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Performance in Scientific Discourses Hosted in Generic Studio Settings: A Comparative Analysis of Citizen's *Kenya's Gold* and *Shamba Shape-Up*

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Abstract
This study compares the production design and audience impact of two agricultural programmes broadcast on Citizen TV (Royal Media Services): *Kenya's Gold* and *Shamba Shape-Up*. Despite sharing an agricultural focus and an entertainment-education purpose, the two programmes report markedly different audience outcomes. The study draws on Entertainment-Education theory, Social Learning Theory and Performance Theory, and uses a qualitative comparative case study design. It combines close textual analysis of ten purposively sampled episodes per programme (January 2025 to May 2026) with thematic analysis of twelve sampled YouTube comments for *Kenya's Gold* and secondary analysis of the *Shamba Shape-Up* Series 15 impact report (N=600 smallholder farmers). Findings point to two divergent paradigms. *Kenya's Gold* follows a studio-based, journalist-led, aesthetic-driven model in which artificial sets, costumes, and scripted presentation create what this study terms a "performative deficit": a theory-practice disconnect that shifts attention to the presenters. *Shamba Shape-Up* follows a field-based, actor-facilitated, problem-solving model shot on working farms, where concepts are demonstrated in context and support observational learning. The study concludes that scientific content about objective reality is better represented in context-specific settings. It recommends that producers of such programmes use appropriate contexts, strengthen audience feedback mechanisms, and conduct regular audience impact assessments.

Key terms: Audience impact, entertainment-education, Kenya's Gold, objective reality, Shamba Shape-Up.

INTRODUCTION

This study compares the production design and audience impact of two agricultural programmes broadcast on Citizen TV (Royal Media Services): *Kenya's Gold* and *Shamba Shape-Up*. Despite their shared agricultural focus, *Kenya's Gold* and *Shamba Shape-Up* report divergent audience impact. Both programs are anchored in edutainment, a hybrid model that integrates education and entertainment. This approach has proven effective for knowledge dissemination. It aligns with the historical rationale for introducing film and theatre in colonial Kenya through the Colonial Film Unit, which was explicitly instructional and aimed to teach indigenous populations about health, agriculture, and civic order (Ambler, 2001). The colonial use of visual media established a precedent for using performance for instruction, a logic that persists in post-colonial television. Contemporary Kenyan television continues to deploy the entertainment-education ideology. This is particularly evident in fictional television drama, where compelling narratives are curated to explore specific thematic concerns. Contemporary Kenyan television continues to deploy this entertainment-education ideology, embedding educational content within entertaining frameworks to enhance audience relatability. Audiences engage with these themes through narrative immersion, using fictional characters and settings presented through a realist aesthetic, thereby fulfilling the dual objectives of entertainment and education. Royal Media Services (RMS) exemplifies this practice by producing and broadcasting thematically specific programming aimed at niche audiences, where the educational function is foregrounded over entertainment.

These productions adopt a documentary-style, objectivist epistemology rather than a constructivist, fictional approach, prioritising authenticity to enhance credibility. Examples include *Kenya's Gold* and *Shamba Shape-Up*. According to the *Shamba Shape-Up* Series 15 Impact Report (SSU, 2025), its viewership consists predominantly of agricultural practitioners seeking to enhance technical knowledge or seeking inspiration for agricultural enterprise. Paradoxically, despite addressing the same subject matter, agriculture, Kenya's Gold and *Shamba Shape-Up* exhibit divergent impacts. This discrepancy necessitates an investigation into their divergent production modalities and communicative strategies. This paper therefore investigates this phenomenon by asking three questions: 1) how are the shows produced? 2) What impact do these shows have on their audiences? 3) What differences stand out between the two shows? These questions are answered in three different sections, followed by a discussion of the findings.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the last two decades, there has been a marked increase in the amount and popularity of edutainment programming. While the body of literature surrounding edutainment is wide but not deep, the concept is traditionally conceived as a pedagogical strategy that employs entertainment tactics (Carlson, 2012). Early conceptualisations focused on children, but contemporary scholarship positions edutainment as a hybrid model that integrates education and entertainment to enhance adult learning. Makarius (2017) defines it as improving learning by making it more engaging and enjoyable through the integration of technology, design, and narrative. Okan (2003) provides the critical foundation for the performative deficit observed in Kenya's Gold. Warning that edutainment has become a hybrid genre obsessed with "fun", Okan argues that education concerns the development of cognitive structures and that technology is a medium, not a pedagogy. When entertainment overrides education, what emerges is technotainment: heavy on entertainment but lacking rigour, where learning is trivialised, and students are motivated to play with the technology rather than learn.

Okan, drawing on Postman (1985), notes that such designs teach that anything worth learning ought to take the form of entertainment, diminishing the need to attend seriously to prior knowledge, metacognitive strategies and sense-making, and producing stimulus-bound behaviour and short attention spans. This is compounded by what Salomon and Perkins (1998) call the Butterfly Defect, where learners lured by visual appeal engage in shallow, associationist wandering rather than deep, goal-oriented search, coming to believe knowledge itself is a hypermedia spectacle rather than logically structured science. This directly explains *Kenya's Gold*'s studio-based, aesthetic-driven model where artificial sets, costume, make-up and poetic language suspend objective realism and divert

attention to presenters, resulting in medium output but low feedback efficiency. In contrast, Okan concludes that effective edutainment must function as a cognitive tool that enables mind-extending, facilitating planning, representation and reflection within authentic, socially co-constructed tasks, which is precisely *Shamba Shape-Up's* field-based, problem-solving model shot on practical farms, aligning epistemology with ontology and converting output into documented behavioural change.

Zhu et al. (2024) argue that evaluating scientific communication by output alone is inadequate and propose a two-stage model that separates content production from audience reception. In their study of 37 research institutes, they define three indicators: input in terms of personnel and funding, output in terms of volume of content produced, and feedback in terms of audience response such as reading volume and engagement, which form two efficiencies: output efficiency, how well inputs become content, and feedback efficiency, how well content becomes engagement. Using K-means clustering with K=3, they identified three paradigms that directly explain the divergence between *Kenya's Gold* and *Shamba Shape-Up*. The Green Cluster, centred at 0.856 and 0.972, represents institutions with high output and high feedback efficiency, efficient in both production and engagement. This corresponds to *Shamba Shape-Up's* field-based, empirical production model, shot on practical farms; anchoring abstract concepts in context ensures output translates into behavioural change. The Yellow Cluster, centred at 0.421 and 0.282, represents institutions with medium output but low feedback efficiency, producing content that lacks relevance and fails to engage.

This corresponds to *Kenya's Gold's* studio-based, aesthetic-driven, journalist-led model, where the generic studio setting and performative elements of costume, make-up, and scripted presentation create a performative deficit, leaving the program at the awareness-creation level with shallow engagement and a broken feedback mechanism. The Purple Cluster, centred at 0.957 and 0.254, represents the majority with high feedback but low output due to workflow inefficiencies. Zhu et al. (2024) provide a validated systems-theory model for diagnosing why scientific communication fails at the feedback stage. However, their study is limited to 37 research institutes in a single year and to online written communication. It does not apply the two-stage model to televised edutainment, nor does it examine how production design; studio mise-en-scène vs field reality- mediates the conversion of output to feedback.

Theoretical Framework

The study draws on Entertainment-Education theory, Social Learning Theory and Performance Theory. Entertainment-Education (E-E) is a theory-based communication strategy that purposely designs and implements a media message to both entertain and educate, increasing audience members' knowledge, creating favourable attitudes, shifting social norms, and changing overt behaviour (Singhal & Rogers, 1999). Its efficacy is often explained through Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory, which posits that learning occurs through observation, imitation, and modelling. Viewers are more likely to adopt a behaviour when they observe a credible, similar model performing it in a recognisable context and being rewarded. In agricultural communication, this implies that farmers should observe fellow farmers, not journalists, solving real problems on real farms. This study introduces a second lens: Performance Theory. Following Goffman (1959) and Schechner (2003), all social interaction involves front-stage performance. Scientific discourse, however, derives its authority from suppressing performative excesses in favour of objectivity, empiricism, and evidence. Searle's (1995) distinction between ontologically objective reality and epistemologically subjective interpretation is critical.

Agriculture belongs to the former. When ontologically objective topics are staged in a studio, a space designed for spectacle, there is a risk of what this study terms 'the performative deficit', where the performance of science overrides the science itself. The studio is a mise-en-scène constructed for the camera to portray an appealing visual. Participants perform for viewers as shows are scripted with a pre-determined chain of events. Costume, make-up, and elevated language become signifiers that distract from empirical content.

In contrast, field-based production aligns epistemology with ontology: objective reality is represented in its appropriate contextual setting,

reducing performative noise and enhancing believability. The first theory becomes the normative anchor of this study; it establishes both programs as intentional interventions designed to increase knowledge, shift norms, and change behaviour, but they operationalise this differently; hence, a comparative analysis establishes the differences in operation and the effects. The second theory, Social Learning Theory, predicts that field-based production will achieve higher self-efficacy and intention to adopt than studio-based production because it satisfies the conditions for observational learning. Finally, performance theory allows the study to measure the performance levels of each show: the setting, costume, language and scripting and the role of the presenters. Therefore, the study uses Entertainment-Education to define the purpose of both shows, Social Learning Theory to define the psychological conditions required for that purpose to be achieved, and Performance Theory to explain how production choices in studio versus field settings either satisfy or violate those conditions, thereby creating or avoiding a performative deficit that hinders audience understanding.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a qualitative comparative case study design. Two programmes broadcast on Citizen TV, *Kenya's Gold* and *Shamba Shape-Up*, were treated as bounded cases and examined in three linked phases: (1) production analysis, (2) audience response analysis, and (3) comparative synthesis. A case study design suits the research questions because it allows close examination of how production choices (setting, host role, costume, expert interaction and narrative structure) operate in context, and how those choices relate to audience response. The study takes an interpretivist position. Televisual performance is treated as a constructed phenomenon whose meaning is produced through producers' choices and viewers' interpretations. The two programmes themselves are contrasted along a constructivist-objectivist axis. Kenya's Gold is read as a studio-based, aesthetic-driven form, while Shamba Shape-Up is read as a field-based, empirical form. This distinction is analytic: it describes how the programmes represent agricultural reality, not the researcher's stance. The analysis was guided by the three theories set out in the framework. Entertainment-Education theory defined the purpose of each programme. Social Learning Theory supplied the conditions for observational learning against which production features were assessed (a credible and similar model, a recognisable context, and demonstrated outcomes). Performance Theory supplied the indicators of performative excess (setting, costume, language, scripting and presenter role).

Additionally, Zhu et al.'s (2024) output-feedback distinction was used to interpret the relationship between production and audience response. Ten episodes of each programme (20 in total) were selected purposively from episodes aired between January 2025 and May 2026. The selection aimed to cover a range of enterprises (crops, livestock, and mixed farming) so differences could be attributed to production design rather than subject matter. Kenya's Gold episodes were coded 001 to 010 and Shamba Shape-Up episodes 011 to 020. Episodes were accessed through the Citizen TV YouTube channel and the Akz TV (Africa Knowledge Zone) channel. For audience sampling, two sources were used because the data available for the two programmes were unequal.

For *Shamba Shape-Up,* data was collected from the website and the Series 15 impact report (Marles, 2025). The report drew on 600 face-to-face interviews with smallholder farmers in Embu, Kilifi, Nakuru and Kisumu counties (150 per county), using a structured questionnaire and selective sampling. For *Kenya's Gold,* no impact report has been published by the media house; primary data were therefore drawn from viewer comments on the programme's Citizen TV YouTube playlist. Twelve comments (N=12) were randomly sampled across different episodes. Data were collected through non-participant, close viewing of the sampled episodes, documentation of audience comments, and retrieval of the published impact data and national agricultural statistics (The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2025). Still images were captured from episodes to illustrate setting, costume and host presentation.

Close textual analysis was applied using a structured coding matrix with eight categories: location, presenter role, expert interaction, practical demonstration, costume, narrative structure, problem

solving and, for Kenya's Gold, studio-field transitions. Each episode was viewed and coded against these categories, and the results are presented in Tables 1 and 2. Comments were coded inductively using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis: familiarisation, initial coding, theme searching, theme review, theme definition and reporting. Four themes emerged: presenter-focused engagement, practical information-seeking, awareness creation and youth empowerment. Comments written in Kiswahili and Sheng were read in the original language and interpreted by the researcher, who is proficient in both. Percentages are reported only to show the sample distribution and are not generalisable.

Findings from both programmes were compared feature by feature (Table 3). Production features were then related to audience outcomes using the output-efficiency and feedback-efficiency distinction (Zhu et al., 2024), with each programme located against the Green and Yellow cluster profiles. Credibility was supported by triangulating three sources: production coding, audience comments and the published impact report. Purposive sampling across enterprise types was used to avoid attributing differences to topic alone. Dependability was supported by a fixed coding matrix applied uniformly to both programmes, and by reporting the coded data in full in the tables. Confirmability was supported by quoting audience comments verbatim.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Production Design of the Two Shows

The two shows show several differing production elements. First, *Kenya's Gold* is a studio-produced show hosted by Violet Ngina and Emmanuel Terer that runs every weekday on Citizen Television from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm. The hosts are professional journalists; one holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Media Studies and a diploma in Human Resource Management and Business, and the other is a Journalism graduate from Moi University. The show thrives on hosting agricultural experts in the studio and visiting agricultural farms. The studio is the show's platform for interviewing these experts, who are frequently invited to share insights in their areas of specialisation. As a platform, particularly set before a camera to fit the frame and portray an appealing mise-en-scene, people on set tend to perform for viewers, as the shows are scripted with a pre-determined chain of events that shape the nature of the show. Journalists on set are mere performers in a scripted storyline with a predetermined ending. For *Kenya's Gold*, the aim is always to explore available agricultural practices that audiences can engage with, and they also seek experts' opinions. These experts, when invited to the studio, due to the studio ecosystem and the lack of contact with the audience and topics of discussion such as physical fields where agriculture is practised, tend to put on a performance that defeats scientific objectivity, losing the link between theory and practice and placing heavy emphasis on acting skills to please the audience.

Moreover, another factor that distinguishes the two shows is the heavy investment in sets and costumes in *Kenya's Gold*. The studio already creates a disconnect, as the artificial studio lights and set present a utopia that negates what agriculture actually is. There is high investment in costume and make-up, particularly on the hosts who shape the perspectives of these shows. This portrays the artificiality of the show as two careers are juxtaposed: journalism and practical agriculture, and events are unravelled through the lens of the journalists, who further expose this disconnection through elevated looks intended to boost the visual aesthetic of the show. This suspends objective realism through immersion that might boost believability.

Therefore, audiences have to navigate two worlds: from the journalist gatekeepers to the real agricultural experts and practitioners to gain insights on agriculture, and this system risks audiences simply liking the journalistic world and stopping there, defeating the purpose of having the show in the first place. The appearance of the journalist, presentation style and the poetic language use, especially by the Kiswahili host, might be the real attraction for audiences and not agriculture. This makes spectacle the show's selling point, as practical minimalism is sacrificed for visual aesthetics. Further, when the show breaks away from the studio to recorded fieldwork, the journalist's teleporting further highlights the disconnect between the live studio session and the recorded fieldwork. These recorded parts become more engaging to audiences than the studio sessions, as a practical showcase of the

discussed phenomena is more believable and pragmatic. However, a concern remains: these moments might linger in audiences' memories more than the studio sessions.

Table 1. *Kenya's Gold* Production Design

Episode code	Topic	Location	Presenter Role	Expert Interaction	Practical Demonstration	Costume	Narrative Structure	Problem Solving
001	Sugarcane farming	Studio	Interviewer	Abstract	None	Suit	Scripted Q&A with a pre-determined ending	Lists challenges. Pledges the government to intervene
002	Maize farming	Blended; Studio and farm in Kakamega	Interview	Abstract, comments on farmer's practices from studio	Practical demonstration by farmer herself, None by expert	Gumboots in farm In studio, journalistic aesthetics upheld	Informational	Farmer experience diverts from standard practice
003	Coffee farming	Studio	Interviewer	Abstract and theoretical	None	Journalistic	Scripted Q&A with a pre-determined ending, Informational	Evaluates coffee reforms in Kenya, highlights underlying issues with implementation
004	Potato hydroponics	Studio	Interviewer	Abstract and theoretical	None	Journalistic; suit	Scripted Q&A with a pre-determined ending	General information on potato breeding and hydroponics
005	Tomato production	Studio	Interviewer	Panel of farmers and experts	None	Journalistic	Scripted Q&A with a pre-determined ending	Higlights challenges that led to tomato shortage then
006	Pig farming	Blended: Studio and pig farm in Kiambu	Interviewer	None	None	Journalistic in studio; Farmer's apron in the pig farm	Informational	Lists challenges and how he navigates them
007	Coffee farming	Blended; Studio	Interviewer	None	None	Journalistic	Scripted Q&A with a	Highlights new coffee

		and farm in Uasin Gishu					pre-determined ending	venture in Uasin Gishu
008	Cabbage farming	Blended: Studio and cabbage farm in Murang'a	Interviewer	None	None	Gumboots in farm In studio, journalistic aesthetics upheld	Informational	Highlights challenges such as pests and stunted growth but offers no solution
009	Dairy farming	Blended; Studio and farm in Nakuru	Interviewer	None	None	Gumboots in farm In studio, journalistic aesthetics upheld	Informational	Highlights the routine of maintain a jersey dairy cow.
010	Macadamia farming	Blended; Studio and farm in Taita Taveta	Interviewer	Abstract and theoretical	Practical demonstration by interviewer on how to remove the skin of the nut	Journalistic in studio; Farmer's apron in the farm	Informational	Highlights challenges in farming and market, does not offer solutions

Shamba Shape-Up, on the other hand, is hosted by Tonny Njuguna and Caroline Midimo and produced by The Mediae Company. It first premiered in Kenya in 2012 and airs on Citizen TV on Saturdays and Sundays at 1:30 pm. The show is shot on practical farms with minimal sets. The two hosts are not journalists but professional actors known for their stand-out roles in *Makutano Junction*. On the show, efforts to blend with farmers take priority in costume choices. This identifiability creates a sense of belonging for audiences who intend to gain agricultural insights from the show. The show is hosted on farmers' farms after adequate research on the intended topic of discussion and the link with the farmer. This creates a great link between theory and practice as abstract concepts are discussed in connection with practical undertakings. Experts invited on the show tackle practical issues faced by the host farmer. Unlike *Kenya's Gold,* where experts discuss issues abstractly, *Shamba Shape-Up* identifies specific challenges faced by the farmer and invites experts who solve the issue in practice, not just discuss it.

For farmers watching the show, the context provides a learning point, as the farmer hosting the show serves as an appropriate case study, and the experts' input becomes practical. This makes generalising findings feasible due to the show's hands-on approach. Although the two shows tackle the same issue, their approaches are quite different. *Kenya's Gold* focuses more on studio-produced content, while *Shamba Shape-Up* focuses more on context-specific content. Since the phenomena they tackle are scientific and cannot be negated by empiricism, *Shamba Shape-Up* tends to exemplify this more; hence, this study argues that shows tackling scientific discussions should be more engaging and empirical to create impact.

Table 2. Shamba Shape-Up's **Production Design**

Episode code	Topic	Location	Presenter Role	Expert Interaction	Practical Demonstration	Costume	Narrative Structure	Problem Solving
011	Chicken feed, BioChar, Calf Breeding and women group	Farmer's farm in Murang'a	Facilitates conversation between the expert and the farmer Oversee immediate implementation of expert's suggestion	Chicken expert is invited to check the chicken housing Expert inspects how organic manure is used on the farm Expert identifies shortcomings in cow management	Expert interacts with the chicken and checks their health Expert demonstrates how to put bio-fertilizer on plants Expert demonstrates the suitable mates for breeding the farmer's cow	Standard costume fit for field work	Dictated by findings on the farm	Expert advices on how to improve production to 98% Expert gives a bio-fertiliser to help generate pods and maize in the crops The cow shed is improved to make the cow comfortable
012	Bamboo, soil health, brioler and broiler feeds	Farmer's farm in Kisumu	Facilitates conversation between the expert and the farmer Oversee immediate implementation of expert's suggestion	Expert inspects chicken coop and list mis-undertakings	Expert demonstrates how to plant bamboo trees to diversify income	Standard costume fit for field work	Dictated by findings on the farm	Expert gives advice on how to improve hygiene in the coop Shamba Shape-Up builds an abattoir for the farmer The show builds terraces for the

								farmer to stop soil erosion
013	Soil health, trees, compost and sunflower	Farmer's farm in West Ugenya	Facilitates conversation between the expert and the farmer Oversee immediate implementation of expert's suggestion	Expert inspects farm and suggests the usage of earth auger to dig holes Expert advices the adoption of organic manure	Expert demonstrates how to use an earth auger Expert demonstrates how to make green manure and compost manure	Standard costume fit for field work	Dictated by findings on the farm	Expert gives advice on how to maintain the earth auger Soil fertility and plant health problem tackled through organic manure
014	Agro-biodiversity, Agro-forestry, Tiller	Farmer's farm in North Alego, Siaya	Facilitates conversation between the expert and the farmer Oversee immediate implementation of expert's suggestion	Expert advices on crop rotation Expert advices hot to integrate trees with crops Expert notes the manual labour involved in farming	Expert demonstrates how to plant leafy African vegetable crops Expert demonstrates how to plant trees Expert demonstrates how to use a tiller	Standard costume fit for field work	Dictated by findings on the farm	Expert offers solution to increase soil fertility Expert offers solution for tree integration
015	Calf & heifer care and high pressure washer	Farmer's farm in Nakuru	Facilitates conversation between the expert and the farmer Oversee immediate implementation of expert's suggestion	Expert identifies gaps in the housing structure of the cows and hygiene	Expert demonstrates how to make feeds for the new born calf Expert demonstrates how to use a pressure washer to	Standard costume fit for field work	Dictated by findings on the farm	The structure is renovated to make it more hygienic The farmer is introduced to pressure

					clean the cows' structure			washer which helps maintain hygiene levels
016	Broiler, poultry production and seaweed farming	Farmer's farm in Watamu	Facilitates conversation between the expert and the farmer Oversee immediate implementation of expert's suggestion	Expert notes gaps in the structure of the chicken coop	Expert demonstrates how to make nutritious feed for chics	Standard costume fit for field work	Dictated by findings on the farm	The structure is renovated to make it more habitable for chics
017	Brush cutter and organic pesticides	Farmer's farm in Kiserian	Facilitates conversation between the expert and the farmer Oversee immediate implementation of expert's suggestion	Expert observes weeds are a problem to the farmer Expert identifies problem of pests	Experts demonstrates how to use a brushcutter to control weeds Expert demonstrates how to use the recommended pesticide	Standard costume fit for field work	Dictated by findings on the farm	Weeds are controlled Pests are controlled
018	Milk production and egg production	Farmer's farm in Kahiga Murang'a	Facilitates conversation between the expert and the farmer Oversee immediate implementation of expert's suggestion	Expert identifies issues in the ffeding program of the cows Expert identifies nutritional gaps in the chicken feed	Expert demonstrates how to feed a calfing mother pre and post calfing Expert demonstrates how to feed the birds effectively	Standard costume fit for field work	Dictated by findings on the farm	Nutritional needs of a calfing mother are addressed Nutritional needs of the birds are taken care of
019	Dairy nutrition,	Farmer's farm	Facilitates conversatio	Experts identifies	Expert demonstrat	Standard	Dictated by	Nutritional needs

	goats care, persea mites and water pump	in Kipipiri	n between the expert and the farmer Oversee immediate implementation of expert's suggestion	issues in the ffeding program of the cows and gaps in the sleeping shed Expert identifies poor pest control on the avocado farm Expert identifies Expert identifies water shortage	e a new feeding program for the cows Expert demonstrates usage of the recommended pesticide Expert demonstrates how to use a water pump	costume fit for field work	findings on the farm	of the cows are sorted Pest control initiated Water shortage addressed
020	Goats and ships care, financial literacy and organic pesticides	Farmer's farm in Namanga Kajiado	Facilitates conversation between the expert and the farmer Oversee immediate implementation of expert's suggestion	Expert identifies poor hygiene and poor housing for the goats Expert advices how to get funding and to join an agricultural cooperation Expert identifies pest on kales	Expert demonstrates how to control pests on sheep Expert demonstrates how to use organic pesticide to control pests on kales	Standard costume fit for field work	Dictated by findings on the farm	A pen is constructed for goats and sheep Financial literacy taught Pests are controlled

Audience Impact

Both shows have amassed a huge following, especially among agriculture enthusiasts and the general public. According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2025), "Nominal GDP increased from KSh 15,033.6 billion in 2023 to KSh 16,224.5 billion in 2024, out of which with Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing contributed 22.5 per cent, an increase from 21.5 per cent in 2023" (The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2025). In the same year, agriculture was the top GDP contributor in Kenya and the biggest employer, accounting for over 42 per cent of the total workforce. This therefore explains the high interest in agriculture and the high number of viewers. Viewers report different impacts from the shows. According to the official Shamba Shape-up website, a total of 12,000,000 viewers have been reached across three countries, Kenya, Uganda and Zambia, benefiting 428,000 farmers. A report published by *Shamba Shape-Up*, titled IMPACT *OF VIEWING ON SMALLHOLDER FARMERS'KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES,* was conducted by Aareton Blue, an independent Kenyan research firm, between 9th and 22nd September 2025 using a selective sampling approach, and the researchers carried out 600 face-to-face in-home interviews with smallholder farmers aged 18 years and above.

Respondents were selected from rural areas in Embu, Kilifi, Nakuru, and Kisumu counties. They were required to farm between 0.5 and 10 acres, be key farm decision-makers, and watch local television content. A total of 150 interviews were conducted in each county using a fully structured questionnaire. The research findings report that nearly half of the smallholder farmers surveyed (45%) reported changing their farming practices after watching Shamba Shape Up (SSU). The impact was strongest among farmers in Nakuru (60%) and Kilifi (51%), as well as among long-term viewers (59%) and iShamba users (57%), suggesting that continued engagement with the programme increases the likelihood of adopting improved farming practices. Among viewers who adopted new practices after watching SSU 15, the most common changes were improving livestock housing (15%), proper livestock feeding (15%), using organic manure to improve soil fertility (14%), implementing regular livestock vaccination schedules (13%), and soil fertility management through organic inputs (10%). These findings indicate that the programme promotes practical improvements in both crop and livestock production. Farmers who implemented the practices reported several positive outcomes. The most significant benefits were higher yields (68%) and improved income (46%). Other reported outcomes included healthier soil fertility (36%), healthier livestock (35%), increased egg production (22%), higher milk production (14%), and more meat production (8%).

Therefore, these results suggest that the programme contributes to increased agricultural productivity and improved farm management. Finally, most viewers indicated that watching SSU had positively affected their income and livelihoods. In SSU 15, 49 per cent reported a significant improvement, while 41 per cent reported some improvement, meaning that 90 per cent of viewers experienced at least some positive impact. Only 3 per cent reported no impact at all. The findings further show that the programme's benefits are particularly strong among long-term viewers, highlighting its sustained influence on farming households.

Kenya's Gold, on the other hand, has 968 episodes uploaded on the Citizen TV YouTube channel, where viewer interactions happen in the comment section. This forms the primary data for the audience impact analysis, as the media house has not published any report on the show's impact on audiences. The playlist has 138,842 views, suggesting an active online presence.

Random sampling of comments collected the following comments from different episodes;

USER 1 Emmanuel Terer! Kiswahili sanifu....Kiswahili.mwafaka	**USER 2** Thank you madam for always asking gud questions	for us....watching from makueni.

USER 3
Hallo. Good work. Where can i find the registered nursery near Nairobi or it's environs? Or where's can i find this farmer?

USER 4
Punguza msamiati bro. Focus more on content

USER 5
Good work 👍please were in naivasha any contact will appreciate thank you

USER 6
I love the interviewer and the respect he shows the farmer 👏👏❤. Really nice and informative show❤👏👏Good job citizen 💘

USER 7
Kenya's Gold please we would like to know if Rawhide usually sell incalf heifers and their contact details

USER 8
What about black cotton soil? Can carrots do well?

USER 9
Jamaa hajui ngamia ,tafuta mtaalamu.

USER 10
Ukuzaji wa ngamia? Naona bora ufugaji.

USER 11
Aki siunakuanga mrembo

USER 12
Nice one, i think as a youth we gonna make it in farming. I thank WFP for empowering us and citizen Tv for enlightenment to the World that farming can be done by youths to solve the issue of unemployment.👩‍🌾

For this study, 12 YouTube comments (N=12) were randomly sampled from different episodes across the playlist to conduct thematic analysis of audience responses. Comments were coded inductively and grouped into four thematic categories:

a) Presenter-Focused Engagement (33.3%, n=4)
Comments focus on presenters rather than agriculture. USER 1: "Emmanuel Terer! Kiswahili sanifu....Kiswahili.mwafaka" and USER 4: "Punguza msamiati bro. Focus more on content" critique and praise the language complexity. USER 6: "I love the interviewer and the respect he shows the farmer" and USER 11: "Aki siunakuanga mrembo" focus on demeanour and appearance. This supports the performative deficit argument - spectacle becomes a selling point, as Okan (2003) warned.

b) Practical Information-Seeking (50%, n=6)
The largest category. Viewers attempt to convert awareness into practice but lack a mechanism. USER 7: "please we would like to know if Rawhide usually sell in calf heifers and their contact details", USER 5: "were in naivasha any contact will appreciate", USER 3: "Where can I find the registered nursery near Nairobi?", USER 8: "What about black cotton soil? Can carrots do well?", USER 9/10 on camel farming: "Jamaa hajui ngamia, tafuta mtaalamu." These are direct requests for contacts, inputs, and agro-ecological advice. Critically, none of these questions is addressed by the channel, indicating a lack of a proper feedback mechanism and limiting viewer control over the show.

c) Awareness Creation (25%, n=3)
General praise without evidence of adoption. USER 2: "Thank you madam for always asking gud questions for us....watching from makueni." USER 12: "Nice one, i think as a youth we gonna make it in farming." This remains at motivation level, not behavioural change.

d) Youth Empowerment Narrative (8.3%, n=1)
USER 12's single comment links farming to unemployment solution, showing potential but unconverted intent.

Comparative Analysis
While the preceding sections described production design and audience impact separately, this section synthesises how production choices systematically produce divergent engagement and impact.

Table 3. Comparative Analysis between *Kenya's Gold* and *Shamba Shape-Up*

Production Feature	Kenya's Gold	Shamba Shape-Up
Knowledge type	Theoretical	Practical
Presenter role	Interviewer - Passive, journalistic, controls scripted Q&A	Facilitator & Project Manager - Facilitates farmer-expert dialogue; Oversees immediate implementation
Expert interaction	Abstract, theoretical, detached.	Concrete, diagnostic, embodied. On-farm inspection; identifies specific gaps
Practical demo	When present, by farmer/interviewer, not expert	Central, expert-led, hands-on.
Costume	Journalistic/Gumboots and apron on farm, but aesthetics upheld	Standard costume fit for fieldwork. Practical, uniform, work-ready
Narrative structure	Scripted Q&A with pre-determined ending / Informational	Dictated by findings on the farm. Emergent, diagnostic
Problem solving	Descriptive & Deferred	Prescriptive & Immediate.
Impact level	Low – Awareness/motivational level	High – practical and livelihood change
Outcome	No productivity outcome reported	Tangible farm outcomes

Discussion

The findings show that both programmes contribute to agricultural education by providing platforms where knowledge is disseminated, but based on two divergent paradigms. Kenya's Gold exemplifies what Okan (2003), drawing on Buckingham & Scanlon (2000) and McKenzie (2000), terms "technotainment": a hybrid genre that relies heavily on visual material and informal, game-like address, laced with entertainment but lacking rigour. Anchored in a generic studio setting, hosted by professional journalists and heavily invested in set, costume, and make-up to construct an appealing mise-en-scène, the programme prioritises scripting, elevated language, and performative presentation as primary text. Okan warns that such designs embody a form of thinking that orients a person to approach the world as spectacle and that teaches, as Postman (1985) argued, that anything worth learning ought to take the form of entertainment. In this model, experts are detached from their ontological context, which is the farm and are forced to perform agriculture rather than demonstrate it, producing what this study terms a performative deficit, creating a theory-practice disconnect and diverting attention to presenters.

Audiences navigate two worlds, journalism and agriculture, and often stop at the first, becoming, as Okan cautions, motivated to play with the medium rather than to learn. This produces the shallow, stimulus-bound behaviour and Butterfly Defect described by Salomon and Perkins (1998): impulsive, visually lured wandering through screens that constructs shallow, associationist networks with no intellectual merit, thus explaining the programme's shallow engagement and broken feedback mechanism. *Shamba Shape-Up*, by contrast, exemplifies what Okan concludes edutainment should be: a cognitive tool that is mind-extending and catalysing for volitional learners, providing stimulating structures to promote meaningful construction activities such as planning, representation and reflection. Employing a field-based, actor-facilitated, problem-solving model hosted by professional actors and shot on practical farms with minimal set pieces, it aligns production with content. As Okan argues, technology must be subservient to pedagogy and

grounded in constructivist learning theory, where learning is socially based and involves the active co-construction of contextualised knowledge. *Shamba Shape-Up* does exactly this as costume blends with farmers, research precedes shooting, and experts are invited not to discuss abstractly but to practically solve a host farmer's specific challenge. Abstract concepts are demonstrated in context, enabling observational learning as predicted by Bandura.

Shamba Shape-Up has documented evidence demonstrating significant behavioural change among viewers. According to the 2025 impact study, 45 per cent of viewers reported changing their farming practices after watching the programme. Long-term viewers reported even higher adoption rates. Viewers implemented improvements such as better livestock housing, improved feeding practices, soil fertility management, and regular livestock vaccination schedules. These behavioural changes translated into tangible outcomes. Sixty-eight per cent of adopters reported higher yields, while 46 per cent reported increased income. Additional benefits included healthier livestock, improved soil fertility, and increased production of milk, eggs, and meat. Furthermore, 90 per cent of viewers reported at least some improvement in their livelihoods, indicating substantial real-world impact. For *Kenya's Gold*, evidence of impact is primarily qualitative and based on audience comments. Viewers frequently describe the programme as informative, educational, and inspirational, particularly for young people interested in agriculture.

However, there is limited evidence demonstrating actual behavioural change or economic outcomes. Most comments reflect appreciation, requests for information, or reactions to presenters rather than documented adoption of farming practices. This study extends Zhu et al. (2024) by applying the output-feedback distinction, asserting that Kenya's Gold exemplifies the Yellow Cluster: medium output, low feedback, due to a performative deficit. Shamba Shape-Up exemplifies the Green Cluster: high output, high feedback, due to empirical production that aligns ontology with epistemology. The study therefore operationalises Zhu et al.'s (2024) call for regular evaluation and feedback of scientific discourses in the specific context of Kenyan agricultural edutainment.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion: The study concludes that *Kenya's Gold* and *Shamba Shape-Up* contribute significantly to agricultural education and public awareness in Kenya. However, the findings indicate that *Shamba Shape-Up* has a greater impact on its audience than *Kenya's Gold*. Its practical, farm-based format enables viewers to observe real-life challenges and solutions, leading to measurable behavioural changes such as adopting improved farming practices, increasing productivity, and enhancing livelihoods. The programme's documented evidence of audience impact further demonstrates its effectiveness as an agricultural education tool. While *Kenya's Gold* successfully generates audience engagement and interest in agriculture, its impact is largely reflected in awareness creation and information sharing. Therefore, the study concludes that practical, context-specific agricultural programming is more effective at influencing audience behaviour and producing tangible outcomes than studio-based discussion formats.

Recommendations: The study recommends that creators of shows tackling objective reality use appropriate contexts to maximise impact and discourage performance tendencies among participants. This enables viewers to benefit from highly empirical scientific discussions. This will encourage strong interaction between the audience and the content, rather than production elements that clutter it and distract viewers. Further, television programmes that tackle objective phenomena should strengthen their feedback mechanisms so viewers can benefit more from interaction. Agricultural programmes should also conduct audience impact analysis so that their reach can be accounted for. This data can support future decision-making and help the programme become more efficient for farmers.

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