ABSTRACT

The objective of this research project was to establish the agenda setting role of media in conflict. Specifically, the research sought to examine how the Nation Media group reported conflict during the 2007 general elections and if this contributed to violence; to examine the institutional factors at Nation Media group which contributed to this state of affairs; and to establish the impact of negative media reporting on conflict. Using the Nation Media newspaper as a case study, the research examines the place of print media in setting public agenda and conflict resolution. The research employed a research method incorporating purposive sampling because we were looking for particular articles in the newspapers, which fall under the expected political time frame; and content analysis, which was appropriate because the research was dealing exclusively with text. The target of the study was Daily Nation newspapers of between 151 October 2007 and 31st January 2008. "How an issue is reported is as important as whether the issue is reported at all" said James Dearing and Everett Roger [1996] in an article 'Agenda-Setting'. This fact as well as claims that the Mass Media in Kenya helped to fuel the 2007 post election violence is what prompted the research topic. The target publication was 123 publications. A sample size of 62 publications was chosen for analysis and using the systematic sampling every 2nd newspaper was chosen starting with the Daily Nation dated 3rd October 2007 which was chosen randomly and a total of 250 articles were analyzed. This represented over 50% which was deemed by the researcher as a representative of the target publications and hence generalized to the entire publication of the time frame under study. The data was collected and analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively and the results of the analysis were presented in form of charts, graphs and tables. The findings were also discussed in an effort to answer the research questions, the conclusion drawn and recommendation written.