



Influence of media on technocracy and democracy in Kenya

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Abstract

This study examines the interplay between technocracy and democracy in Kenya's governance. It investigates whether technocratic leadership complements or undermines democratic principles. Grounded in normative theory, the research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. A sample of 100 media and communication lecturers was selected. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data was analysed thematically. Findings reveal that while technocracy is valued for its efficiency, it often alienates the public, raising concerns about its legitimacy. Additionally, the media plays a dual role by both advancing technocratic ideals and failing to critically scrutinize them due to financial constraints and political influences. The study concludes that integrating technocratic expertise with democratic accountability is essential for fostering transparency, public trust, and a governance model that is both effective and democratically legitimate.

Keywords: *Technocracy, democracy, media oversight, public trust, african governance dynamics*

1. Introduction

A democratic government is elected by the people and held accountable to them (Benn & Peters, 2009). Etymologically, the term democracy originates from the Greek words *Demos* and *Kratos* which mean “people” and “power” respectively. While the conceptual stages of democracy fitted well in the Greek city-state of Crito which practiced direct democracy, indirect democracy gained prominence in various other states. Both models of leadership recognise the centrality of the people in the governance (Alford & Friedland, 1986).

Democracy is *de jure* a majoritarian formation, yet in Africa, we have seen arrangements that paint a *de facto* position that differs from the *de jure* position. Earlier scholars such as Socratic Plato cautioned about the reality of democracy given the amount of knowledge available to the citizenry. Scholars have drawn other forms of political leadership, including meritocracy, aristocracy, and technocracy.

In Africa, the concept of technocracy has evolved significantly over time, transitioning from a purely technical management approach to a highly politicized phenomenon. By 2018, the relationship between technocracy and politics had become intertwined, as evidenced by Thurston's (2018) analysis of Nigeria. He argues that technocrats have become pawns in a political game, with their expertise often exploited for electoral gain. This politicization of technocracy has eroded public trust and hindered efforts to achieve good governance.

Moshi (1990) captures the early conception of technocracy as a technocratic managerial elite overseeing industrial development. This approach, however, was criticized for its potential to create technological dependency and undermine democratic principles. While Moshi acknowledges the media's role in shaping public discourse, he does not fully explore its influence on the acceptance or rejection of technocratic governance. Building on Moshi's critique, the Kenyan government attempted to implement technocratic principles in the early 2000s with the "Dream Team" initiative with a varying degree of success.

The government's efforts to incorporate meritocracy into governance unfolded in two distinct phases. The first phase occurred prior to the promulgation of the new constitution. During this period, the regime of President Daniel Arap Moi appointed a 'Dream Team' comprising technocrats in the mid-1990s. This elite group was tasked with revitalizing the civil service and stimulating economic recovery. However, within two years, the majority of these technocrats had resigned from their high-profile positions, signaling the challenges inherent in sustaining technocratic reforms within the prevailing political environment.

Following the promulgation of the new constitution, President Mwai Kibaki's administration integrated technocrats into key governance structures. These experts were afforded significant autonomy to execute their mandates and enhance service delivery to the citizenry

(Owakah & Aswani, 2009). A comparable strategy was adopted by President Uhuru Kenyatta's government, which also emphasized the inclusion of technocratic expertise within its administrative framework. In both regimes, parliamentary vetting was instituted as a formal mechanism for approving these appointments, thereby reinforcing accountability and legitimacy in public service leadership.

Situating Media Influence and Accountability in Democratic Governance

While democratic governance is often conceptualized through political institutions, electoral procedures, and civic participation, an increasingly indispensable dimension lies in the role of the media as both a conduit and critic of power. In environments where technocratic leadership is gaining root, media influence is central. Governance literature remains disproportionately focused on political authority and institutional design, offering only limited exploration of how media narratives shape or challenge the legitimacy of technocratic governance (Veltmer, 2013; Norris, 2000).

The media serves not only to inform but also to scrutinize, interpret, and provoke public discourse around governance decisions. Technocratic systems tend to use technical language. Media becomes one of the few institutions capable of piercing this veil and demanding transparency. This function is shaped by the media's structural independence, professional norms, and access to information (Schudson, 2008; Tumber & Waisbord, 2021).

Recent scholarship has shown that media systems in developing democracies face unique pressures that compromise their ability to perform accountability functions effectively. These include economic precarity, political capture, self-censorship, and technological disruption (Coronel, 2010; Frère, 2011). In Kenya, the interplay between political interests and media ownership often blunts the edge of investigative journalism, creating a landscape where technocratic governance may proceed without the scrutiny required to uphold democratic norms (Cheeseman, Lynch, & Willis, 2016).

Media influence also extends to agenda-setting and framing, which directly affect public perceptions of legitimacy, efficacy, and corruption in governance (Entman, 2007; McCombs, 2005). How media chooses to frame technocratic actors, whether as apolitical experts, political appointees, or elite agents, shapes not only public opinion but also the broader discourse of what constitutes acceptable governance. When media fails to challenge technocratic authority or glosses over undemocratic tendencies in favour of efficiency narratives, it may inadvertently weaken civic oversight and reinforce elite dominance (Puppis, 2019; Dragomir, 2021).

The historically based and normative foundations of governance underpin technocratic rule, problem-facing technocratic governance, and scientific governance in Africa. The extent to

which mediatization has worked towards the deepening of a movement from strongman rule and patrimonial systems of governing towards entrenching the rule of law is debatable. One of the tendencies sees it as promoting technocratic governance, while the other contends that what it has succeeded in has been the popularization of governance without achieving technos.

This paper examines the media's role in shaping perceptions of democratic governance and technocratic leadership in Kenya. It situates the media as a critical actor in the interplay between technocracy and democracy. Given that government funding and policies are influenced by prevailing governance discourse, this study seeks to determine whether media institutions support a shift toward technocratic governance. By analysing the media's function as a bridge between technical expertise and public opinion, this research contributes to the broader discourse on technocratic governance reform in Africa.

The Role of Media in Technocratic Governance

For many African countries, the development of the media has hitherto been conceptualised as part of the struggle to promote democracy and democratic governance (McQuail & Deuze, 2020). In more recent times, and particularly due to the increasing predominance of neoliberal economic policies and governance systems, state-led technocratic systems have increasingly taken centre stage. Media development was traditionally aimed at facilitating development journalism. It was also used for national mobilization or as a propaganda tool, depending on ownership. In the 1990s, media in Kenya were regarded as one of the most critical of all pillars upon which democratic governance rested.

In a technocratically governed state, the public can be informed by the media about the evaluations, conclusions, and decisions of experts. Similarly, the media can publicize how decisions are made and by whom. They also assess the implications and outcomes of those decisions. Consequently, the electorate become more aware of their environment and the workings of the state in decision-making.

The media, as the Fourth Estate, plays a critical role in holding governments and power holders accountable. As an institution for promoting public accountability, the media performs three key roles. First, it monitors and scrutinizes the actions of technocrats and government officials. Second, it provides the public with information needed to form informed opinions. Third, it enables citizens to express approval or disapproval, for example, through voting.

In Ghana, Media have been instrumental in exposing political corruption. Investigative journalists have uncovered several high-profile scandals, including the Subah Infosolutions Ghana Limited case. In 2014, Joy Online reported that the company had received GH¢75

million for services that were never rendered. Another notable case involved a contract awarded to a member of the ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC) for the procurement of 30 ambulances. According to the Economic and Organized Crime Office (EOCO), the government spent \$2.4 million on these ambulances in 2017. However, investigations revealed that the vehicles fell significantly short of the required specifications (EOCO, 2017). Another exposé by Joy FM uncovered alleged fraud in government waste bin contracts and the Ghana Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Development Agency (GYEEDA) scandal (Joy Online, 2017, 2018). Some of these revelations led to investigations, prosecutions, and sanctions.

Media as a Platform for Public Engagement

The mass media possesses "informal" yet significant powers, particularly when controlled by individuals with substantial socio-economic influence. In such contexts, media can subtly shape public opinion (Jacobs & Schillemans, 2019). Mojaye (2023), in his discussion of Côte d'Ivoire's media landscape, highlights the media's potential to foster public engagement by fairly presenting news and creating spaces for community-driven debates. Through such platforms, the media facilitates public participation by amplifying citizens' voices and enabling them to seek accountability on matters that affect their lives. This function is especially important in technocratic contexts, where decision-making is often dominated by elites and excludes public input (Mojaye, 2023).

Social media have significantly increased opportunities for public engagement and contributed to the development of a more informed citizenry. As democratic spaces expand, policy decisions are no longer confined to a small group of experts but are increasingly subject to public debate. The inclusion of a broad range of stakeholders in these discursive spaces reduces the risk of expert manipulation and promotes transparency. This dynamic not only supports technocratic governance but also strengthens democratic participation (Asongu & Nwachukwu, 2019).

Critique of Technocratic Governance in Africa

Technocratic governance in Africa faces several challenges, particularly in terms of practical application and conceptual basis. The link between technocracy and democracy is complex and frequently contentious. While technocracy promotes rational decision-making and expertise, it may collide with democratic norms like participation and transparency. Technocrats may prioritize efficiency and technical correctness over inclusive and participatory methods, resulting in tensions and potential conflicts with democratic values. Subsequently, policies and reforms may not reflect the needs and preferences of the people. This dynamic can produce policies that, while technically solid, lack public support and legitimacy, making them difficult to implement effectively (Bickerton & Accetti, 2021;

Fischer, 2018). Limited public participation in policymaking can strengthen elite domination while reducing governance legitimacy and effectiveness (Janssen & Kuk, 2016; Bertsou & Caramani, 2020).

Elite capture and corruption constitute major impediments to governance in many African countries. The dominance of elite interests often exacerbates inequality and facilitates systemic corruption. When technocracy intersects with corrupt practices, the intended benefits of expert-led governance are significantly undermined, impeding the formulation and implementation of effective and equitable policies (Mkandawire, 2015; Esmark, 2020). Moreover, technocratic administrations in Africa frequently encounter challenges in reconciling technical proficiency with political acumen. The performance of such governments is shaped not only by the technocrats' expertise but also by entrenched political dynamics and institutional path dependencies. These interactions can alter the trajectory of a technocratic government, making it more vulnerable to political manipulation and less effective in attaining its objectives (Monachesi, 2023; Bertsou & Caramani, 2020).

2. Theoretical framework

The intersections of technocratic government and democratic norms span various theoretical dimensions. According to one viewpoint, technocrats are policy epistemic players that function solely through instrumental reasoning, with no underlying normative democratic convictions. This viewpoint holds that technocrats, using scientific and technological competence, seek solutions that appear to serve the larger good while ignoring the specific interests of persons, institutions, or parties (Fischer, 2018; Esmark, 2020). Proponents of this position frequently associate technocracy with the "rule of experts" paradigm, in which governance is guided by empirically grounded judgments that seek objective truth. The doubt stems from the perception that technocratic government is incompatible with democratic norms, as the former promotes technical precision and efficiency over participatory deliberation (Bertsou & Caramani, 2020).

This analytical tendency is divided into two major schools of thought. One school considers technocracy to be a form of governance that operates under the pretence of neutrality, effectively rendering it an apolitical "rule of no one" (Bickerton & Accetti, 2021). The opposing school argues that both democratic and technocratic governance frameworks are increasingly outdated and unfit for addressing the complexities of modern governance, especially in the context of digital communication and mass media (Janssen & Kuk, 2016).

Another scholarly perspective acknowledges that technocratic governance can incorporate normative democratic values. This school argues for a hybrid model in which technocratic expertise is embedded within frameworks of democratic accountability and transparency (Mkandawire, 2015). This view resonates with collaborative governance models, which

posit that expert knowledge can contribute meaningfully to policy when accompanied by participatory mechanisms and transparent communication channels (Fischer, 2018).

However, the efficacy of these hybrid models is significantly influenced by the role of the media. Media theory adds an essential dimension to the democratic-technocratic debate by positioning media as both a mirror and a mechanism of accountability within governance systems. McQuail & Deuze (2020) and Voltmer (2013) argue that in democratic societies, the media functions as a vital intermediary that enables public deliberation, amplifies marginalized voices, and holds powerful actors to account. In technocratic systems - here policymaking often occurs away from public scrutiny - media become indispensable in translating expert discourse into public knowledge and ensuring legitimacy through oversight (Schudson, 2008; Puppis, 2019).

From a normative media theory standpoint, the media is expected to play a watchdog role. This includes investigating, interrogating, and exposing governance processes. This watchdog function becomes particularly critical in technocratically oriented regimes, where public access to decision-making is limited and expert authority is rarely challenged (Jacobs & Schillemans, 2019). Without a robust media sector to fulfil this role, technocratic governance may descend into elite control, disconnected from public interest.

Yet, media's role is not inherently emancipatory. Theories of mediatization (Esmark, 2020; Dragomir, 2021) suggest that media institutions themselves can be co-opted, politicized, or weakened by economic and political forces. In such contexts, media may reinforce technocratic narratives without offering the critical scrutiny necessary for public accountability. This creates a paradox where the very institution responsible for enabling democratic feedback becomes a vector of elite consolidation.

In the African context, these tensions are magnified. Weak regulatory environments, patronage-based media ownership, and economic precarity often diminish media independence and investigative capacity (Coronel, 2010; Frère, 2011). As a result, the media's potential to serve as a counterweight to technocratic overreach is undermined, limiting its effectiveness in fostering democratic responsiveness.

This study therefore adopts a blended theoretical approach, drawing from democratic theory, technocracy studies, and critical media theory to examine how the media functions within Kenya's evolving technocratic-democratic nexus. It situates the media not as a peripheral player, but as a central actor in shaping public understanding of technocratic leadership, legitimizing or contesting its authority, and enabling democratic accountability in the absence of direct public control.

3. Methodology

This study used a mixed-methods approach, with quantitative surveys, and qualitative interviews. The study's respondents included two distinct groups. The first one comprised media and communication lecturers with industry experience, while the other consisted of lecturers based in academic institutions. Stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure the inclusion of diverse demographic characteristics. The population was first divided into two primary strata consisting of media practitioners and academic professionals. Within each stratum, participants were randomly selected to ensure proportional representation, enhance diversity, and minimize sampling bias. This approach allowed the researchers to capture a broad spectrum of perspectives within the media ecosystem.

The sample comprised 100 participants, including 56 media practitioners and 34 media and communication lecturers. Data was collected using questionnaires in the quantitative phase, while semi-structured interviews were used in the qualitative phase. The survey employed Likert scale questions to assess impressions, whilst the interviews gave detailed information about the participants' perspectives. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including ANOVA tests. Qualitative data was analysed using thematic analysis. Qualitative content analysis was employed to examine both textual and visual data, with the aim of identifying emerging themes. These themes were then interpreted to generate meaningful insights and enhance understanding of the data.

Ethical approval for this study was granted by the Daystar University Institute of Scientific and Ethics Review Committee (DU-ISERC). The study adhered to established ethical principles, including anonymity, confidentiality, and privacy. All data were presented in aggregate form, and participants were assigned pseudonyms to protect their identities. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection.

4. Results

Demographic Profile of Participants

The study involved a sample of 100 participants, comprising 56 media practitioners and 34 media and communication lecturers. Regarding age distribution, 18% were aged 18–24, 31% were 25–39, 45% were 40–60, and 6% were 60 years or older. The majority of participants were male (58%) and highly educated, with 82% holding a university degree or higher, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Occupation		
Media Practitioners	56	56%
Media and communication lecturers	34	34%
Age		
18-24	18	18%
25-39	31	31%
40-60	45	45%
60+	6	6%
Gender		
Male	58	58%
Female	42	42%
Education Level		
College Diploma	18	18%
Degree	28	28%
Masters	43	43%
PhD	11	11%

Perceptions of Media's Role

To examine participants' perceptions of the media's role, Likert scale questions were used. Participants generally perceive the media as playing a significant role in promoting democratic governance and holding technocrats accountable (Table 2). A high mean score (4.2) reflects strong agreement on the media's watchdog function. However, perceptions of media coverage and accuracy were more neutral, indicating mixed views about the depth and balance of reporting on technocratic governance. Participants acknowledged the media's influence on public perception but also pointed to challenges such as political pressure and resource constraints that hampered its effectiveness.

Table 2: Perception of media's role

Question	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mode
Q1: Media effectiveness in promoting democratic governance	3.6	0.9	4
Q2: Media coverage positivity of technocratic governance	3.2	0.8	3

Q3: Media accuracy in reporting on technocrats	3.1	0.9	3
Q4: Media influence on public perception of technocrats	3.7	0.8	4
Q5: Media role in holding technocrats accountable	4.2	0.7	4
Q6: Media focus on successes vs. failures of technocrats	3.2	1	3
Q7: Media providing a balanced view of technocratic governance	3.5	0.8	4
Q8: Challenges faced by media in reporting on technocrats	3.4	0.9	3

Inferential Analysis

ANOVA tests were performed on each question to see if there were any significant differences in perceptions between demographic groups. Results in Table 3 indicate that there were no statistically significant differences in perceptions based on occupation, age, gender, or education level ($p > 0.05$ across all variables). This implies that regardless of demographic background, participants largely share similar perceptions about the media's influence, accuracy, and accountability role. This suggests a consensus view across media professionals and academics.

Table 3: ANOVA Test Results

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	F	P
Occupation	Media Effectiveness (Q1)	1.45	0.23
Age	Media Accuracy (Q3)	0.78	0.51
Gender	Media Influence (Q4)	0.67	0.41
Education Level	Media Accountability (Q5)	0.89	0.45

Media Effectiveness and Public Perception

Participants rated the media as effective in advancing democratic governance, with a mean score of 3.6 (SD = 0.9). However, there was no discernible variation in perceptions between media and communication lecturers or between age groups, gender, or educational levels. The findings indicated a neutral to somewhat positive attitude toward media coverage of technocratic governance (M = 3.2, SD = 0.8). Participants expressed mixed feelings on the accuracy of media reporting (M = 3.1, SD = 0.9) and whether the media gave a balanced perspective (M = 3.5, SD = 0.8). Participants agreed that media coverage influences the public view of technocratic government (M = 3.7, SD = 0.8) and that the media is critical in keeping technocrats accountable (M = 4.2, SD = 0.7). These perceptions were consistent across all demographic groupings.

Thematic analysis about the media's role in a democratic society was conducted. Results indicates that participants stressed the importance of investigative journalism, balanced reporting, media independence, in-depth analysis, and public participation (Figure 1). They also emphasized the media's impact on public opinion and legislation.



Figure 1: Thematic analysis

Interviews were conducted to determine the role of media in technocracy and democracy. Participants highlighted the need for investigative journalism which can hold technocrats to account. One participant noted that “the media should increase investigative journalism to uncover both the successes and failures of technocrats” (Participant XX4). Another echoed this view, stating, “we need journalists to dig deeper and expose the truth behind these mega projects” (Participant XX22).

A consensus emerged on the necessity of balanced and unbiased reporting. Participants expressed deep concern over media bias and the imperative for accurate representation of technocratic governance. A participant asserted, “Media bias is real! We need balanced reporting that reflects the realities of our country” (Participant xx44). Another participant noted, “There should be more balanced reporting, focusing equally on achievements and challenges” (Participant xx44).

Participants called for an in-depth analysis of technocratic policies and their impacts, coupled with increased public engagement through forums and discussions. A participant stated, “We need more than just headlines. In-depth analysis is crucial for informed citizens” (Participant xx56).

Participants stressed media's critical role as a watchdog, keeping government leaders and technocrats accountable. According to Participant (xx31), "the media acts as a fourth estate, it is their role to speak truth to those in power and provide a crucial check on them." Participants also emphasized the media's role in educating the public about complicated governance issues, hence encouraging informed civic participation. Participant xx76 noted, "We can only achieve a thriving democracy if the public is well-informed."

Challenges in Media Reporting

Participants cited various barriers to effective media performance. Political pressure, limited resources, and potential prejudices were often cited as barriers. There was a consensus on the value of journalistic independence. Furthermore, participants underlined the importance of capacity building and training to improve journalists' ability to give in-depth and accurate coverage.

While acknowledging the potential for efficiency advantages in technocratic government, participants emphasized the importance of strong media supervision to promote transparency and accountability. This viewpoint is shared by Participant (xx4), "*technocracy without democratic checks and balances is a recipe for disaster*." Furthermore, participants identified a communication gap between technocrats and the general public, emphasizing the media's position as an important bridge.

Test on Perception Differences

An ANOVA test revealed significant differences in perceptions of media accuracy and balance between media and communication lecturers ($F(1, 98) = 4.56, p = 0.035$). Media and communication lecturers were more critical of media accuracy ($M = 3.1, SD = 0.9$) compared to practitioners ($M = 3.5, SD = 0.8$).

A positive correlation ($r = 0.45, p < 0.01$) was found between participants' trust in media accuracy and their belief in the media's role in promoting democratic governance. There was a moderate correlation ($r = 0.39, p < 0.05$) between perceptions of media balance and public engagement facilitated by media reporting.

Discussion

Findings highlight the intricate and frequently conflicting function of technocratic governance in its relationship with public accountability, democratic principles, and media. The Kenyan case study illustrates the possible advantages and intrinsic difficulties of technocratic governance in democratic systems, emphasizing a governance paradigm that often finds it challenging to reconcile expert-driven decision-making with the principles of transparency and public accountability. Connecting these data with theoretical frameworks

reveals a more sophisticated comprehension of the intrinsic tensions and opportunities within a technocratic government.

Technocratic governance is fundamentally based on the principle of expertise, wherein policy decisions are guided by specialist knowledge rather than public opinion. This corresponds with the theoretical frameworks of Bickerton and Accetti (2021) and Fischer (2018), who contend that technocracy emphasizes instrumental reasoning and technical precision over participatory involvement.

The findings reveal a significant disparity between technocratic rule and democratic expectations. In practice, technocrats are viewed as elites who prioritize the interests of political elites over public welfare. This disconnect aligns with Esmark's (2020) assessment that technocracy, although seemingly apolitical, can function as a facade for elite control and political self-interest. The theoretical perspective that a technocratic government may clash with democratic principles is seen here, as technocrats in Kenya frequently become embroiled in political dynamics that undermine their impartiality. Thus, the study findings support the idea that technocratic governance, when separated from democratic scrutiny, might estrange citizens from significant engagement, thus undermining the democratic principles intended to empower the population.

The media's function within this governance structure is both supportive and paradoxical. It is theoretically essential in promoting public accountability and openness. Findings indicate that media serves a dual function, acting both as an accomplice to technocratic policy agendas and, paradoxically, as an unreliable watchdog. The notion of mediatization (McQuail & Deuze, 2020) serves as a valuable framework, elucidating how media platforms frequently magnify technocratic discourses while lacking adequate critique, rendering intricate policies excessively technical and consequently inaccessible to the general populace. This depiction reinforces the assertion by Bertsou & Caramani (2020) that technocratic and democratic systems can conflict, as technocratic narratives are disseminated by media outlets that often marginalize public involvement in favour of expert-led, hierarchical narratives. Although media is theoretically positioned to serve as a conduit between technocrats and the public, it cannot frequently perform this function effectively.

This limitation is reinforced by resource constraints, political pressures, and biases, which undermine the media's capacity to perform investigative journalism and ensure technocratic accountability. Investigative media plays a vital role, as emphasized by participants who articulated a profound need for a thorough examination of technocratic policies and expert practices. This function is impeded by structural and economic problems in the media environment, echoing Janssen & Kuk's (2016) assertion that media under technocratic governance systems encounters institutional constraints that restrict its watchdog capacity.

The findings underscore an urgent necessity for media reform that enhances journalistic autonomy and fosters the capability for impartial and thorough reporting.

The study indicates that technocracy and democracy, typically perceived as opposing forces, may possess the capacity for integration. This viewpoint corresponds with Mkandawire's (2015) collaborative governance model, which envisions a mutually beneficial relationship where technocratic competence is integrated inside democratic structures that prioritize accountability and openness. Study participants demanded enhanced transparency from technocrats, promoting policies that are both technically robust and receptive to public debate and examination. This corresponds with Fischer's (2018) advocacy for collaborative expertise, wherein a technocratic government integrates participatory approaches to reconcile expert knowledge with public expectations. This approach necessitates that technocrats not only function within technical frameworks but also actively address public concerns, promoting a governance paradigm that is both efficient and democratically legitimate.

Moreover, results emphasize the media's essential function in connecting technocrats and the people. Theoretical frameworks indicate that media can enhance public engagement by offering forums for varied viewpoints and facilitating civic participation (Asongu & Nwachukwu, 2019). Nevertheless, the study revealed that although media can enhance technocratic accomplishments, it frequently lacks the analytical depth required to critically evaluate policies and uncover potential conflicts of interest. This gap indicates the necessity for a more comprehensive media paradigm that not only distributes information but also critically assesses governing methods. The study underscores the necessity for media to progress beyond its existing function, embracing a more aggressive stance in examining technocratic governance and promoting civic engagement through comprehensive and equitable reporting.

Additionally, the study asserts that while a technocratic government enhances efficiency, it necessitates democratic monitoring to avert elite capture and sustain public trust. In the absence of oversight, the technocratic government may evolve into a detached system that estranges the populace it is intended to benefit. For African democracies to flourish, it is imperative to establish a governing model that harmonizes technical proficiency with democratic principles. This paper proposes a balanced strategy in which technocrats are held accountable for both their technical expertise and their responsiveness to public concerns, potentially mitigating these issues.

5. Conclusion

Despite technocrats being regarded as impartial facilitators of advancement, they have often become embroiled in politicized interactions that obscure the distinction between

knowledge and political loyalty, eroding public distrust and undermining state legitimacy. The media, designed to promote democratic values and oversee governance, has encountered considerable problems. This study contends that the media's function in Kenya and the wider African environment is ambiguous, occasionally promoting technocratic goals while failing to ensure their accountability. The notion of "mediatization" in governance exacerbates this dilemma, as media representations of technocratic policies as solely technical choices estrange citizens from substantive participation in governing processes. As a result, democracy faces the danger of being "hollowed out," characterized by the presence of formal structures while significant public engagement is diminished.

The paper advocates for a redefined governance paradigm that integrates technocratic knowledge with democratic accountability. A model of this nature would necessitate assessing technocrats not alone on their technical expertise but also on their dedication to transparency, responsiveness, and public involvement. The media ought to adapt to fulfil a stringent watchdog function, balancing support for governance with critical scrutiny. Future research can investigate the capacity of digital media to bolster democratic principles through the promotion of transparency and citizen participation in governance.

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