

# Assessing journalists preparedness to cover trauma stories

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## **Abstract:**

This is an assessment of journalists' preparedness to cover trauma stories. The study used questionnaires to reach out to 100 practicing television cameramen, reporters and editors at leading media houses head offices which included Nation Media Group, Standard group, Royal Media services, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation and Radio Africa group. The study also sought the opinion of a psychiatrist, a member of Media Council of Kenya, Kenya Union of Journalists and the Kenya Editors guild. The study mainly concentrated on crime reporters whose beat make them probable candidates for covering such incident. The study concentrated on some of the major tragic happenings as case studies. These include 2007 Post Election Violence, Mtongwe ferry tragedy, Sachangwan fire tragedy, Nakumatt fire, August ih. The study used non-probability sampling method, in particular, purposive sampling because it accorded the researcher the leeway to target cases that had the required information in line with the objectives and research questions, Kenya Union of Journalists and the Kenya Editors guild. The data collected was analyzed and presented through cross tabulations, pie charts and graphs effectively covering the study questions and objectives. The study established that newsroom operations in Kenya is driven by the need to get the news first and fast and in the mad rush, issues such as journalists' emotional welfare cease to be of concern. It recommends that a follow-up and more detailed psychological study be undertaken to determine the extent to which these work experiences impact on the journalists' personal and psychological wellbeing.