

**THE COVERAGE OF THE DRUG SCOURGE IN THE KENYAN
MEDIA:
AN ANALYSIS OF CONTENT, TRENDS AND QUALITY OF
COVERAGE**

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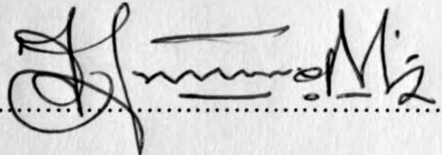
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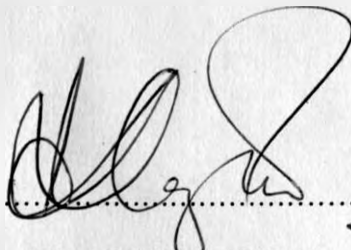
DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been submitted for an award of a degree in any university.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jared Manyara', written over a horizontal dotted line.

JARED MANYARA

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mr. Nyutho Edwin', written over a horizontal dotted line.

MR. NYUTHO EDWIN

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my lovely wife, Stella, and all those who have given all their lives to fighting the drug scourge

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First, I would like to thank my research supervisor Mr. Nyutho Edwin whose guidance and constructive criticism has made this research project a reality.

Secondly, I would like to sincerely thank ACCE documentalist, Mr. Ben Kamanda and his colleague Rachel who provided me with every possible assistance within the library whenever I needed it.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the coverage of the drug scourge in the Kenyan mass media with an intent of coming up with appropriate recommendations for designing a media strategy to combat drug abuse and drug trafficking in Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were to: determine the patterns and trends in the drug scourge coverage in the four Kenyan daily newspapers; determine the nature of media coverage in terms of number of articles, their size, article type, placement and prominence; determine the origin of articles covered in the media; determine the source of articles carried by the daily papers; determine who the main actors are; find out the main subjects focused on in the articles; determine who is to blame for the drug scourge; determine the quality of coverage in terms of balance, informativeness and technical competence; determine how drug abusers and drug traffickers/peddlers are portrayed in the articles; and finally point out apparent weaknesses in the media coverage of the various factors associated with increase in drug abuse.

The research technique employed in this study was content analysis. The content analysis was done using a standardized coding sheet and covered a period of 20 months from September 2001 to April 2003. Articles about the drug scourge were read, measured, categorised and coded for purposes of description, comparison and analysis.

The findings of the study were: the amount of coverage of the drug scourge was quite low; stories on the drug scourge were not assigned much weight as to be placed in the prominent pages/sections; most of the articles were overwhelmingly local as opposed to foreign; main actors in the drug scourge articles were majorly the government and ministry of health closely followed by private individuals and groups; main subjects focused on include

mobilization/campaign efforts and arrest/ jailing and court cases; government and government officials received a large share of the blame for widespread of the drug problem; quality of coverage was found to be high.

In view of the above findings it is recommended that: there is need for media houses to change their editorial policies with regard to the issues of drug abuse and trafficking; the media need to have more editorials; media need to include more mobilization information in their coverage rather than publishing information and facts per se; there is need for the media to work with other organizations dealing with the drug problem; there is also need for a comprehensive training of journalists to empower them to report on the subject of drug abuse; there is need for various organizations campaigning against the drug scourge to use the media strategically to fight the scourge through media advocacy; media should promote individuals, groups, and organizations that fight the scourge through broad media coverage; and finally media need to censor any in their programming and publication any pro-substance and drug abuse messages and information.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Coverage: refers to the presentation of drug scourge stories by the Kenyan media.

Coverage was measured in frequencies.

Drug: any substance that alters a person's perception of reality.

Drug abuse: refers to use of a substance for other reasons other than as medicine, or using it against legal prohibition, or using amounts of the substance beyond the socially accepted levels.

Drug trafficking: refers to the trade in outlawed substances and drugs.

Mass media: refers to any means of disseminating information and/or entertainment to large groups of people

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACYRONYMS

NACADA: National Agency for the Campaign Against Drug Abuse.

NGOs: Non – Governmental Organizations.

NIDA: National Institute on Drug Abuse.

NIH: National Institutes of Health.

UN: United Nations.

US: United States

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1.1 Background information of drug abuse

Drug and substance abuse is one of the greatest problems in Kenya at present. In fact, it has been classified alongside other major problems such as poverty and HIV/AIDS.

The problem which has been aggravated by greater incidence of drug trafficking/ peddling seems to permeate all socio-economic strata. However, youths are the most hit by the scourge.

When is a drug abused? "A drug is abused when, not being used necessarily as medicine, legal prohibition defied, the amount used exceeds the socially accepted level" (Gatere, 2001). In other words, a drug is abused when it is used without being prescribed, against legal prohibition and against socially set standards. When an individual does this, he/she becomes addicted (physical and psychological dependence on the drug) where the abuser has to use increasing amounts of the drug/substance to experience a similar initial excitement.

A number of drugs/substances are commonly abused in Kenya. They include Alcohol, Tobacco, Cannabis (Bang, Marijuana, Hashish, Hashish oil); Opioids (Morphine, Heroin, Codeine etc.); Sedative-hypnotics (Barbiturates); Stimulants (Cocaine, Amphetamine,

Ecstasy, Miraa, Nicotine, Caffeine, Theophylline (Tea), Theobromine [Cocoa]; Hallucinogens; Inhalants (petroleum fluids, glue, paint thinners, cleaning fluids, aerosols, menthol containing products such as vicks inhaler); prescription and non-prescription medicine. (Gatere, 2001; NACADA, 2002)

In Kenya, drug abusers are found in all social strata of society. However, the youth are the most affected by the problem of drug abuse. In fact, most abusers fall between the ages of 16 and 30 years. (NACADA, 2002)

There are a number of reasons why people abuse drugs. Basically, people use drugs with an aim of altering or enhancing their moods. Depending on the nature of the abusers drugs satisfy two needs. One is “the need to self medicate and feel better, to alleviate real or imagined pain and appetite and the other is desire for pleasure and entertainment”. (NACADA, 2002)

There are also a host of other reasons and situations that drive people to abuse drugs. These include curiosity, peer group pressure, boredom, adolescence, stress, feeling of well being, family negligence, false ideas and perception, festivities, drug culture (NACADA, 2002)

The scourge has become a great threat to humanity. It not only affects the individual and his immediate family but the community, the nation and the world as a whole. Drug abuse has a number of effects on the individual abuser and society at large. Some of the effects include:

- The abuse of drugs affect the health of the individual by damaging a number of his/her internal organs like the liver, kidneys, heart, the lungs, reproductive health and the central nervous system.

- The drug abusers are detested by other society members and eventually become social misfits. This is because their behaviour becomes anti-social.
- Leads the drug abuser to engage in criminal activities to raise money for sustaining the practice.
- Affects other family and society members psychologically and may lead to sustained stress.
- Leads to family neglect resulting in family disintegration as the abuser no longer has interest in the welfare of the family.
- Affects productivity of the abuser which means decline in economic production.
- Increases the security risk in a country.

This threat that drug and substance abuse poses to humanity has led to a number of stakeholders to take initiatives aimed at combating the drug menace.

However, the issue of drug abuse is a complex one. There has been a misconception that only illegal drugs are abused in our society. But this is not the case. There is widespread misuse of both prescription and non-prescription drugs and medications. There is also the issue of social drugs such as tobacco and alcohol that are not outlawed but still pose a great danger to humanity. This is in relation advertising that appear in the mass media that glorify drugs. One important point to note is that these social drugs serve as conduits through which other hard drugs are introduced.

This misconception, in many instances, has been the focus on many campaigns against drug abuse in society the media included. The focus on only illegal drugs. The finality of this

nature of campaigns is the complication of any efforts to tackle the problem of drug abuse. This is because this creates a false belief the problem will be laid down to rest.

1.1.2 Government policy response to the drug scourge

The government's response to the drug abuse problem in the country has been gradual over the years.

The initial response was not a concerted one. This could have been due to the fact that "up to very recently, Kenya and indeed many countries in the neighbourhood, were almost free from the scourge of drug/substance abuse" (NACADA, 2002).

Also even those psychoactive substances that were used in our communities, were used "only for ceremonial reasons and as medicaments and even then on strict positive discrimination by age and sex (NACADA, 2002).

The very initial and earliest ordinance was issued in 1913. It provided for the suppression of the abuse of opium and certain opiates. Since then other ordinances have been issued with an aim of regulating liquors, liquor licensing, prohibiting the sale, cultivation sale and possession of drugs such as Miraa in certain areas. Some of the ordinances have declared other drugs especially hard drugs illegal.

As the drug abuse problem seemed to get out of control, the government, in 1980s doubled its efforts in a bid to contain it. The efforts focused on educating and motivating the public on the dangers of drugs and establishment of legislation and its enforcement aimed at combating the problem.

These efforts led to the establishment of various machinery's and various Acts to deal with the drug menace. These machinery's and Acts are outlined below.

In 1983 the anti-narcotics unit was established to operate mainly at airports, vulnerable border points with high incidences of hard drugs related offences and town to help curb production and trafficking of illicit hard and psychoactive substances.

In 1986, the government enacted the Liquor Licensing Act to bring aboard procedures for licensing courts, issuance of licenses and penalties to check the proliferation of alcoholism.

To deal with the brewing and consumption of local brews and their abuse, the government has enacted a number of Acts. These include: The Chang'aa Prohibition Act Cap. 70 of 1980; Traditional Liquor Act Cap. 122 of 1991; Chief Authority Act; Police and Administration Act; and the Penal Code. These Acts outlaw brewing and consumption of brews and in others conditionally allow consumption to authorised ceremonial occasions.

In 1994, the Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Control) Act was enacted and was aimed at controlling hard drugs.

In 1995, the government created the inter-ministerial co-ordination committee, an offshoot of the Narcotics Act whose aim was to co-ordinate, monitor and evaluate control measures against drug and substance abuse at national level.

The government, in 27th March 2001, established the office of the National Co-ordinator for the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse (NACADA) to deal with the increasing magnitude of drug abuse in the country. The major responsibility of NACADA is to co-ordinate the activities of individuals and organisations in the campaign against drug abuse.

The government has also mandated other institutions with capacity to deal with drug abuse through detection and law enforcement. These institutions include: the Customs, Immigration, Kenya Wildlife Services (KWS), Forest Department, Navy, Courts, Ministry of Health, Posts and so on.

The Kenya government has ratified a number of international conventions and declarations and also keeps close with various international organisations in its efforts to combat the drug problem.

1.1.3 The Mass media and the drug abuse scourge

The media has become a major source of information, and there is a tendency for people to discuss what appears in the media. This clearly points out that media have the ability to influence public opinion, and people's attitudes and behaviour. This is because the public is likely to treat as important issues that are prioritised in media coverage.

It is on the basis of this understanding that in many campaigns, the mass media has been used.

The alarming cases of drug abuse in the country have elicited response from the media. The media both print and electronic have made efforts to cover issues related to drug abuse.

As the NACADA (2002) document points out “the print media has already come up with informative and educative articles on drugs and substances of abuse which have excited interest. Similarly, discussions on drug/substances have taken place on television and radio between officers of the media, NACADA and medical professionals”.

This is a pointer that efforts have been made by different stakeholders the media included to inform and educate the public on the dangers of drugs through media coverage.

However, much efforts above may be made, success is only possible when the media has a coherent strategy on the coverage of drug abuse. A coherent strategy in turn can be put in place only when an examination of the prevailing practices by the media in the coverage of drug abuse in Kenya is done so as to identify the strengths and weaknesses, and gaps in the coverage of drug abuse. This will then enable the development of a good strategy on information dissemination on drug abuse.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The increase of drug abuse cases especially hard drugs with its effects on people’s health and societal harmony has raised a lot of concern in society. This is because the abuse of drugs is threatening to tear society apart. Some of the evils resulting from drug abuse are “high rate of robberies and related crimes, fatal road accidents, rape, unrest’s, riots,

damaging properties, general indiscipline by students in institutions of learning and family disharmony". (NACADA, 2002)

Given the threat that drug abuse is posing to society the government and other stakeholders have taken various initiatives to develop measures that can be undertaken to combat the drug scourge. Among the stakeholders involved include the youth groups, government ministries such as Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health, women groups, NGOs, religious organisations and the mass media.

Of these stakeholders, the mass media has an upper hand in the campaign against drug abuse since many people can be reached through the media. Also besides reaching many people, other stakeholders use the mass media to reach various target groups with their target messages.

This demonstrates that the media plays a great role as a change agent. Through selection of stories and headlines in the coverage of issues, the media sets an agenda to society as people tend to attach importance to issues covered. In addition, society depends on media for information on various issues and tends to accept the definition of an issue or situation as presented by the media.

However, in many instances, the mass media has only concentrated on disseminating information on various issues to create awareness. This has led to acquisition of knowledge in society which is never translated into desired behaviour change. Thus, there is need to look at mass media messages on drug abuse to ascertain whether they can lead to intended behaviour change.

It was therefore, the purpose of this study to examine the coverage of drug abuse/trafficking in the Kenyan mass media with the intent to come up with the appropriate recommendations for designing a media strategy to combat drug abuse and drug trafficking in Kenya. In this study, attention was focused on the content, trends and the quality of coverage of drug abuse/trafficking issues.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The broad objective of this study was to analyse media coverage of drug abuse/trafficking in Kenya. The specific objectives were to:

- (i) Determine the patterns and trends in the drugs scourge coverage in the four Kenyan daily newspapers.
- (ii) Determine the nature of media coverage in terms of number of articles, their size, article type, placement and prominence.
- (iii) Determine origin of the articles on drugs covered in the media
- (iv) Determine the source of the articles carried by the daily papers.
- (v) Determine who the main actors in the articles are.
- (vi) Find out the main subjects focused on in the articles.
- (vii) Determine who is blamed for drug scourge
- (viii) Determine the quality of coverage in terms of balance, informativeness and technical competency.
- (ix) Determine how drug abusers and drug traffickers/peddlers are portrayed in the articles
- (x) Point out apparent weaknesses in media coverage of the various factors associated with increase in drug scourge.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To accomplish the above objectives, the following research questions were answered:

- (i) What has been the trend in the coverage of the drug scourge?
- (ii) What was the nature of media coverage?
- (iii) What was the origin of the articles in the media?
- (iv) What were the major sources of the articles published by the daily newspapers?
- (v) Who were the main actors in the articles?
- (vi) Which main subjects focused were on in the articles?
- (vii) Who was blamed for drug scourge?
- (viii) What was quality level in the coverage of drug scourge in terms balance, informativeness and technical competency?
- (ix) How were drug abusers and drug traffickers/ peddlers portrayed in the articles?
- (x) What apparent weaknesses were evident in the media coverage of drug scourge?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The seriousness of the problem of drug abuse/ trafficking prompted the government to establish the National Agency for the Campaign Against Drug Abuse (NACADA) in March 2001. This was aimed at coordinating the activities of various groups campaigning against drug abuse.

These campaigns against drug abuse can only succeed when the mass media play a central role. This is because as “the frontiers of our society expand daily, mass communication channels have become the only means by which information can be effectively

disseminated to a mass audience.” (Okolo, 1994). Nassanga (2000) also points out that “ as more people are joining the formal working sector, there is less time for interpersonal and group communication. Increasingly, people are relying more on media as a source of information for what is happening in their immediate environment and the world at large.”

With this in mind, it is evident that media have high chances of influencing attitude and behaviour change.

This study assessed the coverage of drug abuse issues. The findings will reveal what has been the nature of coverage of these issues. This will give all the stakeholders a new orientation and new refocus in their efforts to combat drug abuse using the mass media.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study examined media coverage of drug abuse over a period of 20 months from September 2001 to April 2003. It looked at the print media coverage specifically the national daily newspapers that were content analysed. Though the intent of this study was to also content analyse broadcast items, a number of constraints have made it impossible. Therefore the broadcast media has been excluded from the study.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study sought to achieve highest levels of accuracy. Despite this desire and efforts towards the same, there were some constraints that militated against this. These included financial and time constraints. Some editions of newspapers to be content analysed were missing there by reducing the sample size.

Nevertheless, efforts were made to ensure that these limitations did not adversely affect the findings of the study. Thus, though the findings of this study may not have achieved highest levels of accuracy, the accuracy level of the results are high.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The mass media have been perceived as powerful instruments that have a greater influence in society. This perception of the power of mass media has been based on observation of their apparent great reach and impact and of late dependency on it for information.

This belief has been reinforced by the influences the media has had on our daily individual lives and even in political arena. In our daily individual lives there are number of changes or behaviours that include; dressing in relation to forecast by the weatherman, buying a particular product because of the advertisement , adapting a certain eating habits to be health because the media tells us so and many more examples. In the political arena there are some events and actions that have been carried out as a result of media information for example what happened in the Soviet Union and, Nazi in Germany was a result of media being pressed into the service of propaganda on behalf of the ruling class. The latest is what happened in 1994 during the Rwanda genocide where the media played a great role in the escalating crisis .

However, this apparent power of the media has been questioned over the years with no consensus on whether the media are powerful or not.

Nevertheless, despite this questioning, society still clings to the idea that media is still a powerful tool of influence.

What this implies is that what is covered by the mass media has potential ability to influence events and behaviour in society. The influence of media content that society is exposed to is both negative and positive. On the negative realm, there has been a tendency to blame the media to many societal ills such as crime, sex, drug abuse, violence, terrorism. This accusation is linked to how media portrays crime, sex and violence. Besides this, media has also been accused of fuelling violent political protests and demonstrations and international terrorism and societal ills such as drug trafficking through their manner of coverage (McQuail, 1994; Owuor & Nyameino, 2000)

On the positive realm, there has been a tendency to look to the media for solutions to society ills. This becomes possible only when the media make deliberate efforts on their own and in conjunction with other interested institutions to confront those social ills with aim of combating them. That is why there have been various public campaigns using mass media as channels of reaching particular target groups with certain messages intended to influence them.

To sum up all these, the messages (content) that the media disseminate to their audiences have potential for effect on the audience whether intended or unintended.

In this section of literature review the following issues will be looked at: the concept of mass media effects, mass communication and social change, coverage of drug issues in the Kenyan mass media and finally the role of the mass media combating the drug problem.

2.2.0 THE CONCEPT OF MASS MEDIA EFFECTS

The study of mass communication is based on the premise that there are effects that result from exposure to mass media messages (content).

The first theoretical analyses of mass communication were closely linked with mass psychology concept. This was the first phase that extended from the beginning of the 20th century to the late 1930s. The mass psychology concept proceeded from the assumption that an omnipotent medium influences defenceless, socially isolated recipients at will (Kunczik, 1988). In other words, “the media, where they were developed, were credited with considerable power to shape opinion and belief, change habits of life, mould behaviour activity more or less according to the will of those who could control the media and their contents” (Mcquail, 1987:).

This mass psychology concept viewed society as mass consisting of isolated, socially unlinked individuals who were perceived as being wide open to suggestion. In other words individuals in society were considered manipulable “it is believed that one could directly and linearly deduce an identical effect on all recipients from given contents” (Kunczik, 1988). To achieve this goal then meant exposing individuals to the contents that are supposed to cause the effect that the communicator intends. Interestingly enough these “views were not based on scientific investigation, but on observation of enormous popularity of the press and new media of film and radio and their intrusion into many aspects of everyday life as well public affairs” (Mcquail, 1987).

However, as Kunczik (1988) points out, "the very first empirical findings of mass media effect research scientifically disproved the simple stimulus reaction model". This, now, opened a new phase in the study of mass communication. This phase spanned between late 1930s to the early 1960s. Studies carried out during this phase on the different types of content and media concluded that media had minimal effects. This is because most of these studies, whose goal was looking for possibilities of using mass media for planned persuasion and information, did not produce the expected results of influencing their target subjects in a particular way. The researchers asserted that effects only occur under certain conditions that mediate effects. As Klapper (1960:8) points out "mass communication does not ordinarily serve as a necessary or sufficient cause of audience effects, but rather functions through a nexus of mediating factors". The mediating factors are social, cultural and personality.

The conclusion that mass media had minimal effect did not go without challenge. There were those scholars who were reluctant to dismiss the possibility that media might indeed have important social effects and be an instrument for exercising social and political power. "One reason for reluctance to accept a 'minimal effect' conclusion was the arrival of television in the 1950s and 1960s as a new medium with even more power of attraction (if not necessarily of effect) than its predecessors and with seemingly major implications for social life". (McQuail, 1994). This heralded a new phase in effects research in which potential effects of the media were still being sought. However, in this new phase, effects research was being carried out while paying attention to "revised conceptions of social and media processes likely to be involved" (McQuail, 1994).

According to McQuail (1994) “ the renewal of effect research was marked by a shift of attention towards long term change cognitions rather than attitude and affect, intervening variables of context, disposition and motivation and collective phenomena such as climates of opinion, structures of belief, ideologies, cultural patterns and institutional forms or media provision”. Neuman’s spiral of silence theory and Gerbner’s cultivation analysis fall in this phase. This phase had many contributors but it was Noelle-Neumann who coined the slogan ‘return to the concept of the powerful mass media’.

Further works on the study of media effects led to another new phase of negotiated media influence referred to as social constructivist (mainstreaming). In this approach the media is viewed as having most significant effect by constructing meanings and presenting these constructs in a systematic way to audiences. These constructs when received by audience may be incorporated or not, based on some form of negotiations, into personal meaning structures, often shaped by prior collective identifications. The new thinking borrows some points and ideas from the powerful media’ theory, including, for example theory of ideology and false consciousness, Gerbner’s cultivation theory and Neuman’s Spiral of Silence’ theory.

This new approach to media effects has two main thrusts according to McQuail (1994). “First, that media ‘construct’ social formations and history itself by framing images of reality (in fiction as well as news) in a predictable patterned way and secondly, that people in audiences construct for themselves their own view of social reality and their place in it, in interaction with the symbolic constructions offered by the media”. In essence this theory “allows for the power of the media and the people’s power to choose” (McQuail, 1994).

What is evident in the above concept of media effects is that the media is able to influence the way it presents and covers news to the audiences. This is what communication scholars call 'mainstreaming'

2.3.0 MASS COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

The mass media plays a critical role in social change as they can be used to influence large numbers of people in society. As Tan (1986) points, the "mass media, because they are able to reach large audiences simultaneously, can be effective tools of influence". In addition to reaching large audiences simultaneously, "as media have become major sources of information, and there is a tendency for people to discuss what appears in the media, the media have considerable influence in shaping public opinion and people's behaviour" (Nassanga, 2000).

Since social change involve change in values, technology or social conflict, before "the existing values can be changed, the new values should be made clear to members of a social unit; the mass media could be the vehicles by which these new values are introduced" (Tan, 1986)

2.3.1 Mass communication and diffusion of information and news

A number of early studies point out that mass media play an important role of diffusing information into the community. The rate at which information and news diffuse is determined by a number of factors. The factors include: media coverage, educational and

interest levels of members of the community and the type of information that is covered by the media (Tan, 1986, Dominick, 1994).

In many instances events important to the community receive full and wide coverage by the media. This leads to rapid and complete diffusion of information within a community.

Even for the less significant events in the community, the media plays an important role of being the primary sources of information and also as a source for verification of information heard from other people.

2.3.2 Mass communication and societal knowledge differential

As studies in mass communication have shown knowledge levels and the rate of diffusion of information are not the same for all segments of the social system. People with higher socio-economic status acquire information at a faster rate compared to their counterparts with the lower socio-economic status thereby increasing the knowledge gap between them (Techenor et al, 1970).

To deal with knowledge gap in society, some communicators have suggested the design of communication campaigns with disadvantaged group in mind. This helps narrow the gap in knowledge between the two groups (Dervin, 1980).

2.3.3 Mass communication and diffusion of opinion and behaviours

One may wonder whether the mass media can influence opinions and behaviours. One issue is clear. The mass media provide information on a range of issues. Since opinions are formed based on acquired information, it can be assumed theoretically that the information provided by the mass media can influence opinions and attitudes. This will in turn influence behaviours as behaviour results from opinions and attitudes.

a) Mass media and public opinion

Mass media could either lead to change or stabilisation of opinion in a number of ways.

As Tan (1986) outlines, one of the ways is through providing information about issues. This information can then be used to form opinions. However, the opinion formed, according to the Leon Festinger's theory of "Cognitive dissonance", depends on the amount and the nature of information that the individual receives, the process of selective exposure, selective perception and selective retention (Festinger, 1957).

The other way through which the media can influence opinion is by deciding which issues the public should form opinions on. This is achieved through the "Agenda setting effect" where the media through selection of stories and headlines influences what people should think about. This presents the public with a continuous stream of cues about importance of various issues, topics and events (McCombs & Shaw, 1972).

Another way through which media can affect public opinion is by directly proposing choices to the public. The media can choose to take particular positions in regard to an issue in many instances agreeing with the majority. If an individual finds that the media does not support his/her opinion, he/she keeps quiet and tends to support popular opinion. This media consonance and an individual's perception of what others are thinking regarding an issue form the basis for public opinion process called the "spiral of silence" (Neumann, 1974)

b) Mass media and behaviour change

Mass media can influence behaviour change. This can be achieved through advertising, propaganda and public communications campaigns in many instances using the mass media. This changes behaviour even at collective level. This is evidenced in the collection of case studies in Rise and Pislely's book "Public communication campaigns". One successful example reported in the book where media played a great role in changing behaviour was the case of the Stanford Heart Disease Prevention Program. The program was intended to change people's habits with regard to three leading risk factors – diet, lack of exercise and smoking. The program was a success in changing attitudes behaviour in relation to the heart disease risk.

MEDIA COVERAGE OF DRUG ISSUES IN KENYA

Despite the fact that the drug problem has been identified as one the major problems in Kenya, information available on the coverage of drug related issues reveals that coverage in terms of volume and quality is inadequate.

For instance, Owuor and Nyameino (2000) in their study on the coverage of drug related issues by the Kenyan print media found out that the print media does not “come out strongly against and do not attach a higher value for drug stories.” Other findings in their study include: the print media do not prioritise their education role in society as far as drug abuse is concerned; the print media have not taken their own initiative to campaign against drug abuse besides highlighting government/ other stakeholders efforts against drug abuse; most of the articles appeared as briefs and were abstract lacking interpretation or human interest angle; the newspapers were unperturbed by the increasing incidences of the drug trafficking and abuse in the country; the print media by reporting the values of drugs impounded by officers were indirectly encouraging drug trafficking as people are likely to consider it as quick way to riches; finally the drug stories were associated with provincial news round-up which are usually short pieces and lacking detail.

Otiende and Kahuthu (2002) content analysed the coverage of drugs related issues by the daily leading newspapers; Daily Nation and The East African Standard. They found that the newspapers assigned low level of prominence to drug related issues. They also found out that despite the efforts made to combat the drug problem ,the media have not taken their own initiative in the campaign against drug abuse. Another important findings that came out of their study was that there were no follow up stories to display the consequences of the action they had reported.

The research technique employed in the two studies was content analysis. One of the strong recommendations in the two studies was that follow-up studies be done to determine whether the nature of reporting of drug issues has changed. This is one of the major reasons that prompted this study.

However, one important point to note is that this study provides a broader perspective in terms of scope. This study covers a much wider period unlike the two studies. This will provide an ample duration for analyzing trends in the coverage of the drug scourge.

2.4.0 ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN ILLICIT DRUG PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT

Though the media has always been blamed for most ills in society, still society looks to it for solutions to most problems including drug abuse and drug trafficking. As the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), a part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) which is a component of the US Department of Health and Human Services indicates in the NIH GUIDE, “interpersonal and media messages can have a significant influence on attitudes, experiences, intentions, and behaviours which affect individual decisions about illicit drug use.” Hence “because the media have the ability to both reflect and shape attitudes and behaviours, drug abuse prevention programmers often look to the media to reach the critical audiences with important messages.” (NIDA, 1998)

In this regard therefore, to combat the drug problem, “media can increase public awareness of drug abuse problems, promote organizational involvement in preventing substance abuse, create public agendas for community action, strengthening drug free social norms, stimulate interpersonal discussions relevant to prevention of drug problems, and reinforce changes in relevant health behaviours of individuals residing within a community.” (NIDA, 1994).

In addition to this the media should provide accurate information on the nature and extent of drug abuse in the country. “Accurate information on the nature of drug/substance abuse problems in a community is fundamental to the development of clear and realistic goals”

(NACADA, 2002). Provision of accurate information to the public means extensive coverage of the issue to ensure that information reaches all segments of the society.

2.5.0 CONCLUSION

Realising that drug abuse is a major problem that is affecting our society, there is need for action. This action entails various campaigns that can be undertaken. At the central of these campaigns is the mass media that gets information to the public (people). The information the media gets to the public should be knowledge enriching and even go a step further to influence behaviour change.

This study intended to evaluate the information the media has been passing on to the public on drug abuse. The findings will form the basis of designing media campaigns to combat drug abuse.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The research technique employed in this study to analyze the coverage of the drug scourge in the four Kenyan newspapers was content analysis. The use of this technique for this study is appropriate as it is “popular with mass media researchers because it provides an efficient way to investigate the content of media...” and it is also “...a valuable tool in answering many mass media questions.” (Wimmer & Dominick, 1983).

Content analysis technique, as Wimmer & Dominick (1983) point out, is normally employed for various purposes which include: describing communication content; testing hypothesis of message characteristics; comparing media content to the “real world”; assessing the image of particular group in society; and establishing a starting point for studying mass media effects. In this study, this technique (content analysis), only served the descriptive purpose, thus, describing how the drug scourge was covered by the four Kenyan newspapers during the 20 month period, from September 2001 to April 2003.

3.2 Target Population

The target population for this study comprised all national daily and Sunday editions of newspapers published in Kenya. The daily and Sunday newspaper editions published in Kenya are: The Daily Nation, Sunday Nation, East African Standard, Sunday Standard,

Kenya Times, Sunday Times, People Daily and People on Sunday. All these newspaper editions from June 2001 to March 2003 total to 2676 newspaper editions that studied.

3.3. Sampling design and procedures

Given the time and resources available for this study, all the subjects of study could not be studied. This necessitated sampling. Therefore the population sample for each category was obtained as follows:

Using the multi-stage sampling technique, the four national daily newspapers were purposely selected on the basis of their span coverage (Odhiambo, 2000)

Secondly, since articles on the drug scourge could not be randomly or systematically distributed throughout the study period, a composite week for each month was constructed for each month to ensure representativeness in the sample (Wimmer and Dominick, 1983).

The construction of the composite week involved the use of random sampling (with replacement) with a "sampling rule that no more than two days from one week can be chosen from one week... across the month (Wimmer and Dominick, 1983). For the study period, this sampling technique yielded 20 weeks for 560 newspaper editions. However, due to some missing editions the sample size was reduced to 448 newspaper editions.

3.4 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis was be the article that covered or contained visualisation of drug abuse/drug trafficking. The articles were analyzed in terms of the following variables:

- (i) **Frequency:** Defined as number of articles
- (ii) **Space:** allocated to the articles: measured in cm²
- (iii) **Type of article:** Defined as news, feature, news analyses/commentary, editorial, letter to the editor, health and science feature, cartoon, advert, picture.
- (iv) **Placement:** Defined as front page, page2/page3, other inside page, feature and magazine section, back page.
- (v) **Prominence:** Defined as edition lead, page lead, bold text, boxed/coloured article, reversed/enhanced headline, picture illustration, main editorial, special commentary.
- (vi) **Origin:** Defined as local, foreign, international syndicate/ feature service.
- (vii) **Source:** Defined as who or what was the source of the drug scourge stories.
- (viii) **Subject:** Defined as the theme focused on in the story.
- (ix) **Blame attribution:** Defined as who is blamed for the escalation of the drug scourge.
- (x) **Balance:** Defined as very balanced, balanced, average, biased, very biased.
- (xi) **Informativeness:** Defined as very informative, informative, average, not informative.
- (xii) **Technical competence:** defined as very competent, competent, average, very incompetent.
- (xiii) **Portrayal:** Defined as how drug abusers and drug traffickers/peddlers were portrayed.

3.5 Coding of Content

This involved placing the units of analysis into the constructed content categories. Before starting the actual coding of content began, the researcher carried out a pilot study to give the research some direction in terms of identifying the variables and determining the

distribution of stories on the drug scourge. The pilot study covered one month in which articles on the drug scourge in the four newspapers were analyzed.

The main research instrument used for coding data was a standard coding sheet that was designed for that purpose (see appendix 1)

3.6 Data analysis

Data analysis involved both qualitative and quantitative techniques

a. Qualitative techniques

These involved the description of the weaknesses apparent in media coverage of drug abuse and trafficking.

b. Quantitative techniques

These involved the use of descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, percentages and measures of central tendency such as the mean.

CHAPTER FOUR

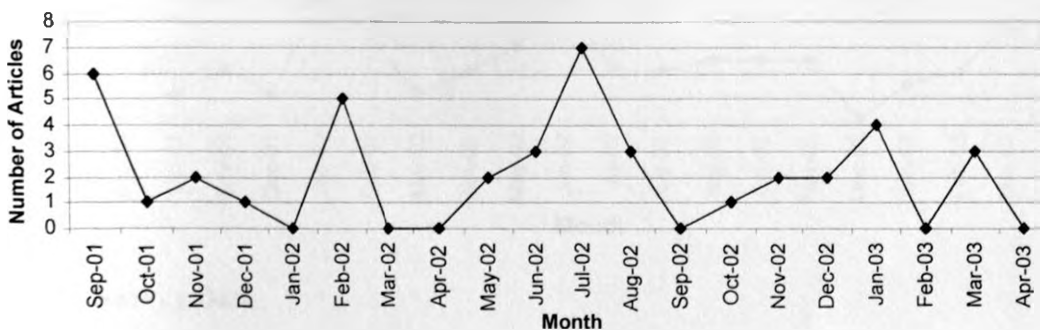
4.0 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS.

4.1 TRENDS AND PATTERNS IN DRUG SCOURGE COVERAGE.

The following figures 1-5 show trends and patterns in the coverage of the drug scourge over the 20 month period of study.

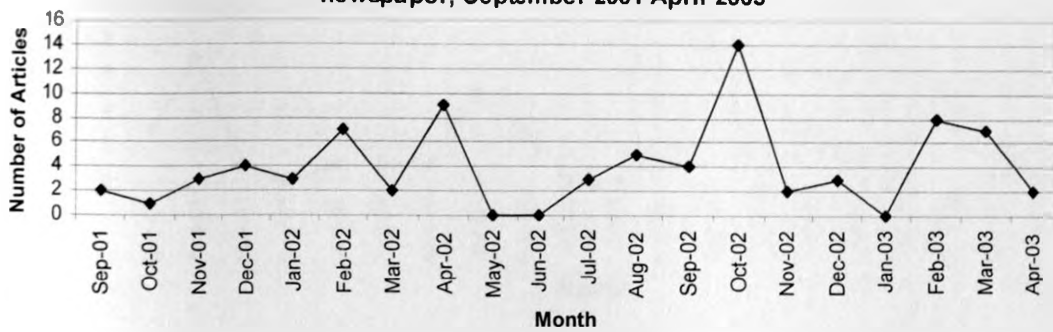
For the *Nation* the coverage of drug issues was the highest in the month of July 2002 when the total number of articles were seven. This was followed by a relatively higher coverage in the month of January 2001 and February 2002 where the number of articles were five and four respectively. Lowest coverage was in the month of January 2002, September 2002, February and April 2003, where no article appeared. This is seen in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Trends in the coverage of the drug scourge by the Nation newspaper, September 2001-April 2003



Source: Survey Data.

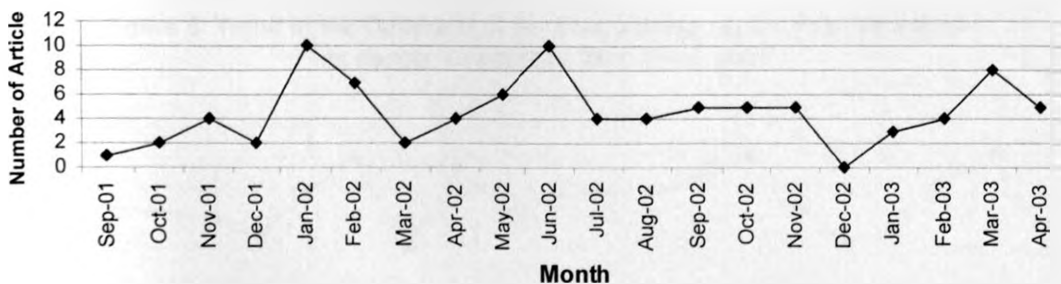
Figure 2: Trends in the Coverage of the Drug Scouge by the Standard newspaper, September 2001-April 2003



Source: Survey Data

As figure 2 shows above the *Standard* had the highest coverage was in the month of October 2002, where 14 articles appeared. This was followed by the months of April 2002, and February 2003 where nine and eight articles appeared respectively. Lowest coverage was in the months of May and June 2002 and January 2003 where no article never appeared.

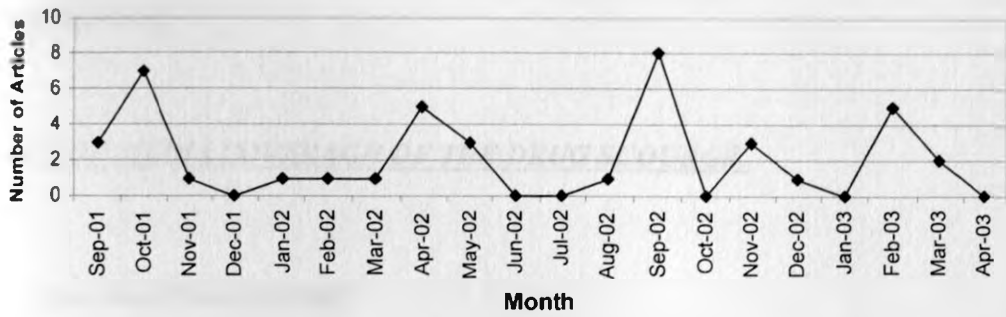
Figure 3: Trends in the Coverage of the Drug Scouge by the Kenya Times newspaper, September 2001-April 2003



Source: Survey Data

For *Kenya Times* highest coverage was reported in the months of January 2002 and June 2002 where in each month 10 articles on the drug scouge appeared. This was closely followed by March 2003 where 8 articles appeared. This is shown in figure 3 above.

Figure 4: Trends in the Coverage of the Drug Scourge by the People Newspaper, September 2001-April 2003

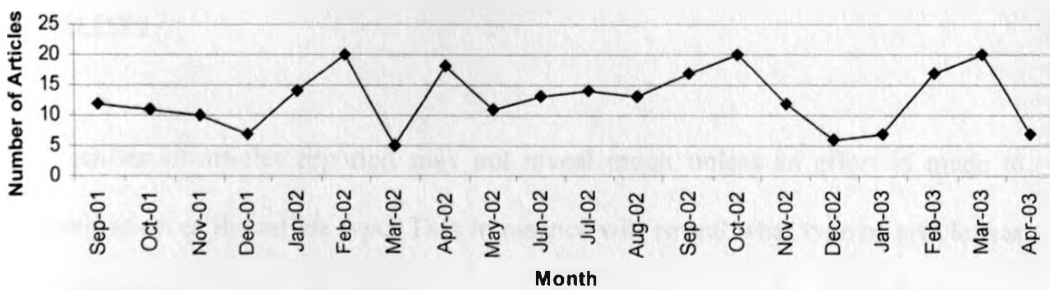


Source: Survey Data

From figure 4 above it is evident that the *People* had the highest coverage was in the month of September, 2002 where eight stories appeared. This was followed by the months of October 2001, April 2002 and February 2003 where eight and five, articles appeared respectively.

The combined trend and patterns of coverage of the drug scourge by the four in figure 5 below.

Figure 5: Trend in the Coverage of the Drug Scourge by the Four Newspaper in Kenya, September 2001- April, 2003



Source: Survey Data

From the figure it can be seen that the intensity of coverage was highest in the months of February and October 2002 and March 2003 where the number of articles were reported.

The lowest coverage was reported in the month of March 2003 where only 5 articles on the drug scourge appeared.

4.2 NATURE OF MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE DRUG SCOURGE.

Frequency and Amount of coverage.

The data analysis shows that the four newspapers coverage of the drug scourge was quite low in terms of frequency and volume as table 1 describes. It is interesting that, of the 448 days used as sample, the four newspapers combined had a total of 254 articles covering the drug scourge in the 20 month period under study.

A look at the amount of coverage of the drug scourge by the individual newspapers reveals that *Kenya Times* took the lead in the number of articles used. It had a total of 91 articles. It was followed by the *East African Standard* with 79 articles. Then, finally, the *Nation* and *People* with 42 articles each.

4.2.1 Article type

The total number of articles reported may not reveal much unless an effort is made to analyze distribution of the article type. This in essence will reveal what type of article was allocated much space.

In total, as table 1 below shows, more news (straight news) articles (53.9%) than any other type of article of the study were reported. This was followed by pictures (15%), feature

stories (10.6%), letters to the editor (7.5%), news analyses and commentary (5.5%), editorials (2.8%), health and science feature (2.8%), cartoon (1.2%), and advertisement (0.8%) in that order.

TABLE 1: Distribution of drug articles in the four Kenyan newspapers by type

TYPE OF ARTICLE	NEWSPAPER									
	NATION		STANDARD		KENYA TIMES		PEOPLE		TOTAL	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
News	26	61.9	37	46.8	52	57.1	22	52.4	137	53.9
Feature	3	7.1	16	20.3	5	5.5	3	7.1	27	10.6
News Analysis/ Commentary	4	9.5	3	3.8	4	4.4	3	7.1	14	5.5
Editorial	0	0	2	2.5	2	2.2	3	7.1	7	2.8
Letter to Editor	1	2.4	7	8.9	8	8.8	3	7.1	19	7.5
Health/ Science Feature	2	4.8	2	2.5	1	1.1	2	4.8	7	2.8
Cartoon	0	0	0	0	3	3.3	0	0	3	1.2
Advert	0	0	1	1.3	1	1.1	0	0	2	0.8
Picture	6	14.3	11	13.3	15	16.5	6	14.3	38	15
Total	42	100	79	100	91	100	42	100	254	100

Source: Survey data

Despite the fact that in all newspapers the bulk of space given to drug stories went to news, the papers exhibited some differences in other type of articles. Nation, Kenya Times and People gave some substantial coverage to pictures. The East African Standard gave some substantial coverage space to features and also a good consideration to pictures and letters to the editor.

4.2.2 Space allocated to drug stories

The total space allocated to the coverage of the drug scourge by the four newspapers is 44,294 cm². Table 2 below presents the figures of the space allocated to drug stories by each of the newspaper.

From table it is evident that the *Standard* was leading with 18,081cm² of space devoted to drug stories, followed by the *Kenya Times* which had some 13,721cm² of space devoted to drug stories. This was followed by *The People* that had 7068cm² of space and lastly was the *Nation* which had devoted 5,424cm². However in terms of mean space the *Standard* was still leading with a mean of 228.87, followed the *People* with 168.28. This was followed by the *Kenya Times* with 150.78 and by the *Nation* with 129.14.

Table 2: Space allocated to drug stories

Newspaper	Space(cm²)	Mean Space
Nation	5,424	129.14
Standard	18,081	228.87
Kenya Times	13,721	150.78
The People	7,068	168.28
Total	44,294	169.27

Source: Survey data

4.2.3 Placement

In the coverage of an issue or a story, placement it is the other issue that must be looked into. This is because placement determines the chances of being read or not being read. The decision to place a story in a particular section of the newspaper lies with the editor and more particularly the chief- sub-editor. The decision he/she makes depends on the weight that the editor attaches to a particular story.

Placing a story on page one or back page of a newspaper often indicates that the story is accorded great weight. Less important stories are mostly placed inside pages sometimes as fillers.

Table 3: Placement of drug articles in the four Kenyan newspapers

PLACEMENT	NEWSPAPER							
	NATION		STANDARD		KENYA TIMES		PEOPLE	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Front page	2	4.8	3	3.8	2	2.2	1	2.4
Page 2/ page 3	3	7.1	4	5.1	11	12.1	2	4.8
Other inside page	28	66.7	65	82.3	70	76.9	35	83.3
Feature/Magazine section	3	7.1	5	6.3	4	4.4	3	7.1
Back page	6	14.3	2	2.5	4	4.4	1	2.4
Total	42	100	79	100	91	100	42	100

Source: Survey data

As table 3 above shows most of the stories on the drug scourge were placed in other inside pages. In fact over 50 percent of the articles in all the four daily Kenyan newspapers 66.7 percent in the *Nation*, 82.3 per cent in the *East African Standard*, 76.9 per cent in the *Kenya Times* and 83.3 per cent in the *People*. Front page had the least number of articles in all the newspapers. Of all the newspapers, *Kenya Times* seem to have done well in terms of placement of drug stories where over 12 per cent of the articles were placed on page two or three, implying that they were treated as important local news. In general, it can be said that stories on the drug scourge were not assigned much weight hence confined to 'other inside pages' by all the newspapers.

4.2.4 Prominence.

Table 4: Distribution of drug articles to the four Kenyan newspapers by prominence

PROMINENCE	NEWSPAPER							
	NATION		STANDARD		KENYA TIMES		PEOPLE	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Edition lead	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Page Lead	7	35	10	37.0	13	39.4	6	50
Bold Text	1	5	2	7.4	0	0	0	0
Boxed/coloured article	3	15	4	14.8	6	18.2	0	0
Reversed/Enhanced headline	2	10	4	14.8	1	3.0	0	0
Picture Illustration	4	20	3	11.1	8	24.2	3	25
Main Editorial	0	0	1	3.7	2	6.1	2	16.7
Special Commentary/	2	10	3	11.1	3	9.1	1	8.3
Total	20	100	27	100	33	100	12	100

Source: Survey data

Table 4 above shows the distribution of drug scourge stories by prominence. What is evident from the table is that the newspapers did well in treating their stories as page leads. *Nation* had 35 percent of the drug scourge articles as page leads, the *Standard* had 37 per cent, *Kenya Times* 39.4 per cent while the *People* had 50 per cent. Close to this boxing/colouring the article and using picture illustration were other indicators of prominence that were employed to give prominence to the articles. One point to be noted is that at least one newspaper, the *Nation*, treated a drug story (5 per cent) as an edition lead. No other newspaper did the same. This is a clear indication that a drug story can also be ‘a

big story'. On the other hand, the other newspapers did well in treating the drug problem articles as main editorials in their editions. *Standard* had 3.7 per cent, *Kenya Times* 6.1 per cent and *People* had 16.7 per cent. This is at least good given that editorials serve as agenda setters for public debate. Interestingly enough the *Nation* that treated, at least, an article as an edition lead did not treat an article on the drug scourge as a main editorial.

4.3 ORIGIN OF DRUG ARTICLES.

The study also examined if the articles carried by the daily newspapers originated locally or from foreign wire services and international syndicate or feature services. As table 5 below reveals, a greater number of stories were local. As is evident 88.1 percent of *Nation* stories were sourced locally, the *Standard* 91.1 percent, *Kenya Times* 60.4 percent, *People* 76.2 percent. It is also clear that it is the *Standard* that led in sourcing a majority of its stories locally. Not many stories on the drug scourge were sourced from foreign or international sources. This implies that most of the stories on the drug scourge were the handwork of our local Kenyan journalists.

Table 5: Distribution of drug articles in the four Kenyan newspapers by origin of articles.

ORIGIN	NEWSPAPER							
	NATION		STANDARD		KENYA TIMES		PEOPLE	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Local	37	88.1	72	91.1	55	60.4	32	76.2
Foreign	2	4.8	2	2.5	15	16.5	6	14.3
International syndicate/feature service	3	7.1	5	6.3	21	23.1	4	9.5
Total	42	100	79	100	91	100	42	100

Source: Survey data

4.4 SOURCE OF DRUG STORIES.

Table 6: Distribution of articles on drugs in the four Kenyan newspapers by source

SOURCE OF ARTICLE	NEWSPAPER							
	NATION		STANDARD		KENYA TIMES		PEOPLE	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Ministry of Health	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4.8
Other Government official	14	33.3	31	39.2	29	31.9	12	28.6
Politician	7	16.7	3	3.8	3	3.3	5	11.9
Religious body/clergy	0	0	0	0	2	2.2	0	0
Sports Body/official	1	2.4	2	2.5	14	15.4	4	9.5
NGO /UN	0	0	2	2.5	2	2.2	3	7.1
Scientific/ Research Report	1	2.4	0	0	1	1.1	0	0
Workshop/ Seminar	0	0	0	0	1	1.1	0	0
Business Organization	0	0	0	0	1	1.1	0	0
Journalist	15	35.7	28	35.4	26	28.6	10	23.8
Reader/letter to editor	2	4.7	7	8.7	8	8.8	1	2.4
Member of Public	0	0	1	1.3	1	1.1	0	0
Other Interest Group	0	0	2	2.5	0	0	4	9.5
Research Institute / University	1	2.4	3	3.8	3	3.3	1	2.4
Employer	1	2.4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	42	100	79	100	91	100	42	100

Source: Survey data

As seen on table 6 above, most of the articles in all the newspapers on the drug scourge came from government officials. *Nation* had 33.3 per cent of the articles, from government officials, *Standard* had 39.2 per cent and was leading, *Kenya Times* had 31.9 per cent and the *People* had 28.6 percent. A second leading source of drug stories was individual journalist's initiative (35.7% in *Nation*, 35.4 % in *Standard*, 28.6% in *Kenya Times* and 23.8% in the *people*). This indicates how much effort journalists are making in getting stories on the drug scourge.

Other significant sources from which stories on drug come were politician, Readers (Letters to the editor) and research institutes and universities and sports bodies. However it is worthy to note that the finding about sports bodies and organisations being major sources of news about the drug scourge is indeed surprising. As shown in table 6, 15.4 per cent of the drug stories come from sports organisation. This is ranked third among the sources of drug stories in the *Kenya Times*. What makes this interesting is that abuse of drugs is the least news we can expect to get from sports organisation owing to the highest degree of discipline that sports people are expected to exhibit.

4.5 MAIN ACTORS IN THE DRUG STORIES.

In addition to the sources of the stories, the study analysed who the main actors in the stories were the findings are presented in table 7 below. It is evident that the main actors in the stories in all the papers were the government /ministry of health. This was 54.8 per cent in *Nation*, 55.7 per cent in *Standard*, 42.9 in *Kenya Times*, and 47.6 per cent in *People*. This was closely followed by private individuals and groups as main actors in the stories (38.1% for *Nation*, 35.4% for *Standard*, 30.8% for *Kenya Times* and 38.1% for *People*).

Other significant actors were sports organisations/officials and researchers/ scientists. Since the government is the actor that mostly acts on cases of drug abuse and drug trafficking, it is not surprising to find that it is main actor in most stories. In the same vein the drug scourge impacts heavily on individuals, families and other social groups. This could be the reason why their plight was focused on.

Table 7: Distribution of drug articles in the four Kenyan daily newspapers by main actor.

MAIN ACTOR	NEWSPAPER							
	NATION		STANDARD		KENYA TIMES		PEOPLE	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Government/Ministry of Health	23	54.8	44	55.7	39	42.9	20	47.6
Researcher/Scientist	1	2.4	2	2.5	3	3.4	0	0
Sports Organization/Official	1	2.4	2	2.5	11	12.1	3	7.1
Religious body/Clergy	0	0	0	0	2	2.2	0	0
Individual/Group	16	38.1	28	35.4	28	30.8	19	38.1
UN agency	0	0	2	2.5	3	3.4	2	4.8
NGO	0	0	0	0	2	2.2	0	0
Business Organisation	0	0	0	0	2	2.2	1	2.4
Research Institute/University	0	0	1	1.3	1	1.1	0	0
Employer	1	2.4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	42	100	719	100	91	100	42	100

Source: Survey data

4.7 MAIN SUBJECT OF DRUG STORIES

The investigation of this aspect of coverage revealed some slight differences in the topics or subjects focused on by the various daily newspapers. Findings can be seen in table 8 below

Table 8: Distribution of drug articles in the four Kenyan newspapers by subject of coverage

MAIN SUBJECT	NEWSPAPER							
	NATION		STANDARD		KENYA TIMES		PEOPLE	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Ban from sporting	1	2.4	1	1.3	16	17.6	3	7.1
Effect on education	0	0	2	2.5	1	1.1	1	2.4
Prevalence	2	4.8	11	13.9	1	1.1	2	4.8
Campaign/mobilization efforts	3	7.1	20	25.3	22	24.2	9	21.4
Arrest/Jailing/court cases	11	26.2	25	31.6	16	17.6	7	16.7
Leads To Crime	1	2.4	2	2.5	4	4.4	1	2.4
Effect on economy/development	1	2.4	1	1.3	3	3.3	0	0
Effect on health	3	7.1	5	6.3	11	12.1	7	16.7
Sale/Consumption/cultivation	1	2.4	2	2.5	4	4.4	0	0
Rehabilitation/treatment	4	9.5	2	2.5	1	1.1	1	2.4
Causes deaths/accidents	1	2.4	1	1.3	3	3.3	0	0
Content/Dangers of drugs	5	11.9	0	0	1	1.1	2	4.8
Crackdown on trafficking and peddling	5	11.9	5	6.3	6	6.6	5	11.9
Economic costs	0	0	0	0	1	1.1	0	0
Corruption/scandals	1	2.4	0	0	1	1.1	0	0
Effect on family/society	0	0	1	1.3	0	0	1	2.4
Disowning employee/sacking	2	4.8	1	1.3	0	0	1	2.4
Behaviour of addicts	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4.8
Legalize brews	1	2.4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	42	100	79	100	91	100	42	100

Source: Survey data

For the *Nation* and *Standard*, the main subjects focused on was arrests/jailing court cases (26.2% for *Nation* and 31.6 for *Standard*) While for *Kenya Times* and *People* it was campaign/mobilisation efforts by government and groups (24.2% and 21.4% respectively) as the main subjects. This points out that *Nation* and *Standard* focused on drug trafficking while *Kenya Times* and *People* focussed on drug abuse. This is because most of arrest and jailing were in connection to trafficking while mobilisation/campaign efforts were in connection with ways of curbing abuse.

Other main subjects that were significantly focused on by almost all the papers was crack down on trafficking and pedalling (11.9% for *Nation*, 6.3% for *Standard*, 6.6% for *Kenya Times* and 11.9% for *People*) and effects on health (7.1% for *Nation*, 6.3% for *Standard*, 12.1% for *Kenya Times* and 16.7% for *People*)

Another point to note is the reportage of other main subjects focused is that the papers differed greatly in other main subjects they gave weight. For the *Nation* it was rehabilitation and treatment (9.5%). *Standard* focussed on prevalence (13.9 %). *Kenya Times* focussed on Ban from sporting (17.6%).

On the whole, the newspapers considered campaign/mobilisation efforts, arrests/jailing/court cases; crackdown on trafficking and peddling; ban from sporting; prevalence; and rehabilitation and treatment as most important subjects.

4.7 BLAME ATTRIBUTION IN DRUG STORIES

Table 9: Distribution of drug articles in the four Kenyan newspapers by blame attribution

BLAME ATTRIBUTION	NEWSPAPER							
	NATION		STANDARD		KENYA TIMES		PEOPLE	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Police	0	0	3	11.1	2	5.3	0	0
Tobacco Companies	1	6.7	2	7.4	6	15.8	3	15.8
Brewers/Sellers	5	33.3	6	22.2	2	5.3	4	21.1
Government/Government officers	4	26.7	7	25.9	14	36.8	5	26.3
Poverty	0	0	2	7.4	2	5.3	0	0
Idleness	0	0	0	0	2	5.3	0	0
Peers	0	0	0	0	1	2.6	1	5.3
Public	0	0	2	7.4	3	7.9	2	10.5
Traffickers/Peddlers	1	6.7	1	3.7	3	7.9	1	5.3
Men	0	0	0	0	1	2.6	0	0
Parents	2	13.3	1	3.7	1	2.6	1	5.3
Teachers	1	6.7	2	7.4	0	0	0	0
Ignorance	1	6.7	0	0	1	2.6	0	0
Tourism	0	0	1	3.7	0	0	0	0
Technology	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5.3
UN	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5.3
Media								
Total	15	100	27	100	38	100	19	100

Source: Survey data

The study also investigated to find out if there was blame in the stories and who was blamed for the drug problem. It was found out that there was blame and the results are presented in table 9 above. From the table, the government and government officials (26.7% for *Nation*,

25.9% for *Standard*, 36.8% for *Kenya Times* and 26.3 for *People*) received most of the blame followed by brewers and sellers (33.3% for *Nation*, 22.2% for *Standard*, 21.1% for *People*)

The *Kenya Times* and *People* had also other articles that attributed blame to tobacco companies (15.8% and 15.8% respectively). *Nation* had other articles that attributed blame to the parents (13.3%) while *Standard* had other articles that attributed blame to police (11.1%). *People* had other articles that blamed the public (10.5%). Others blamed were drug traffickers/peddlers (6.7% for *Nation*, 3.7% for *Standard*, 7.9% for *Kenya Times*, and 5.3% for *People*).

In general, therefore, the government seems to have received most of the blame for the drug problem. Other blame attribution went to brewers and sellers; tobacco companies; parents; police; and drug traffickers and peddlers.

4.8 QUALITY OF COVERAGE OF THE DRUG PROBLEM

Quality of coverage of the drug problem was examined in terms of balance, informativeness and technical competence of the articles.

4.8.1 Balance of Articles

Table 10: Distribution of drug articles in the four Kenyan newspapers by balance

BALANCE	NEWSPAPER							
	NATION		STANDARD		KENYA TIMES		PEOPLE	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Very Balanced	10	23.8	13	16.5	7	7.7	7	16.7
Balanced	24	57.1	48	60.8	63	69.2	25	59.5
Average	7	16.7	10	12.7	12	13.2	6	14.2
Biased	1	2.4	5	6.3	9	9.9	4	9.5
Very Biased	0	0	3	3.8	0	0	0	0
Total	42	100	79	100	91	100	42	100

Source: Survey data

In terms of balance, *Nation* led in having "very balanced" articles with 23.8 percent followed by *People* with 16.7 percent and *Standard* with 16.5 per cent and *Kenya Times* with 7.7 percent. Interestingly enough the reverse is seen in relation to 'balanced' articles. *Kenya Times* is leading with 69.2 percent followed by the *Standard* with 60.8 percent, *People* with 59.5 percent and finally *Nation* with 57.1 percent.

In general, most of the articles on the drug scourge were either 'very balanced' or 'balanced' for *Nation*, *Standard* and *People*. However for *Kenya Times* the articles were either 'balanced' or averagely balanced

4.8.2 Informativeness of the Articles

Table 11: Distribution of drug articles in the four Kenyan newspapers by informativeness

INFORMATIVE - NESS OF ARTICLES	NEWSPAPER							
	NATION		STANDARD		KENYA TIMES		PEOPLE	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Very Informative	6	14.3	10	12.7	18	19.8	12	28.6
Informative	24	57.1	52	65.8	48	52.7	27	64.3
Average	10	23.8	12	15.2	12	13.2	2	4.7
Not Informative	2	4.8	5	6.3	13	14.3	1	2.4
Total	42	100	79	100	91	100	42	100

Source: Survey data.

In terms of informativeness, most of the articles in *Kenya Times* and the *People* newspapers were either "very informative" or "informative". *Kenya Times* had 19.8 per cent "very informative" and 52.7 per cent "informative" articles while *People* had 28.6 per cent "very informative" and 64.3 per cent "informative" or "average". Most articles in *Nation* and *Standard* were either "informative" or "averagely informative". *Nation* had 57.1 per cent "informative" and 23.8 per cent "average" articles while the *Standard* had 65.8 per cent "informative" and 15.2 per cent "averagely informative" articles.

On the whole, it can be said that the newspapers performed well in terms of publishing informative articles as over 50 per cent of the articles were either 'informative' or 'very informative'

4.8.3 Technical competence

Table 12: Distribution of drug articles in the four Kenyan newspapers by technical competence

TECHNICAL COMPETENCE	NEWSPAPER							
	NATION		STANDARD		KENYA TIMES		PEOPLE	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
V. Competent	6	14.3	9	11.4	13	14.3	10	23.8
Competent	23	54.8	50	63.3	44	48.4	22	52.4
Average	11	26.2	16	20.3	26	28.6	7	16.7
Incompetent	1	2.4	4	5.1	8	8.8	3	7.1
V. Incompetent	1	2.4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	42	100	79	100	91	100	42	100

Source: Survey data

Finally in terms of technical competence, most of the articles that appeared in all the papers were either “competent” or of “average quality”. When taken together, 81 per cent of the articles in the *Nation*, 83.6 of the articles in the *Standard*, 77 per cent of the articles in the *Kenya Times* and 69.1 percent of the articles in the *People* daily fall into these two categories. The papers also did somehow well as each produced over 10 percent “very competent” articles. This can be seen in table 12 above.

In general, the papers did well as each produced almost 50 percent “competent articles”

What can be said about the quality of articles is that the Kenyan newspapers produced quality articles since over 70 percent were either “very balance” or “balanced”; over 70 per cent were either “very informative” or “informative”; and over 60 percent were either “very competent” or “competent”.

4.9 PORTRAYAL OF DRUG ABUSERS AND DRUG TRAFFICKERS

4.9.1 Portrayal of drug abusers in articles in the four Kenyan daily newspapers.

Table 13: Distribution of drug articles in the four Kenyan newspapers by portrayal of drug abusers

PORTRAYAL	NEWSPAPER							
	NATION		STANDARD		KENYA TIMES		PEOPLE	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Victims	15	71.4	14	82.4	29	53.7	21	84
Irresponsible	3	14.3	1	5.9	10	18.5	3	12
Criminals/crooks	0	0	1	5.9	13	24.1	1	4
Disgrace/outcasts	0	0	0	0	1	1.9	0	0
Careless	0	0	0	0	1	1.9	0	0
Ignorant	3	14.3	1	5.9	0	0	0	0
Total	21	0	17		54	100	25	100

Source: Survey data

The study also investigated how drug abusers were portrayed in the stories covered by the four newspapers. As table 13 shows in the papers were portrayed mostly as victims. In fact over 50 percent. In the *Nation* the portrayal was 71.4 per cent of the articles, in the *Standard* it was 82.4 percent , 53.7 per cent in the *Kenya Times* while 84 per cent in the *People*. Significantly, the abusers were also portrayed as irresponsible (14.3% for the *Nation*, 5.9% for the *Standard*, 18.5% for the *Kenya Times*, 12% for *People*). Other significant portrayals were as criminals (24.1%) in *Kenya Times*, and ignorant(14.3%) in the *Nation*.

4.9.1 Portrayal of drug traffickers/peddlers/brewers.

In most of the articles, the drug traffickers, peddlers and brewers were portrayed as criminals with exception of one case where drug traffickers were portrayed and reformed. This is because they had been jailed and on release they were assumed to have reformed their character.

This is a clear indication that traffickers, peddlers and brewers are considered as a threat to society. That could be the reason why, may be, in all the articles where they were covered it was either in connection with the arrest, being charged, jailed or having a case in court.

4.10: APPARENT WEAKNESSES EVIDENT IN THE MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE DRUG SCOURGE

A number of weaknesses were identified in the media coverage of the drug scourge by the Kenyan media. These include:

Little mobilisation information. Despite the fact that the drug problem has been given some substantial coverage and highlighting the efforts of the other people dealing with the problem, most articles lack mobilising information. Many articles that were reported never gave people information on what action they should take to combat the problem and on how they should go about it. The articles just gave plain facts and information about the drug problem. The content of the articles majorly concentrated on highlighting the widespread of the problem and its impact on society. Information on where victims of drug abuse or their families should go for help and counseling, where organizations dealing with the drug

problem are located, and may be the organizations can be contacted was very rare. In fact information on drug abuse was just published.

Publication of few editorials on drug abuse and trafficking. Though editorials serve as agenda setters, there were very few editorials. This was observed in all the papers. This is an indication that the issue of drug abuse and trafficking has not been considered editorializing on.

Few in-depth articles and too many straight news stories. The study findings revealed that there were few in-depth articles (features, commentaries, and news analyses) as compared to straight news that comprised of more than 50 percent of the total number of articles. A greater number of straight news articles imply that that the newspapers were only interested in providing people with current information and facts alone on the drug scourge.

Lack of media's own initiatives in creating awareness. Besides reporting the efforts of other organizations and the government in dealing with the drug problem, the media never made their own efforts in creating awareness about its and how the problem can be tackled. The same was pointed out in the two previous studies on its media coverage in Kenya.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section discusses the findings of the study. The discussion of findings in this section aims at shedding more light and expounding some information about the coverage of the drug scourge which plain data could not reveal to us.

As the findings of the study show that the drug scourge is a serious problem in Kenya as the print media has given it attention though not consistently. The finding that the pattern of coverage of the drug scourge was inconsistent throughout the study period reveals a lack of editorial policies regarding the issue of drugs. It appears that the drug scourge was only considered for publication when need arose or when there was an occurrence touching on the issue of drug abuse or drug trafficking.

The volume of coverage of the drug scourge was quite low as the findings reveal. Of the 448 days used as a sample, there were only 254 stories on the drug scourge. This finding can be explained in a number of ways. Though it can be said that some reasonable attention has been found on the coverage of the scourge, the seriousness of the problem would imply that the issue could have been given more coverage. However, for this was not the case as coverage was quite low.

The following could be explanations for this scenario. The first explanation has to do with the local political scene. We have had political events and processes such as the constitutional review which is still going on, the succession issue, the general elections that took place last year 2002. This event featured greatly in the Kenyan media.

The other explanation is the events in the international scene. There was the bombing of the American World Trade Centre and the subsequent attack on Afghanistan by America. This event featured greatly in the international media as well as in the local Kenyan media.

Third, is the government policy on drugs abuse and trafficking. There has been no well laid down policy. Even with the establishment of NACADA, still the agency has no machinery

to deal with the drug problem. Because of this there are chances of low press attention as the agency does not have major activities.

Fourth, is the media houses policies that may have not been favourable to the drug problem. The drug issue may not have been considered newsworthy or of human interest to warrant enough coverage by the media.

A look at issues of placement and prominence points to the fact that the issue of drug scourge has not been accorded the weight it deserves. This clearly indicates that drug stories were not considered important. This is because with regard to placement most of the articles on the drug scourge were placed on "other inside pages" while with regard to prominence most articles on the drug scourge were not treated as edition lead or as main editorial.

Another finding is that the articles on the drug scourge in the newspapers focused on a range of subjects which means that various angles of the problem are given in the coverage. This helps in the understanding of the various aspects of the problem.

It is worthy noting also that local journalists have the ability to handle the subject of the drug abuse which is a bit complex. This is because, overall, the articles that appeared in the four daily papers were at high quality in terms of balance and informativeness and technical competence.

Another finding is that failure by the newspapers to emphasize the rehabilitation/ treatment as main subjects fails to provide society with an opportunity on how to integrate

rehabilitated drug addicts and victims into society. Therefore, media fails to offer solution on how to deal with the problem.

Despite the fact that there was a significant focus on campaign/ mobilization efforts by groups and individuals in society, the cases were reported as isolated incidents without follow up stories on the outcomes of such campaign efforts. The same case applies to arrest/jailing/court cases as a subject of focus. No follow up stories were highlighted to tell us whether those arrested and jailed over drug related cases ever reformed their bad habits. In essence such reportage does not does not avail society much since outcomes of such actions are not reported to reveal whether any change came out of it.

The finding that most of the blame was attributed to the government means that a lot of responsibility is placed on the government to deal with the drug problem and cannot shy away from it. Since brewers/sellers rank second in blame it is evident that the government is seen as having failed to contain the drug menace. It is a challenge that the government needs to take up and mobilize every possible resource to deal with the problem.

The quality of coverage was quite high since the indicators of quality – balance, informativeness and technical competence - rated high. This reveals that local journalists are objective in their reporting and also well informed and well versed about the drug scourge.

Portraying abusers majorly as victims in the articles covering the drug scourge, is a clear indication that the abusers are victims of circumstances. This implies that if something is done so many abusers and potential abusers would be saved from indulging in or venturing into drugs.

Portraying drug traffickers/ peddlers/ brewers as criminals means that means that society abhors such characters and everything possible should be done to rehabilitate and eliminate such people as they are a threat to society.

It is also a fact that a number of weaknesses are evident in the coverage of the drug scourge. The weaknesses as pointed out in the findings include lack of mobilizing information, publication of few editorials, few in-depth stories too much straight news. This is a clear indication that media people have not realised what it means to use the media to deal with the drug problem. The journalists and other media personnel could be thinking that it is just a question of publishing information on the existence of the problem and wide spread it is.

CHAPTER FIVE.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions can be drawn from the findings of the study.

The amount of media coverage of the drug problem was quite low as there were only 254 articles in the 20 month study period. In addition to this over 50 per cent of the articles were news items which means that detailed and interpretive articles such as features, commentaries and editorials were very few.

In terms of placement, stories on the drug scourge were not assigned much weight as to be placed in the prominent pages and sections. They were only confined to “other inside pages” by all newspapers.

The four papers, with regard to prominence, did well in treating their stories as page leads in their inside pages. This indicator of prominence scored over 39 per cent in all the papers.

Most of the articles in four newspapers were overwhelmingly local as opposed to foreign. This indicates that the stories were the handwork of our local journalists which means they have recognised this as a problem in our society. The stories were majorly sourced from government officials as all the papers had over 28 per cent of their the stories coming from government officials.

The main actors in the stories were majorly the government and Ministry of Health closely followed by private individuals and groups.

Main subjects focused on were mobilization/campaign efforts and arrest/jailing and court cases. These subjects featured greatly may be because most of the events reported are those in connection with efforts to eradicate the problem.

With regard to blame attribution, the government and government officials received a large share of the blame. This could be because of the perception that the government has some responsibility in stamping out brewing of illicit brews, growing of bhang and trafficking of hard drugs such as heroin.

Quality of coverage of drug stories was found out to be high as the stories were well balanced informative and technically competent.

With regard to portrayal of drug abuses and traffickers, it was evident that drug abusers were mostly portrayed as victims and irresponsible while traffickers and peddlers were treated as criminals in all the cases reported in the articles.

Finally it is worth noting that the inconsistent pattern of coverage and low coverage of drug issues tell us that this is a subject that has not been given the attention it deserves. My submission is based on the fact the drug problem (both abuse and trafficking) is a source of many other ills in society. These ills include prostitution, murder, domestic violence, corruption, thuggery just to name a few. May be many journalists and editors may not be taking this into consideration.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the findings of this study the following recommendations are suggested

1. There is need for media houses to change their editorial policies with regard to issues of drug abuse and trafficking. They should consider these issues as having significant great impact on society. In this regard we should expect more indepth stories giving background information about the problem and also providing interpretative view of the problem
2. The media need to have more editorials since they serve as agenda setters. This will provide opinion on drugs abuse and trafficking which will help shape attitudes about the problem. This attitude change will go a long way to change behaviour.
3. In their coverage, the media needs to include more mobilizing information to help the public to know what actions to take in order to combat the problem. The mobilization information should also include information on where organizations that deal with the drug problem can be found and how they can be contacted.
4. The media needs, also, to take their own initiatives to combat the scourge. This will supplement the efforts that the government, the public and other interest groups are making to combat the scourge. The media can do this by establishing a regular column with regular contributors who keep on continually discussing the various dimensions of the drug scourge and how it can be dealt with. In addition to this the newspapers can also donate space for placing campaign messages and ads. This will

keep Kenyans continually aware of the presence of this devastating scourge in their society.

5. There is also need for the media to work with other organizations that deal with the drug problem such as various government departments and NACADA and NGOs. Such efforts will lead to united efforts aimed at dealing with the scourge.
6. There is need for a comprehensive training of journalists through seminars/workshops to empower them to report subjects such as health to report on complex subjects such as health and science and even criminology under which the drug problem falls.
7. There is need for various organizations that campaign against drug abuse and drug trafficking to use the media strategically to fight the drug scourge through media advocacy (using the mass media and community strategically to influence change of social and public issues).
8. Media should make an effort to promote individuals, groups and organizations that campaign against the drug problem through broad coverage. In this area, the media should, in particular, publicize drug abuse and drug prevention activities and events.
9. The mass media should censor in their programming and publications any pro-substance abuse messages and information since this pro-substance abuse messages are likely to water down anti-drug campaign efforts.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study focused on only one aspect of the drug scourge, that is the coverage of the problem by the media particularly the print media. This is not exhaustive. There is need for further research the following areas.

- Nature and pattern of coverage of drug issues in the electronic media and may be do a comparison with the coverage in the print media to note if there are any differences.
- Challenges faced by journalists in the coverage of drug abuse and trafficking.
- An analysis of the impact of the coverage of the drug scourge on attitudes, norms and behaviours of youths in society.

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APPENDIX 1

A coding sheet for analyzing coverage of the drug scourge by the daily newspapers in Kenya

NEWSPAPER _____

<i>Month</i>	<i>Article Type</i>	<i>Space</i>	<i>Prominence</i>	<i>Origin</i>	<i>Source of Article</i>

<i>Main Actor</i>	<i>Main Subject</i>	<i>Who is to blame</i>	<i>Balance</i>

<i>Informativeness</i>	<i>Technical Competency</i>	<i>Portrayal of Drug Abusers</i>	<i>Portrayal of Drug Traffickers/Peddlers</i>