PRINT MEDIA COVERAGE OF SAVINGS AND CREDIT

CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES ISSUES IN KENYA

BY

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DECLARATION PAGE

This project is my original work and has not been submitted elsewhere for academic credit or other considerations.

Linda Karimi

Sign... Date: 14/12/2018

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the supervisor.

Dr. Julius Bosire,

Sign... Date 14/12/2018

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to God, in whom all things are possible.

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ABSTRACT

This research was carried out to investigate how print media cover Savings and Credit Co-operatives issues in Kenya. The study analysed newspaper coverage of savings and credit co-operatives in Kenya. The objectives of the study were to determine the frequency of savings and credit co-operatives news coverage in *Nation*, *Business Daily* and *Standard* newspapers, to explore the prominence of stories published about savings and credit co-operatives and to examine the key issues about savings and credit co-operatives in *Nation*, *Business Daily* and *Standard* newspapers. The period of study covered one year from May 1, 2017-April 30, 2018. The research used the Agenda Setting and Framing theory as well as the priming theory. The mixed method approach was used which utilised content analysis and interviews to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. Criterion sampling was used to select 210 articles that were analysed. The data from the content analysis was coded by two coders. Thereafter, a test of reliability was done to establish the level of agreement in the findings between the two independent coders. Purposive sampling was used to select 15 key informants who were drawn from the media and the savings and credit co-operatives sector. The researcher found that *Nation* newspaper had the highest coverage with 95 stories published. *Standard* newspaper published 64 stories while *Business Daily* published 51 stories about savings and credit co-operatives. The study found that stories published seemed few mainly because the media covered politics, since 2017 was an election year. The findings also showed that stories from the sector were inadequately primed. Most stories (72%) were placed in the inside pages of the newspapers while 36% of stories were less than an eighth of a page in length. The study found that Governance and mismanagement issues were primed more by placing these stories on prime pages. To improve on the frequency of stories, the study recommends training of savings and credit co-operatives societies managers on media relations, given that journalists said it was difficult to get information from the sector. To improve on visibility of stories about savings and credit co-operatives, the study recommends that media houses set aside more funds to enable them write longer, more in-depth and analytical stories about the sector.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AGM   Annual General Meeting

BOSA   Back Office Service Activities

CIC   Co-operative Insurance Company of Kenya

CBK   Central Bank of Kenya (CBK)

DTS   Deposit-Taking SACCOs

FOSA   Front Office Service Activities

FSD   Financial Sector Deepening

GDP   Gross Domestic Product

ICA   International Co-operative Alliance

KIHBS   Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey

KNBS   Kenya National Bureau of Statistics

KUSCCO   Kenya Union of Savings and Credit Co-operatives

MFI   Micro-Finance Institution

MSMEs   Micro Small and Medium Enterprises

SACCO   Savings and Credit Co-operative Societies

SASRA   SACCO Society Regulatory Authority

WOCCU   World Council of Credit Unions

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter provides background information against which the research is being carried out. It discusses a statement of the problem, objectives and research questions. The chapter also discusses the justification of the study, significance as well as scope and limitations of the study. This chapter also defines the key terms and explains their operational meaning within the context of the study.

1.1 Background of Study

The society is saturated with information which mainly comes from the media. For instance, in 2011, there were 968,735 books published, 47,776 radio stations, 22,643 newspapers, 33,071 television stations and 40,000 scholarly journals and newsletters worldwide. Through personal computers and mobile phones, people have more access to information on the internet. In 2011, the internet had over 13.6 billion pages that were indexed and available through search engines, (Potter, 2012). The media thus plays a critical role in dissemination of information from all sectors of the economy, including the co-operative sector.

Co-operatives in the country promote economic development through wealth creation and poverty eradication. The members of primary co-operatives are individuals who are within a specific locality or common bond. Primary co-operatives are present in all sectors of the Kenyan economy for instance; coffee, fisheries, marketing, Savings and Credit, sugarcane, horticulture, livestock, housing, pyrethrum, cotton, and dairy, (Gatuguta et al., 2014).

There are about 28 million Kenyans or 63% of the population who count on co-operative activities which directly or indirectly help to sustain their economic well-being, (Oseno, 2018).

Co-operatives pull resources together to empower their members economically and thus reduce poverty. This model has been successful in creating wealth for the local community through value addition. An example of this is Githunguri Dairy Farmers Co-operative Society, which has 23,000 members, having started with only 31 small scale dairy farmers in 1961. The co-operative currently has six cooling centres and 76 collection points. Through its milk processing plant, the Society accesses a wide market through value addition, and packages and sells Fresha milk as its flagship brand, (Fresha.co.ke).

From such examples, we see that cooperatives generate income and wealth, which has spillover effects for the surrounding communities. This includes economic stability, recirculation of resources and accumulation of assets, (Nembhard, 2005).

Other countries have also benefitted from co-operatives. In India for example, rural cooperatives provide a sustainable livelihood for millions of rural Indians living in poverty, (Warwathe, 2014).

1.1.1 History of Co-operatives

The history of cooperatives originated from the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers, started in 1844. This was a consumer co-operative which paved the way for modern co-operatives. The Rochdale Pioneers created the Rochdale Principles, which are the basis of the co-operative principles of modern day, (Gatuguta et al., 2014).

In Kenya, the first co-operative was a dairy co-operative founded in 1908. In the 1930s, the colonial government managed co-operatives, but included Africans in 1946 so that they too could contribute to the economy. Co-operatives grew over the years and by 1970, over 1,800 societies had been registered. By the 1980s, members, through management committees, managed co-operatives while the government played an advisory role. To prevent a looming

collapse of the co-operative sector, the Government introduced legislative and institutional reforms, by amending the Co-operative Societies' Act No. 12 of 1997, (Gatuguta et al., 2014).

1.1.2 The SACCO sub-sector

SACCOs are member-owned, not-for-profit financial co-operatives that provide savings and credit services to their members, to enhance their economic well-being, (Oseno, 2018). Members benefit from higher returns on savings, lower loan rates and fewer, more affordable charges compared to other financial institutions. For instance, in 2016, the interest rates offered by banks were as high as 21% per annum, while SACCOs' rates remained low at 12% per annum.

The sector has over 6,000 active SACCOs making it the largest in Africa. SACCOs in Kenya have over Kshs 480 billion assets and savings, which represents 35% of the national budget, (Oseno, 2018). This shows that SACCOs can be used to effectively drive national growth, and that the sector has what it takes to mobilise financial resources. Moreover, SACCOs contribute immensely to the growth of the low-middle income population in the country.

The SACCO sector also has large financial institutions. A case in point is the Co-operative Bank of Kenya, the 3rd largest bank in Kenya. In the same breadth, the Co-operative Insurance Company of Kenya (CIC), is the 2nd largest insurance company in Kenya, and the only one of its kind in Africa, (Gatuguta et al., 2014).

Some SACCOs are also bigger than commercial banks for instance Mwalimu SACCO with a membership of 47,179 people and assets to the tune of Kshs.22 billion. The SACCO, through its members, bought Spire Bank in 2016. We also have Harambee SACCO with a membership of 98,640 people and assets to the tune of Kshs.13 billion. Further, notable

cooperators are Members of Parliament who are either members of Parliamentarian SACCO or Bunge SACCO, (Gatuguta et al., 2014).

SACCOs assist in deepening access to financial services for a large number of Kenyan households especially in the rural areas. For instance, in 2005, there were only 2,204,000 bank accounts in a population of 30 million Kenyans. This translates to about 7.3% of the population which was quite low, (Oseno, 2018). SACCOs have diversified from their traditional lending to include other investments like real estate and other high earning revenue investments. Such strategies enable the SACCO increase its asset base to cope with the demand of financial services and offered, (Warwathe, 2014).

Research through the FinAccess Household Survey 2016 shows that the number of people using SACCOs rose to 12.9% in 2016 up from 11% of the population in 2013, (FSD, 2016). The survey measures access to financial services among adults in a national survey. It was conducted by the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK), Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) and Financial Sector Deepening Kenya (FSD Kenya).

The survey also revealed that most people who use SACCOs are in Eastern, Nairobi, South Rift and Central regions while the lowest number are in North Eastern region. The survey further showed that mobile bank accounts are perceived to be the financial service providers with the lowest interest rates followed closely by SACCOs.

acUse of Savings Instrument by Provider (%)				
Provider of Savings Instrument	YR2006	YR2009	YR2013	YR2016
Mobile Finance Service, MFS	–	–	27	43.3
Commercial Bank	12.4	12.4	9.8	24.0*
SACCO	12.8	8.9	10.6	12.6
Microfinance Bank, MFB	1.5	3.2	3.1	3.3
Post Bank	5.6	2.5	2.3	1.5

16.8% have savings in mobile bank accounts

bcUse of Credit Instrument by Type (%)				
Type of Credit Instrument	YR2006	YR2009	YR2013	YR2016
Mobile bank account loan	–	–	–	5.9
SACCO Loan	4.2	3.1	4.0	5.0
Personal Bank loan	1.8	2.6	3.6	4.4
MFI Loan	0.8	1.8	1.6	1.8
Government loan	0.9	0.3	0.6	1.3
Credit card	0.8	0.8	1.8	1.2
Bank/Building Society Loan	0.5	0.2	0.9	0.6
Ovedraft	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.4
Hire Purchase	0.6	0.1	0.2	0.1
House/Land Government Loan	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.0

Table 1.1: Extracts from FinAccess Household Survey, 2016, (SASRA, 2017)

The SACCO sub sector comprises of both deposit-taking (DT) and non-deposit taking SACCOs. The non-deposit taking SACCOs are supervised by the Commissioner for Cooperatives, through the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Cooperatives. The SACCO Societies' Act was drafted in 2008, leading to the establishment of prudential standards for SACCOs with Front Office Service Activities (FOSAs). This led to the establishment of the SACCO Regulatory Authority (SASRA), the regulator of deposit-taking SACCOs, (Gatuguta et al., 2014).

In 2017, there were 174 SACCOs regulated by SASRA, with a total loan portfolio of Kshs 331.2 Billion, which was 11.29% growth rate, in comparison to 2016. Deposits grew to Kshs 305.3 Billion, a growth rate of 12% compared to 2016, (SASRA, 2018).

PARAMETER	2017	2016
Number of DT-SACCOS	174	176
Active Membership	3,116,674	3,143,485
Dormant Membership	482,526	489,112
Total Membership	3,599,200	3,632,597
FINANCIALS	**KSHS. MILLIONS**	**KSHS. MILLIONS**
Total Assets	442,277	393,499
Total Deposits	305,305	272,579
Gross Loans	331,212	297,604
Allowance for loans Loss	10,718	8,683
Net Loans &Advance	320,494	288,921
Capital Reserve	72,328	61,261
Core Capital	64,254	54,943

Table 1.2: Growth of FOSA Based SACCOs, (SASRA, 2018)

1.1.3 Effects of media coverage on financial institutions

The quality of media reporting on business issues is important, since the media have a huge effect on economic life. Business stories influence investor as well as consumer behavior. Media coverage also affects policies and laws, including regulation and taxes, (Stefan, 2014).

Media coverage can help raise awareness about an issue, promote sales and build the reputation of company brands. On the other hand, media coverage can convey information that harms reputation, reduces sales, leading to declining prices, (Bironzo et al., 2014). In the financial sector, negative media coverage can lead to distrust in institutions and public fears over the safety of deposits and investments, (Bironzo et al., 2014). An example of this is when Chase bank experienced liquidity difficulties following inaccurate social media reports questioning the

financial health of the bank. We also have negative media reports of Ekeza SACCO and Gakuyo Housing Co-operative that have contributed to loss of public trust in financial institutions.

The information disseminated to the public through various media sources contributes positively or negatively to the operations and performance of the SACCO sector in Kenya, (Konje, 2016). Thus the print media can be used as a tool to bring financial issues about SACCOs to the public domain, as has been used to further other important agendas throughout history, (Karesa, 2013).

1.1.4 Newspaper Readership in Kenya

Newspapers are usually printed on newsprint paper. Most newspapers have a wide audience which may be geographically defined. However, some focus on readers defined more by their interests than their location. For example, there are daily, weekly as well as sports newspapers, (Ndonye and Telewa, 2013). This study will focus on *Business Daily, Nation* and *Standard* newspapers, which have been selected due to their wide reach in circulation and readership.

Elliot, (2015) reported that *Nation* newspapers had a readership of approximately 4. 3 million people daily, while *Standard* newspapers had 2.2 million readers daily, in 2015. This shows that *Nation* newspapers had a 40% market share while *Standard* newspapers had a market share of 20%. Other newspapers are *Taifa Leo*, 10% share and *People Daily*, 8% market share.

The *Nation* newspaper was registered by two British businessmen, Michael Curtis and Charles Hayes in 1959. In 1960 it was sold to His Highness, the Aga Khan, and was distributed through news vendors the same year. It is currently a publication of the Nation Media Group.

Standard newspapers is the oldest newspaper in Kenya and is owned by Standard Media Group. It was started in 1902 as a weekly newspaper called 'African Standard' founded by

Alibhai Mulla Jevanjee. It was sold to two British businessmen in 1905, who changed the newspaper's name to East African Standard. In 1910, it grew to a daily newspaper, and was used to highlight colonial interests. It was later sold to the Lonrho Group in 1967 and was renamed to *Standard* newspapers in 1977, (Omari, 2008).

Business Daily newspaper is published by Nation Media Group and covers a variety of business stories. It aims to help businesses and investors by delivering factual, relevant and credible news, commentary and analysis, (Businessdailyafrica.com).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Numerous stories are reported by various media houses in Kenya. Typically, we see issues of politics, governance, corruption, violence, entertainment amongst others, given prominence in the newspaper pages. However, other important news such as business news are covered less. Studies on how the media covered the financial crisis in 2008 showed that journalists did not cover news about the economy adequately, (Bironzo et al., (2014). Further, a study about coverage of banking news in Kenyan newspapers showed that little coverage was given to the banking sector compared to political news, entertainment, sports and human interest stories, (Karesa, 2013).

The International Co-operative Alliance (ICA), the global alliance for co-operatives, ranks the Kenyan SACCO sector as the largest in Africa and the seventh worldwide. Further, in July 2013, the World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU), the umbrella body of SACCOs globally, awarded Kenyan SACCOs for being the fastest growing subsector in the world, (Gatuguta et al., 2014). There are 175 deposit-taking SACCOs serving 3,456, 975 members with deposits of Kshs 273 million, as at 2016, (SASRA, 2017).

The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) conducted a survey in 2015/2016 named 'Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey (KIHBS)' and sampled 24,000 households. The results of the survey showed that SACCOs are amongst the top sources of credit for Kenyans, with 11.2% of those sampled accessing loans, (KNBS, 2018).

Dalen et, al. (2014), say the role of media is to act autonomously in the general public's interest, rather than that of the society's dominant groups. Therefore, print media have a responsibility to avail information about these financial institutions to millions of Kenyans, who have invested in SACCOs. This will create awareness to the general public on the importance of SACCOs, the net effect of which will be building a savings culture, which will lead to a stronger economy.

1.3 Objectives

The overall objective of the study is to examine how print media covered SACCO issues in Kenya, from May 1, 2017- April 30, 2018.

The specific objectives are:

1. To determine the frequency of SACCO news coverage in *Nation*, *Business Daily* and *Standard* newspapers.

2. To explore the prominence of stories published about SACCOs in *Nation, Business Daily* and *Standard* newspapers.

3. To examine the key issues about SACCOs published in *Nation*, *Business Daily* and *Standard*.

1.4 Research questions

The research sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the frequency of SACCO news coverage in *Nation, Business Daily* and *Standard* newspapers?

2. What is the prominence given to the published SACCO stories on *Nation*, *Business Daily* and *Standard* newspapers?

3. What are the key issues about SACCOs published in *Nation*, *Business Daily* and *Standard* newspapers?

1.5 Justification of the Study

SACCOs play a key role in mobilisation of investment funds required for socio-economic development. They mobilise savings to support higher investment rates. For instance, during 2006/2007 the country's gross national savings was 15.5% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This is envisaged to be raised to 29% of GDP by 2020, (Oseno, 2018). Given the low savings culture, it is important to examine how frequently the media cover SACCOs and the type of stories they publish. The media play a key role in disseminating information to the public on the importance of savings. It is also important to explore the issues highlighted by the media concerning SACCOs.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study was carried out to enable SACCOs appreciate how they are covered by print media and lobby the media for more coverage. The study shed more light on the type of stories that were placed in the media. From the study, SACCOs will understand what the relevance of placement of stories in newspapers is and lobby the media for better coverage.

The Government namely the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Co-operatives and the SACCO Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA) are also beneficiaries of the study. These Government bodies will learn the importance of providing information to the media, which will lead to more stories and awareness about the sector.

The study is also useful to the media in showing the relevance of the SACCO sector and the crucial role that media play in information dissemination to millions of members. It will also show the importance of improving their reporting when covering the sector. Journalists in the print media will also learn the main players of the SACCO industry, who can give accurate information to them.

1.7 Scope and limitations

This study was conducted by analyzing three newspapers with wide circulation and countrywide readership namely, *Nation*, *Standard* and *Business Daily* newspapers. The *Nation* Media Group publishes *Nation* newspapers, on Monday-Friday, as well as *Saturday* and *Sunday Nation*. It also publishes *Business Daily* on Monday-Friday. The Standard Media Group publishes *Standard* newspapers on Monday-Friday, as well as *Saturday* and *Sunday Standard*. Due to time and budgetary constraints, it was not possible to analyse all the newspapers in the market. This study is also limited to print media and did not explore other communications channels namely electronic and social media, which are also widely used.

The study was done over a period of one year, May 1, 2017- April 30, 2018. The period was selected to understand how the media covers SACCOs throughout the year, whether there are activities or not. The study ended on April 30, 2018, which is the deadline by which SACCOs should have done their AGMs, according to the Co-operative Societies Act. Due to time and budgetary constraints, it was not possible to analyse newspapers for more than one

year. However, a one year period was considered adequate for a comprehensive study. The study analysed the key issues reflected in the news articles published. It did not engage with the readers to get their responses or perceptions about the issues they read about in print media.

1.8 Operational Definitions

For this study, the key terms are:

Content analysis

It is a research technique used to make valid interpretations by coding textual material. It can be applied to all kinds of written text such as news items whether digital or in print, as well as text in the form of pictures, videos, or other visual media. For this study, content analysis refers to the classification and interpretation of content derived from articles published on newspapers.

Co-operative

It is an independent group of people who have voluntarily come together to meet their economic, social, and cultural needs, through a mutual, democratically-managed enterprise.

Coverage

This refers to news published in the media about an issue. In this study, coverage refers to news published in a newspaper about SACCOs.

Media

These are communication channels through which news and information is disseminated to the mass audience. For this study, media refers to newspapers.

Prominence

This is defined as the state of standing out or being easily noticeable. For this study, prominence refers to stories which are most visible to readers.

Publish

It refers to the act of issuing printed or otherwise reproduced textual or graphic material, computer software for sale or distribution to the public. In this study, publishing refers to printing information through newspapers, which are distributed to the general public.

SACCO

This is an acronym meaning Savings and Credit Co-operatives Society. These are member-owned financial co-operatives, which provide savings and credit services to their members.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

This chapter will review existing information in relation to the study. It will review literature on print media coverage of financial issues and studies done on SACCOs. The chapter will also review literature on prominence of stories and methodology applied in similar studies. The chapter will also identify the research gap to be filled by the study, and discuss the conceptual and theoretical frameworks.

2.1 Studies on print media coverage of financial issues

Various scholars have done research on how the media covers financial matters for instance, "Where were the media in the financial crisis of 2008, and have we seen this trend before?" (Dickinson, 2010). This article looks at the financial crisis of 2008, and analyses how the media covered it. The research describes the media coverage as inadequate and minimal, despite signs of a looming downfall of strong financial institutions. This led to the onset of the financial crisis.

The study further says that the media did not focus on the financial issues regardless of the damaging effect a drop in the investment industry would have on the economy. The coverage provided was inaccurate, full of shallow explanations of the crisis and had biased reports. Furthermore, the information provided was often fragmented and misjudged the severity of the situation. The media deemed other more entertaining topics like celebrity gossip, politics and professional sports more newsworthy than the looming financial crisis. This resulted in many consumers remaining unaware of the financial turmoil until it was too late, (Dickinson, 2010).

A study of how the media depicted the economic crisis during Barrack Obama's presidency   confirms inadequate media coverage of the financial crisis. The study analysed over 9,000 stories in electronic, print and online media, over a period of seven months in 2008. Among the key story angles were the conflict over the stimulus package and plans to assist in revamping the banking sector. This was almost 40% of the economic coverage in the period under review. Other topics related to the crisis were covered less for instance reporting on food costs and the effect of the crisis on education and public health. The study found that when the economic situation started improving and the political conflict reduced, media coverage began to decrease. After accounting for 46% of the overall news coverage, media coverage of the economic crisis dropped to 21% in April- June 2008.

The findings of a study about tracking the economic slump in USA, in 2009 also showed inadequate coverage. The results of the study showed that only 37% of the national and international coverage on the prime newspaper pages was about economic issues. This was closely followed by the websites, cable television and radio. Sources used by newspapers were also wider compared to those from electronic media. Sources included government officials, citizens and interest groups. Notably, newspaper articles covered more investigative stories-35% implying that journalists initiated the report, rather than wholly relying on external sources.

Newspapers also reported about how non-financial businesses performed when the country faced economic challenges. The stories were mostly place on the front page news. The study found that bigger papers had a higher coverage on the recession's impact on the State and Government. For instance, the New York Times, a national newspaper covered such news on 7% of its front-page while 6% covered non-financial news, (Pew Research Centre, 2009).

Other studies analysed media coverage before the 2008 crisis and found that the media reported about a few sectors of the economy and stories were not comprehensive, (Tett, 2009). Other scholars criticized journalists for not being conversant with financial institutions so as to write credible and accurate stories, (Doyle, 2006). Schiffrin and Fagan, (2013) also criticized journalists for paying too little attention to economic details.

Starkman (2009), studied financial coverage on American newspapers and found that business stories were not consistent. Although journalists advised the public on investment and banking issues between 2000 and 2003, in 2004 these investigative stories were missing.

Doyle (2006), further analysed journalists and concluded that financial journalism was falsely stereotyped as having a bias for corporate entities and covering them favourably. He also found that journalists considered themselves watchdogs as far as corporate performance was concerned. As such, they were ready to cover any problems within these organisations' performance and conduct. They also acknowledged that Public Relations was prevalent in their field and they constantly looked for ways to keep their stories factual and independent from press releases.

In another study, Reich (2011), found that tabloid, financial journalists covered more negative news since they considered it newsworthy. However in another study, Allen and Savigny (2012), concluded that journalists favoured business interest over public interest. The study showed that 45% of articles analysed were business news and government issues covered only 7% of the articles analysed. They also noted that the media environment was accommodative to business news.

Another study by Dalen et, al. (2014), analysed five of the largest Danish newspapers and concluded that adequate business news had been covered, and thus the media fulfilled their

watchdog role in the sector. Other scholars have written on how SACCOs can get more media coverage. A case in point is the article "Five ways your Credit Union can make the cut," (Anderson, 2016).   This article shows that SACCOs worldwide do not get enough media coverage.

In Kenya, Karesa (2013), notes that little coverage is given to business news, but political news, entertainment, sports and human interest stories flood the media houses. In fact, over the six-month study period, no banking related news article appeared as a cover story in *Nation* or *Standard* newspaper. Majority of the articles on banking or finance appeared in the latter sections of the newspapers.

From the literature reviewed, we see that financial news is critical to the public. This therefore provides a background and basis to carry out this research of Kenyan SACCOs, in relation to how they are covered on print media. There is also no evidence of a critical analysis of print media coverage of SACCOs in Kenya. Therefore, there is need for this study.

2.2 Studies done on SACCOs

Kenya's Vision 2030 for financial services is to create a globally competitive and effective financial sector that will promote savings and investments in the country. This vision will be achieved if members in the co-operative movement can transform their savings into viable investments, (Onchangwa et al., 2013).

A study by World Bank, (2015) found that only 30% of small companies in Sub-Saharan African countries access affordable financial capital. Inadequate collateral, filling tax returns issues, low income levels and faulty business plans are some of the reasons why banks shy away from extending credit to Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), (Sacerdoti, 2005).

Karim, (2008) noted that commercial banks had strict requirements for loan applications which were not conducive to micro entrepreneurs. Research by Stevenson and St-Onge, (2005) showed that women entrepreneurs in Sub-Saharan Africa were more likely to be denied credit compared to men. This was mainly due to their lack of control of family resources like land, which could be used as security to acquire loans.

Gichuki et al., (2014) found that the inaccessibility of credit to finance MSMEs and the rising cost of living led entrepreneurs to form village savings and credit organisations, SACCOs. From these organisations, they could access loans at low interest rates with a flexible repayment period to finance their businesses. Some of the profitable ventures funded with the money include food vending, hair salons, grocery stores, tailoring shops and retail shops. As such, majority of these entrepreneurs, especially women are beneficiaries of these services, which they could not access through banks. Studies from the informal finance sector in developing countries show that the poor, especially women, are more likely to access loans from SACCOs than from banks, (Atieno, 2011). Thus, provision of affordable credit will raise the income levels of the rural population in African countries.

Gichuki, et al., (2014) studied the uses of credit accessed from SACCOs. The research findings showed growth in net profits and capital of the businesses, arising from loans obtained. Also, dividends received from SACCOs were reinvested back into the business, resulting in higher profits. Socio-economic factors for instance education level, amount of income earned and entrepreneurial skills also led to a positive change in net profits and capital of the businesses.

2.3 Review of methodology

Ibieri, (2014) studied Print media coverage of County Governance issues, and carried out a content analysis of *Nation* and *Standard* newspapers from May 2013-April 2014. This time frame was significant to the researcher because the country had just finalized on the general elections in March, 2013. Thus, the Government was in the process of implementing the Counties system. The two dailies were chosen for data collection through content analysis, due to their wide readership, and credible reporting of County Government issues.

Omari, (2008) researched about how women are portrayed in Kenya's Print Media. Here, the researcher used a mixed-methods approach and content analysis of newspaper articles of three major dailies at the time. These were *Nation* newspapers, *Standard* newspapers, and *Kenya Times*, between June 2002 and June 2003.

Onsomu, (2012) conducted a research on print media coverage of Kenyan parliamentarians. The researcher used the qualitative method and content analysis to collect data from *Nation* and *Standard* newspapers. Data over a two month period was analysed; May 2014-June 2014.

From the above mentioned studies, the researcher will borrow similar techniques in methodology. The researcher will use the mixed method approach through Content Analysis in *Nation*, *Business Daily* and *Standard* newspapers.

2.4 Prominence of stories

The placement of stories in newspapers shows how prominent or visible a news story is. Many readers scan a newspaper, rather than read the content page by page. Arising from this, editors structure newspaper content with a view of increasing the prominence of stories. For

instance, they use bold, large headlines to attract a reader's attention and to convey generally what the story is about, (Elliot et al, 2018).

Hence, a front page story versus one placed in the inside pages, how big or small a headline is and the length of a story communicate information about the prominence of a news item. The front page, or A section, of newspapers reserved for major national and international news, (McDonogh, Gregg, and Wong, 2001). The next category is the B section of newspapers where Editorials and op-eds are placed. Then we have the 'C' category which includes feature stories on topics like sports, Lifestyle, Finance or Business stories, (McDonogh, Gregg, & Wong, 2001).

Karesa, (2013) conducted a study on priming of banking issues in Kenya and used this classification. Her key findings were that only four articles about banks were placed in the A section of the dailies. 18 of the 905 articles analysed were published in the B section or editorial sections. Most of the articles containing the words banking news or financial news were published in the C section of newspapers-51%. The results showed that banking news was not as prominent as political news, which was 98% of the A-section news during the entire 6-month study period.

In a study done by Omari, (2008), on how women are portrayed by the print media, the researcher agrees that the way a story is placed shows how prominent the story is. The researcher further says that important stories which are of high impact are usually placed on the front page or the back page, where they are most visible to the eye of the reader. Further, stories considered important but less significant are placed on the inside pages. A key finding of the study was that women's stories rarely made front-page news. When they did, it was mostly in relation to crime, beauty, or as victims of circumstances. The researcher further that women rarely made the

headlines and were mostly portrayed negatively. There were few back-page stories about women, most of which were about crime.

In another study, Bironzo et al., (2014) found that business stories in the United States of America (USA) were captured in the back page. This was in a special section separate from domestic news, international politics, and features. During the financial crisis, business news became more prominent, but still rarely appeared on the front page. The study found that financial stories were moved to the front pages when the stories directly affected consumers, or involve politically sensitive topics. Most times, the stories were reported in a negative tone. The study showed that from 2007 to 2008, only 7% of banking stories were covered on the front page.

Stories are of different types with the most notable ones being Editorial and op-ed. Editorials are important because they are persuasive articles written by a publication's editor, editorial board, or publisher that state a newspaper's stance on an issue, (uiltexas.org).

An op-ed, is short for 'opposite editorial,' and is printed across from editorials. Op-eds are similar in content and form to editorials, but are opinion articles reflecting the views of an individual, who may or may not be affiliated with the newspaper. The story is considered important because it is written by an expert in that field, and thus provides insight on a topic, (Chemutai, 2017). Other stories are commentaries from specific writers, which also include Letters to the editor. These are important because they show the views of the readers, (theopedproject.com).

Lastly, we have news stories which are fact- based narratives outlining who, what, when, where, why and how. In a study by Bironzo et al., (2014), finding showed that most financial

stories were fact-based as opposed to opinion-based. The study found that 88% of articles analysed were based on facts while 12% were classified as opinion stories.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

This study will be guided by two main theories: Agenda Setting and Framing Theory by McCombs and Shaw (1972) and the Priming Theory by Karl Lashley (1951).

2.5.1 Priming Theory

This theory was introduced in 1951 by Karl Lashley, as a method of increasing the probability of behavioral responses. The theory says that there is a link between the prominence that the media places on issues and the importance the audiences will attach on them. Priming assumes that the audience will form their attitudes about an issue based on the most accessible news, (Shaw and McCombs, 1980).

Further, the media can selectively decide what the consumer pays attention to, through use of psychological cues, which the consumer uses to interpret and evaluate an existing idea. The media can use pictures or words to portray a person or product in an endearing manner; acceptable socially or morally, to influence the audience into being associated more with a person or product, (Shaw and McCombs, 1980). For instance, pictorials of companies engaging in community service through Corporate Social Responsibility are meant to attract readers to identify with the company. In so doing, they are more likely to buy their products, since part of the profits will be used to care for the community.

Media can also prime news by repeating the news and giving it more prominence. They do so through the use of special features, bold headlines, expert opinions and discussions. By making certain news about SACCOs more available or prominent to the mind of the audience, the media shapes what audiences consume, (Shaw and McCombs, 1980). For instance, the story

of Ekeza SACCO which was covered extensively by many media houses. The SACCO was deregistered by the regulator for failing to conduct AGMs and for not having their financial accounts audited.

For newspapers, position and length are two main criteria of prominence, (Griffin, 2012). For instance a front-page headline story, a three-column story on an inside page, and an editorial are examples of significant focus on an issue, reinforcing the media's agenda. Therefore, the media's agenda is the pattern of news coverage across print and broadcast media as measured by the prominence and length of stories or priming, (Griffin, 2012).

Based on this theoretical paradigm, this study will critically analyse how print media covered SACCOs in Kenya. The study will bring out insights on the prominence given to SACCO stories by answering key questions, for instance how much space is allocated to SACCO issues? On which pages do these stories run?

2.5.2 Agenda Setting and Framing Theory

The concept of agenda-setting is linked to a well-known saying that the media cannot tell the audience what to think, but they can tell them what to think about, (McCombs, 2004). The theory explains how news in the media shapes the public's belief about what is important in society. The media sets the agenda through repeated news coverage known to raise the importance of issues in the public's minds.

The media has a big influence on audiences by their choice of which stories they consider newsworthy, (Potter, 2012). Some of the factors that determine news selection are impact, prominence (well-known events or individuals), proximity, conflict, timeliness of events and economic benefits, (McQuail, 2010). In this regard, the media can transfer saliency of some issues in their news agenda to the public agenda, (Griffin, 2012).

Further, the media can also frame issues- how we should think about them, (Omari, 2008). Thus, Griffin, (2012) says the Framing theory is an adaptation of the agenda setting theory or second-level agenda setting theory.

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient or prominent, (Moy, Tewksbury and Rinke, 2016). A media frame is the main idea for news that provides a context and suggests what the issue is. This is done through selection, exclusion, emphasis and elaboration, (Griffin, 2012). Framing is how a story is told and is thus concerned with how news is presented to the reader. Frames therefore draw attention to some aspects of the story at the expense of others. Thus, stories can be manipulated to persuade the readers through choice of frames.

Framing involves the use of images, analogies, metaphors, storytelling or other narrative components that a journalist uses to communicate the essence of an issue or event. Frames simplify the story-writing process for journalists and help them decide what to include and what to leave out. This process could be conscious, instinctive or cultural. Frames also help audiences make sense of what they read and hear in the news, (Moy, Tewksbury and Rinke, 2016).

Frames are determined by various factors including editorial policies, media ownership, and market competition. Various frames exist in the financial sector. For instance in a study done by Karesa, (2013), the researcher found most stories published about banks were Kenyan-based and had financial frames.

2.6 Conceptual framework

A conceptual framework is a visual or written framework that explains, either in form of pictures or in narrative form, the key things beings studied— ideas, key items, or variables—and the assumed interaction among them, (Miles and Huberman 1994.) In this study, SACCO

coverage on print media is influenced by different variables which include frequency of stories, prominence of stories and the SACCO issues published.

Independent variables   **Dependent variable**

```
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Frequency of stories    │
│    1. Number of stories │
│       published         │
└─────────────────────────┘

┌─────────────────────────┐                    ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Prominence of stories   │ ─────────────────► │                      │
│    1. Placement         │                    │  SACCO coverage      │
│    2. Length            │                    │                      │
│    3. Type              │                    └──────────────────────┘
└─────────────────────────┘

┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Key issues              │
│                         │
└─────────────────────────┘
```

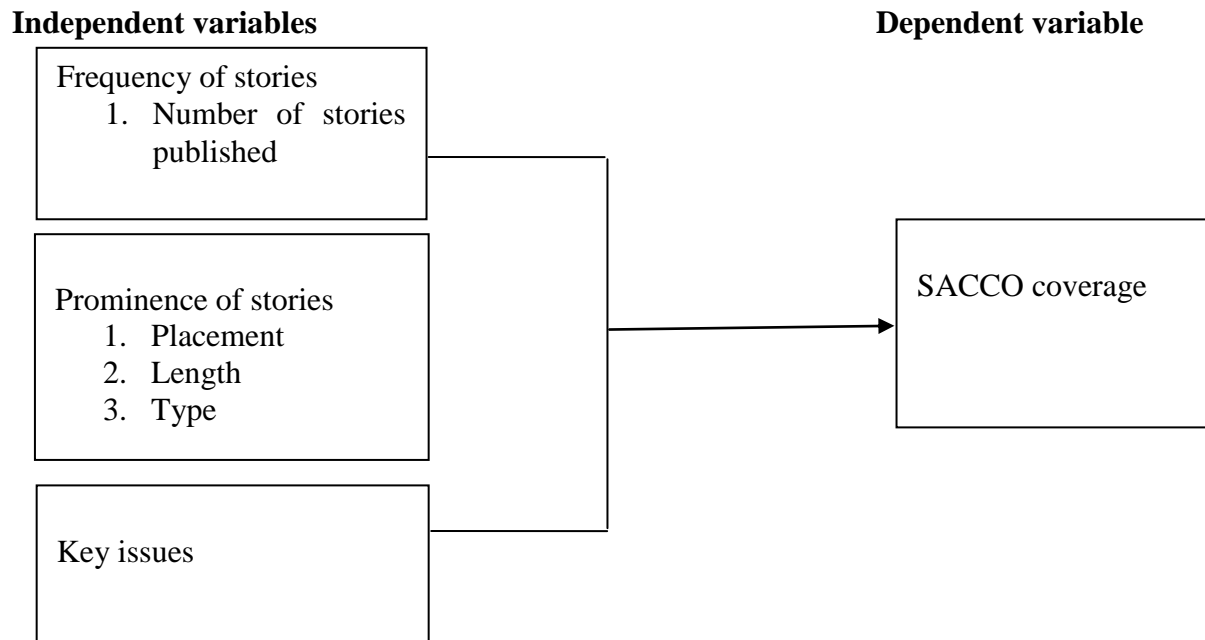*Figure 2.1: Relationship between print media and SACCO coverage*

2.7 Research gap

From the literature reviewed, the researcher found numerous studies about print media coverage of banking and financial institutions as a whole. However, no study was found on print media coverage of SACCOs. Thus there is need for this study which will address this information gap and contribute to the body of knowledge.

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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This chapter discusses the research approach, design, population, sampling procedure and research method. It also discusses the data collection process as well as data analysis and presentation. The chapter also discusses how validity and reliability was achieved as well as ethical considerations that were adhered to.

The study was conducted in Nairobi, which is the headquarters of the two media houses; Nation Media Group and Standard Media Group. Further, the copies of *Business Daily, Nation* and *Standard* newspapers were available in Nairobi.

3.1 Study Design

Research design is the master plan of a research that shows how the study is to be conducted and can be compared to an architectural outline. A research design is an action plan for getting from here to there, where 'here' is the initial set of questions to be answered and 'there' is a set of conclusions, (Yin, 2003).

This study was done through descriptive research design, which was useful in obtaining information about what exists in relation to the variables of the topic, (Cohen, 2007). Descriptive design was used to obtain themes and article frequencies in coverage, framing and priming.

3.2 Research Approach

The researcher applied mixed methods research approach. It was done by collecting both quantitative and qualitative data and integrating the two forms of data. This method was considered ideal because it provided a more complete understanding of the research problem than either approach alone, (Cresswell, 2014).

The researcher used the Convergent Parallel Design. The purpose of this method is to simultaneously collect both quantitative and qualitative data, merge the data, and use the results to understand the research problem, (Cresswell, 2014).

3.3 Research method

The method used in the study is Secondary Data Collection and Analysis, which refers to the review of existing information. Thus the researcher sought to understand and analyse issues as they were through analysis of already existing text.

This method is different from primary research methods in that the researcher did not collect the data directly and could not control the actual data collected. However, the researcher could bring forward new insights through presentation and interpretation, (McDonald, & Headlam, 2015). In this study, the researcher obtained secondary data from media, specifically from newspapers.

3.4 Population

The population that was studied is newspapers from the main-stream media in Kenya. They are *Nation* and *Standard* newspapers which are published daily. *Business Daily* is not published on Saturday and Sunday. This fits in with the definition of the term 'population', which is the total collection of components from which the research is carried out, (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). A population is made up of all the subjects in a study.

3.5 Sampling procedure

Sampling is the process of selecting some components of the entire population, to enable a researcher draw conclusions, (Cooper & Schindler, 2011).

For this study, criterion sampling was used to select articles and images relevant to the study. In this method, the researcher selects cases that are likely to be information-rich, using a

predetermined criteria, (Patton, 2002). The researcher requested the two media houses for access into their archives. The researcher then used the key word 'SACCO' as the criteria to search the database of newspapers. The researcher conducted an online search using this key word and accessed digital copies of relevant articles within the study timeframe. Purposive sampling was used to select the Key informants for interviews, during triangulation.

3.6 Data Collection Tools

The researcher used content analysis as a data collection tool. Content analysis is the systematic classification and description of communication content according to predetermined categories, (Berger, 2000). It may involve qualitative or quantitative analysis, or both. This tool can be applied to all kinds of written text such as articles and news items whether digital or in print. It can also be applied to text in the form of pictures or videos, (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). In this study, quantitative content analysis was used to determine print media coverage of SACCO issues. These were the stories about SACCOs that were published in the newspapers.

Content analysis can determine the frequency, prominence of stories and the predominant news actors. By analysing previous reports, one can also identify dominant frames, in particular, how issues are framed, (Elliott et. al., 2018).

The analysis was done from secondary data – that is newspapers from May 1, 2017 – April 30, 2018. This was a one year period selected to get a holistic view of media coverage throughout the year leading up to April 30, the deadline by which SACCOs should have done their AGMs, as a legal requirement.

The researcher developed themes and categories which included the type of the articles—op-ed, news stories, letters to the editor; placement of the stories—Front page, middle page, back pages; frequency of stories and length of the story—longer stories are deemed more important.

The researcher developed a coding sheet as is in the appendix attached. The researcher coded 5 stories to test the clarity and consistency of coding tool. After that, the sample was coded, the coding consistency was checked.

When sufficient consistency was achieved, the coding rules were applied to the entire text. A second coder was also trained on how to code the information. During the coding process, the coders checked the coding repeatedly, to prevent coding errors, (Schilling, 2006). After coding, the researcher analysed the content for trends and patterns that will answer the research questions, (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009).

The study also used triangulation, where more than one data collection method was used for a better understanding of the research topic. Triangulation is corroborating evidence from different sources to bring out insight about a theme or perspective, (Cresswell, 2014). The researcher sought after 15 Key Informants to provide more insight to the findings obtained from content analysis and better answer the research questions. The key informants interviewed were 6 editors, 6 writers and 3 communication experts from the SACCO sector. The experts were obtained from KUSCCO, which is the umbrella organisation for SACCOs, mandated to lobby and speak on their behalf. The researcher also interviewed a communications expert from SASRA, which is the regulator for deposit-taking SACCOs. Finally, the researcher interviewed a communications expert from the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Co-operatives, which regulates the non-deposit taking SACCOs or BOSAs, which conduct back office activities.

The researcher `developed an interview guide and asked the interviewees open-ended questions. The researcher also asked follow-up questions seeking clarification on issues raised by the informants. The responses were used in triangulating the findings of the study to enhance

their accuracy levels. Due to unavailability of the respondents for face to face interviews, some interviews were done via telephone and email.

3.7 Data analysis and presentation

Once the data was obtained, it was coded and numbers assigned to each theme. The researcher used MS Excel, 2013 to code the data, as it helped to ensure accuracy by reducing chances of repetition while coding. The coded data was then analysed using Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 21, to generate frequency and percentage distribution. This data was then presented in tables, bar graphs, line graphs and pie charts. Qualitative data from Key Informant Interviews was also analysed and presented in a narrative format.

3.8 Validity and reliability

The quality of research depends on the accuracy of the data collection procedures. The researcher ensured that the data collected accurately answered the research questions. For reliability and validity to exist in the data, the data collection techniques must result in relevant and correct information which answers the research questions, (Kothari, 2004).

3.8.1 Reliability

A measuring instrument is reliable if it provides consistent results. However, there are threats to reliability if the measuring instrument is faulty, because the results obtained will not be valid. Small deviations indicate more reliable data, while big deviations mean the data obtained is unreliable, (Kothari, 2004). To ensure reliability, the data collection instruments were pretested before being used. The researcher coded 5 stories to test the clarity and consistency of coding tool. Once consistency was established, the data was coded accurately and objectively. Further, the data was coded by two coders to eliminate personal bias during the process. The researcher then used the Coefficient of Agreement, to test the reliability of the data coded.

Triangulation was also used through Key Informants, to corroborate the findings from content analysis thus enhancing reliability. Patton, (2002) advocates for the use of triangulation and says combining methods strengthens a study.

3.8.2 Validity

Validity is defined as the degree to which the researcher has measured what he has set out to measure. Maxwell (1992) says that descriptive validity or factual accuracy is concerned with initial stages of research involved with data collection. Thus it is important to report data accurately. Rukwaru, (2007) says descriptive validity is indicated by the experience of the respondents chosen by the researcher. In this study, the Key Informants selected had adequate knowledge and experience necessary for providing requisite data for the study. For purposes of clarity, the interview guides had open-ended questions which enabled the respondents to give further clarification on issues.

3.9 Ethics

The researcher sought permission from the named media houses to access their archives. This was done by obtaining a Field Work Certificate from the School of Journalism and Mass Communication in the University of Nairobi (see appendix III). In writing the research report, all information obtained from other scholars was appropriately attributed. The researcher presented the findings as accurately as possible without falsifying or inventing findings, (Neuman, 2000). The researcher defended the final project and obtained a Certificate of Corrections (see appendix IV). Finally, the researcher submitted the research work for an anti-plagiarism test and obtained an Originality Report (see appendix V).

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Overview

This Chapter presents, analyses, and interprets the findings of how *Nation*, *Business Daily* and *Standard* Newspapers covered SACCO issues in Kenya from May 1, 2017 –April 30, 2018. The findings will be answering the research questions of the study namely; What is the frequency of SACCO news in *Nation*, *Business Daily* and *Standard* newspapers? What are the key issues about SACCOs published in *Nation*, *Business Daily* and *Standard* newspapers? What is the prominence given to the published SACCO stories?

4.1 Introduction

The researcher examined all stories about SACCOs which were published from May 1, 2017 to April 30, 2018 and found a total of 210 articles from the three newspapers. *Nation* newspapers had the highest coverage of SACCOs with 95 stories published, *Standard* published 64 stories, while *Business Daily* published 51 stories. The data was collected using content analysis and the information coded by two coders using a coding sheet.

The researcher used the Coefficient of Agreement to measure the extent to which independent coders agreed, also referred to as inter-rater reliability. For this study, Cohen's Kappa (k) inter-rater reliability test was used to measure the percentage of agreement between the two coders. In this regard, Cohen's Kappa Coefficient (k) was 83%. Miles and Huberman (1994) recommend an 80% agreement. The researcher then used triangulation to corroborate the findings and interviewed Key Informants from the media and SACCO sector.

Table 4.1: Response rate from Key informant interviews

No	Category	Sample Size	Response	Percentage
1	Editors	8	6	75%
2	Writers	8	6	75%
3	Communications experts	4	3	75%
	Total	20	15	75%

Source: Field Survey (2018)

From the table, 75% response rate was obtained from writers, editors and communication experts in the SACCO sector. This response rate was adequate enough for triangulation of data. Additionally, at the point of saturation, the researcher discontinued the interviews because similar answers were being given by the informants.

4.2 Frequency of coverage

The first objective was to determine the frequency of stories published in *Business Daily*, *Nation* and *Standard* newspapers from May 2017-April 2018. The table below shows the frequencies of coverage:

Table 4.2: Frequency of coverage

Newspaper	Number of Stories	%
Nation	95	45%
Standard	64	31%
Business Daily	51	24%

Source: Field Survey (2018)

Nation newspapers had the highest coverage and published 95 stories while *Business Daily* published 51 stories, which was the lowest. From these results, it would seem that

SACCOs received inadequate coverage. However, it is important to note that Kenya held its general elections in 2017 and many media houses largely covered politics, hence the low coverage of SACCOs. Thus it would seem that many Kenyans did not access information about SACCOs through print media during this period. The findings agree with a study about the financial crisis in 2008. The findings describe the media coverage as inadequate and minimal, despite signs of a possible collapse of strong financial institutions, which led to the commencement of the financial crisis, (Dickinson, 2010). The frequencies showing coverage are shown in the pie chart below:

Figure 4.1: Percentage coverage
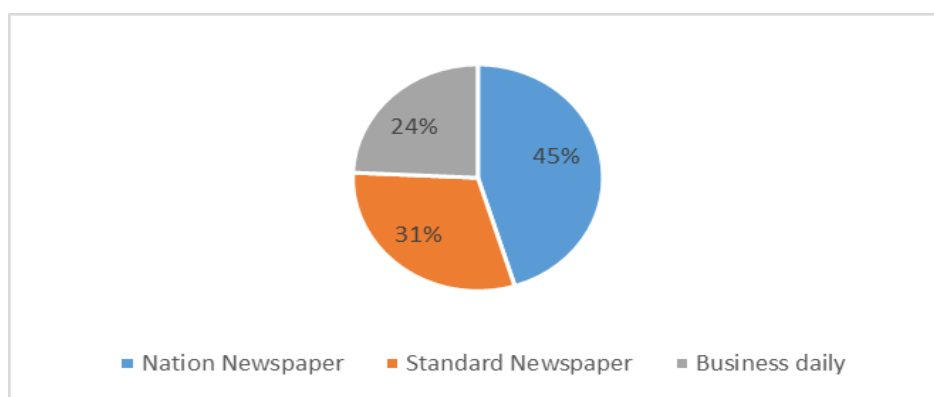
Source: Field Survey (2018)

Nation newspaper was the highest in coverage, representing 45%. *Standard* newspaper's coverage represented 31% while *Business Daily* showed 24%. Key informant 7 attributed the higher coverage in *Nation* to the huge public interest on SACCOs, since they serve the interest of the masses. The Informant further added that the decision of coverage was as a result of editorial judgment.

Key informant 9 said that SACCO coverage was improving because they were increasingly becoming an alternative source of finance. The Informant noted that since the interest rate cap affecting banks was enforced in 2016, few banks were extending credit to

individuals. Thus majority of people went to SACCOs to access affordable loans, which contributed to a rising interest in these institutions.

Key informant 11 commented that most SACCOs perceive *Nation* newspapers as having wider readership compared to the rest of the newspapers, especially on Business topics. Thus, SACCOs, which are financial business entities, are driven to request *Nation* newspapers to cover their stories.

Although the *Business Daily* newspaper largely focuses on business news, the researcher found that the paper published the lowest number of stories about SACCOs. This was attributed to the conservative nature of SACCOs in relating with the media. Key informant 4 said that;

> "SACCO managers don't like engaging the media much. They hardly disseminate information to the print press unless when they want to gain. This is mostly when they think the media can influence them in policy change. They don't want to part with information that is gainful to their members or the general public," (Key informant 4).

Key informant 8 said that SACCOs lacked communication strategies and most of them had not employed public relations professionals. Because of this gap, SACCOs mainly have reactive communication as opposed to proactive. Majority do not communicate with their members when issues arise. They rush to set the record straight with their members and general public after the media has reported on an issue negatively. The informant also noted that there were few online sectoral reports available showing the sector had challenges in technology absorption. Some SACCOs were using manual book keeping methods and had not adapted computerized accounting systems, hence the media had little access to information.

4.2.1 Frequency of coverage during days of the week

In this study, frequency referred to the number of times an article about SACCOs was published in *Business Daily*, *Nation* and *Standard* newspapers.

**Table 4.3: Frequency of Coverage of SACCOs on days of the week**

	Nation Newspaper		Business Daily		Standard Newspapers	
Monday	22	23%	7	14%	22	34%
Tuesday	17	19%	7	14%	15	23%
Wednesday	11	11%	10	19%	5	7%
Thursday	14	16%	14	27%	6	9%
Friday	13	14%	13	25%	6	9%
Saturday	6	5%		0%	5	7%
Sunday	12	13%		0%	6	9%

Source: Field Survey (2018)

The findings showed that *Nation* newspapers published the highest number of stories on Mondays, (22) followed by Sunday (12). *Standard* newspapers published the highest number of stories on Monday (22) with the second highest day in SACCO coverage being Tuesday (15 stories). In *Business Daily*, the highest number of stories were published on Thursday (14 stories).

Conversely, the lowest number of stories were published on Saturday (6), in *Nation* newspapers and (5) *Standard* newspapers. In *Business Daily*, Tuesday and Wednesday recorded only 7 stories published, and was the lowest. The researcher did not find any articles on SACCOs published on Saturday and Sunday on the *Business Daily*.

Figure 4.2: Percentage of Coverage of SACCOs on days of the week
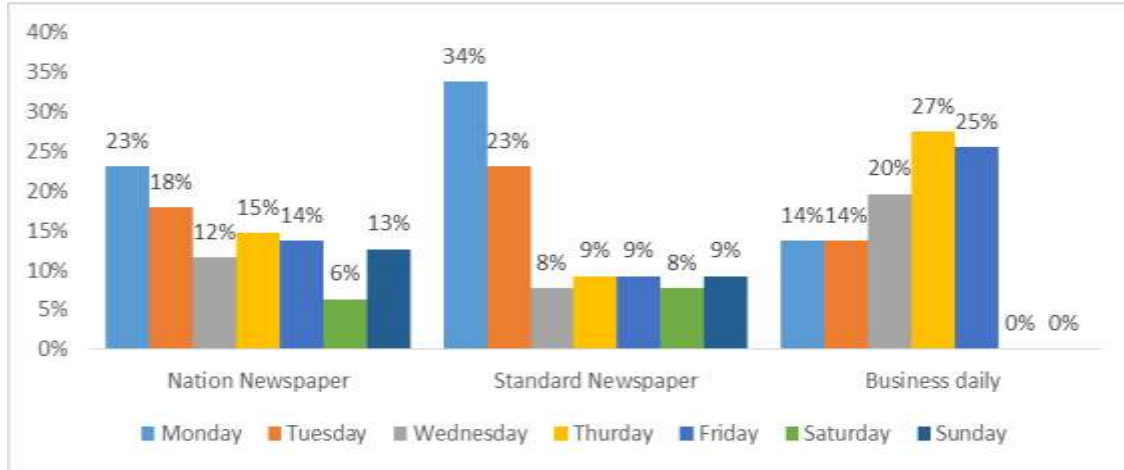
Source: Field Survey (2018)

From the above graphs, the *Standard* had the highest coverage on Monday, representing 34% followed by *Business Daily* on Thursday with 27% coverage. The lowest coverage was observed on Saturday in *Nation* newspaper which had 6% coverage.

Key Informant 9 said that Monday had the highest number of stories because it had a wider coverage compared to the weekend. Hence, many business stories were published then. Additionally, SACCO AGMs were mostly held on Fridays and Saturdays, and sometimes Sundays. Thus most of these stories were published on Monday. The newspapers also publish a pictorial page on Monday, which contributed to the increase in coverage.

Further, Informant 9 added that most stories that were published on Sundays were timeless, feature stories or analytical in nature, and not purely business stories. In *Business Daily,* a pull-out about digital business focusing on innovation and alternative financing contributed to the rise in SACCO coverage on Thursdays. There were no stories published over the weekend because the *Business Daily* is not expressly published on Saturday and Sunday. However, it relies on the Friday newspaper which is distributed throughout the weekend.

4.2.2 Frequency of coverage during the year

This study analysed how SACCOs were covered during the months of the year to show trends in coverage.

Table 4.4: Frequency of coverage during the year

Months (2017-2018)	Nation newspapers		Business Daily		Standard Newspapers	
May	3	3%	3	6%	4	6%
June	8	8%	4	8%	5	8%
July	13	14%	4	8%	10	16%
August	10	11%	4	6%	2	3%
September	3	3%	3	6%	3	5%
October	6	6%	4	8%	2	3%
November	2	2%	2	4%	3	5%
December	6	6%	4	8%	6	9%
January	3	3%	2	4%	6	9%
February	7	7%	3	6%	9	14%
March	15	16%	5	10%	7	11%
April	19	20%	13	26%	7	11%

Source: Field Survey (2018)

As shown in table 4.4, the highest number of stories were published in April, 2018 in both *Business Daily* (13) and *Nation* (19), with the lowest number published in November 2017 (2) and January 2018 (2), for both newspapers. In *Standard* Newspapers, the highest number of stories were published in July, 2017 (10), while the lowest number of stories were published in August and October, 2017 (2) stories.

Figure 4.3: Coverage during the year
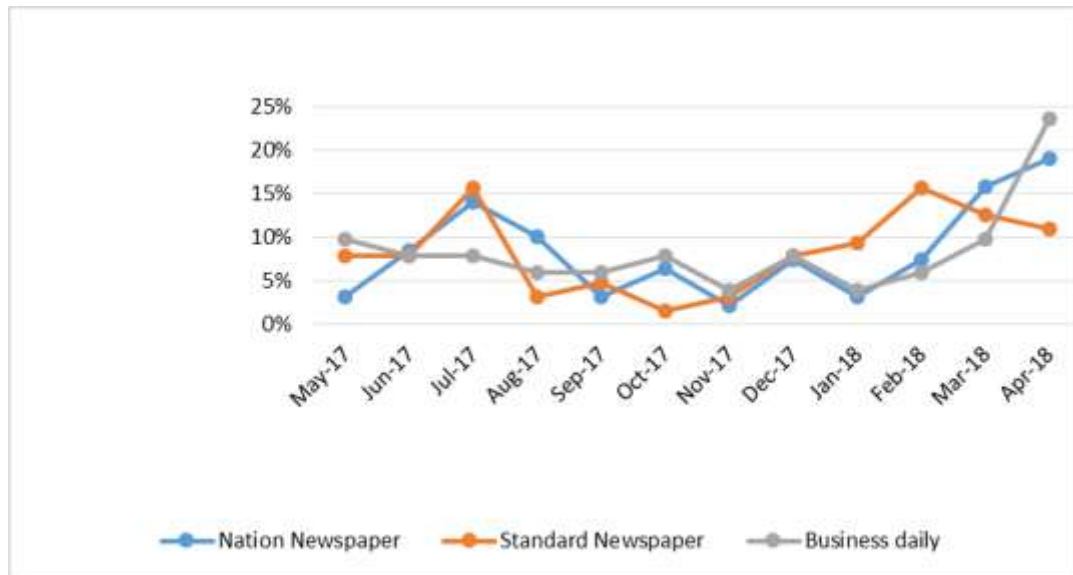
Source: Field Survey (2018)

As shown in Figure 4.3, April had the highest coverage representing 26% in *Business Daily*, and 20% in *Nation* newspapers. July had the highest coverage in *Standard*, (16%). The months that had the lowest coverage were October and November 2017 with 2% coverage. Figure 4.3 also reveals a rising trend in coverage in the months of June and July, 2017, which dropped gradually from August 2017- January 2018. The trend in coverage rose again in February 2018 to reach the peak in April 2018. The drop in coverage is explained by the prolonged electioneering period in 2017, where the general elections held in August 2017 were annulled by the courts. This necessitated another general election in October, 2017, thus the media focused more on political stories during these months.

Key informant 7 confirmed that low coverage in October 2017 was due to the prolonged electioneering period where media covered stories mainly on politics. On the other hand, coverage was high in April, 2018 in both *Business Daily* and *Nation* newspapers. Key informant 14 noted that increased reports of SACCOs releasing their financial results contributed to this.

Some SACCOs also launched new products, opened new branches and formed new partnerships in this period. Additionally some SACCOs were also placed under statutory management, arising from poor performance in their financials.

Further, key informant 12 attributed high coverage in 2018 to the law that requires SACCOs to submit their Audited Accounts reports by 30th April of every year. These reports are also ratified by members during AGMs. Election of board members and payment of dividends also takes place at this time and thus the informant noted there was a lot of news on the sector. The informant also attributed the increase in coverage in the month of July, 2017 to the International Day of Co-operatives or 'Ushirika Day'. The event is held to celebrate co-operatives globally and is covered extensively by the media.

Key informant 11 said the presence of National Assembly Bills about SACCOs published during the first few months of 2018 may have contributed to a rise in coverage. For instance the SACCO Societies (Amendment) Bill, 2018, was gazetted in January, the SACCO Societies Deposit Levy (Amendment) Order, 2018, was gazetted in February and the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill, 2018, was gazetted in April.

4.3 Prominence of stories

The second objective is to explore the prominence of stories published about SACCOs in *Nation*, *Business Daily* and *Standard* newspapers from May 1, 2017- April 30, 2018. To understand prominence and priming of stories, the researcher studied the placement of articles, type of stories and length of stories.

4.3.1 Type of stories

Newspapers publish information in various forms to educate the public. This study classified stories into news stories, features, op-eds, letters to the editors, sports and pictorials.

Table 4.5: Type of Stories

		Nation Newspaper		Standard Newspaper		Business Daily	
Type of story	Op-ed	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%
	Letters to editor	2	2%	2	3%	7	14%
	News story	69	73%	45	70%	39	76%
	Pictures	17	18%	16	25%	4	8%
	Features	5	5%	1	2%	1	2%
	Sports	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%

Source: Field Survey (2018)

Table 4.5 shows that most stories published were news articles, which are fact based articles answering the what, who, why, when, where and how of an incident. The fewest stories published were op-eds, features and sports. More details are shown in the graph below:

Figure 4.4: Type of stories
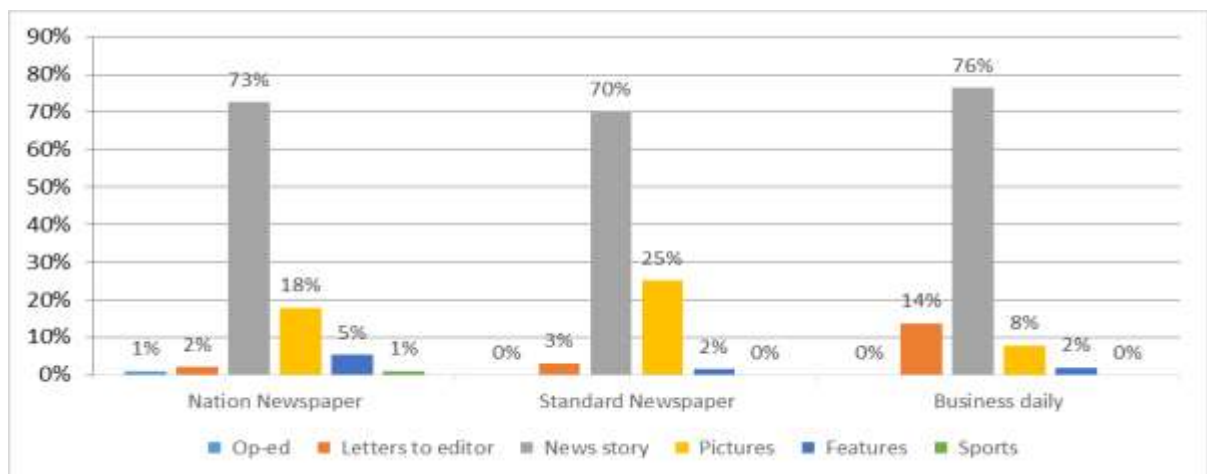
Source: Field Survey (2018).

Figure 4.4 shows that in *Nation*, 73% of stories published were news stories, in *Standard* newspapers 70% were news stories while 76% of news stories were published in *Business Daily*. Pictures were used in 18% of stories in *Nation*, 25% in *Standard* and 8% in *Business Daily*. The highest number of letters to the editor were published in *Business Daily* (14%). *Nation* newspapers recorded the highest number of feature stories representing only 5%, and only one story was published as an Op-Ed. The researcher did not find any editorial stories during the study period.

The findings showed that the coverage was mostly fact-based news stories at the expense of other important sections, namely editorials, op-eds and letters to the editor. An example of this is an article published by the *Business Daily* which lauded Unaitas SACCO for transforming *Chamas* into investment vehicles through loans disbursement of over Sh 2 billion, (Ngunjiri, 2017). The article did not explain how many *Chamas* were targeted, the location or how the *Chama* members would benefit from the funds. This perhaps points to a lack of depth and analysis in news stories about SACCOs.

The study found that *Nation* newspapers had the highest number of features, (5%). Features are more in-depth in nature and are allocated more space compared to news stories. Therefore, they play an important role in educating the public on issues. The fact that there were few features in the period reviewed confirms a trend of inadequate priming of SACCO issues. This was explained further by Key informant 2 who noted that the media could improve on coverage of SACCO news by giving the stories a human face. The informant preferred this approach compared to writing generally about the institution.

The study found one story written as an Op-Ed. Chemutai, (2014) found op-eds important because they are written by an expert in a field, who provides additional insight on a topic.

Further, the study found the highest number of Letters to the editor were published by *Business Daily,* (14%). Letters to the editor are also important because they show the views of the readers, (theopedproject.com). The study did not find any editorial in the period review. Editorials are important because they are persuasive articles written by a publication's editor, editorial board, or publisher that state a newspaper's stance on an issue, (uiltexas.org).

The minimal use of Op-eds and letters to the editors could mean the editor may have received these opinion pieces from readers and experts, but declined to publish them. This would be the case if based on his judgement, the articles submitted did not meet the criteria of news worthiness. The absence of editorial stories on SACCOs may be explained by the focus on politics by the media in 2017. However, it also means that the media did not do enough to express their views and position on SACCO issues.

The study found that pictures were used most in *Standard* newspapers (25%). The use of pictures in stories is important because they pull readers to take a closer look, thus priming the story. The use of few images and tables, as well as the absence of pie charts and graphs shows the journalists did not prime their stories adequately. Shaw and McCombs, (1980) say that pictures can be used to portray a person or product in an endearing manner; acceptable socially or morally. This influences the audience into being associated more with a person or product.

Bironzo et al., (2014) research on banking and financial news also shows inadequate priming of business stories. The study found that 88% of articles analysed were based on facts while only 12% were classified as opinion stories.

4.3.2 Length of articles

Griffin, (2012) says the prominence in a story is shown by length of stories and is important in showing the media's agenda on issues. The study classified the articles analysed to a

full page, three quarter of a page, a half page, a quarter page, an eighth of a page and less than an eighth of a page.

Table 4.6: Length of articles

		Nation Newspaper		Standard Newspaper		Business Daily	
Length	Full page	4	4%	1	2%	2	4%
	Three quarter page	5	5%	5	8%	4	8%
	Half page	8	8%	5	8%	5	10%
	Quarter page	8	8%	9	14%	13	25%
	One eighth page	20	21%	16	25%	21	41%
	Less than one eighth page	50	53%	28	44%	6	12%

Source: Field Survey (2018)

Table 4.6 shows that most articles in *Nation* and *Standard* newspaper were published on less than an eighth of a page. Articles that were published in *Business Daily* were mainly in an eighth of a page (41%) and in a quarter of a page (25%). It also had the highest number of stories published on half of a page (10%). This shows that *Business Daily* allocated more space to SACCO issues compared to the other newspapers. Thus, the editor primed SACCO stories more compared to the other newspapers. The findings are also illustrated in the bar graph in the following page:

Figure 4.5: Length of articles
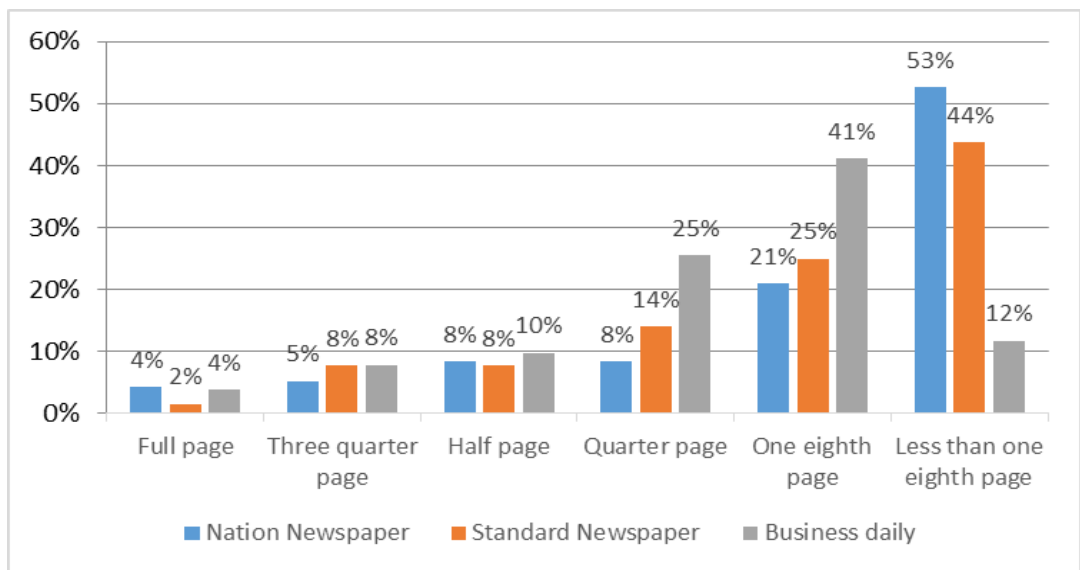
Source: Field Survey (2018)

These findings confirm a trend of inadequate priming of SACCO stories since longer stories were few yet they are considered to be more prominent than shorter ones. McDonogh, Gregg, and Wong, (2001), support this and say the length of a story communicates information about the prominence of a news item. This influences the importance that the audience places on a news item. Longer stories are deemed more important than shorter one.

Key informant 2 said that newspapers give priority to stories that are relevant and newsworthy. The informant added that parameters used to determine newsworthiness are impact on society, timeliness, prominence (if they concern a well-known individual), proximity (how easily familiar they are), bizarreness (weirdness) and conflict in the SACCO. Thus the longer a story, the more prominent it is and the more newsworthy it is considered to be.

4.3.3 Placement of articles

Placement is concerned with how various articles are positioned or arranged in the newspaper. This is important in space allocation to ensure they receive the right attention from the readers. This information is useful for editors in determining headlines to ensure maximum visibility of topical issues to readers.

**Table 4.7: Placement of articles**

		Nation Newspaper		Standard Newspaper		Business Daily	
Placement	Cover page- A section	2	2%	1	2%	8	16%
	Front page- A section	10	11%	7	11%	9	18%
	Opinion page- B section	5	5%	3	5%	6	12%
	Middle pages -C section	74	78%	53	83%	28	55%
	Back page- C section	4	4%	0	0%	0	0%

Source: Field Survey (2018)

Table 4.7 shows that across all the newspapers, most articles were placed on the middle pages or 'C' section, which is from page 20 onwards. *Business Daily* had the highest number of stories mentioned in the cover page (16%). *Business Daily* also had the highest number of stories published in the front pages (18%) and highest number of stories in the opinion pages (12%). This is despite having published the fewest stories on the sector. This is attributed to the business orientation of the newspaper which allocated more prominence to SACCO stories.

There were very few stories on the cover page of *Nation* and *Standard* newspapers (2%), and shows that these papers did not give prominence to SACCO issues. There were no stories placed on the back pages of *Business Daily* or *Standard* newspaper. Key Informant 3 noted that more prominence is given to stories with higher impact. An example is the amounts of money generated from revenues, and SACCOs were perceived to make less revenue compared to banks. Thus, SACCO stories could have received less prominence compared to banks. Further, Key Informant 5 noted that there was limited space for stories, since a story has to compete for space with other articles and advertisements. More details are shown in the graph below:

Figure 4.6: Placement of articles
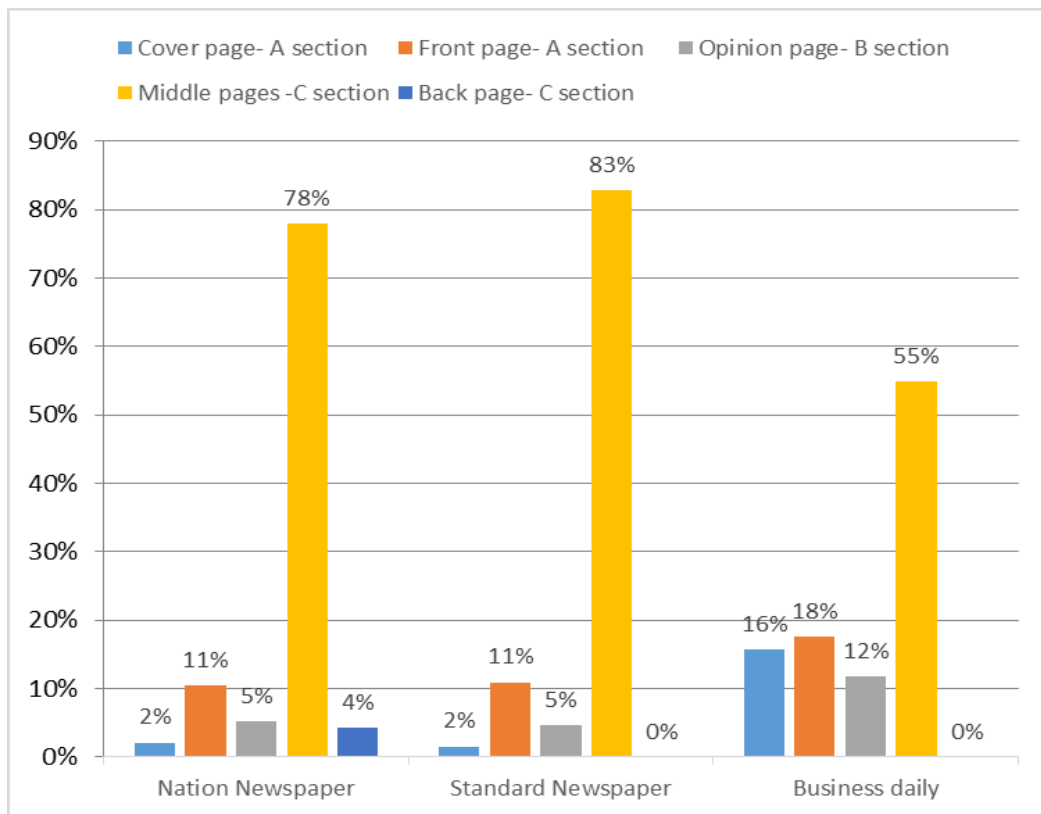
Source: Field Survey (2018)

These findings confirm that the newspapers did not prime the stories adequately by placing most articles in the middle sections of the newspaper. Omari, (2008) says that important

stories which are of high impact are usually placed on the front page or the back page, where they are most visible to the eye of the reader. Further, stories considered less significant are placed on the inside pages. This means majority of SACCO stories were not considered of high impact and were thus placed in the middle pages.

4.4 Key issues

The third objective is to examine the key issues about SACCOs published in *Nation*, *Business Daily* and *Standard* from May 1, 2017-April 30, 2018.

Table 4.8: Key issues

		Nation Newspaper		Standard Newspaper		Business Daily	
Key issues	Business and Finance	65	68%	34	53%	22	43%
	Politics	4	4%	4	6%	2	4%
	Governance and mismanagement	11	12%	13	20%	12	24%
	Women and youth	6	6%	3	5%	0	0%
	Regulation	9	10%	10	16%	15	29%

Source: Field Survey (2018)

Table 4.8 shows that the dominant issues brought out in SACCO stories are business and finance, politics, governance and women and youth. The findings of the study indicated that most stories laid emphasis on business issues more than politics, women and youth. Regulation issues were discussed predominantly in *Business Daily* more than in all other newspapers.

Figure 4.7: Key issues
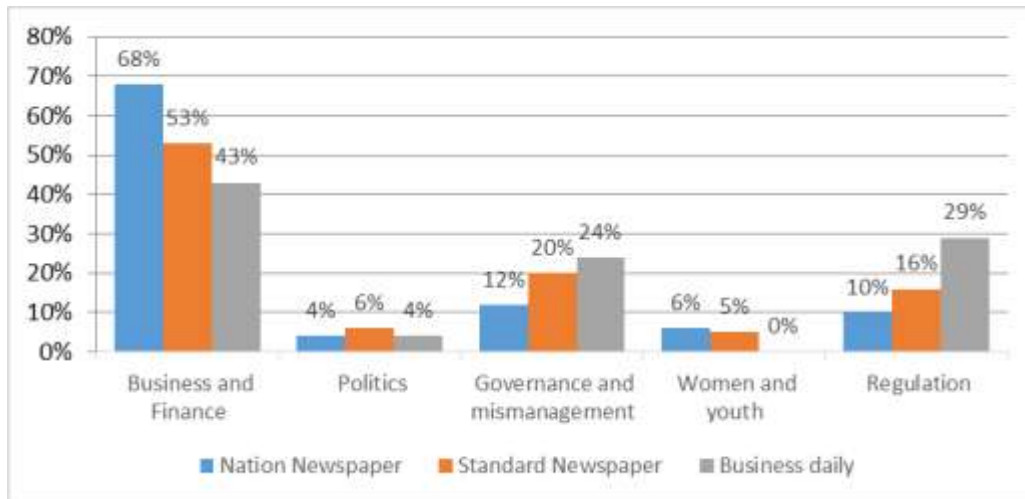
Source: Field Survey (2018)

Figure 4.7 shows that most stories were about business and finance issues. This represented 68% coverage in *Nation*, 53% in *Standard* and 43% in *Business Daily*. Regulation issues were discussed most in *Business Daily* (29%), 10% in *Nation* and 16% in *Standard* newspapers. Governance and mismanagement issues were discussed in *Nation* (12%), and 20% in *Standard* newspaper and 24% in *Business Daily*.

The findings show 4 key issues that affect SACCOs and were covered by the three newspapers in varying proportions. What was consistent is that the newspapers covered issues that formed the agenda in the SACCO sector. All these issues are confirmed by the Key Informants as important issues in the sector. Key informant 1 noted that legislative changes, wrangles in a SACCO and sham co-operatives which don't follow laws formed a key part of news. Informant 1 observed that;

> "Any impact on SACCOs, in terms of regulatory, policy, capital inadequacy, poor corporate governance, member apathy among others is felt strongly across the entire public that depends on the movement. A strong SACCO movement that caters well to the finance needs of its members is what influences and inspires journalists to know more about the sector and write about it," (Key informant 1).

The fact that most issues brought out were about business and finance was adequate since SACCOs are financial institutions. This findings agree with a study by Dalen et, al. (2014), which analysed five of the largest Danish newspapers. The study concluded that adequate business issues were brought out and thus the media fulfilled their watchdog role in the sector.

An example of an article discussing business and finance is further illustrated by a news story published on *Business Daily*. Below is an extract of the article:

> "Stima SACCO has announced a 14 per cent dividend and a 12 per cent interest rebates pay-out to its shareholders. The total pay-out for the two items will be Sh 1.98 billion in 2017 compared to Sh 1.6 billion in 2016," Nyamai F. (2018, April 6).

Articles discussing business and finance issues brought out dividends, interest, shareholders, investments, profit, money among others. Key informant 6 corroborates the importance of the business aspect noting that the criteria used in evaluating a story for publication includes the history of the SACCO, how much it is worth, number of members and the impact on other SACCOs or the ripple effect. For instance the media tend to publish stories of more prominent SACCOs compared to a little known financial co-operative in a remote part of the country.

4.4.1 Key issues and length of articles

Most articles discussing business and finance issues are less than one eighth of a page in length with 24% being one eighth of a page. Articles where political issues are discussed are mainly one eighth of a page and half a page. Articles on a full page, three quarters of a page and a quarter page are more likely to be about regulation. This means that the media considered articles about regulation more newsworthy and thus allocated more space to them. It shows the media primed stories about regulation more compared to stories on other issues.

Table 4.9: Key issues and length of articles

		Key issues				
		Business and Finance	Politics	Governance and mismanagement	Women and youth	Regulation
Length	Full page	3%	0%	3%	0%	7%
	Three quarter page	6%	5%	8%	0%	14%
	Half page	8%	30%	5%	8%	7%
	Quarter page	16%	10%	13%	0%	32%
	One eighth page	24%	35%	34%	31%	32%
	Less than one eighth page	43%	20%	37%	62%	7%

Source: Field Survey (2018)

Further, 5 stories about regulation were published in both *Business Daily* and *Nation* newspapers, on the same day. This means that the media considered the stories important and primed them by publishing them on both dailies. For instance an article published on both Daily *Nation* and *Business Daily* brings out regulation issues. Below is an excerpt of the article:

> "A total of 110 licensed deposit taking savings and credit co-operatives (SACCOs) operating in the country have not met the mandatory institutional and capital requirement, raising questions on their financial soundness, a new study shows," Brian, N. (2017, September 29).

The articles bring out aspect of regulation through words like licensed, mandatory institutional and capital requirements. Deposit-taking SACCOs are regulated by SASRA while non-deposit taking SACCOs are regulated through the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Co-operatives. A well-regulated sector will protect member deposits and creditors against losses resulting from business risks. Regulation therefore promotes public confidence, (Oseno, 2018).

Key informant 5 agrees that regulation is a key news item in the sector. The Informant says that regulatory changes and new laws being mooted lead to stories on the impact to stakeholders.

4.4.2 Key issues and placement of articles

Most articles are placed in the middle pages, with articles about business and finance as well as women and youth, mostly falling in this category compared to others. Articles bringing out politics and governance are more likely to appear in the cover pages. The findings show that most articles published on the cover and front pages brought out Governance and Mismanagement issues. This shows that stories about Governance and Mismanagement were considered more newsworthy and primed more than stories. Details are shown in the table below:

Table 4.10: Key issues and placement of articles

		Key Issues				
		Business and Finance	Politics	Governance and mismanagement	Women and youth	Regulation
Placement	Cover page- A section	4%	15%	11%	8%	4%
	Front page- A section	9%	15%	34%	0%	21%
	Opinion page- B section	9%	5%	0%	0%	4%
	Middle pages -C section	78%	55%	53%	85%	71%
	Back page- C section	1%	10%	3%	8%	0%

Source: Field Survey (2018)

An example of a story about Governance and mismanagement issues is one published in the *Standard* newspapers titled 'Investors 'agony' as SACCO in housing 'scam' deregistered.' The article said that a SACCO was at the center of a housing 'scandal'. Further, the article mentioned thousands of prospective home owners who would have 'lost millions' in the 'housing scam,' (Muthoni, 2018). In this article, we see issues of mismanagement of funds brought out through words like scam, agony, scandal and lost millions. Another article by published on *Business Daily* shows internal wrangles among board members in a leading SACCO. Below is an excerpt of the article:

> "Trouble is once again brewing at the giant Harambee SACCO where suspended members have accused directors of planning to block their participation in an upcoming board election to challenge the incumbent. Nine suspended delegates have moved to the Co-operative Tribunal seeking a reversal of the suspension, on grounds that it was meant to stop them from vying for elective posts at the AGM," Galgallo, F. (2018, April 4).

The article brings out internal conflict through words like trouble, suspended members, accused and Co-operative Tribunal. Key informant 13 noted that stories about bad governance, losses and fraud contributed to a perception in the minds of the public that SACCOs are corrupt and mismanaged. The informant noted that these stories overshadowed the successes of other SACCOs and all the good the sector had done.

Corporate governance is the process by which companies and SACCOs, are directed, controlled and held accountable to their shareholders or members. The SACCO Societies (Deposit –Taking Business) Regulation, 2010 were drafted to provide minimum operational regulations and prudential standards required of a deposit-taking SACCO, (Oseno, 2013). Unsafe and unsound practices in a SACCO may call for statutory management by the Regulatory Authority that will take immediate control of the financial co-operative. Further, the Regulations

place the responsibility of maintaining proper and accurate financial records to the board of directors, (Oseno, 2013). This shows that a SACCO relies on an internal governance system.

Oseno, (2018) says some of the issues related to poor governance include gross mismanagement of funds, theft of members' deposits, failure to hold elections, unauthorized co-operative investments and illegal payments to the board of directors.

Key informant 1 confirmed these findings noting challenges in accessing information. The informant said some SACCOs deliberately bar journalists from their emotive AGMs, to conceal wrong investments by their board members. The informant further cited litigation threats from the SACCOs for exposing scandals. Key informant 6 added that the media covered conflicts, issues related to money loss and controversies within SACCOs as this made big news. The informant also added that concern from members about the safety of their funds in a given SACCO prompted journalists to analyse the investment decisions being made.

On the contrary, Key informant 15 noted that there was little knowledge on co-operatives by reporters, who lacked training on how to report on co-operatives. The informant noted that the sector had many other issues of importance besides bad governance and fraud. The informant further said:

> "Financial news is sensitive and journalists need to be cautious when reporting about it, to avoid publishing untrue news about SACCOs and other financial institutions. Negative or alarming reports instill fear in people and contribute to loss of public trust in financial institutions. Therefore, journalists need to be cautious of the impact of reporting news on the sector," (Key informant 15).

This agrees with literature reviewed which found that in the financial sector, negative media coverage can lead to distrust in institutions and public fears over the safety of deposits and investments, (Bironzo et al., 2014).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Overview

In this study, the researcher sought to examine how print media cover SACCO issues in Kenya, from May 1, 2017-April 30, 2018. The study was guided by the objectives being to determine the frequency of SACCO news coverage in *Business Daily*, *Nation* and *Standard* newspapers. The study also explored prominence of SACCO stories through themes on type, length and placement of articles. The study also examined the key issues brought out in the SACCO stories. This section therefore contains a summary of the findings, conclusions drawn from the study and recommendations arising from the study.

5.1 Summary of findings

SACCOs are key drivers of the economy and have 7.8 million members and a share capital of Kshs 310.6 billion as at 2016, (Statistical Report, KNBS, 2017). The print media being a key communication channel has a responsibility to disseminate information to these millions of investors. However, the media is torn between publishing business news or disseminating controversial news about politics, entertainment and celebrity gossip, which attract readers and increase sales.

The study analysed 210 articles from three newspapers over a one year period to enable the researcher identify trends in coverage. The period was 11 months prior to April 30, 2018 when SACCOs are required by law to have their AGMs and present their audited accounts to their members. From the findings, there were 95 articles about SACCOs published in *Nation*, 64 in *Standard* newspapers and 51 in *Business Daily*. These findings showed little coverage of SACCO issues, as *Nation* newspaper published the most stories, representing only 26% coverage

over the one year period. However, part of the study period covered the general election period in 2017 when the media focused more on politics. This would explain the low coverage. On the contrary, Karesa, (2013) conducted a study on priming of banking issues in Kenya and found 905 articles over a six month period. This implies that the media consider banks more newsworthy than SACCOs.

The findings showed that trends in the coverage of SACCOs kept changing. There were more stories published in July, 2017 while low coverage was seen in August, October and November 2017. On the other hand, the highest coverage of SACCO stories was in February and April 2018 compared to other months. The higher coverage was attributed to more activities in the sector due to AGMs and other SACCO activities. Conversely, the low coverage was explained by the general elections held in 2017. Hence, the media covered more political stories during this time.

The findings showed that 73% of articles were written as news stories, and less than 1% appeared as an op-ed. Pictorials and features were few, with no story found to have been written as an editorial. Most articles across then newspapers were an eighth of a page and less than one eighth of a page. This showed inadequate priming of the articles and implied that stories were of lesser importance compared to political news stories, which were adequately primed. *Business Daily* had the highest percentage of articles taking up more than a quarter of a page (47%). This implies that SACCO stories were deemed more newsworthy in *Business Daily*, hence they were allocated more space, priming them more.

Most stories in the three newspapers were placed in the middle pages as opposed to the front pages, which are most visible to the readers. This means that the media did not prioritise SACCO issues. The *Standard* was the only newspaper that published a story on the cover page,

or the 'A' section as the main headline news. The *Nation* had only 4 stories published on the back page, or 'C' section which is also a prime page. *Business Daily* had the highest percentage of articles placed in the front and cover pages (34%) compared to other newspapers. This shows that SACCO stories were considered important enough to occupy the prime pages of the newspaper. However, most of these stories on these pages were one eighth of a page and less than one eighth of a page.

The findings agree with literature reviewed showing that coverage of business news was not given much priority compared to political news. For instance, a study on priming of banking issues in Kenya showed that no story from banks was published as a front page story, (Karesa, 2013). Another study done by Pew Research Centre, (2008) confirms inadequate media coverage of the economic crisis experienced when Barrack Obama was president.

On the other hand, the researcher noted that issues regarding SACCOs were brought out well. The key issue which was discussed in most articles was on business and finance, representing 59% coverage. However, Regulation as well as Governance and Mismanagement issues were also prevalent.

5.2 Conclusions

First, the study established that the media do not prioritise SACCO issues. Most stories analysed were less than an eighth in length (53%) and longer stories, which are considered to be more important were few. Further, there were few stories on the cover pages, (7%) and 4% articles on the back page. This shows that the media did not give prominence to SACCO issues. Important stories of high impact are usually placed on the front page or the back page, due to better visibility. Further, stories considered less significant are placed on the inside pages. This means majority of SACCO stories were not considered of high impact and were thus placed in

the middle pages. Griffin, (2012), says the media's agenda is the pattern of news coverage across print and broadcast media as measured by the prominence and length of stories, or priming. Inadequate priming of stories showed that the media did not do enough to put SACCOs on their agenda.

Second, the study found that the media did not utilise analytical stories. The findings showed that the coverage was mostly fact-based news stories at the expense of more detailed and analytical stories. The researcher read the articles and found that the stories could have been more in-depth. For instance an article published on an eighth of a page by the *Business Daily*. The article lauded Unaitas SACCO for transforming *Chamas* into investment vehicles through loans disbursement of over Sh 2 billion, (Ngunjiri, 2017). However, the article did not explain how many *Chamas* were targeted, the location, or the expected impact of the funds to the *Chama* members. This perhaps points to a lack of depth and analysis in articles about SACCOs.

Third, the study found that few articles about SACCOs were published, as only 210 articles were found during the one year period. *Nation* newspapers had the highest coverage and published 95 stories while *Business Daily* published 51 stories, which was the lowest. From these results, it would seem that SACCOs received inadequate coverage. However, it is important to note that Kenya held its general elections in 2017 and many media houses largely covered politics, hence the low coverage of SACCOs. Thus it would seem that many Kenyans did not access information about SACCOs through print media during this period.

Fourth, the findings showed that coverage of SACCO issues was mainly based on activities happening in the sector. For instance the presence of AGMs and release of regulatory reports. This showed that the media focused more on reporting news arising from an activity or event, rather than educating the public. However, more balanced reporting would have been

achieved with the use of features and opinion pieces. These articles do not need to report on an event, but could have focused on human interest aspects, as espoused by Key Informant 2. Features are more in-depth in nature and are allocated more space compared to news stories. Therefore, they play an important role in educating the public on issues. The fact that there were few features in the period reviewed confirms a trend of inadequate priming of SACCO issues.

Fifth, the media gave more prominence to negatively perceived issues. The findings show four key issues that affect SACCOs were covered by the three newspapers in varying proportions. These are business and finance, Governance, politics and women and youth. However, the issues were primed differently. In this regard, the findings showed that stories on governance and mismanagement, as well as regulation, were primed more, by giving them more prominence. Regulation stories were longer while governance and mismanagement stories were placed mostly on prime pages.

The findings showed that giving more prominence to governance and mismanagement issues could have contributed to negative attitudes and stereotypes about SACCOs by the public. Further, the reports could have instilled fear and contributed to loss of public trust in SACCOs. As discussed in chapter two, the agenda setting and priming function of the media is key in forming public opinion. Shaw and McCombs, (1980) say that priming assumes that the audience will form their attitudes about an issue based on the most accessible news. Therefore, by making certain news about SACCOs more available or prominent to the mind of the audience, the media shaped the news consumed. The media thus decide what is newsworthy and how the stories will be reported. This has contributed to what the public is thinking about, concerning SACCOs. Therefore, the study concludes that media coverage of SACCO issues was inadequate.

5.3 Recommendations

Dalen et, al. (2014), say the role of media is to act autonomously in the general public's interest, rather than that of the society's dominant groups. Thus the media play a key role in informing public debate to enable people make informed choices. The media is therefore an integral player in spreading accurate, comprehensive and balanced news about the SACCO sector.

5.3.1 Specific recommendations

From the research done and analysis of data thereof, the researcher recommends that print media improve on coverage of SACCO issues. This can be done by increasing prominence given to SACCO stories and publishing more stories about the sector. Further, SACCO leaders should be trained on the importance of providing information to the media. This will assist them write accurate, credible and detailed stories.

The Co-operative University of Kenya and KUSCCO should develop a curriculum to train SACCO leaders on which information makes news and the need for transparency. SACCO managers should be taught how to pitch stories in line with factors editors use in determining newsworthiness of articles. These are the impact on society, timeliness, prominence (if they concern a well-known individual), proximity (how easily familiar they are), bizarreness (weirdness) and conflict. SACCOs should provide more information to the media and play in the financial space rather than shy away from publicity.

Additionally, to increase the number of stories published about SACCOs, there is need to employ adequate communications personnel in the sector. These employees should act as a contact person with whom the media can liaise with and get information about the SACCO. The employees should also develop a communications strategy for implementation by the SACCO

managers. The strategy will guide SACCOs on how to communicate with the media more proactively. Further, the strategy should take into account electronic, print and the online media.

The SACCO apex body, KUSCCO should also have a communication strategy for the entire sector. The organisation should call for a SACCO leaders' forum and invite the media to discuss ways of improving communication within the sector. The findings of the leaders' forum should guide the content of the communications strategy. Additionally, the sector should benchmark with SACCOs from other countries which have implemented a communications strategy. KUSCCO should send a delegation of SACCO leaders on a learning excursion abroad with a view of implementing the knowledge gained in local SACCOs.

The findings found that most stories given prominence were about governance and mismanagement of funds. Therefore, it would be important to also train journalists about the co-operative sector to improve their knowledge and expose them to more positive stories in the sector. SACCO managers should invite reporters to meetings and trainings to build their capacity. The trained journalists will be reporting about SACCOs, both positive and negative stories. In this regard, this study recommends a 'co-operative beat' in the media to report about the sector, for more specialised reporting.

Since the media have a responsibility to educate the public on key issues, they should set aside adequate funds to enable them do in-depth, analytical stories. The findings revealed that most articles were short, fact-based articles and thus analytical stories were missing.

SACCO managers should ensure their financial accounts are well managed and that they adhere to set regulations. Managers should be transparent and present accurate figures to minimize negative stories from the media, due to mischief detected in their financials.

Where space is not a factor as in the case with online publications, SACCOs should adapt digital communication to reach younger audiences through messaging and products. This will complement the coverage obtained through print media.

5.3.2 Recommendations for further studies

The study recommends further research be done on how other newspapers with a national readership cover SACCOs. These include The Star and People Daily, which could have covered other stories on SACCOs, which the newspapers analysed in this study could have left out, due to space constraints.

The study recommends that further research be done on how radio and TV stations including vernacular stations cover SACCOs. This is because the findings indicated that SACCOs have a huge public interest in both rural and urban parts of the country. Radio and TV stations are another effective way of reaching the mass audience with messages.

The study recommends further research be done to analyse the tone of SACCO stories to bring out issues of positive, negative and neutral stories. This will further help the media and the sector understand in a deeper way how SACCOs are portrayed.

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APPENDIX I: CODING SHEET

Unit of analysis: Newspaper articles

Themes and Categories

Data entry date	Name of newspaper	Day of the week	Title of story	Type of Story	Length of story	Placement of story	Key issues

Coding Guide

Coder 1

Coder 2

Name of Newspaper

> 01 Nation newspapers
>
> 02 Standard newspapers
>
> 03 Business Daily

Day of the week

> 01 Monday
>
> 02 Tuesday
>
> 03 Wednesday
>
> 04 Thursday
>
> 05 Friday

06 Saturday

07 Sunday

Type of Story

01 Op-ed

02 Letters to editor

03 News story

04 Pictorial

05 Feature

06 Sports

Placement of story

01 Cover page-A section

02 Front page- A section

03 Opinion pages-B section

04 Middle pages-C section

05 Back page-C section

Length of articles

01 Full page

02 Three quarter page

03   Half page

04 Quarter page

05 One eighth page

06 Less than an eighth of a page

Key issues

01 Business and Finance

02 Politics

03 Governance and mismanagement

04 Women and youth

05 Regulation

APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Questions for Editors-*Nation* Newspapers

1. Name

2. Years as an editor

3. From my findings, *Nation* newspapers published the highest number of stories from May 2017-April 2018. What is your comment about this?

4. The highest number of stories were published in April 2018 in *Business Daily* and *Nation*. The lowest number was published in August and November 2017. What could have contributed to this trend?

5. The highest number of stories was published on Monday in *Nation* newspapers and Thursday, in *Business Daily*. What is the reason behind this?

6. What factors and issues do you consider when evaluating a story on SACCOs for publication?

7. In terms of newsworthiness, where would you place SACCO news?

8. What challenges do you encounter when promoting stories about SACCOs?

9. How can the media improve on financial reporting, especially on SACCOs?

Questions for editors-*Standard* newspapers

1. Name

2. Number of years as an editor

3. The highest number of stories were published in July, 2017 in *Standard* newspapers. The lowest number was published in August and October 2017. What could have contributed to this trend?

4. The highest number of stories was published on Monday in *Standard* newspaper. What is the reason behind this?

5. What factors and key issues do you consider when evaluating a story on SACCOs for publishing?

6. In terms of newsworthiness, where would you place SACCO news?

7. What challenges do you encounter when editing stories about SACCOs?

8. How can the media improve on financial reporting, especially on SACCOs?

Questions for writers

1. Name

2. Years as a writer

3. What influences the kind of stories you write in the newspapers about SACCOs?

4. What challenges do you face as a reporter when writing news about SACCOs?

5. How can the media improve on coverage of SACCO news?

Questions for Communication experts

1. Name

2. Number of years working in communication in the sector

3. In your opinion, what are the short comings of print media coverage of SACCOs?

4. How often do you send information to the media for publishing?

5. What challenges have you encountered when interacting with the media?

6. What do you recommend the sector can do to maintain a better relationship with the media and obtain more coverage?

APPENDIX III: FIELD WORK CERTIFICATE

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REF: CERTIFICATE OF FIELDWORK

This is to certify that all corrections proposed at the Board of Examiners meeting held on _29/6/2018_ in respect of M.A/PhD. Project/Thesis Proposal defence have been effected to my/our satisfaction and the project can be allowed to proceed for fieldwork.

Reg. No: _KSO/70157/2013_

Name: _Linda Karimi_

Title: _Print media coverage of Savings and Credit co-operative societies issues in Kenya._

Dr. Julius Bosire
SUPERVISOR 　　　　SIGNATURE 　　　　_Sep. 3, 2018_
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DIRECTOR 　　　SIGNATURE/STAMP 　　_17.9.18_
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UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
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SEP 2018
SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM & MASS COMMUNICATION

APPENDIX IV: CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTIONS

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This is to certify that all corrections proposed at the Board of Examiners meeting held on 2/11/2018 in respect of M.A/PhD. Project/Thesis defence have been effected to my/our satisfaction and the project/thesis can be allowed to proceed for binding.

Reg. No: K50/70157/2018

Name: Linda Kanini

Title: Print media Coverage of Savings and Credit Co-operative Societies issues in Kenya

DR JULIUS BOSIRE
SUPERVISOR | SIGNATURE | DATE 14/12/2018

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14 DEC 2018
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APPENDIX V: ORIGINALITY REPORT

Dr Julius Bosire