

An Audience Analysis of China's External Communication Activities in Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa

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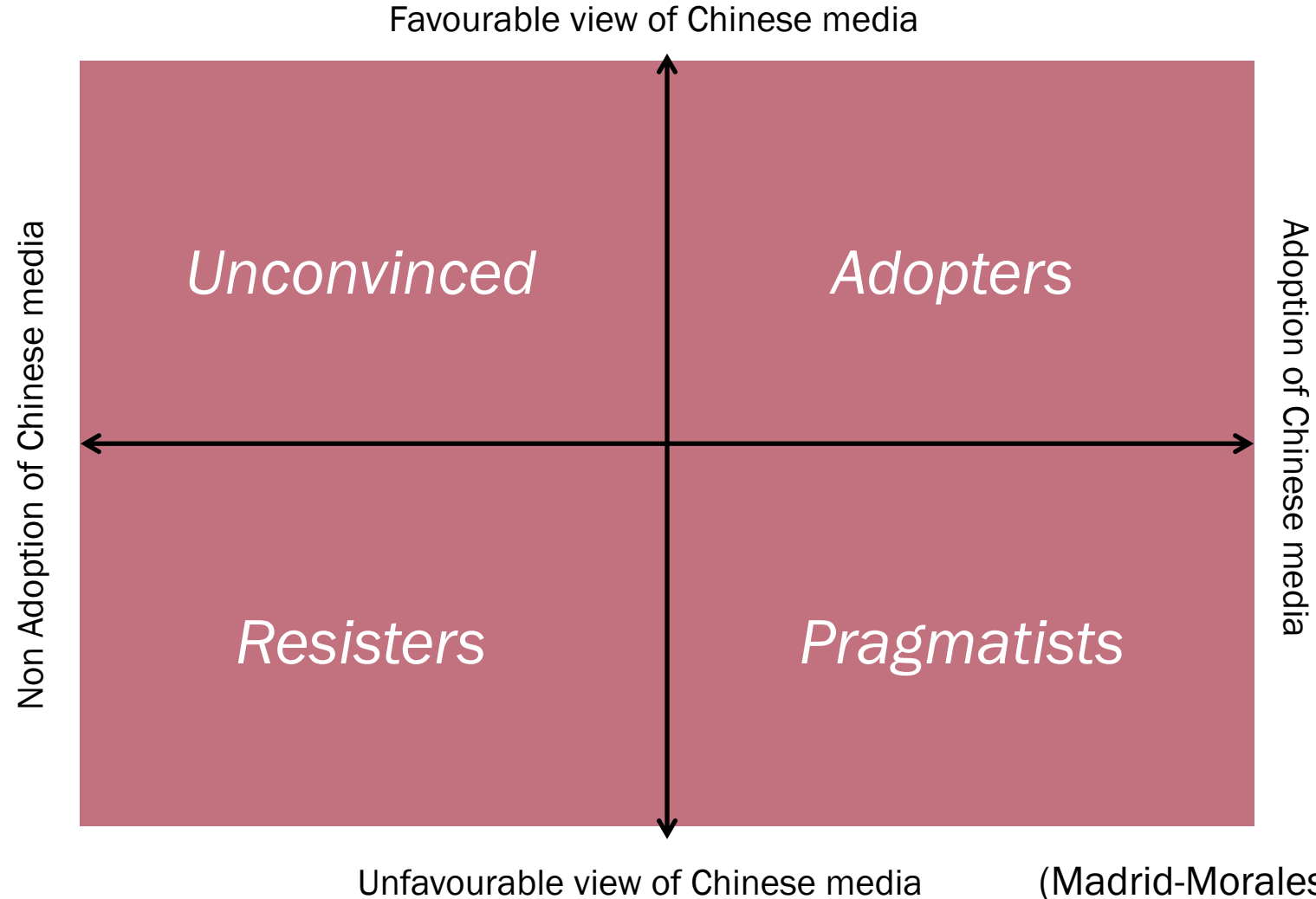
Chinese media, African Audiences (I)

- In most areas of Sino-African relations, it is possible to distinguish two levels of engagements (Park and Alden, 2013):
 - Upstairs – exchanges that affect elites, such as diplomatic and trade missions, government relations...
 - Downstairs – people to people exchanges, including those that are institutionalized (Confucius Institutes), as well as those that are not.
- Very **little is known about the “downstairs”** dimension of Sino-African mediated engagements:
 - There are some small scale studies that suggest limited impact (e.g. Gorfinkel et al, 2016; Guyo & Yu, 2019).
 - Bailard (2016) offers evidence of some impact.

Chinese media, African Audiences (II)

- The engagement of elites with Chinese media operating in Africa has been explored in more detail, and with significantly more geographic diversity (e.g. Diakon & Röschenthaler, 2016 in Mali; Awoonor & Forson, 2020 in Ghana; Maweu, 2016 in Kenya)
- There's evidence that journalists in different countries are indeed engaging with Chinese media (Madrid-Morales & Wasserman, 2019):
 - Some **express hesitation** to embracing content from a political actor that they aren't supportive of;
 - Some are sympathetic of the availability of “**alternative voices**” such as those provided by Russia, China, Qatar and others.

A typology of audiences



(Madrid-Morales & Wasserman, 2019)

Changing context

- The outbreak of COVID-19, and the declaration by the WHO of a global pandemic appears to have **had an impact on Africa-China relations**.
 - China has provided aid and medical assistance to African countries.
 - China has been at the centre of several media debates including those about the origin of the virus, loan forgiveness in Africa, and others.
- Chinese media –including those operating in Africa – **have been very active and vocal** in trying to shape narratives around China’s global response to the virus.

Research Questions

RQ₁: What is the **audience size** of global Chinese media in Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa?

Study 1

RQ₂: What are Kenyan, Nigeria and South African audiences' **perceptions of Chinese media** in Africa?

RQ₃: What factors shape **attitudes towards China** in Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa?

RQ₄: Has the **consumption of Chinese media** changed after COVID-19 in Kenya and South Africa?

Study 2

RQ₅: Have **attitudes towards China** changed after COVID-19 in Kenya and South Africa?

Countries studied

- In **Study 1**, we include South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria all have **vibrant media**, and all of them appear to have the highest levels of engagement of Chinese media.
- In **Study 2**, this presentations report data from Kenya and South Africa (we just finished data collection for Nigeria).



Methods – Research design

- In **Study 1**, we conducted an exploratory online survey ($N = 868$) in Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa.
 - The survey was fielded in January 2018.
 - This is a non-representative sample.
- In **Study 2**, we conducted two online surveys ($N = 1,961$) in Kenya and South Africa.
 - The survey was fielded in April/May 2020.
 - We used demographic quotas to mirror census data for gender, age and location.

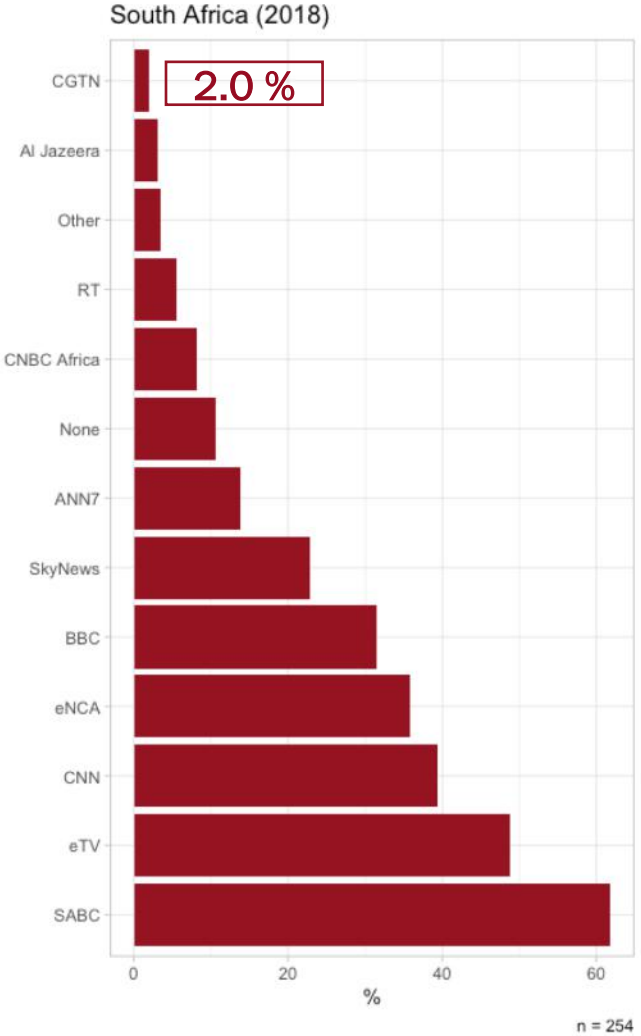
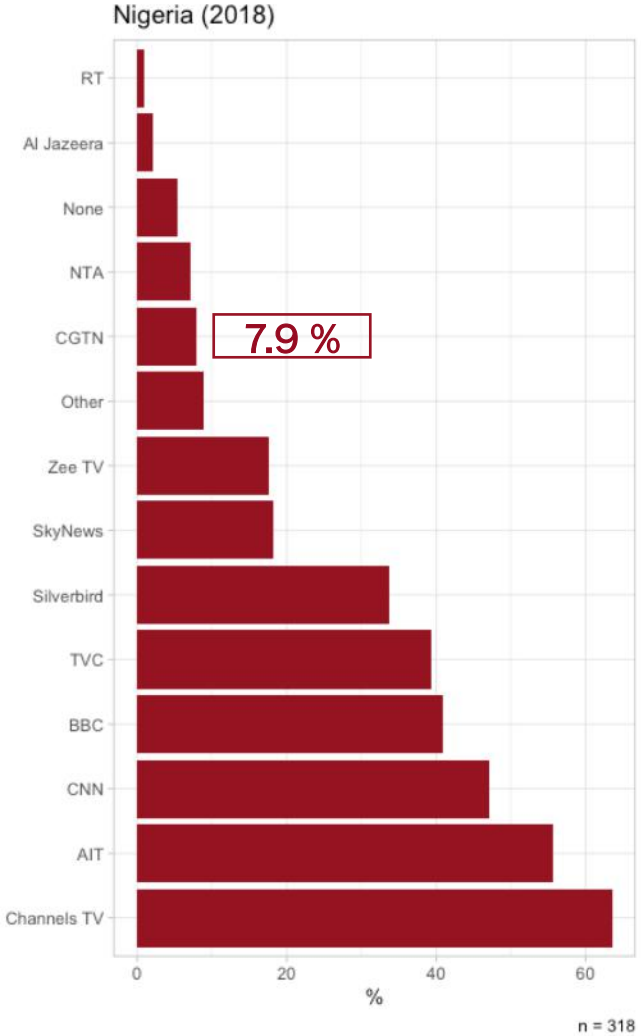
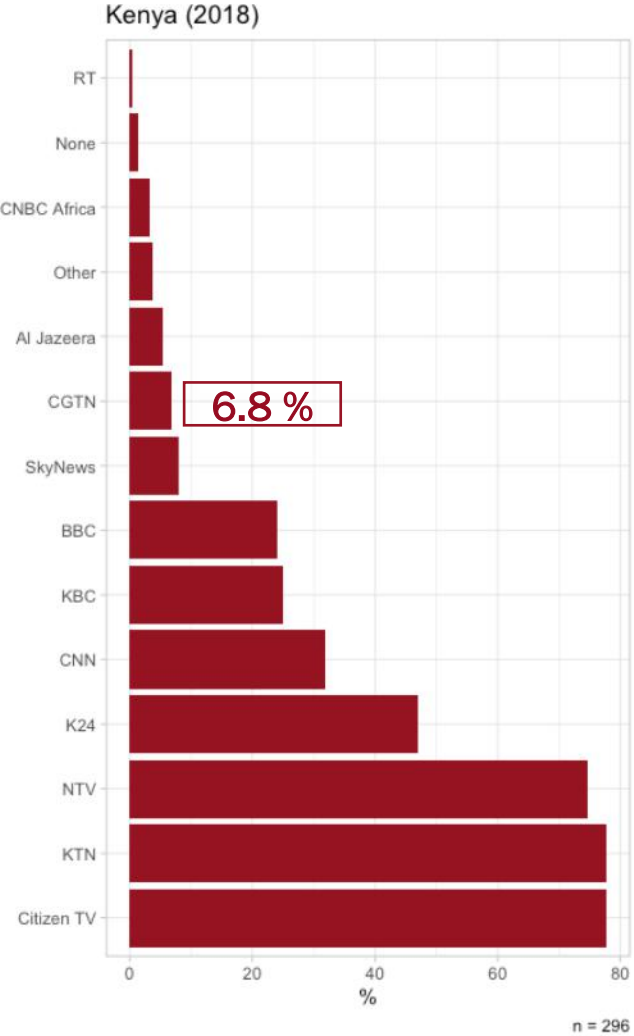
Methods – Measures

- Media consumption
 - “Which of the following television stations did you watch the past seven days to get your news? Select all that apply.”
- Media perception
 - Rank of global broadcasters on four dimensions: trust, familiarity, news coverage and truthfulness.
- Country attitudes
 - Scale borrowed from Anholt (2011)
 - Likert scale with 6 items

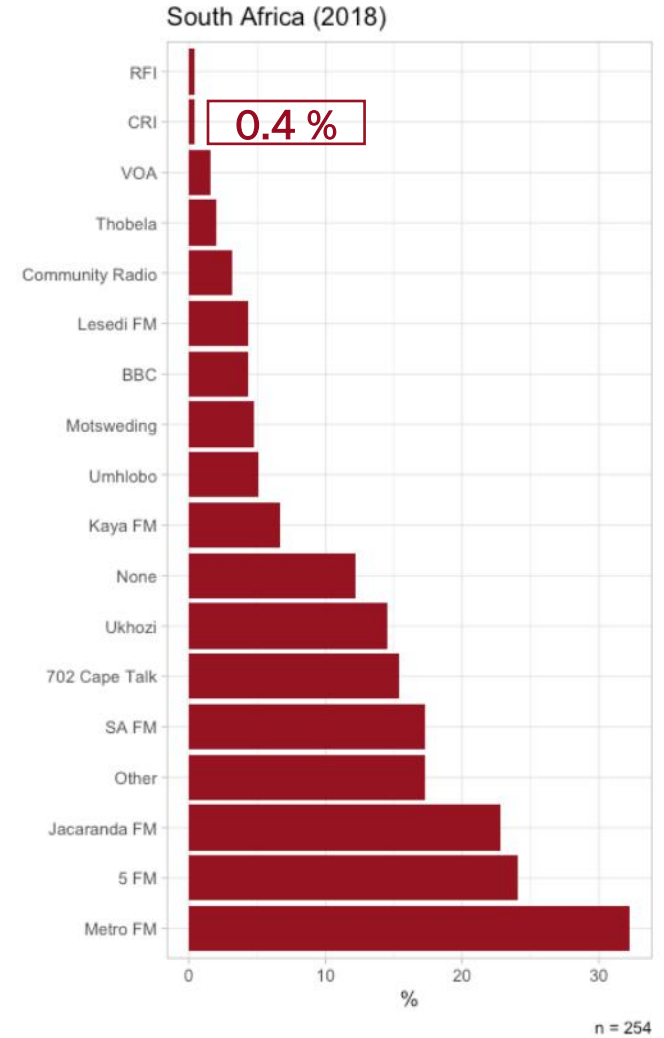
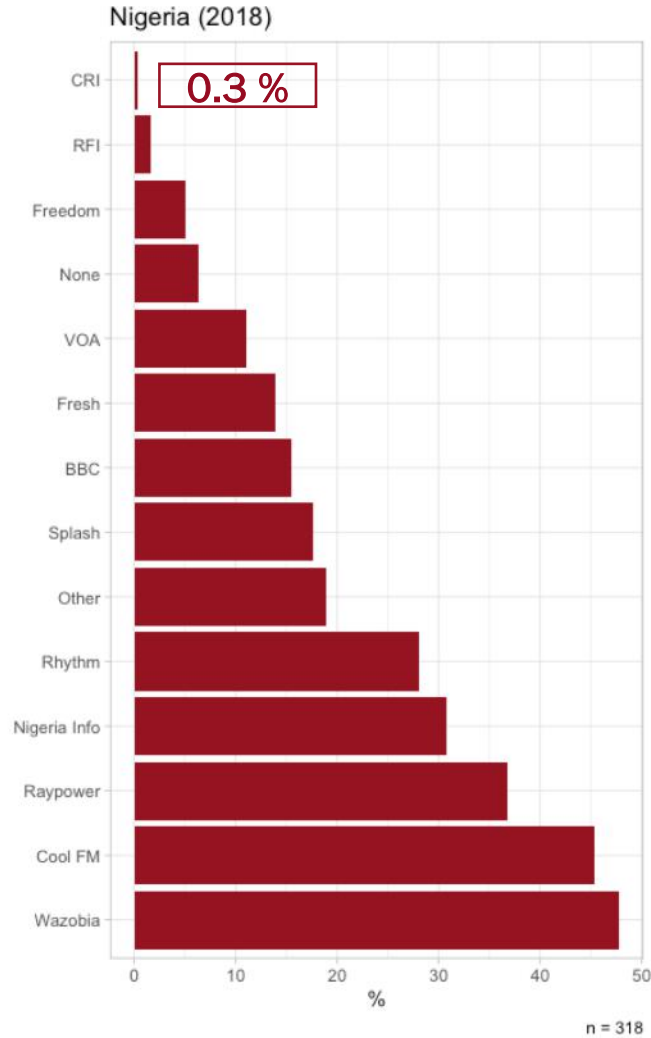
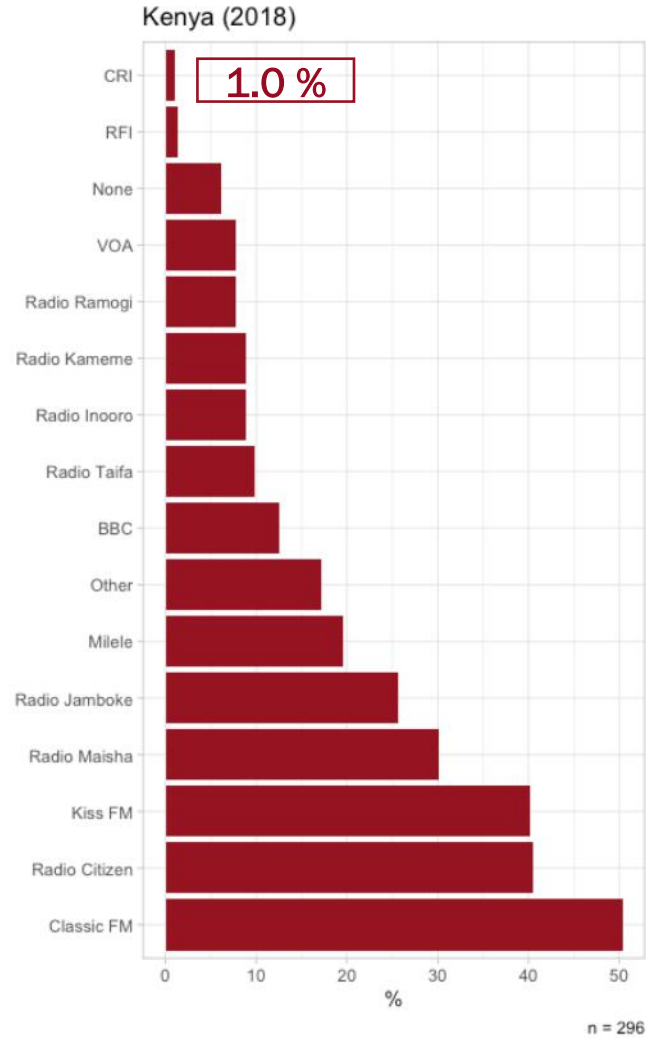
RQ1

What is the audience size of global Chinese media in Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa?

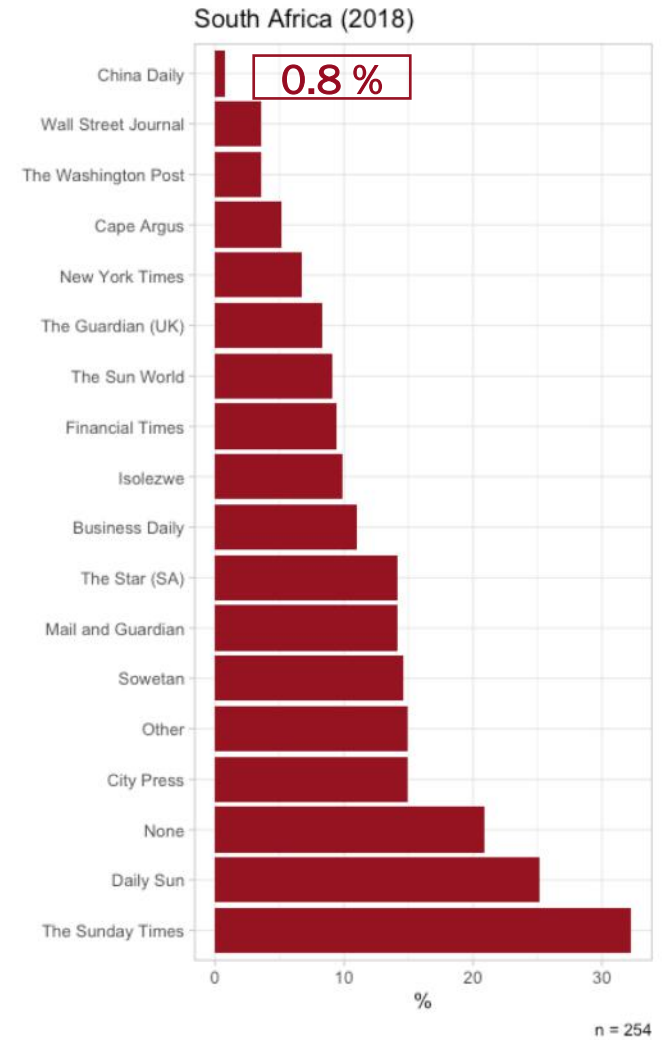
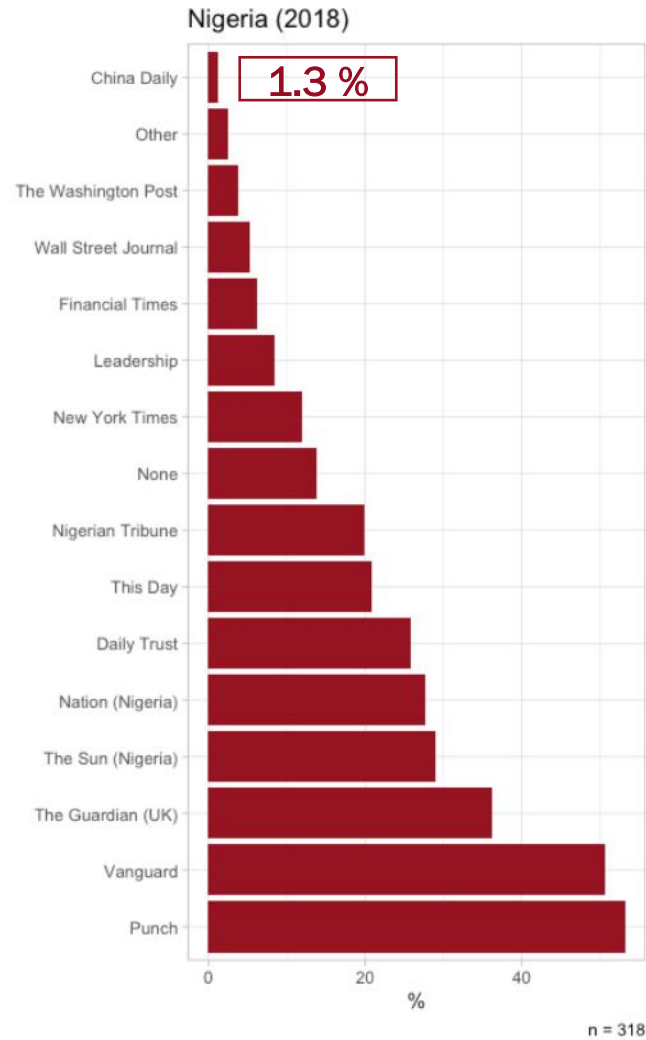
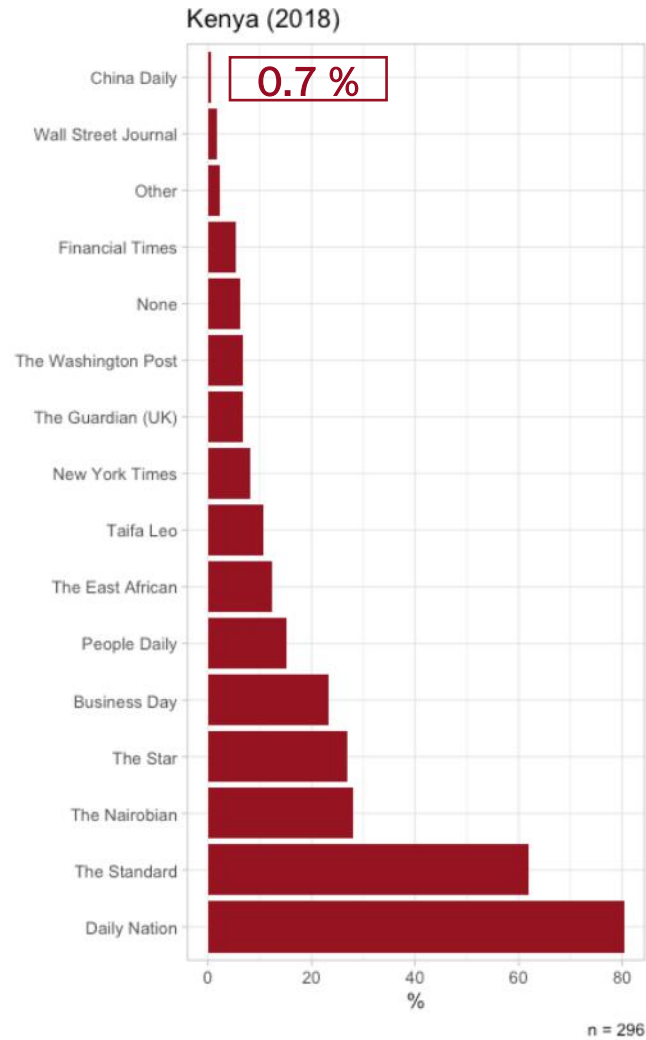
TV viewership



Radio listenership



Newspaper readership








RQ2

What are audiences' perception of Chinese media operating in Africa vis-à-vis other global media?






Kenyan's views on global broadcasters

	Rank	ALJAZEERA	BBC WORLD NEWS	CGTN	CNN	RT
Covers Africa well	1	23.6	37.8	8.7	25.2	4.7
	2	20.1	31.5	14.2	29.9	4.3
	3	23.2	19.7	30.3	21.7	5.1
	4	24.4	8.7	39.4	13.0	14.6
	5	8.7	2.4	7.5	10.2	71.3
I know well	1	15.7	26.0	5.5	48.0	4.7
	2	12.6	48.8	7.5	26.8	4.3
	3	44.9	13.4	24.8	11.8	5.1
	4	20.5	7.5	53.1	7.5	11.4
	5	6.3	4.3	9.1	5.9	74.4
I trust	1	15.0	26.8	3.5	51.2	3.5
	2	17.3	44.1	9.8	24.0	4.7
	3	38.2	20.9	24.0	13.0	3.9
	4	23.6	5.5	53.1	5.5	12.2
	5	5.9	2.8	9.4	6.3	75.6
Tells truth	1	21.3	31.9	2.8	38.2	5.9
	2	16.5	38.6	15.7	24.8	4.3
	3	31.9	20.9	28.0	14.2	5.1
	4	22.4	4.7	42.9	12.2	17.7
	5	7.9	3.9	10.6	10.6	66.9

Nigerian's views on global broadcasters

	Rank	 ALJAZEERA	 BBC WORLD NEWS	 CGTN	 CNN	 RT
Covers Africa well	1	23.4	25.7	6.4	35.9	8.5
	2	13.5	40.5	13.2	28.2	4.6
	3	34.0	15.5	28.5	16.2	6.0
	4	23.0	13.4	38.4	8.1	17.4
	5	6.0	4.9	13.5	11.6	63.5
I know well	1	17.0	19.7	4.6	51.6	7.1
	2	11.3	55.3	6.4	24.0	2.8
	3	44.5	13.7	26.6	12.7	2.8
	4	21.2	8.5	52.1	4.6	13.5
	5	6.0	2.8	10.3	7.1	73.7
I trust	1	18.4	18.3	2.1	53.5	7.4
	2	10.2	54.2	10.3	20.8	4.3
	3	39.6	14.8	30.6	10.6	5.0
	4	23.0	10.2	45.6	4.2	17.4
	5	8.8	2.5	11.4	10.9	66.0
Tells truth	1	20.1	22.9	5.3	43.1	8.5
	2	15.5	48.2	6.7	25.4	3.9
	3	31.4	16.2	31.2	15.2	6.0
	4	24.7	9.2	45.4	6.4	14.5
	5	8.1	3.5	11.3	9.9	67.0

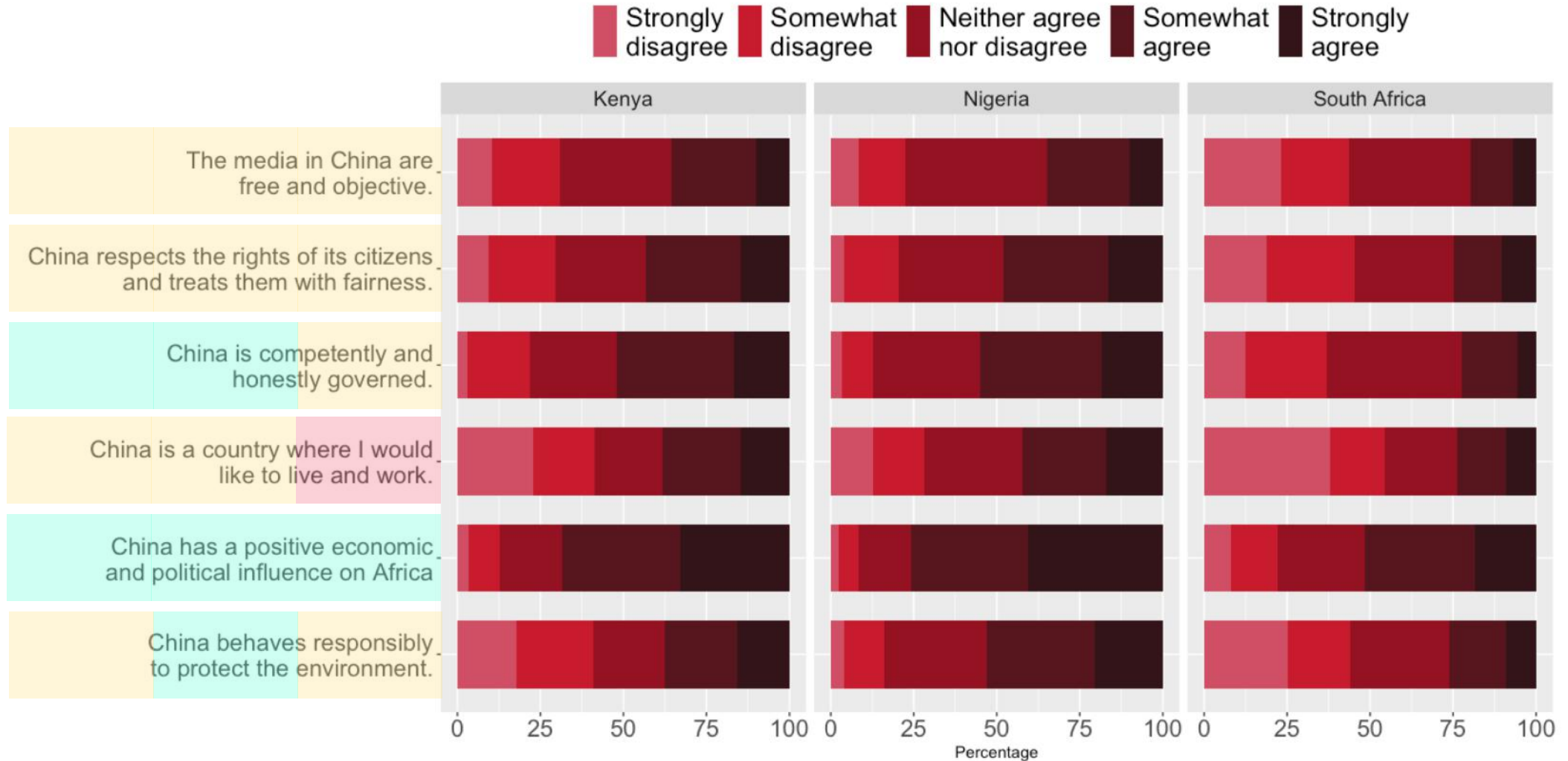
South African's views on global broadcasters

	Rank	 ALJAZEERA	 BBC WORLD NEWS	 CGTN	 CNN	 RT
Covers Africa well	1	17.9	21.3	4.4	37.8	18.3
	2	15.7	43.9	11.4	22.6	6.1
	3	17.5	10.0	54.6	10.0	8.3
	4	32.8	17.8	20.5	8.7	20.1
	5	16.2	7.0	9.2	20.9	47.2
I know well	1	13.5	22.6	2.2	45.0	16.2
	2	13.1	47.0	11.7	24.2	3.9
	3	25.3	9.6	50.4	6.1	8.3
	4	29.3	14.3	21.3	5.6	29.7
	5	18.8	6.5	14.3	19.0	41.9
I trust	1	13.1	23.0	4.8	45.2	13.5
	2	14.4	47.0	7.9	22.2	8.3
	3	24.5	7.8	46.3	8.3	13.1
	4	30.6	19.1	24.5	5.7	20.5
	5	17.5	3.0	16.6	18.7	44.5
Tells truth	1	15.3	23.9	4.8	40.9	14.8
	2	16.6	42.2	14.0	20.0	7.0
	3	22.3	11.7	49.3	7.8	9.2
	4	28.8	17.0	17.0	10.0	27.1
	5	17.0	5.2	14.8	21.3	41.9

RQ3

What **factors shape attitudes** towards China in Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa?

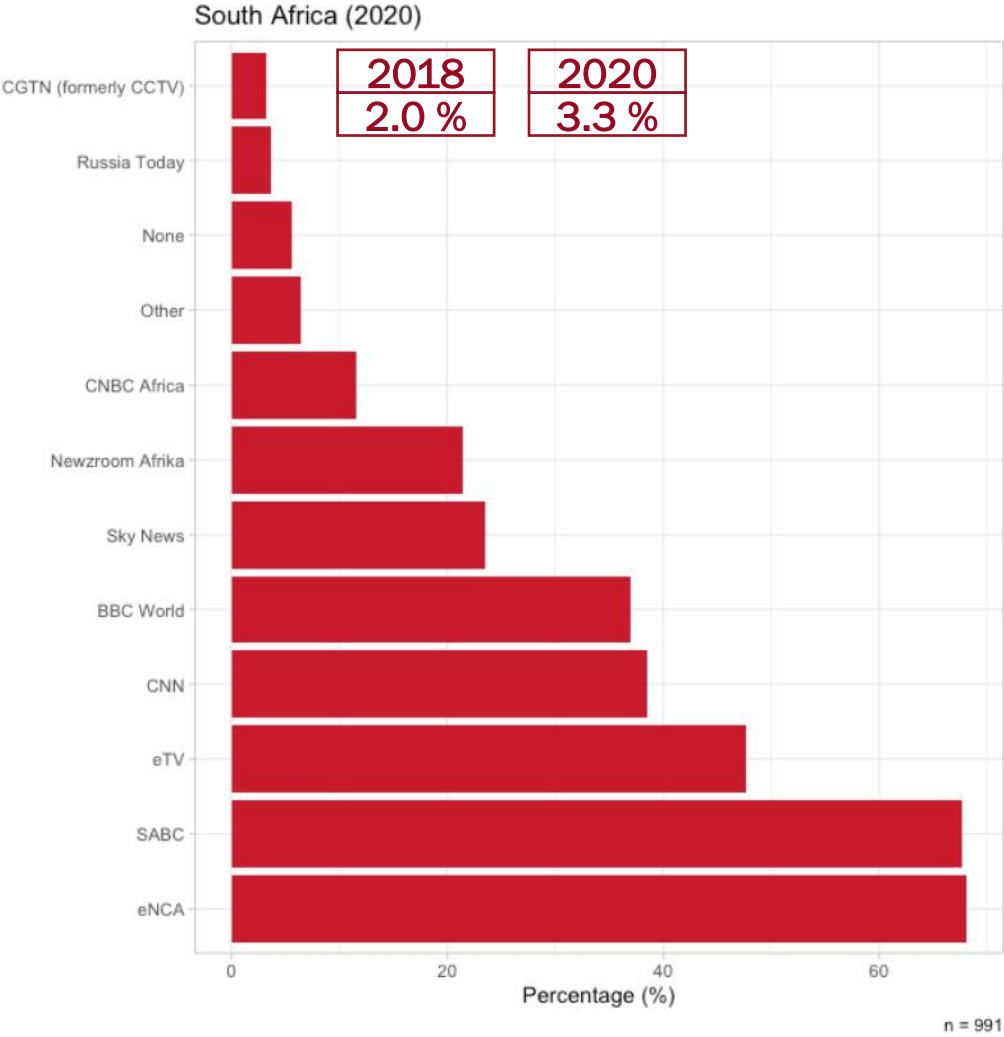
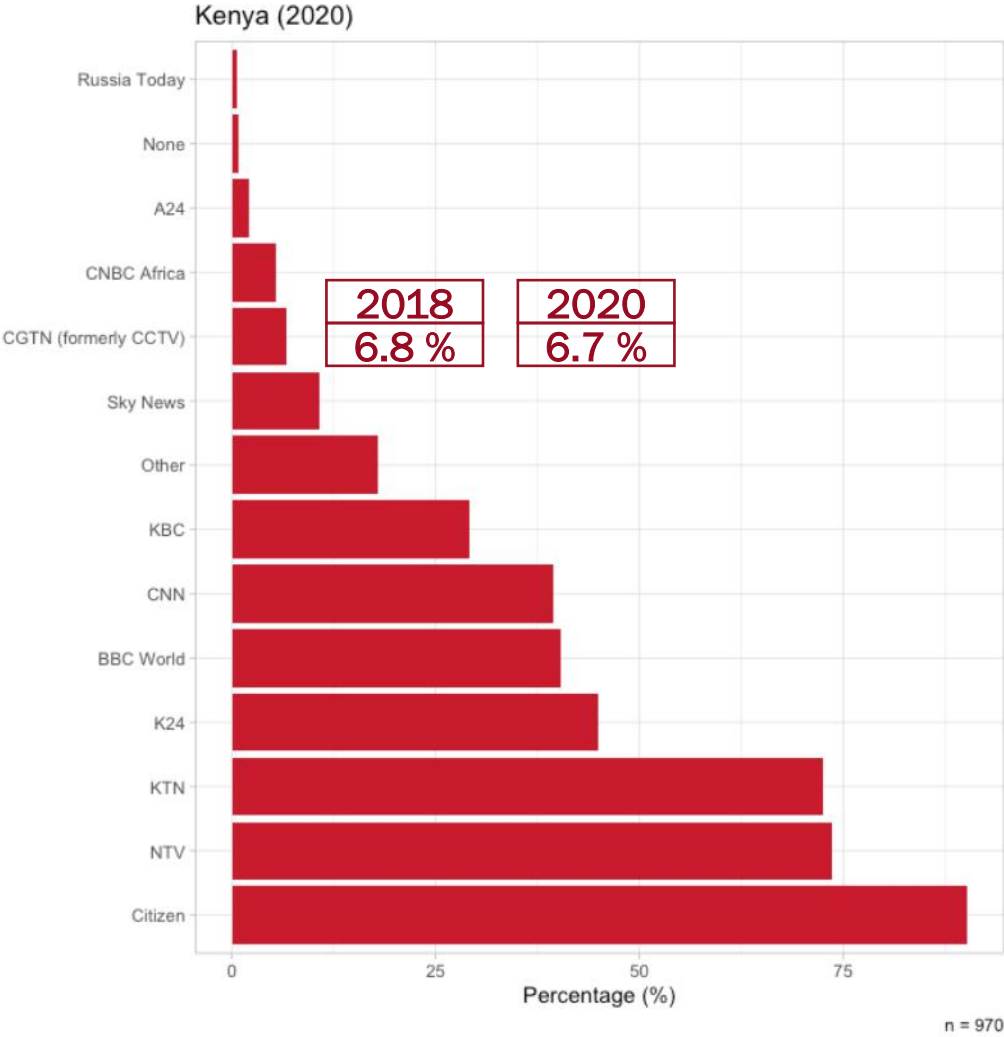
Attitudes towards China (2018)



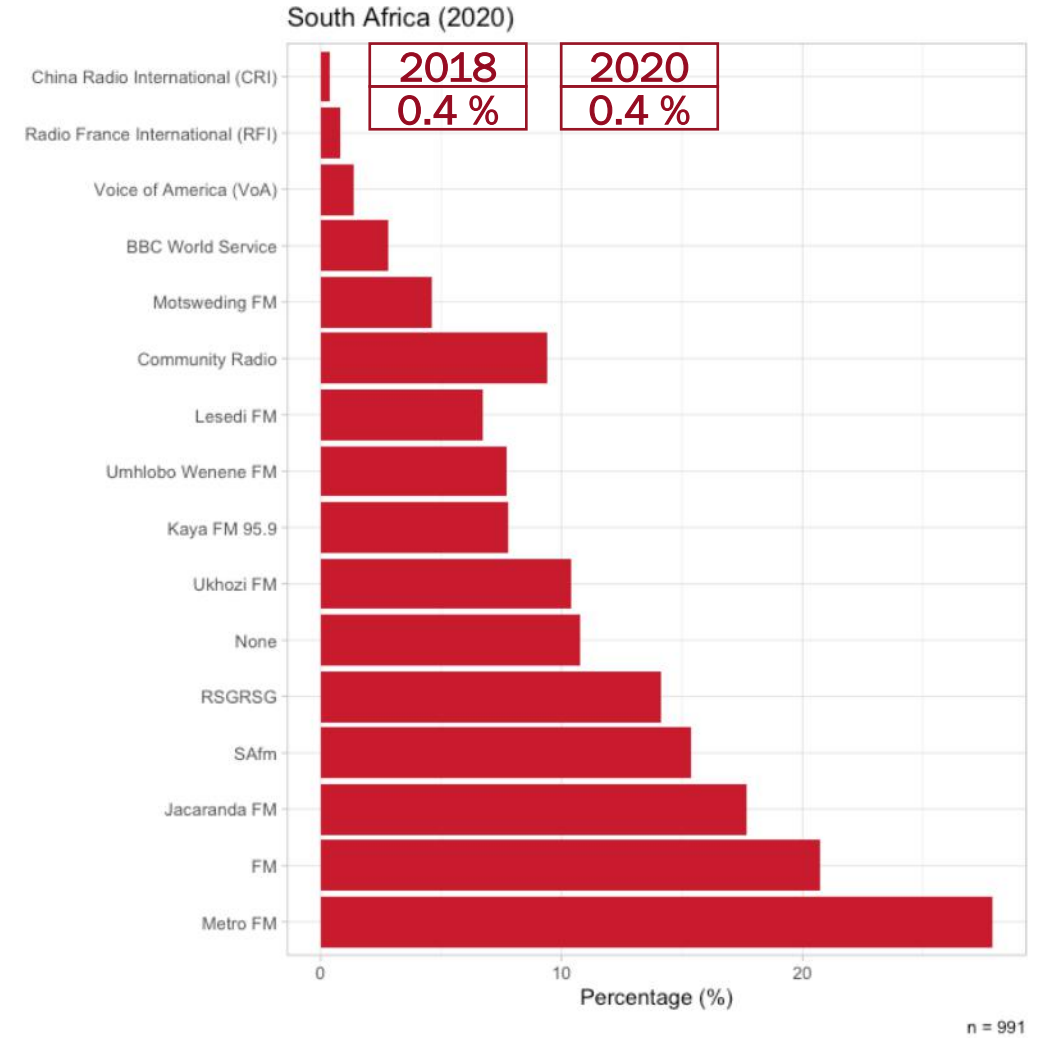
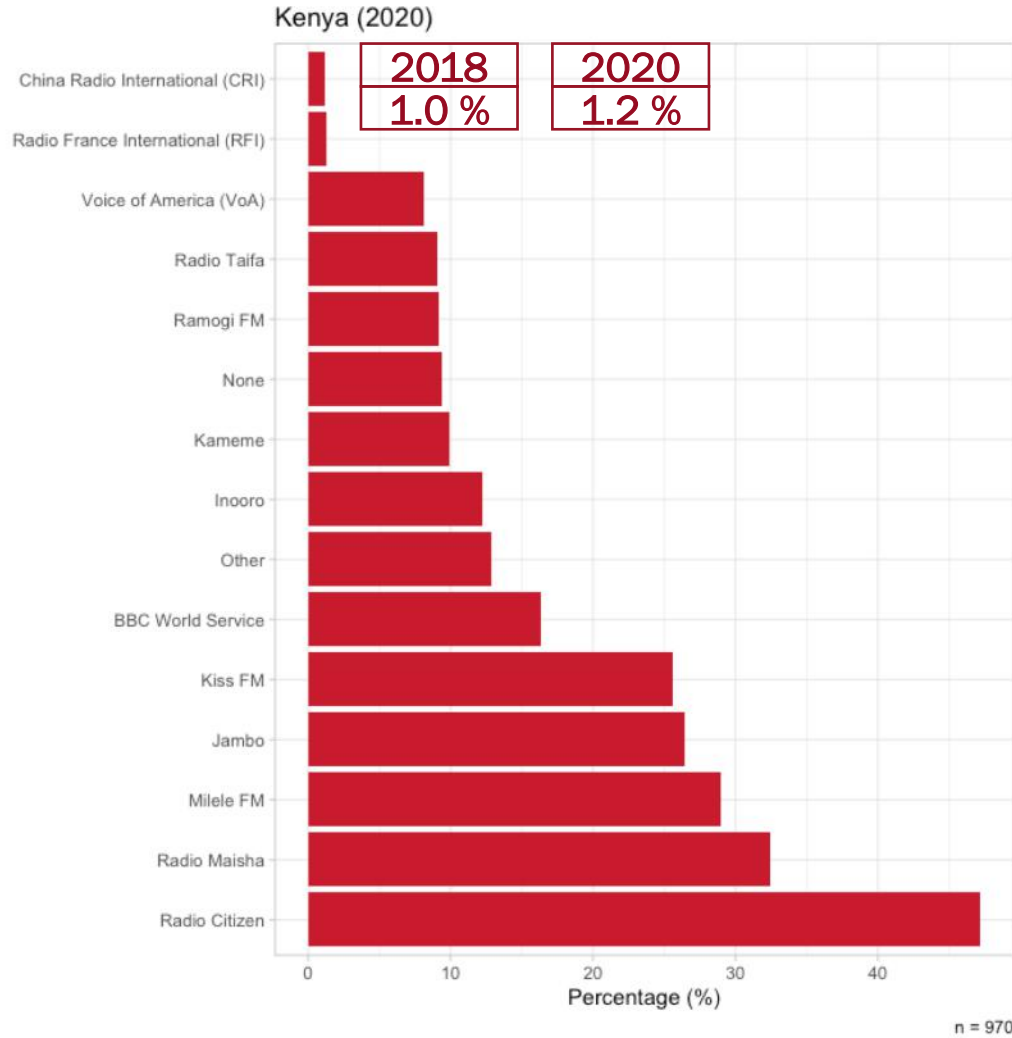
RQ4

Has the **consumption of Chinese media** changed after COVID-19 in Kenya and South Africa?

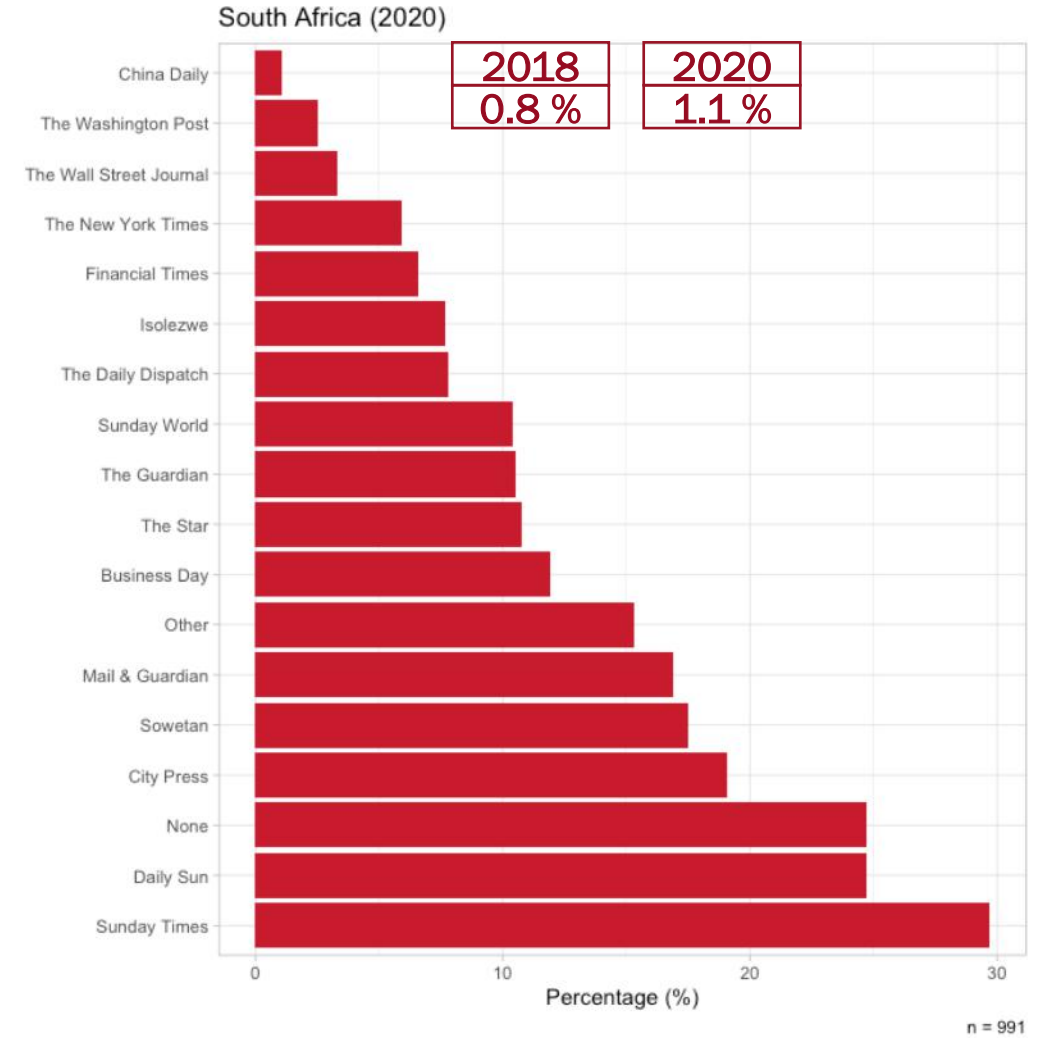
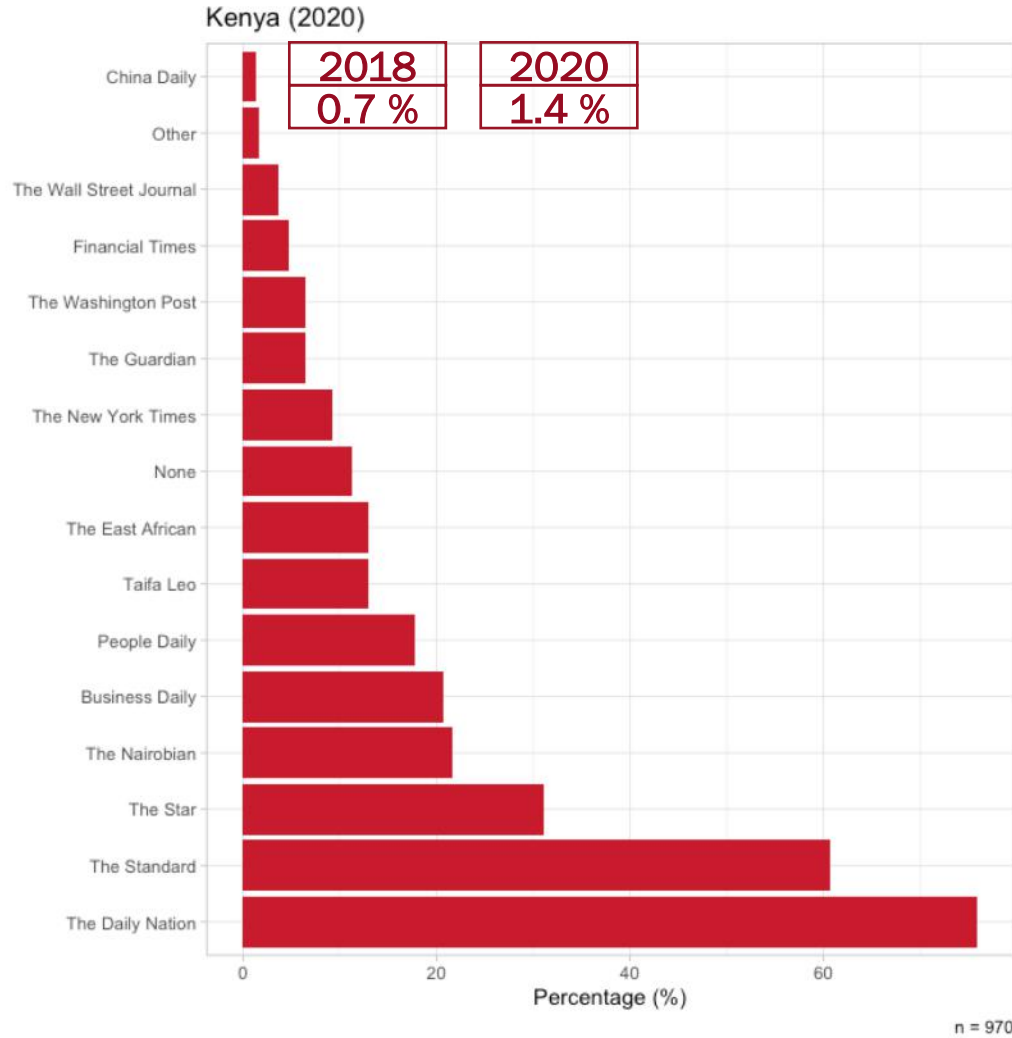
TV viewership



Radio listenership



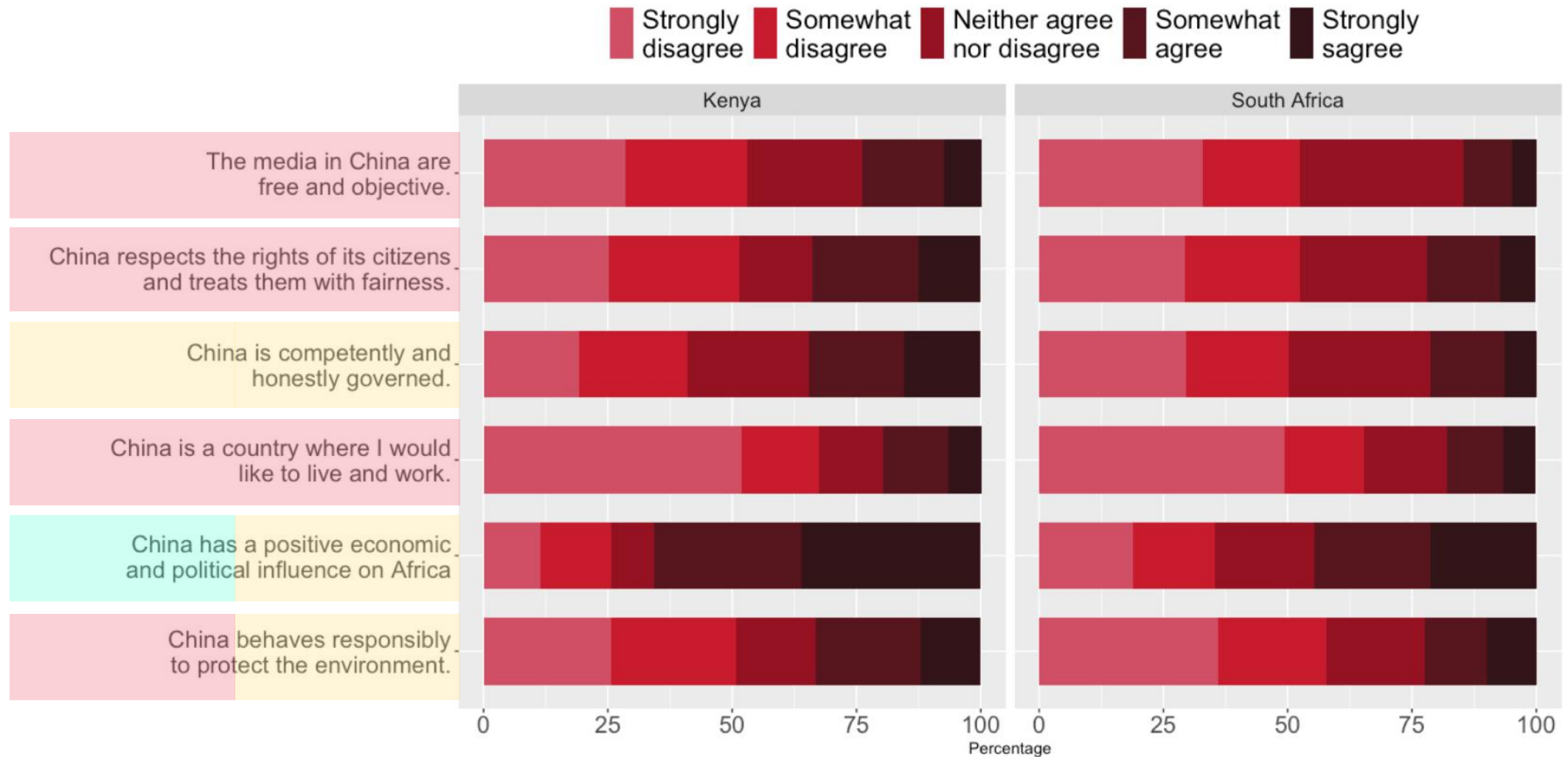
Newspaper readership



RQ5

Have **attitudes towards China** changed after COVID-19 in Kenya and South Africa?

Attitudes towards China (2020)



Evolution of attitudes towards China

	KENYA		SOUTH	
	Pre COVID	During COVID	Pre COVID	During COVID
China is competently and honestly governed	2.44	1.90	1.79	1.48
China respects the rights of its citizens and treats them with fairness	2.19	1.70	1.71	1.47
China behaves responsibly to protect the environment	1.95	1.69	1.66	1.38
The media in China are free and objective	2.04	1.50	1.60	1.34
China has a positive economic and political influence on Africa	2.85	2.65	2.40	2.12
China is a country where I would like to live and work	1.89	1.07	1.40	1.10

Final Ideas (I)

1. Chinese media operating in Africa have **very limited direct reach** on the segment of the population that could be identified as its target audience.
2. CGTN **trails behind its most direct competitors**, but is at par with other "similarly emerging" global media such as RT and AJE.
3. Given the limited reach of Chinese media, their effectiveness in **shaping public attitudes** towards China would seem to be difficult.
4. Pending more research, the COVID-19 outbreak would appear to have had a **very significant negative impact** on attitudes.
 1. Chinese media were not a source of information during COVID-19.

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