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## A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PRINT MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE INUA JAMII CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMME TO VULNERABLE GROUPS IN KENYA BEFORE AND DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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### ABSTRACT

This study set out to investigate how print media covered the Inua Jamii cash transfer programme before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. The specific objectives were: to find out the extent to which the Inua Jamii cash transfer programme was covered before and during the COVID-19 period, to analyse the themes emerging from print media coverage of the Inua Jamii cash transfer programme in Kenya and to investigate the public perceptions of the Inua Jamii cash transfer programme based on print media reporting. It is anchored on the agenda setting, priming and framing theories. The study used a descriptive design and qualitative research approach. Purposive sampling was used to draw a sample of 28 newspaper issues that had relevant articles on the programme drawn from a sample population of five daily newspapers in Kenya. The research method used was content analysis and the data collection tool was a coding sheet. The study found out that there was a significant increase in coverage of the Inua Jamii cash transfer programme during the pandemic. The themes drawn from the reviewed articles were: mismanagement, efficiency, corruption, non-commitment, challenges, reforms, shortage and expansion. The public perceptions drawn from the study were: efficiency, corruption, insecurity, protection and government stipend not enough. The study recommends that the government and media put more effort in creating awareness of the Hunger Safety Net Programme. Additionally, the government needs to address the issue of mismanagement of the programme and lastly the media needs to put more effort in capturing the public's opinions on social protection programmes in the country.

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## INTRODUCTION

Cash transfer programmes are common instruments used by governments and institutions to economically empower vulnerable groups in society. They are seen as part of wider social protection programmes from governments to their citizens. As noted by Ouma&Adésinà (2018), "cash transfers, as public social assistance, constitute forms of social protection policies in which the state and/or other agencies make direct, regular and predictable payments to households or individuals to address short- and long-term vulnerabilities to cushion households from shocks, and prevent further deprivation and poverty". Ngelu (2017) notes that cash transfer programmes are on the rise in developing countries. This is collaborated by Ouma&Adésinà (2018) who point out (ibid) there are 40 African Nations providing some sort of cash transfers to their citizens, an upward from 21 in 2010 as reported by world bank in 2015. Social protection (usually to the vulnerable groups in society) emerged in the early 1900s in Western Europe according to (Andersen,2018). Anderson further notes that social protection was advanced to include different types of social services from the 1940s. There has been exponential growth since then. Enli, Syvertsen&Mjøs (2018) see social protection as a key objective of a welfare state. Lindbeck,(2006) defines a welfare state as that whose government makes arrangements for cash benefits to households and also provides subsidised human services. While Lindbeck argues that this is a narrow definition of a welfare state, it is worth noting that it

encompasses most social protection programmes that Andersen (2018) talks about, "...the welfare state modifies the impact of the market, by providing some sort of minimum guarantee (mitigating poverty); covering a range of social risks (security), and providing certain services (health care, child and elder care, etc.) – at the best standards available." From the above definition and explanation about welfare states, it is clear that there are different approaches to the provision of welfare in different states. Devereux & White (2010) point out that social protection in Africa has increasingly become institutionalized in order to cushion the poor and most vulnerable in society. They further point out that even though this is majorly an initiative from development and aid organizations in the continent, it has picked up nevertheless. Social protection in Kenya takes different forms. According to the Kenya Social Protection Sector Review, 2017 there are two types of social protection schemes in Kenya. The ones funded from the government revenue such as Cash Transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (CT-OVC), Older Persons Cash Transfer Programme (OPCT), Cash Transfer for Persons with Severe Disabilities (PWSD-CT), Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP), Urban Food Subsidy Programme (UFS-CT), World Food Programme Asset Creation Programmes, World Food Programme General Food Distribution. The other types are contributory such as the National Social Security Fund (NHIF), National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) and Mbao Pension Scheme. While all the above protection schemes target different groups in the society, this study sought to investigate the Inua Jamii programme that has been a pilot programme for cash transfers since 2004. The Inua Jamii programme is a local name for National Safety Net Programme (NSNP) that

covers: Older Persons Cash Transfer (OPCT), Cash Transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (CT-OVC), Persons with Severe Disabilities Cash Transfer Program (PWSD-CT) and Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP). The National Safety Net Programme (NSNP) was founded in 2013 to establish a common framework for the four programmes (Government of Kenya, 2016). Ouma&Adésinà (2018) note that the government began NSNP with the aim of increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of safety support to poor and vulnerable populations in Kenya. According to Ngelu, (ibid) OVC is the biggest of all cash transfer programs currently in Kenya. It was launched in 2004 with an aim of improving the abilities of households with orphans and vulnerable children under their care. Ng'ong'a (2019) adds that the OVC was also a government's initiative in addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic effects in Kenya at the time. Ngelu (2017) further notes that the OPCT was launched in 2006 and was allocated KSh. 4 Million. Since then, the government has continually funded the program while increasing its allocation.

The PWSD-CT programme was launched in 2011 to support households living in poverty with persons with severe disabilities requiring 24-hour support from a caregiver as members (Kenya Social Protection Sector Review, 2017). Mukasa (2019) opines that funds distributed to PWSD for entrepreneurial activities may not be useful in cases where beneficiaries have severe disabilities. Also, caregivers of such persons may lack the economic ability to care for PWSD hence the need for the government to provide funds for sustaining PWSD. HSNP was piloted in 2008 with funding from Department For International Development (DFID) and Australian Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). The programme targeted vulnerable households in Turkana, Mandera, Wajir and Marsabit counties due to the arid conditions of the four counties (Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, 2020). In an effort to understand the role of communication in development specifically in welfare states, Andersen (2018) notes that the media is a crucial part of the welfare state since it is not only a member of the society but also an important avenue through which social protection policies are debated and information shared to the citizens. Enli, Syvertsen&Mjøs (2018) relate media and the welfare state by pointing out that "while it may not be easy to highlight media effects on the welfare state, media structures and institutional ideologies help understand how issues are framed and what is considered free and fair." There is therefore an already existing relationship between the media and the welfare state that cannot be underestimated.

Communication is critical in development hence the reason why focus of media coverage of social issues in a state is deemed very important. This further highlights the importance of development communication that is geared towards advocating for transformation for the benefit of the masses in society. Nora C. Quebral defined Development Communication as the art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country and the mass of its people from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth that makes possible greater social equality and the larger fulfillment of the human potential" The media therefore is no longer constrained to its traditional functions such as agenda setting and information sharing, but is now responsible for also framing issues in a way that the masses understand the role of the government and utilise media to articulate issues that need to be addressed. In recognition that the media is critical in building support for its social protection programmes, the Government of Kenya through the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection has undertaken several measures to maintain presence in the media. Some of the ways include organising the national conference on social protection in 2015 and training of Members of Parliament in 2016. Additionally, the Ministry [of Labour and Social Protection] has embarked on creating a communication strategy for the Social Protection Secretariat. (Kenya Social Protection Sector Review, 2017).

**Problem statement:** In her study on the *Influence of cash transfer program on socio-economic status of beneficiaries in Kenya*, Syanda (2017) also noted that cash transfer programs need more sensitization in the communities to enable community members understand who

qualifies for the program and to prevent jealousy among non-recipients. McKay et al (2020) found out that Inua Jamii beneficiaries were not aware that the bank accounts they opened for the Inua Jamii cash transfer programme could be used as savings accounts. They further noted that the recipients did not know that they could link their bank accounts to *Mpesa* services that are more accessible to them. McKay et al, 2020 recommended that it is critical for the government and stakeholders to help beneficiaries understand the benefits of owning bank accounts and the functionalities of those accounts. The foregoing clearly points to the fact that beneficiaries are not adequately reached by sensitization and public mobilization campaigns that can help them know the components and benefits of the Inua Jamii programmes. Given the role of the media in public sensitisation, it would be expected that they will be utilised to mount awareness messages to beneficiaries. Mainstream media are especially valued for its credibility and ability to inform. With this understanding of the role of the media in society, it is therefore important to deeply investigate how Inua Jamii issues are covered by the media in a bid to find out if the media are adequately or inadequately utilised to boost awareness about Inua Jamii. This study therefore sought to investigate how the media covered the Inua Jamii cash transfer programmes before and during the COVID-19 pandemic in a bid to find out whether the lack of awareness about the programmes resulted in failure to utilise mainstream media.

### Research objectives

1. To find out the extent to which Inua Jamii cash transfer programmes were covered before and during the COVID-19 period.
2. To analyse the themes emerging from the print media coverage on the cash transfer programmes in Kenya.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Social protection (usually to the vulnerable groups in society) emerged in the early 1900s in Western Europe according to (Andersen,2018). Anderson further notes that social protection was advanced to include different types of social services from the 1940s. There has been exponential growth since then. Enli, Syvertsen&Mjøs (2018) see social protection as a key objective of a welfare state. Lindbeck,(2006) defines a welfare state as that whose government makes arrangements for cash benefits to households and also provides subsidised human services. While Lindbeck argues that this is a narrow definition of a welfare state, it is worth noting that it encompasses most social protection programmes that Andersen (2018) talks about, "...the welfare state modifies the impact of the market, by providing some sort of minimum guarantee (mitigating poverty); covering a range of social risks (security), and providing certain services (health care, child and elder care, etc.) – at the best standards available."

From the above definition and explanation about welfare states, it is clear that there are different approaches to the provision of welfare in different states. Devereux & White (2010) point out that social protection in Africa has increasingly become institutionalized in order to cushion the poor and most vulnerable in society. They further point out that even though this is majorly an initiative from development and aid organizations in the continent, it has picked up nevertheless. They continue to point out that the driving forces behind social protection growth is a cost versus benefit measurement, political reasons and concern for people's rights. Devereux & White, 2010 also note that the growing trend of democratization in the continent has allowed governments to be keen on provision of citizen rights influencing social protection programmes positively. (Holmes & Lwanga-Ntale, 2012) point out that "The main social protection instruments implemented in African countries tend to align with the needs of particular vulnerable groups. On the one hand, social assistance and welfare forms of social protection for people who are labour-constrained (such as people with disabilities, orphans without support, victims of civil conflict and/or natural disasters, and those

who are not eligible for insurance schemes) tend to be unconditional income or food transfers... On the other hand, labour-market programmes which target wage or non-wage employees in the formal and informal sectors, as well as those who are under-employed or unemployed are also increasingly prevalent”

Social protection in Africa has seen tremendous growth over the past few decades. Ochieng’Opalo (2020) put it into more context by stating that:

“In 1990 less than 15 countries had any social safety net programs. But by 2016 the number had increased to 46.2 Coverage varied from 0.3 percent of the population in Guinea-Bissau to 64.4 percent in South Africa – with cash transfer programs being the most widespread form of social protection and accounting for 41 percent (and growing) of total spending on social safety nets (Beegle, Coudouel and Monsalve, 2018, p. 7). As of 2017, 46 countries had such programs, compared to 33 with workfare programs, and 28 with feeding programs.”

This is collaborated by Ouma&Adésinà (2018) who point out (ibid) there are 40 African Nations providing some sort of cash transfers to their citizens, an upward from 21 in 2010 as reported by world bank in 2015. Such upward projection is appreciated as more and more countries develop plans to cushion their most vulnerable. However, there are pertinent issues that have been pointed out pertaining to the advancement of social protection in Africa. One of the most concerning issues is the over reliance on donor funding. Ochieng’Opalo (2020) [ibid] notes that “out of 87 programs across 24 countries in 2017, donor funding averaged 85.7 percent.” Ouma&Adésinà (2018) not only point at donor funding as an issue but also the implementation of social protection programs by non-state actors such as NGOs and international organisations. Overdependence on external funding and running of such programs by external factors pose high risks to the recipient governments. Donors and implementing agencies are sometimes ignorant of the political and social status of the countries they are involved with. In other areas, they create a culture of overdependence on outsiders. Robert Chambers, one of the leading scholars of participatory development, pointed out that outsiders do not always understand what it means to be poor due to failure to appreciate the contribution of the people they want to help. It is imperative to note that some development partners only work with state agencies in an effort to address social issues facing the vulnerable in society while oblivious of what is really a priority to the recipients of the services.

**Social Protection in Kenya:** Ouma, 2017 traces the history of exponential growth of social protection in Kenya to the NARC government of 2003, usually referred to as the Kibaki era. When the government came to power, there was rejuvenated hope in the citizenry that their government would improve the living standards of everyone including the vulnerable. The political environment during Kibaki’s era also gave confidence to development partners such as UNICEF, World Bank and DFID to enter the development sector to supplement the government’s effort in development. This saw UNICEF begin the OVC programme in 2004. Since then, there has been tremendous improvements in the programme, development of many others and generally an improved social wellbeing of vulnerable Kenyans. As mentioned in the background, social protection in Kenya takes different forms. Kabare, (2015) groups social protection in Kenya into three: social assistance, health insurance and social security. Social security falls under National Social Security Fund (NSSF) while health insurance falls under National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF). These two fall under the contributory schemes earlier highlighted in the background. Social assistance targets the vulnerable groups in the society who for one reason or another are unable to provide for themselves. It mostly refers to aid; financial or material (Kabare 2015). Kenya Social Protection Sector Review, 2017 lists the ongoing national cash transfer programme as: Cash Transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (CT-OVC), Older Persons Cash Transfer Programme (OPCT), Cash Transfer for Persons with Severe Disabilities (PwSD-

CT), Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP), Urban Food Subsidy Programme (UFS-CT), World Food Programme Asset Creation Programmes and World Food Programme General Food Distribution. All the above are funded by the Kenyan government in conjunction with other partners such as the World Bank, the Department for International Development (DFID), and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) (Kabare, 2015). While the above programmes have been formalised and improved through the years, it has taken a long process, heavy financial investment from both the government and partners and also has had its challenges.

**Growth of Cash transfers programmes in Kenya:** The Inua Jamii programme is a local name for National Safety Net Programme (NSNP) that covers: Older Persons Cash Transfer (OPCT), Cash Transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (CT-OVC), Persons with Severe Disabilities Cash Transfer Program (PwSD-CT) and Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP). The National Safety Net Programme was founded in 2013 to establish a common framework for the four programmes. (Government of Kenya, 2016). Ouma&Adésinà (2018) note that the government began NSNP with the aim of increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of safety support to poor and vulnerable populations in Kenya. According to Ngelu, (ibid) OVC is the biggest of all cash transfer programs currently in Kenya. It was launched in 2004 with an aim of improving the abilities of households with orphans and vulnerable children under their care. Ng’ong’a (2019) adds that the OVC was also a government’s initiative in addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic effects in Kenya at the time. Ngelu (2017) further notes that the OPCT was launched in 2006 and was allocated KSh. 4 Million. Since then, the government has continually funded the program while increasing its allocation. The PwSD-CT programme is a national programme launched in 2011 to support households living in poverty with persons with severe disabilities requiring 24-hour support from a caregiver as members (Kenya Social Protection Sector Review, 2017). Mukasa (2019) opines that funds distributed to PwSD for entrepreneurial activities may not be useful in cases where beneficiaries have severe disabilities. Also, caregivers of such persons may lack the economic ability to care for PwSD hence the need for the government to provide funds for sustaining PwSD. HSNP was piloted in 2008 with funding from Department For International Development (DFID) & Australian Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). The programme targeted vulnerable households in Turkana, Mandera, Wajir and Marsabit counties due to the arid conditions of the four counties. (Ministry of Labour and Social protection).

**Media and Social Protection:** Media remains a key player in society. From its traditional functions of informing, entertaining, watchdog functions, educating, agenda setting among others to the more recent functions such as framing and priming, media is seen as a major actor in our societies. It is therefore imperative that we understand the existing relationship between media and social protection, as part of the media’s role in development. Understanding the media’s relationship with social protection has to begin with the evolution of the media’s role and place in society. This takes us to the four theories of the press that were first introduced by Theodore Peterson, Frederick S. Siebert, and Wilbur Schramm in 1956. Authoritarian theory of the press explains the relationship between the media and government where the press is under control by the state. This means that the state has control over media functions and by doing so limits the power of the press. The theory applies to many governments before the 19th century such as European governments and also applies to some current regimes for instance, we have a number of countries especially in Africa, where press freedom is only limited to government propaganda. Authoritarianism stemmed from the understanding that the state is the organized system of regulation and control. The libertarian theory of press opposes the authoritarian theory and explains that the society can decipher good from bad and should be fed with all types of information for them to choose without any restriction from the government or even the press itself. This means that the press should have freedom to inform the public on what’s going on around them without any form of censorship. For the

information consumers who are the public, they have the right to seek information and express themselves freely in the media. While this theory may seem impossible to apply in modern societies where governments are keen to regulate what their citizens are consuming from the media, alternative media such as websites, social media channels such as instagram and blogs have taken over the role of the mainstream media in producing uncensored content. An example of this is a website known as Wiki leaks that has been known to publish top secrets of the United States government. The limits of the libertarian theory are evident when information meant for harm is distributed to the public in the name of press freedom and the rights of people hence some critics argue that media should have some form of censorship. The third theory of the press is the Soviet Media Theory that is not very different from the authoritarian theory. The theory explains that governments need absolute control of the media but only for the benefit of the people. The belief is that most beneficiaries of this type of the media would be the working class who need the government to inform, educate and entertain them through the media while still having some form of freedom to offer feedback. This type of media was common in communist countries. The last theory of the press is the social responsibility theory. It is more applicable to this study as it mainly focuses on media responsibility in society. The theory holds that the media have a social obligation to provide the society with accurate, objective and relevant information. Additionally, the media have a responsibility of enlightening the public in promotion of self governance and lastly the media is tasked with safeguarding people’s rights. With the above expectation for the media to promote self governance, there underlies its obligation to report on issues concerning the public including but not limited to government obligation to its citizens and their grievances. This also forms the basis of the relationship between the media and the welfare state. The welfare state, as explained in the above sections of this study, is an arrangement where the state takes responsibility for the welfare of its population, especially the most vulnerable in society, through offering subsidized health care, provision of pensions, insurance regulation and even direct cash benefits.

**Theoretical framework**

**Agenda setting theory:** Media’s influence on the masses cannot be underestimated. The fourth estate has taken a central place in people’s lives over the past decades and continues to influence what people think about, talk about and classify as important in their societies. Agenda setting is about pointing to people what is important (Moy, Tewksbury & Rinke, 2016). While quoting Cohen (1963), they put an emphasis on the role of media which has successfully told people what to think about. This theory was developed by Max McCombs and Donald Shaw in 1968. Their study was groundbreaking in the sense that it proved that indeed the media determined what people thought about. They concluded this after carrying out a study where, when asked, voters would give examples of the three things that they thought were important for the government to focus on, which reflected the news covered by their media in the area (Moy, Tewksbury & Rinke, 2016). Since this study, media have advanced presentation of news and content by systematically selecting opening stories during news times for television, choosing where to place links of the main stories for digital media, interrupting normal programming to bring in breaking news among others are as a result of understanding the influence of the agenda setting theory (Pg:3)

**Priming theory:** Priming generally refers to associating one phenomenon to another, In media, it refers to the standards people use to make political evaluations (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987, p. 63). Audiences use the information available in news content to make evaluations of their leaders and governments. Weaver (2007: pg 145) points out that priming is all about making issues more salient and more likely to be accessed in forming opinions. Priming is seen as part of the process of agenda setting (Scheufele & Tewksbury 2007). It occurs in two steps: receiving information, and the consequences of that information. In the first step, audiences will consume news items

and that will activate pre-existing [related] knowledge of the particular individual. Association of the news information received to the pre-existing knowledge enables the individual to interpret and evaluate the new information. As explicitly mentioned by Moy, Tewksbury & Rinke, 2016 pg 6, “A media priming effect occurs if, in the second step, the receiver applies the primed, now more accessible concept to a target stimulus when s/he would not otherwise have done this. The first step thus consists of the priming process, and the second speaks to its consequences.” Priming is majorly associated with political communication. While the political linkage may not be explicit every time, there is a tendency of news media consumers to associate news items to political issues hence directly influencing their perceptions of leaders and governments.

**RESEARCH METHODS**

This study employed a descriptive research design. Kothari & Garg, 2019 describes descriptive research using a qualitative approach. The qualitative approach was used provide an in-depth understanding of media coverage of the Inua Jamii cash transfer programmes. In the study’s first objective, the study looked into the number of articles in each of the daily newspapers that addressed Inua Jamii cash transfers in the country. In the second objective, the study explored themes used in print media coverage before and during the COVID-19 period. This was achieved through looking into individual articles in the selected newspapers and analysis of the content. The third objective is to understand people’s perceptions of the Inua Jamii cash transfer programmes based on the print media reporting. Content analysis was more appropriate in this study because it offered the researchers an opportunity to study newspapers extensively and allowed the researchers to analyse themes present in the selected articles. This is in tandem with Ong’ondo & Jwan (2020 pg:122) where they explain the use of content analysis as a research method compared to a data generation technique. The researchers also compared how different daily newspapers covered Inua Jamii programmes in Kenya, hence the analysis of each and every story covered within the selected period of time.

**Population and Sampling:** This study analysed all the five English daily newspapers in Kenya. The choice to pick the five was based solely on the frequency of circulation and publication language. The target population therefore refers to all newspapers in the country including the daily, weekly, fortnight among others but the sample population will refer to only the five. The coverage period in this study will be 109 days before reporting of the first COVID-19 case in Kenya, that is, November 26, 2019-March 13, 2020, in comparison with 109 days after reporting the first COVID-19 case in Kenya, that is, 13 March -June 23, 2020. The sampling frame included all the newspaper issues of the five daily newspapers for the period between November 26, 2019 to June 2020. A sampling frame is a list containing all units that are under study. The researchers got this list by visiting the newspaper libraries that have the records of their publications. After gaining access to their libraries, the researchers used their cataloguing systems that help with search of keywords. The keyword in this case was ‘Inua Jamii’. This sampled only the related articles and stories for this study, thereby falling under purposive sampling strategy. In summary, sampling was done as follows.

Research Phase	Sampling Frame	Inclusion criterion	Sampling technique	Sample
Qualitative method	109 issues of Nation 109 issues of The Standard 109 issues of The Star 109 issues of People Daily 109 issues of the Business Daily  Total=545 issues	Any article mentioning Inua Jamii cash transfer programmes	Purposive	28 issues

**Data generation techniques:** This study mainly focused on secondary data available in Kenyan daily newspapers. To ensure that there was sufficient data available, the researchers first carried out a pre-test by conducting an online search of the available data. Using digital platforms of each of the five daily newspapers, the researchers searched for 'Inua Jamii' and found out that there were indeed sufficient articles published with the referenced keywords. The researchers then sought access to each of the media house's libraries and accessed their cataloguing systems that provided access to published stories with the theme of Inua Jamii cash transfer programmes from 26 Nov 2019 -30 Jun 2020. To ensure the stories are relevant, the researchers read each of the articles to understand whether it was relevant to the study. The researchers then analysed the available information using a coding sheet. The main strategy utilised in this study is thematic analysis, where data was grouped into themes. The process involved reading all the relevant newspaper articles on Inua Jamii cash transfer programmes then listing the categories of related themes. These themes were informed by research questions highlighted in the background section of this study. Data from this study was then presented in narrative form.

## RESULTS

**Extent to which the Inua Jamii programme was covered before and during the COVID-19 period:** To find out the extent to which the programme was covered, the study tallied the number of articles each of the daily newspapers published between 26 November 2019-13 March 2020 and compared them with those published from March 14, 2020-June 30, 2020. The study reviewed 109 issues of each of the newspapers making a total of 545 issues. Out of these, only 28 had information related to the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme.

**Media Coverage before the COVID-19 period:** There was limited coverage of the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme before COVID-19 struck. *Business Daily* and the *People Daily* had the highest number of articles on the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme with each publishing three articles. *Nation* and *The Standard* ranked second with two articles each while *The Star* did not publish any article on the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme before the COVID-19 period. Table 1.1 summarises the dates each of the newspapers published the articles.

**Table 1. Publishing dates of Inua Jamii articles**

Newspaper	Date of publication
People Daily	20 January, 04 & 09 March 2020
Business Daily	27 November 2019, 03 & 22 January 2020
Nation	04 January 2020
The Standard	07 December 2019
The Star	None

**Summary of dates of publication of InuaJamii programme articles before COVID-19 pandemic:** In terms of the articles published per month before the COVID-19 period, January had the highest number of articles published with a total of four articles from all the newspapers. Only two articles were published in the month of March while November and December had the least number of articles published with a single article. Table 1.2 summarises the number of articles published by all the five newspapers per month.

**Table 2. Number of Inua Jamii articles per month pre-COVID-19**

Month	Number of articles per month
November	1
December	1
January	4
February	0
March	2
Total	8

**Print Media Coverage during the COVID-19 period:** There was a significant increase in coverage of the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer

programme during the COVID-19 period. The *Nation* newspaper had the highest number of articles published during COVID-19 period with a total of seven articles published on 15 & 20 April, 03, 06, 07, 21 May and 15 June 2020. The *People Daily* ranked second with six articles published on 28 & 29 May, 11 June (twice), 12 & 29 June 2020. They were followed by *The Star* that had five articles published on 03, 20, 29 April, 21 & 22 May 2020. *The Standard* and *Business Daily* newspapers published two articles on the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme. Below is the summary of coverage during the pandemic.

**Table 3. Publication Dates of InuaJamii programme articles during COVID-19 period**

Newspaper	Date of Publication
Nation	15 & 20 April, 03, 06, 07, 21 May and 15 June 2020
People Daily	28 & 29 May, 11 June (2 articles), 12 & 29 June 2020
The Star	03, 20, 29 April, 21 & 22 May 2020
Business Daily	03 April, 23 June 2020
The Standard	23 May & 26 June 2020

The month of May had the highest number of articles with a total of nine articles from the five newspapers. All the newspapers published eight articles in June and six in April. There were no articles on the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme published between 14-31 March 2020. From the data presented here, it can be inferred that there was an increased reporting of the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme during the COVID-19 period compared to the period just before the pandemic hit.

**Table 4. Articles on InuaJamii programme published per month during COVID-19**

Month	Number of articles
March	0
April	6
May	9
June	8
Total	23

The main aim of this study was to investigate how the media covered the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme before and during the COVID-19 pandemic in a bid to find out whether the lack of awareness about the programmes resulted in failure to utilise mainstream media. It can be inferred from the findings that print media was adequately utilised especially during the pandemic period. The study also observed that there was very little coverage of the Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP) compared to the other programmes within the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme. There was only one article by the *Nation* newspaper that covered HSNP that was published on 03 May 2020. The study also observed from the findings that in general, there was minimal information on HSNP including information on the funding of the programme. In addition, the *Nation* newspaper mentioned HSNP as a stand-alone project in its 15 April 2020 article. These findings match the researcher's observation from the available literature that there was minimal information on HSNP. Additionally, even though the government mentioned that the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme consisted of four programmes: Older Persons Cash Transfer, Cash Transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children, Persons with Severe Disabilities Cash Transfer Program, and Hunger Safety Net Programme (Government of Kenya, 2016) the researchers observed that HSNP was not included as part of the government's funding of the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme. These findings are likely to suggest that HSNP is not part of the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme.

**Themes emerging from print media coverage on the Inua Jamii cash transfer programme in Kenya:** Several themes emerged from the articles reviewed. These were: mismanagement, efficiency, corruption, non-commitment, challenges, reforms, shortage and expansion. The themes are summarised in the table below according to each newspaper article. There was a total of 13 articles with the theme of efficiency.

Table 5. Summary of themes on the InuaJamii programme from reviewed articles

Themes	Nation	The Standard	The Star	Business Daily	People Daily	Total
Efficiency	2	1	2	3	5	13
Mismanagement	3	0	1	0	0	4
Reforms	0	0	0	1	2	3
Corruption	0	1	0	1	1	3
Shortage	2	0	0	0	0	2
Expansion	0	0	0	0	1	1
Non-commitment	0	1	0	0	0	1

Articles that addressed mismanagement as a theme were four, while those addressing reforms were three, corruption three, shortage two, one that addressed expansion, one that addressed challenges, and one that addressed non-commitment as a theme. Out of the 28 newspaper issues that covered the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme, 13 of them had the theme of efficiency. It can therefore be inferred that the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme is efficient. Out of the 13, the *People Daily* had the highest number of articles that projected the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme as efficient with a total of five articles. These were articles published on 09 March, 28 May, 29 May, 12 June and 29 June 2020. The researchers found this theme appropriate since the articles covered stories on the positive impact of the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme. For instance, on 28 May 2020, the *People Daily* reported on page 12 that the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection had noted an increase in the purchasing power of beneficiaries of the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme. Further, the Ministry noted that the level of poverty of beneficiaries had dropped down, there was increase in food expenditure and dietary diversification and increase in savings and investments of the beneficiaries of the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme. At the same time, the Ministry observed that more children were retained in school while there was a reduction of child labour and illnesses due to the government stipend provided to the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme beneficiaries. The article entitled: *CS: Sh8.7b Inua Jamii cash sent to beneficiaries*, is an example of articles that had a theme on efficiency of the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme. It can also be concluded from the findings that the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme has been mismanaged as the theme appeared four times in the reviewed articles. The *Nation* had the highest number of articles with the theme of mismanagement, followed by *The Star* that had one article. The rest of the newspapers did not have articles projecting such a theme. *Nation* newspaper published the three articles on 04 January, 07 May & 21 May 2020, while *The Star* published one on 21 May 2020 entitled: *350,000 locked out of Inua Jamii programme*. In comparison to the *Nation* newspaper that also carried an article on 21 May 2020 titled: *MPs want 350,000 added to stipend plan*, the researchers noted that both articles projected the same theme of mismanagement. The *Star* newspaper's article was shorter compared to the *Nation* and did not offer as much background information as the *Nation*. The *Star* article appeared on page 8 while the *Nation* article appeared on page 36.

## CONCLUSION

This study, generally, finds that the media adequately covered the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme during the COVID-19 period owing to the safety net programmes meant to cushion Kenyans at the time, compared to before the pandemic. It can, thus, be concluded that COVID-19 had an impact on the coverage of the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme. Key thematic areas covered focused on mismanagement, efficiency, corruption, non-commitment, challenges, reforms, shortage and expansion. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the *Inua Jamii* cash transfer programme is efficient. Findings of this study suggest that print media generally framed issues of *Inua Jamii* on a positive note, although the frequency of coverage was sporadic. Issues covered focused on issues of mismanagement, efficiency, corruption, non-commitment, challenges, reforms, shortage and expansion of the *Inua Jamii* programme, indicating that media were effectively playing their watchdog role. In the coverage, most of the media coverage represented the people's

voices as pertained to containing views/opinions of the public. This is in line with the Social Responsibility theory that states that the media have an obligation to offer the public accurate, objective and relevant information, have a responsibility of enlightening the public in promotion of self-governance and lastly the media is tasked with safeguarding people's rights. The media have an obligation to promote self-governance of the public through the media's power to influence decision making. It can, therefore, be concluded that Social responsibility theory still influences Kenyan media in carrying out their work. The study recommends that the media focus more in commentaries and opinions, which advise government and policy makers on ways of addressing *Inua Jamii* programmes such as mismanagement.

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