



**THE ROLE OF THE PRINT MEDIA IN SHAPING THE PUBLICS' PERCEPTION OF  
THE PASTORALIST AND ITS IMPACT ON DEVELOPMENT IN KENYA: A CASE  
OF POKOT COMMUNITY**

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### ABSTRACT

Communication via the media is the reflection of the societal issues by reporting events and happenings, normally for economic, political, social, and aesthetic purposes. The study set out to investigate the role that media plays in shaping the publics' perception of the pastoralist communities and its resultant impact on the development. In particular, it aims to investigate the role of the print media in shaping publics' perception of the pastoralist communities, *Pokot* community in particular. It also assessed the impact of print media portrayal on the development of the *Pokot* community and identified the various communication barriers that have hindered accurate projection of information. The research explores the various media approaches that can promote neutral reporting by the print media. The study embraced the agenda-setting theory developed by McCombs & Shaw (1968) and developed by Shoemaker et al (1996) and Coleman et al (2006) which states that, mass media (print) sets the agenda for public opinion by highlighting 'certain issues' considered important (news) by the mainstream media. The study it is hoped will shade light on the media's selection reality and the influence of this selectivity on public's perception. The study was carried out in West *Pokot District*. The study adopted a descriptive survey design with a sample size of 300 selected from the target population of 1000 from a total population of 12000 through stratified and purposive sampling to ensure the representativeness of the sample. Stratified sampling was used to select subjects to whom questionnaires were administered; purposive interview schedules were also employed on key respondents to gather special responses from the major development stakeholders. Data collection was done by use of questionnaires and structured interview schedules for the key informants and focused groups, while secondary data collection from the print media was through systematic sampling of the various publications. Data analysis and interpretation was done both using quantitative and qualitative techniques with the help of the SPSS (V.17) and data presentation was in form of percentages, frequency tables, graphs and pie charts. Inferential statistics were used to describe relationships between variables under study, an effort that is intended to provide a framework that would guide the government in monitoring and evaluating media practices in as well as planning and policy implementation in both the government and developmental NGOs in the pastoralist communities.