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This study’s main objective was to comparatively analyze how two leading newspapers in Kenya prime banking news. The specific questions that this study sought to answer were: to establish the key banking issues themes and how they are disseminated to the public through print media; who the key voices and agenda-setters are and how were they primed over time; how are banking issues presented and the geographic diffusion pattern of the media coverage of the banking news. The study reviewed the Priming Theory and the Agenda setting theory.

The research design involved content analysis of the literature with a bias towards the following themes: number of articles; size in cm², type of the story, placement, prominence and the main subject that stories are published mostly. Data collection involved conducting interviews with the media professionals, banking sector employees and desk review of newspapers. One major limitation is the fact that the research was based on information provided to a certain portion of the overall Kenyan demographic, and thus the recommendations could be most valid and useful for a similar portion of the Kenyan demographic.

Notably, the study evidence suggests the media were more amicable to the vested interests of the political class than the banking sector news. This was confirmed by the fact that during the entire 6-month study period, no banking related news item appeared in A’s section of the two newspapers. Interestingly, majority of the articles containing the words — banking news | and/or — financial news | appeared in the D section of newspapers. This should be a matter of concern, not just for banks but also editors and media owners. Very often, print media articles mentioned peer or rival banks in the same sentence hence the need for banking institutions to work together. More so, the findings divulge that the media attention relating to banking news is increasing over time and recommends that banks should establish personal relationships with a small cadre of print media professionals. In terms of geographically focus, banks should invest in national campaigns and or news.

In a nutshell, the print media is a powerful tool that has been and can continue to be used to effect business change. Banking industry news is important and salient business issue of the present time. While banking institutions already actively attempt to use the print media in order to sensitize people about the industry and market their products, there are ways in which they can improve their media communications strategies through priming.