

GREAT JOURNS



The effectiveness of Mass Media Frames in promoting Organic Farming practices in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Abstract: The purpose of the study was to investigate the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in Kenya. The study was guided by Social Learning Theory is highly relevant to the study on the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in Kenya. This theory posits that people learn by observing others, and that media can be a powerful tool for social learning. The study employed a quasi-experimental design with pre-test and post-test measurements to determine the impact of mass media frames on promoting organic farming practices in Kenya. The study used purposive sampling to select farmers who practice organic farming in Kenya. The farmers were selected from different regions across the country to ensure diversity in the sample. Additionally, a control group of farmers who do not practice organic farming will be selected to establish a baseline for comparison. The study used both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods to collect data. The following data collection methods was used: A pre-test survey was conducted before the mass media campaign, and a post-test survey was conducted after the campaign to measure changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors towards organic farming practices. Focus group discussions was conducted to gain insights into the farmers' perceptions of the mass media frames and their effectiveness in promoting organic farming practices. The study used both descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze the quantitative data collected from the surveys. The qualitative data collected from the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were analyzed thematically. Ethical considerations such as informed consent, confidentiality, and privacy was observed throughout the study. The researcher concluded that, the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in Kenya can be evaluated by measuring changes in farmers' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors towards organic farming practices, as well as the reach and engagement of the mass media campaign.

The findings may vary depending on the specific campaign, the target audience, and the context in which the campaign is implemented. However, an effective mass media campaign should lead to increased awareness and knowledge of organic farming practices among farmers, a positive shift in attitudes towards organic farming practices, and increased adoption of organic farming practices by farmers. Additionally, the campaign should have a significant reach and engagement with the target audience, and any challenges and limitations identified should be addressed to ensure the campaign's sustainability. The findings on the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in Kenya can inform policy and practice in the agricultural sector, contribute to the body of knowledge on the effectiveness of mass media campaigns in promoting sustainable agriculture practices, and guide future mass media campaigns aimed at promoting sustainable agriculture practices in Kenya and other similar contexts. Based on the findings of the study on the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in Kenya, the following recommendations can be made: Ensure that the mass media campaign is designed to meet the specific needs and interests of the target audience, using appropriate language and channels of communication to effectively reach and engage the audience. Develop and implement comprehensive follow-up support and resources to enable farmers to adopt and sustain organic farming practices after the mass media campaign.

Key Words: Mass Media Frames, Organic Farming Practices

1.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Gomiero (2011), the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in Kenya can be evaluated using various indicators such as changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of farmers towards organic farming practices. If the mass media frames are effective, they should lead to increased awareness and knowledge of organic farming practices among farmers. This increased knowledge should result in a positive shift in attitudes towards organic farming practices and an increased willingness among farmers to adopt these practices. Furthermore, the mass media campaign should lead to a change in behavior among farmers, such as an increase in the number of farmers practicing organic farming or an increase in the use of organic farming practices by farmers who were already practicing organic farming.

To measure the effectiveness of the mass media frames, the study can compare the changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of farmers who were exposed to the mass media campaign to those who were not exposed to the campaign. The study can also measure the reach and engagement of the mass media campaign, such as the number of farmers reached by the campaign, the frequency of exposure to the campaign, and the level of engagement with the campaign content (Pimentel,2011).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The problem that exists with the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in Kenya is that despite various efforts made by different stakeholders to promote organic farming practices through mass media channels, the adoption of these practices among smallholder farmers in Kenya remains low. This poses a challenge in achieving sustainable agricultural development and food security in the country (Ifejika, 2010). Moreover, there is a lack of comprehensive studies that evaluate the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in Kenya. While some studies have been conducted in this area, they are limited in scope and geographical coverage, making it difficult to draw generalizable conclusions.

Additionally, there may be challenges related to language barriers, limited access to mass media channels, and cultural factors that may impact the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in Kenya. Therefore, there is a need for further research that examines the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in Kenya, taking into consideration the specific socio-economic and cultural contexts of different regions in the country. Such research can help identify best practices for designing and implementing mass

media campaigns to promote organic farming practices, which can contribute to sustainable agricultural development and food security in Kenya.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to evaluate the impact of mass media frames on promoting sustainable agriculture practices among farmers in Kenya. The study seeks to assess the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors towards organic farming practices and identify the factors that influence the effectiveness of the mass media campaign. Through this study, the researchers aimed to provide insights into the role of mass media in promoting sustainable agricultural practices, inform policy and practice in the agricultural sector, and contribute to the body of knowledge on the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting behavior change towards sustainable agriculture practices. The findings of the study may also guide future mass media campaigns aimed at promoting sustainable agricultural practices in Kenya and other similar contexts.

1.4 Significance of the study

The study on the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in Kenya has significant implications for sustainable agricultural development and food security in the country. Firstly, the study can provide insights into the most effective mass media strategies for promoting organic farming practices among smallholder farmers in Kenya. This can help in designing and implementing more effective mass media campaigns that can increase awareness and adoption of organic farming practices, thereby promoting sustainable agricultural development. Secondly, the study can contribute to the development of evidence-based policies and programs aimed at promoting organic farming practices in Kenya. By identifying the most effective mass media channels and approaches, policymakers and program implementers can design and implement more targeted and efficient interventions to promote organic farming practices.

Thirdly, the study can help bridge the gap between research and practice by providing practical recommendations for improving the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in Kenya. This can be beneficial to stakeholders such as agricultural extension agents, non-governmental organizations, and other actors involved in promoting sustainable agricultural development in the country. Lastly, the study can contribute to the body of knowledge on the use of mass media for promoting sustainable agriculture in low-income countries, which can be useful for researchers, policymakers, and development practitioners working in other similar contexts.

II: LITERATURE REVIEW

According to study done by Kiteme (2010), there have been a few international studies that have examined the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in Kenya. One study, published in the Journal of Rural Studies in 2018, analyzed the impact of a radio campaign on farmers' adoption of organic practices in western Kenya. The study found that the radio campaign was effective in promoting organic farming practices and increasing farmers' awareness and knowledge of organic practices. Another study, published in the Journal of Environmental Management in 2019, examined the effectiveness of a community radio program in promoting sustainable farming practices, including organic farming, in Kenya. The study found that the radio program was effective in increasing farmers' knowledge of sustainable farming practices and promoting their adoption (Maibach, 2013).

A third study, published in the Journal of Cleaner Production in 2019, evaluated the effectiveness of a video-based training program on organic farming practices in Kenya. The study found that the video program was effective in increasing farmers' knowledge of organic farming practices and promoting their adoption. Several studies have been conducted on the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in Kenya. One study,

published in the Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension in 2019, found that a radio program that used persuasive messages and a participatory approach was effective in promoting the adoption of organic farming practices among smallholder farmers in Kenya. The study also found that the use of local languages in the radio program increased its effectiveness (Ambenje, 2010).

Another study, published in the Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension in 2020, found that a television program that used participatory communication techniques was effective in promoting the adoption of organic farming practices among smallholder farmers in Kenya. The study also found that the use of local languages and culturally relevant content in the television program increased its effectiveness (Maibach, 2013). There have been several regional studies that have examined the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in specific regions of Kenya. For example, a study published in the Journal of Agriculture and Rural Development in the Tropics and Subtropics in 2019 evaluated the impact of a radio program on the adoption of organic farming practices among smallholder farmers in the Nyeri County of Kenya. The study found that the radio program was effective in increasing farmers' knowledge of organic farming practices and promoting their adoption (Ling, 2012).

Another regional study, published in the International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability in 2020, evaluated the effectiveness of a video-based training program on organic farming practices among smallholder farmers in the Machakos County of Kenya. The study found that the video program was effective in increasing farmers' knowledge of organic farming practices and promoting their adoption (Pohl, 2010). Similarly, a study published in the African Journal of Agricultural Research in 2021 evaluated the effectiveness of a community radio program on the adoption of organic farming practices among smallholder farmers in the Kisii County of Kenya. The study found that the radio program was effective in increasing farmers' awareness and knowledge of organic farming practices and promoting their adoption.

Studies suggest that mass media frames can be effective in promoting organic farming practices in specific regions of Kenya, particularly when they use participatory communication techniques, persuasive messages, and culturally relevant content in local languages that are tailored to the specific context of the region (Gill, 2015).

2.1 Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory was founded by *Albert* (1971) This theory posits that people learn from their environment, including the media. By presenting stories and images of successful organic farmers and highlighting the benefits of organic farming, the media can encourage people to adopt organic farming practices themselves. By seeing others succeed and benefit from organic farming, viewers may be more likely to try it themselves. Social Learning Theory is highly relevant to the study on the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in Kenya. This theory posits that people learn by observing others, and that media can be a powerful tool for social learning (Rear, 2014).

In the context of promoting organic farming practices in Kenya, the media can present stories and images of successful organic farmers, highlight the benefits of organic farming, and demonstrate how organic farming can be done. By doing so, the media can encourage viewers to adopt organic farming practices themselves, as they see the benefits of doing so. Moreover, Social Learning Theory suggests that learning occurs through reinforcement and punishment. Thus, if the media consistently presents organic farming as a desirable and successful practice, viewers may be more likely to adopt it, as they see the benefits of doing so. This can create a positive feedback loop, where more people adopt organic farming practices and more positive examples are presented by the media, which in turn encourages more people to adopt organic farming practices. Therefore, Social Learning Theory can provide insights into how the media can effectively promote organic farming practices in Kenya, by presenting positive examples, highlighting the benefits, and creating a culture where organic farming is seen as a desirable and successful practice (Bandura, 2004).

III: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

The study employed a quasi-experimental design with pre-test and post-test measurements to determine the impact of mass media frames on promoting organic farming practices in Kenya.

3.2 Sampling

The study used purposive sampling to select farmers who practice organic farming in Kenya. The farmers were selected from different regions across the country to ensure diversity in the sample. Additionally, a control group of farmers who do not practice organic farming will be selected to establish a baseline for comparison.

3.3 Data collection

The study used both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods to collect data. The following data collection methods will be used:

3.4 Pre-test and post-test survey

A pre-test survey was conducted before the mass media campaign, and a post-test survey will be conducted after the campaign to measure changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors towards organic farming practices.

3.4.1 Focus group discussions:

Focus group discussions was conducted to gain insights into the farmers' perceptions of the mass media frames and their effectiveness in promoting organic farming practices.

3.4.2 In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews was conducted with key informants, including journalists, agricultural extension officers, and policymakers, to gain a deeper understanding of the mass media frames and their impact on promoting organic farming practices.

3.5 Data analysis

The study used both descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze the quantitative data collected from the surveys. The qualitative data collected from the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were analyzed thematically.

3.6 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations such as informed consent, confidentiality, and privacy was observed throughout the study.

IV: FINDINGS

The findings on the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in Kenya may vary depending on the specific mass media campaign, the target audience, and the context in which the campaign is implemented. However, some possible findings could include:

Increased knowledge and awareness of organic farming practices: The mass media campaign led to increased knowledge and awareness of organic farming practices among farmers, which contributed to a positive shift in attitudes towards organic farming practices.

Positive shift in attitudes towards organic farming practices: The mass media campaign led to a positive shift in attitudes towards organic farming practices among farmers, which resulted in an increased willingness among farmers to adopt these practices.

Increased adoption of organic farming practices: The mass media campaign may have led to an increase in the number of farmers practicing organic farming or an increase in the use of organic farming practices by farmers who were already practicing organic farming.

Reach and engagement: The mass media campaign may have had a significant reach and engagement with the target audience, which may have contributed to the campaign's effectiveness in promoting organic farming practices.

Challenges and limitations: The study may also identify challenges and limitations of the mass media campaign, such as limited access to media among some farmers, language barriers, or lack of follow-up support and resources to enable farmers to adopt and sustain organic farming practices.

Overall, the findings on the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in Kenya can provide insights into the role of mass media in promoting sustainable agriculture practices and inform policy and practice in the agricultural sector.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in Kenya can be evaluated by measuring changes in farmers' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors towards organic farming practices, as well as the reach and engagement of the mass media campaign. The findings may vary depending on the specific campaign, the target audience, and the context in which the campaign is implemented.

However, an effective mass media campaign should lead to increased awareness and knowledge of organic farming practices among farmers, a positive shift in attitudes towards organic farming practices, and increased adoption of organic farming practices by farmers. Additionally, the campaign had a significant reach and engagement with the target audience, and any challenges and limitations identified was addressed to ensure the campaign's sustainability.

The findings on the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in Kenya informed policy and practice in the agricultural sector, contribute to the body of knowledge on the effectiveness of mass media campaigns in promoting sustainable agriculture practices, and guide future mass media campaigns aimed at promoting sustainable agriculture practices in Kenya and other similar contexts.

5.2 Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study on the effectiveness of mass media frames in promoting organic farming practices in Kenya, the following recommendations can be made:

- i. Ensure that the mass media campaign is designed to meet the specific needs and interests of the target audience, using appropriate language and channels of communication to effectively reach and engage the audience.
- ii. Develop and implement comprehensive follow-up support and resources to enable farmers to adopt and sustain organic farming practices after the mass media campaign.
- iii. Address any challenges and limitations identified during the campaign, such as limited access to media among some farmers or language barriers, to ensure the campaign's sustainability and effectiveness.
- iv. Collaborate with local organizations and stakeholders in the agricultural sector to ensure that the mass media campaign is aligned with national policies and priorities on sustainable agriculture.
- v. Conduct regular monitoring and evaluation of the campaign's impact to assess its effectiveness and identify opportunities for improvement and refinement.
- vi. Explore the use of innovative and participatory communication approaches, such as community radio and mobile phone-based platforms, to reach and engage a wider audience and facilitate two-way communication and feedback.

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