

THE INFLUENCE OF PRIMING AND FRAMING OF GENETICALLY
MODIFIED ORGANISMS (GMOs) FOR FOOD SECURITY: A CASE OF THE
PRINT MEDIA IN KENYA

by

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APPROVAL

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DECLARATION

THE INFLUENCE OF PRIMING AND FRAMING OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS (GMOs) FOR FOOD SECURITY: A CASE OF THE PRINT MEDIA IN KENYA

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college or university for academic credit.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AATF	African Agricultural Technology Foundation
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic Acid
ERB	Ethical Review Board
EPZ	Export Processing Zone
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GMOs	Genetically Modified Organisms
GM	Genetic Modification/ Genetically Modified
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
INGOs	International non-Governmental Organizations
ISAAA	International Service for the Acquisition of Agribiotech Application
KALRO	Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization
KEBS	Kenya Bureau of Standards
KEPHIS	Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation
NEMA	National Environment Management Authority
NPTs	National Performance Trials
NBA	National Biosafety Authority
OFAB	Open Forum on Agricultural Biotechnology in Africa
WHO	World Health Organization

ABSTRACT

This study sought to explore the priming and framing of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) by Kenya's print media. It was guided by the following objectives: to establish the frames on GMOs as used in the Daily Nation, the Standard and the Business Daily; determine the frequency of coverage of GMOs in Kenya's print media; and to establish the link between frames, priming and the decision to adopt or not to adopt GMOs. Descriptive research design was used for this study and the target population was the news story articles, feature stories, opinion pieces and letters to the editor that covered GMOs in the Daily Nation, the Standard and the Business Daily between the years of 2015 and 2019. Systematic Random Sampling was used in the selection of newspapers for the time period. Content analysis was used in data collection and the data was analyzed using Microsoft Excel. The findings of the study showed that though the frames that communicated perceived benefits of GMOs dominated the publications, the safety theme dominated discussions. Additionally, the study found that the benefits increased over the years. The study also found that state corporations were the most cited by journalists. Additionally, the study found that there is a link between framing, priming and the decision to adopt or not to adopt GMOs in Kenya. Therefore, publications through framing and priming highlight the issues that are perceived to be important to the audience (Goffman, 1974). This study found, that the perceived benefits of GMOs were published at a high rate, and safety concerns were also considered salient. Albeit suggestions by some media content influences audience perception, others posit that publications are representation of public perception.

DEDICATION

To my supportive husband, Laka Nyaga, and beautiful daughter, Tehya: Thank you for your love and support toward the realization of my MA degree.

To my parents, Nancy and Caleb Kahuthia: Thank you for your continued prayers, support, and encouragement.

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