

**PRINT MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE REFUGEE CRISIS IN KENYA: A  
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE DAILY NATION AND STANDARD  
NEWSPAPERS**

**By**

**YVONNE BARAZA K50/8091/2017**

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## DECLARATION

This project is my original work and has not been previously submitted to any other university or faculty for consideration of any certification.



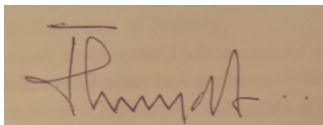
Signature

**Yvonne Baraza**

K50/8091/2017

Date: .....17/10/22.....

This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor.



Signature

**Dr James Oranga**

School of Journalism & Mass Communication

University of Nairobi

Date: .....17/10/22.....

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this research project to my family for their emotional support and encouragement towards my study.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

My sincere gratitude goes to everyone who contributed towards the successful completion of this research project. I remain grateful to my supervisor, Dr James Oranga, who has supported and guided me throughout my research. I appreciate my family for the support they gave me throughout my study period. Above all, I am very grateful to God for the grace throughout my academic journey.

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

**UNHCR** : United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees

**UN** : United Nations

**IOM** : International Organization for Migration

**IED** : Improvised Explosive Device

**US** : United States of America

**UK** : United Kingdom

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## ABSTRACT

The study sought to investigate print media coverage of the refugee crisis in Kenya by the *Daily Nation* and *Standard* newspapers. The study objectives included establishing the amount of coverage of the refugee crisis by the *Daily Nation* and *Standard* newspapers, determining the sourcing used by the *Daily Nation* and *Standard* newspapers, comparing and contrasting the coverage of the refugee crisis by *Standard* and the *Daily Nation* newspapers, and identifying factors that determined how the *Standard* and *Daily Nation* newspapers undertook the coverage of the refugee crisis. The study was guided by three theories: agenda setting, agenda priming, and agenda building. A mixed-method research approach was used in the study. The study's target population included all newspaper articles published by the *Daily Nation* and *Standard* newspapers between 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017. The study found that the number of articles on the refugee crisis published by the *Daily Nation* was 29 from a total of 21,170 articles published between 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017, while the *Standard* newspaper had 34 articles on the refugee crisis from a total of 11,315 articles published in the same period. The findings from the priming analysis showed that the *Standard Newspaper* had a total of 30 articles on its inside pages, 3 articles on its editorial pages and only 1 article on its front pages. *Daily Nation* had 24 articles on its inside pages, 4 on its editorial pages, 1 on its front pages and none on the back pages of both newspapers. The study also found that humanitarian themes in the context of refugees' plight and illegal immigration were most prevalent in both newspapers. The study recommends that print media should increase its coverage of the refugee crisis as it is a crucial issue of societal concern that deserves continuous and interpretative coverage that clarifies misconceptions and corrects falsehoods regarding refugees. In addition, the study recommends that media organizations in Kenya should emphasize and facilitate humanitarian and peace journalism training for their journalists to better equip them with the technical know-how on what peace and humanitarian journalism entails and how to report on it.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Overview

The chapter includes the background of the study, the problem statement, the aim of the study, its objectives, research questions, research justification, and the scope and limitations of the proposed study.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

The media is crucial in modern society as it shapes people's opinions and attitudes; it provides the point of contact for disparate groups. In addition, it strongly influences people's perceptions of minorities and disparate groups. However, it is argued that as much as media coverage of stories helps form the public's opinion, it has a corresponding effect on policymakers during policy development (Thompsett et al., 2003). For instance, false perceptions of an opinion driven by the media can be detrimental if shared with people in power to shape public policy. Since initiatives that receive public support are more likely to succeed, media reports should create a balance in picturing issues.

Even when there is a positive effect from media coverage of ethnic-related affairs, such as promoting inclusion and increasing awareness, there is a possibility of reflecting differences and promoting otherness. This usually occurs when there are reports on conflicts as they are considered newsworthy. Additionally, dominantly negative discourses can promote social distancing and portray ethnic minorities as a threat, and frame the majority and minority relationship as conflicted. The media can also reinforce the marginalization of ethnic minorities by negatively representing them as different and deviant to maintain the status quo.

Immigrants' issues and those surrounding migration are some defining features of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Esses & Lawson, 2013). The world is experiencing refugee influx due to wars from religious conflicts, economic, political and or internal wars and these issues have become more of a global problem than regional. In addition, climate changes are causing many places worldwide such as low rainfall causing prolonged periods of droughts that make it difficult for populations dependent on farming as a livelihood impossible to survive. The populations in areas hence migrate in search of jobs and livelihood, resulting in tension, civil wars and conflicts.

According to the UNHCR, as of 2020, 79.5 million people were forcefully displaced owing to socio-political issues such as violence, human rights violations, persecution, conflict and other events. Only a few could have anticipated the novel coronavirus's drastic effects, leaving asylum-seeking refugees in dire humanitarian needs. Even with the COVID-19 disruptions reducing refugee numbers due to the restrictions it imposed on movement and borders being closed down, this global situation remains unresolved. In addition, people living outside their country of birth are more rapidly growing than in any other period and are expected to increase in the future (International Organization of Migration, 2011).

Kellner (1995), posit that images broadcast by the media are pivotal in shaping the views and opinions of a nation's values; what is good or bad, positive or negative and what is moral or evil. Therefore, the media; representation of social issues determines the audience's understanding and support for them (Surette, 1992; Picard, 1998). The media functions as the agents that transmute information needed to fill knowledge gaps and elicit the public's interest in discourses and the participation in their national development programs (Okoro, 2009).

In Kenya's print media; there has been considerable coverage of the refugee crisis in the country. It was crucial in highlighting the decision proposed by the government of the intent in closing the camps in Dadaab and Kakuma, citing security concerns after previous terrorist attacks and the ongoing Kenya-Somalia Maritime war. This has elicited mixed reactions from the public, among those supporting the decision and those in opposition. As a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention, Kenya is expected to grant some refugees citizenship instead of repatriating them. Against this background, this study explores the portrayal of refugees in the Kenyan print media.

### **1.1.1 An Overview of the Refugee Crisis and Role of Print Media in Kenya**

According to the UNHCR, Kenya currently hosts 508,033 refugees as of January 2021 and for the last two decades, has been engaged in policy interventions in efforts to enclose the refugee population in the camps in Kakuma and Dadaab. The high refugee problem shot the 1990s due to significant regional conflict, war, and national security issues that were growing concurrently, leading to the Al-Shabab of Somali reportedly infiltrating the Somali refugee community.

Most of these refugees migrate from Somalia (54%) while others come from South Sudanese (24.6%), Congo (9%), and Ethiopia (5.8%). Persons of concern from Sudan, Rwanda, Eritrea, Burundi, Uganda, and others, make up 6.8 % of the total immigrant population of 508,033 as

of January 2021 (UNHCR). Almost half of these (44%) reside in Dadaab, 40% in Kakuma and 16% in urban areas such as Nairobi, which harbours the majority, alongside 18,500 stateless persons. Refugee operations are the region's political s growth and humanitarian menace perpetuated by Somalia and South Sudan. Despite the moderate gains made in the past three years in Somalia, the humanitarian situation remains fragile, needing assistance in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNHCR). Political developments and the humanitarian situation in the region continue to inform the operations in 2021, mainly as a result of the Somalia and South Sudan situation. The ongoing unrest in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo's (DRCs) volcanic eruptions, the Tigray crisis in Ethiopia and the Kenya - Somali Maritime wars continue to spark the situation. Since December 2014 and December 31 2019, 85,067 Somalis have been assisted to return to Somalia voluntarily (UNHCR). However, due to the ongoing drought and persistent insecurity situation humanitarian situation in Somalia has deteriorated, resulting in movements back to Kenya.

Kenya continues to hurdle through several significant crises such as political and national security issues. Before the refugee crisis, Kenya had a lax attitude toward refugee hosting as the influx was manageable, and refugees were not deemed as threats to national security. However, Sudan and Somalia went into a conflict that caused refugees in numbers of hundreds of thousands to migrate to Kenya. The influx of refugees overwhelmed Kenya's capacity to manage them and resulted in the government's push for a policy on containing refugees. Located in Northeastern Kenya in Garissa County, Dadaab comprises three camps, Dagahale, Ifo and Hagadera. Dadaab is the name of the refugee site and collectively refers to all three camps and is Africa's oldest and biggest refugee camp (UNHCR). Kakuma is in the Northwestern region of Kenya in Turkana County on the outskirts of Kakuma town. In 2014, Kakuma surpassed its capacity by over 58,000 individuals, leading to congestion in various sections, following negotiations between UNHCR and the national and county government of Turkana and the host community, land for a new settlement was identified in Kalobeyei, 20km from Kakuma town.

Since late in 2011, Kenya experienced multiple terrorist threats and attacks with murders and blasts carried out by Al-Shabaab in retaliation to *Operation Linda Nchi*; a coordinated military mission between the Somalian and Kenyan military that began in 2011. According to security experts, the bulk of attacks were increasingly carried out by radicalized Kenyan youth hired for the purpose and were part of death squads that carried out the killings under the orders of a government security council. By mid-2014, the cumulative attacks began affecting Kenya's

tourism industry as Western nations issued travel warnings to their citizens. For national security reasons and persistent terrorist threats, Kenya planned to close its two refugee camps in Dadaab and Kakuma. In April 2021, the Kenya government issued an ultimatum to the UNHCR to close both camps by June 2022. Being among the largest camps in the world, they have acquired iconic status and represent decades of open-heartedness by Kenya to those fleeing wars and persecution; however, the Al-Shabaab terrorist group has taken advantage of the overcrowded camps and under-resourced conditions to operate its activities.

### **1.1.2 Role of the print media in coverage of refugee crises**

The print media plays a central role in providing information and framing the refugee stories as a crisis. It constitutes critical and trusted resources for the public and officials to understand and act in an event. Citizens use print media information to make sense of the world and their place within it. According to Cottle (2000), the media occupies a binding site and plays a crucial role in the public representation of unequal social relations and cultural power. Through these representations, media audiences construct a sense of who they are to who they are not.

World Migration Report (2018), states that the media is significant in shaping public discourses that affect peoples' thoughts and actions and the way in which policymakers determine and make priority decisions on immigrants. Journalists and media professionals are expected to take a human rights-based approach when reporting on migrants (World Migration Report, 2018). Siopera (2010) asserts that stereotyping minority people, asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants results in prejudice and discriminatory attitudes against them leading to the rejection of cultural diversity. Therefore, fair and accurate reporting is expected from journalists when covering stories on the refugee crisis.

The newspaper industry in Kenya has grown over the years, recording an increase in readership and circulation depending on the type of newspaper and target readership. The newspapers with the largest circulation in Kenya are The Daily Nation, The Standard and Taifa Leo, followed by The Star, and The People (Nyabuga and Booker, 2013). Over the years, their coverage of the refugee crisis in Kenya has shaped the public's attitudes and opinions on the issue. The findings of previous studies (Chemutai, 2017; Nyabuga and Booker, 2013) have shown that the *Standard* and *Daily Nation* have not adequately covered stories of the country's refugee crisis. In addition, the coverage of such stories has been chiefly at low levels as the related articles are short in length and mostly placed inside the newspaper.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The media is an integral player in shaping public policy and discourse about refugees and immigrants (Fleras & Kunz, 2001). Besides disseminating policy messages, the media significantly influences people's positions on issues. Refugees and asylum seekers are increasingly being considered newsworthy, hence receiving much attention from the media. The media is a central player in the shaping of public opinion regarding refugees and asylum seekers and has long been debated. Media messages shape geopolitical conditions and people's understanding of the balance of power. News frames strongly influence how audiences perceive global issues such as war, disasters, and crises (Ramasubramanian & Miles, 2018). Therefore, the media's portrayal of societal issues largely influences the audiences understanding and support for them (Surette, 1992; Picard, 1998).

On the Kenyan front, media reports have been biased towards the representation of refugees. News coverage of asylum seekers and refugees has triggered hostility towards them, leading to misrepresentation (Chemutai, 2017). Esses and Lawson (2013) assert that the portrayal of refugees has increasingly become hostile, with the media priming the threats posed by immigrants and refugees host population. The Kenyan media has been reporting in favour of the government in repatriation cases and reporting on refugees whenever the government announces closure or during security crises in the country that link back to immigrants. According to (Mutambo, 2017) (Nganga, 2016), Kenyan journalists lack the expertise needed for humanitarian and peace journalism and reporting.

Considering the above, the Kenyan media is responsible for demystifying some of the myths created about refugees and asylum seekers (UNHCR, 2015). The print media in Kenya must take the lead to highlight and increase the coverage of the actual situations in the camps, immigration, plights or refugees and the underlying political implications that the forceful closure of the two of Africa's biggest refugee camps would bring against the government of Kenya and region as well. Kenya opened its arms to refugees in 1992, bringing the camps' existence to 30 years of operation in Kenya. According to the 1951 Refugee Convention on reducing stateless persons, the Kenyan government is compelled to grant Kenyan citizenship to children born from families that have lived in the camps since its existence (UNHCR 2015). The print media in Kenya must therefore bring such recommendations to the public, which will then inform the government's decisions regarding mass repatriations and closure of the camps as well as the potential diplomatic relations that would follow the government.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

This study's objective was to establish how the print media in Kenya covered the refugee crises in Kenya in the period of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

#### **1.3.1 Specific Objectives**

1. To establish the amount of coverage of the refugee crisis in Kenya by the Standard and Daily Nation between 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017.
2. To determine the sourcing used by the Standard and Daily Nation on the refugee crisis in Kenya between 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017.
3. To compare and contrast the coverage of the refugee crisis in Kenya by the Standard and Daily Nation between 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017.
4. To identify factors that determined how the Standard and Daily Nation undertook coverage of the refugee crisis in Kenya in the period of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

#### **1.3.2 Research Question**

1. What is the amount of coverage of the refugee crisis in Kenya by the Standard and Daily Nation in the period of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017?
2. What is the sourcing used by the Standard and Daily Nation in covering the refugee crisis in the period of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017?
3. What are the comparison and contrast of the coverage of the refugee crisis in Kenya by the Standard and Daily Nation in the period of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017?
4. What factors determined the coverage of the refugee crisis in Kenya by Standard and Daily Nation in the period of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017?

### **1.4 Justification of the Study**

The researcher chose this topic because it is crucial to understand the issues surrounding the print media's reporting of human rights stories like that of the refugee crisis in Kenya. In the wake of the Kenya-Somali Maritime war, terrorist attacks and border insecurity, many refugees in the camps live in uncertainty and risk further violating their rights and privileges if forced back to their country. Although the repatriation process was initiated in 2016, Somalia still faces civil war. As such, there are concerns about whether refugees be allowed to voluntarily

go back home or be forced back to their home country. Thus, the study seeks to explore whether the coverage of the refugee crisis was done from a government or a refugee perspective.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The study findings will be helpful to media organizations, as it will offer insight into the news coverage of the refugee crisis in Kenya and identify ways of improving the same.

The study will highlight the challenges journalists face in the refugee crisis coverage, which will help media organizations identify areas for training to improve their skills and competencies in news coverage.

The findings will also contribute to the media industry's existing body of knowledge on the media coverage of the refugee crisis. It will also help researchers identify areas for future research on the subject of print media and the refugee crisis in Kenya.

### **1.6 The Scope and Limitations**

The study analysed only two mainstream newspapers in Kenya; Daily Nation and the Standard Newspapers, published between the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2016 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017, totaling 365 days. 730 newspapers were reviewed, and a sample of 63 articles was drawn from the population. All the articles were stories that specifically touched on the refugee crisis in Kenya. 34 articles from the Standard newspaper were analyzed, and 29 articles from the Daily Nation newspaper, bringing to a total of 63.

The study focused on both hard and soft news items. Soft news articles included editorials, features, opinions, news analyses, letters to the editor, news roundups, cartoons, advertorials, and Q&As.

10 key informants comprising reporters, news editors and managing editors or their representatives were interviewed to acquire information on the considerations news editors and managing editors make when determining stories that receive coverage in the Standard and Daily Nation newspapers.

### **1.7 Operational Definition of Terms**

**Advertorial:** An advertorial is a news story that highlights the merits of something.

**Blurb:** A short piece of promotion that goes with creative work.



**Agenda building:** This is a process through which the media and or journalists select, emphasize and feature stories to be the interest of the public or policymakers.

**Agenda setting:** This is a process through which the media and or journalists influence the significance of issues for the public to influence viewers and establish a hierarchy of news prevalence.

**Coverage:** The extent to which articles on the refugee crisis published in The Standard and Daily Nation newspapers were broadcasted.

**Content analysis:** This is a qualitative study tool to conduct research and analyse data.

**Editorial additives:** Editorial Additives are journalistic features used to enhance visibility and appreciation of a story; they include pictures, graphs, maps, charts, graphs, cartoons, blurbs, straplines and stand firsts.

**Frequency:** The number of times the refugee crisis has been covered in newspaper articles.

**Genre:** Genre is the type of article; that may include hard news or soft news, i.e., feature, editorial, letter to the editor, news roundup, news analysis, advertorial, cartoons, and commentary/opinion.

**Hard news:** News topics that are usually fresh, important, consequential, current, and immediate are reported using the inverted pyramid format.

**Inside pages:** The less prominent and less accessed newspaper pages that are usually viewed as less important.

**Prime pages:** are the most important and most accessed newspaper pages. They include page one, the back page and the editorial page.

**Print media:** Advertising forms that utilize printed materials, e.g., newspapers, magazines, and journals. Standard Newspaper and the Daily Nation Newspaper.

**Refugee:** A person who has fled from his country of origin to escape natural disasters or fear of being persecuted because of their nationality, religion, political affiliation, or religion.

**Refugee Crisis:** The refugee crisis is regarded as the difficult and dangerous situations in refugee-hosting countries after receiving asylum seekers, displaced people and refugees, or immigrants. The situations may include shortage of funds, terrorism and insecurity, the

proliferation of crime among refugees, smuggling of small arms among refugees, and the government's inability to provide refugee services adequately.

**Refugee plight:** Loss of financial ability to provide for the family's needs, including children's education, medical care, and shelter. Inability to participate in remunerative work due to host government restrictions on work. Unaccustomed dependency on outside assistance.

**Story:** A story is any news article published in a mainstream newspaper.

**Soft news:** Soft news is analytical, historical, or profile news that is usually written using the hourglass or dramatic unity structure format.

**Standfirst:** This is an introductory part of a story in a newspaper that comes following the headline and is distinct from the rest of the article parts.

**Straplines:** A subsidiary heading or caption beneath the main heading in a newspaper is usually written in a smaller font and used to give the reader further teaser information about the article.

**Themes/Subjects:** The actual issues of societal concern addressed by the stories and the implications of what agendas they set and build.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.0 Overview

This chapter provides a detailed review of literature related to the primary objective of the study: the relationship between print media and the portrayal of the refugee crisis in Kenya. This chapter is divided into the following subsections: literature review and theoretical review.

#### 2.1 The Amount of Coverage of the Refugee Crisis

Media reporting on the issues of refugees and other kinds of migrants received increased attention in the 1980s. Studies have evaluated these developments and status in different countries over time. In Europe, Bleich et al. (2015) studied the factors shaping the media coverage of refugees' stories and the effects that they had on forming public attitudes, influencing policy development and societal agenda. Studies presented in developed countries, portrayed the perspective of destination countries for migrants and refugees. Another study that looked into the coverage in African countries done by Fengler et al. (2017), posits that migrants and refugees were insignificant topics in the origin countries partly due to political and editorial constraints, but also because origin countries did not find them newsworthy as opposed to other stories.

Eberl et al. (2019), in their computer-assisted analysis of media coverage on migration in seven European countries between 2003 and 2017, found that reporting on these stories had increased in destination countries and also in the countries of origin for migrants. They found emerging patterns of migration reporting from outside the EU, which were relatively negative and focused on issues of securitization and economic aspects.

Caviedes (2015) did a comparative study on migration coverage in France, the UK, and Italy between 2009 and 2012 that concluded that the media was paying increasing attention to the issue of security and crime in relation to refugees and immigrants than other aspects. Dimensions such as the economic issues in migration are also a significant issue but the media is seen to its negative impact on the cultural identity of host countries and their populations. In Esses et al. (2013: 520) study, they found that negative and conflict-laden frames dominated European migration coverage, describing the intra-EU migrants as threats to the economy and the welfare system, while migrants from outside the EU as "threat to the host countries' culture" (Eberl et al., 2018; see also Goedeke Tort et al., 2016).

Horsti (2008) in his few studies whose focus was on migration from Africa to Europe, argued that Sweden and Finland's media "domesticated" the migration event of approximately 30,000 migrants landing on the Canary Islands in 2006 by focusing on the Northern European actors and perspectives hence neglecting the motives of the migrants. Balabanova/Balch (2010) compared the coverage of labour migrants in the UK and Bulgaria after EU enlargement in 2007, which were the country of origin together with the destination country. It found that the media agenda in the countries had their own stakes in the phenomenon and were different hence the coverage was strikingly homogenous because the Bulgarian media largely mirrored the UK's media. Humanitarian aspects were more prevalent in Italy's media; Sweden's had a more positively inclined tone- frequently including the perspective on migration from Africa to Spain, while the UK's was conspicuously hostile. Germany had many similarities with Sweden's media but was more divided along the editorial line of the media.

Fotopoulos and Kaimaklioti (2016) studied the reporting on refugees in the press of Greece, Germany and the UK, arguing that it portrayed refugees as helpless and desperate victims of the civil war in Syria in the early phase of the 'refugee crisis'. Another comparative analysis was conducted on the media coverage of Aylan Kurdi - the little boy, who was found drowned on the Turkish coast in 2015, in Western and Central Eastern Europe revealed the contrasts. After the shocking photos of the boy were published, Western Europe media covered migrants and refugees more positively, emphasizing compassion for the needs of refugees and migrants; however, the pictures received far less attention in CEE media and thus had a lesser impact on the tone of coverage in the region (EJO 2015). Georgiou and Zaborowski (2017), in their study of 8 countries, concluded that European media paid little attention to both the contexts of migrants and refugees and the situation in their countries of origin, rarely including refugees and migrants as actors. Metaphors of natural disasters like the tsunami wave of refugees and the vocabulary of war were found in the media of both Sweden and Germany (Pettersson & Kainz 2017).

The Kenyan print media has covered the refugee crisis in a way that conforms to the global media. Chemutai (2017), in a study on Print Media Coverage of the Refugee Crisis in Kenya, found that the print media supported the government and shaped public opinion to repatriate refugees in Dadaab. The study also found that journalists reported stories on Somalis' repatriation favouring the government since the Kenyan army was in Somalia to maintain peace and protect the Kenyan borders (Chemutai, 2017). Political leaders and the elite in Kenya

shared the same sentiments in the dailies regarding the refugee camps' threat to national security (Chemutai, 2017).

The refugee crisis issue took the front pages or headlines of the newspapers following terrorist attacks against innocent Kenyans had increased in different parts of the country. According to Chemutai (2017), media attention shifted to the refugee crisis after politicians pushed for the flushing out of the terrorist cells in the refugee camps and the push for the repatriation of refugees, especially those in the Dadaab camp. Before the attacks, stories on refugees in the newspapers focused primarily on kidnapping perpetrated by the Al Shabab. However, it is important to note that the mention of refugees in the newspapers was in the context of the military operation conducted in Somalia (Chemutai, 2017). Therefore, while the refugees were perceived as victims, on the one hand, they were also viewed as dangerous because they were illegal aliens. The priming of the refugee issue in Kenyan newspapers was mainly based on responsibility, human interest, economic consequences, conflict and morality.

## **2.2 Dominant Themes and Subjects Covered by Print Media**

Globally, media differs in terms of coverage of predominant themes; Berry (2016), humanitarian themes are common mainly in Italian media coverage of the refugee crisis compared to the German, British, and Spanish media. Threat themes such as cultural threats and welfare systems were most prevalent in Italy, Britain, and Spain. Immigrants and refugees are discussed mainly as threats to national security in 10.1% of articles in Italy, 9.2% in those in Spain, 8.5% in Britain, 4.8% in Germany and 2.3% of those in Sweden (Berry, 2016). The refugees and migrants' representation as a cultural threat or threat to community cohesion was most prevalent in Britain, followed by Sweden, then in Italy, Spain, and then in German newspapers (Berry, 2016).

Scholarly works have established some key themes and frames that consistently recur over time and across countries, constructing an ambivalent framing of refugees and asylum seekers as innocent victims, invaders and threats to the physical, economic, and cultural well-being of the respective host country (e.g. Gemi, Ulasiuk, and Triantafyllidou 2013; Horsti 2008b; Klocker and Dunn 2003; Van Gorp 2005).

Victimization frames focus on the plight of refugees as people needing help because of circumstances that are beyond their capabilities to action (Horsti 2008a; Van Gorp 2005). By providing detailed insights into people's backgrounds, motivations, and living conditions on the move (KhosraviNik 2009), media representations draw on the victimization frame to call

attention to a humanitarian stance in asylum policy and related legal and moral obligations (Harrell-Bond 1999). Victimization hence leads to individualize emotionalized perspectives that relate to the human-interest frame (Steimel 2010); however, it can also have a connotative dimension of asylum seekers as desperate people who depend entirely on external support (Chouliaraki 2012), and that leads to them being seen as a burden on economies and threats to security and development.

Research has found that coverage of refugee and asylum stories is dominated by problem orientation themes (Gemi, Ulasiuk, and Triantafyllidou 2013; Heller 2014), with the incoming populations being associated with negative impacts on the recipient nation (Bennett et al. 2013; El Refaie 2001; Goodman and Speer 2007; Ibrahim 2005). They are often accused of straining public resources, which the members of the host nation depend on and are entitled to. These frames shift the focus of public attention towards the legitimacy of asylum seekers' claims and the question of their legitimacy in actually deserving sympathy and support (Lynn and Lea 2003). The picture of toddler Aylan Kurdi's body being pulled out of the Mediterranean Sea was an excellent example of imagery that identifies refugees as victims. The boy, a figure which audiences were able to empathize and sympathize, was meant to elicit a feeling of shared humanity (Mamdani, 2010) and to some extent, succeeded in creating a frame that was directly in contrast to the problematization perspective created by the threat and 'fear of the other.'

Ghanaian media covered the refugee crisis in Liberia. According to Dela-Dem (2018), The Daily Graphic, a Ghanaian state-owned newspaper, echoed the government and people of Ghana's determination to resolve the Liberian conflict peacefully. At the peak of the civil war in Liberia, The Mirror Newspaper painted the situation in Liberia as one that would threaten the entire West African region (Dela-Dem, 2018). Media coverage of the primary settlement of Liberian refugees in 1993, known as Buduburam, focused on the issues of corruption, rising death from a cholera outbreak, malaria, and diarrhoea (Dela-Dem, 2018).

Ghanaians raised concerns over the second wave of over 1,000 Liberian refugees landing in Ghana in 1996. The relative success of Liberian refugees in Ghana attracted refugees from Cote d'Ivoire after the 1999 coup in the country (Dela-Dem, 2018). The refugees comprised minors, vulnerable children, the disabled, and the elderly. At the time, Ghana press, including government press and private newspapers, published articles that depicted the unemployed youth as vulnerable to recruitment by mercenaries (Dela-Dem, 2018). The mention of Liberians

as prostitutes and rebels filled state-owned and private newspapers such as the Chronicle. Consequently, some Liberian refugees found themselves targets of violence by Ghanaians and ignored their pleas from those who became a target of police violence and imprisonment for years (Dela-Dem, 2018). However, this study did not examine the coverage of the refugee crisis in the context of closure in the relevant refugee camp, as in the case in Kenya.

Ibrahim and Gujbawu (2017) found that the coverage and reporting of internally displaced persons in Nigeria in the Daily Trust and Nation newspapers in 2016 used the assistance, security, and vulnerability frame. Additionally, the study found that internally displaced persons were portrayed in the newspapers as people who need assistance and demonstrated that proffered solutions to the problems facing internally displaced persons in the camps in Nigeria (Ibrahim and Gujbawu, 2017). However, the findings of this study also showed that the Daily Trust newspaper gave more prominence to stories of internally displaced persons than the Nation newspaper. This finding suggests that each newspaper had its philosophy and interest.

The priming of news coverage of the Rwandan genocide as localized Hutu-Tutsi warfare made reports easy to produce, especially for the US television to digest. According to Parks and Fair (2001), media attempts to peg this event as one tribe fighting another required reporters to identify the tribal side that the US audience should support. However, reporters found it difficult to make a clear distinction between which side was good or bad. As a result, the genocide story received far less coverage than the movement of refugees into camps in 1995 (Parks and Fair, 2001). It is important to note that refugees made good visuals because they evoked familiar images of famine and conflict in Africa (Parks and Fair, 2001).

In the Kenyan context, limited studies such as (Gloria, 2014) have explored the print media's issues of refugee crisis coverage. While such a study offered insights into the refugee crisis in Kenya, it did not explore the problem in the context of the discussions by the Kenyan government to close the Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps, the mass repatriation of Somali refugees and the ongoing maritime war with Somalia. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this research gap by exploring how the print media's reporting on the refugee crisis may have influenced government security decisions.

### **2.3 Media Coverage of the Refugee Crisis**

Globally, the media coverage of refugee crises is crucial as they are predominantly the primary source of information for critical issues and shape people's reality. The refugees and the refugee crisis have elicited many debates in European countries (Corbu, Buturoiu, and Durach, 2017).

The increasing number of refugees seeking shelter in the European Union has been portrayed as the second most crucial issue in the European Union after the financial crisis experienced in 2008. The implication of this tendency is the continuous formation of negative public attitudes towards refugees leading to the widespread insecurity associated with the refugee crisis (Corbu, Buturoiu, and Durach, 2017).

Globally, the media is vital as citizens' primary means of information. According to Stromback et al. (2011), the media's media functions as a window to influence peoples' priority of real-life events and their interpretation. Therefore, the media functions as a guide by offering people essential topics for discussion and the mainframes for interpreting those topics. They achieve this by first capturing people's attention, providing direction on the topic, and cultivating attitudes and opinions. Lawlor and Tolley (2017) assert that the media serves the informational and interpretative needs of events.

Studies on European migration-related topics have shown that media coverage, through the media's tone of voice, informs public opinion and propagates different interpretations of the immigration systems (Mengistu & Avraham, 2015). Thus, what media covers and how it covers it is important. Studies on agenda-setting and priming have found that the media strongly influences people's topics as necessary and how they evaluate issues, actors, and events (Corbu, Buturoiu, and Durach, 2017). Berry et al. (2016), research conducted in various countries in the European Union has shown that refugees are often portrayed negatively and rather than beneficial to host countries, a problem leading to negative opinions being formed by the public (Menendez Alarcon, 2010).

According to Corbu, Buturoiu, and Durach (2017), there are a few occasions where the media has positively impacted public attitudes and policy development relating to refugee topics. Berry et al. (2016) note that positive influences on refugees in the media are often associated with less concern about immigration. This implies that how the media covers sensitive topics is responsible for the shifts in public opinion and attitudes and might even lead to the emergence and development of societal decisions and behaviours (Berry et al., 2016).

In a study examining the priming of online media during the refugee crisis in Romania, Corbu et al. (2017) analyzed 1493 articles with 21 keywords. The key findings from the study showed the media as ignoring issues of who is accountable for solving or finding a solution to the crisis and secondly from a conflict frame which denoted emphasis on the differences in opinion at the country level disagreements. Human interest was ranked third as the dominant priming,



especially in moments of crisis. The economic consequence was not a mainframe in the online articles. However, it was established that online media portals preferred to use a balanced approach in portraying refugees and a slightly negative one when covering news related to the European Union.

Berry et al. (2015) conducted a cross-national comparison study to explore the factors that drove media reporting in European countries, including Spain, Italy, Germany, the UK, and Sweden. The study reviewed thousands of articles published between 2014 and 2015. The findings of the study showed vast differences between priming and themes. For instance, humanitarian themes were more predominant in Italian coverage than in British, German, and Spanish media. The Swedish press was found to be the most positive towards refugees and immigrants compared to the UK, which was the most negative and polarized. Most importantly, the study found that the British media was uniquely aggressive in its campaigns against refugees and migrants.

#### **2.4 Factors that Determine Media Coverage**

According to Harcup and O'Neill (2017), news stories are supposed to generally satisfy several editorial requirements in order to be selected; stories concerning influential individuals; stories concerning celebrities; entertaining stories on sex, human interest stories, and animals; stories with a surprise element, relevant stories to the public, stories about groups, and stories with negative or positive overtones (Harcup & Orneill, 2015).

Schultz (2007), after observing Danish TV journalism practice, argues that the six news values that dominate are timeliness, relevance, identification, conflict, sensation and exclusivity. Being the first to air a story means exclusivity and adds value for producers. This helps them in attracting their audiences, an aspect that overrides other news values, such as timeliness. She claims that distinction can be drawn between the undisputed, taken-for-granted and rarely articulated news values, which she terms as doxic news values; explicit news values and debatable, dominated news values. O'Neill (2012) has suggested that a hierarchy of these values may exist, with celebrity dominating the popular press and "quality" UK newspapers.

News values are rarely seen as a reflection of the type of information the citizens want or need and more as a reflection of organizational, sociological and cultural norms combined with economic factors (Weaver et al., 2007). This has led Allern (2002) to propose a supplementary set of commercial news values, where sensationalist stories are a more likely winner; costly stories do not make it; and news subsidies, such as well-prepared press releases and photo

opportunities, are more likely to be taken up and translated into the news. These news subsidies by industries are described as prefabrication by Bell (1991), which is a practice widely observed in the media as well as less well-resourced news organizations (Lewis, Williams, and Franklin 2008). Commercial pressures have also resulted in the selection of news stories based on their perceived appeal to target audiences rather than by their inherent qualities of newsworthiness or importance (Niblock and Machin 2007; Stromback, Karlsson, and Hopmann 2012)

Furthermore, the individual journalist's application of these values is critical in value application altogether. Schultz (2007) used the Bourdieu's sociological approach to argue that the degree of autonomy accorded to a journalist's decision-making ability about news depends on the type of news organization they work for, the type of journalism, and the hierarchical level at which they operate. For Bourdieu, journalists can only work within the confines of the social or workspaces that surrounds them (Bourdieu & Wacquaint 1992); the different levels of editorial capital in the journalistic field (Schultz 2007) they hold as some journalists are more powerful than others.

## **2.5 Theoretical Framework**

This research utilized three theories: the agenda-setting theory and agenda building theory, and the priming theory.

### **2.5.1 Agenda Setting Theory**

Max McCombs and Donald Shaw developed the Agenda Setting Theory in 1968. In their study, they found national news reports to be the most critical issue and what hundreds of Carolina residents believed to be the most critical issue in the elections (Alitavoli & Kaveh, 2018). McCombs and Shaw determined how the media shapes public opinion by comparing the salient issues in news content and public perception. Agenda setting refers to the ability of the media to determine and transfer the most critical issues by setting the agenda (Alitavoli & Kaveh, 2018).

The two primary assumptions of the theory are that the press and media do not reflect reality but rather filter and shape it, and media focus on a few or specific issues and subjects, leading to the public perceiving them as most important in comparison to others (Alitavoli & Kaveh, 2018). Agenda setting occurs through a cognitive process where the more frequently the news covers an issue, the more the issue becomes accessible to the audience's memories (Alitavoli

& Kaveh, 2018). When the audience is asked about the most critical issues affecting the public, they would answer with the most accessible issues in memory, which is often the news media focused on the most. The media sets an agenda when they, for example, repeatedly place specific stories on their newspapers' front page or prime certain news as top stories to influence the importance placed on the topics for a public agenda. Therefore, the agenda theory was relevant to this study as it provided a framework for analyzing how the print media in Kenya portrays the stories of immigrants. For instance, when the media repeatedly portrays refugees as violent, rebels, illegal arms and goods traders or depicts refugee youths as unemployed and therefore vulnerable to recruitment by mercenaries hence a threat to the host country, those are the perceptions that the public will always associate with refugees.

The priming theory, stemmed from the agenda setting theory that gained attention in the 1980s and early 1990s owing to its effects on political elections. The theory was based on the idea of the mass media being capable of strongly influencing attitudes and the manner in which audiences process messages depending on the predispositions, schemas, and other characteristics of the media reporting (Scheufele and Tewksbury, 2007). Priming effects have been traced in the 1970s during the Watergate Scandal of President Nixon's administration.

### **2.5.2 Agenda Building Theory**

Agenda building theory was developed in 1997 by Cobb and Elder. The theory reviews how news organizations and journalists select certain events to report over others. Unlike the agenda-setting theory that reviews what audiences talk about, agenda building talks about the news media and how it acts as a tool that shapes political changes and policy.

Agenda building is the process in which varied demands of different groups of a population are treated as issues competing for the attention of decision-makers, policymakers, and or those of the public. Agenda-building theory determines the people who make the media, the public, and the policy agendas, i.e., stakeholders attempt to build up the media agenda through activism or media relations strategies, while journalists attempt to build the public and policy agendas through investigative reporting. For instance, in the issue regarding the closure of the Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps, the government of Kenya can use media relations as a strategy to build a policy agenda. At the same time, journalists can seek to create a policy or public agenda through investigative reporting.

The difference between the agenda-building theory and the agenda-setting theory, which explains the effects of the media on setting the public discourse and opinion is that the agenda-

setting theory puts emphasis on the power of the media in setting the public and the policy agenda, while that of the agenda-building theory is the reciprocity of the relationship of the media and other sources or the society in general in building the public and the policy agenda. While agenda setting focuses on the media as a powerful tool, agenda building focuses on other stakeholders to push for a particular agenda.

This theory was relevant to this study as it helped establish how the media gave prominence to refugee stories through the placement of the news item in the Daily Nation and Standard newspapers, what page the stories of the refugee crisis appeared on, prominence attached to the news item and the frequency-the number of times refugee stories were featured in the Daily Nation and Standard newspapers.

### **2.5.3 Agenda Priming Theory**

Iyengar, Peters and Kinder promulgated the priming theory in 1982. The theory, informed by the preceding agenda-setting theory, explains the effect that the media has on audience decision-making, like agenda setting. It is seen as an effect of agenda setting as priming happens before the agenda is set to provide the necessary perception and relative comparison, to promote judgment. These preconceptions are used as the frame of reference for decision-making.

Priming theory expounds on the process of the media images in psychologically controlling the audiences' minds. The theory is rooted in the Associative Network Model of the human memory in cognitive psychology. Every idea or information is stored in the memory as nodes that form a network with related information (Iyengar, Peters, and Kinder, 1982) that interconnected work to inform judgments. When the node of a network is activated, priming occurs, and the network activation acts as a filter in interpreting, understanding and judgment process. It elaborates on processes and patterns that influence information storage and decision-making (Iyengar, Peters, and Kinder, 1982). When new information is given to the public, the first installation is the most important as the same information will be taken as the source of reference to another.

Priming occurs daily when a person is frequently exposed to words or actions, and then these actions become familiar. How the media awards time acts as a source of priming, which could cause trouble (Iyengar, 2008). Iyengar continues to say that in print media, prominence is given to the story by placing the news item in the newspaper; what page did a story appear on? Also, through frequency, how many times does a story get featured in the newspaper?

The priming theory was relevant to this study as it established the tenets of priming, including length of the story, page placement, pictures, and infographics which then helped determine the priming of refugee issues in the Daily Nations and Standard newspapers. Photos as a tenet of priming are relevant to the study as the study showed how the media used this tenet to sell the human angle of stories and bring out empathy in the audiences. For instance, after the government announced the closure of Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps and the mass repatriation of refugees, there were members of the public who sided with refugees citing human rights violations and an increase in the plight of refugees. This then elaborates how the print media in Kenya primed the refugee crisis in Kenya and how page placement confirms the bias from previous studies such as (Chemutai 2017). The priming theory explains that the media influences how the public reacts and makes decisions on specific issues. For instance, if the media places the issue of the closure of the Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps as an important issue, the public will also believe its importance, especially if they are already familiar with the refugee crisis in Kenya as covered by the media.

Additionally, the headlines given by newspapers create certain impressions for filters as they are often made from existing knowledge or prior experiences. The Priming theory also showed how agenda setting has become a significant factor in priming as it is crucial to understand how the priming effects as described above get to be mediated by factors such as certainty of news, knowledge of the readers, prominence associated with the news item and importance of the news.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The methodology that was used in the study is discussed in this chapter, containing the research design, the area, population, sample, data collection tools and methods, and ethical considerations.

#### **3.2 Research Methodology**

The study employed a mixed methodology, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative design because the study dealt with both qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative design focused on the intentions of media houses in their coverage of the closure of the Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps and its implications and repatriation of refugees. On the other hand, the quantitative research design was used to create a list of groupings from the frequency of word lists. It was also used to control word distribution and their respective groupings over the text. Therefore, the design was used to transform the groups into quantitative data.

#### **3.3 Research Design**

This is the plan of action or outline used to investigate a research problem (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). The research approach that was applied in this study was the mixed method, which explored the use of qualitative and quantitative methods. The descriptive research design was best for this study because it helped the researcher identify article priming, editorial additives such as photos, and frequencies in coverage.

#### **3.4 Population**

A population comprises of people, or object units, which data samples for research are taken from to inform the process (Kombo and tromp, 2006). The Standard and Nation Newspapers were the population of this study. This study examined 730 newspapers that were published between 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017. Out of all these newspapers, the researcher purposefully picked out 63 stories on the refugee crisis.

#### **3.5 Sampling Procedure**

This is selecting the unit to be studied from the target population of a study. The convenience sampling method selected the newspapers with the broadest national readership and circulation

in Kenya, i.e., the Standard and Daily Nation newspapers. The researcher used the online archives database at the Nation and Standard libraries and used purposive sampling to identify articles on refugee crisis using keywords such as refugee crisis, refugee dilemma, refugee repatriation, Kakuma, and Dadaab closure during the search.

The researcher used the purposive sampling method to identify key informants comprising reporters, news editors and managing editors or their representatives who commonly report on refugees to be interviewed regarding the considerations reporters, news editors and managing editors make when determining stories that receive coverage and prominence in the newspapers.

The study analyzed all articles on the refugee crisis published by the Daily Nation and Standard. This includes hard news articles, features, editorials, opinions, commentaries, pictorials, and roundups.

### **3.6 Data Collection**

To address the study's first, second and third objectives, i.e., 1) to establish the amount of coverage of the refugee crisis in the Standard and Daily Nation newspapers, 2) to determine the sourcing used by two newspapers and 3) to compare and contrast the two newspapers coverage of the stories on the refugee crisis. The researcher used a code sheet to table the study's variables and then analyzed the content to examine the coverage of the refugee crisis by the newspapers selected. Through content analysis, the study analyzed the frequency, priming, dominant themes, and factors that determined the coverage of the refugee crisis by the two publications. A code sheet was used during the content analysis. To address the study's fourth objective, i.e., 4) to identify factors that determined how the two newspapers reported the refugee crisis, an interview schedule was used to conduct key informant interviews in order to get the views of experts behind the productions of the two newspapers. It was used to help identify the themes and provide a straightforward way of evaluating the various aspects of the study.

Key informant interviews were used to acquire information on the considerations news editors and managing editors make when determining stories that receive coverage. 10 key informants comprising of news reporters, news editors and managing editors or their representatives who commonly report on refugees were interviewed to acquire information on the considerations reporters, news editors and managing editors make when determining stories that receive coverage in the Daily Nation and Standard Newspapers.

### **3.7 Data Presentation and Analysis**

The data collected from the newspapers analyzed was presented in tables addressing prose form in the number of stories, length and the size of articles, and the type of stories.

Emerging themes were highlighted from the patterns observed from the qualitative data and was presented in a narrative form.

The analytical parameters include:

1. Frequency - the actual number of times stories on refugees are published and the implications of high-frequency vis-a-vis low frequency.
2. Themes/Subjects - the actual issues of societal concern addressed by the stories and the implications on what agendas they set and build.
3. Placement - the location or page of the newspapers where a story on refugees is published – whether on the prime pages or inside pages, and the implications of this concerning the importance accorded to a story by the newspaper.
4. Story Size – the amount of space accorded to a story on refugees and the implications concerning the importance accorded to a story by the newspaper.
5. Sources – the authorities or persons who give information concerning a refugee story and the implications of this to the authenticity and expert opinion provided in the story.
6. Editorial Additives – the journalistic stylistic devices used to make a refugee story more visible and catchier and the implications of that to attract audience attention.
7. The Genre of the story – the type of article used to report a refugee story and its implications for the readers' appreciation of the story.

### **3.8 Validity and Reliability**

A pilot study was done to decide the research instruments and questions' suitability. Four newspapers from Standard and Daily Nation were randomly used to conduct the reliability test. After the pilot, content validity was used to assess how specific elements were represented in every area of research interest. Necessary adjustments were made to the instrument before the actual research.



### **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

The researcher followed the guidelines of the University of Nairobi, School of Journalism in the handling of the data collection, analysis and reporting process. The researcher also credited the sources of information for the research and observed anti-plagiarism rules. During data collection, the researcher sought consent from the participants and provided them with complete details of the study before the interviews. The researcher also restrictively stored and shared the study with the academia and relevant parties only, as was required.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

#### 4.1 Overview

This chapter presents the results of data collected to analyze how to most read newspapers in Kenya reported the refugee crisis in the period of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017. The findings are classified into the following: the amount of coverage of the refugee crisis, dominant themes and subjects addressed, sourcing techniques, the priming of the stories, and the factors that determine the coverage of the refugee crisis. A total of 63 articles from the two dailies were analyzed in this study; all of them were stories that specifically touched on the refugee crisis in Kenya. In addition, the articles were picked between 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017. The researcher categorized the articles for analysis. The Standard newspaper had 34 articles, while *The Daily Nation* had 29 articles.

#### 4.2 Amount of Coverage of the Refugee Crisis by Daily Nation and Standard

The amount of coverage refers to the number of times a newspaper has covered the refugee crisis in the study period. The study investigated the Standard and Daily Nation reporting on the refugee crisis between 1<sup>st</sup> May of 2016 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

Table 4.1: Frequency of articles published on the refugee crisis in the Daily Nation and Standard

<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>No. of Articles on Refugee Crisis Published Between 1<sup>st</sup> May of 2016 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017</b>	<b>Total Number of Articles Published between 1<sup>st</sup> May of 2016 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017</b>
Daily Nation	29 (46%)	21,170
Standard	34 (54%)	11, 315
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>32,485</b>

*Source: Researcher 2021*

The findings displayed in table 4.1 refer to the study's first objective, which sought to find the extent to which the refugee crisis stories were covered in the Standard and Daily Nation. In the *Daily Nation*, the study found that out of the 21,170 articles published between 1<sup>st</sup> May and 30<sup>th</sup> April, 29 articles covered the refugee crisis. In the *Standard*, the study found that out of the 11, 315 articles published between 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017, 34 articles covered the refugee crisis. According to Fengler et al. (2017), media coverage of refugee topics is insignificant in the origin countries owing majorly to editorial and other times political constraints, other reason being that they are not newsworthy in these nations. Informed by the agenda setting theory, which stipulates that prominence depends on the frequency of the coverage of stories, these newspapers gave no priming to refugee issues despite its implication on national peace and security. Therefore, the stories did not set this as an agenda of concern or elicit public debate enough to promote behaviour change or advocacy.

There are several explanations for the amount of coverage of the refugee crisis during the study period by the two newspapers. In May, June and July 2016, the government-initiated plans of closing down the refugee camps in Kakuma and Dadaab. This was received with mixed reactions, with the UNHCR warning that the move would severely affect the refugees. There were concerns regarding the fate of refugees especially those from Somalia, regarding the readiness of them going back home amidst the political tensions and civil wars there was going on in Somalia. In addition, the UNHCR challenged mass repatriation as many parts of Somalia are grappling with security issues. The government noted that the Al Shabab militants based in Somalia used the refugee camps as locations to plan their attacks on Kenya. The coverage also increased between the months of January to May 2017 due to ongoing maritime boundary disputes between Somalia and Kenya. Consequently, the media covered the issue of the closure of the refugee camps and humanitarian agencies, and activists came out and criticized the decision and the mass repatriation, citing breaking international laws; these concerns forced the Kenyan government to reconsider its directive and later announced a 6-month postponement. This then links to the study's agenda building theory, which determines who builds the media, public, or policy agendas.

#### **4.3 Size of Story on the Refugee Crisis in the Standard and Daily Nation**

Newspapers vary sustainably in formats from country to country in terms of their sizes, their paper types, page designs and the printed style. According to (Steve N.H. et al. 2013), newspaper formats entirely depend on the media houses—Daily Nation and the Standard

newspaper use *Berliner*. According to (The Guardian, 2014), the Berliner format measures about 315 by 470 mm (12.4 in by 18.5 in); it is relatively longer and wider than tabloids and is narrower and shorter than the broadcast format.

*Table 4.4 Length of articles on the refugee crisis in the Standard and Daily Nation*

<b>Size of Story on Refugee Crisis</b>	<b>Daily Nation</b>	<b>Standard</b>
Full page and more	3	4
Full page	16	16
Half page	7	9
Quarter page	3	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>34</b>

*Source: Researcher 2021*

Table 4.4 shows the length of articles on the refugee crisis published in the Standard and Daily Nation between 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017. In the Daily Nation, the study found that out of the 29 articles on the refugee crisis, 7 articles covered more than a page, 16 were full pages, 7 covered half page, and 3 stories covered a quarter page. In the Standard, the study found that out of the 34 articles analyzed, 4 stories covered full pages and more, 16 full-page, 9 half a page, and 5 quarter a page.

The length of any story is a crucial basis for examining a story (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). When reviewing stories in a newspaper, special consideration is given to the opening story in the news section. There hence is a higher possibility of a story that is allocated a full page to be highly read in comparison to those that are allocated lesser space.

The newspapers failed to provide sufficient space for the coverage of articles on the refugee crisis as only 7 articles were allocated more than a page. While a significant number (32) of articles on the refugee crisis were allocated a page, there is a need for the print media to allocate more space for the adequate coverage of the refugee crisis. These results are consistent with Chemutai (2017), who explored the size of stories on the refugee crisis in the Daily Nation and Standard.

#### 4.4 Dominant Themes and Subjects

The dominant themes and subjects that the study sought to identify in the newspapers' reporting of the refugee crisis included insecurity, the plight of refugees, terrorism, illegal immigration, and the proliferation of small arms.

Table 4.2 Dominant themes found in the newspapers in covering the refugee crisis

Dominant Themes	Daily Nation	Standard
Insecurity	2	1
Plight of Refugee	6	16
Terrorism	5	3
The proliferation of Small Arms	9	6
Illegal Immigration	1	3
Legal marriages	3	2
Child labour	0	1
Refugee camp closure	3	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	29	34

Source: Researcher, 2021

The findings displayed in table 4.2 shows that there were 2 articles published on insecurity, 6 articles published on the plight of refugees, 5 articles published on terrorism, 1 article published on illegal immigration and 15 articles were published on the proliferation of small arms throughout the 12 months. The proliferation of small arms problem received the highest coverage as it was featured in 15 articles, whereas the problem of illegal immigration was least covered as it was featured once. In the *Standard*, 1 article was published on insecurity, 16 articles were published on the plight of refugees, 1 article was published on terrorism, 3 articles were published on illegal immigration, and 11 articles were published on the proliferation of small arms. The issues of terrorism, the proliferation of small arms, and refugee camp closure appear to be captured by both newspapers. However, other issues arise such as child labour, illegal immigration, and legal marriages, revealing variations in coverage by the two dailies.

Horsti (2008) and Van Gorp (2005) found in their study on media coverage of the refugee crisis that a victimization frame was used. It focused on asylum seekers and refugees' plight portraying them as helpless people that needed help owing to their circumstances, which was something beyond personal responsibilities or group actions. Similarly, Ibrahim and Gujbawu (2017) in their study of Nigeria's print media, found that it used the vulnerability, security and assistance frames. In consistency, this study found internally displaced people to be were portrayed as vulnerable and as proffering solutions that of the camps in Nigeria (Ibrahim and Gujbawu, 2017).

According to Gemi, Ulasiuk, and Triantafyllidou (2013); Heller (2014), the media's reporting on asylum seekers and refugee plight is problem-orientated. These foreigners are associated with terrorism, crime and illegality (Bennett et al. 2013; El Refaie 2001; Goodman and Speer 2007; Ibrahim 2005). They are often charged with straining public resources that should otherwise benefit members of the host nation's population. Owing to these perspectives and frames, the focus of stories shifts from the legitimacy of asylum seekers' plight to that of whether they should be accorded sympathy and support or not (Lynn and Lea 2003). The findings of this study confirm previous research on the victimization frame, which is the same case as is in Kenya because the study found that the plight of refugees received the highest prominence since the Kenyan government was considering closing the refugee camps, which would have severe ramifications on the wellbeing of the refugees. According to Harrison (2016), refugees are often portrayed as victims to highlight their plight in newspapers. Therefore, the newspaper's focus on reporting on the plight of refugees influenced the agenda on refugee issues in the country.

#### 4.5 Sourcing Techniques

*Table 4.6 Sources Techniques of Stories in the Standard and Daily Nation*

Type of Source	Source of Stories	Standard	Daily Nation
<b>Government Officials</b>	Ministry of Interior Coordination and National Government	4	5
	Politicians	10	8
	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	4	2

<b>Refugee Agencies</b>	Department of Refugee Affairs- Kenya	3	2
	UNHCR	2	1
<b>Civil Society</b>	Kenya Human Rights Commission	2	2
<b>Professionals</b>	Refugee Consortium of Kenya	3	2
	Kenya Human Rights Commission	2	1
<b>Refugees</b>	Centre for Victims of Torture	3	4
<b>Community leaders</b>	Local Authorities	1	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		34	29

Source: Researcher 2021

Sourcing techniques explore whether the stories published by the Standard and Daily Nation relied on either or both primary data and secondary data. Table 4.6 shows the sources techniques of stories in the *Standard* and Daily Newspapers between 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017. The study found that out of 34 articles published by the *Standard*, 21 government officials, 3 refugee agencies, 2 civil society, 3 professionals, 3 refugees, and 1 community leader were the story's sources. In the *Daily Nation*, the study found that out of 29 articles published, 17 were sourced from government officials, 3 refugee agencies, 2 civil society, 2 professionals, and 4 refugees, and 2 community leaders. The dominant sources in both the Nation and Standard were refugee agencies, government officials, and professionals. News stories are either single-sourced or multiple-sourced. The data presented in table 4.6 suggests that multiple sources were used in writing the stories, including antagonists and protagonists involved in the refugee crisis. Over and above interviewing sources, most of the stories in both Nation and Standard relied on what is already written about the refugee crisis.

The most prominent personalities speaking on behalf of the government included former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hon. Rafael Tuju, Cabinet Secretary; Amina Mohamed, Late Cabinet Secretary; Hon. Joseph Nkaiserry, the Deputy President; Hon. William Ruto and other politicians. On the international front, former US ambassador Robert Godec opposed the move of the government on closing the camps, stating that refugees would be sent back to their country of origin. The findings indicate that news values such as, prominence in association to the news is considerations editors make when selecting news stories for publication. The

announcement by the government of intent to close the camps in Kakuma and Dadaab and the follow-up comments from government officials made the issue receive significant coverage by the newspapers.

#### 4.6 Placement of Stories

Table 4.3: How the newspapers placed articles on refugee crisis in Kenya

<b>Priming</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Nation</b>
<b>Page One</b>	1 (2%)	1 (3%)
<b>Other pages</b>	30 (88%)	24 (83%)
<b>Editorial page</b>	3 (9%)	4 (14%)
<b>Back page</b>	0	0
<b>Total</b>	34	29

Source: Researcher 2021

From table 4.3 above, 2% of the total articles by the *Standard* newspaper on the refugee crisis were placed on the front page, 88% on the inside pages, nine % on the editorial pages, and none on the back pages. As for *Daily Nation*, 3% of the total articles on the refugee crisis were placed on the front pages, 83% on the other pages, 14% on editorial pages, and none on the back pages. Page one, editorial page, and back page are considered as the prime pages in a newspaper. Out of the 34 stories on the refugee crisis published by the *Standard*, only 11 percent appeared in the prime pages of the *Standard*, while 17 percent appeared in the prime pages of the *Nation*. Therefore, the two newspapers did not place most of their stories on the refugee crisis on their prime pages. The lack of priming of the refugee crisis implies that the stories did not elicit significant public attention to shape public evaluation of the issue.

According to Iyengar, Peter and Kindler (1982), priming of stories can only be achieved if the idea's significance is the basis of evaluating and judging its prominence. These newspapers created a picture that the subject was not so important by denying the articles the most read pages; as such, the agenda was set for the readers to pay less attention. Nonetheless, the above results are consistent with Chemutai (2017) findings in her study of print media coverage of refugee repatriation, as she found that most of the refugee stories covered by the *Standard* and *Daily Nation* were placed on the other pages. Therefore, both newspapers failed to give



prominence to the refugee crisis by not placing them on the front and back pages, which are deemed to be very prime. In addition, the *Daily Nation* and *Standard* failed to set the refugee crisis agenda by not placing the stories on the first page. However, the expert views expressed in the editorial section were important to the readers' comprehension of the issue.

#### 4.7 Story Type

Table 4.5 Story type covered by the *Standard* and *Daily Nation*

Story Type	Daily Nation	Standard
Hard News	9	7
Editorials	5	7
Commentary/Opinion	4	3
Letter to the Editor	3	4
News Analysis	2	4
Press Release/ Statement	3	5
News Briefs	3	2
Advertorial	1	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>34</b>

Source: Researcher 2021

Table 4.5 shows the story types covered in the *Daily Nation* between 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017. The study found that out of the 29 articles on the refugee crisis, 11 stories were hard news, 5 editorial, 4 commentary/opinion, 3 letters to the editor, 2 news analyses, 3 news roundups, and 1 advertorial. In the *Standard*, the study found that out of the 34 articles published by the *Standard*, 14 were hard news, 7 editorials, 3 commentary/opinion, 4 letters to the editor, 4 news analyses, 2 news roundups, and 2 advertorials. The findings imply that majority of articles on the refugee crisis were reported as hard news. The news having been a reaction from the announcement of the closure of the camps, its intent for mass repatriation of refugees and the flushing out of terrorist cells within the Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps. This also shows that the media did not give any consideration to expert opinions or editorials that give readers an expert opinion of the problem, which helps shape the discussion on the

topic in the public domain. When newspapers do not editorialize issues, they tend to fade away without the public’s needed attention.

The study findings show evidence of the Kenyan media’s failure to cover the refugee crisis in the country. When newspapers with the highest readership only have 63 articles on the refugee crisis in a whole year, on a topic of global concern with the country hosting the largest number of refugees in Africa according to the UNHCR. This finding confirmed the problem of this study which was to study the coverage of the refugee crisis in Kenya by Kenya’s leading newspapers, i.e., the Daily Nation and Standard newspapers.

#### 4.8 Editorial Additives

Table 4.7: Editorial additives used in the *Daily Nation* and *Standard*

Type of Editorial Additive	Daily Nation	Standard
Photographs	20	24
Graphics	1	0
Cartoons	0	2
Bold/Box text	1	1
Maps	1	3
Blurbs and Fillers	3	2
Stand firsts	2	1
Straplines	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>34</b>

Source: Researcher 2021

Table 4.7 shows the editorial additives used in the Standard and Daily Nation between 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017. In the Daily Nation, the study found 20 photographs, 1 graphic, 0 cartoons, 1 Bold text, 1 map, 3 blurbs, 2 stand firsts, and 1 strapline. In the *Standard*, the study found that out of the 34 articles published, there were 24 photographs, 0 graphics, 2 cartoons, 1 Bold text, 3 maps, 2 blurbs, 1 stand firsts and 1 strapline.

The findings indicate that photographs are the most used editorial additives by Standard and Daily Nation when covering stories on the refugee crisis. According to Harrison (2016), the use of photos by the media portrays refugees as victims. The use of refugee images made the audience empathize, sympathize, and elicited a feeling of shared humanity. Journalists are responsible for ensuring that graphical representation accompanies their story to enhance students understanding of their problem.

#### **4.9 Factors That Determine the Refugee Crisis Coverage by the Standard and Daily Nation**

10 key informants comprising reporters (R1, R2, and R3), news editors (NE) and managing editors (ME) or their representatives were interviewed to acquire information on the considerations news editors and managing editors make when determining stories that receive coverage in the two newspapers. The *Standard* ME said that “*the newsworthiness of a story and public interest determines the placement of a story in the newspaper.*” The NE and R2 interviewed asserted that the timing of the news stories is also important because readers want to receive the latest news updates. He noted that a refugee story could only be placed on the front pages if it has a major impact that warrants public interest and attention. In this case, the refugee crisis story had currency because the government had just announced its intent on closing the refugee camps in Kakuma and Daadab.

Similarly, Daily Nation ME said, “*famous people, especially politicians' gain coverage, especially when they touch on issues relating to the refugee crisis.*” By commenting on such an issue, prominent politicians give such a story news value. According to R2 interviewed, “*they are assigned by editors to report on news events mostly as a matter of currency, especially if it is of public interest.*” This implies that a news story would receive a high percentage of coverage when it has just occurred as opposed to several days or weeks later. The NE noted that when a news story is covered even after it has lost currency, prominent politicians comment on it.

On the question of the average length of refugee stories in the newspaper, Daily Nation ME noted that for feature stories, it could be as long as a page or more. However, new stories could mostly take half or more pages since the reader is interested more in the articulate presentation of facts and their implications on them and the country as a whole. Standard R2 noted that the editorial process primarily influenced the print media coverage of refugee stories. The journalist noted that there are occasions when the editors “kill” a story, especially when they

lack currency or when there is a present issue requiring more prominence. Therefore, while a story might be of news value, it may not be given more prominence as compared to a political story.

On the question of whether the editorial process distorts that perspective of a story, Daily Nation R2 and R3 noted that editors have a major influence on how stories are presented in the newspaper. When a reporter files a story, it is reviewed by the sub-editor and editor to ensure that the facts are accurately presented. The editors also check for legal liability such as defamation and alarmist reporting. However, there are various occasions where they have been asked to rewrite a story so that it presents an issue from a particular perspective. As a result, it would distort to an extent, the presentation of facts relating to the reporting of a refugee crisis.

These views are consistent with the study's findings from analyzing the relevant articles on the refugee crisis as they showed currency, prominence, and conflict as factors determining newspaper coverage of stories. From the key informants, the study also found that there was a lot of competition in media houses in efforts to attract readers for the survival of their newspapers. The news was the most important section of the media to propagate cultural issues, ideologies and public opinions; audiences and informational sources would hence, point out news selected unfavourably and would impact action and reaction. Results found news production to often involve processes, people and steps such as the informants or sources, agents of the press, editors, news reporters and other agencies. Similar studies cite that opinion leaders and other players in the media complete the informants' chain process. As sources compete to have their say in news selection and editorial content, selection and or distortion of the messages may occur at different links in the chain, this is also not ignoring the individual journalists' subjective likelihood in selecting, priming and framing news informed by their personal skill, orientation or political inclination.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Overview

This chapter summarizes significant findings and conclusions on press coverage of the refugee crisis in Kenya between 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017. It also features pertinent recommendations and suggests further areas of research on the refugee crisis in Kenya.

#### 5.2 Summary of the Findings

- i. There were variations in how the refugee crisis was covered by both newspapers. The Standard had the highest number of articles (54%) on the refugee crisis, whereas the Nation had the least number of articles on the refugee crisis (46%). The amount of coverage of the refugee crisis increased due to the ongoing boundary dispute between Somalia and Kenya. The government noted that Al Shabab militants based in Somalia were taking advantage of the refugee camps as stations to organize their attacks on Kenya.
- ii. Both Standard and Nation newspapers did not place articles on the refugee crisis on the prime pages. The majority of the stories were placed on other pages of the newspaper while one story was placed on the first page. The lack of priming of the refugee crisis implies that the stories did not elicit significant public attention to shape public evaluation of the issue.
- iii. Multiple sources, including government officials, refugee agencies, and professionals, were used by both newspapers when publishing stories on the refugee crisis. As a result, there was a balance in the presentation of stories on the refugee crisis as both antagonists and protagonists were interviewed. Moreover, secondary sources such as past newspapers, magazines and UN reports were used in writing the stories.
- iv. The most used editorial additive by both newspapers are photographs. The use of photos in stories helped the newspapers portray refugees as victims. In addition, it made the readers empathize with the refugees and simultaneously elicit a feeling of shared humanity. Therefore, photos and other editorial additives shape the readers' comprehension of an issue.
- v. News values such as timeliness, prominence, and impact are considerations editors make when selecting news stories for publication. The timing of the news stories is also

important when selecting stories on the refugee crisis because readers want to receive the latest news updates. The story on the closure of the refugee camps was newsworthy because of the impact it would have on refugees living in the camps.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

- i. The research achieved its primary objective of establishing how the Standard and the Daily Nation had covered the refugee crisis in Kenya. The decision to close the refugee camps in Kakuma and Dadaab elicited divergent views from different stakeholders. In 2013 and 2015, the government suffered attacks from the Al-Shabaab at the WestGate mall and Garissa University, respectively. According to government sources, the refugee camps house terrorist cells that facilitate attacks carried out in Kenya, especially in the Northern parts of Garissa and Mandera. There was a feeling that the refugees harboured the terrorists but did not make an effort to report them.
- ii. The study found that the Standard and the Daily Nation had published a total of 63 articles in the period under review to be. The study found that this coverage was considerable, but there is a need for space to be given to coverage of the refugee crisis, given the magnitude of its impact on the refugees. To this end, the study concludes that more frequency should be given to the issue by the print media to build more relevance among the readers.
- iii. Furthermore, coverage of the two newspapers was more on news articles and less frequent on opinions and editorials. While news articles are important in informing readers on issues, opinions and editorials are integral in shaping the discussion on an issue of public interest.
- iv. The study found that most articles were published inside the newspaper, while a few were published on the front and none on the newspaper's back pages. This shows that the Standard and the Daily Nation did not adequately prime the articles on the refugee crisis. Therefore, there is a need for the two newspapers to place the articles on the front and back pages.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

The study made the following recommendations based on the results:

- i. The print media in Kenya should prioritize the refugee crisis by introducing a special column in the newspapers. This is important because the refugee crisis is a societal concern linked to security issues and illegal immigrants.
- ii. Refugee crisis stories should be adequately primed by allocating more space and increasing the length of the articles. The researcher also suggests using infographics to supplement the photos, as they are more appealing and summarize critical information.
- iii. Since Kenya is a signatory of the 1951 Refugee Convention, which obligates it to protect refugees and asylum seekers, the print media in Kenya should prime articles on refugees as an international law issue and highlight issues such as forceful mass repatriation and the closure of the camps as a violation of international law and the consequence after that.
- iv. It recommends the priming of more stories on the refugee crisis in Kenya, especially by the print media, to fulfil its mandate as the public watchdogs of the society. The study found that few articles were placed in the prime pages of the Daily Nation and Standard newspapers, which have the most comprehensive coverage in the country and hence are not seen as important. To increase the readership of refugee articles, they need to be primed better.
- v. The study recommends that media organizations in Kenya should emphasize and facilitate humanitarian and peace journalism training for their journalists to better equip them with the technical know-how on what peace and humanitarian journalism entails and how to report on it. There should be specialized training for journalists working on refugee stories to ensure that they provide accurate presentations of facts to shape the agenda on the matter through their reporting. This is important because journalists should be familiar with international laws governing issues relating to refugees.
- vi. Editors should do more editorials and opinions where experts can shed more light on the refugee crisis in Kenya. As a result, this will create knowledge among the public on the issues and attract more readers. Besides, the advocacy role requires the media to inform the public about the happenings within and beyond its borders.

### **5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies**

The study, which sought to understand how print journalism covers refugee crisis stories by studying the Standard and Daily Nation newspapers, focused on the frequency of the coverage of the refugee crisis, dominant themes in the articles, priming of the articles, and factors that

determine the coverage of the refugee crisis by the two publications for the period May 2016 to April 2017. It suggests that studies to be done, but the sample should comprise all local dailies within a more extended period. The researcher also suggests research to be done on electronic media's coverage of the refugee crisis.



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Code Sheet

**Topic:** *Print Media Coverage of the Refugee Crisis in Kenya: The Case of the Standard*

*Newspaper and Daily Nation Newspaper*

<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>DETAILS</b>	<b>CODES</b>
<b>Frequency of Coverage</b>	Frequency of coverage of refugee crisis	Daily: Weekly: Monthly:
<b>Dominant themes and subjects</b>	Dominant themes and subjects that were featured most	Insecurity: The plight of Refugees: Terrorism: Illegal Immigration: The proliferation of Small Arms:
<b>Priming of the Refugee Crisis</b>	How the refugee crisis was primed	Length: Page placement: Use of pictures: Infographics:
<b>Factors Determining Coverage of the Refugee Crisis</b>	Considerations given to a refugee-related story before coverage	How they cover the refugee crisis: Why they cover refugee crisis: When they cover refugee crisis:

## Appendix B: Interview Schedule

Focus Area	Questions
<b>Priming</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="659 347 1289 450">1. When can a refugee story take the front-page headline?</li><li data-bbox="659 495 1310 598">2. How long on average are refugee stories in the newspaper?</li><li data-bbox="659 642 1337 745">3. Under what circumstances would a refugee story take the front page?</li></ol>
<b>Factors Considered when selecting news stories</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="659 788 1390 891">1. What is the focus when selecting stories for publications?</li><li data-bbox="659 902 1378 1005">2. What is the editorial process like, and does it distort the perspective of the story?</li><li data-bbox="659 1050 1091 1084">3. How do you assign reporters?</li><li data-bbox="659 1106 1390 1187">4. What are the ethical considerations placed when doing refugee stories?</li></ol>