THE ROLE OF MASS MEDIA IN PROMOTING NATIONAL COHESION: A CASE STUDY OF MARSABIT COUNTY

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Declaration

I declare that this project is my own original work and has not been presented to any other university for a degree award or anywhere else for academic purposes.

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

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my wife Rahima Roba and our children Lelo, Hafsa, Mumina and Halima.

Acknowledgement

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CBO   Community Based Organizations

DGHRLA   Directorate General Human Rights and Legal Affairs

DREF   Disaster Relief Emergency Fund

FM   Frequency Modulation

KBC   Kenya Broadcasting Corporation

KIHBS   Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey

KNBS   Kenya National Bureau of Statistics

KPR   Kenya Police Reservists

LAPSSET   Lamu Port South Sudan Ethiopia Transport

MCK   Media Council of Kenya

MJNCCA   Ministry of Justice, National Cohesion and Constitutional Affairs

MPNDV   Ministry of Planning and National Development and Vision 2030

NCIC   National Cohesion and Integration Commission

NGO   Non Governmental Organizations

OLF   Oromo Liberation Front

PSM   Public Service Media

REGABU   Rendille Gabra and Burji

SMS   Short Message Services

TV   Television

UNISA   University of South Africa

Abstract

Conflict is a common occurrence among the communities residing in Marsabit county. These frequent conflicts have resulted in mistrust, suspicion and outright animosity between the local communities in the area. This study sought to establish the role of mass media in promoting community cohesion in the area in specific analyzing ways in which the media in de-escalation of conflicts, factors that hindered effective media coverage of the area, investigation of the role of media in escalation of the local conflicts and also exploration of the ways in which media contributed to conflict resolutions. The study established the critical role the media played in de-escalation of conflicts in the area as majority of respondents agreed that the media indeed de-escalated conflicts while the least number of those polled tended to strongly disagree with the sentiment. Whereas the majority of the respondents cited accurate and objective reporting as the main way through which the media de-escalated conflicts, a significant number identified exposing the root cause of the problem as another way by which the media de-escalated conflicts. Also sensitive reportage as well as avoiding the identity of actors were cited as other possible ways by which the media could de-escalates conflicts. A majority of 71.4% of the respondents felt that the media were not giving adequate coverage of issues in the county. This reinforced the commonly held perception by the locals against the media. On the specific factors that might have hindered media coverage in the area, majority of the participants identified distance from the media organization as their main problem while others cited illiteracy among the local population, and the policy of the individual media houses. Further, 3.2% of the participants identified socio-cultural factors, while the remaining 10% cited more than any two of the factors identified above. On the role of media in escalation of local conflicts, 56% of the respondents were in agreement and identified the possible means as irrational and sensational reporting (54), insensitive reporting (52), identifying actors at (38) and glorifying violence(33), while 12 respondents cited all of them. On the role of media in conflict resolutions, an overwhelming majority that is 98.9% were in agreement, while 1.1% seemed to disagree. Similarly, on media and county cohesion 181 of those polled were in agreement with 7 disagreeing, while 2 appearing not to know. Therefore, from this study one can deduce that the media played vital role in promotion of a cohesive and peaceful community in Marsabit county.

CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Communication is the transmission of ideas, opinions, feelings, and values among the parties in an encounter. In other words, it is the sharing of meanings between the sender and receiver of the message. Communication is basic for human survival and is as old as mankind. The most common medium of communication is conventional mass media such as radio, television, newspapers, and the social media. These forms of communication are also known as mediated communication.

1.2 Mass media and society

Mass communication is the process in which media organizations produce and transmit messages to large populations and is also the process by which those messages are sought, used, understood, and influenced by audiences (Weiss, 2009) as quoted by (Littlejohn & Foss 2011). They transmit information around the world and construct agendas to their audiences.

While citing Gerbner (1967), the above authors summarized the importance of mass media as the ability to create public, define issues, and thus allocate attention and power. They also cited Lasswell (1948) and identified major functions of the media of communication as surveillance, providing information about environment, correlation, presenting options for solving problems and transmission, socializing and educating. The above explanations clearly demonstrates that the media inevitably plays an important role in democratization process, informing citizens of the happenings around them, promoting of human rights and good governance, transforming societies and also functioning as a public watchdog in order to check on the excesses of the government. Thus, one cannot imagine a society without media.

By providing these contents, media organizations play a great part in the society. Media are not primarily instruments of information or means for achieving self- interest but rather a means that allow us to come together in some form of community and offer us a sense of belonging (Littlejohn &Foss, 2011). The socialization function allows the audience to form some identity, hence establishing bond among them. The media have an obligation to provide contents their audience can relate to, in a personal way (Obonyo & Nyamboga, 2011). The authors argue that

while a local content might be poorly packaged, and of low quality, it still has greater resonance with the public as the local audience can identify with it both at an ideological level and in terms of characters featured scenes and the themes of the story. According to Obonyo and Nyamboga (ibid.), the biggest challenge that the media outlets face is their obligation to society which they do not look at as simply a commercial enterprise, but from a social responsibility's point of view.

Following the introduction of multi-party system and liberalization of air waves in 1990s, Kenyans have witnessed tremendous growth of media especially in the broadcast sub-sector of radio and television. As a result, the country has one of the most vibrant and diversified media in the region. The media system in the country is operated by both public and private (commercial) media organizations. The public service broadcaster, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), which operates both radio and television, has a wide national coverage while the private or commercial radio and Television (TV) stations are available mainly in the urban areas. There are also four main daily newspapers and a host of magazines and periodicals.

According to Mbeke at el (2010), Kenya's media consumers use radio most, and then TV and newspapers. Although media literacy is low, trust on media to report accurately on political issues is high. Mbeke and co-authors argue that media owners in the country have strong political affiliations and tend to be politically co-opted and therefore influence editorial policy. They add that media owners are largely driven by profit motive and often ignore social responsibility roles. But this trend could be dangerous for developing democracies such as Kenya especially where the public broadcaster is seen not to play its role effectively.

They argue that Kenyans want media that would promote a Kenyan identity and national cohesion within the global context. In this regard, there is need to integrate conflict management and peace journalism in journalism training programmes at university level as well as in in-house training.

1.3 National cohesion and integration

According to the Ministry of Justice, National Cohesion and Constitutional Affairs (MJNCCA), national cohesion and integration is defined as a process and an outcome of instilling and enabling all citizens to have a sense as well as a feeling that they are members of the same community engaged in a common enterprise, facing shared challenges and opportunities

(MJNCCA, 2012). National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) is a governmental body mandated to build a national community and promote peaceful co-existence among Kenyan populations. Therefore national cohesion simply means the extent to which the citizens or the society of a given nation or state can bond together to achieve its national development.

Attainment of a cohesive community is challenge to almost every nation whether in the first world or third world countries. This is because of incompatible and clashing interests pursued by individuals or groups in society. Yugoslavia in eastern Europe, for example, collapsed due to ethnicity which played an important role in its conflicts, as political elites took advantage of the symbolic power that ethnicity had and used it as a tool for pursuing territorial, political and economic objectives (Sotiropoulou,2004).

According to Sotiropoulou ,the communist regime suppressed the various ethnic identities of the groups and tried to create, a Yugoslav based on supra-ethnic elements. Nationalism and ethnicity have always been key elements in state-building and break-ups of states, and never so than in the world today. Ethnicity is the state of being ethnic or belonging to a certain ethnic group (Kellas, 1998). When ethnicity becomes nationalist, the result is emergence of ethno-nationalism which in turn can prove threatening for the existence of the state and lead to ethnic conflict and disintegration as in the case of Yugoslavia.

The issue of ethnicity is also common in German even after the unification of the country following the collapse of the Berlin wall in 1989. According to German ambassador to Kenya Mrs. Margit Hellwig-Boette, German was a very tribal country and was the last to be united in Europe but has emerged from its difficulties united (NCIC, 2011).

It is in view of this fact the Council of Europe came up with policy guidelines targeted on the Public Service Media (PSM) to promote social cohesion and integration of all communities. According to Directorate general human rights and legal affairs (DGHRLA, 2009) reports, PSM should continue to play an active role in the promotion of a culture of tolerance and encourage actions that can contribute to social cohesion. The report gave clear guidelines on what the member countries PSMs should address in order to achieve this noble goal.

In Africa, Rwanda also experienced one of the worst atrocities which had an inclination of heightened ethnicity. The infamous Rwandan genocide occurred in 1994 when the majority

Hutus turned on the minority Tutsi in which close to one million people were killed in a period of 100 days (Des Forges, 1999). The massacre was a culmination of long standing ethnic competition and tension between the minority Tutsi who had controlled the power for centuries and the majority Hutu people who had came to power in the rebellion of 1959-62 (Lemarchand, 2002). It is believed that a local radio station started hate speech against Tutsi's while the international media either ignored or seriously misconstrued events on the ground.

Rwanda is currently pursuing the road to healing and national cohesion. The current government prohibits discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, race and religion. It has also passed numerous laws prohibiting emphasis on Hutu or Tutsi identity in most political activities (Kinzer, 2008).

Nationally, Kenyan communities are not so cohesive and integrated as they ought to be. Ethnicity is highly pronounced in the country especially during election times by political elites who wish to use it as a vehicle for their own self-interest. Although the country occasionally experiences perennial inter-ethnic conflicts, many of these conflicts are reported during election period as people tend to vote along ethnic lines and anybody perceived to have voted against 'them' (the dominant groups) would be victimized.

Lack of national cohesion and integration in the country is also partially blamed on historical injustices and negligence by successive governments. For instance, policies in sessional paper No. 10 of 1965 which placed emphasis on developing high potential areas at the expense of other places was largely blamed for underdevelopment and neglect of many parts of the country by successive regimes after independence (NCIC,2011). This policy paper led to unequal distribution of resources between the high potential areas also known as 'productive' and the low potential or 'unproductive areas' thereby resulting in discrimination in matters of developments.

For the country to achieve sustainable development and growth there is need for citizens to see themselves as Kenyans first, and promote harmonious peaceful coexistence among themselves; and also respect and appreciate their ethnic and racial diversity.

1.4 Statement of the problem

Marsabit County has great potential for development. Unfortunately this potential is hampered by the perennial occurrences of inter-communities conflicts among the communities in the county. These inter-communities conflicts have led to not only the breakdown of peace, but also mistrust, suspicion and outright animosity among the communities. It is feared that even with the devolved governance system, development may still remain a mirage in this expansive county, unless the local population, as a matter of urgency alleviate inter-community conflict.

For Marsabit County to achieve meaningful development and improve the living standard of its residents all the communities in the county must co-exist; live together in peace, harmony and tranquility. They have to appreciate one another and celebrate their rich diversity which is in the form of their cultural aspects and belief systems; instead of using that diversity to promote tribal groupings and feelings which do not augur well for development.

Media set agenda in society. It can set an agenda of peace and cohesion in Marsabit County. This research examines the role of media in fostering national cohesion among the communities in Marsabit County, with a view to building lasting peace, which would, in turn, spur community development.

Furthermore, the media have the powers to either fuel the conflict or help reduce tension among the protagonists in the conflict. In this regard, the media can play an extremely important role in promoting the much needed cohesion in the county by publicizing content that would enhance unity, harmony, peace and co-existence in the area.

According to the Ministry of planning and national development and vision 2030 (MPNDV) report on the 'one Kenya one dream', 'the Kenya we want' conference, the participants pointed out that the media is capable of either building or destroying a nation as was evident during the 2007 post election violence, when some media houses and journalists were used by politicians to incite a section of Kenyans (MPNDV report, 2009).

The media should also educate the communities to shun the culture of violence by advocating for tolerance and to sensitize the local population against engaging in hate speech and trading insults

that may cause or heighten ethnic tension in the county. Thus, for any meaningful community development to be achieved, the inhabitants of the county have to embrace peace and cohesion. This would create conducive environment that is likely to attract prospective investors from across the country and beyond.

1.5 General objective

The general objective of this study is to establish the role of mass media in the promotion of national cohesion in Marsabit County.

1.6 Specific objectives

1. To analyse ways by which media can de-escalate conflict in Marsabit county.
2. To examine factors that hinder effective media coverage of conflicts in Marsabit
3. To investigate the role of media in escalation of the local conflict situations.
4. To explore the ways in which media can contribute to conflict resolutions.

1.7 Research questions

1. In what ways did the media de-escalate conflict in Marsabit county?
2. What are the factors that hindered effective media coverage of conflicts in Marsabit?
3. What is the role of media in escalation of the local conflict situations?
4. How would the media be used in conflict resolutions?

1.8 Justification

Since there is no tangible evidence to show that studies have been done on this subject in the area, this study aims to fill the knowledge gap in order to contribute to the available literature on the role of media in promotion of national cohesion in the country. This study would also help the main stakeholders in building national cohesion and integration among the local population, and nation at large to mitigate against the challenges of building a peaceful and harmonious state. This would go a long way in addressing the perennial problem of conflicts, inter- ethnic raids and clan rivalry as well as elements of mistrust and suspicion among the communities in the county so that they would be able to live together in peace and harmony.

The journalists working or covering conflict stories would be able to understand and appreciate the important role the media plays in promotion of national cohesion and integration generally in the country and more specifically the conflict prone areas and therefore observe the highest standards in the practice of the profession.

It is common knowledge that conflicts hamper development as a lot of resources are directed towards addressing the problems of conflicts and lack of harmony among the communities in the area. Availability of peace and harmony is a pre-requisite for any meaningful development to be attained in modern society, and once enduring peace has been found in the area, the local communities can direct their attention and energies to other developmental activities which will eventually contribute to improved living standards and better their quality of life. This would further motivate relevant government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other development partners in the area to initiate and support long term development projects in the area. This will in turn spur the county to the next level of development by tapping of available local resources.

The findings and recommendations of this study would also help in policy formulation and planning in relation to coverage of the media on cohesion issues by the stakeholders. Once completed, the project becomes a resourceful material for policy makers, media practitioners, researchers and teachers in this area.

1.9 The scope of the study

The scope of the study was limited to the role of traditional mass media as a tool for building county cohesion case study of Marsabit county. The study was conducted in mountain location of central division, Marsabit district, for five days in the last week of August 2013. Though the research was limited to Marsabit town, being the county headquarter and due to its heterogeneous population, the study findings can be generalized to the entire county on the subject matter of the role of mass media in promoting community cohesion in the area that is media's coverage of conflict situations in the county and whether they contributed to cohesion building or not.

1.10 Chapter outlines

Chapter one is the background to the study which deals with introduction, mass media and society, national cohesion and integration, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, justification and the scope of the study.

In chapter two, literature review dwells on media and conflicts, media and national cohesion, media and county cohesion, local conflict situation, causes of conflicts, types of conflicts in the area and theoretical frame which is based on agenda-setting theory.

Chapter three is methodology and sections addressed under this are research design, the study site, sample population, determination of the sample, data collection instruments, validity and reliability of research instruments, ethical considerations and the limitations of the study.

Chapter four is data analysis in which the qualitative and quantitative analysis and interpretation of the collected data was done.

 Finally, chapter five provides the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

It involves the systematic identification, location and analysis of documents containing information related to the research problem under investigation (Mugenda &Mugenda, 2003). In this section the main issues tackled are media and conflicts, media and national cohesion, media and county cohesion, local conflict situation, causes of conflicts, types of conflicts in the area and theoretical framework.

2.2 Mass media and conflicts

Conflict is one of the main sources of news stories for journalists from time memorial. This is because the media is interested in the events and happenings that make news. The news worthiness of a story depends on its timeliness, proximity and conflicts among others. In particular, conflict that is developing, has it been resolved or does anybody care whether it involves people, governmental bodies or sports team is often considered newsworthy (Itule &Anderson, 2008). As the old adage goes "bad news" is good news, conflict being bad news because of the level of destructions involved and sometimes even deaths, it becomes important news for the media.

Mass media operates within society. Their performance is judged by society in terms of what the media ought to do that is their expected role in society. Media performance can be good or bad, acceptable or unacceptable (Oosthuizen, 2002). In many occasions, the media have been condemned rightly or wrongly for escalation of conflicts in the society. They have also been accused of failing to consider peace initiatives whenever violence and conflicts erupt in communities. Also some conflict events around the world have been 'mediatized' by journalists paying more attention to certain issues than others (Cottle, 2006). During violent conflict situations, the relationship between media and audience grows as Kuusik (2010) adds. Lack of information can at any stage of a conflict make people desperate, restless and easy to manipulate. Bratic (2006) suggests the potential of mass media in peace building. Despite the situation that "media are more likely to escalate a conflict than to pacify it", media have been utilized to promote peace environment and building communities that have undergone violent conflicts (Wolfsfeld, 2004).

While the media have the responsibility to inform the public about the happenings in the environment, the way in which they discharge their duties would sometimes have profound influence on the audience. In many cases, the media have been accused of escalating conflicts by engaging in irrational and sensational reporting of incidents of conflicts or violence in society. In this case there is need for the media to be responsible while at the same time being candid in its reportage of conflicts so as to avoid glorifying incidents of violence. As Wolfsfeld (ibid) has stated, media can also be used successfully to promote peace and harmony in the society; for example, in the case of former Yugoslavia in Western Europe and closer here in Rwanda after the infamous 1994 massacre.

Concerns about media's coverage of violent conflicts were raised way back in sixties with commission tasked to investigate the riots in United States of America unearthing several undoings by the media. The team found that many of the inaccuracies of facts, tone and mood were due to the failure of reporters and editors to ask tough questions about official reports and to apply the most vigorous standards possible in evaluating and presenting news (Kerner, 1968).

The report further pointed out that adequate coverage of different cultures and races requires reporters permanently assigned to this beat and the media needed to hire more minorities for in depth reporting and for the understanding on minority affairs. If future journalists are to meet the challenges of improved coverage of minorities, there is need for training in cultural sensitivity so as to understand better their culturally diverse society (Itule &Anderson, 2008). According to Bramlett-Solomom, a journalism professor at Arizona State university, as quoted by the above authors, cultural sensitivity training can help journalists learn not to rely on long held impression about particular social groups thus helping move journalists past stereotypes. The media practitioners as the voice of the people or citizens have no option, but to understand their subjects thoroughly well and always be sensitive to the plight of the people they are serving.

Itule and Anderson (ibid) note that in many newsrooms it is true that standards are unclear, given recent evidence, wildly inconsistent. Editors routinely talk about the gap between the journalistic values they hold most dear and those they think guide the reporters they work besides:

> Ironically for a profession whose commodity is the truth, journalism is increasingly being distrusted by the public. Journalists need to be very concerned about their credibility,

news organizations sell truth and if the public does not trust what they report, journalists' livelihood is in jeopardy. The journalists have to accept that they are not going to be loved by the public but still cannot afford to stop trying to improve their credibility in the eyes of the public (Itule &Anderson, p. 457).

In this regard, the media organizations have to put their house in order by providing their employees, especially those who are directly involved in production of media contents, with clear guidelines on how to go about discharging their daily tasks. Credibility is earned and not dished out to individuals; therefore, media practitioners must work hard to prove to their audiences that they are credible men and women who are at the service of the public. In fact, journalists as professionals, have a code of ethics which should guide and police their conduct. In the Kenyan situation, a proposal by the Media Council of Kenya (MCK) to develop standard policy framework to be used by the practitioners would go a long way in enhancing the rule of professionalism in the practice of journalism in the country.

The search for truth even when it is unpopular is what distinguishes journalism from other forms of communication, they need to think of audiences, not as customers, but as clients to be served in a professional way, just as a doctor serves his or her patients by telling them what they need to know and not necessarily what they would like to hear (Itule &Anderson, p. 458). Journalists have the professional and moral responsibility to provide well researched, factual and truthful contents which would serve the information needs and expectations of their target groups.

According to Itule and Anderson (ibid), the newspapers (media) are unfair when they focus too much on what is wrong, violent and bizarre; and that they never print 'good news' could be the longest-running complaints of the public. Much as the media are interested in what is newsy, the focus should not be only on the negative side of the incidents or events. The media can break the same item from different perspectives without losing the gist of the story and compromising on the standards of the media outlets. With this approach, they can easily build public confidence, by giving them some hope especially when they are in a state of despair and hopelessness. The way a news item is packaged before it is disseminated to the audience matters a lot, therefore the same conflict or cattle rustling and incidents of clan rivalry can be approached from an angle of inspiration and hope.

In modern society, effective and democratic media are an essential part and indispensable for societies trying to make a transition towards peace and democracy. Harry S. Truman, former USA president, once said "You can never get all the facts from just one newspaper, and unless you have all the facts, you cannot make proper judgments about what is going on" as quoted by Kuusik (2010). This statement confirms the need for free access to unbiased information, so that citizens can freely speak their mind and believed in media freedom while constructively criticizing.

Not giving people the possibility of political participation, and not allowing them to express themselves freely is a significant cause of conflict. On the one hand free, independent and pluralistic media provide a platform for debate and different opinions. These same media can also be misused for propaganda purposes, to incite hatred and spread rumors, creating unnecessary tensions (Wolfsfeld, 2004). It is true that the media (conventional mass media and lately social media) have been accused of disseminating contents that are likely to cause tensions and sometimes even degenerate to violent conflicts.

Journalism does not need justification for its existence. Its service to society is a justification in itself. Journalism can not only help to distribute information but also counter hate-speech and create an environment of balanced opinions, thereby creating information equilibrium (Ronald, 2004), as cited by Kuusik 2010. This sentiment is not far from truth as the media plays critical role in the functioning of a democratic society in which citizens can exercise their constitutional rights of access and freedom of information for them to make informed decisions. However, what needs to be emphasized at this juncture is that the players in the industry have also a responsibility of serving the society well.

Although it is not usually the defining factor in determining whether violence will or will not occur, the role of media is a significant aspect of the overall context. During the 2007 general election, Kenyan media also engaged in a form of political propaganda based on ethnicity where politicians and some citizens utilized media to mobilize political violence .The mushrooming of local language media in the country was also cited as the possible source of the problem. Local language media were used by politicians as a tool for ethnic mobilization and political control in certain areas (Selemani, 2012). Kenyans are polarized along ethnic lines by the main political

contenders. The media also fall prey to this by engaging in a lot of propaganda which heightened tensions and subsequent violence witnessed in that election. One of the reasons for this is that the media in the country is either owned by the politicians or those who are affiliated to them.

The media, both print and electronic, stood accused of stirring up cultural prejudices in the way they reported news. They have a moral responsibility to change negative values while ensuring accountability for those who commit social and economic evils (MPNDV report: 2009). This can be attained by avoiding negative ethnicity and instead striving to build one cohesive Kenya without paying much attention to ethnicity or creed.

According to Ogola, as cited by Selemani (2012), most of the journalists who were in the local language media were not professionally trained:

> Lack of training opportunities for media practitioners meant that presenters working for most frequency modulation (F.M) radio stations lacked the necessary skills and largely got their jobs on the basis of being widely known or having competency in the local languages. The lack of training was especially evident in the talk shows where hosts failed to moderate debates leaving callers to vent their frustrations sometimes by suggesting and encouraging violence against opponents (Selemani, 2012, p 16).

What Selemani (ibid) has pointed out is matter of grave concern that the MCK and other stakeholders need to move with speed to reign in the quacks and untrained practitioners, as they have no business damaging this noble profession, when the country boasts of highly trained and skilled middle level media graduates as well as hundreds of young fresh university graduates who are currently jobless or are working as casuals to make ends meet. The bad 'manners' are mostly common among the employees of F.M radio stations in the country. Besides, MCK and the relevant government agencies must fully enforce the rules and regulations governing the practice of the profession in the country. There is need for FM vernacular stations to show greater responsibility when they are broadcasting in languages those other communities do not understand.

Stremlau and Price (2009) recognize the influence of new media technology in stocking conflict. The social media, specially twitter and face book, can easily be used to mobilize the masses and cause tension among the population. This was proven to during the run -up to the just concluded general elections and period before and after the determination of presidential election petition by the Supreme Court of Kenya in which Raila Odinga challenged the election of President

Uhuru Kenyatta. During this period, the social media as well as cell phone's short message service (SMS) platforms were awash with messages laced with hate speech and falsehood that almost caused major problems were it not for the swift action taken by the government to contain the situation.

However, conflicts in Kenya are mainly reported among the hitherto pastoralists communities, though it is also a common feature between those who are perceived as pastoralists and the farming communities. Disputes among the latter groups mostly occurs when the neighboring communities who practice different economic activities clash for example; there are perennial conflicts between the Orma and Pokomo in Tana River County, Maasai and Kisii in Transmara, Boran and Meru in Isiolo and Meru counties to mention but a few.

In the Marsabit situation, the area doesn't normally attract much media attention. The county is classified as arid and semi arid area in terms of productivity. Since mostly bad news is good news, the county was on the spot light during the infamous Turbi massacre and subsequent Bubisa killings in 2005, and inter-community conflicts in Moyale between 2011 and 2013.

The otherwise quiet and passive county enjoyed unprecedented media coverage during the said conflicts with both local and foreign media heavily represented in the area. On Turbi killings for example, the mission team appointed to investigate the matter pointed out that while media played a role informing the country about the conflict, the reportage was partly biased and the presentation of facts tended to exacerbate rather than minimize the conflict. There is need for conflict sensitive approach.

The team further noted that while there were clear early warnings of a looming violence, the government machinery and civil society actors supporting peace building on the ground failed to respond in good time.

Political elites have seized, owned and now control community affairs thereby usurping the role of government and traditional authority systems. There is also the problem of identity crisis among the local communities; for instance; the Gabra, who are traditionally regarded as young brothers by the Boran, are persistently pursuing the process of upsetting the status quo (Mission team, 2009).

2.3 Media and national cohesion

Communication scholars have argued that conflicts between people could be due to communication breakdown or lack of effective communication among the parties concerned. Media play crucial role in promotion of national cohesion. They are a double-edged sword, capable of both supporting and also subverting social cohesion.

According to Lasswell (1948), the main functions of media in society are surveillance of the environment, correlation of the parts of society in responding to its environment and transmission of the cultural heritage. Wright, (1960) latter described other effects of the media and added entertainment as another key media function and a final role is mobilization, which is designed to reflect the wide spread application of mass communication in the field of political and commercial propaganda.

The media are assumed to have a potential for significant influences, but it is particular ideas and values conveyed by the media which are seen as primary causes of social change irrespective of who owns and controls them (McQuail, 2010). Therefore, media are quite instrumental in articulating issues of concern to the society thereby influencing public opinion towards the subject under discussion.

The media, especially mass media, and lately the social media are a powerful tool of communication that can be used to set the agenda for the public. The media can serve to repress as well as liberate, to unite as well as fragment society, to promote as well as hold back change. The information, images and ideas made available by the media could as well be the main sources of awareness of a shared past time and present social location (McQuail, 2010). They are also a store of memories and a map of where we are and who we are, and provide materials for orientation to the future.

McQuail argues that media help the society to mirror itself by proving information about the events happening locally and as well as updating them on issues unfolding in far distant places. In this regard McQuail is advocating for a media system that is operated according to the same basic principles governing the rest of the society in relation to justice, fairness, democracy and reigning notions of desirable social and cultural values.

The media need to provide content that would help the local communities understand and also appreciate each other's diversity. They must play their rightful roles of advocating for national cohesion within the country. The content presented by the media should be able to promote social cohesion and integration by avoiding publication or broadcasting contents bordering on hate messages and rumours.

Further, media practitioners should engage in responsible and professional journalism, that is objective, accurate and fairness to all stakeholders. They should also focus more on developmental reportage while highlighting positive trends. The media can also be used to promote the role of local opinion leaders in conflict resolutions in order to achieve community cohesion.

Media are also a tool for social integration. The link between popular mass media and social integration are easy to perceive in terms of both negative impact such as crime and immorality and also positive contribution to cohesion and community expected from modern communication (McQuail, 2010). This can be identified as some of the possible effects of the media on their audiences which may be both desirable and undesirable.

McQuail noted that mass media are a potential force for a new kind of cohesion as they are able to connect scattered individual in a shared national, city and local experience. They could also be supportive of new democratic politics and social reform movements.

However, there is a concern about the weaknesses of the ties that bind individuals together and to their society, the lack of shared values, lack of social and civic participation and decline in what has been called social capital (Putnam, 2000). This argument advances the possible side effects of the media in society, more so when they are perceived to be serving the interest of the powerful individuals.

The media have brought messages of what is new and fashionable in terms of products, ideas, techniques and values from city to the country side and from social top to the base. They have also portrayed alternative values system, potentially weakening the hold of traditional values (McQuail, 2010). While the media are important sources of information and ideas to the people, they could also have effects on the society in particular on the cultural and moral values of recipients. Locally, much of media content, for example TV, is foreign. The entertainment

programmes for example, are from Western, Latin American and Asian countries. When the audience is exposed to these contents more frequently, there may be erosion of societal moral values in long run.

Media have a capacity to unite scattered individuals within the same large audience; to integrate newcomers into urban communities and immigrants into new country by providing a common set of values, ideas and information; and helping to form identities (Janowitz, 1952; Clark, 1969; Stamm, 1985; Rogers, 1993), as quoted by McQuail, 2010. In this case the media help in formation of social groups as well as the preservation of cultural values and traditions within the society.

The idea that the news media powerfully controlled people's attitudes, beliefs and behaviour might not hold any water, but the press obviously brings to their attention a selected agenda of topics and issues for the audience to respond to and think about (Lowery & Defleur, 1995). Of course the media audiences in this era are seen to be active users of media products or contents. The audiences know what they need from the media and where to find it; that is they are able to make their own choices on what to look for and what to do with what they are looking for. But the main hindrance is that they have to contend with the choices that the media have already prepared and packaged for them.

There is some evidence that media can contribute to the occurrence of a riot event by publishing incidents which are themselves causes of riot behavior, by giving advance publicity to the likely occurrences of rioting (Singer;1970). The media have the capacity to define the nature of events, even if they are on the side of the established order. They can unintentionally increase the degree of polarization in particular cases.

Violent acts may be spontaneous, but they are more often the product of a longer sequence of historical decisions and political actions (Anderson & Lochery, 2008). In Kenya, which experienced large scale violence during and after the 2007 election period, it was argued that there had been a failure to develop a national identity while ethnic communities had formed a multitude of nations within imposed colonial boundaries. The government had not been able to bring groups together into national entity because ethnic mobilization provided a mean to attain political power (Stremlau and Price, 2009). While it might be true that the country had been

polarized along ethical lines by the politicians for their own political survival, the problem could also be attributed to the colonial system which divided the country along tribal lines for easy administration and manipulation of the subjects. Even after independence, the successive regimes did not do much to build one coherent and cohesive nation. In fact, no mention of national cohesion and integration of the country was ever heard of until after the violent incident of 2007 general elections.

The role of media in violence as a platform for expression of political messages, in particular, the use of phone-in radio shows has been heavily implicated in contributing to violence. The spread of rumor, using mobile phones, and the use of internet and blog to spread information, fuelled violence (Anderson & Lochery, 2008).

As already noted, most of the problems of inter-ethnic conflicts during elections have been blamed on the political elites and the media. The media, civil society and the interest groups can also preach messages of political tolerance, peace and dialogue in order to build one cohesive nation whether it is polls time or not. In addition, the media have to take the responsibility of fostering peace and stability in areas that are perceived as hot-spots and conflict prone zones.

Thus there is need to 'de-tribalise' the Kenyan politics by advancing issue-based arguments as opposed to ethnic- inclined approaches which are a threat to community cohesion.

Kenyan leaders should make efforts to place their nation before their ethnic groups as demonstrated by African role models like Mwalimu Julius Nyerere of Tanzania and Nelson Mandela of South Africa (MPNDV report, 2009).

2.4 Media and county cohesion

The media are influential in shaping public opinion and behaviour. For instance, during the First World War, United States and other European countries marshaled the press and films to mobilize the masses to fight in the battle.

Media have also effects on international relations and alliances. Recently, the fall of communism, the Balkan wars, two gulf wars and the war on terror have confirmed the media as an essential and volatile component in any international power struggle where public opinion is also a factor (McQuail, 2010). Therefore, countries enter into relationships and also build

alliances mainly through the media. This is because the media can project or present an image which is either favorable to a given nation or not, depending the nature of coverage or publicity it is giving the affected nation. Based on this projection, other countries may decide whether to enter into a relation with each other or not.

McQuail points out that the condition for effective media power generally depends on a national media industry capable of reaching most of the population, degree of consensus in the messages disseminated and some measure of credibility and trust in the media on the part of the audience.

Although the country has robust and vibrant media industry, the nature of their operation is centralized, that is, they are operating from the main towns in the country. Therefore, their presence is not felt country-wide. This inhibits their nationwide coverage, more so, of the far flung counties in the northern part of the nation. As a result, the coverage by media of the northern part of the country is wanting. Counties in this part of the country are in the news for all wrong reasons; if at all there is any coverage. The image the media give or portray is that of violence, banditry attack, famine and drought. Whenever these incidents occur, the media would casually refer to them as normal incidents of tribal clashes, inter-clan conflicts or feuds, or the usual cattle rustling menace. They need to investigate further to un-earth the root cause of the problem, with a view to finding a lasting solution to the matter since they have a responsibility to set things right. Nevertheless, Kenyans nationally seem to have more faith in media specially the private media which are perceived as credible source of information mainly in performing the watchdog role over the government.

One of the functions of mass media is to provide a public warning of the possible dangers and risks. This offers an explanation for disproportionate in news to crime, violence, disaster, death and disease (McQuail, 2010). While these are prime sources of "good news" stories for the journalists, it does not justify sensational reporting by the media that is done as if to glorify violence or crime in the society. As stated above, in the northern part of the country the focus is mostly on conflicts, drought and the likes. Through this, the media tend to depict the image of these counties negatively, that they have nothing "good" to offer. This approach needs to be reviewed for these communities to come on board as media audiences. Occasionally, Kenyan leaders have complained about western media engaging in media imperialism. Unfortunately the communities in these counties may also accuse the national media of engaging in systematic

"marginalization of the marginalized"; a situation in which the media tend to give excessive publicity to the 'high potential' areas of the country at the expense of the 'low potential' areas.

Sometimes, media reports of danger can lead to short-term panic responses. For the have the tendency to portray world as more dangerous than it really is. In this reporting, attention is skewed away from mundane causes of death, diseases and disaster and towards more dramatic but rarer calamitous such as terrorist attacks. This can be said to mislead the public about the true nature of risks. A similar criticism applies to the links between crime reporting and public fear of crime (Lowry et al., 2003; Romer et al., 2003).

The aim of national cohesion is to ensure that the country becomes an equitable society that is politically, economically and socially cohesive and integrated; where the citizens have a shared vision and sense of belonging while appreciating diversity (MJNCCA, 2012).

The above values should be a guiding factor at the county level; through which the communities in Marsabit should be able to uphold equal participation in political, economical and social issues, while embracing a common vision that is aimed at promoting a sense of belonging within the county.

Therefore, for Marsabit County to achieve meaningful development programmes, communities in the area must live together in peace and harmony. They have to appreciate and celebrate their diversity in terms of ethnic groups, cultures and belief systems; but the same diversity should not be used to heighten tribal groupings and feelings. Therefore media plays crucial role as far as achieving county cohesion and integration is concerned.

2.5 Local conflict situations

Marsabit is a cosmopolitan county though it is predominantly inhabited by Cushitic speaking communities such as Boran, Rendille, Gabra, Sakuye, Gurreh and Burji. Others include Samburu, Meru, Turkana and Elmolo to mention but a few. The county also shares long and porous border with Ethiopia to the north, Wajir to the east, Isiolo to the south east, Samburu to south and Lake Turkana to the west. The expansive county is largely underdeveloped with the main economic activities in the area being subsistence farming, pastoralist, agro-pastoralist and small scale business enterprises. The world bank report based on 2005 Kenya integrated house

hold budget survey (KIHBS) shows that the patterns of poverty are highest in northern and north-eastern counties which are sparsely populated. It is lowest in the urban hub of Nairobi and neighbouring counties (The World Bank, 2013). The county was ranked among the poorest in the country.

Administratively, the county consists of the following districts: Moyale, Chalbi, Laisamis, and Marsabit (which also serves as the county headquarters). According to the Kenya national bureau of statistics, the county has a population of about 300,000 people ((KNBS,2010a),) as detailed in the table 1.

Table 1: Population distribution of Marsabit county

Population distribution by administrative units, gender and area in S/km

District	Male	Female	Total	Area in S/kms
Marsabit	23,305	23,197	46,502	2,052.0
Chalbi	41,318	33,878	75,196	39,248.0
Laisamis	32,198	33,471	65,669	29,290.5
Moyale	54,291	49,508	103,799	9,370.8
Total	**151,112**	**140,054**	**291,166**	**79,961.3**

Source: 2009 Kenya population and housing census.

Conflict in the county has a long history with reports of frequent clashes occurring among the major communities in the area although they share strong historical and traditional values and belief system. Conflicts are mainly reported between Boran and Gabra, Rendille and Gabra, Boran and Rendille, Gabra and Dasanach as well as between Dasanach and Turkana people. Occasionally, there are also conflicts between Samburu and Turkana communities in the county.

 Ethnic clashes in Marsabit, northern Kenya, has been a common occurrence for years with raids and counter raids between various communities resulting, in many cases, in deaths, injuries, displacements and theft of animals (DREF Bulletin, 2006). For instance, in 2005 a major incursion occurred in Turbi trading centre along Marsabit-Moyale road between the Boran and Gabra communities in which over 70 people were killed. The fighting was a result of competition over scarce water and pasture land in the arid region along the Ethiopian border, as

well as about the recent political division along ethnic lines. The fighting in Turbi is similar to that between the Gurreh and the Murule in Mandera in January and February in 2005. Cattle rustlings is relatively common practice in this region, and some reports suggest that the massacre may have begun as a cattle raid. The Gabra people, victims of the massacre, had been accused in June of stealing cattle and goats (Wikipedia, 2005).

The county again had its fair share of violent inter-ethnic conflicts in 2011and 2012, and then in 2013 when a serious conflict broke out between various communities in Moyale area. According to a Red Cross report, close to hundred lives were lost and properties worth millions of shillings destroyed, while over 5,000 people were displaced during the said conflicts. Even when there are no conflicts, cases of sporadic killings were being reported in the area.

2.6 Causes of conflicts

According to a team sent to investigate the Turbi killings in 2005, the main causes of the conflicts in area is ethnic rivalry; cultural identity and fight for supremacy which is manifested in competition for access to resources, political power, and educational and job opportunities.

Politicians in the area played key role in inciting people against each other for their own political survival. For instance, the 2013 conflicts in Moyale area were allegedly blamed on March 4th general elections in which the Boran lost elective posts to the alliance of REGABU- acronym for Rendille, Gabra and Burji. This alliance also included the Samburu and Gurreh communities. It was formed to allegedly isolate the Boran community from leadership positions. However, analysts point out that these skirmishes are more than just politics, as the Borans are mostly the victims of these vicious raids spearheaded by the Gabra supported by Burji and a section of Gurreh people. The same alliance secured county positions in the elections in which they (Borans) had lost. They were also claims that the REGABU alliance was to taking up strategic leadership positions in the county while sidelining other communities, especially the Borans who are the single largest ethnic group in the larger Marsabit county.

There is an also inadequate development intervention by government, Non -governmental organizations (NGOs), development agencies and local leaders, thus generally the county inhabitants are in a state of despair.

The report further cited cultural practices such cattle rustling, poaching and human killing which are regarded as a sign of bravery and revenge by the local communities. Others are proliferation of small arms and light weapons due to porous and expansive border with Ethiopia and high demand for the same in the area as well as ineffectiveness and misuse of the Kenya police reservists (KPR). They were claims that security agencies were biased and were compromised in handling of conflicts in the area.

Sometimes conflict could be due to border disputes among different communities in the county. There were also claims that certain sections of county leaders were out to resettle aliens on what is regarded by others as their ancestral lands.

Although the mission team recommended that the government investigate and prosecute politicians who incited people against one other, not much has been done in this respect. The team also urged the government to resolve all pending political and administrative boundary disputes in the area by involving the local communities and other stakeholders to ensure there is a proper way of sharing communal resources.

Further, the government should complete the process of policy formulation and the establishment of necessary legislation for peace building and conflict management in the country. Finally the authorities should initiate and support long-term development strategies in the area, the team concluded.

2.7 The types of conflict in the area
Physical conflict entails physical confrontations and fighting over watering points, grazing land and even border disputes within the county. This type of conflict can result in loss of lives and destruction of properties of the parties concerned.

Political conflict happens when there is political undertone or a given group tries to dominate the leadership positions within the county thereby disadvantaging others. There is also lack of equal representation and marginalization of some sections of the local population.

Ideological conflict occurs when systems of thoughts or values clash with each other for instance a community may feel alienated. Then there is use of vulgar language against others,

certain members from some communities are perceived as lazy and thus seen as non-entities as in far as county affairs are concerned.

There are cross-border raids since the some communities spread a long common border with Ethiopia. Events or conflicts on one side of the border tend to spill over to other side, thus impacting on communities living across the common borders of Kenya and Ethiopia. Occasionally, the county has also experienced incursions from Ethiopian authorities pursuing the remnants of Oromo Liberation Front (OLF, a militant group fighting for independence of Oromo region in Ethiopia) who are allegedly harboured by a section of local communities in Kenya. This allegation has been denied by the Kenyan government and local communities have denied it categorically.

The main actors in the local conflict in the county include: Political leaders, business people, herdsmen, youth groups, community elders, community based organizations (CBOs), relevant arms of the government and sometimes the neighboring state. Therefore, all these factors contribute to lack of cohesion and social integration within the county.

2.8. Theoretical framework

2.8.1 Introduction

This study is guided by agenda-setting theory. In agenda setting, the media, be it print (newspapers, magazines, periodicals et cetera) or electronic (radio or television) tend to come up with items (issues) which generate audience discussions. According to this theory the media gives the audience what to talk about.

2.8.2. Agenda -setting theory

McCombs and Shaw provided the empirical foundations of this theory. According to McQuail, 2010, the term agenda-setting was coined by McCombs and Shaw (1972, 1993) to describe happenings in the context of election campaigns. The core idea is that the news media indicate to the public what the main issues of the day are and this is reflected in what the public perceive as the main issues (McQuail, 2010). As Trenaman and McQuail (1961:178) pointed out, "The evidence strongly suggests that people think about what they are told but at no level do they think what they are told".

There is a strong evidence to show correspondence between the order of importance given by the media to the issue and the order of significance attached to the same issue by the politicians and the public. Quoting (Scheufele, 1999), Littlejohn and Foss (2011), state that agenda setting occurs at two levels, the first level establishes the general issues that are important while the second determines the parts or aspects of those issues that are viewed as important. Therefore agenda-setting occurs when a media practitioner selectively report the news as it unfolds while the news outlets make choices on what to report and how to report it.

This theory is concerned with the process by which the media prepare their contents for the public. This is done by selecting what the media think is important for the audience from the myriad of issues of the day. There could be a lot of things or events happening out there, but the media only identify and select what they regard as important to the audience. But an interesting question to pose is, whose agenda does the media set and how often do the media set public agenda? Journalists working in the field would gather or collect information they think is important to the public from amongst all the happenings or events unfolding based on the guidelines provided by their respective media organizations.

One of the guidelines is that the item or the content must be rich in news value and also have element of public interest. Although it is hard to pinpoint how media would often define public interest, not all media content is processed, packaged and disseminated with public interests in mind. Public interest content is precisely a content which would be able to enrich the information and entertainment needs of target audience so as to make them better citizens of a given country. That is the extent to which the media audience derives satisfaction from media content in a socially responsible way.

Do the media always succeed in setting agendas for the public? Dearing and Rogers (1996) define the process as ongoing competition among issue protagonists to gain attention of media professionals, public and policy elites. Lazarsfled, et al. (1944) referred to it as the power to 'structure issues'. People may have other pressing and important issues which are of concern to them other than what the media may portray as crucial to the public. Shaw and McCombs claimed that media depiction can affect how people think about news, help organize the world of experience, and are stunningly successful in telling us what to think about (Littlejohn& Foss, 2011). Quite often one would find people discussing vital issues amongst themselves albeit

informally, while the news programme is ongoing. In reality, one would find people going about their normal duties with minimal interruption from the news bulletin.

According to Littlejohn and Foss (ibid), agenda-setting function is a three part process, first the priority of issues to be discussed in the media, then the media agenda in some way affects or interacts with what the public think and finally the public agenda affects or interacts in some way with what policy makers consider important. In short, the media agenda affects the public agenda, and public agenda affects the policy agenda. It also operates through priming i.e. the process by which the media affect the standard that individuals use to evaluate what they see and hear in the media (Turow, 2009, p. 166). Therefore the media, through a repeated attention, make certain issues more prominent and thereby priming audience thoughts.

Davis and Robinson (1986) criticised previous agenda -setting research for neglecting possible effects on what people think concerning who is important, where important things happen, and why things are important. According to Rogers and Dearing (1996), we need to distinguish clearly between three different agendas; the priorities of the media, those of the public and those of the policy. The same authors also pointed out that the media vary in their credibility, personal experiences and media picture may diverge and the public may not share the same values about news events as the media. In addition, real-world events may intervene in unexpected ways to upset previous agenda (Iyengar and Kindler, 1991).

Despite these challenges, agenda- setting has attracted mass communication researchers as it seems to offer an alternative to the search for directional media effects on individual attitudes and behaviour change (McQuail, 2010). Dearing and Rogers (1996) wrote that agenda-setting is related to several other kinds of effects such as bandwagon effect, the spiral of silence, the diffusion of news and media gate keeping.

The hypothesis presupposes a process of influence from the priorities of political or other interest group, to the news priorities of the media in which news value and audience interest play a strong part and from there to the opinion of public.

Dearing and Rogers (1996) offer a number of generalization about agenda -setting. They say that different media tend to agree about relative salience of a set of issues; media agendas do not closely much 'real-world' indicators; and the position of an issue on the media agenda

importantly determines that issue's salience in the public agenda (1996:192). One common condition for agenda-setting is that different mass media tend to share the same set of news priorities, the position currently being challenged by the availability of online media (McQuail, 2010). The main hypothesis of agenda-setting are: public debate is represented by a set of salient issues that is an agenda for action, competing interest seeks to promote the salience of their issues, mass media news selects issues from competing several pressures and agendas effects are peripheral and short-time (2010:515).

The theory explains an important influence of the press in terms of how individuals come to regard some events and situations that they encounter through news reports as more important than others (Lowery& Defleur, 1995). According to the theory, those who control the news media make decision about what should be reported to the public. This becomes the agenda of the public at any given time, though this may not be the case always as the audience may decide, at their own discretion issues that they would focus on.

It implies a relationship between decisions about the treatment of an issue or event in newspapers, TV and radio news and the belief about its importance or significance on the individual who make up the news audience (Lowery& Defleur, 1995). This explains, for example, why different newspaper outlets tend to give the same news item different treatment in terms of placements of articles, font sizes to be used as well as allocation of space in the publications. However, the prevailing opinion among media researchers seems to suggest that the media do not always have powerful effects on the public agenda. Media, most often, will be powerful when media credibility is high, conflicting evidence is low, individuals share media values, and when audience has a high need for guidance (Walgrave &Van Aelst, 2006).

Therefore since agenda setting theory is mostly useful in advocacy and when influencing public opinion, the media, both traditional mass media and social media, should be used to set peace and development agenda for the inhabitants of the Marsabit county. Through this strategy, the local population would be able to have knowledge of events and happenings and the need for them to co-exist and live in peace with each other in cohesion.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 An overview

Subsections addressed under this are research design, the study site, sample population, determination of the sample, data collection instruments, validity and reliability of research instruments, ethical considerations and the limitations of the study.

3.2. Research design

This is a plan of how the study was conducted. This research used a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches in order to get more reliable and credible results. The research involved use of cross- sectional field survey where all the data were collected at the same time and within the shortest time possible to establish the role of media in the local conflict in Marsabit county. This entailed how people received information on conflicts in the area, their sources of information or news and the ways in which different news organizations gave their coverage and whether this contributed to promotion of the county cohesion or not. The main media within Marsabit included; TV, radio and, newspaper. Radio was the commonly available medium in the area, while TV and newspapers were only found within major settlements of the county.

3.3 Study site and sample population

The study was conducted within Marsabit central division since it serves as the county head quarters and is also inhabited by almost all the communities in the county. The central division comprises Nagayo, Dakabaricha, Mountain, Jirime, Karare, Songa and Hula Hula locations. The Mountain location which formed the study site consisted of Township and Wabera sub-locations with a total population of about 6,561 people (KNBS, 2010c).

Table 2: Rural population distribution by gender

Sub-location	Male	female	Total
Township	1,399	1,048	2,447
Wabera	2,009	2,105	4,114

Source: Kenya 2009 census

Since most of the communities were found within the mountain location, this also helped in easy identification of the target group that was used in the study.

Through probability sampling, a representative sample of about 150 to 200 was drawn for purpose of the study. According to university of South Africa (Unisa), a representative sample is one that resembles the population in as many ways as possible and which enables the researcher to accurately generalize the results (Unisa, 2000). This sample was large enough to represent the population of central division which was estimated to be about 15,000 people as per the 2009 national population census. The sampling technique used here had also helped in capturing of the heterogeneous population of the county thus useful in generalization of results to the entire area of the study. The sample was drawn using stratified random sampling technique in which the target population was divided into various sub-groups to cater for different groups in the area, based on age, gender, level of education and occupation. Then, simple sampling method was used to select a sample from each sub-group of the target population. The main sub-groups included Boran, Gabra, Rendille, Burji, Samburu, Turkana and Somali population among others.

3.4 Determination of the sample

Populations under 1,000 are regarded as smaller populations and need a sampling ratio of approximately 30%. According to Neuman (1997) as cited by Unisa 2000, for a larger population of approximately 10,000, a sampling ratio of 10% is required. Since the site selected for the study has a population of about 6,500, a sample of between 150-200 respondents was adequate to represent the entire population of the division and by extension the larger county population.

According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), the formula for selecting the sample size is demonstrated below.

$$nf = \frac{n}{(1+n)/N}$$

Where nf = the desired sample size for a population less than 10,000

n = the desired sample size for a population of more than 10,000

N = the estimate of the population size

3.5 Data collection instruments

The primary data were collected using questionnaires and semi- structured interview guides which were administered to the sample population with an aid of trained research assists in the area. The questionnaires were closed and were self- administered. However, where respondents felt they were unable to fill in on their own, research assistants helped them out. The semi structured interviews were for key informants such as the clergy, opinion leaders, community elders, politicians, youths and women leaders as well as NGOs and civil society representatives in the area. Both the questionnaires and interview guides were used to gather data to ascertain the role of media in promoting national cohesion in the county.

Open- ended questions are more suitable for qualitative approach because they allow respondents to give a free response in continuous text. Even though they can elicit more sensitive information than close ended questions, they tend to be more difficult to categorize and hence hard to analyze quantitatively (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The qualitative and quantitative data collected through semi structured interviews and questionnaires were analyzed and the findings presented.

3.6 Research validity and reliability

Validity is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represent the phenomenon under study Mugenda and Mugenda (ibid). For this to be attained, the subject chosen for the research has to be based on a representative sample of the larger population. As these authors argue, a representative sample should replicate the population properties in approximately the same proportion as they occur in the target population (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:88; Brink 1996:134), as cited by Unisa, (2000).

3.7 Ethical considerations.

This entails the moral principles on which the research was based. Some of the ethical issues that were taken into account were the respondents were not be harmed in any way during and after the study.

Their consents were also sought in their involvement in the work and individual participants were allowed to exercise their rights and ability to choose whether to participate in the study or

not. The privacy and confidentiality of respondents were also guaranteed especially where it involved sensitive information.

The researcher also treated all the participants justly and fairly. This also applied to the way in which research interpretation and findings were done. Collecting objective and accurate data in a socially responsible way is fundamental to scientific research. This point was also taken care of.

3.8. Limitations of the study

The main limitation of the study was unavailability of relevant data on the topic and lack of cooperation amongst some participants. There was also lack of enough time and financial constraints. Also illiteracy among the local population impacted on the study.

Further, the vastness of the county, being the second largest in the country also made it difficult for one to transverse the area because of mainly lack of basic infrastructure such as roads and communication.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of the data collected through questionnaires and interview guides to establish the role of mass media in national cohesion, case study of Marsabit county. It entailed the analysis and interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative data collected from the field and presentations of the findings.

The data was collected in five days after training of four research assistants, three men and a lady. A total of 200 structured questionnaires and 10 interview guides were issued out with a return of 189 questionnaires and 6 interview guides completed and returned. The findings from the quantitative data obtained were presented by the use of charts, tables and graphs. Further, the primary data collected using questionnaires and interview guides show common understanding amongst the respondents regarding the role of media in the promotion of national cohesion in the area.

4.2 Bio data information

During the collection of the data in Marsabit town, the questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and findings of those sampled for the study was as indicated in figure shown below. An interesting point to note is that more men respondents were willing to be sampled than their female participants. In fact, out of 189 questionnaires, male respondents took the lion's
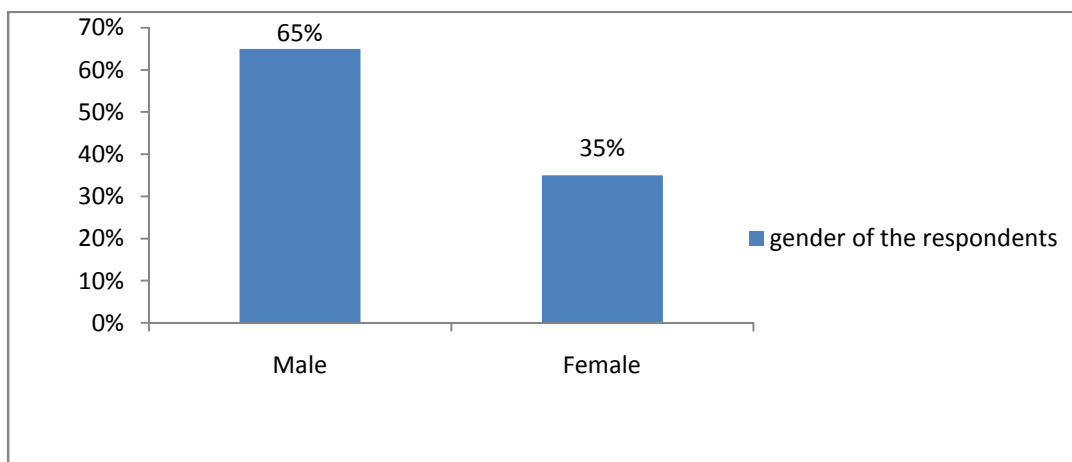

Figure 1: Gender of the respondents

share of 122 while female accounted for paltry 67 participants that is 64.5% and 35.5 % respectively.

The reason for few female participants could be attributed to the closed nature of the communities and also socio-cultural factors such as that women are not supposed to have discussions with 'strangers'.

Table 3: The distribution of ethnic groups used for the study

Ethnic group/Tribe	Number of respondents
Boran	65
Gabra	52
Rendille	23
Burji	15
Samburu	7
Turkana	5
Kikuyu	4
Meru	3
Luo	2
Luhya	2
Konso	1
Gurreh	1
Not indicated	9
Total	**189**

Source: Researcher

The age of the respondents in years

In terms of age, most of the respondents were in the age bracket of 20-30 years and they accounted for 61.4%, 30-40 years were 23.8% while those aged between 40-50 and above 50 years were 10% and 4.8% respectively.

Therefore it can be deduced from these data that, young people were more enthusiastic to participate in the study than the rest of the categories. This is demonstrated in figure 2.
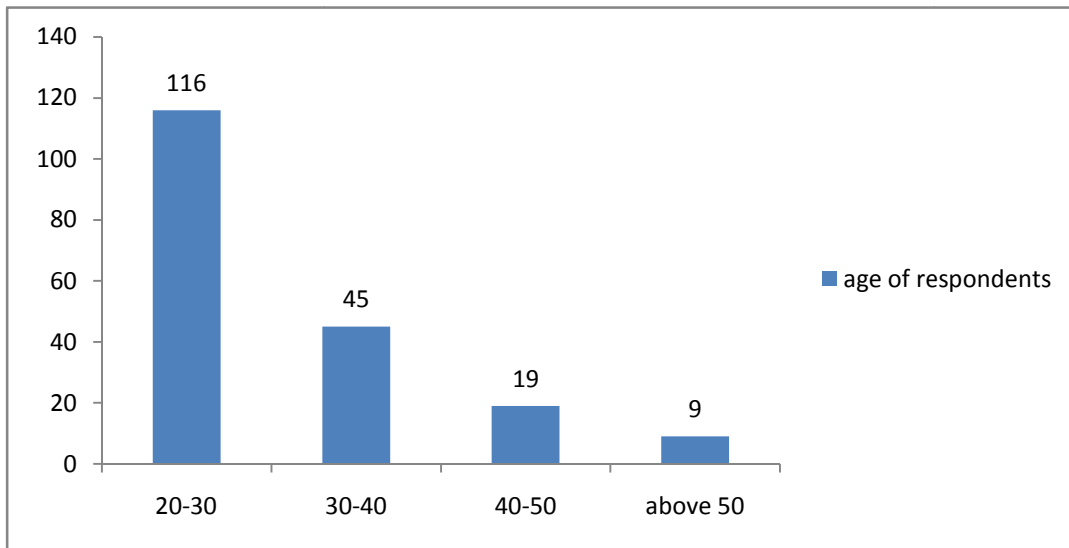
Figure 2: Age of respondents in years.

On the level of education, the respondents were also fairly literate with 16.4% of them being university graduates, 41.8% have tertiary level and 35% with secondary education. Only 2.6% of respondents were primary school leavers while 4.2% have not had any formal education.
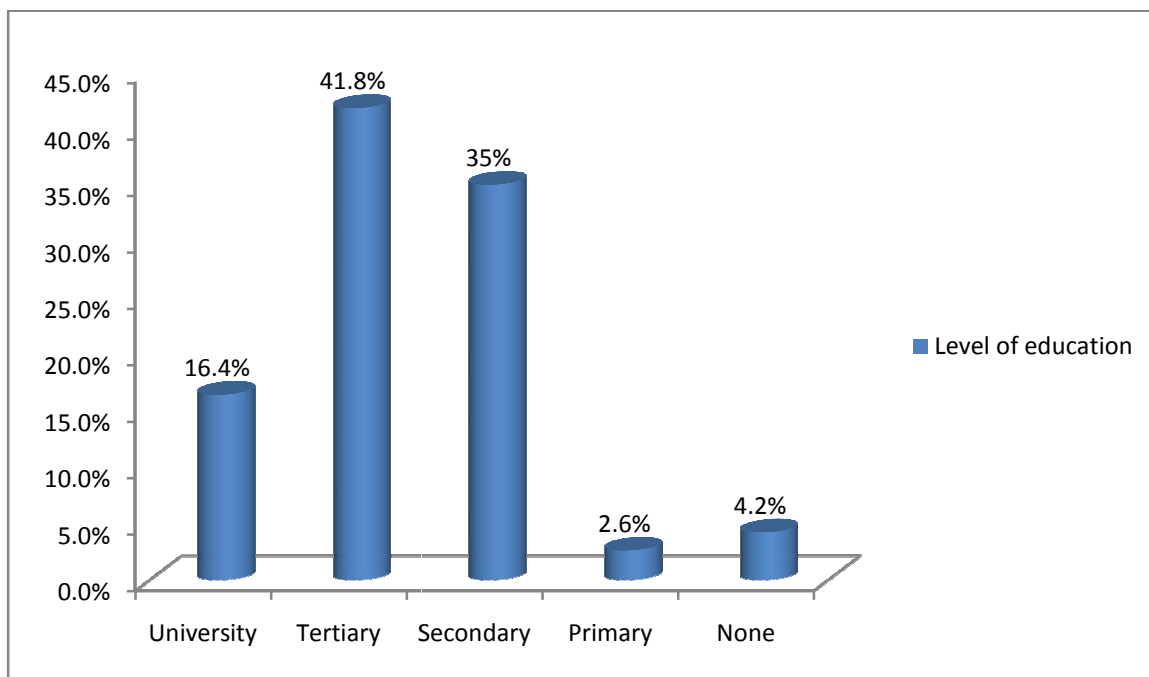

Figure 3: Respondents level of education

Source: Researcher

Access to the media among the respondents in the study was quite impressive with astounding 98.94 % of them indicating that they have access to some form of media in the county, while only 1.06% stating that they do not have access to any media at all. In terms of media accessibility, television at (73) seemed to be the most commonly available media in the area, followed by radio at 55 and then newspapers13; while 8 respondents identified internet. However, 37 respondents indicated that they have access to more than one media as shown in figure 4. This seemed to be against the commonly held belief that in rural areas radio was the most readily available medium of mass communication.
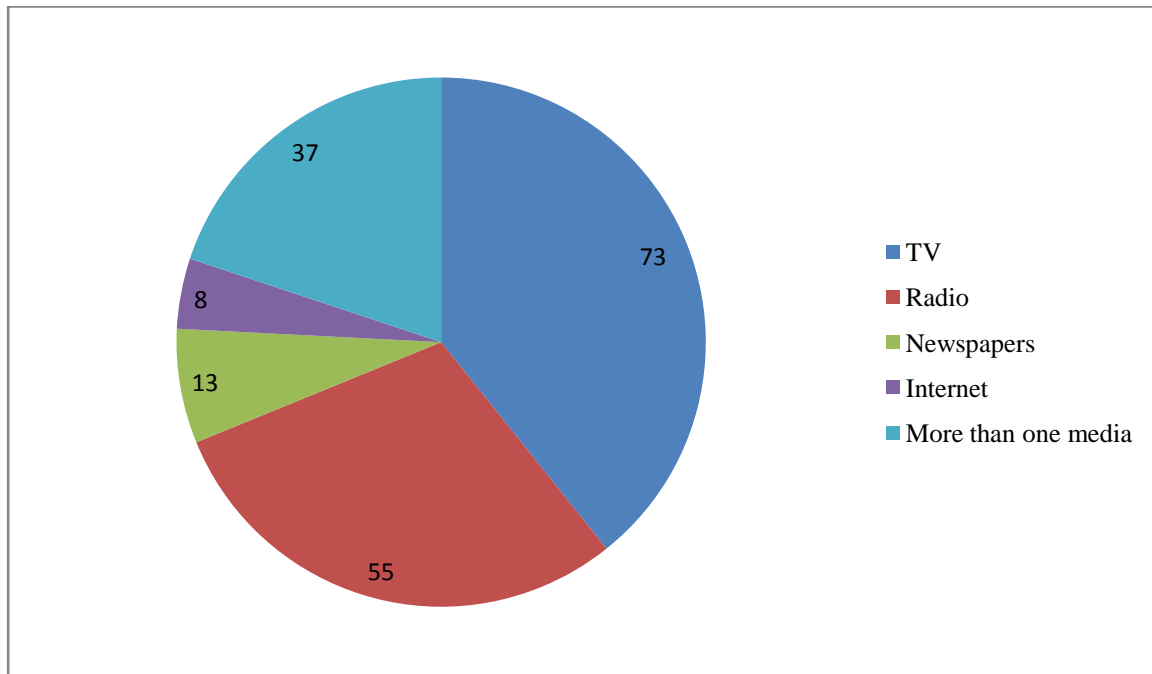

Figure 4: Access to the media

Source: Researcher

It is important to point out that access to the media doesn't in anyway translate to the ownership of the same. While TV is mainly found in major urban centres and pockets of trading centres in the county, radio could be by far the most commonly available mass media in the area due to its portability and ease of acquisition.

In fact, there was a radio station that broadcast from the heart of Marsabit town. The station, Sifa, formerly known as Marsabit FM, which is owned by Transworld Radio started its operation in 2008 and covers a fairly good portion of this vast county. However, not many people in the

area were excited about it due to the fact that the station is church owned and most of the local populations are Muslims.

4.3 Role of media in de-escalation of conflicts

Figure 5 demonstrates that media play a critical role in de-escalation of conflicts in a given area as the majority (49.7%) of the respondents were in some form of agreement that media can indeed de-escalate conflict, while the least number of respondents (2.6%) tends to strongly disagree with the sentiment. However, 15.9% of those surveyed were non-committal, that is they took a neutral position on the matter. Also, a key informant respondent indicated that mass media can de-escalate conflict through positive reporting of factual information in a sensitive way. The contents have to disseminate peace messages, urging the communities to shun violence.

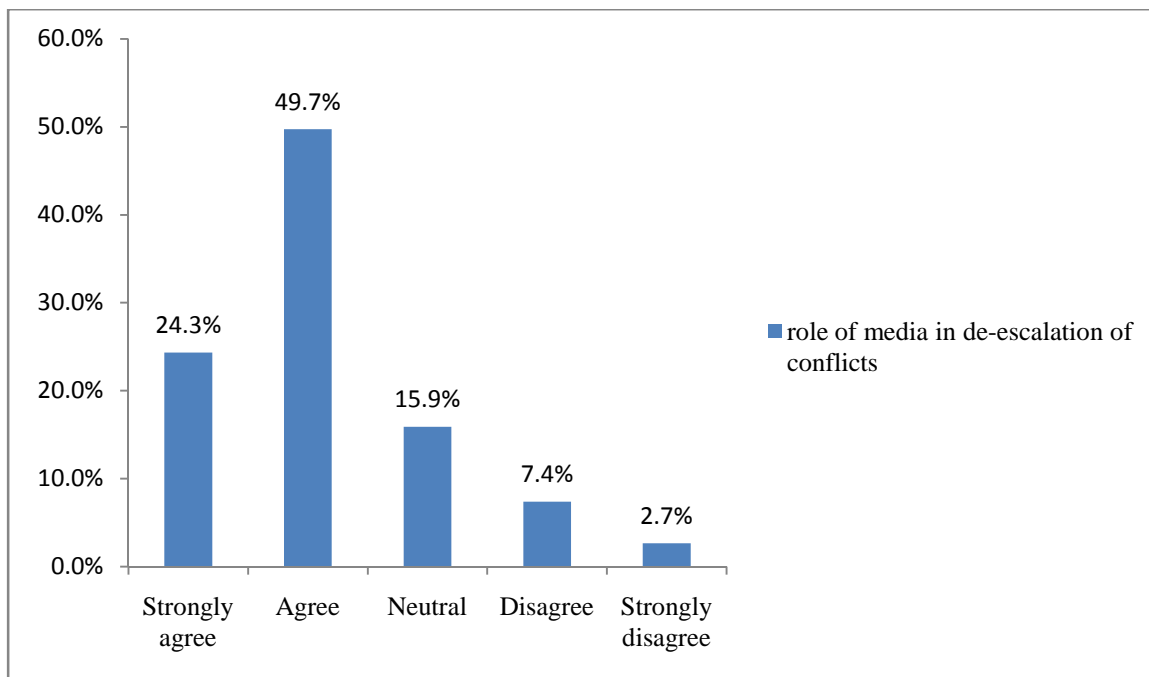Figure 5: The role of media in de-escalation of conflicts

Source: Researcher

Ways in which the media could de-escalate conflicts

When the respondents were asked how the media could de-escalate conflicts, 36% of them cited accurate and objective reporting as a major way through which the media can de-escalate conflict situations, while 27.5% agreed that by exposing the root cause of the conflicts, the media can de-

escalate conflicts. Another 19.6% of the respondents believed the media can de-escalate conflicts by engaging in sensitive reporting of the happenings, whereas 9% felt that by avoiding the identity of actors in the conflicts, the media would de-escalate conflicts. However, 7.9% of the respondents cited all the four ways as the possible means through which the media could be used to de-escalate conflicts.

On the ways in which media would de-escalates conflicts, a key informant stated that the media needed to actively set the agenda for the communities by emphasizing the issues that unite them (communities) than those that set them a apart. A focus on the root cause of the problems in order to find lasting solutions was also seen as important.

When it came to a specific item of exposing the root cause of the problem as a possible way of de-escalating conflicts, a resounding 55% of the respondents were in agreement, 28% strongly agreed, those who were neutral were at 10%, those in disagreement at 3.7%, while those who tended to strongly disagree accounted for paltry 3.2%.

By exposing the root cause of the problem media could de-escalate conflicts the respondents said. Table 4 gives more details.

Table 4: Media can de-escalate conflicts by exposing the root cause of conflicts.

Responses	No of respondents	No. in percentage
Strongly agree	53	28%
Agree	104	55%
Neutral	19	10%
Disagree	7	3.7%
Strongly disagree	6	3.2%
Total	**189**	**100%**

Source: Researcher

Accurate and objective reporting is one of the attributes of a professional journalist. When the respondents were asked whether this could contribute to the de-escalation of conflicts, a resounding 91% of those surveyed answered in affirmative, with 4.8% being negative, while 4.2% said they did not know. The results were as depicted in figure 6.

"They (mass media) need to undertake pre-conflict assessment to signal the authorities and other stake holders about the impending conflict within the communities. This would help to pre-empt the occurrence of the conflicts" one key informant quipped.

Another key informant felt that media can also be used to promote corporate social responsibility programmes aimed at attaining peace while highlighting the need for peaceful co-existence amongst the locals.
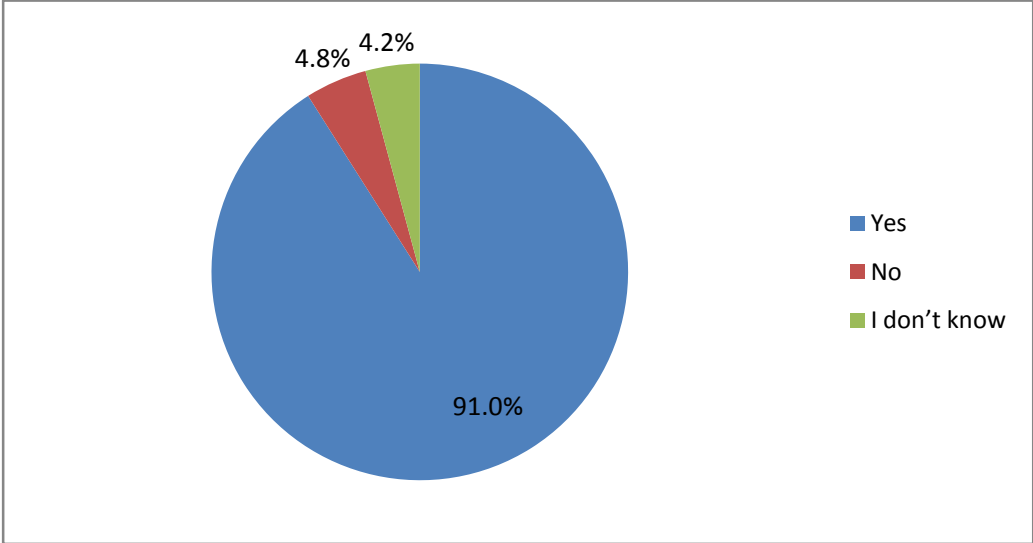
Figure 6: Accurate and balanced reporting de- escalates conflicts

Source: Researcher

4.4 Factors that hindered effective media coverage in the area

According to 71.4 % of those polled in the survey, media are not currently giving adequate coverage of issues in the county. This reinforces the common perception that county inhabitants traditionally held against the media. Nevertheless, 25.4% of the respondents were of the view that media indeed had been giving adequate coverage of happenings in the area, while the remaining 3.2% could not tell whether the county was getting adequate coverage or not.
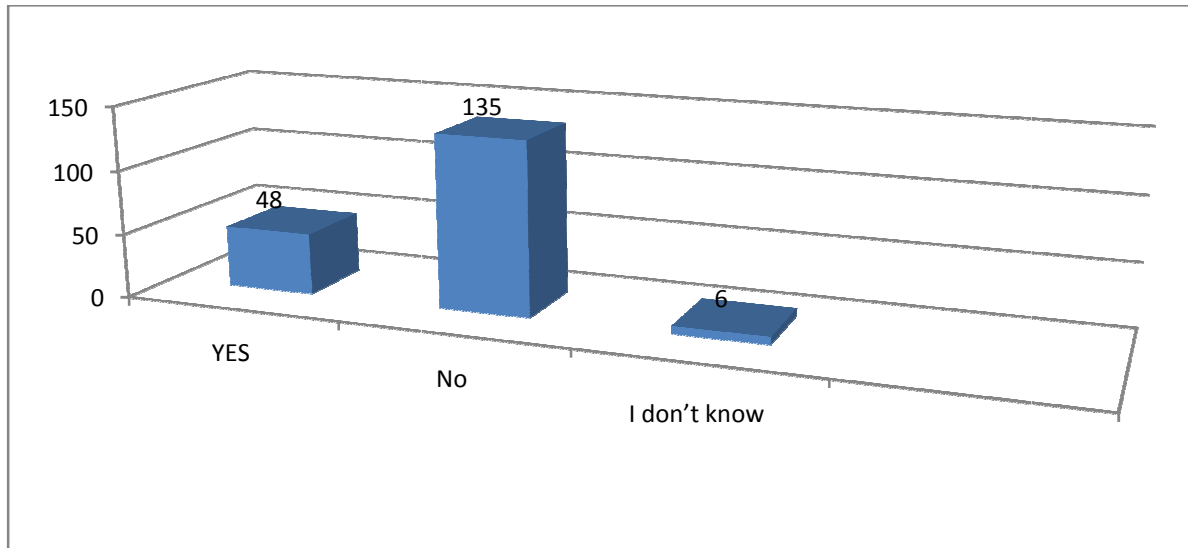
Figure 7: Media's coverage of the area

On the same note, a key informant concurred with other respondents that the media were not giving adequate coverage of issues in the county and if they did, the focus was mostly on negative issues. This therefore means that the media needed to put more efforts as far media publicity was concerned.

On the specific factors that might have hindered media coverage in the area, the following were their responses. In this case respondents were provided with options to choose from.

Figure 8: Factors hindering media coverage

Figure 8 shows that 68.9% of those polled identified distance from the media organization as a major hindrance to effective media coverage in the area, while 19% cited illiteracy among the local populatio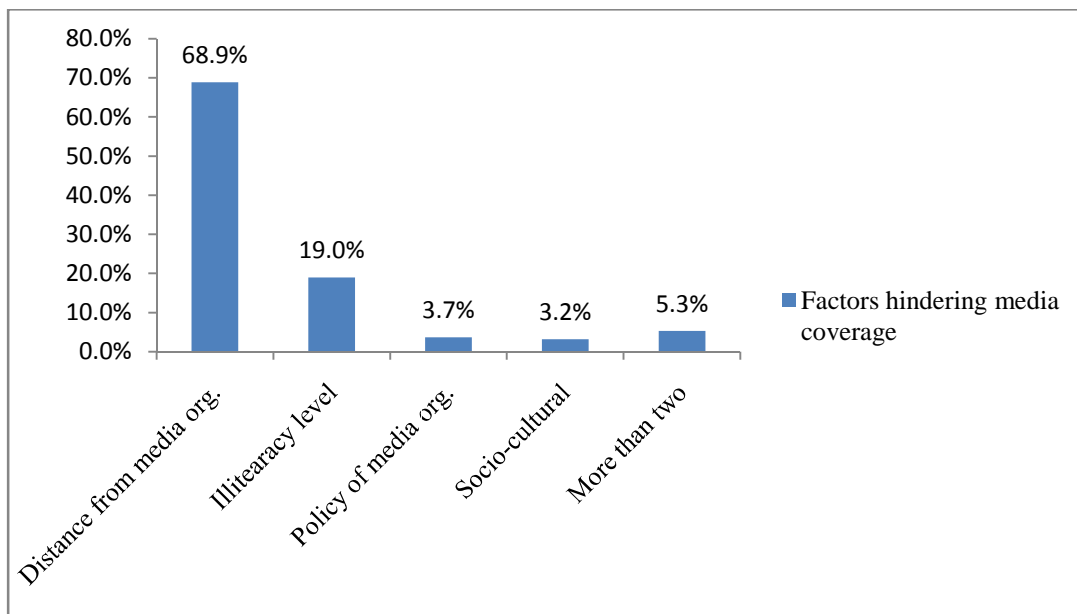n. Another 3.7% blamed lack of coverage on the policy of the individual media outlets. However, 3.2% of the respondents identified socio-cultural factors as their main reason for the lack of media coverage, while the remaining 10% cited more than any two of the factors as the possible hindrance of effective media coverage in the area.

Once they identified the main factors that might have contributed to lack of adequate coverage of the media in the area, the respondents were again given possible options through which this trend could be reversed and their responses were as follows: on the possible ways of enhancing media coverage in the area, 59.8% of the respondents identified decentralization of media outlets as the main way of addressing the issue; another 15.3% cited employment of the locals as way of enhancing the coverage; while another 14.3% indicated the need for improvement of infrastructure in the area. However, 5.8% of the respondents cited security as a major factor hindering media coverage, thus by improving the security situation in the area, then adequate coverage of issues in the county could be enhanced. Further, 5.3% of the respondents indicated that all the four factors played an important role as far as enhancement of media coverage of the county affairs was concerned.
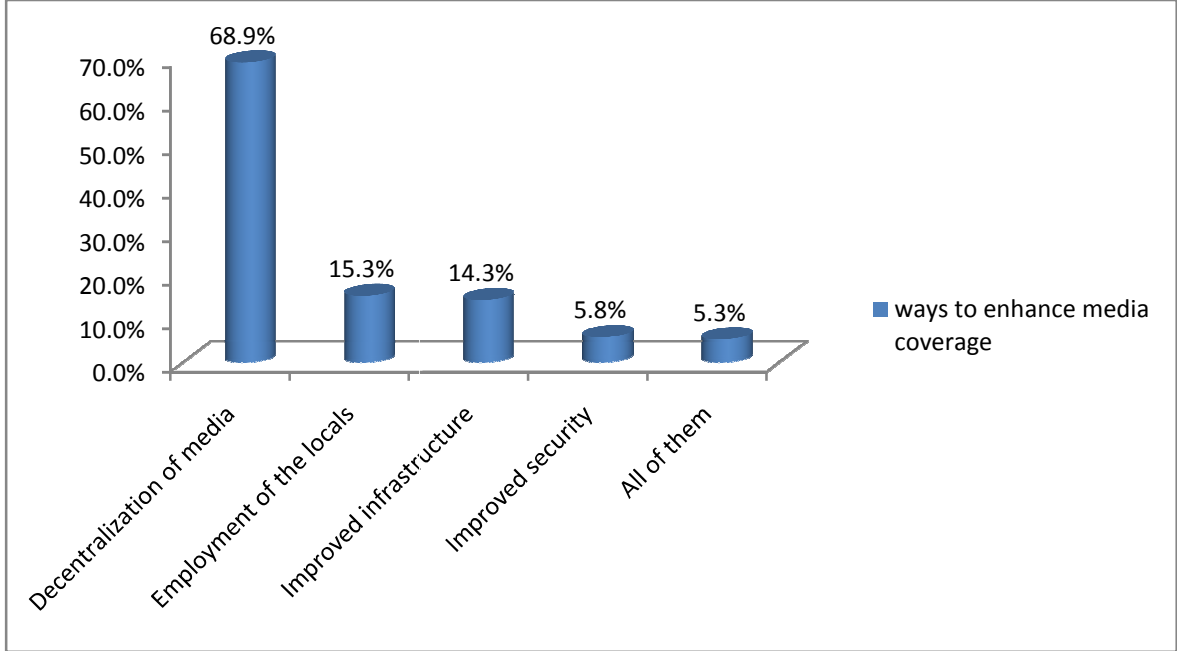

Figure 9: Ways to enhance media coverage

The key informants identified nomadic lifestyle, poverty levels among the local population, lack of basic infrastructure, insecurity and negligence by both the authorities and mass media as their main factors that hindered effective media coverage in the area. This can be reversed by employment of the locals, representation of the main media houses on the ground, as well as decentralization of media operations for their services to be felt by the inhabitants of Marsabit county, an informant said.

4.5 Code of ethics and positive media coverage

Ethics is a branch of philosophy that deals with ability to distinguish between which human actions are morally permissible (acceptable) and which ones are not (Merrill& Odell, 1983). Journalists, as professionals, have the code of ethics that regulates and police their conducts. On the matter of the role of code of ethics and positive media coverage, 80.4% of the respondents agreed that the code of ethics, if fully implemented could contribute to positive media coverage in the area. However, 6.9% of those surveyed indicated that might not be true, while 2.7% said they do not know whether the code of ethics could play any role or not.

Media coverage is one thing and the nature of the coverage, be it positive or negative, is quite another. When respondents were asked whether the media always painted negative picture about
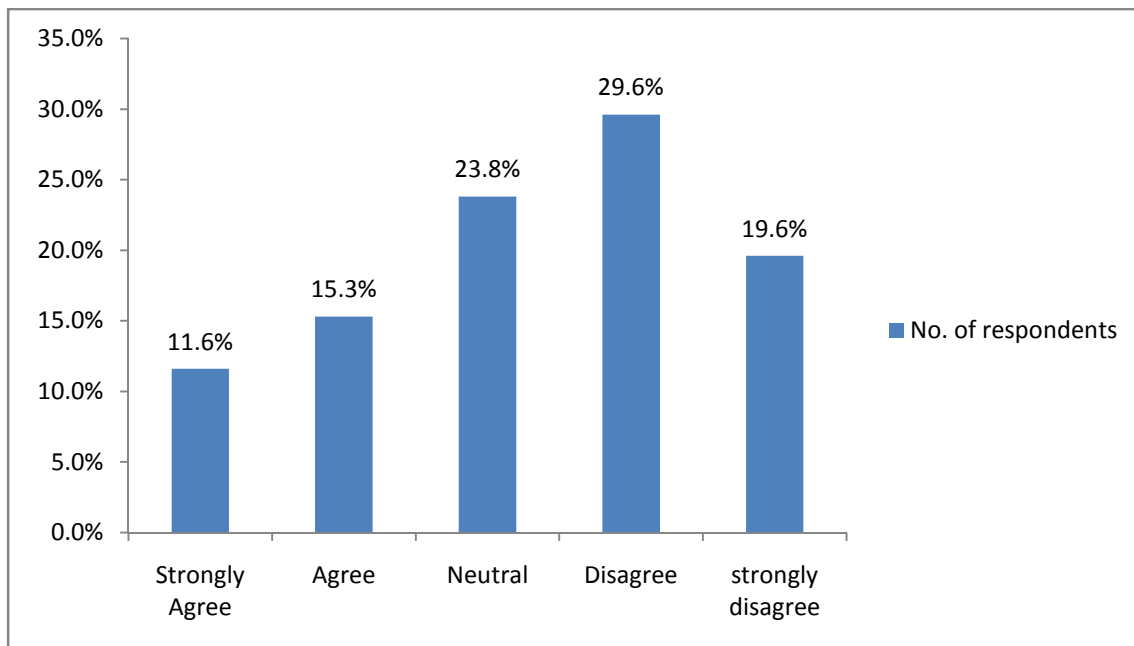

Figure 10: Nature of coverage

the county, their responses were as indicated in figure. The above diagram clearly demonstrates that many of those polled (29.6%) tended to disagree with the notion that the media always painted negative picture about the county. Those who were neutral on the matter was 23.8%. However, 19.6% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. And 15.3% of the respondents answered in affirmative, while those who were strongly in agreement with the sentiment constituted 11.6% of the total respondents. This shows that the media do not always paint a glowing picture about the county.

4.6 The role of media in escalation of local conflicts

The media have been blamed either rightly or wrongly for funning violence or conflicts. When the respondents were asked about this matter, the following were their responses; 56% of the respondents were affirmative, 35.5% tend to refute or disagree, while the remaining 8.5% indicated they did not know as shown in the figure 11.
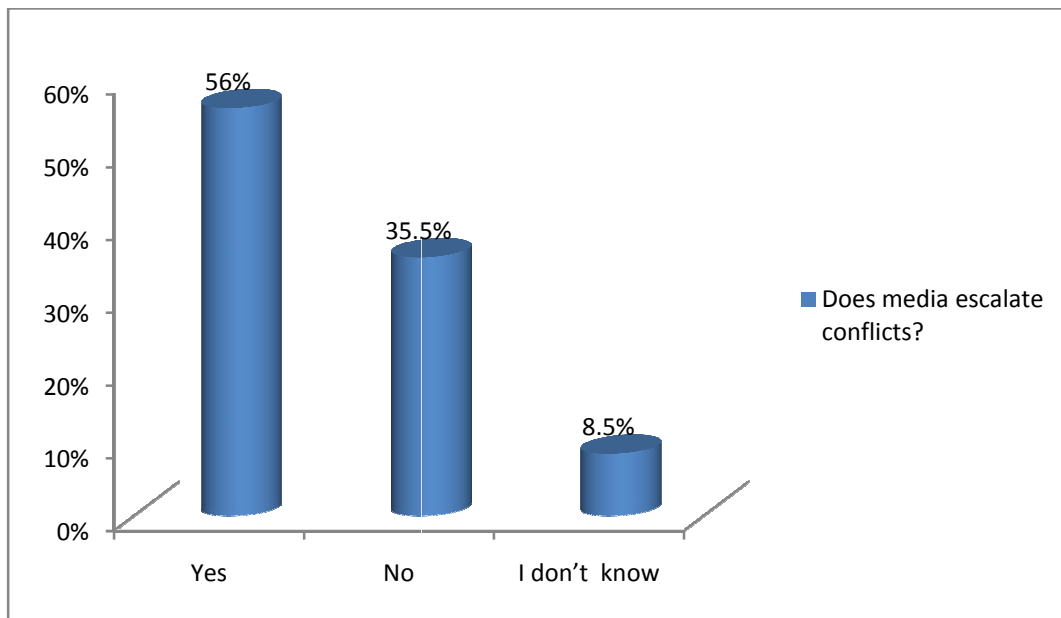

Figure 11: Do the media escalate conflicts?

Source: Researcher

Ways in which the media can escalates conflicts

There were common assumptions that media could escalate conflicts in various ways. The possible ways through which the media might escalate conflicts were listed and the respondents

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asked to choose from the alternatives provided. Their responses were as follows: most of the respondents at 54 indicated that the media had to avoid irrational and sensational reporting as this was the main way through which the media could escalate conflicts. Another 52 respondents cited insensitive reporting as a possible way. Similarly, 33 of those polled identified glorification of violence, with another 38 having problems with identification of actors in the conflicts. However, 12 participants felt that all the four ways could be the possible means through which the media might escalate conflicts situations. Thus on the overall, there was a pattern that the media could exacerbate conflict situations if not handled responsibly as shown in figure 12.
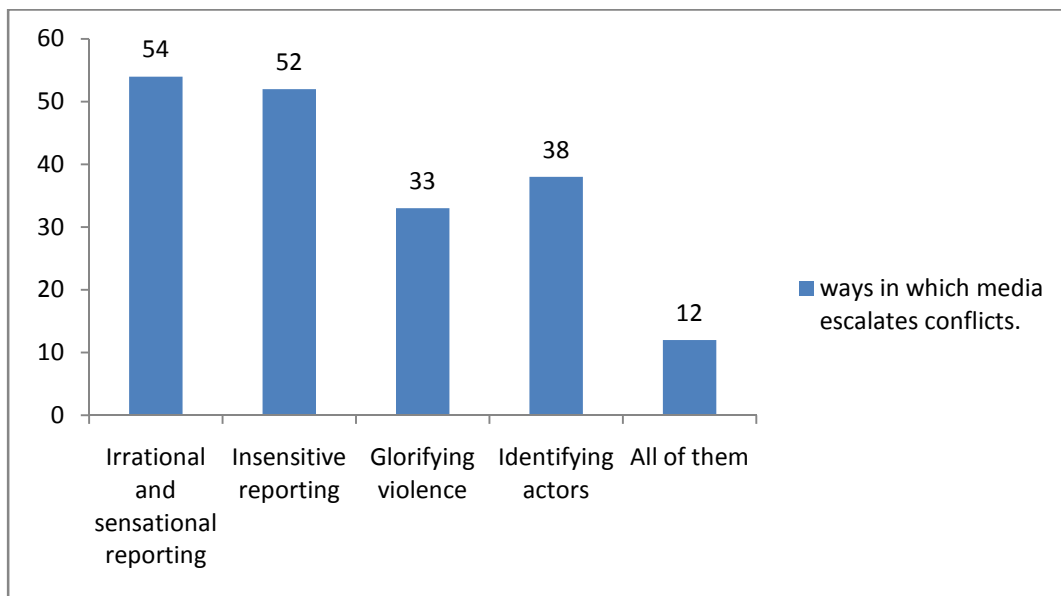
Figure 12: Ways in which media escalates conflicts

Source: Researcher

A key informant also cited inaccurate reporting of events, exaggeration of small conflicts, identifying perpetrators and victims in conflicts, being biased against certain groups and lack of sensitivity in reporting conflicts as the main ways in which the media could escalate conflicts in the area. The media also needed to avoid prejudices and prejudgments of issues in their reporting. All these issues raised by an informant border on failure of reporters to adhere to the professional standards in the practice of journalism.

One way of addressing the above matter is through training of journalists on sensitive reporting of conflict situation. When a question was asked on whether training of journalists on sensitive

writing and reporting could help resolve the problem, the responses were as demonstrated in figure 13.
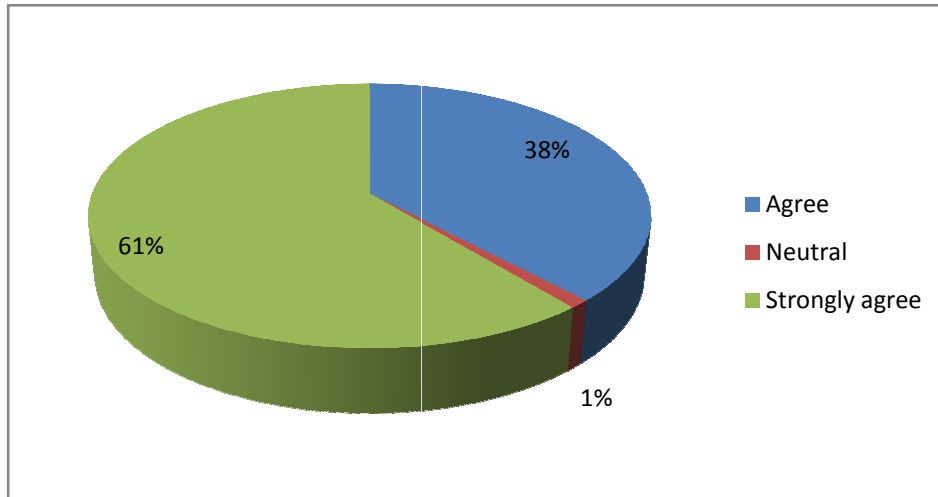
Figure 13: Training of journalists in conflicts

The majority of the respondents (60.8%) felt strongly that there was need for journalists to be trained on conflicts sensitive reporting; 37.6 % agreed; while a mere 1.6% were neutral about the subject.

As earlier stated, the media have been blamed for fuelling conflict situations. However, when the question on the issue was reframed and the respondents asked whether the media can be blamed for escalating local conflicts situations in area, mixed reactions were elicited as shown in the figure 14.
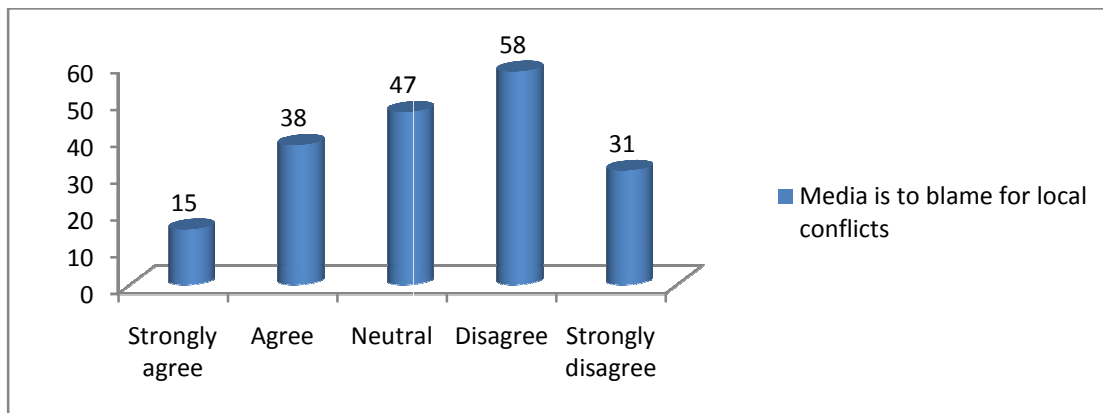
Figure 14: Were media to blame for local conflicts?

The majority of the respondents 58 (30.7%) disagreed with the statement that media could be blamed for escalation of conflicts in the area; while 31(16.4%) strongly disagreed. Interestingly, 47 (24.9 %) of those polled opted to remain neutral on the matter, with the remaining 15 (7.9%) and 38 (20.1%) selecting strongly agree and agree respectively. From these responses, one can deduce that the media were off the hook at least for the time being in as far as escalation of local conflicts was concerned.

In any conflict situation there is need for coordinated flow of information both to the media and the concerned public. Through this approach one would be able to contain the situation from turning unmanageable, otherwise others will take the advantage of condition to peddle false information and rumours thereby causing fear, confusion and panic among the population. When the question on the subject was posed to them, a whopping 83% of the respondents felt that there was need to have a coordinated flow of information to the media in conflict situation, while 10.6% were not quite sure about the matter. However, 6.4% of those surveyed felt differently. This calls for proper coordination of information flow specifically to the media and the public at large in a case of conflict situation to minimize uncertainty and panic amongst the county inhabitants.
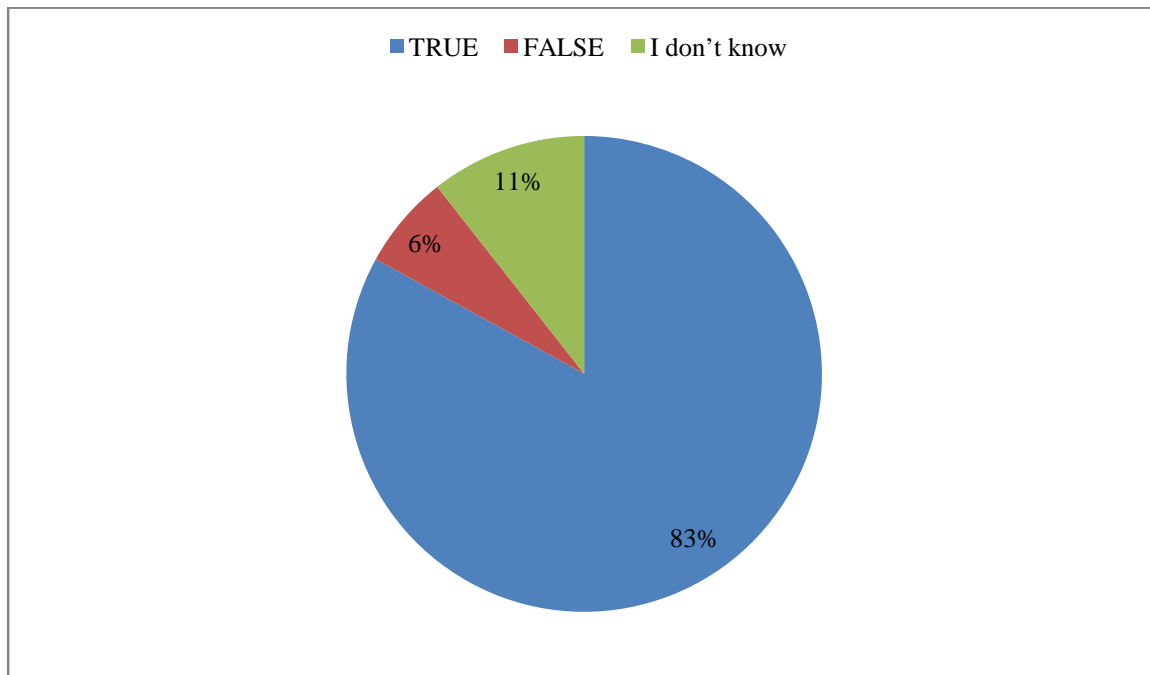
Figure 15: The need for coordinated flow of information in conflicts

4. 7 Sources of information

Information plays great role for development and survival of mankind. In this modern society also known as a network society, information is both power and resource thus those without it are powerless and also lack resources. At the county level, people also need to know and understand about the local, national and international issues, events and happenings. The aim of this section was to establish the main source of information for the county inhabitants, as indicated by figure 16.
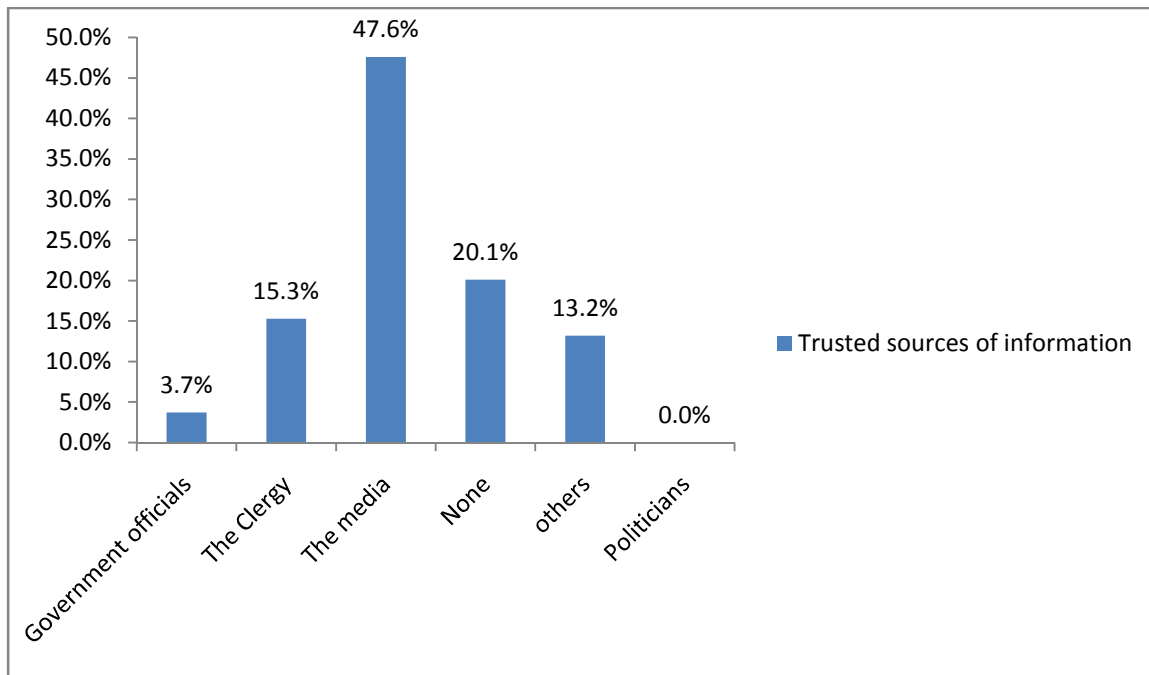
Figure 16: Trusted sources of information

Source: Researcher

The majority of the respondents 47.6% identified media as the main source of information, followed by the clergy at 15.3%, and government officials were a distant third at 3.7%. Surprisingly, no one seemed to rely on politicians as a source of information. Another significant number (20.1%) of the respondents claimed that they did not trust any of the choices provided as a possible source of information. Further, 13.2% of the participants identified others as their trusted source of information; and some respondents actually specified opinion leaders and community members, among others.

4.8 Media and conflicts resolutions

The county was prone to frequent inter-community conflicts. There was need for concerted efforts to find lasting peace in the area. Once this has been attained then the development of the county could take a centre stage. In this regard, media could be used to enhance county development through positive coverage and publicity of events. When the question on the matter was presented to the respondents, an over whelming majority 98.9% were in agreement, while 1.1% disagreed.

Table 4: Media and county development

Response	No. of respondents
True	187
False	2
Total	**189**

Source: Researcher

Through agenda setting, the media can be used to set development agenda for Marsabit county. One of the reasons for lack of media coverage was attributed to poor infrastructure. However, things were set to change in the county as the main road from Isiolo to Moyale was in its final phase of construction. Then, the Lamu Port and South Sudan Ethiopia Transport (LAPSSET) project which is ongoing is likely to open up the counties in the northern frontiers for massive investment opportunities to both local and foreign business communities.

Marsabit county has a lot of potential ranging from mining, to oil exploration, to tourism, to large scale farming using irrigation, to modernization of the livestock subsector which is the livelihood of the communities as well as the proposed dry port at the border town of Moyale, among other opportunities for development in the area. All these and other development opportunities need to be strategically communicated through the media for investors to learn and develop interest in them. As indicated earlier these opportunities could be shattered if the county leadership does not bring all the stakeholders on board and work towards attaining lasting peace in the area.

On the possible role of media in conflict resolutions, almost half of the respondents 94 agreed with the statement, with 70 of them strongly agreeing. However, 9 of the respondents were neutral on the matter, with another 10 and 6 of them disagreeing and strongly disagreeing respectively as demonstrated by figure 17.
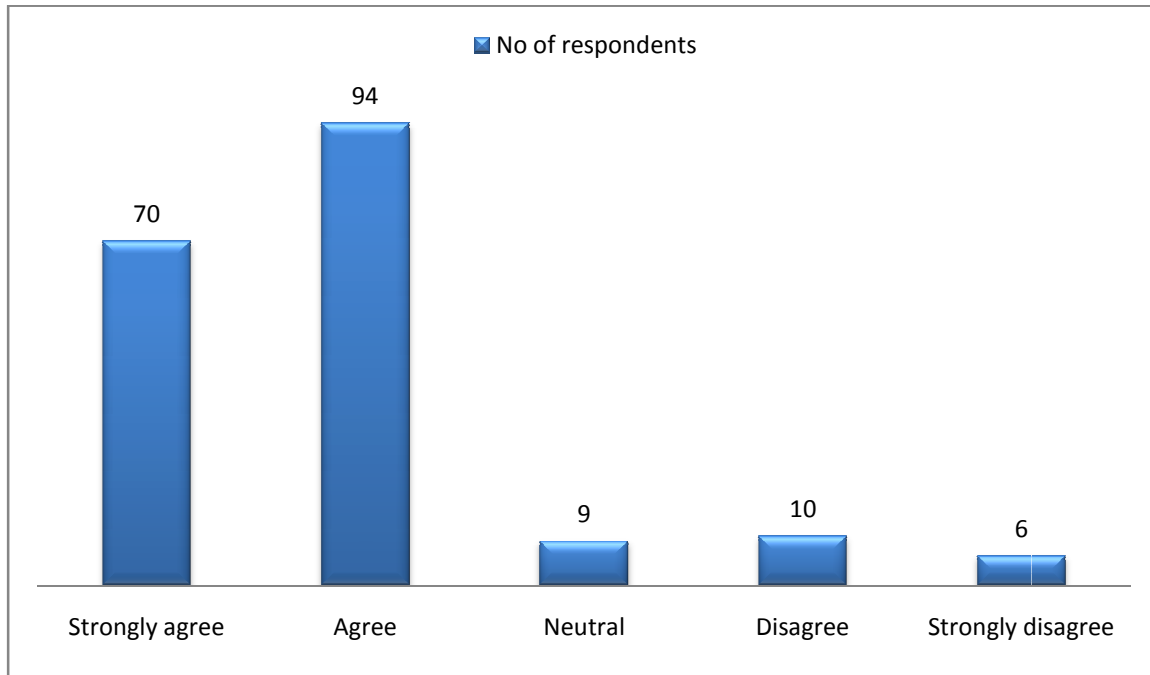
Figure 17: Media and conflict resolutions

Source: Researcher

This figure clearly demonstrates that media can be a crucial tool for conflict resolution if utilized positively by the main protagonists in conflict situations.

4.9 Media and county cohesion

County cohesion is the extent to which inhabitants of Marsabit county would be able to coexist in peace and harmony. Without cohesion not much development can be realized. A key informant stated that the media could be used to enhance county cohesion by relaying messages advocating of peaceful co-existence among the local communities. Occasionally, they (media) should hold discussion forums with the entire county leadership to dialogue.

When views were sought from the respondents to establish whether media play any role in achievement of county cohesion, their responses were as shown by figure 18.
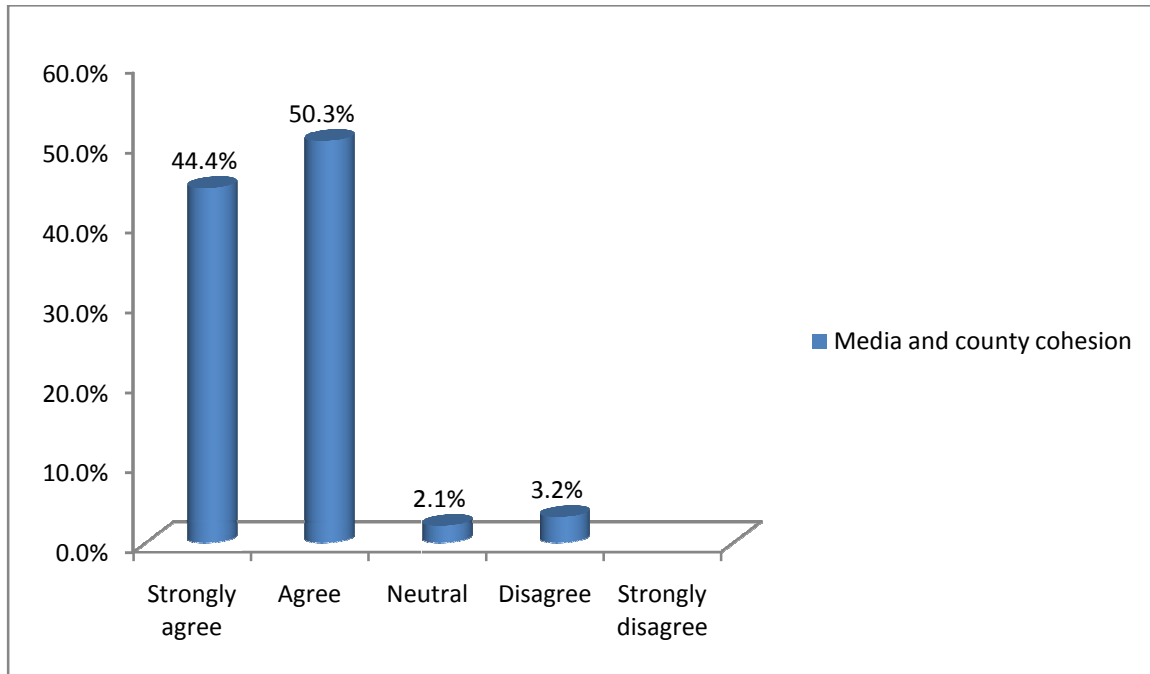
Figure 18: Media and county cohesion

Source: Researcher

The media could also be employed to promote peace agenda. Through the agenda setting function, the media could be used to set peace agenda for the county by positive coverage, they could shape public opinion and influence their perception and focus on peace building. An overwhelming number of respondents (95%) agreed; with 4% disagreeing; while insignificant number 1% seemed not to know as indicated in figure 19.

According to a key informant, media could preach peace and could also resolve conflicts through dialogue between warring communities. It could also show impacts of conflicts and give the people the way forward. Occasionally, there was need for the coverage of all county proceeding and organization of debates through which the public could interrogate the county leadership, the respondent concluded. From this response, it was evident that the local communities also recognized the vital role mass media played in resolving inter- community conflicts in the area thereby promoting county cohesion.
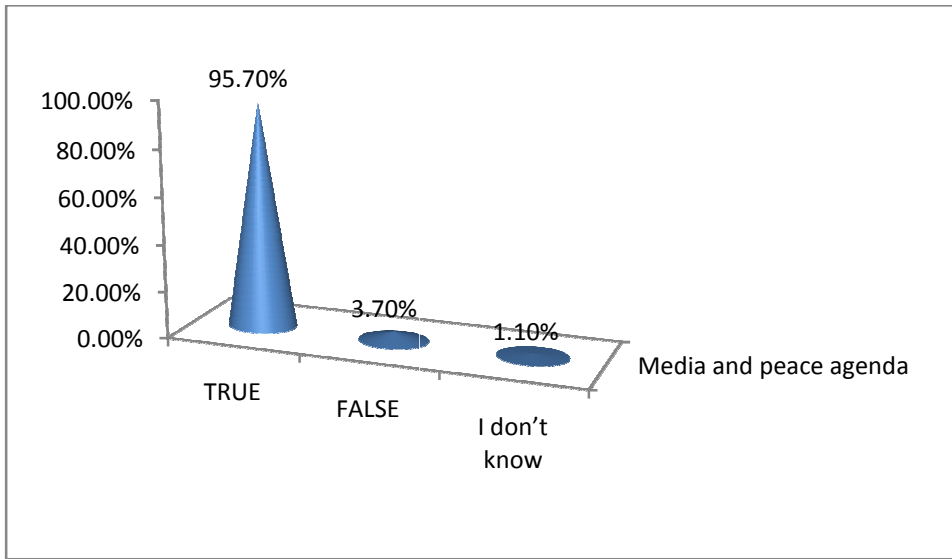
Figure 19: Media and peace agenda

Source: Researcher

Earlier, the respondents indicated that their main source of information was mass media. This question was meant to interrogate that sentiment further so as to ascertain their ratings of the media as their main sources of information and finding were shown in figure 20.
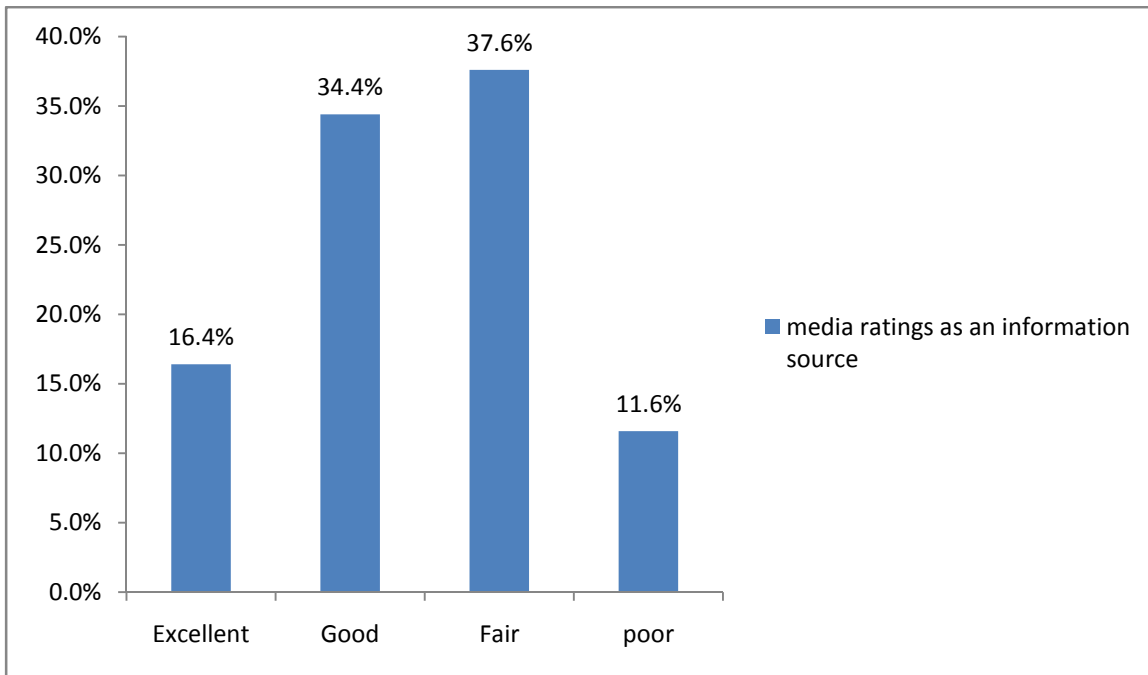
Figure 20: Media ratings as source of information

Source: Researcher

From figure 20, it is apparent that 16.4% of the respondents rated media as an excellent source of their information, while 34.4% rated them good. However, as their possible source of information 37.6% and 11.6% of the participants rated them as fair and poor respectively. A key informant rated the media as fair source of information but hastened to add that, though the services of media was limited in remote parts of the county, they (media) had transformed the society more positively.   In the overall, one can infer that media popularity as a preferred source of information stands at an average amongst the respondents in the study, and by extension the county inhabitants.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This study sought to establish the role of mass media in national cohesion, case study of Marsabit county. The main conclusions of the research were as follows:

The response rate among the participants was good with 189/200 and 6/10 questionnaires and interview guides respectively have been completed and returned. The majority of the respondents in the survey were male at 64.5% and female at 35.5%. This showed that male participants were more willing to participate in the study than their female counterparts. It also showed how closed these communities were, especially among female members where it was regarded as "taboo" to have discussions with 'strangers'.

In terms of age, those who are in the age bracket of 20-30 years were more enthusiastic to participate in the study than the middle aged and the older generations.

Surprisingly, access to the media among the local population was quite impressive with over 98% of the respondents indicating that they had access to some form of a media. Amongst the traditional mass media, access to TV seemed to be common followed by radio, newspapers and the internet. This was against the common belief that radio was the most available medium in the rural parts of the country.

5.2 Role of media in de-escalation of conflicts

Media played critical role in de-escalation of conflicts in the area. Through accurate and objective reporting, which is requirement of good journalism, mass media could de-escalate conflicts situations.

Another way by which the media could de-escalate conflict was by exposing the root cause of the problem. They have to investigate further to tell the audience why the problem existed, with a view to finding an appropriate solution. Thus, the media should not just dwell on trivial issues such as banditry attacks and inter-clan feuds, but instead engage in thorough investigations to unearth the root cause of the problem and recommend the right solutions.

The media should also be sensitive in reporting of conflicts and violence situations in the area. In this respect, there is need for the training of journalist on conflicts and violence sensitive reporting in such situations.

Further the media could also de-escalate conflicts by not mentioning the identity of the protagonists in a given conflict situation. In several cases, the media have been accused of escalating conflicts by disclosing the identity of actors or communities in conflicts indicating that one side had suffered so much escalated a conflict. This is a recipe for chaos as the affected communities will go for each other to take revenge.

5.3 Factors that hindered effective media coverage in the area

In this survey, 71.4% of the respondents felt that the media were not providing adequate coverage of the issues in the county. The people in the northern part of the country had all along being complaining about the systematic marginalization of the sections of the communities by the media. Since the media system in Kenya is centralized, that is, all of them operate from the major urban areas, this tends to disadvantage the far flunk counties in the northern part of the country. Therefore, distance from the media organization has been the main factor that hindered effective coverage of issues in the area.

There is also high level of illiteracy among the local communities, as well as socio-cultural factors which has also partially contributed to the marginalization of the area in terms of media coverage.

The policy pursued by the media organization was also of concern to the participants. Indeed all media houses have in- house policy that guides their day to day operations. It is this policy that determines what is going to be published or broadcast and how it will be done. While the commonly held perception is that the media always paints negative picture about the county, the respondents in the study tended to think otherwise.

5.4 The role of media in escalation of local conflicts situation``

The majority of the respondents believed that media indeed had been contributing to the escalation of local conflict situations. Irrational and insensitive reportage were cited as the main ways through which the media escalated local conflicts.

There is also the issue of identifying actors in the conflict as well as glorification of incidents of violence. As earlier pointed out there is need for training of journalists in sensitive reportage of conflicts and violence situations.

The media have been absolved from the blame of escalating local conflicts as per the responses of the participants in the study.

5.5 Media and conflict resolutions

The majority of the respondents agreed that media were a useful tool for conflict resolutions in the area. They could also be used to advance peace agenda, besides promoting and enhancing the cohesion of the county.

5.6 Conclusion

Therefore it could be inferred from this study that mass media inevitably play crucial in promotion of county cohesion and by extension national cohesion.

5.7 Recommendations

Mass media play important role in the modern society. They have a responsibility to discharge theirs functions to all parts of the country.

Training of journalists in conflict reporting should be integrated in the training curriculum of journalists. The media houses have to continually conduct refresher courses for their personnel especially on conflict reporting.

Media council of Kenya and other stakeholders must strengthen and enforce the code of ethics for proper practice of journalism in the country.

The media houses should decentralize their operations to other parts of the country. They need to establish offices or centres in all the counties in the country with special reference to the northern parts of the country, which are far back in many fronts.

The government should revive Kenya broadcasting corporation (KBC) station in Marsabit and decentralize their services of vernacular stations such as Boran, Samburu, Rendille and Burji so that they are broadcast from the northern counties.

The community leaders should also mobilize and sensitize local communities to establish community radio. Community radios, unlike the public or commercial radio stations, have many advantages. They tend to work for advancement of the community in which they operate.

There is also need for training of journalists on pastoral reporting for media practitioners to understand the lifestyles and values of the people in order to report them well.

In terms of employments, the media houses should have representatives from all regions of the country with emphasizes on the marginalized and the minority groups.

Finally there is need for a future study to be done on availability and ownership of mass media amongst the local population. On the same note, a future research should be conducted to establish the effectiveness of individual mass media in promoting county, and by extension national cohesion in the country.

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APPENDEX 1

RESPONDENT'S QUESTIONNAIRE

INTRODUCTION

*Hallo. I am Abdirizak Guyo, M.A Student School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Nairobi. I am carrying out **a research project on the role of media in promoting national cohesion: case study of Marsabit County**. I will be grateful if you grant me an interview. The interview would not take more than 20 minutes of your time and the information received will be treated with confidence and used purely for academic purpose only. Do you agree to be interviewed?*

[ ] *Yes* [ ] *No* *(if no thank the respondent and end the interview)*

SECTION (A) RESPONDENT'S PERSONAL INFORMATION

Please tick one

1. Gender [ ] Male [ ] Female

2. Age [ ] 20-30 [ ] 30-40 [ ] 40-50 [ ] above 50 years

3. Level of education [ ] Degree [ ] Tertiary [ ] Secondary [ ] Primary [ ] None

4. Occupation [ ] Employed [ ] Self employed [ ] Unemployed

5. State your home district…………………… Tribe/Clan………………………………

SECTION (B) STRUCTURED QUESTIONS

(i)The role of media in de-escalation of conflicts in the area

(Please tick one)

6. Do you have access to the media [ ] Yes [ ] No

7. Which media do you access frequently? [ ] Newspapers [ ] Radio [ ] Television [ ] Internet

 [ ] More than one (Please specify)

8. How often do you access the media indicated above? [ ] Daily [ ] Weekly [ ] Monthly

9. The media can de-escalate conflicts situation in the area.

   [ ] Strongly agree [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree

10. In your opinion, how could the media de-escalate conflicts?

[ ] Sensitive reporting

[ ] Accurate & objective reporting

[ ] Avoid identity of actors in conflicts

[ ] Exposing the root cause of the conflicts

[ ] Others *(Please specify)*

11. By exposing the root cause of the conflicts, the media can help in de-escalation of conflicts.

[ ] Strongly agree [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree

12. Accurate and balanced reportage of conflicts can de-escalate conflicts in the area. [ ] Yes

[ ] No [ ] I don't know

(ii) The factors that hindered effective media coverage of conflicts in Marsabit

13. Currently do you think the media is giving adequate coverage of issues in the county?

[ ] Yes   [ ] No [ ] I don't know

14. In your view, which one of the following factors hindered media coverage in the area?

[ ] Distance from the media organizations   [ ] Socio-cultural factors

[ ] Level of illiteracy among the population   [ ] Others (please specify)

[ ] Policy of the media organizations

15. How could the media coverage be enhanced in the area?

[ ] Improved security situation   [ ] Employment of locals

[ ] Better infrastructure   [ ] Decentralization of media outlets

[ ] Other(s) Please Specify

16. The code of ethics for journalists can enhance positive media coverage in the area

    [ ] True   [ ] False   [ ] I don't know

17. The media always paint negative picture about the county [ ] Strongly agree [ ] Agree

    [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] strongly disagree

(iii)The role of media in escalation of local conflict situations

18. Do you think the media escalates conflicts in the area   [ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] I don't know

19. In what way (s) do the media escalates conflicts?

        [ ] Irrational and sensational reporting

        [ ] Insensitivity in reporting

        [ ] Glorifying incidents of violence

        [ ] Identifying parties in the conflicts

        [ ] Others please (specify)

20. Journalists need training in sensitive reporting on conflict situations;

    [ ] Strongly agree [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree

21. Media is blamed for escalation of conflict situation in the county.   [ ] Strongly agree

    [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree

22. There is need for coordinated follow of information to the media in conflict situation.

    [ ] True   [ ] False   [ ] I don't know

23. Who do you trust most as source of information? [ ] Government officials [ ] Politicians

    [ ]   The Clergy [ ] Media [ ] None   [ ] Others (please specify)

(iv)The ways in which media can contribute to conflict resolutions

24. Media can contribute to county development through positive coverage   [ ] True   [ ] False

25. Media are crucial tool for conflicts resolutions   [ ] Strongly agree [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral

    [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree

26. Media are useful in achieving county cohesion. [ ] Strongly agree [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral

[ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly disagree

27. Media could be utilized to promote peace agenda in the county. [ ] True   [ ] False

   [ ] I don't know

28. Generally, how would you rate media as source of information [ ] Excellent [ ] Good

   [ ] Fair [ ] Poor

Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX 2

RESPONDENT'S INTERVIEW GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

*Hallo. I am Abdirizak Guyo, M.A Student School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Nairobi. I am carrying out **a research project on the role of media in promoting national cohesion: case study of Marsabit County**. I will be grateful if you grant me an interview. The interview would not take more than 20 minutes of your time and the information received will be treated with confidence and used purely for academic purpose only. Do you agree to be interviewed?*

[ ] *Yes* [ ] *No* *(if no thank the respondent and end the interview)*

SECTION (A) RESPONDENT'S PERSONAL INFORMATION

Please tick one

1. Gender   [ ] Male   [ ] Female

2. Age   [ ] 20-30   [ ] 30-40   [ ] 40-50   [ ] above 50 years

3. Level of education   [ ] Degree   [ ] Tertiary [ ] Secondary [ ] Primary   [ ] none

4. Occupation   [ ] Employed [ ] Self employed   [ ] Unemployed

5. State your home district…………………   Tribe/Clan………………………………

SECTION B. SEMI STRUCTURED QUESTIONS

Please give your input to the best of your knowledge.

(i) The role of media in de-escalation of conflicts in the area.

1. Do you have access to the media? Yes   No   if yes please specify

2. How often do you access the media mentioned above?

3. Do you think the media can de-escalate conflicts situations in the county? Please explain.

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……………………………………………………………………………………………………….
4.In your opinion, how could the media de-escalate conflicts situations in the area?

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5. In what ways could the media be used to promote peace agenda in the county?

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………

(ii) factors hindering effective media coverage of conflicts in Marsabit

6. Do you think the media are giving enough coverage of issues in the county? Please explain.

……
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……

7. In your view, what are the factors that hindered adequate media coverage in the area?

……
……
……

8. In what ways could effective media coverage be enhanced in the area?

……
……
……

(iii)The role of media in escalation of conflicts situations

9. Do you think the media escalates conflicts in the area? Please explain

……
……
……

10. Outline ways through which the media can escalate the local conflict situation

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11. How would you rate the performance of the media during conflict situation?

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(iv) The ways in which the media can contribute to conflict resolutions

12. State ways in which the media can be used to promote conflicts resolutions in the area.

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13. In what ways can media be used to achieve county cohesion?

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14 Generally, how would you rate media as source of information?

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Thank you for your time.