UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

INSTITUTE OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

REPORTING TERRORISM IN KENYA; STRIKING A BALANCE BETWEEN PUBLIC INTEREST AND NATIONAL SECURITY

By

JANET ODARI CHAPIA

R50/67742/2013

A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

NOVEMBER 2015

DECLARATION

This research proposal is my original work and has not been presented in any other university for any purpose of examination

……………………..   ………………………….

Signature   Date

This proposal has been submitted for examination with my approval as the appointed university supervisor

………………………..   **………………………..**

Signature   **Date**

DR. MARTIN OUMA

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to all those who have suffered terror attacks, individuals who have paid the price of the cruel hand of terrorists and their heinous and despicable acts of cutting short lives, dreams and support to their agonizing family members.

ABSTRACT

Terrorism still remains a major threat to Kenya's national-security interests. Reporting security matter, especially terrorism is not only complex but tedious activity that endangers the life of journalists. However, efforts to combat the menace are hampered by an insufficient legal framework. Previously, terrorism-related offenses were primarily handled under the provisions of the penal code, with the result that offenders received lenient sentences or even were acquitted. On the other hand, efforts to formulate specific counterterrorism legislation in the past were met with criticism from human-rights bodies, the clergy, legal bodies, and the public at large. The overall objective of the study was to explore ways in which the media while reporting on terrorism in Kenya is able to strike a balance between public interest and protecting national security. The following were the specific objectives that guide the study: To look at the various ways in which the media coverage of terrorism can compromise national security; to find out whether the media can and is used as tool to propagate the agenda of terrorists and to determine how the media can objectively report on terrorism while safeguarding national interests. The study was based on liberalism theory which is founded on two main tenets. The principle of individualism where a special emphasis is placed on the individual in the society and the second principle is that of freedom. The researcher aimed to test the following hypothesis: Media in Kenya can strike a balance between public interest and national security when reporting terrorism and media in Kenya cannot strike a balance between public interest and national security when reporting terrorism. This study adopted qualitative and quantitative research design. The researcher used both primary data and secondary collection techniques. The study included administration of questionnaires to the respondents and interviews guided by structured open-ended and closed questions. Qualitative and quantitative analysis methods were used so as to gauge the different variables and how they affect the dependent variables.   The study established that media and the government have common interests in seeing that the media are not manipulated into promoting the cause of terrorism or its methods, it also established that freedom of expression is a fundamental, it is universally accepted that it may legitimately be subjected to restriction on various grounds by the Government. The study concludes that ensuring national security is a fundamental precondition to safeguard human rights including freedom of expression, Counterterrorism may unavoidably be incompatible with human rights as fighting terrorism necessarily involves the state taking on new powers of surveillance and enforcement. The study recommends that the government should be the hard-nosed defenders of security and freedom because both are vital to nation's well-being. Everyone should be permanently vigilant and never stop thinking hard about how to protect our security and freedom as society and circumstances change.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, the objectives, literature review, theoretical framework, the hypothesis, the research methodology and finally the chapter summary on Reporting Terrorism in Kenya; Striking a Balance between Public Interest and National Security.

1.1 Background of the study

The Africa just like other regions of the world has experienced significant levels of terrorist activity in recently. In East Africa, the Somalia-based terrorist group al-Shabaab remained the primary terrorist threat. Most notably, al-Shabaab launched an attack against the Westgate Mall in Nairobi, Kenya on September 21 that left at least 65 people dead and in 2015 the group launched an attack on Garissa University that left almost 100 students dead. On the global scene, the Al Qaeda has also been unleashing terror to civilians and has received high levels of media audience. Reporting on terrorism has been said to be a threat and is likely to jeopardize security operations, especially when major focus concentrates on the events, for instance, the images of attacks, especially in cases such as 9/11, can inspire awe. For instance, after 9/11 and other attacks, Bin Laden became more popular among groups in the Muslim world. For example, Nacos observed that "Simply by demonstrating that he and his kind were able to land a catastrophic blow against the United States on its home turf, bin Laden conditioned a large number of young Muslim men – especially in the Muslim diaspora in

western Europe – for recruitment into his cause without ever meeting them[1]. This is a good example of how media attention focused on terrorist activity abroad can lead to an increased threat of terrorism within European countries

Despite the consequences, journalists presumably while enjoying media freedom have exclusively deviated from the normative role of journalistic principles in guiding them and of particular concern is their requirement to report all sides of the story but intelligently, they report stories that portrays weakness of one side despite giving them airtime[2]. The acts of the media have been perceived to in contrary to the code of conduct for the practice of journalism in Kenya. According to the Code of Conduct, the media should avoid presenting acts of terrorism activities in a manner that glorifies such anti-social conduct. In addition, it states that the media should not present news reports or commentaries in a manner likely to inflame passion, aggravate the tension or accentuate between the communities concern. Arguably, while media freedom and self-regulations are considered important in any democratic society, the media are required to adhere to or subjected to same rights and responsibilities as envisaged in the Constitution[3]. The government uses regulations provided to ensure that national goals of the national security are achieved.

Although the public depend on the media for news, the media is expected to remember the issue of national security as well. Striking the right balance between national security and public interest is crucial for both the success of our counter-

[1] Nacos, B.L. (2000). Accomplice or Witness? The Media's Role in Terrorism," Current History, 99(636), p. 175
[2] Amos, K. (2014). Mediatizing security operations: An ethical and professional assessment of Media coverage of insecurity in Kenya. *Journal of Media and Communication Studies. 7*(2), 27-40.
[3] Kisang, A. K. (2014). Reporting terrorism among Kenyan media: Should journalists be cautious? *Journal of Media and Communication Studies, 6*(5), 78-84,

terrorism strategies and to maintain the tolerant and democratic ideals of our multicultural country.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Reporting security matters, especially terrorism is not only complex but a tedious activity that puts on the line the lives of journalists. The terror attack on Westgate mall on September 21, 2013 seems to have aroused the interest investigative journalism in Kenya especially on the topic of terrorism as many investigative reporters went all out to dig up each and every detail of the terror attack. KTN's "*Jicho Pevu*"; was the first then came NTV's "*The Foul Winds*" and several more special documentaries observed in most media outlets. Despite the increased interest in investigative journalism in Kenya with regard to terrorism reporting, no methodical efforts have been made to develop policies and guidelines on the reporting of terrorism among Kenyan journalism. By and large, Westgate mall terror attack and the Garissa University terror attack have challenged the ability of the media in reporting acts of terrorism going by the images shown on the television screen or newspaper pages. The Kenyan media has been found itself at cross roads as authorities seek to strengthen defenses against terrorism.

In the days following the Westgate Mall attack, the media was accused of being unethical in the way it reported terrorism, to the extent of being accused of violating the media freedom. It was perceived that the media reported terrorism in such way which jeopardized national security and public interest. The media has found itself in a dilemma during the coverage and reporting of terrorism in general as some of the reports published or aired in the media are said to have impacted negatively on the country. It is in light of the above developments that the study seeks to establish whether it is possible for the

media to strike a balance between dissemination of true, objective and accurate information to the masses and being patriotic enough to the call of nationalism. The study looks at how the freedom of the media can be curtailed and what methods can be used to address competing interests during the coverage of terrorist activities. The various laws and legislations that regulate the practice of journalism in Kenya will also be looked at, particularly the Provisions in the Security Laws (Amendment) Bill 2014.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The study has a general objective and three specific objectives.

1.3.1 General Objective

The overall objective of the study is to explore ways in which the media while reporting on terrorism in Kenya can strike a balance between public interest and protecting national security.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The following are the specific objectives that guided the study:

i. To examine the various ways in which the media coverage of terrorism can compromise national security.

ii. To find out whether the media can and is used as tool to propagate the agenda of terrorists.

iii. To investigate how the media can objectively report on terrorism while safeguarding national interests.

1.4 Literature **Review**

The literature review is organized in three parts: The first part examines global terrorism and the media, the second part explores reporting terrorism by the Kenyan Media while the third section examines modern terrorism and media and the fourth section discuses role of media in reporting insecurity.

1.4.1 Terrorism and Media

Hoffman states that terrorism is conceived specifically to attract attention and the publicity it generates, to communicate a message. As a one of leaders of the United Red Army once realistically explained "violent actions… are shocking. We want to shock people, everywhere… It is our way of communicating with the people[4]. Mass media, as the principal conduit of information about such acts, thus play a vital part in the terrorists' calculus[5]. It is obvious that only by spreading the terror and outrage to a much larger audience can the terrorists gain the maximum potential of their actions and intentions they need to effect fundamental political change.

Terrorism is a phenomenon that has been given different definitions in different quarters. It is a phenomenon has become one of the most dangerous tragedies in the present day. The United Nations ability to develop a comprehensive strategy has been constrained by the inability of Member States to agree on an anti -terrorism convention including a definition of terrorism[6]. This prevents the United Nations from exerting its moral authority and from sending an unequivocal message that terrorism is never an acceptable tactic, even for the most defensible of causes. Terrorism differs from other

---

[4] Hoffman, B. (2006), Inside Terrorism (Revised and Expanded Edition), New York: Columbia University Press.
[5] Hoffman,B. (2003) . *Unutrašnji terorizam*. Beograd: Alfa.
[6] Hoffman, B. (2003) *Unutrašnji terorizam*. Beograd: Alfa.

forms of violence in the choice of targets and modes of activity, since definitions of the phenomenon abound, the international community has thus far not been able to reach a consensus on one general definition. Terrorism has been defined as differently a doctrine about the presumed effectiveness of a special form or tactic of fear-generating, coercive political violence and, on the other hand, to a conspiratorial practice of calculated, demonstrative, direct violent action without legal or moral restraints, targeting mainly civilians and goals and all these attributes are regarded as necessary and sufficient for an act to qualify as terrorism[7].

Terrorists tend to perpetuate their heinous acts for different reasons, which may include: - political, psychological, ideological or even religion based reasons. The psychological approach focuses on attitudes, personalities, and beliefs of terrorists. It aims to explain the motivation behind terror attacks[8]. The psychological approach also deals with characteristics of individual perpetrators of terror activities, with an emphasis on their profiles and methods of recruitment. Religion as a cause of terrorism has however been downplayed in some quarters with Thomas Badey argues that religion is an ideology which like communism and nationalism is used to mobilize populations toward political violence and therefore it has become difficult to define religious terrorism despite a lot of literature work that has been done on this topic[9].

The world has for a long time witnessed horrific and gross terror attacks, which have led to loss of lives, property and instilled fear into millions of people. However the manner in which the media packages the news on terrorism is what determines the impact the terror attack has on the public. Former United Kingdom Prime Minister Margaret

---

[7] Schmid L., *Handbook of Terrorism Research. London, Routledge 2011*
[8] Sageman M., Understanding Terror Networks (2004), University of Pennsylvania Press.
[9] Badey J, Violence and Terrorism(2013) , Mc Graw-Hill

Thatcher claimed that media coverage provided oxygen of terrorism since by publicizing the terrorists' message of fear and demands, the position taken by terrorists was bolstered. The 9/11 attack which was a terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre in New York City is probably one of the major attacks in recent history. 3,000 people lost their lives in the attack which Islamist terror group Al Qaeda is said to have been responsible. The initial images of the jets hitting the World Trade Centre were relayed to hundreds of millions of viewers throughout the world. The videos were horrific as the world was treated to major terror attack. The President of the ABC News David Westin ordered an immediate stop to the repeated airing of the WTC so as to protect the viewers. Following the 9/11 attack, America reconsidered its position on broadcasting of footage from scenes of terror attacks[10]. In the US for example, in the aftermath of the London train attacks, the government took the position that the attack was the work of external extremists who were waging a global war and that the UK happened to be the victim. British media on the other hand framed this as a homegrown problem thus dismissing it as that, which involved selected incidences[11].

1.4.2 Reporting Terrorism by the Kenyan Media

The role of the media is to report the truth in an objective and factual way without taking sides since the press serves not only as the watchdog of the society in terms of probing and reporting on the ills of the society, but also as a catalyst of national development and a forum for the enhancement of the values of democracy. It is a weapon for the propagation of peace and stability in the society. Mass media is a basic source of information on crime, insecurity and terrorism for citizens and it is an important factor in

---

[10] http://abcnews.go.com/
[11] http://www.natcom.org/CommCurrentsArticle.aspx?id=2822s

the processes of construction of social meanings as it gives the facts an existence. The press serves not only as a watchdog of the society in terms of probing and reporting on the ill in the society, but can also serve as a weapon for the propagation of peace and stability. One such role vested on the media is during times of insecurity

Mathewson and Steinberg observe that terrorism is a notoriously difficult concept to define because of its many forms, objectives, ambiguity, contextual fluidity, and the multiplicity of perpetrators[12]. They say that in a generic sense, terrorism, unlike random acts of violence, is the premeditated use of violence to achieve certain objectives and according to them terrorism is intimidation through violence[13]. According to Cronin there are four major types of terrorism movements around the world: left-wing (leftist), right-wing (rightist), ethno-nationalist or separatist and, religious or sacred[14]. Each of these terrorism types has a different style and mode of behavior that can provide insight into the likeliest manifestations of its violence and the most typical patterns of its development. Currently, religious or "sacred" terrorism, e.g., that perpetrated by Al Qaeda, dominates the global stage although all four types of terrorism are capable of unspeakable brutality.

According to Cronin, Kenya has experienced all four major types of terrorism i.e., leftist, rightist, ethno nationalist, and religious but the most devastating attacks have come from ethno nationalistic and religious terrorism[15]. The manifestation of these dominant forms of terrorism in Kenya has a definite historical sequence since

---

[12] Mathewson. K. and Steinberg, M. (2003).Drug Production, Commerce, and Terrorism. In Susan L. Cutter, Douglas B. Richardson, and Thomas J. Wilbanks (ed), The Geographical Dimensions of Terrorism, Routledge: New York and London.
[13] Ibid p,37
[14] Cronin, A. K. (2002). Behind the Curve: Globalization and International Terrorism. International Security, 27:3 (December 01, 2002). pp. 30-58.
[15] ibid

8

ethno nationalistic terrorism was mostly experienced in Kenya towards the end of the country's colonial rule in the 1950s when freedom movements such as Mau Mau used terror to hasten the country's independence. Sorel argues that, the terrorism events that took place in Kenya at that time perfectly exemplify the maxim: one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter[16]. While the British sought to suppress the Mau Mau terrorists', natives oppressed by colonialism saw this ragtag army as freedom fighters and supported it, eventually culminating in the country's freedom from British colonial rule. The success of this bloody ethno nationalistic movement lines up with Cronin's characterization of such organizations' as often being; astoundingly violent, durable, able to utilize traditional paramilitary structures and, having strong support among the organizations' founders ethnics.

According to Daily Nation the current incidence of religious/sacred terrorism in Kenya is most bothersome because its perpetrators have no qualms about sacrificing civilians in the process of achieving their objectives[17]. To this end, Al-Qaeda religious terrorist groups have subjected Kenya to devastating terrorist attacks in the last six years including; the August 7, 1998 bombing of the US Embassy in Nairobi which killed over 200 people and injured thousands, the November 28, 2002 suicide bombing of the Israeli-owned Paradise Tourist Hotel in Mombasa, Kenya, which killed 15 people and injured 80 others. Simultaneously, there was an abortive attempt to blow up an Israeli passenger jet on take-off from Mombasa International Airport.

---

[16] Sorel, J. (2003). Some Questions About the Definition of Terrorism and the Fight Against its Financing, EJIL (2003), Vol. 14 No. 2, 365-378.
[17] Daily Nation on the web(Friday, November 29, 2002). Two suspects arrested after terror bomb on hotel kills 13, Online at http://www.nationaudio.com/, accessed July 3, 2004.

The success of terrorism is driven by the attention the media gives to terrorists' attacks and this is supported by Bruce Hoffman argument on terrorist attacks that "without the media's coverage the act's impact is arguably wasted, remaining narrowly confined to the immediate victim(s) of the attack, rather than reaching the wider 'target audience' at whom the terrorists' violence is actually aimed" [18]. Brigitte Nacos agrees: "Without massive news coverage the terrorist act would resemble the proverbial tree falling in the forest: if no one learned of an incident, it would be as if it had not occurred" [19]. Boaz Ganor states it even stronger: "Terrorists are not necessarily interested in the deaths of three, or thirty - or even of three thousand - people. Rather, they allow the imagination of the target population to do their work for them. In fact, it is conceivable that the terrorists could attain their aims without carrying out a single attack; the desired panic could be produced by the continuous broadcast of threats and declarations – by radio and TV interviews, videos and all the familiar methods of psychological warfare"[20].

1.4.3 Modern Terrorism and the Media

Bassioni observes that terrorists are drawn to news media coverage because they desire maximum publicity for their messages and symbolic actions[21]. They achieve the desired maximum coverage by selecting a target and engaging in a kind of symbolic action that is often visually dramatic, and which is hard for the news media to ignore[22]. According to Brian Jenkins "terrorist attacks are often carefully choreographed to attract

---

[18] Hoffman, B. (2006), *Inside Terrorism* (Revised and Expanded Edition), New York: Columbia University Press. Pp. 174.
[19] Nacos, B.L. (2000). Accomplice or Witness? The Media's Role in Terrorism," *Current History,* 99 (636). p. 1745
[20] Ganor, B. (2002), Terror as a Strategy of Psychological Warfare, July 15, 2002. See: http://www.ict.org.il/var/119/40015-Terror%20as%20a%20Strategy%20of%20Psychological%20Warfare.pdf.
[21] Bassoni, M. (1981).Terrorism and the Media. *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology.***72**, 1-55
[22] Tunman, J.S. (2003). *Communicating Terror: The Rhetorical Dimensions of Terrorism*. London: Sage.

the attention of the electronic media and the international press. The hostages themselves often mean nothing to the terrorist. Terrorism is aimed at the people watching, not at the actual victims" [23]. Put in an analogy, terrorism is a theatre and the news media, for their part, are seen as unable to resist the chance of a good story, so they obligingly provide extensive coverage of terrorist bombings, hijacks, kidnapping and assassinations[24]. Walter Laqueur supports Jenkins' observation by saying that "terrorists have learned that the media are of paramount importance in their campaigns that the terrorist act by itself is next to nothing, whereas publicity is all"[25].

The media is always in a constant need of diversity and new angles to stories, and so terrorists always have to be innovative and in some instances they become the super-entertainers of our time". By and large, terrorism, according to Abraham Miller, "is the media's stepchild, a stepchild, whom the media, unfortunately, can neither completely ignore nor deny"[26]. Terrorists know the conventions and newsgathering routines of the media, and so to achieve their objective of drawing attention to themselves and gain notoriety, they deliberately organize their actions to fit the key news values of drama, violence and unexpectedness[27].Modern terrorism relies on the mass media for publicity, recognition, psychological impact, political achievements and other purposes. Terrorist attacks around the world have long and extremely been destructive in terms of human lives and property. But what are the roles of the media in the war on terror? Apparently, there is evidence to suggest that terrorists value the mass media for they can sell their

[23] Jenkins, B. (1975). *International Terrorism*. Los Angeles: Crescent Publication.PP. 20
[24] Schlesinger, P, et al. (1983). *Televising Terrorism: Political Violence in Popular Culture*. London: Comedia Publishing Company.
[25] Jenkins, B. (1975). *International Terrorism*. Los Angeles: Crescent Publication.
[26] Miller, A, H. (1982). *Terrorism, the Media and the Law*. New York: Transnational Publishers.
[27] Crelinsten, R.D. (1989) "Terrorism and the Media", *Political Communication and Persuasion*. PP. 332.

ideologies to the public but the only critical issue is that they don't attack randomly; they select their target carefully with the believe that it attracts media coverage.

Walsh states that the attention the media offers to terrorists is understood by the length of broadcast segments devoted to terror attacks[28]. Looking at newspaper pages or TV screens following a terror attack one tends to confirm this logic considering the size of newspaper article or time allocated to the coverage. As a matter of concern, television in the USA is 10 times likely to report terrorist attack with known perpetrators[29]. Combs and Slann have compared terrorist attacks in Africa and Europe and explain that terrorists benefit from amplification of effect as a result of messages reaching audience at a large region[30]. They looked at terrorism attacks in Angola and Mozambique which occurred a decade ago without media attention but similar attacks by Palestinians in Europe and Middle East became a topic of discussion in most of the TV stations. Indeed, they attribute this to terrorist proximity to TV news reporters and this report is cognizant of the fact that the media not only highlights terrorism activities but they play a key role in the war on terror; it only raises questions when the media presumably display nail-biting battle scenes and the stories of real people affected by terrorism.

A study by Holfman *et al* on two USA newspapers (The Washington Post and USA Today) on media coverage of terrorism found that the media not only reports the government's position but also plays a key role in the war against terrorism[31]. According to Altheide reporting objective, factual and balanced information strengthens the public's

---

[28] Walsh J, I. (2010). *Media attention to terrorist attacks: Causes and consequences*. North Carolina: Institute for Homeland Security Solutions.
[29] Weimann, G .(2008). The psychology of mass-mediated terrorism, *Am. Behav. Sci*. 52(1):69-86.
[30] Combs C.C., & Slann M. (2007). Encyclopedia of terrorism. Revised edition. New York: Infobase publishing
[31] Hoffman AM, Jengallery PHA, Duncan NB, Buehker M, Rees M (2010). How does the business of news influence Terrorism coverage? Evidence from the Washington Post and USA Today. *Terror. Polit. Violence* 22(4):559-580.

interpretation of acts of terrorism and the media determines information consumed by the public thus reducing tension arising from terror attacks[32].

Are Kenyan journalists aware of terrorists' aims in attracting the media coverage? How should the media and the government share the same thoughts in the war against terror without compromising independents of the media as enriched in the Media Act, 2013? In his book *A First Look at Communication Theory*, Griffen states that the public depends on the media for news segment that captures their attention[33]. Consequently, the media is able to influence the way the public interprets events[34]. Furthermore, research shows that framing stories helps journalists package the content, which, in effect can, influence specific interpretations by selecting and emphasizing on exclusion. In essence, the ability of the media to select a section of events reporting places them in a better position in the war against terror[35].

1.4.4 Role of Media in Reporting Insecurity

Media plays an integral role in reporting of insecurity, especially terrorism and this is published, presented, broadcasted and transmitted in form of various insecurity issues that attract public attention[36]. While the media as the watchdog of society has been lauded for its critical role as an agent for social change and transformation, it is vested with a lot of responsibilities as it is mandated to educate, inform and correct misconceptions and create a better understanding of such situations. In pro-active news gathering, the media can take control of the flow of information by conceiving their own story ideas, hunting up events for coverage or defining problems for coverage and agenda

---

[32] Altheide DL (2007). The mass media and terrorism. *Discourse Commun*.1(3):287-308
[33] Griffen E (2009). A First look at communication theory: A Profile Braz. *J. Res.* 4(1):18-27.
[34] McCombs M, & Shaw D (1972). *The agenda of the mass media*. Public. Opin Q. 36:176-187.
[35] Altheide DL (2007). The mass media and terrorism. Discourse Commun.1(3):287-308.
[36] Pratt J (2007). *Penal Populism,* London, Routledge.

setting. They can also gather news by questioning the message of the sources and researching causes, consequences and context on occurrences such as insecurity. When covering national security issues, journalists may encounter dilemmas over handling classified information or information that may provide as assistance to those who would do harm to the country. Sometimes exposing the deaths and casualties resulting from insecurity exposes the ineffectiveness of a country's security machinations to the terror groups.

The media publishes reports on crime and other security threats in a populist and sensational manner and use different techniques to attract people's attention and the selective reports about crimes do not reflect the nature and extent of crime presented in official statistics and victimization surveys[37]. The media may play critical roles in the prevention and management of conflict that causes insecurity, as well as deliberately or inadvertently driving conflict that may lead to insecurity. Positive roles in promoting peace and security may include: linking citizens to state; changing attitudes and behaviors; providing early warning of divisive issues or instability; mitigating conflict through balanced reporting and promoting reconciliation.

According to Jones, some of the expected roles of the media in ensuring security and peacekeeping include: increasing the quantity and quality of public communication as it relates to attacks and more especially on how those living in affected areas should behave and respond; providing early warnings of situations that might lead to conflict as well as alerting leaders and attentive publics to opportunities for increasing understanding[38]. Stimulating the use of mechanisms such as negotiation, mediation and

---

[37] Surette R (1998). Media, Crime and Criminal Justice: Images and Realities, Belmont, Wadsworth.
[38] Jones OD (2011). The role of the media in peace building. *Int. J. Conflict Stud.* 8(5):19-27.

arbitration for conflict resolution and management and providing information that facilitates these processes; helping to create a mood in which solutions are more likely to be sought and accepted; mobilizing or helping to establish contacts among those interests in finding peaceful solutions; and helping to build opinion[39].

1.4.4 Summary of gaps

Although a lot has been written on how the media has and should cover terrorism, it is yet not clear how journalists can a strike a balance between the competing interests, it is not yet clear where to draw a line between public interest and national security in Kenya. This, arising from the fact that journalists have been empowered by the constitution to apply their trade without fear, favor, ill-will or favoritism and issues to do with media freedom or freedom of the press have been addressed. Legislative and policy issues have been highlighted including how the journalism profession should be conducted. From America, Asia, Europe and Africa, authors have published a lot on how the media has been covering various terrorist activities. It seems like terrorism is going to be around for a while as on the other hand the media is also growing in terms of sophistication. Thanks to technology there has emerged a new form of media known as Social Media and just by a click of a button one is able to access information from any corner of the world. Therefore it is important for scholars, practitioners, experts and the general public to devise ways that will ensure that the basic tenets of journalism are not sacrificed at the altar of national security. Media freedom should not be assumed to be absolute, and thus used as a scapegoat to compromise the security of a nation. In the same

---

[39] Jones OD (2011). The role of the media in peace building. *Int. J. Conflict Stud.* 8(5):19-27.

vein, confidentiality and deliberate misinformation of the media by the government during security operations should not be used to restrict media freedom.

1.4.5 Justification of the Study

This study is important in the sense that it will enable policy formulators to come up with ways of ensuring that there are clear guidelines on how security agencies and the media can work together to promote the public right to information and national security. It is clear that both the media and security agencies play a vital role in ensuring the security of a nation. It's also imperative to note that terrorism is a dynamic phenomenon which keeps changing and thus there is need to change the intervention approaches. Thus the media practitioners and scholars would be interested in knowing to what extent issues relating to how media coverage of terrorism affects other aspects of the society.

The study will be useful to all Kenyans in general as it ventures into addressing the current ways of protecting citizens from the disastrous monster of international terrorism in Kenya. At the core of the subject, the researcher seeks to unravel the efficiency of the media in the to fight against terrorism as well as reviewing suggested challenges, with a view to reflect on the suggested solutions and ways of protecting the vulnerable citizens, thus legitimizing the use of contemporary terrorist disaster mitigation approaches in the third world. With the threat of terrorism likely to be here for a while, it would be important to gather as much information as possible in this area. The media has also been dynamic and therefore it would be imperative to see how the emergence of new media affects the overall performance of the industry and how stakeholders in the media can be able to regulate the practice without compromising the freedom of the media.

On the other hand, journalists and students of media/journalism will be able to draw from the knowledge in this study and apply it as they go about their trade. Though there is no monopoly of knowledge, this study is expected to contribute to the existing bank of knowledge and even improve on what has already been written. Researchers will benefit from this research out of the research gaps that will emerge from it. This will make their investigations more focused hence fruitful. This study is expected to foster creation of new knowledge and awareness in the area of terrorism in all industry sectors both in the private and public sectors. It intends to provide value addition to the government by way of improving security, gap identifications as well proposals to mitigate the gaps. Findings are expected by the researcher to add more knowledge to the existing body of knowledge in the subject area and stimulate further research in the area.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

The study was based on liberalism theory which is founded on two main tenets. The principle of individualism where a special emphasis is placed on the individual in the society and the second principle is that of freedom. In this study a special emphasis was laid on the principle of freedom where we will delve into the issue of media freedom. According to liberalism, society has a role of ensuring that individuals reach their full potential by allowing them as much liberty as they can[40]. The theory advocates for a free market system with limited government intervention. The media industry is an enterprise[41]. It may be private or public but most certainly the fourth estate as it is

---

[40] Richards D.A., Human Rights and Moral Ideals: An Essay on the Moral Theory of Liberalism (1980)s
[41] Fawcett E., Liberalism: The Life of an Idea (2014), Princeton University

commonly referred to, is one of the main investors worldwide. Therefore freedom or liberty is one of the main factors that contribute to democracy globally[42].

Media freedom, press freedom or freedom of information has been defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization - UNESCO as the right to access information held by public bodies. This plays a crucial part and is part of the fundamental right to freedom of expression as recognized by Resolution 59 of the United Nations General Assembly and Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The UDHR states that the fundamental right of freedom of expression encompasses the freedom to "to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers". Press freedom is a global phenomenon and several legal instruments have been developed to ensure that it is attained. Many of these instruments view media freedom as a basic right. UNESCO promotes freedom of expression and freedom of the press as a basic human right, through lobbying and monitoring activities. It highlights media independence and pluralism as fundamental to the process of democracy by providing advisory services on media legislation and by making governments, parliamentarians and other decision-makers aware of the need to guarantee free expression.

It therefore doesn't come as a surprise that though the theory of liberalism advocates for a free society, the freedom is not absolute. Even in the most democratic countries, press freedom has been limited to a certain extent. Freedom, they say, must be accompanied by responsibility. And so as much as the media practitioners worldwide tend to enjoy the freedom of disseminating information to the masses, they are under

---

[42] http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/freedom-of-expression/press-freedom/s

obligation to do it within some defined confines of either law or policies that govern the practice.

In the United States of America, Freedom of the Press is protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. The Amendment prohibits the government from interfering with the printing and distribution of information or opinions. The freedom is however has some restrictive legal regimes in the form of defamation laws. In the United Kingdom, the law provides for freedom of the press, and the government generally respects this right in practice[43]. However several laws that weaken press freedom remain in place. But in the wake of terror attacks and particularly the July 2005 bombing London's transit system, the United Kingdom government passed the Prevention of Terrorism Act which criminalizes speech that is deemed to encourage terrorism in the absence of a specific terrorist act. China on the other hand has a very poor record of press freedom. The government continues to put constraints on media and practitioners are even dismissed for violating censorship discipline. This is no different from Africa where oppressive regimes tend to clamp down on media houses which oppose the governments of the day. In Kenya, media practitioners can enjoy press freedom thanks to the Constitution of Kenya (2010), which guarantees the media freedom from state interference[44]. There are also several pieces of legislation both local and international which guarantee the freedom of press in Kenya.

As mentioned before press freedom cannot be absolute. There must be some measures to ensure that all players conform to a given way. The liberalist approach is more or less the same. As much as Liberalism advocates for liberty, it is important to note

---

[43] https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2013/united-kingdom#.VQ8BOPyUdAw
[44] The Constitution of Kenya (2010)

that this liberty is often limited. Just like under Liberalism states are legally free, in practice they have to negotiate with other actors in the international system. These actors limit the freedom which the sovereign states hold. According to Karl Marx freedom and the disclosure of truth are cornerstones of resistance to official attempts to manipulate the understanding of freedom as license to act and to suggest that truth is relative and determinable by public authorities[45]. Marx identifies editorial practices with freedom of expression that belongs to working journalists as an individual or collective right that governs the relations between journalists and public and private authorities, including the owners of the press itself; freedom of the press, on the other hand, as an economic consideration is a professional prerequisite for intellectual labour. His ideas offer real alternatives to current debates over freedom of the press and contemporary conditions of journalism: to sustain democracy requires freedom of expression and the protection of the public sphere, including the media, particularly from forms of censorship that arise with the control of intellectual labour by those who own or influence the means of public communication.

1.6 Research Methodology

Research design is a plan that specifies how data from the study is collected and analysed. This study adopted qualitative and quantitative research design and in adopting the quantitative research design, the study sought numerical and quantifiable data. This employed the use of questionnaires on the general public and journalists. In regard to the research approach used, the researcher used explanatory approach to collect data. The exploratory research method allows a researcher to gather preliminary information which

---

[45] Marx K., Communication is Freedom

assists in defining the problems as well as suggesting the research hypothesis. The type of research design employed was applied to discover ideas, concepts, insights, generate possible explanations and hypotheses.

With increased attention to media coverage of terrorism and reporting, the researcher used both primary data and secondary collection techniques. This included administration of questionnaires to the respondents and interviews guided by structured open-ended and closed questions, which were administered to the subjects at a convenient time. The questionnaires were administered to the general public and journalists while interviews were used for security agents and media consultants. Secondary data was used to supplement primary data which involved the use of published and unpublished materials containing relevant data to the study; reports from organizations, journals, previous studies provided the secondary data needed.

Because of the nature of the study, convenience-sampling method was used where Convenience sampling is one of the non-probability sampling techniques, which involve the selections of study subjects because of the convenient accessibility as well as their proximity to the researcher. Convenience sampling was chosen because it is the easiest method to recruit participants for any study[46]. Furthermore, it was not necessary for the researcher to consider the representation of the sample to the entire population. The major benefit of using convenience sampling is that it is cheap compared to other probability methods of sampling. And can also be applied in pilot studies which allows the

---

[46] Castillo, J. J. (2009) *Convenience sampling*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.experiment-resources.com/convenience-sampling.html (Accessed: 31 March 2015).

researcher to acquire the basic data required as well as the study trends without much complications compared to the use of randomized sample[47].

Qualitative and quantitative analysis methods were used in this study so as to gauge the different variables and how they affect the dependent variables. Moreover, the findings were presented in form of tables, charts and figures. On the other hand, qualitative analysis was chosen because it results in a different type of knowledge than use of quantitative inquiry. This is because in quantitative analysis one party argues from the underlying philosophical nature of each paradigm[48], enjoying detailed interviewing and the other focuses on the apparent compatibility of the research methods, "enjoying the rewards of both numbers and words[49].

1.7 Chapter Summary

This project is organized into five chapters with an introduction and summary of the key themes discussed in every chapter.

Chapter one gives a general introduction and background to the study. It provides the background of the study, the problem statement, objectives, hypothesis, theoretical framework, literature review and methodology in relation to striking balance between public interests and national security when reporting terrorism.

Chapter two presents an overview of media freedom and access to information, related to insecurity in the country. In this chapter, media freedom will be defined, media

---

[47] Castillo, J. J. (2009) *Convenience sampling*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.experiment-resources.com/convenience-sampling.html (Accessed: 31 March 2015).
[48] Golafshani, N. (2003) Understanding reliability and validity in qualitative research, *The Qualitative Report,* 8(4), 597-607.
[49] Mugenda AG (2013). *Qualitative research methods: Introduction*. Nairobi: Arts Press

regulation in Kenya explored and professional and moral dilemma of media coverage of terrorism in Kenya discussed.

Chapter three the role of media in coverage of terrorist attacks in Kenya and how it compromises national security. It also looks at how media propagates terrorist's agenda and effects of media coverage on terrorist's attacks, the use of media to counter terrorism and media obstruction in counter-terrorism efforts.

The chapter three analyzes into detail the challenges the media faces while reporting terrorism and explores ways in which a balance can be struck between public interest and national security.

Chapter four analyzes the research findings on striking balance between public interests and national security.

Chapter five presents the findings based on the objectives, concludes the research and recommend on the findings.

CHAPTER TWO

MEDIA COVERAGE AND TERRORISM IN KENYA
2.0 Introduction

This chapter analyzes the historical background of Media Coverage and Terrorism in Kenya. It is organized in the following sub-topics; Global Overview Media Coverage and Terrorism in Kenya, The Revolution in Mass Communication and Terrorism, The Dynamics of Modern Media Coverage and Terrorism, Foreign Media Coverage and Terrorism, Media freedom in Kenya, Media and Counter-Terrorism strategies, Media and Counter-terrorism strategies in Kenya, Conclusion and the Chapter Summary.

2.1 Global Overview of Media Coverage and Terrorism

News on terrorism, just like other news is difficult to resist as it touches on the emotions and feelings of the audience. This could be due to the impact that such activities have had on human lives and property, where property of great proportions has been lost and lives lost while those lucky enough have been maimed. During the study, it was observed that many people are unable to resist news coverage of terrorist attacks, this is because as horrific and traumatizing it is to watch such news on television and read about in newspapers and magazines, and many still find it nearly impossible to turn away. This is in line with Slone's argument that the mass media has a strong psychological effect on the audience that makes them want to keep watching or listening or even reading terrifying news[50].

---

[50] Slone, M. (2000). Response to media coverage of terrorism. *Journal of Conflict Resolution, 44*, 508-522.

Many viewers globally always find themselves glued to their sources of news whenever such events happen. In Kenya, many say they are forced to watch such news as it is presented in form of "Breaking News" which is definitely bound to attract attention. With almost all media outlets leading with and attributing acres of space in newspapers and airtime on radio and TV to terrorism incidents, the audience is left with no choice but to comply. A case in point being the Westgate Terror Attack in 2013 whose broadcast on Kenyan Television began at mid-day and was aired live for almost 3 days. Respondents in this study argue that it is difficult to know why the information is so hard to resist as some say they are hoping to get information since they are fearful of future attacks and want to be prepared. Other respondents during this study however said they watch and read news so as to digest and process the event while others say the media purposely create sensational and addictive images that are hard to resist.

Cronin on the other hand confirms what a majority of respondents in this research observe that whatever the reason, it is important to understand the effects on the community that this type of exposure may have[51]. Cronin's research generally finds an association between watching media coverage of terrorist attacks and stress symptoms. However, he points out that most studies cannot answer the important question of whether watching television of the event makes people worse or if people who have more severe stress reactions are the ones who choose to watch more television coverage of the event.

---

[51] Cronin, A. K. (2002). Behind the Curve: Globalization and International Terrorism. International Security, 27:3 (December 01, 2002). pp. 30-58.

The findings in this study established that nearly every day, all people around the globe, watch and read news articles about the destruction and horror committed by groups fighting against the status quo and as Eugenis explains, random acts of violence have a direct and immediate impact on those affected, their influence cannot spread beyond the vicinity of the attack without the assistance of news media reporting on the event[52]. According to him, without the news media terrorists cannot communicate their messages to the central government or the greater population. This study agrees with Eugenis' argument that, if the goal of terrorism is to spread widespread fear and uncertainty (as the public has no knowledge of when or where the next attack will occur), then terrorists need the media to report on their activities to the general public[53].

This study established that terrorists heavily rely on the media to pass across their intended message to the masses and as Eugenis further explains, terrorist organizations remain salient to both the people it claims to represent and to those who live in fear only so long as the news media continue to broadcast the terrorist attacks to the public[54]. Findings from this study to some degree tend to agree with Eugenis statement that as soon as the media loses interest and ceases reporting on the topic, the organization loses its ability to communicate to its intended audience. This is regardless of whether it is the global population, the group claims to be fighting for, the government, or the international leaders who might become involved. And just like Eugenis, findings from this research revealed that when random acts of violence no longer attract the attention of the media, terrorist groups are without communication to the mass public, leaving them

---

[52] Eugenis k., (2013) Who Will Tell the Story? Terrorism' s Relationship with the International News
[53] Ibid p,24
[54] Ibid p,24

no choice but to find either another way to obtain that necessary media attention or to search for other, perhaps legitimate, tactics in order to enact change[55].

During the study it emerged that live reporting includes the risk to loss of lives through informing e. g. kidnappers of the activities outside a hostage location, this of course would have to be avoided by means of self-limitations. Limiting freedom of expression hardly prevents terrorists from attacking and as this study established, if certain events are not reported, the terrorist dynamics demand them to create such a big and spectacular event that automatically reporting cannot be avoided anyway. Therefore, trying to block and inhibit free reporting is either technically not possible anyway or may at worse lead to even more extreme violence would need to be covered anyway. The study reveals that when dealing with media coverage of terrorism it is also important to consider the different effects which that coverage has. A view that corresponds with arguments advanced by Walsh who observes that tterrorists aim at maximum attention for their own sake[56].

Terrorist attacks can be regarded as following the principles of symbolic negotiation and even games. According to this study, part of the terrorists' strategy is to force the respective conflict partner to express weakness publicly and this needs to be clear in media reporting and communication that the events and the reactions from those events follow a dramaturgy of potentially increasing escalation. From the findings, many terrorist activities are directed at the empowerment of their own followers and their own group structure and journalists and the media in general need to be aware of this fact, just

---

[55] Eugenis K., (2013) Who Will Tell the Story? Terrorism' s Relationship with the International News

[56] Walsh JI (2010). *Media attention to terrorist attacks: Causes and consequences*. North Carolina:

Institute for Homeland Security Solutions.

as Tuman established in his work "Communicating Terror"[57]. This study reveals that it is not always the larger audience which is addressed but also the terrorists' own followers. It was for example relatively risky to broadcast the first Bin-Laden videos after 9-11 as they may have contained hidden messages for the supporters of Bin Laden. Respondents in this study agree that rresponsible journalism takes into account this effect and should be very careful in the broadcasting and distribution of material gathered outside the own professional possibilities and means. And like Tuman states, it is very difficult to apply a general standardized approach to these political and professional challenges[58].

2.2 The Revolution in Mass Communication and Terrorism

Findings from this study reveal that innovation and technological changes in communication have brought about a major turnaround in the manner in which news is delivered. This falling in line with Hoffman's submissions that the revolution in mass communication offers abundant new opportunities to communicate on a larger scale than ever before and the development of technological inventions have significantly changed the way news are communicated, making them accessible to a great number of people[59]. During this research, it was observed that there was a big difference in the manner in which the 1998 terror attack on the American Embassy in Kenya was covered and how the Westgate and Garissa University terror attacks were covered. This study revealed that there exists a symbiosis relationship between that media and terrorism. The findings

---

[57]Tuman,S.,2010.*CommunicatingTerror:RhetoricalDimensisofTerrorism*.S2nded.ThousandOaks,CA:SageP ublications,Inc

[58]Ibid p,26

[59] Hoffman AM, Jengallery PHA, Duncan NB, Buehker M, Rees M (2010). How does the business of news influence Terrorism coverage? Evidence from the Washington Post and USA Today. *Terror. Polit. Violence* 22(4):559-580

agreeing with Hoffman's statement that the symbiosis between media and terrorism have had a direct influence on terrorism[60].

This research established that besides classic terrorist threats, the influence of contemporary media has initiated the so-called propaganda war, and terrorist organizations attach great importance to it. The findings agree with Hoffman's statement that propaganda war can be a very powerful psychological weapon and can greatly increase the effect of certain actions[61]. Terrorists, on the one hand, need media propaganda in order to demonstrate absolute justness of their goals, but at the same time they are aware of how much damage negative publicity might cause to their goals. According to Wilkinson, the four main objectives in using mass media are: to convey the propaganda of the deed and to create extreme fear among their target group; to mobilize wider support for their cause among the general population, and international opinion by emphasizing such themes as righteousness of their cause and the inevitability of their victory; to frustrate and disrupt the response of the government and security forces; to mobilize, incite and boost their constituency of actual and potential supporters and in so doing to increase recruitment, raise more funds and inspire further attacks[62].

Hoffman states that, terrorism and the media are bound together in a specific way and complement each other[63]. Sentiments which agree with findings of this study which reveal that the real issue, however, is not so much the relationship itself, as whether it actually affects public opinion and government decision-making in a manner that assists

[60] Ibid p.22
[61] Ibid p.20
[62] Wilkinson, P. (2002) Terorizam protiv demokracije. Zagreb: Golden marketing.
[63] Hoffman AM, Jengallery PHA, Duncan NB, Buehker M, Rees M (2010). How does the business of news influence Terrorism coverage? Evidence from the Washington Post and USA Today. *Terror. Polit. Violence* 22(4):559-580

terrorists. This study established that there are opinions, mainly shared by politicians and state officials, scientists and media critics, that media favours the terrorist goals as their "publicity oxygen" or "amplifier of media campaign for publicity" and one might conclude that depriving them publicity could diminish their influence and frequency of their actions significantly. However some respondents in this research felt that one should not ignore the fact that media coverage of terrorist actions is almost always presented in a negative context, and this was supported by some security expertss who noted that, although at some times it may be benevolent, media coverage of terrorism has not resulted in a more favorable public opinion, neither on terrorists nor on their struggle.

2.3 The Dynamics of Modern Media Coverage and Terrorism

According to the findings of this study, the media is attracted by extreme terrorist acts not only because it is their duty to report on any major event but also because, at the same time, the dramaturgy of terrorism attracts large-scale attention. These findings agree with Wilkinson who states that the media has a major role to play in communicating terror activities to its audience, and the bigger the terror attack the bigger the media coverage[64]. As revealed from the study, journalists and media practitioners tend to thrive on the dramatic part of such incidents which not only make for good television but also increase the ratings. Thus the respondents observed that today's terrorists have picked up this dynamic and take action not only to make their victims suffer but also to create maximum attention around the world. The study reveals that terrorists have become "media competent" by knowing and applying the principles of attracting media attention in most of their activities and just like Tuman found out, s not only do they now own the

---

[64]Ibid p,24

necessary technical equipment such as video cameras and Internet facilities; they also usually know how to time and create those images which can guarantee a maximum impact through the media[65]. During this research, it emerged that this dynamic may lead to the conclusion that a major option for the prevention of terrorism would be not to allow journalists and the media to report on terrorist activities or events or at least to inhibit coverage as much as possible.

Security experts and agents interviewed during this research revealed that there are several countries that have chosen this option and it is difficult in those countries to have access to information or events that are related to terrorist activities. The findings revealed that modern democracy is however characterized to a high extent by its freedom of expression and the possibility to access relevant political or societal information. Respondents who have lived through the four regimes in Kenya agree that indeed the democratic space in Kenya has expanded and cannot be compared to the first two regimes. The Constitution of Kenya grants the media a lot of freedom and in this case, the media has not only used it well but in a few instances abused it as well. Media practitioners during the research revealed that information and news is readily available to many and therefore as soon as information related to terrorism is blocked by governments or other political or societal institutions, terrorists may have gained one of their goals, which is to compromise the values of modern democracy. Thus, political institutions, as well as the media, are faced with the basic dilemma that on the one hand media coverage may be instrumentalised by terrorists in order to get maximum attention

---

[65] Ibid p,20

while, on the other hand, if such information is inhibited, the basic principle and value of freedom of expression and information is under threat.

Leonard *et al* says that although this major principle may be generally accepted, many details need to be considered when addressing media and terrorism and that one of the major questions when dealing with terrorism is its definition[66]. This study established that over the years this question has always been central to the analysis and treatment of terrorism and for the media the labeling and determination of precise motives is important even if this is not the same as a criminal justice procedure. Leonard *et al* argues that it may therefore be more suitable to deal primarily with individual events and if necessary describe the actors involved as criminals thus agreeing with findings from this study that established that everyone who may be sympathetic to terrorist activities, but has not been involved himself or herself, could be a terrorist per definition[67]. According to this research terrorist attacks themselves may easily be described by comparison as they usually involve extreme violence against individuals or larger groups where mostly innocent people are hurt or killed.

As this research reveals, any situation outside a "normal" war which includes extreme violence and may be motivated by whatever simple or sophisticated or ideological political goals may be called terrorism, especially across Europe in countries with an emerging or already established democracy and just like Manuel's argument that

---

[66]Leonard et al. 2012. "The Challenges of Conceptualizing Terrorism. "Terrorism Studies: Reader. Eds.John Hogan and Kurt Braddock. London: Routledge. 76-90.
[67] ibid

"one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter" probably does not apply[68]. Journalists in this study argued that there is indeed a preference among journalists and politicians to limit the word "terrorism" to events and not to apply it to a whole group or even to a major part of a certain group which has not directly been involved in violent attacks against society and its citizens just like Leonard *et al* state in their work "The Challenges of Conceptualizing Terrorism"[69].

As this study found out, the Kenyan media has failed to dig deep and inform their audiences on the real motive of the terror activities witnessed on the Kenyan soil just like Leonard *et al* warns that concentrating on the terrorist events themselves and not on the motives when reporting on terrorism may of course limit the number of people who may be called terrorists[70]. Some respondents feel that the decision by media practitioners to focus on the ensuing drama sacrifices the whole story and this has been attributed to what some term as laziness on the part of journalists or outright ignorance. But all is not lost as the study reveals that the investigative pieces done by a section of Kenyan journalists have helped unravel the truth, albeit late. Journalists can cover any aspect of political violence including supporters and groups which may be sympathetic with terrorist goals. But it can be dangerous to "over-generalize" the label "terrorist" to include a larger number of people and who may be drawn deeper into terrorist tendencies exactly because they are already labeled as such.

---

[68]Manuel R.(2008)."Terrorism and the Mass Media after AlQaeda: A Change of Course?" AthenaIntelligenceJournal.3(2):1-20

[69] ibid
[70] Ibid p,25

The study established that one should consider that terrorism may also actually be supported by the fact that "normal" criminal activities when labeled ""terrorism" receive a certain, if negative glorification and attraction for those who appreciate being (anti-) heroes and this has been confirmed by Stuart who says that many so-called terrorist activities are more based on normal criminal behavior than on political motives[71]. This does not make them better or worse for the victims or the political system but it may create a different context or connotation for them in the media and limit the probability that their actions are perceived as being rewarding for a higher, ideological goal. The findings of this research reveal that many, if not most attacks in the context of "terrorism" serve goals other than to reach or realize political objective as they are about money, attention, status, other advantages, or just about keeping a group alive and intact. An early-1980s study on German terrorism demonstrated that most terrorist events occurred when the group cohesion and group structure of the violent gangs was threatened to collapse and disintegrate and this has been supported by Stuart who says planning and realizing an assault strengthened the group and put it back into a stable, if clandestine structure[72].

2.4 Foreign Media Coverage and Terrorism

This research reveals that modern media technology and communications satellites have had a marked effect in increasing the publicity potential of terrorism, giving them the oxygen of publicity. As established during this study and from a point of

---

[71] Stuart N. (2003). "Media, Public Opinion, and Foreign Policy" *The Harvard International Journal of Pressand Politics* 8 (January) 27-48

[72] Ibid p.26

view also confirmed by Altheide, terrorist acts aim at causing heavy casualties, raising fear within the public which, and the media, participates collaterally in every terrorist attack[73]. The respondents in this research agree that modern technologies have made it possible for small terror groups to use the foreign mass media as a powerful gun, in such a way the mass media serves in the interests of terrorists, against their own will though opinions on the real relationship between media and terrorism vary greatly

The study found out that Foreign Media has many a time given a platform to terrorists who appear in the most popular programmes in order to gain mass publicity, and that such media attention creates legitimacy in the eyes of their followers. [74] The foreign media has positioned itself as a propaganda tool just like in the words of Hoffman who states that: "to inform about the revolutionists' actions is enough for the modern mass media to become an important tool of propaganda and that the psychological war is a technique of fight, based on direct or indirect usage of the mass media"[75].

According to findings from this study, terrorism may be seen as a violent act that is conceived specifically to attract attention and then, through the publicity it generates, a message is communicated to the leaders just as was the case as one of leaders of the United Red Army once realistically explained: "violent actions are shocking. We want to shock people, everywhere[76]. And what a better way to get such a message relayed to the

[73] Altheide DL (2007). The mass media and terrorism. Discourse Commun.1 (3):287-308.
[74] Cepulkauskaite, I. (2000) "The mass media and terrorism", Sociumas, Internet magazine, http://www.sociumas
[75] Hoffman AM, Jengallery PHA, Duncan NB, Buehker M, Rees M (2010). How does the business of news influence Terrorism coverage? Evidence from the Washington Post and USA Today. *Terror. Polit.Violence* 22(4):559-580
[76] ibid

audiences than through the foreign media whose reach goes beyond borders to reach billions of people. Journalists and media practitioners during the research revealed that by spreading the terror and outrage to a much larger audience can the terrorists gain the maximum potential of their actions and intentions they need to effect fundamental political change. This confirms the sentiments of Hoffman who claims the terrorists must find a way of communicating and if the local media doesn't offer the platform to do so, then the foreign media will[77].

One may however pose the question what is in it for the foreign media, considering this is a two-way traffic so to speak? As established by findings from this research, information about terrorism, especially kidnappings and hostage crisis, is one major source of news for foreign media. This is due to the fact that such news is dramatic, updated and raise great public attention and could significantly raise audience ratings. The audience ratings will subsequently have a positive economic effect on the media house's revenue base due to the profits accrued. This argument goes hand in hand with the works of Cepulkauskaite who states that mass media will always do so in case of terrorist attacks because of a great public attention for such an event[78]. Findings from this study reveal that every percentage of rating increase raises the annual profit for foreign media houses and as Wilkinson states some chief editors are not even aware of the implications caused by their relentless struggle to increase ratings, i.e. profit[79].

---

[77] Hoffman AM, Jengallery PHA, Duncan NB, Buehker M, Rees M (2010). How does the business of news influence Terrorism coverage? Evidence from the Washington Post and USA Today. *Terror. Polit.Violence* 22(4):559-580

[78] Cepulkauskaite, I. (2000) "The mass media and terrorism", Sociumas, Internet magazine, http://www.sociumas

[79] Wilkinson, P. (2002) Terorizam protiv demokracije. Zagreb: Golden marketing.

2.5 Media Coverage and Terrorism in Kenya

According to Mathewson and Steinberg, terrorism is a notoriously difficult concept to define because of its many forms, objectives, ambiguity, contextual fluidity, and the multiplicity of perpetrators[80]. Many respondents in this research gave different definitions of this concept with many of them linking it to activities that instill fear and horror in the victims mind following violent activities that claim human lives. A section of the respondents in this study argued that in a generic sense, terrorism, unlike random acts of violence, is the premeditated use of violence to achieve certain objectives and according to them, terrorism is intimidation through violence just as postulated by Mathew and Steinberg[81]. In the course of this research, legal experts agreed with Ruby who stated that terrorism can also be defined from a legal, moral and behavioral standpoint and further noted that legally, terrorism is a violation of established laws[82].

Findings from this study established that although this approach is popular with governments, it is scarcely universal given the wide variety of laws and governments around the world and from a moral standpoint, terrorist acts are morally unjustifiable. According to the study, the various pieces of legislation in Kenyan spell out the various legal ways in which terrorists should be dealt with. According to Cronin there are four major types of terrorism movements around the world: left-wing (leftist), right-wing (rightist), ethno-nationalist or separatist and, religious or sacred[83]. Many respondents in this research held that currently, religious or "sacred" terrorism, e.g., that perpetrated

---

[80] Mathewson. K. and Steinberg, M. (2003).Drug Production, Commerce, and Terrorism. In Susan L. Cutter, Douglas B. Richardson, and Thomas J. Wilbanks (ed), The Geographical Dimensions of Terrorism, Routledge: New York and London.

[81] Ibid p,37

[82] Ruby, C. L. (2002). The Definition of Terrorism. Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy, 2002, pp. 9-14.

[83] Cronin, A. K. (2002). Behind the Curve: Globalization and International Terrorism. International Security, 27:3 (December 01, 2002). pp. 30-58.

by Al Qaeda, dominates the global stage although all four types of terrorism are capable of unspeakable brutality. During this study it was observed that, the globalization of terrorism as well as a notable dispersal in the geography of terrorist acts is most worrisome because a terrorist organization from one part of the world can launch attacks in another part of the globe thereby complicating the process of identifying terrorism perpetrators just as Cronin states in his work "Beyond the Curve: Globalization and International Terrorism" [84].

Some of the respondents in this study revealed that Kenya experienced ethno nationalistic terrorism towards the end of the country's colonial rule in the 1950s when freedom movements such as Mau Mau used terror to hasten the attainment of the country's independence. Sorel argues that, the terrorist events that took place in Kenya at that time perfectly exemplify the maxim: one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter'[85].According to Daily Nation the current incidence of religious or sacred terrorism in Kenya is most bothersome because its perpetrators have no qualms about sacrificing civilians in the process of achieving their objectives just as some respondents stated during this study[86]. Findings from this study reveal that Al-Qaeda and Al Shabaab religious terrorist groups have subjected Kenya to devastating terrorist attacks in the last six years including; the August 7, 1998 bombing of the US Embassy in Nairobi which killed over 200 people and injured thousands, the November 28, 2002 suicide bombing of the Israeli-owned Paradise Tourist Hotel in Mombasa, Kenya, which killed

---

[84] Cronin, A. K. (2002). Behind the Curve: Globalization and International Terrorism. International Security, 27:3 (December 01, 2002). pp. 30-58

[85] Sorel, J. (2003). Some Questions About the Definition of Terrorism and the Fight Against its Financing, EJIL (2003), Vol. 14 No. 2, 365-378.

[86] Daily Nation on the web(Friday, November 29, 2002). Two suspects arrested after terror bomb on hotel kills 13, Online at http://www.nationaudio.com/, accessed July 3, 2004.

15 people and injured 80 others. Simultaneously, there was an abortive attempt to blow up an Israeli passenger jet on take-off from Mombasa International Airport.

2.6 Media Freedom in Kenya

The findings of this study established that many journalists in Kenya appreciate the freedom guaranteed to them by the laws in Kenya. Media coverage can be defined as the way in which a particular piece of information is presented by media either as news, entertainment or as infotainment. The research revealed that media freedom can affect the extent of information dissemination as well as influence the audience opinion while giving out the information On the other hand; positive coverage can help create a better image and positive public opinion. Media practitioners interviewed during this study supported Smith who argues that different types of media coverage can be defined based on two important elements the type of mass media used, and the style of coverage[87].

From this study, it is emerges that radio, television and newspapers are the primary source of media coverage. Radio coverage involves broadcasting news, information, and entertainment via the radio while newspaper coverage refers to providing news, information, and infotainment using the newspapers. This is a cost-effective medium; however, is losing popularity to the internet as many of the young respondents agreed that it is easier and faster to get information from the internet as compared to the newspapers. Media practitioners interviewed during this study agreed that newspapers have become quite expensive and one has to wait longer before accessing the news as compared to the internet where news is relayed as soon as it breaks. Many media houses and outlets have websites where they post news on as soon as it breaks and as this study reveals, the running of these sites is governed by the existing

---

[87] Smith, K. (2007) Textbook on International human Rights, New York: Oxford University press. Ch.18

laws and code of conducts. And just as Smith puts it, internet coverage means the using the Internet to provide, news, views, and entertainment and this is one of the most popular and widely used media today[88].

Article 19 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR) recognizes media freedom/coverage as a right to communicate through both electronic and print media. Freedom of expression falls under the First Generation rights and as this study reveals this freedom is considered a pillar of democratic societies and embodies the right to take part in government, through freely chosen representatives as it relates to freedom of thought and conscience and sometimes overlaps with the right to participation in public life, the right to vote and the right to stand for election. According to Smith, although it is an individual right, by definition there are examples of it which are inherently communal in origin and just like the study found out, the media is not duty bound to preserve human rights, but the fact that it operates as a conveyor of information between the state and society, requires media practitioners to act responsibly[89]. The International Council on Human Rights notes that press freedom is directly connected with independent Journalism Practice, conditions without which, other human rights are endangered[90]. A view which has also been held by media practitioners in this study who argue that people have the right to access information and knowledge.

From this study, it emerged that a media concerned with peace-building initiatives can argue for human rights by respecting such freedoms as of essence to democracy this

---

[88] Ibid p,23
[89] Smith, K. (2007) Textbook on International human Rights, New York: Oxford University press. Ch.18
[90] ICHR, 2001

40

is because regardless of having ratified several human rights instruments that guarantee media freedom, Kenya's history of political related conflicts inhibits the full realization of human rights. During this study, journalists observed that the media in Kenya is relatively free and in some instances the exercising of this right has inspired violence against sections of the population. The intended use of the media to stir up the public to commit acts of violence can therefore hardly be defended under the right to "freedom of the media" as was witnessed during the 2007/2008 post election violence in Kenya which was one journalist by the name Joshua Arap Sang' dragged to the Hague based International Criminal Court, alongside other politicians and as Dahl puts it, inspiring violence further defeats the role of the media as an agenda setter for human rights as noted by Dahl[91].

2.7 Media and Counter-terrorism Strategies

According to findings from this study, terrorists are completely capable of applying new methods for conducting a war, adapted to the media era, as opposed to the majority of democratic countries. By taking into account the fact that violent extremists have their own media relations experts who are trained in manipulating the opinion of the elite, it is apparent that at the present moment their activities are directed towards the planning and carrying out of attacks by all forms of communication[92]. This research is in line with findings of Nacos who states that they are aware of the fact that communication eliminates borders and that a single press release can cause as much havoc as a military

---

[91]Dahal, R. (2011): â€žConflict and Mediaâ€Ÿ, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. [Online] Availableat:<http://www.nepaldemocracy.org/media/conflict&media_freedom_drd.htm> (Accessed 07.03.2011)

[92] Nacos, B.L. (2000). Accomplice or Witness? The Media's Role in Terrorism," *Current History,* 99 (636). p. 1745

attack and they also have the possibility to act quickly with few people and modest means as opposed to the huge, expensive and bureaucratized democratic institutions. From the research, it is clear that irresponsible media behavior can be neutralized if one ensures that an expert link with the media is established.

The study found out that in some instances the government has to intervene and curtail media freedom in cases where the national interest is at the risk of being compromised by the continued coverage of a terror attack. Respondents in this study stated that just as it was witnessed during the Westgate attack in Kenya, the security agencies had to stop the live coverage of the crisis when it appeared that the media was now revealing too much to the terrorists. According to the research government sources at that time were apprehensive that the attackers were being fed with too much information from the media and therefore it was proving difficult for the government to launch its rescue strategies. These sentiments confirm what Wilkinson noted that in a democratic society a good and efficient public intelligence policy which would limit as much as possible the enormous clout that the mass media wield is an element of vital importance for a successful strategy of combating terrorism[93].

According to findings from the study, a key blow to the terrorists strategy may be delivered by the power of the media and political leadership to mobilize the democratic public opinion and to fortify society's resistance as well as to provoke harsher and more efficient counter-measures that would foil terrorist efforts precisely because the objective of these efforts is to crush their opponent's willpower by fear mongering. The study

---

[93] Wilkinson, P. (2002) Terorizam protiv demokracije. Zagreb: Golden marketing.

established that there are ways in which the media can be used to counter terrorism activities in Kenya. Some respondents felt that a total black out to coverage of terrorism activities by the media in Kenya would be ideal, as it would snap out the much needed publicity by the aggressors. On the other hand, there was a view in this study that in such a democratic country, blocking the masses from accessing such crucial information is not only impossible but also an affront to the liberties and freedoms as enshrined in Kenya's supreme law which is the constitution. Findings from this research however agree with Wilkinson when he argued that there exists a series of other important means by which responsible media in a democratic society can thwart terrorists' aims and objectives. A view that was also established during the study with some media practitioners holding that the term objectivity could be relative.

A section of journalists during this research held that objectivity in the media is difficult to attain as the practice, apart from being governed by law and code of conduct, is also subjected to various interests in such a manner that commercial, political and religious interests tend to interfere with the principal of objectivity. Some respondents felt that by broadcasting in an objective manner the cruelty of terrorist violence and the killings of the innocent, the media can contribute significantly to the destruction of the myth on fighters for justice and freedom as terrorists usually describe themselves. From the study it is clear that some practical forms of help: responsible and accurate reporting on incidents may increase vigilance among the public, for example with respect to unusual parcels, suspicious persons and behaviors, the media may transmit warnings issued by the police to the public as well as instructions on how to behave in dangerous situations. The study found out that the Kenyan media has not fared badly on this front

with a majority of the media houses being hailed for publishing and airing some of the safety precautions that members of the public should take during terror attacks.

The respondents held that through the publishing of such information, the media goes beyond its primary mandate of informing as it now it engages its educative gear. For example through the media, members of the public are sensitized on the various ways in which they can protect themselves and prevent deaths during terror attacks. This research also notes that contributions by the media to the war against terrorism are so valuable that they outweigh the disadvantages and risks and the undoubted damage caused by a small minority of irresponsible journalists and broadcasters thus supporting Yakovenko who stated that the misdeeds of a few in the profession should not soil the whole trade[94]. From the study it emerged that the move by media houses especially broadcast stations to invite security experts to their studios to enlighten the public on the do's and don'ts during terror attack is one of the positive strategies the media has used in Kenya as a counter-terrorism strategy. However during the study, security experts noted that the media need not become an instrument of terrorism since they can easily fall into this trap by adopting a well thought-out approach the media in Western liberal states may become a weapon which could be used as an important means for defeating terrorists.

The findings also established that it is for the information community itself to create a model in which the media could be used as an efficient anti-terrorism instrument that would rule out any, even involuntary, cooperation with the terrorists. From the study it is clear that journalists should come up with special recommendations related to the media self-control when covering the terror-related events or individuals, as one of the

---

[94] Ibid

indispensable conditions of a successful counter-terrorism struggle. This however is yet to be achieved in Kenya as each media outlet tends to chart their own course when it comes to reporting on terror attacks in Kenya. According to the study Kenya can borrow a leaf from BBC which has the oldest instruction document named "Terrorism and national safety". In the preamble of the document it is stated that the "basic role of BBC in reporting about a terrorist situation is to tell the truth, fast, carefully, responsibly and avoiding speculation"[95].

The study noted that journalists are given instructions on ways in which to cover safety situations and the responsibility a journalist has for what is written is especially stressed. And unlike what Yakovenko states that in October 2001, The Union of Journalists of Russia adopted the "Ethical Principles of Professional Conduct of Journalists Covering Acts of Terror and Counterterrorist Measures", the study reveals that the only guide for journalists practicing in Kenya is the Media Code of Ethics which doesn't comprehensively touch on acts of terror[96]. According to Yakovenko the participants resolutely condemned terror as one of the gravest threats to mankind and having recognized their own responsibility reached an agreement on drafting a new anti-terrorist charter. Something, the study established as lacking in the Kenyan context and which according to the findings could help journalists in Kenya as they cover terror attacks. In comparison to Kenya, the study established that an elite unit of the police force known as the Anti-terrorism Police Unit was established specifically to deal with the menace.

---

[95] Geljman, M. (2004) Russkij sposob: Terrorizm i mass-media v tretjem tysjachiletiyi. Moskva: Guelman
[96] Yakovenko, A. (2005) "Can the Media Help to Fight Terrorism?", International Affairs,
        http://www.eastview.com.

2.8 Media and Counter-Terrorism Strategies in Kenya

Can the media act as a responsible tool for fighting terrorism in Kenya? Are Kenyan journalists aware of terrorists' aims in attracting the media coverage? How should the media and the government share the same thoughts in the war against terror without compromising independents of the media as enshrined in the Media Act, 2013? In Maina's book A First Look at Communication Theory, states that the public depends on the media for news segment that captures their attention, a factor that came to the fore during the study where it was established that many Kenyans rely on the main stream media as a source of information, while a few rely on the blogs just as postulated by Maina[97]. From this research, it is therefore imperative that the media in Kenya plays its role in a way that will benefit the public who look up to it for information. Furthermore, Maina's research shows that framing stories helps journalists package the content, which, in effect can, influence specific interpretations by selecting and emphasizing on exclusion in line with this study which revealed that some journalists reporting on terrorism in Kenya tend to align themselves to some specific interests which are mainly attributed to their political or religious affiliations.

During this research a top television investigative reporter was accused of trying to incite the masses against the government as he tried to sanitize religion and portray the government as a monster hell-bent on curtailing the various strides made in achieving the various freedoms guaranteed by the constitution. Maina holds that, there have been some instances that Kenyan media reports or uses old images of Al shabaab to support current

---

[97] Maina l.,.(2014).The Theater of Terror: *Mass Media and International Terrorism*. New York: Longman

news stories which as this study revealed, does not portray the true picture on the ground and is bound to cause tension and instill more fear among the citizens[98]. Some respondents during the study argued that by rekindling old terrorism stories the media tends to enhance the message sent by the terrorists to their audience. According to the findings, it is advisable for the media to understand values and norms of terrorist; because the media is able to identify new segments that can either support the ideologies of terrorists or assist authorities in the war on terror.

From the story it appears as if the media is at times in competition with the government when informing the masses about terror attacks. And this raised questions during Westgate mall terror when the media took over from government the role of information dissemination, a question which was posed by Archetti seeking to find out just who is mandated to give formal information during such times[99]. The study established that during terror attacks in Kenya, the media has always had a way of sourcing for its information and this information is relayed to the audiences in manner showing that it has not been verified or reports from impeccable sources. This in a way puts the government in an awkward situation as it finds it difficult to downplay the impact of the situation or be economical with the truth regarding the situation.

2.9 Conclusion

From the findings of this research we can conclude that that terrorism is a form of violence is used to gain attention by dramatizing events and in which terrorists satisfy

---

[98] ibid

[99] Archetti C (2013). Understanding terrorism in the age of global media: A Communication Approach.

UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

news values of newsworthiness which in turn, attract journalists searching for news stories to tell their audiences. It is also imperative to note from this study that terrorism is a global problem which affects the first world as well as the third world countries and that Kenya has not been an exception. The interplay between media freedom and terrorism comes to the fore with the study revealing that it is hard for the media to objectively report on terror activities especially in cases where the government place caveats to the access of information. And as revealed by the study, media freedom is essential for a frees and democratic society and with this denied, then it becomes difficult for the media to carry out its mandate.

In the same vein, the study reveals that a responsible media can play an effective counter terrorism role. Instead of being used as a tool to propagate propaganda and give life to terrorism, the media can be used to avert attacks and educate the masses on what terrorism is all about. For instance as the study found out, praising people known or suspected to fund terror groups, the media glorifies terrorism activities despite giving limited space to counter-terrorism measures.

From the research, it is clear that information technology has radically changed people's lifestyles, in communication, business activities and leisure time and in various other aspects of everyday life. One of the consequences of society thus transformed is its openness as well as ever faster and greater availability of information. It is therefore easy to conclude that one of the direct consequences of these processes are new possibilities mass media offer in fast information communication and their global spreading. Without the assistance of media, terrorist rhetoric would influence only those in the immediate

vicinity of terrorist violence. Conversely, with the assistance of media, terrorism reaches a much broader, sometimes global audience.

As the study established, the media today not only shapes public opinion but also conducts politics, and journalists, besides reporting, deal with defining a great number of various operations which are at the disposal of the government, and with predicting possible public reactions on certain government moves. Archetti argues that it is this manner, in this era of mass communication media, that the terrorists get a chance for such a manipulation and influence they have never so far had, because "what was not released in the media, did not happen at all!" [100]. Findings from this study reveal that in order to make the struggle against terrorism successful, counterterrorist organizations need also to adjust to their actions, on organizational, strategic and technological level.

From the findings, some of the factors that have contributed to terrorism in Kenya are unlikely to change in the short-term, the country will continue to be on the terrorist radar screen for a while. Thus, it is imperative for the country to maintain a high level of terrorism preparedness by enacting antiterrorist legislation and reducing corruption especially in its security forces.

2.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter analyzed the historical background of Media Coverage and Terrorism in Kenya. It was organized in the following sub-topics; Global Overview Media Coverage and Terrorism in Kenya, The revolution in mass communication and

---

[100] Archetti C (2013). Understanding terrorism in the age of global media: A Communication Approach.UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

terrorism, The dynamics of modern media coverage and terrorism, Foreign media coverage and terrorism, Media and Counter-Terrorism in Kenya, Media and counterterrorist strategies, Media and Counter-Terrorism and the Conclusion.

CHAPTER THREE

MEDIA AND NATIONAL SECURITY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of media and national security. It is organized in the following sub-topics: Global Overview of Media and National Security, National Security and Media Liberty in Kenya, the Role of the Media and Security Agencies in coverage of terrorism, The Security Dilemma, The role of the Media in safeguarding National interest.

3.1 Global Overview of Media and National Security

The study established that since the close of the Cold War, insecurity has become more notice able and this has been attributed to various factors including globalization. And as Maurice puts it, before the collapse of the Rock hard Curtain, nations in the Western Alliance were often the targets of essential leftist and nationalist terrorist groups, all the while appreciating support from Eastern Bloc nations in the form of weapons, training facilities, and safe sanctuaries[101]. From the study it emerged that Islamic fundamentalist terrorists often target Westerners in their efforts to incite the United States into meddling in the affairs of Muslim countries. This from this particular study reinforces what Bienien said in that terrorists seek "to provoke the target into a

---

[101] Maurice, (2009), "Challenging the Orthodoxies: The Role of Ethnicity and Regional Nationalism in Leadership and Democracy in Africa", UNESCO Seminar, 28 – 30 September at Kisumu Sports Ground

disproportionate response that radicalizes moderates and drives them into the arms of terrorists, expanding their supporters"[102]. By inspiring further revenge, Islamic fundamentalist organizations such as al-Qaeda seek to end Western pollution of Islamic culture, force the United States to withdraw from the Middle East, and destroy Israel.

This study noted that in trying to cause greater devastation, terrorist organizations such as the Lebanese Hezbollah often conduct suicide attacks and that such suicide attacks are not foreign even in Kenya where some of the terrorists have perished with the victims. During this research, a crime reporter pointed out that during the Garissa University attack in April 2015, one of the attackers who had been cornered by a member of the elite recce squad blew himself up and in the process killed the police officer. And as Hoffman puts it, suicide terrorism follows strategic logic from the perspective of terrorist organizations seeking to coerce the authorities to consent to their demands[103]. This couldn't be further from the truth, since after the Garissa University and the Westgate attacks, the Islamist terror group al shabaab took to social media to celebrate its "victory" and promised to continue carrying out more attacks on the Kenyan soil. Findings from this study reveal that it is dangerous for the government to make any concessions or negotiations with terrorists. A view which Pape agrees with stating that consistent concession by governments in response to bombings by suicide terrorists such

---

[102] Bienien, H. (2014) Kenya: The Politics of Participation and Control. Princeton University Press, New Jersey.

[103] Hoffman, B. (2006), Inside Terrorism (Revised and Expanded Edition), New York: Columbia University Press.

as American, French, and Israeli forces' desertion of Lebanon has incentivized them to follow more ambitious campaigns[104].

Barry points out that guerilla groups today are more confrontational than earlier, and they have also been boosted by technological enhancements. Over the last few decades, innovations in international communiqué and transportation, including communication satellites and the digital revolution, have spurred globalization[105]. High-speed, more affordable air travel and the free movement of people within the European Union have increased the ability of terrorists to find hiding places and cross borders for operational purposes by reducing transaction costs. The Internet has been used increasingly by terrorist organizations to spread fear, distribute propaganda, make demands, coordinate their activities, send warnings about their attacks, and gather intelligence. Mobile phones now let terrorist groups coordinate their attacks at widely dispersed places, allowing them to operate in multiple countries at once[106].

According to the findings the international media has also grown tremendously after the Cold War due to globalization, providing more opportunities for terrorists to gain publicity[107]. Minimized aid travel expenses, more efficient correspondence through the Internet and cell phones, and fewer language barriers have significantly broadened access to information for journalists and the public[108]. The media's expanding global reach creates more favorable circumstances for gaining publicity, often called the "oxygen of terrorism. "As media organizations get access to more locations across

---

[104] ibid
[105] Ibid pg.39
[106] Ibid p.g 22
[107] ibid
[108] ibid

borders, terrorists are provided with more opportunities to have their attacks noticed[109].

Moreover, political liberalization in Central and Eastern Europe as well as Central Asia

has opened up channels of communication that were formerly controlled by autocratic

governments. This development has made terrorism more appealing in former Soviet

republics. For instance, despite harsh criticism from the Russian government, several

television channels outside of the state's control most notably NTV have broken

numerous stories about bombings, hijackings, and hostage takings by Chechen

separatists, perpetuating their conflict with the Russian military[110].

3.2 National Security and Media Freedom in Kenya

This study observed that in the face of terrorism threat that lurks in Kenya

government was compelled to reinforce its security mechanisms in a move meant to

secure the country from internal and external aggression from terrorists. Police sources

revealed that the recruitment of more officers in the police force is a good step in the

direction of bolstering security within the country. It is therefore little wonder that the

police recruitment dispute which would have seen the country go without the much

needed security personnel was resolved quickly and a fresh one conducted quickly to

ensure that the deficit is taken care of. The respondents felt that the security of a nation is

paramount to its development. An issue that security experts also agreed on in the course

of this research, saying it would be difficult for any state to achieve meaningful

development without proper security since Kenyans need to be assured of their security

---

[109] Bennett, L, (2008), The Politics of Illusion (Longman Classics Series in Political Science),
    Publisher: Longman Washington

[110]http://www.natcom.org/CommCurrentsArticle.aspx?id=2822s

within their homes, on the streets and their places of work. Without this many cannot carry out their daily economic activities for fear of losing their lives through normal criminal activities or terrorism. The government of Kenya, as the study established is under obligation to guarantee every Kenyan adequate security as enshrined in the Constitution of Kenya published in 2010. The Bill of Rights in the Kenyan constitution expressly guarantees all Kenyans the right to life, human dignity and protection of right to own property.

It is the same Constitution that guarantees Kenyans various rights and liberties and freedoms which are passed to them via the media. For example freedom of expression, freedom of the media and the right to access information are all enshrined in the Constitution. When it comes to the coverage of terrorism, the rights and liberties guaranteed by the constitution tend to clash. And as the study established, security forces always have a problem with controlling the media during the coverage of terror attacks in Kenya. A senior police officer says the rights entitled to the media act as a hindrance to security operations in times of crisis. The top cop confirmed that at times they have had to disregard the Constitution in instances when the lives of the journalists seem to be in danger. A view echoed by one of the journalists who covered the Garissa University attack. The state had to impose a curfew and no one except security officers were allowed to move in Garissa town and its environs, meaning that journalists who had camped in the area to inform the public on the goings on could not cover all aspects of the story as they would have wished to. This clearly shows that to every freedom there is a limitation, which is supported by the law.

In terms of disseminating true and objective information during attacks, the study established that journalists rely mostly on the government as a source of official information and anything contrary to that is not taken with the seriousness it deserves. However, some journalists interviewed in this study felt that government through the security agencies tend to be economical with the truth and relying on them fully could put at risk the authenticity of the news aired or published. The study revealed that journalists have to invoke their own sources to brief them when those mandated by the law to address journalists fail to do so, or are economical with the truth. The danger with this, as a senior editor argues, is that the public may end up consuming "rumours" and "speculation" packaged as "truth" or even outright satire that may leave the government with egg on the face in case the true information is not put out there. A case in point being the government briefing during the Westgate terror attack where Cabinet Secretary for Interior and Coordination Joseph Ole Lenku made a fool of himself and the government when he announced that the explosions that were being overheard were emanating from mattresses which were on fire. This was not only untrue but embarrassing to the government as Kenyans took to Social Media to make fun of the government.

The government has often blamed the media for conducting its business in an unprofessional manner and the study reveals that government believe that the media should employ professional journalists employed based on their academic and professional merit as opposed to talent. This is because those hired on the basis of their talents tend to ignore the rules that govern the profession. As to whether the media practiced too much freedom in its coverage, it is believed that the vernacular stations in

Kenya tend abuse this freedom by preaching hate messages and thus contributing to insecurity. The researcher further observed that the direction of the conflict tends to be shaped by circumstances surrounding the press[111]. For instance the government's move to ban live coverage the onset of the Post election violence since it was argued that it would help fuel animosity between the warring factions. As the study found out, at times it is in the interest of National Security for the government to ban live coverage of terror attacks as such coverage tends to expose the weakness of the security forces to the world and the aggressors. Some members of the public have blamed the media for the escalating crisis at the Westgate terror attacks, arguing that had the media not relayed the images live, the attackers at the mall would not know the government's plans and the impact would not have been less.

But some journalists have defended the media saying at times it ends up being a victim of circumstances since they don't some of the dangers they could be posing the public and those under siege. Fawcett, noted an inevitable war against the press by government bodies, and the Kenyan case was a good example[112]. As established by the study, the extent of the power of the media over the national interests can be minimal because government always has the final word on who was to air what, when, where and how, in the case of electronic broadcasting. This, the government does so as to mitigate the impact of that a dispute is likely to have on the victims and the general public. According to the study, it is not clear whether social media is capable of improving security operations during humanitarian relief missions, though tentative analysis is

---

[111] ibid
[112] Fawcett E., Liberalism: The Life of an Idea (2014), Princeton University

unoptimistic[113]. Joint security operations are highly important to major disaster relief efforts; enhancing militaries' capabilities to collaborate with international peacekeeping forces and local law enforcement would be strongly beneficial in these situations. Classified information sharing databases would be a primary means for attempting this, but so far in other areas of military and government, security difficulties have brought their use into question.

According to Tuman in the civilian sector, the U.S. government developed "Intellipedia" to encourage interagency information sharing. Intellipedia allows government employees to instantaneously collaborate classified information, reducing institutional barriers[114]. This study observes that information sharing is crucial in security operations, especially in disaster relief initiatives, when a variety of security purveyors are usually present: local police and military forces, foreign militaries, and UN security personnel. Collaborative information databases can be used to foster information sharing in joint security operations in disaster relief scenarios, allowing various security teams irrespective of organizational boundaries to share classified tactical information. However, while classified collaborative information sharing databases are laudable for their capabilities to enable experts from different organizations to pool their knowledge, form virtual teams, and make quick assessments, they are subject to considerable security concerns. This however is not the case in Kenya as the government and security agencies tend to embargo information that is deemed to be detrimental to national security as found it during this study.

---

[113] Ibid pg 60
[114] Tuman, J.S. (2003) Communicating Terror: The Rhetorical Dimensions of Terrorism. London: SAGE Publications

From the findings of this study, while social media technologies enable useful collaborative information sharing tools, the dissemination of classified information on these systems is somewhat risky[115]. Secure information sharing databases could prove highly useful to joint security operations in humanitarian relief initiatives, though their potential setbacks in the unlikely event of a security breach would be costly. In future, as social media continue to develop, they may become more suitable for classified security operations, but for now the risks are likely on par with the benefits. In any case, as demonstrated in this project, social media tools are well suited for many other sorts of operations in disaster relief efforts, so any increased effort to leverage them should preferably begin in these other, more administrative, capacities. On another level, and along the lines of crisis mapping software, social media-based crisis response maps can be developed to identify criminal activity[116].

3.3 The Role of the Media and Security Agencies Terrorism Coverage

According to this study, the media has immense power to resolve rather than propagate dispute. Many respondents felt that when properly put to use, the media can go a long way in resolving some of the existing conflicts, but this however is yet to be weighed against the impact the media can have on trying to resolve terror attacks. As

---

[115] ibid

[116] Maurice, (2009), "Challenging the Orthodoxies: The Role of Ethnicity and Regional Nationalism in Leadership and Democracy in Africa", UNESCO Seminar, 28 – 30 September at Kisumu Sports Ground

observed during this research, the media and security agencies play a complementary role during terror attacks. The media is usually present during such attacks so as to relay information in terms of news to the masses who for security and various reasons cannot be allowed at the scene of crime. This research shows that several players are usually present during such incidents and they include media, security agents, rescue and medical workers and each have their own defined roles. However for purposes of this study, the focus is majorly on the relationship between the media and security agents.

According to security agents interviewed during this study, the main aim of security agencies during terror attacks is to neutralize the attack and ward off more aggression. The police are mandated to secure the area by cordoning it off, helping in the rescue of casualties before embarking on investigations. And as it emerged during this study, police officers are at times forced to bar the media from accessing scenes of terror attacks so as to carry out security operations. This, as the study established is the main source of conflict between the media and security agents. Journalists interviewed during this study argued that the move by security forces to cordon off the crime scene makes it hard for them to gather news and relay it as their movement around the area is greatly limited. To make it worse, the journalists say, relying on the security forces as a source of information can be futile as the security officers volunteer very little or no information at all, especially the senior officers who are mandated to talk to the media. The junior security officers are however not empowered to speak to the media and the information they give cannot be attributed to them as they speak undercover. However as the study reveals, when the security or government agents decide to speak to the media, the information is usually one sided.

And since the media is only informed from one side, it becomes difficult for it to disseminate such news as the code of ethics demands that a story must be balanced; meaning both sides of the story must be told. Findings from this research hold that editors usually have a difficult time in such cases and some resort to publish a one sided story. In some cases, news editors interviewed during this research accused the government or security forces on the ground for deliberately hiding the truth or misleading the media. An example that was given being that of Westgate Mall terror attack where there was a hostage situation for several days and with the media not being allowed in, the then Security Cabinet Secretary Joseph Ole Lenku was brought on national television saying that there were mattresses burning despite the fact that explosions could be heard in the background.

In such cases, the study reveals that the media has a difficult time in dispensing its mandate. This is because the media for a fact knows that the information being given by security agents is not true. However without proof of what exactly is happening, the media remains at pains to explain what exactly is happening. And this is where the media resolves to sourcing information from unauthorized sources. As this study reveals, such information could be misleading as its authenticity cannot be confirmed. During this research, some journalists revealed that they have at times been forced to turn to unprofessional means to get such information and as one journalist disclosed, he was compelled to pay for exclusive information which was given to him by a junior police officer. Some journalists even "cook up" stories just so as to have something to report about during such attacks.

Findings from this study reveal that the public is usually attracted to the media outlet constantly relaying news from the scene of attack. The larger the audience for the media house, the higher the ratings which translate to economic profit for that particular media establishment. That's why there is an ever unending competition among media houses as they seek to outdo each other. And with a level playing field offered by a terrorist attack, in terms of coverage, each and every media house seeks to have an exclusive side of the story that the other competitors don't have. As this study established, the race to attract and retain viewers in the case of TV is real as the competitors know their ratings entirely depend on this. As observed during this research, TV stations tend to outdo each other by relaying live and up to the minute images from the scene of terror attack. During such times the saying "you blink, you lose" comes to play as the editors and journalists must ensure they have enough content to sustain the live coverage.

The study reveals that the media in Kenya works under relatively difficult conditions during terror attack coverage. With little or no government assistance in form of information, journalists are left to fend for themselves and make sure they file and publish stories from scenes of crime. However the media and security agencies must find a way of working with each other during terror attacks for the benefit of the citizens who not only have a right to be protected but also to be access information which is relayed to them during such terror attacks. As the study established, striking a balance between the media and security agents who are also mandated to ensure the security of media practitioners.

3.4 The Security Dilemma

As the study found out, the government is always apprehensive of media coverage of any issue where it is involved. The fear of the media publishing what may be detrimental to the government or what may portray it in bad light is not only limited to politics but also security issues. Findings from this study have established that many a time, the government cautiously handles the media in times of crisis for fear of escalating the crisis and in a bid to mitigate the effects of the crisis. According to police officers interviewed during this research, the need to protect the nation far outweighs the need for the public to access information. A senior police officer in the course of this research revealed that this is usually attributed to the high affinity of sensationalism as portrayed by the media. The police feel that their efforts to ease crisis situations are usually watered down by irresponsible and reckless reporting by the media and thus resort to barring the media from accessing crime scenes.

This "irresponsibility" as noted during the study is what makes the law enforcement agencies or police believe that the media is usually used by terrorists to propagate pro-terror propaganda, just like Wolfsfeld noted that the media can be misused for propaganda purposes, to incite hatred and spread rumours and therefore artificially create tensions[117]. The transmission of ideas is also not limited to conventional media such as newspapers, TV or radio and arguably, the traditional media takes primacy in this, however, new technologies, the internet and digital content should also be considered in this context, sentiments which agree with Pankowsiki[118]. According to

---

[117] Wolfsfeld, Gadi (2004) *Media and the path to peace.* p.8-10
[118] Pankowski, Rafal (2007) *How to Understand and Confront Hate Speech.*

findings from this research information can, at any stage of a conflict, make people desperate, restless and easy to manipulate and it is in line with this that security forces believe that media coverage of terrorism gives the attacks legitimacy by giving the terrorists the much needed publicity. As the study established, the Westgate mall terror attack is an example of how the media was used to give publicity to the terrorists who had taken hostage a number of shoppers during the terror attack.

The police claim that the live coverage aired on TV stations on the first day of the attack was counter-productive to efforts by the law enforcement ages to contain the crisis. As the study found out, the live coverage gave the terrorists the much needed impetus as they clearly followed what was going on and knew every step the security forces were taking to expel them from the mall so as to manage the hostage situation. The terrorists used the many television sets in the mall to keep up with the proceedings, getting to know where to attack next and how to evade the police dragnet. It is therefore clear from this study, that terrorists at Westgate mall did not only get the publicity they needed by the event being transmitted live, but they also got a chance to know the weaknesses of the security forces and plan an effective exit strategy. According to senior police officers, that is an example as to why the police in Kenya are forced to contravene the Bill of Rights as provided for by the constitution by barring the media from transmitting terror attacks live. This, the police say is usually done in the interest of the public and so as to lessen the effects of terror attacks.

As observed during this research, the move to block journalists or hinder their access to scenes of crime like terror attack sites, proved not so viable for security forces in Kenya. In 2014, the Security Laws Amendment Act spelling out stiff penalties for

journalists who cross the "redline" during the coverage of terrorism came into force. And as this research reveals, some of the clauses in the Act were draconian and an affront to the Constitution of Kenya. An example of a clause in the Act that was deemed draconian was that which criminalized media coverage likely to cause public alarm or disturb the peace or undermines investigations or security operations by police. If found guilty, the amended law proposed the perpetrator should get a maximum sentence of three years in jail, or a fine of 5 Million shillings or both. This Act was however quashed by the high court for being in contravention of the Constitution of Kenya.

Koven states that it can be problematic to find a balance between preventing harm caused by speech and protecting individual expression and being able to find this balance, however is important especially in conflict situations[119]. And this is true as findings from this research reveal that journalists are torn between being sensitive to the needs of their countries and pledging their allegiance to their states. On the other hand, they are required to act objectively devoid of their feelings and coercion from the security agents seeking to have them dance to the government tune. Findings from this research established that security agencies would prefer the media to relay delayed images of terror attacks so as not to compromise the security of those involved in security operations or victims. The study reveals that live transmission instills fear among the victims and in this manner the media fuels the terrorists plans by instilling terror among those under attack and the public at large. By delaying the transmission, the security agents feel that the media has time to sift through the images and edit what could be

---

[119] Koven, Ronald (2004) *An Antidote to Hate Speech: Journalism, Pure and Simple.*

sensational as they try to salvage the situation. But then begs the question, should the media be used as a mouth piece of the government.

3.5 Role of Media in Safeguarding National Interest

According to the findings the mass media act as a communication tool within the policy community, allowing indirect interaction between groups such as government officials and grassroots organizations. In the face of terrorism in Kenya, the study established that the media acts as a conduit allowing influence groups, organizations, and others to communicate with both the public and with decision makers by effectively getting their message out to the media. Arguments which agree with Nacos who states that, the press also helps to intensify and accelerate movements that have already begun through other channels since mass media rarely starts a movement, but they can pick up an idea that originated elsewhere and accelerate its development or magnify its impact[120].

From the study, it was emerged that the media influences and is influenced by public opinion, as it tries to give readers and viewers information about issues that they care about. And as the findings of this study reflect, government officials rely on the media as a means of monitoring the state of public opinion on subjects like which issues the public feels need to be addressed and how well government is doing addressing them. Public opinion as noted in this research influences government decision to do something, or more often, constrains government from doing something. From the findings of this study, the media wields immense power capable of moving a government in office and this power should be used to the advantage of the citizenry. According to members of the

---

[120] Nacos, B.L. (2000). Accomplice or Witness? The Media's Role in Terrorism," *Current History,* 99 (636). p. 1745

public interviewed during this study, the media's importance cannot be over stated and it's a high time the media acted in the interest of the nation. Some members of the public feel that the media in Kenya has at times been promoting the agenda of terrorists with little regard to what the nation stands to lose. A businessman in the tourism industry interviewed during the study noted that some of the investigative pieces done on the topic of terrorism have been counterproductive as they have kept tourists at bay thus reducing the income accrued from tourism which is Kenya's second largest foreign exchange earner.

This little regard to the effects that reporting on terrorism has on Kenya's economy is what has led to the media being accused of not being patriotic. Investors in the tourism industry revealed that the losses incurred due to such negative reports or glorification of terrorism not only affects them but the whole country which depends on tourism as a source of income. To this end, the study established that the media cannot afford to be aloof to the dangers of their reporting on the country's economy especially in the face of terrorism. An issue that police officers agree with stating that portraying Kenya as an insecure country makes it difficult for them to conduct their work as the police force is viewed as a failure and thus susceptible to attacks. As findings from this study reveal, the media should know that if the country is affected, they are affected too. This is because when inflation rises due to harsh economic conditions, media practitioners will not be spared as they too will have to bear the brunt of their deeds. According to this research the media's responsiveness and support to issues that seem to burden the government or issues that are likely to pull down the progress of the country's

development should be handled in a cautious media manner so as not to throw the country into anarchy.

As observed during the research, the media has the moral obligation to put the national interest first before its own interests which are largely driven by commercial profits. Some senior police officers interviewed during the research indicated that the media in Kenya is not loyal to the interests of the country and can even auction the country just to get the ever elusive juicy story. Sentiments echoed by a few members of the public who feel that the "recklessness" with which the media exposes the country during terror attack gives an impetus to the works of terrorists. As observed during this study, journalists can achieve this by choosing carefully what to air so as not to raise tension among the citizenry. The choice of words and images published during the reporting of terror can go a long way in salvaging the situation as postulated by security experts during this study. As it emerged during the research, sensationalism should not be allowed during the coverage of terrorism as this gives the terrorists the drive to carry on with their ruthless acts. Instead the media was advised to choose words and images that will reassure the citizenry that the situation is not as dire as the terrorists will want them to believe and that the situation can and will be effectively handled by those in charge. In terms of investigative reporting, this study revealed that the media has always exposed the weaknesses of the security apparatus in the country thus making it easier for the terrorists to mark their targets and carry out their attacks with ease.

However as this study revealed, this is not practical especially in a country with a democratic dispensation like Kenya where the media enjoys so much freedom and liberty provided by the constitution. The findings of this study agree with Djankov who observed

that the media in new and restored democracies enjoys immense liberty and that this democracy has been a boon to the press[121]. It is evident from the findings of this research that new constitutions are written that provide press freedom and the right to information, allowing journalists to report on areas that were previously taboo including terrorism which is not such a new phenomenon in Kenya. Journalists who took part in this study observed that most countries that have undergone a democratic transition since the 1980s, appreciate the press as an important player on the political stage.

From the study, it is clear that the media in Kenya enjoys immense liberties as enshrined in the constitution and therefore it would be difficult to convince media practitioners to skew their reporting in a certain manner so as to suit the whims of the government. News editors and crime reporters interviewed during this research noted that it would be retrogressive for democracy to force the media to report in a particular manner so as to show that they have public interest at heart. This, as the study found out would amount to eroding the democratic gains made by the country in order to have a liberated media which is not under government censorship. Media practitioners who took part in this study stated that the media's values of objectivity and fairness should never be sacrificed at the altar of national interest as this would be the beginning of self censorship before government censorship checks in. According to journalists, the media is under obligation to tell both sides of the story without fear, favour or ill will. And as the study established, reporting only the positive side of the government or security agents during terror attacks and denying the audience the side of the terrorists can be seen bias. But just how does the media get to report the aggressors'' side of the story?

---

[121] Simeon Djankov, Caralee McLeish, Tatiana Nenova and Andrei Shleifer, "Who Owns the Media?" Draft paper for the World Bank's World Development Report2001.

Findings from this study revealed that many terrorist groups tend to have a channel of relaying their messages to the public as seen when they claim responsibility for the attacks. In the recent times, social media has been their choice mode of communication and more often than not, messages claiming responsibility of terror attacks will be relayed on facebook or media accounts. Therefore media practitioners need to be on the lookout for such messages and include them in their reports when covering terrorism. On the other hand as the study revealed, there are certain media establishments that are out to support the terrorists' agenda. These too, should go beyond their interests and report the other side of the story as well so as to gain the much needed balance. This study found out when it comes to reporting on terrorism each media outlet uses the house policy it ascribes to, to relay the information to the masses. For example, state owned media outlets will always give out the side that favours the government, while those media outlets that support the opposition will always paint the government in bad light. Apart from the liberties granted to the media by the constitution, it is also imperative to note that the interests of media owners often determine media content and allow the media to be manipulated by vested interests as noted by Holmes whose arguments agree with the findings of this study[122].

It emerges therefore from this study that there is a need for the media and the security agents to strike a balance when it comes to coverage of terrorism in Kenya. From the findings of this study, the security agents need to understand that the media has an obligation to report and report a balanced story to the audience. On the other hand, the security forces have a duty to protect the country without interference from the media.

---

[122] Stephen Holmes, "Liberal constraints on private power?" in Judith Lichtenberg (ed), Democracy and the Mass Media," Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. pp. 21-65

This means that it would be important for a balance to be achieved for the two players to perform a complementary role and not to be seen as competitors.

3.6 Conclusion

This topic sought to examine the role the media plays in national security when it comes to coverage of terrorism in Kenya. From the findings of this study, it is clear that the mandate of the media to report on terrorism issues cannot be wished away as this is the core business of the media and terror activities tend to be a source of news for the media. On the other hand, the security of a nation is of paramount importance and therefore security agencies in Kenya have to do all they can to ensure that lives and properties are protected during terror attacks.

As found from this research, the mandate of the media and that of the security agents tends to clash during terrorism. The media using the liberty granted to it by the law always feels that it is obligated to tell the terrorism story and tell it the best way it can. This includes the use of images and words that may be deemed to be "sensational". The lack of co-operation from government representatives in divulging information regarding terror attacks has led to the media to speculate and rely on hearsay when covering terrorism.

And as the study reveals, the media has been urged to play a more patriotic role by being cautious on how they report on terrorism so as not to jeopardize the security and economic fortunes of the country. The study established that the media has been faulted for playing into the hands of terrorists who have many a time used it to broadcast their messages which are mostly intended to cause panic and instill fear among the citizenry. Members of the public feel that the media plays a make or break role during terrorism

coverage and any mistakes will have major consequences on the security of the nation. However from the study, the media feels like its freedom cannot be curtailed and by deciding to skew their reports to favour the government is a form of self censorship which can drive a "rogue" government to move in and censor the media. From the findings, it is clear that there is a need for harmony to be created between the media and security forces to be created during the coverage of terrorism.

3.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview of media and national security. It is organized in the following sub-topics: Global Overview of Media and National Security, National Security and Media Liberty in Kenya, the Role of the Media and Security Agencies in coverage of terrorism, The Security Dilemma, Media and National interest.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATIONS ON REPORTING TERRORISM IN KENYA; STRIKING A BALANCE BETWEEN PUBLIC INTEREST AND NATIONAL SECURITY

4.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the interpretation and presentation of the findings obtained from the field. The chapter presents the background information of the respondents, findings of the analysis based on the objectives of the study. It also presents the findings from the respondents under the following subtopics: Responsibility of the Media in Reporting Terrorism, The Relationship between Terrorism and the News Media, Kenyan Media, Terrorism and National Interests, Media, Public Interest and National Security in Kenya, Measures to Be Taken To Ensure a Balance between National Security and Public Interest Is Struck, Media Reporting of Terrorist and Glorification of Anti-Social Conduct, and finally the Conclusion and Recommendation

4.1 Demographic Information

The study sought to establish the demographic information in order to determine whether it had influence on reporting terrorism in Kenya. The demographic information of the respondents included age, gender and education levels and occupation of the respondents.

4.1.1 Gender distribution of the respondents

The following table displays demographic information according to gender.

Table 4.1: Gender of the respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
Male	55	61.11%
Female	35	38.89%
Total	**90**	**100.0%**

According to the analysis it was evident that majority of the respondents were male who represent 61.11% of respondents while 38.89% were female. It can therefore be deduced that males were the most dominant gender and the findings of the study are as shown in table 4.1

4.1.2 Age of the respondents

The researcher sought to determine if the respondents were of desired age to give reliable information that pertain to reporting terrorism; striking a balance between public interest and national security**.**

Table 4.2: Age of the respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
20 - 30 years	11	12.22%
31-40 years	37	41.11%
41-50 years	24	26.67%
51-60years	10	11.11%
60 years and above	8	8.89%
Total	**90**	**100.0%**

The study findings revealed that majority 41.11% of the respondents aged between 31 to 40 years. 26.67% aged between 41 to 50 years, 12.22% of the study respondents aged between 20 - 30 years, 11.11% aged between 51-60 years with the least 8.89% aging 60 years and above. These implied that the respondents were of reliable age to give responses on reporting terrorism.

4.1.3 Level of education of the respondents

The table shows the respondents level of education.

Table 4.3: Level of education of the respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
Secondary education	1	1.11%
Diploma	12	13.33%
Bachelor's degree	58	64.44%
Master's degree and above	19	21.11%
Total	**90**	**100.0%**

The study sought to find out the respondents level of education. The findings of the study are tabulated as in table 4.4. From the findings, majority (64.44%) had university degrees followed by 21.11% who indicated that they had master degree and 13.33% of the respondents indicated that they had college diplomas with only 1.11% who had secondary education only. Therefore the findings conclude that most respondents had adequate education to execute their pertaining to reporting terrorism in Kenya. The findings of the study are tabulated as in table 4.3.

4.2 Media coverage of terrorism and compromise national security

Respondents were asked to indicate whether media coverage of terrorism compromises national security or not.

Figure 4.1 Media Coverage of terrorism compromise national security
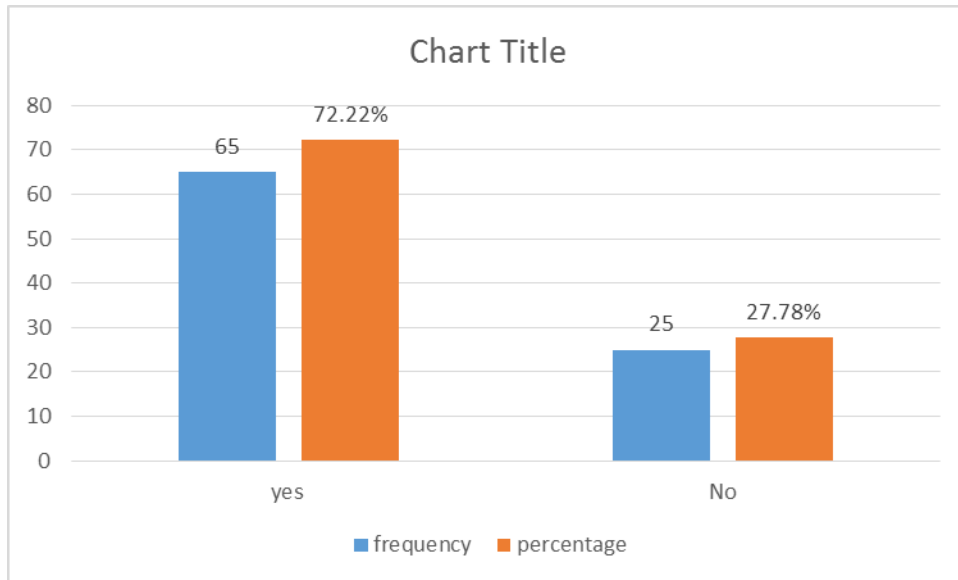
According to the findings majority (72.22%) of the respondents agreed that Media coverage of terrorism compromises national security, with only (27.78%) who were of contrary opinion.

4.3 Media and enhancing terrorism agenda

Respondents were asked to indicate in their view whether media was being used as a tool to propagate the agenda of terrorists or not.

Figure 4.2Media and enhancing agenda of terrorist
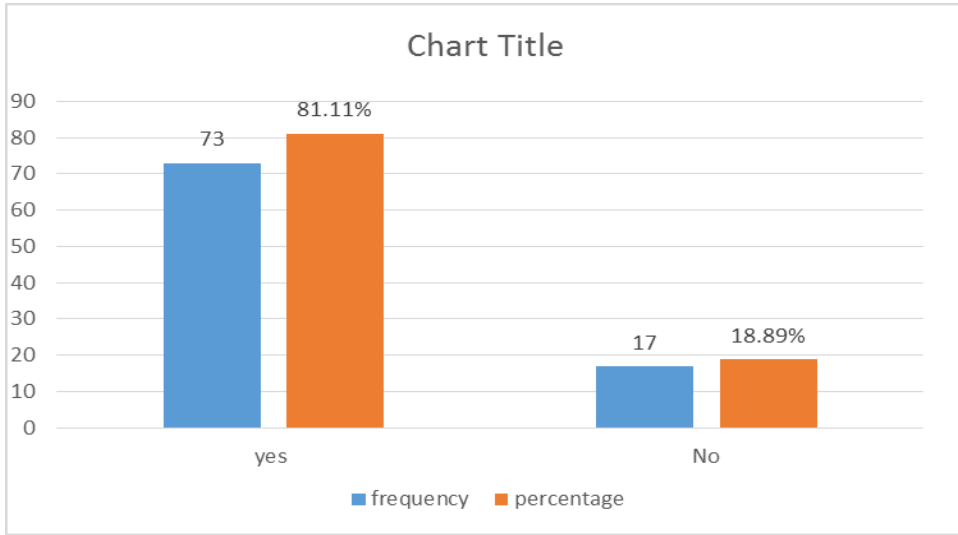
The study findings revealed that majority (81.11%) agreed that media has been used as tool to propagate the agenda of terrorists with only 18.89% who were of the opinion that media was been used as tool to propagate the agenda of terrorists.

4.4 Media And Ways Of Enhancing Agenda Of Terrorist

The respondents were asked indicate ways in which media enhanced the agenda of terrorism.

Figure 4.3: Media and ways of enhancing agenda of terrorist
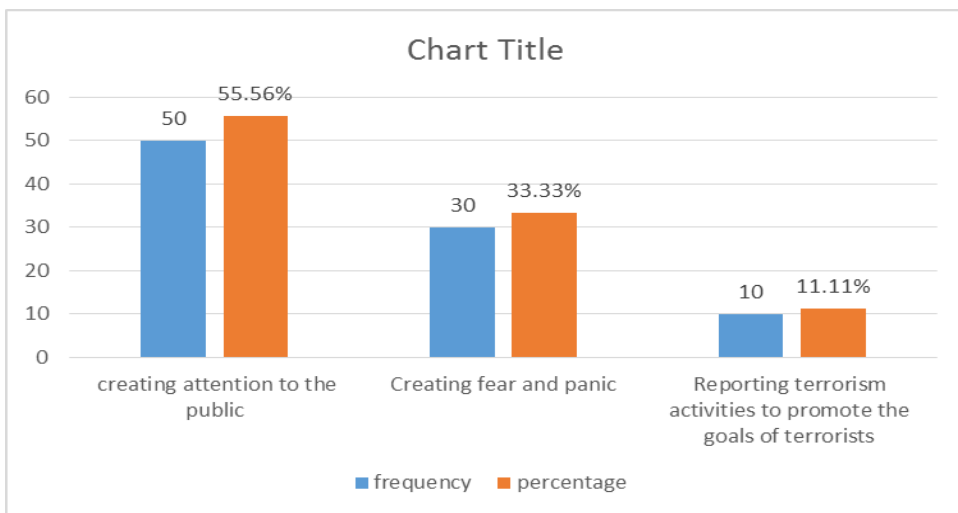
4.5 General View on Media and Terrorism

Respondents were asked to indicate extent to which they agreed with each of the given statements in a likert scale of 1 to 5. Where: 1. = strongly disagree (SD); 2. = Disagree (D); 3. = Neutral (N); 4. = Agree (A); 5. = Strongly Agree (SA)

Table 4.4: General View on Media and Terrorism

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean
Reporting terrorism can propagate terrorists' attacks.	1.61	3.23	11.29	66.13	17.74	3.97
Media can be used as a responsible tool for fighting terrorism in Kenya.	4.84	9.68	30.65	37.10	17.74	3.53
Constant broadcast of dramatic and explicit images create tension, fear, anger and grief to public.	4.84	20.9	38.71	33.87	1.61	3.02
Terrorists are drawn to news media coverage because they desire maximum publicity for their messages and symbolic actions.	1.61	3.23	11.29	53.23	30.65	4.10
Media coverage on terrorism compromise covert security operations especially during terror attacks.	4.84	9.68	20.97	45.16	19.35	3.64

A balance can be struck between public interest and national security while reporting terrorism.	2.94	2.94	11.76	52.94	29.41	4.04
The right to access information as enshrined in the constitution override the need for government to protect its citizenry.	5.88	2.94	8.82	47.06	35.29	4.03

From the study findings it was discovered that majority of the respondents (66.13%) agreed that Reporting terrorism can propagate terrorists' attacks with a mean of 3.97, the respondents (37.10%) also agreed that Media can be used as a responsible tool for fighting terrorism in Kenya with a mean of 3.53. However, respondents (38.71%) were moderate that Constant broadcast of dramatic and explicit images create tension, fear, anger and grief to public (mean=3.02). in addition, respondents (53.23%) agreed that Terrorists are drawn to news media coverage because they desire maximum publicity for their messages and symbolic actions (mean=4.10).the findings also revealed that majority(45.16%) of the respondents agreed that Mmedia coverage on terrorism compromise covert security operations especially during terror attacks(mean=3.64). the researcher noted that majority of the respondents (52.94%) agreed that A balance can be struck between public interest and national security while reporting terrorism (mean=4.04). However, 47.06%of the total respondents agreed that The right to access information as enshrined in the constitution override the need for government to protect its citizenry(mean=4.03).

4.6 Role of the Media in Reporting Terrorism

According to the key informants one of the major functions of the mass media is the provision of adequate information about ongoing or current events in society as a way of serving the public need to know[123]. The news media, in particular, serves this basic human need by providing information on what, who, why and where of a particular event, which the media consider worthy of relaying to the public. Indeed, Joseph says that it is possible to argue that there is no particular time the public is more in need of information from the media than when the safety, or even the survival, of the public is threatened[124]. In other words, the public is in greater need of more extensive information during a current danger in order to reduce uncertainty about the danger. No wonder then that the news media, particularly the broadcast media, become rallying point of the public when terrorists strike[125].

According to Patrick reporting on terrorism presents a number of dilemmas and paradoxes to journalists whose responsibility is to inform the public objectively, fairly and accurately[126]. It is a dilemma to them because one of the main objectives of a terrorist act is to maximize publicity in order to create a psychological effect on the public. This leads to some questions concerning the role of the media in reporting terrorism. For example, is the media an accomplice to the aims of the terrorists, who crave cheap publicity; does the media not magnifying the threat and fear in the way they report terrorism instead of allaying the fear; are the media' reports of terrorism encouraging more such acts, as the terrorists may be more emboldened by the massive publicity they

---

[123] Interview with Paul Journalist at The Star Newspaper, Kenya
[124] Freelance photographer Joseph Mathenge
[125] Interview with freelance journalist Francis
[126] Interview with Patrick Journalist at Trans world Radio

gain for their terror and intensify the acts of terrorism; are the media really objective and accurate in the way they report terrorism in their narrative and framing of the terrorists; how best should the media then report incidents of terrorists violence [127].

4.7 Relationship between Terrorism and the News Media

Mike states that terrorists are drawn to news media coverage because they desire maximum publicity for their messages and symbiotic actions[128]. They achieve the desired maximum coverage by selecting a target and engaging in a kind of symbiotic action that is visually dramatic and which is difficult for the news media to ignore and it is in this sense that Jenkins says that "terrorist attacks are often carefully choreographed to attract the attention of the electronic media and the international press. The hostages themselves often mean nothing to the terrorist and terrorism is aimed at the people watching, not at the actual victims" [129].

According to Mbande, terrorism is theatre and the news media, for their part, are seen as unable to resist the chance of a good story, so they obligingly provide extensive coverage of terrorist bombings, hijacks, kidnapping and assassinations[130]. This is supported by Walter and Jenkins who say that "terrorists have learned that the media is of paramount importance in their campaigns that the terrorist act by itself is next to nothing, whereas publicity is all" [131].

---

[127] Jane Video Journalist at Zoomin.TV,
[128] mike member of the public
[129] Jenkins Broadcast Journalist at Wired Media, Film Director/Producer at Wired Media
[130] Mbande Broadcast Journalist at Wired Media, Film Director/Producer at Wired Media
[131] ibid

4.8 Media, Terrorism and Public Interest in Kenya

According to Paul, terrorists, governments, and the media see the function, roles and responsibilities of the media when covering terrorist events from differing and often competing perspectives[132]. Such perspectives drive behavior during terrorist incidents-- often resulting in both tactical and strategic gains to the terrorist operation and the overall terrorist cause. The challenge to both the governmental and press communities is to understand the dynamics of terrorist enterprise and to develop policy options designed to serve the interests of government, the media, and the society. Majority of the key informants stated that terrorists must have publicity in some form if they are to gain attention, inspire fear and respect, and secure favorable understanding of their cause, if not their act[133]. Governments need public understanding, cooperation, restraint, and loyalty in efforts to limit terrorist harm to society and in efforts to punish or apprehend those responsible for terrorist acts. Journalists and the media in general pursue the freedom to cover events and issues without restraint, especially governmental restraint.

According to the key respondents three new trends appear to be emerging which impact on the relationship between the media, the terrorist, and government[134]. These include: anonymous terrorism; more violent terrorist incidents; and terrorist attacks on media personnel and institutions. A number of options, none without costs and risks, exist for enhancing the effectiveness of government media-oriented responses to terrorism and for preventing the media from furthering terrorist goals as a byproduct of vigorous and

---

[132] Paul a Security expert
[133] Mike and Wanjala Writer/Freelance Photo-Journalist at Standard Newspapers Kenya, Writer/Media Officer/Online Content Editor at African Colours web portal
[134] Prisca and Ndeto Journalists at AFTV/BAM, A Journalism student, a blogger and writer at http://kanalispeaks.wordpress.com/, Journalist at Kenya News Agency

free reporting. These include: financing joint media/government training exercises; establishing a government terrorism information response center; promoting use of media pools; promoting voluntary press coverage guidelines; and monitoring terrorism against the media.

This study found out that the media and the government have common interests in seeing that the media are not manipulated into promoting the cause of terrorism or its methods. But policymakers do not want to see terrorism, or anti-terrorism, eroding freedom of the press--one of the pillars of democratic societies. This appears to be a dilemma that cannot be completely reconciled--one with which societies will continually have to struggle. The challenge for policymakers is to explore mechanisms enhancing media/government cooperation to accommodate the citizen and media need for honest coverage while limiting the gains uninhibited coverage may provide terrorists or their cause. Communication between the government and the media here is an important element in any strategy to prevent terrorist causes and strategies from prevailing and to preserve democracy.

4.8.1 Main Aim of Media coverage of terrorism

According to Fred, journalists generally want the freedom to cover an issue without external restraints, whether they come media owners, advertisers, editors, or from the government[135]. The media wants to be the first with the story as the scoop is golden, "old news is no news." Pressure to transmit real time news instantly in today's competitive hi-tech communication environment is at an all-time high. The media also want to make the story as timely and dramatic as possible, often with interviews, if

---

[135]Interview with Fred member of the public

possible. During the June 1985 TWA Flight 847 hijack crisis, ABC aired extensive interviews with both hijackers and hostages. In addition, most media members want to be professional and accurate and not to give credence to disinformation, however newsworthy it may seem. This may not be easily done at times, especially when systematic efforts to mislead them are undertaken by interested parties.

They however want to protect their ability to operate as securely and freely as possible in the society. In many instances, this concern goes beyond protecting their legal right to publish relatively unrestrained; it includes personal physical security. They want protection from threat, harassment, or violent assault during operations, and protection from subsequent murder by terrorists in retaliation providing unfavorable coverage (the latter occurring more often abroad than in the United States.). the media want to protect society's right to know, and construe this liberally to include popular and dramatic coverage, e.g., airing emotional reactions of victims, family members, witnesses, and "people on the street," as well as information withheld by law enforcement, security, and other organs of government[136]. And finally the media members often have no objection to playing a constructive role in solving specific terrorist situations if this can be done without excessive cost in terms of story loss or compromise of values

Majority in response to the question "is it possible for the media in Kenya to objectively report on terrorism while safeguarding national interests?" Said the media and the government have common interests in seeing that the media are not manipulated into promoting the cause of terrorism or its methods On the other hand, neither the media or policy makers want to see terrorism, or counter terrorism, eroding constitutional

---

[136] Members of public Ruth, Osman and Mweni data managers and analysts KEMRI

freedoms including that of the press one of the pillars of democratic societies. This appears to be a dilemma that cannot be completely reconciled one with which society will continually have to struggle. Communication between the government and the media is an important element in any strategy designed to prevent the cause of terrorism from prevailing and in preserving democracy. By their nature, democracies with substantial individual freedoms and limitations on police powers offer terrorists operational advantages. But terrorists and such democracies are not stable elements in combination. If terrorism sustains itself or flourishes, freedoms shrink, and in societies run by ideological authoritarians, thugs, or radical religious extremists, a free press is one of the first institutions to go.

4.9 Media, and National Security in Kenya

The 2010 Constitution weakened laws such as the Official Secrets Act that initially prevented release of information on national security grounds. According to Mwangi the delay in enacting this law as well as the Access to Information and Data Protection law is a major concern since they are very critical in facilitating journalism practice in the country[137]. It's only the Access to Information law that would obligate people, especially those holding information on behalf of the public, to release it and equally provide for protection of individual.

According to one member of the public, President Uhuru's pledge to uphold freedom of expression and the press as long as it is exercised with responsibility is a move in the right direction[138]. The president has been on record urging the media to

---

[137]Interview with Mwangi
[138] Irene member of public nurse at Nairobi outpatient

ensure they have their facts right before writing their stories, insisting there is no absolute freedom since this can destroy a country. There have also been concerns over the media in the hands of a few owners as well as the level of geographical penetration by most of the media, which will allow for plurality in expression of ideas, among others.

4.10 Media in Furthering the Agenda of Terrorists

According to Carol, terrorism is an attractive boon for media coverage, mainly because terrorist attacks make viewer ratings surge and profits increase and more specific, terrorism has many aspects that make it a very attractive subject for the media, as it has the elements of drama, danger, blood, human tragedy, miracle stories, heroes, shocking footage, and action[139]. Another reason is that violence is a central and defining factor in contemporary television culture and is critical to the semiotic and financial momentum of contemporary media organizations. Indeed, the media has always been interested in reporting terrorism; however, the recent proliferation of television and radio channels, and the emergence of mega-media organizations have resulted in greater competition and insatiable appetites for shocking, sensational "infotainment" that is believed to keep audiences captivated, boost ratings and circulation, and increase profits. Also, the part of the reason why the media is that irresponsible and excessively profit-oriented in the context of terrorism is that a considerable number of top media executives today come from the corporate world, but not from the ranks of journalists.

Michael says that it is by and large the case that the media covers terrorist acts by writing sensation-seeking, enlarging anecdotic stories, especially on who is to blame,

---

[139] Carol police officer

repeating the same images over and over again, separating physical and mental health consequences of disasters, and creating new syndromes[140]. In addition, the media traumatizes the audience by exaggerating the threats, or, as it was in the case in the US after 9/11, showing nonstop footage of combat scenes. In other words, as Altheide underlines, the politics of fear is a dominant motif for news and popular culture today. Moreover, within this framework, news reporting about terrorism is linked with "victimization" narratives that make crime, danger, and fear very relevant to everyday experiences.

According to Ann, in order to understand how the media portrays terrorists and covers related stories and news, one should take a closer look at the mediums the media employs[141]. The media generally uses agenda setting and framing to highlight and make certain issues more prominent than others. Agenda setting is the theory that the more attention a media outlet pays to a certain phenomenon, the more importance the public attributes to such an issue. Framing, on the other hand, is "selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described". Thus, the words and images that make up the frame can be distinguished from the rest of the news by their capacity to stimulate support of or opposition to the sides in a political conflict.

---

[140] Michael Freelance Multimedia Journalist at Freelance Journalist and Writer
[141] Ann security officer republic of Kenya

According to the respondents, the media indeed profits from the drama terrorism creates, and covers the terrorism-related news in a sensational way[142]. Through employing the above-mentioned mediums, however, the media may directly or indirectly serve the interests of terrorists by simplifying stories for the viewer to the point that it has little to do with the actual events. Repeating the traumatizing scenes and stories may also serve them, as the goal of the terrorists is to be in the media as often and long as possible. In addition, the media's bias and obsession of sensationalism may help them get the upper hand in using media as a tool, create an atmosphere and politics of fear, and create ripe conditions for propaganda and recruitment following any terrorist attack.

Given this, it can be argued that the goals and objectives of terrorists are highly related to agenda setting and framing, and that the way media covers news and stories has a crucial impact on the way terrorists communicate, carry out attacks, and gain a foothold in the audiences' daily lives. The better terrorists understand this mechanism behind the media, the more coverage they may receive and take further steps for massive publicity and the opportunity to showcase their ability to strike.

4.**10.1 Media as a Weapon for Terrorism**

Margaret Thatcher once said that "publicity is the oxygen of terrorism." Terrorist organizations embrace the media for without it they lack a significant tool that has arguably become their most effective weapon. "Terrorists must have publicity in some form if they are to gain attention, inspire fear and respect, and secure favorable understanding of their cause, if not their act"[143] From the perspective of the terrorist,

---

[142] Members of public
[143] Interview with Agnes Investigative Journalist at Standard Group LTD KTN, F. Investigative Journalist...

media coverage is a measure of success for a campaign. Brigitte says terrorists commit violent acts looking for three universal objectives: to get attention; to gain recognition; and to obtain a certain degree of respect and legitimacy[144]. These objectives are attainable for those individuals who are capable of receiving the most media coverage.

Terrorists and the media have an interesting relationship. Media-oriented strategies, in which terrorists are aware of and utilize the media to further their message; and Complete Breakaway, in which the media is seen as the enemy and the terrorists will respond to the media in the same way they respond to any enemy[145]. Contemporary terrorism would show that terrorists are on a mixture of the last three levels and that complete indifference is hardly recognized. One would be hard pressed to find a terrorist organization that does not desire media attention in some form. They are almost all interested in drawing some attention to their cause although keeping the media alive is obviously not a priority. There are many media outlets out there and if a few get eliminated in the process it will only serve to increase the attention to the incident. Whether or not this is productive to the cause is a different argument all together.[146]

In some instances it is debated that the media are the principal authors of the stereotyped and clearly negative vision that society has of terrorist organization's participants and activities. By this perception the press is considered to be "mere extensions of the enemy".

---

[144] Brigitte journalist and Academic Writer at Ispire Afrikan, Researcher/...
[145] Joan and martin members of public
[146] An interview with Waithera sales and Marketing officer

4.11 Media Training and National Security

Should journalists expect support and protection from security agents when they risk their lives to report on security operations? What if their coverage could potentially expose military strategies? Why are journalists disparaged as unpatriotic when they show how security operations fail? These and other questions were at the heart of a discussion in Nairobi recently between leaders of the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) and National Police Service Commission (NPSC) and the Media Council of Kenya. The meeting, on February 7, was organized by the council in the wake of its study on how media covered the September 2013 attack on Nairobi's Westgate mall, which killed 67 people.[147]

In the study, journalists said they were not adequately prepared by their editors on how to cover the Westgate mall story. One photojournalist said the only advice he got from his editor was not to risk his life because he needed to be alive to tell the story. The study established that journalists who had previously covered crime were better prepared psychologically to cover the attack while others were overwhelmed by fear and intensity. "Covering this incident was a bit terrifying, knowing that these were not normal thugs but terrorists with state-of-the art artillery and who could kill any time." Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Defence, Raychelle Omamo, and Gen. Julius Karangi, former head of the KDF blamed the media for being not only a security risk and an obstacle but also aiding criminals by giving them information on security plans and installations. They said that, except for journalists embedded with security forces, media should not report on details of military operations. Journalists at the meeting differed with this position as Nation

---

[147] Ibid

90

Media Group Chief Executive Linus Gitahi acknowledged that the media was ill-prepared to cover such a big event but said journalists did their best.

According to one of the Journalists, "We editors compromised the security of our reporters during the Westgate terrorist attack and we must take responsibility[148]. It's time newsrooms worked on security support structures for the journalists, for we cannot trust the security agencies to always extend help," Media houses in Kenya do not have adequate protective gear and equipment for journalists, and even when they do, they are required by law to deposit security gear with police, making the process of actually accessing the equipment slow and cumbersome. The Media Council's report found that the press might have compromised security operations during the mall siege. Live coverage showing special security forces preparing to enter the building where hostages were being held could have risked the operation and put the hostages in jeopardy. Of respondents to the study, 70% said they felt that media failed to ask critical questions about the historical, cultural, and social context of terrorism and instead focused on dramatic, violent, or bizarre accounts of the attack. "With no briefs from editors, reporters were reduced to conveyor belts of misinformation that lacked in credibility and objectivity. Some of the reporters were traumatized and shocked and received no counseling after the incident."'[149]

4.12 Striking a Balance between Public Interest and National Security

Kenya is a signatory to International and regional instruments guaranteeing the right to freedom of expression and the right of access to information such as the

---

[148] Ibid
[149] "The Final Insert" by the Media Council of Kenya

Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR), the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) and the World Summit on the Information Society's Declaration of Principles where parties commit to media pluralism and diversity. The standards regarding freedom of expression apply to online expression. In 2011 the UN Human Rights Committee stated in General Comment No 34 that the ICCPR protects all forms of expression and the means of their dissemination, including all forms of electronic and Internet-based modes of expression. At the same time, the UN Human Rights Committee noted the differences between traditional and electronic information dissemination systems, and observed that the laws should take these differences into account[150].

In relation to the online application of freedom of expression standards, General Comment No.34 provides that restrictions on the operation of websites, blogs or any other internet-based, electronic or other information dissemination system (including systems to support such communication, such as internet service providers or search engines) are only permissible to the extent that they are compatible with paragraph 3 of Article 19 ICCPR. Permissible restrictions generally should be content-specific; generic bans on the operation of certain sites and systems are not compatible with paragraph 3. It is also inconsistent with paragraph 3 to prohibit a site or an information dissemination system from publishing material solely on the basis that it may be critical of the government or the political social system espoused by the government.[151]

---

[150] ibid
[151] collins Journalist at Kenya News Agency

Furthermore, The Joint Declaration on Freedom of Expression and the Internet of June 2011 noted that regulatory approaches in the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors cannot simply be transferred to the Internet. The international mandates called for promotion of the use of self-regulation as an effective tool in redressing harmful speech. Kenya is obliged to implement international treaties via domestic law. The Constitution of Kenya 2010 specifically provides for Freedom of Expression (FOE) (Art. 33), Right of Access to Information (FOI) (Art. 35) as well as Freedom of the Media (FM) (Art. 35). These provisions are subject to limitations that are reasonable and justifiable in an open and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom as provided for in the Constitution of Kenya 2010.

4.13 Conclusion

According to one of the journalists the rhetoric and narratives with which the news media label and define terrorists does not really matter, what matters most is the dramatic narration and manners in which they report terrorist acts[152]. This is the vital concern of many theorists who are interested in how the media have reported various terrorist acts, labeling, derogatory definitions and mythologizing terrorists is, as it is for many theorists, a form of discourse that entails power and resistance. On this basis, the negative labeling and definition of the terrorists might have some effect in terms of how they are framed and primed in the mind of the audiences, nevertheless, the current news environment provides a site for a struggle against such framing and priming in the minds of the public.

---

[152] Sammy Journalist at Kenya News Agency

However, what the terrorists do not want to struggle against is the propaganda mileage they get from the considerable psychological effects of their acts, the registration of fear, thrill, agony and trauma in the minds of the public, and which the media, by their conventions, intensify through their dramatic reporting of the images of carnage and slaughter terrorists create through their acts. Thus, the way media, by their conventions and through their narratives, cover a terrorist act confers importance (status conferral theory) on the terrorists. In addition, the news media in particular have been a ready accomplice for the achievement of the terrorists' motives of creating fear in the minds of the public. The result of this achievement on the part of the terrorists can lead to what is termed as contagion effect. In other words, the media's coverage of terrorism provokes both undue publicity for the terrorists and immeasurable fear, real or imaginary, in the minds of the public. This may eventually embolden the terrorists and motivate them to go further and raise the threshold of their violence.

Catherine argues that an emphasis on the violent acts committed by terrorists may stimulate other terrorists to repeat the same crimes since there is evidence to suggest that detailed coverage of a terrorist act is apt to lead to a rash of similar acts[153]. In fact, the contagion effect may spread beyond reducing the inhibitions of the terrorists towards violence to the unlearning of inhibition against the use of violence by many other people in the society, acquisition of know-how relating to the rational uses and applications of violence and provide great motivation for youths to act violently.

---

[153] KDF officer

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents summary of the findings, conclusions based on the findings and recommendations there-to on reporting terrorism in Kenya; Striking a balance between public interest and national security. The chapter also presents recommendations for further studies.

5.1 Findings

The aim of this study was to investigate the topic "Reporting terrorism in Kenya; Striking a balance between Public Interest and National Security". Three specific objectives were fronted. To look at the various ways in which the media coverage of terrorism can compromise national security, to find out whether the media can and is used as tool to propagate the agenda of terrorists, to investigate how the media can objectively report on terrorism while safeguarding national interests. The responsibility of the media in reporting terrorism was examined, the relationship between terrorism and the news media, Kenyan media , terrorism and national interests, Media, public interest and national security in Kenya, Striking a balance between national security and public interest is struck, media reporting of terrorist and glorification of anti-social conduct.

5.1.1 Media Coverage And Terrorism In Kenya

Based on the observations the study found that the media and the government have common interests in seeing that the media are not manipulated into promoting the cause of terrorism or its methods. But policymakers do not want to see terrorism, or anti-

terrorism, eroding freedom of the press one of the pillars of democratic societies. According to the findings of this study, there appears to be a dilemma in reconciling the roles of the media and that of security forces during the coverage of terrorism in Kenya. The challenge for policymakers is to explore mechanisms that will enhance media and government cooperation to accommodate the citizens and media's need for honest coverage Communication between the government and the media here is an important element in any strategy to prevent terrorist causes and strategies from prevailing and to preserve democracy.

The study found out that all over the world, journalism's fundamental function is the dissemination of information and other than that the media acts as a watchdog for the society thus the tag "the fourth estate" which is usually used to refer to the media. The media has emerged as one the strongest social institutions in building public opinion and safeguarding national interests. A positive and constructive role of journalists could turn around the society on positive lines for promoting social values This research also noted that the Mass Communication Departments in institutions of higher learning in Kenya have made tremendous contributions in producing good journalists, who are now holding important positions at different media houses. Other institutions have upgraded their academic programmes in media training by launching degree courses in the discipline of TV-production from current semester. The study found out that the recent spate of terrorist acts indicates the emergence of trends that impact on the relationship between the media, the terrorist, and government.

5.1.2 Media and National Security

This study established that today we see isolated instances of anonymous terrorism acts where no one claims responsibility and no demands are made. The World Trade Center bombing is but one example. This allows the media a larger role in speculation, and generally removes most bases for charges that they are amplifying a terrorist's demands or agenda. Reportage is inevitable; especially if it includes unbridled speculation, false threats or hoaxes; coverage can advance terrorists' agendas, such as spreading panic, hurting tourism, and provoking strong government reactions leading to unpopular measures, including restrictions on individual liberties. Again the study noted that in the context of advanced information and technology, a trend suggesting more violent terrorism cannot be ignored.

The threat of terrorist use of materials of mass destruction is an issue of growing concern. If, and as, terrorism becomes more violent, perceptions that the press is to some degree responsible for facilitating terrorism or amplifying its effects could well grow. Increasingly threatened societies may be prone to take fewer risks in light of mass casualty consequences and may trust the media less and less to police itself. It was also his discovered during this study that attacks on journalists who are outspoken on issues of concern to the terrorists seem to be on the rise. The study noted that freedom of expression is a fundamental right, and almost every national constitution with a bill of rights has it. This freedom of expression as the study reveals must not be used to sabotage national interest. According to the study, journalists must devise ways of reporting objectively while at the same time ensuring that their reports don't promote the terrorists' agenda through sensationalism and speculation. Freedom of expression as this study

observed is a conceptually complex right because, although it is a fundamental, it is universally accepted that it may legitimately be subjected to restriction on various grounds by the Government.

5.2 Conclusion

This study concludes that the freedom of expression and the right to access information is one of the major democratic milestones made in Kenya. This freedom should at no point be curtailed by the government as this amounts to erosion of the milestones made during the fight for the Second Liberation. It is also evident from thi study that a nation's security is of paramount importance if the country is to make any meaningful development. Terrorism however threatens to hinder this through henous acts which leave the citizenry scared and even claim lives. In line of this, security agents in the country feel that they have an obligation to protect the state at all costs even if it means going against some of the established laws. And this study concludes, this is a cause of conflict which must be adequately addressed. Restrictions based on security interests must demonstrate a genuine effect of promoting national security and not impose random restrictions on the media. On the other hand the media must also act in good faith so as to safeguard national interests.

5.3 Recommendations

The study recommends that the government and the media must recognize that they play complementary and not competing rights in resolving terror attacks in Kenya. Each party should appreciate and support the other's role so as to avoid unnecessary confrontations during terror attacks. This unity of purpose is likely to weaken the "enemy's" strategy and alleviate suffering that may be caused during terror attacks. For the media, this can be achieved by ensuring that they double check their facts and publish information that is not sensational or that which will give the terrorists an impetus. On the other hand, the government may reciprocate by limiting all the barriers that make it difficult for the media to access vital information that is required during terror attacks.

Journalists must be alive to the fact that they owe their allegiance to their countries and that there is no absolute freedom guaranteed by law. This will not only ensure a smooth working relationship between the media and the security agents, but will also promote the safeguard of national interests as the terrorism situation is diffused. The media should not be used by terror groups as a tool for propaganda. In the same vein, the government/security forces should not try to clamp down the media and impose government censorship in the name of safeguarding national interests.

5.3.1 Recommendation for Further Studies

The study recommends that a study on the impact of social media in reporting terrorism in Kenya should be carried out. This research appreciates that social media is part of the new media which is causing ripples around the globe and which cannot be ignored by the main stream media. Currently the social media has been acknowledged as

a source of formal communication and it would be interesting to see how such a balance can be struck considering social media is usually on a virtual platform but could have a larger impact than the mainstream media.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Altheide DL (2007). The mass media and terrorism. Discourse Commun.1 (3):287-308.

Amos, K. (2014). Mediatizing security operations: An ethical and professional assessment of Media coverage of insecurity in Kenya. *Journal of Media and Communication Studies. 7*(2), 27-40.

Archetti C (2013). Understanding terrorism in the age of global media: A Communication Approach. UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Article 16 of the Rome Statute applies in the event of a threat to international peace and security (Du Plessis & Gevers, 2011).

Bandura A (1977). Social Learning Theory. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Barry E. Willey,(2006).The Conflict-Media Connection: For Better or For Worse, Military Review, vol. 78, no. 6

Bassoni, M. (1981)."Terrorism and the Media", *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*.**72**, 1-55

Bennett, L, (2008), The Politics of Illusion (Longman Classics Series in Political Science), Publisher: Longman Washington

Bienien, H. (2014) Kenya: The Politics of Participation and Control. Princeton University Press, New Jersey

Castillo, J. J. (2009) *Convenience sampling*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.experiment-resources.com/convenience-sampling.html (Accessed: 31 March 2015).

Cepulkauskaite, I. (2000) "The mass media and terrorism", Sociumas, Internet magazine, http://www.sociumas.

Combs, C,C, & Slann M, (2007). Encyclopedia of terrorism. Revised edition. New York: InfoBase publishing.

Crelinsten, R.D. (1989) "Terrorism and the Media", *Political Communication and Persuasion*.332.

Dahal, R. (2011): â€žConflict and Mediaâ€Ÿ, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. [Online] (Accessed 07.03.2011)

Daily Nation on the web(Friday, November 29, 2002). Two suspects arrested after terror bomb on hotel kills 13, Online at http://www.nationaudio.com/, accessed July 3, 2004.

Ganor, B. (2002), Terror as a Strategy of Psychological Warfare,http://www.ict.org.il/var/119/40015-Terror%20as%20a%20Strategy%20of%20Psychological%20Warfare.pdf.

Geljman, M. (2004) Russkij sposob: Terrorizm i mass-media v tretjem tysjachiletiyi. Moskva: Guelman.

Golafshani, N. (2003) Understanding reliability and validity in qualitative research, *The Qualitative Report,* 8(4), 597-607

Griffen E (2009). A First look at communication theory: A Profile Braz. J. Res. 4(1):18-27.

Griffen E (2009). A First look at communication theory: A Profile Braz. *J. Res*. 4(1):18-27

Herman G, Herman CF (1998). Hostage taking the Presidency and stress. In: Walter Reich (ed) origins of terrorism, Psychologies ideologies and orgies, states ofmind. Washington DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press

Hoffman AM, Jengallery PHA, Duncan NB, Buehker M, Rees M (2010). How does the business of news influence Terrorism coverage? Evidence from the Washington Post and USA Today. *Terror. Polit. Violence* 22(4):559-580.

Hoffman, B. (2003) Unutrašnji terorizam. Beograd: Alfa.

Hoffman, B. (2003). *Unutrašnji terorizam.* Beograd: Alfa.

Hoffman, B. (2006), Inside Terrorism (Revised and Expanded Edition), New York: Columbia University Press.

Jenkins, B. (1975). *International Terrorism.* Los Angeles: Crescent Publication.

Jones OD (2011). The role of the media in peace building. *Int. J. Conflict Stud. 8*(5):19-27.

Kisang, A. K. (2014). Reporting terrorism among Kenyan media: Should journalists be cautious? *Journal of Media and Communication Studies, 6*(5), 78-84,

Kondrasuk JN (2005). A US view of terrorism. Disaster Prev Manag. (14)5:644-656.

Laquer, W. (1987) The Age of Terrorism, Boston: Little Brown.

Laqueur, W. (1977).*Terrorism.* London: Weidenfield and Nicolson.

Maurice, (2009), "Challenging the Orthodoxies: The Role of Ethnicity and Regional Nationalism in Leadership and Democracy in Africa", UNESCO Seminar, 28 – 30 September at Kisumu Sports Ground

McCombs M, & Shaw D (1972). *The agenda of the mass media*. Public. Opin Q. 36:176-187.

Medij. istraž. (god. 13, br. 1) 2007. (5-22) IZVORNI ZNANSTVENI RAD UDK: 316.77:323.28 Primljeno: 5. svibnja 2007.

Miller, A, H. (1982). *Terrorism, the Media and the Law*. New York: Transnational Publishers.

Miller, A, H. (1982). *Terrorism, the Media and the Law*. New York: Transnational Publishers.

Mugenda, A. G. (2013). Qualitative research methods: Introduction. Nairobi: Arts Press.

Nacos, B.L. (2000). Accomplice or Witness? The Media's Role in Terrorism," Current History, 99(636), p. 174-178.

Nelson, P. S. & Scott, J. L. (1992) "Terrorism and the Media – an empirical analiysis", Defense Economics, 3(4), 1992.

Pratt J (2007). *Penal Populism,* London, Routledge.

Rumsfeld, D.H. (2006) "How to fight terrorism in the media", The Daily Star, http://www.dailystar.com

Schlesinger, P, et al. (1983). *Televising Terrorism: Political Violence in Popular Culture*. London: Comedia Publishing Company.

Schmid, P.A. (1989) "Terrorism and the Media: The Ethics of Publicity", Terrorism and political Violence, 1(4).

See also Art.10,ECHR;Art.13,ACHR;Art.9(2).ACHPR;Art.11,CIS;Art.32 (Smith,2007)

See Crimes against Humanity Article 7, 25 of the Rome Statute

Smith, K. (2007) Textbook on International human Rights, New York: Oxford University press. Ch.18

Surette R (1998). Media, Crime and Criminal Justice: Images and Realities, Belmont, Wadsworth.

Tunman, J.S. (2003) *Communicating Terror: The Rhetorical Dimensions of Terrorism*. London: Sage.

Wall D (2007). *The role of the media in generating insecurity and influencing perceptions of cybercrime, 'Media and Insecurity'*, Ljubljana, Faculty of Criminal Justice.

Walsh JI (2010). *Media attention to terrorist attacks: Causes and consequences*. North Carolina: Institute for Homeland Security Solutions.

Weimann G (2008). The psychology of mass-mediated terrorism, *Am. Behav. Sci*. 52(1):69-86.

Wieviorka, M. (1993) The Making of Terrorism. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Wilkinson, P. (2002) Terorizam protiv demokracije. Zagreb: Golden marketing.

Yakovenko, A. (2005) "Can the Media Help to Fight Terrorism?", International Affairs, http://www.eastview.com.

APPEDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

In fulfillment of my dissertation I am required to research a topic area. Explore ways in which the media while reporting on terrorism in Kenya is able to strike a balance between public interest and protecting national security.. The questionnaire is designed to capture different aspects related to the reporting terrorism in Kenya, and striking balance between public interest and protecting national security Your participation is highly appreciated, and all information collected shall be treated with strict confidentially and anonymity.

I understand that by completing and returning this questionnaire, I consent for the data I have provided to be included in the study.

Tick where appropriate

1. **Sex /Gender**

    Male   [ ]   Female [ ]

2. Indicate your age group   (years)

    21-30   [ ]   31-40   [ ]   41-50   [ ]   above

    50-60 [   ] 60 years and above [ ]

3. Indicate your level of education

    O level   [ ]   Diploma   [ ]

    Degree   [ ]   Masters and above   [ ]

4. What is your occupation?

    …………………………………………………………………………………

Section B

5. Does the media coverage of terrorism compromise national security?

   Yes [   ]

   No   [   ]

6. In what ways does the media coverage of terrorism compromise national security? (Be brief and to the point).

   …………………………………………………………………………………………

7. Can the media be used as tool to propagate the agenda of terrorists?

   Yes [   ]

   No   [   ]

8. In what ways do the media enhance the agenda of terrorist?
   a. By creating attention to the public   [   ]
   b. By Creating fear and panic   [   ]
   c. Reporting terrorism activities to promote the goals of terrorists   [   ]

Section C

To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements? Please indicate your answer using the following 5-point scale where: 1. = strongly disagree (SD); 2. = Disagree (D); 3. = Neutral (N) ; 4. = Agree (A); 5. = Strongly Agree (SA)

		SD	D	N	A	SA
9	Reporting terrorism can propagate terrorists' attacks.					
10	Media can be used as a responsible tool for fighting terrorism in Kenya.					
11	Constant broadcast of dramatic and explicit images create tension, fear, anger and grief to public.					
12	Terrorists are drawn to news media coverage because they desire maximum publicity for their messages and symbolic actions.					
13	Media coverage on terrorism compromise covert security operations especially during terror attacks.					
14	.A balance can be struck between public interest and national security while reporting terrorism.					
15	The right to access information as enshrined in the constitution override the need for government to protect its citizenry.					

Thank you for your co-operation in completing this questionnaire.

APPEDIX II: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The following questions will be used to collect data and information from the selected sample.

   i. What is the responsibility of the media in reporting terrorism?

   ii. Is it possible for the media in Kenya to objectively report on terrorism while safeguarding national interests?

   iii. Does the Kenyan Media strike a balance between public interest and national security?

   iv. Can the media be used to further the agenda of terrorists?

   v. In what ways do you think media reporting compromises national security?

   vi. To what extent does media coverage compromise covert security operations especially during terror attacks?

   vii. What actions or measures can be put into place to ensure a balance between national security and public interest is struck?

   viii. Does the right to access information as enshrined in the constituent override the need for government to protect its citizenry?

   ix. Do you think that the media reports terrorist activities in a manner that glorifies such anti-social conduct?

   x. What are your closing remarks on the issue?