

THE ROLE OF THE MASS MEDIA IN PROMOTING GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN PEOPLE AND NATURE: FOCUS ON COASTAL KENYA

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Effective nature management messages should reach a majority of the people. Previous studies have focussed more on the mass media promoting conservation of the general environment, but there has not been a thorough examination of the potential of the mass media to promote the friendly co-existence between people and nature. The paper argues that the public has a responsibility to protect the nation's resources. But they can not be expected to conserve nature if they do not comprehend the official policy of the land. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to explore how the mass media can contribute to good coexistence by raising people's consciousness on nature conservation. This research analyses the reception and perception of nature conservation messages along Coastal Kenya, develops a model and makes recommendations that can provide a feedback to the policy makers on the success of their awareness program. The paper examines questions like: Which are interested in conserving nature and which people are inclined on degrading it? What's the distribution of the mass media in Coastal Kenya? In what form are the nature messages delivered to the people: Are they handed down as polite statements, orders or threats? Information for this study has been obtained using a series of methodologies and finds that Kenya, for instance, has a good conservation policy in place but it still follows a Top-down model that lacks opportunities for the public to offer feedback to the state. This study is significant to social science as well as to public policy. The results of this study are not just for adding to the scientific pool of knowledge but that this study will be useful if it can also lead to a change in policy.