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Effective Communication for Inclusivity in Working towards the Attainment of Beta and Vision 2030

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to explore the effectiveness of communication as an inclusivity strategy for achieving Beta and Vision 2030. The objectives were to assess the level of awareness of the Beta and Vision 2030 agendas, to analyse the uptake of the Beta and Vision 2030 strategies among Kenyan Citizens, and to propose better communication modalities that can enhance and bring on board citizen participation. A descriptive, cross-sectional survey was adopted for this study. An online questionnaire was used to collect data through a selected sample of respondents. In total, 200 respondents participated in the survey. Quantitative aspects of the data were analysed using SPSS, while qualitative data were subjected to thematic analysis. The findings demonstrate that while communication efforts have achieved broad awareness of Vision 2030 and, to a lesser extent, the BETA initiative, they fall short in deepening public understanding and fostering a sense of inclusive participation. While communication has raised awareness, it has not translated into widespread access, participation, or engagement with the BETA and Vision 2030 strategies. Citizen participation in BETA and Vision 2030 remains constrained by several communication barriers, including inadequate outreach, mistrust, low literacy, and limited access to inclusive platforms. The findings emphasise that achieving Beta and Vision 2030 requires a communication framework that is inclusive, adaptable, and responsive to the needs of all individuals, ultimately leading to sustainable and equitable development.

Keywords: Communication, BETA, Vision 2030, inclusivity of citizens, Kenya

1. Introduction

Since Kenya attained independence in 1963, every President who has come to power and formed a government has laid out a plan or strategy to bring development to the country's citizens. Some of these government strategies range from eradication of ignorance, poverty and diseases by Mzee Jomo Kenyatta's government (Achieng, 2023), to Free Primary Education by the Narc government under the leadership of Mwai Kibaki (Ogola, 2010), Vision 2030 that was launched in 2008 by the grand coalition government still under the leadership of President Mwai Kibaki (as a vehicle for accelerating transformation of the country), the Big Four agenda launched in 2017 under the leadership of Uhuru Kenyatta, and with the aim of fast tracking the attainment of Vision 2030 and the BETA of the Kenya Kwanza government under the leadership of President William Ruto.

All these strategies have been geared toward accelerating the country's transformation. The expectation, therefore, is that with these agendas, we would have witnessed accelerated macroeconomic and microeconomic stability, reliable health facilities and services, reduced unemployment, and top-notch technological and infrastructural development. Despite these strategies, Kenya still grapples with challenges such as unreliable health services, rising school dropout rates (Andati, 2024), 16 million Kenyans (31.7%) living below the poverty line (Kenya Poverty Report, 2022), and a youth unemployment rate of 12.23% as of 2023. An interesting observation, however, is that some government initiatives, such as local e-government websites where citizens are expected to interact with and obtain critical services, not only in Kenya but also in the United States, are prone to errors that hinder local governments from providing services when needed. Cumbie and Kar (2016) offer that on average, each local e-government website has 291.83 issues and is frequently unavailable or even non-existent.

The uptake of some of these government strategies by citizens in Kenya faces significant challenges that hinder effective implementation and the actualisation of socio-economic development (Kauma et al., 2022). Key obstacles include inadequate public awareness, mistrust in government institutions, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and socio-economic disparities that limit access to information and resources. Language barriers, cultural diversity, and digital illiteracy continually impede the effective dissemination and adoption of the said government strategies, both in urban and rural areas. While social media and digital platforms have improved access to government communication, misinformation and skepticism remain major concerns. Additionally, political influence, corruption, and frequent policy shifts reduce the consistency and credibility of government initiatives. Addressing these challenges requires enhanced public engagement,

transparency, and inclusive policymaking that ensures all citizens can actively participate in and benefit from government strategies.

This research, therefore, analysed two specific strategies, the BETA and the Vision 2030, affiliated with the present-day government, with an inclination towards assessing the levels of awareness of the strategies, the levels of strategy uptake among the country's citizens, and the citizens' views on strategy implementation. The research also sought to propose more effective communication modalities to bring more citizens on board and enhance the uptake of the government strategies.

2. Literature Review

Goldman (1991) discussed strategies for inclusive communication and conceptualised it as a strategy that involves bringing together persons with disabilities and those without disabilities in everyday exchanges. According to Goldman (1991), the main goal of inclusive communication is to foster effective, positive interactions that incorporate all persons. Goldman (1991), in his discussion, opined that inclusive communication always leads to positive and effective engagement and interaction among ordinary people as well as those with any form of disability. Goldman (1991) further argues that this strategy always ensures that interactions that cut across persons with disability, as well as those without disability, mark the threshold of what can be termed successful communication. Goldman concludes that inclusive communication is essential for bringing people with disabilities into discussions and involves being flexible and patient, as well as treating everyone with dignity and respect.

The Forbes Communications Council (2024) assessed the power of diversity that can be attained through the creation of inclusive communication strategies. The Forbes Communications Council observes that inclusive communication strategies are critical, especially in a diverse workplace. Forbes further offers that inclusive communication involves creating a workplace communication environment that recognises and respects differences, invests in communication skills training, encourages open dialogue between partners, leverages technology, and is built on the practice of active listening. According to Forbes Communications Council (2024), inclusive communication in the workplace increases respect and understanding among team members, thereby making the team more robust and effective in task performance.

Aswani and Otiende (2024) investigated strategies for effective workplace communication, organisational subcultures, and communication preferences among Generation Zs (Gen Zs). Aswani and Otiende (2024) revealed that the entry of Gen Zs into the job market introduced a diversity that is now reshaping organisational culture, where organisational communication is expected to incorporate values such as independence, flexibility, and freedom, which are attributed to Gen Zs. Gen Zs have a preference for transparency and openness and are technology-driven; hence, these preferences must be managed effectively in organisations that have Gen Zs in their workforce to avoid workplace communication issues (Aswani & Otiende, 2024). The research further reveals that every generation is defined by some distinct values, which also define their communication preference, for instance Baby Boomers (people born between 1946-1964), value authority and hierarchy, have a preference for direct interaction and personal connection hence reflecting an era where digital communication was not as prevalent, Generation X (people born between 1965-1980) prioritise autonomy, flexibility and innovation based environments that have a more relaxed approach to work, Millennials or Generation Y (people born between 1981-1996) prioritise adaptability, inclusiveness and mental health enabling environments, they reject traditional control and coercion and are heavy on technology and Generation Z (people born between 1997-2011) prefer open and transparent communication, receiving feedback. These environments stimulate innovation and creativity and rely heavily on digital technology. Aswani and Otiende (2024) further emphasise the importance of understanding organisational subcultures and the communication preferences of different generations for effective workplace communication and to foster a more inclusive and productive work environment. Aswani and Otiende (2024) conclude that understanding and managing generational differences in workplace values and communication are crucial for preventing conflict, fostering innovation and promoting a positive organisational culture. Organisational Leaders who recognise and embrace these differences can create an inclusive and effective workplace communication environment.

Omondi (2016) investigated the performance of public relations practices in government ministries in Kenya. The study observed that public relations practice in government ministries encounters various challenges, including a lack of a national communication policy framework, lean or even absent budgetary allocation, low staffing levels, inadequate working equipment, and a poor understanding of the PR role by top management, which leads to lukewarm support. Omondi (2016) further notes that Public Relations practice is essential in government ministries and that making Public Relations Officers official spokespersons of these ministries can improve effectiveness at all levels. Omondi (2016) underscores the need to formulate a national communication policy to standardise and professionalise Public Relations practice, thereby improving communication and public relations within government ministries and departments. The research concludes that there is a need to delineate public relations from administration, provide enough budgetary support and equipment, recruit and deploy an adequate number of staff and train information officers to undertake their role as government public relations officers.

Owino (2023) critically analysed the strategic dimensions of central government communication in Kenya. The study observed that government communication is characterised by strong political influence, short- and medium-term goals, and minimal long-term goals. Owino (2023) reveals that the structure of government communication in Kenya is decentralised, uncoordinated, fragmented, and unplanned, with a lack of professionalisation and a lack of clarity about its role. Owino further notes that government communication is often seen as a tactical rather than a strategic tool.

Government communication in Kenya operates on press agency and public information models, with a focus on publicity and media coverage, and is majorly one-way, with structures that are not clearly defined and no regard for feedback (Owino, 2023). Owino (2023) finally concludes that government communication in Kenya is not strategically managed and calls for a more proactive, strategic approach to communication, as well as sufficient empowerment of Public Relations executives.

Sagase (2024) studied the role of communication management in influencing public participation for county governance in Vihiga County, Kenya. The study aimed to establish how communication management can build the exchange and sharing of ideas between the citizens and their leaders. Sagase highlighted communication management as the tool that facilitates public participation in county governance, underscoring the criticality of a structure that ensures inclusivity, accountability, and transparency. Sagase (2024) established that, much as the respondents use different channels for county initiatives engagement purposes, such as radio stations, county websites and newspaper advertisements at (42%, 19.4% and 38.6%) respectively, these channels do not guarantee meaningful engagement with the county initiatives, hence the need for tailored communication management to encourage public engagement. Sagase further reveals that there are clear gaps in understanding governance processes and that county governments do not adequately consider public opinion, which, in turn, hinders effective public participation and integration. Sagase concludes that addressing all barriers to integrating public participation, such as limited understanding of governance processes and poor responsiveness from county-level arms of governance, can promote inclusivity in decision-making.

Kotut and Sakataka (2015) examined the effectiveness of communication strategies in enhancing stakeholder participation in Kenya's Uasin Gishu County-funded projects. Their research established that informal as well as formally organised meetings, alongside online communication, are among the effective strategies that may be applied to enhance stakeholder participation. Kotut and Sakataka (2015) further revealed that for the successful completion of government projects, stakeholder participation is critical, as the government depends on these stakeholders and must meet their expectations; therefore, it ought to seek ways to manage its relationship with them. Hence, communication strategies and systems structures that reach out to the stakeholders are crucial for enhancing stakeholder participation. Kotut and Sakataka (2015) argue that inclusivity in government projects provides stakeholders with the opportunity to contribute as experts, especially if the initiative has aspects that touch on their specialities or fields of professionalism. Kotut and Sakataka (2015) conclude that public stakeholders must be involved from the conception of the project or initiative if they are to fully own the project or initiative and fight for its sustainability.

The reviewed literature provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of communication strategies and channels. It highlights the importance of stakeholder engagement and underscores the need to apply relevant communication strategies to fully onboard stakeholders to government projects and initiatives. However, there is a notable gap in research on stakeholder engagement, active communication, and sensitisation regarding initiatives at the heart of different government regimes, such as the Big 4 agenda of the Jubilee government, the BETA initiative of the Kenya Kwanza Government, and Vision 2030. This might partly explain why some of these initiatives experience limited sustainability beyond the regime that birthed the vision and fizzle out as soon as the vision carrier exits from power. Research on the criticality of communication effectiveness for encouraging stakeholder participation in government initiatives such as the BETA initiative and Vision 2030 is minimal. Most studies on this front have been biased towards providing a general view of the effectiveness of communication and Public Relations for inclusivity at a broad level. The present study, therefore, sought to assess the effectiveness of communication for inclusivity, particularly to the BETA initiative of the Kenya Kwanza government, and Vision 2030.

3. Methodology

A descriptive, cross-sectional survey was adopted for this study due to its ease of use and applicability to the research context. Cross-sectional studies are observational in nature. The target population is analysed at a single point in time, with no follow-up or time-reversal to assess causality (Wang & Cheng, 2020). This process is beneficial since it collects even the data that respondents may not remember when filling in a questionnaire. This study employed stratified random sampling because Kenya, as a country, has people who can be placed in different categories (strata). These categories include different professions, education attainment levels, age groups, religious and cultural affiliations, special interest groups, and ethnic groups, among others. Each of these categories formed a stratum, and participants were selected at random from all these strata.

This study sought to assess how effectively the Kenyan government's agendas are communicated to promote inclusivity among its citizens, especially as it works towards the attainment of Beta and Vision 2030, all informed by perceptions from certain groups. The research sought to explore the levels of awareness of these government initiatives among Kenyan citizens, assess the uptake of the strategy, and collect citizens' views on the government's implementation of the strategy.

Online Questionnaires were sent to the sampled respondents to be filled out. The benefits of the questionnaires include the different perspectives on an issue that a researcher can obtain from respondents and the uniformity of the questions, which makes the analysis straightforward. The questions were set on a Likert scale, with respondents asked to indicate their level of agreement with each question. An interview schedule was prepared to collect information from specialised Communication and Public Relations professionals. The core benefit of interviews is that a given researcher/interviewer can adjust the questions as deemed necessary; they may rephrase or repeat the question, ensure that the responses are properly understood, and hence clarify any doubt. Purposive sampling was applied to select the Communication and PR practitioners to participate in the research interviews. Researchers typically adopt purposive

sampling based on their assessment that the sampled strata possess uniqueness that aligns with the study's objectives (Bisht, 2024).

Communications and PR practitioners have a strong understanding of the most effective communication strategies for enhancing inclusivity and public participation in government initiatives, and are therefore resourceful and able to shed more light on this topic. Qualitative data generated from interview schedules was organised into themes.

The target population was the entire citizenry of Kenya, persons who had at least a Kenyan identity card, were of sound mind, and had the capacity to provide insights and perspectives on governance issues, even at a basic level, at the time of the study. Simple descriptive analytics was used to understand the characteristics of the sample data sets. This enabled an assessment of the impact of career progression on staff performance. Data processing and analysis were performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 23).

The study made a number of ethical considerations throughout the research cycle. First and foremost, the respondents were assured that the data would be used solely for the objective of this research and for no other purpose whatsoever. Measures were taken to safeguard the data provided by assigning password protection to the machines and the questionnaire to prevent unauthorised access (Nanda & Kumar, 2019). To maintain confidentiality and protect the privacy of the specific respondents represented, no identifying information was included in this report, as only aggregated data was analysed and discussed.

4. Results

A total of 200 respondents successfully participated in the study. The majority of these were youth, comprising 43.0% under 25 years, 12.5% between 25 and 34 years, 21.0% between 35 and 44 years, 14.0% between 45 and 54 years, and 9.5% aged 55 years and above. There was also a relatively adequate representation by gender, though most of the respondents were male (59.5%), while females accounted for 40.5% of the sample. The results are organised according to the specific objectives.

4.1. Level of Awareness of BETA and Vision 2030 Agendas

4.1.1. Awareness of BETA Initiative

The distribution of respondents by level of awareness of the government's BETA initiatives is presented in figure 1. The majority of participants (68.0%) reported being aware of the BETA initiative, while 32% reported not being aware. This suggests a relatively high level of awareness.

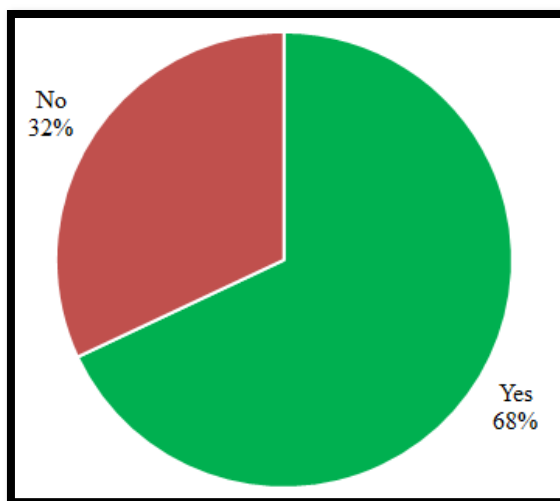


Figure 1: Are you Aware of the BETA Initiative of the Government?

Respondents were then asked to rate their understanding of the BETA initiative. Figure 2 presents the percentage distribution of respondents' self-rated understanding of the BETA initiative. A plurality of participants rated their understanding as moderate (33.0%), followed by those who rated it as good (26.0%) and those who were not at all familiar (25.5%). Fewer respondents indicated a very good (9.5%) or poor (6.0%) understanding. The findings suggest that while a significant proportion have at least a moderate grasp of the initiative, a considerable number remain unfamiliar with it.

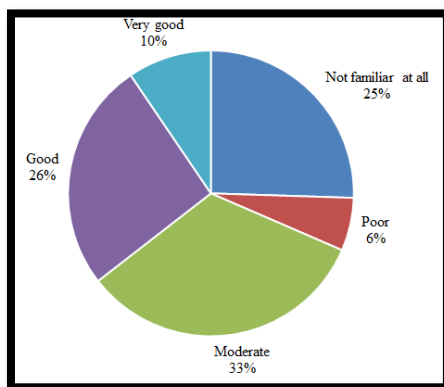


Figure 2: How Would You Rate Your Understanding of the BETA Initiative?

4.2. Awareness of BETA Vision 2030 Agendas

The distribution of respondents by whether they were aware of Vision 2030 is shown in figure 3. An overwhelming majority of participants (95.0%) reported being aware of the Vision 2030 initiative, while only a small proportion (5.0%) indicated they were not aware. This indicates a very high level of public awareness of the initiative among the surveyed population.

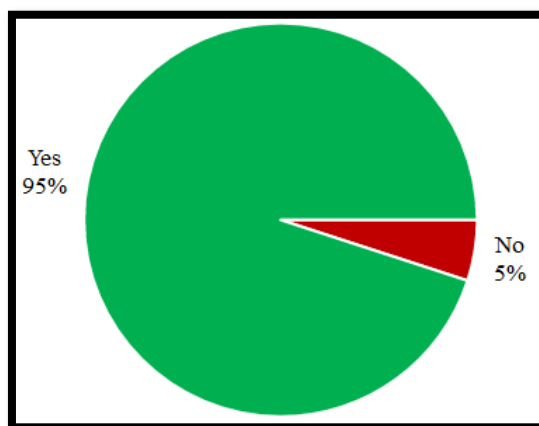


Figure 3: Are You Aware of the Vision 2030 Initiative?

Figure 4 presents the percentage distribution of respondents' self-rated understanding of the Vision 2030 initiative. The majority of participants rated their understanding as good (38.0%), followed by very good (27.5%) and moderate (27.0%). Only a small percentage indicated poor (4.0%) or no familiarity at all (3.5%). These results suggest that most respondents have a relatively strong understanding of the Vision 2030 initiative.

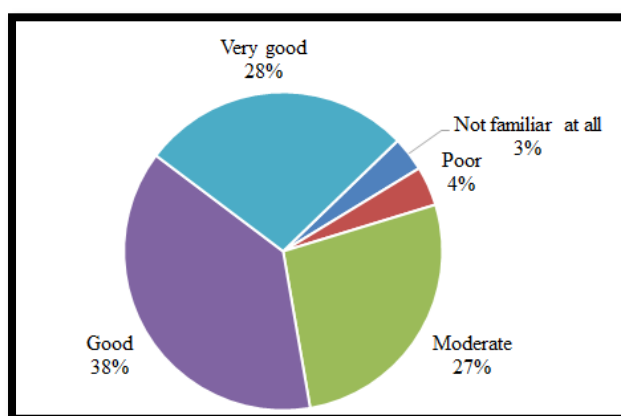


Figure 4: How Would You Rate Your Understanding of the Vision 2030?

4.3. Promotion of Inclusivity by Government

Figure 5 presents respondents' perceptions of the government's promotion of inclusivity for all societal groups in matters related to BETA and Vision 2030. Most of the respondents were neutral (34.5%), while 31.0% agreed and 4.0% strongly agreed. On the other hand, 23.0% disagreed, and 7.5% strongly disagreed. These findings indicate a mixed perception, suggesting a lack of consensus.

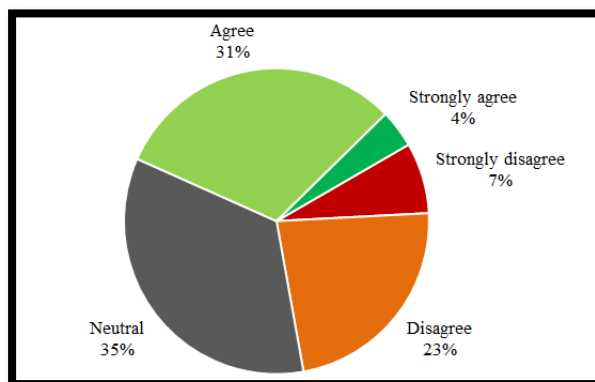


Figure 5: Do You Believe the Government Has Promoted Inclusivity for All Societal Groups in Matters Pertaining to BETA and Vision 2030?

4.4. Communication Channels Used to Disseminate BETA and Vision 2030

Figure 6 shows the most commonly used communication channels for disseminating BETA and Vision 2030 goals and initiatives. The figure reveals that five channels dominated the dissemination of BETA and Vision 2030. In rank order, they are: television (78%), social media (75%), radio (72%), newspapers (68%), and government official website (64%). Less used channels included chief’s barazas (29%), text/SMS services (22%), church and mosque announcements (16%), and others (4%).

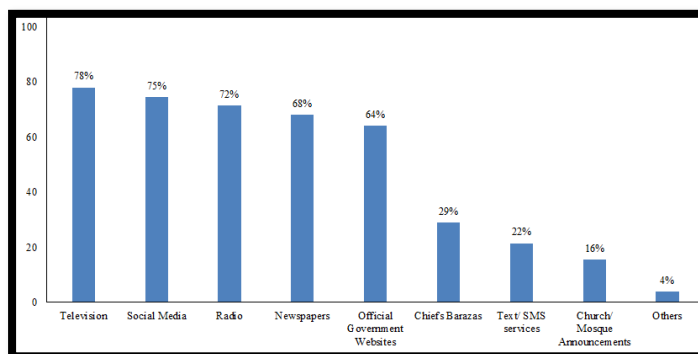


Figure 6: Communication Channels Used to Disseminate BETA and Vision 2030

4.5. Commonly Used Language of Communication

Figure 7 presents the distribution of languages used to communicate about BETA and Vision 2030, as observed by the respondents. The figure shows that English was the most used language, accounting for 82%, followed by Kiswahili (15%), while vernacular was the least used (3%).

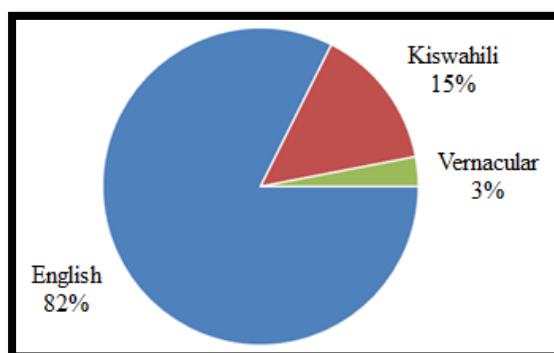


Figure 7: Commonly Used Language of Communication

5. Uptake Levels of the BETA and Vision 2030 Strategies among Kenyan Citizens

The second objective of the study was to analyse the uptake levels of the Beta and Vision 2030 strategies among Kenyan Citizens. This section focuses on accessibility, participation, inclusiveness, and perceived effectiveness of the BETA and Vision 2030.

5.1. Ease of Access

Figure 8 presents the respondents’ perceptions of the accessibility of information regarding BETA and Vision 2030. A majority of respondents (43.0%) indicated that the information is only somewhat accessible, while 34.0% reported that

it is easily accessible. Conversely, 23.0% stated that the information is not accessible. These findings suggest that while some progress has been made in disseminating information, a significant portion of the population still faces challenges in accessing it.

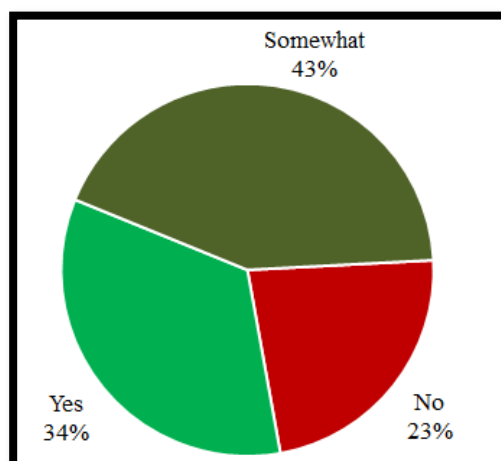


Figure 8: Do You Find the Information about Beta and Vision 2030 Easily Accessible?

5.2. Effect of Communication on Active Participation

Figure 9 presents the respondents' views on whether communication about the BETA initiative and Vision 2030 has encouraged their active participation in related activities. Slightly more than half of the respondents (51.0%) indicated that the communication had encouraged their participation, while 49.0% reported that it had not. This nearly even split suggests that while communication efforts have motivated some individuals, there remains a need for more engaging or inclusive strategies to inspire broader involvement.

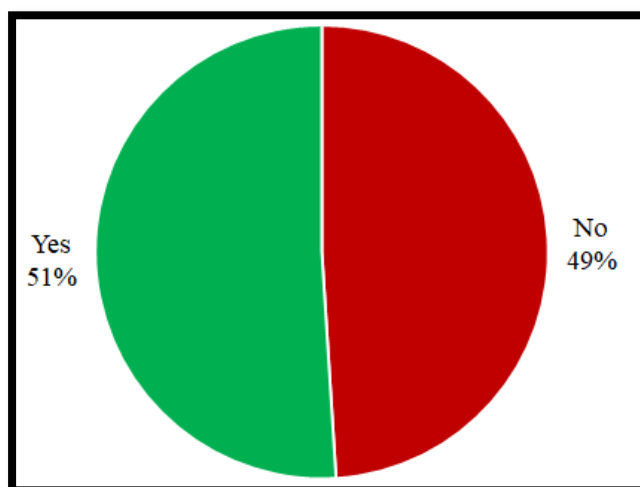


Figure 9: Has the Communication Encouraged You to Actively Participate in Activities Aligned with the BETA Initiative and Vision 2030?

5.3. Inclusiveness of Communication

Figure 10 presents respondents' perceptions of how inclusive the communication methods used for BETA and Vision 2030 are in reaching diverse groups, including rural communities, persons with disabilities, youth, and women. Most respondents rated the communication as moderately inclusive (44.5%), while 29.0% viewed it as slightly inclusive. A smaller proportion found the methods to be neither inclusive (17.5%) nor very inclusive (9.0%). These results suggest that while communication efforts are somewhat effective at reaching diverse audiences, there is room to improve inclusivity.

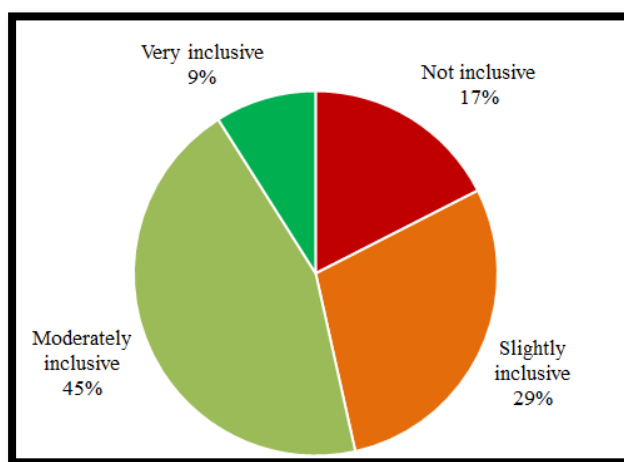


Figure 10: How Inclusive Are These Communications Methods in Reaching Diverse Groups?

5.4. Effectiveness of Communication

Table 1 presents the mean ratings and standard deviations for respondents' perceptions of the government's communication strategy's effectiveness in promoting the BETA initiative and Vision 2030. On a scale from 1 (None effective) to 4 (Strongly effective), respondents moderately agreed that the government utilises platforms within their reach to communicate its agendas ($M = 2.57$, $SD = 1.217$) and that it communicates in a language that appeals to citizens ($M = 2.53$, $SD = 1.189$). However, lower ratings were observed for the government's communication measures enhancing inclusivity and participation ($M = 2.41$, $SD = 1.143$), the liberty to share perspectives in government offices ($M = 2.26$, $SD = 1.242$), and personal engagement in public participation ($M = 2.06$, $SD = 1.168$). The overall composite score for communication effectiveness was 2.37 ($SD = 1.191$), indicating a generally moderate perception of the government's communication efforts.

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
I feel that the government utilises platforms within my reach to communicate its agendas	2.57	1.217
The government communicates its initiatives in a language that appeals to its citizenry	2.53	1.189
The government has put in appropriate communication measures that enhance inclusivity and participation	2.41	1.143
I feel at liberty to walk into any government office to share my thoughts and perspectives on a government initiative	2.26	1.242
I have been engaged severally in government public participation	2.06	1.168
Communication effectiveness composite score	2.37	1.191

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on Effectiveness of Communication Strategy

5.5. Overall Evaluation of Citizen Sensitization

Figure 11 presents respondents' opinions on whether the general Kenyan citizenry is appropriately sensitised on the BETA initiative and Vision 2030. A majority of respondents (68%) indicated that citizens are not appropriately sensitised, while only 32% believed they are. These results suggest a perceived gap in public awareness and engagement efforts related to these government initiatives.

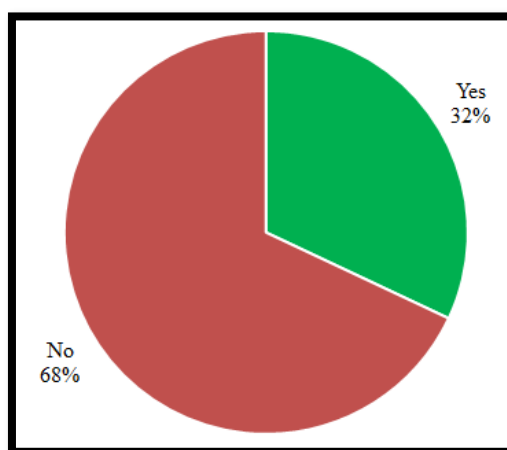


Figure 11: In Your Opinion, Is the General Kenyan Citizenry Appropriately Sensitised on BETA and Vision 2030?

6. Communication Modalities That Can Enhance and Bring on Board Citizen Participation

The last objective of the study was to propose better communication modalities that can enhance and bring on board citizen participation. This section analyses the main barriers to effective communication, the language best suited to communication, and recommendations for making communication more effective, including how it can be tailored to better serve marginalised populations in the context of BETA and Vision 2030.

6.1. Barriers to Effective Communication

Respondents were asked to identify the main barriers to effective communication about BETA and Vision 2030 in their community. The barriers are ranked from most common to least. Figure 12 shows that all participants (100%) cited inadequate outreach as a key barrier, followed by mistrust in information sources (78%) and low literacy levels (72%). Other significant barriers included lack of internet access (64%) and language barriers (61%). These findings highlight the need for more targeted, trustworthy, and accessible communication strategies to enhance public engagement.

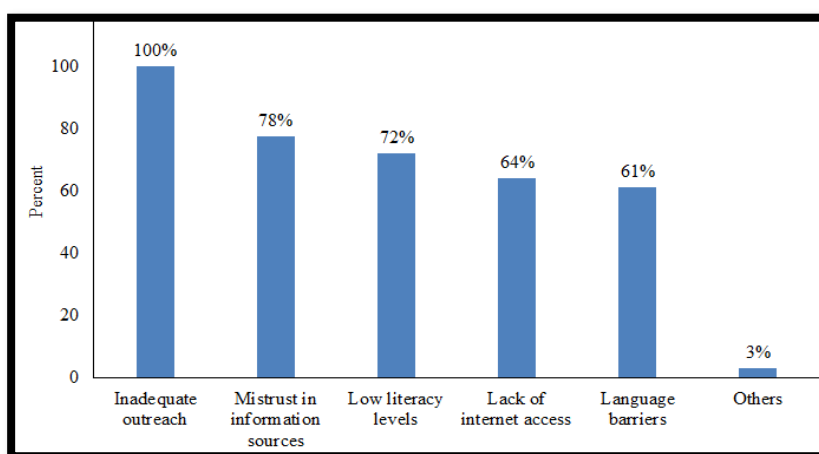


Figure 12: What Are the Main Barriers to Effective Communication about BETA and Vision 2030 in Your Community?

Figure 13 presents the respondents' views on which societal groups are most commonly left out of current communication efforts. The elderly were identified most frequently (51%), followed closely by rural residents (49%) and the uneducated (49%). Youth were mentioned by 40% of respondents, while persons with disabilities (31%), marginalised groups (25%), and the poor (14%) were cited less frequently. Women (9%) and children (4%) were the least mentioned, indicating perceived gaps in communication efforts targeting these groups.

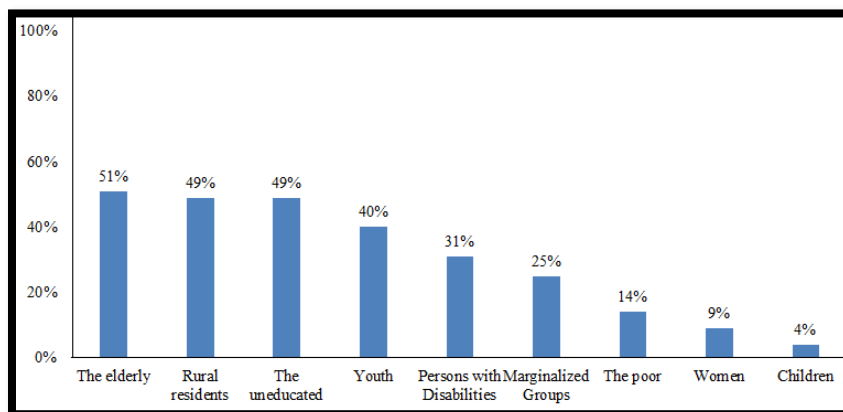


Figure 13: What Group(s) Are Most Often Left out of Current Communication Efforts?

6.2. Respondents' Recommended Language

Figure 14 presents respondents' views on the most suitable language for communicating about the BETA initiative and Vision 2030. Kiswahili was identified by the highest proportion of respondents (39%) as the most appropriate language, followed closely by English (34%). Vernacular languages were preferred by 24% of respondents, while a small percentage (3%) suggested a mix of languages tailored to literacy levels.

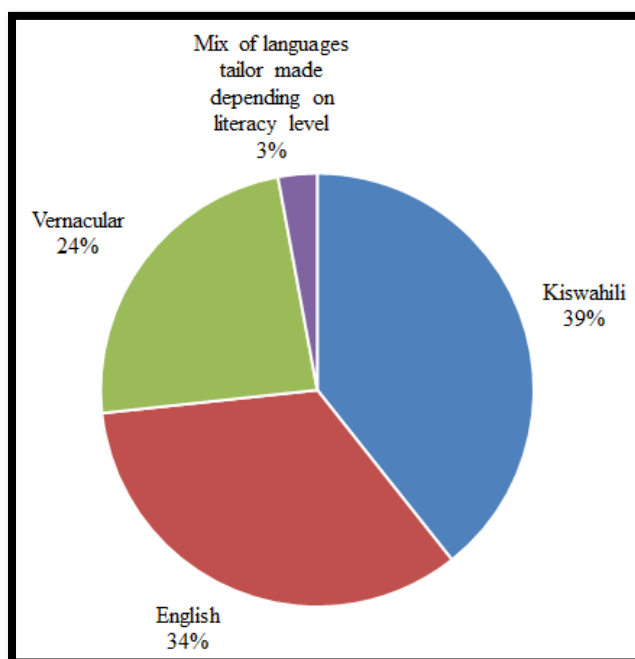


Figure 14: In Your View, Which Language Would Be Most Suited for Communicating about BETA and Vision 2030?

6.3. Tailoring Communication Strategies to the Marginalised

The views of respondents were sought regarding how communication strategies can be tailored to better serve marginalised populations in the context of BETA and Vision 2030. Thematic analysis of the views yielded four salient themes: Localised and Community-Based Approaches, Use of Vernacular and Accessible Language, Inclusive and Accessible Formats, and Participatory and Empowerment-Oriented Communication.

6.3.1. Theme #1: Localised and Community-Based Approaches

The most salient theme emerging from the responses is the emphasis on localised and community-based communication. Respondents repeatedly advocated for strategies that utilise familiar grassroots structures, such as barazas and nyumba kumi initiatives, and the involvement of local leaders, including chiefs and village elders. These community forums offer trusted platforms for conveying information in accessible ways, enabling two-way communication that supports inclusivity and feedback. This approach is particularly valuable in remote and rural areas where conventional mass media may not be effective. The strategy of going "door-to-door" or "house-to-house" ensures that even the most geographically or socially isolated individuals are reached. These expressions were evident in the following verbatim excerpts:

"Use village elders, *nyumba kumi*, chiefs' *barazas*" (Respondent #11).

"Door to door sensitisation and village *barazas*" (Respondent #16).

"Through *barazas* with local leaders" (Respondent #29).

"Narrowing down to the area chiefs to conduct *barazas*" (Respondent #44).

"Using all mediums of communication, including the grassroots forum" (Respondent #67).

6.3.2. Theme #2: Use of Vernacular and Accessible Language

Another strong theme is the use of vernacular and simplified language to ensure clear understanding across literacy and language barriers. Respondents stressed that communication should be delivered in local dialects, Kiswahili, and other simplified forms, ensuring relevance and comprehension among the marginalised, including the elderly, illiterate, and disabled. Translation into indigenous languages was frequently mentioned as a vital step in breaking down communication barriers. This theme emphasises that messaging is not only understandable but also contextually appropriate, as implied in the following verbatim quotes.

"Use vernacular or simplified language" (Respondent #31).

"Translate in all vernacular languages" (Respondent #47).

"Using vernacular at the grassroots to educate on BETA and Vision 2030" (Respondent #58).

"Translating the program into a language that everyone understands" (Respondent #70).

"Use of local languages and dialects" (Respondent #83).

6.3.3. Theme #3: Inclusive and Accessible Formats

Respondents also highlighted the need for inclusive and accessible communication formats. This includes the use of braille, sign language, visual tools, and mobile platforms like SMS and USSD to reach people with disabilities and those in remote areas with limited digital access. Suggestions to increase the use of radios and local television also reflect a recognition of the varying technological capacities among marginalised populations. Inclusive formats ensure that no group is left out due to sensory impairments, literacy levels, or technological divides. This was reflected in the following verbatim comments:

"Develop accessible communication materials for people with disabilities" (Respondent #27).

"Using local languages, braille, and sign language" (Respondent #53).

"Offer mobile-friendly updates via SMS or USSD" (Respondent # 77).

"Use understandable language and various modes of communication" (Respondent #111).

"Visual and audio tools" (Respondent #130).

6.3.4. Theme #4: Participatory and Empowerment-Oriented Communication

The call for participatory communication and empowerment was also apparent from the qualitative responses. Respondents noted that marginalised populations should not just be recipients of information but active participants in designing and delivering communication. Empowering local youth, women, and community resource personnel helps embed the messaging within the social fabric of these communities, increasing both trust and uptake. Feedback mechanisms and inclusive civic education were also recommended as strategies to strengthen participation and accountability in the communication of BETA and Vision 2030. This is evident in the following verbatim examples:

"Ensure inclusivity and proper public participation" (Respondent #29)

"Have community educators at village levels, including the nomadic areas" (Respondent #60)

"If people can be given an opportunity to give feedback and opinions" (Respondent #116)

"Engage the youth in informal settings for youth in informal settlements" (Respondent #143)

"Foster participatory communication for all marginalised groups" (Respondent #158).

7. Discussion

The first objective of the study was to assess the level of awareness of the Beta and Vision 2030 agendas. The disparity between relatively high awareness and moderate to low familiarity, especially with BETA, aligns with Kauma et al. (2022), who observed that while awareness of government strategies is growing, there are still gaps in understanding and inclusivity. This validates the literature's claim that inadequate public awareness and digital illiteracy continue to hinder policy uptake. The mixed perceptions regarding government inclusivity also reinforce Goldman's (1991) argument that inclusive communication is necessary to ensure effective engagement across all societal groups, including persons with disabilities. Furthermore, the reliance on television, social media, and radio as dominant communication channels confirms Omondi's (2016) observation that government communication often defaults to publicity models rather than interactive or inclusive strategies. The dominance of English as the language of communication (82%) supports Kauma et al.'s (2022) emphasis on language barriers and further explains why vernacular (3%) is rarely used, despite its potential to reach rural populations.

The second objective of the study was to analyse the uptake levels of the Beta and Vision 2030 strategies among Kenyan Citizens. The moderate accessibility (43.0% "somewhat accessible") and low perceived effectiveness (overall mean score of 2.37) of communication on BETA and Vision 2030 echo Kauma et al.'s (2022) observations regarding inadequate public awareness, limited access to information, and bureaucratic inefficiencies that hinder citizen engagement. The near-even split in citizen participation (51.0% encouraged vs. 49.0% not encouraged) further supports Omondi's (2016) and Owino's (2023) critiques of government communication as lacking coordination. Additionally, the study's limited inclusiveness (only 9.0% found it very inclusive) is consistent with the emphasis of Goldman (1991) and the Forbes Communications Council (2024) on the necessity of inclusive communication to engage diverse populations.

Sagase's (2024) findings on the ineffectiveness of common communication channels in promoting meaningful public engagement are also reflected in this study's report, which states that 68% of citizens are not appropriately sensitised.

This study identified inadequate public awareness, mistrust of information sources, and socio-economic disparities as major barriers to the uptake of government strategies such as BETA and Vision 2030. The respondents' emphasis on inclusive and accessible communication strategies, including vernacular use, grassroots engagement, and formats suitable for persons with disabilities, aligns with Goldman's (1991) conceptualisation of inclusive communication as a dignified and flexible approach that fosters positive interactions among diverse populations. The study's findings also affirm Aswani and Otiende's (2024) advocacy for inclusive and generation-sensitive communication strategies, particularly the use of accessible technology, respect for differences, and participatory models that empower marginalised groups.

8. Conclusion

The conclusion is drawn that while communication efforts have achieved broad awareness of Vision 2030 and, to a lesser extent, the BETA initiative, they fall short in deepening public understanding and fostering a sense of inclusive participation. While communication has raised awareness, it has not translated into widespread access, participation, or engagement with the BETA and Vision 2030 strategies. The majority of respondents found the information only somewhat accessible, and nearly half felt that communication had not encouraged their active participation – indicating limited impact on behaviour change. Furthermore, citizens perceived communication methods as only moderately inclusive, with significant gaps in reaching rural populations, youth, women, and persons with disabilities. The high reliance on mass media and English as the primary language of dissemination has potentially limited the reach and effectiveness of the messaging among grassroots and marginalised populations. Moreover, the mixed perceptions regarding government inclusivity point to a communication gap – not just in access, but in engagement. The moderate effectiveness scores and the majority view that citizens are not appropriately sensitised underscore a disconnect between communication efforts and actual citizen uptake. This suggests that current strategies lack the depth, reach, and inclusivity required to drive meaningful public engagement, and points to the need for more deliberate, targeted, and community-anchored communication approaches.

Citizen participation in BETA and Vision 2030 remains constrained by several communication barriers, including inadequate outreach, mistrust, low literacy, and limited access to inclusive platforms. The most marginalised groups – such as the elderly, rural residents, and the uneducated – are frequently left out of current communication strategies, further undermining inclusivity. Respondents overwhelmingly advocated for more localised, community-driven modalities, such as leveraging chiefs' *barazas*, *nyumba kumi* structures, and door-to-door engagement. Additionally, there was a strong preference for Kiswahili and vernacular and/or simplified language to enhance comprehension and cultural relevance.

9. Recommendations

For communication to serve as an effective inclusivity strategy for the realisation of BETA and Vision 2030, there is a clear need for more participatory, multilingual, and community-based approaches that move beyond informing to involving citizens in shaping and owning the national agenda. Inclusive formats such as braille, sign language, visual aids, SMS, and radio were recommended to accommodate disabilities and digital divides.

Secondly, translating government agendas into indigenous languages should be undertaken to reach the masses. In a country where the average years spent by the citizens in school is capped at 6.7 years (within primary school as per the Kenyan education system) which then falls below the world's average at 8.7 (United Nations, 2025), a large number of citizen may not have capacity to decipher complex presentations and reports, which carry these government agendas in a way that they can feel included and their contribution counts. Moreso, when these initiatives and agendas are written only in English. As an inclusivity strategy, the government therefore needs to translate the agendas into the vernacular dialects that are easier for the larger population to understand.

Thirdly, the study highlights the need for participatory and empowerment-based communication approaches that position citizens not merely as recipients of information but as co-creators in the national discourse. Effective communication makes citizens more informed, thereby significantly improving the quality of decisions they make as they create solutions to both public and private societal problems. Information rarely spreads evenly and in a timely to the people it is expected to reach, if the government would enhance communication by investing in literacy programs in all areas that touch on its economy, it would create "smart managers" among its citizens which would dynamically change how every common citizen intervenes when faced by public (communal) or private (personal) societal problems. A perfect example would be money investment literacy programs that range from basic to advanced. With a greater number of "smart managers", government intervention in many societal problems lessens, as common citizens can create homegrown solutions to problems around them, and the priority now shifts to alternative agendas, which, in essence, lead to improved economic growth.

These insights underscore that for communication to be an effective tool for inclusivity, it must be grassroots-oriented, linguistically accessible, technologically adaptable, and participatory. Lastly, a key finding of this study was mistrust of information sources. Future research should focus on the role of trust deficits in government agencies and how they affect public perception and participation in government initiatives.

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