

**WORKPLACE CYBER BULLYING AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN MEDIA  
HOUSES OPERATING IN NAIROBI, KENYA**

**By**

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## DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for any award in any other university.

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This research project has been presented for examination with my approval as the University Supervisor

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my wonderful wife and children. You are my source of inspiration and love. You motivate me to strive higher in life. God Bless you always.

## **ABSTRACT**

The adoption of modern communication devices and technology in the day-to-day operations at the workplace has both positive and negative effect in the workplace since it has not only revolutionized the way employees communicate with one another but also provide a platform for perpetrators of cyber bullying to propagate the vice. The general objective of the study was to investigate the effect of workplace cyberbullying on employee performance of Media houses in Nairobi, Kenya. Specifically, to establish the extent to which the employees face cyber bullying at the workplace, establish the challenges the employees face in managing cyber bullying at the workplace and determine the relationship between cyber bullying and job performance at the workplace. The research design was cross-sectional descriptive research. A semi-structured questionnaire that has both open-ended and closed-ended questions was used to collect the data needed for the analysis. Regression analysis was used to analyze data . The research established that , cyberbullying had an undesirable effect on employee performance with all dimensions of cyberbullying being significant in affecting employee performance ( $p < 0.05$ ). Only public humiliation factor was insignificant ( $p > 0.05$ ). The study concludes that workplace cyberbullying has become a common vice and is an evolving phenomenon, there is need for urgent intervention due to its negative effect on employee performance and workplace productivity. Cyberbullying being an evolving phenomenon, the vice can take different forms in different industries, therefore further research should be carried out to determine its impact in different workplaces.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study

The adoption of modern communication devices and technology in the day-to-day operations at the workplace in the last two decades has led to astronomical increase in the use of electronic media at the workplace. The adoption of the information and communication technology has both positive and negative effect in the workplace because it has not only revolutionized the way employees communicate with one another but also provide a platform for perpetrators of cyber bullying to propagate the vice (Lugeiyamu, 2013). The consequences of bullying at the workplace often result into adverse effects on victims and the organization. Elevated level of cyber bullying exposes the targets to ill health, victimisation, or reputational damage. The negative effect of cyberbullying extends to organizations because it affects the employee performance and that the organizations resources end up being used by the perpetrators and spending time on non-work activities (Madan, 2014). Similarly, the targets end up being less efficient, feel less wanted in the organization and eventually might want to leave the organization - a situation that end up affecting the overall organization performance.

The effect of workplace cyberbullying on employee performance was supported by three theories, namely, Conservation of Resource Theory, Reverse General Strain Theory and the dysempowerment theory. The conservation of Resource Theory was advanced by Hobfoll, (1989) who opines that organizational resources include personal characteristics, energies or conditions that are considered valuable by individual. The General strain theory was advanced by Agnew and White (1992) and suggests that strain is likely to result in an increase of the possibility of depression and anger that create pressure for crimes and thus attempts to explain the genesis of a negative life event happening in an individual. The

dysempowerment theory (Hobfoll, 1989) postulates that, an employee assessment of a ‘polluting’ work environment that results in a subjective stress, result in a negative effect and behaviour at work.

Media houses in Kenya play an important role in informing, entertaining, persuading and transfer of culture in a society. In order to perform their functions appropriately, their employees need to perform their duties without external or internal pressure that might influence their work activities. However, with embracing of information technology in almost all the spheres of human life, it has brought both positive and negative effect to the media personnel – just like the other sectors. Makhulo (2019) submits that by media personnel being public figures, they attract attention of miscreants in the society whose sole objective is to arise staff. Through the same research, it was noted that close to 55% of employees in the Kenyan media organizations have faced one form of cyberbullying or another in their course of duties. The question that needs to be investigated is what degree of influence the vice has on the employee performance of these media houses.

### **1.1.1 Workplace Cyberbullying**

Traditionally, bullying has been associated to occur within the confines of an institution by persons that are in contact with the victim. However, with the proliferation of the information technology to almost every part of the globe, bullying is now perpetuated by persons that are anonymous or can hide their identity (Branch, Ramsay, & Barker, 2013). Cyberbullying is a form of harassment or bullying that occurs online using computers, mobile phones, and social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter. Although there is no clear legal definition of cyberbullying yet, it is generally understood to be any form of bullying or harassment that occurs online. Workplace cyberbullying therefore, is the kind that is aimed against an employee with the goal of embarrassing or demeaning them in some way. According to the definition provided by Farley, Coyne, Sprigg, and Axtell (2015), workplace cyberbullying is

defined as repeated online behaviours that result in a person being harmed at the workplace. This damage may take the form of extreme stress as well as poor physical and mental health.

Majority of studies have found that doxing, impersonation, stalking, exclusion, and flaming are the most frequent types of workplace cyberbullying. In addition, one kind of cyberbullying is known as deception, which includes deceiving another person into divulging particular secrets and then exposing that information online. According to West et al. (2014), the most prevalent kind of cyber bullying that occurs inside a business is when employees make improper remarks online about their co-workers or even go so far as to post bad comments about the organization itself.

The effect of workplace cyberbullying varies among employees. According to Coyne (2011), the impact of being bullied at work on an individual employee involves a broad variety of psychosomatic, psychological, and physiological repercussions. Coyne makes this argument in his article. Because of this, a variety of detrimental consequences on employee performance have been documented, all of which are a direct result of the harassed employee. Coyne, Craig, & Smith-Lee Chong (2004) highlight that; some of the consequences of cyberbullying include low job satisfaction and commitment, higher turnover intention, increased absenteeism, and eventually high actual employee turnover. The prevalence of cyberbullying in an organization is because of various environmental factors that have contributed to employees being powerless to confronting the aggressors.

Different challenges have been identified that employees face while encountering cyberbullying in the workplace. Patchin and Hinduja (2006) wrote that an organizational policy that does not expressly state that any form of online or cyber-bullying will be taken as a form of workplace bullying and serious consequences meted on the bully. Similarly, a lack of standards on workplace friendships and the boundaries that need to be upheld might

expose staff to unwanted approaches that encourage workplace bullying. Organisations ought to have in place an explicit policy that deal with privacy issues and how cases of breach are handled, absence of which exposes employees to bullying. McTernan, Dollard and Lamontagne (2013) similarly explain that to protect employees against workplace cyberbullying, managers need to remain vigilant on any form of intimidation, suspicious messages, and emotional outburst to fellow employees.

### **1.1.2 Employee Performance**

In general, performance is the aggregate of expectations that an organization has based on independent behaviour samples of each employee throughout a certain period of time (Motowidlo, 2013). On the other hand, employee performance refers to a collection of behaviours that a person demonstrates regarding his work, or more specifically, the amount of efficiency attained as a result of the person's job type (Ali & Farooqi, 2014). Performance on the job refers to how well an employee carries out the duties of their position in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations, as well as how much effort and success they have achieved. In addition, Drogan (1994) notes that an employee's performance may be seen as a measurement of how efficiently a person transforms inputs like labour, materials, and money into outputs in the form of tangible products and services.

According to Loi, Mao, and Ngo (2014), there is a correlation between employee performance and the amount and quality of output, presence/attendance on the job, and the effectiveness of the task that is accomplished. Gilbert (1978) asserts that an employee's performance will be impacted both by the degree of motivation the employee has as well as their ability to execute. Several academic investigations have been carried out to investigate the connection between cyberbullying and the performance of employees. In 2014, Kumaran Kanapathipillai and Nur Nadiah Mahbob carried out research with the objective of determining the effects that cyberbullying has on people working in the manufacturing

industry in Malaysia. According to the findings of this research, cyberbullying causes a significant amount of stress, which in turn reduces an organization's overall productivity. In yet another piece of research, researchers Halit Keskin, Ali Ekber Akgün, Hayat Ayas, and aziye Serda Kayman set out to determine whether there is a correlation between the victims of cyberbullying, counterproductive job behaviour, and emotional intelligence in the workplace. According to the findings of their research, cyberbullying in the workplace has a negative influence not only on the mental but also the physical welfare of workers, which in turn has a negative impact on employee productivity. Gargi Sawhney from Auburn University and Mallory McCord from the University of Minnesota Duluth collaborated on research in 2021 to determine the effect that cyberbullying had on the stress levels and levels of productivity of remote workers who were working during COVID-19 pandemic. Their research suggests that being subjected to cyberbullying might provoke a stress reaction, which in turn can reduce an employee's level of productivity. An employee who experiences excessive stress may suffer detrimental effects on their physical, emotional, and mental health as well as performance and motivation. Despite the fact that stress is a normal human reaction to dangerous or difficult circumstances, it may be dangerous when in excess (Snyman and Loh, 2015).

### **1.1.3 Media Houses in Nairobi**

Media houses are a public or privately owned organizations involved in mass media enterprises such as publishing, television, radio, music, motion pictures and advertising. The media industry generates different form of content and transmits the same over different platforms. They collect, process, and transmit content digitally and also receive public feedback and reaction digitally. Traditionally the print media was the most common platform but over time this has been overtaken by the digital platform which is more effective but also has introduced challenges. The common types of media in Nairobi include digital media,

broadcast, and publications. Digital media is made up of those messages that are transmitted electronically through the mobile communication platforms and the internet (Kaigwa, 2017). Broadcast media is that form of media platform that transmits information electronically to a mass audience, with the common form being recorded music, film, radio, and television. On the other hand, publications refer to the print media which uses primarily English as communication tool - though native languages such as Kiswahili is also used (Deloitte, 2012; PWC, 2019)

Kenya is one of the most renowned media marketplaces in all sub-Saharan Africa, and its media business is growing. More than 22 media outlets in Kenya have received certification. It is accompanied by the emergence of the middle class, rising literacy rates, a large population living in cities, and the use of mobile phones as a platform for communication in place of more traditional forms of communication. Instead of having just one broadcaster, the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), which was inherited from the colonial government and was formerly known as the Kenya Broadcasting Service (KBS), the nation now boasts having over 386 FM radio frequencies, with more than 46 of those frequencies located in Nairobi County, and 105 TV frequencies that are owned by both state and private owners, this is according to Geographic Poll (2015) and Kentra (2016). Currently, various media organizations, including Nation Media Group, Standard Media Group, Radio Africa Group, Royal Media Services, and MediaMax Communication Group, own the great majority of radio frequencies (Strategic Public Relations & Research, 2016). This research will be based on eight select major media houses that command at least 1 % of the market share in Kenya and are operating in Nairobi (Appendix II).

The media has a significant impact on public life in Kenya, both in terms of its ability to direct the attention of the public and its capacity to supply a significant number of the facts



and opinions that go into the formation of people's points of view on the most pressing issues of the day. To disseminate ideas and information to the public, one might think of the mass media as a vehicle, or mechanism (Herman & Chomsky, 1988). The media provides direct and indirect employment to thousands of people in Kenya. It also helps employers to make known employment opportunities available and therefore help them attract talent and as well help job seekers learn of these opportunities. The media contributes directly to the economy by payment of taxes and providing valuable economic information that aid doing business. It makes it easier for the general population to get information. The media is sometimes referred to be a "mirror" of contemporary society; yet the media is really the force behind the changes that occur in our lives. Many people consider the media to be the fourth and most important pillar of democracy. It calls into question the choices made by the administration, brings to light instances of corruption and injustice, and as a result, impacts public opinion. In addition to this, it educates citizens about their fundamental human rights. Therefore, the media helps to enhance democracy. It keeps an eye on things for us. It compels individuals in authority to accept responsibility for the consequences of their actions, which are felt by average citizens. Because so many news outlets now operate around the clock and make use of digital media to provide information to the public in a manner that is almost instantaneous, the level of public awareness has increased as a result. Entertainment for the public may also be provided by media corporations in the form of music, films, and comedies. On the other hand, there is a dark aspect to the expansion of the media: certain stations are producing sponsored news. A decrease in media standards is being brought about by the commercialization of the media. A small number of firms control the majority of the news networks. Many news outlets are contributing to the spread of skewed information by engaging in interactions with politicians and businesspeople. People are becoming more politically divided as a result of the media's dissemination of skewed and commercialized

news (GD Ideas, December 2021). During the post-election unrest in 2007, the media was accused of playing a role in encouraging violence between different ethnic groups. Kenyan media companies, just like their counterparts in other countries and regions of the globe, have their fair share of difficulties. At least 91% of journalists working for local media outlets have reported receiving security threats while on the job. This indicates that the atmosphere in which journalists and media employees are required to do their jobs is becoming more hostile. Politicians are responsible for almost forty percent of all acts of harassment and assault (Committee to protect Journalists, May 2013).

## **1.2 Research Problem**

The evolution of the information and communication technology in the workplace is intended to make work easier and, in the process, result in improved employee performance and efficiency. The increasing use of online communication in the workplace should facilitate better communication among staff and thus result in faster decision making, increase employee performance and result in a motivated workforce (Farley, Coyne & D’Cruz, 2021). Indeed, effective use of communication channels like email and text messages, on social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn improves work results and, as a result, has continued to play a significant part in the organization's day-to-day operations (Findahl, 2013). The widespread disruption that the COVID-19 outbreak has produced has led to a shift in the way organizations view and implement remote work. The concept of working remotely has quickly become the de facto standard around the globe, and the number of companies that use this model is only going to continue to grow. Cyberbullying, which is defined as technology-mediated communication that violates norms for mutual respect and occasionally has the intention of causing harm (Farley et al., 2016), is a significant stressor that needs to receive more attention in light of the significant and sudden increase in the use of technology to carry out remote work tasks during COVID-19. Forms of digital

cyberbullying that occurs in the workplace include harassment, unwanted messages, abusive languages and unwanted phone calls which might result in an imbalance of power, and it creates a feeling of powerlessness (Durr, 2019). Workplace cyberbullying is found to have significant effect on employees because of its wider audience that can include family members, neighbours, friends and colleagues. As a result of the potential negative effect that cyberbullying has on organizations outcome, and its nascent development, this area has attracted the interest of scholars and management practitioners.

The purpose of the study carried out by Coyne, Farley, and Axtell (2017) was to determine the impact of digital cyberbullying on an employee's mental strain and job satisfaction among a sample of 331 employees at a university in the United Kingdom. The data demonstrate that there is a substantial correlation between cyberbullying and the levels of mental strain and work dissatisfaction experienced by employees. The research also found that the intensity of cyberbullying in the workplace did not influence the intensity of negative effect on employee performance and thus irrespective of the cyberbullying, its negative effect isn't evident among the employees. Following the same line, Martínez-Monteagudo, Delgado, García-Fernández and Rubio (2019) sought to investigate the possibility to predict the level of aggressiveness and emotional intelligence with respect to the victim, aggressor, or victim-aggressor due to exposure to cyberbullying, among students. As a result, the study advocated for consideration of a number of factors when developing programs to prevent and reduce cyberbullying among the college students. Madden and Loh (2020) investigated the relationship between the bystander helping behaviour and the workplace cyberbullying by employing the social identity approach. The results identify the need for organizations to develop social relationship amongst employees as a way of mitigating the effect of digital cyberbullying. The Kenyan media houses have popularly been called the Fourth Estate due to the important role it plays in the society. In terms of their role, media houses keep the public

informed, educates, exposes injustices in the society, shape's public opinion and exposes corruption. In addition, the media highlights the excesses of the government and therefore helps keep the state in check. While fulfilling this responsibility, the media houses tend to go against the interest of various groups in the society, that are for example inclined towards particular political position, social interests or economic strategy. In order to collect, compile and disseminated news and also get feedback in a timely and most efficient way, media houses continuously adopt the latest cyber technology. The technology enhances their work but also provides an opportunity disgruntled members of the public to get back to them individually or the entire organisation. According to the Kenya Union of Journalists Association (KUJ), the number of cyberbullying cases directed towards its member in 2019 was 783, up from 318 in 2018. This number suggests that workplace cyberbullying has become rampant amongst personalities in Kenya. In the future, as the digital age takes ground and the number of media houses grow taking divergent position in various issues, cases of cyberbullying will also increase. The question that needs to be investigated is what effect cyberbullying has on employee performance among the Kenyan media houses. Various scholars have picked interest in the problem of cyberbullying in different contexts.

Makhulo (2019) investigated the effect of cyberbullying on workplace production of journalist in the mainstream Kenyan media. The findings reveal that cyberbullying at the workplace affects performance due to the resultant psychological trauma and embarrassment whenever the victim goes to the public. In extreme cases, the victims of cyberbullying have had to resign from their workplaces. Within the Private university set-up in Kenya, Mugaza(2018) investigated how the social media use affect the employee productivity. The findings suggest that there is an inverse correlation between the times that employees visit the social media and their workplace productivity. Further, Ndiege, Okello and Wamuyu (2020) investigated the extent of cyberbullying among university students from the Kenyan

experience perspective. The results to the research reveal that cyberbullying in the Kenyan universities has become prevalent and therefore there is need for these institutions to come up with frameworks to protect cyberbullying victims and at the same time limit the actions of the aggressors. Solomon Kituyi (2021) conducted research with the purpose of determining the impact cyberbullying has on employee productivity in Kenyan insurance companies. The findings of his study indicated that cyberbullying has negative impact on employee engagement and commitment resulting to reduction in performance. According to the findings of other studies, cyberbullying in the workplace is associated with low levels of job satisfaction, absenteeism, and productivity (see Farley et al., 2015; Fahie & Devine, 2014).

From the studies covered above, it is evident that digital cyberbullying has become rampant in the workplace – third world and first world countries. Majority of the studies has tended to investigate its influence on students and organizational outcomes. It is important to look at its effect on employee performance which ends up affecting organizational outcomes. As a result, the current research will seek to bridge in the gap by answering the following question: what is the effect of workplace cyberbullying on employee performance of mainstream media houses in Nairobi, Kenya?

### **1.3 Research Objective**

The general objective of the study was to investigate the effect of workplace cyberbullying on employee performance of Media houses in Nairobi, Kenya. Specifically, to:

- i. establish the extent to which the employees face cyber bullying at the workplace.
- ii. establish the challenges the employees face in managing cyber bullying at the workplace.
- iii. determine the relationship between cyber bullying and job performance at the workplace.

#### **1.4 Value of the Study**

Present study is of benefit to the media houses in Kenya and the policy development guiding the human resource and the regulation of the sector in general. By explaining the various forms of cyberbullying staff in the sector encounter, then regulators such as the Media Council of Kenya (MCK) and the Communication Authority (CA) would be able to develop targeted policies that govern employee behaviour at the workplace as well as advise other regulatory bodies such as Communication Authority (CA) to formulate targeted policies that govern the usage of electronic gadgets. These policies and laws would help in the development of regulations and laws that will further guide the use of electronic gadgets.

The management of the media houses would derive benefit from the study as it will make various contributions by adding more theoretical content to human resource management and show evidence on how cyberbullying impacts on employee performance. From the same, the management would be able to come up with appropriate training programs tailored in cushioning the employees from the adverse effect of cyberbullying. In addition, suggestions will be made on controls that can be made to reduce the spread of cyberbullying in organizations. Therefore, this study provides a different perspective on how organization will handle cyber bullying cases by highlighting the role of management support in boosting employee performance and solving the problems that arise at workplace. This study opens door for future research in detail and help the employees who are being affected by cyberbullying through recognizing the impact of psychological distress and management support in the effective employee performance. Future researchers would be able to identify the gaps in the present study that form a foundation of additional studies with a view to increasing the body of knowledge.

The study makes a significant contribution to theories reviewed in this study, the conservation resources theory, reverse general strain theory and disempowerment theory.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The purpose for this study is to determine the impact that cyberbullying in the workplace has on the performance of employees, and this chapter reviews the relevant literature. This section also covers the relevant theories to the objective of the research, empirical studies on the challenges faced by employees in managing cyberbullying in the workplace, and how employee performance is affected by the level of workplace cyberbullying. The purpose of this section is to attempt to review the literature on the research objective. In addition to this, the chapter provides a summary of the research that has been done and the gaps in it.

### **2.2 Theoretical Review**

This section examines theories pertinent to the study's aims. The talks on the impact of cyberbullying on employee performance are based on three theories: conservation resource theory, reverse general strain theory, and disempowerment theory. This section outlines the three theories and emphasizes their relevance to the research.

#### **2.2.1 Conservation of Resource Theory**

Hobfoll (1989) is credited with the advancement of the conservation of resource theory, which is a hypothesis that human beings are induced to acquire, protect, and retain resources at their disposal. These resources include reputation, relationships, time, or food. Resources in this sense encompass personal conditions, energies or characteristics that serve as a means for attainment of these objects. The theory opines that individual will jealously protect these resources and that depletion and the inability to recover these personal resources can result in stress, burnout, and poor well-being (Taylor & Kluemper, 2012). In cognizance of the fact that individuals have limited resources, Lee, and Jensen (2014), it makes the loss of the said resources to be distressing to an individual to the point of eventually resulting loss of

personal drive to work to their ability. The theory further suggests that when an individual continuously perceive a net loss of emotional, physical or cognitive resources that cannot be replenished easily, it will result in negative actions in the overall output (Maslach et al., 2011). Particularly, the resource loss can detrimentally affect individual job outcomes, including job satisfaction and job performance.

Conservation of resources theory – in the current context implies that continuous workplace cyberbullying exerts its effects on the wellbeing of employees and eventually lead to a psychological ill-being of employees. The loss of an employee reputation in the eyes of fellow colleagues and the public in general seriously affects employee working position and when the vice persists and in turn the final output of the affected employee is negatively hampered.

### **2.2.2 Reverse General Strain Theory**

The General Strain Theory was advanced by Agnew and White (1992) and is of the view that strains in the workplace is likely to result depression and anger that eventually lead to pressure for crimes. The theory therefore hypothesis that the genesis of crime and anger in the workplace is the presence of strain in a person that originate from the negative emotions such as frustrations. The GST can be expanded to explain also the non-criminal activities such as bullying in that person that bully, say employees, are facing some form of strain which increases their anger and thus increases their likelihood of engaging in deviant activities such as bullying to relieve their strain. In order to cope with the negative strain, GST opines that individual that perpetrate the organizational bullying should be helped through engagement in coping process. The coping process brings about relief to the potential perpetrators and that these actions include the organization availing adequate coping resources, coping skills and social support (Barn & Tan, 2012). In this study, therefore, the reverse GST helps in



explaining how the employee performance in the media houses is influenced by the workplace cyberbullying that they experience.

### **2.2.3 Dysempowerment theory**

Dysempowerment theory was advanced by Kane and Montgomery (1998). According to the theory, an employee perceives the presence of a polluted environment in the workplace as a violation, which leads to a feeling of subjective stress—leading to unpleasant emotion, and this in turn disorients employees' attitudes toward work objectives. According to the notion, the bigger the impact of workplace pollution, the larger the possibility for dysempowerment. Dysempowerment theory therefore has the potential to explain workplace cyberbullying as a circumstance where a target of workplace cyberbullying perceives a series of events as a violation of their dignity (or as something unfair), leading to a negative affective response that impacts their mental well-being and job attitudes. The negative emotion resulting from cyber bullying results in an employee mental strain, and job dissatisfaction.

Madden and Loh (2020), further opines that attribution of blame for the “polluting” event of cyberbullying to a particular individual is taken as an act of violation on an employee dignity and therefore affects one dignity and consequently emotional state in the workplace. The theory therefore suggests that an employee dysempowerment because of harassment, improper contact, deception and public humiliation is expected to affect the ability of an individual to work and consequently performance in the workplace. This theory is therefore considered to be relevant in explaining how cyberbullying affects the employee productivity in the workplace.

### **2.3 Types of Cyberbullying**

Understanding the definition of cyberbullying is critical to examine its manifestations and discover appropriate prevention strategies. There are several definitions of what constitutes cyberbullying, some of which we look at in this document. Cyberbullying occurs when someone purposely and consistently uses technology to bully, harass, disturb, or threaten another person (Smith, 2015). Cyberbullying is defined as purposely humiliating, threatening, or frightening another person using a technical medium such as the internet or a mobile phone, such as via a text message or a phone call (Okoth, 2014).

According to Smith (2015), it comprises utilizing electronic media to inflict harm intentionally and consistently to another individual on several occasions. Traditionally, bullying has been associated to occur within the confines of an institution by persons that are in contact with the victim. However, with the proliferation of the information technology to almost every part of the globe, bullying is now perpetuated by persons that are anonymous or can hide their identity (Branch, Ramsay, & Barker, 2013).

According to Li (2010: 373- 374, as cited in Andrew Makori1 & Peace Agufana study on Cyber Bullying), cyber bullying can take various forms: Exclusion, when we speak about excluding someone, we imply intentionally leaving them out. For example, in work, one might be purposely excluded from group conversations and the exchange of knowledge. Harassment occurs when a bully sends his or her victim unpleasant and threatening messages through electronic methods of communication. Harassment may occur in several circumstances. It is conceivable that a group of people may collude to send hundreds of SMS to the victim at the same time. Flaming is a kind of cyberbullying in which the bully makes postings or directly communicates insults and profanity to the victim of the bully's actions. Flaming is like trolling, but it frequently includes a more direct attack on the target in order to engage them in an online war.

Cyberstalking is a kind of harassment that occurs via the Internet. Cyber bullies often use online communication to deliver frightening and threatening remarks to their victims. It is very rare for victims to have the false impression that "the intimidator may move offline and physically harm them," which causes them to be overly cautious of their surroundings. Impersonation happens when someone creates a false profile in the name of another person or when someone illegally gains access to another person's account. A cyberbully will often assume the identity of the person they are bothering online to tarnish that person's good reputation. Denigration is an attempt to harm the victim's reputation or disrupt the victim's friendships by circulating false gossip or rumours online. Cyberbullying is another term for denigration. One of the perpetrator's weapons may be deceit, allowing the victim to think that "they are conversing in confidence with a trusted friend so that they expose important information." This might involve unpleasant or humiliating secrets. Once the cyber bully obtains the material, he or she will use it against the victim by publicly disclosing it to others, "in an attempt to shame the victim."

Outing and trickery are two types of cyberbullying that are often employed in tandem. Outing is the act of a cyber bully who uses technological ways to publicise private information without authorization with the intention of causing harm" to the victim of cyber bullying. Several studies on cyber bullying have been conducted. In 2020, J. R. Ndiege, G. Okello, and P. K. Wamuyu published a research paper on a study titled "Cyberbullying among University Students: The Kenyan Experience". In their study, the researchers sought to establish the extent of cyber bullying among university students and its impact on their studies. In a similar vein, Kintonova, Vasyaev, and Shestak (2022) studied "Cyberbullying and cyber-mobbing in poor nations". A research titled "Cyber Bullying Among Learners in Higher Educational Institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa: Examining Challenges and Possible Mitigations" was undertaken by Peace Agufana and Andrew Makori from the School of

Education at Muranga University of Technology in Kenya. Researchers attempted to determine the types of cyberbullying that college students experience, how it affects their education, and the difficulties they have preventing it in their study.

## **2.4 Employee Performance**

An employee's performance is judged by how successfully they carry out the obligations of their employment, achieve the set objectives, and behave themselves at work. Performance is measured using characteristics such as work quality, quantity, and efficiency Sumbul (2020). Work product quality, the quality of the work produced is an essential performance indicator. Are employees making every effort to ensure that the final product is of the greatest possible quality? Is progress being made toward meeting performance objectives? The job's quality serves as the basis for evaluating all other areas of their performance.

Quickness and effectiveness: examine how much an employee generally does in a week, month, or quarter, and how well these compare to your expectations. Are the deadlines met, has there been meaningful progress, or has time been wasted? Are shortcuts being employed to speed up the completion of the task? Because efficiency is the result of increasing output while decreasing expenses, it is critical that this knowledge be conveyed across your firm. Trust and consistency are crucial attributes for employees to have. Do the employees work independently? Are they punctual? Do they look presentable? It is conceivable to give high-performing employees autonomy and expect them to continue delivering strong results with less supervision, Abowd, Kramarz and Moreau (1996).

## **2.5 Effect of Cyberbullying on Employee Performance**

Baloch (2020) investigated the moderating influence of management support in the relationship between workplace cyber bullying on the employee Performance. The research

was based on public sector employees in Pakistan. The outcome to the study reveal that cyberbullying had a negative and significantly relationship on employee job performance as it led to psychological distress ( $\beta = -.2728$ ,  $p=0.0000$ ). Further, the results suggest that management support acted as a moderator in limiting the negative effect of cyberbullying on employee performance. This finding is in support to that made by Arseneault et al., (2010) which pointed out that workplace cyberbullying has negative impact on employee health and general wellbeing that if it continuous unchecked resulted in distress and depression. Indeed, existence of a causal relationship between workplace cyberbullying and emotional well being has been established by prior studies which show that the vice generates increased psychological distress among employees. An employee that is affected psychological is found not to perform.

Alwansyah, Santi and Syah (2020) examined the influence of Cyber bullying Victimization on Counterproductive Work Behavior among 235 agrochemical products employees in Malaysia. The results reveal that cyber bullying victimization in an organization had a positive and significant effect on counterproductive work behaviour and this means that whenever employees are subjected to a higher level of cyberbullying, the employees exhibited increased negative work behaviour. The findings supported the dysempowerment theory by finding that cyberbullying affects employee mental strain and consequently satisfaction and performance. The findings suggest that workplace cyberbullying not only affects individual employees but also the organization in general (Broughton, Higgins, Hicks, & Cox, 2010). The result implies that increased volume of cyberbullying results in employee's disenchantment and which in turn reduces employee performance in the workplace.

Madden and Loh (2020) sought to investigate the workplace cyberbullying and the influence of the bystander helping behaviour among 204 white collar employees. According to the results, onlookers are more inclined to intervene on behalf of bullied workers if they have a psychological link with the person being bullied as the target of the bullying. In line with the findings of Levine and Crowther (2008), bystanders were found to step in and aid when the target of the bullying was a co-worker or another member of the in-group, but they were less likely to do so when the victim was a member of an out-group. However, the results contradict that arrived by Lewis, Thompson, Wuensch, Grossnickle, and Cope (2004) who found that diffusion of responsibility was absent when the in-group members were working outside their jurisdiction even though in the same multinational organization.

James Nambusi Makhulo (2019) investigated the effect of cyberbullying emanating from the social media on workplace production. The research particularly investigated the effect role of the Cyber security and protection act (2016) Section 27 enacted in Kenya. The research findings reveal that cyberbullying impacted negatively on adults more than the youth which earlier studies have concentrated on since the vice impact on the families and workplaces. The employee productivity was found to be affected from the psychological trauma, embarrassment, shame, and legal involvement whenever the message goes public. In other situations, the study findings reveal that others have buried themselves in work for fear of victimization and in some cases, others have gone to the extent of committing suicide- This position supports the findings by Hollis (2016) who noted that cyber shaming–technology among people of color in high school students in England was found to result in suicide. Therefore, the effect of cyberbullying is not localised in a particular region but rather transcends national boundaries and affects persons of all ages.

Researchers Malik and Malhi (2020) investigated the effects of job satisfaction on potential indicators of workplace cyberbullying among university workers in Pakistan. The findings indicate that spiteful envy led to behaviour that may be classified as cyberbullying, which in turn led to an increase in the number of organizational politics. On the other hand, the findings demonstrate that employees' levels of work satisfaction were unaffected by malignant jealousy. However, when cyberbullying was included as a mediator, the data suggest that workers who envy their colleagues followed it up with bullying and political actions. This was the case even when cyberbullying was used as a mediator. The findings indicate that a negative connection does exist between exposure to workplace cyberbullying and organizational commitment ( $r = -.25$ ;  $p .01$ ). In this research, they stress the fact that the leadership of the firm plays a significant role in mitigating the negative impacts of employee bullying by instituting proper regulations that make clear the repercussions of continuing to engage in the vice. This perspective is reinforced by past research that indicate the presence of ethical leadership on decreased instances of unproductive behaviours and bullying in the workplace (Stouten et al., 2010).

Researchers Farley, Coyne, Sprigg, Axtell (2015), and Subramanian looked at the impact that cyberbullying has on medical students and residents. The study looked at cyberbullying from five different angles: who is to blame, how it makes people feel, how it affects interactional justice, and how it affects work satisfaction. The findings imply that disempowerment is considered to have an influence on staff even when an individual's dignity has not been violated. This is because negative effect strengthens the connection between cyberbullying and mental strain. In support to the similar findings, Preacher and Kelley (2011) who find that online communication has higher chance of being construed as cyberbullying while the message has good intention as opposed to the written communication. Further, the study

recommends that an organization comes up with a policy that guides the tone that online communication carries.

## **2.6 Challenge Faced by Employees in Managing Cyber Bullying**

The traditional bullying that is constrained to an organization has been overtaken by the speed and magnitude of bullying that is based on the digital technology. The cyberbullying permeates beyond organizational boundaries and the sheer speed that it travels is high and might even be accessed by millions before the victim gets aware of it and therefore becomes difficult to undo the damage. Since employees represent an organization, cyberbullying affects not just the reputation of employees but also that of the organization and hence its effect goes far and wide (D'Cruz & Noronha, 2013). The challenge of cyberbullying is proving to be challenging to manage- especially to employees due to number factors. Aldea-Capotescu (2013) highlights that a significant number of organizations do not have a policy that offers adequate protection to employees and a lack of workplace standards on friendship that will discourage other employees from bullying fellow colleagues. Further, a lack of policy on staff privacy and clear specification of what constitutes improper advances by fellow staff is lacking on some organizations. Cohen (2016) submits that the anonymity of the bully and inefficient handling of the bullying cases by the authorities at both organizational level and security agencies has become a challenge for the victims to seek justice resulting from the cyberbullying vice.

According to Zhang and Leidner (2014), victims of cyberbullying find it difficult to avoid being bullied since they are required to check their e-mail and respond to text messages as part of their jobs. In addition, cyberbullying may take place anywhere and at any time, seemingly at random, and as a result, it is difficult for victims to steer clear of it without giving up their use of information and communication technologies (ICT). This suggests that victims of cyberbullying continue to be targeted even when they are not at their place of



employment (Ak, Ozdemir, and Kuzucu, 2015), and in some instances, some of the cyberbullying actions, such as posting someone's picture in the media without permission, may extend to a larger population. Considering that such a post might extend to a larger audience, the effect is that many responses will come through – thus having a ripple effect and consequently being more damaging to the victim.

The importance of employee training regarding workplace cyber bullying has been advocated as one way of controlling the vice. According to Maatman (2018), having an awareness of the laws that address harassment and training all workers, including managers, would demonstrate to all personnel in the company the seriousness with which the rules are to be taken. A firewall that can check and reject data that is sent to the server of an organization from inside the organization as well as from outside the organization need to be included into the computer systems of all organizations. The power of the system to flag off instances of bullying should also be made known to the workers so that they are aware of this capability. According to Neumeyer (2017), it is necessary to put in place a social media policy that defines the rights of both the employer and the employee in the event that employee uses social media in an unprofessional manner. It is imperative that employees refrain from posting statements related to their place of work and maintain a professional demeanour while sharing personal information online. The use of technology in an unsuitable way should be expressly forbidden under the organization's standards. This includes transmitting harassing, libellous, insulting, pornographic, offensive, or obscene content (Lieber, 2010, p. 88).

## **2.7 The Conceptual Framework for the research.**

A graphical depiction of the hypothesised link between the several factors is shown in the conceptual framework. The features or qualities that are the subject of an investigation are

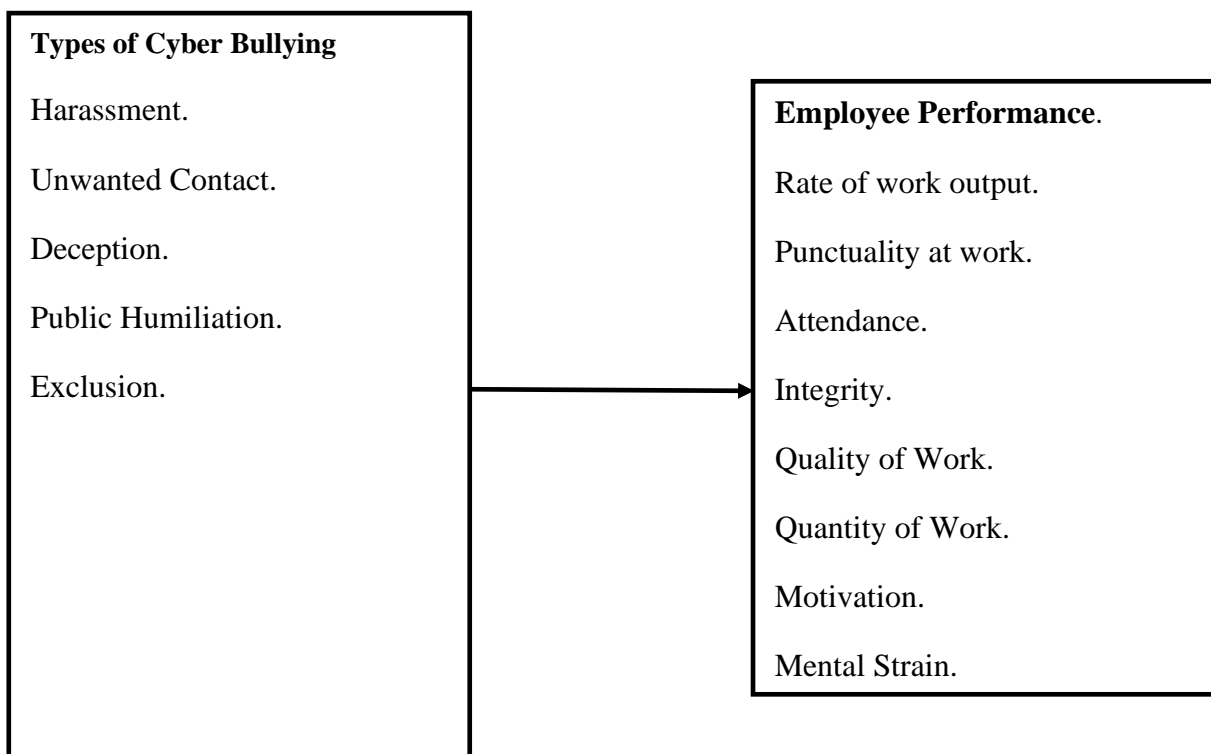
referred to as variables. In the study we are undertaking we have two variables: Cyberbullying and employee performance. Cyberbullying is the Independent Variable and Employee Performance is the Dependant Variable.

Figure 2.1 is the conceptual framework for the study.

**Figure 2. 1 Conceptual Framework**

**Independent Variable**

**Dependent Variable.**



## 2.8 Summary of Literature and Research Gap

From the literature review, the influence of cyberbullying on different aspects of human life has been highlighted. The information technology world has brought with it immense benefits resulting from adoption of the technology at the workplace, however, this has also brought about challenges due to misused at the workplace. One of the challenges that have come about from the use of the electronic gadgets is the workplace cyberbullying. The theory of conservation of resources posit that individuals have individual resources in terms of honour, dignity, and relationship – to which they will jealously protect and that depletion and

the inability to recover these personal resources, will result in stress, burnout and poor well-being of the affected member (Taylor & Kluemper, 2012; Makhulo, 2019). The loss of any form of individual resources has negative consequence on the employee and by extension the organizational outcome. What is evident from the studies however is that though researchers have looked at the influence of cyberbullying on employee productivity ((Kanapathipillai & Mahbob, 2021), employee emotional intelligence and work-life behaviour (Keskinet al., 2016), there has been limited studies on what effect cyberbullying has on employee performance. This scarcity of studies is more evident in developing countries where studies have looked at the effect of cyberbullying on students behaviour Ndiege, Okello, & Wamuyu, (2020) and identification of forms of cyberbullying experienced by high school students (Wanjohi, 2018). The research gap identified is that no study has been carried out to establish the effect of workplace cyberbullying on employees of local media houses.

One of the public figures that are prone to cyberbullying are the media personalities and if the vice is not managed effectively might influence their performance. It is therefore necessary that a study be carried out with a view to establishing how cyberbullying affects their performance of Media house employees. This study will seek to cover the reseach gap.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter discuss procedures and techniques that were used to identify, select, process, and analyse information in the study.

### **3.2 Research Design**

Research design gives information on the type of strategy that the research may undertake to reach the aims and objectives that it was designed to attain. It is sometimes referred to as a blueprint, a master plan that outlines methods, protocols, and processes for acquiring and interpreting the necessary information, or simply a framework or action plan for the purpose of research (Collis & Hussey, 2017).

The research design was cross-sectional descriptive research. Because the descriptive study is primarily concerned with the univariate problem in which the study is involved – in this case, the understanding of the effect that cyberbullying has on employee performance – this aspect motivated the researcher to adopt it. In addition, the other reason behind the choice of this study design is that the descriptive study helps understand a phenomenon at a glance. In addition to this, adopting this research design would be helpful in the process of developing a genuine personal comprehension of the value that is contributed to the way in which employee performance is influenced.

### **3.3 Population of the Study**

Study population is a group of objects that a researcher will select a sample for the study and to which findings of the study will be generalised.

These study elements may be living or non-living organisms, and they can come from any field of study. These aspects of the research, known as the target population, are decided based on a variety of considerations, such as the geographical limits, the scope of the study, availability, and the time constrained constraints.

The targeted population were employees of the media houses that have a market share of at least 1% in the Kenyan market. According to the Communication Authority, there are eight of the media houses that have a commanding market share of 98%, with each at least having a share of 1% (Appendix II).

The unit of analysis was the eight media houses (employees) operating in Nairobi Kenya. According to the individual media house Human Resource departments, the approximate number of staff in the top and middle level management is 4066. These cadres are presented in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1: Target Population**

<b>Firm</b>	<b>Management</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
Royal Media	765	765	18.8
Kenya Broadcasting Corporation	227	227	5.6
Nation Media Group	1174	1174	28.9
Standard Group	680	680	16.7
Capital Group	258	258	6.3
Kass FM	259	259	6.4
Radio Africa Group	283	283	7.0
Media Max	420	420	10.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>4066</b>	<b>4066</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Firm Human Resource Departments**

### **3.4 Sampling**

To identify respondents for the research, stratified sampling and basic random sampling procedures was used. First, the media houses current two cadres were considered as strata from which the responders would be chosen. Because the population is diverse, stratification was employed to account for the features of each stratum.

The researcher will use Slovin's (1960) method to determine the number of respondents in each cadre.

$$n=N/(1+Ne^2).$$

Where.

n= sample size

N= Total population, i.e., the three cadres' targeted population

e= stands for error tolerance. The research use a 95% confidence level, which resulted in a 0.05 margin of error.

The following formula is used to determine the sample size;

$$n=4066 / (1+4066*0.05^2)$$

$$n=4066/19.15$$

$$n=364$$

Hence the 364 employees formed the sample size. To arrive at the sample size for each cadre, the researcher will proportionately determine the number of targeted employees in each cadre with a view to arriving at a total number of 364 respondents. The sampling frame is presented in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2: Sample Size**

<b>Firm</b>	<b>Management</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
Royal Media	68	68	18.8
Kenya Broadcasting Corporation	20	20	5.6
Nation Media Group	105	105	28.9
Standard Group	61	61	16.7
Capital Group	23	23	6.3
Kass FM	23	23	6.4
Radio Africa Group	25	25	7.0
Media Max	39	39	10.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Researcher (2022)**

### **3.6 Data Collection**

A semi-structured questionnaire that has both open-ended and closed-ended questions was used to collect the data needed for the analysis. The respondents had a total discretion to respond to the open-ended questions in whatever way they see appropriate based on their experiences, since this kind of inquiry is meant to provide them that latitude. On the other hand, closed-ended questions provide respondents the opportunity to rank the many available answers and, as a result, assist respondents in promptly responding to the questions.

There were three parts of the questionnaire. The demographic details of respondents and the media companies will be covered in Section A, while Section B focused on cyberbullying data. Section D captured Challenges employees face in managing cyber bullying at the workplace, and Section C covered employee performance at the workplace.

Due to the Covid protocols in place, the researcher administered the questionnaires through use of the electronic mail. The targeted respondents were drawn from the supervisory team,

supervisors, middle level and top-level managers. The point of entry in each organization was the human resource department.

### 3.7 Data Analysis

The questionnaire was edited for precision and completeness after the data has been obtained. For the purpose of analysis, descriptive statistics measurements such as mean, frequency, and standard deviation were used. The forms of cyber bullying experienced by employees at the workplace will be measured using Frequency and percentage, challenges employees face in managing cyber bullying will be measured using mean and standard deviation. To determine the relationship between cyberbullying and employee performance, a regression equation was determined that assumed the following form.

Employee performance = f (X1, X2, X3, X4, X5).

More specifically, the regression was of the form.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + \beta_4 x_4 + \epsilon$$

Where Y = Employee performance

$\beta_0$  = Constant

X1 = Harassment

X2 = Unwanted Contact

X3 = Deception

X4 = Public Humiliation

X5 = Exclusion

$\epsilon$  = Error term

To present the results, tables were used.



## CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Introduction

The section discusses outcome of analysis of primary data collected. The section covers respondents and organisational demographic information including, age, gender, management level and tenure. Furthermore, other demographic information sought was the ownership of the media house, number of employees and years that the media house had been in operation.

### 4.2 The Rate of Response.

The study population is comprised of eight major media houses in Kenya focusing at lower, middle, and top-level management in these organizations. Since all media houses have over 100 members of staff at the headquarters, the researcher targeted managers in the organizations. The target respondents were staff in the respective organizations with all departments targeted – with staffs that are the face of the organization in the public. The researcher distributed 20 data collection instruments using a combination of physical questionnaires and Google forms per media houses. The targeted respondents were the three management level staff consisting of the upper, middle and lower level management staff. The filled and collected questionnaires from the respective employee cadres are summarised below.

**Table 4. 1 : Response Rate**

<b>Cadre</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Top Management	12	8.5
Middle level Management	58	40.8
Lower-level Management	72	50.7
Total	142	100

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

The researcher distributed a total of 158 data collection instruments out of the targeted 369 of the sample via the Google forms as well as physical questionnaires. The researcher was able to get feedback from 142 respondents with close to three-quarters (72%) of the successful respondents being from the lower-level staff and 40.8% being of the middle level management and 8.5% being the top management. This represented a response rate of 89.9% of the data forms distributed. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a 50% or more response rate is adequate. Bailey (2000) further opines that a response of 50% is adequate of analysis. Consequently, the 60% response that was achieved in the research can be said to be sufficient in realizing the objectives of the study. Therefore, the realised response rate of 89.9% was considered adequate for analysis, more so considering data from all media houses was collected.

### 4.3 Respondents Demographic Information

Data required from respondent's comprised of age, gender, level of management and the period that they have been working with the media house. The results are summarised below.

#### 4.3.1 Age of the respondent

The researcher sought to establish about the age bracket of the respondents. The results are presented in Table 4.2.

**Table 4. 2: Respondent's Age.**

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 25 years or below	14	9.9	9.9
26 to 30 years	37	26.1	36
31 to 35 years	35	24.6	60.6
36 to 40 years	40	28.2	88.8
41 to 45 years	12	9.2	98
Over 46 years	4	2.0	100.0

Total	142	100.0
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**Source: Research Data (2022)**

Results obtained suggests that most of the respondents (28.2%) are in the age bracket of between 36 -40 years second to this is the 26 – 30 years bracket. Indeed, close to four fifth (78.9%) were of ages between 26 - 40 years while the respondents that are over 46 years old were the minority (2%) of the respondents.

### 4.3.2 Gender

Below is a summary of data collected on the respondents gender.

Table 4.3.

**Table 4. 3: Respondents Gender**

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	46	32.4	32.4
Female	96	67.6	100.0
Total	142	100.0	

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

The results suggests that slightly over two-thirds (67.6%) of the respondents were female while the male constituted close to one – third. This implies that both genders were represented in the research and thus gender bias in the data results was minimized considering that bullying might be directed to a person of a particular gender more.

### 4.3.3 Employee Tenure

The final demographic information for the respondents sought was the work experience in the media house. The results are summarised below.

**Table 4. 4: Employee tenure**

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 5 years or less	22	15,5	15.5
6-10 years	45	31.7	47.2
11-15 years	47	33.1	80.3
16-20 years	14	9.9	90.2
21-25 years	9	6.3	96.5
More than 25 years	5	5.5	100.0
Total	142	100.0	

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

#### **4.4 Data on Organizational Demographics.**

The researcher also wanted to establish a number of demographic data of media companies in the study population. The specific information sought includes nature of ownership, whether it is domestic or foreign owned and number of employees. Similarly, information relating to the period that the company has operated was sought.

##### **4.4.1 Organization Ownership**

The results on the ownership structure of the media houses are summarized below.

**Table 4. 5: Ownership Structure**

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Private	7	87.5	87.5
Public	1	12.5	100.0
Total	8	100.0	

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

The results suggest that majority (87.5%) of the media houses are privately owned while only one media house (KBC) is publicly owned. Based on the findings, it suggests that the views of both privately and publicly owned media houses journalist are incorporated in the analysis.

#### 4.4.2 Number of Employees

The media houses total number of staff was sought, and the results summarized is tabulated below.

**Table 4. 6: Employees Numbers**

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 100 or less employees	-	-	-
101-500 employees	2	25	25
501-1000 employees	3	37.5	62.5
1001-1500 employees	2	25	87.5
1501-2500 employees	1	12.5	100
Over 2500 employees	-	-	100.0
Total	8	100.0	

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

Data obtained on media house workforce suggest that 3 (37.5%) of the media houses had between 201 -1000 employees while those media houses with more than 1000 employees are likewise 3 (37.5%) of the organizations researched on. Consequently, according to the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM, 2010) classification, these organizations are to be classified as large since they have more than 500 employees.

#### 4.4.3 Years of Operations

The number of years in which the media house has operated in Kenya is used in most cases to represent the age of the firm. The result summery is tabulated below.

**Table 4. 7: Operation Years**

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 11-15 years	-	-	-
16-20 years	1	12.5	12.5
21-25 years	2	25	37.5
26-30 years	3	37.5	75
Over 30 years	2	25	100.0
Total	8	100.0	

**Source : Research Data (2022)**

Data tabulated above suggests that 3(37.5%) of the media houses had operated for less than a quarter a century while the rest of the media houses had operated for over 26 years. This means that the media houses had gained requisite local market footing and spread their operations in most parts of the country, in turn will require more staff for coverage.

#### **4.5 Common Forms of Cyberbullying in the Workplace**

This study wanted to establish the different forms of cyberbullying prevalent at the workplace. These included malice, unwanted contact, deception and public humiliation. The data obtained is provided in the sub-headings .

##### **4.5.1 Harassment**

Harassment occurs when a bully sends his or her victim unpleasant and threatening messages through electronic methods of communication. The results on the nature of harassment that the journalists have received in their workplace are tabulated below.

**Table 4. 8: Harassment**

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have received rude messages.	4.054	1.0959
I have been made fun of electronically.	3.739	.8665
I have been teased severally electronically.	3.739	1.0412
I have been called names in the social media.	3.587	.9598
Have received intimidating threatening messages online.	3.470	1.1877
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.718</b>	

**Source: Research Data**

Data obtained on harassment as a form of cyberbullying suggests that to a large extent, they employees have received rude messages (M=4.054, SD=1.0959) as well as been made fun of electronically (M= 3.739). To a moderate extent, receipt of intimidating messages online was a common practice (M=3.470). However, in some of the results regarding harassment, the results shows that there was wide extent to which the respondents had been subjected to the same vice since  $SD > 1.0$ .

**4.5.2 Unwanted Contact**

Unwanted contact happens when the victim is forced out of his/her own volition to meet or accede to someone demands involuntarily. The results to the research questions on unwanted contact is tabulated below.

**Table 4. 9: Unwanted Contact**

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have been forced to meet someone who forced themselves to me through electronic media.	3.940	.8998
I have received an electronic message from someone who made sexual advances.	3.794	1.2562
I have received partial nude as well as nude pictures from someone I did not know.	3.628	1.0849
People have questioned my dressing through electronic media.	3.481	.8956
I have received unwanted pornographic pictures electronically.	3.470	1.1780
Mean	<b>3.663</b>	

**Source: Research Data**

Results obtained from unwanted contact form of cyberbullying suggest that the employees agreed that to a large extent, some persons had forced themselves through use of electronic media (M=3.94, SD=.8998) and with the SD < 1.0 implies that there was concurrence among the respondents. Similarly, the results indicate that the respondents had to great extent received electronic messages from someone who made electronic messages (M=3.794) and also received partial nude and nude pictures from persons not in their social circle (M=3.628). To a moderate extent, unwanted pornographic pictures (M=3.470) and questioning on the type of clothing worn.

**4.5.3 Deception**

Deception allows the victim to think that they are conversing in confidence with a trusted friend so that they expose important information. The results on deception of the respondents is summarized below.



**Table 4. 10: Deception**

Deception	Mean	Standard Deviation
I have shared unauthorized information having been deceived.	3.997	.9574
An anonymous person has impersonated a colleague to gain unauthorized information.	3.619	1.0033
Someone has lied to me electronically.	3.619	1.1918
Someone has shared personal information with me electronically while pretending it is someone I know.	3.224	1.1897
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.615</b>	

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

The common form of deception faced by the respondents, was that to a large extent, having shared unauthorized information with a person (M=3.997) and with anonymous person having impersonated a colleague to gain unauthorized information (m=3.619). To a moderate extent, the other common form of deception faced by the respondents was whereby someone shared information electronically while pretending it is someone they know (M=3.224).

#### 4.5.4 Public Humiliation

The researcher sought to determine what form of public humiliation the respondents faced in the discharge of their duties. Data obtained is tabulated below.

**Table 4. 11: Public humiliation**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
My pictures outside the workplace while enjoying myself have been posted on social media.	3.894	1.1435
I have been humiliated publicly by my picture being posted inappropriately.	3.774	1.0682
My pictures at different inappropriate posture have been posted electronically to humiliate me.	3.676	1.0886
My organization has been humiliated through my actions.	3.539	1.1679

Unfounded rumors that could damage my reputation have been spread about me online.	2.590	.6956
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.494</b>	

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

The public humiliation form to the respondents took the form whereby their pictures have been shared outside in the social media while enjoying oneself privately have been posted on social media (M=3.894) and some inappropriate pictures have been posted in appropriately (M=3.774). To a small extent, the forms of human humiliation has taken the form of unfounded rumors that could damage my reputation have been spread about me online (M=2.590) and their employers being humiliated as a result of their actions (M=3.539).

**4.5.5 Exclusion at workplace**

The last form of cyberbullying investigated in the workplace involved exclusion at work by colleagues. Data obtained is tabulated below.

**Table 4. 12: Exclusion at Work**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have been deliberately left out on group communication or information sharing at work	3.166	1.3544
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.166</b>	

Respondents agreed to a small degree that they have been deliberately left out on group communication or information sharing at work (M= 3.166, SD=1.3544).

#### 4.6 Challenges the employees face in managing Cyber Bullying at the workplace

Different challenges are faced by individuals as well as organization in the quest to control cyberbullying challenge. This study seek to find the challenges respondents face when managing the cyberbullying challenge at workplace. Data obtained is tabulated below.

**Table 4.12: Challenges in Managing Cyberbullying at Workplace**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Difficulty in proving episodes of improper advances due to lack of specification on what constitutes improper advances by staff.	4.201	1.05585
Fear of reprisal from senior staff.	3.788	1.40638
Difficulty in identifying the bully, due to their anonymity.	3.756	.96534
Difficulty in proving infringement on one's privacy due lack of policy on staff privacy	3.719	1.1018
Humiliation when reporting incidents of cyberbullying	3.421	1.0131
Difficulty in delimiting friendly actions with cyberbullying due to lack of workplace standard on friendship	3.235	1.5488
Difficulty in obtaining organizational support due to lack of policy that adequately protect employees against cyberbullying.	3.201	1.4019
Difficult in recovering due to inadequate guidance and counselling in the workplace.	3.112	1.3882
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.554</b>	

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

The common challenge highlighted was that there is a difficulty proving episodes of improper advances due to lack of specification on what constitutes improper advances by staff in the workplace (M= 4.201) and that sometimes the same bullying occurs from persons of authority and therefore the staff fear reprisals if they report (M=3.788). To large extent, the respondents noted that the other challenge they face in the workplace is difficulty in identifying the bully, due to their anonymity in some instances (M=3.756) and difficulty in

proving infringement on one’s privacy due lack of policy on staff privacy in the organization (M=3.719). To a low extent, the results reveal that staff have difficulty in recovering due to inadequate guidance and counseling in the workplace (M=3.112) and the challenge of difficulty in obtaining organizational support due to lack of policy that adequately protect employees against cyberbullying was moderately considered as a challenge by the respondents (M=3.201). .

#### 4.7 Employee Performance

This study seek to establish the impact of workplace cyberbullying on employee performance. The performance measures were assessed based on 2 parameters, namely, deviational behaviours and work output. The results on the same measures are presented below.

**Table 4. 13: Employee performance**

<b>Deviational behaviours</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Rate of work output	3.899	.7722
Punctuality at work	3.808	.9973
Work attendance	3.348	1.0793
Integrity at work	3.189	1.1860
<b>Work Output</b>		
Quality of work	4.284	.9143
Motivation to work	4.009	.7009
Quantity of work	3.774	1.0271
Mental health	3.605	.9521
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.615</b>	

**Source : Research Data (2022)**

The results agrees to great extent that cyberbullying in the workplace influences rate of work output (M=3.899) and punctuality at work (M=3.808). The same high influence of

cyberbullying on employee was that it affects the quality of work (M=4.284 ) and that it acts as great de-motivator in the workplace (M=4.009). Similarly to a moderate extent, the results suggest that cyberbullying affect employee work attendance (M=3.348) and integrity of work.

#### 4.8 Inferential Statistic

The regression coefficients help in determining individual variable effect on the outcome variable. The better coefficients attached to each variable shows the magnitude of effect on the outcome variable or the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Under this section, the regression model summary, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and regression coefficient of the variables.

##### 4.8.1 Model Summary

The model summary of a regression analysis explains the correlation between the dependent and independent factors. Additionally, the model presents the coefficient of determination which explains the percentage effect realized on the outcome variable courtesy of the explanatory variables.

**Table 4. 14: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	-.714 <sup>a</sup>	.510	.503	.5285

a. Predictors: (Constant), Exclusion, Harassment, Public humiliation, Deception, Unwanted contact

The findings suggest that, there is a strong negative correlation between workplace cyberbullying and employee work performance ( $r=0.714$ ). This is further explained by the coefficient of determination which indicate that cumulatively, the five cyberbullying variables explained 51% of the employee performance in the media houses ( $R^2 = 0.51$ ). This

further suggests that other factors not considered in the study explains 49% of the employee performance.

#### 4.8.2 ANOVA

Analysis of variance is a significant presents the significance of the model in relation to goodness of fit of the model. In this respect, the ANOVA model determines if the regression model is good of fit for the regression data. The decision criterion is based on 5% significance level hence giving a 95% level of confidence.

**Table 4. 15: ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	99.623	5	19.925	71.348	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	95.786	137	.279		
	Total	195.410	142			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Exclusion, Harassment, Public humiliation, Deception, Unwanted contact

The findings show a significance level of 0.000 which is less than 0.05. The findings thus imply that the model is good of fit for the regression data and therefore the regression model is significant for predicting the outcome variable given the specific units of the predicting variables.

#### 4.8.3 Regression Coefficient

The regression coefficients help in determining individual variable effect on the outcome variable. The significant coefficients attached to each variable show the magnitude of effect on the outcome variable or the relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

**Table 4. 16: Regression Coefficient**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.829	.185		9.891	.000
	Harassment	-.113	.028	-.156	-4.077	.000
	Unwanted contact	-.198	.024	-.360	-8.347	.000
	Deception	-.280	.025	-.463	-11.093	.000
	Public humiliation	-.011	.031	-.013	-.339	.735
	Exclusion	-.046	.021	-.085	-2.119	.035

a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance

As shown in the regression coefficient table, with zero effect of cyberbullying in the workplace, employee performance will remain at 1.829. However, when harassment is experienced by a member of staff, employee performance significantly reduces ( $\beta=-0.113$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). Similarly, when an employee experiences unwanted contact, their performance significant reduces ( $\beta= -0.198$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) and the same result is registered in case deception cyberbullying is faced by an employee whereby an increase by deception level by one unit reduces employee performance ( $\beta = -0.28$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). In the same way, an increase of the public humiliation cyberbullying by one unit results in a reduction in employee performance by  $-0.011$  units and it is also significant. Exclusion cyberbullying on the other hand resulted in a decline of employee performance by  $-0.046$  units.

The resulting regression model is presented as;

$$\text{Employee performance} = 1.829 - 0.113 (\text{harassment}) - 0.198 (\text{unwanted contact}) - 0.280 (\text{deception}) - 0.11(\text{public humiliation}) - 0.046(\text{exclusion}).$$

#### **4.9 Discussion**

The objective of the study was to determine the effect of workplace cyberbullying on employee performance of major media houses in Kenya. The specific objectives representing cyber bullying dimensions include malice, unwanted contact, deception, public humiliation and exclusion. The research established that , cyberbullying had an undesirable effect on employee performance with all dimensions of cyberbullying being significant in affecting employee performance ( $p < 0.05$ ). Only public humiliation factor was insignificant ( $p > 0.05$ ).

The result from all the five variables representing the cyberbullying indicates that when an employee is exposed to cyberbullying, they get humiliated and stressed and this eventually results in high stress on the mind of workers and this eventually lead to mental strain, and demotivates staff. This finding support the results by Tuckey (2016) that reveal that any form of cyberbullying on employees affects their mental strain and psychology which in turn affects their choice of decisions and work related output. The results also reveal that there is lack of adequate employee support in punishing the perpetrators of the cyberbullying vice due to the difficulty that arise from identifying the bully and fear of reprisal from the seniors. This cumulatively results in the victims feeling helpless and in return negatively impacts their work productivity. Philips (2012) identified the negative ripple effect that arise in an organization when employees feel that the bullies have a high chance of escaping punishment due to weak organizational controls or that they will not be punished. The negative consequence is that employees will fell fearsome in reporting or even being a witness despite being bullied. The fear or perception of staff being in the side of the victims might result in such extreme actions as quitting work or even seek for a long leave to recover from the pressure of being bullied. This is the same conclusion that was made by (Van Laer, 2014). The eventual effect is that the work performance of staff get affected due to absence of work



and considering that the media house staff are technical persons, to get a replacement might take a while before being replaced (Faisal, Mook, Lee, Malul, & Shoham, 2015).

The research findings suggest that the bullying in the workplace takes different forms ranging from messages that might seem to be a joke, use of inappropriate works against the victim and initiating debates in the social media that might look embarrassing to the victim. The study shows that public humiliation of staff negatively affect work performance. This is because, as supported by Beale and Hoel (2011), lead to the dampening effect of the victim psyche as well as emotional distress of the targeted employee work performance. The study outcome suggest that the negative impact of workplace cyberbullying does not only restrict itself in the workplace but also extends to the family and social network of an employee. This is because, as pointed out by Sebok and Chavez (2010), cyberbullying damages the socio psychological strength of a person. Indeed, the research was able to show that various types of cyberbullying at the workplace exerts a negative impact on daily life of an employee and by extension the overall employee performance , and thus eventually the organizational performance.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The section summarizes the main results, highlights inferences drawn from results of study, and offers suggestions for future study as well as for policy. The findings and suggestions were made in an effort to meet the study goal.

### **5.2 Summary**

The purpose of this research was to establish the impact of workplace cyber bullying on employee performance of major media houses in Kenya. The specific cyber bullying measures that were investigated were five, namely; malice, unwanted contact, deception, public humiliation and exclusion. The research collected data from the eight major media houses based in Nairobi and in total 142 questionnaires were fully filled and collected by the researcher. This represented a response rate of 89.9% considering that 158 questionnaires were distributed in total. The questionnaires were distributed to the three cadres of staff, top, middle and lower level management cadres in the eight organizations.

The results in regard to harassment, as a form of workplace cyberbullying suggest that the common practice affecting the staff was receiving of rude messages, being made fun of electronically as well as being teased. These practices were strongly agreed by the respondents as a common form of bullying with the overall mean of the responses being 3.718. The regression results of the vice shows that harassment has a negative and significant effect on employee performance ( $\beta = -0.113$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). In regard to unwanted contact as a form of cyberbullying, the results suggest that the common practice under this category involves been forced to meet someone that has by themselves sought the meeting through electronic media, sexual advances made electronically and also receipt of nude or partial nude pictures from unknown person. In all these responses, the results shows that the

respondents agreed with the statement that the vices are rampant ( $M > 3.5$ ). Similarly, the regression suggests that a unit increase in unwanted contact vice decreases employee performance by 0.198 units and this effect was significant ( $\beta = -0.198$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ).

The results also reveal that deception is a common factor affecting media house employees. These was manifested through sharing of unauthorized information about a staff and unauthorised person impersonating someone that I know with the sole purpose of accessing information. In addition, the results indicate that the other common form of deception is whereby someone has electronically lied to the respondents out rightly with the sole purpose of getting unauthorised information. The deception form of electronic cyberbullying was found to also negatively and significantly affect the employee performance ( $\beta = -0.280$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). The other variable that was found to s=negatively and significantly affect employee performance is exclusion ( $\beta = -0.46$ ,  $p = 0.035$ ) but public humiliation, though having a negative effect on employee performance, was found to be insignificant ( $\beta = -0.011$ ,  $p = 0.735$ ). In totality, the research outcome suggest that there is a strong negative correlation between workplace cyberbullying and employee performance ( $r = -.714$ ) and that in total the variables under consideration explained 51% of employee performance.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

In the present day electronically interconnected world, new channels of aggress keep on evolving and this has direct effect on employee productivity and overall firm performance. The outcome of the research suggest that workplace cyberbullying has become a common vice and there is need for an urgent intervention due to its negative effect that it has on the employee performance and workplace productivity. Cyberbullying creates a psychological distress on an employee

The results also suggest that in some cases, the affected employees do not report the bullying either to the internal or external authorities and there is need of the top management to give necessary attention.

#### **5.4 Recommendation for Policy**

In cognizance of the negative effect that cyberbullying has on employee performance and productivity, it is recommended that HR department must keep close monitoring of online resources with a view to preventing their misuse and thus affect the good work climate that has been established by the organization. Further, when the senior management in the organization is accused of cyberbullying, the HR department should encourage the complains to be shared in confidence without victimisation.

The media houses and all other organizations in general should nurture ethical culture and encourage the affected members of staff as well as whistle blowers to come out and report the vice. All staff members and newly recruited staff should sign an undertaking not to engage in any form of cyberbullying. Similarly, organizations should come up with a written policy on bullying and the same be shared to all members of staff. The organization should consistently remind all staff against the vice so that at all times, the dangers of engaging in such action is high.

Organisations should design and conduct continuous training programs against cyberbullying.

The training should be conducted at all levels of the organisation with the objective to make employees understand what is termed cyberbullying, the various forms of it, how each is perpetrated and the adverse effects of the vice on individuals and by extension the organisations they work for. Counselling to the affected staff should be organized in-house and in case there is need for outside intervention, then the same should be arranged quickly to avoid further deterioration of the affected staff.

### **5.5 Limitation**

This research was limited by the perception nature of the respondent's view. This means that the results lack empirical backing of the results and cannot therefore be generalised to other organizations. In addition, the research restricted itself to five dimensions of cyberbullying witnessed by staff in the Kenyan media houses.

The sample size adopted is yet another limiting factor such that it was 142 from the eight media houses and the same can be increased to cover other organizations for the results to be representative.

### **5.6 Recommendation for Further Studies**

The construct of cyberbullying in the workplace is an evolving phenomenon and by the mere fact that the perpetrator can at times not be known, can make the tracing complicated. Consequently, the findings are not supported by empirical data from other sectors and therefore future research should try and fill this lacuna.

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**APPENDIX**

**Appendix 1a: Letter to the Respondents**

Richard Otieno  
P. O. Box 1015  
Kampala, Uganda.  
10<sup>th</sup> October 2021

I am now studying a Master of Business Administration degree at the University of Nairobi, and as part of this program, I am doing research on the topic of "workplace cyberbullying and employee performance in media organizations operating in Nairobi Kenya." You have been chosen to participate in this research as respondent, and as a result, I would very much appreciate it if you could help me out by responding to the questions that are included in the questionnaire. Your answer will be kept in the strictest confidence.

I am excited to work with you and look forward to our time together.

With kind regards,

.....

**Richard Otieno**

**Appendix Ib: Questionnaire**

**Section A: Demographic Information.**

**(I) Respondent**

**1. Age bracket of respondent.**

- |                         |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| a) 25 years or less ( ) | b) 26 to 30 years ( ) |
| c) 31 – 35 years ( )    | d) 36 – 40 years ( )  |
| e) 41 – 45 years ( )    | e) over 45 years      |

2. Gender of respondent.

- a) Male ( )                      b) Female ( )

3. What level of management are you?

- a) Top Level ( )    b) Middle level ( )  
c) Supervisory Level ( )    d) Others (Specify).....

4. For how long have you worked in the media House?

- a) 5 years or less ( )    b) 6 -10 years ( )  
c) 11 – 15 years ( )    d) 16 – 20 years ( )  
e) 21 – 25 years ( )    d) More than 25 years ( )

**(II) The Firm (Media House)**

1. Is the media house public or privately owned?

- a) Private ( )    b) Public ( )

2. Is the media house domestic or foreign owned?

- a) Domestic ( )    b) Foreign ( )

3. How many employees are there in the media house?

- a) 100 or less ( )    b) 101 – 500 ( )  
c) 501 - 1000 ( )    d) 1001 – 1500 ( )  
e) 1501 – 2500 ( )    f) Over 2500 ( )

4. For how long has the media house operated in Kenya?

- a) 10 years or less ( )    b) 11 – 15 ( )  
c) 16 – 20 ( )    b) 21 – 25 ( )  
c) 26 – 30 ( )    d) Over 30 Years ( )

**Section B: Types of Cyber Bullying Common at the Workplace.**

To what extent have you faced each of the following types of Cyber bullying in the media.  
 Use the scale: 1 = Not at all, 2 = Little extent, 3 = Moderate extent, 4 = Great extent, 5 = Very great extent.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Not at all (1)</b>	<b>Little extent (2)</b>	<b>Moderate extent (3)</b>	<b>Great extent (4)</b>	<b>Very Great extent (5)</b>
<b>Harassment</b>					
I have received rude messages.					
I have been teased severally electronically.					
I have been made fun of electronically.					
I have been called names in the social media.					
Have received intimidating threatening messages online.					
<b>Unwanted Contact</b>					
I have received unwanted pornographic pictures electronically.					
I have been forced to meet someone who forced themselves to me through electronic media.					
I have received an electronic message from someone who made sexual advances.					
I have received partial nude as well as nude pictures from someone I did not know.					
People have questioned my dressing through electronic media.					
<b>Deception</b>					
An anonymous person has impersonated a colleague to gain unauthorised information.					

Someone has lied to me electronically.					
Someone has shared personal information with me electronically while pretending it is someone I know.					
I have shared unauthorized information having been deceived.					
<b>Public Humiliation</b>					
I have been humiliated publicly by my picture being posted inappropriately.					
My pictures outside the workplace while enjoying myself have been posted on social media.					
My pictures at different inappropriate posture have been posted electronically to humiliate me.					
My organization has been humiliated through my actions.					
Unfounded rumors that could damage my reputation has been spread about me online.					
<b>Exclusion at workplace</b>					
I have been deliberately left out on group communication or information sharing at work.					

Others, specify .....

.....

**Section C: Challenges the employees face in managing Cyber Bullying at the workplace.**

To what extent have you faced each of the following challenges in managing cyberbullying at your workplace?

Use the scale : 1 = Not at all, 2 = Little extent, 3 = Moderate extent, 4 = Great extent, 5 = Very great extent.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Not at all (1)</b>	<b>Little extent (2)</b>	<b>Moderate extent (3)</b>	<b>Great extent (4)</b>	<b>Very great extent (5)</b>
Difficulty in obtaining organizational support due to lack of policy that adequately protect employees against cyberbullying.					
Difficulty in delimiting friendly actions with cyberbullying due to lack of workplace standard on friendship					
Difficulty in proving episodes of improper advances due to lack of specification on what constitutes improper advances by staff.					
Difficulty in proving infringement on one's privacy due lack of policy on staff privacy					
Difficulty in identifying the bully, due to their anonymity.					
Humiliation when reporting incidents of cyberbullying					
Difficult in recovering due to inadequate guidance and counseling in the workplace.					
Fear of reprisal from senior staff.					

Others, specify .....

.....

#### **Section D: Employee Performance.**

Please rate your **performance** as an employee after cyberbullying according to each of the following measures of employee performance.

Use the scale : 1= Very Poor, 2=Poor, 3=Average, 4 = Good, 5=Very Good.

	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Very</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Very</b>

		<b>Poor (1)</b>	<b>(2)</b>	<b>(3)</b>	<b>(4)</b>	<b>Good (5)</b>
<b>Deviational behaviours</b>	Rate of work output					
	Punctuality at work					
	Work attendance					
	Integrity at work					
<b>Work output</b>	Quality of work					
	Quantity of work					
	Motivation to work					
	Mental health					

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME**

## **Appendix 2: Media Houses in Nairobi, Kenya**

1. Royal Media Services
2. Kenya Broadcasting Corporation
3. Nation Media Group
4. Standard Group 5. Capital Group
5. KASS Media Group
6. Radio Africa Holding
7. Media Max.
8. Capital Group.

Source: (Communications Authority of Kenya-CAK, 2021)