

**THE ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE DURING COUNTY LEGISLATION
PROCESS: A CASE STUDY OF EMBU COUNTY GOVERNMENT.**

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REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A MASTER'S DEGREE IN JOURNALISM
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DECLARATION AND APPROVAL

I declare that this project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree at any other University or for any other award.

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Date: 29 03 2025

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I confirm that the candidate carried out the work reported in this thesis under my supervision.

DR. KENNEDY SIMI 

Date: 12/03/2025

DEDICATION

This work is a dedication to my beloved son, Alvin Munene.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My first acknowledgment is to the almighty God for his kindness and provision of the energy and good health He has given me. I wish to acknowledge the support accorded to me by my able supervisor, Dr. Kennedy Simiyu, for his guidance, valued input, support and encouragement throughout the process. I acknowledge the immense support and guidance offered by Dr. Oloo throughout the research process. Lastly, I cannot finish without acknowledging the management of the Embu County Assembly and colleagues, especially the Hansard Department, for their encouragement, motivation and support towards the completion of this research work.



ABSTRACT

Public relations are an integral component of the media's engagement with the public. The purpose of this study is to examine the crucial role of public relations practices within the complex dynamics of county legislation processes and public engagement with the County Government of Embu as the focus of the case study. The objective of the study is to examine the public awareness of the legislative process in Embu County. It also looks to identify the methods used by the Embu County Assembly to deliver legislative information. It analyzes the communication processes employed by the Embu County Assembly to disseminate information. The problem statement addresses the less-known influence of public relations in shaping legislative outcomes and building meaningful engagements with country governance. The significance of this study lies in its potential to enhance transparency, improve public participation, and strengthen the relationship between the county government and its citizens. By analyzing the effectiveness of the county's public relations practices, the study offers insights that can inform policy decisions, communication strategies, and future public engagement efforts. Understanding how public relations shape public awareness and participation in the legislative process is vital for ensuring that governance is inclusive and responsive to the needs of the public. The research explores the correlation between public relations practices, legislative agendas and stakeholder interactions, referring to the theoretical frameworks of agenda-setting theory and stakeholder theory. Through the help of a mixed method approach combining qualitative interviews, content analysis, and questionnaires, the study unraveled the intricacies of public relations' role in county governance. Analysis of the data collected was achieved through descriptive and inferential statistics and, eventually, visualization, identifying the various insights necessary to address the objectives of the study. The findings reveal that there is a moderate level of understanding of the legislative process among the public, with only 55.5% of respondents possessing a moderate knowledge of how the county's legislative processes work. Social media and mainstream media are the primary channels for communication, although their effectiveness in reaching the public varies. The study also identifies significant challenges in stakeholder participation, particularly in ensuring broader public involvement in decision-making processes. These challenges highlight the need for improvements in public relations strategies to facilitate better engagement and transparency. Based on the findings, the study recommends several improvements to the county's public relations operations. These include the implementation of sensitization programs to increase public awareness of the legislative process, enhancing digital communication strategies to reach a wider audience, and establishing an effective feedback system to encourage public participation. These measures are expected to improve transparency, foster greater public involvement, and ultimately enhance the effectiveness of the legislative processes in Embu County.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

PR – Public Relations

PWDs – Persons with Disabilities

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

FOI – Freedom of Information

SPSS – Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

FRM – Flood Risk Management

MCA- Member of County Assembly

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Communication processes: Communication processes encompass the methods and means by which information is exchanged between individuals or groups. They can be measured in terms of communication channel effectiveness, perception, message retention and feedback mechanisms.

Legislation Process Refers to the series of steps that a proposed Bill goes through before it becomes law. It can be measured in terms of draft legislation, second reading, and enactment into law.

Public awareness Refers to the level of consciousness and understanding that the general population has about specific issues, events, or matters of importance. It can be measured in terms of Media Reach, social media engagement and web analytics.

Public Relations Practice This is a strategic communication process that aims to build and maintain positive relationships between an organization and its various stakeholders. It can be measured in terms of Customer Feedback, community engagement, reputation management and media coverage.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter covers the background, the issue at hand, the objectives of the research, its importance, and the limitations of the study. This study examines the role of public relations practice during the county legislation process and engagement among county governments.

1.1 Background of the Study

Legislation is the process of creating, amending or repealing laws within a governing body such as a legislative assembly or a parliament, in this case, the County Government Assembly (Hayek, 2022). Public relations (PR) is a strategic communication discipline aimed at building mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and its various stakeholders, such as government bodies, community groups, the public and the media (Grunig, 2020). In the context of county governments, effective PR practices are essential for developing transparency, accountability and public trust. The process of legislation in the County Assembly involves several stages. The initial stage is the introduction of the bill by a member of the assembly. The bill undergoes evaluation and debate in various committees before being presented for consideration and voting by the whole assembly. Public participation is a vital part of the legislative process. It refers to the active involvement of the people in the decision-making process. It is made up of a spectrum of activities, including public forums and consultations in the legislative process (Quick & Bryson, 2022). It is through PR that the government can educate, engage, and inform the public through strategic communication. According to Pandeya (2015), some of the most common PR strategies in communication include press releases, community outreach, media, and social media posts. Public

participation allows community members to provide opinions, express concerns and take part in the development of laws that directly affect their lives.

In many countries, the process of public participation in legislative activities is evolving due to advances in technology and shifts in political systems. Globally, public relations strategies have adapted to incorporate digital platforms, providing governments with new tools to engage with citizens on legislative matters. As highlighted by Brown et al. (2021), digital communication technologies, such as social media and online portals, have become essential in disseminating information, gathering public input, and facilitating more inclusive participation in governance.

Globally, the advancement of communication methodologies inside corporate institutions has become a vital element in affecting policy outcomes (Samimi et al., 2022). Throughout the legislative process, public relations contribute significantly to facilitating communication between the public and the government. The elements of corporate communication play an urgent part in forming the viability of authoritative activities at different levels of government. According to Cornelissen (2020), the role of public relations is crucial in the legislative process and public participation, especially in the context of county government. Public relations act as a bridge between government agencies and the public and play an essential role in shaping the understanding, acceptance and enforcement of laws. Effective public relations contribute to the transparency of the legislative process and ensure that the public is well-informed about proposed laws and policies and their impact (Voermans, ten Napel and Passchier). When the public is given sufficient communication, their general awareness is elevated; hence, they feel comfortable participating in the legislative process, giving consultations and feedback and engaging in public hearings.

Public relations practices help cultivate trust in government institutions, promoting a positive relationship between the authorities and the public (Ataguba & Ataguba, 2020). Successful legislation enforcement is dependent on the public's trust in the government. When the public trusts the government, they are ready to cooperate and comply with legislation, hence making the enforcement process successful.

In Nigeria, a study by Akarika, Umoren, and Ikon (2021) recognized that the role of public relations practice reinforces the efficiency of dispersing information about legislation, policies, and governance processes to various populations with varying linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds. Successful communication strategies can help prevail over language barriers, increase public awareness, and promote inclusivity in decision-making. Additionally, in regions where there may be historical wariness of government institutions, transparent and effective communication becomes a cornerstone for building and maintaining trust between county governments and the public. Therefore, the public relations practice during the county legislation processes and engagement is instrumental in contributing to accountable, participatory, and responsive governance across the various county governments.

The research is particularly relevant to county governments, given the diverse governing structures and practices observed across the different counties. Variations in cultural, political and economic factors may lead to differences in public relations practices and legislative effectiveness in counties (Hao et al., 2022). The study identified trends and best practices that can inform more targeted approaches to public relations within county governments by examining individual county perspectives. Understanding the county dynamics is essential for creating communication strategies that align with local values and governing structures that will complement the general effectiveness of the legislation processes.

Kenya has a unique view of understanding the opportunities and challenges in relation to public relations and legislative processes in County governing structures. Kenya is a rapidly growing country with a diverse political taste, which adds complexity to the relationship between public relations and legislation processes (Otieno et al., 2020). The devolved government system provides a localized setting of autonomy with many lessons to draw from for the research. The research delves into the means by which public relations practices affect the efficiency of the legislation processes in the County, irrespective of the diverse cultural, linguistic and economic factors that impact communication strategies.

One key challenge in PR during the legislative process is ensuring inclusive communication, especially in regions where there are diverse linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic conditions. Studies by Akarika, Umoren, and Ikon (2021) and Samimi et al. (2022) underscore the necessity for tailored communication strategies that take into account local cultural norms, language preferences, and access to information. In many counties in Kenya, limited access to digital infrastructure poses a barrier to effective PR campaigns, particularly in rural areas where citizens rely on traditional media such as radio and face-to-face community forums (Githinji & Ogola, 2021). Therefore, PR professionals in the county governments must be adept at leveraging both traditional and digital platforms to reach a broader audience.

Moreover, the role of PR in fostering government accountability cannot be overstated. In contexts where public trust in government institutions is fragile, as seen in some counties within Kenya, PR plays a critical role in building and maintaining this trust. When PR efforts emphasize transparency and responsiveness, citizens are more likely to participate in the legislative process and feel confident that their input will influence policy outcomes. As noted by Otieno et al. (2020), PR in

county governance must go beyond simple information dissemination—it must actively engage citizens and foster dialogue between the government and its stakeholders.

Furthermore, the devolved governance system in Kenya offers a unique case study for examining the intersection of PR and legislation. The decentralized structure allows for more localized decision-making, but it also presents challenges in ensuring that all counties maintain consistent standards of transparency, communication, and public engagement. Each county has different political dynamics, cultural identities, and governance challenges, making it imperative for PR strategies to be tailored to the specific needs and expectations of the local population (Kameri-Mbote & Oduor, 2022). As a result, understanding how PR practices are adapted in counties like Embu to promote legislative engagement can provide valuable insights for broader governance reforms across Kenya.

In addition to facilitating communication, public relations strategies are integral to conflict resolution within legislative processes. Legislative debates and decisions often involve competing interests among various stakeholder groups, such as local communities, businesses, NGOs, and government officials. Effective PR practices can help mediate these conflicts by providing a platform for dialogue, ensuring that all voices are heard, and fostering a consensus-building environment. It is particularly relevant in Kenya, where cultural and regional differences can lead to tensions in local governance (Ogonda, 2019). The role of education and public awareness in legislative PR is crucial. Educating the public about legislative procedures and the importance of their participation can significantly improve the quality of public engagement. Informed citizens are more likely to contribute meaningfully to public discussions and provide constructive feedback on legislative matters. According to a study by Wanyonyi (2020), initiatives that focus on civic education, particularly in marginalized communities, have led to increased legislative participation

and improved policy outcomes. Thus, PR strategies should prioritize educational campaigns alongside their broader communication efforts to ensure that citizens are well-informed and empowered to participate in governance.

This research examined the Kenyan context and the role that county-level public relations strategies play in shaping public opinion and promoting legislative engagement. Understanding the nuances of public relations is essential to ensuring accountability, openness, and public trust as the influence of private sector groups on the legislative landscape grows. The study aimed to guide how to coordinate public relations efforts with the goals of suitable legislation and sound governance within the framework of Kenyan counties.

This strategy recognizes the importance of considering the explicit features of each area to develop more focused and effective communication frameworks that assist legislative activities at the county level. The research also acknowledges the possible impact of cultural and traditional values on public relations, corporate communication and legislative processes in Kenya. This study provided a comprehensive understanding of how public relations can enhance legislative processes. It also offered recommendations for improving the effectiveness of communication strategies that promote transparency, accountability, and public trust. By taking into account the various local viewpoints, the study aims to contribute to understanding and giving recommendations that are familiar to the Kenyan socio-cultural context. The results informed not only academic discussions but also policy interventions that strengthen the cooperation between public relations practices and legislation effectiveness within Kenya's county governments.

1.2 Problem Statement

Effective public relations practice plays a significant role in building transparency, accountability, and public engagement within legislative processes in counties. Lack of proper public participation may lead to poor governance, loss of trust in the government, and protests due to the passing of inappropriate bills that do not address the concerns of the citizens. Nonetheless, with the constantly changing prospect of local governance, there exists a gap in the overall understanding regarding the precise role and effect of public relations during county legislation processes and engagement. Socially, ineffective PR in the county government can erode trust in the legislative process, leading to mistrust and disengagement of the public, which eventually undermines democratic governance. A case in the review was the skirmishes experienced in Kenya when the Finance Bill 2024 sailed through the Second Reading on 20th June 2024; members of the public took to the streets protesting the lack of involvement. It led to the destruction of property and loss of lives. Had adequate public participation been carried out, the same would have been avoided. The strategic role of corporate communication in public institutions suggests that effective communication practices contribute to improved organizational performance (Kitonga, 2017). Research demonstrates the importance of effective communication in the public sector by emphasizing that transparent and clear communication is essential for successful policy implementation (Fredriksson & Pallas, 2018).

Academically, there needs to be more research and evidence of the influence of PR practices in the legislative process in governance. Examining how laws are delivered and packaged becomes crucial in fostering effective communication not only in the content but also in the means of delivery (Ballaro et al., 2020). Despite the recognized importance of public relations, there is a lack of empirical evidence and theoretical frameworks that describe the specific mechanisms through which public relations practice influences and shapes county legislative processes and the

dynamics of public engagement. It is relevant to examine how public relations practice promotes public engagement during the county legislation process. Counties in Kenya have a commitment to legislative activities, as reflected in Kenya's Constitution. This study bridged these gaps by analyzing the effectiveness of communication processes employed by the Embu County Assembly to disseminate information in the legislative process.

1.3 Research Objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

The study examines the role of public relations practices in sensitizing the public of Embu County about legislative processes and public engagement with the County Government.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

1. To determine the level of the stakeholders' awareness of the legislative process in Embu County.
2. To identify the communication channels utilized by the public relations office to inform the people about the legislative processes in Embu County.
3. To assess public engagement during the legislative process within the county Government of Embu
4. To evaluate the role of public relations practice in the legislative process of Embu County.

1.4 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions, which aimed to understand the role of public relations in Embu County and the amount of public engagement it delivers.

1. What is the level of the stakeholders' awareness of the legislative process in Embu County?
2. Which communication channels does the public relations office utilize to sensitize the people of Embu County to the county's legislative processes?
3. To what extent does the Embu County government undertake public engagement during the legislative process within the County?
4. What impact does public relations practice have in sensitization of the legislative process in Embu County?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Valuable insights were derived from the findings of this study for policymakers, government officials, and communication practitioners in Embu County, providing them with evidence-based recommendations to improve their communication approaches surrounding legislative processes. Additionally, the study's broader implications extend to similar regions and governmental structures, contributing to the growing knowledge of the vital interplay between effective communication and legislative efficacy in decentralized governance systems. Ultimately, the research addresses a pertinent gap in the literature and offers actionable insights that can positively impact the democratic functioning of county governments and contribute to the overall betterment of public administration.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

This study is geographically limited to the County Government of Embu in Kenya. The study also relies on published documents which have limited knowledge, especially on County governments since they are relatively new forms of governance in Kenya. Unpublished forms of information

were relied upon to provide more valuable data. However, alternative sources of information, like conducting interviews, were explored. The target population comprised county executives, administrative staff, Communication Practitioners, and citizens of Embu County. Further, the study concentrated on the Embu County government, covering the topic of the role of public relations practice during the county legislation process and engagement among county governments. Also, the study did not focus on all the services the Embu County government offers.

1.7 The Scope of the Study

The study included a detailed review of the role of public relations practices within the county legislation process and stakeholder engagements within the County Government of Embu. The study evaluated how public relations strategies influence legislative outcomes, public perception and stakeholder involvement in the County Government of Embu. Various public relations methods were investigated, such as media relations, community outreach, public perception, and initiatives to involve the public during the different stages of the legislation process. The information obtained was crucial in providing a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics between public relations and country governance and the implications of enhancing transparency, accountability and public trust.

Public relations are acknowledged as a discipline with many aspects and applications across various aspects of governance, and the study was focused solely on the influence of public relations on legislative outcomes and public engagement within the County Government of Embu. The study was geographically limited to Embu County, and the findings may not be directly transferable to other counties or jurisdictions. The study did not look at other sides of county governance, such as service delivery or executive functions. The study focused on recent

legislative activities within the County Assembly of Embu to get the current changes and practices. Older legislative processes may not count in this study. Logistical constraints also limit the study. Incorporating the diverse spectrum of stakeholders' perspectives may be challenging as the study does not have enough logistical resources to accommodate all eligible stakeholders.

1.8 Organization of the Study

Chapter one introduced the particulars of the study, including the background information, followed by a statement of the problem. The research objectives and the research question, which gave guidelines to what the study focused on and areas to look into, were established. The importance of the study was also underscored, keeping in mind the limitations and the extent of the study, which marks the end of chapter one. Chapter two was dedicated to reviewing the literature supporting the study. This chapter included three main areas: theoretical and empirical literature review theoretical and conceptual frameworks. Scholarly works supporting the study and the frameworks thereof were included. In chapter three, the research methodology was examined in detail. Areas such as research design, the location of the study, target population, data collection methods, data analysis and presentation, and, finally, ethical considerations were covered.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

A literature review is the foundation pillar of this study. It offers a deep dive into the existing scholarly works and research findings relevant to the role of public relations practices in county legislation processes and public participation. The chapter assessed the literature on the concept of public relations practice and legislation effectiveness among county governments, the literature on the study variables, gaps, and the study's conceptual framework.

2.1 Theoretical Literature

Public relations, political science, and governance studies encompass core concepts that establish the context for understanding PR's role in legislative processes and county governance. In particular, concepts like transparency, public accountability, stakeholder engagement, and communication effectiveness are central to public relations practice in governance contexts. These ideas underscore the vital role that PR plays in fostering an informed and engaged citizenry, building public trust, and ensuring that legislative actions are responsive to community needs.

Transparency in governance is essential for building public trust and fostering a culture of accountability. Effective PR practices contribute to transparency by providing clear, consistent, and accessible information on legislative processes, thus enabling citizens to understand and participate in governance. Studies in governance have demonstrated that transparent communication helps bridge the gap between government institutions and the public, reducing information asymmetry and enabling citizens to make informed decisions regarding legislative matters.

Public accountability is closely related to transparency and is a core objective of public relations efforts in governance. Accountability in legislative processes ensures that elected representatives are answerable to the public, while PR serves as a channel through which governments communicate their actions, rationale, and impact on public policy. This concept reflects the importance of using PR to report on legislative decisions and actively seek feedback from stakeholders, thereby reinforcing accountability to the public.

Stakeholder engagement is another key concept that emphasizes the importance of involving community members, organizations, and other groups in legislative discussions and decision-making processes. In the context of county governance, stakeholder engagement through PR helps create a more inclusive environment where diverse perspectives are considered. Effective engagement strategies may include community outreach programs, public consultations, and digital engagement tools that allow stakeholders to voice their opinions and contribute to the legislative process.

Communication effectiveness addresses how well public relations strategies convey complex legislative information in a way that is understandable and actionable for the public. In the context of legislative communication, effectiveness involves selecting the appropriate channels, tailoring messages to the audience's level of understanding, and ensuring consistent updates. Public relations' role in crafting clear and impactful messaging is critical for fostering an informed public that can participate meaningfully in governance.

By grounding the study in these key concepts from public relations, political science, and governance, the research can provide a more nuanced understanding of how PR practices contribute to legislative engagement and public awareness. These foundational ideas form the basis for examining how PR enhances or hinders effective communication within county legislative

processes, providing insights into how public institutions can improve their outreach and transparency to foster a more participatory governance model.

2.2 Empirical Literature Review

An empirical literature review focuses on the existing verifiable literature. The purpose of this section is to give a conceptual assessment and identify gaps in the objectives of the research. The literature review aims to provide a detailed and inclusive perspective on the changing workings within Kenya's county governments, with a specific view on the legislative processes. By thoroughly reviewing the current scholarly contributions to this field, this section attempts to shed light on essential realizations, patterns, and discoveries that form the basis for understanding the role of public relations practice during the county legislation process and engagement among county governments.

2.2.1 Stakeholder Awareness Regarding the Existing Legislative Framework

Leu et al. (2022) conducted a comprehensive cross-national comparison of the different legislations. The study explored the frameworks for policy and service developed to safeguard and assist adolescent young carers across European countries and how these frameworks are implemented. Unlike previous research that focused primarily on quantifying the number of young carers and the impact of their caregiving responsibilities, this study takes a comprehensive approach by examining policy responses to the young carers and interviewing experts. An analysis of 25 interviews and a cross-national synthesis reveals varying responses to young carers, ranging from robust protection and support in policy and legislation, including a clear definition for young carers, to a total absence of recognition and assistance. The findings underscore the potential to expand existing legislation, policy, and service frameworks to encompass adult young carers and

stress the importance of acknowledging and raising awareness about young carers. Efforts to raise awareness should target professionals in the healthcare, social services, and education sectors, as well as the general public. Moreover, the study suggests establishing a standardized definition for young carers to facilitate self-identification and emphasizes the significance of recognizing adult young carers as a vital demographic for policymakers to address.

The article by Pleasence, Balmer, and Denvir (2017) investigated the general public's awareness regarding their rights in the consumer, housing, and employment law domains. Using data from the English and Welsh Civil and Social Justice Survey, which was conducted between 2010 and 2012, the study analyses responses to hypothetical scenarios in order to investigate the public's understanding of legal rights and the factors influencing this awareness. The results highlight a significant gap in individuals' understanding of their legal rights and duties, even among those directly affected by specific rights and obligations. In addition, the study discusses the implications of these findings for public legal education and the legal system's thoroughness, efficacy, and legitimacy.

The study by Weisiko (2023) examined the relationship between public participation in legislative processes and good governance in Kenya using qualitative research methods such as desktop research and literature reviews. The study primarily focused on investigating legislation and bills related to public participation in Kenya, with research questions and objectives derived from these sources. Important discoveries show that the absence of comprehensive laws governing public participation in Kenya's legislative process is the root cause of historical abstraction. The research suggests passing a public engagement Act and conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the current feedback channels to improve the implementation of public engagement in legislative processes. Further, the research underscores the crucial role of public participation in fostering

good governance, constitutionalism, the rule of law, human rights, and inclusivity in legislative processes in Kenya and across Africa. Finally, the study advocates for a practical and substantive realization of the right to public participation through effective implementation, challenging the theoretical approach in existing literature.

In Nigeria, Apeh and Didiugwu (2017) examined factors that enhance collaboration by facilitating faster and more efficient communication between the government and citizens. The study aimed to assess the extent of public awareness and utilization of Nigerian government agencies' websites, utilizing the Uses and Gratification Theory as its theoretical framework to achieve the study's objective. The investigation utilized in-depth phone interviews with 200 respondents selected through judgmental sampling from a population of 3,257,298 residents in Enugu State, employing a qualitative research design. The findings indicated limited exposure to government agencies' websites among Nigerian residents. Consequently, the study recommends enhancing government agencies' website services, emphasizing the need for improved speed and quality in policy development, coordination, and enforcement across all government ministries' websites.

Safari and Mbithi (2022) investigated the implications of public policy implementation on service delivery within the Kilifi County government in Kenya. Guided by citizen involvement and goal-setting theories, the research employed a correlational research design, targeting all county departments. The total respondents, including workers from various departments, county assembly members, and the general public, amounted to 160 individuals, with a sample size of 112 determined using the Taro Yamane formula. Data collection involved questionnaires and key informant interviews, with content validity and a pilot test ensuring the reliability of the instruments. Descriptive and inferential statistics and regression and correlation analyses were employed for quantitative data analysis. The findings indicated weak positive correlations between

stakeholder engagement, public participation, implementation framework, and policy evaluation plan with service delivery. The study recommends improving public policy implementation processes to enhance county performance and service delivery, highlighting the need for future research to explore moderating and mediating influences on the identified relationships.

Ibrahim and Khasoa (2021) looked into the ways in which people with disabilities (PWDs) who resided in rural regions took part in county planning and budgeting. They focused primarily on how well-informed PWDs were about the laws, regulations, and organizational structures that control these procedures in Kisumu County. With the Social Model Theory of Disability serving as a guide, the study employed a mixed-methods research approach, choosing to interview 11 key informants from various PWD groups and survey 30% of the 775 PWDs in the Muhoroni sub-county. Among the methods used to collect data were vital informant interviews (KIIs), focus groups (FGDs) with PWDs and self-help group leaders, and surveys. The study's findings showed that among the people living with disabilities, there was low awareness regarding legal provisions. Further, the inclusion strategies were ineffective, hindering participation by people living with disabilities, and the mobilization efforts bore mixed success. The study concluded that participation levels of people living with disabilities faced many challenges, calling for a targeted intervention to promote their inclusion.

2.2.2 Methods Used to Deliver Information About Legislative Processes

According to Hermanto and Aryani (2021), recognizing the potential of legislative reform to establish detailed, efficient and effective legislative drafting frameworks within legally transplanted omnibus legislation, this research seeks to assess the utilization of omnibus legislation as a comparative legal tool in Indonesia, Turkey, and Serbia. The objective is to identify, analyze, and make clear the legislative processes in these countries. In doing so, the research emphasizes

the significance of omnibus legislation despite factors driven by possibilities, obstacles, and standard measurements. Developing countries face challenges in transitioning their legislative architecture through proposed legislative reforms. The study aimed to shed light on the importance of omnibus legislation in advancing the legislative reform agenda pursued by developing countries.

Vadlamannati and Cooray (2017) examined the impact of Freedom of Information (FOI) laws on facilitating citizens' access to government information, enhancing transparency, and ensuring government accountability in approximately 90 countries. The research investigated the relationship between the perceived level of government corruption and the application of Freedom of Information laws using quantitative analysis based on panel data spanning 132 countries between 1990 and 2011. Even after adjusting for self-selection bias, the findings indicated that passing FOI laws is associated with an increase in the impression of government corruption, which is fuelled by an increased awareness of corrupt practices. Interestingly, this picture is reinforced when FOI laws are combined with more media freedom, active NGO participation, and increased political competitiveness. The report does note that popular opinions of government corruption tend to wane over time after FOI laws are passed. Even when endogeneity is considered through the use of different samples, instrumental variables, and estimate techniques, these conclusions hold up well. The research focuses on combining FOI laws with factors like media freedom, NGO engagement, and political competition without delving into the nuanced interactions and potential trade-offs between these elements. A more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics between FOI laws and contextual factors could enhance the applicability of the findings.

A study by Mailu and Kariuki (2022) investigated the impact of strategic leadership practices on the organizational performance of not-for-profit organizations in Nairobi County, Kenya, utilizing

a convergent mixed-method research design targeting not-for-profits; the study focuses on determining the effects of strategic direction, human capital development, ethical practices, and balanced strategic control. Data was collected through survey questionnaires and interviews with 305 strategic leaders selected via simple random sampling. SPSS version 21 was employed for data processing and analysis. Results indicate a significant positive correlation between overall strategic leadership practices.

Further, the results indicated that strategic direction, developing human capital, ethical practices, and strategic control also influence organizational performance. The study recommended adopting strategic leadership practices in not-for-profits to enhance organizational performance. However, the study failed to examine significant concepts such as ethical practices and strategic control that enhance performance.

A study by Cedergren, Hassel, and Tehler (2022) examines the factors that impact implementation and the outcomes generated by the risk management process. Data gathering involved administering a questionnaire on five occasions throughout the study. Supplementary to the questionnaire outcomes, an interview study was conducted to acquire more profound insights into the factors influencing the evolution of the risk management process. The results highlight a developmental progression over time, notably demonstrating heightened risk awareness among individuals engaged in the process. Nevertheless, the findings also suggest that the impact of the risk management process was somewhat constrained, with limited dissemination of outcomes to the broader organization. Notably, individuals at the management level exhibited a diminishing commitment to the risk management process over the 3.5 years.

Mmene (2021) examines how Kenya's legal framework for public participation works. The study contends that this ambiguity stems from a clear definition of the right in the Constitution, statutes, or judicial decisions. The study employs a doctrinal research methodology to illustrate that the substance, structure, and threshold of the right to public participation in Kenya remain undefined and unresolved. Examining case law, legislative frameworks, and institutional structures reveals significant deficiencies in Kenya's approach to public participation rights. Courts have not articulated a definitive "reasonability" test to determine the threshold, leaving the qualitative and quantitative aspects ambiguous. The Public Participation Bill 2018 needs to address these legal challenges adequately. Additionally, the study adopts a comparative research methodology to draw lessons from South Africa's experience, particularly from its courts, which have provided clear definitions and guidelines for parliament's duty to facilitate public involvement. The study proposes an ideal correct definition and clarifies the reasonability test for determining the threshold required to fulfill this duty.

2.2.3 Communication Processes Employed to Disseminate Information About Legislative Processes

Hyland-Wood, Gardner, Leask, and Ecker (2021) studied the role of effective communication processes in ensuring compliance and understanding of bylaws. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining surveys and case studies. The quantitative component involved surveying residents to gauge their awareness and compliance with specific bylaws, while the qualitative case studies delved into the experiences of municipal officials responsible for implementing these regulations. The study further shed light on administrative challenges faced by municipal officials, such as limited resources and the need for capacity-building initiatives.

Kim and Kreps (2020), an analysis of government communication in the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic in the USA, aims to identify challenges and best practices in crisis communication processes. Instances of inadequate government communication have resulted in significant public confusion, misunderstandings, and critical errors in responding to the evolving health threat. These shortcomings have led to detrimental health and social outcomes, particularly within the United States, exacerbating the duration of the pandemic. The article employs systems theory as a framework for evaluating government communication in the US throughout the COVID-19 crisis, offering recommendations to help governments establish effective health-risk communication strategies. The proposed communication strategies advocate for disseminating pertinent, accurate, and sensitive information to key public groups, minimizing communication noise to guide coordinated and desirable actions. The strategies are applicable at local, national, and international levels.

A study by Eja and Ramegowda (2020) on the factors contributing to project failures in developing countries focused on Nigeria. The study revealed that project failures are prevalent in developing nations, notably Nigeria, with numerous identified causes, effects, and consequences. Some established causes include insufficient financial capacity, inaccurate costing, and corruption; incompetence and lack of knowledge; deficient planning and estimation; ineffective communication; inadequate contracting and contractor practices; frequent changes and errors in design scope; socio-cultural and political interference; poor leadership; and corruption. The effects of project failure surrounded the state's revenue loss, project cost overruns, diminished income for citizens, substandard infrastructure, and reduced community empowerment. The outcomes included sluggish economic growth, sector-specific underdevelopment, a decline in foreign aid and grants, stricter donor regulations, electoral losses for incumbent leadership, and a lack of

confidence in the state from financial institutions. The study recommended a comprehensive overhaul of Nigeria's policy framework to address the root causes of project failure, with a particular emphasis on combating corruption.

According to research conducted by Syallow (2019) on the role of information dispersion in employee engagement in Kenya, transparent and timely communication showed significant improvements in employee perception. The research focused on measuring the timeliness and clarity of information dispersion and its impact on employee engagement and satisfaction. The outcomes indicated that timely and transparent communication significantly improved employee perception, demonstrating the significance of effective communication in organizational settings.

2.2.4 Public relations practices in legislative communication

Effective public relations (PR) practices are vital in legislative communication to ensure that stakeholders, including citizens, are well-informed and can actively participate in governance processes. Several studies highlight the critical role PR plays in bridging the information gap between government institutions and the public, promoting transparency, trust, and engagement.

Hyland-Wood, Gardner, Leask, and Ecker (2021) examined the role of communication processes in ensuring public compliance and understanding of government policies using a mixed-method approach that combined surveys and case studies. Their findings emphasized the importance of clear, consistent, and accessible communication, revealing that challenges like resource limitations and inadequate PR capacities hindered effective legislative communication. This study underscores the need for strategic PR practices to foster public understanding and adherence to government initiatives, which are crucial in legislative contexts.

In the context of crisis communication, Kim and Kreps (2020) analyzed the effectiveness of government PR during the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States. Their research identified significant public confusion stemming from inconsistent messaging, which hindered public compliance with health regulations. Using systems theory as a framework, they recommended practices such as minimizing communication noise and delivering timely, accurate information. Though focused on health crisis communication, these recommendations are applicable in legislative PR to build public confidence and foster proactive citizen engagement.

Eja and Ramegowda (2020) explored project failures in Nigeria and highlighted ineffective communication as a contributing factor to legislative and project-related challenges. Their study demonstrated that public relations deficiencies, alongside corruption and mismanagement, contributed to public distrust in legislative projects. This research illustrates the need for transparent, accountable communication practices in legislative PR to maintain public trust and support for legislative initiatives, especially in project-based governance.

Syallow (2019) investigated the impact of information transparency on employee engagement in Kenya, finding that timely and clear information improved organizational commitment. Although centered on corporate settings, this research emphasizes the general applicability of PR principles, such as transparency and timely communication, to enhance stakeholder engagement. In a legislative setting, transparent PR efforts help foster a sense of inclusion and understanding among the public, leading to greater acceptance of legislative outcomes.

These studies collectively highlight that strategic PR practices are essential in legislative communication, advocating for transparency, consistency, and accountability to build public trust and facilitate meaningful public engagement.

2.3 Critical Review and Research Gaps Identification

The studies conducted by Mehryar and Surminski (2020), Apeh and Didiugwu (2017), and Safari and Mbithi (2022) each reveal specific gaps within their research domains. A significant gap is found in Mehryar and Surminski's research of Flood Risk Management (FRM) laws in England, which is primarily reactive. The analysis exposes a lack of consideration for future hazards and a limited acknowledgment of proactive approaches to flood risk management. It implies that, in light of climate change, more comprehensive and aggressive legislative frameworks are needed. Apeh and Didiugwu's study on public awareness and utilization of Nigerian government agencies' websites exposes a gap regarding the limited exposure among residents, signaling the need for strategies to enhance citizen engagement with online government platforms.

Safari and Mbithi's research on public policy implementation in Kilifi County, Kenya, suggests a gap related to the lack of exploration into moderating and mediating influences on the identified correlations between stakeholder engagement, public participation, the implementation framework, the policy evaluation plan, and service delivery. Hermanto and Aryani's (2020) study emphasizes the significance of collecting legislation without delving into potential challenges, limitations, or criticisms associated with its implementation, leaving room for a more nuanced understanding of the complexities involved.

In addition, Vadlamannati and Cooray's research focuses on combining FOI laws with factors like media freedom, NGO engagement, and political competition without delving into the nuanced interactions and potential trade-offs between these elements. If a more complete understanding of the relationships between FOI legislation and contextual elements is attained, the findings have broader applicability. The study conducted by Mailu and Kariuki (2022) on strategic leadership practices in Nairobi County's not-for-profit organizations has a weakness: it needed to thoroughly

explore the concepts of ethical behaviour and strategic control, which are identified as having an impact on organizational performance. These components are mentioned in the research, but their purposes and effects are not discussed in great detail, which limits our comprehension of these crucial subjects. A more thorough investigation of ethical practices and strategic control would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of their impact on organizational performance.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

This section illustrates the theories supporting the study. Agenda-setting and stakeholder theories support the study.

Agenda-Setting Theory

The agenda-setting theory was founded by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in 1968 (Efendi et al., 2022). The theory states that communication practices and media can influence which issues gain attention among the public. The agenda-setting theory explains a lot about media and perception. However, it oversimplifies the dynamics of media and the audience by generalizing on the cause-and-effect phenomenon (Coleman et al., 2009). The relationship between media and the audience is not as simple as the agenda-setting theory portrays. On the contrary, the relationship between media and the audience is complex due to the way people interpret and process information. People's pre-existing beliefs, values, and personal experiences have to be taken into consideration in order to view the relationship holistically.

Agenda-setting theory also has strengths that make it a popular theory in media studies. It can point out the significant impact of the media on the public agenda. Various research on the theory has demonstrated that the topics and issues emphasized by the media tend to agree with what the public regards as imperative.

The theory is applicable given that it helps understand how communication influences public perceptions of legislation issues. It is often employed to analyze news coverage, framing effects, and the media's role in shaping public discourse since it can help understand how strategic communication efforts influence the prioritization and attention given to legislative matters in Embu County. The theory is the perfect yardstick for evaluating the effectiveness of the communication channels utilized by the County Government in circulating information regarding participation in legislation processes as well as the methods that are best suited to delivering the information.

The theory is particularly useful for understanding how strategic communication from the county's PR office impacts the public's awareness and engagement with legislative processes. By analyzing the communication channels used, such as social media, radio, and the official county website, the theory helps to assess how effectively the county government sets the public agenda around legislative participation. This analysis is crucial as it offers insight into how certain legislative issues gain prominence in public discourse while others may be overlooked.

The agenda-setting theory is also useful for evaluating the effectiveness of framing techniques employed by the county PR office. The way information is framed, including the language, visuals, and emphasis on certain issues over others, plays a significant role in guiding public opinion. For instance, by highlighting the importance of public participation in legislative sessions or consultations, the county's PR office can influence how much attention the public gives to these processes. This approach also helps to measure the impact of media coverage on public perception,

determining whether the issues prioritized by the PR office align with those that the public deems critical.

Stakeholder Theory

Edward Freeman developed stakeholder theory in 1984, asserting the involvement of all stakeholders in any organization's decision-making process (Freeman et al., 2010). It asserts the need to balance, understand, and manage all the needs of stakeholders influenced by the decisions of the organization. The theory emphasizes the need to be thorough in considering the interests of the various stakeholders affected by a decision in order to make it ethical and sustainable, as Freeman (2023) emphasizes. In this study, it is helpful in understanding the engagement of the various stakeholders in the legislative process in Embu County. It involves learning the interests of the Embu County stakeholders by means of establishing a communication channel that promotes transparency in the legislative process. Public relations have a huge responsibility to build trust in the legislative process of Embu County. The theory is a blueprint for the management of the interests of various stakeholders, including the press, the public, NGOs, leaders, and county government officials involved in the legislative process in the County. The application of the theory could be an asset to the county PR practitioners in building trust in the legislative process and ensuring the stakeholder's interests are reflected in the legislation.

Additionally, it can be a measure of the level of awareness of the legislative processes among the stakeholders and provide insight into the channels suitable for circulating information among the stakeholders. This theory is particularly valuable for analyzing the county PR office's role in fostering transparency and building trust among stakeholders. In legislative matters, trust is crucial for ensuring that stakeholders feel their interests are considered and reflected in decision-making. For PR practitioners, Stakeholder Theory serves as a guide for creating communication strategies

that involve all relevant parties in the legislative process, ensuring that the legislative outcomes reflect the needs and concerns of the community.

One key aspect of Stakeholder Theory is its focus on transparency and engagement. For Embu County, establishing transparent communication channels through which stakeholders can voice their opinions and access information is critical. The PR office must develop strategies that not only disseminate legislative updates but also encourage two-way communication where stakeholders can give feedback and participate in discussions about legislative decisions. This theory underscores the need for a balanced approach to communication that ensures the voices of marginalized groups, rural residents, and underrepresented communities are included alongside those of more powerful stakeholders.

By applying the Stakeholder Theory, the study can also assess how well Embu County manages the interests of its diverse stakeholders. For instance, it can measure how effectively the county uses different communication channels—such as town hall meetings, social media platforms, and traditional media like radio—to reach various groups. Additionally, the theory helps in evaluating how these PR efforts impact stakeholders' trust in the legislative process. For example, if stakeholders perceive that their input is considered in legislative decisions, it could lead to higher levels of public trust and participation.

Furthermore, Stakeholder Theory is instrumental in evaluating how PR can serve as a tool for conflict resolution among different stakeholder groups. Legislative processes often involve competing interests, and effective PR strategies can help mediate these differences by ensuring that all parties are heard and their concerns addressed. The theory supports the notion that a well-managed stakeholder communication strategy contributes to more inclusive and participatory governance.



2.5 Conceptual Framework

Figure 2.1 represents the conceptual framework illustrating the connection between the independent variables (public relations practice) and the dependent variable (information dissemination).

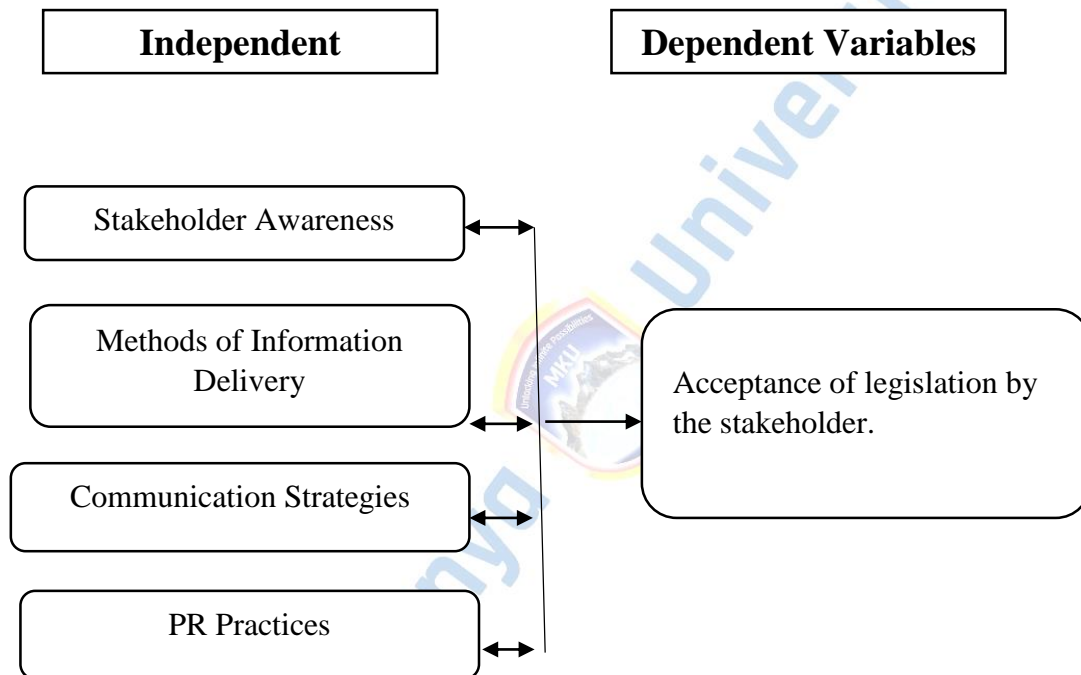


Figure 2. 1: Conceptual Framework

Stakeholder Awareness

Public awareness, self-awareness, and organizational awareness combine to create an informed citizenry. Individuals who follow current events, have critical thinking skills and self-awareness and understand how relevant organizations work are more inclined to be engaged in the political process and favor democratic governance. Being well-informed, people begin to affect public policy, demand more accountability from elected officials representing their interests, and push for laws that mirror their value systems. Increased public, individual, and organizational awareness can lead to a more active and engaged citizenry, which, in turn, will bolster democratic processes and further social development. It measures how well the public understands the legislative process, including when and how laws are proposed, discussed, and enacted. Public awareness is directly influenced by the effectiveness of PR strategies in disseminating relevant information and educating citizens on their role in governance.

When stakeholders are aware of legislative processes, goals, and implications, they are more likely to understand and accept the resulting policies. Awareness enhances transparency and reduces misunderstandings, enabling stakeholders to see the legislation's relevance to their interests. By informing stakeholders early and comprehensively, PR can build trust and facilitate a smoother path to acceptance, as informed citizens are more likely to support policies they comprehend and find beneficial.

Methods of Information Delivery

It includes the various platforms used by the county government to disseminate information regarding the legislative process. Channels could include traditional media (radio, TV), social

media, press releases, community forums, and the official county website. These channels are vital in determining how well the government communicates legislative activities and engages the public. Effective communication processes within the government promote accountability and transparency. The source should be deemed credible and reliable to promote public confidence and trust. The message should be straightforward, factual, and complete to ensure that citizens have access to credible information about what the government does or decides. By using multiple communication avenues, including traditional and digital media, the government reaches more people and increases public access to information, resulting in transparency and accountability. Further, integrating feedback encourages the government to be responsive to the public's concerns, allowing it to express grievances, complaints, and concerns more fairly and accountable. By encouraging transparent, factual, inclusive and responsive communication processes, governments have demonstrated accountability to the citizens they serve, enhancing trust and engagement in the governance process.

When information is delivered in accessible and relevant formats, stakeholders are more likely to engage positively with the content, increasing their sense of inclusion and involvement in legislative processes. Consequently, effective delivery methods enhance understanding, participation, and the eventual acceptance of legislative decisions by stakeholders, as they feel more informed and connected to the legislative process.

Communication Process

Communication processes should be incorporated within government systems to promote accountability. First, the credibility and trustworthiness of the source of the information contribute to the level of public opinion on how credible their actions are. When governments communicate

as responsible agents, the public becomes confident of the trustworthiness of what the government does. The effectiveness of the message also contributes to accountability. The message should be factual, accurate, and complete for the government to be answerable. First, the complete information that gives factual news will likely help the public hold the government accountable. The government should also be factual, clear, and transparent regarding all it does and how it does it. The government should use diverse means of communication to ensure that the audience gets the information it wishes with equal measure. It may include traditional broadcast means and other digital means. Moreover, the government should use feedback as a measure of commitment to consider the people's opinions and grievances.

Strategies that emphasize transparency, consistency, and two-way communication can build trust and credibility, which are crucial for acceptance. For example, strategies that include frequent updates, opportunities for stakeholder feedback, and simplified messaging ensure that the legislative process is open and participatory. When stakeholders feel that their voices are heard and their concerns are acknowledged, they are more likely to accept legislative outcomes. In contrast, ineffective strategies that lack clarity or exclude feedback channels may lead to disengagement or opposition to legislation.

Public Relations Practices

Effective PR practices, including media relations, crisis communication, and community engagement, directly impact stakeholders' perception and trust in legislative processes. By using PR to manage communication consistently, maintain positive relationships with the public, and address stakeholder concerns, county governments can foster goodwill and credibility. PR practices that emphasize inclusivity and address the diverse needs of stakeholders contribute to a

greater sense of ownership and trust in the legislative process. When stakeholders perceive PR efforts as sincere and aligned with their interests, they are more likely to support and accept legislative initiatives.

2.6 Summary

Chapter two examines the study's foundation by evaluating the existing body of knowledge relevant to the topic. The literature review expounds on the theoretical concepts, frameworks and perspectives related to public relations practice, county governance and legislative processes. A thorough review of the components of this chapter exposes the relationship between the objectives and the research questions.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

Chapter three presents the methodology used to carry out the study. It elaborates on the research design employed, the scope of the study, the target population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection procedure, and data analysis. Furthermore, it highlights how the data was presented and the ethics considered in collecting the data.

3.1. Research Design

The study used a mixed-method research approach to measure the variables and identify and describe the various perspectives. The mixed-method approach used questionnaires and interviews as the data collection methods. These methods are best suited for the study. Mixed methodology allows the researcher to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data, providing a holistic view of the public relations practices in Embu County during the legislative process. At the same time, qualitative data can uncover in-depth insights into the experiences, perceptions, and strategies of key stakeholders. Public relations practices can be deeply contextual, often shaped by local culture, governance structures, and specific community needs. The qualitative aspect of the study allows the researcher to capture these nuanced factors, whereas the quantitative approach can provide measurable indicators of how these practices influence the legislative process.

Embu County was selected as the study site due to several unique characteristics that make it an ideal setting for examining public awareness, sensitization, and participation in legislative processes. Embu is a moderately populous county with a diverse demographic profile, including various educational backgrounds, age groups, and socio-economic statuses, allowing for a representative sample of public opinion on legislative matters. The county's active approach to

legislative development, as highlighted by Mmene (2021), places it among Kenya's leading counties in terms of legislative activity, making it a prime site for studying public engagement in the governance process. Furthermore, Embu County's geographical proximity to the researcher's institution enhances logistical feasibility, allowing for thorough data collection and engagement with stakeholders within the county.

The use of questionnaires and interviews as data collection methods was well-suited for this study as they enabled both quantitative and qualitative data to be gathered. Questionnaires allow for efficient collection of data from a large number of respondents, enabling the researcher to measure variables like awareness levels and attitudes quantitatively. This method is beneficial for capturing a broad spectrum of public opinion across various demographics, providing a comprehensive view of legislative awareness and participation within Embu County.

Interviews complement questionnaires by offering qualitative insights, especially from key stakeholders such as county officials and community leaders. Interviews provide an in-depth understanding of the perspectives, challenges, and experiences of those directly involved in the legislative process, which quantitative methods alone might not capture. Together, questionnaires and interviews provided a balanced approach that allows for a thorough analysis of the effectiveness of public relations practices in fostering legislative awareness, participation, and acceptance among Embu County's residents.

3.2 Target Population

The target population is the particular group of people that a researcher aims to investigate and collect helpful information (Tabesh et al., 2019). According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics report, Embu County had a population of 608,599 people as of 2022 (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2019). The general population accounted for 608,565 people, while the

population of the MCAs was 31, according to the official website of the Embu County Assembly (“Members | County Assembly of Embu,” 2020). The study considers participants who have attained the age of 18 and above.

3.3.1 Sample Size

The sample was established using Yamane's 1967 formula. The formula is presented below at a 95% confidence level and a P value of 0.05.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where:

N = Total population;

n = the sample size;

ϵ = error term.

$$N = 608599 \quad \epsilon = 0.05$$

$$n = \frac{608599}{1+608599(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{608599}{1+1521} = 399.86$$

The sample size was 400 respondents.

Table 3.1: sample size

Category	Target population	Sample
Public Relations Director	1	1

Members of the County Assembly	31 (all MCAs)	31
Members of the public	608567	368
Total	608599	400

Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2019)

3.3.2 Sampling Technique

A sampling design refers to the strategy and methodology used to select a sample from a specific population (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). This research utilizes a random and purposive sampling design where the public participants were selected at random. The public relations director was purposively selected as he is the only person in that capacity. The MCAs were subjected to purposive sampling since their population is deficient, and as the representatives of the people, they provided valuable and diverse information from the various wards they represent. The methods chosen are to mitigate bias and subjectivity.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

3.4.1 Data Collection Instruments

Data collection was carried out using questionnaires and interviews. The members of the public and the MCAs were facilitated with the questionnaires and given adequate time to complete them before they were collected. The participants had five days to respond to the questions.

The interview was reserved for the public relations director. Prior notification was provided to book and schedule the interview and furnish the participants with the questions to be covered during the interview.

3.4.2 Procedures of Data Collection

Two research assistants were selected to administer the questionnaires. The assistants first took an excursion of the County, with each member being assigned a ward to familiarize themselves with the wards. Each member was responsible for initializing contact with the respondents of the general population. The questionnaires were printed out on paper for easy distribution. The questionnaires provided multiple choices for the respondents. The team was dispatched to each ward to facilitate the distribution of the questionnaires to the respondents. The research assistants were also responsible for educating the respondents on the details to provide, the period given for responding to the questionnaires and how to fill in the questionnaire for quality data. Data from the MCAs was also collected using questionnaires. The questionnaires had multiple choices for the respondents' MCAs.

The interview process was carefully structured to ensure a clear and effective exchange of information. A copy of the interview guide was sent to the single interviewee in advance, providing them with the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the questions before the scheduled interview. This pre-interview preparation allowed the interviewee to reflect on the questions and ensure they could respond thoughtfully and with clarity. The interview guide included a list of specific questions organized in a logical order to facilitate a smooth conversation. Additionally, the guide highlighted areas that may require further clarification or follow-up questions, ensuring that the interview could explore key topics in depth. This structure was important for maintaining focus and consistency during the interview while also allowing flexibility to delve deeper into responses when necessary. By providing the interviewee with the guide ahead of time, the process was made transparent, which encouraged the interviewee to engage more openly. The guide also served as a valuable reference during the interview,

ensuring that all relevant topics were covered and reducing the risk of omitting critical areas of discussion. Once the interview was conducted, the completed responses were carefully reviewed and collected, adhering to the timeline set for the study. This methodical approach helped to ensure that the data gathered was both relevant and comprehensive, aligning with the research objectives and enhancing the overall quality of the study.

3.4.3 Reliability and Validity of Instruments

The instruments for collecting data were put to the test to ascertain their credibility in delivering reliable and valid data suitable for answering the research questions.

Reliability

In the study, the testing and pretesting of the research instruments were critical steps in ensuring their reliability and efficiency. Prior to the main data collection phase, the instruments underwent a pre-testing phase to identify and address any potential issues. This phase was carried out with a selected group of participants, specifically a dispatch team, who were tasked with providing feedback on the instruments.

The pre-test focused on evaluating several key aspects of the instruments:

Comprehensibility: The participants were asked to assess whether the questions were easy to understand and whether the language used was clear and straightforward. Any ambiguous terms or confusing phrases were noted and modified to enhance clarity.

Clarity: The clarity of the questions and instructions was examined to ensure that respondents would not be uncertain about how to answer or interpret the questions. Adjustments were made to improve the precision of the items.

Relevance: The pre-test also assessed whether the instruments addressed the study's objectives and were relevant to the context of the research. Any questions that were deemed irrelevant or off-topic were either revised or removed.

Feedback from the pre-testing phase was carefully reviewed, and necessary modifications were made to the instruments. It includes rewording questions, adding clarifications, or eliminating redundant items. The goal was to ensure that the instruments were both effective in gathering the necessary data and suitable for the study's context.

Once the instruments were refined based on the pre-test feedback, the final versions were used for the main data collection. This pre-testing process helped to ensure that the research instruments were both reliable in yielding valid results and efficient in capturing relevant data from the target population.

Validity

Specialists in public relations, county governance, and legislative procedures helped ascertain the validity of the questionnaires. Their immense experience in the matter being researched came in handy in shaping the questionnaires to ensure they capture the relevant information that mainly addresses the objectives of the research. The specialists reviewed the questions to check for the desired constructs about public relations practice in the County Government of Embu and during legislation processes. The advice of the specialists was helpful in improving the questionnaire items to reflect the research's objectives and guarantee reliable results accurately.

Reliable results were dependent on the study's instruments. With the help of expert reviews, the study's instruments were moderated to ensure they were appropriate and relevant to the participants in the Embu County Government. The tools were evaluated by the experts for suitability, clarity, and relevance to the study population and the unique circumstances of the

County Government of Embu governance. The expert's input was vital in improving the study's instrument validity for a thriving collection of data. These rigorous validity testing procedures are imperative to ensure that the research instruments meaningfully and accurately capture the desired information about the role of public relations practice in promoting effective governance and stakeholder engagement within the context of the Embu County Government.

3.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of applying statistical methods to identify patterns in collected information and produce meaningful interpretations (Wickham & Wickham, 2016). The collected information is processed by first cleaning to eliminate redundant and incomplete pieces of records. The cleaning process ensures that the data is consistent. The cleaned data is sorted and checked for completeness for easy analysis and interpretation. Various software applications can be used for data cleaning, but the most common is Excel. Robust data analytics packages are essential to provide wholesome data interpretation, including visualization, for easy reading. The study implemented graphs and tables to present demographic data such as age and gender distribution among the study participants. Percentages and frequencies were used to present the level of awareness of the legislative process among the respondents. They were helpful in the presentation of the methods of information delivery and their frequency in Embu County. In inferential statistics, correlation analysis was helpful in analyzing the relationship between awareness and the communication process. Besides, the study used Pearson's correlation coefficient to establish the strength and direction of the relationship between independent and dependent variables.

In data presentation, tables and figures were helpful in summarizing numeric data such as frequencies and levels of awareness. Graphs and charts were helpful for the visual presentation of data. The research included direct quotes by respondents in the textual analysis. It used narrative descriptions to explain findings, such as trends and patterns from the tables and charts. In the interpretation of results, there were links to various objectives relating to findings and the objectives.

3.6 Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations in research are paramount to ensuring the integrity, reliability, and respect of the study's participants.

Ethical Approval Procedures

In compliance with the law and institutional requirements, the researcher obtained formal ethical approval from Mount Kenya University's ethics review board. This approval ensured that the study adhered to ethical standards and protected the rights and welfare of all participants. Additionally, the researcher sought formal authorization from the Chief in each of the Wards where data collection took place. It was essential to not only ensure that the study met local governance and legal requirements but also to protect the researcher and participants throughout the data collection process. These measures were implemented to safeguard both the participants and the researcher, promoting an environment of trust and respect while ensuring full compliance with legal and ethical obligations.

Informed Consent

All participants were fully briefed on the study's objectives, the procedures involved, and the potential risks and benefits to ensure voluntary participation and informed decision-making. The

researcher provided clear, understandable information regarding the nature of the study and what participation would entail. Before any data collection began, participants were required to sign a written consent form, signifying their agreement to participate and to have their responses recorded for research purposes. Informed consent was emphasized to respect the autonomy of participants and ensure that they were fully aware of their rights, including the right to withdraw from the study at any point without facing any negative consequences.

Confidentiality

The confidentiality of participants was a paramount concern in this study. To protect their privacy, the researcher assured all participants that their identities would remain anonymous, and any personally identifiable information (such as names or specific locations) was excluded from the published findings. This anonymity was crucial to ensure that participants did not experience any negative repercussions or discomfort for taking part in the study. Furthermore, all collected data was handled in a manner that guaranteed its confidentiality. Information shared by participants was not disclosed to third parties, and access to raw data was restricted to the researcher and authorized personnel directly involved in the study. These measures were in place to prevent unauthorized access or misuse of the data.

Risks and Benefits

The researcher carefully assessed the potential risks and benefits associated with the study to ensure that participants were not exposed to unnecessary harm. Risks were minimal and included potential social or community pressures resulting from participation. There was a possibility that some participants might feel uncomfortable discussing the legislative processes in Embu County or could face negative feedback from their community for being part of the study. However, the

study posed no significant risk to the participants, and their involvement was unlikely to result in harm. The benefits of the study outweighed the risks, as the findings were expected to contribute valuable insights into the legislative communication processes within Embu County, potentially improving governance and public participation in the future. The researcher made every effort to mitigate risks, ensuring that participants felt safe and comfortable throughout the research process.

Data Storage

Ensuring the secure storage of data was a critical element of this study's ethical framework. All collected data was stored securely to prevent unauthorized access or loss. Hard copy data, such as signed consent forms and paper-based questionnaires, were stored in locked cabinets accessible only to the researcher. Digital data, including electronic survey responses and interview recordings, were protected using password encryption, two-factor authentication, and secure cloud-based storage systems. Regular data backups were conducted to safeguard against accidental data loss. The researcher ensured that all data would be stored for a specific period as stipulated by the university's data retention policies, after which it would be securely destroyed to maintain participants' confidentiality and comply with ethical standards.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with research findings and a detailed explanation of the outcomes. Every objective is taken into consideration to establish the effectiveness of the research in satisfying the objectives set out in the research.

4.1 Response Rate

The participation level was satisfactory. A total of 399 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents for data collection. The majority of the respondents who received the questionnaires were members of the public and employees of the County Government of Embu. The questionnaires received a 90% completion rate and were returned to the researcher. Early communication and prior arrangements for interviews enabled the interviewee to find time and attend the interview. The scheduled interview was a success, again accounting for a 100% response rate. The results for the data collection superseded expectations with a 90% delivery and equally satisfying the 50% threshold for a reasonable analysis.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The participants of the study had varied characteristics, and the diverse nature of the characteristics enriched the responses provided for the study by providing a broader understanding of the area of study. The variables of the dataset form the demographic characteristics. The variables include age distribution, gender, educational background, employment status, residency, sources of legislative information and effectiveness of the delivery methods.

4.2.1 Age Distribution

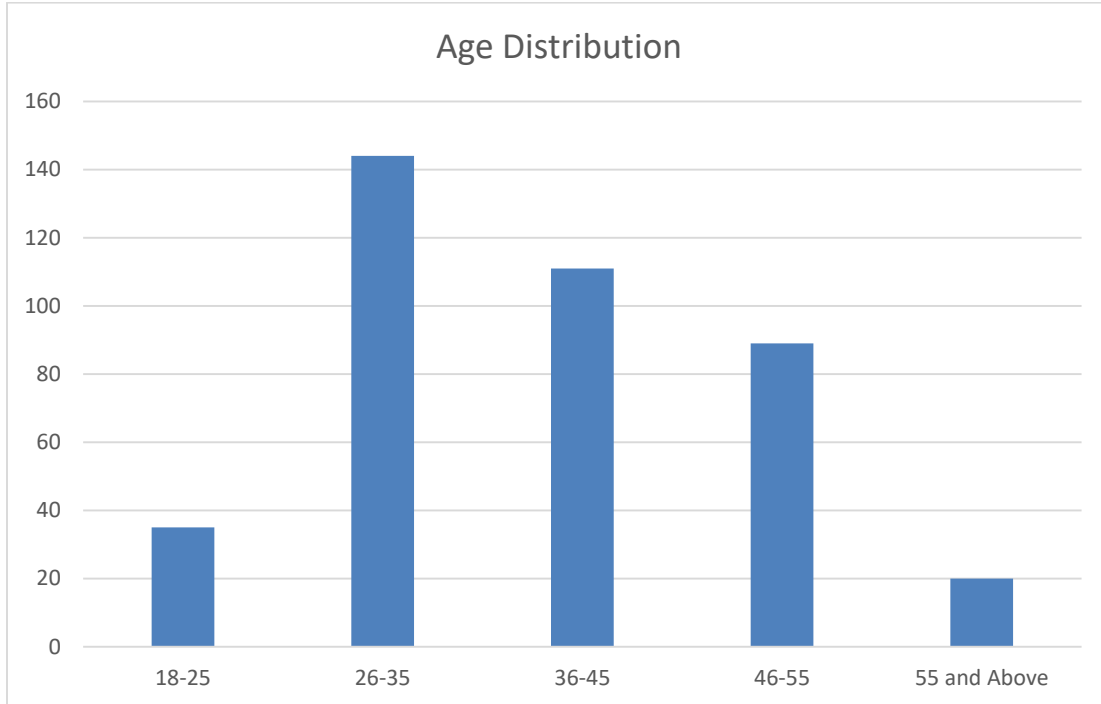


Fig. 4.1 Age distribution

Figure 4.1 shows the age distribution of the respondents, indicating that the majority of the respondents are within the age bracket of 26 and 35 years, constituting 36.1% of the total respondents. The age brackets 36 to 45 and 46 to 55 had 22.8% and 22.3% of the total respondents. The three age brackets had the majority of the respondents, with the high numbers being attributed to most people in this section being actively engaged with the current developments of the County Government. Additionally, they are well articulated with the dynamics of the county legislation process. Young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 had a representation of 8.8%. The majority of people in this group have limited knowledge of the legislation process and shy away from participating in the process. Respondents over the age of 56 had the most minor representation, as illustrated in Figure 4.1, with 5% of the total respondents. The section represents a group of older adults who may not have the time to participate in the grueling sessions of public participation.

4.2.2 Gender

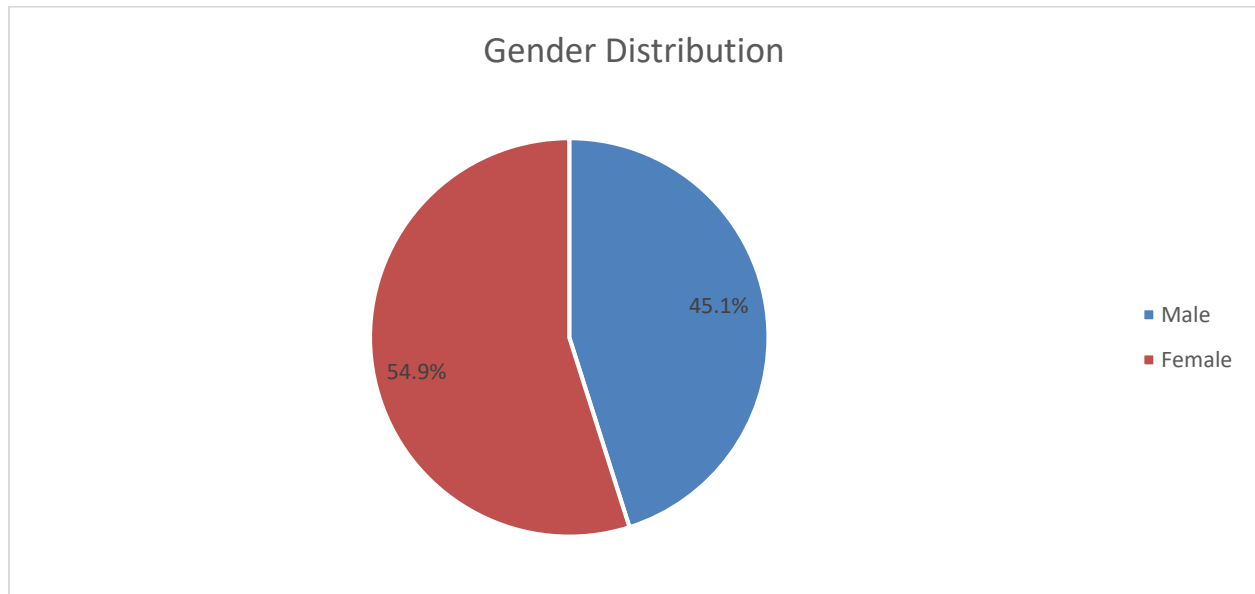


Fig. 4.2 Gender distribution

Figure 4.2 illustrates the male-to-female ratio and gender distribution of the respondents sampled. The population consisted of 180 males and 219 females, translating to 45.1% and 54.9% of the sample size, respectively. The data demonstrates that a large percentage of the female population is actively engaged in the legislation process in the county government compared to the male population. The gender distribution shows a slight difference in the participation levels between the males and females. Despite the slight difference, it is encouraging to see participation from both genders, showing the efforts of public relations in inviting the public to participate in legislation processes equally for both genders. According to Fombad and Jiyane (2019), effective public relations should be modeled to cut across the gender distribution without any form of discrimination. Including gender as a demographic variable is essential and ensures that all groups are represented in the study. By considering how gender impacts public relations practices, the research can help highlight any unequal access or treatment in the legislative process and advocate

for more inclusive strategies that promote gender equality in governance and communication efforts. Gender plays an important role in understanding the diverse perspectives, experiences, and dynamics at play.

4.2.3 Educational Background

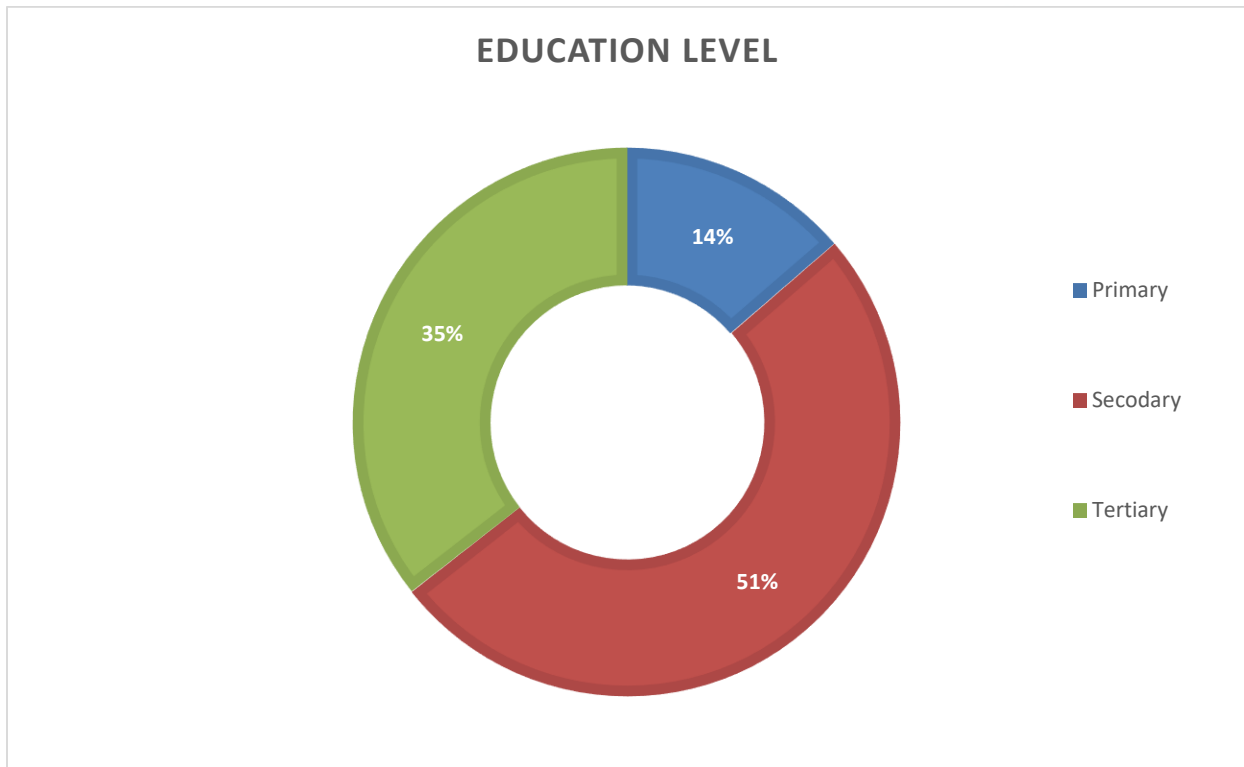


Fig. 4.3 Level of education

Figure 4.3 above represents the education level of the sample size. According to the figure above, all the respondents have had formal education, with the least educated having undergone primary education. There were only 50 respondents who attended primary education, accounting for 14% of the sample size. The secondary education level had 185 respondents, which constituted 50.7% of the sample size. One hundred thirty of the respondents had attained a tertiary level of education, accounting for 35.6% of the sample size. The education background distribution indicates that the majority of the residents of Embu County have had some level of formal education and, hence, are

capable of consuming information in print and digital media in both English and Kiswahili, which are the formal languages legally recognized. Public relations can, therefore, rely on the educational background of the people of Embu and utilize the necessary public relations strategies to design effective communication for disseminating information on legislation processes.

4.2.4 Length of Residency in Embu County

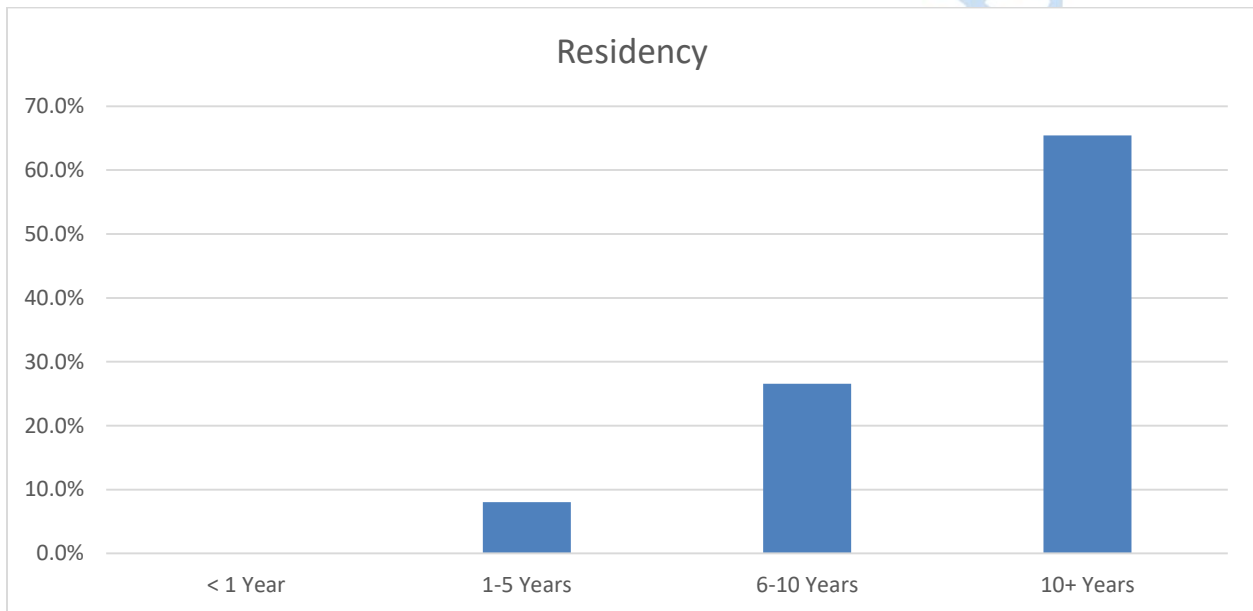


Fig. 4.4 Length of residency

The residency distribution depicted in Figure 4.4 illustrates that a majority of the respondents have lived in Embu for more than ten years. Residency information is crucial as it indicates that the population is well aware of the local legislative processes and the dynamics of the politics in the region. Therefore, the public can relate to communications by the public relations office on legislation processes and what is required of them when information is available to the public. Judging from the level of familiarity with the legislative processes by the locals and the level of investment they portray in community issues, the public relations issues can identify the means to motivate, encourage and coerce them into participating in these legislation processes. The mode

of communication can also be developed so that the locals are more receptive to the message and more likely to heed and participate in the legislative processes.

4.2.5 Sources of Information

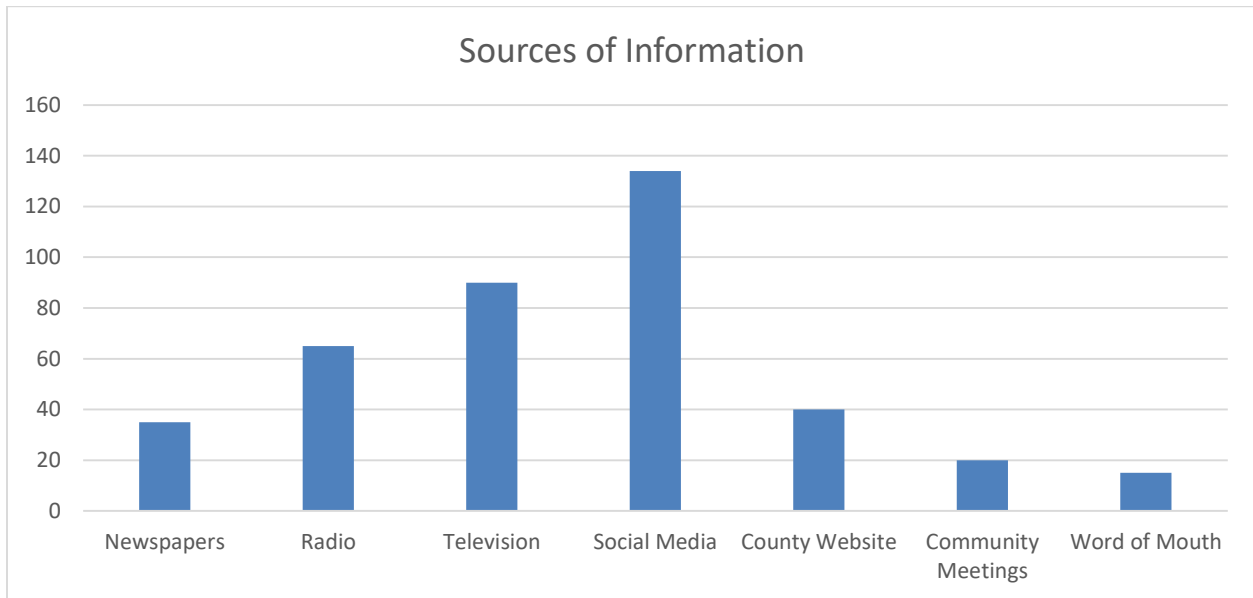


Fig 4.5 Sources of information

According to Figure 4.5, electronic and print media accounted for the primary sources of information for the respondents. However, the county website did not seem to have a significant impact as a source of information. Community meetings and word of mouth also had little impact as a source of information. The slight impact could be attributed to the limited number of meetings occurring at the grassroots level within Embu County, which would also impact the oral dissemination of information as the sources are already constricted. Similarly, the official website for the County Government could be less known by people, hence receiving little to no traffic. Information source distribution provides significant insight into public relations as it identifies the channels that are widely used by the public, enabling the public relations team to know which areas

to target when circulating information. Relevant channels that are not frequently used, such as the county website, can be promoted to familiarize them with the public and attract more traffic.

4.3 Presentation of Findings

4.3.1 Stakeholders Familiarity of the Legislative Process in Embu County

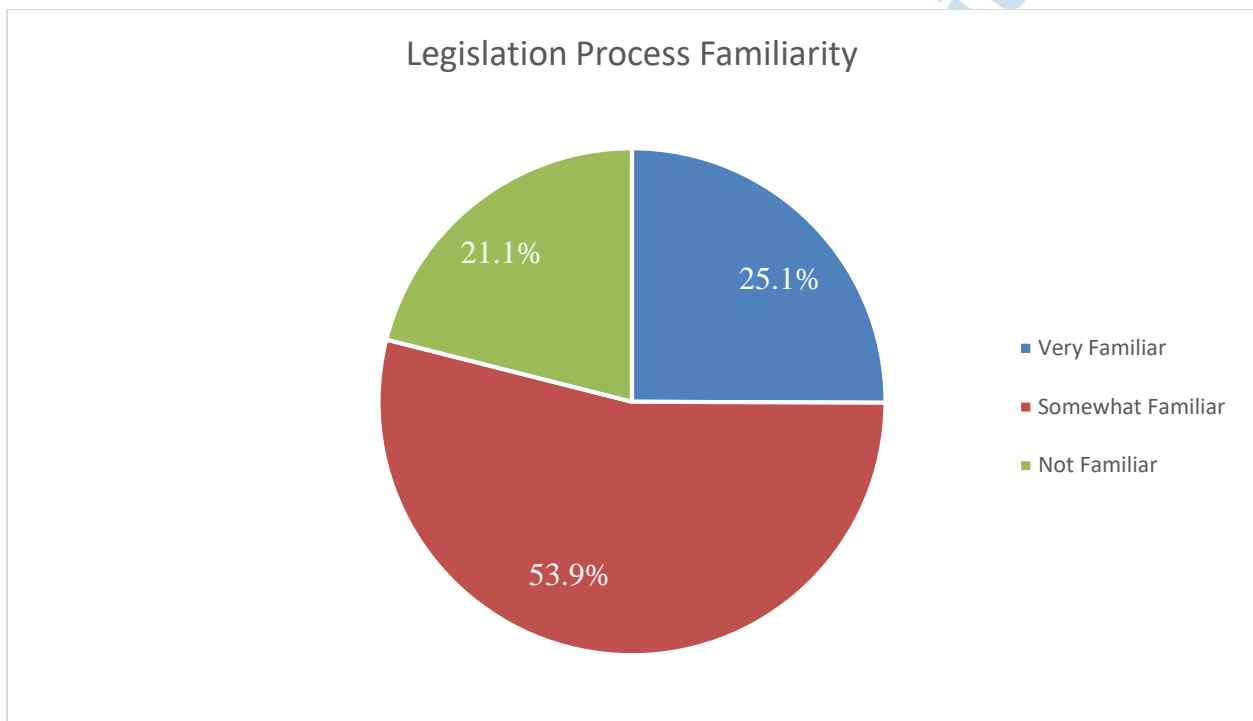


Fig 4.6 Legislation process familiarity

The findings indicate that the level of awareness is below average, with a paltry 25.1% of the population acknowledging that they are familiar with the legislation process. 55.9% of the respondents had moderate to little knowledge of how the legislation process is carried out or when it takes place. 21.1% did not know the legislation process and had never participated in any legislation process. Evidently, stakeholder awareness is shallow among the people of Embu County, based on the responses given by the respondents. According to the responses from the

interviewees, there is agreement that the penetration rate of information regarding the legislation process is not to the desired level, and more efforts are required to push more information and promote awareness of the legislative process. Mhlanga (2019) opines that the availability of information is critical in driving engagement levels and encouraging participation by stakeholders.

From the interview, it was evident that the director felt that the county government’s legislative processes were not transparent enough, contributing to low public familiarity. Interviewee highlighted that public awareness campaigns, while occasionally initiated, often lack consistency and reach, especially in remote areas. The interviewee expressed, “I only hear about these forums at the last minute, and by then, it is too late to participate.” These responses underscore the need for proactive communication to increase public familiarity with legislative activities and to ensure that citizens have ample notice to engage in these processes.

4.3.2 County Government of Embu’s Communication Channels for Legislative Information

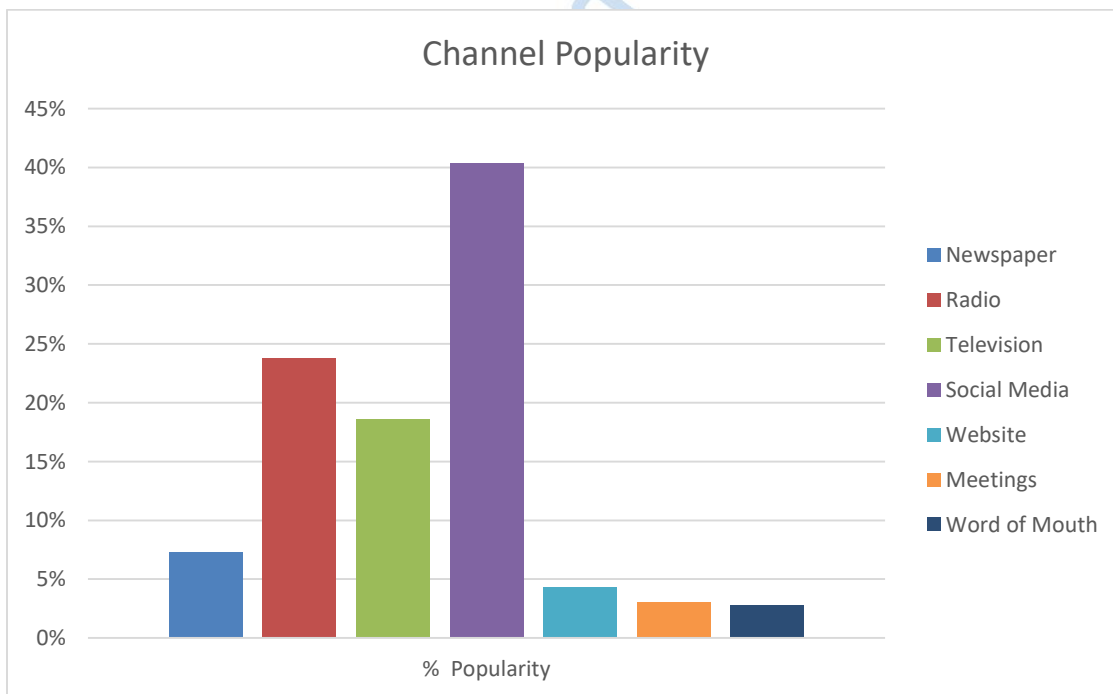


Fig 4.7 Channel popularity

The responses given by the respondents indicated that mainstream media and social media were the main communication channels used by the county government to pass information to the public. Social media was the leading platform used by the County Government to post notifications for upcoming public participation meetings and other County Government news. Radio and television broadcasting in local languages were also explicitly used to accommodate older adults who may not have a good understanding of English and Kiswahili. Additionally, local dialect is prevalent at the grassroots levels, thereby making local radio and television channels the best mode of communication for the local people. According to Hyland-Wood et al. (2021), the availability and reliability of information are crucial in determining how well the target population receives it. The official communication channel for the County Government is the County website. However, the public rarely visits the website, reducing its effectiveness as a reliable channel for disseminating information.

Interview data revealed that social media and local radio were viewed as the most reliable sources for legislative information among younger urban populations. However, he pointed out the limitations of digital communication, particularly due to poor internet connectivity and low smartphone ownership. He stated, “They depend on local radio for information, as not many there have access to social media or the internet.” Additionally, the interviewee reported that the county website is rarely updated, which diminishes its value as a reliable source of legislative information. The feedback from the interview indicates that while multiple channels are in place, each has unique challenges in effectively reaching all demographics, with a need to integrate better and update these channels to maximize coverage.

4.3.3 Effectiveness of the Communication Channels Used by the County Government

The responses given by the respondents displayed a wide range of satisfaction with the communication channels used by the County Government. The figure below shows the responses given by the respondents.

Satisfaction Level	Respondents	% Respondents
Very Dissatisfied	32	8.0%
Dissatisfied	54	13.5%
Neutral	111	27.8%
Satisfied	152	38.1%
Very Satisfied	50	12.5%
Total	399	99.9%

Fig 4.8 Effectiveness response

38.1% of the respondents were satisfied with the communication channels used by the County Government in providing information on the legislative process. A further 12.5% of the respondents were delighted with the means utilized by the County Government. The total percentage of the respondents pleased with the County Government's efforts was 51.6%, accounting for almost half of the sample size. 27.8% of the respondents were indecisive about the communication channels used by the county government. 21.5% of the respondents were not satisfied with the choice of channels used by the County Government. The findings indicate a positive trajectory, with the majority of the respondents showing satisfaction with the public engagement that the County Government was utilizing. According to Ojwang (2020), optimistic

projections on delivery and engagement provide the basis for further efforts towards bolstering public relations to cater to the marginalized sections. In the interview responses, the respondents indicated that there would be plans to intensify the process of availing information, including using traditional means to reach more people in Embu County.

Interview responses suggested mixed feelings regarding the effectiveness of the communication channels used by the county government. The interviewee noted, “In rural areas, it would be better if the county government collaborated with local chiefs or village elders to spread information.” This feedback emphasizes the need for the county government to adopt a more localized communication strategy that includes trusted community figures and traditional methods of information delivery, particularly in underserved areas.

4.3.4 Impact of Public Relations Practice

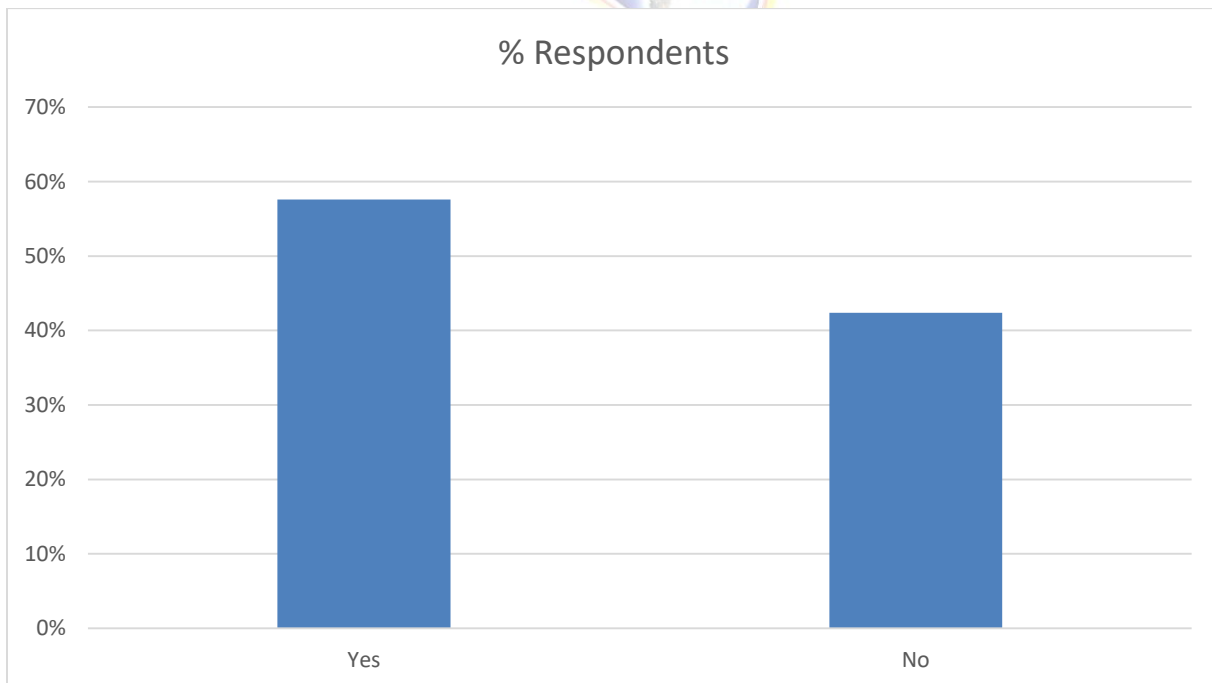


Fig 4.9 Impact response

When the respondents were asked about the impact of public relations practices used by the county government to inform the public about the legislative process and public participation, they agreed that there were significant improvements compared to previous terms. The responses were corroborated by the data collected where 58% of the respondents agreed that public relations efforts had made them more aware of legislative processes in the county government and the importance of public participation in the legislative processes. 42% of the respondents did not feel the impact of public relations in increasing their awareness of legislative processes and public participation. The findings indicate that while the efforts of the public relations office to provide information to the public are recommendable, the penetration level of the information to the public is still wanting, and there is room for improvements to make information available and accessible to all the people of Embu County.

The study findings revealed that, while multiple channels are available for disseminating legislative information—including social media, local radio, public forums, and the county website—there are inconsistencies in updates across these platforms. Social media and local radio emerged as the most effective channels, particularly for reaching younger and rural populations. However, the county's official website was significantly underutilized, offering few updates and lacking interactive features. This inconsistency in communication reduces the effectiveness of public relations efforts, as citizens are unable to rely on a single, comprehensive source for timely legislative information.

The research further showed that public relations practices often struggle to reach rural and marginalized communities. Limited internet access and a heavy reliance on digital channels restrict engagement with these populations, highlighting the need for more accessible, traditional media like local radio and in-person community forums. Additionally, the absence of communication in

local dialects further constrains outreach in rural areas, as some residents cannot fully understand updates in the official languages. These findings underscore the importance of diversifying communication approaches to meet the language and accessibility needs of all residents, particularly in rural areas.

Social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, have had a notably positive impact on engagement with urban youth populations. These platforms are effective in capturing the attention of younger audiences, who value quick, visual, and shareable content. Social media proved especially useful for promoting legislative events, such as public hearings, and it has been shown to increase attendance rates in urban centers. These results suggest that while digital tools have limitations in rural regions, they remain invaluable for connecting with tech-savvy urban populations, who respond well to interactive and visually engaging content.

The interview further indicated a positive perception of public relations practices in Embu County among urban stakeholders, who felt that social media and local radio had enhanced their understanding of legislative processes. However, respondents from rural areas expressed a desire for more accessible communication in local dialects, as well as more consistent updates. One rural respondent mentioned, “The information is often not in the language we use daily, and it is easy to miss important updates.” This finding suggests that the county government’s PR practices need to be more inclusive by providing content in local languages and offering updates that cater to non-English and non-Kiswahili speakers. Moreover, interviewees recommended that the county improve feedback mechanisms, such as creating an interactive online portal or helpline, to allow citizens to ask questions and receive clarifications on legislative issues.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the research findings, conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for further study. The study sought to establish the level of the Embu County stakeholders' awareness about the legislative process, evaluate the communication channels used by the Embu County government in passing information to the stakeholders, and provide recommendations on actions that can be taken to promote stakeholder engagement.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The study revealed that there needed to be more awareness relating to legislative processes among the stakeholders. Specifically, 58% of respondents said they needed more information regarding how or when the legislative process takes place. In contrast, 55.5% were somewhat or moderately aware of the process, and some confessed to limited participation in legislative efforts. This fact points to the significant gap in the perceived level of awareness and the existence of some obstacles to taking an active part in low political legislation.

Stakeholder ignorance can be attributed to several factors: failure to communicate the issue, poor sensitization from the county government, and no awareness creation by the legislatures. It was revealed that the current communication approaches needed to be sufficient in educating the public on legislative processes. For example, the County Government of Nairobi had not adequately encouraged public Engagement and had not communicated well on legislative matters. Thus, it became commonplace to lack severe debates and discussions and to have a modest number of participants. One significant finding relates to the discrepancies in public awareness levels. The data revealed that awareness of legislative processes varied considerably across different

demographic groups. Urban residents and younger individuals were generally more informed, largely due to their greater access to digital platforms like social media and the internet.

In contrast, rural populations and older citizens exhibited much lower levels of awareness. This disparity can be attributed to barriers such as limited internet access, lower technological literacy, and the lack of local-language communication in many instances. The gap in awareness indicates the need for more tailored communication strategies to reach marginalized groups.

In terms of communication channels, the study identified varying degrees of effectiveness. Social media and local radio emerged as the most effective platforms for reaching urban residents, especially younger demographics. These channels were praised for providing timely updates and interactive content. However, in rural areas, traditional media, particularly radio programs delivered in local languages, were found to be more effective. Despite these successes, the county's official website was significantly underutilized. Although it served as the county's primary official platform, it failed to attract substantial traffic from residents, indicating a need for improved digital engagement strategies and content that resonates more with the local audience.

The study also highlighted challenges with public participation in the legislative process. Despite efforts to encourage greater involvement, significant barriers remained. These included a lack of accessible information for rural populations, low levels of technological literacy, and insufficient communication in local dialects. While PR strategies succeeded in urban areas, rural communities showed lower levels of engagement due to these challenges. The findings suggest that a more diversified approach to communication, which takes into account the unique needs of rural populations, is essential to boosting participation.

The public feedback systems implemented by the PR office were also a focal point in the findings. While online platforms and community suggestion boxes were introduced as mechanisms for collecting citizen feedback, they were largely underutilized. Many residents, especially those in rural or marginalized areas, lacked access to these systems. As a result, there was a disconnect between the government's efforts to engage with the public and the actual level of feedback received from the community. It highlights the need for more inclusive and accessible feedback mechanisms that ensure all citizens can voice their opinions on legislative matters.

The findings also revealed the perception of PR impact among respondents. There was a general acknowledgment that the PR office had made strides in improving communication with the public, particularly in terms of transparency and providing timely information. However, there were still concerns about the overall trustworthiness of PR campaigns and the extent to which these efforts truly reflected the needs and concerns of the public. Respondents indicated that while the PR office had improved its efforts, more direct engagement and transparency were needed to build greater trust between the county government and its citizens.

Hence, the research calls for enhanced communication approaches. Strengthening governmental activities, raising the population's awareness via various means and elaborating effective public enlightenment programs could eliminate these gaps. In this way, the county government can enhance the levels of participation among other legislative stakeholders, hence increasing the efficiency of the legislative processes within the needy Embu County.

5.1.1 Stakeholders' Awareness of the Legislative Process in Embu County

The findings show that many stakeholders have limited awareness of legislative processes in Embu County. It aligns with the literature indicating that public awareness is essential for effective

participation in governance. Lack of awareness undermines public engagement and can lead to disengagement from the legislative process (Tejedo-Romero et al., 2022). Furthermore, public forums designed to promote engagement are often underutilized due to poor logistical planning and lack of targeted communication, particularly in rural areas. These results are consistent with previous studies that emphasize the need for robust communication strategies to foster informed participation among diverse community members (Hyland-Wood et al., 2021).

The observed low awareness in Embu County also reflects challenges identified in other studies related to insufficient government-led awareness campaigns and ineffective communication on legislative processes. According to Quick & Bryson (2022), government institutions can enhance public trust and engagement through effective, targeted communication that ensures accessibility for all demographic groups. It highlights the need for Embu County to prioritize awareness-raising initiatives that are inclusive and accessible, particularly in rural areas where logistical barriers may limit participation. The findings suggest that by adopting comprehensive communication methods and regular public sensitization, Embu County can better empower its citizens to participate actively in governance.

5.1.2 Effectiveness of Communication Channels Used by the County Government

The study revealed a range of satisfaction levels with the communication channels used by Embu County for legislative processes. Digital media, such as social media, were effective in reaching younger and urban populations, while traditional media, like radio, proved to be more impactful in rural areas. This finding aligns with Kim and Kreps (2020), who found that varied communication channels are necessary to engage different demographics effectively, especially in governance-related matters. The digital divide highlighted by the study, where urban residents have greater access to digital tools than their rural counterparts, underscores the need for a balanced

communication approach that leverages both modern and traditional media to reach all stakeholders effectively.

The study also revealed that respondents desired broader visibility and improved design of digital tools, such as the county website, to enhance accessibility and engagement. According to Eja and Ramegowda (2020), government websites must be well-designed and regularly updated to serve as reliable sources of legislative information for diverse audiences. This finding points to a gap in Embu County's digital outreach efforts, particularly on its official website, and suggests that enhancing digital tools could increase public engagement and access to legislative information. By balancing digital and traditional communication channels, the county government can ensure more inclusive access to legislative processes.

5.1.3 Effectiveness of Communication Processes

The study indicates that more than half of respondents rated the communication channels positively, yet some respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the overall effectiveness of communication processes. These findings resonate with research by Syallow (2019), which emphasizes that effective communication in governance requires addressing diverse communication needs and incorporating feedback mechanisms. The variability in satisfaction levels suggests that while Embu County has taken steps to improve communication, further enhancements are needed to cater to all demographics and fully engage stakeholders in the legislative process.

Respondents recommended extensive outreach programs, greater use of local languages, and more interactive communication platforms. These recommendations reflect findings by Hyland-Wood

et al. (2021), who highlighted the importance of tailored communication strategies to address diverse community needs. Incorporating local dialects, creating accessible forums, and improving the digital platform could address the concerns of dissatisfied and neutral respondents, fostering greater inclusion and trust in governance. By adapting its communication processes based on these suggestions, Embu County can create a more accessible and engaging environment for public involvement in legislative matters.

5.1.4 Public Relations Practices in Legislative Communication.

The study found that Embu County's PR practices generally received positive responses from stakeholders, especially through social media and local radio, which proved effective in engaging both urban and rural populations. The study aligns with findings from Ballaro et al. (2020), who noted that effective PR strategies should employ both digital and traditional media to cater to diverse populations. However, rural respondents expressed dissatisfaction due to limited access to digital platforms, suggesting that the county government needs to strengthen its traditional media outreach to reach these areas more effectively.

Additionally, respondents pointed to barriers to PR effectiveness, such as the underutilization of the county website and the absence of communication in local languages. These barriers mirror findings by Tejedo-Romero et al. (2022), who argued that inclusive PR practices are essential for building trust and enhancing public engagement in governance. The study suggests that Embu County's PR strategies should incorporate more localized approaches, such as using local dialects and interactive platforms to foster two-way communication to achieve better communication.

In line with Cedergren et al. (2022), who found that tailored and accessible communication strategies foster greater public understanding, this study's findings support the need for Embu

County to adopt more interactive and culturally relevant PR practices. Enhancing PR practices to address the needs of rural and marginalized communities would enable the County to build public trust and increase the acceptance of legislative processes, ultimately strengthening governance through active citizen participation.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the study's findings, the stakeholders' awareness of the legislative process in Embu County needs to be improved. The majority of the respondent's views on the above issues were either a show of ignorance or inadequate knowledge of the legislative process, which is a significant setback in public participation and engagement. This lack of awareness can negatively affect the functioning of democracy and the implementation of the correct policies that would benefit the community. The current communication channels employed by the county government are only moderately efficient, though adjustments must be made. Hence, the information is disseminated through social media and local media, although its success could be improved in terms of reach and effectiveness. Furthermore, the low levels of utilization of the county government's website also partially support this argument, suggesting that overall, there is a requirement for a further coordinated and more extensive communication plan. Basket-leading these channels and building or boosting the impact could assist in reducing awareness and increasing public participation.

The results revealed that the primary communication channels used by the PR office are social media and mainstream media (radio and television). However, the county's official website is underutilized despite being a key channel for official communication. The findings align with

Grunig's (2020) assertion that effective public relations strategies should include a mix of traditional and digital communication channels to reach diverse stakeholders.

In terms of public engagement, the study found that most respondents were satisfied with the current communication strategies, though engagement was moderate, especially in rural areas. Many respondents indicated that they were unaware of the opportunities for public participation in legislative processes. It indicates that while the PR office is making strides in public communication, there is room for improvement in creating more inclusive and accessible platforms for public engagement, particularly for rural and marginalized communities. The study supports Cornelissen's (2020) findings that a lack of accessibility to information for all demographics often limits the effectiveness of public relations in governance. Embu County's reliance on digital platforms, while effective in urban areas, is not as successful in reaching rural populations. This finding underscores the importance of utilizing multiple communication platforms to ensure that all citizens are well-informed and have the opportunity to participate in legislative processes.

Therefore, the study also identifies the fact that demographics, such as the academic level of stakeholders and their duration of stay in Embu County, affect the levels of awareness and participation. However, there is a need for a more refined and extended target that incorporates all demographic categories common among the population, with particular attention paid to young people and people with low literacy levels. Thus, by addressing the diverse needs of the citizens, the county government can increase engagement and make legislative information available to all users.

5. 3 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made to enhance stakeholders' awareness and engagement in the legislative process in Embu County: There is, therefore, a need for the county government to launch massive public sensitization programs on matters concerning legislation nationwide to enlighten the general public on its importance and how they can be involved. Such campaigns may embrace meetings, workshops, or any other forms of awareness creation, with the intended audience being different groups of society. It is also possible that involving local leaders and other famous members of one community can increase the amount of attention and participation that is reached.

To enhance communication efficiency, the Embu County PR office should prioritize the use of its official website as the primary communication platform. This website must be regularly updated with timely and detailed information regarding legislative processes and include details about opportunities for public participation. In order to improve accessibility, the website should incorporate interactive content, such as videos and infographics, which simplify complex legislative information. Additionally, a feedback section should be integrated into the site, providing citizens with an avenue to voice their opinions and pose questions on ongoing legislative activities. This part of the website should be frequently updated with legislative news, event schedules, and ways for public engagement. Using such elements as interactive content and multiple languages makes the website more attractive and accessible to the audience.

While social media and mainstream media have proven effective, particularly in urban areas, the county government must expand its use of traditional media like local radio stations to reach rural and marginalized communities. Radio programs in local languages can play an instrumental role

in engaging older adults and others without access to digital platforms. The county government should continue to engage local radio and television stations to disseminate information in local languages to older adults and those who can hardly understand English and Kiswahili. Also, searching for cooperation options with well-known media outlets in the region will significantly increase the dissemination of legislative information.

Furthermore, organizing regular community meetings and forums in rural areas will foster broader public participation, ensuring that no segment of the population is excluded.

The PR office must also establish strong feedback mechanisms to promote two-way communication between the government and its citizens. Online forums, suggestion boxes, and community workshops can be set up to give citizens the opportunity to provide input on legislative matters. These platforms will also contribute to building trust between the government and the public, as citizens will feel that their opinions are valued in the decision-making process.

To increase public awareness of legislative processes, the county government should implement public sensitization campaigns using a mix of media platforms. These campaigns should educate the public on the significance of participating in legislative processes and provide clear information on how and when they can engage. The campaigns should be tailored to meet the specific needs and preferences of different demographic groups, targeting both urban and rural populations.

Continuous professional development for PR practitioners within the Embu County government is essential. PR staff should undergo training to enhance their skills in public communication, particularly in the areas of digital media and community engagement. Collaboration with PR

experts from other counties and attending workshops will enable them to design and implement more effective communication strategies, ensuring they reach all stakeholders.

A comparative analysis should be conducted with other counties that have successfully implemented inclusive communication strategies in legislative processes. By learning from the experiences and best practices of these counties, Embu County can adopt more effective PR strategies that significantly enhance public engagement and participation in governance. The county government's social media accounts and website can also offer trustworthy information if put to more use.

Another effective approach is to develop Legislative Information Centers at strategic locations throughout the county. These centers, located in places such as markets, community centers, and schools, would provide residents with direct access to legislative materials and updates. These centers can distribute printed materials, offer access to digital devices for those who may not have them, and serve as meeting spots for citizens to engage in discussions about legislative processes. Such centers would ensure that people without internet access or the knowledge to navigate digital platforms can stay informed and contribute to governance decisions.

In addition to information centers, interactive workshops and civic education programs should be established to educate the public about the legislative process. These workshops can include interactive simulations that explain how laws are created, passed, and implemented, making legislative processes more understandable and relatable for the general public. Engaging local schools and colleges in these programs will encourage younger generations to actively participate in the governance of their community, fostering a sense of civic responsibility.

Another important strategy involves using data analytics to track and improve engagement. The PR office can adopt tools to analyze metrics like website traffic, social media interactions, radio listenership, and attendance at legislative forums. This data-driven approach will help identify which communication methods are working and which need adjustment. By understanding what channels engage the public most effectively, the county can allocate its resources accordingly, maximizing the reach and impact of its legislative communication efforts.

Measures for people with disabilities should be incorporated into communication strategies to ensure inclusivity. The county government needs to make legislative information accessible to all by providing sign language interpretation at legislative forums, creating easy-to-read materials for those with cognitive disabilities, and ensuring that digital platforms are accessible to those with visual or hearing impairments. These inclusivity measures will ensure that people with disabilities can engage with and understand legislative processes, empowering them to participate fully in governance.

Legislative outreach programs specifically targeting women and youth can also significantly improve engagement. Historically, these demographics have been underrepresented in governance, and targeted communication strategies could help rectify this. Women-led community meetings and youth-driven social media campaigns could be instrumental in encouraging these groups to participate in legislative discussions. Moreover, focusing on policies that directly affect them—such as healthcare, education, and job creation—would make legislative content more relevant and engaging, motivating them to take a more active role.

Another innovative idea is to implement Public Participation Days, where the county government designates specific days for public forums on legislative matters. These events, widely advertised

across communication channels, would encourage community members to engage with upcoming legislation, share their thoughts on budget allocations, and voice concerns over policy decisions. By holding these participation days regularly, the county government could foster a culture of engagement, ensuring that citizens have consistent opportunities to make their voices heard. Ensuring broad representation from urban, rural, and marginalized communities would be a critical component of these events, helping to eliminate barriers to participation.

Collaboration with civil society organizations and community-based organizations (CBOs) is another effective method to increase engagement. Local civil society groups and CBOs already have established networks within the community and are well-positioned to assist the government in disseminating legislative information, organizing forums, and encouraging participation. Partnering with these organizations will amplify the county's outreach efforts and help the government reach a broader audience, particularly in areas that might be harder to access through traditional PR channels.

To continuously improve the effectiveness of these engagement efforts, a monitoring and evaluation framework should be established to assess the success of public relations campaigns and public engagement strategies. This framework would provide regular feedback on how well citizens are receiving information and engaging with legislative processes. By evaluating which communication channels are most effective and gathering input from citizens on how they perceive these efforts, the county can make informed decisions about refining and optimizing its outreach strategies.

Additionally, the county government can benefit from conducting comparative studies with other counties that have implemented successful PR strategies. By learning from the experiences of other

counties, Embu County can adopt best practices that enhance public participation in legislative processes. This comparative analysis can also help Embu County identify common challenges and develop solutions tailored to its unique demographic and geographic characteristics.

To encourage public input, the PR office should establish feedback mechanisms that allow for two-way communication between the government and citizens. Online forums, suggestion boxes, and community workshops would offer citizens opportunities to voice their opinions and provide input on legislative matters. These platforms not only give the public a voice but also contribute to building trust between the government and its stakeholders. When citizens feel that their feedback is taken into account, they are more likely to engage with the legislative process and develop a stronger sense of ownership in governance decisions.

Citizen Budgeting Workshops could also play a key role in increasing public involvement in crucial legislative matters, such as budgeting. These workshops would demystify the budgeting process and provide a platform for citizens to offer input on how county funds should be allocated. It would give residents a tangible way to influence policy and reinforce their role in decision-making.

Embu County's PR practitioners must undergo continuous professional development to enhance their skills in public communication, particularly in areas like digital media and community engagement. Workshops and collaborations with PR experts from other counties will improve the ability of PR staff to design and implement more effective communication strategies that meet the diverse needs of the population. Professional development will ensure that the PR team remains at the forefront of evolving communication trends, further enhancing their ability to engage the public.

By implementing these expanded recommendations, Embu County can create a more inclusive, transparent, and engaging legislative process. These efforts will not only enhance public awareness but also foster a stronger connection between the county government and its citizens, ultimately leading to better governance outcomes.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Study

The role of public relations (PR) in informing the public about legislative processes in Embu County has emerged as a crucial element in fostering public engagement and participation in governance. The findings of this study underline the significance of PR strategies in creating awareness, improving transparency, and promoting public trust. However, several gaps remain unaddressed, and further research is necessary to deepen the understanding of PR's long-term impact on public participation, particularly in the context of governance and legislative processes. Future studies can expand on these findings by exploring a number of critical areas.

Analyzing the effects of numerous past awareness campaigns on the general population and their increased engagement in the processes of lawmaking is of immense value. Knowledge of what motivates or demotivates the public can assist in enhancing the level of awareness as well as participation. Research could be conducted to contrast the communication plans adopted by other counties with the level of stakeholders' engagement and, hence, be in a position to discover approaches that Embu County may implement. Such a comparative analysis can also help one get a more global view of the existing communication models and prospects for their utilization in different environments.

Future communication strategies can only be designed with a better understanding of how the latest technologies, such as mobile applications or interactive websites, could improve the public's opposition to the legislation process. The possibilities of using technologies to share information

in real-time and allow participation can drastically change the way in which legislative information is communicated and received.

Considering that a considerable part of the surveyed individuals below the age of 35 demonstrated low awareness of their members of Congress, future research could aim to identify the factors that hinder youth involvement in legislative processes and ways of overcoming them. It is essential to increase the youth's interest and participation in political matters because they form the bulk of the electorate, and their participation determines the longevity of the processes. The assessment of current public relations tools used by the county government and their effectiveness or lack thereof is the last and potentially the most practical of the evaluative strategies. Evaluating the different perimeters of PR strategies to be effective is essential because it allows for the creation of a communication plan that fits all their expectations.

Longitudinal research is recommended to assess the evolving nature of public engagement and awareness over time, especially in response to PR campaigns. This type of research would provide a clearer picture of the sustained impact that PR strategies have on public awareness of legislative processes. While the current study provides a snapshot of the current state of public engagement, a longitudinal approach would capture trends and shifts in behavior, attitudes, and participation over a more extended period. By tracking these changes, researchers could identify which PR campaigns are most effective in fostering long-term public engagement. Longitudinal studies could also provide valuable insights into the factors that influence changes in public awareness, such as social, economic, or political shifts, and how these variables affect public perception of and participation in governance.

Additionally, comparing the role of PR in other counties across Kenya could yield vital insights into the effectiveness of different PR approaches in diverse contexts. While Embu County serves as an important case study, Kenya's county governments operate under different socio-economic and demographic conditions, which may influence the effectiveness of PR strategies. By exploring the PR practices in other counties, future research could highlight variations in communication strategies and identify best practices that could be replicated in Embu County or elsewhere. Such comparative studies could also investigate the unique challenges faced by counties with different levels of digital infrastructure, media access, and literacy rates, which may affect the dissemination of information and engagement with legislative processes. For instance, counties with more rural populations or higher levels of illiteracy might require more traditional, non-digital communication methods, such as community radio or town hall meetings, to effectively reach their stakeholders. Understanding how PR strategies work in these different contexts could help standardize communication methods across counties or allow for the development of more tailored, region-specific strategies.

A critical area for further study is the challenges faced by rural populations in accessing information about legislative processes. The current study points to the significant role of digital platforms and social media in facilitating communication between the county government and urban populations. However, rural populations often face barriers to accessing this information due to limited internet access, technological literacy, and infrastructure. Future research should investigate these specific challenges in greater depth, identifying the factors that hinder effective communication between county governments and rural populations. Researchers could explore potential solutions tailored to the needs of these communities, such as the use of radio, mobile phone-based communication (SMS), or community outreach programs. Furthermore, future

studies could evaluate the effectiveness of these alternative communication methods in improving public awareness and participation in rural areas. By addressing the communication gaps that exist between rural and urban populations, county governments can ensure that all citizens, regardless of their geographic location, have equal access to legislative information and opportunities for participation in governance.

Another area for further investigation is the effectiveness of different PR tools in fostering trust and transparency between county governments and their stakeholders. Trust is a fundamental component of successful governance, and the way information is communicated can significantly influence the public's perception of the government. Future research could assess the effectiveness of various PR tools, such as press releases, social media campaigns, public meetings, and interactive platforms like mobile applications or websites. Comparative analysis of these tools in terms of their ability to foster transparency, encourage feedback, and promote dialogue between government officials and citizens would provide valuable insights for improving PR strategies. Additionally, studies could examine how the consistent use of these PR tools influences the public's long-term trust in government institutions. Understanding which tools are most effective in building and maintaining trust would help county governments design more targeted PR strategies that emphasize transparency and accountability.

Moreover, comparative studies across different counties would provide a broader understanding of how PR practices can be optimized to improve governance and public participation. These studies could compare counties with varying levels of economic development, population density, literacy rates, and technological infrastructure to determine how these factors influence the effectiveness of PR strategies. Such comparative research could identify both the common

challenges faced by all counties and the unique issues that arise in specific regions. By analyzing the success and shortcomings of PR practices across different counties, researchers could offer concrete recommendations for optimizing PR strategies to meet the diverse needs of Kenya's citizens. Comparative studies could also examine the role of local cultural factors in shaping public engagement with PR campaigns, offering insights into how PR strategies can be adapted to resonate more effectively with different demographic groups.

Lastly, future research should investigate the long-term effects of PR-driven public engagement on the legislative process itself. While this study focused primarily on public awareness and participation, further research could explore how increased public engagement, driven by effective PR strategies, influences legislative outcomes. Are laws and policies more reflective of public opinion when PR campaigns successfully engage the public? Does heightened public scrutiny lead to more transparent and accountable governance? Investigating these questions could provide a more comprehensive understanding of how PR not only informs the public but also shapes the legislative process and governance outcomes over time.

In conclusion, while this study has shed light on the vital role of PR in Embu County's legislative processes, numerous avenues for further research could deepen our understanding of PR's long-term impact on public engagement and governance. Longitudinal studies, comparative research across counties, and investigations into the challenges faced by rural populations all hold the potential to improve PR strategies and ensure more inclusive and transparent governance across Kenya.

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APPENDICES

Research tools

Letter of Self Introduction

Dear Respondent,

RE: COLLECTION OF DATA

I am a master's student planning to do a research project on "**THE ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE DURING COUNTY LEGISLATION PROCESS AND ENGAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY OF EMBU COUNTY GOVERNMENT.**" as fulfillment for my end year examination. I want your assistance in providing your response to the enclosed questionnaire. The responses provided will be critical to the research's objectives. You will not be required to provide any personal details, and the information provided was treated with the utmost discretion. The research's findings will only be used for academic purposes, and should there be a legitimate requirement, the research's outcome was made publicly available for records. Thank you for your cooperation

Yours Faithfully,

Rutere Daizy Wawira

Senior Hansard Editor

County Assembly of Embu

Informed Consent Form

Title: The Role of Public Relations Practice during County Legislation Process and Engagement:
A Case Study of Embu County Government

Introduction:

I, Rutere Daizy Wawira, a Senior Hansard Editor at the County Assembly of Embu, am conducting a research study on the role of public relations practice during the county legislation process and engagement within County Government Embu. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and before deciding to participate, you must understand the purpose, procedures, and potential risks and benefits associated with the research.

Purpose:

This study examines how public relations practices influence the county legislation process and engagement with stakeholders in the County Government of Embu. By participating, you will help provide valuable comprehension of the effectiveness of public relations strategies in promoting transparency, accountability, and public trust within the county governance framework.

Procedures:

If you agree to participate, you may be asked to complete a questionnaire or participate in an interview. The process will take approximately two weeks, and your responses will be confidential.

Risks and Benefits:

Participating in this study involves minimal risks, and your confidentiality was maintained throughout. The benefits include contributing to research that may promote efforts to strengthen public relations practices and governance processes within County Government Embu.

Voluntary Participation:

Participation in this study is strictly voluntary, and withdrawal does not come with any penalty. Agreeing to participate will have no impact on your relationship with the County Assembly of Embu.

Confidentiality:

We pledge to treat all the data you provide as private and confidential. Your name and identifying information will be replaced with a code to ensure anonymity.

Contact Information:

If you have any questions before, during, or after the study, please contact me at ruterdaizy@gmail.com.

Please sign below to acknowledge that you have read and understood the information provided and accept the invitation to participate in this study voluntarily.

Participant's Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Questionnaire Schedule for the General Public

Introduction:

Your participation in this study is much welcome. The responses provided in this questionnaire will be valuable to our efforts to understand the County Assembly of Embu's methods of dispensing legislative information and engaging the public in the legislative process. Please take the time to answer the following questions candidly.

Section A: Demographic Data

1. Age:

What is your age?

Under 18

18-35

35-50

50-65

65 and above

2. Gender:

What is your gender?

Male

Female

3. Education Level:

What is your highest level of education completed?

No formal education

Primary school

Secondary school

Tertiary Education

4. Residency:

How long have you lived in Embu County?

Less than one year

1-5 years

6-10 years

10+ years



Section B: Familiarity with the Legislative Process:

1. Are you aware of the legislative process in Embu County?

Yes

No

2. If yes, how would you rate your familiarity with the legislative process in Embu County?

Very Familiar

Somewhat Familiar

Not Familiar

3. Rate how often you follow updates or news about the legislative process in Embu County.

Always

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

Section B: Sources of Legislative Information:

1. Where do you learn of the legislative process in Embu County? (tick where applicable)

Local newspapers

Radio

Television

Social media

County Assembly website

Community meetings

Word of mouth

2. Which Source of information do you find effective for receiving news or updates about the Embu County legislative process?

Local newspapers

Radio

Television

Social media

County Assembly website

Community meetings

Word of mouth

Section D: Participation in Legislative Process:

1. Have you ever participated in any legislative process?
 Yes
 No
2. How regularly do you participate in or follow the legislative activities in Embu County?
3. Regularly
 Occasionally
 Rarely
 Never
4. In your own opinion, is the public engaged sufficiently during the legislative process?
 Yes
 No

Section E: Impact of Public Relations:

1. Has public relations made you more aware of the legislative process in Embu?
 Yes
 No

Questionnaire Schedule for the Members of County Assembly

Introduction:

Your participation in this study is much welcome. The responses provided in this questionnaire will be valuable to our efforts to understand the County Assembly of Embu's methods of dispensing legislative information and engaging the public in the legislative process. Please take the time to answer the following questions candidly.

Section A: Demographic Data

1. Age:

What is your age?

- Under 18
- 18-35
- 35-50
- 50-65
- 65 and above

2. Gender:

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

3. Residency:

How long have you lived in Embu County?

- Less than one year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 10+ years

Section B: Public Awareness and Communication:

1. What is the general level of public awareness regarding the legislative process in Embu County?

- Excellent
- Fair

- Poor
2. Which communication channels does the county government utilize to communicate to the public about legislative processes?
- Local newspapers
- Radio
- Television
- Social media
- County Assembly website
- Public meetings/Barazas
3. Which do you consider the most effective communication channels for sensitizing people about the legislative process?
- Local newspapers
- Radio
- Television
- Social media
- County Assembly website

Section C: Public Engagement:

1. Does the County Assembly seek public participation during the legislative process?
- Yes
- No
2. Rate the current level of public participation in Embu County's legislative process.
- Excellent
- Fair

Poor

Section E: Impact of Public Relations on Legislative Process:

1. To what extent have public relations practices impacted public awareness and participation in legislative processes?

Significantly

Moderately

Minimally

No impact

Interview Schedule for the Director of Communications

1. Can you describe the primary communication processes or strategies the County Assembly of Embu utilizes to disseminate legislative information to the public?

2. How do you determine which communication channels or platforms most effectively engage the public in the legislative process?

3. How does the County Government utilize public relations to notify the public about legislative processes?

4. Does the county government often involve the public in legislative processes?

5. What tactics or initiatives have you implemented to enhance public engagement with the County Assembly's legislative activities?

6. How does the County Government measure the effectiveness of public relations efforts in relation to the legislative process?

7. How are the diverse needs of the population, such as language, level of education and access to information?

8. How has public relations influenced public participation or opinion in the legislative process within the County?
9. How do you ensure that legislative information provided by the County Assembly is accessible and understandable to diverse community audiences?
10. How much has the level of engagement increased between the County Government and the public on legislative processes?
11. What is the success rate of the initiatives carried out by the public relations office in promoting effective communication and public engagement?
12. Can you discuss any challenges or obstacles you have encountered as a PR manager for the County Assembly in promoting effective communication and public engagement in the legislative process?



Mount Kenya University

ERC Approval Document



REF: MKU/ISERC/4438
TO: RUTERE DAIZY WAWIRA

Date: 25 September 2024

REG: MJMS/2023/45599

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: THE ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE DURING COUNTY LEGISLATION PROCESS: A CASE STUDY OF EMBU COUNTY GOVERNMENT

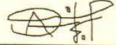
This is to inform you that **Mount Kenya University** has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is **3160**. The approval period is **25/09/2024 - 25/09/2025**.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements;

- i. Only approved documents including informed consents, study instruments, MTA will be used
- ii. All changes including amendments, deviations and violations are submitted for review and approval by **Mount Kenya University**
- iii. Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to **Mount Kenya University** within 72 hours of notification
- iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affect the safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to **Mount Kenya University** within 72 hours
- v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions
- vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal
- vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to **Mount Kenya University**

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) <https://research-portal.nacosti.go.ke> and also obtain other clearances needed.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Alfred Owino, PhD
Chairman, Mount Kenya University ISERC



Fig. 6.0 ERC Approval

Introduction letter from MKU

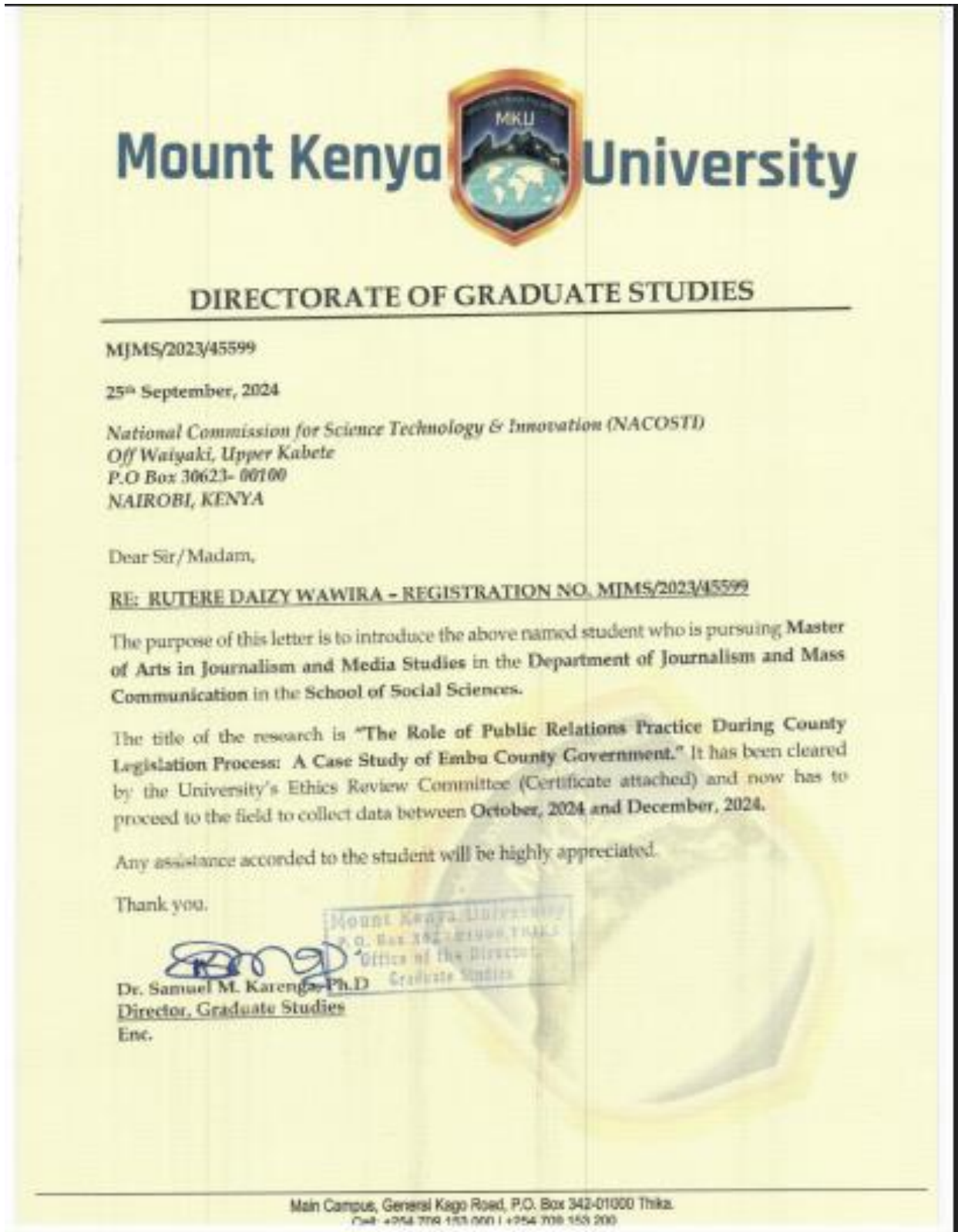


Fig. 6.1 Introduction letter

NACOSTI research license


REPUBLIC OF KENYA


NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: **537148** Date of Issue: **11/October/2024**

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Ms. DAIZY WAWIRA RUTERE of Mount Kenya University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Embu on the topic: THE ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE DURING COUNTY LEGISLATION PROCESS: A CASE STUDY OF EMBU COUNTY GOVERNMENT for the period ending: 11/October/2025.

License No: **NACOSTI/P/24/40784**

537148
Applicant Identification Number


Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY &
INNOVATION

Verification QR Code



NOTE: This is a computer generated License! To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application. See overleaf for conditions

THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013 (Rev. 2014)
Legal Notice No. 108: The Science, Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014

The National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation, hereafter referred to as the Commission, was established under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act 2013 (Revised 2014) herein after referred to as the Act. The objective of the Commission shall be to regulate and assure quality in the science, technology and innovation sector and advise the Government in matters related thereto.

CONDITIONS OF THE RESEARCH LICENSE

1. The License is granted subject to provisions of the Constitution of Kenya, the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, and other relevant laws, policies and regulations. Accordingly, the licensee shall adhere to such procedures, standards, code of ethics and guidelines as may be prescribed by regulations made under the Act, or prescribed by provisions of International treaties of which Kenya is a signatory to
2. The research and its related activities as well as outcomes shall be beneficial to the country and shall not in any way:
 - i. Endanger national security
 - ii. Adversely affect the lives of Kenyans
 - iii. Be in contravention of Kenya's international obligations including Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN).
 - iv. Result in exploitation of intellectual property rights of communities in Kenya
 - v. Adversely affect the environment
 - vi. Adversely affect the rights of communities
 - vii. Endanger public safety and national cohesion
 - viii. Plagiarize someone else's work
3. The License is valid for the proposed research, location and specified period.
4. The license any rights thereunder are non-transferable
5. The Commission reserves the right to cancel the research at any time during the research period if in the opinion of the Commission the research is not implemented in conformity with the provisions of the Act or any other written law.
6. The Licensee shall inform the relevant County Director of Education, County Commissioner and County Governor before commencement of the research.
7. Excavation, filming, movement, and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearance from relevant Government Agencies.
8. The License does not give authority to transfer research materials.
9. The Commission may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project for the purpose of assessing and evaluating compliance with the conditions of the License.
10. The Licensee shall submit one hard copy, and upload a soft copy of their final report (thesis) onto a platform designated by the Commission within one year of completion of the research.
11. The Commission reserves the right to modify the conditions of the License including cancellation without prior notice.
12. Research, findings and information regarding research systems shall be stored or disseminated, utilized or applied in such a manner as may be prescribed by the Commission from time to time.
13. The Licensee shall disclose to the Commission, the relevant Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee, and the relevant national agencies any inventions and discoveries that are of National strategic importance.
14. The Commission shall have powers to acquire from any person the right in, or to, any scientific innovation, invention or patent of strategic importance to the country.
15. Relevant Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee shall monitor and evaluate the research periodically, and make a report of its findings to the Commission for necessary action.

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Fig. 6.2 NACOSTI certificate

Field entry /Research Authorization

N/A



Turnitin report



Fig 6.3 Turnitin report

Research site map

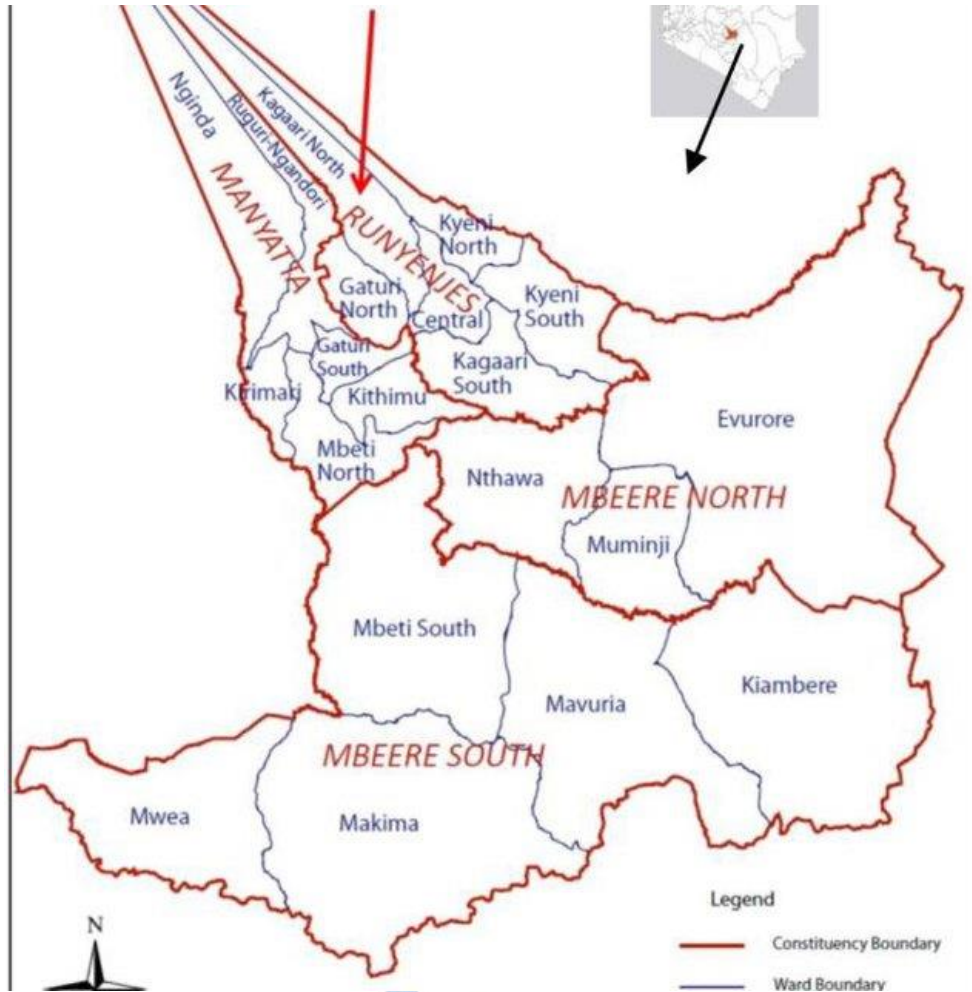


Fig 6.4 Map

Long tables

Budget

Item	Unit cost	Total Cost (Ksh)
Traveling and Accommodation		20,000
Typesetting and printing	@ 30 per page	5,000
Stationery		2,000
Photocopies charges	@ 5 per page	1,000
Binding charges	@ 100 per copy for ten copies	1,000
Consultation telephone, email expenses,		1,000
Contingencies 10% of the total		3000
Total cost		33,000

Table 6.0 Source: Researcher (2024)

Work Plan

Activity	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV
Assembly of study literature						
Proposal writing						
Supervisor consultations						
Research instrument design						
Proposal defence						
Data collection						
Analysing data						
Writing final report						
Writing final report						

Table 6.1: Work plan Source: Researcher (2024)