

# **Media coverage of major infrastructural projects: Analysis of the Print Media in Kenya**

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## **Abstract**

*This paper examines the role of the media in portraying infrastructure projects in Kenya. The paper analyses print media and more specifically the main newspapers in Kenya- The Nation newspapers and The Standard newspapers published in a period of one calendar year; between January 1<sup>st</sup> 2014 and December 31<sup>st</sup> 2014. To establish which stories fall into infrastructure and related categories, the researchers identified keywords that were found in the story. These were transport, power, building and construction, telecommunication and water and sanitation. In order to understand how The Nation and The Standard newspapers primed infrastructure information. The paper looked at article placement, type of story, tone, article size, theme of article, focus, function and article prominence. It also looked at captions and graphics use. The research found that both newspapers had most of articles on infrastructure published in the inner pages leaving prime pages for other news, especially politics. Major infrastructure stories found their space on the cover page only when the President made a public address especially during Kenya's public holidays. The study also found out that that infrastructure theme that was mostly covered was transport even as most of issues came from the government and the media only reported events as they unfolded-reactive reporting. In-depth analysis of infrastructure issues was not given emphasis. The reporters tended to only answer the elements of news; the 5Ws and H only. The impacts of the stories were not stressed nor were there investigative pieces on the subject. More space of prominence needs to be allocated to infrastructural development issues.*

**Key words:** Development; Infrastructure; Print media; Kenya

## **Background of the study**

Infrastructure is the basic physical and organizational structure needed for the operation of a society or enterprise, or the services and facilities necessary for an economy to function. It can be generally defined as the set of interconnected structural elements that provide a framework supporting an entire structure of development. It is an important term for judging a country or region's development. Infrastructure is also referred to as public services or systems: the large-scale public systems, services, facilities of a country or region that are necessary for economic activity, including power and water supplies, public transportation, telecommunications, and roads. This paper takes the definition of infrastructure as the basic structures and facilities necessary for a country or organization to function efficiently. These structures include buildings, transport, water and energy resources and administrative systems, (Oxford Advanced Learners dictionary)

Infrastructure contributes half a percentage point to Kenya's annual per capita GDP growth over the last decade raising the country's infrastructure endowment to that of the region's middle-income Countries. Kenya is now a middle level economy according to all African report and its infrastructure indicators look relatively good when compared to other low-income countries in Africa. However, they remain far below the levels found in Africa's middle-income countries. Kenya has made significant progress in infrastructure in recent years. This is attributed to the rapid modernization of the ICT sector with around 90% of the population living within range of a GSM cell phone signal. The sector is crucial in the promotion of socio-economic activities and development since an efficient and effective transport system is a mainspring for rapid and sustained development. This is in terms of national, regional, international integration, trade facilitation, poverty reduction and improvement of welfare of the citizen (State Department for Infrastructure).

Institutional reforms in the power sector have reduced the fiscal drag of the sector—the burden of subsidies on the public purse—by about 1% of GDP. A successful public-private partnership in air transport has helped to make the country's airline one of the top three carriers in Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport one of the key international gateways into the continent (AICD, 2010).

Poor infrastructure impedes a nation's economic growth and international competitiveness (The World Bank, 2006). Insufficient infrastructure also represents a major cause of loss of quality of life, illness and death (Willoughby, 2004). The Global Competitiveness Report 2010-2011 of the 2010 World Economic Forum values the competitiveness of 133 economies and thus provides the most complete economic evaluation of its kind.

The Forum uses 12 determinants, which the report calls "pillars", to measure competitiveness. The second basic pillar is infrastructure (World Economic Forum 2010). The report emphasizes that, "Extensive and efficient infrastructure is critical for ensuring the effective functioning of the economy, as it is an important factor determining the location of economic activity and the kind of activities or sectors that can develop in a particular economy."

Currently Kenya is being guided to development by the Vision 2030 blueprint that aims at reforming eight key sectors that build the society. These are; science and technology, security, microfinance, land reform, public sector reforms, energy, human resource and infrastructure. The blueprint recognizes that infrastructure is a key pillar in development and has even listed down flagship projects.

The vision 2030 infrastructural flagship projects in Kenya include Energy Generation of 23,000 MW and Distribution, Dredging of Mombasa Port, Kisumu Airport Rehabilitation and Expansion, Road Network Expansion, Lamu Port and New Transport Corridor Development to Southern Sudan and Ethiopia (LAPSSET), JKIA Expansion and Modernization, and the Standard Gauge Railway.

The Government of Kenya hopes to achieve these projects by 2030 and already some of these projects have begun their first stage. Such as JKIA expansion has already began and progress has been seen. However there is more to be done in order to accomplish these projects and have the real impact felt.

## **Infrastructure situation in Kenya**

Development of infrastructure in Kenya is a role left for the Government since independence. The foundations of infrastructure in Kenya were laid by the late founding President, Jomo Kenyatta, despite tackling political challenges such as the change from a federal to a unitary state, the Shifta war, political assassinations and the cold war between socialist and capitalist economic systems. Sessional Paper number 1 of 1965, African Socialism and its application to Planning in Kenya, settled the contest in favor of free market policies with critics saying only secondary emphasis was put on equity and alleviating poverty.

The capitalism route appeared imprudent at the time as transnational corporations dominated the economy and growth slowed in the face of capital outflows, with Kenya having no indigenous entrepreneurs that it now boasts of.

The worst drought in Kenya's history in 1984 compounded the economic doom. Pressure from the World Bank, the IMF and market realities saw price controls come tumbling down in the 1990s, with privatization of State enterprises, cost sharing in education and health and restructuring of the public service taking a heavy toll on jobs and social welfare.

Constitutional reforms allowed multiparty politics once again in 1991 and granted greater freedom to political parties before the December 1997 elections. In 2008, in the aftermath of the disputed December 2007 presidential election, legislation was passed that provided for the creation of a coalition government and amended the constitution to alter the structure of the executive branch, allowing for the re-creation of the prime minister post and the creation of two deputy minister posts. A new constitution was promulgated in 2010. Changes included a reduction in the power of the presidency, the elimination of the prime minister post after the next round of elections, the reestablishment of a bicameral parliament, provisions for a new decentralized government structure based on counties, and the addition of a bill of rights for Kenyans.

Great strides have been made since independence on state of infrastructure in Kenya. The research found out that the different political regimes contributed one way or the other towards development in terms of infrastructure in Kenya. During Jomo Kenyatta's regime the devolved system of governance involved ensuring the systems and administration of governance was aimed at development of the various Districts in the Country. The system did not work because the Country then had no capacity to sustain the devolved system nor the infrastructure or human expertise.

Moi's regime came with the "Harambee" spirit calling upon Kenyans to unite to do any developmental projects geared towards improvement of public services in Kenya. Then many public schools, hospitals and other community projects were named after Kenya's retired President Moi. His government also turned to the West for support of developmental projects in Kenya. During his tenure, many local and International NGO's were founded in Kenya.

President Kibaki's government took over a system that was at a verge of collapse in terms of infrastructure. This was after the long reign of President Moi and his dictatorial leadership. Kibaki's government decided to go East in partnerships for development. It was during his reign that the new constitution was promulgated. His government encouraged the Public Private Partnerships.

The democratic rule at the time allowed Kenyans and other developers to focus on development. The country then saw the meaning and importance of development. It was also during this time that there was

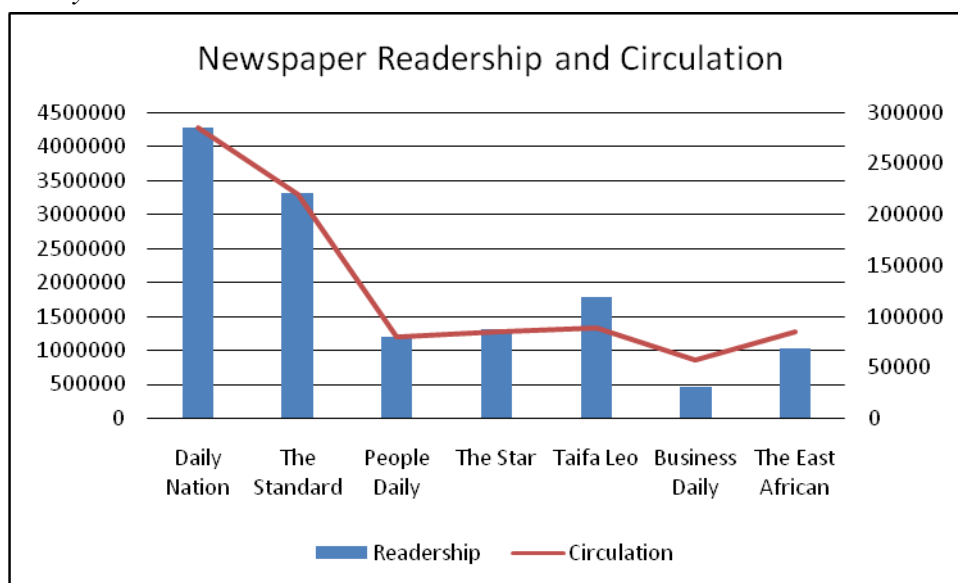
political will and also democratic space for everyone to contribute to nation building. President Kibaki’s government can be remembered for passing legislation to ensure free primary school education in all public schools. The new constitution ensured plans were laid down to ascertain that the country was ready for the same.

The country under the leadership of President Uhuru Kenyatta under the devolved government system. It is during this era that Kenya has been named as a middle income economy. Infrastructure is one of the major areas slated for improvement under the Vision 2030. The development plans include significant improvements to roads, railways, seaports, airports, water, sanitation and telecommunications. Kenya is focusing on these in the hope of attracting, accelerating and retaining investors who often complain of its dilapidated facilities that increases the cost of doing business and rendering Kenya’s products uncompetitive in the global market.

### Media landscape in Kenya

There are over ten daily newspapers in Kenya. All these publications are owned by different media houses with the largest publications being The *Daily Nation* Newspaper owned by the Nation Media Group and *The Standard* newspaper owned by the Standard Group. According to the Ipsos-Synovate Kenya Advertising Research Foundation statistics (Q4, 2013) The *Daily Nation* and the Standard newspaper control over 56% stake in the print media industry in Kenya. Out of all articles obtained after setting the keywords, the paper analyzed only those in which the subject of mental health represented the main content.

Figure 1: Readership and Circulation of the Top 7 Newspaper in Kenya  
Newspaper in Kenya



### Infrastructural content in print media in Kenya

Gitlin (1980) suggests that mass media influence has become the principle distribution system of ideology. People are only familiar with their own "tiny regions of social life" (Gitlin, 1980, p. 1), and that the mass media brings simulated reality into their lives and people find themselves relying on those sources to provide a conceptualized image of the real world. Newspapers succeed in telling the audience what to think about through their writings. Salience, on which the agenda setting theory is premised, is brought out through repeated publication of stories. This repetitiveness constructs images in the minds of the audience. The media's contribution to development occurs simultaneously along several storylines. Economists term this joint production as when rearing sheep provides meat, wool, and leather. UNCTAD (2008:176) takes the argument a step further "One infrastructure requirement particular to the creative industries is the need for access to information and communication technology. Access to information needed to boost business development is in many regions of the world still far from universal and will never be so without conscious public-sector efforts to fund such access" illustrating the two-way relationship between content and platforms plus the need for public support.

Effects of the media and impact of the media go back to earlier works done by scholars such as Paul Lazarsfeld among other scholars in the 1940's. Lazarsfeld did a number of notable studies and of interest was a comparative study of *Radio and Printed Page* which sought to determine which people under what conditions, and for the sake of gratification choose radio or print as a source of communication (Lazarsfeld, 1940:154)

While mass media doubtlessly have a variety of possible effects on society, sponsoring agencies of mass communications research have been particularly interested in just one kind of effect which has thus received almost exclusive attention, namely, the impact of campaigns- to influence votes, to sell a product, to reduce prejudice e.tc. Research has focused on 'how, and under what conditions, mass media campaigns (rather specific, short term efforts) succeed in influencing opinions and attitudes (Scannell, 2007. Pp 86)

Different scholars like Stefan Andreason have written on why Africa lags behind in terms of development and he focused on South African countries these are; Botswana Zimbabwe and South Africa. The comparative study shows how many African leaders are too happy to be in power even for a life time and incase they step down or do not get reelected, they usually have amassed wealth to last them a lifetime of their generations at the expense of public coffers. In a nation like Botswana, the masses are passive and they do offer no resistance to the government yet there still exists socio-economic inequalities.

No doubt that the media do play a role in developing of a nation (Ross, 2008). In his book he takes us through how Germany came to be this strong and powerful nation by the power of ink and pen from the days of Guttenberg, through its different political leadership like the regime of Hitler to Margret Thatcher and the challenges the press had to the time the press integrated and disintegrated. Ross takes us through various events in Germany from time of Nazi and Communist fights to the Wall Street crash in 1929 government control by the media

## **Research gap**

The projects main focus is to show exactly how print media portrays infrastructural issues and achieves its most fundamental roles which are: playing the watchdog, information flow, correlating of events among

others. In order to have the following roles achieved the media should cover on infrastructure intensely. However no research has been done to provide accurate data how infrastructure is portrayed specifically by print media. Most countries work toward developing and improving their current state of life to a better one. Infrastructure and the media are two key ingredients towards these improvements with the media's most basic role being to inform. The media specifically the print media has a responsibility to give people information in depth without bias. Print media coverage of infrastructural issues in Kenya is wanting. They cover infrastructural issues as an event or an occasion highlighting the issues in brief without giving in depth information on how it will impact on the audiences. They fail to answer the question so what? Ideally when one reads an article on something, they should not only know what the article is about but can also be able to tell what happens next.

Whenever an infrastructural issue is covered, it is not covered in depth as more emphasis is placed on the negative aspect of it instead of the impact it will have. A good example is the Standard gauge Railway project, the media focused more in the corrupt dealings in the tendering process instead of the economic impact it would have in the East Africa Region.

The print media covers certain infrastructure projects such as roads, ICT and railway more frequently than others such as water and sanitation.

## **Theoretical framework**

This paper seeks to set out the role of the media in promoting infrastructural issues in Kenya. It appreciates that the media indeed plays a role in priming and framing of developmental issues. Hence the media is always a player in development aspects of a nation. This paper focuses communication to put the message in context. This is the agenda setting theory.

### **Agenda setting theory**

According to the agenda-setting hypothesis, the media influence public opinion by emphasizing certain issues over others. The amount of media attention, or the media salience, devoted to certain issues influences the degree of public concern for these issues (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). The roots of this approach can be found in Lippman's (1922) argument that the world around us is too complicated and out of reach, and that consequently we must rely on the media to understand it. Not all the world is out of reach, however, and agenda setting studies too often ignore instances where people do have direct experiences with real-world events (Behr & Iyengar, 1985).

Behr and Iyengar argued that "it is imperative that indicators of national conditions be brought to bear on the relationship between news coverage and issue salience" (1985). One of the key aspects of agenda-setting theory is the ability of the media to highlight certain topics or aspects of issues through the processes of agenda setting (Hayes, 2007). By calling attention to some issues over others during the election cycle the news media, theoretically at least, form the public's opinion about the most important issues facing the country (Hayes, 2007). The hypothesis describes a process that is an extension of agenda setting. First, by emphasizing certain issues over others, the media influence the hierarchies of issues that the public recognizes as important or otherwise.



A wave of mass hysteria disrupted households, interrupted religious services, caused traffic jams and clogged communication systems. People fled their city homes to seek shelter in more rural areas, raided grocery stores and began to ration food. The nation was in a state of chaos, and this broadcast was the cause of it. The broadcast was not intended to be a hoax and Welles did not know the effect it would have on the masses. The effects of the broadcast suggested that the media could manipulate a passive and gullible public, leading theorists to believe this was one of the primary ways media authors shaped audience perception. However the theory was based on one major assumption that the audience is passive, the theory cannot be ruled out as irrelevant or inaccurate because the media does have an impact on people.

## **Methodology**

Methodology refers to the procedures that have been used in conducting a study (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). This paper used a content analysis that sought to assess and determine the dominant media frames in Kenya's two leading daily newspapers. Content analysis is a method of research defined, in brief, as "the systematic assignment of communication content to categories according to rules, and the analysis of relationships involving those categories using statistical methods (Riffe, Lacy & Fico, 2005, p. 3).

This enables a more objective evaluation than comparing content based on the impressions of a listener. It is a quantitative method that seeks to understand how print media portrays infrastructural issues, who speaks for and about infrastructure in the media, and finally in what context the media reports on infrastructure. In the 21st Century, we have seen advancement in communication through changes in technology. This has made information become widespread. For instance, the existence of the physical newspapers has been complemented by its subsequent digital format in the internet. *The Standard* Newspaper for example is available to the public as Standard Digital online. This move has increased readership as the media understand the importance of being in touch with the current global trends of communication. Thus, need for media to focus on development activities globally and nationally. In Kenya, the print media analyzed in this study were: *The Daily Nation* and *The Standard* Newspaper with reason being that the two are the oldest newspapers in the country and have a wider circulation and readership according to the press reference.

Content analysis of the print media was selected because it was easier to obtain the newspaper articles than the broadcast clips. Print media is more reliable since once the paper is written it cannot be altered however broadcast and audio clips can be easily altered.

The project involved complete collections of relevant print articles that were organized according to date of publication, media house / newspaper, type of story, length of the story, tone or attitude of the story. Every article was numbered and sum total determined for each paper. The figure for the proportion of Kenyans who sometimes read papers is even more impressive: almost 50 per cent of the population read a newspaper at least once a week. This is excluding the children under 14 years and translates into about 12 million people.

## **Research Design**

The research undertook a content analysis as a method for research in accordance to the content provided by the Standard and Nation newspapers. This technique involved analyzing the content of the *Daily Nation* Newspapers and *The Standard* newspapers. Content analysis was first used by Harold Laswell to analyze the content of Nazi propaganda to find out why the propaganda had such great impact on those who heard it (Lowery and DeFleur, 1995).

In this research, the focus is on *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* Newspapers published between 1st January and 31st December 2014 on all weekdays. Weekends were excluded since the papers covered stories already covered during the week. It looked at each story containing information about infrastructural projects in Kenya and reviewed it. A careful analysis of key words, concepts, themes, phrases, characters and sentences within sets of data collected was carried out in order to quantify the role played by the two newspapers in covering these infrastructural projects in Kenya.

### ***Data collection method***

The data collected focused on the units of analysis that is -type of story, placement, prominence, main theme, tone of the story, main actors, frequency, treatment, pictures and size of articles. The data was compiled and interpreted. Moreover, there was integration of different sources that consolidate the write up of the report. See appendix 1.

### ***Data analysis***

It is working with data, organizing, breaking it to manageable units, synthesizing, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others. (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982). The focus was on how the two newspapers covered stories on infrastructural issues and translate the concepts into the story line that will be readable. The procedural approach included decoding of data, Categorisation of the information, Abstraction ideas/concepts from raw data during analysis, Comparison, Integration and Interpretation in order to come up with a suitable outlay.

The kind of information collected was then integrated using computer software namely: Word processors and Word retrievers. This has helped in the numerical representation and manipulation of observations for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena the observations reflected. Below are sample table structures that were used to formulate data interpretation and presentation.

### ***Research instrument***

To aid data collection, the research used key words in locating relevant information on infrastructural issues; they included type of story, placement, prominence, main theme, main actors, frequency, treatment, pictures and size of articles of articles. A code sheet for analyzing the priming of infrastructure issues by in the Nation and Standard newspaper in Kenya, in the period of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014 and 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2014 was prepared.



**Findings**

**Article Placement**

This was concerned with sections of the newspaper where the articles were published. In order to manage this, the newspaper was divided into four major sections namely page 1-3, page 4-5, inside pages, and back page. Pages 1-3 and back page of the newspaper are usually considered prime. This is because information published on these pages is easily accessible to readers.

Table 4. 1: Summary of article placement (Nation)

	Number	Percentage %
Pg. 1-3	37	14.51
Pg. 4-5	45	17.65
Inside pages	128	50.20
Back pages	45	17.65
TOTAL	255	100

Table 4. 2: Detailed analysis of article placement (Nation)

MONTH	Pg. 1-3	Pg. 4-5	Inside Pages	Back pages	Total
JANUARY	4	5	10	3	22
FEBRUARY	5	2	9	4	20
MARCH	2	3	12	3	20
APRIL	0	6	11	5	22
MAY	3	3	14	2	22
JUNE	4	1	16	0	21
JULY	1	3	11	7	22
AUGUST	3	3	12	3	21
SEPTEMBER	3	5	6	8	22
OCTOBER	4	5	9	4	22
NOVEMBER	6	6	5	3	20
DECEMBER	2	3	13	3	21
TOTAL	37	45	128	45	255

Figure 4. 1: Article Placement: Nation Newspaper

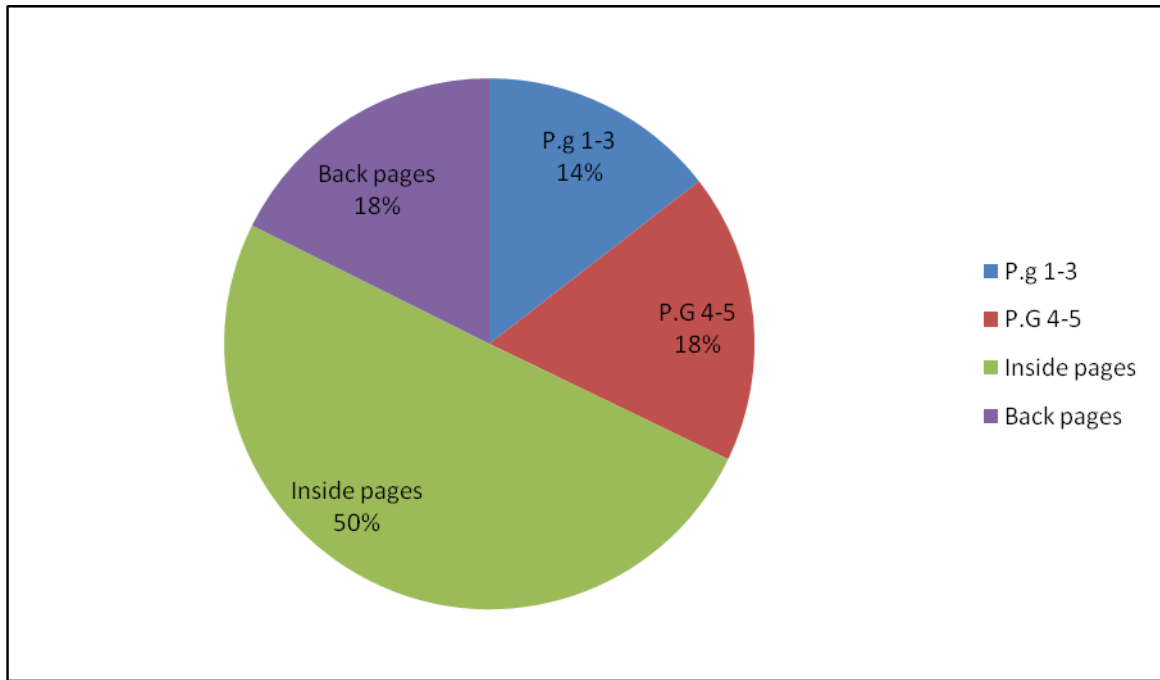


Figure 4. 2: Article Placement: Standard Newspapers

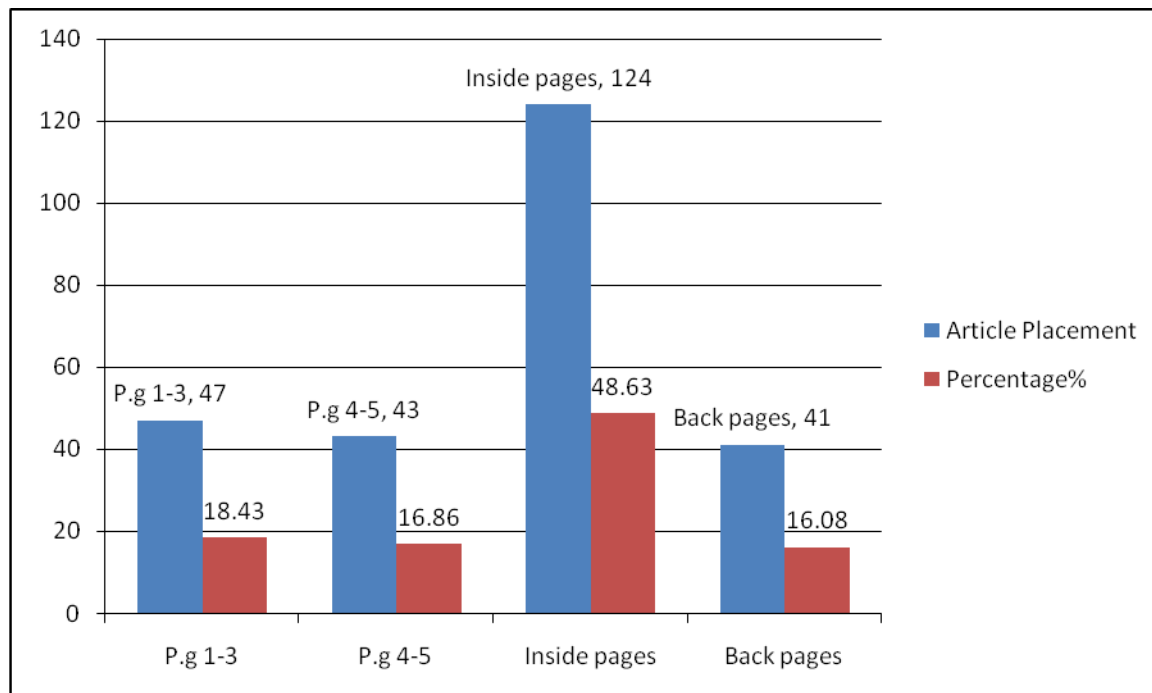


Table 4. 3: Detailed analysis article placement (Standard)

MONTH	Pg 1-3	Pg 4-5	Inside Pages	Back page	Total
JANUARY	9	3	6	4	22
FEBRUARY	9	6	4	1	20
MARCH	0	3	12	5	20
APRIL	7	7	6	2	22
MAY	3	2	14	3	22
JUNE	5	1	15	1	22
JULY	3	3	12	4	22
AUGUST	0	0	14	6	20
SEPTEMBER	4	3	10	5	22
OCTOBER	5	2	12	3	22
NOVEMBER	0	6	13	1	20
DECEMBER	2	7	6	6	21
TOTAL	47	43	124	41	255

Table 4. 4: Summary of article placement (Standard)

Article Placement	Number	Percentage%
Pg 1-3	47	18.43
Pg 4-5	43	16.86
Inside pages	124	48.63
Back page	41	16.08
TOTAL	255	100

From the above data we find that infrastructure issues as a whole were majorly published in the inside pages. We find that the two newspapers all featured infrastructure issues in the inside pages. The nation had 50% while standard 49%. This is because infrastructure themes are covered in details which take up space that is usually available in the inside pages. Moreover in inside pages they were able to feature stories from various Counties which had they covered the stories in pages 1-3 they would only have covered the most important infrastructure project.

From the Nation newspapers we find that back pages had 18% with the Standard being 16% this is because back pages prioritize sports news and infrastructure themes were less covered in back pages. Pages 1-3 of the Standard had 18% while Nation 14% this is because these pages are more often left to national news that are mostly political in Kenyan context.

The months of May and June in both papers had more articles on infrastructure because of signing of the treaties between The East African countries on the SGR. Another reason is due to the fact that there are two major public holidays in the two months- 1st of May Labor day and 1<sup>st</sup> of June Madaraka day. During these days the Government usually outlines its development agenda among other promises to the citizens which are usually covered by the media in details.

### Size of the Article

The sizes of the articles were measured in centimeters squared (cm<sup>2</sup>). A full page being 918 cm<sup>2</sup>, half a page 459 cm<sup>2</sup>, a quarter a page 230 cm<sup>2</sup> and an eighth 115 cm<sup>2</sup>as. Size of articles reflected the amount of space given to an item. The sizes of the articles were measured in centimeters squared (cm<sup>2</sup>).

We found that that the Nation Newspapers the stories incorporated pictures with the subsequent infrastructural stories thus 1/4 to 1/2 a page. The Standard newspapers covered infrastructural stories as briefs thus occupying 1/8 to 1/4 a page.

In both Standard and Nation newspapers, 1/2 to 1 page recorded the least figures of 20.31% and 30.20% respectively. This is attributed to the fact that they had wide photos with captions accompanying the infrastructural stories. These stories were considered very important and in the interest of the public.

Table 4. 5: Summary of size of the Article (Nation)

	Number	Percentage%
1/8-1/4page	81	31.76
1/4-1/2page	97	38.04
1/2-1page	77	30.20
TOTAL	255	100

Figure 4. 3: Size of the Article: Nation Newspapers

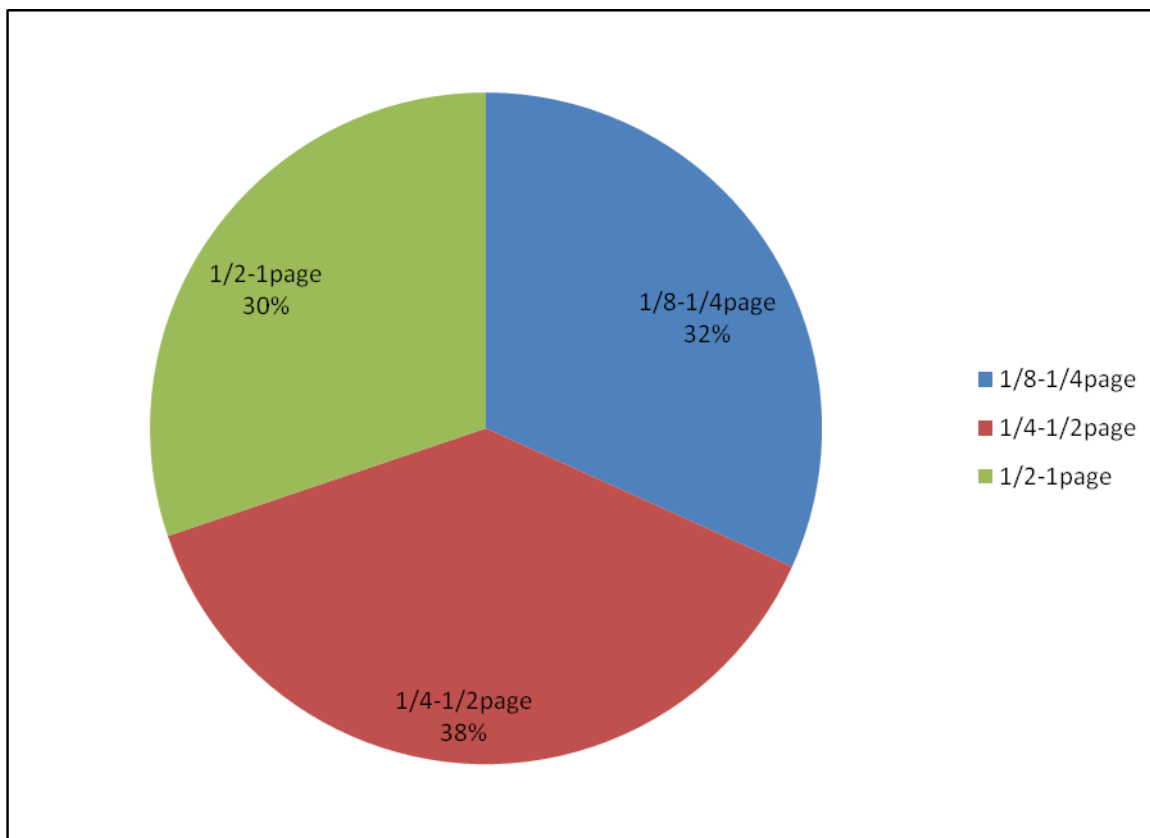


Table 4. 6: Detailed analysis of size of the Article (Nation)

MONTH	1/8-1/4page	1/4-1/2page	1/2-1page	Total
JANUARY	7	10	5	22
FEBRUARY	3	10	7	20
MARCH	7	6	7	20
APRIL	5	11	6	22
MAY	10	7	5	22
JUNE	9	4	8	21
JULY	5	9	8	22
AUGUST	9	8	4	21
SEPTEMBER	3	10	9	22
OCTOBER	8	6	8	22
NOVEMBER	8	7	5	20
DECEMBER	7	9	5	21
TOTAL	81	97	77	255

Table 4. 7: Summary of size of the Article (Standard)

Size of Article	Number	Percentage%
1/8-1/4page	104	40.78
1/4-1/2page	89	34.90
1/2-1page	62	24.31
TOTAL	255	100

Figure 4. 4: Size of Article: Standard Newspapers

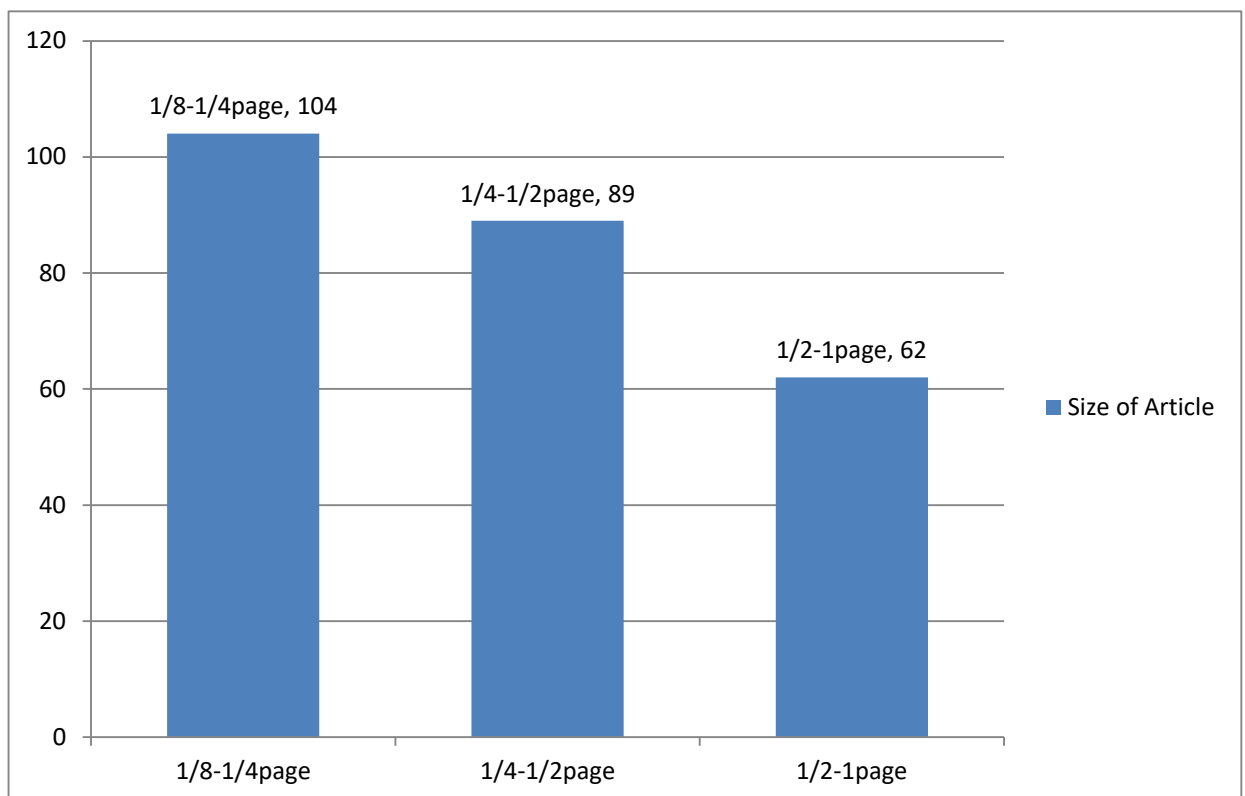


Table 4. 8: Detailed analysis of size of the Article (Standard)

MONTH	1/8-1/4page	1/4-1/2page	1/2-1page	Total
JANUARY	8	7	7	22
FEBRUARY	8	7	5	20
MARCH	7	9	4	20
APRIL	10	5	7	22
MAY	9	6	7	22
JUNE	8	6	7	21
JULY	9	9	4	22
AUGUST	10	7	4	21
SEPTEMBER	8	10	4	22
OCTOBER	9	8	5	22
NOVEMBER	11	6	3	20
DECEMBER	7	9	5	21
TOTAL	104	89	62	255

**Type of Story**

Articles published in the newspapers were classified into different types. This research classified articles into; news, opinion and editorials, letter to the editor, business and sports. The role of the media is to inform hence from the data the stories that had a big percentage were news stories totaling to 57% in the Nation and 66% by the Standard. News is newly received or noteworthy information especially about recent or important event. Most of the stories on infrastructure are considered news for it is important to the public. Business came second especially because of entrepreneurial aspect of every development theme. Examples of stories that made to news segment in 2014 are SGR from the signing of the treaty to the procurement procedures used. The SGR was a big story in 2014 covered in various angles hence the media had a field day on that topic. Laptop project made it to the news from the angle of curiosity of whether standard one kids will be able to carry the laptops to whether various rural schools had capacity to efficiently secure and sustain operations of the gadgets. There were also fears if the government would live to fulfill the promise of laptop to every standard one pupil every year. There was also procurement issues in this project that later on made the public know the company that won the bid did not meet the necessary requirements.

Table 4. 9: Summary of type of story (Nation)

	Type of Story	Percentage%
News	145	56.86
Opinion	35	13.73
Letter	15	5.88
Business	47	18.43
Sports	13	5.10
TOTAL	255	100

Figure 4. 5: Type of Story: Nation Newspapers



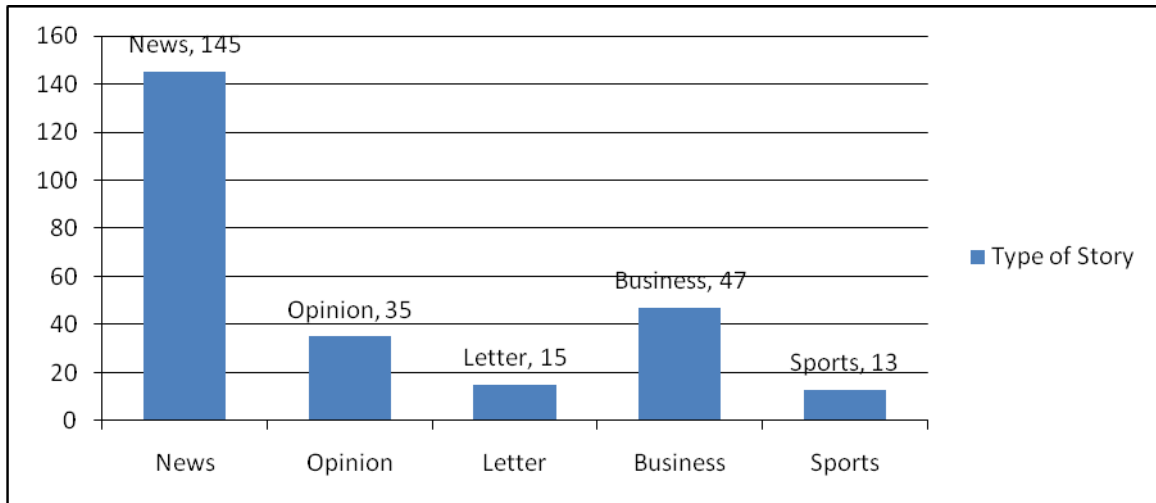


Table 4. 10: Summary of type of story (Nation)

MONTH	News	Opinion	Letter to Editor	Business	Sports	Total
JANUARY	15	2	2	1	2	22
FEBRUARY	12	2	2	2	2	20
MARCH	11	3	0	6	0	20
APRIL	10	5	1	5	1	22
MAY	15	2	1	4	0	22
JUNE	14	0	2	3	2	21
JULY	16	2	1	2	1	22
AUGUST	9	7	3	1	1	21
SEPTEMBER	9	3	0	7	3	22
OCTOBER	11	4	1	6	0	22
NOVEMBER	12	2	0	6	0	20
DECEMBER	11	3	2	4	1	21
TOTAL	145	35	15	47	13	255

Table 4. 11: Summary of type of story (Standard)

	Type of Story	Percentage%
News	167	65.49
Opinion	15	5.88
Letter to Editor	13	5.10
Business	49	19.22
Sports	11	4.31
TOTAL	255	100

Figure 4. 6: Type of story: Standard newspapers

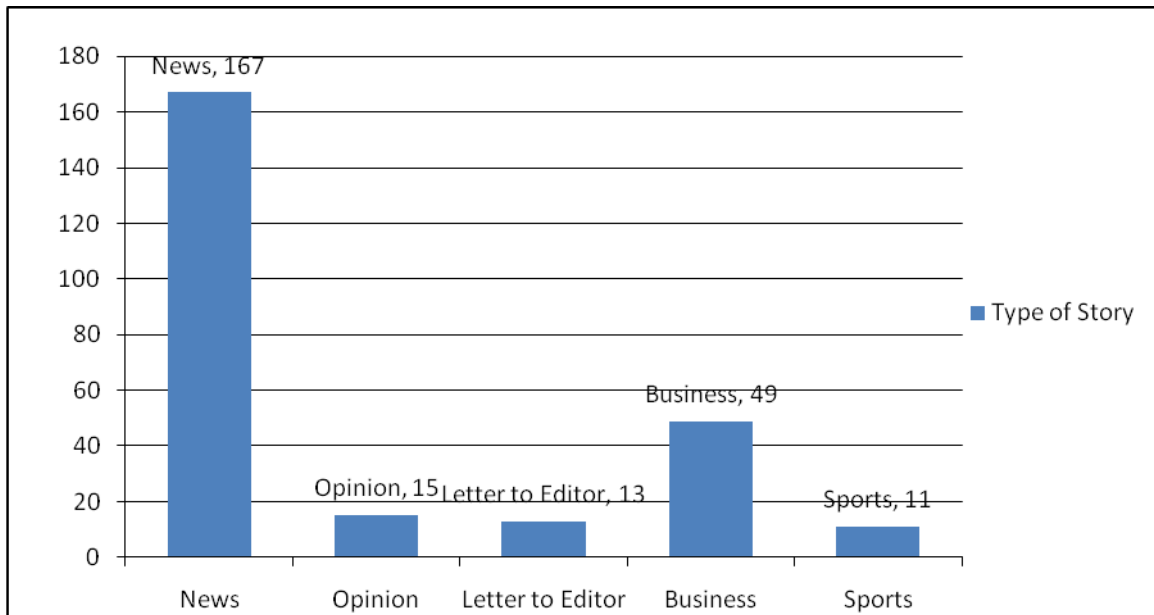


Table 4. 12: Detailed analysis of type of story (Standard)

MONTH	News	Opinion	Letter to Editor	Business	Sports	Total
JANUARY	14	1	2	4	1	22
FEBRUARY	12	4	2	2	0	20
MARCH	10	2	0	7	1	20
APRIL	13	2	1	4	2	22
MAY	16	0	0	4	2	22
JUNE	17	2	1	1	0	21
JULY	16	0	2	4	0	22
AUGUST	18	0	0	1	2	21
SEPTEMBER	14	1	2	4	1	22
OCTOBER	15	0	1	5	1	22
NOVEMBER	13	1	1	5	0	20
DECEMBER	9	2	1	8	1	21
TOTAL	167	15	13	49	11	255

**Theme /Focus**

This concerns what the article is about as stated in chapter one infrastructure is a wide topic and the research had to classify them. Infrastructure was classified into transport, telecommunication, power, water and sanitation, building and construction in terms of facilities created.

This concerns what the article is about as stated in chapter one infrastructure is a wide topic and the research had to classify them. Infrastructure was classified into transport, telecommunication, power, water and sanitation, building and construction in terms of facilities created. From the data collected transport was the main theme. The main focus was on the standard gauge railway especially because it affected the whole of East Africa. The constant visitation from other countries’ head of states coming to sign the treaties at the State House in Nairobi. The road that was built in Machakos County was also put in the limelight

especially after the Governor was accused of corruption by producing a low quality road that never met the set standards. The Eastern, Northern and Southern bypass were also talked of in the media. Construction of the bypass was good news to the public as it was a plan to ease the traffic jam in the city of Nairobi.

There was also expansion of the JKIA to ease passenger traffic.

Table 4. 13: Summary of Theme (Nation)

	NUMBER	Percentage%
Transport	95	37.25
Telecommunication	44	17.25
Power	47	18.43
Water	25	9.80
Building &Construction	44	17.25
TOTAL	255	100

Figure 4. 7: Theme

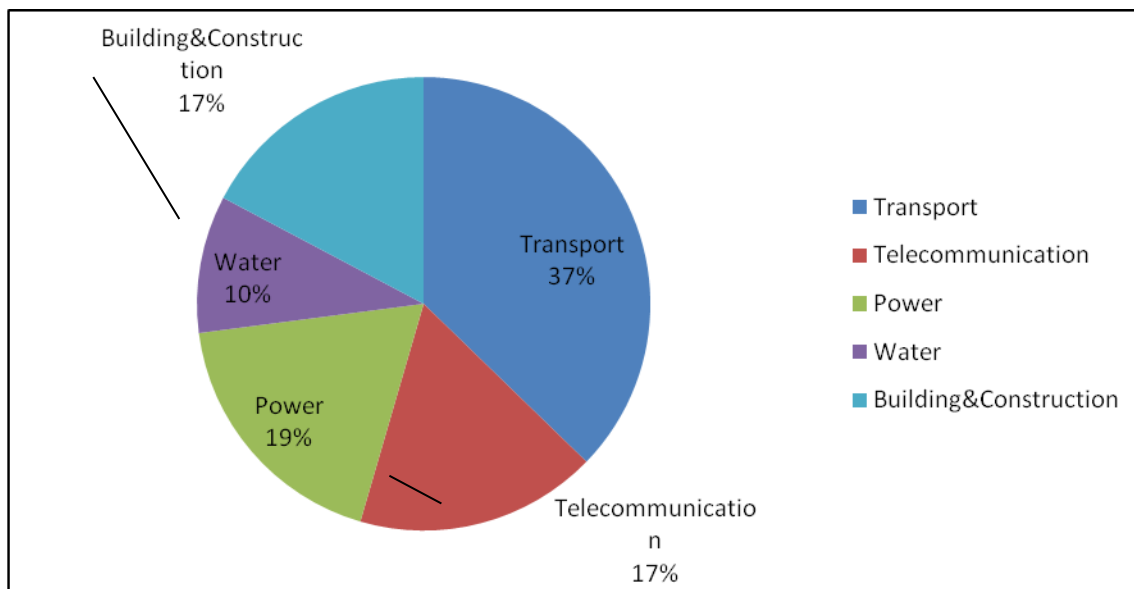


Table 4. 14: Detailed analysis of theme (Nation)

MONTH	Transport	Telecommunications	Power	Water& Sanitation	Building& Construction	Total
JANUARY	8	5	3	4	2	22
FEBRUARY	8	3	2	1	6	20
MARCH	9	4	3	0	4	20
APRIL	12	4	2	2	2	22
MAY	8	5	4	1	4	22
JUNE	4	2	8	3	4	21
JULY	8	2	3	3	6	22
AUGUST	14	1	2	1	3	21

SEPTEMBER	7	6	4	2	3	22
OCTOBER	5	7	4	3	3	22
NOVEMBER	4	4	6	2	4	20
DECEMBER	8	1	6	3	3	21
TOTAL	95	44	47	25	44	255

**Prominence of the story**

This is the strength of articles in terms of their presence on the page. This was determined by looking at different levels of headlines guided by font size. For the purpose of this research, stories were grouped into four categories; splash or page lead, second lead, third story and brief.

The research found out that most of the stories fell under splash and covered transport issues comprehensively. In 2014 the major issues were the Standard Gauge (SG) Railway, Lamu Port- Southern Sudan- Ethiopia Transport (LAPSSET) project, the Northern and Southern Bypass, expansion on Jomo Kenyatta International Airport

**Tone**

This reflected how the story was covered, if of positive impact to the society and bringing development, then it has a positive tone. Whereas a particular project that had a negative impact on citizens without development was considered negative. A story that had neither positive nor negative was considered neutral. The research revealed that stories majorly covered in 2014 had a negative tone in that they either depicted failures of the project than the successes.

A good example is by the publication by the Standard on January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014 the headline “The Shs. 327 billion standard Gauge Railway row” where the cost of the controversial SGR from Mombasa to Nairobi rose by Ksh. 107 billion between July 2012 and November 2013 and furthermore the Chinese company that was awarded the contract, CRBC may already have received about Shs. 100 billion as a first installment even as the parliament and anticorruption Authority launch investigations into the project.

From our study we found that the stories that got much attention in 2014 mostly had an aspect of corruption or delayed roll out in the project like the laptop project or a story that the Government missed to meet its objectives or mandate.

**Pictures**

In this a story that was accompanied by a picture was classified as with story while a picture on its own with a caption explaining the picture was classified as deep caption. Most articles fell under the ‘with story’ category. The stories that had large pictures as part of the story indicated that it is of great importance. These stories were accompanied by captions to emphasize the relevance of the story to the reader. Stand alone pictures used were mostly of the key stakeholders in the infrastructural projects for instance managers or government officials.

**Function**

The function unearthed the source of the story, classified in terms of government, experts, journalists,

reader and others people who were the source of the story but not categorized in the appendix used for research. We found in our research that most of the sources of the stories were from the government. The media more often than not played the role of covering these infrastructural stories as opposed to generating themselves.

### **Key Findings**

In our study, it was established that in both newspapers, infrastructural articles were placed mainly in the inside pages. The placement of articles in the months of May, June and December were more covered than other months. This is attributed to the public holidays that fall in those months when the important issues were addressed by the Kenya government. For example, the reading of the budget in June and Labor Day which adversely depict the government's plan on infrastructure. From our findings we find that the print media has a role in promoting infrastructure in Kenya by informing, highlighting and creating awareness on infrastructural issues.

Secondly, the most covered theme was on the transport sector. This was seen from the numerous transport projects that were being undertaken at the time. For instance, Standard Gauge Railway, LAPSSET and the Northern & Southern By-passes were mostly highlighted by virtue of them being of high pedigree. Under power, there were mostly stories that addressed the oil project in Turkana. The stories highlighted various dynamics involved and the stakeholder contribution.

Thirdly, we established that the government was the key actor player or in the stories covered. This was due to the fact that it is the government's role to provide these infrastructural amenities to the people. Moreover, it is the government that initiates such projects from an active capacity like sponsoring and being into partnership with other stakeholders in the operations.

Fourthly, we established that infrastructural matters were covered between a quarter to half a page. This means that infrastructural issues are important due to the space allocated to it. The tone of the stories was mostly negative. For instance, there was controversy in the manner in which the contract for the free laptop project for primary school children project was awarded to India's Olive Telecommunications. It was established that the company is not an original equipment manufacturer as required by the Kenya Public Procurement Administrative Review Board. There was also corruption coming out as a key feature in the infrastructural projects.

### **Conclusion**

The study sought to find out how infrastructural issues were portrayed by *the Standard* and *Daily Nation* newspapers in Kenya. The study revealed that the print media does not give priority to infrastructural issues since most of the stories were placed in the inside pages. Many articles were reduced to small stories and briefs. Information on infrastructure only made it to the prime pages when there was a major public address by the government and its agents during a public holiday like Madaraka Day, Mashujaa Day and Labor Day.

The research also revealed that the stories covered did not give the impact of the projects to the public

despite the media having a fundamental role of educating the public. This brought about a scenario where the public is informed of the project without properly knowing how it will benefit them. The study exposed that most of the stories on infrastructure are on news. Moreover, the government is seen as the main actor with the media only reporting thus failing to be the source of the story. The study was based on two theories namely Agenda Setting and Magic-Bullet theory. The media was passive in its approach and downplayed its capacity to influence public opinion by failing to reveal how infrastructure was important to the audience.

The study also established that the focus of articles was directed at reporting on infrastructure rather than on issues on policy and educating the public. (Morrison 2006) observes that news values related to impact, proximity, prominence, relevance and human interest are all important in determining how much significance a news story is accorded by a particular media. In the case of infrastructure, journalists and reporters tend to favour stories with prominence and either occasioned or officiated by the government or its agents. This was confirmed by this study where the function was mostly the government.

## **Recommendations**

Infrastructure is very important and it is the basic facility for any nation to be developed. Issues regarding the same should be given priority. The research has shown contrary to the above statement hence we recommend that the media whose work is to set the agenda should give enough time and space to infrastructure issues. From the study we found that the media only covers the story as it answers the questions who, what, when, why, where and how. We recommend that the media be involved in these stories and give more to the audience besides the 5W's and H by demonstrating the impact of any infrastructural project its consequences of development to the society.

From the research, it clearly shows that most of the infrastructural stories appeared in the inside pages whereas we recommend that they be placed in the first pages of the newspapers where most reader's attention is placed. It was also evident that the sources of the stories were government officials and experts yet the media should be the watchdog of the society hence highlight extensively on infrastructural needs of its audiences and what they really need instead of waiting for the government to be the main sources of the infrastructural stories.

The media should also not just cover the news stories on infrastructure but also cover policy issues surrounding infrastructure and development. This will enlighten the audience on making the government accountable on development issues. The research showed that the content was majorly on transport issues and we recommend the media to give coverage to other infrastructural themes that are also important such as telecommunications, water and sanitation, building and construction among others.

A more holistic research encompassing more media platforms needs to be done on the priming of infrastructural issues in Kenya. Of particular concern would be the space allocated to the same. Editorial and advertising compete for space and in most cases the latter prevails. This research suggests that equilibrium must be struck between public and business interest. Many informative stories have missed out in the paper due to unavailability of space. Infrastructural stories from both papers were ranging from



1/8 – 1/4 of a page which is the least size of an article and is not enough space to capture enough details, the size should be improved to 1/2 -1 page.

The editorial department, who determine the newspaper size in terms of pagination, should strive to increase the number of pages so as to accommodate more articles on infrastructure.

Infrastructural issues generate great public interest and are paramount to the welfare on any given society. The findings showed a deficiency in projecting infrastructure information on prime pages of the Nation paper. Most of the stories were buried on the inside pages. Fairly a bigger percentage of the stories were published as briefs. A way should be found of carrying these articles big and on the prime pages. More and more space should be allocated for photos and graphics.

The media should strive to keep infrastructural issues alive by constantly and regularly publishing this information i.e. setting the agenda for the public. Most of the infrastructural issues reported took a negative angle and did not depict the impact these projects have to the public domain.

The government should come up with the policy that give room to thorough research on infrastructural issues in the country given that little has been done as far as research is concerned.

Policy makers and implementers must take advantage of the vibrant media to come up with policies that allow the media to provide adequate information about infrastructure to the public, for instance, the entire process of any infrastructural development project in the country.

Being a market leader, Nation newspaper and Standard should take advantage of this position to disseminate road safety information to its audience. It must stamp its position by providing information as well as educating the people on ways of ensuring road carnage cases are reduced. The public should aggressively reach out to the media through the relevant channels to compel them to highlight more stories in infrastructure. This will create awareness on the developmental and infrastructural issues that affect them by virtue of the media's capability to reach a lot of people through the print platform.

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