

Have you seen these shows?

Monitoring *Tazama!*— (investigate show)
and *XYZ*— (political satire)



Key Findings *Tazama!* and *XYZ*

- 11% of Kenyans have ever watched the *Tazama!* show, and 24% have ever watched the *XYZ* show.
- Both shows seem to appeal to a younger and higher educated audience (while they each hold similar appeal to men and women, and rural and urban viewers).
- The three top reasons given for watching the *Tazama!* show were related to increasing one's knowledge and awareness of current topics and views of Kenyan citizens.
- Among *XYZ* viewers, half watch the show for its comical nature, but half watch to see their leaders exposed, and to learn about current issues. Seven out of 10 respondents also appreciated being able to make jokes about leaders and bringing up topics that are not addressed in other shows.

Introduction

XYZ TV Show

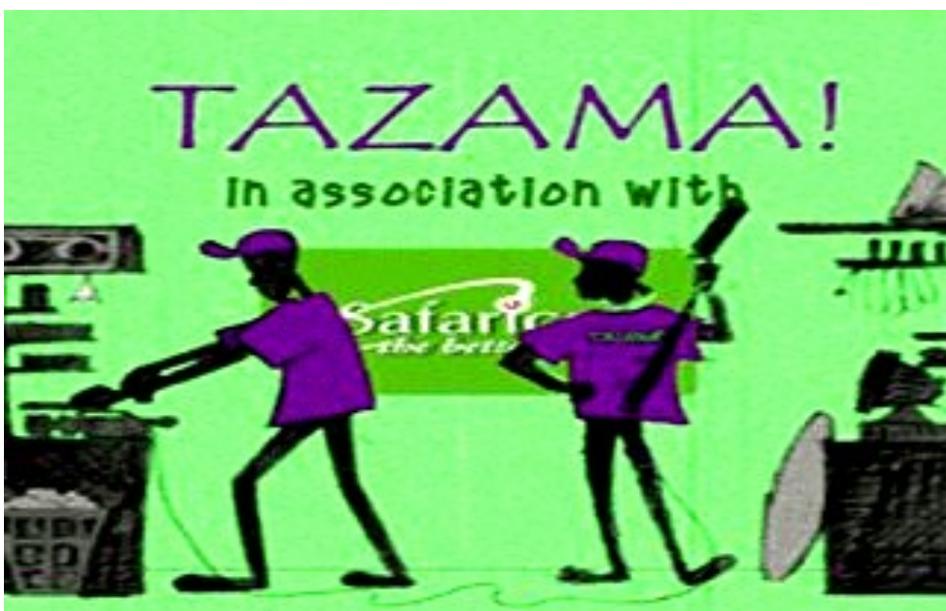
There are many ways to convey important information in a manner that raises people's curiosity. Buni Media's *XYZ* show is a Kenyan weekly television program that aims to stimulate public imagination and debate using well researched information, but delivered in a unique style – through the use of puppetry¹. The *XYZ* show is a political satire that Godfrey Mwapembwa a.k.a Gado, an acclaimed cartoonist, created for the Kenyan market. It addresses current hot topics, through various Kenyan characters in puppet form, to stir public interest on current affairs. It is currently in its ninth consecutive season, and it is estimated to reach [millions](#) of viewers. Twaweza has been supporting the *XYZ* show since 2011.

¹<http://buni.tv/shows/xyz-show/>

In a very entertaining way it provides Kenyans a platform to think and talk about politics, ethnicity and Kenyan history. The show also provides an opportunity to challenge the dominance of political leaders through its satirical form.

2. *Tazama! Show*

The *Tazama!* series is a product of Media Development Africa (MEDEVA), a Kenyan not for profit non-governmental media organization whose work involves the production and distribution of high quality documentaries and feature films. It is an award winning program on current affairs, mixing investigative pieces, with documentaries, Stories of Change and debates². Twaweza partnered with *Tazama!* because *Tazama!* investigates and reports on issues that matter to ordinary people. Cases are often followed over time to create a complete story of the experience, whether of success or failure, hope or despair. The program is infused with citizen agency, giving space for citizens to ‘speak out’ to a national audience. The show journeys across different parts of Kenya to capture the diverse struggles and aspirations of ordinary Kenyan citizens. The show had run for five seasons but had been off air for six years; the partnership with Twaweza enabled *Tazama!* to resume broadcasting. So how successful are these two distinct shows in reaching ordinary Kenyans and what role do they play in informing their viewers? This report summarizes the findings from a recent study conducted by Twaweza on the questions above.



Methodology

The aim of this exercise was to identify the coverage of the *Tazama!* show and the XYZ show among a nationally representative sample of Kenyans, and, among the viewers of each, to assess how viewers perceive the show. The data was collected in Kenya through an “omnibus” survey; the sample size was 2059 respondents selected to be nationally representative (among whom 63% were rural and 37% were urban). The data collection took place in March 2014. The findings in this brief are based on the quantitative data collected through this exercise.

²<http://twaweza.org/go/medeva-ajea>

Main findings: XYZ!

Who watches?

As Figure 1 shows, 24% of Kenyans have ever watched the XYZ show. Among viewers, 59% reported watching it at least once per week, while another 18% reported watching it 2-3 times per month (data not shown).

Figure 1: Have you ever watched XYZ Show? (n=2059)

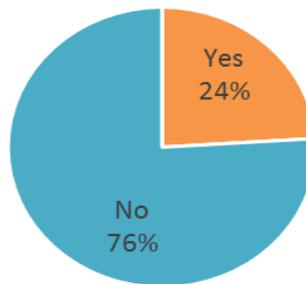
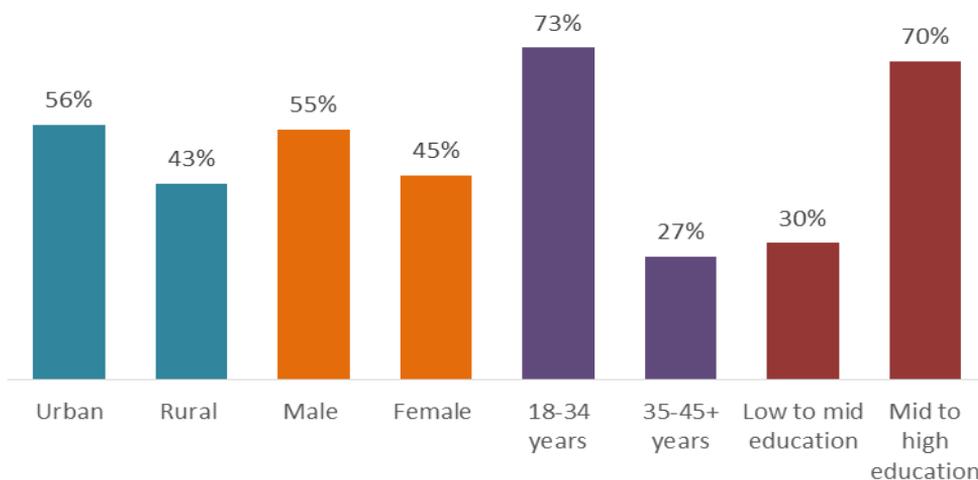


Figure 2 shows the demographic characteristics of the viewers of the XYZ show. While it appears that viewers are somewhat more likely to be male and urban (as compared to female and rural), the more notable differences appear to be among age groups and educational attainment. Among the viewers, 73% were aged 34 years or less, and 70% had completed secondary education or higher³.

Figure 2: Demographic characteristics of the viewers of the XYZ show (n=486)

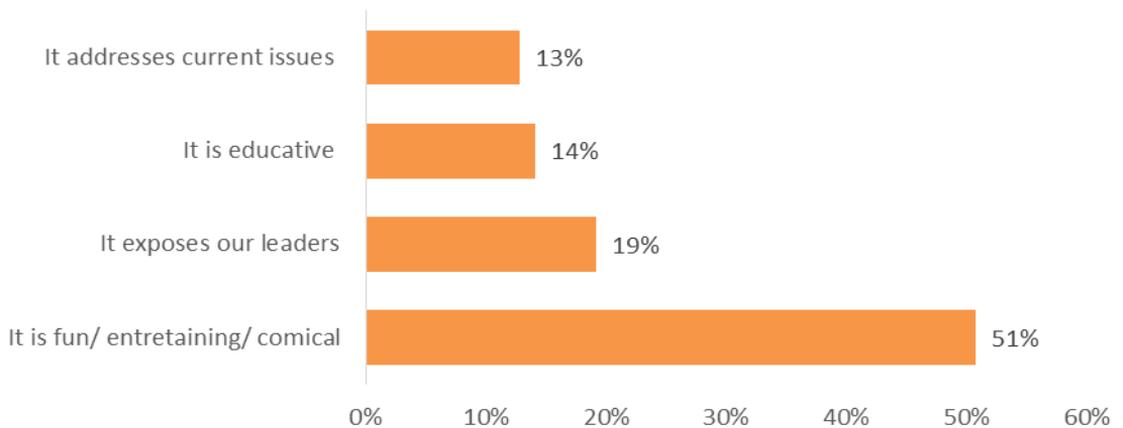


³“Low to mid education” includes respondents who reported to have up to some, but incomplete, secondary education; “mid to high education” includes respondents who reported to have completed secondary education, or higher.

Why do they watch?

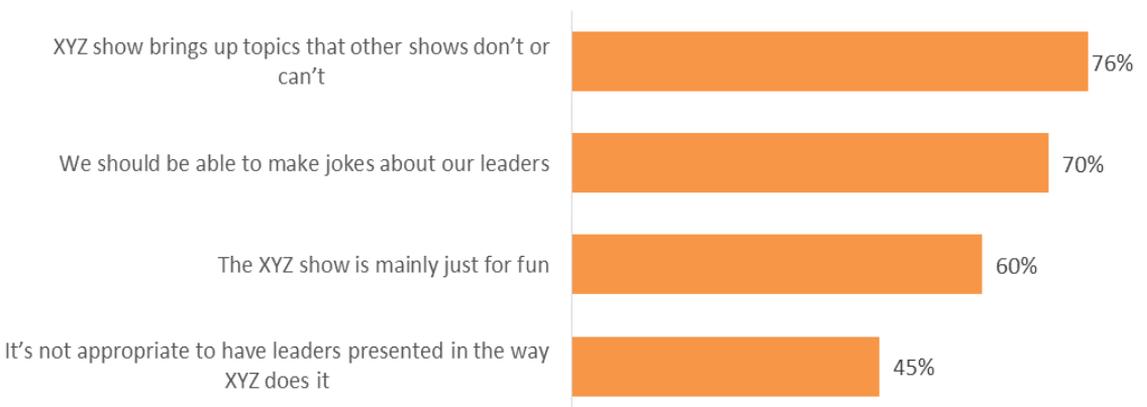
Among viewers, 84% stated that they liked it (data not shown). There were some common reasons given for watching the show, as illustrated in Figure 3. While 51% like to watch the XYZ Show because it is fun, entertaining, or comical, the remaining 49% like to watch it for more sober reasons, including because it exposes current leaders, it is educational, and addresses current issues. Interestingly, among those who have watched the show but reported not liking it, the main reason given for the dislike was the show’s criticism of the government and portraying a “bad” picture of the leaders (data not shown).

Figure 3: Main reasons viewers watch the XYZ Show (n=412)



In an attempt to further understand what viewers really thought of the show, they were asked to what extent they agreed with a series of statements about the show; results are shown in Figure 4. More than three-quarters of viewers (76%) agreed that the XYZ show brings up topics that other shows don’t, and 70% also agreed that it is acceptable to make jokes about leaders. Six out of ten (60%) also agreed that the show is mainly for fun. On the other hand, 45% of viewers thought that it is *not* appropriate to present leaders as the XYZ show does.

Figure 4: Viewers who strongly agree or agree with the following statements (n=486)



Conclusions

Coverage of the XYZ show is quite high, as would be expected of a show that is popular and well-established. The show appears to appeal fairly equally to men and women, and is watched fairly equally among urban and rural respondents (which is notable, given that in rural areas the overall access to television tends to be lower). In addition, the XYZ show seems to appeal to younger and better educated viewers. Viewers appeared to appreciate both the entertainment value of the show, as well as its more serious nature of imparting information and addressing important topics. Furthermore, the data suggests that the show occupies a fairly unique space in Kenyan media, as fully three-quarters of viewers agreed that the XYZ show brings up topics that other shows don't or can't. There was also an appreciation of poking fun at one's leaders, although the show is clearly not without controversy, as not all respondents like the show, and nearly half of those who had watched the show did not believe the portrayal of leaders was appropriate. It would be interesting to investigate further whether the XYZ show, in addition to being memorable and fun, also contributes to stimulating debate among ordinary Kenyan citizens on issues of importance and to dismantling the cloak of infallibility from political leaders.

The XYZ Show



Main findings: *Tazama!*

Who watches?

Those who watch the show appear to do so frequently: 40% reported to have done so on a weekly basis within the last month, and 26% stated that they had watched the show 2-3 times per month within the same period (data not shown).

Figure 5: Have you have ever watched *Tazama!*? (n=2059)

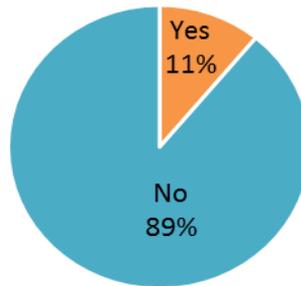
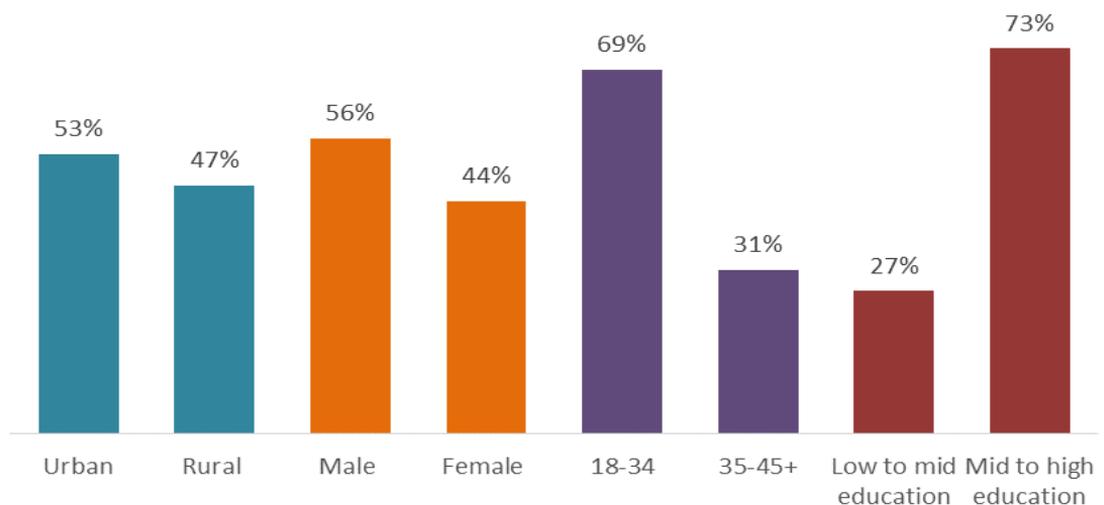


Figure 6: Demographic characteristics of the viewers of *Tazama!* (n=222)

Figure 6 shows the demographic characteristics of viewers of *Tazama!*. It shows that viewers are more likely to be urban (53% of viewers are urban, while among the general population, only 37% is urban). There doesn't appear to be a difference in the proportion of male and female viewers; however, viewers tend to be younger (up to 34 years old), and also tend to be better educated⁴. It is worth noting that higher education is likely to be correlated with a higher ownership (and access to viewing) television, although this was not tested.

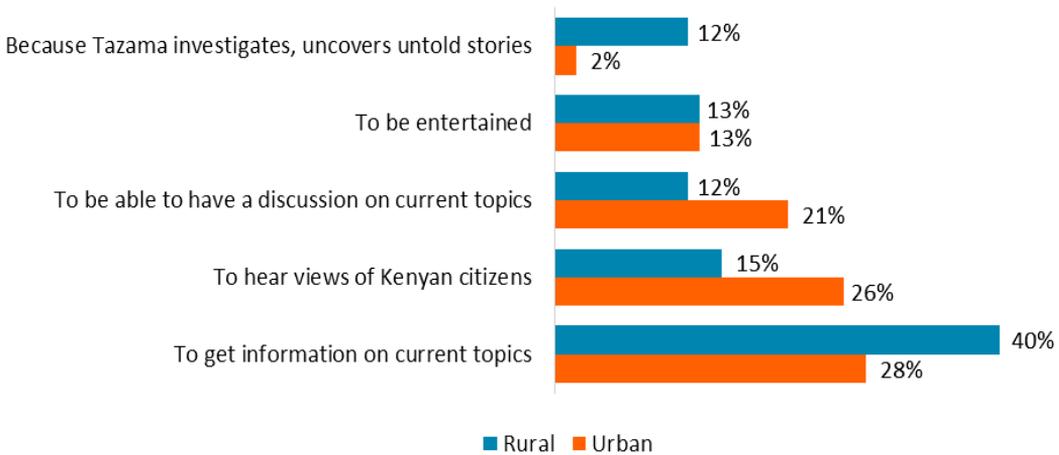


⁴“Low to mid education” includes respondents who reported to have up to some, but incomplete, secondary education; “mid to high education” includes respondents who reported to have completed secondary education, or higher.

Why do they watch?

Figure 6 shows the main reasons, among urban and rural respondents, for watching the show. The most commonly reported reason (34%) was “to get information on current topics.” Among the rural population, up to 40% chose this as the main reason for watching the show (vs. 28% of the urban population). Another 20% of all respondents said it was to hear the views of Kenyan citizens, and 17% in order to be able to have a discussion on current topics. There were no notable differences between the reasons men and women gave for watching the show.

Figure 6: Main reasons viewers watch Tazama! (n=222)



Conclusions

It was Tazama’s first season in six years, and in this time they had presumably lost their loyal group of viewers. In this context, the 11% of Kenyans who had ever watched the show is a satisfactory level of coverage (as a point of comparison, the XYZ show, a popular satirical televised show in its eight consecutive season, had been watched by 24% of the general population; see next section of the brief). It is noteworthy that the typical *Tazama!* viewer lives in an urban area, is aged 18-34, and has higher than average levels of education. Furthermore, most people gave a ‘meaningful’ reason for watching the show (e.g. “to get information on current topics”), indicating that the *Tazama!* show is fulfilling a demand for information among Kenyan viewers. The next question that would be interesting to investigate is whether the show has inspired viewers to take action similar to those depicted in the episodes.