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A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS TOWARDS THE AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS (MA) DEGREE IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES AT THE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

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Abstract

This is a content analysis study to examine reporting of the ethnic violence which erupted at the Coast Province in Kenya by a Kenya’s leading National Media Group newspapers; The Daily, Saturday and Sunday Nation (henceforth referred to as in-here the Nation newspapers) from August 15th, 1997 to November 30th, 1997.

The purpose of this study was to find out the role played by the Nation newspapers in their reportage of the crisis. This study endeavored to find out whether the newspapers failed to act decisively and responsibly and the role it played in resolving the crisis.

The study looked into how the newspapers went about presenting their articles which included news, editorials, opinions, letters to the editor, features and commentaries during the crisis period. The actual crisis started on August 13th, 1997 and continued up to November 30th, 1997.

This is a case study of an ethnic conflict based on the assumption that it could occur in many other cases. It is an example of events which happened or are happening in various parts of the world including Iraq, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kosovo, Liberia, Sudan, Uganda, Angola, Rwanda, Burundi, Pakistan, Somalia, Sierra Leone, Madagascar, Israel, Palestine, Afghanistan, among other regions and countries.

The investigation therefore made a detailed examination of a single phenomenon: how the Nation newspapers covered and reported the ethnic violence in the Coast Province of Kenya which erupted prior to the 1997 General Elections held in December the same year.