

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION**

**THE ROLE OF THE PRINT MEDIA IN THE COVERAGE AND  
REPORTING OF THE 1997 KENYAN COASTAL ETHNIC  
VIOLENCE: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE *NATION*  
NEWSPAPERS FROM AUGUST 15<sup>TH</sup>, 1997 TO NOVEMBER 30<sup>TH</sup>,  
1997**

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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 15<sup>th</sup>, 1997 to November 30<sup>th</sup>, 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 endeavoured 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 13<sup>th</sup>, 1997 and continued up to November 30<sup>th</sup>, 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.