



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

DEPARTMENT OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

TITLE:

**IMPACT OF MAINSTREAM MEDIA ON POST-ELECTION CONFLICT
PEACEBUILDING IN AFRICA: THE CASE OF KENYA**

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DECEMBER 2022

DECLARATION


I, Saka Were Rosemary hereby declare that this research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

Signature 

Date: **25/11/2022**.....

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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval at the University of Nairobi


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DEDICATION

I dedicate this Masters Project to My Daughter, **Lexi Mwendwa**, for the ample time, support and encouragement she gave me from the commencement of my coursework studies in September 2020 to the completion of this project in the year 2022.

To My Project Supervisor, **Dr. Mumo Nzau: MA, PhD Political Science-SUNY at Buffalo** for his time, supportive and encouraging nature and his step by step guidance and support while working on this project.

To Colleagues at the **Department of Diplomacy and International Studies (DDIS)** for their facilitation and support.

To **My Late Sister Sylvia Nelly Namukuru Saka**, she cherished education, unfortunately she did not get to witness this, but she saw heaven when God took her away on 1st January 2022. She will forever be engraved in my heart.

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Abstract

This study explores the impact of mainstream media on post-election conflict peacebuilding in Africa: The case of Kenya. In fact, the conduct and practice of conflict resolution has been altered by the emergence of media as a strategy and tool for defining agendas as well as the advent of internet worldwide communication. Since then, media has evolved into a tool for resolving conflicts in the modern era. The study was guided by the following objectives; To Assess the Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in the 21st Century International System, To Evaluate the Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Africa and To Critically Analyze the Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Kenya. The agenda-setting theory served as the study's compass and both qualitative and quantitative methodologies were used in a mixed-method approach. A descriptive research design was used for the investigation. This strategy aims to gather information without influencing the respondents or the research variables in an effort to evaluate how broadcast media might be a useful instrument in the effort to promote peace. The findings were that the mainstream media is therefore a critical tool for post-election peacebuilding. The masses rely on information relayed by mainstream media channels, information which can either break or facilitate peace after elections. Mainstream media channels influence post-election peacebuilding in the 21st Century globally, in Africa and Kenya. Media outlets are more capable of influencing post-election peace when they understand their impact on the peacebuilding process, thus should be educated about their impact on post-conflict peacebuilding. The study recommends that media outlets should put in place efficient electoral conflict reporting systems. This will allow for well-coordinated and harmonized information before disseminating to the public. Reporting disharmonized information on electoral conflict can lead to widespread panic that could trigger violence.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Media is a communication channels and technological tools that are used to transmit and retain information and data. It is connected to the communication medium or specialized mass media businesses including print media and the press, photography, advertising, film, broadcasting (radio and television), publishing, and point of sale. The media is the sword arm of democracy.

Peace Building on the other hand is referred to as the efforts aimed at addressing the elements that produce or alleviate conflict. Those developing and planning a peacebuilding initiative are specifically seeking to minimize structural or direct violence. At various levels of activity, the media plays a huge influence in politics. The rapid changes of the 20th and 21st Centuries have had an impact on conflict resolution, as well as other aspects of international relations. The advent of the media as a tool and instrument for creating agendas, combined with the revolution of internet worldwide communication, has had a significant impact on conflict resolution conduct and practice. Since then, the media has evolved into a modern-day dispute resolution instrument.¹

The first political importance of the media is to inform their audiences about wars, peace, and diplomatic processes. Global media always strive to attract the attention of the public. To attract this kind of attention, the media mostly use crises and conflicts as their topmost agendas to persuade the public to pressure the government to deliver on its policies.

¹ Orgeret, K. S., Conflict and Post-Conflict Journalism. In *Journalism in conflict and post-conflict conditions: Worldwide perspectives* (pp. 13-22). (Nordicom, 2016)

Conversely, the government can also use the media to drive their agenda thus making their views known to the public for the government's interests.²

The media's coverage of a particular conflict can result in one of two outcomes: escalation of violence due to journalists' decision to utilize war journalism, or de-escalation of conflict due to the promotion of peace journalism. Journalists sometimes combine facts with conflicting viewpoints in order to further their narratives. The media fuels war machinery and causes conflict parties to broaden their hostility by focusing on casualties and who won over whom. Media, on the other hand, brings opposing sides closer together by focusing on efforts to end the dispute while keeping a careful eye on the destruction caused by the war, thereby fostering conversation and finally peace. By appreciating opposing ideas, this type of journalism encourages favorable considerations among antagonistic parties.³

In media discussions, conflicts and peaceful cohabitation share a similar position, because reporting on a disagreement may also mean pursuing another productive solution to the hindrance. Conflict is defined as a struggle between individuals over a variety of topics such as values, claims, rankings, power, and minimal resources, in which the intentions of the various parties are often at odds with one another. While the debate rages over whether the media perpetuates disputes or not, a small number of communication specialists and researchers argue that the media can still be utilized to resolve interminable conflicts as a strong instrument.

² Mutua, E., *Media and social responsibility: An investigation into post-election media coverage by Kass and Musyi FM* [Master's thesis, he University of Nairobi, 2016]

³ Kabashi, F. (2019). *News Framing on Bosnian Conflict: Exploring the Peace and War Journalism Perspective* [Master's thesis, Umea University, 2019]

In the event of a chaotic situation, it is highly anticipated that the interaction between the audience and the media be improved in order to avert and/or lessen foreseen and unforeseen tensions.⁴

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Conflict has a high cost, as it causes pain and poverty, stifles economic development, and deprives people of their basic requirements. Conflict arises frequently in countries experiencing large political transitions toward democracy. Over the last few decades, the media's role in conflict/war or in peacebuilding has grown dramatically. When you consider the Rwandan genocide, the Libyan civil war, and Kenya's post-election violence, you can see how media may be utilized to intensify or deescalate crises.

The existing literature shows there is limited focus on the role and impact of the media in peace processes on conflict and peacebuilding. Existing literature merely emphasizes the media's importance in conflict reporting and discussion of the current events. Scholars studying the post-election phenomenon have come to the conclusion that the media has the potential to play a more important role than just reporting and discussing conflict post-election peacebuilding. However, this media's role in the conflict, as well as its ability to negotiate a peaceful resolution, is not sufficiently addressed. Kenyan media has been investigated in the international court as a perpetrator of political violence. The post-2007 post-election violence and the peacebuilding process that followed hence serve as a good case to exemplify the process from conflict to peacebuilding and the role the media can play. This study, therefore, analyzes the impact of mainstream media on post-conflict building in Africa, with a key focus on post-election violence peacebuilding

⁴ Radoli, O. L., Press freedom and media's role in conflict and peace-building: a case of the post-2007 election crisis in Kenya [Master's thesis, Universitetet i Tromsø, 2011)

in Kenya. The study aims to answer the question, what is the impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Violence Peace Building in Africa and specifically Kenya?

1.3 Research Questions

- i. What is the Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in the 21st Century International System?
- ii. What is the Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Africa?
- iii. What is the Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Kenya?

1.4 Research Objectives

1.4.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study is to analyze the impact of mainstream media on post-conflict peacebuilding in Africa, with a key focus on post-election violence peacebuilding in Kenya.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

- i. To Assess the Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in the 21st Century International System.
- ii. To Evaluate the Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Africa.
- iii. To Critically Analyze the Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Kenya.

1.5 Justification of the Study

Media is a key component of society. The media plays a key role in setting the agenda in society. After the legislative, executive and judiciary, the media is considered the fourth pillar of society since it shapes people's perceptions and lives through education, information and entertainment, the media has an impact on every aspect of our lives. Given this critical function, objective reporting and peace journalism could be used as a vehicle for conflict transformation and peacebuilding. Media, on the other hand, can be used to incite strife. Subjective reporting, for example, can polarize a country, supporting or exacerbating war.

For policymakers, this study will give policy recommendations that will aim to contribute to post-election violence peacebuilding. This is because the impact of conflict can be devastating. In the case of Kenya, the country has been faced with post-election violence since the introduction of multiparty politics. Therefore, the findings of this study will be used in the formulation of media best practice policies on covering conflict resolution processes.

The results of this study will be significant for academics because they will have an impact on future research on conflict resolution generally, rather than simply electoral conflict resolution, using the media as a point of comparison. Additionally, it will give media experts the tools they need to cover conflict resolution in the best possible way.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The scope of this study will be the impact of mainstream media on post-conflict building in Africa. In particular, the study will focus on post-election violence peacebuilding in Kenya. The study will mainly be carried out in Kenya, Nairobi.

The choice of Nairobi was due to the fact that it is the headquarters of most media stations. Nairobi also hosts a number of agencies tasked with peacebuilding as well as the entities tasked with ensuring a peaceful, free and fair election.

The possible limitations of this study are that the study will be conducted during an electioneering period when emotions are high on election and post-election matters. As such the findings of the study might be biased and highly influenced by political affiliation. The respondents may also be reluctant to provide necessary information due to fear of ethnic and political profiling. To overcome this, the study will assure the respondents that the study is conducted purely for academic purposes and any information provided will be treated with confidentiality.

1.7 Literature Review

This section of the study provides a review of the relevant literature. The literature review will be done thematically as per the specific objectives of the study.

1.7.1 Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in the 21st Century

According to Paulovich the mainstream media in Belarus led by the Belarusian Association of Journalists, or BAJ acted as a watchdog in the 2020 presidential elections that resulted in violence⁵. The article is clear that President Victor Lukashenko of Belarus, was under fire, for using comparable strategies to announce his victory in the country's presidential election in August 2020. Before the fiercely disputed elections in August, opposition politicians and members of the party were intimidated, detained and the situation sparked widespread demonstrations.

⁵ Paulovich, Natallia. "How Feminist is the Belarusian Revolution? Female Agency and Participation in the 2020 Post-Election Protests." *Slavic Review* 80, no. 1 (2021): 38-44.

A mainstream media watchdog said that as part of a multi-pronged campaign against dissent and freedom of thought in the former Soviet country, Belarusian authorities nevertheless raided the offices of many media outlets and the residences of dozens of reporters. The media's standing confers several advantages, such as the right to attend public gatherings, socially significant events and zones of violent rebellion or crisis to report from those locations. This improved peace and stopped unscrupulous political figures from inciting post-election violence.

According to Shaw, the Brazilian media serves as a moderator, setting storylines, filtering subjects, and attempting to maintain calm and a diversity of viewpoints during post-election unrest⁶. Political violence has been deployed in Brazil to settle political conflicts about who would control the benefits of the role of government, as well as manipulate election outcomes. Violence connected to elections is becoming a bigger problem that goes beyond election seasons. In Brazil and other countries where corruption is a major factor in electoral killings, mainstream media initiatives can minimize political killings. According to the writer, newspapers, as part of mainstream media, are superior at reporting violent incidents in cities and historically significant locations. However, to deter aggressiveness and advance peace, the media frequently underreports instances of political violence.

According to Simangan, the Open Broadcast Network (OBN), a multimedia network founded in Bosnia two decades ago is among the most comprehensive and early purposeful media endeavors to lessen violent election conflict⁷. It is still the only broadcasting company created to foster peace and healing.

⁶ Shaw, Ibrahim Seaga, and Senthan Selvarajah. "Introduction: Reporting Human Rights, Conflicts, and Peacebuilding—Critical and Global Perspectives." In *Reporting Human Rights, Conflicts, and Peacebuilding*, pp. 1-10. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2019.

⁷ Simangan, Dahlia. "When hybridity breeds contempt: negative hybrid peace in Cambodia." *Third World Quarterly* 39, no. 8 (2018): 1525-1542.

The author mentions that Montenegrin Bosniaks testify that depression and uncertainty permeate their neighborhoods as a result of a string of assaults and property destruction directed at the minority group after the state's legislative elections, which brought in a new majority government controlled by right conservatives. Nevertheless, OBN has supported peace broadcasting by emphasizing community leaders' initiatives to advance peace during the conflict. Additionally, it has developed a variety of initiatives meant to enhance international understanding. The author adds that the programs provided helpful guidance for rapprochement and migration. The administrators of OBN steadfastly declined to utilize the overt nationalism bias of other broadcasters, which broadcast exact readings of political media releases live, footage of loud public appearances and uncensored personal messages. By eschewing many of the same war journalistic pitfalls and working toward openly promoting peaceful reconciliation, OBN's public service broadcasting section sets the bar for professional reporting in general.

According to Von the media plays a crucial role in peacebuilding and management of Mexican elections since it serves as the voters' primary conduit for information⁸. The author stated that despite post-election unrest in Mexico, the country's media had contributed to fostering stability. In Mexico, the National Election Institute (INE) is given control of Television and radios, and only INE is allowed to broadcast political and electoral advertisements. Nevertheless, due to the nation's extremely polarized elections and its weakened and unscrupulous administrations, the media have been slow and inefficient. Criminal organizations might utilize favors and intimidation to establish control over prospective elected politicians. Government-organized criminal connections which have historically undercut security measures contribute to Mexico's high levels of post-election violence.

⁸ Von Borzyskowski, Inken. "The risks of election observation: international condemnation and post-election violence." *International Studies Quarterly* 63, no. 3 (2019): 654-667.

According to Sahar mainstream media in Afghanistan had their peacebuilding efforts jeopardized during the elections as the government banned them from streaming events⁹. The author criticizes this notion as it fueled war in the Country. He states that The mainstream press must tell the public about who is running for office, their platform, the date, location, and hour of the elections, as well as how voters may cast their ballots—but not for whom. Armed officers in Afghanistan intimidate journalists who attempt to report on violent post-election crimes and prevent them from visiting voting stations fearing they could become the focus of terrorist assaults. According to the author, this undermines both the fundamental right of Afghan civilians to understand what's happening in their nation and media liberty. Even worse, this effort towards censoring puts the entire democratic process in peril and heightens the vulnerability that Taliban assaults pose to civilians. However, the author thinks that mainstream media would have a good impact on peacebuilding efforts during and after elections in Afghanistan.

According to Bachelard social media sites like Facebook and Twitter, as well as new mainstream media, can improve people's accessibility to electoral information and hence act as a peacebuilding mechanism in case of a post-election violence¹⁰. As per the author, this has been implemented in the United States. Acts of political aggression in the United States have increased dramatically during the past five years, ranging from assassination attempts against hitherto unnamed bureaucrats and government servants to a conspiracy to abduct Michigan's governor and the attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021. The mainstream media has a fundamental difficulty during elections, which calls into question its neutrality and objectivity. Being a spokesperson for any one politician is indeed not it shouldn't be the role of the media in peacekeeping, particularly major

⁹ Sahar, Arif, and Aqila Sahar. "Ethnic politics and political violence in post-2001 Afghanistan: the 2014 presidential election." *Terrorism and political violence* 33, no. 8 (2021): 1692-1712.

¹⁰ Bachelard Birou Mbima, Ruben. "Digital and printed media: and its effects for conflict resolution and societal peace in Côte d'Ivoire, between 2002 and 2011." (2021).

media organizations. Its primary function is to inform and educate the public and serve as an impartial, unbiased forum for unrestricted discussion of all viewpoints. The author thinks that the mainstream media helped to promote peace during the recent elections in the United States.

1.7.2 Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Africa.

As per the article of Makeke, the mainstream media in Somaliland took a clan-based initiative to promote peace during a highly contested presidential event that was brewing violence¹¹. The significance of reputable news from mainstream media institutions in conflict settlement possibilities was demonstrated by contrasting instances in Somaliland and Ethiopia. Using the extremely competitive presidential elections in 2003 as an instance, it has been suggested that Somaliland's guru (House of Elders), a branch of the parliamentary government together with the media, played a significant role in stabilizing because of its ties to regional kinship frameworks and expertise in conventional methods of conflict resolution. Even though the Somali Government is eroding the organizations and rendering them ineffectual for peacebuilding endeavors, the media played a part. The author urges nations to safeguard the rights and regulations of mainstream media.

In the article of Abdulrahman, he argues that Satellite communication has been considered a means of fostering nationhood and peacebuilding efforts in Ethiopia's elections¹². This specific initiative, dubbed Woredanet, uses teleconferencing mainly to interconnect municipalities to the central administration and one other. To provide better services and peaceful cohesion across the country, this permits the flow of news from the center point to the outskirts and the retraining of local

¹¹ Makeke, Chao J. "The Role of Media in Conflict in the Horn of Africa." Ph.D. diss., University of Nairobi, 2020.

¹² AbdulRahman, Imran, and Sesan A. Peter. "Political and economic effects of post-election violence on national development." (2018).

authorities. Additionally, it supported attempts to promote stability throughout the 2005 general election violence in Ethiopia, which included a police shooting and citizen deaths at the hands of security forces. The author claims that by facilitating communication, the media helped to promote peace since it allowed leaders to attend meetings and for their message to reach citizens.

The article of Ruben states that mainstream media was driven by political rhetoric, false information from rival political groups, and incitement of violence during the 2010 general elections in Côte d'Ivoire, threatening peacebuilding attempts¹³. While media professionals themselves frequently become the objects of assault and harassment. Both presidential candidates Laurent Gbagbo and Alassane Ouattara utilized the newspaper media and broadcast television as a propagandist weapon and a way to mobilize their constituency against their rivals during the post-election conflict that ensued following the declaration of the presidency outcomes. The mainstream media had a critical role in the post-election crisis and subsequent fall into a major conflict, which resulted in the evacuation of over one million people, the apparent cessation of many public institutions in sections of the country, and continued economic deterioration. The author concludes that media coverage of election-related violence can have both beneficial and negative effects.

According to Piccolino, the Mainstream media should provide full election coverage without biases like the one witnessed in Ivory coast to promote peacebuilding efforts¹⁴. A key aspect of the Ivorian civil war was the fight for media domination between political groups supporting Gbagbo and Ouattara. In circumstances when information is limited, tensions typically rise. Consequently, providing a diversity of news that includes a range of truths, viewpoints, and opinions would have

¹³ Bachelard Birou Mbima, Ruben. "Digital and printed media: and its effects for conflict resolution and societal peace in Côte d'Ivoire, between 2002 and 2011." (2021).

¹⁴ Piccolino, Giulia. "Peacebuilding and state-building in post-2011 Côte d'Ivoire: A victor's peace?" *African Affairs* 117, no. 468 (2018): 485-508.

been a defusing action. The mainstream press can't be impartial in favor of stability. Whereas this may seem to contradict the media's official neutrality above everything, they should recognize that the manner they publish on and about a particular issue can substantially change the viewer's view of the situation and hence impact future events like post-election violence. The author urges organizations of mainstream media to remain impartial to promote peace and refrain from political prejudice.

Ogenga argues that on various occasions in Africa, the media has been utilized to promote peace and reconciliation. For instance, the mainstream press was already employed in Northern Uganda to foster the common good for the populace and encourage peace amid post-election hostilities¹⁵. Since 2002, Mega FM has successfully fostered order and stability in Northern Uganda.

Research also points to radio as having a significant role in motivating LRA personnel to emerge from the wilderness. The author also mentioned that the LRA administration was urged to tune in to the channel and frequently participated in phone-in chat programs and conversations with government and civil society officials, which was a positive step toward promoting peace. Consequently, the media contributed to world peace.

According to Okyere, the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (UNMECAR) founded Radio Ndeke Luka (RNL), a radio station that focuses on prosperity and stability in the Central African Republic (CAR), to advance elections, security, and rehabilitation in the country¹⁶. The author states that ever since its establishment, the station has been able to support macroeconomic stability, independence, and peacebuilding efforts during election violence like that witnessed in March 2021.

¹⁵ Ogenga, Fredrick. *Peace journalism in East Africa: A manual for media practitioners*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2020.

¹⁶ Okyere, Frank O. "Central African Republic." *Journal of International Peacekeeping* 24, no. 3-4 (2021): 305-335.

It has drawn attention to concerns involving violations of human rights, the quest for tranquility, and peace-promoting efforts. It has also supported professional training for Central African Republic reporters and technologists on how to promote peace during voting, creating a good influence on local mainstream media.

Ochoga states that media coverage of post-election issues promotes community contact, conversation, and understanding, which reduces underlying tensions and fosters long-lasting peace. The author gave an illustration of post-election violence in Sudan¹⁷. The Janjaweed paramilitary, which has a history of acknowledged violations of human rights in Darfur and other places, makes up the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) that have been linked to ongoing atrocities. Even in the medium term, Sudan appears unpredictable since the TMC and its RSF are still consolidating power under the terms of the current power-sharing arrangement.

The media supported both peace and stability, particularly through commercials that emphasized peace. The author draws the following conclusion: By participating in trustworthy coverage and portraying diverse perspectives, media may be an effective instrument for encouraging peace.

In the article of Peter, he states that mainstream media has negatively influenced peacebuilding efforts in African countries during elections as a result of inciteful people toward violence¹⁸. The author looked into Nigeria and its endless post-election violence. Politicians and their recruited associates have a history of using violence against competitors and their followers in Nigeria. This is often accomplished directly by organizing gangsters or covertly by inciting aggression and using hate rhetoric towards specific adversaries. They spread hate speech that causes violence and utilizes the mainstream media to sway elections.

¹⁷ Ochoga, Ochoga Edwin, and Ebenezer Ejalonibu Lawal. "CONFLICTS IN AFRICA: THE CASE OF BURUNDI AND DAFUR." *Zamfara Journal of Politics and Development* 1, no. 1 (2020): 12-12.

¹⁸ AbdulRahman, Imran, and Sesan A. Peter. "Political and economic effects of post-election violence on national development." (2018).

State brutality has also been documented on other occasions. This has occurred whenever there's been an observable use of armed services, officers, and state government troops. For instance, claims of this were made in River State during the 2019 election and Ekiti State in 2018. The author thinks that Nigerian mainstream media can only improve and advance peace if they are impartial.

1.7.3 Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Kenya.

According to Jacinta, the Kenyan mass media has made a significant contribution to the nation's growth by addressing important societal, political and election concerns¹⁹. However, this has been met with revulsion, particularly when it comes to political concerns that lead to violent disputes. Given its influence, the media can indeed be expected to play a hidden function in Kenya. For example, by aiding the Electoral Commission of Kenya's (ECK) working to secure democratic campaigns, the mainstream press may have had a favorable impact on the 2007 national elections. Nevertheless, throughout Kenya's political races, the media's comprehensive reporting and transmissions had a significant impact on domestic and international popular perception, sentiments and behaviors toward various political parties, presidential candidates and important topics. The author believes the Kenyan media played a role in fostering peace, nonetheless, some were politically influenced.

Gakunju argues that, the mainstream media is essential during elections because it provides a forum for politicians and citizens to address crucial topics and serves as a watchdog to maintain ethical political processes and peacebuilding²⁰.

¹⁹ Makeup, Jacinta Mwendu. "Community media: Building trust and resilience in Kenyan post-election conflicts." *African Conflict and Peacebuilding Review* 9, no. 2 (2019): 9-32.

²⁰ Gakunju, Lulu. "Effect of Media on Peacebuilding in Kenya: A Case of the 2007/8 PEV." Master's thesis, Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Ås, 2017.

The media, however, may also accentuate or even promote national biases or conflicts during disputed polls, which is a severe problem in many African nations where election-related killings are on the rise. News outlets in Kenya contributed to the 2007–2008 post-election violence, which resulted in over 1,100 fatalities, by spreading hateful statements. The adoption of governmental standards to prohibit hate speech, a boom in "peace journalism," and a willingness to commit to journalistic capacity-building occurred after the 2013 elections, nevertheless. The administration, the world communities and media groups can all do so much in readiness for the approaching elections. The author believes Kenya can be peaceful through positive media influence.

In addition to their good contributions, the media also had the potential to harm the source and progression of electoral violence and hinder peacebuilding efforts²¹. Television presented a turbulent political atmosphere tainted with repugnance, aggression and a close race amongst two personalities via irresponsible reporting, as might be inferred from Kenya during the 2007 presidential elections reporting. Major media outlets like NTV and KTN also projected a faulty and heavily rigged election in support of the governing government. As a result, ECK's alleged attempt to muck up the voting process merely helped to reinforce the media's forecast. There is no doubt that this may have caused the post-election violence.

According to Ajao, certain media outlets, particularly local FM stations, appeared to have fostered incitement to violence that stoked racial tensions that erupted in public post-election unrest²². Inooro FM, Kameme FM, Kass FM and Lake Victoria FM were some of the radio stations which were frequently referenced. FM radio stations, particularly those broadcasting in tribal dialects, seemed to promote ethnic enmity and antagonism by the use of hostility and inappropriate

²¹ Ajao, Toyin, and Cori Wielenga. "Citizen journalism and conflict transformation: The Ushahidi's Response to Kenya's 2008 Post-Election Violence." *Matatu* 49, no. 2 (2017): 467-486.

²² Njigua, Grace Wambui, and Tonny Manyengo. "ROLE OF MEDIA IN CONFLICT; A CASE OF 2007/2008 POST ELECTION VIOLENCE IN KENYA." *crisis* (2017).

language, whereas mainstream news outlets like KBC, Nation Media and Standard Group were far more careful. For example, the author cites a famous Kikuyu radio station, Kameme FM, which frequently refers to Luos as "fishermen," whereas KASS FM, which aired to Kalenjins in the old Rift Valley Province, called their Kikuyu neighbors "immigrants." The author criticizes the mainstream media in Kenya as being the front runners in jeopardizing peacebuilding efforts during elections.

Oluoch argues that despite the above unfavorable peacebuilding responsibilities, the media played a constructive role during the 2007/08 Post Election Violence²³. Acting as a spokesperson for humanity's voiceless, in the author's opinion, was the most crucial job. This was accomplished by drawing attention to abuses committed during the violence and urging the worldwide community to take action. This increased public knowledge of the conflict's imminence and the post-conflict state.

For example, the 2007–2008 Post Election Violence asking for international engagement to apply pressure on protagonists to stop the war received extensive coverage in the international media. The author offers ideas and policies on how Kenya's administration, indigenous media outlets, and multilateral organizations may best promote the growth of an impartial, competent, and self-reliant media, particularly during election times.

Machete states that the most detrimental peacebuilding role that the media might have had during the Post-Election Violence was manipulating viewer emotions to make an empathetic petition²⁴. This situation occurred when several media outlets, according to their political and ethnic affiliations, portrayed comparable events differently to pique the sympathies of their listeners.

²³ Oluoch, Victor O. "Community radio in peacebuilding: the case of Kibera's pamoja FM in the 2007/2008 post-election violence in Kenya." Ph.D. diss., University of Nairobi, 2015.

²⁴ Machete, Belinda O. "Role of Media Coverage in International Conflict Management: the Case Study of 2007-08 Post-election Violence in Kenya." Ph.D. diss., University of Nairobi, 2017.

The lack of a consensus report across media outlets may make it difficult to condemn atrocities committed during conflicts. According to the 2007–2008 PEV, the lack of a neutral report by local media outlets because of political allegiance may have emboldened conflict opponents to plot retaliatory assaults, which might have worsened the conflict.

According to Kamiri, several communal and faith-based radio broadcasting utilized their networks to defuse hostilities and advocate for peaceful elections during the 2007/2008 post-election unrest.²⁵ Examples were Radio Waumini, Koch FM and Pamoja FM in the informal settlements of Korogocho and Kibera, respectively, in Nairobi. Majority of Kenyans still have the belief that "if the radio says it, then it is real," important during periods of violence. For this reason, radio is frequently mentioned as a cause of interethnic and intercommunal conflict. According to the author, community radio stations offer an excellent way to establish settings where conversations amongst parties to a dispute can be held in confidence since they are more accessible to the general public than major newspapers and television.

As per the article of Mutahi, Kenyan, social media and modern technologies were being used to not only spread violent rhetoric and mobilize for conflict but also to locate and map out conflict areas and help in peacebuilding²⁶. According to the author, Kenya's elections have come to be associated with electoral malpractices. During the 2007 elections, this took a tragic turn. Nevertheless, this was also the era when social media and digital technologies were first applied to politics, especially for polling as well as campaigns. Furthermore, because social media has been used to encourage hatred and violence, it has also posed a significant threat to security, peace,

²⁵ Kamiri, Agnes W. "Role Of Effective Communication In Conflict Resolution: Case Study Of Post-Election Violence In Kenyan." Ph.D. diss., University Of Nairobi, 2011.

²⁶ Mutahi, Patrick, and Brian Kimari. *The impact of social media and digital technology on electoral violence in Kenya*. IDS, 2017.

and reconciliation. The author believes that social media as a mainstream media can be useful in Peacebuilding efforts in Kenya as many people are connected through the media.

1.7.4 Gaps in the Literature Review

The concept of mainstream media and peace building is increasingly gaining traction in both academic and policy circles the world over. Specifically, how mainstream media can be a tool for peace building is an area that continues to capture the interest of scholars. Numerous research projects on mainstream media and peacebuilding as a result continue to produce new information and insights, expanding the range of knowledge already available in this field. But there still exist many knowledge gaps and there are endless opportunities for study to expand the body of knowledge in the field of knowledge management techniques both locally and globally. In particular, there is limited literature on impact of mainstream media on post-election conflict peacebuilding in Kenya. This study intends to fill some of the gaps and contribute useful knowledge in mainstream media and post-election peacebuilding.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

Agenda Setting Theory gives a deeper understanding of media's ability to influence a wide range of issues on the national agenda. The underlying tenet of agenda-setting theory is that audience are more likely to find a new topic to be significant if it is covered frequently and in depth. Agenda-setting analysis was established by Drs. Max McCombs and Donald Shaw in a study of the 1968 presidential election. McCombs and Shaw were able to determine how much the media affects public opinion by comparing the content of the public's opinions on the most important election topic.²⁷

²⁷ Kim, S.T., & Lee, "New functions of Internet mediated agenda-setting: Agenda –rippling and reversed agenda-setting:. (Korean Journal of Journalism and Communication Studies, 2006)

In his 1992 book *The Public Opinion*, Walter Lippmann expands on the agenda-setting hypothesis. Lippmann argues that the media has a significant impact on how images are created in the minds and memories of its viewers. He claims that rather than the actual event itself, the audience reacts to the mental image of the true incident. Because of this, the media plays a crucial role in connecting world events with how the general population views them.²⁸

The Agenda-setting theory is important to this study in that the media controls public discussion by selecting, organizing, and emphasizing the significant subject that can drive a narrative in the general public. The shaping of an agenda by the media leads to intensive visibility of an issue on news thus manipulating the public. This agenda-setting ability of the media can be used in peacebuilding to foster unity, cohesion, forgiveness, and restoration of the society in the post-election conflict.

1.9 Research Hypotheses

- i. The mainstream media has positively impacted Post-Election Conflict peacebuilding in the 21st Century International System.
- ii. The Mainstream Media has contributed immensely to the Post-Election Conflict peacebuilding in Africa.
- iii. The Mainstream Media has positively impacted Post-Election Conflict Peace Building in Kenya.

²⁸ Lyengar, S; kinder, D, *News that matter*: (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987)

1.10 Research Methodology

1.10.1 Research Design

This section entails the method that was used in tackling a research challenge and collecting the research question's responses are all included in a study design. The study used both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. A descriptive research design was used for the investigation. This strategy aims to gather information without influencing the respondents or research variables in an effort to evaluate how mainstream media might be a useful instrument for peacebuilding after elections.

1.10.2 Target Population

The target population of this study was mainly be media personnel both from print and television media, officials of the National Cohesion and Integration Commission, officials from the Office of the Directorate of Criminal Investigations, security personnel, the Electoral body and academicians.

1.10.3 Sampling Procedure

The study used both simple random and purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is where the researcher selected a sample that is judged to be informative to the study. This was used to sample respondents from media personnel both from print and television media, officials of the cohesion and integration commission, officials from the Office of the Directorate of Criminal Investigations, the security personnel, and the officials from the electoral body. For the academicians, the study will use simple random sampling methods since every citizen of 18years and above can weigh in on the media and post-election peacebuilding

The population was arrived at by using the formula $n = p \times q \times (z/e)^2$

Where;

$$n = 0.5 \times 0.5 \times (1.96 / 0.05)^2 = 384$$

Target population	Sample size	Sampling procedure
Media houses (Radio, TV, Newspaper)	20	Purposive
Officials from the National Cohesion and Integration Commission	20	Purposive
Officials from the Office of the Directorate of Criminal Investigations	20	Purposive
Security personnel	20	Purposive
Officials from the electoral body	20	
Academicians	284	Simple Random
	384	

1.10.4 Data Collection Procedure

The study used a mixture of primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data will comprise information collected from the respondents from various categories mentioned in the target population where questionnaires will be administered to the respondents.

Secondary data will include data collected from relevant literature in libraries such as journals, newspapers, annual reports, published and unpublished books, case records, news bulletins.

1.10.5 Data Analysis and Presentation

Through the use of both qualitative and descriptive approaches to data analysis, including content analysis and narrative analysis, both primary and secondary sources of data were analyzed. Data on behavioral patterns were tabulated and compiled using content analysis. The primary qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis and presented in narrative format.²⁹ Quantitative data will be analyzed through Microsoft Excel and SPSS packages and presented as tables and pie charts.

1.10.6 Reliability of Data Collection Instruments

To guarantee that all relevant data is gathered, this study used triangulation and a mixed-method design for data gathering. The design of the data collection devices was characterized by clear, rational, and all-inclusive questions to increase credibility. To ensure that the information about the specific instrument produces accurate and reliable results, it will also be examined, cross-checked, and closely examined.

1.10.7 Validity of Data Collection Instruments

The instruments chosen for data collection—questionnaires, in-person interviews, and in-depth research into prior coverage of the case study dispute—are valid for the information that were pertinent to this study. This is so that the data acquired can directly address the research questions and hypotheses since it was current or recently current.

²⁹ Matthes, J., What's in a frame? A content analysis of media framing studies in the world's leading communication journals, 1990-2005. (J & MC Quarterly, Summer 2009)

1.11 Chapter Outline

The research topic, Background, Research goals, A review of relevant literature, theoretical framework, hypothesis and research technique are all included in Chapter 1 of the research proposal.

Chapter two is an Assessment of the Impact of the Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in the 21st Century International System.

Chapter three is an Evaluation of the Impact of the Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Africa.

Chapter four critically Analyses the Impact of the Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Kenya.

Chapter five is a summary of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

THE IMPACT OF THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA ON POST-ELECTION CONFLICT PEACEBUILDING IN THE 21ST CENTURY INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

2.1 Introduction

In today's modern conflicts, the media frequently plays a vital role. In effect, their goal can take two different forms. Either the media actively participates in the conflict and contributes to the escalation of violence, or it remains neutral and out of the conflict, contributing in the peace settlement and the decline of violence. The main stream media involvement in a particular war, as well as the times before and after it, is influenced by a number of factors, including the media's connection with conflict parties and its independence from political elites in societal structure. Since the United Nations (UN) was founded in 1945, peace has been a human rights priority around the world. Non-interference and respect for national sovereignty are supported by Article 2 preambles of the Charter of the United Nations (1, 3, 7).

Conflict prevention and peace-building initiatives use a number of techniques, from encouraging discussion and agreements between warring parties to deploying peacekeeping missions to break away armed forces. These programs, on the other hand, can use media tactics to reach and greatly affect a much larger audience. Acknowledging the media's influence is merely a step towards realizing its peacemaking potential. The media must be prepared to perform a variety of roles, including being a source of information, monitor, conversion tool and promoter.

2.2 An Overview of the Relationship Between Mainstream Media and Conflict

The modern world is characterized by conflict, as seen by the innumerable conflicts that have resulted in fatalities and displacement of people since the fall of the Soviet Union.

Hans Morgenthau is a proponent of identifying the key cause of this problem and the interrelationship between defense and conflict resolution from an international, multidimensional perspective.³⁰ Understanding the nature and significance of the media in the conflict and post-conflict peace process necessitates first understanding how media influences conflict and conflict resolution. By and large, a distinct role is demanded of media in a context of violence, beyond the tenets of its profession.

In this context, when the media was heavily exploited as a propaganda tool, the French Revolution is undoubtedly the first and most famous example of its kind. During the French Revolutionary War's Italian campaign, Napoleon Bonaparte, a French commander and acclaimed military strategist, produced his own publications to glorify his triumphs.

The initiative was a major success in terms of creating a positive image of himself amongst some of the French public particularly, and conquering European people in general, leading for him to become France's first Emperor.³¹

Radios were utilized as a medium to advocate in both World Wars subsequently in the 20th century, when digital technology in the context of broadcast had been developed, in addition to publications and pamphlets. The local RTLM radio fostered communal violence between Tutsi and Hutu populations, which was found to have contributed a crucial part in the Rwandan genocide.

The Rwandan genocide of 1994 culminated this brutality, which the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda eventually blamed on the propaganda by the media.

³⁰Morgenthau, H., & Thompson, K. "Politics among nations". New York: McGraw-Hill. (1985).

³¹ Zahoor, Musharaf & Sadiq, Najma. Media and Armed Conflicts: An Overview. NUST Journal of International Peace & Stability. 70-80. 10.37540/ v4i1. 80. (2021).

However, it should be noted that these were not the first times in history where the media played a positive or negative role in a war or conflict.³²

For the first time in 1903, Villard emphasized the significance of providing two sides of a story, laying the framework for journalistic neutrality.³³ Peace journalism was added to the definition of ethical or moral journalism, based on a key study by Galtung and Ruge. Their study was examined on the basis of how four Norwegian newspapers handled the Congo, Cuba, and Cyprus crises. Journalists should contribute and shift their emphasis on long-term progress instead of short-term progress in a conflict, according to their findings and studies.³⁴

The media should be educated on how to deal with prejudices successfully, there should be more content devoted to reporting from diverse cultural societies, and non-elite individuals and groups should be given more exposure. As a result, peace journalism concentrates on humanitarian issues, journalistic integrity, and as little reliance on authoritative forms of information as possible during a conflict. Journalists must be taught how to report on issues of peace in their own communities.

Numerous approaches to responsible journalism have been discussed, notably for conflict coverage. Attachment journalism and detachment journalism are two examples. These two perspectives also explain how journalists have typically played a part in any war.

Martin Bell, a BBC journalist, coined the word "journalism of attachment" with the goal of not just observing while reporting from conflict zones, but rather addressing the atrocities of the

³² A. Thompson, *The media and the Rwanda genocide* (pp.1-11). London: Pluto. (2007)

³³ Mindich, D. T. (1998). *Just the Facts: How "Objectivity" came to define American journalism*. New York: New York University Press.

³⁴ Galtung, J., & Ruge, M. H. (1965). The structure of foreign news: The presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus crises in four Norwegian newspapers. *Journal of Peace Research*, 2(1), 64-90.

conflict to instill a sense of accountability and intervention to help alleviate the hardships faced by conflict victims.

As a result, the media has numerous potential to play a beneficial role in dispute resolution. By introducing and anchoring key topics in national and local debates, the media helps improve discussion processes. They can serve to dispel victim and perpetrator stereotypes and increase public awareness of political decisions such as peace agreements and the like, making future change processes more participatory. They have the potential to enhance awareness of the psychosocial consequences of conflict

2.3 The Role of Mainstream Media During Conflict

There are links between the media and conflicts; for example, the media can inform citizens of a state about the severity of a conflict, where it is being waged, why, how, and who is waging war; however, the most serious issue of media potential to influence, which largely determine conflict direction, has yet to be ascertained.³⁵ The media has propelled peace and security challenges onto the global stage throughout many regions across the international system. For a long time, it has also played a role in the distribution of information concerning war and conflict. Hearst observed that conflict and also the media thrive off of each other, with one providing as a source of riveting news and the other as a forum for debating and sometimes advocating conflict resolution policies.³⁶

Globally, various forms of media are used to transmit information, disseminate it, and share it. In today's conflict, the media can play multiple roles including fueling violence and escalating conflict, as well as remaining neutral and making significant contributions to conflict resolution.

³⁵Kaldor, S. "Canada and International Peacekeeping". Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies (2001)

³⁶Aho, M, Media's Role in Peace-building: United Nations Peace Support Operations, Virginia: George Mason University. (2004) p 41

The media's participation in conflicts is determined by a number of variables, including the relation between the media and the conflict's actors, as well as the media's independence from the society's power holders.

Freedom of speech and expression is a universal human right and crucial to the functioning of a representative democracy, not only an indication of a successful media. It is a sign of free speech, knowledge, and the expression of different points of view in a diverse community. Efficient and transparent media are an integral aspect of any environment of prevention and vital for civilizations attempting to transition to democracy and freedom. The media can be used to provide a platform for multiple viewpoints and dialogue, but it can also be used for propaganda, inciting hatred and spreading false information, and therefore artificially heightening tensions.

People might become desperate and frightened as a consequence of the lack of knowledge at any phase of a conflict, making them unsettled and easier to influence.

As a result, the ability to make well-informed decisions promotes society by fostering economic success, democratic processes, and a positive future view. As just a result, the United Nations Millennium Declaration emphasized the importance of ensuring the media's freedom to perform their critical function, as well as the public's right to knowledge.³⁷

Internal conflicts have a long history and do not arise out of nowhere. Local news outlets are typically more knowledgeable about present political institutions, conflict participants, and events that occurred prior to the rise of violence. As a result, the media can have an impact on the public not just before, during, and after a disagreement by identifying and appropriately resolving public

³⁷United Nations Millennium Declaration (2000)

concerns. Unlike international news media that covers wars all over, local news media are a recognized element of society with the potential to generate or alleviate worry.

There are avoidable shortcomings in conflict and conflict management, one of which is underestimating the importance of the media. Because it has the power to intensify conflicts while also exhibiting its good potential, the media plays a critical role in post-war construction and conflict settlement. As a result, the media has the ability to reduce situations and hostilities before they reach the critical stage while also keeping a discerning eye on the government, opposition, and broader population.

The media assists in the resolution of conflicts and the dissemination of representative democracy ideology by giving reliable information and addressing a large audience. As a consequence, in the aftereffects of a war, the media can aid in the promotion of community unity and reconciliation. Responsible journalism focuses on providing a straightforward, balanced, and fair picture of events rather than simply publishing media releases.

To do so, journalists must avoid judgmental portrayals and accurately convey reality without exaggeration or instigation. The worldwide media can help to bring awareness from all over the world in the event of a crisis or conflict. The mainstream media is able to throw light on conflicts all around the world because it is such an integral part of everyday life, particularly in advanced economies. This is owing to the creation of the responsibility to protect (R2P) and international humanitarian principles, which state that all people must be protected against mass atrocities and human rights violations.³⁸

³⁸ “Mission statement”. United Nations: office of the special adviser on the prevention of genocide. Retrieved 2012.

Even while most military conflicts these days are conducted for political rather than territorial reasons, entities are often concerned with ensuring that the majority of the public is on "their" side, which offers access to distorting the truth and seeking to acquire control of information transmission through the media. As a result, unbiased and independent international media engagement is vital not just for the global audience but also for individuals who are directly affected. Nonetheless, because the number of disagreements that attract global attention is small, local media plays an important role in this regard.

Peace journalism can help to achieve a certain level of peace. Peace reporters attempt to expose the root reasons of a conflict as well as the actual intentions of all parties involved, while also humanizing all conflict victims. The media ought to avoid exploiting the loss and hardship, instead ensuring balanced reporting and demonstrating how readily news can be distorted.

One of the ethical standards for this sort of journalism is to highlight people who employ nonviolent means to protest war and violence, as well as to highlight the suffering and death on all sides.

Peace journalism is also concerned with possible solutions and preventing future escalation of the conflict. Different techniques can be employed in a recommended structure for peace-building media, including such: Journalism that is responsive to conflict and promotes peace media sector that promotes peace. To prevent encouragement to violence, the media must be regulated to citizen media that promotes peace.³⁹

³⁹ Himelfarb, Sheldon and Chabalowski, Megan Media, Conflict Prevention and Peace building: Mapping the Edges. United States Institute for Peace 2008.

2.4 The Media as an Instrument in Peacebuilding

We must recognize the media's existence, which has lasted over half a millennium. The shift in media advancement can be traced from print media, which was the telegraph, through the phone, stereo, television, computer, and now the widely used internet, all of which contributed to civilization, thereby ushering in a new era of peace and tolerance. However, in today's world, it may be claimed that the media has surpassed our expectations and has evolved into a vehicle for relaying violence and war. In Rwanda, for example, the local media was effectively utilized as a tool to promote Tutsi massacres.⁴⁰ The media should have on the other hand have helped reduce the conflict from escalating and encourage cooperation among the people.

It can be noted that a lot of social norms nowadays are being globalized in this new world era. This is due to the fact that human interaction is becoming increasingly mediated and also the sharing of universally accepted and defined Rights even when it comes to social institutions.

Thus, making it necessary for the society to utilize media especially in regions that are characterized by conflicts for example the horn of Africa. The media being the civil society agents/tools has the power to transform violent conflicts into non-violent ones, therefore, it can provide positive change and peace-building⁴¹.

A free and outspoken media can promote norms such as democracy, Human Rights and peace. It can be argued that the media has helped to remove dictatorial regimes for example Muammar Gaddafi, highlighted violations of human rights especially in the Sub-Saharan African countries and fostered justice and reconciliation.

⁴⁰ Thompson A. 'The Media and the Rwandan Genocide' (ED). London: Pluto Press 2007

⁴¹ Robin Hay, Media and peace-building, Global Affairs Research Partners for the Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society' 2002 p.66

The media plays several roles for example: educate, inform and enlighten citizens. It has also promoted environmental protection and helped campaign against the spread of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. This proves that the media has strengthened as agents for peace-building.

Local media employing community stations can assist engage people in diverse places and in different dialects by delivering information. Individuals can be directly addressed in this manner, as well as their own personal observations can be better absorbed than with international press. The media, particularly radio, makes it easier to communicate peace appeals to passing militants and refugees in border regions. It also aims to involve the general public in the creation and transmission of content. For example, after the Sudan authorities and the SPLM (Sudan People Liberalization Movement) signed a peace deal, the UN built a number of radio stations in their respective native dialects to promote peace culture and reduce negative attitudes between the two parties.⁴²

In peace initiatives, the local and international media complement each other. The international media plays a critical role in internationalizing the issue and drawing attention to the situation on the ground. Because most internal conflicts involve governments, the two parties may falsify the facts because they control the information. The media, on the other hand, must stay objective. During a conflict, the media serves as a mediator and a means of communicating peace to those in the conflict zone. It functions as a transmission medium by analyzing a disagreement, identifying objectives, and dispelling misunderstanding, all of which are components of the peace process.⁴³

⁴² Fleischhacker, Helga and Doebbler, Curtis F. "Sudan" In Elections in Africa: a data Handbook, pp 843-863. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999

⁴³ Howard Ross: Media and peace-building, online research 2002.

2.5 The Media's Influence in Post- Election Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding

2.5.1 Media and Peacebuilding

Conflict is one of the defining characteristics of the modern world. Following the conclusion of the Cold War, several conflicts arose, claiming the millions of people's lives and causing pain and displacement for countless more. Human misery caused by conflict is impossible to adequately quantify. The media's importance in the global arena has grown in recognition during the previous six decades, particularly its ability to escalate or limit possible crises. People might become worried, restless, and easily persuaded due to a lack of knowledge at any stage of a conflict. The ability to make well calculated and better-informed decisions benefits society by promoting growth and prosperity, democratic systems, and a positive outlook for the future.

The media has become an indispensable aspect of human society's daily life. They have an impact on the political, social, cultural, economic, and intellectual life of the country. In a conflict situation, this power can be turned into a positive or negative force that incites violence or fosters peace. Initiatives aimed at consolidating peaceful coexistence and strengthening legitimate political, socioeconomic, and organizations strong enough to deal with conflict, as well as other methodologies that would either generate or encourage the necessary requirements for long-term peace, are referred to as peace-building.⁴⁴

Although media has played an important role in conflicts throughout history, it was only in the last 20 years that it became a systematic instrument for peacebuilding, beginning with inter-ethnic conflicts in the early 1990s. This is due in part to the end of the Cold War era and a change from inter-state to intra-state warfare, which saw the rise of a slew of new conflict actors utilizing novel

⁴⁴ Adam, G., & Holguin, The Media's Role in Peace, building: Asset or Liability?'. In Our Media 3 Conference (pp. 19-21). May 2003.

technologies in both combat and post-conflict stages. But, more crucially, two other concurrent developments in the preceding decade (1980s) made the practice conceivable, such as the refinement of media technology and equipment and the greater organization of peacebuilders as NGOs.⁴⁵

The media serve as a medium for the expression of public opinion, allowing citizens and government officials to gauge popular sentiment on a wide range of issues. The public may see what people expect and whether or not representational regimes are serving the public by reflecting public perception. As a result, since the early 1990s, international peacekeeping organizations have been interested in the impact of the media on society. By delivering credible news, presenting balanced perspectives in editorial material, and developing communication channels between conflicting groups, the media can contribute to peace.

It can also objectively identify and express the fundamental goals of opposing parties. The media has the ability to transmit information that increases trust with stakeholders in a disagreement.⁴⁶

2.5.2 The Media and Policymaking

Because the society, governments, and even competing parties perceive the significance of events through the news, the media plays a critical role in conflicts. It also shapes public perceptions of the oppressor or terrorist as well as the victim. This is in line with Deprez and Raeymaeckers' ideas, as well as many other studies that have looked at the function of the media in influencing or

⁴⁵ Crosbie, V, 'What Is New Media? www.digitaldeliverance.com. 2002).

⁴⁶ . Skjerdal, S. The South Sudan media and their peace-building potential. *International Journal of South Sudan Studies*, 11(9), 27-50. 2012.

changing public opinion during times of crisis. They claim that how the media portrays the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the concerned parties involved has a big influence on public perception.⁴⁷

Due to the political costs, it is believed that decision-makers will not simply reject the public's opinion on a critical issue. Two major elements are responsible for the rise in significance of the news media in shaping decision-making, particularly when it comes to Western engagement in wars. Due to a lack of security concerns, military engagement has become a personal choice rather than a necessity after the end of the Cold War.

Additionally, the media's power to bring war home to the people by airing live footage from battlegrounds has swayed public perception on most conflicts over the decade. The phrase "CNN effect," created during the US invasion of Northern Iraq in 1991, is now widely used in research on the news media's ability to influence policymaking. It focuses on the most violent period of a conflict, as well as the need for humanitarian aid.

The media has sway over politicians, especially when it comes to preventing and responding to violent conflict. Policymakers also use the media to spread their messages. Some academics claim that CNN has gained control on policymaking, especially in humanitarian disaster situations.

Officials are compelled to intervene militarily to halt death by imagery of atrocities, hunger, and brutality shown on CNN, even if they do not perceive it is in their country's best interests to provide it. For example, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the media played a critical role in inspiring citizens to pressure officials to intervene to halt the violence.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Deprez, A., & Raeymaeckers, K. Bottlenecks in the coverage of the Israeli Palestinian Conflict: The coverage of the first and second intifada in the Flemish press. *Media War & Conflict*, 4(2), 185-202. (2011)

⁴⁸ Gilboa, Eyta: *Framing Issues, Making Policy, Shaping Opinions.* , Media and Conflict ,Ardsey, NY, USA: Transnational Publishers Inc. 2002

2.5.3 The Media as a Global Diplomat

People active in the everyday arena of public diplomacy are confronted both by the velocity and the magnitude of these concerns in the media and news sectors as stories like the Iraq war, politically sensitive cartoons, and terrorism have reverberated in the media around the world in recent years. As the number of communication channels has grown in recent decades, public diplomacy has expanded its entry points.⁴⁹ Modern day media has greatly influenced the rules of engagement when it comes to public diplomacy in its pursuit to promote peaceful International Relations. The rise of citizen journalists has placed strain on diplomats to report on happenings on the ground in an efficient and timely manner. This is due to the internet, which allows individuals to interact and influence audiences all around the world on specific foreign policy issues.

The media is sometimes used to report diplomatic endeavors and relay signals between conflicting parties. While politicians prefer covert conversations, there are situations when no direct routes of contact are available.

If one party wishes to see how other people react to a negotiating proposal, they can use the media to convey signals and messages to other people. Leaders of opposing groups or administrations are periodically invited to speak on television or radio by the news media.

By bridging the gap between opponents, the media could be able to help them develop trust and start talks.

The usage of blogs is one of the media instruments that can be employed for diplomatic exchange. For example, following the post-9/11 transitioned in the US administration from a "need to know"

⁴⁹ Holli A. Semetko, Media and Public Diplomacy in Times of War and Crisis, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, Volume 52 Number 5 January 2009 639-642

to a "need to share" approach, the US Department of State has embraced technology and is attempting to leverage current capabilities to promote exchange of information.⁵⁰ It therefore incorporated technology from the world's greatest social networking authorities namely: Facebook, Twitter, and Wikipedia.

As evident, public diplomacy is gaining traction as a vehicle for international engagement, at the same time social media plays a significant role in diplomatic reporting. This blogging medium is therefore quickly becoming an integral element of the diplomat's reporting toolkit. In view of this, the ultimate focus of a diplomat is to promote and protect the interests of their country. Blogs, whether authored by them or others, can become a useful resource that is often overlooked by the mainstream media.

2.5.4 The Media as Gatekeeper and Monitor

The media can sometimes act as a third-party 'oversight committee,' offering people information about local situations. The media has the ability to bring previously unknown tales to light. Investigative reporting can bring to light a public issue. In the perspective of the people, the media is a reliable source of information. Whereas civil society may be constrained in its ability to collect information, the media may be able to obtain information through whatever lawful methods available. While the Ombudsman's office will always react to complaints from the public, whistleblowers seeking to expose problems may turn to the media first.⁵¹

The news media's watchdog function helps democracy and contributes to democratic government by monitoring influential groups of society in both the public and private spheres. It contributes to

⁵⁰ Archetti, C "The Impact of New Media on Diplomatic Practice: An Evolutionary Model of Change," *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, 7(2): 181-206. (2012)

⁵¹ Semetko, Holli, *Media and Public Diplomacy in Times of War and Crisis Introduction*. American Behavioral Scientist. (2009).

the preservation and strengthening of democracy, as well as the renewal of public trust in it, by revealing and keeping individuals and institutions responsible for their actions. Individuals who want to oppose perceived abuses may require the help of the media to get the information they have out to the general public.

As a result, the media has an obligation to inform as a monitor and watch-dog to the society by letting the public know and trying to raise awareness about issues that affect the general population. In a volatile society, in a rapidly changing social environment, and in an unpredictable political scenario, the public wants the media to remain fair and impartial, with an independent point of view free of prejudice.⁵²

In the past, the media has been a catalyst for change by exposing weak leaders and scrutinizing badly crafted policies. It has been the people's voice when public resources have been looted by greedy individuals, as well as exposing social issues in particular areas.

Because the media serves as a watchdog for the government, the people is able to form their own opinions on how the war should be waged.

The concept of the media as a neutral machine is crucial since we obtain the majority of our information from it, and it may influence how we think and feel about issues as well as how we vote. This is especially important during times of conflict because most governments do not include war preparedness in their manifesto pledges. During times of conflict, the media should also act as a watchdog, enabling people to obtain all essential information before determining whether or not a war is justifiable.⁵³

⁵² Benyahia, S.C., Gardner, A. and Rayner, P. Media studies: The essential resource. United Kingdom: Routledge (2004)

⁵³ Challenging Media, The propaganda model of news, The myth of the liberal media (2006)

The media can also function as a censor, setting agendas, controlling topics, and attempting to strike the right combination of viewpoints. Even when they discreetly aim to promote a certain ideological range of thoughts and restrict the public's access to a wide range of content, the media tries to depict itself as 'balanced and fair.' In 2006, a Danish cartoonist sparked international outrage with an anti-Islam comment. Because of global tensions, there has been a lot of discussion on how and when professional journalists should intervene as moderators to prevent certain sentiments from being judged degrading or disrespectful to specific communities.

2.6 Chapter Summary

The media is a key player in times of conflict and post-conflict building. In the twenty-first century, media freedom of speech is critical because it has the capacity to either intensify violence or lessen tensions between opposing parties and the impacted communities. The chapter looked at the impact the media plays during and after conflict, as well as an overview of the media's relationship with conflict. Even in the past, the media had an important role in wars such as the French revolution and the Rwandan genocide, when the media was used to disseminate hate and provocation.

In the globalized world of the twenty-first century, news spreads quickly, and whatever is published quickly obtains traction and international attention. As a result, the chapter has focused on how the media has had an impact in post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding through propagating international principles and norms such as democracy, human rights, and peace. Journalism of attachment is a type of journalism in which journalists are asked to do more than just report news and stand by, but to create a feeling of accountability and intervention in which local and international media sources collaborate to internationalize a problem.

After a conflict, post-conflict rebuilding and peacebuilding are essential, and the media plays a key role in this. In peacebuilding, the media can act as a people's voice, highlighting public opinion and encouraging togetherness. The media has an impact on policymaking because it is assumed that decision-makers will not simply disregard public opinion on an important subject. Finally, the media serves as a global diplomat, as it is sometimes used to report diplomatic initiatives and relay messages between disputing parties, contributing to post-conflict rebuilding. Finally, the media serves as a watchdog, as it has a responsibility to disclose the general population and raise public awareness about issues that impact society through investigate journalism. Therefore, the significance of the media during and post-election conflict cannot be downplayed.

CHAPTER THREE

THE IMPACT OF MAINSTREAM MEDIA ON POST-ELECTION CONFLICT PEACEBUILDING IN AFRICA

3. 1 Introduction

Post-Election Conflict is one of the numerous issues that Africa faces. Conflict is almost unavoidable in a continent that covers one-fifth of the globe and is rife with ethnicity. Africans have been subjected to controversial and deceitful colonial tyranny that has impeded nation-building since foreign powers partitioned Africa without consideration for traditions and culture or socioeconomic growth. As a result, Africa has long been a staging ground between East and West in terms of socioeconomic and political agendas.

The media's function in conveying information as a domain of knowledge in human consciousness can be either be beneficial or damaging to civilization. The media's helpful influence in conflict resolution is predicated on its ability to create reality during the political settlement. The media's deconstructive function in transmitting information as a subject of knowledge in human awareness, on the other hand, can be both beneficial and damaging to peace. The media's helpful influence in conflict resolution is founded on the formation of facts during the peace negotiations.

A multifaceted combination of variables, such as the media's interaction with conflict actors, as well as the media's autonomy from political elites in societal structure, define the involvement of the media in a given conflict, as well as the stages leading up to and following it.

Generally, a strong and independent media helps to maintain or promote stability in the region in crisis prone regions, not just to manage violent warfare.

3.2 The Media's Functional Roles in Africa Post-Election Conflict

The media has had a significant influence on modern society's conflicts, warfare, and conflict settlement. Information, whether accurate or false, may now be shared more quickly thanks to the media. This is due to the ease with which modern media can cover large areas and move around. In actuality, thanks to advancements in information technology and the media, millions around the world today know a lot more about major developments in the global affairs than they did in prior eras. Individuals rely on the media for critical information on legislative, socioeconomic, and cultural challenges in their countries and surroundings. The media also addresses impending societal catastrophes, such as natural disasters.⁵⁴

The media can perform one of two functions as a source of information: it can be active and participate in the violence, thereby feeding it, or it can be neutral and stay out of the friction, consequently resisting conflict and alleviating violence. A myriad of difficult factors affect the media's role in disseminating information in a specific conflict, including the media's autonomy from the political and government authorities, including the interaction between the media and the conflict's actors. The mainstream media also acts as a translator of what would have transpired if the media had not been present. The ordinary citizen has no understanding of what's going on in most conflict situations. The media assesses occurrences beyond the physical realm in times of chaos, providing enlightenment and clarification.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ White, A., Media Ethics in a Context of War or Conflict: A discussion paper for International Media Support, p. 12. (2016)

⁵⁵ Tawanda, Chirunga & Mbwirire, John The Role of Media In Peacebuilding: A Case Study Of Both Public And Private Media In Harare, Zimbabwe. . (2020).

Conflicts are diversifying and disintegrating at an unprecedented rate, giving rise to a threat to international peace in a manner not seen before. In a global environment, the literature and evaluation of the root causes of conflicts, as well as the relationship between security and conflict resolution, are revealing a variety of trends. As a consequence, the vast majority of current conflicts originate from a local and societal level before spilling over borders to other locations. In view of this, tragic regional dynamics, including those exhibited in some developing countries, noticeably in Africa, are aggravated by political rivalry and the ensuing disputes among and between states.⁵⁶

After the culmination of the Cold War, the media has played an important part in the development and implementation of peacekeeping operations wherever there is a political disagreement between states. The media has the ability to sway public opinion and produce variables or situations that states can consider when resolving disputes. The emergence of non-state actors in international politics, as well as the complex interdependence of today's international system, has resulted in powerful actors such as the media, which have an impact on states' essential interests in some way. The internet has changed the way information is gathered, framed, and produced in different parts of the world, and media coverage has expanded beyond national boundaries.⁵⁷

When it comes to the African continent, the media has also been a powerful tool in resolving the continent's disputes. During the Rwandan genocide in the mid-1990s, for example, Rwandan broadcast, 'Television Libre des Mille Collines' (RTLM), was among the case studies of mainstream media that facilitated spread controversy via stimulating the Hutu populace to eliminate the Tutsi, alluding to them all as "cockroaches" who required to be killed to bring peace

⁵⁶ MFAF, Media Focus on Africa Foundation Centre for Independent Research (CIR). National Integration and Cohesion Report April 2009.

⁵⁷ Robinson, P. 'The CNN Effect: can the news media drive foreign policy', Review of International Studies 25(2): 301-9 (1999).

in Rwanda. As a byproduct of the genocide, about 1,000,000 Tutsis were slaughtered, and many others were displaced. More recently, social media has been instrumental in mobilizing people against the regimes of Libya, Tunisia, and Egypt. These events proved the importance of the media in not only resolving disagreements, but also in rallying people to achieve a common purpose.

3.3 Perspectives of African Conflicts in Media Coverage

The international press can help to bring awareness from all over the world in the event of an incident or conflict. Because the media has become such a vital part of everyday life, particularly in more developed countries, it is sufficient to convey conflict from all around the globe to limelight. Even though the media plays an important role in broadcasting on these wars, experts have criticized foreign news organizations for promoting "fatal imagery" ⁵⁸, which prioritize devastation, warfare methods, or tribalism whilst disregarding "conflict resolution concepts" that promote peacebuilding and economic improvement. The predominance of 'fatal photos' implies that journalists critique Africa based on collectively acceptable standards and observed perspectives, culminating in a preferential picture of what is going on in the globe. ⁵⁹

A journalistic culture has existed in Western media for more than 50 years. Biased reporting on Africa is a manifestation of this culture. Boston University conducted a study (1994-2004) on five major US newspapers' coverage of Africa in 2005. The news was dominated by conflict, war, starvation, and natural calamities. "It's as if there's a wish to preserve an antiquated and grim impression of Africa living in the imaginations of audiences, readers, and listeners since pre-

⁵⁸ Kothari, A. The Framing of the Darfur Conflict in the New York Times: 2003 – 2006. *Journalism Studies* 11(2): 209 – 224. (2010)

⁵⁹ Armentia, J. I. & Marin, F. (2018) How the Spanish press frames obesity: A study of content published by El Pais, La Vanguardia and El Correo in 2015

slavery times, an attitude that western media has attempted to shape in the minds of audiences, readers, and listeners," according to Safari.⁶⁰

Media content which is an outcome of journalism' practice function has been the subject of research on how African conflicts are represented in the Western media, with some discussions with media professionals thrown in for good measure. These studies have regularly discovered that Africa is portrayed negatively, albeit to a lesser level than in past decades, and that African struggles over political, economic, and socio-cultural concerns are given prominence. Global perceptions of Africa were constrained, stereotype-ridden, and significantly affected by Cold War framing and images of an impoverished, often barbarous region from the 1970s through the 1990s, according to research.⁶¹

Debating about the influence of media reporting on Africa's issues is pointless for someone who believes that media coverage plays a significant position in the commencement, continuance, and resolution of conflicts. A study examined three American news outlets' coverage of the Angolan conflict namely (New York Times, Washington Post, and Christian Science Monitor). If the United Nations' announcement of the International Year of Peace (IYP) in 1986 was not supported by the fortitude to solve difficult problems, it would be nothing more than window decoration. The Angolan conflict and violence was controlled by ideology, with Soviet Union Communism and Western Democratic free market economics turning into a fraudulent Eastern -Western fight fought on African terrain.⁶²

⁶⁰ Safari, G.. Skewed media coverage of Africa impacts. The News Times (Rwanda's first daily), Monday, October 3 2010.

⁶¹ Bunce, M. The international news coverage of Africa: beyond the 'single story'. In M.Bunce, S. Franks and C. Paterson (eds) Africa's Media Image in the 21 Century, pp. 17 - 29. (2016)

⁶² Nwosu, I. Foreign Media Coverage of African Liberation Struggles: A Content Analytical Case Study of the Angolan Crisis. Africa Media Review, Vol. 2 (1), 76-103. (1987).

The adoption of a strategic framework has the consequence of distracting audiences from the content of African wars and peace process. On the other side, a generic or regulatory frame is used to identify structural qualities and attributes of news that may be utilized to a broad selection of themes or problems.⁶³ It encourages viewers to think about the big picture, addressing concerns and strategies, conflict resolution, and peace-building initiatives. Researchers have revealed that in media articles about African conflicts, Western media gives governing frames so little importance, perpetuating "western racism, intolerance, and ignorance to their difficulties" and taking a strong stance against cross-cultural correlations concerning specific sociological phenomenon that took place in but are not unique to Africa.⁶⁴

Choosing a factual approach, on the other hand, comes at an expense because publications must engage reporters to acquire first-hand information about the study and use reporters who are familiar with the area. Scholars have accused Western news organizations of deploying foreign correspondents who are unfamiliar with Africa. Consequently, numerous journalists covering on Islam and Muslims are misinformed about Islamic and Muslim nations. The editors of African diaspora publications understand the significance of dispatching the media to acquire first-hand material.⁶⁵

But at the other aspect, the regulating frame offers readers a feeling of control, calm, and steadiness. As per a story titled 'African Union (AU) Commission to Visit South Sudan,' the AU Commission of Inquiry reviewed and solidified its project schedule at a recent conference,

⁶³ Matthes, J. What's in a Frame? A Content Analysis of Media Framing Studies in the World's Leading Communication Journals, 1990 – 2005. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, Vol. 86, No. 2: 349 – 367 (2009)

⁶⁴ Myers, G., Klak, T., & Koehl, T. The inscription of difference: News coverage of the conflicts in Rwanda and Bosnia. *Political Geography*, 15(1): 21 – 46. (1996)

⁶⁵ Yusha'U, M. J., Representation of Boko Haram discourses in the British broadsheets. *Journal of Arab and Muslim Media Research*, Vol. 5, No. 1: 91 – 109 (2012)

agreeing on systems and procedures and establishing out the operations to be performed as aspect of its review into the conflict in South Sudan. This reframing method has the impact of attracting international recognition and support for a long-term resolution to these challenges.

Their decision to use a fact-based approach and governing structure helps to change the focus from all that is amiss with Africa (judgmental frame), which also conveys a feeling of hopelessness, to what can be done to assist resolve African disputes (governing frame), which conveys a sense of optimism. According to this interpretation, the African diasporic journalism strives to counter from the western perception of African wars. On the other side, a lack of journalistic resources and advertising funds may limit their ability to continue delivering a varied range of perspectives on African challenges.

3.4 The Media's Influence in Post-Election Conflict and Peace Building in Africa

Large-scale violence has been recorded during African elections in recent years. Recent research using information from more than 50 elections held in Africa between 2011 and 2017 revealed that almost all of these elections experienced instances of electoral violence at some point during the election.⁶⁶ As was the case in Burkina Faso 2014 and Burundi 2015, the risk of violence is particularly clear when incumbents propose referenda or parliamentary votes to amend the constitution in an effort to extend their presidential tenure. Beyond the relatively infrequent incidents that grab worldwide headlines, many nations encounter a "daily" form of electoral violence that is widespread but low-intensity and often takes place far in advance of election days, in between election cycles, and in local elections.

⁶⁶ Kewir, Kiven James, and Gabriel Ngah. "Joint-Leadership and Regional Peacebuilding in Africa." *Journal of African Union Studies* 7, no. 3 (2018): 9–25.

For society's free speech, and also a broad understanding of the subject and autonomy, diverse, various opinions are essential. By facilitating participation, conversation, and reconciliation, as well as bolstering civil society, the media could be crucial in moving the peace process forward. As a result, traditional societal responsibilities of journalistic media are seen as vital in helping the move to a stable and democratic society. Both perpetrators and victims of violations of human rights can use the media to share their experiences in order to obtain a greater comprehension of what occurred and to promote true healing and reconciliation. Visual images are important because they can both assist people remember and learn about past conflicts or wars.⁶⁷

Numerous news agencies have aided in the promotion of human rights and democracy of expression in African countries. For instance, through the observing, mentoring, capacity building, research, and dissemination of information, the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) which is a thriving, society platform of country wide chapters coordinated by a professional regional secretariat which then aim to facilitate free, impartial, and diversified media across all of southern Africa in service of democratic values. MISA's major role is that of an organizer, coordinator, and facilitator, and as such, MISA searches out like-minded people and organizations to partner with in order to develop a legitimately open and varied media in Southern Africa.

This is in line also with the 1991 Windhoek Declaration on an Independent and Pluralistic African Press, which emphasizes the importance of diverse and independent media in societal, governmental, and economic growth and development. The citizen involvement and engagement in the constitution-making procedure, as well as the subsequent Constitutional Referendum in 2013, are noteworthy accomplishments.

⁶⁷ Kristin Skare Orgeret and William Tayeebwa , Journalism in Conflict and Post-Conflict Conditions Worldwide Perspectives, Nordicom University of Gothenburg. 2016

Zimbabweans demanded that Sections 61 and 62 of the country's current constitution provide media freedom, freedom of opinion, and accessibility of information.

Lack of information can make people frantic, restless, and susceptible to influence at any stage of a conflict. The ability to make well-informed judgments enhances society and promotes economic prosperity, democratic structures, and a good future view. As a result, the United Nations Millennium Declaration (2011) emphasized the need of ensuring the media's freedom to perform their critical role, as well as the people's freedom to knowledge. The media may inspire persons to take action and involvement in community activities by motivating them to collaborate with other people in the community for the greater benefit. The media is significantly more interested in influencing people's attitudes and ideas than in actually influencing their behaviors.

In the run-up to the 2018 elections, non-governmental organizations enhanced the coverage process in Zimbabwe, while citizens were actively engaged in exchanging messages and news of peace. The Zimbabwe Electoral Support Network's (ZESN) outreach project employed conventional and traditional means and social media to help raise awareness, enlighten voters, motivate participatory democracy, and urge for amicable acceptance of the elections. The importance of voter education in the peacebuilding process cannot be overstated. Inadequate voter education exposes some voters to being frog-marched to register to vote in a manner that is equal to coercion, since they will be lacking in sufficient knowledge, putting them in a position to participate in an uninformed manner.

South Sudan, like other African countries, has never been free of civil conflicts that have been politically motivated. In 2011, the country declared independence from Sudan.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Jok Madut Jok, The Role of Media in War and Peace in South Sudan, The Sudd Institute Policy Brief October 20, 2015

However, war started as soon as it gained independence. In fact, by December 2013, the long-standing political feud involving President Kiir and Riek Machar had devolved into civil war, with thousands of citizens killed, tortured and more than 2 million displaced from their homes, with many fleeing to bordering states.⁶⁹

In the South Sudanese electoral political conflict, the media played a variety of roles. Citizens have been made more aware of the landmark of the Agreement for the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan and its renewed version thanks to the media. It has also aided humanitarian organizations in highlighting the difficulties faced by South Sudanese citizens in displaced camps and the safeguarding of civilian areas. It should be mentioned, however, that the media has had a negative role in the possibility for South Sudanese citizens to live peacefully. This was due to misinformation and hostility spread through social media, telephone contact, online media, and certain print media, aggravating the tribal differences between Nuer and Dinka.

In addition, the media in South Sudan has have been used to manage the nation's government's involvement with the international community, displaying distrust and animosity in the relationship at times, all to the detriment of future cooperation on peace-related issues. The government, for example, has viewed the involvement of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) with suspicion since the crisis began, alleging the world organization of meddling in the fight in favor of the armed rebels. UNMISS responded by expressing serious concerns about the government's use of the national media to organize public opposition to the UN mission.

⁶⁹ Muchie, M., *the African Union Ten Years After: Solving African Problems with Pan-Africanism and the African Renaissance*. Oxford: Africa Institute of South Africa. (2013)

Following the genocide in Rwanda, which resulted in the massacre of many civilians, the media was very influential and played a big part. During the crisis, the media contributed to the escalation of the violence by broadcasting hate messages on the radio. Although it did have a part in post-conflict reconstruction, as the media advocated peace by defining community in terms of region rather than ethnicity or tribe.

In post- election conflict operations, the media has also placed a greater emphasis on unity rather than tribal differences and has used the airwaves to broadcast reconciliatory messages by creating a platform for public engagement as well as a space for sharing experiences and settling issues.⁷⁰ As a result, in the context of African conflict, the mainstream media can be considered both during the conflict and thereafter in peacebuilding.

During the 2015 general election, Nigeria, which has experienced conflicts and election-related violence, benefited from peace journalism. Following the deaths of over 800 people in the previous election, many of Nigeria's media outlets decided to train their journalists in peace journalism in order to prevent the bloodshed that accompanied previous elections from occurring again.

The workshop, which was supported by the Durban University of Technology's peace building program, brought together journalists from both electronic and print media. The impact of the training on the journalists' job was incredible. The Nigerian media, for example, played a significant function in shaping public opinion about the need of embracing peace and avoiding violence. Peace messages were broadcast on local stations in most of the country's 36 states, urging citizens to vote peacefully. As a result, the effort helped to ensure that the elections were mostly peaceful, saving many lives.

⁷⁰ Gai Emmanuel Mabor, Roles of Media in Man-made Disasters: A Case of Protracted Conflict in South Sudan, *Texila International Journal of Management*. Volume 5, Issue 2, Aug 2019

3.5 Challenges for Media in Post- Election Conflict and Peace Building in Africa

Over the years, conflict has evolved, and it has been noted that conflict tends to occur within a state than between states all of which is documented by the media⁷¹. However, the media faces a lot of challenges in its role during conflict management from the local governments as they do not see its legitimacy in the conflict resolution process.

Developing media and communications strategies to enhance peacebuilding and conflict mitigation faces a number of challenges. The media's involvement, and especially their willingness to participate in peacebuilding, is greatly influenced by media ownership. Privately operated media have large corporations for example, the revenue gotten from advertising, and shareholders may be associated with or endorse particular political sides or groups and ideologies that they actively advocate through their news outlets, television stations, and other media channels.⁷²

Peace doesn't always sell and attract, however violence and conflict might, the media deems conflict and violence to be more "worth reporting" - a typical journalistic guideline is "if it bleeds, it leads." Four attributes that those in charge of the media favour are responsiveness, intensity, simplification, and ethnocentrism, finding it challenging to be using the media for peacebuilding. Another issue is journalists' apprehension, which arises from their idea that they should be unbiased and simply report the story.

Local authorities impose rules on the media, which are frequently conceived as regulations and laws. States have even gone so far as to use unconstitutional and illegal tactics like intimidation, harassment and coercion to sway elections or handle post-election situations.

⁷¹ Martin Van Creveld: 'The Transformation of War' pp 20-21, 25(1991)

⁷² Bratic, V. & Schirch, L. *Why and when to use the media for conflict prevention and peacebuilding*. Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict. (2007).

The government then goes to provide instructions for the type of language that ought to be used by the media. States rationalize their restrictions on media freedom by saying that it comprises hateful speech, resulting in legislation that weakens the media's influence.

Uganda is an excellent example, which during the 2006 elections, different regulatory mechanisms impacting the media were already in place, particularly laws dealing to terrorism, electronic media, and defamation, as well as a media code of practice. For example, during the elections, the media was required to adopt an equal treatment to all contenders, but the incumbent received higher publicity. As the election drew nearer, the government constructed a media centre in Kampala, where it attempted to exert more control, specifically over international journalists.

Economic constraints may exist in the media, preventing them from investing in employee training, conducting investigations, or increasing production programming, and the government can impose legal, compliance, and other restrictions on the mainstream press, another challenge can be spreading unverified information this is particularly the case of social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter, which are increasingly susceptible to spreading fake news, that can cause incitement. Finally, a lack of media outreach, such as that caused by inadequate internet connectivity or illiteracy, can restrict the efficacy of media and communication initiatives. Even the best-intentioned media interventions can aggravate tensions and impede peacebuilding efforts if they are poorly designed.

Aside from cultural differences, there are also personal interests to consider. The function of any media in the peace-building process is heavily influenced by its ownership. Because private media has a commercial motive, they may gain from aligning with specific conflict participants even after the conflict has ended. Even if private media is not biased in favor of certain organizations, peace stories are less "interesting" than war stories.

Many private media businesses rely on breaking and timely news to stay afloat. Journalists in impoverished nations are frequently underpaid, and they may rely entirely on warring parties for financing during and after a conflict. This may have an impact on their reporting since they must strike a balance between journalistic integrity and avoiding losing ground with their donors.

Conflict groups frequently employ journalists or media outlets to enhance their polarization efforts on a political level. This limits the scope of reporting for many journalists and publishers, as well as their credibility with certain segments of the public. Without substantial changes in journalistic behavior, this bias generally persists and is difficult to overcome. This is linked to the issue of power in a post-conflict scenario: in extreme circumstances, peacebuilding can be utilized to enable so-called 'victors-peace,' in which a dominating actor wields control over communication channels and determines the society's peacebuilding aims. This has been the case in many countries, notably in South Africa.⁷³

The intimate ties that exist between the media and politicians in some Central African countries are not due to the regular conducting of elections, but rather to the media's basic structure. As is the case with Radio Okapi in the DRC, Radio Ndeke Luka in the Central African Republic, and private stations in Burundi, media firms either belong to the state, are controlled by individuals who are directly or indirectly involved in politics or rely on partnerships with foreign funders. All these ownership and financing systems have an impact on the media's content.

Even community media is usually owned by a single person rather than a group of people, and their reliance on Western benefactors for funding is often structural, influencing the material they

⁷³ Aiken, Nevin T. "Post-Conflict Peacebuilding and the Politics of Identity: Insights for Restoration and Reconciliation in Transitional Justice." *Peace Research* 40, no. 2 9–38. (2008)

generate. When it pertains to stakeholders, there is almost never any transparency in the private sector, and many enterprises in the DRC and Congo Brazzaville are officially managed by straw men. In such cases, media pluralism does not always mean a diversity of editorial perspectives or multiple content, nor does it ensure the presence of diverse and "independent" opinions and ideas in the public arena.

Many poor post-conflict environments require on help to invest in equipment and personnel since rebuilding infrastructure, which sometimes includes the most fundamental parts of media, may be costly. Government restrictions are frequently still in effect, but they may be less harsh than they were during the crisis. Giving individuals a voice for critical thoughts on their place within the war is not in the interests of some administrations. In these instances, even social media is frequently prohibited or suppressed. Individual journalists are responsible for these limitations. Journalists' behavior is frequently unaffected by post-conflict settings. Journalists, for example, frequently use self-censorship to preserve themselves and their publishing power.⁷⁴

Because the end of a battle does not necessarily imply the end of censorship, journalists frequently continue to refuse to report particular stories. They are sincerely concerned about their reputations, employment, and lives. Stringers, who are anonymous local journalists who provide material to colleagues abroad, are present to get past these issues. Of course, in a crisis situation, the journalists' primary audience is domestic, and it is simpler to reach them from within the country.

Not only is freedom of expression a recent achievement in Central African countries, dating only to the early 1990s, but the media's that use of the freedom has rendered them the subject of

⁷⁴ Jungblut, Marc, and Abit Hoxha. "Conceptualizing Journalistic Self-Censorship in Post-Conflict Societies: A Qualitative Perspective on the Journalistic Perception of News Production in Serbia, Kosovo and Macedonia." *Media, War & Conflict* 10, no. 2 222–38. (2017)

numerous violent acts and persecution since then. Journalists were usually among those killed or injured in military clashes that were tied to power struggles in some way. Half of the profession's members were slain in Rwanda in 1994. It was one of the toughest years in the media profession's history when the second conflict in the DRC broke out in 1998.

Due to the high number of press freedom violations and its different manifestations, journalists have begun to practice self-censorship. This is especially true given that most attacks on journalists do not result in investigations or consequences for the perpetrators, even in countries where conflicts have left innumerable crimes unpunished. Self-censorship by journalists is likely to be the first impediment to citizens' right to knowledge. As seen, all these regulations hinder the capacity and competence of the media to fulfill its role during conflict resolution process.

3.6 Conclusion

The media has had significant influence on modern society's conflicts, warfare and conflict settlement. Information, whether accurate or false, may now be shared faster, thanks to the media. This is due to the ease of coverage and mobility that modern media is known for. The chapter looked into the various ways the media impacts post-conflict peace building in Africa by looking into the operational roles of the media in post conflict and also various perspectives on media coverage of African conflicts. These highlighted different perspectives especially from the foreign media and the media's influence in post conflict building in Africa in various countries.

The media can play a role in promoting peace and preventing war. As a response, the number of media activities in peacebuilding projects has increased, with frequent operations such as journalist development and capacity building of pro-peace programs. Developing, implementing and assessing such programs, on the other hand, present significant challenges.

While some programs have yielded beneficial results, such as reduction in election-based violence, evidence is scarce and causal links between action and influence are difficult to ascertain. The media also faces various challenges in peacebuilding such as intimidation and lack of funds, therefore making their efforts difficult to achieve.

CHAPTER FOUR

IMPACT OF THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA ON POST-ELECTION CONFLICT

PEACEBUILDING IN KENYA

4.1 Introduction

Having looked at the impact of the mainstream media on post-election conflict peacebuilding in Africa, this chapter examines the impact of the mainstream media on post-election conflict peacebuilding in Kenya. For many years, Kenya has been regarded as a peaceful nation. However, this concept of peace was questioned following the 2007 general elections, and since then, ethnic tensions and violence have continued, especially just after the results of elections are typically announced. In 2007, during the post-election violence in Kenya, the media was used to fuel conflict as well as in the 2008 peacebuilding process. This double-edged role of the media is what necessitates this study.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the selected demographic are described in this collection of information which also assesses the potential influence on the study's conclusions. The demographic factors in this research were sex, age, educational attainment, and the designation of the entity, company, or employment.

4.2.1 Gender

The participants of the study were asked to indicate their gender (Male or Female or Prefer not to say).

The gender of the respondents provided mixed results. The gender dynamic was important to the study in that each gender has a different perception of the impact of mainstream media on post-

election conflict peacebuilding. The male dominated the response hence male constituted the highest percentage as indicated below

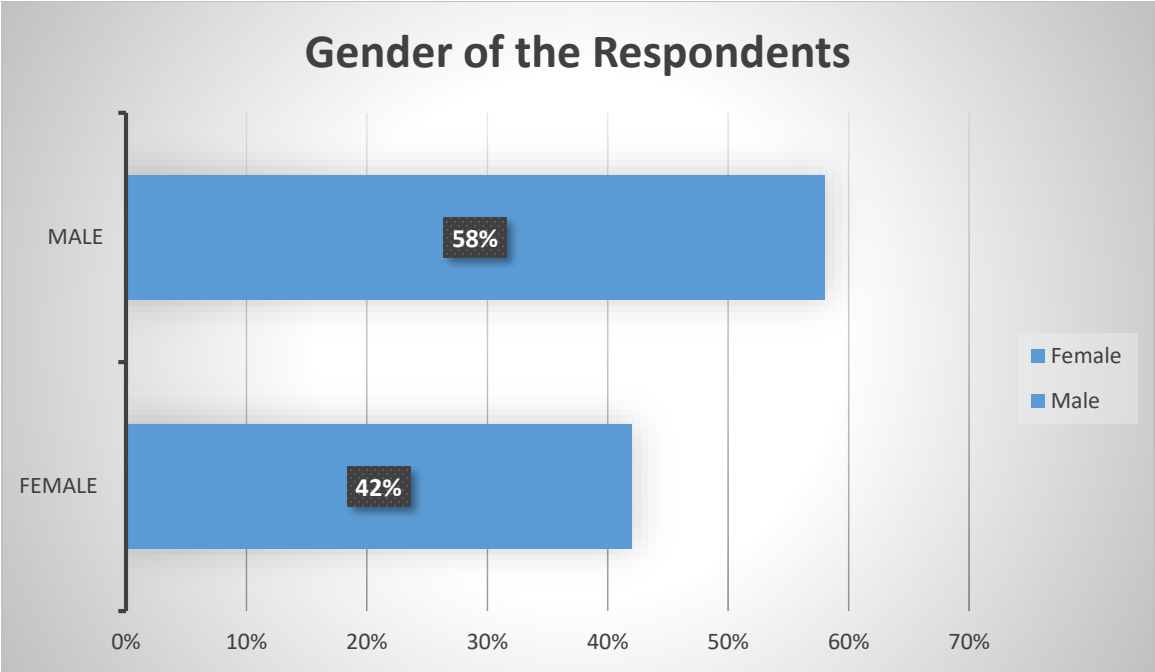


Figure 4.1 Gender of the Respondents

4.2.2 Age

The respondents' ages were divided into the following ranges: 19 to 30 years, 31 to 40 years, 41 to 50 years, and over 51 years., and were as shown in figure 4.2 below;

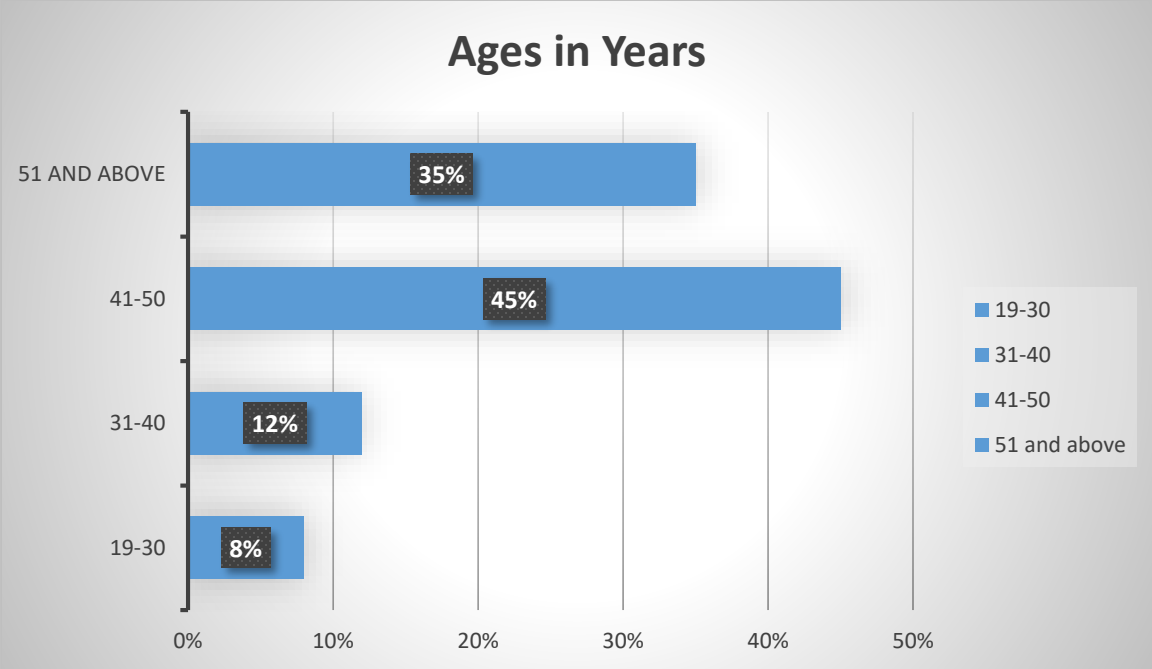


Figure 4.2 Age Distribution of Respondents

From the table above, 5.4% of respondents had 19-30 years, while 10.8% of the respondents had 31-40 years, 45.9% has between 41-50 years and finally, 37.8% had above 51 years. This suggests that the majority of responders were between the ages of 41 and 50. The most experienced bracket in the safety industry is this one.

4.2.3 Level of Education

The participants were requested to provide the maximum educational qualification acquired as of the article's period. The highest education levels as indicated by the respondents were taken as secondary school, tertiary college, undergraduate, post-graduate, and any other. The figure 4.3 below shows the frequency of the responses received.

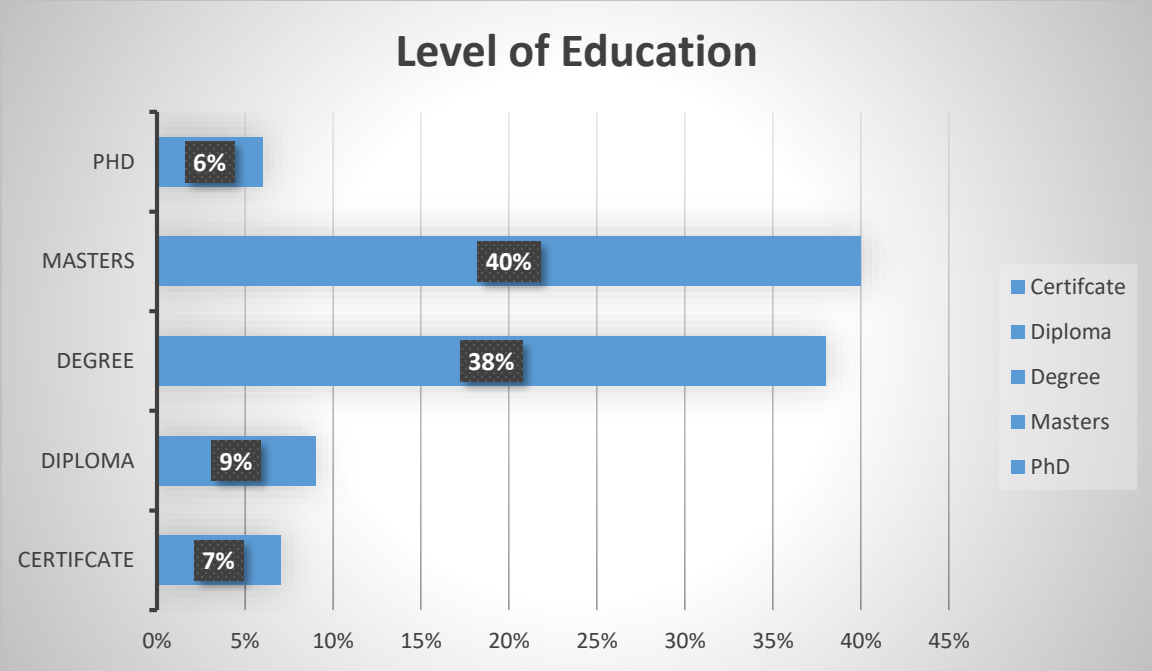


Figure 4.3 Highest Level of Education

The above data indicates that majority of the respondents have attained their Master’s degree level of education with a representative percentage of 40%. This was followed by 38% of the respondents who had reached the Degree. Such results show that those who were sampled for this research study were educated and knowledgeable enough to understand and answer the questioned posed in the questionnaire.

4.2.4 Time in the Current Organization

The participants were requested to specify how long they had been employed by their present employer. The responses for this were varied.

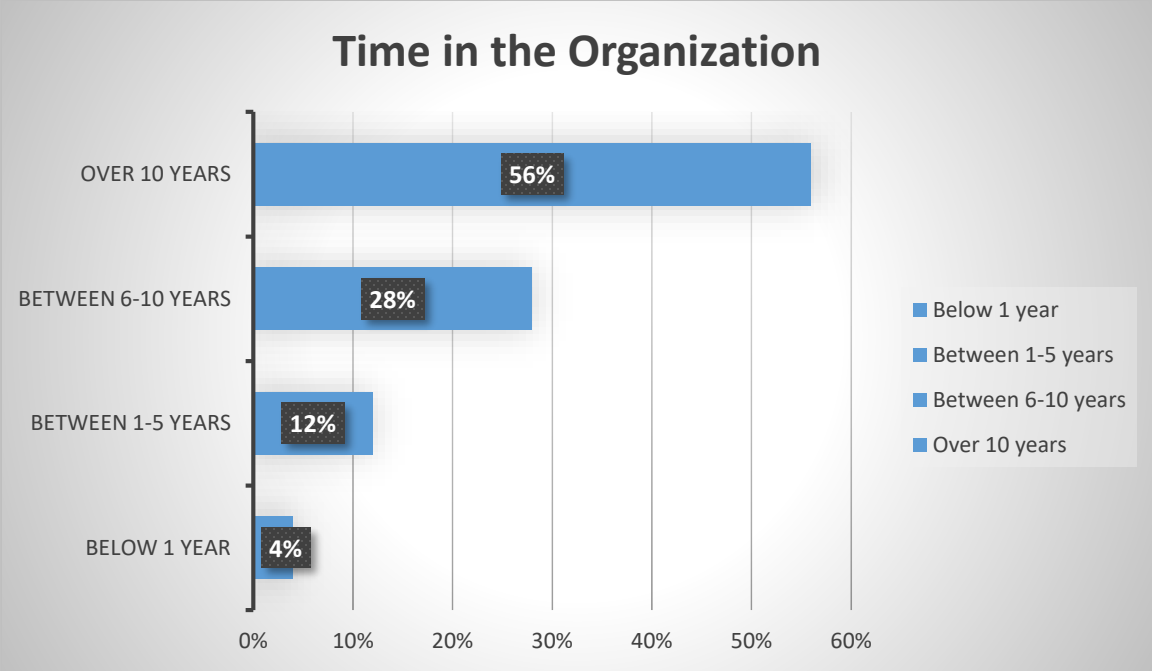


Figure 4.4 Time in the Current Organization

It is clear from the replies given, as shown in figure 4.4 above, that the most of participants (56%) had been employed by their present firm for more than ten years. The responses show that 28% of the respondents have 6-10 years in their organizations. This indicates that with a majority of the respondent having attained over a decade of experience in their current organizations of work, they are uniquely qualified to give informed answers to the questions posed in the study questionnaire. In addition to this, their insights will be reliable and accurate to the study.

4.3 Impact of the Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Kenya

Post-election violence has been a subject of significant concern in Kenya since the violent developments witnessed in 2007/2008 following controversial presidential election in December 2007. From non-violent political disagreements in the previous elections that were mainly characterised by the detention or persecution of dissenting political leaders, 2007 was a new low for the country with violent ethnic clashes erupting after the declaration of the then incumbent

president Mwai Kibaki as the winner of the elections. Several investigative reports determined that the mainstream media was one of the causative factors for the violence with particular blame on local radio stations.⁷⁵ The highlight of media influence in the violence was the inclusion of KASS FM director, Mr Joshua Sang as one of the accused persons in the prosecution by the international criminal court of justice popularly referred to as the “Ocampo Six”.

Kenya’s mainstream media is however also credited with the eventual end of the post-poll chaos in 2007/08.⁷⁶ Many reports on the violence acknowledge that media houses, especially, the national media outlets did an outstanding job calling for calm while mediations between the warring political pacts progressed under the tutelage of the former UN secretary general, Koffi Annan. Since then, dissemination of information by the mainstream media in Kenya has grown to be an extremely valued pillar of the electioneering process in Kenya.⁷⁷ The mainstream media has taken up the position of a peace influencer, championing for peaceful transitions by ensuring that information disseminated to the public is credible, moderated, and intended towards ensuring that the process of electing leaders democratically does not degenerate to armed violence between political sections with divergent ideologies/choices. This chapter discusses the study results. It conclusively demonstrates the impact of mainstream media on post-election conflict peacebuilding in Kenya by analysing the study finding and connecting with current scholarly literature on post-poll peace processes in the country.

⁷⁵ Radoli, Ouma Lydia. "Press freedom and media's role in conflict and peace-building: case of the post-2007 election crisis in Kenya." Master's thesis, Universitetet i Tromsø, 2011.

⁷⁶ Gakunju, Lulu. "Effect of Media on Peacebuilding in Kenya: A Case of the 2007/8 PEV." Master's thesis, Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Ås, 2017.

⁷⁷ Oyoo, Rodgers Ombeck. "MEDIA INFLUENCE ON THE CONDUCT OF ELECTIONEERING PROCESS IN KENYA WITH REFERENCE TO KISUMU COUNTY." PhD diss., MMUST, 2020

The third objective of the study sought to examine the impact of the Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Kenya. The study adopted an expert approach in analysing the influence that mainstream media outlets have on the aftermath of general elections in the country. It assumed that experts (Individuals working in media houses, those working in security agencies, officials from electoral bodies, and academicians) on the electioneering process and those who understand the dynamics and impact of information dissemination were best placed to provide insight on how communication by popular media modeled the processes of ensuring peace following national polls. The respondents were asked to rate on a 5-point Likert scale how much they agreed with statements assessing impact of the mainstream media on post-poll peacebuilding in the country. The stud also tabled narrative questions where respondents reinforced their perspectives by explaining their expert position on the impact of mainstream media on the conservation of peace after elections.

4.3.1 Setting the agenda in elections in Kenya

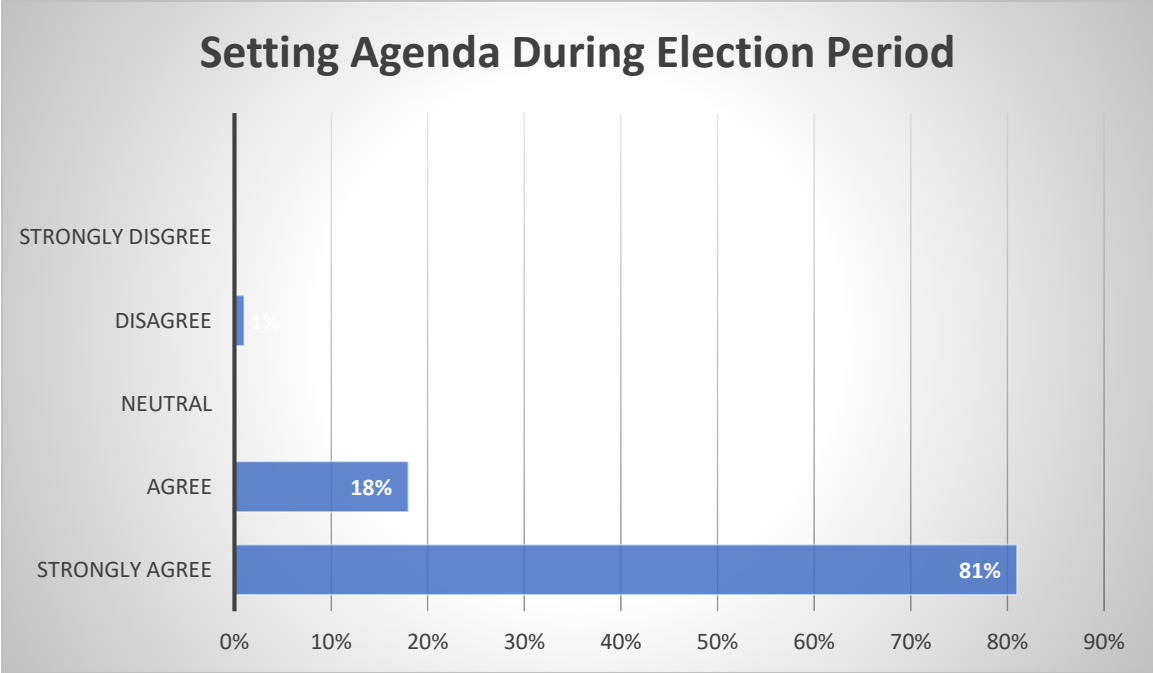


Figure 4.5: Setting the Agenda in Elections

Source: Field Data, 2022

Asked about their perception of the impact of mainstream media in setting the agenda in elections in Kenya, the majority of the respondents concurred that the mainstream media sets the agenda for elections with 81% of the respondents strongly agreeing, while another 18% simply agreed as indicated in figure 4.3.1 while 1%, indicated that they did not believe that the mainstream media sets the election agenda. The mean response on the Likert scale was 4.5 which is between those who agreed and those who strongly agreed. The results, therefore, indicate that the respondents believed that the mainstream media significantly shapes the agenda in elections in the country.

These results are consistent with the findings of several exploratory studies on the influence of mainstream media on post-poll peacebuilding in Kenya. A study by Adongo et al. (2018) revealed that since the 2007/08 post-election violence, peace has been a major theme by mainstream media outlets during electioneering period, a factor that the scholar attributed to the subsequent peaceful elections in 2013 and 2017.⁷⁸ The researchers note that since the 2007/08 post-election violence, popular media houses have taken it upon themselves to encourage peaceful electioneering by campaigning against political extremism and emphasizing the value of peace to electorates. Gathara (2017) supports these findings noting that media houses have been at the forefront advancing the “nation before individual” agenda to the Kenyan people during electioneering periods, with an emphasis on the importance of preserving peace and sustainable development as opposed to fighting for individuals to assume leadership positions.⁷⁹ Another scholar, Mwangi (2020) reinforces this perspective of media influence on post-election peacebuilding processes highlighting that the Kenyan mainstream media, especially the national broadcasters have been

⁷⁸ Adongo, Owade J., Ayodeji O. Awobamise, and Ogbonna Chidiebere. "A peace journalism approach to understanding the role of the media in the land disputes in Kenya." *Journal of Social and Administrative Sciences* 5, no. 2 (2018): 170-180.

⁷⁹ Gathara, Patrick. "When the Press Fails the People: A Critique of Kenya's Media." (2017).

instrumental in ensuring peace during and after elections by promoting rational thinking among electorates and alleviating political extremism and sycophancy that build up electoral violence.⁸⁰ Indeed, the media has been on the frontline highlighting the importance of peaceful coexistence in communities regardless of the individual political, social, or ethnic affiliations of members. Throughout electioneering periods, the media has been consistently reminding ordinary citizens about what they stand to lose whenever they instigate violence and how inconsequential political chaos is to the political leaders that they fight for.⁸¹ Courtesy of the mainstream media's consistent peace agenda during elections, the Kenyan voter today is much more rational and woke to the tune that they are able to evaluate actions that lead to political violence and choose the more profitable path which is political tolerance.

The study results are also consistent with the advances of the agenda-setting theory. The Agenda-setting theory suggests that media institutions shape political debates by determining what issues are most important and featuring them in news broadcasts. It describes the media as the main entity that selects what news stories to report and prioritizes based on what they think people might care about.⁸² Post-election peacebuilding is a subject that almost every Kenyan care about today. In fact, throughout the world today, peaceful political transitions are a subject of significant interest. The study participants believed that mainstream media sets the agenda in elections in Kenya, and since peace remains a leading agenda in the country during electioneering periods, it can be safely concluded that the popular media in Kenya has been doing an incredible job at propagating the theme of peace, contributing significantly to post-poll peacebuilding.

⁸⁰ Mwangi, Winfred W. "The Role of Media in Conflict Management-a Case of 2017 General Elections in Kenya." PhD diss., University of Nairobi, 2020.

⁸¹ Mwangi, Winfred W. "The Role of Media in Conflict Management-a Case of 2017 General Elections in Kenya"

⁸² McCombs, Maxwell E., Donald L. Shaw, and David H. Weaver. "New directions in agenda-setting theory and research." *Mass communication and society* 17, no. 6 (2014): 781-802.

4.3.2 Spreading the Message of Peace During and After Elections in Kenya

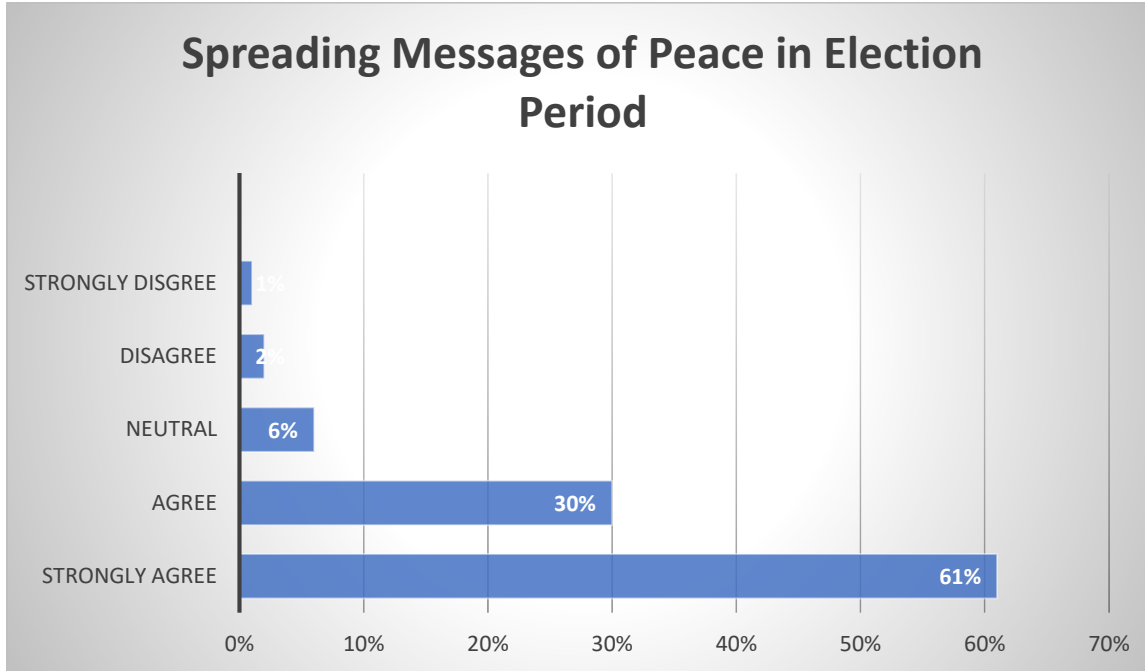


Figure 4.6: Spreading the Message of Peace During and After Elections

Source: Field Data, 2022

Majority of the respondents indicated that mainstream media in Kenya are instrumental in spreading the message of peace during and after elections in Kenya. As shown in figure 4.3.2, 61% of the participants strongly agreed that popular media outlets spread the message of peace during and after elections, supported by a further 30% who agreed with this perspective. A small fraction of respondents (6%) remained neutral on the subject, while 2% disagreed, suggesting that the mainstream media did not spread messages of peace during and after elections. 1% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the mainstream media influenced peacebuilding by spreading messages of peace and tolerance during and after elections. On a Likert scale, the mean response was 4.5 which lies between those who strongly agreed or simply agreed that mainstream media channels influence post-poll peacebuilding by spreading messages of political tolerance and harmonious coexistence during and after elections.

Contemporary literature supports that mainstream media outlets in Kenya have in the past three general elections influenced peace by spreading messages of tolerance and encouraging peaceful ways of solving political disputes. Mwangi for instance, notes that several media houses when interviewing political aspirants have been keen to ask about their commitment to peaceful elections with the question of whether the aspirants will concede defeat featuring prominently in most of the interviews.⁸³ Mwangi (2020) also presents that mainstream media channels have been much more careful in their reporting highlighting that even the vernacular media stations that were previously notorious for inciting communities have grown to be more careful with how they report political stories to maintain a neutral perspective and encourage rational thought among electorates.⁸⁴ Media stations have also been keen to remind the public about the consequences of the 2007/08 post-poll chaos. 2007/08 remains a popular theme in the mainstream media during and after elections – a timely reminder of the consequences of post-election violence and why electorates must never allow the country to go on a similar path again.

The study results are further consistent with the results of a review by Gakunju (2017) who notes that media channels have put significant responsibility on political aspirants to contain the behaviour of their followers.⁸⁵ Indeed, through discussions such as debates, the mainstream media have consistently reminded politicians of the need to take responsibility of their supporters and compete based on ideologies as opposed to ethnicity and regionalism – factors that are influential precursors for post-election violence. Through programs that bring opposing politicians together for example the presidential and gubernatorial debates, the mainstreams media houses have been

⁸³ Owino, Ruth, and Boniface Kirema Karani. "Conflict Sensitive Journalism and Elections: Analysis of the media coverage of the 2017 Elections in Kenya." *Kabarak Journal of Research & Innovation* 11, no. 3 (2021): 299-307.

⁸⁴ Mwangi, Winfred W. "The Role of Media in Conflict Management-a Case of 2017 General Elections in Kenya." PhD diss., University of Nairobi, 2020.

⁸⁵ Gakunju, Lulu. "Effect of Media on Peacebuilding in Kenya: A Case of the 2007/8 PEV." Master's thesis, Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Ås, 2017.

able to communicate the message of peace by demonstrating to the public that despite the political differences, the leaders whom they may be tempted to fight for during elections actually coexist hence there is no need for one to turn against their neighbours because of elections/or divergent political views.⁸⁶ Therefore, as established in the study, the mainstream media has been a critical tool in the process of peacebuilding after elections in the country, spreading messages of peace and tolerance during and after elections.

4.3.3 Peaceful Coverage of Elections in Kenya

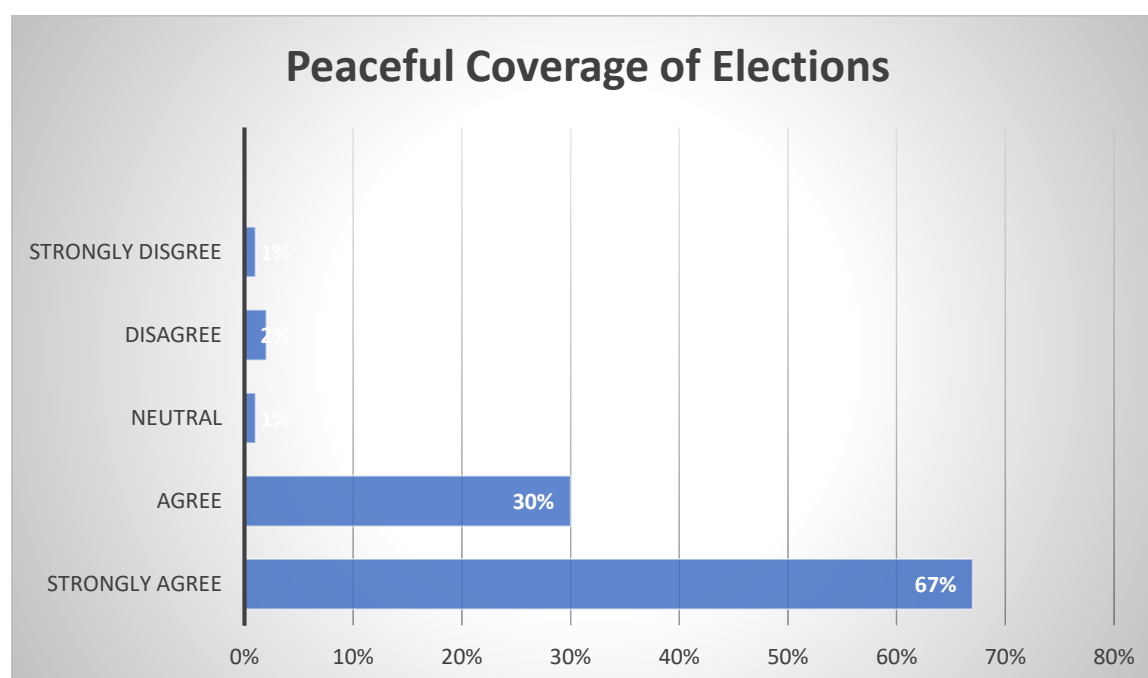


Figure 4.7: Peaceful Coverage of Elections in Kenya

Source: Field Data, 2022

Majority of the respondents agreed that the mainstream media's coverage of elections in the country has led to peaceful elections. 67% of the study participants strongly agreed with this perspective, while a further 30 % simply agreed with the supposition that peace following elections

⁸⁶ Mwangi, Winfred W. "The Role of Media in Conflict Management-a Case of 2017 General Elections in Kenya."

in Kenya can be attributed to effective media coverage. Some participants (1% of the respondents) remained neutral on the subject with the belief that peace was moderated by many other contemporary factors and not just media coverage of electoral developments. A small fraction of the respondents felt that media coverage of elections did not play a part in post-election peacebuilding in the country with 2% disagreeing with the hypothesis statement, and a further 1% strongly disagreeing. Since 2007 the dissemination of news during electioneering periods has become a matter of significant caution as media houses are on high alert about their possible influence on election violence.

Awobamise et al. (2020) support the study findings, explaining that mainstream media channels have become more responsible and careful in their coverage of the county's electoral processes with particular focus on the credibility and accuracy of information disseminated.⁸⁷ For instance, media houses have become much more careful with results transmission during elections with a number of channels opting to wait for verified election results and communicating this information in a manner that avoids the ambiguity that led to the 2007/08 chaos. In the just concluded 2022 general elections, for example, media outlets only provided results verified by the commission and gave the electoral body time to declare the official presidential results. The mainstream media has strived to be as transparent as possible in their coverage of elections achieving peace by walking with the electorates throughout the electioneering process and how the electoral body arrives at winners.

More neutral reporting of electoral developments in electoral reporting since the 2007 elections are also associated with post-election peace. As observed by Mwangi (2020) the mainstream media

⁸⁷ Awobamise, Ayodeji, Yosra Jarrar, and Joan Owade. "An analysis of media reportage of conflict during the 2007, 2013 and 2017 Kenyan presidential elections: A peace journalism approach." *Universidad y Sociedad* 12, no. 2 (2020): 184-191.

– even though they have not reached the desired standards of neutrality, have significantly improved in terms of biased reporting, ensuring that information is not blown out of proportion and that the public gets the right perspective of political development.⁸⁸ Unlike in the 2007/08 post-election violence where biased media reporting was found to be a major source of political incitement, the mainstream media has improved their reporting significantly, alleviating radical thinking and encouraging objectivity around political discussions.

The contribution of unbiased reporting to post-election peacebuilding is supported by the agenda-setting theory. As explained by McCombs et al. (2014) the media sets the stage on what the public consumes and believes. Biased reporting influences flawed perceptions which in political contexts can result in radical thinking and subsequent violence.⁸⁹ By ensuring unbiased reporting, the mainstream media is able to cultivate an objectivity culture and soberness in the political discourse ensuring that the electorates get accurate information and that news is not sensationalized to achieve ulterior motives like political unrest. The experts' perceptions are thus consistent with the advances of the agenda theory and their position on the influence of election coverage on post-election peacebuilding is justified.

Ndonye et al. (2014) add that in their reporting, the mainstream media has also been instrumental in reminding aspirants and their supporters about the constitutionally available channels for challenging election outcomes.⁹⁰ The impact of mainstream media in election coverage could be seen in 2017 when inconsistencies in the electoral process were highlighted by many media houses, and their continued encouragement of constitutional avenues for challenging elections culminated

⁸⁸ Mwangi, Winfred W. "The Role of Media in Conflict Management-a Case of 2017 General Elections in Kenya."

⁸⁹ McCombs, Maxwell E., Donald L. Shaw, and David H. Weaver. "New directions in agenda-setting theory and research." *Mass communication and society* 17, no. 6 (2014): 781-802.

⁹⁰ Ndonye, M., and Wendo Nabea. "Media as opium of masses: coverage of the 2013 general elections in Kenya." *Kenya Studies Review* 7, no. 2 (2014): 103-115.

in opposition leader Raila Odinga challenging the results in court. Media coverage of elections is therefore a cornerstone of post-election peacebuilding in Kenya.

4.3.4 Creating awareness on election conflict early warning in Kenya

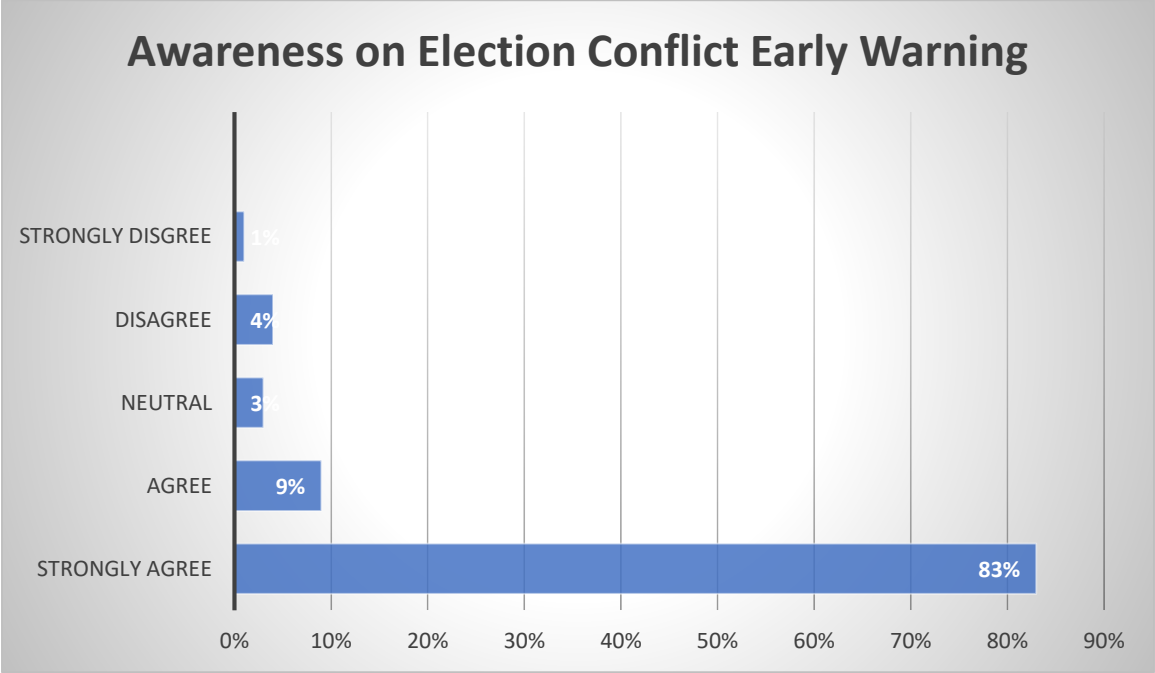


Figure 4.8: Create Awareness on Election Conflict Early Warning in Kenya

Source: Field Data, 2022

Majority of the respondents either strongly agreed (83%) or simply agreed (9%) that mainstream media coverage of electoral developments across the country in the build-up to and during elections has led to election conflict early warning in Kenya. 3% of the participants were neutral on the subject, while out of the remaining 5%, 4% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed with the proposition that media coverage influenced electoral conflict early warning in the country. With a mean response of 4.5 (lies between “strongly agree” and “agree”) it is evident that a significant number of the respondents believe that mainstream media coverage of politics and elections in Kenya influence conflict early warning.

The study findings align with the research results by Abdirashid (2020) on the influence of popular on electoral violence early warning.⁹¹ The researchers determined that both the mainstream media and social media influence electoral violence early warning by attracting the attention of security agencies to high-tension areas that may be susceptible to violence during elections. In the previous elections, for instance, media outlets have effectively drawn the attention of the government to high-tension areas by reporting incidences of incitement in regions and calling for preventive action. In the just concluded elections, for instance, media houses reported incidences of threatening leaflets circulating in various parts of Nakuru country where certain communities were being threatened to leave. Such reporting spurs government security agencies into action which involves preventive measures like improved security and investigations leading to the apprehension of individuals found culpable of advancing these kinds of motives.

The mainstream media has also been critical in reporting politician sentiments that may radicalize individuals and increase political animosity between opposite political pacts. As explained by Abdirashid (2020), media highlights of negative campaign sentiments like hate speech are examples of ways through which media coverage influence conflict early warning with regard to elections.⁹² Coverage of political rallies and the nature of supporter engagements across the country also help provide a comprehensive picture of the state of peace and political developments in various parts of the country, identifying areas at risk of violent electoral behaviour and informing containment measures.

⁹¹ Abdirashid, Haji Mohamed. "Social Media as an Early Warning System for Electoral Violence in Nairobi County during 2017 General Elections." PhD diss., United States International University-Africa, 2020.

⁹² Abdirashid, Haji Mohamed. "Social Media as an Early Warning System for Electoral Violence in Nairobi County during 2017 General Elections." PhD diss., United States International University-Africa, 2020.

Additionally, popular media report situations in various parts of the country during the electoral process, the transmission of results, and the winner declaration. Through this reporting, the government and other peace agencies are able to monitor the state of harmony and possible volatile reactions to election results and take preventive action.⁹³ In the recently concluded elections, for instance, the mainstream media highlighted incidents of unrest in Bomet county following the announcement of the gubernatorial results. Security agencies were able to move with speed and contain the situation while the discussion for tolerance and peaceful post-election existence intensified across the nation. Thus, as established in the current study, mainstream media coverage of election build-up and the whole electoral process influenced electoral violence early warning leading to conservative measures and enhancing the post-poll peacebuilding process.

4.3.5 Assisting the security and cohesion institutions to respond to electoral conflict in Kenya

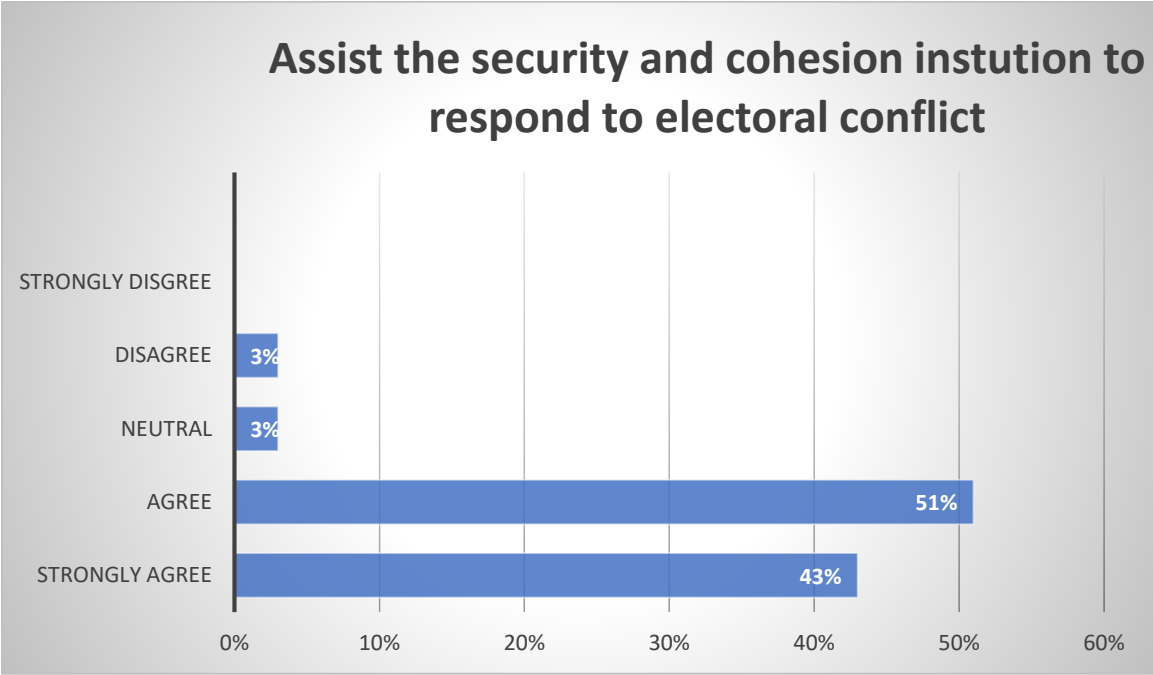


Figure 4.9: Assisting the security and cohesion institutions to respond to electoral conflict in Kenya

⁹³ Odinga, Petty Christa Awuor. "Use of new media during the Kenya elections." (2013).

Source: Field data, 2022

A significant fraction of the respondents believed that the mainstream media plays a critical role in post-election peacebuilding by assisting the electoral agencies, the National Cohesion and Integration Commission, security agencies and all the other organizational players involved in the electoral process. 51% of the respondents agreed which was the majority while another 43% strongly agreed that mainstream media assists institutions involved in the electoral process hence post-election peace. A few individuals (3%) remained neutral on the subject, while a paltry 3% disagreed, no respondents strongly disagreed with this supposition. A summary of the participant responses is provided in table 4.3.5 above.

In the same way that mainstream media helps in election violence early warning, media outlets also help the security and national cohesion institutions to respond to electoral conflict. The National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) – the body responsible for fostering national unity and integration in the country, is many a time sprang into action by reports of incidences that threaten national unity and peace for example cases of hate speech by politicians in the mainstream media.⁹⁴ Indeed, the commission lacks the resources to monitor all political developments across the country and heavily relies on media reports to execute action. The mainstream media also assists the commission by providing evidence of events thus acting as a source of data for the NCIC to carry out its duties.

The mainstream media also helps the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) – the country's electoral body, discharge its duties by facilitating the dissemination of critical electoral information. This improves the commission's effectiveness and ultimately ensures peace after polls have been conducted. Oyoo (2020) argues that the biggest recipe for post-election

⁹⁴ Odinga, Petty Christa Awuor. "Use of new media during the Kenya elections." (2013).

violence is poorly conducted polls.⁹⁵ When an electoral commission is in shambles and is unable to discharge its duties effectively, chances of post-election violence increase exponentially. Mainstream media outlets help in enhancing the effectiveness of the electoral commission. They assist in voter sensitization, civic education, education about the voting process, and creating awareness of what is expected of voters and political aspirants to ensure a smooth electoral process. The mainstream media also help the electoral commission communicate results and other important information to the public. For example, in the concluded general elections, the mainstream media played a critical role in communicating the postponement of elections for some positions like the gubernatorial elections in Mombasa and Kakamega. Without the mainstream media, such unforeseen electoral developments can easily result in chaos. The mainstream media, therefore, plays a vital auxiliary role to the agencies involved in the electoral process, improving their effectiveness and ultimately enhancing post-election peacebuilding.

4.4 Summary of the Chapter's Findings

The mainstream media significantly enhances the process of post-election peacebuilding in Kenya. First, the mainstream media promotes post-election peacebuilding by setting the agenda of peace and political tolerance throughout the country's electioneering period leading to the de-radicalization of political pacts and eventual peaceful elections. The Kenyan mainstream media seems to have learned lessons on its role in post-poll chaos in 2007/08 and has since been committed to using its influence to promote peaceful transitions. The mainstream media also promotes post-election peacebuilding by communicating messages of peace and political tolerance to electorates and politicians alike leading to rationalism and an objective approach to political

⁹⁵ Oyoo, Rodgers Ombeck. "media influence on the conduct of electioneering process in Kenya with reference to Kisumu county." PhD diss., MMUST, 2020.

contests. Unbiased and neutral coverage of elections is the other way through which the mainstream media enhances post-election peacebuilding. Most media houses have learned from the consequences of biased reporting in the 2007/08 post-poll chaos and while this has not been perfected, the media houses have shown significant improvement in their reporting in the last 3 general elections all of which have achieved post-poll peace. The mainstream media also helps in the development of electoral conflict early warning. By highlighting high-tension areas, the mainstream media is able to draw the attention of the government and other peace organizations and inspire the initiation of timely preventive measures for conserving peace. Lastly, the mainstream media enhances the effectiveness of the electoral commission and assists security agencies and the national integration commission address electoral conflicts effectively. The mainstream media, therefore, comes out as an invaluable player in the post-election peacebuilding process in Kenya. Mainstream media houses play a critical role in post-election peacebuilding and must be integrated into future efforts toward ensuring peaceful electoral processes and power transitions.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a summary of the study findings, relevant conclusions that can be drawn from these findings and finally conclude by giving policy recommendations for the present research problem. The outline will be based on the three research objectives that have guided the research in finding answers to the pertinent research questions asked in the introductory chapter.

5.2 Summary of Findings

This research was conducted with the broad objective to analyze the impact of mainstream media on post-conflict building in Africa, with a key focus on post-election violence peacebuilding in Kenya. This was supplemented by three specific objectives which were to assess the Impact of the Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in the 21st Century International System, to evaluate the Impact of the Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Africa, to Critically Analyze the Impact of the Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Kenya.

5.2.1 The Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in the 21st Century International System

The findings were that the media is a key player in times of conflict and post-conflict building. In the twenty-first century, media freedom of speech is critical because it has the capacity to either intensify violence or lessen tensions between opposing parties and the impacted communities. The chapter looked at the impact the media plays during and after conflict, as well as an overview of the media's relationship with conflict.

Even in the past, the media had an important role in wars such as the French revolution and the Rwandan genocide, when the media was used to disseminate hate and provocation.

In the globalized world of the twenty-first century, news spreads quickly, and whatever is published quickly obtains traction and international attention. As a result, the chapter has focused on how the media has had an impact in post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding through propagating international principles and norms such as democracy, human rights, and peace. Journalism of attachment is a type of journalism in which journalists are asked to do more than just report news and stand by, but to create a feeling of accountability and intervention in which local and international media sources collaborate to internationalize a problem.

After a conflict, post-conflict rebuilding and peacebuilding are essential, and the media plays a key role in this. In peacebuilding, the media can act as a people's voice, highlighting public opinion and encouraging togetherness. The media has an impact on policymaking because it is assumed that decision-makers will not simply disregard public opinion on an important subject. Finally, the media serves as a global diplomat, as it is sometimes used to report diplomatic initiatives and relay messages between disputing parties, contributing to post-conflict rebuilding. Finally, the media serves as a watchdog, as it has a responsibility to disclose the general population and raise public awareness about issues that impact society through investigate journalism. Therefore, the significance of the media during and post-election conflict cannot be downplayed.

5.2.2 The Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Africa

Based on the second objective, the findings were that the media has had significant influence on modern society's conflicts, warfare and conflict settlement. Information, whether accurate or false, may now be shared faster, thanks to the media. This is due to the ease of coverage and mobility that modern media is known for.

The chapter looked into the various ways the media impacts post-conflict peace building in Africa by looking into the operational roles of the media in post conflict and also various perspectives on media coverage of African conflicts. These highlighted different perspectives especially from the foreign media and the media's influence in post conflict building in Africa in various countries.

The media can play a role in promoting peace and preventing war. As a response, the number of media activities in peacebuilding projects has increased, with frequent operations such as journalist development and capacity building of pro-peace programs. Developing, implementing and assessing such programs, on the other hand, present significant challenges. While some programs have yielded beneficial results, such as reduction in election-based violence, evidence is scarce and causal links between action and influence are difficult to ascertain. The media also faces various challenges in peacebuilding such as intimidation and lack of funds, therefore making their efforts difficult to achieve.

5.2.3 The Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Kenya

In line with the third objective, the findings were that the mainstream media significantly enhances the process of post-election peacebuilding in Kenya. First, the mainstream media promotes post-election peacebuilding by setting the agenda of peace and political tolerance throughout the country's electioneering period leading to the de-radicalization of political pacts and eventual peaceful elections. The Kenyan mainstream media seems to have learned lessons on its role in post-poll chaos in 2007/08 and has since been committed to using its influence to promote peaceful transitions. The mainstream media also promotes post-election peacebuilding by communicating messages of peace and political tolerance to electorates and politicians alike leading to rationalism and an objective approach to political contests. Unbiased and neutral coverage of elections is the other way through which the mainstream media enhances post-election peacebuilding.

Most media houses have learned from the consequences of biased reporting in the 2007/08 post-poll chaos and while this has not been perfected, the media houses have shown significant improvement in their reporting in the last 3 general elections all of which have achieved post-poll peace. The mainstream media also helps in the development of electoral conflict early warning. By highlighting high-tension areas, the mainstream media is able to draw the attention of the government and other peace organizations and inspire the initiation of timely preventive measures for conserving peace. Lastly, the mainstream media enhances the effectiveness of the electoral commission and assists security agencies and the national integration commission address electoral conflicts effectively. The mainstream media, therefore, comes out as an invaluable player in the post-election peacebuilding process in Kenya. Mainstream media houses play a critical role in post-election peacebuilding and must be integrated into future efforts toward ensuring peaceful electoral processes and power transitions.

5.3 Conclusion

The mainstream media is a central player in post-election peacebuilding given the role of communication in shaping perspectives that either lead to animosity or tolerance between opposing political pacts. Unlike in previous years when communication was much less robust, information communication technological advancements in the 21st century have seen popular media become a huge part of people's everyday lives and a source of information on critical subjects one of which is governance. The media regulates the information consumed by the masses, how the masses interpret this information, and how people react to developments in the news and other forms of communication by mainstream media channels. The mainstream media thus comes out as a potential facilitator, moderator and peace agent as far as post-election conflict is concerned.

Since the turn of the 20th century, the mainstream media has significantly contributed to post-conflict peacebuilding in various parts of the globe. As the main source of information on elections and related political developments, mainstream media channels are responsible for developing agendas as countries approach elections, providing information that can either break or build peace after elections, building perceptions on the importance of peace and the consequences of conflict, and calling to for active efforts for ensuring peace during the processes of government transition. The study has discussed several post-election incidents where the mainstream media was instrumental in ensuring peace. Similarly, the study has discussed incidences where the mainstream media was counterproductive for post-election peace and led to post-poll chaos; the highlights being post-poll conflicts in Afghanistan, Rwanda, and Kenya. The study also discovers the media as a public diplomat influential in developing public policies in relation to government transitions and bringing together rival political pacts for the purposes of sober engagements and favoring diplomatic solutions for electoral grievances. The mainstream media has been proven by the study as a critical tool for peacebuilding in the 21st century. Almost everyone is connected to at least some rudimentary form of popular media and the sentiments of these outlets significantly influence the behavior of leaders and their followers after elections.

In the African continent, the media has been found to be one of the main instigators of post-election violence. In a continent marred with violent power takeovers and regular instances of post-election violence, the study found the mainstream media – particularly local media outlets as a source of incitement and a tool for violence used by aggressive leaders to pit their followers against their rivals as a means to power. Particularly, local media houses were found to be culpable for instigating previous incidences of violence – Kenya, Rwanda, and Burkina Faso being some of the most reliable examples of nations where local media outlets jeopardized post-election

peacebuilding. The media can therefore actively sabotage post-election peace by inciting violence among the masses. Misinformation, incitement, and biased reporting are some of the common media factors that impede post-election peacebuilding in African nations.

The media however ticks both sides of the paradigm and has been a great tool for post-election peacebuilding in Africa. The mainstream media, both local and international have from time to time influenced peace efforts by highlighting violent post-poll developments in various African countries, calling into organizations both local and global peace organizations for the successful containment of post-election conflict. The media, therefore, build post-election peace by drawing world attention to chaos and potential violence and influencing measures that lead to peace. The mainstream media in African countries have also been at the forefront of urging peace and political tolerance among locals after elections and ensuring that civilians shun violence and promote peace during the transition of governments.

In Kenya, the media has been invaluable in promoting post-election peacebuilding, particularly since the 2007/08 post-election violence. Local media stations played an inciting role in the 2007 chaos but the mainstream media in the country seem to have learned its lessons and changed for the better. The study established that the mainstream media has been a major contributor to the peaceful elections witnessed in the country since 2007 – a fact that highlights the overreaching impact of the mainstream media on post-election peacebuilding. The media is an agenda-setter. It sets the agenda going into elections and after elections. The media has been influential in setting an agenda of peace every electioneering period and emphasizing to the country the importance of placing the country and peace before any individual eyeing for an elective seat. It is believed that this has significantly contributed to post-election peace in the country in the three elections since 2007.

The media also contributes to post-election peacebuilding in Kenya by encouraging rational thought and de radicalization during and following elections. It has reduced extremism among members of the public by presenting the benefits of peace and sustainable development to the public as well as the consequences of bloodshed in the quest for political succession. Also, the media has improved post-election peacebuilding by scrutinizing information disseminated to the public, ensuring that the masses are accurately informed to avoid conflicts that can arise as a result of misinformation or biased reporting. The media is further credited with influencing post-election peacebuilding in Kenya by spreading messages of peace during and after elections. Several media houses are on record preaching peace and organizing programs like political debates to emphasize the need for a peaceful transition and encourage aspirants to commit to promoting peaceful, free, and fair elections.

Lastly, the mainstream media facilitates post-election peacebuilding in Kenya by enhancing the effectiveness of the country's electoral body (IEBC) and other auxiliary agencies involved in the process leading to transparency and accountability in elections. Transparency in elections is a critical factor for peacebuilding and the lack of it is one of the main causes of electoral conflict. Thus, by ensuring smooth voting through strategies like civic education and improving transparency through open tallying and presentation of results, the mainstream media significantly model post-election peace.

The mainstream media is therefore a critical tool for post-election peacebuilding. The masses rely on information relayed by mainstream media channels; information which can either break or facilitate peace after elections. Mainstream media channels influence post-election peacebuilding in the 21st century all over the world, Africa, and Kenya.

The media outlets are more capable of influencing post-election peace when they understand their impacts on the peacebuilding process thus they should be educated about their impacts on post-conflict peacebuilding. Findings from the current study can be used to educate media institutions on their impact on post-poll peacebuilding.

5.4 Recommendation

The study recommends that media outlets should put in place proper election and electoral conflict reporting system. This will allow for a well-coordinated and harmonized information before disseminating to the public. Reporting disharmonized information on election and electoral conflict can lead to widespread panic that might trigger violence.

The study also recommends that in order to prevent another PEV, there is need to put in place strict and clearer regulations guiding media usage and reporting of electoral results and the conflict. This is because reckless airing of election has fueled election violence all over.

The study further recommends that as much as media outlets enjoy freedom and the privileges to report freely, the government should nonetheless have some control over how election results are aired in the media. Although it can be challenging, the government should cooperate with the media to ensure that the results it airs are varied to avoid airing of unverified results that can cause conflict whenever it varies.

5.5 Areas of Further Research

The number of studies conducted media and violence is numerous. This study has ventured into the intersection impact of mainstream media on post-election conflict peacebuilding. However, it would be interesting to see further research the partisan and nonpartisan nature of media and elections in Africa.

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APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire

Dear Respondent:

I am a student undertaking a Master of Arts Degree in International Studies at the Department of Diplomacy and International Studies, University of Nairobi. I am undertaking a study on **THE IMPACT OF MAINSTREAM MEDIA ON POST-ELECTION CONFLICT PEACEBUILDING IN AFRICA: THE CASE OF KENYA**. The findings and recommendations of this study are aimed at contributing to knowledge and a deeper understanding of the Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peace Building. The information collected in this study will be specifically for academic purposes and as such will be treated with top confidentiality.

Please fill in the blanks or tick (√) in the box/spaces to provide the information requested.

PART I: General Information

1. Please state your Organization/Ministry/Department/Agency/ Institution
.....

2. Please indicate your gender:

Male Female

3. Age:

19-30 Years 31-40 years 41-50 years Above 50 years

4. What is your highest academic qualification?

Certificate Diploma Degree Masters Degree PhD

Others (Please specify)

5. How long have you worked in your current organization?

Below 1 year 1- 5 years 6-10 years More than 10 years

**PART II: To Assess the Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict
Peacebuilding in the 21st Century International System**

6. How strongly do you agree with these statements on the impact of media on post-election conflict peacebuilding from the year 2000? Please rank each statement as follows:

- (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither disagree nor agree, (4) Agree, (5) Strongly Agree**

Statement	Response				
	1	2	3	4	5
The mainstream media set the agenda during election					
The mainstream media are peace agents through their election coverage					
Mainstream media are peace mobilizers during and after election					
Mainstream media is an effective tool of peace building					

7. On a scale of 1-5 to what extend do you agree with the statements below in regard to Mainstream media and peace building?

- (5) Very high (4) High (3) Low (2) Very Low (1) Not at all**

Statement	Response				
	1	2	3	4	5

There has been peaceful election due to due mainstream media coverage					
There has been increased awareness of causes of electoral conflict due to media coverage					
There has been improved transparency of election due to mainstream media coverage					
There has been increased election conflict early warning due to mainstream media coverage					
The security and cohesion institutions have been more responsive to electoral conflict due to media coverage					

SECTION III: To Evaluate the Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Africa.

8. In your opinion, does mainstream media have positive impact on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Africa?

Yes No

9. Please explain your answer above?

.....

.....

.....

10. The following statements relate to your views on the Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Africa. Please show the extent to which you agree with each of these statements. Please rank each statement as follows:

11.

(1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither disagree nor agree, (4) Agree, (5) Strongly Agree

Statement	Response				
	1	2	3	4	5
The Mainstream media set the agenda during elections in Africa					
The mainstream media are peace agents through their election coverage in Africa					
Mainstream media are peace mobilizers during and after elections in Africa					
Mainstream media is an effective tool of peace building in Africa					

PART IV: To Critically Analyze the Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Kenya.

12. The following statements relate to your views on Impact of Mainstream Media on Post-Election Conflict Peacebuilding in Kenya. Please show the extent to which you agree with each of these statements. Please rank each statement as follows:

(1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither disagree nor agree, (4) Agree, (5) Strongly Agree

Statement	Response				
	1	2	3	4	5
The mainstream media has been setting the agenda in elections in Kenya					

Mainstream media has been useful in spreading message of peace during and after elections in Kenya					
The mainstream media coverage of elections has led to peaceful elections in Kenya					
Mainstream media coverage has led to increased election conflict early warning in Kenya					
Due to mainstream media coverage, the security and cohesion institutions have been more responsive to electoral conflict in Kenya					

13. How effective is mainstream media role in electoral conflict peacebuilding in Kenya?

(1) Very effective (2) Effective (3) Not Effective

14. Please explain your answer above

.....

.....

.....

15. How can these challenges be addressed to ensure post-election peace building is successful?

.....

.....

16. What are some of the recommendations you can give on the subject area?

.....

.....

.....