

## **Media and Conflict: An Analysis of Print Media Coverage of Terrorism in Kenya**

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### **Abstract**

*This paper examines how the print media in Kenya covers terrorism issues. It sought to identify the patterns of reporting of terrorism in the print media in Kenya in 2015 when coincidentally, Garissa University was attacked by terrorists leaving 147 dead and scores injured. According to the 2015 Global Terrorism Index, acts of terror in total cost \$52.9 billion across the globe in 2014. Kenya has been hit hard in the last 5 years by acts of terror causing agonizing deaths of people, injuries, destruction of property and denting the development of the country. This paper carried out content analysis of two leading newspapers in Kenya, the Standard and The Nation newspapers. Data was collected using an analysis of the stories contained in the two leading newspapers, which related to TIs. The content of 1142 articles on TIs was reviewed from January 2015 to June 2015 of The Standard and The Nation newspapers. An analysis was done on the data, which was then presented using simple tabular comparison of graphs, charts and text. The study found that terrorism is an issue of importance in Kenya, with 1142 articles published in the six months period under review. In each of the two newspapers, over 65% of articles were reported as news while feature articles published were below 15%. This shows that the media did not put much effort into analysing and doing in-depth coverage of this issue. Articles on terrorism in Kenya were only placed on the prime pages of the newspaper when an incidence of a large magnitude happened. This shows that the media is not actively covering the issue of terrorism and giving it prominence unless an attack happens. This reveals a shortcoming, as the media, responsible for creating a platform for public discourse has failed to be proactive and set the agenda to discuss important issues in people's life.*

### **Introduction**

Data from the National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) in Kenya indicates that at least 900 people have been killed in terrorism attacks since 2000. A project document drafted by the Government of Kenya (GOK) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2015, states that terror attacks and killings in Kenya are led by Jihadist terrorists groups, Al-Shabaab and Al-Qaeda. Kenya is second after Somalia to bear the grave pain of terrorism in East Africa. Terrorism attacks have drastically become rampant in Kenya since the deployment of military to Somalia in October 2011. The deployment was done in the hope of lessening the capacity of Al Shabab. Since then hundreds of people have been killed, scores sustained injuries and property destroyed in multiple terror attacks mainly in the country's capital -Nairobi, the Coastal and Northern Kenya regions.

The deadliest terror attack in Kenya was in August 7, 1998, on the US embassy in Nairobi. The attack propelled by Al Qaeda, a militant Sunni Islamist organization, killed about 213 people whilst over 4,000 more were injured. On 2 April 2015, about six to ten masked gunmen stormed Garissa University College, in Northern Kenya, killing 147 of the 815 students in the college. Prior to this incident, Kenya was nursing terror scars after the Al Shabab hit the Westgate mall on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2013, killing 67 people. Other attacks since September 2013 include; the 15 June 2014 attack on hotels and bars in Mpeketoni, including the local police Station, on the east coast of Kenya. In total, the attacks left 65 people dead, 10 vehicles burnt, and 64 houses burnt (17 residential houses and 47 commercial buildings).

16 June 2014 attack on Pokomo village, east coast of Kenya, where 10 civilians were killed; the 6 July 2014 attacks on Hindi and Gamba villages, east coast of Kenya which left 29 civilians dead, on 24 July 2014, 11 civilians were killed by Al Shabaab, in northern Kenya, On 22 November 2015, Al Shabaab attacked a bus in Mandera, northern Kenya, killing 28 civilians while on 25 November 2014, 36 civilians were killed when Al Shabaab attacked a quarry at Kormey, north-eastern Kenya. The Kenyan Government has come up with legislation in efforts to combat terrorism. In 2012, the Kenya Prevention of Terrorism Act was set up, in 2011 Proceeds of Crime and Anti-Money Laundering Act was signed to law while in 2010, the Prevention of Organized Crime Act was put together and the three act as strong legal framework under which to prosecute acts of terrorism.

In late 2014, Kenya's third President, Uhuru Kenyatta signed into law the Security Laws (Amendment) Act of 2014 (SLAA), a set of provisions that altered 20 existing laws to further strengthen Kenya's legislative framework to fight terrorism. Some of the key steps contained in the SLAA include strengthening the mandate of Kenya's National Counter-Terrorism Centre (NCTC), the criminalization of participating in terrorist training, laying out the foundation for a coordinated border control agency and broadening evidentiary standards to allow greater use of electronic evidence and recorded testimony in terrorism prosecutions. In the last four years, terrorism in Kenya has become a constant news item served by the Kenyan media. This heavy and widespread coverage of terrorism activities by the Kenyan media on the constant terror attacks not only highlighted terrorism as a salient issue but also led to the creation of a perception that the security in Kenya was weak and the country was not in control. For instance; days before USA President Barrack Obama's visit to Kenya in July 2015, the American international media channel, CNN, described Kenya as a 'hotbed of terrorism'. This caused uproar amongst the Kenyan populace, who expressed their disappointment on CNN's framing of Kenya by creating a hashtag on Twitter, #someone tell CNN. This saw the Kenyan Interior Cabinet Secretary Joseph Nkaissery come out to condemn CNN terming the broadcast a "sustained campaign" to portray Kenya in bad light. Nkaissery told journalists at Harambee house in Nairobi that the announcement was based on lies and demonstrated heightened irresponsibility by the media network and smacks of arrogance (*Daily Nation*, 2015).

*The Guardian* further reported that a senior CNN executive flew to Nairobi to apologize for the media channel's remarks ahead of the America's head of state visit. When the media makes some issues more salient than others, then priming occurs by guiding viewers on what to think about the issue. Miller and Krosnick (2000) posit that people depend on the media to relay them with information on issues. When the media gives more attention to some news instead of others, the audience considers that, because the media has dedicated precious time and space to an issue, it must be an important issue. They then try to figure it into their judgments and develop an attitude on it. A critical analysis of how terrorism issues are covered in Kenya is necessary to determine whether there is need for change of style in the presentation of this information. To date, there exist huge gaps in literature on how the issues of terrorism are presented in the Kenyan print media.

### ***The Daily Nation and Standard Newspapers***

The study focused on using The Daily Nation and Standard Newspaper as the two consecutively have the highest readership and circulation in Kenya. The Nation on its website, [www.nationmedia.com](http://www.nationmedia.com) brands itself as the largest independent media house in East and Central Africa founded by Agakhan in 1959. The Daily Nation is a morning newspaper published on all 7 days of the week and is available in all major cities in East Africa. The Saturday version is dubbed the Saturday Nation while the Sunday version is known as the Sunday Nation. The newspaper is usually published by the Nation Media Group from its headquarters at Nation Centre, on Kimathi Street in Nairobi. The newspaper has adapted technology by maintaining a well updated and free website, which hosts online editions of the daily and the Sunday copy.

The Standard Newspaper, established in 1902 is the oldest newspaper in the country and is owned by The Standard Group. Historically, The Standard's founder, Alibhai Mulla Jeevanjee, sold the paper to two British businessmen in 1905, who changed the name to the *East African Standard*. The paper then went ahead to become a daily morning paper and relocated its headquarters from Mombasa to Nairobi in 1910. The British-based Lonrho Group bought the newspaper in 1963. It was sold to Kenyan investors in 1995 and in 2004 the name was changed back to The Standard. The Standard online, [www.standardmedia.co.ke](http://www.standardmedia.co.ke) has one of the highest readerships online. According to Geopoll, a global market survey platform, in 2015, the *Daily Nation* had an average readership of approximately 4,379,400 per day, and Standard had an average of 2,223,500 per day.

This means nationwide, Daily Nation has a 40% share while Standard has a 20% share. Geopoll further examines the two newspapers readership share by different age groups and genders, and points out that young people (ages 15-24) are less devoted to Daily Nation and Standard; while these two newspapers still have the most shares, 32% and 19% respectively. The populace was also reported to read other newspapers including Taifa Leo, with a 12% share, sports publication Mwanaspoti, 10% share, and The Nairobiian, part of the Standard Group with a 10% share.

### ***Print Media coverage of TIs in Kenya***

In the past, various groups in Kenya have questioned and expressed dissatisfaction in the way the media reports on terrorism. Interestingly, in 2014, the Media Council of Kenya (MCK), a statutory body established by the Media Council Act, No. 20 of 2013, to regulate the media and the conduct and discipline of journalists in Kenya, expressed dissatisfaction with the conduct of the media. The code of conduct for the practice of journalism in Kenya states, in part, that: ‘The media should avoid presenting acts of terrorism activities in a manner that glorifies such anti-social conduct’. In addition, section 5 states that journalists should recognize that they are accountable for their actions to the public, the profession and themselves and by doing so, they are required to conduct themselves ethically. Section 23 of the Media Act of 2013 goes further to state that, “newspapers shall not allow their columns to be used for writings which tend to encourage or glorify social evils, warlike activities, ethnic, racial or religious hostilities”.

A 2014 report by MCK states that in coverage of Westgate attack, the media didn’t adhere to some basic journalistic principles and front for harmony in the society. They looked at some statements adapted from some TV clips which were played out to the public. In particular, NTV was condemned for using word-for-word comments from some people suspected or known to be Al-shabaab members without selecting parts of the messages which would not create fear among the public. The TV clip quoted some man stating that, “*ku-revenge iko katika Quran na iko dini yetu kuwa ukiwa pushed ama ukiona mwenzako akinyanyaswa, you have to stand up, sio kwa kislamu peke yake ata dini zote*”. (...to revenge is stated in Quran and our religion explains that if you are pushed or even see your colleague being exploited, you must defend and it is not only in Islam even other religions). (Unidentified man, NTV, 23rd April, 2014).

This attests to the fact that the media has the ability to provide useful tools that serve terror propaganda and psy-war ends (Yonah, 1978). Most journalists in Kenya can always fall back to Article 33 of the constitution of Kenya 2010 which provides every person with the freedom to seek, receive or impart information or ideas and freedom of artistic creativity among others. This paper borrows from a scholar who analyzed *Operation Linda Nchi*, a codename coined by the Kenyan Government for a coordinated military operation between the Kenyan military and the Somali military that began on 16 October 2011. Kenyan troops crossed the border into the conflict zones of southern Somalia in pursuit of Al-Shabaab militants that are alleged to have kidnapped several foreign tourists and aid workers inside Kenya. According to the Ethiopian Foreign Minister, the operation represents one of the final stages in the Islamist insurgency of the Somali Civil War.

Maina (2014) assessed how the Daily Nation and The Standard Newspaper reported on *Operation Usalama Watch* in April 2014. He notes that, in the Daily Nation, majority of Al Shabaab stories were news (71 percent), briefs (19 percent), editorial (7 percent), caricature (1 percent), features (1 percent) and pictorial (1 percent) while the Standard had 79 percent as news, 13 percent as briefs, 4 Percent as editorials, 3 percent as features, and 1 percent for pictorial and caricatures. With most of the stories packaged in news form, this drew a lot of attention to the phenomenon of terrorism. The newspapers reported the stories with intent to rely the occurrences to the public; however this also gave the terrorist group a lot of publicity.

### ***Journalist’s opinion and its impact on coverage of terrorism***

Altheide (2007) asserts that the media promotes terror acts by stressing fear and an uncertain future. This means that when a journalist uses words such as, ‘fear reigned following the terror attack...’ they are using the opinion to fuel the emotion of fear amongst the populace. Various journalists writing on media ethics have expressed that it is not necessary that journalists should abstain from expressing their personal opinions. Conversely, a reader should be able to tell the difference between the articles stating facts and materials which are expressing someone's opinion or interpretation of events.

Streckfuss (1990) states that, objectivity was founded not on a naive idea that humans could be objective, but on a realization that they could not. When a journalist outlines a news story based on their own opinion, they are mostly considered to be subjective or impartial. A news story which is impartial is also considered to lack balance. Bilgen (2012) asserts that the media should present both sides of the story to the audience in an unbiased and fair way to aid the audience in making their own opinion of the news without the media's influence. He goes ahead to point out that the media coverage of success stories should be balanced with the coverage of failure stories without speculation and dramatization so that it can add to the credibility of the source and public order in the aftermath of an attack.

### ***The Priming theory***

Iyengar and Kinder (1987) introduced the concept of priming to describe how the media could go beyond telling people what to think about and shape the criteria used by individuals to judge the merits of their political leaders and the pressing political issues. Williams (2003) further quotes Iyengar and Kinder who state that the power of the media does not rest in persuasion but in "commanding the public's attention (agenda setting) and defining criteria underlying the public's judgments (priming)". The two scholars viewed that priming occurs when news content suggests to news audiences that they ought to use specific issues as benchmarks for evaluating the performance of leaders and governments. Priming has in most cases been understood as an extension of agenda setting. Hastie & Park, (1986) view this to be based on two reasons. The first being that both effects are based on memory-based models of information processing and secondly these two theories of communication assume that people form attitudes based on the considerations that are most salient when they make decisions. The grouping of priming and agenda setting in analyzing media has strengthened the theoretical base of agenda-setting effects by providing 'a better understanding of how the mass media not only tell us 'what to think about' but also 'what to think', (Cohen, 1963). Many studies testing priming effects, examine agenda-setting as the independent variable and priming effects as outcomes of agenda-setting or as the dependent variable. Notably, during the Gulf War, Iyengar and Simon (1993) combination of survey data and content analyses of network television news supported the basic priming hypothesis: Foreign policy issues that had been made more salient for individuals by intensive Gulf War coverage tended to override other issues as influences on assessments of presidential performance. Interestingly, McCombs, Llamas et al. (1997) based their attempts to combine agenda-setting, priming, and framing into a single theoretical framework on the assumption that integrating theory is always desirable.

### ***Agenda setting theory***

Agenda setting is generally viewed as the theory that media have a substantial influence on their audiences by choosing certain topics and highlighting them as news and thus placing prominence on these topics over others. Lippman (1922) was among the ancient scholars who argued the world around us is too complicated and out of reach, and that consequently we must rely on the media to understand it. In his 1922 classic, *Public Opinion*, which began with a chapter titled "The World Outside and the Pictures in Our Heads", Lippmann noted that the news media are a primary source of "the pictures in our heads," the agenda of issues or other objects presented by the news media influence what the pictures in our heads are about. Later on in 1972, McCombs & Shaw asserted that the media influences public opinion by emphasizing certain issues over others. Herein, they implied that the amount of media attention, or media salience, devoted to certain issues influences the degree of public concern for these issues. McCombs and Shaw hypothesize that what media sets as agenda is not necessarily the agenda of the public and the resultant effect may not be desired or have the desired impact. The two scholars argue that there is a likelihood of a dissonance between media agenda, and public agenda; that there was great difference between what audiences thought was important vis-à-vis what media thought was important. Agenda setting is the power to entice people into thinking about certain kinds of issues (Williams, 2003). One of the key features of the agenda setting theory is the ability of the media to highlight certain topics or aspects of issues through the processes of agenda setting (Hayes, 2007). Hayes adds that by calling attention to some issues over others during the election cycle, the news media, theoretically at least, forms the public's opinion about the most 19 important issues facing the country. Price & Tewksbury, (1997) say that the process of agenda setting involves the emphasizing of certain issues over others and the media influence of issues that the public recognizes as important or otherwise.

Now, herein, the agenda setting part is considered as when the media makes certain issues more salient than others. We can thus note that the agenda setting theory denotes that the amount of time and space that the media devotes to an issue makes an audience receptive and alert to particular it

### ***Methodology***

The purpose of this paper was to find out how print media covers terrorism issues in Kenya. This study undertook content analysis as a method for examining how the two leading newspapers in Kenya, the Nation and the Standard newspapers covered terrorism issues. Content analysis is viewed as the method where content of the message forms the basis for drawing inferences and conclusions about the content (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1976). Kerlinger (1973) clearly defines content analysis as the method of observation in the sense that instead of asking people to respond to questions, it “takes the communications that people have produced and asks questions off communication”. Each and every article carrying information on terrorism in Kenya was reviewed over a period of 6 months. A careful analysis of the stories as presented in the newspapers was also carried out.

### ***Research Population***

The term population in this research particularly implies a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement. In the paper, the research population of this, entailed newspaper articles from both the Nation and the Standard newspapers published from January 2015 to June 2015. The six months period of time offered ample research time and gave a deeper insight on media coverage of terrorism issues as the Garissa terror attack occurred during this period.

### ***Data Collection Methods***

The paper involved a sample size of all articles from the Nation and the Standard newspapers, which carried stories and information on terror attack from the between from January 2015 to June 2015. The paper used content analysis to collect data. This period was purposely sampled with the two newspapers that carried stories, articles, and information on terrorism issues being considered for analysis. This was the most convenient approach for this study since in the 6-month period considered, not every newspaper may have carried a story on terrorism issues. The two newspapers were selected due to their high readership rates in the country and their wide circulation in the country. They were also chosen because they contained stories on the various terror attacks.

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

This research analyzed articles on terror attacks during the specified period (January 2015 to June 2015) in Kenya appearing in the Nation and the Standard newspapers. Following this, the subsequent aspects were analyzed and coded accordingly. The paper embarked on perusing the newspapers while scouting for stories on terror attacks in Kenya from January 2015 to June 2015. The process involved identifying the stories; classifying them into their respective categories, for instance, a news item, a feature story, an editorial, news in brief, an advertising feature, opinion, letter to the editor, among others. It also involved measuring the amount of space allocated for an article in words; and determining the source of the story; the placement of the story in the newspaper and the number of stories in the newspaper; the main event.

After collecting the data, the study presented it in different ways based on the type of interpretation that is intended to the audience. To present the data from the research, this study used tables, graphs and pie charts. The researcher keenly focused on number and size of articles published every month in the period of study, type of article and the frequency of coverage during the period under study, placement of the article in the newspaper and themes and frames covered in the article

### ***Unit of Analysis***

The unit of analysis was an individual story (news story, feature, and editorial, letter to editor or commentary) whose content was be examined in terms of:

- Number of articles,
- Their size (in words),
- Type (whether news, Opinion, feature, editorial, book review, letter to editor, or advertisement),
- Placement (front page, page 4, page 18, other inside pages, special feature/magazine section, or back page),
- Prominence (edition lead, page lead, main editorial, or special commentary),

The data aggregation and analysis on this research was carried out using the SPSS computer software and involved the use of graphs and charts to compare and contrast the similarities and differences in the coverage of terrorism issues in Kenya by The Nation and The Standard newspapers.

### **Research Instrument**

To aid in data collection, key words were used in locating relevant information on the media priming of terrorism issue such as: terrorist, Al- Shabab, attack, gunmen, hostage, security, siege and shooting. A code sheet for analyzing the priming of terrorism issues in Kenya by the Standard and Nation Newspapers, from January 2015 to June 2015 was prepared.

### **Data analysis**

The data collected primarily focused on the priming of terrorism issues in Kenya by the two national newspapers. The paper aimed at establishing the frequency of stories, story placement, the size of the stories, the key themes and also the precise types of photos published.

### **Frequency and number of articles on terrorism issues in Kenya**

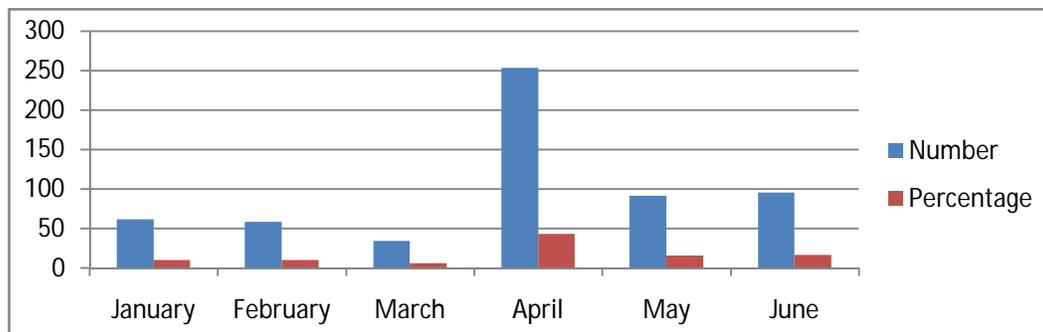
The research started by following up on the frequency of terrorism issues as reported by both The Nation and Standard newspapers as the data is summarized below. When a news media views an issue to be of importance, they allocate more space for it. The media herein, sets the agenda by publishing more on an issue and provides a platform for the public to react on this through opinions and letters to the editor.

**Table 1: the Nation Newspaper publication of articles on TIs**

Month	Number	Percentage
January	61	10%
February	58	10%
March	34	6%
April	253	43%
May	91	15%
June	95	16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 1 shows the number of articles published by the *Nation* Newspaper in the 6 months; from January 2015 to June 2016. The month of April saw the highest number of articles published on terrorism issues in this newspaper with 253 articles. This can be explained by the infamous attack on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2015 which happened at the Garissa University College located in Garissa County which is reported to have killed 148 people injuring scores. The incidence, received massive coverage as it was the second worst attack on the Kenyan soil since the 1998 bombing of the USA embassy which killed over 200 people. The month of May, where 91 articles were published saw another incidence crop up; Kenyan police were ambushed by Al-Shabaab as they were rushing to aid a colleague who had been hit by a landmine explosion in Yumbis Village, Garissa County. The Government reported that only one officer was injured despite AlShabab releasing reports saying that 20 police officers had died. The month of June saw high numbers of articles on terrorism issues in Kenya as follow up articles on these two incidences, in-depth features of what transpired and opinions by the public were shared by the media.

**Figure 1: The Nation Newspaper publication of articles on TIs**



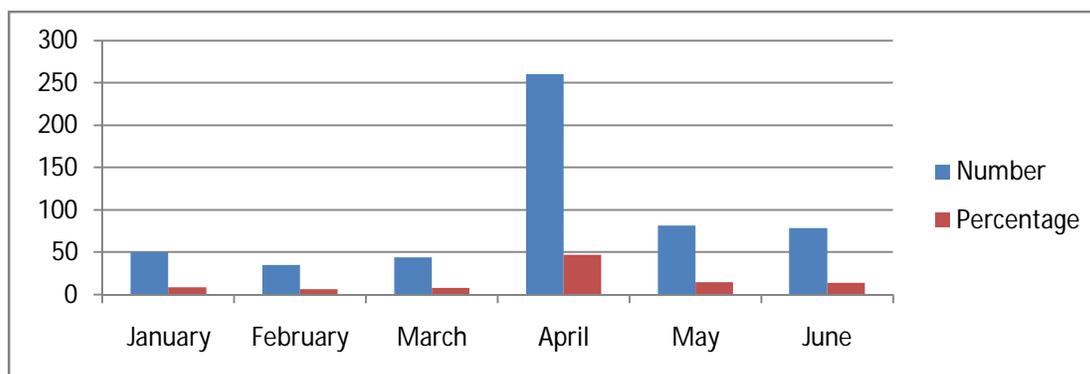
During the same period, the Standard Newspaper reported on terrorism in Kenya as summarized in table 2.

**Table 2: the Standard Newspaper publication of articles on TIs**

Month	Number	Percentage
January	50	9%
February	35	7%
March	44	8%
April	260	47%
May	82	15%
June	79	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 2 shows how the Standard Newspaper reported on issues of terrorism in Kenya. Quite similar to the *Nation* coverage, the month of April had the highest coverage due to the brutal Garissa terror attack with 260 articles published. The month of May saw the second highest articles published on issues of terrorism with 82 articles published due to follow up stories on the Garissa attacks that had just happened a month before and also the incidence in Yumbis Village in Garissa County.

**Figure 2: the Standard Newspaper publication of articles on TIs**



From the data above, it is clear that terrorism, a phenomenon denting the development of Kenya received massive coverage in the month of April 2015 with *Nation* accounting for 43% while the *Standard* accounted for 47%. This is due to the gruesome Garissa attack which led to the death of over 140 people and shocked the world. The lowest cases were reported in the months of February and March in both newspapers. This can be attributed to the fact that cases of terrorism in the country were low with the most recent attack before the Garissa attack occurring in June 2014 where more than 60 people were killed in attacks in Mpeketoni, Lamu County. The quick dip in coverage of terrorism issues in the month of May and June is alarming as this indicates that the media did not continue priming this issue. This could be taken to mean that the media set the agenda only after the incidence occurred and did not push this issue further and keep it in the public eye.

### **Types of articles**

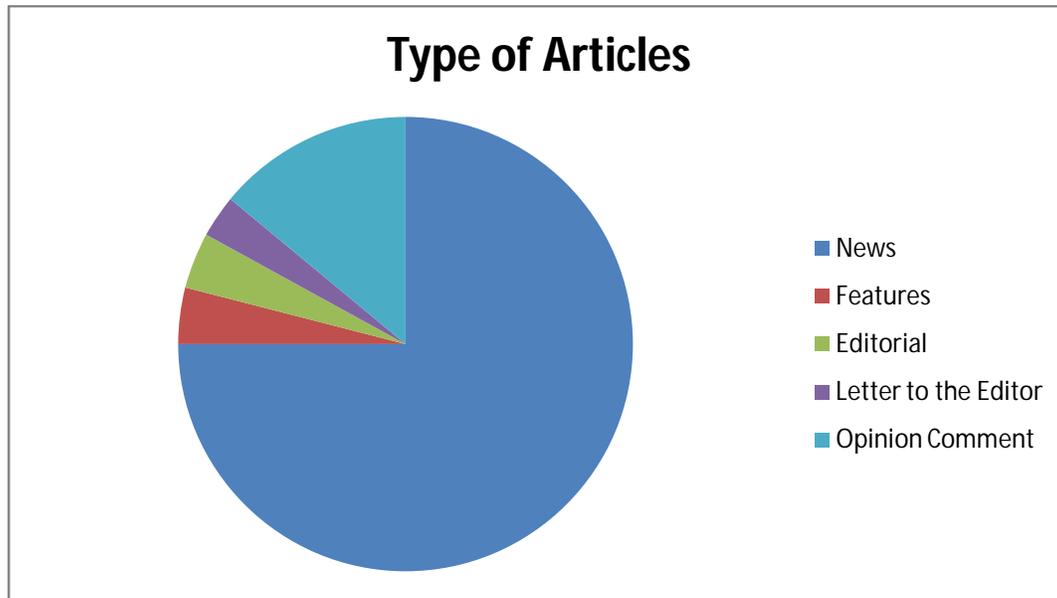
A newspaper publishes stories of various types to break the monotony of the newspaper and also retain the attention of the reader. For this paper, we classified the stories into news, features, editorials, letter to the editor, opinion comment and also looked at how pictures were used.

**Table 3: Type of articles on TIs by the *Nation* Newspaper**

VARIABLE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
News	378	75%
Features	18	4%
Editorial	22	4%
Letter to the editor	17	3%
Opinion Comment	72	14%
<b>Total Publications</b>	<b>507</b>	<b>100%</b>

According to table 3, the type of news that dominated the *Nation* Newspaper were news accounting for 75% of coverage while opinion comment articles accounted for 14%. Notably, features and letter to the editors were least utilized by the public coming at 4% while features also tailed at 4%.

**Figure 3: Type of articles on TIs by the *Nation* Newspaper**

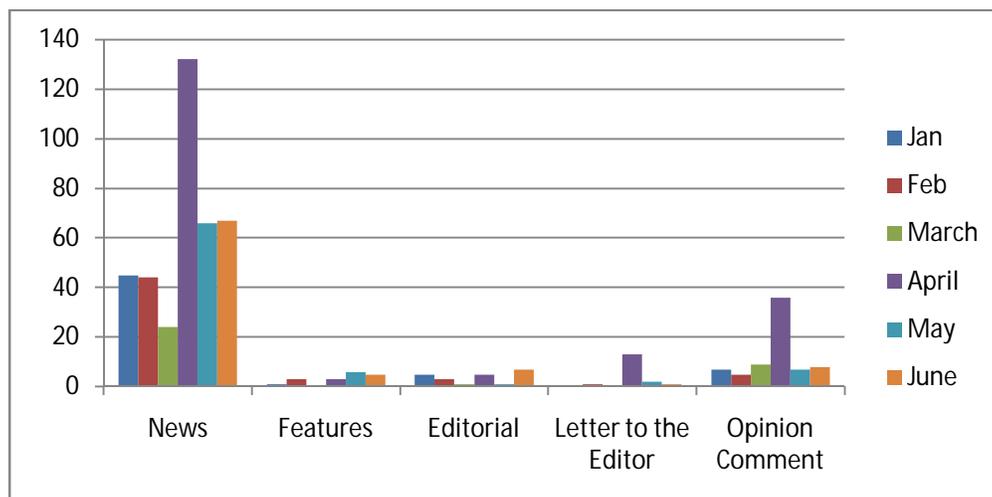


**Table 4: Type of articles on TIs by the *Nation* Newspaper per month**

VARIABLE	JAN2015	FEB2015	MARCH 2015	APRIL2015	MAY2015	JUNE2015
News	45	44	24	132	66	67
Features	1	3	0	3	6	5
Editorial	5	3	1	5	1	7
Letter to the editor	0	1	0	13	2	1
Opinion Comment	7	5	9	36	7	8

In all the 6 months, stories on terrorism issues were mostly in the news category with the highest being 132 articles in the month of April.

**Figure 4: Type of articles on TIs by the *Nation* Newspaper per month**

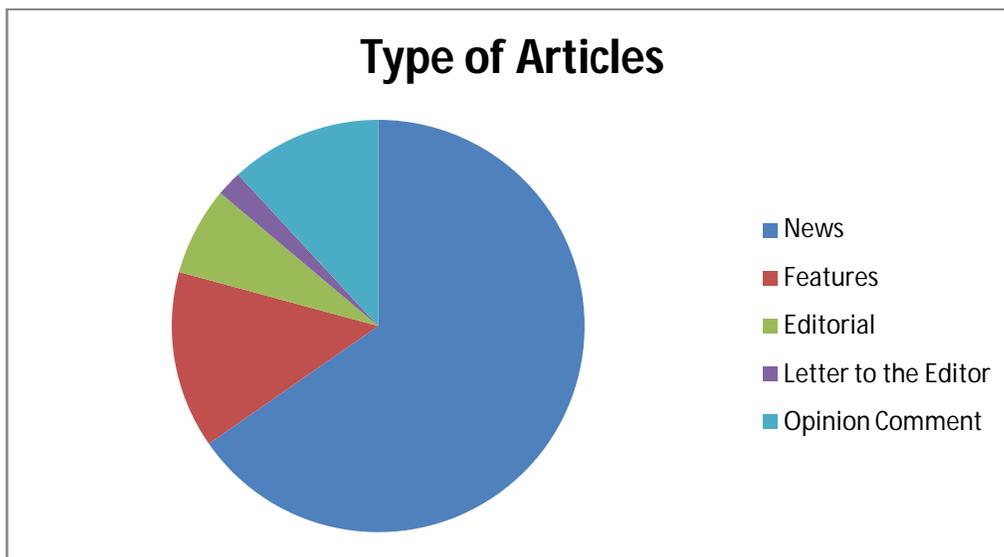


**Table 5: Types of articles on TIs by the Standard Newspaper**

VARIABLE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
News	312	66%
Features	64	14%
Editorial	35	7%
Letter to the editor	6	2%
Opinion Comment	56	12%
<b>Total publication</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 5 shows a similar trend with that of Nation Newspaper with news dominating with 66% followed by features at 14%. Letters to the editors were least send with only 2 1% send in by the readers during the 6 months of the study.

**Figure 5: Types of articles on TIs by the Standard Newspaper**

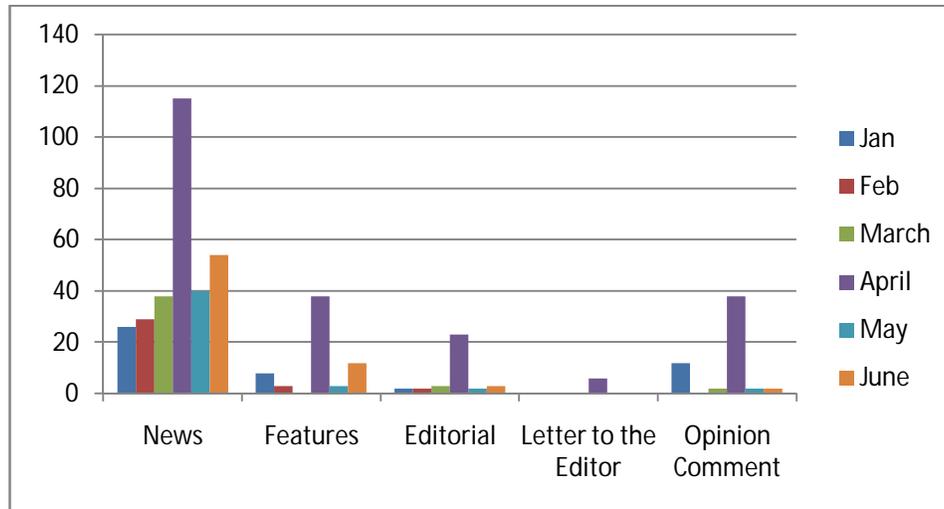


**Table 6: Types of articles on TIs by the Standard Newspaper per month**

VARIABLE	JAN2015	FEB2015	MARCH 2015	APRIL 2015	MAY 2015	JUNE 2015
News	26	29	38	115	40	54
Features	8	3	0	38	3	12
Editorial	2	2	3	23	2	3
Letter to the editor	0	0	0	6	0	0
Opinion Comment	12	0	2	38	2	2

In the six months, news took the lions share with 115 articles on terrorism issues in Kenya during the month of April. Features and opinion comments also were used quite a bit during the period. Letter to the editor was not a type mainly utilized in the Standard newspaper with only six letters published in the six months of this study. Notably, they were only published during the month that the Garissa terror attack occurred.

**Figure 6: Types of articles on TIs by the Standard Newspaper per month**



The data on the types of stories carried out by the two newspapers gives an interesting point of view. Both newspapers used news as the main type of way to disseminate information on terrorism in Kenya with *Nation* at 75% and the *Standard* at 66%. This shows that the media herein reported the information as it was. The media did not put much effort in analyzing and doing in-depth analysis on the issues of terrorism as features, which are usually longer and used to give in-depth analysis, were at 4% at the *Nation* Newspaper. This is worrying as the *Nation* has the largest readership in Kenya and also has the highest circulation. It is crucial for the newspaper to invest more resources on conducting better researched stories on this matter of national importance. The *Standard* Newspaper increased had a substantial number of features compared to the *Standard* at 14%. The newspapers should have focused on other key issues apart from security, such as economic growth, development, ease of doing business, investments and given more space for feature stories. In the two newspapers, it is notable that letters to the editors, opinion and editorials had low numbers. This is worrying as it indicates that the readers were either adamant to express their views or the media stations did not publish their views. The media not only purposes to inform the public but to also educate them. By tapping into other types of stories apart from news, this goal of fully analyzing the topic of terrorism would have been achieved.

**Placement of articles**

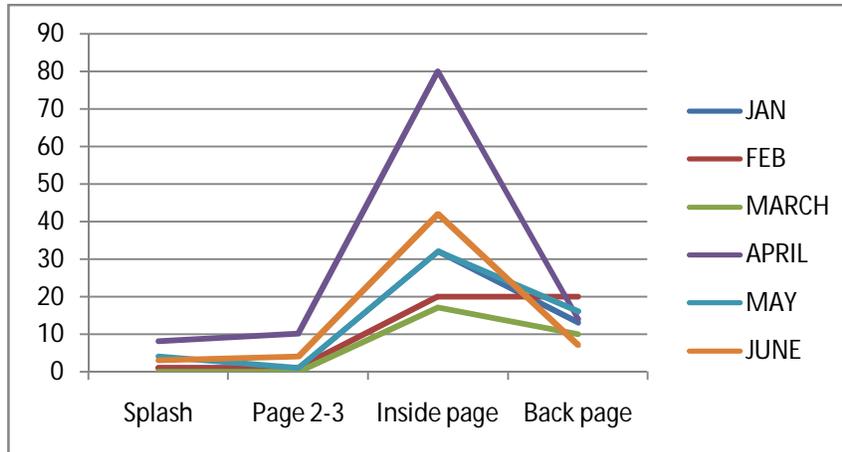
Placement refers to the position of articles in a newspaper. Placement is a crucial aspect in the agenda setting theory. The front page is considered as a display case and it stipulates whether one buys a newspaper. The process of selecting it by news editors is carefully done in aim of ensuring that it attracts as many readers as possible. Shoemaker and Cohen (20016) argue that the prominence of a story is operationalised as its quantity (in increments of either space or time) weighted by its placement within the medium. An article placed on the first, second third and last page of a newspaper is set to grasp the attention of the reader and viewed to be of interest to the public.

**Table 7: Placement of articles on TIs by the Nation Newspaper**

VARIABLE	JAN 2015	FEB 2015	MARCH 2015	APRIL 2015	MAY 2015	JUNE 2015
Splash	1	1	0	8	4	3
Page 2-3	1	1	0	10	1	4
Inside page	32	20	17	80	32	42
Back page	13	20	10	14	16	7

According to the data above, most stories published on terrorism in Kenya were placed on the inside pages of the newspapers. The pack page also had the second largest number of stories. The month of April saw the newspaper place terrorism on the splash page, giving the subject prominence.

**Figure 7: Placement of articles on TIs by the Nation Newspaper**

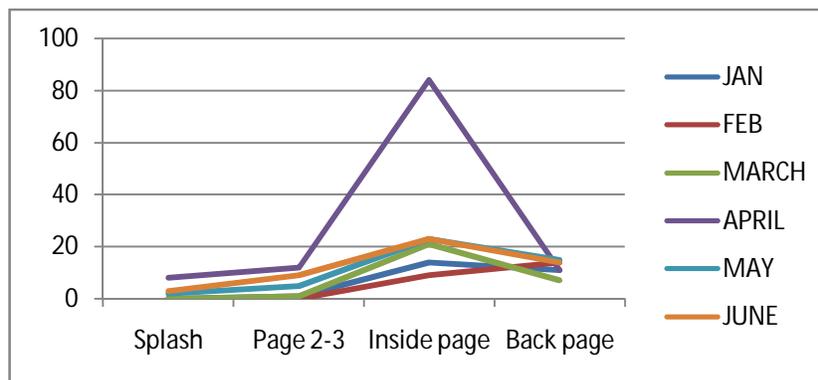


**Table 8: Placement of articles on TIs by the Standard Newspaper**

VARIABLE	JAN 2015	FEB 2015	MARCH 2015	APRIL 2015	MAY 2015	JUNE 2015
Splash	0	0	0	8	2	3
Page 2-3	1	0	1	12	5	9
Inside page	14	9	21	84	23	23
Back page	11	14	7	11	15	14

Similar to the *Nation Newspaper*'s story placement, the *Standard* also saw the highest number of stories covered on terrorism placed on the inside pages of the newspaper. In the month of April, the stories on the front page were 8 whilst page 2-3 and back page also saw increased placement. The month of May and June also saw the back pages increase placement on terrorism issues.

**Figure 8: Placement of articles on TIs by the Standard Newspaper**



From the tables above on both the *Standard Newspaper* and *Nation Newspaper*, it is clear that the editors of the newspaper did not give the stories much prominence on the front pages until when a terror attack happened. This is supported by the fact that during the month of January, February and March, when Kenya was still considered an insecure country but with calm after attacks, editors only had 2 stories on the splash of the newspapers. The numbers rose thereafter when the Garissa attack occurred. Terrorism is a salient issue. It should dominate the media just like other issues such as politics in Kenya. On the inside pages, terrorism issues were thoroughly discussed indicating that the news media found it to be a topic of importance and pushed for more coverage of it.

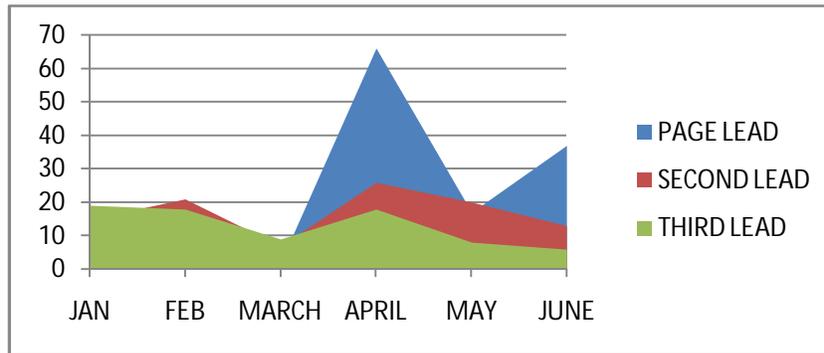
**Story prominence on page**

Unlike in the previous category, this probes on how the articles cum stories or articles were placed on the newspaper page. Whether they were on the lead page, back page or inside pages, the study explored the precise position they were laid out in by looking at the fonts used and also the headlines they were allocated. The researcher grouped them into page lead, second lead and third lead.

**Table 9: Prominence of the articles on TIs on newspaper page by the Nation Newspaper**

VARIABLE	JAN 2015	FEB 2015	MARCH 2015	APRIL 2015	MAY 2015	JUNE 2015
Page lead	3	3	2	66	17	37
Second lead	15	21	7	26	20	13
Third lead	19	18	9	18	8	6

**Figure 9: Prominence of the articles on TIs on newspaper page by the Nation Newspaper**



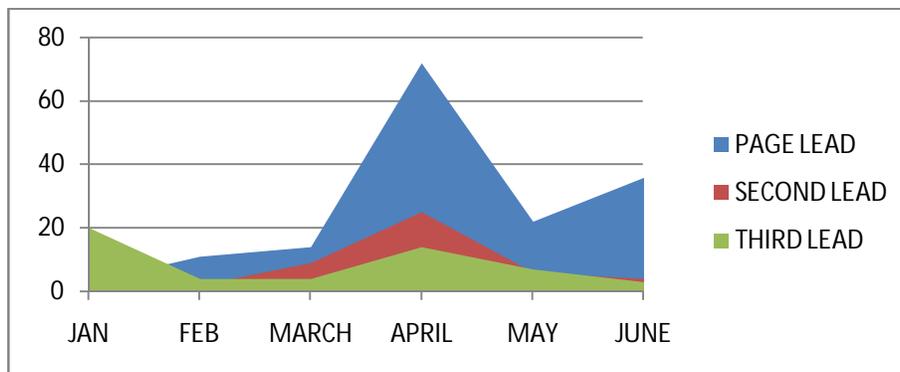
The *Nation* newspaper gave adequate prominence on coverage of terrorism issues. Notably, the recurrence of a terror attack lead to the increase in prominence of this stories. In the month of April the number of stories that were page leads was 66. In a month there are 30-31 days, this shows that at least two stories were page leads on this month. In the month of June where the page leads were 37, it shows that at least one story on terrorism in Kenya was page lead. The consistency in second and third leads shows that the story was severally highlighted and given a substantial coverage.

**Table 10: Prominence of the articles on TIs on newspaper page by the Standard Newspaper**

VARIABLE	JAN 2015	FEB 2015	MARCH 2015	APRIL 2015	MAY 2015	JUNE 2015
Page lead	3	11	14	72	22	36
Second lead	4	2	9	25	6	4
Third lead	20	4	4	14	7	3

The *Standard* Newspaper accorded the issue of terrorism substantial prominence in the six months. Even in months when terrorism cases had not shot up, they gave the issue prominence. The month of April had 72 page leads followed closely by the month of June at 36 owing to the fact that two terror attacks had happened.

**Figure 10: Prominence of the articles on TIs on newspaper page by the Standard Newspaper**



Comparatively, in both newspapers, when issues of terrorism came up they were accorded prominence by being page leads. However, as figures in table 4.2 indicate, most of these stories were in the news category. This shows that they mainly were informing the public on what had transpired. To be able to combat and push for policies on terrorism, in-depth stories such as features should be utilized.

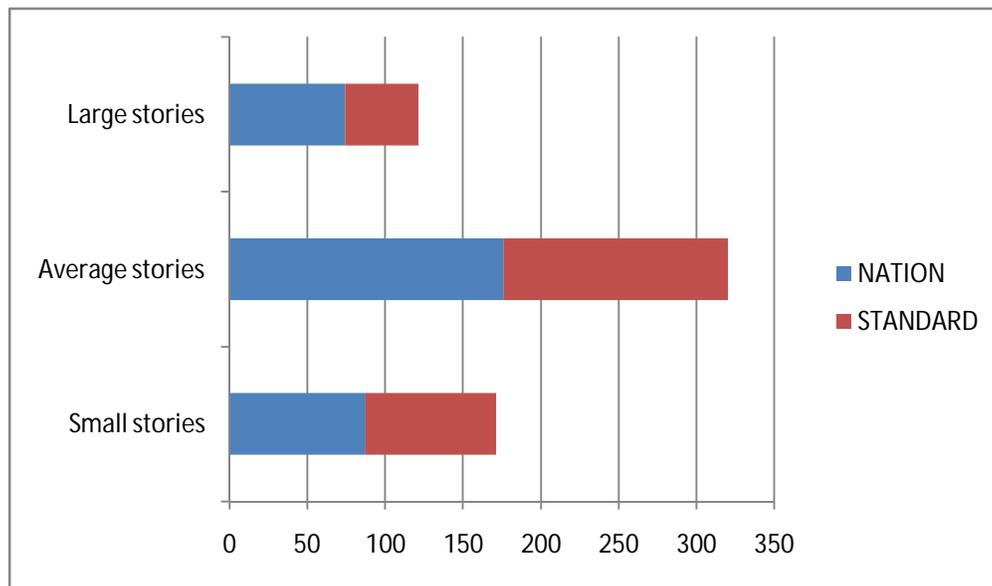
**Story size**

When a story is viewed to be prominent, it is allocated more space in a newspaper. The size of a story reflects the editorial viewpoint of the newspaper on its prominence. The story size was determined by calculating the number of words of the stories.

**Table 11: Size of articles (words) on TIs by the Nation and Standard Newspapers**

VARIABLE	NATION	STANDARD
Small (1-100 words)	87	84
Average(100-400 words)	176	144
Large(400 & above)	74	47

**Figure 11: Size of articles (words) on TIs by the Nation and Standard Newspapers**



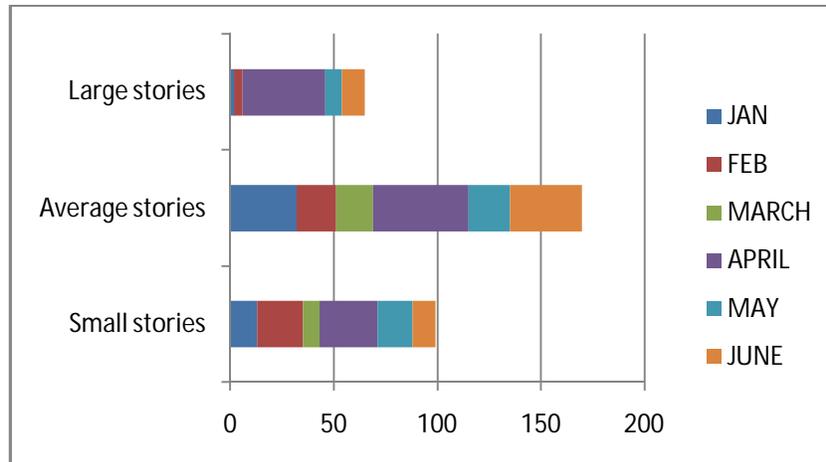
From the table above, it is evident that most stories were between 100 to 400 words. The Nation Newspaper had 87 small stories, 176 average stories and 74 large stories. On the other hand, the Standard Newspaper had 84 small stories, 144 average stories and 47 large stories.

In order to get deeper insight on the space located, the tables below expound more on this;

**Table 12: Size of articles (words) on TIs by the Nation Newspaper**

VARIABLE	JAN 2015	FEB 2015	MARCH 2015	APRIL 2015	MAY 2015	JUNE 2015
Small (1-100 words)	13	22	8	28	17	11
Average (100-400 words)	32	19	18	46	20	35
Large (400 & above)	2	4	0	40	8	11

**Figure 12: Size of articles (words) on TIs by the *Nation* Newspaper**



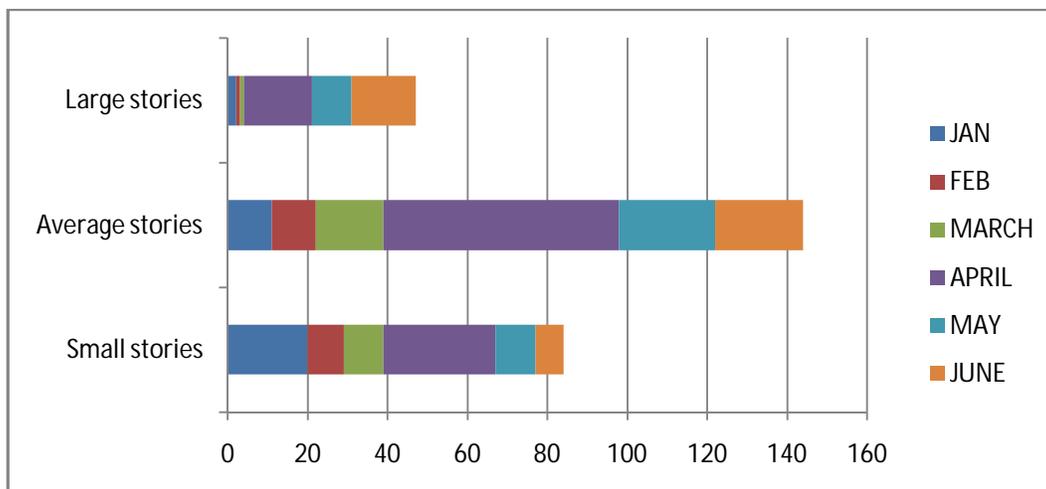
From table 11 and figure 11, it is clear that articles with average words of 100-400 were the most commonly published. With April as the month with the most coverage on terror attacks, the highest number of stories was average in size. According to table 1, the frequency of the articles published during this period was at 43%. This reveals that the *Nation* newspaper ordinarily publishes most of its stories below 400 words.

**Table 13: Size of articles (words) on TIs by the *Standard* Newspaper**

i. Story size (in words)

VARIABLE	JAN 2015	FEB 2015	MARCH 2015	APRIL 2015	MAY 2015	JUNE 2015
Small (1-100 words)	20	9	10	28	10	7
Average (100-400 words)	11	11	17	59	24	22
Large (400 & above)	2	1	1	17	10	16

**Figure 13: Size of articles (words) on TIs by the *Standard* Newspaper**



The *Standard* covered articles on terrorism as briefs-below 100 words and only seemed to increase the word count when a terror attack happened. In the month of June the story spaces tended to increase. This is the period when more feature stories were drafted as supported by figure 2.

**Photographs in the media on terrorism in Kenya**

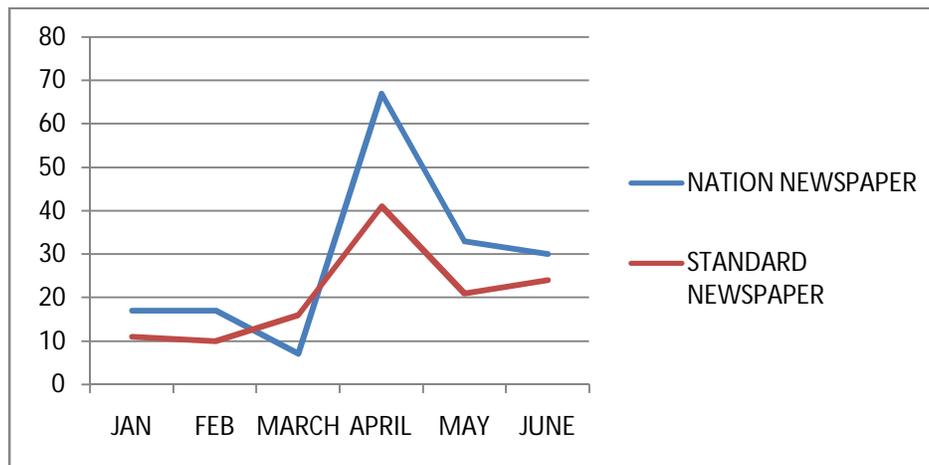
According to Lester (2003), photography is the use of visual images which serve as powerful form of communication as they stimulate both intellectual and emotional responses. Further, Terry Barrett (2006) asserts that photographic images can exert a positioning power on the viewer’s imagination. He insists that even without words, a well constructed photograph can create a creative and logical storytelling that grabs the viewer attention. Most of the photos were used in the month of April following the terror attack. They were on the bloody attack, the building where the attacks happened, the victims of the attack and their relatives as well as the witnesses of the attack.

Photographs used along stories were used mainly to prove authenticity of the story. They supported the story by proving that the event actually occurred and also gave the public the faces of the victims of the attack. In this paper, photographs were analyzed into two main categories; those that accompanied stories, on terrorism in Kenya and stand alone photographs that did not have stories but were merely captioned.

**Table 14: Articles alongside photo on TIs by the Nation and Standard Newspaper**

VARIABLE	NATION	PERCENTAGE	STANDARD	PERCENTAGE
Jan 2015	17	10%	11	9%
Feb 2015	17	10%	10	6%
March 2015	7	4%	16	13%
April 2015	67	39%	41	33%
May 2015	33	19%	21	12%
June 2015	30	18%	24	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Figure 14: Articles alongside photo on TIs by the Nation and Standard Newspaper**

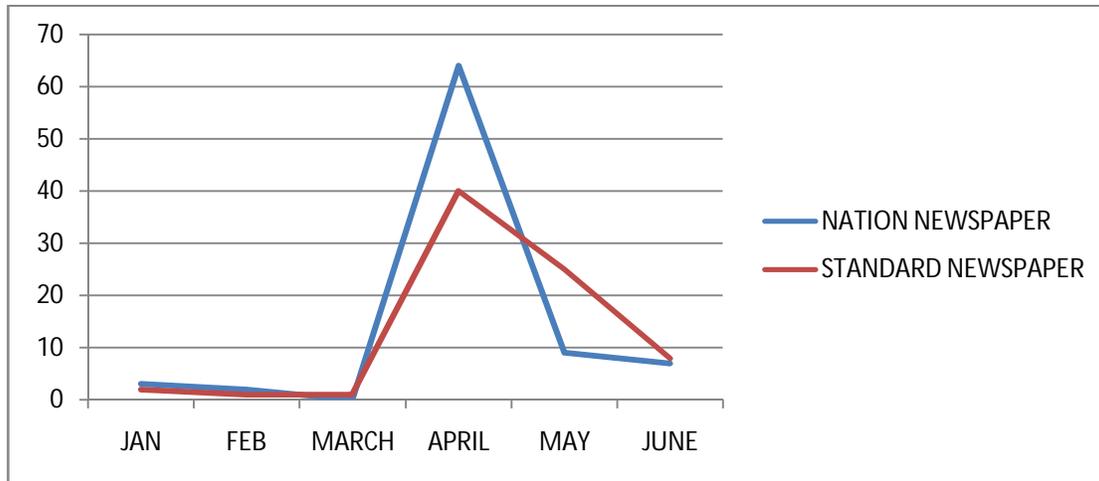


The Nation Newspaper used more photographs compared to the Standard newspaper. This can be seen as the Nation Newspaper used 171 photos, to support their stories, 58% of the total images used, in comparison to Standard Newspaper’s 123 photos, which stood at 42%. The months of April, May and June when terror attacks were rife, more images were used alongside stories. The Nation used 39% of pictures alongside stories in the month of April while the Standard used 33% of pictures in the same month.

**Table 15: Stand alone photo on TIs by the Nation and Standard Newspaper**

VARIABLE	NATION	STANDARD
Jan 2015	3	2
Feb 2015	2	1
March 2015	0	1
April 2015	64	40
May 2015	9	25
June 2015	7	8

**Figure 15: Stand alone photo on TIs by the Nation and Standard Newspaper**



The figure above reveals that in the months that terror attacks were not occurring, pictures were not used. Many scholars argue that powerful images of war can sway public opinion or push for end of operation. The periods when images were used, the audience is seen to have reacted more by sending letters to the editors and editor published more opinion commentary. The month of April like in all other cases saw the increased use of stand-alone photos with the Nation Newspaper using 64 images while the Standard used 40 images. The media should have primed the issue of terrorism more by using past images of the attack to make the issue of terrorism more salient. This would have revoked the reader’s emotions and kept the topic in the public domain longer.

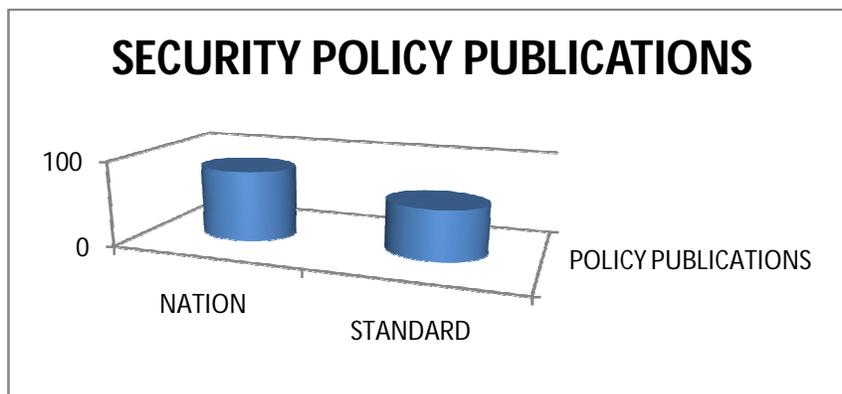
**Security policies enacted to curb terrorism in Kenya**

Herein, the term policy is refers to a course or principal of action proposed or adopted by the Government to reach its goal, in this case to combat terrorism.

**Table 16: Articles on security policies by the Standard and Nation Newspapers**

VARIABLE	NATION	STANDARD	Total
SECURITY POLICY	83	58	141
Percentage	59%	41%	100

**Figure 16: Articles on security policies by the Standard and Nation Newspapers**



By looking at figure 16, it is clear that the Nation published more stories on security policies to counter terrorism at 59% in contrast to Standard’s 41%. Among the policies put across were the ‘nyumba kumi initiative’ that urged Kenyans to be keen on knowing their neighbors and report to the police any suspicious activity they found. The government went ahead to begin building a 700 kilometer wall along the Kenya-Somali border. The Kenyan government went ahead to deploy an anti-terror Police Unit in Northern Kenya, an area prone to attacks by the Al-Shabaab. The Kenyan government in the same period increased its budgetary allocations to help equip the security agencies in fighting the war on terrorism.

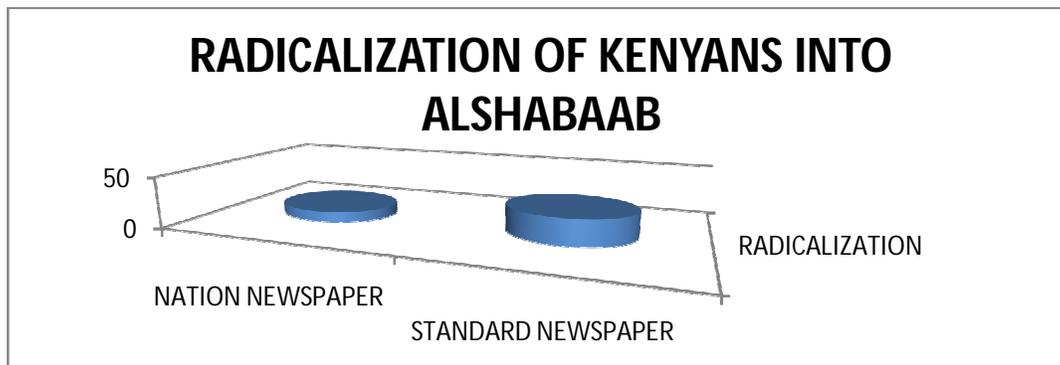
**Radicalization of Kenyans into participating in terrorism**

The paper looked at the issue which became salient particularly when one of the perpetrators of the April 2015 Garissa University attack was reported to be a University of Nairobi law student who had joined Alshabab.

**Table 17: Articles on radicalization into terrorism by The Standard and Nation Newspapers**

VARIABLE	NATION	STANDARD	TOTAL
Radicalization of Kenyans into terrorism	10	25	35
Total	29%	71%	100%

**Figure 17: Articles on radicalization into terrorism by the Standard and Nation Newspapers**



The Standard gave more coverage to this issue at 79% while the Nation trailed at 21%. The coverage of these stories was further heightened when the government decided to shut down the Dadaab refugee camp where approximately 350,000 Somali refugees were living.

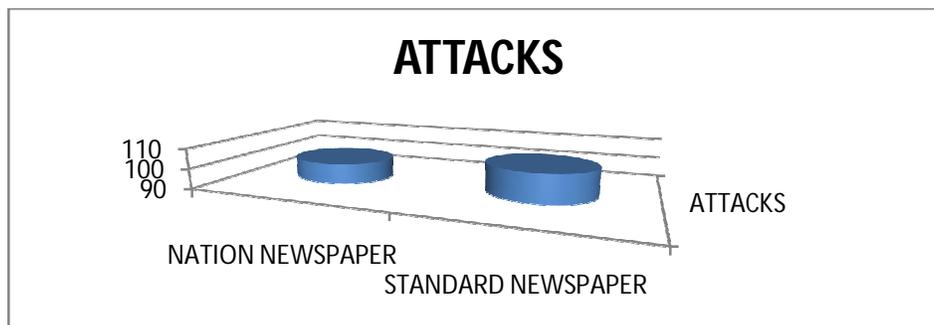
**Terror attacks in Kenya**

Maogoto J, (2005) adds into the topic of terrorism by noting that terrorist attacks are not the actual targets of the attackers, but rather serve as message generators. In this case, our paper found that the culprits of the terror attacks were used to send a message to the Government of Kenya.

**Table 18: Articles on terror attacks by The Standard and Nation Newspapers**

VARIABLE	NATION	STANDARD	Total
Attacks	100	104	204
Percentage	49%	51%	100%

**Figure 18: Articles on terror attacks by The Standard and Nation Newspapers**



The Standard Newspaper was apt in its reporting capturing all terror attacks. The difference between the two newspapers is not as significant with the *Standard* at 51% and the *Nation* at 49%

## **Findings**

First, the paper established that terrorism is a salient issue in Kenya. This is evident with the 1142 stories published in the two newspapers over the 6 months period. The Daily Nation paid more attention to issues on terrorism in Kenya with 592 stories which translate to 52% as compared to The Standard's 48 % during the same time.

A notable trend was that in months where the country did not experience a terror attack, the media reported very few issues on terrorism. In the months of January and February 2015 for example, both newspapers gave the issue of terrorism the least coverage. In the month of February and March 2016, only 7% and 8% respectively of the total news coverage by the Standard Newspaper was on terrorism issues. In the same two months, The Nation Newspaper gave coverage to issues on terrorism 10% and 6% for the month of February and March respectively.

According to Hastie & Park (1986), the constant priming of particular issues by the media leads to people creating judgments and attitudes to what they think is more salient than the other. In this case, had the media persisted in covering terrorism issues even when there was no particular terror attacks, the policies formulated to combat terrorism would have been well thought out and implemented earlier. For instance, the government would have considered increasing the number of Anti- Terror Police on the border of Somali earlier and maybe the April attack would have been combated or the number of victims who died, reduced.

Secondly, the most dominant stories on terrorism were news. This is revealed as in Figure 3 where 75% of Nation Coverage was news whilst 66% of coverage in The Standard Newspaper was also news. News are stories that beg to answer the questions; Why, where, when, who, what and how. Such stories are direct reports that do not probe further on an issue. The space allocated to stories is usually average in size meaning from 100 to 400 words.

This is supported as seen on figure 11 that shows that average stories were the highest in number in both newspapers in covering terrorism issues in Kenya. The media's aim is not only to disseminate information. The media, dubbed as the Fourth estate is also tasked with the role of acting as a watchdog, being the voice of the voiceless and creating a platform for public discourse. The media failed to do this in a large scale. The media downplayed the importance of feature stories. The Nation only had a paltry 4% of feature stories while the Standard had 14% of feature stories. The feature stories on issues of terrorism were soft news, detailing the impact of terrorism on a social perspective. For instance, The Standard Newspaper followed up the victims of the terror attack and told the stories of the relatives of the terror attack victims. This was only one way to look at it. More in-depth coverage and attention was necessary in aspects of how terrorism had affected the economy of Garissa County and interpretation of what the attack revealed about Kenya's ability to combat terrorism. Follow up stories are crucial as they keep the story alive.

This kind of reporting creates concern as it shows the media only interested in reporting and not analysing the issues on terrorism. The low numbers of letters to the editors, opinions, commentaries and editorial pieces reveal a shortcoming of the media of not adequately covering the issues of terrorism in Kenya to evoke more reaction from the public. The media placement of news items was determined by the magnitude of a terror attack in Kenya.

In the months that terrorism incidents did not occur, the media did not place stories on terrorism on the first page. This can be seen on table 8 where the months of January, February and March did not have a single splash in The Standard newspapers.. The media was leaning on giving more coverage to incidences which had more impact. The Garissa University attack received overwhelming coverage as it resulted to the death of 148 while the terror attack at Yumbois in June 2015 did not receive the same coverage despite Al-shabaab claiming that 20 people had died as a result of the attack. The media did not probe further to find out if the claims by Al-shabaab were true and went with the figures the Government gave indicating that only one police officer had been injured in the terror explosion.

When a terror attack occurred, the media is seen using the page leads to disseminate the information. However, what the media should have utilised most is the subsequent stories following the attacks when issues of policy such as the 'nyumba kumi initiative', the closing down of the Dadaab refugee camp and deployment of more security officers to combat terrorism. A headline such as, 'Is the Government waiting for another terror attack to enact security policies?' would have created reactions from both the Government and public leading to more dialogue of terrorism in Kenya in search of solutions on the menace.

A gaping hole was revealed in the coverage of terrorism issues in Kenya. There was lack of experts on issues of terrorism in Kenya. For instance the Standard and Nation constantly used the opinion of experts on security issues who were foreigners or locals working outside Kenya. The media also used politicians as authorities in terrorism. For instance, the two newspaper gave space to politicians who were pushing for the Kenyan Government to exit Somali and also who were calling for press conferences to talk on building the 700km wall to bar Somali's from getting into Kenya . The media did not counter-balance facts of what this would mean to Kenyans by pointing out cases of other countries such as Israel who had done the same.

The paper also found out that only a few articles on terrorism contained detailed knowledge on enactment of various policies in Kenya.

Based on the findings of this paper, it can be argued that print media in Kenya still has a generally low and temporary coverage of terrorism issues on print media. It is crucial that the media increases coverage on this subject to increase awareness, change old perceptions and lead to more preparedness in handling this issue.

### **Conclusion**

The study reveals that there is an urgent need for different stakeholders such as institutions of higher learning to train news reporters and editors on issues of terrorism. This will help them on formulating other story angles that can enhance reporting on terrorism issues. Story placements on issues of terrorism were tucked inside the newspaper pages. The media accorded stories on terrorism in Kenya splash pages mostly when a terror attack happened thus making the media reactive. During months when terror attacks did not occur, the media only followed up with news articles on policies being put in place by the Kenyan Government and on what prominent individuals such as Kenya's politicians were saying on the topic.

Photographs are very crucial in creating a vivid memory in the mind of a reader; in the months that photographs were used, the public reacted by sending in their opinions and airing their views via letter to editor and commentaries. As much as the media used images, they should be careful on not using grotesque images that might create more shock factor to the public. The paper also found out that the Government was only forced to come up with policies to combat terrorism when an incident of a high magnitude occurred. The Kenya government should not wait for this to happen but should be steps ahead by ensuring they tackle the rife issues of radicalisation and educate the masses on how to counter terrorism.

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