs. Negative Public Perception**

Findings indicated a positive weak correlation (.23) between how the media covered the crisis and the public’s perception of KNH during crisis period. Although a positive weak
correlation, there exists a relationship between how the media covers organizations during crisis and how the public perceive them. This shows how frames are an important determinant of public opinion (Nelson, Oxley & Clawson, 1997) and as such, underline it as “a potent tool for swaying how people think about issues” (Brewer, 2002, p.305). These results concur with a study done by Sadaf (2011) on public perception of media role on the issue of judiciary in Pakistan that found a significant relationship between public’s perception and media coverage.

People turn to the media during crisis to “seek causes and make attributions” (Coombs & Holladay, 2004, p.97) and as such absorb negative or positive frames that “raises concerns and emphasizes potentially negative consequences of the enlargement process such as high cost, increase of crime, and instability” (Schuck & Vreese, 2006, p.10). The stakeholders turn to the media to “seek information about the crisis and evaluate the cause of the event and organizational responsibility for crisis based on media coverage” (An & Gower, 2009, p.107).

**Public Negative Perception by Demographics**

Findings revealed a slight difference in gender between male (50.65%) and female (49.35%) respondents regarding the dominant negative perception towards KNH. This shows a push off the Kenyan patriarchal system that has seen men dominate almost everything including leadership, work force, and major conversations especially on issues of public interest (Canudo & Ali, 2018). These results show that, female respondents are as concerned about issues of public interest as are their male counterparts. This is a clear testimony of the results of the new Constitution of Kenya 2010 that aims to end marginalization of women and provide affordable education to all. To fully understand
the shift from male dominance in Kenyan institutions, a study done by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics reported in 2017, that there were 21,400 professional women employed in the science and technical fields. This represented a jump of 10.88% from the previous year, even though their male counterparts were still more than double at 52,400 professionals. With less marginalization and affordable education, women are getting empowered enough to participate in issues of public interest. This is well demonstrated in the slight difference between males and females. Both males and females are ready to participate on issues of public interest, which is, interesting to know.

Even though, a slight difference, males show more concern about public affairs issues compared to their female counterparts and this supports findings of Ireri, Roberts, and Ochieng’ (2019) who found that male Kenyans are more knowledgeable about public affairs (72%) than their female colleagues (64%). However, the reduced difference in gender could also be a result of the nature of the crisis that contained the human-interest value hence their defined awareness and interest on the crisis. The slight difference more so, shows that both genders attached similar weight of negativity towards KNH. This brings up a yet interesting discussion, as according the results, negativity seems to matter more to male respondents than their female counterparts.

Undergraduate students aged 18-21 formed the majority (54.67%) followed by 22-25 (37.16%) and 26 and older (8.17%). This could be attributed to the fact that 18-21-years-old are mostly first years hence, easily available to participate in research studies and who form the majority (36.28%) of the student under year of study. This is complementary as it shows the growing interest among the youth on issues of public interest such as the wrong-patient brain surgery crisis.
On the religious front, Christians lead the other groups in negative perception towards the KNH. The Catholic church has always been at the forefront of fighting for the rights of the less privileged in Kenya, and so is the Anglican church in Kenya. The church more so, as pointed out by Ireri, Roberts, and Ochieng’ (2019), has always been used as an avenue for discussion of issues touching the public interest, for instance, crises. Therefore, the prominent role of the church in driving for change has impacted the engagement of its members hence, may have contributed to their participation on public interest issues such as the wrong-patient brain surgery crisis at KNH, compared to other religions. The church’s role in fighting for the rights of the less privileged casts a stone as to why Christians lead in having a negative perception towards KNH. In this crisis, the rights of an individual have been inflicted and less response was being offered. This sends negative signals and is likely to appeal negatively towards Christians. It also shows why the media is so determined to frame crises with a human-interest approach. This approach enables them to appeal to their feelings and attitudes.

The Hindu trail other religions in perception dominance because they are mostly associated with Indians who form a minority group in the country and tend to keep a low profile from issues of public interest and government related, such as KNH surgery mix-up crisis. The Hindu population, according to Ireri, Roberts, and Ochieng’ (2019) “can be viewed as being insular within the Kenyan context, primarily engaging with one another in terms of daily life, business, and employment” (p.15). This explains why they are last in those worth a negative interest towards KNH.
Dominant Newspaper Tone vs. Negative Perception

Findings indicate a positive strong correlation (.811) between the most dominant valence and public’s organization’s perception. This is critical as it shows a clear relationship between what the media publishes and what reflects the public’s thinking. This deliberates Entman’s (2004) argument that media frames exercise the power to control and shape the public policy debate, as is a study by Valkenburg, Semetko, and Vreese (1999) that investigated whether and how journalistic news frames affect readers’ thoughts and found that frames played a significant role in readers’ thought listing. The authors more so, found out that, “it is just as conceivable that news frames influence recall as they influence readers’ thoughts” (p.554). This is in line with the findings of this study that show a positive strong correlation between media coverage and public perception and therefore, strengthens an existing covalent bond between these two entities (Media and public perception). These findings more so, support McNair’s (2005) argument that journalism is the “raw material” of public opinion - an important facet of democracy. The author, further underlines that whether they are politicians, lobbyists, pressure groups or company spokespersons, journalism provides the essential “oxygen of publicity” that enables their causes to be noticed and addressed.

Mitroff (2004) argues that, to understand satisfactorily the causes of the crisis, the stakeholders turn to the media for further clarification of information being relayed, this is well evident from the findings of this study that show a near perfect correlation between what the media cover or report and what the public think about. Therefore, it is salient (especially to crisis communication managers) to assess how the media “frames a crisis, the cause of the crisis, and the actor(s) responsible because these crisis frames
influence the public’s perception and impressions of the organization” (An & Gower, 2009, p.107). The same insights are emphasized by Seeger, Sellnow, and Ulmer (1998) when they posit that, it is salient to study frame, framing, and frame building processes especially in a crisis, because these crises threaten an organization’s high primacy goals. They also result in high media devotion and corporate attempts to communicatively repair organizational legitimacy and public perception (Patriotta, Gond, & Schultz, in press).

This relationship (between media and the public) shows why it is important for communicators to give salience to how they shape their information as frames must adjust to the needs of the society or meanings will potentially be lost or misunderstood (McCarthy, 2013). More so, of importance is that framing of press releases according to Schultz et al. (2011) that “resonates as intended in the news and hereby affects also stakeholders’ perception of and reactions towards organizations” (p.2). These findings are in cognizant with the results of this study and goes on to underline the seriousness that should be accorded to the media in relation to public perception, as the media determines how they are viewed especially during crisis period. This perception leads to the decisions they take and the relationship they share with the organization hence, determines the organization’s survival.

This existent relation is a bare testimony that has been ascertained by previous researchers who have revealed that news frames can affect the evaluative direction of thoughts (see, Price et al., 1997; Valkneburg et al., 1999), interpretations (see, Rhee, 1997) or perceptions of an issue (see, Nelson & Kinder, 1996; Nelson et al., 1997b).
With such an underlying importance placed on the relationship between the media and public perception, the researcher conducted a follow-up study, that entailed in-depth interviews on Kenyan undergraduate students in universities based in Nairobi. The in-depth interviews were done to provide answers to questions that the questionnaire would not. For example, why did many of the respondents choose negative perception towards KNH? What reasons influenced their decisions? Could these reasons, if improved change their perception towards the organization?

Respondents (after the follow-up the study) told the researcher that the in-human acts (shown through newspaper coverage) of the wrong-patient brain surgery mix up that ruined the lives of the patients was one of the reasons for their negative perception towards the organization. One interviewee told the researcher that:

Up until now, I still cannot believe that there was a surgery mix-up. It is something that haunts me, what about those who are party to that, their close relatives and/or families? More so, it is only human that everyone who heard about it, thought about it in a negative way, I believe. I can’t think of someone I know, even this guy who had the surgery mix-up, I can’t believe what he is going through.

The interviewee’s observation is in consonant with Kim and Cameron (2013) who note that the public’s perception of an organization is heavily pegged on the way the media describe the crisis. Therefore, attention should be directed to how the media covers organizations during crisis as this plays a role on how they perceive the organization.

The other reason is the prior crisis history of Kenyatta National Hospital that has consisted poor services, doctors’ or nurses’ negligence, long queues, and negative word of mouth. As notes Holladay (2001), that in crisis periods, crisis relationship history affects the perceptions of the crisis as well as the organization in the crisis. This is well
reflected in this crisis, as respondents’ perception was determined by the previous crisis history of the organization. An interviewee told the researcher that:

I had or have a negative view of them even before, let’s say, I have followed their history of crises. The wrong patient brain surgery crisis just brought it to light. The hospital, all the time, has been pictured with negative services and the place has been known to be unhygienic and it’s something I have personally noted.

Fombrun and van Riel (2004) further underline that reputational capital (previously accumulated reputation) is an organization’s ‘stock of perceptual and social asset – the quality of the relationship it has established with stakeholders and the regard in which the company and brand is held. A previous favorable result means that an organization suffers less and rebound quickly and may mean that stakeholders regard the crisis as a ‘blip’ (Cornelissen, 2011, p.204). This was not the case with KNH who have been in the limelight with negative cases, as such explains the reason why this crisis unlike the ones that have happened before attracted much more media attention and contributed heavily to the negative perception held by the public towards the organization.

The interviewees were asked if they would look forward to working with KNH after the crisis had been addressed. Six of the ten interviewees, said, they would never access medical services from KNH. This is because, they were adversely affected by the irresponsible manner of operations by the organization. To add to that, the interviewees do not have faith that KNH would address their issues satisfactorily in the future. Such is the impact of negative reputation. Cornelissen (2011) calls this a “organizational stigma” which is, “a collective stakeholder group-specific perception that an organization possesses a fundamental deep-seated flaw or quality which is demonstrated in repeated
crises or failures” (p.204). This, the author emphasizes, “effects stakeholders to single out and discredit the organization” (Cornelissen, 2011, p.204)

According to Coombs and Holladay (1996, 2010, 2014) people will look out for information in times of crisis from three important sources, that is, the media, the organization, and the interaction from peers or word of mouth. Results from interviews show poor word of mouth as one of the reasons why respondents chose a negative perception towards KNH. An interviewee told the researcher that:

…personally, I have never been there, but I have heard stories from people who have had access to KNH and I don’t think their stories reflect well on the organization

This underlines the importance of an organization in ‘stealing the thunder’ (Arpan, Roskos-Ewoldsen, 2005) and being in drive of communication during crisis period, as such, individual opinions deserve clarification or else, they end up denting the organization’s image and/or reputation. During this crisis, KNH had less activities regarding crisis response. This was also one of the reasons why the respondents selected negative perception towards KNH, as they were not satisfied with the responses given by the organization. An interviewee said:

…that is why I am saying that I am on the negative option, because if they cannot account for this, what can we the public do more. We are helpless, and such platforms give us a chance. I believe with a better response, everyone would come to terms with what happened at that moment and understand better the organization’s position. Plus, the fact that they waited for the media to relay it and later took long to get back is so disturbing I must say. So, I don’t think the organization’s response was satisfactory enough. It was purely sketchy and not all right at all. A public relations gimmick I must say!

The interviewees also pinpointed to personal or individual experience as a reason why respondents selected a negative perception towards the organization. These
included; poor services offered by the organization, long ques that take hours before one
receives treatment, minimal or no access to doctors, patient discrimination, negligence of
duty, and an overwhelmed staff. An interviewee shared that:

…there was a time I went there personally and the hospital conditions were not
good, the services were also terrible. I have experienced KNH first hand and I
believe that aside of newspapers’ coverage of the crisis and the crisis itself, the
services offered by the organization majorly contribute to the negative
perception I hold of the institution. Aaah, the services are terribly bad!

Another major reason was diminished expectations. The respondents viewed the
organization highly and the mistake caused by the wrong patient brain surgery was
shocking to them and difficult to comprehend:

…it shows the lack of attention and the non-commitment of the medical
department. Also, a lack of commitment towards surgery preparation. Up to this
moment I don’t understand how they wheeled in a wrong patient to the theater?
How? That even goes further to why I chose confidently, that negative perception.

The fact that there is a strong correlation between the public’s perception of KNH
and media coverage of the organization during this crisis period underlines the
importance of the media to organizational operations. Fombrun and van Riel (2004) note
that, organizational reputation is formed through the information stakeholders receive
from the news or media, interaction with organization, second-hand information, that is,
because of word of mouth, and social media. These findings more so, substantiate
Coombs’ (2006) argument that, it is important to look at how the media frames a crisis
event, the cause of the crisis, and the actor(s) responsible for it because those frames
influence public’s perception of and impressions of the organization(s).
Conclusion

This study aimed to answer five critical areas. First, it identified the most prevalent crisis frame featured during KNH wrong-patient brain surgery crisis. Second, it examined whether the four newspapers’ (The Daily Nation, The Standard, People Daily, and The Star) coverage of Kenyatta National Hospital wrong-patient brain surgery crisis was reported negatively or positively. Third, it investigated the role of newspapers’ frames (negative or positive) on public’s perception of KNH during this crisis. Fourth, the study investigated how the most dominant perception varied by demographics of gender, age, religion, and year of study. Lastly, it examined whether there was a significant correlation between the most prevalent newspaper valence and the dominant public perception.

Findings show an existing relationship between media coverage and public perception. This is because a positive weak correlation of .227 was established. This was further strengthened by an established positive strong correlation (.811) between what the media reported and what the public thought about the organization during this crisis period. Crisis managers, therefore, are encouraged to focus more on how the media covers them as the public are more likely to turn to the media for further clarifications especially during crisis. This therefore, means that, negative coverage will have a negative damage on the public hence, negative influence on the organization. This highlights the importance of the media as an entity (to organizations) and fourth estate that it is. That negligence to it is towards your own loss or detriment.

Attribution of responsibility as is from previous studies (An & Gower, 2009; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000) was the most dominant frame in the newspapers’ coverage of KNH wrong-patient brain surgery crisis. During crisis, people look to
attribute the cause of it to someone specifically, therefore, the need to have good communications channels will help set the pace and put organizations under control of the crisis, hence, minimize loses.

Negative valence was the most dominant in the coverage of the crisis and this reflected on the dominant negative perception established during the survey. This points toward greater responsibility and cautiousness during crisis periods as much is needed than just responses. Formation of press releases, tweets, messages, and response mechanisms shared through the media determine how the public view an organization especially during crisis.

An existent variation in gender shows the needed change is communication systems and strategies as the youth are more interested in matters of public opinion or public interest. Shaping messages to suit their understanding is now critical as one aims to fulfill the attention and demands of the target audience as is the demands of the organization. Males were slightly dominant in terms of gender while 18-21 years-old undergraduate students featured more under age bracket. Christians registered the highest group with negative perception towards KNH while Hindus registered the lowest. First years were the most dominant group under year of study while others that included fourth and fifth years were the least.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, there are key recommendations surrounding the area of media coverage and public perception:
First is that, organizations should work closely with the media to inform the public about organizational development more especially during crisis periods. They should be aware that the public turn to the media, the official organizations website and their peers to certify communications especially negative information such as crisis. Therefore, media officers need to work in tandem with media organizations to ensure that what they publish reflects well on the organization.

Second, there should be sufficient mechanisms such as crisis communications plans that deal with crises such as the wrong-patient brain surgery. Preparedness and anticipation of crises are one way to deal with unexpected events. Therefore, organizations need to have crisis communications department equipped with crisis communications team that will monitor crises, prepare for it, and conduct follow-ups to ensure that crises are fully addressed. More so, the crisis teams should be tasked with the ability to address issues before they reach the crisis stage.

Third, media houses should have experienced communications experts or specialists given full time roles to investigate issues before they turn into crises, follow up the solutions provided to issues or crises, and then share them in detailed fashion to enable the readers to have a clear picture of how the crises unfold, the challenges, the conflicts, and follow-up stories that offer solutions to problems.

Fourth, organizations should be careful on how they deal with the media. They should ensure that they have a great relationship with the media as they play a key role on how the public’s view an organization during crisis period. Organizations should know that the media are the eyes and ears of the public and that the information (especially negative) will play a role on how the public view them.
Fifth, the media, when exercising their role as public watchdog should also ensure that they also cover the positive sides of an organization and not just dwell on the negative aspects of an event covered, for instance, a crisis. This will ensure that the audience have a balanced report and as such be able to make informed choices about an issue, crisis, or event.

Sixth and lastly is that, the media should be aware that, how they chose to frame an issue or event is important as this contributes to the public perception and impressions or the organization. Therefore, balanced reporting is key towards good decision making. The study hence, recommends that the media adhere to the media act that advocate for journalistic codes of ethics that call for journalistic standards to be upheld. This will ensure that journalists stick to their mandate and report inform the public without limiting their access to the truth of the matter.

**Areas of Further Research**

This study suffered some limitations that could be addressed in future studies, first, the non-probability purposive sampling technique means that the results cannot be generalized to the entire population because not every undergraduate student was given an equal chance to participate in the survey, as such, findings should be handled with utmost care.

Secondly, this study focused only on newspapers and left out other probable mass communication means like television, radio, and social media that provided a platform to disseminate information on the wrong-patient brain surgery crisis. Therefore, further studies on the area of social media, radio, and television would add much more meaning to a study of this ilk.
Thirdly, future studies need to incorporate the differences on how local daily newspapers report crises, the frequency of newspaper reading per week, and the sections that are mostly read in relation to demographics as this will help further explain the study findings and rate the influence of newspaper readership among the youth.

Lastly, is that this study only focused on Nairobi area. However, Kenyatta National Hospital being the center of the country’s medical treatment system affects the whole country. This means that the respondents selected were limited to this specific area and left the others. Future studies should put this into consideration and go further to analyze respondents from not only universities but also the non-students.
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Appendices

Appendix I: Study Questionnaire

Questionnaire for Newspapers’ Framing of a Health Crisis and Public Perception in Kenya: A Case of Kenyatta National Hospital Wrong-Patient Brain Surgery

Dear respondent,

I am Kevin Charlse Mudavadi, a second-year student at the United States International University – Africa, pursuing a Master of Arts in Communications Studies. As part of my course study requirements, I am to do a research and submit a final thesis.

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the role of newspapers’ frames on public perception of Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) during the wrong-patient brain surgery crisis.

Please note that, answering the questionnaire is voluntary and the information you provide is anonymous, and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. No participant will be offered incentives to complete this questionnaire.

The study is not sponsored by or affiliated to any internal or external organization, and will be solely used for academic purpose(s). By participating, you will be making a great contribution towards the study of media in Kenya.

Kindly note that this questionnaire will only take five minutes of your time.

Please indicate whether you are willing to participate in this study by signing below:

Signature: ........................................

Date: ........................................

NB: In case of any queries, please direct them to; kelvinmudavadic@gmail.com

SECTION A: NEWSPAPER PREFERENCE

1. Which of the following newspapers do you read?

   a) The Daily Nation

   b) The Standard

   c) People Daily
2. In a typical week, how many days do you read a newspaper?
   a) 1 day
   b) 2-3 days
   c) 4-5 days
   d) 6-7 days

3. Which section of the newspaper do you often read? (Please select only one)
   a) News Content
   b) Editorial
   c) Opinions
   d) Letters to the editor
   e) Any other …………………………………………………………………………

SECTION B: PUBLIC PERCEPTION

4. How did the media cover Kenyatta National Hospital wrong-patient brain surgery crisis?

   Negatively  (  )

   Positively  (  )

5. From the answer above, what is your perception of Kenyatta National Hospital?

   Negative  (  )

   Positive  (  )
Instruction: Tick the answer that best represents your opinion

SA – Strongly Agree A – Agree D – Disagree SD – Strongly Disagree

6. What is your thought on articles published on newspapers?

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<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) The articles are accurate or factual</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>ii</td>
<td>iii</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) The articles are biased</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>ii</td>
<td>iii</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) The articles are balanced</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>ii</td>
<td>iii</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) The articles are negative towards</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>ii</td>
<td>iii</td>
<td>iv</td>
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<tr>
<td>the organization, persons or items</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>e) Placement of pictorial representation related to KNH wrong-patient brain surgery determines the importance of the issue</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>ii</td>
<td>iii</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) Newspapers reported and highlighted the issue in a much better way during KNH wrong-patient brain surgery</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>ii</td>
<td>iii</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g) Newspapers were responsible in making the public aware about KNH wrong-patient brain surgery</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>ii</td>
<td>iii</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SECTION C: DEMOGRAPHICS

7. What is your gender?

a) Male

b) Female

c) Other: ................................
8. What is your age bracket?
   a) 18-21
   b) 22-25
   c) 26 or older

9. What is your religion?
   a) Christian
   b) Muslim
   c) Hindu
   d) Other: ……………………………

I would like to contact you for a follow-up study. Please provide your contact below if you are willing to participate in it:

**Phone Number:** ………………………………………

*Thank you!*
Appendix II: Interview Guide

Interview Guide for Newspapers’ Framing of a Health Crisis and Public Perception in Kenya: A Case of Kenyatta National Hospital Wrong-Patient Brain Surgery

| Introduction | Dear Interviewee,
Thank you for taking your time to meet me today. I am Kevin Charlse Mudavadi and I would like to talk to you about the Role of Newspaper Frames on Public Perception of Kenyatta National Hospital Wrong-Patient Brain Surgery Crisis. This study is investigating the role of the media on public’s perception of an organization especially during crisis period.

The interview will last for a period of 30 minutes. I will be taping in the session because I don’t want to miss any of your comments. Although I will be taking some notes during the session, I can’t possibly write fast enough to get it all down. Since we are on tape, please be sure to speak up so that I don’t miss your comments.

Please note that, all responses here in, will be kept confidential. This means that, your interview responses will only be used for academic purposes. More so, I will ensure that the report does not conceal your identity. Remember, you don’t have to talk about anything you do not want to and that you may end the interview at any time. This will not cost you in whatever way. |
Do you have any questions about what I have just explained? Are you willing to participate in this interview? (Please read carefully the consent form and sign right are the end of it).

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. What are your thoughts on articles published on newspapers?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What about during this crisis period?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What are your thoughts on placement of pictorial representation related to KNH wrong-patient brain surgery?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How did newspapers report and highlight the crisis?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. According to you, how were newspapers responsible in making the public aware about KNH wrong-patient brain surgery?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. What reasons determine your negative perception of Kenyatta National Hospital during the wrong-patient brain surgery crisis?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. The organization tried to address the crisis, were you satisfied with the responses that they provided?</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Does this negative perception towards KNH affect the way you relate with the organization?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Is your negative perception of KNH a result of newspaper coverage?</td>
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<tr>
<th>Closing</th>
<th>Is there anything more that you would like to add?</th>
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</table>

I will be analyzing the information that you and others gave me and submit as my thesis in a months’ time. The result will be shared in the official website of the USIU-Africa for your access, if interested.

Thank you for your time once more.
Appendix III: Researcher’s Introductory Letter

United States Internal University – Africa
School of Communication, Cinematics, and Creative Arts,
P.O. Box 14634 – 00800,
Nairobi Kenya, East Africa.

Summer, 2018.

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RESEARCH ON NEWSPAPERS’ FRAMING OF A HEALTH CRISIS AND PUBLIC PERCEPTION IN KENYA: A CASE OF KENYATTA NATIONAL HOSPITAL WRONG-PATIENT BRAIN SURGERY

I am a graduate student at the United States International University - Africa pursuing a Master of Arts in Communications Studies. As part of my course study requirements, I am to do a research and submit a final thesis. I am doing research on the above-mentioned topic and I have sampled your school to help me get data to support my study.

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the role of newspapers’ frames on public’s perception of Kenyatta National Hospital during the wrong-patient brain surgery crisis.

Please note that, the data gathered will be solely used for academic purposes and not any other. I am kindly asking for your cooperation to allow me collect data from your school or institution.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kevin C. Mudavadi
Graduate Student, USIU-Africa
Appendix IV: Code Book

**Frame Analysis: Newspaper Framing of A Health Crisis Vs Public Perception In Kenya: A Case Of Kenyatta National Hospital Wrong-Patient Brain Surgery**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of newspapers’ frames on public perception of Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) during the wrong patient brain surgery crisis. To be specific, the study examined the most prevalent crisis frame featured during KNH wrong-patient brain surgery crisis. Second, it examined whether the four newspapers’ (*The Daily Nation*, *The Standard*, *People Daily*, and *The Star*) coverage of KNH wrong-patient brain surgery crisis was reported negatively or positively (valence framing). In addition, the research investigated how the most dominant public perception towards KNH varied by demographics of gender, age, religion, and year of study. Lastly, it examined whether there was a significant correlation between the most prevalent newspaper valence and the dominant public’s perception.

**Unit of Analysis**

The unit of analysis for the frames is a sentence.

**Operationalization of Categories**

**a) Attribution of Responsibility Frame**

This refers to “a way of attributing responsibility for [a] cause or solution to either the government or to an individual or group” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 96). The following are its characteristics:

1. Does the sentence suggest that some level of national government, institution or doctors to have the ability to control the crisis? (Yes/No)
2. Does the sentence suggest that to some level, the national government, the institution or doctors are responsible for the crisis? (Yes/No)
3. Does the sentence in any way suggest that the county government or ministry of health is the reason of control for the crisis? (Yes/No)

b) Conflict Frame

The conflict frame “emphasizes conflict between individuals, groups, or institutions” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 96). The frame emphasizes disagreements between individuals or groups as a means of capturing audience interest (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). The following are its characteristics:

1. Does the sentence reflect disagreement between parties—individuals—groups (Doctors, Ministry of Health, or Government)? (Yes/No)
2. Does the sentence pinpoint the winners or losers? (Yes/No)

c) Human Interest Frame

This type of frame “brings a human face or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue, or problem” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 95). The following are its characteristics:

1. Does the sentence provide “human face” (for example, the emotions) on the strike? (Yes/No)
2. Does the sentence emphasize on how individuals or groups have been affected by the strike? (Yes/No)

d) Economic Consequence Frame

This frame “presents an event, problem, or issue in terms of the economic consequences it will have on an individual, group, institution, region, or country” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 96). The following are its characteristics:

1. Does the sentence contain a mention of financial losses or gains now or in the future? (Yes/No)
2. Does the sentence contain a mention of the cost/degree of expense involved? (Yes/No)
3. Does the sentence contain a mention of the economic consequences of pursuing or of not pursuing a course of action in relation to the crisis? (Yes/No)

e) Morality Frame

This frame “puts the event, problem, or issue in the context of morals, social prescriptions, and religious tenets” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 96). The following are its characteristics:

1. Does the sentence contain events or issues or problems that touch on societal morals or social prescriptions? (Yes/No)

2. Does the sentence contain religious mentions or religious depictions? (Yes/No)

Valence Framing

This is the positive or negative mentions of the major actors in the crisis. This study will focus only in the positive and negative mentions and not the neutral mentions. This entails any negative or positive description provided for by the writer and the institution which means that the mention will have either a positive or negative impact.

This study will focus only in the positive and negative mentions and not the neutral mentions. This entails any negative or positive description provided for by the writer which means that the mention will have either a positive or negative impact.
## Appendix V: List of all Universities in Nairobi County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTITUTION</th>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Africa International University</td>
<td>Private</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Africa International University</td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cooperative University College of Kenya</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Daystar University</td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Dedan Kimathi University of Technology</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. East Africa School of Theology</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Egerton University</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Genco University</td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Great Lakes University of Kismu</td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. International Leadership University</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. International University of Professional Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Kabarak University</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. KAG East University</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. KCA University</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Kenya Methodist University</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Kenyatta University</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Kiriri Women's University of Science and Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Kisii University</td>
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<td>20. Laikipia University</td>
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<td>21. Maasai Mara University</td>
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<tr>
<td>22. Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Moi University</td>
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<tr>
<td>24. Mount Kenya University</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Multimedia University of Kenya</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Pan Africa Christian (PAC) University</td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Pioneer International University</td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Riara University</td>
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<td>29. South Eastern Kenya University</td>
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<td>30. St. Paul's University</td>
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<tr>
<td>31. Strathmore University</td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Technical University of Kenya</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. The Catholic University of Eastern Africa</td>
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<td>34. The East African University</td>
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<td>INSTITUTION</td>
<td>CATEGORY</td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daystar University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Egerton University</td>
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<td>Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology</td>
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<td>Kabarak University</td>
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<td>Strathmore University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical University of Kenya</td>
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<td>The Catholic University of Eastern Africa</td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Nairobi</td>
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<td>United States International University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zetech University</td>
<td>Private</td>
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</table>
Appendix VII: Consent Form for Interview Participants

Consent Form for Interviewees

NEWSPAPER FRAMING OF A HEALTH CRISIS vs. PUBLIC PERCEPTION IN KENYA: A CASE OF KENYATTA NATIONAL HOSPITAL WRONG-PATIENT BRAIN SURGERY

Kevin C. Mudavadi,
Master of Arts in Communication Student,
United States International University – Africa,
kelvinmudavadic@gmail.com

Dear Participant,

You are being asked to take part in this research study whose purpose is to investigate the role of newspapers’ framing (negative or positive) on public’s perception of the organization during the wrong-patient brain surgery crisis. Before undertaking this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully. Where it is not clear, please ask the researcher for clarification. Kindly note that, this consent form should be signed before undertaking the interview.

Benefits

Your contributions to this research will play an important role towards crisis communications in Kenyan organizations. More so, it will help to highlight the important media-organizational relations and enhance the importance of this area of study.

Confidentiality
Your responses to this interview will be anonymous unless you are willing to disclose your details. Please do not provide any identifying information during the interview. The information you provide more so, will solely be for academic purposes and none other. The researcher will through every effort preserve your confidentiality including the following:

a) Assigning code names/numbers for participants that will be used on all research notes and documents
b) Keeping notes, interview transcriptions, and any other identifying participant information in a locked file cabinet in the personal possession of the researcher.

Please note that, the participant’s data will be kept confidential except in cases where the researcher is legally obligated to report specific incidents. These incidents include, but may not be limited to, incidents of abuse and suicide risk.

Compensation

Kindly note that no incentives or compensation will be offered for this interview process because the research is solely academic.

Recoding

Please note that, this interview session will be recorded for data analysis, reference, and presentation.

Voluntary Participation

It is salient to note that your participation in this study is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study. If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to sign a consent form. After you sign the consent form, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Withdrawing from this study will not affect the relationship you have, if any, with the researcher. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

Contact Information
If you have questions at any time about this study, or you experience adverse effects as the result of participating in this study, you may contact the researcher whose contact information is provided on the first page. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, or if problems arise which you do not feel you can discuss with the researcher, please contact the Institution’s Review Board (irb@usiu.ac.ke).

Consent

I have read and I understand the provided information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without cost. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Participant's signature: ______________________________ Date __________

Researcher's signature: ______________________________ Date __________
Dear Respondent,

Thank you for participating in this study! The researcher hopes you enjoyed the experience. This form provides background about our research to help you learn more about why we are doing this study. Please feel free to ask any questions or to comment on any aspect of the study.

You have just participated in a research study conducted by Kevin Charlse Mudavadi, a Master of Arts in Communication Studies student at the United States International University – Africa (kelvinmudavadic@gmail.com).

As earlier informed, the purpose of this study is to investigate the role of newspapers’ frames on public perception of Kenyatta National Hospital during the wrong-patient brain surgery crisis.

As you know, your participation in this study is voluntary. If you so wish, you may withdraw after reading this debriefing form, at which point all records of your
participation will be destroyed. Please note that, you will not be penalized if you withdraw.

Access to this researcher’s final project can or will be accessed through the United States International University – Africa library (usiu.ac.ke).

The researcher will do follow-up experiments that will continue into future semesters. Because of this, it is important that you do NOT talk (or write or e-mail, etc.) about this project. The main reason for this is that YOUR COMMENTS could influence the expectations, and therefore, performance of a future participant, which would bias the study’s data. Failure to comply with this request may have severe repercussions with regards to the accuracy of the data. YOUR COMMENTS could compromise months of hard work preparing this research. The researcher hopes you will support this study by keeping your knowledge of it confidential.

You may keep a copy of this debriefing for your records or you may please return this debriefing form to the researcher. Contact information for the researcher and Institutional Review Board is on your copy of the consent as well as this debriefing form which you may keep for your records.

If you have questions now about the research, please ask. If you have questions later, please e-mail the researcher [kelvinmudavadic@gmail.com]. If, because of your participation in this study, you experienced any adverse reaction or issues, please contact the Institutional Review Board of United States International University – Africa [irb@usiu.ac.ke] or contact the researcher at kelvinmudavadic@gmail.com
Participant's signature: ______________________________ Date __________

Researcher's signature: ______________________________ Date __________
Appendix IX: Institutional Introductory Letter

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

2nd November, 2018

Dear Sir/Madam,

REF: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH – KEVIN CHARLSE MUDAVADI
STUDENT ID, NO. 653449

The bearer of this letter is a student of United States International University (USIU) -Africa pursuing a Master of Arts in Communication.

As part of the program, the student is required to undertake a dissertation on “The Role of Newspapers’ Frames on Public Perception: A Case of Kenyatta National Hospital Wrong Patient Brain Surgery Crisis” which requires him to collect data.

Please note that information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will only be used for academic purposes.

Kindly assist the student get the appropriate data and should you have any queries contact the undersigned.

Yours Sincerely,

[Signature]

Prof. Amos Njuguna,
Dean – School of Graduate Studies, Research and Extension
Tel: 730 116 442
Email: amnjuguna@usiu.ac.ke
Appendix X: Institutional Review Board Certificate

14th December, 2018

KEVIN CHARLSE MUDAVADI
School of Communication, Cinematic and Creative Arts
kelvinmudavadikm@gmail.com
USIU-A/IRB/41-18

Dear Mr. Mudavadi,

IRB-RESEARCH APPROVAL.

The USIU-A IRB has reviewed and granted an ethical approval for the research proposal titled “The Role of Newspapers’ Frames on Public Perception: A Case of Kenyatta National Hospital Wrong Patient Brain Surgery Crisis.”

The approval is for twelve months from the date of IRB. A Continuing Review application must be approved within this interval to avoid expiration of IRB approval and cessation of all research activities. A mid-term report and a final report must be provided to the IRB within the twelve months approval period. All records relating to the research (including signed consent forms) must be retained and available for audit for at least 3 years after the research has ended.

You are advised to follow the approved methodology and report to the IRB any serious, unexpected and related adverse events and potential unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others.

Should you or study participants have any queries regarding IRB’s consideration of this project, please contact irb@usiu.ac.ke.

Sincerely,

Prof. Amos Njuguna,
IRB chair and Dean – School of Graduate Studies, Research and Extension
Tel: 730 116 442
Email: anjuguna@usiu.ac.ke
Appendix XI: NACOSTI Certificate

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:

MR. KEVIN CHARLES MUDAVADI
of UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY - AFRICA, 800-50100
Kakamega has been permitted to conduct research in Nairobi County
on the topic: THE ROLE OF NEWSPAPERS FRAMES ON PUBLIC PERCEPTION: A CASE OF KENYATTA NATIONAL HOSPITAL WRONG PATIENT BRAIN SURGERY CRISIS
for the period ending: 10th December, 2019

Applicant’s Signature

Director General
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation

Republic of Kenya

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation RESEARCH LICENSE

Serial No.A 22260

CONDITIONS: see back page
Ref. No. NACOSTI/P/18/73469/26987

Kevin Charlse Mudavadi
United States International University
P.O. Box 14634- 00800
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on “The role of newspapers frames on public perception: A case of Kenyatta National Hospital wrong patient brain surgery crisis,” I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Nairobi County for the period ending 10th December, 2019.

You are advised to report to the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County before embarking on the research project.

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit a copy of the final research report to the Commission within one year of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.

Godfrey P. Kalerwa MSc., MBA, MKIM
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Nairobi County.

The County Director of Education
Nairobi County.
# Appendix XII: Linkert Scale Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The articles are accurate</td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>0.809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The articles are biased</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>0.989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The articles are balanced</td>
<td>1822</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>0.911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The articles are negative towards the organization, persons, or items</td>
<td>1817</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>1.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement of pictorial representation related to KNH wrong-patient brain surgery determines the importance of the issue</td>
<td>1834</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>0.881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers reported and highlighted the issue in a much better way during KNH wrong-patient brain surgery</td>
<td>1865</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>0.840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers were responsible in making the public aware about KNH wrong-patient brain surgery</td>
<td>1874</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.856</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix XIII: Operationalization of Variables
An operational definition of a concept includes the procedures used for classifying and measuring it (Ahmad, Makingu, & Peter, 2007).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Operation Definition</th>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Tools of Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of use</td>
<td>The amount of time that a user spends on the medium (Chen, 2011)</td>
<td>Measured by how often a user has access to the medium under investigation</td>
<td>Descriptive Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographics</td>
<td>Different attributes that describe and distinguish a user</td>
<td>Measured by gender, age, and religion</td>
<td>Descriptive Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>refers to a process of interpretation of a present stimulus based on experience</td>
<td>Measure by a positive or negative attribution that one has about study</td>
<td>Descriptive Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2016)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frame Prevalence</td>
<td>This refers to the most featured frame in a frame analysis</td>
<td>Measured by attribution, economic, morality, conflict, and human</td>
<td>Descriptive Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>attribution aspect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valence</td>
<td>This refers to the emphasis placed on a published news item, it can either be positive, negative, or neutral</td>
<td>Measured by how negative or positive the coverage of news items is done</td>
<td>Descriptive Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>This refers to the relationship between different aspects under study</td>
<td>Measured by the relationship established between extinct items</td>
<td>Descriptive Analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>