

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ENQUIRY ON JOURNALISTIC EXPERIENCES
AND STRUCTURAL INFLUENCES IN THE COVERAGE OF TERRORISM IN
KENYA

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APPROVAL

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AND STRUCTURAL INFLUENCES IN THE COVERAGE OF TERRORISM IN
KENYA

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DECLARATION

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ENQUIRY ON JOURNALISTIC EXPERIENCES
AND STRUCTURAL INFLUENCES IN THE COVERAGE OF TERRORISM IN
KENYA

I declare that this dissertation is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college or university for academic credit.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPROVAL	ii
DECLARATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	viii
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	xii
ABSTRACT.....	xiv
DEDICATION.....	xv
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background to the Study	4
1.3 Statement of the Problem	13
1.4 Purpose of the Study	15
1.5 Objectives of the Study	16
1.6 Research Questions	16
1.7 Justification for the Study	17
1.8 Significance of the Study	18
1.9 Scope of the Study	22
1.10 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study	23
1.11 Definition of Terms.....	23
1.12 Summary	25
CHAPTER TWO	26
LITERATURE REVIEW	26
2.1 Introduction	26
2.2 Theoretical Framework	27
2.3 General Literature Review	47
2.4 Empirical Literature Review	68
2.5 Conceptual Framework	94
2.6 Summary	96
CHAPTER THREE	97
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	97
3.1 Introduction	97
3.2 Philosophical Foundations Underpinning Current Research	98
3.3 The Phenomenological Approach	100
3.4 Sampling Framework	101
3.5 Data Collection Instruments.....	103
3.6 Research Procedures	109
3.7 Pilot Study.....	112
3.8 Data Analysis Plan	112
3.9 Tests of Validity and Reliability	116
3.10 Ethical Considerations	122
3.11 Summary	123

CHAPTER FOUR.....	124
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION	124
4.1 Introduction	124
4.2 Analysis and Interpretation	125
4.3 Summary of Key findings	183
4.4 Summary	185
CHAPTER FIVE	186
DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	186
5.1 Introduction	186
5.2 Discussions of Key Findings.....	186
5.3 Conclusion	232
5.4: Limitations of the Study.....	232
5.5 Recommendations	234
5.6 Recommendations for Further Research.....	238
REFERENCES	240
APPENDICES	264
Appendix A: Interview guide.....	264
Appendix B: Consent Form for Interviewees	266
Appendix C: Document Analysis Guide.....	269
Appendix E: Ethical Clearance	270
Appendix F: Research Permit	271
Appendix G: Researcher’s Curriculum Vitae	272
Appendix H: Plagiarism Report.....	279

LIST OF TABLES

Table 5.1: Explanatory Powers of Hierarchy of Influences 231

LIST OF FIGURES

<i>Figure 1.1: A Timeline of Some of the Notable Terror Attacks in Kenya.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Figure 2.1: The “Hierarchy-of-Influences” Model</i>	<i>47</i>
<i>Figure 2.2: Conceptual Framework</i>	<i>95</i>
<i>Figure 4.1: People Who Died during the Westgate Mall Attack in September 2013</i>	<i>141</i>
<i>Figure 4.2: Some Kenyan Journalists Embedded with KDF in Somalia.....</i>	<i>142</i>

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AP	Administration Police
AP	Associated Press
ATPU	Anti-Terrorism Police Unit
BAKE	Bloggers Association of Kenya
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CAK	Communications Authority of Kenya
CID	Criminal Investigations Department
DCI	Directorate of Criminal Investigations
KDF	Kenya Defence Forces
DMI	Directorate of Military Intelligence
GSU	General Service Unit
IPOA	Independent Policing Oversight Authority
NCIC	National Cohesion and Integration Commission
NIS	National Intelligence Service
NSIS	National Security Intelligence Service
NPS	National Police Service
NPSC	National Police Service Commission
PDF	Portable Document Format
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
RECCE	Reconnaissance Company of GSU
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and Libya (a reformation of ISIS)
NMG	Nation Media Group
RMS	Royal Media Services

SG

Standard Group

ABSTRACT

Since 2011, the impact and frequency of terrorism in Kenya have soared consistently. Consequently, terrorism reporting is today a major recurring news item in various media outlets. This research employed a phenomenological inquiry based on 28 in-depth interviews with journalists who have covered terrorism in Kenya between 2011 and 2019. Specifically, it first explored the lived experiences of journalists involved in this coverage and, secondly, examined the structures that influence their work when reporting on this beat. Third, it investigated ways in which structures influence the freedoms of journalists who have reported on terrorism. Last, the study explored the implications that the structural influences have on the journalistic freedoms of those covering the news topic. Within the context of lived experiences, findings indicate three major themes: fear of surveillance, the safety of journalists at risk, and nationalistic reportage. The fear of surveillance is characterized by worries about surveillance by state security agents and terrorists, while the safety of journalists at risk comprises psychological and physical safety. Nationalistic coverage is highly associated with Kenya-born reporters – an outright biased in favor of their nation. Legal and policy and organization structures influence those covering terrorism. The ways in which the structures influence journalistic freedoms comprise two themes: constraints in accessing information, resulting in journalists exploring alternative avenues for news; and the violation of tenets of professional journalism, such as impartiality, objectivity, and journalistic ethics. Under the fourth line of investigation, journalistic autonomy is the single major implication related to the coverage of terrorism, featuring low journalistic independence, self-censorship, and biased reporting.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to all the journalists across the world that risk it all when reporting about terrorism and related events.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Terrorism is a global threat that has widespread material and affective impact. Extant literature has shown how it affects people directly or indirectly and at almost all levels –psychological, physical, social, cultural, economic, or political facets of their life (Fremont, Pataki, & Beresin, 2005; Nacos & Bloch-Elkon, 2011; Schmid, 2011; Spencer, 2012a; Zelizer & Allan, 2011).

In 2019 alone, terrorists killed 16,000 people, with 103 countries recording at least one terror attack (START, 2021). The most affected countries included Afghanistan, Iraq, Nigeria, and Syria (START, 2021). The economic impact of terrorism on the global economy in 2019 is estimated at a loss of \$33 billion (START, 2021). Although terrorism in Kenya is a relatively new phenomenon, the country is now ranked number 21 globally among those worst affected by the phenomenon (START, 2021).

Prior to 2011, there were only four terror events recorded in Kenya: the attempts to shoot down an Israeli plane touching down in Nairobi from Entebbe, Uganda in 1976; the 1980 bombing at the Norfolk Hotel; the 1998 bombing of the US embassy in Nairobi and the 2002 bombing of the Kikambala Hotel in Mombasa (Lind, Mutahi, & Oosterom, 2017; Mogire & Mkutu Agade, 2011; START, 2021). These attacks were rather isolated, and neither specifically targeted the Kenyan population but the international citizens who were either living in the country or on transit through Kenya.

The frequency of attacks, however, spiked dramatically in scale and impact, with the violence intensifying after the entry of the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) into

Somalia on October 25, 2011 (Kimari & Ramadhan, 2017). The forces later formed part of the African Union Mission in Somalia (Amisom) to fight Al-Shabaab insurgents. Three years after this move, Wafula (2014) reported at least 100 terror events between 2011 and 2014 on the Kenyan soil in retaliatory attacks by the Al-Shabaab. Figure 1.1 shows a timeline of some of the notable terror attacks in Kenya: compiled by the author from various media reports on terrorism cited in this study.



Figure 1.1: A Timeline of Some of the Notable Terror Attacks in Kenya

Source: Author (2021)

According to Kimari and Ramadhan (2017), reports of acts of terrorism in Kenya appeared consistently in the country's media, spiking between 2013 and 2015, but abating thereafter. In 2018, there were no cases of terrorism attacks reported in Kenya, but on January 15, 2019, an attack took place at an upmarket hotel – DusitD2 - in the capital city's Westlands area, leaving 21 dead (AFP & Oruko, 2019). Another attack occurred in January 2020, when the Al-Shabaab hit a naval base in Manda-Magogoni in Lamu County, temporarily disrupting business at the Manda Air Strip (Kazungu, 2020).

Hundreds of Kenyans (civilians and military personnel) have lost their lives and thousands have been affected in different ways during these attacks and combats with the insurgents, both inside the country and in Somalia, where the Kenyan military has pitched camp since 2011. Among the worst of the attacks was at the Westgate Mall in 2013, where 67 people were killed (AFP & Barasa, 2013), and the Mpeketoni attack in

2014, where 60 people died (AFP, 2014). At the Garissa University College, 147 students were killed in 2015 (Mutambo & Hajir, 2015); and the terrorist groups killed unknown numbers of KDF soldiers at El Adde in Somalia, after the insurgents overran their camp (Mukinda, 2016). Up until today, the government of Kenya has not yet released the official number of soldiers killed in the El Adde attack and during the entire stay of Kenyan troops in Somalia.

As a result of these terror occurrences, Kenya has adopted a raft of counter-terror measures: the concern for the safety of its citizens has become a priority for both the government and private institutions in the country. The government started security initiatives aimed at preventing and stopping of terrorism activities. These include *Linda Nchi* (Protect the country), *Usalama Watch*, and *Nyumba Kumi*. *Nyumba Kumi* is a community policing initiative 'Ten Households', requesting citizens to know their neighbours, especially in the capital Nairobi and other urban areas (Glück, 2017; Kioko, 2017).

Linda Nchi aims to secure Kenyan citizens and prevent damage to property and businesses, calling for KDF to join the Amisom troops in fighting Al-Shabaab in Somalia: that call was made by the government on October 16, 2011. The country's budgetary allocation to the military was also substantially increased to \$1.1 billion in 2019, from \$600 million in 2012 (Olingo, 2019). Internally, the presence of government and private security officers and security checks in shopping malls, churches, mosques, schools, universities, hotels, airports, and public places, among others, became the norm.

During the period under study, the Kenyan government crafted counter-terrorism laws and regulations that effectively led to the policing of journalists by the internal security organs and KDF. As a result, the journalists become less critical of the

war against terrorism for fear of reprisals. The clauses that have had severe consequences on the capabilities of journalists between 2011 and 2019 are contained in the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2012. The counterterrorism laws became a subject of litigation, and the Kenyan Parliamentary proceeding in 2014 turned chaotic during the discussion of the laws in December 2014 (Kisang, 2014). In reflection during this study, journalists who were embedded with the military in Somalia noted that the laws and regulations ended up valourising the work of the military (Mukinda, 2017; Mutiga, 2016; Ngirachu, 2011).

For the journalists, the provisions of some of the laws were a deterrent to critical reporting on terrorism. For instance, some clauses in Prevention of Terrorism Act 2012 state that a person who publishes or utters a statement that is likely to be understood as directly or indirectly encouraging or inducing another person to commit or prepare to commit an act of terrorism, commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 14 years (National Council for Law Reporting, 2012). A statement is likely to be understood as encouraging or inducing another person to commit or prepare to commit an act of terrorism, if the circumstances and manner of the publications are such that it could reasonably be inferred that it was so intended; or the intention is apparent from the contents of the statement. The law observed that it is irrelevant whether any person is in fact encouraged or induced to commit or prepare to commit an act of terrorism.

1.2 Background to the Study

1.2.1 Media Ecology in Kenya

Albeit glaring news and information inequalities, the media in Kenya is arguably the most vibrant (robust) in the greater East African region, expanding its reach, size, and ownership in neighboring countries of Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and

Southern Sudan (Cheeseman, Lynch, & Willis, 2014; Ireri, 2015; Ismail & Deane, 2008; Media Council of Kenya, 2020; Muindi, 2018; Mwita, 2021). It is characterized by relatively high media freedom, anchored in article 34 of the bill of rights of the country's constitution that was promulgated in August 2010 (Freedom House, 2019; National Council for Law Reporting, 2010; Reporters Without Borders, 2020). Prior to 2010, media freedom was not included in the Constitution of Kenya. Practically, various laws, regulations, and media industry codes of practice discussed in this dissertation enforce the Constitutional guarantees of media freedom as articulated in articles 33, 34, and 35 of the bill of rights.

In mapping the media in Kenya, there are seven active national daily newspapers, four weeklies, several monthly magazines, 100 television stations and 173 radio stations - but there are 365 radio and 108 television frequencies registered by the Communications Authority of Kenya (CAK) in 2020 (CAK, 2020). The national switch from analogue to broadcast digital media in 2012 promoted a robust growth in broadcast media, but still, there are glaring inequalities in news and information across the country due to factors such as media ownership and enabling infrastructure such as electricity or Internet connectivity (Owilla, Chege, Awiti, & Orwa, 2020). Nairobi County is the central hub for news and information in Kenya, with almost all media houses located at the capital city. Counties outside the city, especially the far-flung ones, operate as news and information deserts (Owilla et al., 2020).

There are three local news agencies - the Kenya News Agency, Content House and the African Women and Child Features Services - that supply local media houses (Media Council of Kenya, 2019; Reboot, 2018). Local media houses have subscribed to international news agencies such as AFP, Reuters, AP, CNN, and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). In fact, some radio stations have arrangements with

the BBC to broadcast the corporation's programmes. These international media houses, including Al Jazeera, have their regional bureaus in Nairobi. In terms of ownership, Kenya's media has a high level of concentration, with only five prominent media houses sustaining interests across print, TV, radio, and digital platforms. The main media houses are the Nation Media Group (NMG), the Standard Media Group (SMG), Radio Africa Group, MediaMax, and Royal Media Services (RMS). There is a close link between politicians and media ownership in Kenya, with key political figures holding interests in some main media houses directly or by proxies (Nyanjom, 2012) and that "... media owners are widely believed to influence content, reporting style and personalities at the media houses" (Media Council of Kenya, 2012, p. 10). There is also a high level of commercialisation of media in the country as the owners see their outlets as businesses: "driven by commercial interests, many media owners disregard the traditional public interest remit of journalism and define journalism primarily as a profit-driven economic activity" (Media Council of Kenya, 2014, p. 10).

According to the Media Council of Kenya (2019), there are 3,000 registered journalists in Kenya, although this number includes other media workers as the advertising staff and technical crew in the broadcasting wing. Several studies have looked into the professional outlook and training of Kenyan journalists (Media Council of Kenya, 2014; Ileri, 2015, 2017). For instance, findings of a study into the training and welfare of Kenyan journalists by the Media Council of Kenya (2014) portrayed a profession marked by "huge discrepancies between top-earning journalists and the rest, and appalling working condition for some of the journalists" (pp. 10-11). Despite these discrepancies, Ileri (2015, 2017) found that Kenyan journalists regarded their role of providing information to the citizens as the most important.

At the same time, while the opportunities for training of journalists in the

country are many, the quality of courses remains questionable, and the professional conduct of the media practitioners is in doubt (Ileri, 2015, 2017; Media Council of Kenya, 2014, 2016). For instance, the Media Council of Kenya (2014) established a galloping trend where media houses recruit “celebrities” and “comedians” to run broadcast programmes in their stations, much to the harm of professionalism as well as the public-interest-driven journalism.

Kenyan media has embraced emerging forms of technology (Mathenge, 2013; Muindi, 2018; Nyabola, 2018; Wamuyu, 2021; Wamuyu, Ileri, & Mulwo, 2020). All the major media houses have established websites and presence in social media services as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram: “... journalists have taken to the social media like duck to water; such networks enable them to interact and debate topical issues with wider audiences and to more efficiently collate the views of the public than ever before. There is also vibrant online citizen journalism” (Media Council of Kenya, 2012, p. 9). The report found radio to be the most widely used channel, with 90% penetration rate, followed by TV at 39% and newspapers at 23% but recent findings by the Internews Kenya indicate that social media platforms have knocked out radio as the most widely used channel in Kenya (Mwita, 2021)

Kenya is one of the African countries with a huge young population (under 35 years) and staggering levels of mobile and Internet penetration. As of December 2020, the country’s mobile phone penetration rate stood at 94%. The CAK (2020) recorded 42.8 million active mobile phone subscribers at the close of that year.

According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2016), the country’s population is estimated at 48 million, whereby almost three-quarters of the population was below 30 years of age, and the vast majority have access to the Internet. CAK (2020) indicated a penetration rate of nearly 100%. CAK attributed this growth of the

Internet to the rising number of Kenyans, especially the youth, who have Internet-enabled phones at their disposal. This has been corroborated by independent audits such as *The State of the Internet Report in Kenya*, published in 2020 by the Bloggers Association of Kenya (BAKE), which indicated that there are 6.1 million Kenyans who use Facebook and 2.2 million Twitter (BAKE, 2019). At least 3 million others use Instagram; 1.5 million on LinkedIn and 350,000 are on Google+. WhatsApp is estimated to have 10 million users in Kenya. Other studies (Wamuyu et al. 2019; Wamuyu, 2021) have validated these findings indicating that there have been no major deviations from these statistics in recent times.

This change in the media landscape has implications on how journalists access, produce, and publish news. For instance, Muindi (2018) observed that the Kenya-based journalists appropriate social media tools in their day-to-day sourcing of information, processing and publishing levels. In that study, he appreciates that the social media tools have posed a challenge for the journalists who have to balance speed and credibility, while appropriating those tools.

We are, therefore, witnessing the development of new communicative ecologies and assemblages that not only redefine the domain of news production, but also news consumption. Mobile news consumption is thus fast eclipsing reading the physical newspapers, listening to the radio and watching television in Africa. As a news consumption tool, the mobile phone is an inherently complex technology whose appropriation is shaped and constrained by the context in which news and information are generated and circulated. This has led to growth of alternate media away from the mainstream platforms that are powered by the digital technologies.

The concept of alternative media is growing by the day, and the rising numbers of users of Internet technologies for alternative news is gaining ground. "... Blogs are

seen by many as authentic means to get news and opinions that mainstream media would normally shy away from. This could be described as anti-traditional media sentiment and blogs, among other alternate platforms are increasingly filling up the gap” (BAKE, 2018, p. 4). These platforms are seen as the alternate media in Kenya. Even the mainstream media use them to first air their news or rely on the same to gather information (Muindi, 2018; Mutie, 2014). The following section of the background now looks at the role and place of journalists when reporting terrorism.

1.2.2 Reporting Terrorism

The media is one of those institutions that have been affected by terrorism and counter-terrorism strategies by governments in different parts of the world. Studies demonstrate that freedom of the media is impacted negatively as a result of terrorism and the various counter-terrorism strategies by governments (Moeller, 2009; Silke, 2014; Zelizer & Allan, 2011).

On the one hand, terrorists use the media as a tool to amplify the impact of their warfare. Masterminds such as Osama bin Laden have been cited, explaining the vital role of the mass media in executing violence (Schmid, 2011). Media and terrorism scholars such as Dumain (2005), Schmid (2011), and Spencer (2012a) observed that the reporting of terrorism and terrorists’ activities can, and in fact does, intensify the impact of the crime. On the other hand, the unique position of the media as a critical actor in terrorism, has led governments to become concerned, putting in place several counter-terrorism strategies that directly and indirectly determine how journalists operate when reporting terrorism. These strategies include counter-terrorism laws, policies and regulations on how journalists report news related to terrorism events (Ileri, 2015; Kolodkin, 2017; McNamara, 2009; Pokalova, 2015).

The goal of terrorism is twofold: one, to cause visible disaster, and two, psychological fear and intimidation. Fremont et al. (2005) observed that “terrorist events occur suddenly, without forewarning and frequently result in severe trauma. The threat persists indefinitely” (p. 430). Fremont et al. further contend that the terrorists capitalise on “media coverage, whose powerful visual images create strong emotional responses, including fear, panic, despair, and rage, even in individuals who live far away from the traumatic events” (p. 430). Their study shows that there is significant psychological impact on people exposed to terrorist attacks. The position by Fremont et al. (2005) is further advanced by Zelizer (2004), who argued that in the politics of terrorism, images of terror do more than present to audiences the knowledge of places and people not available through immediate experience. Because of this display of terrorism, the “images shape audience orientation towards the others” (Silverstone as cited in Chouliaraki, 2008, p. 371), and a theatre of terror is displayed through the media that creates them-versus-us setting.

There are varied schools of thought on the role of the media when extremist violence occurs. As observed above, capitalising on media coverage is a strategic decision on the part of the terrorists to intimidate targeted populations - “the others” (Silverstone, 2007). Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher described publicity as “the oxygen of terrorism,” and scholars have argued that terrorism and media tend to feed off each: “the terrorist-media symbiosis argument is popular among decision-makers who must respond to terrorism” (Nacos & Bloch-Elkon, 2011, p. 371). Some even contend that if the media did not cover terrorism, the impact of the violence would be minimal, dealing a blow to terror (Fremont et al., 2005).

In the view of Mrs Thatcher, terrorism would cease once the media censor coverage of these violent events. But some scholars have disagreed with this position,

arguing that the relational modes are too complex, but reveal weaknesses and failings in the manner journalists report terrorism. For instance, Wieviorka (1993) appreciated this complexity and contends that it is “entirely improper to make a scapegoat of them (journalists), or to lay the blame for terrorism at their feet” (p. 43). The argument by Wieviorka’s can be buttressed by the fact that terrorists are today using the Internet and its platforms to spread their messages, bypassing mainstream news channels. Because of the fluid and ubiquitous nature of the Internet and its multifarious platforms, Nacos and Bloch-Elkon (2011) observed that it (the Internet) “allows contemporary terrorists to circumvent media outside their control to post propaganda on their own websites or those of friendly organisations and individuals” (p. 5). In the Kenyan context, for instance, the Al-Shabaab militants have used platforms such as Twitter and YouTube to broadcast their messages.

The notion of bypassing mainstream media by the terrorists introduces a new dimension in the understanding of the context in an era of mass self-communication (Castells, 2008; Gray & Couldry, 2012) and the creation of a new public sphere (Castells, 2008; Habermas, 1960). The modern era is awash with channels of media, away from the traditional television, radio and print platforms. In the new era, Van Dijck (2009, p. 43, 45) has challenged the notion of the audience as being a passive recipient of information passed onto them by journalists, and in fact says the audience are “talking back”, and not only interact with the information and the sender at different levels, they are also acting as producers of information themselves – a privileged position to inform, educate and entertain that rested earlier with the journalists. Singer (2007, pp. 1-2) argued that journalism has now become a “participatory affair” where the audience is now wrestling with the journalist over the control of content enabled by technology, and that the buffer that once existed between the journalists and the

audience has blurred. This is an additional way in which acts of terror can and are amplified and has implications as to how journalists report terrorism.

At the same time, Spencer (2012a) argued that censoring the media from reporting terrorism presents both normative and practical challenges - introducing laws and policies meant to censor the media from reporting terrorism is a counter-terrorism strategy usually met with resistance, especially in a democratic state. He agreed with Nacos and Bloch-Elkon (2011) and asserted that the practicality of completely banning coverage of terror in the media in today's world of technological advancement is a nightmare for authorities. With or without censoring how media covers the violence, it appears that information will still get out.

In regard to the relationship between the media and terrorism, Spencer (2010) viewed it as a communication strategy - a symbiotic relationship between the media and terrorism, akin to "accomplices" or "best friends" ... "terrorists provide the media with emotional, exciting and bloody news, which helps them sell their products" (p. 4). It is these complexities and a rather uneasy relationship between the media and terrorism, as well as the censorship measures by authorities that the current study explores.

Without a question, terrorism affects the rights of citizens, directly and indirectly. Human Rights Watch (2015), however, warned that government responses to acts of terror – counterterrorism – also claw back citizens' rights. For example, the enactment of the Patriot Act in the US, allows the state to listen to private conversations by the citizens. The 9/11 attacks are largely seen as the genesis of a global security regime that has threatened the rights and freedoms of citizens and the capabilities of journalists to report in the public interest (McNamara, 2009; Nash, 2005; Silver, 2008; Skillen, 2004). This follows the enactment of laws and policies by nation states

governing national security and access to government information, and or information of public interest.

Terrorism attacks ruin government's credibility, eroding public confidence (Canel, 2012). The government communicate strategically in order to influence media frames, control the flow of information and protect the authority from criticism, especially in unprecedented terrorism attacks (Marthoz, 2017). "So, preventing media reporting on terrorism altogether is not only normatively problematic... the vast range of new media outlets and channels of communication, via the Internet, make it impossible to stop the reporting of terrorist acts... However, considering the communicative strategy by terrorist groups of spreading fear in the general public, one may be able to at least alleviate this... by officially framing "terrorism" in a particular kind of way" (Spencer, 2012a, p. 212).

Different studies point out that when the national security of a country is under threat, governments tend to overplay their responses by developing restrictive regimes that have severe implications on the rights of citizens, such as the right to information (Dumain, 2005; Zelizer & Allan, 2011). For example, Dumain (2005) observed that in times of war, governments term as official secrets under their security policies, some publicly available information, and such constraints have implications on the citizens and professional journalists working under such regimes. Journalists are forced to toe the official line and internalise the regime rhetoric in the name of national security (Schudson, 2011).

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Since 2011, the impact and frequency of terrorism in Kenya has soared consistently. Consequently, reporting of terrorism is now a main news agenda, and as the Media Council of Kenya (MCK) observes, the Kenyan print and electronic media

“has become implicated in the fight against extremism, radicalisation and terrorism especially when the war against terror often receives hyperbolic and sensationalist media coverage” (Media Council of Kenya, 2014, p. 22; Media Council of Kenya, 2016).

Previous studies into reporting of terrorism in Kenya have focused on the news content (Adhoch, 2014; Emmanuel, Nwafor, & Orji-Egwu, 2017; Ileri, 2018b; Kisang, 2014; Maine, 2011; Mutua, 2013; Nzibo, 2020; Obwogi, 2015; Ogenga, 2012; Omanga & Chepngetich-Omanga, 2013). These studies have been concerned with valence framing; the frequencies of pre-determined variables of the reporting and the space allocated to different actors in the context of terrorism and related events. For instance, Ileri (2018a) found that journalists allocated more space to government officials during the Garissa and Westgate Mall attacks in 2015 and 2013 respectively, while Ogenga (2012) observed a similar trend where the two leading newspapers in Kenya, the *Daily Nation* and the *Standard*, covered KDF favourably. Employing content analysis protocols, Emmanuel et al. (2017) studied the Kenyan media framing of the terrorism where their findings show that the media mainly adopted a policy response frame. They also established a pattern of contagious framing where journalists adopt news frames from the international media through a contagion effect (Epkins, 2011; Norris, Kern, & Just, 2003). As such, the local media are caught up in a trickledown effect as the international media serve as a reference point, from which they draw their frames (Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2008; Entman, 2003).

While these studies are important, what is lacking is a close look at the lived experiences of the journalists who report terrorism and related news events, and how structural conditions bear on their freedoms. Examining the previous studies, there has been a paucity of empirical inquiry on the lived experiences of journalists reporting

terrorism and related events in Kenya. Atton and Mabweazara (2011) have, in fact, also made this observation and pointed out that “contemporary journalism studies in Africa have tended to shy away from studies of the routines and practices of journalism (especially print media) ...” (p. 667).

This epistemic and methodical focus on news content that the journalists produce, effectively put content analysis and framing studies as the primary research agenda in reporting terrorism, marginalizing critical areas of research such as lived experiences and the structural conditions that impact on the agency of the reporters. This study, therefore, focuses on personal and professional lived experiences of Kenya-based journalists covering terror and related topics, drawn from local and international media houses, to plug the gap in knowledge. In summary, as a relatively new phenomenon in the Kenyan journalism practice, there is both epistemic and methodical gap in how the coverage of terrorism and related events influences journalistic freedoms and thus, the goal of the current study is to close the gap by undertaking a phenomenological investigation into the lived experiences of journalists who have reported terrorism and related news events.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

Through a phenomenological strategy, this research investigated how structural influences affected journalistic freedoms in Kenya between 2011 and 2019 in the reportage of terrorism and related events. Structural conditions are inextricably connected to freedoms when exploring human agents’ lived experiences (Sewell, 2010). Four objectives helped to achieve this purpose. First, the research explored the lived experiences of journalists involved in terrorism coverage during the nine-year period. Second, the study examined structures that influence the work of journalists who have reported on the highly contested topic (terrorism). Third, it investigated ways

in which theoretical structures influence the freedoms of journalists who have reported on terrorism. Last, the study explored the implications that the structural influences have on the journalistic freedoms of those covering the news topic.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to offer an in-depth investigation into the influence of reporting terrorism on journalistic freedoms in Kenya. Therefore, the following were the specific objectives within the context of the study purpose:

1. To examine the lived experiences of journalists involved in the coverage of terrorism in Kenya between 2011 and 2019.
2. To investigate the structural influence of reporting terrorism on journalistic freedoms in Kenya within the context of hierarchy of influences theory framework.
3. To explore the ways in which structures influence freedoms of Kenya-based journalists reporting on terrorism and related news events
4. To assess the implications of reporting terrorism on journalistic freedoms in Kenya.

1.6 Research Questions

1. What are the lived experiences of Kenyan-based journalists who are involved in the coverage of terrorism and related events?
2. What structures influence the work of the Kenya-based journalists who report terrorism and related news events?
3. In what ways do structures influence freedoms of Kenya-based journalists reporting on terrorism and related news events?

4. What implications do structural influences have on the freedoms of Kenya-based journalists' reporting of terrorism and related topics?

1.7 Justification for the Study

Doyle (2002) and Fenton (2010) agreed that the role of journalism in society cannot be overstated because it creates a public sphere where citizens, government, and other institutions exchange views. For instance, in politics, Phillips and Witschge (2012) observed that “information is to democracy what oxygen is to fire. Without one, the other cannot survive” (p. 3). This means that by providing information, journalists play an important role in keeping democracy alive. For instance, important decisions made by the people, such as who to elect for public office or what roads to avoid during a natural disaster, are largely mediated by journalists: they set the agenda for discussion by the public (McCombs, 2005) in the way they select stories for publication, and play the watchdog role (Leveson & Leveson, 2012) where they keep institutions and people in public office in check. But besides serving as a forum for education, journalism also plays the role of an entertainer.

To achieve these ends, media freedoms need to be guaranteed. In the the Kenyan context, media freedom is a cornerstone of Kenya's democracy. In fact, the Kenyan Constitution has highlighted media freedom as a human right under its Bill of Rights in Chapter Four (National Council for Law Reporting, 2010). Independence of the media has not only been enshrined within this supreme law, but other statutes such as the Media Council Act 2013 guaranteed journalistic independence. Therefore, this study is justified because it looks at the influences of journalism in the terrorism context and in Kenya, one of the countries that have been affected by terrorism (START, 2020). For journalists to live up to their ideals of independent reporting, it is crucial to understand the influences that affect media freedoms that is a critical enabler for journalists to carry

out their critical roles in society effectively.

The existence of journalistic freedoms in its multiple dimensions as pluralism, independence, and safety, strengthens peace as well as democratic and developmental processes. These social goods depend upon people being free to speak and to be freely informed about public affairs. Press freedom, as such, helps to ensure participation, transparency and accountability in society. This recognition explains the value to a society of having access to a free media, and of the importance of multiple information and communication choices enabled by pluralism. The perspective further highlights the significance of editorial independence from state or private owners, or other external influences, and journalistic accountability to professional ethics that shape the quality of information.

The researcher, therefore, found it justified studying how terrorism has influenced media freedoms in the Kenyan context, where reporting of news around terrorism and related events is a new phenomenon. As such, this study undertook a phenomenological investigation into the lived experiences of journalists who have reported terrorism in order to understand the interplay between structure and media freedom.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The study of influences of media freedoms among journalists reporting terrorism and related events was significant at different levels, including the media industry, the academia as well as policy and governance. As noted in the introduction of this chapter, Kenya is one of the countries that have been hard hit by terrorism in recent times (START, 2021). This study, therefore, would contribute to a growing a body of knowledge at international and local contexts on how terror is impacting on various facets of journalism practice. It is the first study to explore influences on

journalism among the Kenya-based journalists involved in reporting terrorism and terror-related events.

For media industry, including journalists and other media workers, this study would provide insights into understanding the forces that impact on the journalistic freedoms to report on terror events. It could inform ways of improving media performance within this context as the journalists reflect, not just on their personal experiences, but also on professional pressures that come to bear when reporting terrorism and related events. For instance, this study has explored discourse on how journalists can develop critical stories on terrorism and related events without necessarily becoming tools or conduits for propaganda by either the government or terrorist groups. At the same time, preparing journalists to cover terrorism was a major theme discussed in this study including, giving them both human and non-human resources that enable them to write their stories professional while ensuring that their physical and psychological health is sound.

Epistemologically, this study could be critical in informing research discourse on the reporting of terrorism and terror-related activities in Kenya, and in what ways media freedom is affected. It could also add onto the knowledge regarding reporting of terrorism and related events, a global phenomenon that is affecting almost all the countries today (START, 2021). By looking at Kenya, this study brings on board empirical evidence on reporting terrorism in an African context. Previous studies have primarily focused on Western journalists and their reportage of terrorism, especially in the Middle East (Feinstein, Osmann, & Patel, 2018; Horowitz, 2018; Langer, 2012; Petersen & Soundararajan, 2020). Therefore, while the research helped bridge the identified research gaps, it also made an important contribution to the literature on

journalists' coverage of terrorism, in relation to lived experiences, structures constraining the work of reporters, and journalistic freedoms.

Theoretically, it contributes to the frameworks relating to the influences of media freedom, including the hierarchy of influences theory (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014) and concepts of structure, agency, and professional identity of journalists drawn from the structuration meta-theory (Giddens, 1984, 1991). Structure, agency, and professional identity are over-arching concepts that inform the Hierarchy of Influences theory.

For policy makers, the study of how terrorism has impacted media freedoms is an important issue. At the global level, this study is significant in contributing to our understanding of the shaping of media freedoms and policy in the African context. There is limited literature on how journalism policies and media freedoms have been shaped by terrorism. Locally, policy makers, such as government bodies, including MCK and CAK, will find this study useful in developing regulations and protocols that guide reporting of sensitive issues such as terrorism.

Journalism schools and other institutions responsible for the development of media curriculum and training could benefit from this study too. Development of curriculum and training on reporting terrorism, as a new specialisation, should be evidence-based. Therefore, the study offers important evidence in key areas such as physical and psychological safety of journalists reporting terrorism and related events; the structural conditions governing how terrorism is reported and how this reportage limits or sets journalistic freedoms. By examining the lived experiences of those who have reported on terrorism and related events, media houses and their editorial workers will benefit from the lessons learned.

1.8.1 Lived Experiences, Structural Influences, and Journalistic Freedoms

Lived experiences, structural influences and journalistic freedoms are inextricably connected (Bolin, 2016; Giddens, 1991). On the one hand, both lived experiences and journalistic freedoms are affected by the structural influences within which the journalists operates (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014). To demonstrate this linkage, for instance, structures such as laws and policies on terrorism or counterterrorism determine the degree of freedom that journalists would enjoy when reporting in this beat. On the other hand, the lived experience of a journalist who reports on terrorism are best understood when we interrogate the structural conditions. This research explored lived experiences (personal and professional), structural influences and freedoms among journalists reporting terrorism and related events. Lived experience simply means research subject's human experiences, choices, and options and how those factors influence one's perception of knowledge (Boylorn, 2008). Journalism practice (personal and professional lived experiences) is influenced by structures inside and outside the profession (Reese, 2001; Tuchman, 1978; Zelizer, 1993).

Structural influences affect the work of journalists in different ways and at different levels. Reese (2001) and Shoemaker and Reese (1996) have outlined various levels of structures that influence the profession. For instance, the work of journalists is regulated by a set of formal laws that bind society and professional practice. Journalism practice is governed by a set of formal and other unwritten rules that control how information is gathered, processed and disseminated (Reese, 2001; Tuchman, 1978; Zelizer, 1993). These rules can take the form of routines and rituals as well as organisational and cultural protocols that inform how things should be done. Such rules - in their multifarious forms - determine the structural conditions under which journalism is

practised. In this sense, structure in the present research is conceptualised as “an overt or covert system of interrelations between material or symbolic entities, within which human action takes place” (Bolin, 2016, p. 1973).

The structural conditions within which journalists report terror (whether embedded or not) are constantly changing and being renegotiated in response to violence and propaganda. It is these structural conditions that influence freedoms of the journalists when they are reporting within this context. In the present research, the freedoms were synonymous to agency, the ability of an individual to act independently and make free choices (Bandura, 2008). Thus, agency is seen as the independence of journalists to operate within these influences when they on report terrorism and related events.

1.9 Scope of the Study

This is a study of Kenya-based journalists drawn from both local and international media houses, who report on terrorism and related events. It is limited to the period between 2011 and 2019. It interrogated terrorism, specifically, transnational terrorism inspired by the instability in Somalia. Furthermore, this study was interested in, experiences and structural influences when reporting the events of terrorism as they occurred during the period under study, but also, reporting terror-related activities. Terror-related events are those that are related to the violent activities such as the recruitment and radicalisation of sympathisers of terrorists. Other events that fall in this category include the co-opting of journalists in the war against terrorism by security apparatus of the country. This made embedded journalist with the KDF an event of interest to this study. Reporting these events and the discourses around them, such as parliamentary proceeding and security committee presentation on terrorism and counterterrorism, were also within the province of this study.

1.10 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

The researcher was cognisant of a number of methodological challenges inherent in the current design. These challenges have been discussed under the section on trustworthiness in Chapter Three and ways of mitigating them to guarantee quality findings. This study cannot be generalised to an entire population because it is qualitatively (where not all journalists who report on terror and related activities were given equal chance to participate) designed and described and discussed findings of a context-specific scenario. However, insights gleaned from this study on journalistic experiences and structural influences when reporting terrorism in Kenya can be useful in advancing our understanding on how unique news events as this do shape media freedom (Creswell, 2013; Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Saldana, 2011; Silverman, 2011).

1.11 Definition of Terms

Terrorism: According to Golder and Williams (2004), “terrorism is an activity intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, or to any other person not taking an active part in hostilities in a situation of armed conflict” (p. 274).

Terror-related events: These are activities related to the violent event, including counter-attack initiatives such as embedded journalism, recruitment, and radicalisation of sympathisers of terrorists and reporting parliamentary proceedings touching on terrorism.

Counterterrorism: On the other hand, counterterrorism encompasses “practices, tactics, techniques, and strategies that governments, militaries, police departments and corporations adopt in response to terrorist threats, and or act, both real and imputed” (Ndung'u & Shadung, 2017, p. 3). In this study, media freedom was a multi-faceted concept that entails independence of media workers from censorship by the State, its agencies, and other institutions. It was articulated as a construct that entails four main

facets, including safety of journalists, independence of their work, laws and regulation governing their operations and plurality of views in their news stories (Radsch, 2014).

Lived experience: Simply means research subject's human experiences, choices and options and how those factors influence one's perception of knowledge (Boylorn, 2008). Related, agency is the ability of an individual to act independently and make free choices (Bandura, 2008). In this research, agency was seen as the independence of journalists to operate without structural influences when they report terrorism and related events.

Structure: In this study, structure is defined as "an overt or covert system of interrelations between material or symbolic entities within which human action takes place" (Bolin, 2016, p. 1976). In this research, rules, regulations, policies, and laws governing the operations of the media in Kenya were classified as forms of structures. Others include resources, both material and non-material, required to perform an action by agents. These include military resources to report terror and related activities, as well as skills and knowledge to operate within that space.

Professional identity: Refers to a social category that is defined by membership rules and alleged characteristic attributes or expected behaviours (Breit, 2011).

Journalistic freedoms: A multifaceted concept that includes laws and regulation governing the operations of the media; safety and independence of journalists and other media workers; pluralism of ideas and content in their publications (Radsch, 2014). In this research, these freedoms were conceptualised as the foundation of agency of the journalists when they are reporting terrorism and related events.

1.12 Summary

This chapter has introduced the gap in knowledge regarding the influences of media freedom among Kenya-based journalists covering terrorism and related events. The chapter has addressed the background and context of the research, as well as its problem statement, purpose, objectives, questions, significance, justification, limitations and delimitations, and scope. It closes by defining operational terms used in the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter detailed the theoretical framework and literature related to lived experiences and structural influences of journalistic freedoms when reporting terrorism and related events. First, the phenomenological tradition forms the theoretical foundation in this research and is principally concerned with people's lived experiences. Concepts of structuration as a meta-theory were then explored and the hierarchy of influences theory provides a framework for understanding the layers of influence on the journalistic of Kenya-based journalists covering terrorism topics. All these theoretical lenses are interrelated: the concepts of structure, agency and professional identity are appropriated at meta-theoretical level to explore the lived experiences of journalists reporting terror on the one hand, and the freedom of the journalists on the other hand. After a synthesis of both theory and literature, a conceptual framework of the research is then developed.

At the same time, this chapter also reviewed both the general and empirical literature on lived experiences of reporting terrorism and journalistic freedoms. Empirical literature was reviewed in line with the four research questions articulated in Chapter One. General and empirical literature was delineated to meet the overall purpose of the study: to investigate whether terrorism has influenced journalistic freedoms in Kenya through the lived experiences of the journalists reporting terror-related topics between 2011 and 2019. The chapter was organised thematically, guided by Bryman (2012) on approaches to literature review. The research adopted this approach to include studies on: what is already known about journalistic freedoms and

terrorism; concepts and theories relating to journalistic freedoms and terrorism; and, existing controversies and debates around reporting terrorism by journalists in different parts of the world, before narrowing down the focus to Africa and Kenya in particular.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 The Phenomenological Tradition

Theorising mass communication has been described as a “jungle” because of the existence of hundreds of theories explaining communication (Craig, 2016; Craig & Muller, 2007; Littlejohn & Foss, 2010). To create harmony in this chaotic jungle, theories of communication have been grouped into broad clusters or families, commonly known as traditions. There are seven of such broad clusters; cybernetics, rhetorical, semiotics, socio-cultural, socio-psychological, critical and the phenomenological tradition (Craig, 2016; Littlejohn & Foss, 2010).

At the lower level, these traditions are composed of meta-theories. As Griffin, Ledbetter, and Sparks (2012) observed, such meta-theories are broad about other communication theories and encompass assumptions made when developing the particular ones. Baran and Davis (2015) looked at meta-theories as “grand theories” that are “designed to describe and explain all aspects of a given phenomenon” (p. 5), while Ritzer (2007) observed that a meta-theory is a broad perspective that overarches two, or more others. As the concern of this research narrows down to theorising reporting terrorism by journalists, the research is informed by phenomenological tradition at the higher level. At the lower levels, structuration meta-theory becomes relevant in exploring the dialectic of journalistic agency and social structures when reporting terrorism. The influences of terrorism on journalism are finally explored through the lens of the hierarchy of influences theory.

Phenomenological tradition informs the understanding of people's everyday experiences as the epistemological assumption of acquiring knowledge (Apostolescu, 2020; Craig, 2016; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Littlejohn & Foss, 2010). This tradition has a strong philosophical background (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Spiegelberg, 1982) traced to Edmund Husserl, a German mathematician, who has come to be known as the father of phenomenology (Husserl, 2013; Kockelmans, 1994). Notable scholars who have extrapolated the work of Husserl include Martin Heidegger (Capobianco, 2014; Heidegger, 1994, 2010), Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty (Schmidt, 1985; Smyth, 2013). These scholars contend that phenomenology is the study of the lived experiences of individuals and the fact that these experiences are conscious ones (Lavery, 2003; Littlejohn & Foss, 2010; Van Manen, 1990; Weiss, Salamon, & Murphy, 2019). In phenomenological studies, the focus is on the nature and meaning of people's conscious experience: meaning that they are aware and can describe the events and occurrences happening within and around them (Finlay, 2009). In this research, the experience of interest is that of journalists who have reported on terrorism and related news events between 2011 and 2019.

Scholars in communication research use phenomenology, both as a theoretical tradition and methodological approach interchangeably (Lanigan, 1988; Mitchell, 2015). For instance, Creswell (2007) observed that phenomenology, as a theoretical tradition and methodology approach, is concerned with interrogating the lived experiences of a phenomenon or concept among several individuals. Here, the research involves describing experience of participants. Kafle (2011) noted that the methodological approach of phenomenology is a broad term that encompasses both philosophical thought and a variety of research strategies, while Maykut and Morehouse (1994) said that phenomenology has been conceptualised as a philosophy,

a research method and an overarching perspective from which qualitative research is sourced. Yin (2011) argued that phenomenological studies try, as much as possible, to stick to the lived experiences of the participants and researchers describe their findings using the participants' words in verbatim. Similarly, this research applies phenomenology as a tradition and a methodological approach.

Phenomenology includes four levels: description, reduction, essences and intentionality (Ferrarin, Moran, Magri, & Manca, 2019; Lavery, 2003; Merleau-Ponty, 1962). Description is the key aim of phenomenology and entails the capacity of a person to describe a phenomenon. The second level involves reduction, which is the process of suspending or bracketing out a person's experiences in order to fully understand the phenomenon at hand; and essence, which is teasing out the core meaning of an individual's experiences and, intentionality - the consciousness of an individual towards an experience (Behnke et al., 2013; Lavery, 2003; Merleau-Ponty, 1962).

Essence is a concept that has been emphasised on by various scholars of phenomenology (Grbich, 2007; Patton, 1990; Van Manen, 1990). Here, phenomenology involves understanding the essences (qualities or characteristics) of an experience amongst a group of participants (Grbich, 2007). A phenomenological approach is informed by the assumption that "there is an essence or essences to shared experience" (Patton, 1990, p. 70; Zahavi, 2012). The essences of a phenomenon are the core meanings that are mutually understood amongst the participants.

Stewart and Mickunas (1990) brought out some four perspectives in the study of phenomenology. The first is that phenomenology entails the traditional task of philosophy: search for knowledge. The second is that it suspends all philosophical presuppositions; that phenomenology abandons all judgments about what is real until it finds something that is founded on a more certain basis. This suspension is what

Husserl termed as *epoche*. The third is the intentionality of consciousness, which posits that the reality of an object is related to an individual's consciousness of it. Lastly, is the assumption that the reality of an object is perceived within the essence and meaning of an individual. Phenomenology is therefore ideal for the current study on the lived experiences of journalists who are involved in the coverage of terrorism and terror-related news events.

2.2.2 Structuration Meta-Theory

Critical theorists argue that structure plays a key role in human agency as opposed to quantitative approaches that give little regard to structure. Structuration becomes one of those critical perspectives that seek to provide an alternate thought pattern to a dominant positivist approach in understanding social reality.

Structuration, as a meta-theory, therefore, becomes relevant in examining the dialectic of human agency and social structure when reporting terrorism by journalists. This meta-theory can be tracked down to the work of Anthony Giddens (1984, 1991). The zeitgeist of structuration provided a different perspective from the 1960s school of thought on human behaviour and communication, particularly, in relation to social structure. At that time, the dominant epistemology was quantitative in approach and included experiments and surveys emphasising on statistical analysis. As such, it downplayed the role of social structure as the scientific enquiry was seen as devoid of value – objective and strictly empirical. But Giddens, through the structuration theory, brought in a fresh perspective in the understanding of how human action and interaction generated social reality (Poole & McPhee, 2005).

This study is situated within the sociology of communication, and specifically appropriates structuration to enable an investigation into macro-, meso- and micro influences of journalism culture (Giddens, 1984, 1991). Specifically, the meta-theory

concepts of structure, agency and identity are appropriated to explore the relationship between the lived experiences of journalists reporting terror, on the one hand, and freedom of the media on the other. Thereafter, communication-specific theoretical framework draws on Pamela Shoemaker and Stephen Reese's hierarchy of influences work to provide insights into the culture of making news in a context of reporting terrorism and terror-related activities (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, 2014). The work of Shoemaker and Reese is a fitting framework to enable analysis at different layers, including personal, organisational, and societal influences. A conceptual framework synthesising both theory and literature on influences of terrorism on media freedom is then developed towards the end of the section.

This project is rooted in the broad discipline of sociology of communication to explore the dialectic of action and structural conditions when reporting news in a terrorism context. Other concepts drawn from sociology and appropriated in this study are agency and identity, particularly the notions of sub-identities and the construction of professional identities. These concepts are explored at length in subsequent pages and their application in the present study interrogated.

Sociology of communication is a field, as Waisbord (2016) appreciated, where sociological thought and questions help communication scholars deepen their understanding of the social life of individuals and institutions. It is one of those areas of communication scholarship that relies on other disciplines – this time, sociology being the focus to create knowledge on the lived experiences of the Kenya-based journalists, who have reported terrorism and terror-related activities between 2011 and 2019.

Scholars in sociology are concerned with the history, development, organisation, and problems of people living together as social groups. Because

sociology is interested in understanding people and institutions, structuration theory becomes an important lens through which understanding the culture of journalists in a particular context, and the symbolic codes used by members of that section of the society are interrogated. In particular, this project is interested in the culture of producing news within the terrorism context (Giddens, 1984, 1991; Mumby, 2001; Poole & McPhee, 2005; Waisbord, 2016; Zelizer, 2004).

But while the importance of sociology in understanding journalism remains crucial, Waisbord (2016) observed that the emergent sub-disciplines – the sociology of communication, and post-disciplines as sociology of media, for instance - are highly chaotic and non-unified in terms of thought:

It is not a coherent, well-defined field of study with shared questions, an ontological centre, or common institutional roof. It is disaggregated by parallel questions about communication (or media, *sic*) soaked in sociological thinking. This shapes a vibrant, chaotic, layered academic space grounded in the sociological tradition with significant overlaps with other disciplines and post-disciplines – from cultural studies to the social study of science and technology (Waisbord, 2016, p. 1182).

Having said that, this dissertation focuses on three concepts of structuration theory mainly: structure, agency and the professional identity of the Kenya-based journalists, who are involved in the coverage of terrorism between 2011 and 2019. The concepts of structure, agency and professional identity are explored in depth below and thereafter, this section canvasses the hierarchy of influences model.

Reporting terrorism has a bearing on the conceptual framework theorising structure and agency (Giddens, 1984, 1991). Many scholars have demonstrated that

structure and agency are inextricably connected (Bencherki, 2016; Bolin, 2016; Bourdieu & Farage, 1994; Giddens, 1984, 1991; Sewell, 1992).

Structuration, as a theoretical conceptualisation, emanates from structuralism, which is one of the four traditions of sociology. Others are functionalism, Marxism and Symbolic Interaction (Giddens, 1993). Structuration was born as a *zeitgeist* of the 1970s and 1980s that provided an alternative explanation from positivism that was a dominant school of thought at that time in explaining human action and social structure (Corman, 2005). Anthony Giddens has been credited with the birth of the *zeitgeist* in his seminal works, *Central Problems in Social Theory*, written in 1979 and *The Constitution of the Society*, in 1981. Giddens' ideas on the dialectic of human action and social structure provided a new and fresh approach to understanding sociology, away from the existing dominant epistemology of that time, which emphasised experiments, surveys and statistical analysis and downplayed the role of social structure. This thinking of action and social structure was informed by the new understanding that: "all observation presumes interpretation, and interpretation is inherently laden with theory and interests. Therefore, observation can never be theory-free" (Corman, 2005, p. 20).

Since the birth of structuration, social scientists have appropriated the specialised understanding of the relationship between human action and social structure in different contexts to explain the multifarious ways that the concepts produce and reproduce social realities. In the current study, the dialectic of structural conditions and the human agency of journalists reporting terrorism and terror-related activities is explored with a view to clearly understand how such production and reproduction could be reshaping journalistic freedoms in the Kenyan context.

2.2.2.1 The Dialectic of Structure and Agency

In structuration theory, agency of journalists can be articulated as their ability to act independently and to make free choice when performing their work. The dialectic of structure and agency then manifests, as the agency of these journalists can either be limited or determined by the structural conditions within which they operate. As defined by Bolin (2016) earlier above, structure, in this particular sense, becomes “an overt or covert system of interrelations between material or symbolic entities within which human action takes place” (p. 1973).

The agency of a journalist reporting terrorism can therefore be determined or limited by structures such as laws and rules (both formal and informal). These rules can also take the form of cultural routines and rituals as well as organisational and cultural protocols that inform how things should be done. Such rules - in their multifarious forms - constitute the structural conditions under discussion in the present research.

However, structure is more than just these rules, protocols or regulations that either limit or determine one’s agency. As Sewell (1992) observed, structure is “one of the most important, elusive and under-theorised concepts in the social sciences” (p. 1). Sewell demonstrated that while structure can be seen as rules, resources such as human and non-human and schemas, can also form a part of structure.

Sewell’s (1992) understanding becomes important in collecting evidence on whether Kenyan journalists and their newsrooms have the requisite resources – both human and non-human – to report on terrorism. Among others, this study seeks to interrogate the implications of a lack of these structures, for instance, when Kenyan journalists are embedded with KDF to report on terrorism and terror-related events in Somalia, instead of their particular media houses deploying requisite resources to independently carry out this journalistic work. The relationship between a government

agency, such as KDF, and their sponsoring of journalistic work becomes even more important to understand because the latter are parties to the conflict. This could imply that there are certain unsaid expectations that the journalists are obliged to fulfil on account of being embedded with the military. This research seeks to bring out these nuances through a phenomenological investigation into the lived experiences of journalists who reported terrorism and terror-related activities between 2011 and 2019. For instance, could less resources deployed by media houses in support of the coverage of terrorism and terror-related activities affect the agency of journalists making news in that particular context? In this regard, a parallel is drawn between the Kenya-based journalists from local and international media houses, to identify the differences in the structure of respective media firms.

This research took a very particular and specialised meaning in articulating how structure and agency play out when Kenya-based journalists report terror. As Poole and McPhee (2005) noted, “while in traditional systems theory, structure refers to the relations among operations and divisions” (p. 174). In structuration theory, those relations are regarded as part of the system itself and hence structure has a more specialised meaning as: “observable patterns and relationships in practices, which include relations among operations and divisions” (p. 174). Its meaning can further be articulated as “the rules and resources drawn on by actors in taking part in system practices. A rule is any principle or routine that guides people’s actions” while “a resource is anything people are able to use in action, whether material (money, tools) or non-material (knowledge, skills)” (Poole & McPhee, 2005, p. 174). These are the resources that Sewell (1992) referred to above.

The duality of structure is a central idea of structuration theory where structures are produced and reproduced: “When we draw on structural rules and resources to act

within a social system of practices, we also keep that system going – we reproduce the system and its structures” (Poole & McPhee, 2005, p. 175). This reproduction can lead to transformation of the system and does not mean that the system endures without change: transformation is reproduction of the system in a new direction that can also lead to its demise. As such, every action, every episode of interaction produces the practices of which it is part and reproduces the system and its structure, usually in a small way, as changed or stable. The theory explains the system as the product of human actions operating through a duality in which structures are both the medium and the outcome of the actions. The system is produced and reproduced in human interaction and that it is not static. This could mean that structural conditions of reporting terrorism and terror-related activities may have significant bearing on the agency of journalists. This reproduction of the structures can lead to the recasting of professional identity of the journalists.

Human agents are knowledgeable and have the ability to reflexively monitor their conduct. Anthony Bandura (2008) noted that “to be an agent is to influence intentionally one’s functioning and life circumstances” (p. 16). Bandura developed what he calls the four core properties of human agency, including intentionality, temporal existence of agency through forethought, self-reactiveness and self-reflectiveness. Intentionality means that people have action plans and strategies to realise their intentions. But there is no such a thing as absolute agency because human pursuits involve other participating agents. People have to negotiate interests by other people, families, institutions, organisations and society, among others, to achieve their intentions. In this study, the Constitution of Kenya determines the extent to which freedoms under discussion could be curtailed.

Bandura (2008) operationalized temporal extension of agency through forethought by including what he terms as “future-directed plans” (p. 16). “Individuals have to set themselves goals and anticipate likely outcomes of prospective actions to guide and motivate their efforts” (p. 16). But agents are also self-regulators. Bandura (2008) observed “in this process, individuals adopt personal standards, construct appropriate courses of action, monitor their activities, and regulate them by evaluating self-reactions” (p. 16). Finally, on self-reflectiveness, he appreciated that people “self-examine their own functioning” (p. 16) - a reflection that a number of journalists covering terrorism do in the current research.

Anthony Giddens has been criticised for emphasising on the agency of actors over structure in a social system. This lack of balance in duality of structure and action has led scholars such as Conrad (2005) and Poole and McPhee (2005) to point out that too much power is given to individuals in structuration discourse. In the observation of these scholars, sociologists, such as Michel Foucault (1984, 1995) aimed to give accounts of both social interaction patterns and agency, and argued that individuals had little or no agency – the reverse of the argument by Giddens.

This conceptualization by Foucault (1984, 1995) of the place of the individual in the social system could be congruent with the hierarchy of influences theory used in this study. Shoemaker and Reese’s theory places the individual at the inner most circle in the hierarchy of influences – the micro level – while placing other influences at meso- and macro-levels to bear a high impact on the agency of the journalists.

2.2.2.2 Journalistic Professional Identity

The work of sociologist Andrew Abbott has been critical in shaping the understandings of how professional identities are constructed (Abbott, 1988). According to Fearon (1999), Jackson and Hogg (2010), and Poole and McPhee (2005), professional identity

is a social construct that actors draw upon when carrying out action. Bourdieu and Farage (1994) and Poole and McPhee (2005) saw socially constructed identity as a form of structural resource that actors depend on to guide them in the process of exerting their agency in a field. Scott, Corman, and Cheney (1998) defined this form of identity as “a set of rules and resources that function as an anchor for who we are” (p. 181). Such positioning of identity as a socially constructed structure is in agreement with other definitions of identity, such as the one articulated by Fearon (1999): “a social category, defined by membership rules and (alleged) characteristic attributes or expected behaviours,” or Breit (2011), who observed that professional identities are constructed by understanding certain traits such as the application of specialised knowledge in a field gained through specialised education or training; relying on ethical guidelines in carrying out action and exercising a level of autonomy and or self-governance, among others.

Breit (2011) observed that to understand professional identities, one must reflect on the intra-, inter-, and trans-professional forces that bear an impact on both the profession itself and relations with the micro-, meso- and macro-levels of the society. In the present context, therefore, exploring the dialectic of structure and agency, as revealed by mapping this hierarchy of influences, is geared at creating new understanding of how the casting and recasting of the professional identity of journalists involved in the reporting of terrorism occurs.

Social constructivists approach to identity advanced by Jackson and Hogg (2010) observed that identity is “established within the perception of the self as derived from thoughtful reflection on communicative interactions between oneself and others from the societal environment” (p. 739). This implies that professional identity is not a static, but rather a fluid concept that is produced by applying the structural resources to

an actor in a field and by the act of drawing on these resources, reproduction (or what I am referring to as recasting) of professional identity occurs, setting in motion a fluid context of the notion of work (Bauman, 2013; Deuze, 2013).

Breit (2011) opined that when considering journalism as work (i.e. professional work cf. Abbott, 1988), journalists come together to tell stories, seek out information, among other roles, and as such, "... professionals apply unique knowledge and expertise and commit to a set of conventions and structures designed to preserve and enhance professional control" (pp. 8-9). This is what defines the professional identity of journalists.

As already observed, professional identities are fluid and not static. In this view, Breit (2011) observed that journalists use their professional identities to perform four types of roles: monitorial, facilitative, radical and collaborative. When journalists draw on the monitorial identity, they collect and publish information of public interest to audiences; facilitative identity entails providing "a public voice to people with legitimate claims for public attention" (p. 11); while radical identity is where "journalism provides a platform for views and voices that are critical of authority and the established order" (p. 11). When journalists wear their collaborative professional identity, they "support civil or military authorities and broader national interests" (p. 11). Breit (2011) offered an example of collaborative role as when embedded journalists do not reveal the location of troops in their reports.

But journalists can provide other roles in the field, away from the typology drawn by Breit (2011). When they do so, it becomes clear that the journalists create what Scott et al. (1998) saw as sub-identities (for instance: monitorial sub-identity; facilitative sub-identity; radical sub-identity; and collaborative sub-identity, among others). Employing concepts of structuration theory, Scott et al. (1998) referred to this

action as “regionalisation”. Poole and McPhee (2005) observed that in structuration theory, “regional identities develop because we enact particular identities fairly consistent in the various activities we engage in (and these activities generally occur in different times and places)” (p. 182). There are various rules that apply when different sub-identities are assumed. Regionalisation of identity shows how professionals create and maintain their identities, while at the same time appreciating the role of social structures in shaping those professional identities.

In line with this understanding, the current research observes that the rules here are the journalistic protocols enshrined in the code of conduct for the practice of journalism in Kenya, programming codes, house styles and the expected behaviour enshrined in the journalistic ideology that stipulates how things are done while practising journalism (Deuze, 2005; Grubenmann & Meckel, 2017).

The professional identity and ideology of journalists have been explored at length, for instance by Deuze (2005, 2008, 2013), Grubenmann and Meckel (2017), and Hanitzsch (2017). These scholars have identified five dominant concepts, values and elements that constitute the ideology of journalism. They include public service, objectivity, autonomy, immediacy and ethics.

As an element of professional conceptualisation, public service implies that the role of journalism in the society cannot be overstated because it creates a public sphere where citizens, government and other institutions exchange views (Doyle, 2002; Fenton, 2010). Journalists provide information to the people: “information is to democracy what oxygen is to fire. Without one, the other cannot survive” (Phillips & Witschge, 2012, p. 3). Important decisions made by the people such as who to elect for public office, or what roads to avoid during a natural disaster, for example, are largely mediated by journalists. They set the agenda for discussion by the public (McCombs,

2005) in the way they select stories for publication, and play the watchdog role (Leveson & Leveson, 2012) where they keep institutions and people in public office in check, against abuse of authority. But besides serving as a forum for education, journalism also plays the role of an entertainer.

Public interest is a contested notion. Some scholars such as Mak'Ochieng (2006) observed that it can be considered through the preponderance theory, where numbers become an important determinant when considering what public interest is.

In preponderance theories, the sum total of individual interests is held to be paramount and the public interest is defined in a majoritarian way as the 'will of the people'. In this case, the public interest will correspond to the choice of the majority, or with what is believed to maximise the number of individual preferences. It can be known in a number of ways, such as by voting, by the weight of 'public opinion', or by the assertion of some dominant power to determine a result (Mak'Ochieng, 2006, p. 13).

Ethics is a key element of professional role conceptualisation of journalists. A lot of the times, when analysing normative implications of communication, there is an inclination to look at it from the production level. But as Breit (2011) observed, when considering ethical issues in communication, it is important to see the latter as a process that involves the stages of production, consumption, and reflection. "It is important not to single out one aspect when considering questions of ethics. Focusing too heavily on issues of production, divorced from consumption (and vice-versa), can distort ethical decision making" (Breit, 2011, p. 86). However, Christians (2015) questioned the ambitious nature of what this paper calls the dominant ethical theories of human communication and recommends that there is a need for scholars in this area to appreciate the multifaceted nature of ethics: "... as the field turns to global media ethics,

the question is whether our work in ethical theory is international in scope, sophisticated enough to match the multicultural and transnational character of the issues” (p. 61). This indicates that there is a clear need to look at ethical communication using certain lenses that provide nuances for an African context adequately.

For a long time – in fact, for as long as scholarship in ethics in human communication is concerned - a number of ethical ideologies have dominated the discourse, including: Aristotle’s Virtue ethics, Emmanuel Kant’s Deontological ethics, Stuart Mills Teleological or Consequentialism and the Judeo-Christian perspectives. All these, including other less significant perspectives such as ethics of dialogue and care, are influenced by Western thought, and hardly has there been a substantial contribution from Africa, among other regions, for instance.

The current research provided a platform to investigate how journalists make critical ethical decisions regarding what to publish or what not to publish when reporting terrorism and counter-terrorism activities. For instance, this research clarified on how journalists balance the need for the truth and serving interests of actors within the terrorism space: this includes the terrorists and government agencies such as the security organs.

2.2.3 The Hierarchy of Influences Theory

Shoemaker and Reese, in 1996, developed the hierarchy of influences to provide a theoretical framework on the levels of structural layers that enhance or constrain how journalists report news. Subsequent modifications were done in a newer version in 2013 that incorporated changes occasioned by technological disruption on journalism theory and practice (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014). The scholars have mapped out five levels of influences: individual influences, media routine influences, organisational influences, extra-media influences and ideological influences. These are factors inside and outside

the media organisations that affect the work of newspeople. Figure 2.1 illustrates these layers.

The present research categorises these factors into three broad brackets touching on micro, meso and macro-layers of the society. At the micro-level, are the individual influences, as discussed below, while at meso level, factors relating to media routines and organisational forces are articulated. Others operating outside the media are named as the extra-media ideological influences and are bracketed in the macro level.

At the first level of influence, Shoemaker and Reese (1996) outlined a range of individual (journalist) factors that shape the professional identity of a media worker. These factors include a journalist's backgrounds such as gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, political orientations, education, training, attitudes, personal biases, values and beliefs, religious upbringing, and professional orientation. The theorists view this level as having the least influence on journalism, when compared to the other four layers: "we believe that there is no direct influence of communicator's characteristics, backgrounds, and experiences on media content, but that content may be affected to the extent that such factors influence both personal and professional attitudes and roles" (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, p. 98).

This theoretical articulation is an important consideration in the present research because it seeks to understand how journalists make news when confronted with the complexities of a terrorism context. It is still unknown whether these factors will determine how news is made in a terror-context among the Kenya-based journalists. Factors such as gender, ethnicity, sexual and political orientations, education, training, attitudes, personal biases, values and beliefs, religious upbringing, and professional orientation, indeed seem to have a bearing on reporting terrorism.

The second level of influences is media routines. “Routines are those patterned, routinised, repeated practices and forms that media workers use to do their jobs” (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, p. 100). Journalists’ routines, once institutionalised, tend to lock out some perspectives while letting in others. These include what questions to ask, how to handle soft and hard news and what techniques are appropriate for each. Newspaper stories are written using the inverted pyramid, and the consideration of news values, among other routines. Tuchman (1978) observed that journalists who have mastered the routines tend to be preferred in the workplace. This shows that making news is an organised routine such as a factory or an industry. As such, Shoemaker and Reese (1996) noted that media routines tend to fix three main questions: 1) what is acceptable to the consumers? (audience)? 2) What is the organisation (media) capable of processing? 3) What product is available from the supplier? (news sources)?

The organisational influences are at the third level. Here, Shoemaker and Reese (1996, 2014) looked at media as organisations and ask the following questions: (1) what are the organisational goals? (2) How is the organisation structured? (3) What is the policy and how is it implemented? (4) How are these policies enforced? At this level, the ultimate power lies with the owner of the media organisation, whose influence comes indirectly through various intermediaries such as the editors and managers. This layer of influence is further categorized into three layers: bottom, middle and top level. The bottom layer comprises of writers, reporters, and creative staff, whose duties are to gather and package information. The middle-level consists of managers, editors, producers, and others who coordinate the news production and mediate communication between the bottom and the top levels of the media organisation (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). Media executives including the owner are found at the top level. Their roles are

to make the organisation's policies, set budgets, make important personnel decisions, and protect commercial and political interests of the firm.

At the four layer (extra-media level), Shoemaker and Reese (1996) pointed out influences that are outside the media and the organisation. These factors may include information and revenue sources, social institutions, economic environment, technology, social-political interest groups, market competition, and public relations. Other factors include audiences, politicians, advertisers, media laws, government regulations, religious pressure and friends and family. The theory suggests that extra-media forces are superior to the media and tend to control what content is produced. In agreement with Herman and Chomsky (1994), Shoemaker and Reese (1996, 2014) noted that media owners, for instance, might be affected by decisions and changes in other industries where they are also owners, or sit on the boards of directorship.

At the fifth level is the ideology of those in power (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). Media content is congruent to the ideologies of those in power and their views reflect those of the controlling elite (Gurevitch, Bennett, Curran, & Woollacott, 1982). It is regarded as the most powerful influence.

The model by Shoemaker and Reese has been employed in various studies to understand the factors that shape the work of journalists. For example, Ileri (2015, 2017) employed the theory to explore influences that shape the work of the Kenyan journalists in the 21st the century. Concepcion (2011) used the model to investigate journalist's perceptions of situational challenges and the factors that influence their ethical decision-making. The study found that new journalists enjoyed a great deal of autonomy on the choice of stories they covered and how they covered them, compared to their older counterparts. However, at the organisational level of their specific media

houses, Concepcion (2011) found that news managers posed a great threat to the content they produced, followed by extra-medial influence of the advertisers.

Using the model, Ibrahim (2003) examined various influences that international correspondents cited when covering the Middle East. The examination explored individual characteristics of the journalists and how organisational pressures and routines of news production affected the media content. Suryanarayan (2008) used the model to investigate level four influences: extra-media layer on the coverage of the tragic December 26, 2004, Indian Ocean tsunami, that took more than 31,000 lives in Sri Lanka. Suryanarayan (2008) found that the US elite newspapers had more prominent coverage of Sri Lanka post-tsunami than pre-tsunami, implying that level four influences set the agenda for the media coverage. Varouhakis (2009) used the model to investigate newspaper coverage of Arab American in pre and post 9/11 terror attack. That study found that level four influences (extra-media) as a result of the terror attack, led to an increase in the coverage of Arab Americans in the US media after the attack.

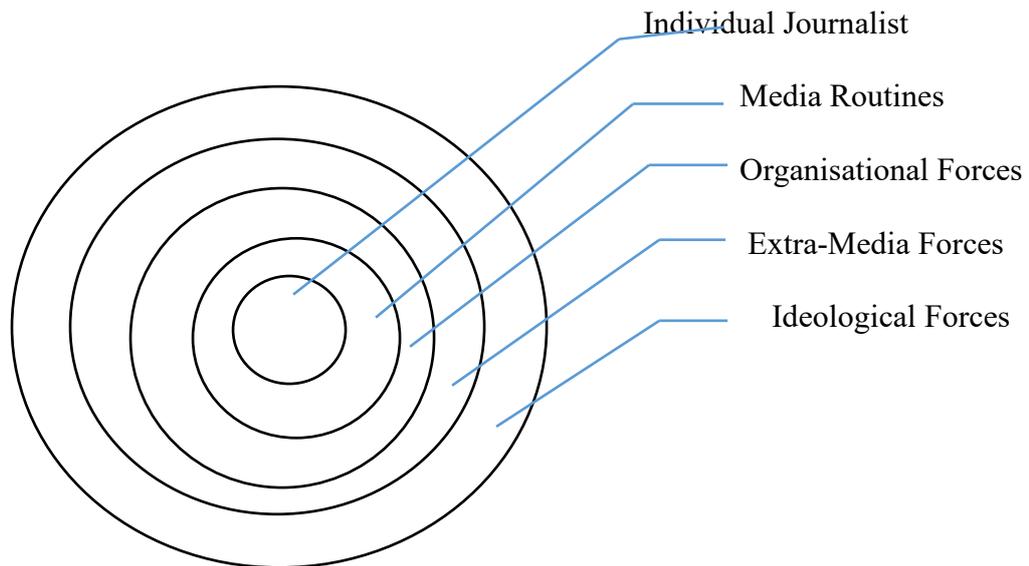


Figure 2.1: The “Hierarchy-of-Influences” Model
Source: Shoemaker and Reese (1996)

2.3 General Literature Review

2.3.1 Terrorism in Kenya

Terrorism is a contested term. Indeed, there is a lack of consensus about what constitutes or does not constitute terrorism (Golder & Williams, 2004; Schmid, 2011; Schmid, 2012). Many scholars see terrorism as the unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians in pursuit of political aims. They also contend that terrorism is a global and serious threat to the national security in various territorial nations. Its psychological impact is felt across places away from the scene of terror (Fremont et al., 2005; Kolodkin, 2017; Nacos & Bloch-Elkon, 2011).

The etymological root of terrorism is the word ‘terror’ that comes from the Latin verb *terrere*, whose meaning is “to bring someone to tremble through great fear” (Schmid, 2011, p. 41). Scholars trace the historical appropriations of the word “terror” and its derivative – terrorism - to the French Revolution, in what was known as the ‘Jacobin Reign of Terror’ between 1792 and 1794. During that time, emergency

measures were given out in France, ostensibly to tame traitors by instilling fear across the country by means of violence (Combs, 2013; Schmid, 2011).

Combs (2013) pointed out that that terrorism dates back to the ancient times in Greece and Rome. For instance, she observed that the assassination of Julius Caesar was a form of terrorism in 44 B.C. “During ancient times, conquerors created a mood of fear in their realms by extermination of whole populations or forcing them into exile” (Combs, 2013, p. 18).

The acts of terror, and terror-related activities, utilise the media in advancing their political aims. This thesis explores terrorism as a unique news event and traced its history in the Kenyan context. At least two factors make Kenya a potential target by the Islamic militants, including the country’s proximity to Somalia, and the involvement of Kenya in the so-called Global War Against Terrorism, spearhead by the US government, that places Nairobi, Kenya’s capital as a key player in combating acts of terror and related activities (Lind et al., 2017; Mogire & Mkutu Agade, 2011).

As mentioned above, terrorism is a contested term and that there is a lack of consensus about what constitutes or does not constitute terrorism (Golder & Williams, 2004; Schmid, 2011, 2012). As such, scholars have developed an academic definition of what terrorism constitutes. They see terrorism as the unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians in pursuit of political aims. They also contend that terrorism is a global and serious threat to the national security of countries. Its psychological impact is felt across places away from the scene of terror (Fremont et al., 2005; Kolodkin, 2017; Nacos & Bloch-Elkon, 2011).

The 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism defines terrorism as “an act intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, or to any other person, not taking an active part in hostilities in a situation

of armed conflict, when the purpose of such an act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a government or an international organisation to do or to abstain from doing any act” (Golder & Williams, 2004, p. 274).

Days after the 9/11 attacks on the US, President George Walker Bush, in Executive Orders (No. 13224, 66, 2001), expanded this definition to include an activity that involves a violent act, or an act dangerous to human life, property or infrastructure; and appears to be intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, kidnapping, or hostage-taking (Bush, 2001). This definition expands the categories of activities regarded as terrorism. The media remains an active actor in these contexts.

Since independence from the British, Kenya’s national security has been threatened by both internal and external factors. During the colonial period, the British administration labelled as terrorists the resistance movement Mau (Elkins & Lonsdale, 2005; Mogire & Mkutu Agade, 2011). As noted by Mogire and Mkutu Agade (2011), in the history of terrorism, Mau was likely the first group to be associated with the term terrorists in Kenya.

In post-independent Kenya, other internal groups that have been associated with terrorism include the Maskini Liberation Front, the February Eighteenth Movement, the Sabaot Land Defence Forces, *Mungiki* (Mogire & Mkutu Agade, 2011). The Shifta led an uprising that was aimed at annexing North Eastern Kenya to Somalia, according to the global terrorism database by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) at the University of Maryland, USA. Some other internal threats have been the perennial ethnic tensions and clashes and conflicts among

pastoral communities. As noted in this study in Chapter One, ethnic clashes and communal conflicts are not within the ambit of the phenomenological investigation.

This research is concerned with transnational terrorism, inspired by the instability in Somalia and piracy in the Indian Ocean, and that has been categorised as one of the present biggest threats to the national security of Kenya (Lind et al., 2017; Mogire & Mkutu Agade, 2011). The history of transnational terrorism in Kenya dates back to the attempts to shoot down an Israeli plane touching down in Nairobi from Entebbe, Uganda in 1976; the 1980 bombing at the Norfolk Hotel; the 1998 bombing of the US embassy in Nairobi and the 2002 bombing of the Kikambala Hotel in Mombasa (Lind et al., 2017; Mogire & Mkutu Agade, 2011; START, 2020). These attacks were rather isolated and do not appear to have targeted the Kenyans, but foreign citizens who were either living or on transit through Kenya.

However, since Kenyan troops entered Somalia in 2011 to curtail further Al-Shabaab incursions, the country has experienced unprecedented internal attacks. Wafula (2014) recorded that between 2011 and 2014, there were at least 100 incidents of terror attack in the country, as the insurgent group made a political statement to Kenya on withdrawing its troops from Somalia. The worst attacks recorded since the troops entered Somalia include the Westgate Mall in 2013 (AFP & Barasa, 2013); Mpeketoni in 2014 (AFP, 2014); Garissa University College in 2015 (Mutambo & Hajir, 2015); and the killing of the Kenya Defence Forces soldiers at El Adde in Somalia by the terrorist groups (Mukinda, 2016). Hundreds of Kenyans have lost their lives and thousands of others affected in different ways.

Like other countries affected by terrorism, the Kenyan government's response to these violent incursions has been twofold: heightened military and police presence and strengthening counter-terrorism and national security laws. Among others, during

the period under study, Kenya introduced a litany of security laws designed to support its counterterrorism as discussed in another section of this review. Understanding this prevailing security culture becomes important for this project, because these structures define the context in which journalism is produced in Kenya. This constitutes counterterrorism.

Counterterrorism encompasses “practices, tactics, techniques, and strategies that governments, militaries, police departments and corporations adopt in response to terrorist threats and or act, both real and imputed” (Kolodkin, 2017, para. 2). As noted by Anderson (2009), targeted killings and law are popular strategies that governments use to counterterrorism.

Some studies, such as Anderson (2009), connected counterterrorism to the United States’ responses to the September 9/11 attacks. But Al-Bulushi (2018) decentred the US from this war against terrorism and argued that African governments, for instance Kenya and Tanzania, have been waging the war since the fatal attacks on August 8, 1998, in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam: “for many Africans, memories and experiences of the so-called War on Terror therefore date back, not to September 2001, but to August 1998” (para. 1). In Kenya, for instance, counterterrorism started immediately after the 1998 attacks with the government carrying out raids and arrests in the coastal town of Mombasa that is predominantly inhabited by Muslims.

Therefore, Al-Bulushi (2018) contended that the discourse on counterterrorism needs to be moved beyond the US calling on researchers and policy makers to document the practices and strategies that African nations have since employed in combating terrorism. Another form of counterterrorism in Kenya has been the surveillance of communications (Privacy International, 2017).

In Kenya, counterterrorism is the province of the National Counterterrorism Centre that is located in the Office of the President and was formed under the Security Laws Amendment Act 2014, to coordinate counterterrorism efforts in the country. The centre, however, existed earlier since 2004 through a Cabinet decision. Information on the National Counter Terrorism Centre (2016) website showed that the agency brings together the organs of the national security of Kenya, including the National Security Council, the National Security Intelligence Service, the Kenya Defence Forces and the National Police Service.

The Security Laws Amendment Act 2014, 40c stipulates the responsibilities of the centre and observes that: 1) the centre may request any person or government body for any information relating to terrorism, and 2) members of the public have a responsibility to furnish the centre with any information relating to terrorism, which is within their knowledge. This mandate is drawn from the Constitution of Kenya, Article 238, that explicates the issues of national security (National Council for Law Reporting, 2010).

According to the supreme law, national security is the protection against internal and external threats to Kenya's territorial integrity and sovereignty, its people, their rights, freedoms, property, peace, stability and prosperity, and other national interests. The country's national security organs are the ones listed above and are subordinate to civilian authority.

2.3.2 Terrorism and the Media

Terrorism has widespread material and affective impact: It affects people at almost all levels – psychological, physical, social, cultural, economic and political facets - are impacted directly or indirectly. For journalists, consequently, there are personal and professional implications that need to be clearly understood in order to

appreciate how reporting terrorism, and the multifarious counter-terrorism practices adopted by the government, might be reshaping media freedom. The cultural practices of reporting terrorism constitute the lived experiences of the sampled journalists in this doctoral project.

There is consensus among scholars in this field that an act of terror is intentional, politically motivated and is designed to intimidate and, or injure people in order to influence macro-level change. It causes physical and psychological harm to those directly and indirectly involved. Across the world, different insurgent groups carry out terror activities, but their ideology largely remains the same.

In the context of this study, the terrorist group, Al-Shabaab, has been waging war against Kenya and its citizens for three reasons: first, the insurgents seek to take political control of Somalia, and therefore see Kenya as an enemy because of its support of Amisom forces in Mogadishu. Secondly, the insurgents seek to take control of parts of Kenya and Ethiopian - land claimed to belong to Somalia; and finally, they wish to establish a Caliphate in Mogadishu and the larger East African region. A Caliphate is a region that is governed using strict *sharia* (Islamic law) (Lind et al., 2017; Mogire & Mkutu Agade, 2011; Shinn, 2011).

Their weapons of terror range in sophistication from improvised explosive devices, commonly referred to as IEDs, to the state-of-the-art military equipment, including war drones. As countries step up the war and crack down on potential terror threats, everyday items are now being improvised to inflict devastating harm, and radicalise citizens using modern tools of communication such as the Internet, in what has come to be termed as “home-grown” terrorism - a phenomenon in European countries, for instance, the UK, France and Germany, and African states such as Nigeria, Somalia and Kenya (Boga, 2017a; Schmidt & Cohen, 2013). In the Kenyan

context, the Al-Shabaab has been using homemade equipment to fight, while recruiting the youth through social media platforms. In other times, they use standard military equipment to carry out violent acts (AFP & Oruko, 2019; Boga, 2017a; Shinn, 2011).

But, away from their material warfare tools, information and media coverage are regarded as among the most vital weapons of terrorists. In fact, scholars observed that terrorism is in itself a form of communication (Moeller, 2009; Silke, 2014; Zelizer & Allan, 2011) that intentionally employs the mass media tools to achieve its end (Schmid, 2011; Zelizer & Allan, 2011). In this particular sense, therefore, terrorism becomes mediated violence and journalists are ensnared in the act of terror (Schmid, 2011; Spencer, 2012a; Zelizer & Allan, 2011). Terrorism masterminds such as Osama bin Laden have been cited explaining the vital place and role of the mass media in executing violence (Schmid, 2011).

At the same time, in today's digital era that is characterised by the growth and sophistication in media technology, terrorism has become a complicated phenomenon (Castells, 2013; Deuze, 2005, 2013). Social media tools are today enabling people to share their lives and its moments as it happens with little gatekeeping. Some scholars have labelled this essence of the new media as the rise of "mediatisation" of life and its moments (Lundby, 2009). Others such as Silverstone (2007) have called it the rise of "mediapolis", where the media becomes both pervasive and invasive in people's everyday lives.

In this regard, terrorists have found a unique use of different characteristic of the emerging media platforms, and insurgent groups like the Islamic State of Syria and Iraq, ISIS, (that recently morphed into the Islamic State of Iraq and Libya, ISIL) and the Al-Shabaab, for instance, are using the Internet and social media tools to recruit

supporters, plan their activities and publicise terrorism events to the world with much ease (Schmid, 2011).

Targeted online communication strategies make the threat of terrorism a global phenomenon that cuts across geographical, spatial and temporal boundaries. Communication of local terror activities expands its impact to become a global phenomenon to populations remotely located from the scene of the violence (Bauman, 2013). This study presents the particular form of terrorism - which uses the pervasive nature of modern media tools - as transnational or global terrorism. It is classified as such because the intention is to go global and impact lives, miles away from the scene of the violence. This utility of the new technology is not exclusive to terrorists. Authorities are also using these communication technologies to prevent and or eliminate terrorism in measures adopted by many nation states (Pokalova, 2015; Schmidt & Cohen, 2013).

Consequently, journalists are finding their work reconfigured because mass personal communication means that information can be spread to audiences directly, by passing them, thereby reshaping the traditional gate-keeping function of the media. As such, one of the sub-aims of this research was to find out how journalists are negotiating the coverage of terrorism and counterterrorism in the modern age.

For instance, on March 15, 2019, a 28-year-old terrorist in New Zealand attacked two mosques, killing 50 worshippers (AFP, 2019). During the attack, the terrorist mounted a camera on him and live-streamed the violence on Facebook. Mainstream media across the world reported the event thereafter. Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, particularly were blamed for amplifying the violence that was mediated on their platforms and authorities have asked the technology companies to play an active role in preventing terrorism.

2.3.3 History of Journalistic Freedoms

The origin of journalistic freedoms can be traced to the roots of free speech, dating back to the ancient Greek civilisation: journalistic freedom is a subset of free speech (Nordin, 2016; Radsch, 2014). Literature indicates that concerns of free expression date back to 399 B.C., when Socrates reportedly said to the jury at his trial that if he was offered to be let free on the condition that he can no longer speak his mind, he'd rather obey the gods than the men of Athens. This has been cited as the first recording of man defending his free speech and elevating that freedom to a higher pedestal than his own life (Bogen, 1983; Nordin, 2016; Rosenberg, 1989).

But Plato, a prized student of Socrates, differed with his teacher on the relationship between man and the State. Plato idealised aristocratic regimes and argued that authority in the society could not be distributed equally; otherwise, the State would degenerate. Therefore, the ideal situation would be for the State to establish and enforce the unity of political and cultural goals by rigorous control of opinions and discussions. This meant controlling the ideas and opinions by the people in the society (Reeve, 1989; Siebert, Peterson, & Schramm, 1956).

Advancement of human civilisation saw the invention of the printing press in 1448 in Germany by Johan Guttenberg (Fang, 1997). The invention invited an even closer scrutiny of ideas and opinions that were being circulated in the society. In Europe, the church and the State were keen on the contents of the publications and formalised regulations that were meant to curb both dissent and heresy of church doctrine (Hallin & Mancini, 2007). As such, many states across Europe started enacting formal controls on the press to regulate the content that was published.

States would grant permits to print and disseminate information to individuals who did not publish material that criticised the government. Printed materials were

required to have been cleared by the State before distribution to the masses. If found distributing information that was perceived as anti-government, one would be charged with treason and sedition in the courts of law. “The publisher of a newspaper or leaflet which attacked the government could readily be accused of activities which might lead to the overthrow of the State” (Hallin & Mancini, 2007; Siebert et al., 1956, p. 23). The penalty of treason was death. In England, the Queen would give exclusive patents to publishers who supported the crown. Publishers would be asked to submit their work due for printing to the government for verification and approval. This was also practised in France, Germany, Spain, and Italy (Hallin & Mancini, 2007; Siebert et al., 1956).

But the momentum for media freedom and free speech grew as society advanced with Sweden becoming the first country in the world to enact a law on free press in 1776 (Bogen, 1983; Nordin, 2016; Rosenberg, 1989). Other countries subsequently followed and in 1948, the United Nations General Assembly declared media freedom as a human right through Article 19, among the 30 universal declarations of human rights (Assembly, 1948).

Article 19 declares media freedom as the right to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers. In the modern world, freedom of the media has been imprinted in many other international charters and constitutions of different countries (Bogen, 1983; Nyamnjoh, 2013; Radsch, 2014; Rosenberg, 1989; Wasserman, 2013). Kenya is among these countries that have included media freedom as part of its Constitution in Article 34 of the Bill of Rights.

Today, media freedom is a multifaceted concept that includes laws and regulation governing the operations; safety and independence of journalists and other media workers; pluralism of ideas and content in their publications (Herman &

Chomsky, 1994; McChesney, 1998; McManus, 1994; Radsch, 2014; Siebert et al., 1956). Some scholars such as Potter (2004) saw freedom of the press as the right of the press to report information without prior government approval; while Christians, Richardson, Fackler, Kreshel, and Woods (2015) articulated this freedom as the right to be just or unjust, partisan or nonpartisan in news.

Other scholars observed that this freedom entails the ability of journalists to operate without censorship from the political structures of the society (Radsch, 2014; Siebert et al., 1956; Wasserman & Maweu, 2014), economic structures (Herman & Chomsky, 1994; Maweu, 2014; McChesney, 1998; McManus, 1994), as well as individual, organisational and media culture (Nyabuga, 2015; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, 2014). Earlier scholars, Herman and Chomsky (1994), McChesney (1998), and McManus (1994), all agreed that the economic model of the media is a key determinant of freedom of the media. They posited a strong nexus between the economic model (with advertising as the dominant source of revenue), ownership and freedom of the media. They submit that a few individuals control huge investments in media with cross ownership status and that the bottom line is profits.

Shoemaker and Reese (1996, 2014) observed that there are differing levels of factors, both inside and outside the media organisations that affect the practice of journalism. They developed a theoretical approach with five levels of influence: individual, media routine, organisational, extra-media and ideological influences.

Legislating media laws by State has been viewed as the main determinant of the freedom of expression and the freedom of information, and whether media are censored, banned or blocked in various contexts (Radsch, 2014). The media laws also determine whether defamation is criminalised and whether it or other laws are used against the media, and those practising journalism in order to illegitimately restrict the

freedom of expression. Media laws also determine the freedom and status of investigative journalism and the protection of journalists' sources. As observed earlier in Chapter One, Radsch (2014) pointed out that other markers of a free press include pluralism of ideas, and the safety of the journalists.

A spectrum of global institutions, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the Freedom of Information Network; the Africa Freedom of Information Centre; Reporters Without Borders; the Committee to Protect Journalists; Decriminalisation of expression campaign and Article 19, have been publishing various reports concerning the freedom of the media around the world.

The World Press Freedom Index by the Reporters Without Borders is arguably one of the most popular and extensively quoted analyses of the state of the world press freedom. The Index has been published every year since 2002 by the international non-profit organisation registered in France that has a consultative status with the UN and UNESCO.

The aim of the Index is to measure the freedom of media in 180 countries. It reflects the degree of freedom that journalists, news media and netizens (Internet citizens) enjoy in each country, and the efforts made by the authorities to ensure respect for this freedom. Reporters Without Borders, however, cautions that its index should not be seen as an indication of the quality of the media in the countries concerned.

This index ranks the performance of 180 countries according to criteria that include media pluralism and independence, respect for the safety and freedom of journalists, and the legislative, institutional and infrastructural environment in which the media operate (Radsch, 2014). Since 2002, top of the list, as so often, are three Scandinavian countries: Finland, followed by Norway and Denmark. At the other end of the scale, Turkmenistan, North Korea, and Eritrea, in last place, are the worst

performers.

In general, the index highlights the worldwide deterioration in the freedom of the media in 2019. Beset by wars, the growing threat from non-state operatives, violence during demonstrations and the economic crisis, and concludes that media freedom is in retreat on all five continents. Other institutions such as Unesco and the Freedom House have confirmed this position.

Examining the index, media freedom in Kenya, which is the concern of this study, has been on a decline during the period under study. Since 2011, the country's media freedom global ranking moved from position 71 to 100 in 2019. This indicates a worrying context for journalists based in the country, but also for freedom of expression in general (Freedom House, 2019; Radsch, 2014; Reporters Without Borders, 2019).

2.3.4 Global Perspective on Journalistic Freedoms

Journalistic freedom, although conventionally accepted as a human right, has been operationalised differently in various contexts. Less than a decade after the universal declaration of media freedom as a human right, scholars started taking interest in how different countries articulated and observed this freedom. Among the seminal works at this time was that of Fred T. Siebert, Theodore Bernard Peterson and Wilbur Schramm in 1956, who argued that media freedom was not universal and different countries viewed the press differently. They posited that “the press always takes on the form and colouration of the social and political structures within which it operates” (Siebert et al., pp. 1-2), meaning that different social and political contexts give rise to different status of press freedom.

Further, Siebert et al. (1956) established that media freedom appeared in different forms and served different purposes in different countries. This, they argued, depended on the nature of the government in that country. They, therefore, advanced

four approaches to understanding media freedom in societies, including: authoritarian, libertarian, communism and social responsibility approaches.

Under authoritarian, the media should support the state and the government in power without any criticism, while the libertarian media looks into the natural rights of all citizens as the right to pursue the truth. Here, no opinion should be suppressed, whether it censures the government or not. Under the communist regime, mass media are instruments of government and integral parts of the State. They are owned and operated by the State and directed by the communist party or its agencies. Social responsibility places more emphasis on the press responsibility to society than on the press freedom. It is seen as a higher level, theoretically, than libertarianism.

Hallin and Mancini (2007), Nordenstreng (1997), and Radsch (2014) suggested that authoritarian governments have been the most common forms of regimes across the globe in the history of mass media: the government controls operations and functions of the press as an institution. Here, governments control the press by enacting laws that attract (high) penalties to those who flout them and licences of operations to media that are perceived to support it. The government also interferes, coerces and controls units of communication in the society, making them to support and advance its policies.

For instance, during the times of war, scholars such as Siebert et al. (1956) noted that if one broadcasted on radio material that assisted the enemy during war, they would be charged with treason. But in modern days, the punishment for such has been lessened under authoritarian regimes, although the tendency to control the free gathering of legitimate news continues in many countries. One of the forms in which the States have established control is by owning the mass media channels (Hallin & Mancini, 2007; Nordenstreng, 1997).

Although the work of Siebert et al. (1956) positioned our understanding of global perspectives to media freedom, this research appreciates that there have been calls by emerging scholars to move beyond the four approaches (Hallin & Mancini, 2007; Nordenstreng, 1997; Nyamnjoh, 2013; Obonyo, 2011; Wasserman, 2013). For example, Hallin and Mancini (2007) and Nordenstreng (1997) argued that the work of Siebert et al. (1956) reached “philosophical impasse” (Nordenstreng, 1997, p. 98). As argued by Obonyo (2011), governments in Africa may not necessarily be structured in a manner as theorised by Siebert et al. (1956) and therefore application of this understanding to media freedom in the continent becomes problem.

This position by Obonyo (2011) is supported by Nordenstreng (1997) who argued that while the four approaches by Siebert et al. (1956) may be true for countries such as the US, the UK and continental Europe, however, “despite their distinctive and rich cultural and philosophical traditions, Asia, Africa and Latin America have not nurtured major innovations...” (pp. 104, 108) in regard to moving beyond the classical Four Theories of the Press (Nordenstreng, 1997).

These scholars argued that to understand media freedom in Africa, Asia and Latin America, there is a need to interrogate the structural environment within which the media in those jurisdictions operates. Among the proposals fronted by scholars such as Hallin and Mancini (2007) and Nordenstreng (1997) is the liberal-individualistic paradigm, where individual liberty is the cornerstone of democracy; social responsibility paradigm, where the cornerstone of the political order is not an equitable but a social conception of the good and a common understanding of the moral subject.

Others are the critical paradigm where the freedom of expression is articulated in terms of repressive powers on the one hand, and oppressed masses on the other. Media are strategically located at the nexus of the social structures and social

consciousness with a potential for emancipating the masses. There is also a proposal where the media has been labelled as collaborative and should help the state, for example in times of war and emergencies, surveillance, facilitative and critical. Others are the administrative and cultural and negotiations paradigms. The foregoing thus creates a gap in understanding journalistic freedoms dimensions in Africa and Kenya in specific.

2.3.5 Journalistic Freedoms in Africa

In African countries, scholars contend that the notion of media freedom needs further investigation in order to create a clearer understanding of the factors that shape these freedoms. Nyamnjoh (2013), Obonyo (2011), Wasserman (2013), and White (2011) argued that the relationship between structures and social issues in African polities, and how those structures relate to media institutions, warrant more nuanced investigation.

Different African countries have been plagued by social, political, and economic challenges, including despotic leadership, military coup *d'état*, violent incursions, terrorism, apartheid, genocides and technological changes (Mazrui, 1986; Nyamnjoh, 2013; Obonyo, 2011). As appreciated by White (2011), “in virtually all African countries, a fundamental problem is the self-serving political leadership that places its own enrichment and the enrichment of their friends above the national welfare” (p. 221). This thesis contended that as communication scholarship in Africa matures, it requires examining how these peculiar realities can contribute to the development of an understanding that best matches this environment in terms of journalistic freedoms.

This position is congruent with that of Obonyo (2011), who underscored the need for the social and political structures within which the African communication

operates. He argued that the debate has evolved without incorporating the realities of Africa. Consequently, theory and literature around the freedom of the media, and communication in general are an ill fit on the continent. Realities, such as the insecurity posed by the Boko Haram in Nigeria, the Al-Shabaab in Kenya, the genocide in Rwanda, the political upheavals in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the neighbouring states, and the apartheid in South Africa, technological changes, and the use of mobile phones, warrant closer attention by media scholars.

But at the same time, technology is also contributing to new understanding of both the media and its freedom in the continent. For example, in the African context, the media landscape is changing fast – probably faster than in some countries in the developed world. Wasserman (2018) recorded that the mobile phone is disrupting existing platforms of communication with nearly 9% of the adult Africans owning one of the gadgets. If communication occurs within a context, mobile phones can be seen as the new talking drums that create new social spaces in the African society today (Altheide, 1994).

Just like the ancient drumming culture, used by the dwellers of the continent to relay messages across vast distances, the mobile phone technology is changing the African society while concurrently, Africans are giving meaning to the technology resulting in the reshaping of social realities. As Bruijn, Nyamnjoh, and Brinkman (2009) observed, both the mobile communication technology and the society are in a context of interdependence: “technologies are not seen as determining society as such, and there is no one-way direction in the relationship between technology and society. On the contrary, society and technology are interdependent and are evolving in a dialectic process of cultural and social appropriation” (p. 11).

Taken together, all these factors on journalistic freedoms in the continent

account for a unique environment that warrants nuanced understanding. As Nyamnjoh (2013) contended, press freedom in Africa is a game of many interests and observes the need to understand the peculiarities of this phenomenon in specific contexts throughout the continent. The current study gleans insights in these interests that shape and reshape the phenomenon of journalistic freedoms in Kenya. Specifically, the concern here is on how terrorism recasts this freedom. Therefore, this right needs to be understood with clarity in different contexts of the global society and therefore thesis focused on the African nation of Kenya, aiming to produce rich insights into journalistic freedoms when reporting national events related to terrorism.

2.3.6 Journalistic Freedoms in Kenya

To understand press freedom in Kenya, it is critical to examine the historical development of the media in the country. As is the case in many other societies, the development of the media in Kenya has over time been significantly influenced by social economic and political changes. Scholars such as Abuoga and Mutere (1988), Faringer (1991), Mbeke (2008), and Ochilo (1993) have accounted for the development of the media in Kenya since the entry of the Christian missionaries – under the Rev Albert Stegal of the Church Missionary Society highlighting its legal, regulatory and policy environment. It is documented that the Rev Stegal started the first press in Kenya and published the *Taveta Chronicle* in 1895, soon after the partitioning of the continent by colonial powers (between 1880 and 1913) and the establishment of administrations, settler authorities began to have a direct influence on the development of the media in Kenya. In 1901, Asian trader Alibhai Mulla Jeevanjee set up *The East African Standard* and later sold it to British businessmen, who were keen on using it to serve the White settlers community interests in the country (Abuoga & Mutere, 1988; Faringer, 1991; Mbeke, 2008; Mbeke, Okello-Orlale, & Ugangu, 2010; Ochilo, 1993).

The clamour for self-rule by the indigenous African population, starting from the mid-1920s to the 1950s, led to the development of several African language publications in the country. These were essentially vehicles for spreading the liberation gospel among the African communities, and ventilating their grievances (Mbeke, 2008; Mbeke et al., 2010). The concern then was not about professionalism, or the quality of the publications, but rather on their utilitarian value in mobilising African populations towards independence.

In Kenya, the government control of the media and practice remained tight under presidents Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel arap Moi. The Kenya Broadcasting Corporation was transformed into the Voice of Kenya (VOK) at independence and back again to its old status, when the pressure to liberalise the economy was brought to bear. It was mainly a government mouthpiece. Mbeke et al. (2010) noted that: “dissenting voices were shut out, while those in power got time on national radio and television to talk to citizens. Gradually, in the years following independence, the VOK transformed into a propaganda department for the state, hence a complete deviation from the purely developmental goals it was supposed to play in the fight against poverty, disease and ignorance” (p. 17).

Draconian laws curtailed press freedom and other forms of public agitation. The new leaders realised that influence and control over the flow of information was a precondition for stemming undue criticism, consolidating political power and ultimately, ensuring that the masses played only a passive role in national affairs. The history of the Kenyan media in the 1970s and the 1980s is, consequently, filled with episodes of state interference, harassment and torture of journalists. “This gave rise to media self-censorship where journalists gave certain stories a wide berth if they sensed that they would attract official anger. Media ownership at the time was restricted to the

government, with the handful private investors playing safe” (Mbeke, 2008, pp. 5-6).

The birth of multiparty democracy in 1991 had a unique role for the media in Kenya. The ownership base expanded, and media content became bolder. This progress has not, however, been accompanied by more progressive legislation to entrench media freedom in the country. The 1990s saw spirited attempts, mainly by the government, to create laws that would curtail, rather than expand, media freedom. All of them came to naught because of the vigorous resistance from civil society and the media. Since the 1990s, debate on the media has mainly centred on ethics, ownership, and content and regulation. The key players have included the civil society groups; media lobby groups such as the Kenya Editors Guild, MCK and the Kenya Union of Journalists (KUJ). The formation of media-focused civil society organisations such as the African Woman and Child Feature Service, the Media Diversity Centre and the Media Institute, has boosted lobbying to frustrate the passage of draconian laws that give the government undue control over the media in Kenya.

Independence, or journalistic autonomy in Kenya, is best articulated by the country’s code of conduct for the practice of journalism, Section One, which provides that: journalists shall defend the independence of all journalists from those seeking influence or control over news content. The code elaborates that journalists are duty-bound to gather and report news without fear or favour, and resist undue influence from any outside forces, including advertisers, sources, story subjects, powerful individuals and special interest groups.

It further directs them to resist those who would buy or politically influence news content, or who would seek to intimidate those who gather and disseminate news; that they should determine news content solely through editorial judgment and not the result of outside influence. Other provisions of this section of the code are that

journalists should resist any self-interest or peer pressure that might undermine their duty and service to the public; recognise that sponsorship of the news shall not be used in any way to determine, restrict, or manipulate content; and refuse to allow the interests of ownership or management to influence news judgment and content inappropriately (Mbeke et al., 2010).

2.4 Empirical Literature Review

This section looked at previous empirical studies related to lived experiences of reporting terrorism, structures that influence reporting of the same topic, and the ways in which the structures influence the freedoms of journalists reporting on the news beat. This review of literature was in line with the four research questions that form the scope of the research.

2.4.1 Lived experiences

As mentioned in Chapter One, previous studies in Kenya have focused on the content of the journalistic coverage of terrorism (end product), overlooking the professional and personal lived experiences of the journalists involved and how structural conditions impact on their freedoms/latitudes when reporting in the news beat.

For instance, some studies have focused on the lived experiences of various actors who are involved in terrorism such as survivors of terror activities (Aswani, 2020; Feinstein et al., 2018; Fremont et al., 2005); psychological impact of witnessing terrorism violence (Feinstein et al., 2018; Feinstein, Wanga, & Owen, 2015); lived experiences of journalists covering terrorism in the Middle East, India, and Sri Lanka (Langer, 2012); lived experiences of journalists covering mass shootings in the US (Petersen & Soundararajan, 2020); and the impact of terror experience on women and children in places such as Nigeria, Kenya and the Middle Eastern countries (Aswani,

2020; Fremont et al., 2005; Schmid, 2012; Spencer, 2012a).

Journalists who cover terrorism and terror-related activities bear witness to gross violence on fellow human beings, with severe consequences on their personal lives (Feinstein et al., 2018). The personal cost of reporting terrorism and terror-related events can range from emotional or psychological to physical harm – this at times can extend to the family and colleagues of the journalists. In some unfortunate cases, the ultimate cost of reporting terrorism is death, as was the case of some journalists reporting in the Middle East such as the London's *Sunday Times* correspondent Marie Colvin (Langer, 2012). In April 2018, nine journalists were killed in Kabul as they covered a terror event. A suicide bomber, disguised as a cameraman, blew himself up in a pack of the journalists (Horwitz, 2018). In addition, trauma (specifically, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, PTSD), physical injuries, are other personal costs that have been documented among journalists involved in the coverage of terrorism and related events (Feinstein et al., 2015; Feinstein et al., 2018).

Feinstein et al. (2018) carried out a study on the frequency and severity of trauma among journalists covering conflict in 18 countries, including Kenya's Al-Shabaab terror (specifically the Westgate Mall terror attack in 2013 in Nairobi's Westlands area), 9/11 attacks in New York City, Iraq and Syria war. The researchers, collecting data from 1998 to 2015 on these cases, observed higher frequency and severity of PTSD among journalists exposed to the threat of terrorism. Their study on the Kenyan context was purely quantitative. Feinstein et al. (2018) used a standardised tool to measure PTSD among the journalists in the 18 countries. In limitations to their study, they acknowledge that the empirical tool was uniform and overlooked local realities in different countries as well as personal experiences of the journalists involved. This validates the carrying out of the current research that stretches over 10

years, and recounts the actual experiences of reporting terrorism, and the impact of structural conditions on their freedoms when reporting. As such, therefore, this thesis builds onto existing knowledge by articulating the first-hand account of reporting terrorism and terror-related activities and documenting of personal the costs the journalists have borne as a result of covering terrorism and terror-related activities, especially those who have been embedded with KDF in Somalia. There have been no previous studies into the lived experiences of these journalists from this perspective.

Backholm and Idås (2015) conducted a web-based eight to nine months survey among 549 journalists who were employed by different media houses during or in the aftermath of the largest terror attack that struck Norway during their times of peace. Their study investigated how exposure to journalistic ethical dilemmas during the Oslo/Utøya terror attack in 2011 and subsequent work-related guilt were related to the development of posttraumatic stress (PTS) reactions. The study also found out the risk factors connected with the active role of journalists who had to make choices between various behavioral strategies during difficult terror reporting or similar work-related circumstances. Using the Pearson correlation as well as a series of linear regression analyses, the study found out that female journalists were more inclined to report ethical dilemmas than their male counterparts. Additionally, the study established that, the fact that a journalist was in the field reporting the terror does not relate to exposure dilemma. However, exposure to these dilemmas is most likely the results of long-term psychological impairment. On the other hand, work related guilt was found to be an important factor between exposure to ethical dilemmas and severity of PTS reactions. The research recommended possible trainings to journalist to best prepare them for dilemmas that relate with this kind of reporting.

Fowler (2007) embarked on an extensive survey of how the media in the UK reported the military attack in Afghanistan (in between September and December 2001), what was then referred to as 'Operation Enduring Freedom.' The study also incorporated the survey of both radio and newspaper reporting of the attack. It points out that the reporting of this attack provided a welcomed platform within which issues of feminist reporting are highlighted. In so doing, it highlighted the hypocrisies cited within the western media coverage on women rights. This study additionally, pointed out the unfortunate reporting of Afghan women as subjects rather than the agents of debates of the 'operation Enduring Freedom' attack. Even further to this, the majority of journalist reporting this attack did not recognize women as agents and their rights as women. This kind of coverage has severe implications especially in co-opting the discussions of women rights by politicians to justify military conflict.

Feinstein et al. (2018) conducted a retrospective analysis of a study carried out between 1999 and 2017 that investigated eight behavioral datasets of 684 frontline journalists. The study specifically examined the frequency and severity of symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in journalists covering conflict. The study captured several conflicts; migration crisis in Europe, state-sanctioned media intimidation in Iran, Kenya election violence/Al-Shabab terror, civil war in Syria, Mexico drug wars, 9/11 attack in New York City, and the civil wars in the Balkans. The study found out that a conflict reporter is one who is 40 years of age, is a male who is highly educated and very well exposed to conflict reporting. The major predictor of PTSD was a female journalist who was less educated. According to the researchers, PTSD was known to recur among frontline journalists who have experienced similar reporting and these can result to severe symptoms difficulties.

In 2012, Epkins, conducted 35 in-depth interviews targeting national security journalists who worked for the Washington, DC, ‘prestige press’. The study sought to find the journalists’ perceptions of reporting in a rapidly changing digital age especially from the inside of their work environment. To be specific, Epkins (2012) investigated the journalists’ use of web-based data in gather news information, how the new media is impacting their work, their views on declining rates of traditional media, and their know-how of the interplay of terrorist reporting and media coverage of issues in that arena. Regarding the interplay of media coverage and terrorist reporting, the findings posted a rather disparate, and surprisingly to say so. Many of the journalist who featured in the study either chose to deny or accept being mouthpiece for terrorists. On the other hand, many participants in this study acknowledged that the terrorists use of technology did affect their reporting. A majority of journalist interviewed also felt very much impacted by the emergence of the new media to the extent of some being rendered jobless while some saw it as somewhat ‘democratization of journalism’ (p. 30).

Lund and Olsson (2016) embarked on rather different approach to crisis management within a media house - under attack itself. They investigated the newsroom reporting during a breaking event, in their cases, the July 22, 2011, attacks in Norway while under attack themselves. The study investigates the challenges that online journalist faced when they covered the terror attack – under duress. More so, it found out how these journalists addressed those challenges. Lund and Olsson’s study was based on a larger project that included semi-structured interviews (25) with employees of the Norwegian Broadcast Corporation (NRK), TV2, and VG.

Lund and Olsson’s (2016) study found out that journalists, especially from VG struggled with their “own sense of shock and disbelief as well as a lack of organizational structure and leadership” (p. 369). The study also pointed out to lack of organizational

structure, this meant that, responsibility was placed on the shoulders of the journalists themselves. The journalists, to combat this, relied on the virtual organization where tasks and responsibilities were relayed. Additionally, the study found respectful interaction and emergency setup as key towards restoration of a normal media house setup. The authors also pointed out that coping mechanisms are a standout in such a crisis touching on a critical organization as the media. The authors also point out that these mechanisms range from expected to unexpected, that is, routine and habit and improvisation and bricolage respectively.

At the same time, and has been hinted previously in the statement of the problem, previous studies have concentrated on the end product (i.e. the news stories/narratives) of journalistic reporting of terrorism and related events. While these studies are, by no means unimportant, what has been lacking is a focus on the journalistic narratives centred on their lived experiences. There has been a focus on epistemological enquiry of the content that the journalists produce effectively, putting framing studies at the heart of research in reporting terrorism and related activities in Kenya, but also in other parts of Africa.

For instance, researchers who focused on terrorism reporting by groups such as the Boko Haram have in Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, Chad, and Benin, tend to lean on framing and content analysis of news narratives (African Union, 2015; Emmanuel et al., 2017). The situation obtains for studies looking into reportage of ISIS, now called ISIL in Libya and the Al-Shabaab in Somalia and the larger East African region (Emmanuel et al., 2017; Ileri, 2018a; Ogenga, 2012; Ogenga, 2020).

Overlooking of the lived experiences of journalists covering this violence can be seen as a concerning oversight, especially so because the Kenya-based journalists have consistently reported on terrorism and related events for more than a decade now

(Kimari & Ramadhan, 2017; START, 2020). Even before the threat of terrorism intensified on the Kenyan soil, the bombing of the American embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam concurrently in August 1998 received robust reportage by the Kenya-based journalists. In fact, this was the most lethal attack to be experienced in Kenya, that left more than 200 people dead and 4,000 others injured (START, 2020). Therefore, the lived experiences of the Kenya-based journalists covering such violence warranted investigation.

While the US embassy bombings were significant in both scale and impact, there have been other major terror and related activities such as the Westgate Mall attack in Nairobi in 2013, where 68 people died, and the Garissa University College attack in 2015, where 148 people, mostly students died (Kimari & Ramadhan, 2017; Wafula, 2014). Among other scholars, Ileri (2018a), Kiarie and Mogambi (2017), and Ogenga (2020) have used these attacks as reference points in content analysing and framing studies of media coverage of terrorism in Kenya. Scholars such as Mainye (2011) and Ruigrok and Van Atteveldt (2007) have focused on the framing of the same events by the international media and found that journalists crafted the stories of terrorism and related events in Kenya as tragedy, crime, evil, Islamic issue and illegal political leverage.

Other empirical studies, such as the ones carried out by Kiarie and Mogambi (2017), Media Council of Kenya (2014, 2016), as well as Ogenga (2012) actually found out that both local and international media gave much attention to terrorism and related news events in their reportage - media attention of an issue is measured by the size and time dedicated to it (Entman, 2003; Krippendorf, 2012). The Media Council of Kenya (2014) concluded that the media “has become implicated in the fight against extremism,

radicalisation and terrorism, especially when the war against terror often receives hyperbolic and sensationalist media coverage” (p. 22).

Kisang (2014) concluded that journalists should be concerned in the manner in which they portray terrorists and the military in Kenya, especially those embedded with KDF in the Somalia incursion. According to the findings of a news content analysis by Kisang (2014), journalists portrayed weakness of the security agencies involved in the fight against terrorism. At the same time, Kiarie and Mogambi (2017) conducted a study on how the Standard and the Daily Nation covered the Garissa University College terror attack. The scholars analysed 1, 142 articles on terror incidents between January 2015 and June 2015. The findings indicated a dominance of episodic frames (65% of articles were reported as news), while thematic frames were below 15%. The study concludes that the two dailies did not put much effort in analysing and doing in-depth coverage of terror incidences. With further findings indicating that the media only highlighted the magnitude of a terror incident. This study concurs with earlier findings by Kisang (2014), that the media mainly blamed the government for the terror attacks in the country. Furthermore, the Media Council of Kenya (2016) found that the government has been uneasy in sharing terror attacks information with the media on the grounds of national security. The council observed that this amounts to state censorship.

In Kenya, Aswani (2020) focused on the lived experiences of victims of terror attack where he studied the case of the Garissa University College attack of 2015. His study was concerned with the victims’ perceptions towards the Kenyan government communication on terrorism. Using interpretive phenomenological approach (Laverty, 2003; Van Manen, 1990; Weiss et al., 2019), Aswani established that victims of the terrorism attack viewed government communication as a form of doublespeak. He concluded that the lived experiences and perceptions of the terror victims were

communicated to them, anchored on religious opinions on life and death. Scholars such as Mbiti (1969) observed that the lived experiences and practices of Africans are dominated by religion, validating the findings by Aswani (2020).

The examined studies did not give focus to the lived experiences of journalists reporting on terrorism and related events. The attention of the studies, in this regard, has been on the stories that are generated from the news events. Therefore, this literature paves the way for research question 1:

RQ1: What are the lived experiences of the Kenya-based journalists who are involved in the coverage of terrorism and related events?

2.4.2 Structural influences

Journalism practice is influenced by structures inside and outside the profession (Reese, 2001; Tuchman, 1978; Zelizer, 1993). Structural influences affect the work of journalists in different ways and at different levels. Reese (2001) and Shoemaker and Reese (1996) outlined various levels of structures that influence the profession. For instance, the work of journalists is regulated by a set of formal laws that bind society and professional practice. Journalism practice is governed by a set of formal and other unwritten rules that control how information is gathered, processed and disseminated (Reese, 2001; Tuchman, 1978; Zelizer, 1993). These rules can take the form of routines and rituals as well as organisational and cultural protocols that inform how things should be done. Such rules - in their multifarious forms - determine the structural conditions under which journalism is practised. In this sense, structure in the present research is conceptualised as “an overt or covert system of interrelations between material or symbolic entities, within which human action takes place” (Bolin, 2016, p. 1973). The structural conditions in which journalists report terror, whether embedded

or not, are constantly changing and being renegotiated in response to violence and propaganda.

In Kenya, media freedoms were on a decline during the period under study, due to various influences. Since 2011, just a year after Kenya promulgated a new Constitution that elaborately enshrined this freedom as a human right, the country's media freedom's global ranking moved from position 71 to 100 in 2019 (Freedom House, 2019; Radsch, 2014; Reporters Without Borders, 2019). This indicates a worrying context for journalists based in the country, but also for the freedom of expression in general.

Press freedom is an important human right: it helps to ensure participation, transparency and accountability in the society. Diminishing of this right means democratic ideals such as free speech, plurality of ideas, robust debates on social issues in diverse channels of communication, as well as the independence and safety of journalists, remain at risk.

Previous studies on factors that influence the work of journalists in Kenya have focused on influences such as political control, legal and regulatory restrictions and commercial interests of media houses (Ileri, 2015, 2017; Mbeke, 2008; Nyabuga, 2015; Nyamboga, 2012; Obonyo & Owilla, 2017; Ochilo, 1993; Ugungu, 2015; Wasserman & Maweu, 2014). For instance, in a survey of the Kenya journalists, Obonyo and Owilla (2017) found that media laws and regulation are perceived as the greatest influence (85%) on the work of the journalists, followed closely by editorial policy (83%). These are followed by information access, journalism ethics and the availability of newsgathering resources.

The findings by Obonyo and Owilla (2017) are similar to those of Ileri (2015) and Nyabuga (2015), who cited organisational forces as the other major sources of

influences on the professional work of journalists in Kenya: editorial policies and media managers and owners bear the greatest influence on news selection decisions. In their study on the vulnerabilities of media freedom in Kenya, Mbeke et al. (2010) also reported organisational and policy frameworks as potential forces of influence.

Commercial influences have been studied extensively. For instance, Nyabuga (2015) agreed with Maweu (2014) and Wasserman and Maweu (2014), who observed that the five organisations that dominates the Kenyan media (Nation Media Group, Standard Media Group, Royal Media, Mediamax and Radio Africa) are commercial entities whose bottom-line is to maximise profits. These scholars argued that the media content that these houses produce reflects their goals as profit-making entities and that explains why there is a high prevalence of hyper-commercialisation. They concluded that market pressures silence media freedoms.

Mbeke (2008) and Nyamboga (2012) examined how legal influences bear on media freedom. For instance, Nyamboga (2012) found that case law and the reporting of court proceeding have a bearing on the journalistic freedoms. He stated that cases on defamation serve as deterrent for journalists, because of the hefty damages awarded against their media houses.

Ideally, journalists assigned to report terrorism negotiate the challenge without becoming the tool of terrorists or conduits of propaganda for the government (Perl, 1997; Zelizer & Allan, 2011). This ideal situation may not be the case in Kenya because the country's military has, on many occasions, co-opted journalists in their counter-terrorism activities, including embedding them in combat zones with the militants inside Somalia and along the Kenya-Somalia border (AFP & Barasa, 2013; Gettleman & Kulish, 2013; Mutambo & Hajir, 2015; Nation Team, 2013; START, 2017, Wafula, 2014).

Scholars such as Johnson and Fahmy (2009) and Olsen (2018) have found that freedom of the media is curtailed when journalists and their work become embedded in the security apparatus of a country. Drawing on experiences of journalists covering counter-terrorism activities such as the US war in Iraq and Afghanistan, these scholars found that the independence of those journalists was influenced by their attachment to the military.

Therefore, the above examples demonstrate that journalists' coverage of different news events presents different challenges that can potentially enhance or curtail their freedoms. However, little is known about how the coverage of terrorism influences the journalistic freedoms in Kenya's vibrant news ecology. This meant that as a relatively new phenomenon in the Kenyan journalism practice, there is a research gap on how the coverage of terrorism and related events influences the journalistic latitudes.

As such, there was a need to garner an in-depth understanding of how both formal and informal influences of reporting terrorism in Kenya shape media freedoms. This was triangulated with document analysis of the laws and policies guiding the reporting of terrorism in the Kenyan context, to complement our understanding of this problem. Thus, the goal of the current study was to bridge this research gap by undertaking a phenomenological investigation into the lived experiences of journalists, who have reported terrorism and related news events.

Scholars have previously studied structures that influence media freedom. At an individual level, journalists face numerous personal and professional challenges when assigned to report terrorist-related activities. According to Zelizer and Allan (2011), these challenges include personal safety and access to resources and training. Zelizer and Allan (2011) found that to report effectively in volatile conflict zones, journalists

need access to human and non-human resources, such as special gear, reliable locals (fixers) and knowledge of what to do and how to act in such an environment.

Support and resources to ensure journalists report fairly and accurately can be, and have been, provided by media organisations and other bodies such as the government and NGOs. For instance, KDF has occasionally embedded the Kenya-based journalists on several missions in Somalia since 2011 (Kimari & Ramadhan, 2017; Wafula, 2014). In this case, as found out by Johnson and Fahmy (2009) and Olsen (2018), the independence of the embedded journalists becomes problematic. In these cases, the US popularised the notion of embedded journalists, specifically the Department of Defence, during its war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Journalists were attached (embedded) with the troops during their invasion of Iraq, provided with logistical support and given guidelines on how to report while with the forces.

In Kenya, scholars have investigated structures that influence media freedom in the past. For instance, Obonyo and Owilla (2017) demonstrated that media laws and regulation are the greatest influence (85%) on the work of the journalists in Kenya, followed by editorial policy (83%), information access, journalism ethics and the availability of newsgathering resources, in that order.

Other factors that top the table of these perceived influences are feedback from the audience, editorial supervisors and higher editors, time limits and competing news organisations. Factors that the journalists said had the least influence on their work included pressure groups, politicians, friends, acquaintances and family, business people, military, police and state security, government officials and public relations. The researchers had asked the journalists to identify the influences from a random list. “Three out of five respondents (60%) said that they had complete or a great deal of freedom in their selection of stories” (Obonyo & Owilla, 2017, p. 5). The present study

seeks to build onto this knowledge by providing a deeper understanding of the attitudes of journalists who report terrorism and related activities.

As noted above, the findings by Obonyo and Owilla (2017) are congruent with another research conducted by Ileri (2015), who found that organisational level forces were the major influences on the professional work of the Kenyan journalists. Editorial policies and media managers and owners bear the greatest influence on news selection decisions. Both studies, conducted almost at the same time and during the regime of President Uhuru Kenyatta, however, seemed to place the influence of media law and regulations at different spots. While Obonyo and Owilla (2017) found that media law and regulations were at the top of the influences, Ileri (2015) differed sharply to score the influence at number four, after editorial policies, media ownership, and advertisers.

Examining organisational influences on media content, Nyabuga (2015) observed that the five organisations that dominate the Kenyan media (Nation Media Group, Standard Media Group, Royal Media, Mediamax and Radio Africa) are commercial entities whose bottom-line is to maximise profits. As such, he argued that the media content that these houses produce reflects their goals as profit-making entities. “Although they have expanded the public sphere and enriched the audience choices and experiences, the Kenyan media conglomerates are often interested in attracting audiences that are economically viable and thus lock out poorer segments of the population” (Nyabuga, 2015, p. 45). He recommended tackling the organisational nature of media that diminishes plurality of ideas in the marketplace. Plurality of ideas is a key issue, related to press freedom as articulated in Chapter One of this study.

Herman and Chomsky (1994) buttressed the interrogation by Maweu (2014), Nyabuga (2015), and Wasserman and Maweu (2014) in their notion of filters that media houses use to determine what ideas dominate the public sphere and what ideas are

locked out. The first filter is the organisational nature of the media where size, concentrated owners, the owner's wealth and profit orientation is the dominant force. The use of advertising as the primary income generator of the mass media and reliance of information provided by the government, business and 'experts' funded and approved by these primary sources and agents of power ensures that only certain views take the lead; sometimes flak is seen as a means of disciplining the media. Theoretically, the discourse renders credence to Marxist arguments that the economic base of the media houses influences content in a major way. Ireri (2015) and Obonyo and Owilla (2017) found that Kenyan journalists viewed themselves as objective, but Marx and Engels (1976, 2002) observed that while the media professionals consider themselves to be autonomous, their views reflect those of the controlling elite.

Observations by Hall (1986) and Nyamnjoh (2005) are that the conglomeration of the media houses has led to homogenisation of the content across the platforms. "Under the modern forms of monopolistic competition, more means more of the same - the direct opposite to the myth of marketplace competition and freedom" (Nyamnjoh, 2005, p. 8). This view originates from the constraints that the news workers navigate in trying to meet the organisational objectives. As such, Tuchman (1978) noted news workers end up constructing reality, rather than giving a picture of that reality and in effect, legitimate the *status quo*: "the process of making news is not accomplished in a void... professionalism serves organisational interests by reaffirming the institutional processes in which news work is embedded" (p. 8).

Presently, scholars have demonstrated that counter-terrorism strategies, such as laws and policies, can, and do affect media freedom when journalists are reporting terrorism negatively (McNamara, 2009; Pokalova, 2015). In Kenya, however, there is

a knowledge gap on the impact of counter-terrorism laws, policies and regulations on how journalists report news related to terrorism.

In Kenya, there has been a changing or tightening of the security law regime. Kenya, like many other nation states, has been legislating stricter security laws since the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1373 of September 2001 – just days after the 9/11 attacks in New York, Washington, DC, and Pennsylvania (Pokalova, 2015).

This position is confirmed in the Kenyan context by the work of Nyabuga (2016), who observed that between 2014 and 2015, Kenyan journalists were faced with serious challenges in the course of their work. As noted earlier, this period marked the climax of terrorist attacks in the country by the Al-Shabaab. Nyabuga (2016) concluded that threats, harassment, and intimidation, as well as legal and personal attacks on journalists, grew tremendously in this period. Many of these threats originated from the security organs of the country, he noted.

Kenya promulgated a new Constitution in August 2010 that contains an elaborate and far-reaching Bill of Rights, guaranteeing freedoms such as those of expression, free press and access to information. During the period under study, an enactment of restrictive regimes has affected the interpretation of laws vesting rights in journalists and access to information. Some of the provisions of these laws are punitive, carrying with them heavy fines and, or long terms of imprisonment for persons who flout them, and have been a subject of litigation.

The Security Laws 2014, in particular, has been the most contested legislation during the period under study. The laws were introduced in Parliament in December 2014 as a response by the government to counter terrorist attacks that had rocked the country in the preceding days. Two separate terror attacks in northern Kenya: one in a

bus travelling to Nairobi and another at a mining quarry, left 64 Kenyans dead and several others injured. The attackers specifically targeted Christians and spared Muslims.

The Security Laws Act of 2014 was an omnibus of several amendments touching at least 22 other laws related to the security of the country. The laws include Penal Code Act, Criminal Procedure Act, Evidence Act, Refugees Act, National Intelligence Service Act, Prevention of Terrorism Act, Public Order Act, Extradition (Contagious and Foreign Countries) Act, Criminal Procedure Code, Registration of Persons Act, Prisons Act, Firearms Act and Radiation Protection Act. Others are Rent Restriction Act, Kenya Airports Authority Act, Traffic Act, Investment Promotion Act, Labour Institutions Act, National Transport Safety Authority Act, Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Act, National Police Service Act and the Civil Aviation Act.

But structures are broad, and extend beyond laws and regulations. Technology is one of those structures that are currently reshaping the practice of journalism globally. The concept of alternative media is growing by the day, and the rising numbers of users of Internet technologies for alternative news is gaining ground. "... Blogs are seen by many as authentic means to get news and opinions that mainstream media would normally shy away from. This could be described as anti-traditional media sentiment and blogs, among other alternate platforms, are increasingly filling up the gap" (BAKE, 2018, p. 4). These platforms are seen as the alternate media in Kenya, where even the mainstream media use them to first air their news or rely on the same to gather information (Muindi, 2018).

Muindi (2018) found that Twitter was playing a crucial role in shaping the media agenda in Kenya. That research, which was largely qualitative, suggested that the news agenda of journalists in the *Daily Nation* tended to be set by the conversation

on Twitter. Altogether, there seems to be evidence from reviewed studies that online platforms can be significant inter-media agenda setting forums. This is because of the possibility to share content and break news as it happens. However, the reviewed literature has revealed three other sets of findings. In some studies, mainstream media have been found to set the agenda of the social networking sites. Other studies have revealed reciprocity between the traditional and digital media. Still, findings from other studies have failed to demonstrate evidence of inter-media agenda setting.

As noted, inter-media agenda setting is the fourth level of this theory (Funk & McCombs, 2017; Golan, 2006; McCombs, 2014). It offers an explanation to the shared news agenda, among the variety of media channels, with research focusing on the extent to which news reports transfer between various media platforms. At this level, Groshek and Groshek (2013) noted that agenda setting theory “is no longer conceived of as only a top-down process from (mainstream print and broadcast) media to audiences, but also a dynamic process” (p. 16) with citizens engaging online spaces to further media and policy agendas. Historically, inter-media agenda setting has attracted research across the variety of platforms, media systems, and geographical contexts (Golan, 2006; Groshek & Groshek, 2013; Valenzuela, Puente, & Flores, 2017). Yet, quite limited studies have been traced in Africa (Muindi, 2014; Visona, 2012), the wider context of the present study. Considering this seeming paucity of studies, the present literature review seeks to discuss the application of inter-media agenda setting in other contexts of the globe, drawing insights from the findings for the current study.

Ultimately, the review shows divergent results that can be categorised into four sets of findings. While some studies have demonstrated micro-blogging platforms as influencing traditional media news coverage (Harder, Sevenans, & Van Aelst, 2017; Meraz, 2011; Sayre, Bode, Shah, Wilcox, & Shah, 2010), some other studies have

revealed an inverse relationship, with traditional media setting the agenda of social networking sites (Groshek & Groshek, 2013; Lee, 2007; Ragas, Tran, & Martin, 2014). There is also evidence of a dynamic relationship where the agendas of digital media and traditional media enjoy a mutual reinforcement, none having a clear dominance over the other (Cui & Wu, 2017; Neuman, Guggenheim, Mo Jang, & Bae, 2014; Ragas et al., 2014). Still, some scholars have reported results that do not show any evidence of inter-media agenda setting (Skogerbø & Krumsvik, 2015). Consequently, this literature review on structural influences of journalistic freedoms leads to research question 2:

RQ2: What structures influence the work of the Kenya-based journalists, who report terrorism and related news events?

2.4.3 Impact of structural influences

Structures have a bearing on journalistic agency (Reese, 2001) At professional level, there were concerns that this thesis sought to answer with clarity and depth, concerning how journalists cover terrorism and terror-related activities. For instance, did the journalists reporting terrorism and terror-related activities deviate from established news gathering routines, rituals, and techniques? Did they do anything differently in reporting terror than they do in their day-to-day news reporting? Did they invoke different story-telling techniques, procedures, and strategies when reporting terrorism? Finally, how did this change their professional norms and values?

This study contended that context can, and does, shape media freedom because reporting unique events like terrorism (and terror-related activities) presents different realities in different contexts. This uniqueness gives rise to unique and specific understanding of media freedom. Therefore, an in-depth study is needed to provide in-depth insights into the study.

In Nigeria, Popoola (2012) observed that the terrorist group, Boko Haram, has posed a challenge to press freedom. Specifically, the author noted that the killing of journalists targeted by the insurgents in Nigeria is currently the biggest threat to journalism. Popoola (2012) further noted that because of this direct threat on the life of journalists, they are forced to censor their reportage of the group and its activities. Other scholars such as Adibe, Ike, and Udeogu (2017) observed that Nigeria has continued to use anti-press laws to curtail media freedom. In specific, Adibe et al. (2017) assessed the impact of Nigeria's cyber security law and conclude that it has been applied wrongly on several occasions with the intention of silencing journalists.

In Zambia, Pitts (2000) observed that due to the one-party political regime background, the attitude of the government towards the media has been authoritarian and views journalism as a tool for propaganda rather than as a watchdog institution in the society. As such, Makungu (2004) recommended that a sustained campaign from the civil society to ensure that policies enacted by the government are in line with the conventional tenets of media freedom.

As appreciated earlier, since 2011 when the Kenyan troops entered Somalia to fight Islamic militants, Al-Shabaab, Kenya has experienced more frequent terrorism attacks than any other time in its history. The entry of KDF into Somalia was a response to the frequent attacks on the Kenyan soil by the Al-Shabaab, especially along the border with Somalia and the coastal region. Since 2011, these attacks have increased, both in frequency and number of casualties (AFP & Barasa, 2013; Gettleman & Kulish, 2013; Mutambo & Hajir, 2015; Nation Team, 2013; START, 2017; Wafula, 2014).

Journalists from local and international media organisations have been involved in the coverage of the violence, both internally and also in Somalia. Locally, dozens of them specialising in the reporting of national security and politics, have occasionally

been deployed to cover the conflict between KDF and the insurgents. The journalists, who are often embedded with KDF, have published several reports from the battlefield since 2011 (Mukinda, 2017; Mutiga, 2016; Ngirachu, 2011). As it was noted at the beginning of this chapter, in war, information becomes a vital weapon, and this research is seeking to discover both the professional and personal challenges that these journalists have negotiated while reporting both acts of terrorism and counterterrorism initiatives.

Through content analysis, a number of studies have been done relating to how Kenyan journalists frame news in terror-events (Adhoch, 2014; Ileri, 2018a; Ogenga, 2012) and coverage of KDF in Somalia by those embedded within the army (Ogenga, 2012). While these studies have pointed at the tone of the reporting and space allocated to different actors, we do not yet know how terrorism has affected dimensions of media freedom such as independence (autonomy), plurality of ideas and safety among journalists reporting the violence.

Relatedly, Canel (2012) pointed out that terrorist attacks always put governments' reputation into question, thus requiring framing strategies to manage the situation. As such, governments, which are the key sources of information during terrorist attacks, skew the flow of information and opinions to its advantage, by strategically influencing media framing of such events (Canel, 2012). This points to the central role the media plays in communication and framing of the meaning of the events, which Norris et al. (2003) argued that governments expect the media to adopt "predominant frame" in reporting terrorism to influence simple and effective communication of its policy priorities, to tilt positive public discourse in order to counter terrorists' objectives. It has been argued elsewhere that such frames are widespread in countries where governments control majority of the media through

indirect ownership or direct power of censorship.

Other studies have observed that Kenyan journalists engage in censorship for fear of offending the government (Otieno, 2018). The areas that media personnel have been found to carry out a high degree of self-censorship include topics that are considered sensitive like criticism of the President, the Deputy President, and other prominent officials (Freedom House, 2016).

Furthermore, findings of the current study are congruent to previous studies in different parts of the world on how journalists reporting terrorism and related events cover the news. While the current study is conducted in a qualitative descriptive design, the findings on how journalists write news when covering terrorism is congruent to framing studies done in other parts of the world. Hence, the scenario in Kenya compares to earlier studies that established that governments influence news framing of terrorism and related events in a significant manner (Rodelo & Muñiz, 2018). This results into slanted framing, where journalists seem to favour one side in a dispute which is attributed to the interaction of real-world developments, cultural norms, and journalistic decision rules with the sometimes proficient and other times maladroit efforts of competing elites to manage the news (Entman, 2010).

Similar to the Kenyan situation from the findings of this study, a study by Du and Li (2017) on two major terrorist attacks in China and the US established that each country framed the attacks based on their ideological backgrounds and national interests. A similar trend was established in the depiction of the Persian Gulf war of 1991 and the presentation of the American foreign policy on terrorism after 9/11 TI, where the US media emphasised on threatening information and evocative imagery that increased the probability of the public supporting policies adopted by political leaders, principally the president (Gadarian, 2010; Gadarian & Alberson, 2014; Nacos & Bloch-

Elkon, 2011).

Since 9/11 TI, the US media has repeatedly associated terrorism with Islam in its war on terrorism frame (Yusof, Hassan, Hassan, & Osman, 2013). A number of studies have shown that frames in the media label Muslims as terrorists and most often than not, fail to identify non-Muslims as terrorists (Ahmed & Matthes, 2017).

A more recent study by Powell (2018) on how terror attacks are framed in the US involving an analysis of 11 TIs between 2011 and 2016, established that perpetrators of terrorism, who were non-Muslims are framed differently than those who are Muslims. This study seems to concur with an earlier one by Saeed (2007), who established a similar pattern in the British media. Kearns, Betus, and Lemieux (2019) on the other hand, established that any attack by a Muslim was likely considered a terror attack and would receive more space in the media. These findings confirm assertions by Ardèvol-Abreu (2015) who opined that in the process of framing an event, journalists choose to focus on a specific piece of information, while ignoring certain aspects, and in the process some reality perceived through the news will be more prominent than others.

In studying how African media frames terror incidence, Emmanuel et al. (2017) employed a content analysis to explain how Kenya and Nigeria frames Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab attacks. Their findings show that the media in Kenya and Nigeria mainly adopted a policy response frame. The study established a pattern of contagious framing where journalists adopt news frames from the West through a contagion effect (Epkins, 2011; Norris et al., 2003). These findings also confirm assertions that some media (in the south) are caught up in a trickledown effect where Western powerful media domiciled in the US, serve as a reference point from which they draw their frames and reporting routine (Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2008; Entman, 2003; Epkins, 2011).

This explains why some common phrases like Islamist and Jihadist, which are mostly used by major Western media, were found in the African media.

In the context of Kenya, there has been little or no investigation on the impact of these counter-terrorism initiatives on the agency and professional identity of the Kenyan journalists, where KDF have embedded several journalists since 2011 in Somalia. Journalists and their work are influenced by different forces that operate at different layers of the production of news. Shoemaker and Reese (1996, 2014) observed that there are different levels of factors, both inside and outside the media organisations that affect the practice of journalism.

At the same time, since 2011, there has been a tightening of the security law regime, aimed at combating terrorism in Kenya. The antecedent to this regime is that Kenya promulgated a new Constitution in August 2010 that contains an elaborate and far-reaching Bill of Rights, guaranteeing human freedoms such as those of expression, free press and access to information. But during the period under study, an enactment of restrictive regimes has affected the interpretation of laws, vesting rights in journalists and access to information. Some of these laws are punitive, carrying with them heavy fines and, or long terms of imprisonment for persons who break them, and have been a subject of litigation.

The Security Laws 2014, have been the most contested legislation during the period under study. The laws were introduced in Parliament in December 2014 as a response to terrorist attacks that had rocked the country in the preceding days. Two separate terror attacks in northern Kenya: one in a bus travelling to Nairobi and another at a mining quarry, left 64 Kenyans dead. The attackers in these two incidents specifically targeted Christians and spared Muslims (The Guardian, 2014). The terrorists targeted those who could not recite the Quran in the bus (The Guardian, 2014).

Coinciding with these events, allegations have emerged of unauthorised surveillance on journalists covering security matters. According to a joint report by the Human Rights Watch and Article 19 (2017), Kenyan journalists covering sensitive issues such as national security, terrorism or corruption are targets of State surveillance (Privacy International, 2017). This has both personal and professional implications. At personal level, it is a contravention of the Constitutional on the freedom of privacy (Article 32 of the Kenyan Constitution). At the professional level, this amounts to surveillance and, or policing of journalistic work that has a bearing on the autonomy of the media workers. The code of conduct for the practice of journalism in Kenya espouses independence in sourcing, processing, and disseminating information. As such, this literature review paves the way for research question 3:

RQ3: In what ways do the structures influence the freedoms of Kenyan journalists reporting on terrorism and related news events?

Media scholars such as Johnson and Fahmy (2009) and Olsen (2018) brought to our attention that there is a potential for the deletion of journalistic agency and reconfiguration of professional identity when journalists and their work become embedded in the security apparatus of a country. Drawing from experiences of journalists covering counterterrorism, such as the US war in Iraq and Afghanistan, these scholars have found that the agency and professional identity of the journalists is affected by the structural conditions of being attached to military.

There has been little or no investigation on the agency and professional identity of the Kenyan journalists, where KDF have embedded several of them since 2011 in Somalia. This study therefore plugs that knowledge gap by undertaking an in-depth study of the lived experiences of journalists embedded with KDF. The sample of the study has been purposively selected to enable the comparing and contrasting of the

experiences of the embedded and the non-embedded journalists reporting in Kenya (including the BBC), Al Jazeera, Reuters and AP.

At the same time, Dumain (2005), Schmid (2011), and Spencer (2012b) found that media reporting of terrorism and terrorists' activities can, and in fact does, intensify the impact of the vices. The symbolic violence of media reports brings the theatre of war into people's homes, spreading fear and panic among the population. Social media and digital tools can (and at times do) increase the potential for this harm. The New Zealand terror attack becomes a case in point where the impact of the violence was felt immediately across the globe, through the ubiquitous Internet and its social media applications (Dumain, 2005; McNamara, 2009; Nash, 2005; Silver, 2008; Spencer, 2012b; Zelizer & Allan, 2011).

In this regard, terrorism becomes a unique form of conflict whereby the way the media portrays the violence expands its reach and exacerbates the psychological harm. There is a debate among scholars on censoring media coverage of terror events, but the ability of everyday citizens to access and use social media platforms means such efforts would be fruitless. In this regard, the reporting of terrorism and terror-related activities cannot and should be seen as an ordinary news event for journalists. This thesis contends that the practice of journalism, and journalists themselves, are highly vulnerable to the strategies and tactics of terrorism and terror-related activities. As observed in the previous chapter, ideally, those assigned to report these events negotiate the complexities of terrorism and find ways of reporting without becoming the tool of terrorists or conduits of propaganda for the government (Perl, 1997).

In addition to being placed in potentially life-threatening situations, where they witness and report often horrific violence first-hand, the journalists negotiate personal and professional obstacles in order to bring news to their audiences. These obstacles

operate on many levels, resulting in a complex and, at times, hostile work environment that ultimately shapes how they go about their work, and what they can and cannot share with their audiences. Therefore, the literature review leads to research question 4:

RQ4: What implications do structural influences have on journalistic freedoms of Kenyan-based journalists' reporting of terrorism and related topics?

2.5 Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework briefly illustrated the current research and is diagrammatically represented by Figure 2.2. At the heart of the figure is the journalist reporting terrorism and terror-related activities. Other key actors in the research are the terrorists, the government and its agencies and the public. The conceptual map illustrates an ensnared journalist negotiating pressures from all the actors, and a seemingly subtle (subliminal) background of technology is shaping and re-shaping social interdependence among the actors in the research. Technology in itself is not just reconfiguring the job of the journalist but is also aiding both terror and prevention of terror tactics and strategies by the actors in this context.

On the part of the terrorists, there are a number of key items that they would like to enlist the help of the media, including publicity, legitimacy and justification as well as support of the cause. On the government and its agencies circle, authorities expect that the media would support its cause on preventing terrorism; coverage to advance the agenda of the government and not that of the terrorists; censor terrorists from media coverage as well as get information from media personalities on terror and related activities. But journalists expect to carry out their duties to the public in a safe environment where public interest takes precedence, and that journalist ideology is observed. This ideology is based on objective reporting, timely news that are ethically

produced and that their autonomy is guaranteed. It is these tensions of being a journalist in such a context that this research unravels to discover what it means to cover terrorism and terror-related activities in the Kenyan context. Figure 2.1 presents the conceptual framework, illustrating the interplay of terrorism, media, the public and the government.

Phenomenological Inquiry on Journalistic Freedoms In Kenyan Terrorism Reportage

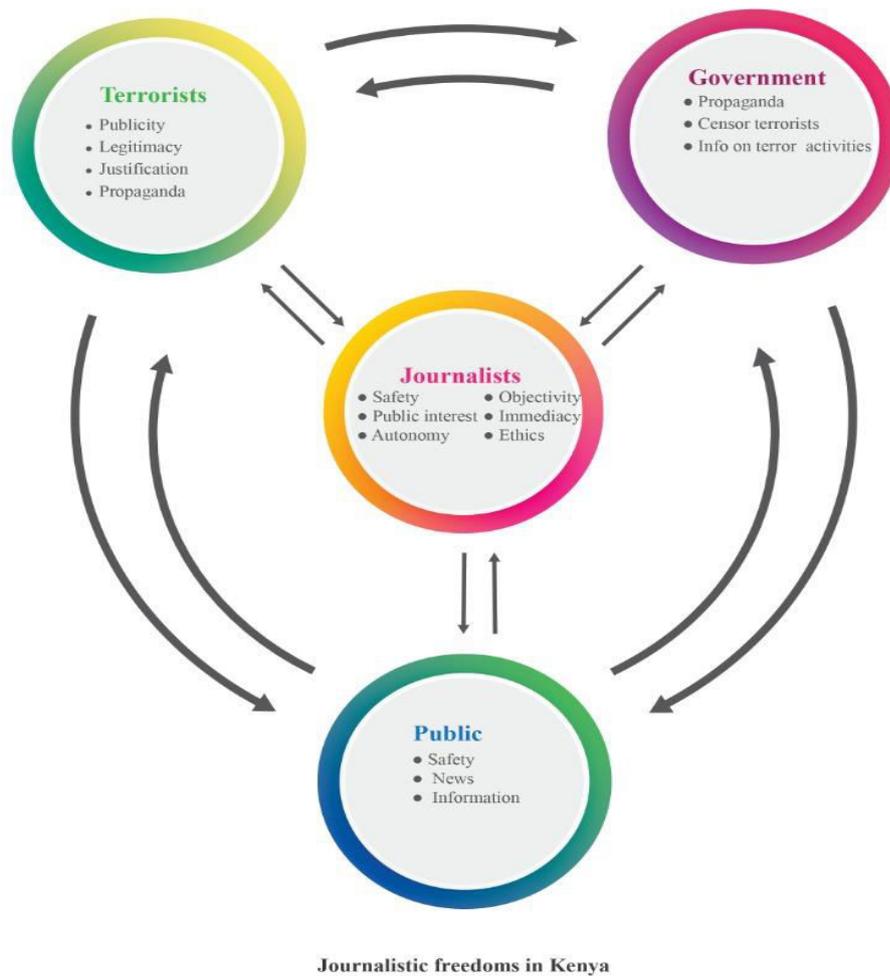


Figure 2.2: Conceptual Framework
Source: Author (2021)

2.6 Summary

This chapter has explored theories and literature regarding how acts of terrorism, as well as the action of reporting terrorism and counter-terrorism initiatives, could be affecting media freedom in Kenya. It has provided details on the interplay of professional identity, agency and structure as experienced when reporting a terror event, on the one hand, and media freedom, on the other. This chapter also explored the theoretical framework. The approach mainly draws on concepts of structuration theory, and using the concepts stated above to create newer understanding of the hierarchy of influences model amongst journalists reporting terrorism and terror-related activities. The following chapter now presents the methods to be used in gaining evidence to answer the research the questions and meet the objectives of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

As stated in the previous chapters, this research investigated journalists' coverage of terrorism in Kenya. The investigation was carried out through the lens of lived experiences of the Kenya-based journalists reporting terrorism within the theoretical contexts of the hierarchy of influences and structuration. To answer the four research questions and meet the objectives of the project, a qualitative descriptive design was employed. In this study, the researcher described bringing out the essence and meaning of reporting terrorism for freedoms among journalists reporting on violence and related events. Because of the complex nature of terrorism, a research design that investigates personal and professional lived experience of reporting the topic among Kenyan journalists was found to be ideal. A descriptive research design was thereby justified in this case (Creswell, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Dulock, 1993).

To ensure rigour, conventionally accepted research protocols were employed, ensuring that biases or errors were either completely removed or minimized. As discussed later in this chapter on the section exploring research trustworthiness (validity and reliability), these protocols included carrying out careful literature search in building probing questions to arrive at accurate findings. Other means of boosting the validity included member-checks among the interviewees, and peer-researcher briefing on the results to add onto clarity, provide additional insights, and further reduce bias (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Wimmer & Dominick, 2010).

Two qualitative research data collection methods: in-depth interviews and document analysis, were used. The data was then analysed and presented using qualitative content analysis techniques described later in the chapter.

The phenomenological approach, suitable for describing the lived experiences of people (Creswell, 2007, 2014; Finlay, 2009; Moustakas, 1994), was executed with the sampled journalists. Non-probability sampling technique, specifically purposive sampling was employed where the sample was chosen for relevance to the breadth of the issue, rather than how well it represented the entire population. This chapter broadly canvassed three main issues in line with procedures for carrying out phenomenological research, including data collection, analysis, and presentation. The following section of the chapter captured the philosophical foundations underpinning the current research followed by the phenomenological approach.

3.2 Philosophical Foundations Underpinning Current Research

3.2.1 Philosophical Paradigm

In the current study, a constructivist philosophical paradigm was adopted, which has ontological and epistemological assumptions as discussed below.

3.2.1.1 Ontology

Interpretivist research paradigm sought to answer the question of “what is the form and nature of reality and, therefore, what is there that can be known about it?” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 108). This paradigm assumes a subjective position that there is no single viewpoint of the world and therefore reality is internal to, and dependent on the individual’s perceptions and experiences (Guba, 1981; Johnson, 2008; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). This paradigm acknowledges that truth is relative amongst a population, and secondly, recognises that there is no single, observable reality, rather

than multiple realities and interpretations of a single event (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

3.2.1.2 Transactional and Subjectivist Epistemology

Epistemology is concerned with how we acquire knowledge. Wimmer and Dominick (2010) pointed out that there are four epistemological sources of knowledge, including tenacity (something is true because it has always been true), intuition (a priori approach that relies on theory rather than sense), authority (trusted sources) and science that assumes that truth is founded on objective analysis.

In constructivist philosophical paradigm, researchers do not find knowledge, rather, they create it, and that, respondents in the research process are seen as co-creators in the generating the new knowledge (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This is in contrast to a positivist philosophical paradigm that assumes that reality exists “out there” and that it is observable, stable, and measurable (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 9). As contented by Corman (2005) as well as Guba and Lincoln (2004), the epistemological assumption of the constructivist paradigm is both “transactional and subjectivist” and that the researcher and subject under inquiry are “interactively linked” (Guba & Lincoln, 2004, p. 26). Subsequently, a constructivist philosophical approach was a fitting framework for investigating the lived experiences of the Kenya-based journalists, who have been reporting on terrorism and terror-related activities. The philosophy was instructive in understanding how reporting terrorism influences journalistic freedoms at personal and professional levels.

3.2.1.3 Axiology

The axiological dimension in qualitative methodology appreciates that research is value-laden, meaning that the researcher is aware of personal biases in the process because as Cronin (2006) explained, “our evaluations depend on our point of view, our

culture, our age or sex, and that there cannot be absolute, universal, true value judgments” (p. 6). Because of this assumption, therefore, researchers are encouraged to declare their personal point of view, and or experiences, that have a bearing into the process. In this regard, the researcher is a former journalist with extensive experience in reporting and news writing, as well as interview and document analysis techniques. Based on the doctrine of reflexivity in qualitative research (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Guba, 1981), the researcher was able to apply these personal skills set to ensure validity of the findings by critically examining the data.

3.3 The Phenomenological Approach

As stated earlier, this research employed a phenomenological approach to investigate the lived experiences of the Kenya-based journalists involved in reporting terrorism and terror-related activities, and structural forces that influence their reporting of the news topic. Phenomenology is the study of a particular phenomenon focusing on the nature and meaning of that phenomenon (Creswell, 2007; Finlay, 2009; Moustakas, 1994). Phenomenology interrogates the lived experiences of a phenomenon or concept among several individuals. This explains why the approach was suitable for the present study, because involves documenting experiences of journalists covering terrorism and related events. Thematic meanings of this experience were then coded from the descriptive accounts through qualitative content analysis (Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994). Phenomenological researchers described their findings using the participants’ words in verbatim as a means of boosting the validity of the findings (Moustakas, 1994; Yin, 2011). It was, therefore, ideal for the current study, which captured the lived experiences of journalists involved in the coverage of terror-related activities.

Unlike the positivist paradigm, phenomenology is not interested in making generalisations because they alter the uniqueness of the events and how participants see

and make meaning of the context (Moustakas, 1994; Yin, 2011). This argument sits well with the constructivist philosophical paradigm that reality is subjective and internal to the participants in a research (Johnson, 2008; Neuman, 2011). Thus, the concern in the present research were themes and patterns that emerge from the collected data within the contexts of investigation, and which are detected via qualitative content analysis.

There are two broad types of phenomenology, hermeneutics and empirical (Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994). Hermeneutics is geared towards interpreting texts as experienced by different people. The second approach is known as empirical phenomenology that is focused on the descriptions of the experiences of the participants and less on the researcher's interpretations of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). The current study employed both types of phenomenology. First, the study described the experiences of journalists covering terrorism and second, it then interpreted the meaning of the data (text), which emanates from the participants' narratives in relation to contexts of inquiry.

3.4 Sampling Framework

As captured in the introduction of this chapter, the sampling process involved both breadth and depth of the participants' views. The sampling framework involved two steps: sampling for maximum variation (similarities and differences across sample) and sampling for data richness (depth and breadth of participant views), and sampling for match of scope of the study (sample to match the research objectives and questions). In view of this framework, two non-probability sampling techniques were employed – purposive (judgmental) and snowball. Purposive sampling involves choosing samples because they conform to a certain criterion. The criterion is described below, under step two of the sampling protocols. In snowball sampling, the qualified respondents were

contacted and asked for referral of fellow journalists involved in the coverage of terrorism and terror-related activities. It was not difficult for journalists to identify and refer the researcher to colleagues they had been working with in reporting terrorism and related news events.

3.4.1 Step One: Sampling for Maximum Variation and Data Richness

Judgment and quota techniques of purposive sampling were employed. Under judgment sampling, members conformed to certain parameters (described below) whereas under quota sampling, the characteristics was that they are drawn from the population of the mainstream media houses that subscribe to a professional code of conduct. The starting point for this sampling was the journalists who first reported on terrorism in various parts of the country since 2011 to 2019 and embedded with KDF in different locations in Somalia.

As mentioned earlier, since this research falls under non-probability sampling procedure, factors such as sub-groups and cost issues were used to arrive at the sample size. However, an ideal size for a phenomenological study was a key consideration in arriving at the ultimate sample. Finally, 28 participants were interviewed in line with previous phenomenological studies. Ultimately, the research paid more attention to depth and saturation levels from the participants as opposed to the sheer numbers of the sampled population. Hence, the concern was centred on depth, clarity and nuanced responses that painted deep-seated insights on how journalists experience and cover terrorism in Kenya, and how structural conditions impacted on their freedoms. In this regard, saturation of responses signalled and became an indicator of the end-point of the sample.

3.4.2 Step Two: Sampling for Match of Scope of the Study

Under judgment sampling, the selected journalists conformed to the following parameters and in line with the study objectives and research questions:

1. They have consistently reported on terrorism and terror-related events since 2011, both in Kenya and in Somalia.
2. The journalists were drawn from the mainstream media houses that are based in Kenya. Mainstream media is governed by a professional code of conduct as well as in-house culture of gate keeping. Bloggers and alternative media personnel, who do not subscribe to a professional code, were excluded.
3. Those journalists who have been embedded with KDF in Somalia for at least 14 days were included. Journalists flown to Somalia and returned on the same day or the next, that is, the touch-and-go participants, were excluded.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

Two data collection techniques: in-depth interviews and document analysis - were used in this study. The primary data collection method was in-depth interviews, while document analysis formed the secondary technique in gaining evidence to support information from the former. In-depth interviews gathered data regarding lived experiences, structural influences, and the implications of the identified structural forces on journalistic freedoms of those reporting on terrorism. On the other hand, document analysis complemented evidence from the in-depth interviews in line with the study's four research questions.

3.5.1 In-depth Interviews

In-depth interviews delve deeply into hidden interpretations, views, understandings and motivations in attempting to answer the research questions

regarding the lived experience of covering terrorism by the journalists and the structural influences that enhance or constrain their reporting of the topic (Creswell, 2014; Kumar, 2014; Morris, 2015; Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Silverman, 2011; Uwe, 2014). Unlike standardised and structured interviews, in-depth interviews aim at developing rich, deep and thick descriptions of a phenomenon. As Rubin and Rubin (2012) observed, these interviews “... let us see that which is not ordinary on view and examine that which is often looked at but seldom seen” (p. xv).

As such, in-depth interviews were a fitting research procedure to bring to the fore the nuances and depth of making news in terror and counter-terror environment. “Rather than stripping away context, reducing people’s experiences to numbers, in-depth interviewing approaches a problem in its natural setting, explores related and contradictory themes and concepts, and points out the missing and the subtle, as well as the explicit and the obvious” (Rubin & Rubin, 2012, p. xv).

In-depth interviews were conducted with 28 journalists from the local and international media houses. The interviews were conducted from July 2020 to October 2020. On average, the interviews lasted about 60 minutes – some of the interviews were done online while others were conducted physically from the journalists’ offices and other meeting places that conducive such as their homes and hotels. The interview questions revolved around the four contexts of investigation: (a) lived experiences of journalists covering terrorism and related news events, (b) structural forces that influence the work of those reporting on terrorism, (c) ways in which structural forces influence freedoms of journalists covering terrorism, and (d) the implications that the structural forces have on freedoms of Kenyan-based journalists covering terror-related events. See Appendix A, for the specific interview questions. These questions led the

researcher to a textural and structural description of the phenomenon of reporting terrorism and related events by the Kenya-based journalists (Creswell, 2007).

Rubin and Rubin (2012) introduced the notion of “responsive interviewing” that implies that the researcher is able to probe further particular responses from the interviewee. This is a sharp difference from quantitative research where the questions are pre-determined and cannot be changed while gathering the data. “Responsive interviewing emphasises the importance of working with interviewees as partners, rather than treating them as objects of research” (Rubin & Rubin, 2012, p. xv). In this case, the interviewees are termed as “conversational partners”. This is in line with the philosophical framework of the research – social constructivism – where both the researcher and subjects are seen as co-creators of knowledge.

The in-depth interviews involved three stages adopted from the model by Rubin and Rubin (2012) who formulated a three-stage approach of carrying out in-depth interviews including: 1). Asking the main questions, probes, and follow-up questions. In stage one, “main questions are related to the overall research problem and structure the interview; probes help manage the conversation and elicit detail; and follow-up questions explore and test ideas that emerge during the interviews. Follow-up questions are critical to the model because they create the interaction with the interviewee; they respond to what the interviewees have said” (Rubin & Rubin, 2012, pp. xv-xvi).

In their model, Rubin and Rubin (2012) argued that for researchers to learn something in-depth from other people’s point of view, one should “choose interviewees who are knowledgeable about the research problem, listen carefully to what they tell you, and ask additional questions, stimulated by their answers, until you really understand them” (p. xvi). In the present research, the interviews were conducted with

28 journalists involved in covering terrorism and related events. As appreciated before, this is an ideal number for carrying out phenomenological research.

3.5.2 Document Analysis

To triangulate the findings of this study, document analysis was used as a secondary data collection technique as noted earlier in this chapter. Document analysis is a qualitative method of gaining evidence from texts that is common among researchers of culture, media, sociology, and philosophy (Flick, 2015; Karcic, 2006; Silverman, 2010). This makes it a relevant method in the current study, where in-depth interviews are triangulated with an analysis of various documents that are relevant to the research problem. The analysis mines data from various laws, policies, and regulations on terrorism, as well as the code of conduct for journalists in Kenya. As identified in chapters one and two, there is a litany of laws and regulations covering how journalists report terrorism that could shape their lived experiences. Other documents such as military guidelines, handed out to the embedded journalists and the MCK regulations on the coverage of terrorism were also analysed.

Scholars such as Flick (2015) and Silverman (2010) regarded document analysis as method of mining data from texts such as newspapers, documents, textbooks, magazines and briefs that researchers use to answer a variety of questions. McKee (2003) looked at the analysis as a way of making an educated guess at some of the likely interpretations that might be made of a text. The analysis is procedural: Stern (1996) observed that textual analysis is a systematic approach to understanding a text.

In the analysis of a text, there are three steps, including the identification of the textual elements (the parts or literary attributes), the construction of meaning (the whole, a sum of parts), and the deconstruction (the unsaid assumptions that challenge singular meaning). The analysis also offers snippets into the affective domains of texts

where researchers seek to understand the emotional linkages that texts pose (Flick, 2015; McKee, 2003; Stern, 1996).

In document analysis, the authenticity and validity of the text, as well as the veracity of the facts embodied are the main concerns of the researcher (Karcic, 2006). Authenticity attempts to determine the origin or authorship of the text, its original form, in case there are multiple forms of the same. The meaning of the text is determined by analysing the content where different approaches are employed. The analytical tools that Karcic (2006) considered critical in this case include content analysis, analysis of linguistic forms, genre, text organisation, rhetoric, discourse, lexicography, structure and the cultural role of the text. In the present study, content analysis is used to make sense of the data.

Flick (2005) detailed what he termed as “basic questions” (p. 178) when carrying out a document analysis. These basic questions were used to draw out concepts that are related to research questions in the current study. These are:

1. What is the issue here? Which phenomenon is mentioned?
2. Who? Which persons/actors are involved? Which roles do they play? How do they interact?
3. How? Which aspects of the phenomenon are mentioned? (Or not mentioned?)
4. When? How long? Where? Time, course, place.
5. How much? How strong? Aspects of intensity.
6. Why? Which reasons are given or can be reconstructed?
7. What for? With what intention, to which purpose?
8. By which? Means, tactics, and strategies for reaching their goal.

Researchers conducting document analysis apply different methods to interpret, or make this “educated guess”, such as surveys and interviews. This is so because

different methodologies will give a researcher different answers, even for the same question and this makes the understanding of the text much more comprehensive and insightful. As appreciated earlier, in the current study, the researcher used in-depth interviews with the sampled journalists to make sense of the world of their understanding of the laws and rules of reporting terrorism; and gain insights into how they relate to these laws.

Earlier textual approaches as recorded by Stern (1996) were criticised for ignoring the reader of the text and focusing purely on the text as the element of research. Under the reader-response theory, critics discarded “the notion that the text is the only legitimate object of inquiry, turning to cognitive psychology to learn about mental schema or script. Readers and the text cannot be set apart from either each other or the culture that sustains them. Rather, greater understanding of the text requires more, not less, attention to texts” (p. 63). This boils down to the question “who reads what how?” where Stern (1996) underscored the importance of the “what”.

3.5.2.1 Procedures for Document Analysis

Qualitative content analysis was used to make sense of the various texts that this study examined. A detailed procedure is explained in later sections of this chapter. However, Stern (1996) noted that the first step in document analysis is the identification of the textual elements that involves naming the literary attributes. This is followed by the construction of a provisional meaning that involves categorising the attributes and finally the deconstruction of meaning that exposes the cultural assumptions that both sustain and subvert it.

Under the identification of attributes, language devices are at play, and it is what the research disentangles to make sense of the written text. Characters and plot are also investigated in a systematic manner. In step two, the researcher attributes meanings to

the characters and plot development within the text, while deconstruction of meaning occurs at the final stage, where the researcher seeks to disassemble the simple notion of a single meaning and uncovers assumptions lying underneath the text: “its value lies in the power to strip away placid surfaces and reveal the subversion, suppression, and hierarchical power struggles that bubble underneath. Scepticism about a single ‘right’ interpretation arises when one pulls apart binary oppositions to reveal the privileging of the dominant term at the expense of the repressed one” (Stern, 1996, p. 67).

One of the key advantages of using document analysis as a mode of research is that it is cheap, and a researcher can mine a wealth of information from text. But the findings of the research cannot be generalised, meaning that the results cannot be replicated. Also, the fact that there are different interpretations to a text may attract criticism. These concerns have been addressed in the delimitations to the methodological approach of this study.

3.6 Research Procedures

For the present work, a three-point systematic procedure for conducting phenomenological research was followed as proposed by Moustakas (1994). The process begun by the researcher identifying a problem and determining if a phenomenological approach was best suited in what Moustakas (1994) called “problem and question formulation” (p. 15). As observed by Creswell (2007) and Moustakas (1994), a research problem that is best studied through this method is one that requires the contributions and understanding of several participants shared experiences with a phenomenon. This held true for the current project where journalists directly involved in the coverage of terrorism, were the study’s participants.

The second procedure is what Moustakas terms as “the data-generating situation”. In this stage, Moustakas (1994) observed that “researchers start with

descriptive narrative provided by subjects, who are viewed as co-researchers... We query the person and engage in dialogue, or we combine them both” (p. 15). Here, in-depth interviews with the sampled journalists were used to generate the descriptive accounts, and was complemented by the relevant document analysis materials, for example, those that touched on various laws, rules and regulations governing government reporting of terrorism and related events.

The last stage involved data analysis where the narratives were “scrutinised so as to reveal their structure, meaning configuration, coherence and clustering” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 16). The emphasis was on the study of the configuration of meaning involving both the structural conditions and how they impact on journalistic freedoms.

Phenomenological researchers use data collection procedures similar to non-phenomenological studies. These include multiple in-depth interviews with the participants (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2011). Literature suggests that the ideal number of interviewees range from 5 to 25 (Moustakas, 1994; Polkinghorne, 1989). As such, the current study intended to discover the experiences of 25 journalists – however, the level of saturation ultimately determined the number at 28. Saturation here meant that the views of interviewees become similar after reaching a certain threshold.

In gathering the research data corpus, the journalists were asked two general questions related to their experiences of the phenomenon of investigation, and the contexts or situations that influenced or affected their experiences of the phenomenon. These two questions, according to Creswell (2007) and Moustakas (1994), lead the researcher to a textural and structural description of the phenomenon.

The first question was meant to describe the lived experiences of the journalists and its implications on the freedom of the media. The second question built knowledge

regarding the structural contexts of covering the phenomenon of terrorism and justified through document analysis. In the empirical phenomenology, data analysis included synthesising of the significant statements from the participants. These included profound sentences and quotes that described the journalists' experiences. Hence, it's this information that assisted the researcher to complete the last two steps: writing a textural description (a description of the participants experiences) and structural description (description of the context that shapes how the participants experienced the phenomenon).

3.6.1 Demographics of Participants in the Research

Before the interviews started, the interviewees answered a brief questionnaire that captured the demographic information. Thus, from the 28 participants, most of the participants in this research were male (18) of a mean age of 35 years and Christian (65%). There are fewer female journalists reporting in the terrorism and related violence beat (10). Most of the participants hold a designation of reporter (11), having been in the industry for between five and 10 years. These are highly trained professionals, with the majority holding a bachelor's degree (14) and a considerable figure – 4 - having attained a master's degree. There were no Ph.D. or certificate holders in the sample. Most of the journalists trained in communications, mass communication or media studies.

The Kenya-based journalists who participated in this study work for international news agencies (13) and the others are drawn from local media outlets (15). All these stations have a footprint on the Internet (100%), besides the physical television, radio and print media platforms. Participants drawn from the television stations accounted for 40% (11) of the sample, while those in the print accounted for a

similar percentage. Radio journalists made 20% (5) of the sample. These media platforms are mainly private owned (24).

3.7 Pilot Study

A pilot study was carried out to ensure that the instruments of data-collection and protocols were adequately designed. A convenient sample of 5 journalists was used during this stage (du Plooy, 2013; Wimmer & Dominick, 2010). The 5 journalists met the three-point criterion but were also known to the researcher. The aim of the pilot study was to clarify the interview guide.

During the pilot study, some problematic issues were identified and were adequately addressed before the main study. These included the ambiguous and the repeated questions. Consequently, some interview questions were eliminated, while others were redrafted to ensure competency and rigor in data-gathering, for the purpose of achieving the study objectives.

3.8 Data Analysis Plan

Qualitative content analysis was employed in analysing data. Previous studies have used this technique to analyse phenomenological interviews data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Moustakas, 1994). Content analysis is a method that may be used with either qualitative or quantitative data, and in inductive or deductive way, depending on the purpose of the study (Altheide, Coyle, De Vriese, & Scheneider, 2008). In the present study, qualitative content analysis was employed inductively, meaning that the research explored theory rather than tested the same using pre-determined variables. This approach is deployed in this study where concepts of structure, agency and professional identity are explored using the hierarchy of

influences theory to better understand journalistic practices and cultures when reporting terrorism.

Using content analysis qualitatively for data analysis has a significant departure from a quantitative one interested in understanding frequencies of certain frames (Krippendorff, 2012). Here, the concern of the research is not in the frequency of certain predetermined themes rather than in understanding and describing meaning that the content bears (Altheide et al., 2008). The sources of data appropriate for qualitative content analysis are texts, to which meanings are conventionally attributed: verbal, discourse, written documents and visual representations. In the current research, data mined from the in-depth interviews was content analysed, qualitatively. The technique is regarded as ideal when dealing with large amounts of data and it is also inexpensive (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Moustakas, 1994). Qualitative researchers such as Elo and Kyngäs (2008) observe that the qualitative content analysis is used in cases where there are no previous studies dealing with the phenomenon, just like is the case with the present research.

3.8.1 Procedures of Data Coding

This research followed procedures of qualitative content analysis as proposed by phenomenological researchers (Bergerf, 2000; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Moustakas, 1994). According to the protocols of the analysis, the process was split into three stages: preparing, organising and reporting. Rubin and Rubin (2012) have also elaborated on a similar analysis, advancing a seven-step sequence to make sense of the interview data. As such, the present research used the Creswell and Creswell (2018) and Elo and Kyngäs (2008) model because of their involvement in conducting research of this nature around lived experiences of people, as opposed to Rubin and Rubin's (2012) strategy that is general to all types of in-depth

interviews. There are, however, no fundamental differences in these two approaches of data analysis.

In the preparation stage, audio recordings were transcribed with consistency with the field notes. These were later saved in both word and Portable Document Format (PDF). In the approach by Creswell and Creswell (2018) and Elo and Kyngäs (2008), words are distilled into fewer content-related categories, themes and patterns. It is assumed that when classified into the same categories, words, phrases and the like share the same meaning (Cavanagh, 1997; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The aim of qualitative content analysis is to attain a condensed and broad description of the phenomenon, and the outcome of the analysis are concepts or categories that described the phenomenon of reporting terrorism in Kenya and in line with the four research questions. The main feature of qualitative content analysis is that the many words of the text are classified into much smaller content categories (Weber, 1990).

The organizing of the qualitative data involved three stages: open coding, creating categories, and abstraction. Open coding involved writing notes and headings in the text of the transcripts while being read. The written material was again read through, and as many headings as necessary were written down in the margins to describe all aspects of the content. The headings were then collected from the margins on to coding sheets where categories were freely generated.

The purpose of creating categories was to provide a means of describing the lived experiences of reporting terrorism and related events; as well as to increase understanding and generate knowledge on how structural conditions impacted on journalistic freedoms. Creswell and Creswell (2018) and Elo and Kyngäs (2008) observed that when formulating categories in qualitative content analysis, the researcher comes to a decision, through interpretation, as to which things to put in the

same category. Research four questions guided the process of putting together similar categories. The data organised into themes was further guided by literature and theory that was generated from the research questions. Saldana (2011, 2013) considered a theme to be an extended phrase or sentence that identifies what a unit of data is all about and what it means.

After the open coding, the list of categories was grouped under higher order headings. This was meant to reduce the number of categories by collapsing those that are similar or dissimilar into broader higher order categories. Each category was named using content-characteristic words such as surveillance, journalistic autonomy, safety, access to information and ethics. Sub-categories with similar events and incidents were put together as categories and categories were grouped as main categories that formed themes.

3.8.2 Data Interpretation Paradigm

The present research data interpretation paradigm is guided by social constructionism (Galbin, 2014), and involved two level analysis and interpretation (Saldana, 2011, 2013). The qualitative interpretive paradigm speaks to how the data was analysed and interpreted to answer the research questions. Two-level coding process was employed: firstly, themes were generated from categories and codes winnowed from the data; and at the second level coding, theory and literature were used (Saldana, 2011, 2013). To authenticate the findings, verbatim quotes from the interviewees and document analysis are used where necessary in the chapter

In the empirical phenomenology procedures, data analysis included synthesising of the significant statements from the participants. These included profound sentences and quotes that described their experiences. From this information, the last steps were completed -- writing a textural description (a description of the

participants experiences) and a structural description (description of the context and structures that shaped how the participants experienced the phenomenon of reporting terrorism).

3.9 Tests of Validity and Reliability

A number of steps were taken to ensure that the current research was trustworthy. These comprised tests of validity and reliability (Guba, 1981; Guba & Lincoln, 2005). To guarantee this, the researcher appropriated the strategies suggested by Guba (1981) and Guba and Lincoln (2005) who advanced a framework for naturalistic researchers to ensure quality in their work. Other scholars, such as Baxter and Jack (2008), have reproduced the framework. Guba's (1981) framework includes four main features: "truth-value (internal validity also known as credibility), applicability (external validity also known as applicability or transferability), consistency (reliability test) and neutrality (objectivity also known as conformability)" (p. 79). Guba (1981) developed "the validity and credibility tests" (p. 79) for quality assurance under the following definitional terms:

1. Credibility/Truth Value/Internal Validity Test: How can one establish confidence in the truth of the findings of a particular inquiry for the respondents with which and the context in which the enquiry was carried out?
2. Applicability/Transferability/External Validity Test: How can one determine the degree to which the findings of a particular inquiry may have applicability in other contexts or with other subjects/respondents?
3. Consistency/Reliability Test: How can one determine if the findings of an inquiry would be consistently repeated if the inquiry were replicated with the same or similar subjects (respondents) in the same context?
4. Neutrality/Conformability/Objectivity: How can one establish the degree to

which the findings of an inquiry are a function solely of the subjects (respondents) and conditions of inquiry and not of the biases, motivations, interests, and perspectives of the inquirer?

The researcher has elaborately discussed each of the tests below in details, demonstrating how quality was assured in the entire enquiry.

3.9.1 Credibility

The credibility (internal validity or truth value) of constructivist research is achieved by answering the question: “How can one establish confidence in the truth of the findings of a particular inquiry for the respondents with which and the context in which the enquiry was carried out?” (Guba, 1981, p. 79).

To guarantee credibility, the researcher responded to this model by providing rich data regarding terrorism and journalistic freedoms (Baxter & Jack, 2008). This was written clearly and concisely. At the same time, the researcher developed the objectives and questions of the research guided by extant literature and theory. Purposeful sampling strategies were employed to ensure that data collected was a correct match to the research scope. Other strategies included collection and managing data systematically, analysing data correctly, triangulation of data sources (multiple perspectives) and reducing social desirability during interviews. The data interpretation was also shared with the participants (member-checking). This is in line with the protocols of guaranteeing that the interpretation is an accurate reflection of the collected data. Baxter and Jack (2008) explained that participants should have the opportunity to discuss and clarify the interpretation and contribute new or additional perspectives on the issues under study. This was done during the second round of interviews with the participants.

3.9.2 Transferability

This refers to “the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts with other respondents” (Anney, 2014, p. 277). The major concern about qualitative research has been whether the studies can be applied to a wider population in what is called “generalisation” (Merriam, 1998). However, in place of generalisation, qualitative researchers are more concerned with “transferability” which Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that a researcher must ensure by providing adequate information regarding the context and participants for future researchers, who may want to conduct a similar study.

As such, the findings of the current study cannot be generalised to the larger population of the Kenya-based journalists, who cover terror and related violent events, but sufficient details about the nature of the enquiry have been given to provide a holistic understanding of the experiences of journalists covering terrorism, as well as theoretical structural influences, which impact on their work. The researcher also provided adequate information regarding the context and participants for others who may want to conduct a similar study.

3.9.3 Confirmability

Confirmability is a term used by qualitative researchers in place of objectivity. Bryman (2012) noted that confirmability assures that the research has not been swayed or influenced by the personal biases or inclinations of the researcher. Anney (2014) argued that confirmability is the level to which the findings of a research can be corroborated by other researchers and it is how we ensure that the observations are factual and not part of the researcher’s imagination.

Besides carrying out a pilot study as elaborated earlier to clarify the research instruments, other steps taken in this study included the triangulation of methods,

theoretical and sampling protocols (du Plooy, 2013). At the methods level, in-depth interviews are combined with analysis of various documents that informed the lived experiences of the sampled journalists. At the theoretical triangulation, the researcher employed structuration meta-theory and the hierarchy of influences to explore the structural forces that shaped journalistic freedoms when reporting terrorism and related news events. Sampling triangulation was achieved by the combination of both purposive and snowballing techniques that ensured that the sample best matches the characteristics needed for this research (du Plooy, 2013; Wimmer & Dominick, 2010).

To enhance trustworthiness in data collection, analysis and presentation of the results, the different stages of the process were described in sufficient detail so that the readers could have a clear understanding of how the procedures were carried out, as well as the strengths and limitations of the different research protocols employed. Specifically, to increase credibility of the findings, the researcher endeavoured to demonstrate how well the themes and patterns that emerged covered the data collected from the 28 participants.

Also, to increase the reliability of the study, the researcher demonstrated a link between the results and the data. This was achieved by describing the analysis in as much detail as possible when reporting the results. Appendices and tables were used to demonstrate links between the data and results to enable someone else to follow the inquiry. Authentic citations further help the readers understand from where or from what kind of original data themes and patterns are formulated, hence increasing trustworthiness of the entire study.

3.9.4 Reflexivity

Creswell (2014) defined reflexivity to mean how researchers “reflect about how their biases, values and personal background, such as gender, history, culture and

socioeconomic status shape their interpretations formed during a study” (p. 295). It is the “active acknowledgement” by a researcher of their personal bias, and how their actions or inactions eventually influence the interpretation of findings (Horsburg, 2003). Various scholars such as Anney (2014) encouraged qualitative researchers to keep reflexive documents such as a journal in which all activities and personal reflections are recorded. Horsburg (2003) noted that reflexivity might be established by the use of first person to demonstrate a personal involvement in the process—an aspect that I have demonstrated in the course of this inquiry.

To demonstrate reflexivity, these protocols were used: thoughtful reflections, maintaining field notes and peer-examination of the data and double coding strategies. Baxter and Jack (2008) recommended double coding as a process where “researchers may choose to implement a process of double-coding, where a set of data are coded, and then after a period of time the researcher returns and codes the same data set and compares the results” (p. 556). This was carried out severally with the help from my supervisors. Creswell (2013, 2014) also argued that researchers ensure confirmability by clarifying their personal biases, prejudices, past experiences, and orientations that influence how they are likely to interpret data. In this research, I outlined that I am a former journalist who has interacted with some of the participants before in the course of journalistic work. In my considered view, this did not bias the process of data collection, interpretation, or other protocols.

Bergerf (2000) suggested other strategies for ensuring reflexivity. They include repeatedly interviewing the participants for clarification, forming a peer-review club and “back talk” groups, keeping a research journal to record research process to the detail, and also for “self-supervision” (p. 222) purposes and creating an audit trail. In the current research I applied the use of audit trails. The audit trail included raw data

(field notes, recorded interviews), interview guides and personal notes taken in the course of fieldwork.

3.9.5 Authenticity

Guba and Lincoln (2005) provided some authenticity measures that qualitative researchers must observe. Authenticity ensures rigorous research through various ways, including ensuring fairness in the process. The other measure is to ensure ontological and educative authenticity that guarantees that the research plays its role in helping readers arrive at a good understanding of the phenomenon under inquiry. The other form is catalytic and tactical authenticity that the research should act as a stimulus for change or action, pertaining the issues discussed within the course of the study.

In the context of the current research, these protocols were observed in various ways. The researcher was cognizant of the fact that using in-depth interviews in data collection is prone to various problems such as interviewee-induced bias, interviewer-induced bias, and the failure to correctly understand the questions. Interviewee-induced bias could be characterized by faulty memory, exaggeration, dishonesty, hidden or not hidden agenda. Examples for interviewer-induced bias could include reaction to interviewee's responses, voice inflections, the desire to help the respondent, biased questions, poor order questions as well as the dress and appearance (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). To overcome these problems with the potential to compromise the credibility of the data-collection and the findings, a combination of strategies described below were employed.

First, the researcher formulated sets of questions that were comprehensive in drawing out the lived experience of reporters as well as structural forces that shaped their reporting of terrorism. Doing so minimized the problem of poor recall among the participants. The interviews were also carried out a number of times with the same

interviewees to ensure that the answers they gave were similar on different occasions. Similarly, pairing two interviewees, who covered the same events at the same time was also employed as a strategy.

In addition, questions were framed clearly and in an every-day language that eliminated bias and controlled ambiguity in response. The protocols of data collection were also peer-reviewed and piloted to eliminate biases and chance of errors. Relatedly, the Rubin and Rubin (2012) responsive in-depth interview model was used to probe further whenever the interviewees gave incomplete or unclear responses.

In the same vein, the researcher was courteous to the interviewees and explained clearly the purpose of the research. As such, during the interviews. This ensured they were comfortable in their natural settings so as speak ably and in a nuanced manner. The researcher did not attempt to help the interviewees with responses, ask biased questions or inflect voice in a manner that could affect the participants' responses. Last, the interview questions were also asked in a clear and logical order, grouping together those that have similar contexts of investigation.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Human subjects who participated in this research had a right to be informed about the study, to understand the general nature of the investigation and to understand their role. As such, participation was voluntary, and the participants were informed of what measures were taken to ensure confidentiality of the data. The researcher was granted ethics approval for the study by the Daystar University Ethics Review Board (DU-ERB) of and a permit to collect data by the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). The two regulatory bodies, DU-ERB and NACOSTI - cater for the welfare of human research subjects. The data collection licence was awarded in July 2020 (see appendices E and F for approvals by DU-ERB

and NACOSTI, respectively). The research was not funded by any agency, and there were no incentives for the participants.

Before the interviews, the participants were briefed on the purpose of the study and signed consent form to participate in the research, voluntarily. The consent form also included the information about the rights of the interviews – including the research being confidential, voluntary, recording of the interviews, and the researcher information such as the institution he is affiliated with.

3.11 Summary

This chapter has captured the methods that the researcher employed to collect, analyse and present findings. The data collection section has detailed the protocols that were used to help generate data corpus of the four research questions: document analysis and in-depth interviews. Procedures of analysing the data evidence and their presentation were also explained in a comprehensive manner, as well as how the data was presented. The various steps that were used to guarantee the general trustworthiness of the research and its findings have been demonstrated, including triangulation of the data at different stages. Similarly, the study's adherence to research ethics has been clearly reported.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presented the findings on the four contexts of investigation in line with the study's four research questions. First, the findings centred on the lived experiences of journalists who report on terrorism and related events in Kenya. Second, the research examined the structures related to hierarchy-of-influences theory that influence the work of journalists reporting on these types of news events. Third, the findings focussed on the ways in which the structural forces also associated with the hierarchy-of-influences model affect or impact the work of journalists covering terrorism and related news events. Last, the findings for research question 4 reported the general implications of the structural influences (examined in questions 2 and 3) on the journalists covering the terrorism news beat, and the general practice of journalism in Kenya.

The findings were presented thematically, based on each research question. This is consistent with standard protocols of doing qualitative research and related previous studies (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Thus, after preparing the data, which included transcribing the in-depth interviews into transcripts and analysis of documents, the data corpus was organised into themes from the categories and codes generated, followed by findings presentation and interpretation. This is in line with various scholars such as Altheide et al. (2008), Creswell and Creswell (2018), Elo and Kyngäs (2008), and Saldana (2011, 2013), who suggested rigorous scientific protocols of data presentation, analysis and interpretation.

Constructivist paradigm informed how the data was analysed and interpreted in relation to the research questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Johnson & Christensen, 2012). During the qualitative coding, two-level coding was employed: at the first level, themes were generated from in-depth interviews categories and codes winnowed from the data. At the second level, theory and literature were employed to further analyse the data from the in-depth interviews (Saldana, 2011, 2013). Specifically, on the second level, the layers of hierarchy of influences theory were relied upon to categorise the multifarious set of influences that affect how journalists reported news on terrorism and related events. To authenticate the findings, and in relation with the phenomenological approach, verbatim significant and relevant quotes from the interviewees and documents were used throughout the chapter as a protocol of ensuring validity of the qualitative research (Creswell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

4.2 Analysis and Interpretation

4.2.1 Lived Experiences

Living in Fear of Surveillance

Many of the journalists interviewed said the government, specifically security agencies fighting terrorism, tapped into their communication, especially mobile phone calls, text messages and e-mail correspondences. This surveillance went beyond the communication assemblage to where both foreign and local journalists based in Kenya said that the authorities monitored their social lives and movements. Also, their newsroom colleagues were sometimes used by security agencies to spy on the stories that they were writing, related to terrorism.

Some Muslim journalists claimed that the State appeared to target them more than the others, especially when they contacted radical clerics and other news sources

viewed as sympathisers of terrorists and their activities. This was particularly the case for a Mombasa-based journalist. The journalist said that he was in constant fear of surveillance from security agencies, because he had developed a professional relationship with a controversial Muslim cleric, Sheikh Abubakar Shariff (also known as Makaburi), who was killed in April 2014 at the height of terror attacks in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi and the coastal City of Mombasa. The journalist believed that security agencies viewed him in a negative light and his work was seen as propaganda for terrorists and their sympathisers.

Another Muslim journalist narrated how he was tracked and arrested by the Anti-Terrorism Police Unit (ATPU) from his home in Nairobi for being in contact with sources of information regarding the ambush of KDF soldiers in El Adde, Somalia in January 2019. The authorities not only confiscated his phones, computer and other electronic gadgets, but he was also charged with the offence of misuse of communication gadgets under the Kenya Information and Communications Act (KICA) for publishing photos of the El Adde camp that had been overrun by the Islamic militants, Al-Shabaab.

Because of reporting terrorism and counter-terrorism activities, some foreign journalists said they were threatened with deportation and others were actually deported from the country. A foreign journalist, who is now based in London (at the time of carrying out the interview), was deported from Nairobi after the anti-terrorism police unit detained and interrogated him without the benefit of legal counsel. The journalist said that he had his passport revoked and communication channels, including calls and activities on social media sites, surveyed without his consent. He was detained incommunicado at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) for 48 hours. The journalist had interviewed many controversial figures, especially in the coastal region,

including Makaburi (named above) and believed that his critical reporting of terrorism and government counter-terrorism plans made him a target of the surveillance dragnet and later the deportation from Kenya. Attempts by the journalist to appeal to Kenyan authorities against the deportation and denial of further access to Kenya had not been reversed by the time this project was completed. As a correspondent of an international media organisation, he still reports remotely from London on terrorism and terror-related activities in Kenya. He observed as follows:

For a long time, I could tell that my phone was tapped, especially when I was dealing with certain stories like covering the Masjeed Musa mosque. They (security officials) were listening in all the time. I knew this because during that time, the security officials would call me and ask what I was working on. They would then go ahead and suggest that I should stop talking to so and so, or stop following up on a certain story lead for one reason or another. After reflection, and careful analysis of these calls, I realised that what the security officers were telling me is exactly what I had spoken on the phone with my contacts. It taught me to be very cautious, with what I said on the phone; I write very short messages, I cannot be on a call for more than five minutes and I prefer meetings in places that I know for security reasons. All these made me more alert (Participant 8).

This type of surveillance has an impact on how the journalists operate, because, as some observed, being on the government watch list could mean that laws governing terrorism and counterterrorism could be applied to charge one with an offence. This deterred the journalists from carrying out their duties independently and without fear of being arrested by the police or questioned for possessing or dealing with information on terrorism activities.

You feel like you are a suspect and that the government can use the information that you have to charge you (in a court of law). The government can corner you when they find that you have information that is potentially dangerous – but you are simply doing your job, said the deported journalist.

As discussed below under research question 2, the Security Laws (2014) introduced an amendment to the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2012 that empowered security agencies, particularly APTU, to intercept communication for purpose of

detecting, deterring and disrupting terrorism activities in Kenya. The law doesn't provide protocols for the implementation of this provision and therefore journalists involved in this study believed that their communication was under surveillance as a part of these ambitious plans by the government. One journalist observed that the State security organs conducted surveillance on them while covering terrorism and other organised crimes.

Although it is unclear of their intentions, from personal experiences, it could be for intelligence gathering or suspicion of connection between reporters and such disgruntled groups. It is even more challenging to Muslim journalists. Some of State security officers treat Muslim journalists as accomplices of terrorist groups on unfounded suspicion, especially when one creates professional relationships with individuals branded by State agencies as terrorist sympathisers such as Sheikh Aboud Rogo and Abubakar Makaburi (Participant 18).

A journalist who was embedded with KDF explained that the army intelligence officers were aware of the stories he was going to write even before they were published (Figure 4.1 below shows a group of Kenya-based journalists embedded with military in Somalia posing for a photo op with KDF troops). When asked how he knew this, he stated that the officers had told him the exact details of a phone conversation that he had with editors in Nairobi. He exclaimed, *"they had tapped my phone!"* The participant went ahead to note that some journalists had been summoned by security agencies following the surveillance.

Yes. They tap and they record. There have been instances where journalists have either been reprimanded by the military or the police about these issues. They have tapped mine. They have no right to do that though they can if they bring it out as a national security issue. It makes me afraid because they hold the capacity to kill. Sometimes you just go underground till the heat cools and you can resume normal life. It does make one uncomfortable. No one likes to be followed around (Participant 3).

The journalists viewed this surveillance as a subtle form of censorship and intimidation by authorities. Most of those interviewed said that they felt 'vulnerable' when handling information for stories that had implications on the national security.

Some stated that the security agencies had approached them with offers on enlisting them in the national intelligence service so that they could help in combating or thwarting the threat of terrorists. Two journalists said:

I have been approached by security agencies asking me to work for them, to provide them with information on security issues because of my network and contacts in the terrorism business. Some of my colleagues are already working with the security agencies but I have declined this offer that has led me to be labelled as a sympathiser of terrorism. I have since made it clear that I am a journalist and not a spy (Participant 5).

For me, I have been persuaded and sometimes coerced by the security officers to work with them. They coerce you to sell the story after they triangulate the information you have from the surveillance. I believe this is a form of censorship because if you do not co-operate with them, they can reach out to your bosses in the newsroom and ensure that the story is not published (Participant 20).

At the same time, Kenyan security authorities have directed journalists who are reporting on terrorism to reveal their sources of information. This is contrary to the code of conduct for the practice of journalism as espoused by MCK, and entrenched in the Media Council Act 2013, protecting journalistic work and the sources of information.

A journalist recounted:

Terrorism exposes government weaknesses. It is in the interest of any government to control the flow of information. I felt the government was spying on our movements and telephone conversation, especially after writing exclusive stories that went against the officialdom. There have been many extrajudicial killings in the name of fighting terrorism. One time when covering an assignment in Manda Bay, I was surprised to know that an intelligence officer was already aware of all the people we interviewed. Of course, when we got embedded with the military in Somalia, part of the tasks for government was background checks. I was told that it was to look at whom we communicated with.

Another participant stated that authorities had the capacity to listen in on their communication even the ones that had end-to-end encryption – demonstrating the perception that authorities would go to all lengths in their surveillance pursuits. Participant 4 said *they have the capacity for surveillance for every channel of communication, including WhatsApp and Telegram messaging.*

Interrogated further, the participants observed that while the means to access this communication had end-to-end encryption, there existed other ways such as intelligence officers infiltrating office and professional communication groups set up by the journalists to snoop on the conversations. They also noted that they had colleagues “planted in the newsrooms” to survey their work. This level of intrusion left the journalists exposed.

I have had calls from security agencies on some of the stories I have done, asking me to divulge my sources because they deemed this a security risk. I declined because I am first a journalist. Not a policeman (Participant 5).

But this kind of surveillance is not the preserve of the government alone, as non-state actors such as the intelligence wings of the militants were also interested in the information that the journalists had. Participants explained that they had received threats by the terror groups because of their lack of co-operation in sharing information and also the news items they published were keenly monitored. Some interviewees said the militants sometimes posed as newsmakers with the intention of accessing the information that journalists had. Participant 20 explained as follows:

In some places such as Lamu and Kiunga, I found that while carrying out interviews, the people I was talking to were actually members of the Al-Shabaab who had been asked to pose as interviewees in order to learn what I was writing about. A chief in the area later told us that authorities were not comfortable because of the people that we were interviewing. All along, we were being spied on and I felt vulnerable. Anything could happen to me.

The journalists noted that terror groups were interested in information just as much as the government agencies were. This placed them in a delicate and vulnerable position. As a coping mechanism, some of the journalist said that they have changed how they communicate or meet people in their everyday life. Participant 15 said as follows:

I used to communicate most of the time through calls and messages, but now they have technology to listen to that. I now prefer meeting with the people that we are

discussing stories with rather than use the mobile phone. Sometimes I use borrowed phones.

This surveillance also extended to the family and close associates of the journalists. Asked whether they feared for their family or people close to them, the participants stated that the worry could do no good – although it is an ever-present one.

During the formative years (of reporting terrorism and related events) I used to be, not anymore. For the military or the anti-terror police to get rid of you, they must have really been monitoring you (Participant 15).

His counterpart, Participant 8, added:

There is a need for journalists to report on the evils committed by the military or the police in terms of terrorism, the government to be pushed to provide this information. Importantly, these organisations accept oversight and accountability i.e. both the military and the police.

The participant further added that they used to worry when handling very sensitive stories such as terrorism and *Mungiki*:

Sometimes the people or organisations I am reporting about would talk to my mum to tell me to tone down on the stories. That was worrying. You are better off coming to me than to my family. So for security reasons, I now avoid putting my wife and kids on social media.

The researcher asked the journalists how they navigate that fear of surveillance when dealing with sources of information, either on the government apparatus or the terror groups. Participants 15 and 13 said:

Yes. Even sharing information becomes difficult. You cannot call a source because once you share a story; they want to check whom did you talk to. You have heard many police or ATPU units punish their officers because they have talked to a journalist. That alone scares them from sharing information. Authorities want to control information flow and they will punish the source (Participant 15).

You just pray and hope that a source can emerge. Sources normally know that such information needs to come out so they won't use their phones. They can leave the office to go to town and call with someone else's phone. They can even tell you to call the boss to ask them this and that. We also do face to face. With personal information, the most they can do is blackmail me with it because it is unconstitutional to use that in the court of law (Participant 13).

But others noted that they did not necessarily change their routines and practices but were more careful in their communication. A Muslim journalist who claimed that he was on the watch list of the authorities, argued that changing his life routines would create suspicion and further complicate matters. He therefore opted to continue living as he had always done, before embarking on reporting of terrorism and related events. He pointed out:

As a result of this, I have not changed my routines, but I have kept doing my job professionally since I am not guilty of any of their suspicion. I remain objective and well balanced in my reporting in order to speak for myself and vindicate me of any wrongdoing. I had expected to be judged on the basis of my faith and that helped me to prepare myself to counter such narratives through well-balanced professional reporting (Participant 18).

Safety of Journalists at Risk

As a major theme of the lived experiences for journalists who covered terrorism and related violent events, the safety of journalists at risk comprised two sub-themes: psychological safety and physical. As such, there were various ways in which the psychological and individual safety of the reporters was at risk, going by the participants' narrations. The psychological safety included traumatic events that led to sleeplessness and nightmares, loss of memory and some journalists resorting to alcohol abuse in a bid to cope with the traumatic experiences.

On memory loss, one journalist explained at times they couldn't remember some things such as login credentials like passwords, or even their places of residence. Participant 15 pointed out that *I would have colleagues log me onto office computers*. Similarly, Participant 9 recalls: "when we got back (from Somalia), I had to be taken home by an office driver. I believe I had lost bits of memory because of the stay in the battlefield.

The loss of memory affected not just their personal lives, but also their capacity to work as journalists:

Thing is, if you have not written something instantly, you forget. So, everyone whose phone number I had saved using their first name, I could not remember their names to date. So, I was only able to do whatever I had written down (Participant 15).

Journalists often rely on their notebooks and pens to chronicle important and newsworthy events while in the field. But while embedded with KDF, some recounted that it was difficult to take notes while in the battlefield. The reliance on a faulty memory became a challenge for some, inhibiting their journalistic work. Participant 3 explained as follows:

Considering the situation, it was not easy to be writing as we were always moving or it was at night. So, you cannot take the usual journalistic notes on a regular basis, you have to rely on your memory.

At the same time, recounting being a journalist in an active terrorism scene for the participants was a difficult experience as it brought to life memories of death – such as counting dead bodies in a church shooting or visiting the morgue where relatives and the loved ones of the victims congregated after the terror incident. Interviewees recounted how they dealt with enervating stories, loss of lives, pain and anguish on one hand; and government officials they described as “whose job at this point is not to tell the truth”.

Telling the stories of the victims as truthfully as I could, was one of those things you do, and sleep well at night, but having those stories playing in your head all day; you know, it can happen to anyone, and your life changes in a flash kind of nightmare; thinking about the wives or kids, or the crying parent, that teary stuff (Participant 1).

One journalist was at pains explaining the difficulty of being sent to cover an aftermath of a terror attack in Garissa County- counting dead bodies strewn on the floor and later following up the relatives and the loved ones in mortuaries and hospitals to

get their stories. The struggle of remaining true to the media audiences in such difficult time was apparent as Participant 1 explains:

You have the blood and bodies, especially in Garissa (the church massacre in 2012) where we had to go into the mortuary and count the bodies one by one; jumping over others, looking for fresh ones, so that I don't get the count wrong; and after Garissa University attack (2015) going to Kenyatta National Hospital and talking with the victims, looking at their wounds, watching their tears and their pain, you know. This is part of the job. It has to be done wholeheartedly, so that you are not shortchanging the reader.

The experience of covering the trail of terror past the scene of the violence was equally difficult for journalists as they followed relatives and the loved ones at the places such as the morgue where the story was different. Participant 27 avers:

The smell of decomposing bodies threw me off and for weeks I could not eat meat. I was deeply conflicted by the fact that I had to report back with images of people suffering at the sight of the death of their loved ones. I would say this was more difficult to document than the actual scene. I had thoughts of what happens to bodies when they decompose. I thought of the workers in the morgue who were clearly overwhelmed by the number of bodies arriving but worked as if it was a regular day, exchanging casual stories, even managing to laugh and high five one another. I had thoughts of their mental states and wondered how they cope with this line of work.

Participant 8 adds to this narrative and explained that at the battlefield in Somalia, death and injuries were the order of the day for those embedded with KDF:

My first casualty to see from the KDF side was a sergeant whom we had been together in the camp in Somalia. A few minutes later, there was an ambush and he was brought back into the camp in a body bag. It was heart breaking, especially so because moments ago, he was telling us that his son was to undergo circumcision that December. He was very excited about it.

These scenes led to a re-consideration of the journalistic call and what really mattered at that point for the participants:

I developed mixed feelings for the entire coverage of the terrorism events. You have never been in active combat; you are the only station covering so in a way you are happy that this is an exclusive. As a journalist you stop thinking about your safety and just think about your story. Looking back now about the risks I took then, I would not take them now (Participant 8).

While Participant 6 adds:

My own mortality was something that thought of, but I also thought a lot about what the terrorists themselves might feel or think about what we were involved in as a county and as journalists.

As a result of their involvement in covering terror-related activities, most participants visited a professional counsellor and were diagnosed with PTSD. See some narrations below:

The aftermath of viewing gory images, interacting with victims and coming to terms with how serious the threat of terrorism, left me traumatised. I remember after covering Westgate, I had terrible nightmares that I would wake up screaming at night – and this went on for some time (Interviewee 2).

During our stint in Somalia, we were forced to take a two-week break in December because one of my team members got emotionally sick. His feelings crossed such that when you told him a sad thing, he would laugh and when you told him a joke, he would cry. We were told to take him out of the war zone after the army doctor examined him (Interviewee 8).

Soon after we went back after the break, we all began getting emotionally and physically tired. I spoke to the officials to evacuate us. We lived in fear, and some of us resulted in avoiding churches, shopping malls, traffic jams, and other public places (Participant 2).

Fear and anxiety were also a recurring psychological lived experiences. Thus, at some point, most of the informants recounted experiences of fear and anxiety when covering terrorism stories. This hampered their capacity to report critically and objectively. Participant 7 calls it as a scary affair. He noted the constant feeling of fear and dread the whole time he was there. The interviewee remembers how he would sit back and wonder whether it was a dream (nightmare) that he would wake up from. This was during the DusitD2 attack that he recounts as the worst experience. He explains:

When I went to cover the attack, I was also sort of a victim. I kept thinking that should be me in there. I was also scared because I have always thought of what I would do in case an attack happened and I had my equipment. Most likely, I would have run towards the attack and maybe things would have been different.

The participant says that he cannot remember a longer night while covering an event than the DusitD2 attack. This was so because of the loud explosions and the sight of his fellow camerapersons crying. It was a somber moment, with journalists hugging and comforting each other, he says.

Participant 1 observed that covering terrorism events had a negative psychological impact on the journalists, long after the dust of the events settled. “This stuff gets to you. You don’t notice it at first, but things stop scaring you. You get to notice how short life is, and you just live,” observes the participant. The participant noted that sometimes these journalists begin to do things that normal people consider reckless, but which they know they have to do because life is no longer a guarantee. One can die even while praying in church. One makes peace with every minute. The participant reflected on people who helped him do a story on grenade smuggling in Kenya after they were both killed.

One was slaughtered in 2013 and his headless body dumped at a beach we used to hang out in in Malindi, he narrated, adding that, I have never gone on holiday again to that beach in Malindi yet I used to escape there like every two months.

The other helper was shot in broad daylight in his car outside a police station. He was a very young boy, but he came from a relatively rich Muslim family. From the stories of these informants, the journalist realised that for them, engaging in terrorism and helping the police, was because of specific motives. They were looking for money, however it they could get it, including smuggling weapons or selling out their colleagues!

Still in psychological safety, some of the participants resorted to alcohol abuse and experienced sleepless nights because of the traumatic experiences of covering terrorism and related events, especially the ones who covered the conflict in Somalia. One participant said that he had noticed a similar pattern of behaviour among his

colleagues who were involved in the news beat during their sojourn in Somalia. The participant noted *the level of alcohol abuse was high; sleep became elusive*.

Daily images of raw blood and the smell of death was combined with the pressure to produce scoop copy on a daily basis, resulting in enhanced anxiety. In most cases, a hot drink would be a solution to calm the nerves before the next assignment. And because during such events, there is no other forms of escape such as discussion groups, mentorship cells or sports activities, taking alcohol was an escape route.

Participant 4 observes:

I noticed that because of the chaotic nature of activities, some colleagues sneaked whisky in the car whenever they were deployed to volatile areas. There were also incidents of sneaking some into the office, things that ordinarily would not take place in "normal days".

He went onto to note that a colleague was admitted to a psychiatric ward at that time. Upon examination, his case was linked to the images of covering violent deaths. He said that it was important to note that the newsroom did not have a pre- and post- trauma counseling for staff assigned to cover violence.

In observing the long-term impact, participant 10 said that during the night, he would get dreams related to the Somalia war long after. His colleagues still get nightmares about the same. For that reason, he observed that anyone involved with the war from Somalia requires a lot of emotional support, especially the soldiers." This role, as he rightly observes, has been taken over by humanitarian organisations. Covering terrorism changed the perspectives and the worldview of the key informants in different ways. Those who were embedded with KDF in Somalia ultimately ended up in hospitals under psychiatric care soon after they came back to Kenya. Participant 10 noted that he had to be counselled as a result of the experiences in war.

I realised I had changed as a person when we landed back at Eastleigh Moi Airbase. I could look at people and wonder if they are aliens because of their dress code and everything (Participant 10)

By the time he got back, he was used to the military clothing, guns and talk of Al-Shabaab. He had only been on the assignment for 30 days. This made him wonder how much damage happens to the soldiers who stay in Somalia for more than a year. To him, such individuals need proper counselling.

Some key informants reported that they withheld their feelings when covering terrorism or related events but were afraid that the delayed reaction to the violence ultimately would end up catching up with them. One journalist, filing stories for an international media, noted that their feelings had become numb as a result of witnessing so much violence in the line of work. But ultimately, they admitted, that there was a need for them to constantly debrief by visiting psychiatrics. Participant 11 noted as follows:

I am not sure that I have feelings when am doing it. I think you sort of do the work and have the feelings later.

In reflecting about this, the participant noted that the danger lies in putting aside the feelings and then having to deal with their recurrence later. Most journalists delay these traumatic feelings, especially since there is no room for them during an assignment. As a trauma journalist, this participant feels that the impact on his work is greater because it relies on trying to imagine the emotional landscape of his interviewee and trying to figure out how to render that to readers. He further observes:

I have done it for so long; for instance, before I joined journalism, I spent my childhood interviewing holocaust survivors since I was about 12 years old and I have realised that a lot of what I do is based on the intuition of those early encounters... It means that I have honed the skill of talking to people who have been through something traumatic experience.

The catch, for this participant, is to master the ability to allow their interviewees to balance being emotionally accessible with what they are saying. This is especially because they are careful not to make sources feel overly exposed and vulnerable. A journalist in this situation, he says, needs to get the point and attain a narrative to be able to tell the story. For him, this is really a personal idiosyncratic spot in his journalistic practise; a tough balance to be able to do what you need to - sort of utterly empty yourself as the emotions take a toll on the journalists, they find themselves unable to do their job. One foreign journalist recounted how she was unable to file stories for many days, yet her editors were directing her to send the stories of the Garissa University College attack. *My friend was in Garissa on the same afternoon the attack happened - April second. I got there on April third and we were both there until she left on Saturday and I on Sunday*, She narrated. By Monday, both journalists were at the mortuary, still chasing the 'story'. Even though she considers her relationship with her editors at Buzz Feed to be excellent, these editors were impatient when the story was not submitted by that Wednesday. She had to make promises to file the story later. Even with this, she did not get it emotionally together by the said Wednesday to file the story. She explains:

I was having an emotional experience as I was doing the writing and not succeeding at compartmentalising the two and just couldn't do it. I just told them that I am not done yet and I filed it on Thursday.

Participant 11 further noted that the experience of sitting with the survivors for hours, most of whom were worried they might not live to call their mothers, was a very emotionally tiring experience.

The foreign correspondents that covered terrorism events such as the Garissa University College attack had a different approach to the story. They focused on the victims rather than the violence. Participant 11 further narrates that she felt as though

the local journalists were totally missing the story, as that was just not the place to be doing the story, she felt needed to be done. She had been a reporter in New York and covered the story of Newtown massacre where children were killed in an elementary school. In the American press, the journalists focussed on details such as who the children were, what stories they could tell, obituaries and families. In essence, she felt that the victims were at the centre of the coverage. It was important to these journalists that the victims' families tell their stories. None of that was happening in Kenya, so she was sort of surprised by the focus on the violence, the terrorists, and the government.

The journalists also experienced emotional breakdown and trauma after covering these stories for a long time:

For me, being able to write the long form story is a way of having an emotional life with the material. At some point, I broke down and cried but even though am pretty trauma aware, it was terrible for the course of my career as I was basically moving from the aftermath of one horrible event after another. I had to deal with the emotional side of the story for myself, which meant I ended up with acute PTSD. It is hard to articulate these feelings yourself, especially when you are aware of the power and privileges of your position, relative to the story you are telling (Participant 11).

Figure 4.1 presents a picture that one of the key informants shared to capture her thoughts of the people who died during the Westgate Mall attack in September 2013. In a diary of the events that occurred, the journalist recounted:

There's no feeling of resolution in this text because there is no official resolution to any of the questions about what happened at Westgate. There is only a memorial on each anniversary.

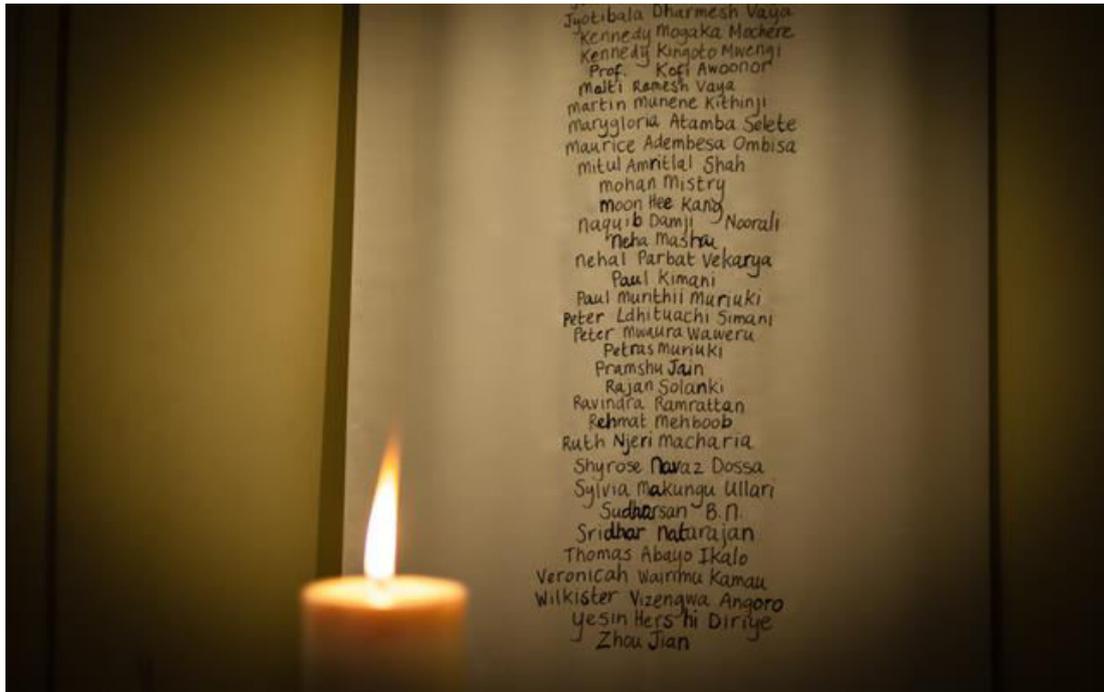


Figure 4.1: People Who Died during the Westgate Mall Attack in September 2013
 Photo courtesy: Participant 25



Figure 4.2: Some Kenyan Journalists Embedded with KDF in Somalia
Photo courtesy: Participant 6

Turning to physical safety as a lived experience related to safety of journalists at risk, it was characterized by death threats among the reporters covering terrorism and

related topics. As such, those interviewed were lucky to have survived death, while exhaustion and lack of sleep were the other physical safety experiences narrated. Participant 8 narrated how the Al-Shabaab insurgents physically attacked them one night as they conducted a live TV broadcast link to their studios in Nairobi from Somalia for a primetime news show. For a journalist to do a live TV broadcast, they have to beam their lights so that the reporter can be visible to the lens of the video camera. It is the beam of light that attracted the attention of the insurgents, who hurled grenades at them, but they survived. The participant said that viewers could watch them on TV as they scampered for safety.

We were later advised that we should never turn lights on during the night while in the battlefield because that attracts the attention of the enemy. All the subsequent live links had to be done during the day (Participant 8).

Yet in another instance, a journalist and his media house became targeted for publishing terrorism stories as the participant narrates:

I was breaking these news stories all through until it got to a point where the Jamia Mosque committee summoned me at their offices in Nairobi. They threatened to kill me and to bomb the Standard Group offices where I worked. I was shocked and threatened. It emerged that they knew my sources and they threatened to harm my family. My source in the government was aware of the threats and told me to report the threats at Central Police Station in Nairobi. I was torn. One of the committee members told me if I report the threat to the police, it would escalate as they will be arrested and taken to court. Once we are taken to court, all Muslims will protest against you, and the Standard. So, it was a push and pull between the forces telling me to report and those threatening me not to report. I had to go under for some time - about a week - in 2010 after the Kampala bombing.

The journalist went on to explain how he was duped with a fake invitation to a press conference but the main goal was to send a threat message because of the coverage. This is how it happened:

The members of the Jamia Mosque Committee pretended that there was a press conference at Jamia Mosque after they saw a story I had done. I had gotten the structure of Al-Shabaab operations in Kenya and in Somalia, and how they were executing their missions, so they were very angry. They insisted that I attend the press conference, so while we were waiting, they said, 'Let Xavier (not the participants real name) come in.'

When I entered, I found a gang of about 20 people seated waiting and the door was locked behind me. One of them, then an MP (Member of Parliament), began to say, 'you know you are a Khafir (non-believer) and you are being used to vilify the Muslims, why don't you seek comments from us, you are portraying all Muslims as terrorists'.

Because of the gravity of this threat, the journalist was advised by his employer to move from his current residential house and make other lifestyle adjustments, including his social life – where he visited and whom he met. After the confrontation at the mosque, he noted that he was advised to change houses and change his cell phone line before proceeding on leave. He then secured a licence to own a gun for his personal protection. He went ahead and noted

My family lives out of Nairobi, so for me, it was for personal security. After I owned the gun, I realised that there was no point because those who plan to kill you will do it anyway, so I returned it.

Another journalist based in Mombasa was threatened by radical youths because of his critical coverage of their activities. He said that it took the intervention of his religious community elders to save him from harm from the youth who accused him of “working with the government” in reporting about them. *This is basically an affront to journalistic freedoms. They want to silence you,* said Participant 5.

Patriotism

While covering terrorism journalists working for the local media outlets (the vast majority of who are Kenyans) took the assignment as a national duty. The coverage of terrorism and related events brought them a sense of pride and patriotism. As such, they said that it was their responsibility to fight terrorism through their reportage. For them, this was a ‘patriotic’ stand - lived by supporting the government and its security agencies in fighting terrorism. The journalists referred to themselves as the first generation of Kenyan reporters to be involved in the coverage of terrorism and related events, and this placed the nationalistic burden on their shoulders. Participant 7 said

being the first generation of reporters, it is very easy to lean towards nationalism kind of reporting where we put Kenya first. According to this journalist, their news reports were skewed towards certain truths and half-truths that the State wanted to portray. The participant explained as follows:

The pride is just in us being reporters of history. We as a country haven't had enough experience covering terrorism on our soil. We are the first generation of writers, reporters and journalists covering terror in the country. So that is where the aspect of pride comes in because we are first among many equals and it is of great importance that we do it right and cover all angles.

Other journalists drawn from the local mainstream media outlets shared related sentiments.

Yes. This is my country, if I don't stop or put an agenda to address the problem, it will come to you. They will hit supermarkets, malls then shortly they will come to the newsroom or to your homes (Participant 13).

In so speaking, the journalists feel that it is their duty to stop the terrorist through reporting. While doing so, they also do not take the terrorist's side of the story, and that's where objective reporting dies when covering terrorism. The participant reiterated that terrorists should not be given any side of the story unless they are confessing. A reporter must not propagate their side of the story because their agenda is never good. A key informant explains:

Some Kenyans are not patriotic but, if you could pick the most unpatriotic Kenyan and take them to Somalia with the KDF, after two days he/she will be a changed person. Because you will understand what is going on. Like a proud Kenyan seeing how much we have achieved because the initial plan of Operation Linda Nchi, even with the sacrifices and the price we have paid for this war, especially human lives. I was very proud to go back to Kismayu and witness the capture of Kismayu and the intelligence and the expertise of our military, especially the marines (Participant 10).

Asked whether they believed that this was professional journalism, the participants observed that the context of terrorism forced them to play by different rules of engagement. An interviewee adds *it is debatable, but we do that to drive an agenda.* They noted that if one defends terrorism, then the terrorist might soon show up and

chop their fingers or harm their child. A participant said he could not imagine the agony should the terrorists target a primary school. Participant 13 added to this viewpoint, noting that it is his patriotic duty to address the problems that bedevil his nation.

Terrorism should not be given any side of the story unless they are confessing. Indeed, a journalist should not propagate their side of the story because their agenda is never good (Participant 13).

Others said they were thrilled to be in these unique assignments, and being able to chronicle important historical events of national and global importance. As such, how they told the story mattered a lot to their country and how they relate to it. They said that they had to put their country first when in these assignments. The researcher asked Participant 15 what exactly does it mean to put the country first. The interviewee replied that it means if the Kenyan forces were beaten hands down, you do not say that in your story. Pressed harder whether this amounted to a lie in the story, the journalist responded *you don't lie. You report whatever does not strongly put them on the negative light.*

Asked whether the reporters exaggerated the win of their national troops, Participant 15 answered *yes. We can say that. You report what the enemy had suffered and leave out KDF's loss.*

The reporter noted that these instructions to bias the coverage emanate from KDF, to ensure that the reporting did not portray the military, and the country by extension in a negative light. The participant said:

I was communicating with the KDF department of public of affairs and the Department of Military Intelligence so they are able to guide and censor on reporting. So, even if you go ahead and report, it won't come out because in the last two years, there has been that kind of censorship.

Participant 2, however, said that authorities forced the patriotic ideology on journalists who reported on this news beat. Once journalists appeared determined to tell

both sides of the story, they became a target of monitoring by the security agencies. The participant opines:

Asking proper questions like how many soldiers died in El Adde, you are told to be patriotic. The moment you keep asking the right questions, you are branded unpatriotic... some facts have to be asked. And as result of this, we end up being on the monitoring list.

If a journalist was perceived as unpatriotic, it came with repercussions. For instance, Participant 2 said that a colleague who was held in Ethiopia by the authorities could not receive Kenyan government support to be released because he was labelled as unpatriotic. They tried to get him help by reaching out to the Kenyan government, but the answers they were getting were “who is he, who does he work for, is he a patriotic Kenyan?” The participant said that the only thing that saved the journalist was the outcry from fellow journalists and that the Kenyan government - that ought to have made calls for his release - was reluctant to do that.

Participant 1 observed that the question on patriotism when covering terrorism, or related news events was complex because it tested both the journalists as well as their organisational values. According to the journalist, patriotism should be secondary to the professional ideology where reporters should do balanced, impartial and accurate reporting and one that is responsible adhering to all the rules of journalism. But the authorities’ understanding of patriotism is, see and say no evil, about the government. Because of this, when journalists and media houses do not take a patriotic stand in the context of reporting terrorism and related events, survival of the media house becomes a challenge as authorities indirectly threaten to withdraw advertisement or fail to pay for the advertisements already run in the media. This becomes an aspect where the organisation is editorially captured because they are thinking of survival, though not really buying the patriotic stand.

Foreign correspondents said that they were not affected by patriotic/nationalistic reporting. According to Participant 7, who is a Kenyan but working for an international media house, the question of patriotism was not of concern to them. However, Participant 7 pointed out that:

... am sure, was I not in the international organisation, as a reporter, I would have 100% reported from a nationalistic point of view. But the place I was in at that time, ensured that I balance my reporting.

Participant 17 supported these sentiments as well:

The issue of patriotism never comes up. For example, when you are reporting from six East African countries, where do you base your patriotism and you are reporting to an audience in South Africa. So for me that does not arise because both the subjects of the cases as well as the audiences are different.

According to Participant 17, because of the media putting on the patriotic lenses, Kenya has had lapses in security handling of terror attacks and the aftermath. This is because a lot goes unreported or unquestioned, because the journalists toe the government lines, maybe because of regulations. Overall, the Kenyan born journalists were out rightly biased in the coverage of terrorism and related events in favour of their country. This was a stark contrast to their international counterparts reporting on the during the same period.

Generally, it could be concluded that though Kenya has one of the most developed and respected media in Africa (Cheeseman et al., 2014; Ismail & Deane, 2008)– characterised by relatively high press freedom (Freedom House, 2019; Reporters Without Borders, 2020), but because of the fear of surveillance from State and non-State actors, the level of journalistic autonomy when covering terror-related events is significantly curtailed. Similarly, it could also be argued that the fear of surveillance by State security agents and terrorists' sympathisers leads to safety risks for journalists – taking psychological and physical dimensions. Also, the national bias

(through the lenses of patriotism) shown by the Kenyan journalists covering terrorism, resonates with the journalistic practice in other countries, where at times of international events or crises, newspeople tend to align their reporting with the country's position or foreign policy (Kim, 2000; Reese & Buckalew, 1995; Yang, 2003).

4.2.2 Structural Influences

Research question 2 examined the structures that influence the work of Kenyan-based journalists, who report terrorism and related news events. Therefore, to answer it, both in-depth interviews and document analysis were relied upon. In-depth interviews were the primary source of the data, while document analysis was used to buttress information from the interviewees regarding structures influencing their work. Structures are broad range of influences that set, limit, or determine the agency of actors (Bencherki, 2016; Giddens, 1991). As captured in Chapter 2 (within the context of the hierarchy-of-influences theoretical framework), the agency of journalists reporting terrorism can be determined or limited by structures or factors within or outside the newsrooms. For example, external influences could be policies and laws (both formal and informal), while those internal could be lack of resources by a media outlet to support the work of its editorial staff. The hierarchy-of-influences model is characterised by five of layers – individual, media routines, organisational, extra-media, and ideological. Thus, within this model, the study explores influences that enhance or inhibit the work of journalists covering terrorism and related news events.

In this regard therefore, findings indicate that the structures or factors that influence the work of the Kenya-based journalists who report terrorism and related events are of two types: legal and policy, and organisational resources. Under the hierarchy of influences theory and within the context of the present investigation, legal and policy structures are found under extra-media forces because they are outside the

media organisation (layer 4). Resources to enable journalists cover terrorism events should be provided by individual media outlets and thus lie in layer three of the hierarchy-of-influences theoretical framework - organisational forces. It's important to point out that during the study, the Kenya government introduced new counterterrorism laws and policies, which affected journalistic freedoms in various ways as discussed below. But at the same time, resources structures at the organisational levels of the media houses also inhibited effective coverage of terror and related events.

Organisational Resource Structures

Lack of resources within individual media organisations was identified as a form of structural influences that affected the work of journalists covering terror-related news events. The interviewees pointed out that respective media houses did not provide adequate resources for their reporters when deploying them to cover terror-related events. The participants observed that their capacity to report terrorism and related events effectively was greatly hindered by the lack of human and non-human resources, including skills to report on the conflict, psychological preparedness before, during and after the coverage of the violent events. Kenyan-born journalists, who were interviewed, relied on other institutions such as the government, KDF and NGOs to provide these resources. This better explains as to why the journalists were embedded with KDF troops in Somalia.

But this was significantly different from the narratives of the foreign correspondents based in Nairobi, who had both human and non-human resources at their disposal. As participants recounted, journalists from the local media houses did not have basic resources to cover KDF troops' incursion into Somalia. One local journalist notes the extent to which this was problematic: "I am sent with a team to

cover these stories and none of us has been taken through even a two-day training on what to do, what to wear or what not to wear when in combat”.

He felt like he was thrown into the deep end and was expected to navigate. It's only after the journalists had arrived in the battlefields did the army officers tell them what they could not wear because it was going to expose them to the enemy. The participant further observed that this was basic training they should have been provided with before going to the battlefields.

Additionally, the local journalists observed that there was no debriefing once one came back from the assignment. According to the participant, there is considerable emotional damage to the journalists. In his case, he was lucky to have had the opportunity to go to the UK for debriefing. He worries, though, that some of his team members will never be the same again. The interviewee adds:

Companies think giving you fifty dollars a day was too much money. There is no clear structure of compensation when one is headed to a war zone. Rarely do they consider how much the journalist needs and how much he or she gets over and above their salary. I am the one who insisted on the company buying us protective wear like armoured jackets and helmets and even gears. I am looking forward to starting a journalist basic training to better equip them for these situations.

Journalists said that local media houses provided basic resources - transport, airtime, night outs, but for investigative stories, it was a tall order to get time off and enough money to pay fixers and spend time near the source of information. Some of the reasons given are that the newsrooms were lean on staff and resources and therefore a week off for a reporter would constrain operations. At the same time, vehicle, and equipment to produce content were made available, but protective equipment like body armor were mostly slow to come. It could be sometimes because of the suddenness of attacks. As noted by Participant 2:

That has always been the most difficult part of it. Easy, less costly stories are the focus. Any investigative work is hampered by lack of facilitation and lack of adequate time to journalists.

Another journalist noted that because of lack of adequate resources to do in-depth investigation, they were forced to become mouthpieces of the government since this was the only source of information.

The main source of information on terrorism for me is the government. However, in places where the occurrences are regular like Lamu, Garissa and Mandera, I did build a network of informers whose accounts, in most cases turned out to be more credible and far much elaborate than the government position (Participant 4).

The Participant added, noting that it requires physical resources to travel and make contacts as well as spend time with those people so that they can develop a level of trust and confidence in you as journalist. Participant 20 added that two days before going to Somalia, his managing editor downloaded a book on covering Iraq and handed it to him to read to see how things are done. *It was reckless*, he said, adding, *we had no protection gears, armoured helmets or flak jackets.*

The narrative was completely different for journalists working for international media houses based in Kenya. They were provided with adequate security and other resources to competently do the assignment. For instance, one of the key informants from the international media stated that they were given police escort to towns in North Eastern Kenya, while covering terrorism and related stories.

One international journalist explained that they have a full-time safety and field security person in Washington. In addition, they have a former military officer based in London. These officers look at these stories and help to plan them. If the story is big enough and worth the risk, then they could fly in a security team even though that is rarely done. The participant clarifies:

I have the resources to hire as many police officers as are necessary. I also have the resources to hire the vehicles so they don't have to ride in my car with me - because you don't want those guys in your car.

To further demonstrate the disparity, this journalist explained how the news organisation does not put limits on the spending. If anything, the journalist also has the privilege of taking an exploratory trip. *Ultimately, that trip and Garissa was a blast and I could take it again, and my news organisation would be okay with it*, said the participant.

Besides this kind of security, police escort and the capacity to be safe, all journalists working for foreign media outlets interviewed said that their media houses provide the kind of gear required by a reporter within violence zones. These include bulletproof vests of different calibre and helmets. Thus, regardless of who they worked for, they had a flak jacket, helmet, cell phone and security officers at their disposal all the time. Each news agency has a security official who does a risk profile for the stories to be produced. There are different risk evaluators or determinants. After these provisions, the journalists are then asked to fill out a proof of life form, such that if they were to get kidnapped, they can figure out how to handle the situation. At the same time, one has to go through a hazard environment training. Some, depending on the assignment, can send a security person with you to watch your back. You pay extra money for a good fixer with experience. When asked whether they had been provided with these resources to a satisfactory level, most foreign correspondents answered in the affirmative. Participant 22 explained, noting that the ability of the media house to track them was very reassuring:

More importantly, we have tracking devices. Again, with the kind of weapons that you're looking at, in many of those places, none of those things will do you good.... like a vest is going to do you no good if you get hit by an IED, right? So, I think the most important part that we have is a check in protocol.

The journalist explained further that tracking is done in real time by their person in London, meaning that should the journalist not check in, efforts would be made to find him or her. He clarified as follows:

When covering terrorism, we've never had any of those problems. However, when I was arrested in South Sudan by the intelligence service, that's what came into play.

In that case, the system and phone were turned off. The South Sudan Intelligence service then threw him into 'The Blue House', which is the national security prison. In response, the journalist's team went into a higher gear and were able to locate where he was. In their assessment, foreign correspondents said they felt confidently covered by the media house they work for when covering terror in Kenya:

We used to not be great at this, but one of our photographers was killed in Afghanistan and from there, I think we've made great strides in getting our stuff together. And I think, we're thinking about it really smartly and we have all the gear and all the knowledge to do this as safely as we can (Participant 22).

As for psychological briefing, they noted that it was compulsory to visit a doctor before and after the assignment, even when violence was impromptu. Examples of such impromptu terror incidents are the DusitD2 Hotel and the Garissa University College attack on April 2, 2015. They had not planned for their coverage but had to do it with a short notice. According to participant 26, one can call a therapist, and that gets included as part of what NPR offers. Being Latino, even though a culture with little emphasis on psychology, this journalist talked to his editor about the issue. The editor followed up, to know how he was doing. It was bad, and he was cognizant of the fact that it was going to hit at some point.

One participant noted that from their experience in more than three international media houses in the region, the issue of resources - physical as well as emotional preparedness for a foreign journalist was a top priority. For instance, the personal environment training at Buzz Feed was weak, but at least it was there. The participant observed that the importance of training is the way it makes you think about assessing risks in any given situation. It is about paying attention to what is going on around you.

They noted that some media houses send you to places such as North Ireland and pay a fortune to take you through intense training on safety when reporting in the hazardous zones. Participant 18 has been through three of such professional trainings. The first was organised by an organisation that supports women journalists. She went to their training in exchange for giving them trauma courses.

On the emotional risks of the job, everybody sucks at that. It was ignored for a long time and no one talked about it. Now, there is more awareness around it like psychological trauma as a work hazard (Participant 18).

To address it, money gets thrown at the problem. Organisations contract big companies, which give them a hotline counsellor, the journalists can call. There are those who have peer support networks. Participant 18 explained how she had also worked for people who thought they were incredibly progressive and in tune with their reporter's emotional needs. As for participant 26, it is not enough to assume that such issue occurs naturally to superiors. One needs to be proactive in seeking support. He narrates:

I was late with some copies, and I had one editor say to me, find out what you need and get it. I was from covering war stories in Sierra Leone then just got to Rwanda in time the commemoration of the genocide and the country was in some sort of depressed mood. I was very touched by her kindness and felt relieved that I was perfectly normal and now 12 years later, I realise that was rare (Participant 26).

Legal and Policy Structures

Under this sub-theme, participants identified new laws introduced by the government during the period under study, or prior, as having a major bearing on journalists covering terrorism and related events. But it was not just the laws alone, as policies and other guidelines such as the ones provided by the military also constrained the work of journalists. Editorial guidelines by MCK and specific media houses were also noted as governing reportage.

For the journalists embedded with the military, KDF provided formal structures in form of guidelines that determined or set the extent to which they could operate both in Kenya and Somalia. As the journalists observed, the guidelines contravened professional standards, such as sticking to the doctrine of accuracy, fairness, and independence when reporting. Participant 3 observes:

I was among a group of Kenyan journalists who were embedded with the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) in the southern sector, crossing into Somalia via the Ishakani border point near the Indian Ocean. In February 2012, I was embedded for a second time, this time crossing into Somalia via Liboi in Garissa County, and each time this issue was evident.

The journalist further narrated how before the deployment, those who covered Somalia had had a briefing at the Department of Defence with senior military officers, where the rules of engagement were laid out. There was, therefore, an understanding of how the reporting would be like. The situation was in two parts. The first was a lack of accuracy and fairness in the reporting, and the second a lack of independence.

According to the participants, the values that they deemed important and part of the work that they did as journalists are commitment to the truth, fairness, and commitment to follow-up and clarity. They also noted that they seek to tell an interesting story. These values, or news routines, are in keeping with the Code of Conduct for the Practice of Journalism 2013 contained in the Media Council of Kenya Act 2013 (Media Council of Kenya, 2013), as well as NMG's editorial policy (Nation Media Group, 2018). But as the interviewees observed, these values were greatly compromised during their reporting of terrorism and terror-related activities. The principles of fairness, accuracy and independence and the doctrine that journalists are responsible to the public, who should be informed in an open manner as much as possible, were not adhered to. Participant 3 recounts:

In my case, however, there was an element of loyalty to the military. This could have been because of the primacy of their role in transporting, accommodating, protecting, and feeding us throughout the expeditions in Somalia, which was a harsh and often terrifying place to be reporting in.

To further understand legal and policy structures, documents review/analysis was undertaken. Documents that were analysed, in line with the framework by Flick (2005), are described in Chapter 3 (For the framework, see Appendix D). They included: The Constitution of Kenya 2010, Code of Conduct for the Practice of Journalism in Kenya (Media Council of Kenya, 2013), Security Laws Act 2014, the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2012, the National Intelligence Service Act 2012, the Access to Information Act 2016, Media Council of Kenya Act 2013, Official Secrets Act 1968, Parliamentary Powers and Privileges Act 2014, The Contempt of Court Act 2016, The Data Protection Act 2019, and the Kenya Information and Communications 2013 Act. Others are the editorial policies of the following media houses where the participants were drawn from: *Agence France-Presse (AFP)*, Al Jazeera, BBC, Reuters, New York Times, National Public Radio (NPR), *The Times* and *Sunday Times of London*, South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), NMG, Standard Media Group, Capital FM and RMS.

The interviewees explained that the laws and regulations governing terrorism had a direct bearing on the latitudes on reporting the news beat. Thus, fearing to contravene these laws, policies and regulations, the journalists always had to wait for official communication the government – lest the information in they possess could be used against them. Some argued that even when you know the truth about a terror event and report it accurately, the government will see you as an alarmist – then based on the legal mechanisms in place, one would be questioned about the source of the information. In doing so, the government puts breaks on the journalists' independence in disseminating the information to the general public. Thus, for fear of victimization,

Participant 20 says a good story ends up buried somewhere as a filler. Supporting Participant 20, Participant 2 explained that journalists became worried about how the laws could be applied against them when reporting terror attacks and related violent activities. The interviewee said as follows:

After this time, I was actually scared. I would often go back to check what has been included in the new laws before writing a story. It is limiting in a way because much as you know you are doing the right thing, the fact that you know this law exists, you have to keep referring to it. So, much as the law has not changed a lot, it has made the journalists more cautious. It has affected the free choice of how fast you jump into a story and even if you wrote the story and you send it to the editor, the editor will be cautious of the law as well.

Most of the terrorism and counter-terrorism laws were introduced after Westgate Mall attack in 2013. During and after the attack, government officials condemned journalists who published news attributing the blame on the State for security lapses (leading to the attack), and how the situation was managed.

In the similar vein, some participants observed that the terrorism and counter-terrorism laws in relation to the media were unnecessary because they are sufficiently covered by the media laws and codes of ethics for the practice of journalism in Kenya. But Participant 11 argues that that the journalists were just a part of the target of the laws by the government in trying to contain information regarding terrorism and related events. The challenge the government has been having, the participant noted, is that unlike the previous crop of KDF soldiers, the current ones in this era of digital communication did not strictly adhere to the secrecy oaths and with their mobile phones, they shared information freely with journalists, especially when the truth about an attack is not told. The participant said, for instance, during the El Adde attack, the government responded very slowly yet there had been a lot of information in the public. In this regard, Participant 11 sees the counter-terrorism laws, policies and regulations as part of the wide government public-relations machinery to show that the country is

not in a crisis. Thus, one way to achieve this kind of public relations gimmick is silencing all perceived credible sources.

4.2.3 The Impact of Structural Influences

Research question 3 investigated ways in which structural influences impact on the Kenya-based journalists reporting on terrorism and related news events. Two main themes (or ways) emerged from the discussions with the participants. The first is the constraints in accessing information, while the second is the violation of tenets of professional journalism practice (fairness, balance, objectivity, truth, accuracy, and ethics in journalism practice).

Constraints in Accessing Information

This study found that journalists reporting on terror-related events were greatly denied access to information by authorities (especially Kenyan government security agencies) that could have strengthened their stories' content. Similarly, the reporters were also monitored on how they developed their news stories, especially for the journalists who were embedded with the military in Somalia. According to Participant 3, reporting on the activities of the military presented a challenge because often, the only sources of information were the ranked officers and soldiers they were embedded with, and there was no opportunity for verification. Being embedded also meant that they were reporting on the very institution that catered for their transportation, accommodation and food. Participant 3 opined:

There was a requirement for the journalists embedded to show the commander, or a designated officer, the material they were going to send to the newsroom for broadcast or publication. There were very minimal changes to the stories I presented, but the photographer in the team had to delete photographs of soldiers that the military considered sensitive because of the nature of their work. There had also been instructions on the aspects of the war that we could not write about, such as the specifics of the number of troops deployed, their equipment and related strategic information. The coverage was the subject of criticism on the basis that the military was depicted in

far better light than it deserved and that its excesses in Somalia went unreported by the Kenyan media.

Therefore, because of such constraints, the journalists turned to alternative sources, including the terrorists and the social media platform, for example, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, in a desperate search for information. For instance, terrorists and their sympathisers became useful sources for terror information – thus presenting difficulties to the journalists in sieving the truth – because such information (from terrorists) is biased to advance their agendas. Thus, because of the strong influence from the social media, and the anxiety of being scooped by competitors or social media platforms, the participants said they were not in control of the story narratives. As such, many fell prey to false information that greatly hampered their professional work.

Participants observed that government security officers did not respond to calls, emails, and text messages, constraining their reportage. Even the most authoritative sources did not write back or respond.

Sometimes, biased information is sent and even if you have more information on the same, you cannot write without official communication because of verification (Participant 15).

In this regard, Participant 10 said that for terrorism reports, the main source of information was Al-Shabaab and their sympathisers.

This is because they are normally the first ones to post that we have hit then we are able to follow up since we are not connected to intelligence reports or operations being taken until something happens then the government says now we are responding (Participant 8).

The journalists, as a result of this vacuum, were forced to use the information that the terrorist groups such as the Al-Shabaab gave but edited how they attributed the sourcing of the same information. This is contrary to the doctrine of accuracy and integrity of information.

We attribute to the Al-Shabaab, for instance, that they have denied this but we do not give them undue advantage because they also want propaganda (Participant 8).

Further, the findings of this research indicate that social media apparatus in Kenya do wield influence on how mainstream media reports terrorism and related events, especially when the terror events are actively occurring as was the case in DusitD2 Hotel or the Westgate Mall attack. The participants said that journalists were not in control of the narrative. It is so because of the strong influence of social media and the fear of being “scooped.” Many fall prey to false stories because unverified information begins to circulate online. There are mainstream media houses that take it up and yet, as a responsible journalist, one cannot just run with it. Participant 7 further observed that after an attack, huge figures of the dead (victims) start doing the rounds even before the information is verified by the authorities.

When covering these events, you know the victim could be your friend, relative or even you. When the DusitD2 attack happened, I was the first reporter on the ground and KTN called me to give them updates on the ground live. People called me saying that is wrong and all. It is also risky because if the terrorists were still there, they could target you and you are still live on air revealing what is happening (Participant 7).

Participant 7 further noted that one has to weigh what has to be said, when and how. For instance, during the DusitD2 attack, the main message was to tell people to stay away from the scene. For instance, it is the duty of the journalists to inform commuters not to use that route, as there is a possibility of active shooting. Further, the journalist has to be a source of hope for the people on the scene, and inform them that security apparatus are coming in. The hotel management also plays a part by giving information such as the strength of the doors and the safety of those in the rooms, should they lock the doors. On the other hand, there were dead bodies and we have to report the casualties, but you have to have it in mind that this is an on-going situation. The

journalist noted that the source of information they had when covering this attack was social media because authorities were not forthright in giving the information.

There was a lot of heresay and misinformation in the beginning and this is because a lot of people speculating online had no idea what was going on. A lot of journalists went in thinking it was a robbery or heist at the Westgate, but later more information came out from the people who were stranded inside the mall (Participant 7).

He identifies this as the second source of information of the unfortunate event. There were phone calls from those who were inside to different contacts and some to newsrooms. Some of these people were injured and were staring death in the face so their phone calls and posts online were acts of extreme bravery.

Generally, journalists pointed out that social media technologies including Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, influenced how they accessed, processed and published content while covering terrorism and related events. As a result, the journalists closely mimicked the agenda that was set by the social media platforms influencing the news agenda – a form of inter-media agenda setting.

In conclusion, what could be drawn from the findings above is that within the hierarchy-of-influences theory, both the organisational and extra-media layers are the major central players, influencing the coverage of terror-related activities in Kenya – especially by Kenyan journalists working for the local media organisations. However, from the intensive discussions with the participants, it is clear that the extra-media forces are more influential than the organisational factors. This is because extra-media involves multiple players – including government and security agents, anti-terrorism and related laws, coverage of terrorism policies, technology, social media, the judiciary, media laws, and terrorists and their sympathisers. For example, Radsch (2014) observes that legislating media laws by State is the main determinant of press freedom as they

dictate the status of freedom of expression and information and whether media are censored, banned or blocked.

Overall, between 2011 and 2019, the rights of journalists to access and publish information of public interest were clawed back in the pretext of endangering national security. Access to information was a normative challenge of covering terrorism and related events under this context of investigation. Therefore, the challenge of sourcing information when writing the stories has a bearing on journalistic work because relevant government officials failed to respond to media inquiries. As a result of this challenge, the journalists were left in the hands of the Al-Shabaab or their agents as the main sources of information.

The media have been regarded as a public sphere. According to Habermas (1989), a public sphere is important to a democratic society and its adequacy depends a lot on both the quality of the discussions and quantity of participation. Habermas argued that a critical requirement for an effective society was the merit of the critical argument and not the social class or identity of the proponents. Habermas (1989) traced the maturation of a public sphere in which “critical public discussion of matters of general interest was institutionally guaranteed” (p. 11).

During the period under study, journalists from the mainstream newspapers, *Daily Nation* and *The Standard*, were arrested after publishing stories regarding an inquiry by parliament on how the security ministry spent funds buying equipment. The parliament hearings were not closed door, yet authorities pressed the journalists to reveal the sources of their information, saying that it jeopardised national security. The journalists were denied access to a lawyer during the interrogations by the Directorate of Criminal Investigations, but later released with no charges. Other instances the police have cautioned journalists regarding reporting and interviewing news subjects during

terror attacks. A journalist involved in the coverage of security and political affairs in Parliament noted that the standing orders barred members of the press from covering issues of public interest that did not have a direct threat to the national security:

When covering parliamentary committees, there is a misused clause of the Standing Orders where a committee simply says something is a matter of national security, and the media (journalists) are locked out. When the Executive (the security organs) and the Legislature (and its committees) lock out the public and the media, they simply create a convenient echo chamber. They can never see things through the eyes of the public. And, in a matter that involves citizens, these issues sometimes have to be discussed openly, so that when they metastasize into policy or laws, it is much easier to create buy-in, and not end up in litigation like the security laws (Participant 1).

The same year in December, the then Interior Cabinet Secretary Joseph Nkaissery threatened to arrest journalists who reported the involvement of Kenyan - forces in the combat against Al-Shabaab militants in northern Kenya. Journalists embedded with KDF troops in Somalia had their stories and photos approved by a commander before they were sent to the newsrooms. This gave the military an oversight role on journalism in the country. There was evidence of unauthorised surveillance on journalists covering security matters as well.

The challenge of sourcing information when writing the stories has a bearing on journalistic work as the key informants in this study noted that officials do not respond to calls, emails or text messages. As they noted, the journalists were targets of biased information, yet they could not write clarity or conviction that it was the truth without official communication or verification.

Because of this challenge, the journalists are left in the hands of the Al-Shabaab or their sympathisers as the main source of information. As the journalists said, they rely on this information to write their stories because the terrorist groups are typically the first agents to go public about a terror attack on the social media platforms. Journalists are then left as windsocks to follow up with the government security

agencies. The journalists are sometimes forced to deviate from ethical codes of accuracy, integrity and fairness when making attribution of their information.

Most of the reporting on terrorism and related news during the period under study relied on sources from the terrorists, while the voice of the government was conspicuously missing. Participants said that before the creation of the ATPU, sourcing for information in the government circles was a futile exercise.

If you go to the Ministry of Defence, they won't even acknowledge receiving your communication while the government spokesperson mostly had no idea what was going on. The police give you a standard answer that we are still investigating (Participant 7).

Because of the absence of diversity of information, journalists said that between 2012 and 2015, the Al-Shabaab capitalised on this vacuum and filled it with propaganda, mainly published in their social media platforms, making every single attack look like the 9/11 over and over. Home-grown terror narratives were dominated by the voices of people actively involved in Al-Shabaab and other sympathiser groups. The Al-Shabaab even created a communications wing, before the government, through the Ministry of Interior, noticed that they also needed to comment on these issues. Because of this, journalists said that they started getting a little bit of balance into the stories.

But then there was another slippery slope to this, like the Kismayu invasion when KDF started a Twitter account to counter the Al-Shabaab social media narratives.

Because we were not used to this kind of openness from the KDF, it meant that every little thing they said, we would then rush to report without verifying whether it is true or not (Participant 7).

As such, unverified figures of Al-Shabaab militants killed in the airstrikes were published on several accounts in the mainstream media in Kenya. The journalist added as follows:

At the time, we couldn't step back and for a period of time there the information was skewed to favour the State.

But things changed significantly and between 2016 and 2018, the reporting of terrorism ceased being framed as them versus us, and journalists started focusing on motives of radicalisation, why young people from Kenya would travel all the way to Somalia for training and come back to cause havoc in their country. During this time, journalists observed that the stories became more rounded with the State, the militants and communities getting involved in shaping the narratives.

Plurality and diversity of ideas and voices in the news stories during the period under study was described as *a seesaw kind of relationship* by Participant 7. Presently, the journalists stated that whenever the State says something, they have learned and now developed sources to query the exactness of pronouncements. The same applies to the Al-Shabaab, who usually use Twitter to publicise their activities. The journalists said that they have credible sources now to verify all information. In the assessment of Participant 3, they were unable to be balanced. To what extent would you talk about accuracy, truth and balance? For them, this lack of plurality of ideas and perspectives was expected. They argued that when a journalist is in the field and speaking to one side that they are embedded with, there is no chance that they will ever get to hear what the other side says:

For one, that other side perceives you to be the enemy. It was clear for me from day one that there was no way I was going to hear the voice of the Al-Shabaab. There were always concerns expressed outside my media house about the extent and the truthfulness of what the military was telling. They come and tell you we had a raid on an Al-Shabaab camp yesterday and killed 30 people. You can't have the chance to go and count them or from the relatives of those shot whether they were indeed terrorists or just bystanders. So that one was always a concern. Also, in Nairobi, say the Westgate attack, we had very limited ways of establishing on the last day whether the army really killed the terrorists as said by the security agencies. That gap was always there. We did what we could.

Because of this challenge, the journalists were forced to lie. The following excerpt from the interview provides a clear image of how the journalists navigate this challenge when reporting about the two sides. In this case, Participant 15 wears a patriotic stand, indicating a level of social responsibility to the country:

1. What exactly does it mean to put the country first?

It means, for instance, that if the Kenyan forces were beaten hands down, you do not say that (Participant).

2. So do you lie about it?

You don't lie. You report whatever does not strongly put them on the negative.

3. So you exaggerate their win?

Yes. We can say that. You report what the enemy had suffered and leave out KDF's loss.

4. Where does these guidelines emanate from?

This one was from the editor, but I was also communicating with the KDF department of public of affairs and the DMI so they are able to guide and censor on reporting. So even you go ahead and report, it won't come out because in the last two years, there has been that kind of censorship.

These accounts are in conflict with the Code of Conduct for the Practice of Journalism in Kenya, according to the Media Council of Kenya (2013), that observes that journalists should write fair, accurate and an unbiased story on matters of public interest. The code states that all sides of the story should be reported, and that factual accuracy and fairness should be observed at all times. It further observes that journalists should treat all subjects of news with respect and dignity, showing particular compassion to victims of crime or tragedy. At the same time, according to the Media Council of Kenya Act 2013, journalists should present analytical reporting based on professional perspective, not personal bias (Media Council of Kenya, 2013).

Violating Tenets of Professional Journalism

The present study findings show that the cardinal tenets of journalism practice such as fairness, objectivity, balance, truth, accuracy, and journalistic ethics, were overlooked when reporting terrorism - thus shaping the reporting of highly contested topics like terrorism in the Kenyan media. For instance, there were journalists who published information with a view to driving an agenda or forcing the authorities to act against terrorism.

I take the laws into account, but it depends on the situations. As a journalist, you need to draw far right to drive an agenda (Participant 12).

In many ways, publishing the image of a terrorist pushes the authorities and policy makers to act and solve the challenge. The participant emphasised that a journalist has to ask the authorities questions such as why they let it happen before one is told what to and not to publish. In this way, journalists work towards achieving the truth and accuracy. At the same time, the rules of balancing, like looking at both sides of the story, were not followed in this context as one journalist opined:

No. How do you call Al-Shabaab in Somalia for a comment? Ask them why they bombed? Because they normally issue a statement taking responsibility for attacks and giving their reasons! But I think if they want to drive an agenda, they should attack a military camp not non-combatants. Most people question why we call them terrorists and not suspects. They state that this is already condemning them. Then you wonder what is one supposed to call people unleashing such violence on helpless civilians.

The above point is congruent to an earlier observation about the motives of some of the journalists involved in this study. They said that it was their responsibility to fight terrorism through their work. For them, this was a 'patriotic' stand - lived by supporting the government and its security agencies.

Yes. This is my country, if I don't stop or put an agenda to address the problem, it will come to you. They will hit supermarkets, malls then shortly they will come to the newsroom or to your homes (Participant 13).

In so speaking, the journalist feels that it is their duty to stop the terrorist through reporting. While doing so, they also do not report the terrorist's side of the story, and that's where objectivity dies. The participant reiterated that terrorism should not be given any side of the story. A reporter must not propagate the side of the terrorist's story because their agenda is never good. Asked whether they believed that this was professional, the participants observed that the context of terrorism forced them to play by different rules of engagement. *It is debatable, but we do that to drive an agenda,* Participant 12 noted. They noted that if one defends terrorism, then the terrorist might soon show up and chop their fingers or harm their child. A participant said he could not imagine the agony, should the terrorists target a primary school.

Participant 6 shared some of the main questions that reporters ask themselves when thinking of balance and fairness. For instance, what if they post on social media, like Twitter, information to the contrary? In this case, the journalists need to weigh it. Participant 20 gave the example of when terrorists said that they attacked Manda Bay and killed so many soldiers. It turned out that those killed were two American soldiers. The question here, said the journalist, is whether you will publish the terrorists' side of the story. As is their nature, the terrorists are alarmists and liars, and they have nothing to lose. However, as the journalist rightly noted, as a media house and journalist publishing the story, one ends up being condemned.

Failing to verify information is contrary to Rule 2 of the Code of Conduct for the Practice of Journalism in the Media Council of Kenya Act 2013. Rule 2 is about accuracy and fairness (Media Council of Kenya, 2013). Being embedded and having to show the officers the stories before sending them to Nairobi for publication was also in breach of Rule 3 of the code on independence. The rule states: "A person subject to this Act shall gather and report news without fear or favour, and resist undue influence from

any outside forces, including advertisers, sources, story subjects, powerful individuals and special interest groups” (Media Council of Kenya, 2013, p. 8).

According to Participant 7, a simple (content analysis) experiment to check between positive and negative stories almost always yields negative stories for most of the journalists. The journalists listed the stories they did into an excel sheet, marking the negative ones in red and the positive stories in green. A majority had red, meaning negative stories. In the formative years of reporting for most of these journalists, participant 7 observed that the most likely missing narrative is that of the state. In fact, Participant 7 added, the state did not comment on the stories until the formation of the ATPU. The only option for a comment was for the journalist to go to the ministry of Defence:

They would not even acknowledge receiving your communication. So, you had to go to the government spokesperson, who mostly had no idea what was going on. Then one goes to the police who will just give a standard answer that we are still investigating (Participant 7).

Participant 3 explained the challenge of corroborating information as one that was always a concern.

In Nairobi, say the Westgate attack, we had very limited ways of establishing on the last day whether the army really killed the terrorists as said by the security agencies. That gap was always there. We did what we could, he said.

To give further context, participant 17 spoke about the idea of objectivity and neutrality in reporting terror. Can this be achieved if the journalist approaches both the government and the terrorist to collaborate the story? The interviewee explains that because the country has borne the brunt of terrorists’ activities, such an approach would be very hard. In any case, innocent citizens have suffered in the hands of terrorists. The participant, however, observed that it is essential to listen to what the terrorists are

saying to have content with which you write your stories, because the people deserve to know.

You have to remember that these are their claims and so you do not give them as the gospel truth. So there is still a bit of objectivity that goes in because you will still give them a chance to say what they want (Participant 17).

The participant further illustrated this by saying that when the terrorists were attacking Kenya; their claim was that Kenya had invaded Somalia, which is their territory. It was essential that this claim be incorporated into every story that the journalists did as a way of explaining to the reader why the terrorists were taking these actions. Participant 17 said *we were not justifying their acts, rather we told the other side of the story*. In a different context, the terrorists claimed that their attack on the Americans was prompted by the fact that they had attacked ordinary citizens in Somalia.

So that too has to come out because indeed, there are reports by Amnesty International of cases where the Americans have really killed civilians in Somalia (Participant 17).

In this context, the question is whether the Al-Shabaab then be the man that stands up for the ordinary Somali. You view it this way and wonder whether that one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter. Another important aspect that the participant spoke about was the extent to which he could use material provided by the terrorists.

It goes through a process before it is approved to be aired. One is because if it came out that they have killed a thousand people, you must always take that with a pinch of salt, said the participant.

The terrorists always hike their numbers. For that reason, any information from them does not go through one ear or one eye; it passes through several gatekeepers before approval. The participant said:

As a journalist, from the word go, I have learnt to take their word with a pinch of salt and there are some of their documents that I dismiss before they even go to the next editor because at this point, I can decipher propaganda and the truth.

Participant 7 spoke especially about the use of images, and stated:

There was also the issue of pictures of the victims. Are you putting it to show and shock people or how is it interpreted? Your intentions in the newsroom can be misinterpreted. And would be looked at as an intrusion into someone's grieve or a celebration of terror. In the newsroom, one is thinking of how to paint the picture as vividly as possible so that they spur actions policy wise, or make the country understand the horror of the attack so that it is just not another story. Indeed, it was something horrific. You cannot anticipate how the audience will take it.

Participant 17 further sought to clarify the difficult process of finding the truth as a calling of journalism when it becomes a contested issue. In his thinking, it is essential to go to a third party away from the government. The likely options are the Kenya Red Cross and in the case of the Garissa attack, the university officials. The participant noted that in these cases, the officers might want to speak away from the cameras.

So, then you can quote what the government and the Red Cross said and the university or you just say that these figures could vary and go ahead and explain why. That way, you play it safe, said the interviewee.

The participant further spoke of how the international media can go along with the government line then once it is quiet, they give a figure that they know. In this case, they do a totally different story, and then explain how they came up with these figures. Now with the introduction of data analyst journalism in almost all newsrooms, it is easier to navigate such problems.

Journalists pointed out that fairness, balance, accuracy and truth presented a dilemma in reporting terrorism. One journalist, who was embedded with KDF, reflects on this role:

I also could have crossed the line and served the interests of the military instead of the public in my reporting. The coverage obviously created a problem as it failed to give the readers a holistic picture of what the KDF was doing in Somalia and what would follow after the capture of Kismayu, which the Kenyan media reported as being the ultimate objective of Operation Linda Nchi. By valourising the army and its activities, it also portrayed the war as the only possible solution to the conflict, while there might have been other approaches (Participant 3).

Participant 3 further observed that whenever criticism of the coverage arose, he would argue that as a journalist, it was his duty to report events as he experienced them or were narrated to him by those in a position to know about them. If he was confident about the information in his possession, and was assured that it was a verifiable truth, then he had no choice but to report it. This is in line with the deontological theory of ethics, which observes that good action is determined by duties or obligations, regardless of consequences (Breit, 2011). As a reporter, one is required to file stories from the field and therefore have a duty to the employer and the editors, as well as to the public, which was very interested in the military's work in Somalia.

It was necessary that I write about events in Somalia and there was a legitimate expectation from my editors that I file stories as I had received a substantial per diem and the war was considered a rich source of stories as it was the first time the Kenyan military was going to battle (Participant 3).

Literature has pointed to the strong influence of the military on the coverage of war by the embedded reporters. McQuail (2006) argued that because of the nature of the arrangement, the journalists who are in these military operations fail to become critical in their reporting. Other studies have shown that the military manipulates the mainstream media by restricting or managing the information presented to the public, and it is difficult to adhere to journalistic doctrines such as objectivity or balance in reporting (Harcup, 2015; Obwogi, 2015). In this study, findings indicate that the embeddedness of Kenya-based journalist yielding similar outcomes as has been witnessed elsewhere. As stated before, Participant 3 noted that he dealt with the ethical challenge presented by embedded reporting, by deciding that he would no longer accept an offer to be with the military. He said:

The unspoken threat by the military officer just because I had written a (factual) story that they viewed negatively, was not only a bad thing, but unprofessional.

Participant 2 noted that one way of dealing with reporting of that nature in the future would be to give readers a more complete picture of the circumstances in which the report from the theatre is generated and to make it clear that there are certain aspects of the activities of the military in the theatre of war that cannot be reported, and why that is the case. Choosing to deal with the dilemma by walking away from it (embeddedness) was, however, a practical action as breaking away from the established rules of engagement could have been problematic, given the influences both within the newsroom and outside it, specifically from the military.

Journalists observed that their ethical considerations when reporting terrorism and related events in Kenya included respecting the victims of the violence by not revealing their names or pictures without their consent; giving the victims and relatives the time and space to deal with the outcomes of the violence by not imposing on them interviews. The journalists were very careful about mentioning the names of suspects unless they were very sure about the accuracy of the source.

The thing is, once you brand someone a terrorist and you share online, it is shared globally. For example, the US and British embassies take these data for their own use, so you can ruin someone's career for good (Participant 1).

The journalist further noted that unless a relative came out to say something about them, they had no business mentioning it. In some cases, such reporting can also become an excuse for the police to execute or arrest them. He further noted that in a case such as the DusitD2 attack, one needs to withhold particular information as it could jeopardise the operation:

Like you cannot say we have ten police wearing ABCD on live TV. This terrorism thing is a cartel; you find there is one monitoring where you are reporting from. As an experienced person, you are being careful of what you are saying on LIVE television and what you are writing. Such include revealing the identity of security officers, but you can name the agencies/units involved or the boss. Also, you do not show or publish images of the casualties unless it's absolutely necessary.

According to the Participant 2, this also went for the sources of information such as police officers and other security agencies that provided the journalists with information.

You learn them in the field. For example, you find it counterproductive exposing a policeman. They have families and are poorly paid, hence exposing puts them in danger of being killed by the terror groups as seen in Kilifi and Lamu (Participant 9).

Participants said that the MCK has guidelines regarding this but, most journalists do not adhere to them. These are a matter of ethics, and a journalist must judge for themselves whether it is good or bad for the viewers. But Participant 3 says that the guidelines by MCK were vague, especially when you are told not to glorify terrorism in your reporting. The participant notes that this is a form of censorship because the council is telling journalists what not to do. This is especially so because they do not give a definition of how terrorism is glorified through reporting. Participant 17, who works for a foreign media house said they were guided by their editorial policy when ethically conflicted. She clarified:

We have the SABC stylebook that says that you cannot show dead bodies on air. You also have the Broadcasting Commission of South Africa that is very clear. So every time a journalist goes against the Commission regulations, the broadcaster will have to pay a hefty fine or they will be brought before the Commission. There are regulations in Kenya that are clear on the showing of dead bodies... And also, because you do not want to get on the wrong side of Kenyans on Twitter. We also have the audiences in mind, like how they will react to what you are airing.

Further, Participant 3 observed that it is up to the journalist to think on their feet, depending on the context. For instance, when they have tricked the government, do they do so while giving the terrorists the upper hand when using the pictures for propaganda to advertise their work? The interviewee noted the importance of thinking about the families of the victims.

There is a way you want to remember your departed loved ones decently. Cultures of the countries you are working for and your target audience also play a role. It is a dicey situation, said the participant.

While there are those who would say it is ok to show the remains of killed terrorists, others will say everyone is innocent till proven guilty. It is a conversation that should be discussed and maybe people need to explain why they decided to take that route. The participant also said that they do not support or approve the approach taken by the *Daily Nation* or *The New York Times* in showing such pictures of victims of terrorism attacks:

You can still tell a story of a terror attack with strong images that show dead bodies. Any terror attack will have devastating effects on people and there are words and pictures that can depict that without infringing on the victim's dignity (Participant 3).

Generally, in covering terror-related events, journalists negotiated ethical contours such as identifying the names of persons affected and publishing pictures and naming the suspects/perpetrators and following guidelines by authorities.

Overall, it is important to point out that journalistic protocols of access, producing and publishing newsworthy information of public interest were greatly hindered by the structural conditions of reporting. Because of the constraints in accessing news information when reporting terror-related news events, journalists tended to seek the information from alternative sources such as the social media – thus, setting the agenda for the mainstream media.

4.2.4 Implications of the Structural Influences

For research question 4, the study examined the implications of the structural influences on journalistic freedoms when reporting terrorism and related topics. Overall, journalistic autonomy was the single major implication in relation to the coverage of terrorism and related violent news events – as analysed from the in-depth discussions with the participants. As presented below, constrained journalistic

autonomy took three dimensions of low journalistic independence on the angle to take when writing a story, self-censorship, and biased reporting.

Independence

Almost all the participants said that they were not in control of the narrative when reporting terrorism and related events in Kenya. In this regard, independence took the dimension of lack of control of the narrative as well as what angle to take when reporting, especially when the journalists were embedded with KDF in Somalia, as many of the interviewed journalists recounted. Before deployment, the journalists had a briefing at the Department of Defence headquarters with senior military officers, where the rules of engagement were laid out. There was, therefore, an understanding of how the reporting would be. The situation was in two parts. The first was a lack of accuracy and fairness in the reporting and the second, a lack of independence. The Code of Conduct for journalism in Kenya states that practitioners should defend their independence from those seeking influence or control over news content. As such, journalists in Kenya are supposed to gather and report news without fear or favour. They are also bound to determine news content solely through editorial judgement (Media Council of Kenya, 2013).

A participant (14), embedded with the Kenyan troops in Somalia, said that they were required to have their work approved by a senior officer before it was dispatched for publication. There were very minimal changes to the stories presented, but in one instance, a photographer had to delete pictures of soldiers that the military considered sensitive. There were also instructions on the aspects of the warfare that could not be written about, such as the number of troops deployed, their equipment and related strategic information. As such, the coverage was the subject of criticism on the basis

that the military was depicted in far better light than it deserved, with its excesses in Somalia going unreported.

On reflecting on the role of KDF in helping the journalists report, especially the embedded ones, one participant observed that the military deeply penetrated the editorial chain. There was a great level of editorial control by KDF to the extent that even newsroom editors and managers appeared to be taking instructions from the barracks. Colleagues in the newsroom chain of production colluded with the military – in the process revealing the identity of reporters who penned critical stories about the KDF. This led to one of the participants abandoning the embedding programme.

Participant 3 recounted that while on a reporting trip to Kismayu in November 2015, one of the officers accompanying the journalists told him they were concerned about a story he had written before his departure. The story was to be published in the weekend edition, and it was based on a meeting between the Principal Secretary at the Ministry of Defence, senior commanders, and the parliamentary Public Accounts Committee (PAC). The participant further notes:

The central theme was the failure by the KDF to account for their budgetary allocation for a past financial year. Alarmingly, the officers were aware that I had asked the editor to remove my by-line from the story. After the stories from that trip were published, I resolved I would not be comfortable being embedded again and would only write about the military where a neutral party, such as the independent Office of the Auditor-General, was involved.

The journalist further narrated that because of being embedded, one starts forgetting they are civilian and begins to adopt the mannerisms of the military. One starts to see things from the military's point of view and even writing like them. He said that it is essential that journalists should be given a break. Such a break allows them to be detached. He adds:

When embedded, your life is on these guys even when harassing a civilian, you can look the other way. By the time a government is embedding a journalist, it is because they want to bring out a few things they have; media-war propaganda.

One of the key informants in this research said that their independence was limited in different ways when they were embedded with KDF as the army decided where they were to go, what they wanted them to record, and what they did on any particular day. The journalists were so controlled not to interact with the enemy. *This is really limiting because you only get to cover their version of the story*, added the interviewee.

In other instances, and contexts where journalists are embedded in some countries like in Iraq and Syria, they can interact with the locals and share their stories. The journalists in this study said that they were only taken to medical camps or community projects like drilling of boreholes, so that they could share the work that KDF was involved in – “just to share one side of the story”.

I am competent in reporting, but there are a lot of limitations. For instance, we have been asking my media house to deploy us to Somalia for the past few years independently, but we are unable because the military does not want to take us. So, regardless of my competence, these obstacles incapacitate my capacity to cover what is happening (Participant 13).

As mentioned earlier, during the period under study, Kenyan authorities crafted counter-terrorism laws and regulations that effectively led to the policing of journalists by the internal security organs and KDF. As a result, the journalists become less critical of the war against terrorism for fear of reprisals. The clauses that have had severe consequences on the capabilities of journalists between 2011 and 2019 are contained in the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2012. Articles inserted during the 2014 chaotic parliamentary proceedings have been a subject of contention in court. In reflection, one journalist who was embedded with the military in Somalia noted that the laws and regulations ended up valourising the work of the military.

Some of the laws state that a person who publishes or utters a statement that is likely to be understood as directly or indirectly encouraging or inducing another person to commit or prepare to commit an act of terrorism, commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 14 years, according to the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2012 (National Council for Law Reporting, 2012). A statement is likely to be understood as encouraging or inducing another person to commit or prepare to commit an act of terrorism, if the circumstances and manner of the publications are such that it could reasonably be inferred that it was so intended; or the intention is apparent from the contents of the statement. The law observed that it is irrelevant whether any person is in fact encouraged or induced to commit or prepare to commit an act of terrorism.

In one terrorist attack at the Garissa University College in April of 2015, the security organs highly quoted the above section, warning both the public and the media against posting photos and or interviewing suspected terrorists. The clauses were later found to be in violation of the Constitution by the courts – thus dismissed. A journalist interviewed for this researcher opines:

Have the laws changed anything? They have definitely made journalism difficult, because you cannot report truthfully or accurately when you don't have information or when you are worried that the information that you have may land you in detention or in grilling. You also never know who to trust, because the government's job is increasingly turning out to be spin and in an environment where there are laws like that, you don't want to be the journalist who is telling the government's story, constructing a new reality while downplaying the facts or ignoring other voices because you don't have access to them. Terrorists, however bigoted, also have their story, and it is for the law to decide how to deal with that. The journalists' job is to tell the story truthfully. Even Osama was covered (by the media) (Participant 3).

Self-censorship

Because of the legal and policy structures highlighted earlier in the chapter, journalists resorted to propaganda and self-censorship. The participants observed that

reporting in a war zone means you are at the mercy of the military, and you are also like one of them. For them, allowing you to be there and guaranteeing your security means they can also influence you directly or indirectly.

They also have an agenda and they are also using me for war propaganda, much as I am doing my job. Even the CNN crew you see going to Kandahar, are there for war propaganda. They can censor what is reported, and this means they (authorities) can withhold information accessed by the media (Participant 8).

The participant adds:

For instance, I would be allowed to the field and we would count bodies, of course there would be so many on the enemy side and maybe about four, a maximum of 10 KDF, but that is what am allowed to see and report. It does not necessarily mean those are the only casualties from the army's side. There are days I could file a story and the senior army officers will come and ask to see it and would instruct you to leave out certain parts.

At the same time, there are some military tactics events, or you are not allowed to air. Other than the government censoring the media, journalists are just as human as everyone else. Some of the soldiers they worked with resigned by the time the journalists were going back to Somalia. But the journalists never reported about these soldiers who preferred to face court martial and be stripped off of their ranks. Participant 3 said that after one of the attacks, a medical army doctor became mentally unstable. For example, he would tell the reporters “take this gun and shoot for me that guy”. These stories were also never told.

I censored myself. At a personal level I could not do that because I was embedded. Naturally, you become such good friends with these people that some things you wake up and decide I cannot report that. That is the danger of embedding journalists into a war situation for over three months. Because staying long, you become attached to them (Participant 13).

To demonstrate how ambitious, the Kenyan authorities have been in their counter-terrorism drive, the police and the military have, at different times demanded an oversight role in the content produced by journalists when covering terrorism. This was both anchored in the Security Laws 2014, and also expanded as unsaid rules and

regulations for the journalists who were embedded. The particular section that was quashed by the courts stated that any person who, without authorisation from the NPS, broadcasts any information that undermines investigations or security operations relating to terrorism, commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a term of imprisonment not exceeding three years, or to a fine not exceeding five million shillings (\$50,000), or both. It further added that a person who publishes or broadcasts photographs of victims of a terrorist attack without the consent of NPS and of the victim, commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a term of imprisonment not exceeding three years or to a fine of five million shillings (\$50, 000), or both.

Biased Reporting

The implications of structural influences on journalism touched on what the journalists published – what narrative was conveyed, who was interviewed and where and how the story was developed, raising concerns of biased reporting.

This slants the angle of the reporting. In most cases, they are sort of guided tours with selected targets. There is no objective sourcing of views (Participant 4).

The government will be seeking to push my story to favour it. It would be difficult to critic or point fingers with such kind of support. It would not be a good idea knowing that whenever a source facilitates a journalist to do a story, the story is mostly biased, more of PR (Public Relations).

It was clear to Participant 4 that the objective of the government in embedding journalists in coverage of terrorism and related events was propaganda. They said:

The government of Kenyan has embedded journalists with the military to cover terror activities. In most cases, the motive is to get positive publicity. In those cases, they offer even images and interviewees who will justify their intervention. In Jubaland, for example, the KDF lined up a series of interviews and story angles that were being pitched to media houses.

They added that:

Initially, we used to cover without caring that this is a terror story and all. I have done a lot of coverage on Al-Shabaab, the military and extrajudicial killings. For

instance, I did one in Uganda, where Kenyans were renditioned. In terms of terror attacks, I have covered the aftermath of the attacks in Uganda, which Kenyans were actively involved in, the Westgate attack, Garissa University and DusitD2. However, over time and with experience, we have come to learn to put the country first even in coverage. For instance, there might be things that I have information about but which I cannot cover because of national interests.

Participant 12 reflected on the various terror suspects he had covered. For instance, he broke the story of the Kenyan commander of Al-Shabaab, who was killed in an airstrike. He had also spoken to Al-Shabaab. He added that it is important to note that KDF never tried to stop him from writing a story.

It is just until the covering of the Manda Bay attack that my boss called me and said, 'when doing this story, I know you know the truth about what happened, but think about the country, so you have to change the narration' (Participant 12).

He must have been called too. The participant identifies this as the only story he has ever tilted in his career.

Getting information is not easy because the police are always lying. For instance, covering the burning of mattresses so you have to dig deeper (Participant 12).

In summary, the question on the implications of structural influences mainly touched on journalistic autonomy, where various forms of latitudes have been eroded during the coverage of terrorism and related violent events in Kenya. As scholars have observed, the notion of journalistic freedom in Africa needs further investigation in order to create clearer understanding. Nyamnjoh (2013), Obonyo (2011), Wasserman (2013), and White (2011) argued that the relationship between structures and social issues in African politics and how those structures relate to media institutions warrant more nuanced investigation.

4.3 Summary of Key findings

From the 28 in-depth interviews, four major themes within the context of lived experiences of the journalists involved in the coverage of terrorism and related violent

events (research question 1) were the fear of surveillance, the safety of journalists at risk, and nationalistic/patriotic reportage. The fear of surveillance was characterized by worries about surveillance by state security agents, surveillance by terror groups and their sympathizers, while the theme of safety of journalists at risk comprised psychological and physical safety of the newspeople. Nationalistic/patriotic reportage involved Kenya-born journalists being outright biased in the favour of their nation, and Kenya Defense Forces (KDF), in what was described as an act of putting your country first when reporting terrorism and related news events.

Under research question 2, participants identified two structural influences on the journalistic work of those covering terrorism and related events – legal and policy structures, and organizational structures related to resources. The legal and policy theme explores sub-structures related to new laws, policies and regulations that are meant to counter terrorism. The second structural influence is organizational in nature – involving human and non-human resources – in which the work of journalists was affected by the lack of requisite resources in reporting terrorism. This was more pronounced for the journalists drawn from the local media houses as opposed to the foreign correspondents.

Research question 3 investigated ways in which structural influences impact on Kenyan-based journalists reporting on terrorism and related news events. Here, the structural impact was related to journalistic latitudes to access information (processing and publishing), and the practice of embedded journalism that compromised the independence of critically reporting terrorism and events of similar dimension. Under this question, two main themes (or ways) emerged from the discussions with the participants. The first theme is difficulty in accessing information that resulted in journalists exploring alternative avenues for news – key among them being social media

platforms (Facebook Twitter, and others). The second was violation of tenets of professional journalism such as fairness, partiality, balance, objectivity, truth, accuracy, and journalistic ethics. The other minor themes are newsworthiness (immediacy), and public interest (journalistic doctrine of public interest).

For research question 4, the study examined the implications of the structural influences on journalistic freedoms when reporting terrorism and related topics. Overall, journalistic autonomy was the single major implication in relation to the coverage of terrorism and related violent news events – as analyzed from the in-depth discussions with the participants. It's characterized by three dimensions of low journalistic independence on what to report about (the angle to take so as to control the narrative), self-censorship, and biased reporting.

4.4 Summary

This chapter presented the findings on the four contexts of investigation in line with the study's four research questions. First, the findings centred on the lived experiences of journalists who report on terrorism and related events in Kenya. Second, the research examined the structures related to hierarchy-of-influences theory that influence the work of journalists reporting on these types of news events. Third, the findings focussed on the ways in which the structural forces also associated with the hierarchy-of-influences model affect or impact the work of journalists covering terrorism and related news events. Last, the findings for research question 4 reported the general implications of the structural influences (examined in questions 2 and 3) on the journalists covering the terrorism news beat, and the general practice of journalism in Kenya.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 discussed the meaning of the main findings as presented in the previous chapter – in relation to journalists’ lived experiences while covering terrorism (research question 1), structural forces/conditions influencing the coverage of terrorism and terror-related events (research question 2), the impact or consequences of the structural influences on those covering terrorism events (research chapter 3), and the implications, which the structural influences have on the journalistic freedoms in the coverage of terrorism in Kenya (research question 4). In addition, the chapter explained the findings’ theoretical implications, draws conclusions of the present research, and highlighted research that could be pursued in the future and policy recommendations. The chapter finally offered a reflection on the future of terrorism reporting in Kenya.

5.2 Discussions of Key Findings

5.2.1 Lived Experiences

As reported in Chapter 4, research question one examined the lived experiences of the Kenya-based journalists who have reported on terrorism and related violent news. From the discussions, the fear of surveillance, the safety of journalists at risk, and nationalistic/patriotic reportage, were the three recurring major themes. The fear of surveillance was essentialised by worries about surveillance by state security agents and by terror groups and their sympathisers, while psychological and physical safety of journalists was the sub-themes of safety of journalists at risk. Under this research question, nationalistic/patriotic reportage involved Kenya-born journalists who were biased in favour of their government’s fighting terrorism in Kenya and in the

neighbouring countries like Somalia. This is what could be described as supporting “homeboys” (during the coverage of KDF operation in Somalia), or an act of putting your country first – a topic of great international interest.

Surveillance

This study found that the Kenya-based journalists reporting on terrorism and terror-related stories live in fear of surveillance. This fear is in two forms: first is the surveillance by the government and its security agencies, and second is the surveillance by terrorists and their sympathisers. This surveillance extended to the family and close associates of the journalists. Government security agencies engaged in digital and physical monitoring of journalists’ work, as well as their professional and private communications. The researcher contends that such surveillance poses a challenge for authorities to delicately balance the binary concepts of national security and the privacy of journalists. The Kenyan Constitution (National Council for Law Reporting, 2010) and Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Assembly, 1948), provide for protection of privacy of the human beings – which in this case was clearly violated by the government and the terrorists – not just of their professional, but also private lives and the people that the journalists associated with.

The journalists observed that from the government’s standpoint/perspective, they were critical players in the counter-terrorism programmes/initiatives because they served as tools of propaganda as well as feeding intelligence on possible terror attacks. For the terrorists, the journalists were seen as potential mouthpieces for advancing legitimacy through publishing information on their cause, justification of the said cause and propaganda, but also as sources of information to advance their ends because terrorism, in itself, is a communicative act that employs the mass media to impart fear and intimidation among populations even the ones remotely located from the scene of

the violence (Spencer, 2012b; Zelizer & Allan, 2011). It was therefore in the interests of both the security agencies and terrorists to tap into communication networks of the journalists – both socially and digitally. Overall, this is against both constitutional and international conventions on human rights, and specifically, the provisions on privacy and handling of personal data (Assembly, 1948; National Council for Law Reporting, 2010; Véliz, 2018, 2020).

In their seminal work on privacy and surveillance, Warren and Brandeis (1890) asserted that human beings have a right to be free from secret observation and to determine whether, when, how, and to whom, one's personal or organisational data and structure is to be revealed. For sure, various laws and conventions within and outside Kenya, reflect Warren and Brandeis' (1980) position. The Kenyan Constitution, Article 31, protects the right to privacy and states that every person has the right to privacy, including the right not to have: “(a) their person, home or property searched; (b) their possessions seized; (c) information relating to their family or private affairs unnecessarily required or revealed, or (d) the privacy of their communications infringed” (National Council for Law Reporting, 2010, p. 27). This provision is congruent to Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 that observes, “no one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks” (Assembly, 1948, p. 4).

For the current research, it could be concluded that the freedom of privacy enjoyed by the Kenyan journalists reporting terrorism and related events is contravened in various ways. As Obonyo and Nyamboga (2011) aver, privacy is the right to be left alone and that the disclosure of an individual should be warranted in the public interest.

The contravention of the freedom of privacy of the journalists covering terror-related events in Kenya is consistent with previous studies indicating that governments have a *carte blanche* approach when dealing with privacy of individuals in the context of national security (Altman, 1975; Johnson, 2008; Krueger, 2007; Solove, 2006; Westin, 1968).

For example, the Patriot Act 2001 was passed in the US following the events of September 11 to enable authorities snoop on private communication of citizens and journalists, in attempts to thwart potential terrorist attacks or safeguard the national security (Pember & Calvert, 2011; Snowden, 2019; Véliz, 2018, 2020). Yet, other previous studies have concluded that the resultant harms of privacy violations are both physical and psychological such that the fear of surveillance leads individuals not to act freely (Altman, 1975; Johnson, 2008; Krueger, 2007; Solove, 2006; Véliz, 2018, 2020; Westin, 1968).

From the foregoing, the balancing of national security and the privacy of journalists by the Kenyan authorities demonstrates a dilemma that has been articulated by previous scholars such as Limpitlaw (2016) who pointed out that the right to privacy for journalists in Kenya is

an interesting right - because it protects Kenyan journalists through their personal communication, but the modern surveillance technology in the hands of the State security organs has the ability and power, particularly in comparison to the pre-computer era, to capture private information from the journalists and use these data in ways unknown to the owners in the name of counter-terrorism (Limpitlaw, 2016, p. 314).

But what should worry stakeholders further is not just the surveillance process, but how the data accrued is used and stored, as well as the limits of purpose/utilisation.

In fact, evidence garnered from the journalists confirms what Jones and Tahri (2011) observed regarding the permanence and vast quantity of the records held in government security databases. Jones and Tahri (2011) noted that the owners of this information are often unaware of, or at least unconnected to, its storage and utilisation, and argues that such ubiquitous data collection is harmful to personal privacy and autonomy, regardless of whether individuals differ on what they determine as private.

Similarly, in the present Kenyan case, the fact that the government agencies collected information about journalists covering terrorism, led to a form of silent censorship because the State could use the information against them as an intimidation tactic when they write critical stories against the government. Also, the journalists changed their social networking and communication behaviours, meaning that personal lifestyles were restructured in the course of their terrorism reportage, hindering personal liberties enshrined in national and international conventions (Véliz, 2018, 2020).

In summary, the freedom to privacy for journalists reporting on terror-related events was contravened against Constitutional and universal human rights declarations – not just by the government, but also by the terrorists. This placed them in a vulnerable position. Thus, as a coping mechanism, some of the journalists changed how they communicate or interact with people.

Safety of Journalists at Risk

Journalists who cover terrorism and terror-related activities bear witness to gross violence on fellow human beings, with severe consequences on their personal lives. The personal cost of reporting terrorism and terror-related events can range from emotional or psychological to physical harm – which could extend to their families, relatives, friends and colleagues. Thus, the current research findings reflect previous

cases that have explored lived experiences of journalists covering terrorism in relation to physical and psychological safety.

For instance, in some unfortunate cases, the ultimate cost of reporting terrorism is death, like that of London's *Sunday Times* correspondent Marie Colvin in the Middle East (Langer, 2012). In April 2018, nine journalists were killed in Kabul as they covered a terror event. This was after a suicide bomber, disguised as a cameraman, blew himself up in a pack of the journalists (Horwitz, 2018). In addition, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and physical injuries, are also some of the personal costs of news people covering terrorism that are documented (Feinstein et al., 2018).

There were various ways in the Kenyan context, in which the psychological and individual safety of the journalists covering terrorism was at risk. The psychological safety included traumatic experiences leading to sleeplessness and nightmares, loss of memory and some of them resorting to alcohol abuse. The physical safety concerns for some journalists included threats of death by fanatical (Islamic) religious groups, but also the risk of being killed in the battlefields of Somalia.

The findings touching on the traumatic experiences support the work of Feinstein et al. (2018) on the frequency and severity of trauma among journalists covering conflict, including Kenya's Al-Shabaab terror (specifically the Westgate Mall terror attack in 2013), 9/11 attacks in New York City, Iraq and Syria war. The researchers, collecting data since 1998, observed higher frequency and severity of trauma among journalists exposed to the threat of terrorism, with a relatively high level of PTSD among Kenyan journalists. In their research, Feinstein et al. (2018) had recommended that there was a need to carry out further research on individual journalists since the tool they used to analyse the traumatic experiences was standardised across the sample, and that it was highly quantitative in nature. The current

study therefore complements the work of Feinstein et al. (2018) in this regard, by presenting individual accounts of the journalists involved in the coverage of terrorism and related events in Kenya – from a qualitative approach.

The safety of journalists in the Kenyan context was also highlighted in the work of Nyabuga (2016), who observed that between 2014 and 2015, Kenyan journalists were faced with serious challenges in the course of their work. This period marked the climax of terrorist attacks in the country by the Al-Shabaab. Nyabuga (2016) concluded that threats, harassment, and intimidation, as well as legal and personal attacks on journalists grew tremendously in this period. Curiously, Nyabuga (2016) observed that many of these threats originated from the security organs of the country. This position is actually supported by the journalists interviewed in the present study who were harassed and sometimes even taken to custody without legal counsel. As observed in Chapter Four, most participants who have since visited a professional counsellor, said that they were diagnosed with PTSD following the coverage of terrorism and related events

Patriotic Reporting

From the findings, the Kenyan-born journalists adopted a patriotic/nationalistic standpoint in reporting terrorism. They viewed themselves as having a duty and responsibility to fight terrorism through their coverage. For them, this was a ‘patriotic’ stand. Those interviewed referred to themselves as the first generation of Kenyan reporters to be involved in the consistent coverage of terrorism and related events, including being embedded with the Kenyan military, and this placed the burden of nationalistic coverage on their shoulders.

This, they noted, was because the country had borne the brunt of terrorism and related events, leading to death and destruction of property. Hundreds of Kenyans

(civilians and military personnel) have lost their lives and thousands of others affected in different ways during these attacks and combats with the insurgents both inside the country and in Somalia where the Kenya's army has pitched camp since 2011. Among the worst of the attacks was at the Westgate Mall in 2013 where 67 people were killed (AFP & Barasa, 2013) and the Mpeketoni in 2014 where 60 people were killed (AFP, 2014). At the Garissa University College, 147 students were killed in 2015 (Mutambo & Hajir, 2015), and the terrorist groups killed unknown numbers of KDF soldiers at El Adde in Somalia in January 2016 after the insurgents overran their camp (Mukinda, 2016).

This form of nationalistic reporting means that the journalists overlooked critical tenets of their profession such as truth, balance and objectivity to the disadvantage of news consumers. As some of the journalists opined, they did this in the hope contributing to fighting terrorism. In fact, as observed in the findings chapter, journalists working for the local media outlets (the vast majority of who are Kenyans) found the assignment as a national duty - the coverage of terrorism and related events brought them a sense of pride and patriotism.

The national bias (through the lenses of patriotism) by the Kenyan journalists covering terrorism, confirms the practice in other countries where, at times of international events or crises, newspeople tend to align with the country's position or foreign policy (Kim, 2000; Reese & Buckalew, 1995; Yang, 2003). As observed by Ileri (2012), naturally, when countries go to war with one another, citizens of the different countries "express their patriotism by rallying behind their nation's course" (p. 6). Similarly, this sense of patriotism has been found in journalistic practices across the globe in different war contexts. For instance, in the coverage of the Gulf War, Reese and Buckalew (1995) observed that the American media amplified the US foreign

policy on Gulf War. Reese and Buckalew's findings are corroborated by Yang (2003), who looked at the framing of the Chinese and the US media in the context of the Indochina and found that coverage of newspapers in both countries reflected the foreign policy of their mother countries.

Importantly, the current study has a similarity in the findings of Reese and Buckalew (1995) and Yang (2003). Over and above this patriotic leaning in the Kenyan journalism reportage, the findings are critical in shaping and advancing our understanding of patriotic/nationalistic reporting in an African context, when journalists are reporting on challenging subject as terrorism and news events related to the terror.

Thus, Kenyan-born journalists paint a picture of *Ubuntu* (Mandela, 2003) or *Harambee* (Ogenga, 2012) when reporting terrorism and related events as a part of solving the problems of African societies today. They view the immediate society as a part of their extended family that needs to be protected from terrorists. The journalists used phrases such as “terrorists should not hit our schools” or “our supermarkets”, and so on, indicating that they had a national burden placed on their shoulders. As opined by Ayisi (1992), this is consistent with the *Ubuntu* ideology, which view society as an extended family. Ayisi contends that the extended family “forms the *raison d'être* of all social co-operation and responsibility. It acts as a social security for the members of the group” (p. 16).

5.2.2 Structural Influences

Under question 2 that asked what structures influence the work of Kenyan-based journalists who report terrorism and related news events, participants identified legal and policy structures and organisational influences related to resources. The legal and policy theme was characterised by sub-structures related to new laws, policies and

regulations meant to counter terrorism. In the organisational structure – involving human and non-human resources – the work of journalists was affected by the lack of resources in reporting terror-related news events. As reported in Chapter Four, the two structural influences belong to extra media (legal and policy) and organisational (human and non-human resources) layers of the Shoemaker and Reese (1996, 2014) hierarchy-of-influences theory.

Legal and Policy Structures

The data corpus from the in-depth interviews shows that between 2011 and 2019, there were efforts to tighten the security laws aimed at combating terrorism in Kenya. Through an omnibus of amendments by Parliament and the security agencies, enactment of fresh laws, policies and regulations, Kenya enacted and or amended at least 22 laws related to the national security. Parliament amended the laws under the florilegium of Security Laws 2014. They included Penal Code Act, Criminal Procedures Act, Evidence Act, Refugees Act, National Intelligence Service Act 2012, Prevention of Terrorism Act 2012, Public Order Act, Extradition (Contagious and Foreign Countries) Act, Criminal Procedure Code, Registration of Persons Act, Prisons Act, Firearms Act and Radiation Protection Act. Others are the Rent Restriction Act, Kenya Airports Authority Act, Traffic Act, Investment Promotion Act, Labour Institutions Act, National Transport Safety Authority Act, Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Act, National Police Service Act and the Civil Aviation Act.

All these restrictive laws impacted on the human rights of Kenyans as stated by Human Rights Watch (2015), but specifically and in the province of this study, the rights of journalists' access to information, content production and its subsequent dissemination were contravened in various ways and forms. The participants in the present research pointed out that the provisions of these laws were punitive as they

included heavy fines and, or long terms of imprisonment for the culprits. As a result, they deterred media houses and their journalists when pursuing stories of public interest related to terrorism, but also critical reporting in the news beat. During the study, the journalists observed that the Security Laws of 2014, in particular, had a major impact on media freedoms in Kenya. The laws were introduced in Parliament in December 2014 as a response to terrorist attacks in the country in the preceding months. Two separate terror attacks in northern Kenya: one on a public bus travelling from Mandera to Nairobi, and another at a mining quarry, left 64 Kenyans dead. The attackers in these two incidents specifically targeted Christians and spared Muslims (The East African, 2014; The Guardian, 2014). For those travelling to Nairobi, the terrorists targeted travellers who could not recite the Quran in the bus (The Guardian, 2014).

For example, the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2012 dictated what and how journalists should publish when covering terrorism. The provisions, as contained in Articles 30(a), 30(f) and 35(3)c were inserted during the 2014 parliamentary proceedings but were later contested in court. These sections of the Prevention of Terrorism Act prohibit journalists from publishing or broadcasting photographs of victims of a terrorist attack without the consent of NPS and that of the victim. The offence attracted an imprisonment term not more than three years, or a fine of Kenya Shillings five million (\$50,000), or both. Thereafter, the Kenya government used the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2012 to warn the media against posting photos or interviewing suspected terrorists during the attacks at the Garissa University College in the April 2015 (Mutambo & Hajir, 2015). According to the Media Council of Kenya Act (2016), the sections read as follows:

1. Any person who, without authorisation from the National Police Service, broadcasts any information that undermines investigations or security

operations relating to terrorism, commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a term of imprisonment not exceeding three years or to a fine not exceeding five million shillings, or both (p. 7).

2. A person who publishes or broadcasts photographs of victims of a terrorist attack without the consent of the National Police Service and of the victim, commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a term of imprisonment for a period not exceeding three years or to a fine of five million shillings, or both (p. 7).

The NIS Act, on the other hand, contains certain clauses that limit the freedom of expression as set out under Article 33 of the Constitution. Section 33(1) of the NIS Act provides that the freedom of the media is limited in the interest of national security and public safety, order, morality, or health. The law further prevents the disclosure of information received in confidence; and seeks to regulate the technical administration or the operation of telecommunication, wireless broadcasting, communication, Internet, satellite communication or television. The programming code for free-to-air radio and television (Kenya Information and Communications Act Cap 411A and the Broadcasting regulations 2009, Section 10) stipulates the conduct of journalists covering terrorism.

Interviewees narrated that the laws related to the coverage of terrorism were tantamount to policing of journalism by the internal security organs and the military. The ramification of this is that the reporters became less critical in covering the war against terrorism. Generally, some of the clauses that have had severe consequences on the capabilities of journalists to report on terror between 2011 and 2019 are contained in Prevention of Terrorism Act. Articles inserted during the 2014 parliamentary proceedings were the most contentious (Daily Nation, 2014; The Standard, 2014). In

reflection, one journalist, who was embedded with the military in Somalia, noted that the laws and regulations ended up valorising the work of the security agencies, and left the journalists as mere conduits of what the military shared.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act 2012, the journalists observed, was invoked on several occasions, and deterred them from publishing unapproved content. That law states that a person who publishes or utters a statement that is likely to be understood as directly or indirectly encouraging or inducing another person to commit or prepare to commit an act of terrorism, commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 14 years. A statement is likely to be understood as directly or indirectly encouraging or inducing another person to commit or prepare to commit an act of terrorism if the circumstances and manner of the publications are such that it can reasonably be inferred that it was so intended; or the intention is apparent from the contents of the statement. The law observed that it is irrelevant whether any person is in fact encouraged or induced to commit or prepare to commit an act of terrorism.

In the Garissa University College attack, for example, the security organs highly quoted this section, warning both the public and the media against posting photos and or interviewing suspected terrorists (@InteriorMinistryKe, 2015). The clauses were later found to be in violation of the Constitution by the courts. In the similar vein, to demonstrate how ambitious the Kenyan authorities have been in their counter-terrorism drive, the police, and the military, at different times during the period covered by this study, demanded an oversight role in the content produced by journalists when covering terrorism. This was both anchored in the Security Laws 2014, and also expanded as informal rules and regulations for the journalists who were embedded with the Kenyan military in Somalia. The particular section that was later expunged by the courts, stated

that any person who, without authorisation from NPS, broadcasts any information that undermines investigations or security operations relating to terrorism, commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a term of imprisonment not exceeding three years, or to a fine not exceeding five Kenya million shillings (\$50,000), or both. It further added that a person who publishes or broadcasts photographs of victims of a terrorist attack, without the consent of NPS and of the victim, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment for a period not exceeding three years or to a fine of five million shillings (\$50, 000), or both.

According to the journalists embedded with the military in Somalia, they were required to have their work approved by senior officers before it was dispatched for publication. While there were minimal changes at times to the stories presented, there were extreme cases such as when a photographer was forced to delete some pictures. There had also been instructions on the aspects of the war that they could not write about such as the number of troops deployed, their equipment and related strategic information. Later, as they observed, the coverage was the subject of criticism on the basis that the military was depicted in far better light than it deserved and that its excesses in Somalia went unreported (Ogenga, 2012).

Regarding the enactment of counter-terrorism laws, international bodies such as the United Nations Security Council have been imploring member states to adopt multifarious counter-terror strategies that deter the terrorists, as well as cooperation amongst friendly countries to end terrorism (Pokalova, 2015). Overall, these measures by the nation states have a double-edged impact on societies: not only have they dealt a blow to terrorism, but they have also curtailed civil liberties – including those of the media people. Scholars such as McNamara (2009), Pokalova (2015), and Spencer (2012b) argued that the acts of terror and subsequent counterterror measures, both

formal and informal, are negatively affecting fundamental human rights as enshrined in international charters and constitutions governing different countries. The freedom of expression and, its barometer - journalistic freedoms - are particularly vulnerable, as security organs survey the production and dissemination of information believed to be critical intelligence in thwarting potential threats by the insurgents. Hence, the current study adds new knowledge from Kenya on the impact of counter-terrorism laws, policies and regulations when journalists report news related to terrorism.

However, it is the argument by Radsch (2014) that best explained freedom of the press in relation to this line of inquiry. Radsch observed that legislating media laws by State is the main determinant of press freedom as the laws dictate whether the media are censored, banned or blocked. The laws determine whether defamation is criminalised and whether they are used against the media and journalists, to illegitimately restrict the freedom of expression. Media laws also determine the freedom and status of investigative journalism and the protection of journalists' sources. Radsch (2014) pointed out that other markers of a free press include pluralism of ideas and safety of the journalists.

In a survey of Kenyan journalists, Obonyo and Owilla (2017) demonstrated that media laws and regulations are the greatest influence (85%) on the work of the journalists, followed by editorial policy (83%), information access, journalism ethics and the availability of newsgathering resources. Other factors that top the table are feedback from the audience, editorial supervisors and higher editors, time limits and competing news organisations. The researchers had asked the journalists to identify the influences from a random list. "Three out of five respondents (60%) said that they had complete or a great deal of freedom in their selection of stories" (Obonyo & Owilla, 2017, p. 5).

Resource Structures

Lack of resources within individual media organisations were identified as a form of structural influence that affected the covering of terror-related news events. The interviewees pointed out that respective media houses (mostly local media outlets as opposed to foreign organizations based in Nairobi) did not provide adequate resources for their reporters when deploying them to cover terror-related events. The participants observed that their capacity to report effectively was greatly hindered by the lack of human and non-human resources, including skills to report on the war zone and psychological preparedness before, during and after the coverage of the violent events.

Unlike those working for foreign media entities, who had adequate resources to cover terror conflicts, journalists employed by local media houses relied on institutions such as the government, KDF and NGOs to provide the requisite resources. Thus, the limited resources explain why the journalists working for local media outlets were embedded with KDF troops in Somalia. It's important to note that the lack of sufficient resources for local journalists to cover terrorism is just a reflection of the larger Kenya society where institutions, especially public ones (including learning and health institutions) experiences similar problems. This is so because media institutions are part of the larger social system, thus facing similar forces which other organizations face – such as poor resources for journalists in Kenya.

At an individual level, journalists face numerous personal and professional challenges when assigned to report terrorist-related activities. According to Zelizer and Allan (2011), these challenges include personal safety and access to resources and training. Zelizer and Allan found that to report effectively in volatile conflict zones, newspeople need access to human to non-human resources, such as special gear, access to reliable local fixers and knowledge of what to do and how to act in such a harsh

environment.

In the context of this study, media organisations and other bodies such as the government and NGOs provided support and resources for journalists to report terrorism and related events. For instance, KDF occasionally embedded Kenyan-based journalists on several missions in Somalia since 2011 (Kimari & Ramadhan, 2017; Wafula, 2014). In the case of embedding journalists with the military, obviously, it's a practice that compromises the independence of reporting conflicts in a partial manner – as the present research findings show. Lack of journalistic independence as a result of being embedded with the military has also been widely reported in other world regions. For instance, Johnson and Fahmy (2009) and Olsen (2018) found that the US, which popularised the practice of embedded journalism, specifically the Department of Defence, during its war in Iraq and Afghanistan, hamstrung the latitudes of their journalists. The journalists who were embedded with the American troops during the Iraq invasion were not only provided with logistical support, but were also given guidelines on how to report, hence likely to compromise their independence (Johnson & Fahmy, 2009; Olsen, 2018).

To enable comparing and contrasting of the the experiences of the embedded and non-embedded journalists reporting in Kenya (including the BBC), al Jazeera, Reuters and AP, the researcher in this study sampled purposively the journalists. It was found that the narratives of the foreign correspondents based in Nairobi, who had both human and non-human resources during the course of covering terrorism and terror-related events, significantly differed from the local counterparts who relied on KDF for support.

But the problem extended beyond compromising the independence to personal safety, a key ingredient of journalist freedom (Radsch, 2014). As participants

recounted, journalists from the local media houses did not have basic resources to cover the KDF incursion into Somalia. One local journalist noted the extent to which this was problematic.

I am sent with a team to cover these stories and none of us has been taken through even a two-day training on what to do, what to wear or what not to wear when in combat, the journalist narrated.

He felt like he was thrown into the deep end and was expected to navigate. It is only after the journalists had arrived in the battlefields that the soldiers told them what they could not wear because it was going reveal them to the enemy. The participant further observed that this was basic training they should have been given. This characteristic is prevalent in other Kenyan private and public institutions such as colleges and universities, and the media is just a part of a larger social system (Rachin, 1988).

Additionally, the local journalists observed that there was no debriefing once one came back from the assignment. According to the participant, there is considerable emotional damage to the journalists. In his case, he was lucky to have had the opportunity to go to the UK for debriefing. He worries, though, that some of his team members will never be the same again. The narrative was completely different for journalists working for the international media houses based in Kenya. They were provided with adequate security and other resources to competently do the assignment. For instance, one of the key informants drawn from the international media stated that they were given police escort to towns in North Eastern Kenya while covering terrorism and related stories. These resources were provided by their media houses to execute the assignment with a lot of ease and comfort.

One participant among the international journalists explained that they have a full-time safety and field security person in Washington. In addition, they have a former

military officer based in London. These officers look at these stories and help to plan them. If the story is big enough and worth the risk, then they could fly in a security team, even though that is rarely done. The participant clarified:

I have the resources to hire as many police officers as are necessary. I also have the resources to hire the vehicles so they don't have to ride in my car with me - because you don't want those guys in your car.

To further demonstrate the disparity, this journalist explained how the news organisation does not put limits on the spending. If anything, the journalist also has the privilege of taking an exploratory trip.

Ultimately, that trip and Garissa was a bust and I could take it again, and my news organisation would be okay with it, said the participant.

Besides this kind of security, police escort and the capacity to be safe, all journalists working for foreign media outlets interviewed in this project said that their media houses provided the gear required by a reporter within violence zones. These include bulletproof vests and helmets. Thus, regardless of who they worked for, they had a flak jacket, helmet, cell phone and security officers at their disposal all the time.

5.2.3 Structural Impact of Freedoms in Kenya

Under research question 3, which explores the ways the structures influence freedoms of Kenyan-based journalists reporting on terrorism and related news events, the study found that the routines of access, producing and publishing newsworthy information of public interest were greatly hindered. As such, two main themes emerged - constraints in accessing information and violation of tenets of professional journalism practices.

Constraints in Accessing Information

From the findings, the journalists were greatly denied access to information by authorities (especially Kenyan government security agencies) that could have

strengthened their stories – thus adequately informing the public. As observed earlier, because of this constraint, the journalists turned to alternative sources, including the terrorists and the social media, in a desperate search for information to fill the news hole. This means that the journalists were not in control of the narrative.

The denial of information by the government is in contravention of the Bill of Rights, specifically, Article 35 of the Kenyan Constitution, on access to information. Article 35 is critical for newsmen, as well as other Kenyans, because the section provides that Kenyans have a right to access information held by the State or by another person and is required for the exercise or protection of any right to fundamental freedoms. The Constitution also provides that that the State should publish and publicize any information affecting the nation. Kenya promulgated a new Constitution in August 2010 that contains an elaborate Bill of Rights, guaranteeing human freedoms related to expression, free press and the free access to information. As stated by the National Council for Law Reporting (2010), Article 33 of the Constitution provides for the freedom of expression that includes the freedom “to seek, receive or impart information or ideas, artistic creativity, academic freedom and freedom of scientific research” (p. 27), while Article 34, provides for the freedom and independence of electronic, print and all other types of media. In fact, clause 2 of the Article states that “the State shall not exercise control over or interfere with any person engaged in broadcasting, the production or circulation of any publication or the dissemination of information by any medium; penalize any person for any opinion or view or the content of any broadcast, publication or dissemination” (National Council for Law Reporting, 2010, p. 28). Even the State-owned media are guaranteed the independence of their editorial content, so that they can be impartial and afford fair opportunity for the presentation of divergent views and dissenting opinions.

Structural influences affect the work of journalists in different ways and at different levels. In Kenya, media freedom was on a decline during the period under study due to various influences. Since 2011, just a year after Kenya promulgated a new Constitution, the country's media freedom's global ranking moved from position 71 to 100 in 2019 (Freedom House, 2019; Radsch, 2014; Reporters Without Borders, 2019). This indicates a worrying context for journalists, but also for the freedom of expression in general. The challenge of sourcing information for stories has a bearing on journalistic work as the key informants in this study noted that officials hardly respond to enquiries.

Because of this challenge, the journalists were mostly left in the hands of the Al-Shabaab and their sympathisers as the main sources of information, because the terrorist groups are typically the first to publish information about a terror attack on the social media platforms. Journalists are then left as windsocks to follow up with the government security agencies. Similarly, the journalists are sometimes forced to deviate from ethical codes of accuracy, integrity and fairness when making attribution in their stories.

Most of the stories on terrorism and related news reported during the period under study, relied on sources from the terrorists while the voice of the government was conspicuously missing. Participants said that before the creation of ATPU, sourcing for information in the government circles was a futile exercise:

If you go to the Ministry of Defence, they won't even acknowledge receiving your communication, while the government spokesperson mostly had no idea what was going on. The police give you a standard answer that we are still investigating (Participant 7).

Because of the absence of diversity of information, journalists said that between 2012 and 2015, the Al-Shabaab capitalised on this vacuum and filled it with propaganda, mainly published in their social media platforms, making every single

attack look like it was 9/11 over and over. Home-grown terror narratives were dominated by the voices of people actively involved in Al-Shabaab and other sympathiser groups. The Al-Shabaab even created a communications wing, before the government, through the Ministry of Interior, realised that they also needed to comment on these issues.

This study found that journalists reporting on terror-related events were greatly denied access to information by authorities (especially the Kenyan government security agencies) that could have strengthened their stories. This means that the journalists were not in control of the narrative.

Information and media coverage are regarded as one of the most vital weapons of terrorists to advance their ends. In fact, scholars observe that terrorism is a form of communication (Moeller, 2009; Silke, 2014; Zelizer & Allan, 2011) that intentionally employs the mass media tools to achieve its end (Schmid, 2011; Zelizer & Allan, 2011). In this sense, therefore, terrorism becomes mediated violence and journalists are ensnared in the act of terror (Schmid, 2011; Spencer, 2012b; Zelizer & Allan, 2011). Terrorism masterminds such as Osama bin Laden have been cited explaining the vital role of the mass media in executing violence (Schmid, 2011).

At the same time, in today's digital era characterised by the growth and sophistication in media technology, terrorism has become a complicated phenomenon (Castells, 2013; Deuze, 2005, 2013). Social media tools are today enabling people to share their lives and its moments as it happens with little gatekeeping. Some scholars have labelled this essence of the new media as the rise of "mediatisation" of life and its moments (Lundby, 2009). Others such as Silverstone (2007) have called it the rise of "mediapolis" where the media becomes both pervasive and invasive in people's everyday lives.

In this regard, terrorists have found a unique use of different characteristics of the emerging media platforms, and insurgent groups like ISIS, (that recently morphed into ISIL) and the Al-Shabaab, are using the Internet and social media tools to recruit supporters, plan their activities and publicise terrorism events with much ease (Schmid, 2011). Targeted online communication strategies make the threat of terrorism a phenomenon that cuts across geographical, spatial, and temporal boundaries. The communication of local terror activities expands its impact to become a global phenomenon to the populations remotely located from the scene of the violence (Bauman, 2013). This study presents the form of terrorism - which uses the pervasive nature of modern media tools - as transnational or global terrorism. It is classified as such because the intention is to go global and impact lives miles away from the scene of the violence. This utility of the new technology is not exclusive to terrorists. Authorities are also using these communication technologies to prevent and or eliminate terrorism in measures adopted by many nation states (Pokalova, 2015; Schmidt & Cohen, 2013).

Consequently, journalists are finding their work reconfigured because mass personal communication means that information can be spread to audiences directly, bypassing them, thereby reshaping the traditional gate-keeping function of the media. As such, one of the sub-aims of this research was to find out how journalists are negotiating the coverage of terrorism and counterterrorism in the modern age. In turning to social media for information, it means the digital platforms were setting the agenda for the mainstream news outlets - a concept known as inter-media-agenda setting in scholarship (McCombs, 2014; McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Simply put, the content that the mass media produces set the agenda for discussion by the public (McCombs & Shaw, 1972).

The present study points at possible inter-media agenda setting relationship between social media platforms and mainstream media in Kenya when reporting terrorism and related events. The participants in the study noted that social media apparatus in Kenya do wield influence on how mainstream media reports terrorism and related events, especially when the events are actively occurring, as was the case in DusitD2 Hotel 2019 or the Westgate Mall 2013 attacks. An independent annual audit - The state of the Internet report in Kenya - published in 2019 by BAKE, indicated that there are 6.1 million Kenyans who use Facebook and 2.2 million others on Twitter. At least 3 million others use Instagram, 1.5 million are on LinkedIn and 350,000 are on Google+. WhatsApp is estimated to have 10 million users in Kenya (BAKE, 2019).

This change in the media landscape has implication on how journalists access, produce and publish news. For instance, Muindi (2018) observed that Kenyan-based journalists appropriate social media tools in their day-to-day operations sourcing information, processing and publishing levels of the journalistic process. In that study, he appreciates that the social media tools have posed a challenge for the journalists who have to balance speed and credibility while appropriating those tools.

We are, therefore, witnessing the development of new communicative ecologies and assemblages that not only redefine the domain of news production, but also news consumption. Mobile news consumption is thus fast eclipsing reading the physical newspapers, listening to the radio and watching television in Africa. As a news consumption tool, the mobile phone is an inherently complex technology whose appropriation is shaped and constrained by the context in which news and information are generated and circulated. This has led to the growth of alternate media that are powered by the digital technologies.

The concept of alternative media is growing by the day, and the rising numbers of users of Internet technologies for alternative news is gaining ground. "... Blogs are seen by many as authentic means to get news and opinions that mainstream media would normally shy away from. This could be described as anti-traditional media sentiment and blogs, among other alternate platforms are increasingly filling up the gap" (BAKE, 2018, p. 4). These platforms, seen as the alternate media in Kenya where even the mainstream media use them to first air their news, or rely on the same to gather information (Muindi, 2018). Altogether, there seems to be evidence that online platforms can be significant inter-media agenda setting forums. This is because of the possibility to share content and break news as it happens on online platforms (Funk & McCombs, 2017; Golan, 2006; McCombs, 2014).

Violation of Journalism Practice Tenets

It is evident from the findings that structural influences had a huge impact on the cardinal tenets of journalism practice when reporting terror-related events in Kenya. The government wielded a lot of power in controlling the reportage of terror-related news beat – thus in some way redefining the professional conceptualisation of journalistic tenets as contained in the code of conduct for the practice in Kenya (Media Council of Kenya, 2013). The government enjoyed the unbridled influence through various means such as threats – both legal and economic consequences for the media houses, and their journalists, if they did not observe the official directives when reporting terrorism.

Literature has pointed to the strong influence of the military on the coverage of war by the embedded reporters. Because of the nature of the arrangement, the journalists who are in these military operations fail to be critical in their reporting (McQuail, 2006). Related studies have shown that the military manipulates the

mainstream media by restricting or managing the information presented to the public and it is difficult to adhere to journalistic doctrines such as objectivity, fairness, or balance in reporting (Harcup, 2015; Obwogi, 2015). This study's findings indicate the embeddedness of Kenya-based journalists yielding similar outcomes documented elsewhere.

One way of dealing with reporting of that nature in the future would be to give readers a more complete picture of the circumstances in which the report from the theatre is generated and to make it clear that there are certain aspects of the activities of the military in the theatre of war that cannot be reported, and why that is the case. Choosing to deal with the dilemma by walking away from it was, however, a practical action as breaking away from the established rules of engagement could have been problematic, given the influences at play, both within the newsroom and outside it, specifically from the military (Participant 2).

Failing to verify information on part of the journalists is contrary to Rule 2 of the Code of Conduct for the Practice of Journalism in the Media Council of Kenya Act 2013. Rule 2 is about accuracy and fairness (Media Council of Kenya, 2013). As the journalists observed, being embedded and having to show the military officers the stories before sending them for publication, was also in breach of Rule 3 of the code on independence. The rule states: "a person subject to this Act shall gather and report news without fear or favour, and resist undue influence from any outside forces, including advertisers, sources, story subjects, powerful individuals and special interest groups" (Media Council of Kenya, 2016, pp. 4-5).

This illustrates an ethical dilemma in reporting terrorism and related events for the Kenyan journalists embedded with KDF and tested their loyalties. Ethics appraises voluntary human conduct in so far as it can be judged right or wrong in reference to determinative principles (Christians, 2005). The researcher appreciates that it is not easy to do 'what is right', especially considering the contested nature of terrorism and related news events (Spencer, 2012b). Due to the communicative nature of terrorism as discussed in Chapter One, Breit (2011) observed that when considering ethical issues,

it is important to see communication as a process that involves the stages of production, consumption and reflection. “It is important not to single out one aspect when considering questions of ethics. Focusing too heavily on issues of production, divorced from consumption (and vice versa), can distort ethical decision making” (Breit, 2011, p. 86).

Terrorists use the media as a form of communicative action to reach populations remotely connected to the scene of the violence, imparting fear and intimidation. At the same time, the government hopes to end the terror activities alongside censoring all information that may advance their ends (Zelizer & Allan, 2011). As such, journalists reporting terrorism and related events find themselves in a dilemma on what is the right thing to do: do you report accurately, truthfully, and fairly on both sides? Do you take a subjective position?

Literature on navigating ethical dilemmas offers some insights. For instance, in *The Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle advances the ‘golden mean’ theory where he posits that virtue lies between the mean of excess and deficiency as possessed by a moral agent. This means that a person’s actions spring either from an excess of virtues, or a deficiency of the same. To do what is virtuous implies finding the golden mean between the excess and the deficiency. Excess and deficiency are both to be avoided. In view of Aristotle’s ‘golden mean’ theory, one’s character (personal qualities) are etched seamlessly in their behaviour; and to understand a man’s disposition, we’d look at whether his actions bring pleasure or pain (Ross, 1923). “The best indication of a man’s internal disposition is his feeling pleasure or pain in the doing of virtuous or vicious acts. Pleasure and pain may indeed be called the subject matter of moral virtue. The pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain, are the main sources of vicious actions” (Ross, 1923, p. 193).

In the regard of the Golden Mean theory therefore, journalists who report terrorism are justified when they censor terrorists from their coverage and advance the government's official position. Patterson and Wilkins (2008) expanded on the 'golden mean' theory by showing that virtue is a combination of the moral character of a person and their actions. As such, one must first understand logically what they are doing, then choose either to pursue virtue or vicious act. But this choice springs from the person's internal disposition. Aristotle developed the six golden virtues from the mean: courage, temperance, liberality, patience, truthfulness, and modesty. Klaidman and Beauchamp (1987) added the virtues of fairness, truthfulness, trustworthiness, and non-malevolence to Aristotle's golden six as far as the practice of journalism, is concerned, while Quinn (2007) emphasised on justice and integrity.

This position is supported by Mill, (1901), who argued that what is ethical is what has the greatest good for the greatest number of people. One can therefore argue that if terror activities are thwarted and that the citizens are safe from danger, then the greatest good will have been achieved for the majority of the people, and as such, journalists' act of defying the codes of conduct become permissible within the utilitarian ethical principle.

Furthermore, in reporting terrorism and related events, Immanuel Kant offers insights on what could constitute ethical behaviour on the part of the journalists and argues that they have a duty to others – deontology (Wyatt, 2008). In deontology, Kant posits that there are two levels: duty to others, merely as human beings, and duty to other human beings. "Performing the first is meritorious (in relation to others); but performing the second is fulfilling a duty that is owed - love and respect are the feelings that accompany the carrying out of these duties" (Gregor, 1996, p. 198; Wyatt, 2008). When journalists therefore reflect on their work in relation to the effect that reporting

terrorism and related events has on society, there is a justification, under deontological ethics, to care for their fellow human beings and to do what would best ensure that their safety is guaranteed.

Harvard social ethicist Ralph B. Potter (1969) developed the ‘Potter’s Boxes’ to expound on moral deliberations. The four boxes are interrelated and encompass an empirical definition of the situation, identifying values, an appeal to ethical principles and choosing of loyalties. Potter (1969) noted that the four boxes help individuals navigate ethical dilemmas, leading to morally right decisions. At the first box, a moral agent should acquaint themselves with the facts of the situation before deciding. One is required at this stage to define and evaluate the phenomenon adequately. At the second box, an individual is required to identify their own values in relation to the situation at hand. Here, the moral agency remains with the individual. At the third box, one is required to identify with the shared values among a group, for example, the code of ethics for journalists. At the upper levels of the dichotomy, one is required to choose loyalties and form a particular judgement or policy. This cycle should translate to the first box on the phenomenon, where feedback should then be communicated.

Because of this challenge of finding the ethical balance, plurality and diversity of ideas and voices in the news stories during the period under study could be described as *a seesaw kind of relationship* (Participant 7). Presently, the journalists stated that whenever the State says something, they have now developed sources to query the exactness of pronouncements. They do not just pass information to the public, simply because it has been said by the officialdom. The same applies to the Al-Shabaab, who usually use Twitter to publicise their activities – verification of their claims is carried out and that the veracity of the information tends to be ascertained. The journalists said that they now have credible sources to verify all information. In the assessment of

Participant 3, they were unable to be balanced in the early days of the coverage and that plurality of ideas, where both sides of the narrative would be explored, was difficult because reporting terrorism was a new thing in the Kenyan media context. To what extent would you talk about accuracy, truth and balance when you are under the shelter of the Kenyan military? As such, the journalists said that this lack of plurality of ideas and perspectives was expected. They argued that when a journalist is in the field and speaking to one side that they are embedded with, there is no chance that they will ever get to hear what the other side says.

But the Kenyan situation is not unique when it comes to reporting from the battlefield. Literature has pointed to the strong influence of the military on the coverage of war by the embedded reporters. McQuail (2006) argued that because of the nature of embeddedness, the journalists who are in these military operations fail to become critical. Other studies have shown that the military manipulates the mainstream media by restricting or managing the information presented to the public, and it is difficult to adhere to journalistic doctrines such as objectivity or balance (Harcup, 2015; Obwogi, 2015). This study's findings indicate that the embeddedness of Kenya-based journalist yielding similar outcomes as has been witnessed elsewhere. As stated before, Participant 3 noted that he dealt with the ethical challenge presented by embedded reporting by deciding that he would no longer accept to be embedded with the military.

The unspoken threat by the military officer just because I had written a (factual) story that they viewed negatively, was not only a bad thing, but unprofessional (Participant 3).

Participant 2 noted that one way of dealing with reporting of that nature in the future would be to give readers a more complete picture of the circumstances in which the report is generated and to make it clear that there are certain activities of the military in the theatre of war that cannot be reported and why. Choosing to deal with the

dilemma by walking away from it was, however, a practical action as breaking away from the established rules could have been problematic, given the influences at play both within and outside the newsroom, specifically from the military.

Because of this challenge, the journalists were forced to lie. The following excerpt from the interview provides a clear image of how they navigate this challenge in reporting about the two sides. In this case, Participant 15 wears a patriotic stand indicating a level of social responsibility to the country in their journalistic practice.

Researcher: *What exactly does it mean to put the country first?*

Interviewee: *It means, for instance, that if the Kenyan forces were beaten hands down, you do not say that!*

Researcher: *So, do you lie about it?*

Interviewee: *You don't lie. You report whatever does not strongly put them on the negative?*

Researcher: *So, you exaggerate their win?*

Interviewee: *Yes. We can say that. You report what the enemy had suffered and leave out KDF's loss.*

Researcher: *Where does these guidelines emanate from?*

Interviewee: *This one was from the editor. I was also communicating with the KDF department of public of affairs, and the DMI, and they are able to guide and censor on reporting. So, even if you go ahead and report, it won't come out because in the last two years, there has been that kind of censorship.*

These accounts are in conflict with the Code of Conduct for the Practice of Journalism in Kenya, and conventional practices of the profession, that journalists should write fair, accurate and an unbiased story on matters of public interest. The code states that all sides should be reported and that factual accuracy and fairness should be observed at all times. It further observes that journalists should treat all subjects of news coverage with respect and dignity, showing particular compassion to victims of crime or tragedy. At the same time, journalists should present analytical reporting,

based on professional perspective, not personal bias, according to the Media Council of Kenya Act 2013 (Media Council of Kenya, 2016).

5.2.4 Implications on the Journalistic Freedoms

For research question 4, the study examined the implications of the structural influences on journalist freedoms when reporting terrorism and related topics. Overall, the major implication that emerged from the in-depth discussions with the participants was constrained journalistic autonomy, which the discussion below focuses on.

This study concludes that journalistic freedoms have been eroded in various ways during the reportage of terrorism and related activities. Thus, the current research confirms the findings of previous studies that the Kenya government has more influence on the news reporting, despite the country's constitution guaranteeing press freedom. The Kenya government's influence forces media houses to tone down their criticism, failure which leads to being denied government adverts (Davidson, 2017). For instance, Simiyu (2013) observed that the government influence forces media managers to frame content in a manner that would not offend those in power. As a result, journalists end up over-relying on government sources. For example, in the coverage of the Westgate and the Garissa University College attacks, the government officials were the main sources of information (Ileri, 2018). Professionalism dictates that journalists should develop plurality of views and diversity of ideas in their stories.

Journalistic freedoms are a multifaceted concept that investigates, among others, laws and regulations; safety and independence of journalists and other media workers; pluralism of ideas and content in their publications (Herman & Chomsky, 1994; McChesney, 1998; McManus, 1994; Radsch, 2014; Siebert et al., 1956). Some scholars such as Potter (2004) saw freedom of the press as the right of the latter to report

information without prior government approval; while Christians et al. (2015) articulated this freedom as the right to be just or unjust, partisan or non-partisan in news.

Other scholars observe that this freedom entails the ability of journalists to operate without censorship from the political structures (Radsch, 2014; Siebert et al., 1956; Wasserman & Maweu, 2014), economic structures (Herman & Chomsky, 1994; Maweu, 2014; McChesney, 1998; McManus, 1994), as well as individual, organisational and media culture (Nyabuga, 2015; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, 2014).

The media has been regarded as a public sphere. According to Habermas (1989), a public sphere is important to a democratic society and its adequacy depends a lot on both the quality of the discussions and quantity of participation. Habermas argued that a critical requirement for an effective society was the merit of the critical argument and not the social class or identity of the proponents. Habermas (1989) traced the maturation of a public sphere, in which “critical public discussion of matters of general interest was institutionally guaranteed” (p. 11). This study points towards an abuse of the public sphere by authorities. One journalist who was embedded with the Kenyan army reflects on this and said that they crossed the line and served the interests of the military instead of the public in their reporting. The coverage obviously created a problem as it failed to give the readers a holistic picture of what the KDF was doing in Somalia, and what would follow after the capture of Kismayu (a key stronghold of Al-Shabaab), which the Kenyan media reported as being the ultimate objective of Operation Linda Nchi. By valourising the army and its activities, the media also portrayed the war as the only possible solution to the conflict.

This is in line with the deontological theory of ethics, which assumes that good action is determined by duties or obligations, regardless of consequences (Breit, 2011). As a reporter, one is required to file stories from the field and therefore has a duty to

the employer and the editors as well as to the public, which was very interested in the military's work in Somalia (Muyonga & Karubiu, 2015). Before deployment, the journalists who went had had a briefing at the Department of Defence with senior military officers. There was therefore an understanding of how the reporting would be. These were organisational influences beyond their control. Participant 3 said *given my age and experience, there was obviously a fair amount of pressure to deliver unique content from my experience in the theatre of war*. The theme on limited Freedom of Information, where journalists became tools of propaganda for the State in their coverage of terrorism and related events during the period under study, is discussed under research question 3.

This study contends that context can, and does, shape media freedom because reporting unique events like terrorism (and terror-related activities) present different realities in different situations. This gives rise to unique and specific understanding of media freedom. As such, the current study adds new knowledge to other studies where terrorism is a social challenge. For instance, in Nigeria, Popoola (2012) observed that the terrorist group, Boko Haram, has posed a challenge to press freedom. Specifically, the author notes that the killing of journalists targeted by the insurgents in Nigeria was then the biggest threat to them. Popoola (2012) further noted that because of this direct threat on the life of journalists, they were forced to censor their reportage of the group and its activities. Relatedly, scholars such as Adibe et al. (2017) observed that Nigeria has continued to use anti-press laws to curtail media freedom. In specific, Adibe et al. (2017) assessed the impact of Nigeria's cyber security law and conclude that the law has been applied wrongly on several occasions, with the intention of silencing journalists.

In Zambia, Pitts (2000) observed that due to the one-party political regime background, the attitude of the government towards the media has been authoritarian and views journalism as a tool for propaganda rather than as a watchdog institution. As such, Makungu (2004) recommended that a sustained campaign from the civil society to ensure that media policies enacted by the government are in line with the conventional tenets of media freedom.

5.2.5 Implications on Theory

The present research had salient implications on the structuration meta-theory (Giddens, 1991) and the hierarchy-of-influences theory (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, 2014), both of which form its theoretical framework. According to Shoemaker, Tankard, and Lasorsa (2004), the major purpose of a theory is to summarise knowledge, guide the research process and provide practical applications. The data corpus from this study demonstrates that the two theories possess the essence of explanatory powers, scope, heuristic value, parsimony, and cumulative nature of science – five important thresholds for evaluating an existing theory when appropriated in an epistemological enterprise (Littlejohn & Foss, 2010; Shoemaker et al., 2004).

One of the benchmarks that researchers usually use to evaluate a good theory is the extent to which it provides an explanation of the problem under investigation (explanatory powers). At the same time, a theory that applies to different situations within a discipline is regarded as more powerful (scope), while at the same time remaining simple in these explanations (parsimony) - as such, the theoretical framework is parsimonious because it summarises and organises new knowledge derived from the data in simple and practical ways that guided the researcher throughout the inquiry. Heuristic value of a theory means that it can birth new ideas and, or propositions when appropriated within a new setting, therefore adding to the body of

existing knowledge. The heuristic essence of the theory paves the way for the final characteristic, which is the cumulative nature of science - meaning that the theory is continually changing with new studies consolidating and advancing perspectives of existing ones. Thus, the process of theorising becomes a non-static one, especially for robust theories and meta-theories (Baran & Davis, 2015; Craig, 2016; Craig & Muller, 2007; Littlejohn & Foss, 2010; Ritzer, 2007; Shoemaker et al., 2004).

From the above introduction, therefore, the choice of structuration meta-theory and hierarchy of influences theory was fitting. First off, structuration meta-theory provides broad explanations on the propositions held by hierarchy of influences theory. In particular, the dialectic of structure and agency is a powerful explainer that helps to build new knowledge around systemic structural influences and how they impart on freedoms of journalists when reporting terrorism or related events. At the lower level, the hierarchy of influences theory was not only found to possess explanatory power, as well, but was also useful in addressing the scope and essentialising a heuristic nature that helped the research answer the research questions. Therefore, this enabled to organise a wide variety of lived experiences of reporting terrorism and related events into fewer propositions that centred on major themes. To support their explanatory powers, the study was in congruence with the assumptions of both structuration meta-theory and the hierarchy of influences theory.

Simply stated, then, the systemic structural conditions either set or limited the agency (freedoms) of the journalists in this study and therefore the appropriation of both meta-theory in this study support the cumulative nature of science by adding new knowledge on how the systemic and social structural influences impact on journalistic agency when reporting terrorism. Heuristically, while the meta-theory was born from a

Euro-centric background, their application in an Afro-centric setting contributes to their development.

According to Langmia (2018) and Mano and Milton (2021), the perspective is that theorists are coming from a Eurocentric rather than Afrocentric for a research problem that is contextually African and, therefore, this study has helped deconstruct the philosophical grounding of both the structuration meta-theory and hierarchy of influences from an African perspective. The nuance of this appropriation is found in the context-specific manner in which journalists reported terrorism and related events, presenting a fresh entry into discussion around the ideology of Kenyan journalist in relation to their role in society. Previous scholars such as Christians (2015) have recommended that there is a need for scholars to appreciate the multifaceted nature of journalism, arguing that its sophisticated nature needs to be studied with nuances “enough to match the multicultural and transnational character of the issues” (p. 61). The views, such as those of Mano and Milton (2021) and Obonyo (2011), are congruent with that of Christians (2015), who argued that it is time to reflect on a new path for appreciating the unique place of journalism in the African context.

Obonyo (2011), for instance, noted the need for the social and political structures within which the African journalism operates to be appreciated when discussing the role of journalists in African society. Mano and Milton (2021) supported and advanced this argument, saying that this is a critical corrective that needs to be addressed in modern media and communication scholarship of the African landscape since this debate has evolved without incorporating the realities of Africa. In this regard, the current study plugs in an epistemic gap, theoretical as well as a methodical one.

Granted, communication scholarship in Africa has come to maturity, and as such, it requires that we examine how the realities of the continent can and do contribute

to the development of theories that best match the African research ecology. Patriotic reporting, as exhibited by the Kenyan-based journalists when reporting terrorism and related news events, therefore forms an important point of reference in shedding the light on how journalists navigate the ethical decision-making terrain, which is in line with the ethics of *Ubuntu*, a viable proposal for answering questions that the Western ideological perspectives have appropriated for African specific contexts (Burnett, 1995; Mandela, 2006; Metz, 2011; Metz & Gaie, 2010; O'Donovan, 1996). *Ubuntu* is an aspect of the African worldview suggesting that Africans are communal beings who have an obligation to family and community at large that supersedes that of personal needs.

Burnett (1995) underlined that the value of an individual is in the community, echoing the philosophy by Mbiti (1969) that “I am, because we are”. Mbiti (1969) is credited for connecting African communities with the notion of community with his most cited maxim: “I am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I am.” Mbiti (1969) wrote; “whatever happens to the individual, happens to the whole group, and whatever happens to the whole group, happens to the individual”. In African worldview, the individual does not exist alone except corporately (Mbiti, 1969). A person owes his existence to other people, including his ancestors. A child must go through rites of passage to get incorporated into the community. But it is O'Donovan (1996), who articulated this ideology in a definitional manner that reflects the argument in this dissertation:

Africans tend to find their identity and meaning in life through being part of their extended family, clan and tribe. There is a strong feeling of common participation in life, a common history, and a common destiny. The reality in

Africa may be described with the statement: 'I am, because the community is' (O'Donovan, 1996, p. 63).

Thus, this study offers increased support and evidence for advancing the *Ubuntu* framework, previously researched by scholars such as Metz and Gaie (2010), becoming instrumental in shaping the discourse in regard to the *Ubuntu* ethical lenses that speak to the African realities. The conceptualisation of *Ubuntu* by Metz and Gaie (2010) as a theory, is congruent to the thoughts of Mbiti (1969) and Oruka (2002) in regard to the communitarianism nature of the African people. Findings from the present study demonstrate that journalists practice *Ubuntu* by putting their country first when reporting terrorism and, or related news events, essentialised by the values of intense humanness, caring, sharing, respect and compassion. Other associated values include altruism, kindness, generosity, compassion, benevolence, courtesy, and respect and concern for others (Broodryk, 2002; Letseka, 2000).

According to Higgs and Smith (2006) and Oruka (2002), the philosophy of patriotism advocates communalism away from Western ideologies such as capitalism that seem to have constructed the role of the media as business first, relegating values and norms such as social responsibility to the peripheries. Oruka (2002) added that communalism is a philosophy for a whole African community and not for individuals. Unlike ethno-philosophy, which appears to consist of "apolitical and free-for-all-metaphysics" (Oruka, 2002, p. 122), nationalist-ideological philosophy is practical and has explicit national and individual problems to solve (Mandela, 2006; Nussbaum, 2003).

Therefore, these views present a philosophical path in which African journalism scholarship can chart its own ethical path by underscoring the significance of the community in the African worldview in relation to the reportage of national events such

as terrorism and related news topics. Oruka's (2002) nationalist ideological philosophy advocates communalism. *Ubuntu* is also linked with communality or communalism, that is, the sense of community and communal interdependence. In addition, communality duty to one's community is more important than individual rights and privileges. Ghanaian philosopher Kwame Gyekye (1997) defined communalism in African societies as the doctrine whereby the group becomes the focus of the individuals' activities. This doctrine places emphasis on the success of the wider society, though not at the expense of the individual. These various perspectives indicate that *Ubuntu*, as part of ethno-philosophy, is an important part of African philosophy, and therefore sheds light on understanding journalistic practices in this context.

Implication on Structuration Meta-theory

For structuration theory, the dialectic of structure and agency as journalist report terrorism and terror-related activities is an overarching theoretical lens to this study, where structure set or determined the agency of the journalists while in action (Giddens, 1984, 1991). Structure and agency are inextricably connected (Bencherki, 2016; Bolin, 2016; Bourdieu & Farage, 1994; Giddens, 1984, 1991; Sewell, 1992). In structuration theory, agency is articulated as the ability of an individual to act independently and to make free choice while structural conditions either determine or limit this agency (Bolin, 2016).

This study was in consonance with the proposition of structuration in that the agency of journalists reporting terrorism was determined or limited by structures such as laws, policies and resources. For example, the policies also took the form of routines and rituals as well as organisational and cultural protocols that informed how things are done. However, structure is more than just these rules, protocols or regulations that either limit or determine one's agency. As Sewell (1992) observed, structure is "one of

the most important, elusive and under-theorised concepts in the social sciences” (p. 1). Sewell demonstrated that while structure can be seen as rules, resources such as human and non-human and schemas can also form a part of structure.

This articulation of structure is critical for the present research in assessing the preparedness of Kenyan journalists to report terrorism and related events. To report this news beat effectively, journalists required the human and non-human resources, for example, special gears and access to reliable information and knowledge of what to do and how to act in such an environment. Once their newsrooms could not provide these resources, journalistic independence was compromised because they had to rely on third parties, including the Kenyan military and NGOs who had vested interests. Since KDF were parties to the warfare, there were underlying implications on the agency of the embedded journalists as they reported on the same conflict, including censorship.

Previous studies by Johnson and Fahmy (2009) and Olsen (2018) have shown that there is the deletion of journalistic agency and reconfiguration of professional identity when journalists and their work become embedded in the security apparatus of a country. Drawing from experiences of journalists covering counterterrorism such as the US war in Iraq and Afghanistan, Olsen (2018) found that the agency and professional identity of the journalists were affected by the structural conditions of being attached to the military. The current study’s findings are in agreement with Olsen’s (2018) work.

Therefore, the present research advances and contributes to the structuration meta-theory, both in an epistemic and geographical dimension. As indicated in the conceptual framework in Chapter 2, journalists negotiated their agency from all the actors, and a seemingly subtle (subliminal) background of technology is shaping and re-shaping social interdependence. Technology in itself, is not just reconfiguring the

job of the journalist, but is also aiding both terror and prevention of terror tactics and strategies by the actors in this context. On the part of the terrorists, there are a number of key items that they would like to enlist the help of the media, including publicity, legitimacy and justification and support of the cause. On the government and its agencies circle, authorities expect that the media would support its cause on preventing terrorism; coverage to advance the state agenda and not that of the terrorists; censor terrorists from media coverage as well as get information from media personalities on terror and related activities.

But journalists expect to carry out their duties to the public in a safe environment, where public interest takes precedence, and that journalist ideology is observed. This ideology is based on objective reporting, timely news that are ethically produced and their autonomy is guaranteed. It is these tensions of being a journalist in such a context that this research sought to unravel and find out what it means to cover terrorism and terror-related activities in the Kenyan context through a phenomenological approach, advancing the propositions of structure and agency, as founded in the structuration meta-theory.

Implications on Hierarchy of Influences Theory

For the current research, Shoemaker and Reese's (1996, 2014) hierarchy of influences model provided a detailed theoretical framework on the levels of structural layers that affect how journalists report news - individual, media routines, organisational, extra-media, and ideological influences. These are factors within and outside the media organisations that affect the operations of journalists. The current work applied Shoemaker and Reese's model to and categorised these factors into three broad brackets touching on micro, meso and macro-layers of society. This approach is similar to Giddens (1984, 1991) structuration approach that looks into the duality of

structures at micro, meso- and macro levels. Influences relating to the individual journalist form the micro tier; at the meso tier, factors relating to media routines and organisational forces are articulated. Other influences operating outside the media are named as the extra-media ideological influences and are categorised at the macro level.

For instance, at the first level of influence, the study found that religion and training of the journalists affected their freedoms when reporting terrorism. Journalists drawn from the Islamic faith observed that they were targeted by government security agents and were seen as sources of information or leads in the war against counter-terrorism. This fear of surveillance determined or set how they conducted their work when sourcing, preparing, or publishing news. Some of the Muslim journalists involved in this study noted that their professional association with controversial Muslim clerics was viewed as a form of sympathy to terrorism and terrorists, and this created a poor perception about them and their work. In the current research, therefore, religion seemed to have an implication on how participants viewed their journalistic freedoms, contributing to clarifying our understanding on how news is made in a terror-context among the Kenya-based journalists.

The theory assumes that factors such as gender, ethnicity, sexual orientations, political orientations, education, training, attitudes, personal biases, personal values and beliefs, religious upbringing and professional orientation indeed seem to have a bearing on reporting by journalists. This was found to be the case in so far as patriotic reporting where religion and professional orientation seemed to bear some influence on the work of journalists. Previous empirical research demonstrates that personal biases, different sets of experiences, attitudes and expectations of both reporters and their editors have a huge bearing on their journalistic work. For instance, in the seminal case study by

White (1950), and later extrapolated by scholars such as Shoemaker (1991), selection of news for publishing was significantly influenced by personal predispositions.

Training – specifically preparation of the journalists, both psychologically and physically – in dealing with terrorism and terror-related events was also mapped at these levels as having a bearing on journalistic freedoms. The study found that journalists drawn from the local media houses did not undergo any form of training in the initial days on how to approach stories on terrorism and related activities – thus affecting their reporting.

At the second level of influences on media routines, this study found that tenets of professional journalism, including fairness, balance; truth and accuracy were violated. The study found that reporting terrorism leads to partial coverage, especially because of embedded journalism encapsulating ethical dilemmas (what to publish or not).

The organisational influences are at the third level. Here, the study found that the work of journalists was affected by the lack of resources in reporting terrorism. These are both human and non-human resources. At the extra-media level, Shoemaker and Reese (1996) pointed out influences that are outside the media and the organisation. The theory suggests that extra-media forces are superior to the media and tend to control the content produced. In agreement with Herman and Chomsky (1994), they noted that media owners, for instance, may be affected by decisions and changes in other industries where they are also owners, or directors. In this regard, this is the level that had the highest influence on journalists who reported on terrorism and related events.

The forces at this level included: information and revenue sources, technology, advertisers, media laws and government regulations. At the ideological level (level-five), the media content is influenced by the ideology of those in power (Gurevitch et

al., 1982; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). It is regarded as the most powerful influence. In this study therefore, the work of Kenyan reporters reflected the position that was advanced by the government. This finding has been supported by previous studies such as Ileri (2018) and Ogenga (2012), who found that the journalists hardly deviated from the official position by the government. Table 5.1 below illustrates how the explanatory powers of the hierarchy of influences theory manifest themselves in relation to the study.

Table 5.1: Explanatory Powers of Hierarchy of Influences

Level of Hierarchy	Major Players	Presence of Explanatory Powers	Manifestation of Explanatory Powers in Relation to the Current Study
Level 1 Individual Journalism	Gender, ethnicity, sexual orientations, political orientations, education, training, attitudes, personal biases, personal values and beliefs, religious upbringing and professional orientation	√	- Training - Religion - Patriotism - Personal biases - Professional orientations
Level 2 Media Routines	Media routines: “Routines are those patterned, routinised, repeated practices and forms that media workers use to do their jobs”	√	- Tenets of professional journalism, including fairness, balance; truth and accuracy (reporting terrorism leads to partial coverage, especially because of embedded journalism) form the second major theme. Ethical dilemmas (what to publish or not) constitute the third major theme. The other minor themes are objectivity, newsworthiness (immediacy), and public interest (journalistic doctrine of public interest greatly contested).
Level 3 Organisational	The players here include media managers, reporters, editors, and media owners.	√	- Resources - human and non-human – in which the work of journalists was affected by the lack of resources in reporting terrorism.
Level 4 Extra Media	Extra-media forces: information sources, revenue sources, social institutions, economic environment, technology, social-political interest groups, market competition, and public relations. Other factors include audiences, politicians, advertisers, media laws, government regulations, religious pressure, friends and family.	√	- Information sources - Revenue sources - Technology - Advertisers - Media laws - Government regulations
Level 5 Ideological	Ideology of the ruling class.	√	The journalists observed that the government controlled the narrative in terrorism reportage

Source: Shoemaker and Reese (2014)

5.3 Conclusion

Founded on the theories of structuration and hierarchy-of-influences, the current research explored the first-hand encounter of Kenya-based journalists covering terror-related news. First, the study investigated the lived experiences of journalists reporting on terror stories. Second, the study examined theoretical structures influencing their work in the news beat. Relatedly, it examined ways in which the theoretical structures influence the freedoms of journalists covering terrorism. Last, the study investigated the implications that the theoretical structures have on journalistic freedoms of those reporting on terror and related news.

Employing a phenomenological inquiry reliant on in-depth interviews from 28 journalists, findings showed that the lived experiences were characterised by three major themes - fear of surveillance on reporters, safety of journalists and patriotic or nationalistic reporting. Under the second context (research question 2), participants identified two factors influencing those covering terror-related topics - legal and policy, and the organisational structures related to resources. Two themes emerged from the ways in which the theoretical structures influenced the work of journalists - difficulty in accessing information and the violation of tenets of professional journalism, such as fairness, partiality, balance, objectivity, truth, accuracy, and ethics. Journalistic autonomy was the single-major implication of the structural influences on the work of those covering terror and related violent events – characterised by low journalistic independence on what to write about, self-censorship and biased reporting.

5.4: Limitations of the Study

While there is no doubt the present research provided useful information and insights regarding the experiences of journalists covering terror news in Kenya, as well as advancing our understanding of how unique news events like terrorism shape

journalistic freedoms, it suffers some limitations, which future studies could address. First, this is a qualitative study, which means its findings are not generalisable to the larger population of the Kenya-based journalists, who cover terror and related violent events (Duploy, 2012; Merriam, 1998; Wimmer & Dominick, 2010). As such, the findings should be interpreted contextually and cautiously, though they do provide a holistic understanding of the experiences of journalists covering terrorism, as well as theoretical structural influences, which impact on their work.

Because of this limitation, the doctrine of transferability was adhered to, which helps address the notion that the results cannot be generalised. Transferability refers to “the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts with other respondents” (Anney, 2014, p. 277), - whether the studies can be applied to a wider population. However, in place of generalisation, qualitative researchers are more concerned with “transferability” which Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that a researcher must ensure by providing adequate information regarding the context and participants for others who may want to conduct a similar study.

As such, enough details regarding terrorism and journalistic freedoms were provided. This was written clearly and concisely. At the same time, the researcher substantiated the objectives and questions as well as purposeful sampling strategies employed. Other strategies included the collecting and managing data systematically, analysing it correctly, triangulation of the sources (multiple perspectives) and reducing social desirability during interviews, by creating rapport with the participants. The researcher also shared with the participants (member-checking) interpretation of the data. This was in line with the protocols of guaranteeing that the interpretation was an accurate portrayal of the data.

In addition, in-depth interviews used to generate data corpus for the study have provided useful insights on the investigation, (and considering that it's the first research of this nature in Kenya), a similar future research could benefit from an ethnographic approach - hence presenting richer nuances. For example, considering that ethnography involves spending considerable time in the field, it means the researcher will gain a more holistic understanding of the experiences of journalists covering the terror topic. Relatedly, Wimmer and Dominic (2006) pointed out that ethnography emphasises studying an issue from the "participant's frame of reference" (p. 141). As such, to study terrorism coverage from the journalists' frame of reference, ethnography would be a suitable technique to employ in future. Also, considering that ethnography employs several data-gathering techniques, it means the study could tap into their strengths as well as compensating for their weaknesses. The current research could also have benefited from combining focus discussion groups (FDGs) with interviews – because group dynamics in FDGs could provide a clearer picture about the investigation.

5.5 Recommendations

5.5.1 Policy Recommendations

This study recommends that authorities should ensure a careful application of the balance between national security and the human rights of the journalists who are involved in the coverage of terrorism and related events. Concerns raised regarding the surveillance of personal and professional lives of the journalists should be addressed within acceptable conventional principles of balancing national security and privacy rights. The recommendations in this regard include having a lawful, fair and transparent method of intercepting personal and professional correspondence of the journalists, whose purpose should solely be to thwart threats to national security. There is the danger of misuse of the term "national security" and "public interest" when the

regulatory regime is not fair and transparent, offering security agencies a *carte blanche* in the handling of personal information. Other recommendations in this regard are that personal data of journalists acquired in the process of surveillance should adhere to the principle of data minimisation - meaning that only essential information about journalists should be collected accurately and should not be stored beyond the limit of the purpose for which it was collected.

5.5.2 Recommendations to Stakeholders

Media houses in Kenya should invest more resources – both human and non-human – to enable journalists reporting terrorism and related events carry out their job competently and in a safe manner. The interviewees pointed out that respective media houses did not provide adequate resources for their reporters when deploying them to cover terror-related events. The participants observed that their capacity to report terrorism and related events effectively was greatly hindered by the lack of human and non-human resources including skills to report, and the psychological preparedness before, during and after the coverage of the violent events. Kenya-born journalists, who were interviewed, relied on other institutions such as the government, KDF and NGOs to provide these resources. This is better explained by why the journalists were embedded with KDF troops in Somalia.

Intense focus should be given to the mental health of the journalists covering terrorism and related events. Specifically, local media houses should put in place comprehensive psychological briefing and debriefing protocols for journalists reporting within this specific beat. Training programmes on this as well as peer to peer sessions would be some practical approaches to this.

In terms of the structural conditions of reporting terrorism and related events, there is a need to ensure that legal and policy structures developed to enable the

government through its security organs to fight terrorism and related events, do not erode constitutional gains, such as freedoms to access and publish information of public interest. As observed in the findings chapter, for the journalists embedded with the military, KDF provided formal structures in form of guidelines that determined or set the extent to which journalists could operate both in Kenya and in Somalia. As the journalists observed, the guidelines contravened professional standards such as sticking to the doctrines of accuracy, fairness, and independence when reporting.

Journalism schools and other training institutions should work on the development of a curriculum on reporting terrorism, as a new specialisation. It should be evidence-based driven. The journalists interviewed noted that they lacked skills, knowledge and proper approaches to the coverage of terrorism and related events during the period under study, blaming a lack of training as one of those setbacks. In fact, at one point, managing editors simply downloaded from the Internet “how to guides” on reporting terrorism and related events and gave them to the journalists. This underscores an important gap in the training of reporting terrorism and related events for the Kenya-based journalists working in the local media houses. The situation was significantly different from that of the international journalists. This study therefore offers important evidence in key areas such as physical and psychological safety of journalists reporting terrorism and related events; the structural conditions governing how terrorism is reported and how this reportage limits or sets journalistic freedoms.

5.5.1 Reflection on the Future of Terrorism Reporting in Kenya

Based on the findings of this research, the future of reporting terrorism and related events in Kenya will remain a contested subject, though the coverage of this topic is expected to improve. This is despite the myriad of challenges documented in the present research – especially for the local media houses. There is evidence that

reporting terrorism, for instance, the January 2019 attack at the DusitD2 Complex in Nairobi, demonstrates a great improvement in preparation and handling of the occurrence by the local media, compared to previous years like the Westgate attack of September 2013.

At the same time, because terrorism is a communicative action meant to impact populations far and wide, journalism will continue to face ethical dilemmas as the profession is seen as a tool to advance the ends of either the authorities fighting terrorism, or the terror groups and their sympathisers. Journalistic freedoms will need to be discussed further theoretically, empirically and from an industrial perspective. The researcher reckons that the existence of journalistic freedoms, in its multiple dimensions as pluralism, independence and safety, strengthens peace as well as democratic and developmental processes. These social goods depend upon people being free to speak and to be freely informed about public affairs. Journalistic freedoms, as such, help to ensure participation, transparency and accountability in the society. This recognition explains the value to a society of having access to a free media, and of the importance of multiple information and communication choices enabled by pluralism. The perspective further highlights the significance of editorial independence from state or private owners, or other external influences, and journalistic accountability to professional ethics that shape the quality of information.

Similarly, from the findings, it appears that Kenya-born journalists will continue their coverage of terrorism as an act of patriotism, leading to outright bias in their approach. Journalistic latitudes will continue to be limited when accessing, processing and publishing news; and the practice of embedded journalism compromise critical reporting. Because this has implications on freedom of information and constrained journalistic autonomy, the study foresees that authorities will craft frameworks to

ensure a careful balance between national security and personal rights. At the same time, surveillance of journalists will continue, as sophisticated technologies are increasingly developed. Human rights groups will call for the need to address, within acceptable conventional principles, balancing national security and privacy rights. The danger of misusing the term “national security” will continue as security agencies are offered a *carte blanche* in fighting terrorism and related activities.

The key argument here will stem from the fact that media freedom is a cornerstone of Kenya’s democracy. In fact, the Kenyan Constitution has highlighted media freedom as a human right under its Bill of Rights in Chapter four (National Council for Law Reporting, 2010). The independence of the media has not only been enshrined within this supreme law, but other statutes such as the Media Council Act 2013. For journalists to live up to their ideals of independent reporting, it will be crucial to carry out continuous evaluation of the structural influences that affect their freedom.

5.6 Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the findings, there is a need for further research in the area (digital and physical) surveillance of journalists, and their communication as well as social network. Specifically, the researcher recommends the need to study how surveillance can be conducted, while delicately balancing the binary concepts of national security and the privacy of journalists. At the same time, some Muslim journalists observed that they felt targeted by security agencies fighting terrorism. As such, there is a need for further research on how religion influences journalistic freedoms in Kenya when reporting terrorism and related events. Future research could focus on Muslim journalisms – in relation to the coverage of terrorism. At the same time, future research, solely focusing on embedded journalism, is very viable. Because of the unique nature of terrorism and related news events, research should also be carried out on ways through which

journalists can report without becoming conduits of propaganda for either the government or terrorist groups.

5.7

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview guide

RQ1: What are the lived experiences of Kenyan-based journalists involved in the coverage of terrorism and related activities?

1. Tell me about the terrorism events that you have covered?
2. What did you feel when covering terrorism or events related to the violence? What did it make you think, or think of? Has this made you do things differently as a journalist?
3. Do you think back about the stories you have written and the people you have written about?
4. Can you think of a story that you wrote that best illustrates how well you handled the situation? Can you tell me about a story where you felt that this was not the case?
5. In your coverage of terrorism and terror-related activities, has your media house provided you with resources to enable you complete the assignment?
6. What resources does the government provide for you when covering terrorism and terror-related activities?
7. What is the source of your information when covering terrorism and terror-related activities?
8. If the government, or any other agency, provides resources for you to cover terrorism and terror-related activities, does this affect how you write the stories?
9. If an organisation other than your media outlets provides resources for you to cover terrorism and terror-related activities, does this affect how you write the stories?
10. Were you trained on how to cover/report terrorism? If so, what organisation facilitated this training? Is it your media house or government, or other agencies?

RQ2: What structures influence the work of Kenyan-based journalists who report terrorism and related news events?

1. What guides you when writing stories on terrorism and terror-related activities? Who gives the guidelines?
2. In your opinion, what are the unwritten rules that guide the work of a journalist when covering terrorism and terror-related activities?
3. Do you believe that journalists are in control of the narrative when reporting terrorism and terror-related activities? Why do you say so?
4. What forces influence how you report about terrorism and related topics?

RQ3: In what ways do these structures influence freedoms of the Kenya-based journalists reporting on terrorism and related news?

1. How do you write about terrorism? I.e. what is a guiding principle for you when you have to tell the stories of people affected by the tragedy of terrorism and or terror-related activities?
2. What makes a story a “story about terrorism and terror-related activities?”
3. What *don't* you do as a journalist when writing about terrorism and terror-related-events and the people affected by it?
4. Can you give an example/examples from current and past experiences?

RQ4: What implications do the structural influences have on the Kenya-based journalists' reporting of terrorism and related topics?

1. What implications do the structural influences you have mentioned have on your freedoms in reporting terrorism and related events?

Appendix B: Consent Form for Interviewees

Dear _____

I am delighted to invite you to participate in this Ph.D. research on the influence of reporting terrorism on media freedom among Kenyan journalists. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study. The study is being conducted by Benjamin Muindi at the School of Communication at Daystar University - for his Ph.D. dissertation. This study is not funded by any agency.

If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to participate in an in-depth interview that should take about 60 minutes. It is completely confidential. The purpose of this research is to understand the influence of terrorism in Kenyan journalism between 2011 and 2019. You will not receive payment for taking part in this study. Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part or may leave the study at any time. Leaving will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled. Your decision, whether or not to participate, will not affect your current or future relations with the investigator.

Efforts will be made to keep your personal information confidential. The information you provide will be used for academic purposes only and will not be made available to anyone except the researcher. Your identity will be held in confidence in reports in which the survey data may be published and databases in which results may be stored. For questions about the study, please contact Benjamin Muindi through e-mail benmuindi@gmail.com or through phone 0724232419. For questions about your rights as a research participant or to discuss problems, complaints or concerns about this study, or to obtain information, or offer input, contact Daystar University, Nairobi Campus, School of Communication.

Thank you very much for your time.

Signature:.....

Demographic survey of the participants

Name of participant:

.....

Age:

.....

Gender:

1. Male
2. Female
3. Other (Please specify) _____

Religion:

1. Christian
2. Muslim
3. Hindu
4. Buddhist

5. Other (Please specify) _____

What type of news media do you work for?

1. Daily newspaper
2. International news agency, e.g. AFP, AP, BBC, CNN, Reuters, etc.
3. Kenya News Agency (KNA)
4. Magazine
5. Radio station
6. Television station
7. Weekly newspaper
8. Online
9. Other (please specify) _____

What is the ownership of the media organisation you work for?

1. Private-owned
2. Owned by religious organisation
3. State- or government-owned
4. Other (please specify)

How many years have you worked in journalism?

1. Less than 1 year.
2. Between 1 and 5 years.
3. Between 5 and 10 years.
4. Between 10 and 20 years.
5. Over 20 years.
- 6.

What is your job title?

1. Bureau Chief.....
2. Correspondent.....
3. Editor.....
4. News anchor.....
5. Reporter.....
6. Sub-editor.....
7. Other (please specify)

In which of the following fields did you study?

1. Broadcast journalism
 2. Communications, mass communication or media studies
 3. Print journalism
 4. Other (please specify)
-

If you have any formal journalism/mass communication training, at what level is your training?

1. Certificate
2. Associate degree (Diploma)
3. Bachelor's degree
4. Master's
5. Ph.D.

Signature Date

Researcher..... Signature Date

Appendix C: Document Analysis Guide

This framework is adapted from Flick (2005) to guide in document analysis. Flick (2005, p. 178) details what he terms as “basic questions” when carrying out a document analysis. These basic questions will be used to draw out concepts that are related to research questions in the current study. These are:

1. What is the issue here? Which phenomenon is mentioned?
2. Who? Which persons/actors are involved? Which roles do they play? How do they interact?
3. How? Which aspects of the phenomenon are mentioned? (Or not mentioned?)
4. When? How long? Where? Time, course, place.
5. How much? How strong? Aspects of intensity.
6. Why? Which reasons are given or can be reconstructed?
7. What for? With what intention, to which purpose?
8. By which? Means, tactics, and strategies for reaching their goal.

Appendix E: Ethical Clearance

VERDICT – PASS

Daystar University Ethics Review Board

Our Ref: **DU-ERB/30/06/2020/000432**Date: 30th June 2020

To: Benjamin Muindi Mutie

Dear Benjamin,

RE: AN IN-DEPTH INVESTIGATION INTO THE INFLUENCE OF TERRORISM ON JOURNALISTIC FREEDOM IN KENYA

Reference is made to your ERB application reference no. 160620-01 dated 16th June 2020 in which you requested for ethical approval of your proposal by Daystar University Ethics Review Board.

We are pleased to inform you that Daystar University Ethics Review Board has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is **DU-ERB-000432**. The approval period for the research is between **30th June 2020 to 29th June 2021** after which the ethical approval lapses. Should you wish to continue with the research after the lapse you will be required to apply for an extension from DU-ERB at half the review charges.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements;

- i. Only approved documents including (informed consents, study instruments, MTA) will be used.
- ii. All changes including (amendments, deviations, and violations) are submitted for review and approval by Daystar University Ethics Review Board.
- iii. Death and life threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to Daystar University Ethics Review Board within 72 hours of notification.
- iv. Any changes anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affected safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to Daystar University Ethics Review Board within 72 hours.
- v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions.
- vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal.
- vii. Submission of a signed one page executive summary report and a closure report within 90 days upon completion of the study to Daystar University Ethics Review Board via email [duerb@daystar.ac.ke].

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) <https://oris.nacosti.go.ke> and other clearances needed.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs. Purity Kiambi,
Secretary, Daystar University Ethics Review Board

Encl. Review Report



Athi River Campus
P. O. Box 17 - 90145
Daystar University, Kenya
Tel: 045 6622601 (2) (3)
Fax: 045 6622420
Email: admissions@daystar.ac.ke

Nairobi Campus
P. O. Box 44400 - 00100,
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: 020 2723 002 (3) (4)
Fax: 020 2728338
Email: admissions@daystar.ac.ke

Mombasa Campus
Apollo House, Moi Avenue
P.O. Box 99483 - 80107,
Kilindini Mombasa
Tel: 020 2416916
Email: mombasa@daystar.ac.ke

www.daystar.ac.ke

"...until the day dawn and the daystar
arise in your hearts"
2 Peter 1.19 KJV

Appendix G: Researcher's Curriculum Vitae

BENJAMIN MUINDI

Ph.D. Researcher (Media Studies) & Faculty
 School of Communication,
 Department of Media & Film Studies,
 Daystar University, Nairobi
 ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8538-0222>
 Cellphone: +254 724 23 24 19
 Skype: @Kalasinga11
 Twitter: @MuindiMutie

EDUCATION

- Ph.D. in Media Studies (2016 - Present): Daystar University, Kenya.
 Advisors: Prof Kioko Ileri (Ph.D. Indiana University, Bloomington);
 Prof Levi Obonyo (Ph.D. Temple University).
- M.A. in International Journalism, 2014: University of Leeds, United Kingdom.
- M.A. in Communication Studies, 2012: University of Nairobi (incomplete thesis).
- B. Ed. in English and Literature, 2007: Kenyatta University, Kenya.

TEACHING POSITIONS/EXPERIENCE

- May 2017 – Present: Faculty & Ph.D. Researcher – School of Communication, Language and Performing Arts, Daystar University, Nairobi, Kenya.
- January 2019 – Present: Faculty – Department of Journalism and Corporate Communications, United States International University-Africa.
- January 2018 – November 2018: Faculty – Graduate School of Communication and Media Studies, Aga Khan University, Nairobi, Kenya.
- January 2017 – December 2017: Faculty – Department of Communication and Media Studies, Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AND CONSULTANCIES

01/06/2017 – 01/11/2017: HEAD OF MEDIA ANALYSIS

EUROPEAN UNION ELECTIONS OBSERVATION MISSION, NAIROBI

Headed the media-monitoring unit of the EU elections observation mission in Kenya during the 2017 general elections.

01/05/2007–01/12/2014 WRITER, EDITOR

NATION MEDIA GROUP, NAIROBI (KENYA)

1. Preparing daily straight news stories for the Daily Nation and other publications of the Nation Media Group as and when required.
2. Generating content for the group's other platforms as the websites, breaking news alerts and other journalistic pieces as well as practising investigative journalism - unearthing information not in the public domain and informing readers objectively.
3. Ferreting out information from research papers, reports et al., and developing well written, easy to read stories.
4. Hatching story ideas and projects for the platforms
5. Breaking news in Kenya and the region at large by use of the Nation Media Group digital platforms including the phone alerts, social media platforms as Twitter and Facebook and the newspaper websites.

My responsibilities as a beat leader in Education included assigning tasks to reporters and editing their work among others. I was in charge of planning and execution of daily stories for the Daily Nation as well as coordinating Education

coverage in the Bureaus dotted across the country.

I graduated from a one-year training programme on the business process of the company. Had the chance to go through all divisions of the Nation Media Group. Besides teaching on developing journalistic skills in newspaper, radio, TV and online platforms, the programme exposed me to other core-functions of a media house. Some of them include advertising and marketing - becoming a brand ambassador as well as practical management skills were inculcated during the training period. I worked as a trainee reporter for NTV, Easy FM and digital and online sections of the group.

01/01/2007-01/04/2007 TEACHER

BROOKHOUSE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, NAIROBI (KENYA)

Taught English Literature as a part of my student teacher internship.

CONSULTANCIES

GENESIS TECHNOLOGIES

POSITION: CONSULTANT NEWS EDITOR

April 2015 – June 2016

During this consultancy, my scope of work included:

- Ensuring timely processing of news material;
- Coordinating coverage of current affairs on a day-to-day basis;
- Assigning articles or content ideas as per the target audience of the website;
- Supervising writers and sub-editors to ensure copy meets the editorial standards of the media house;
- Verifying facts and accuracy of all news reports before they are published;
- Rewriting and editing copy to ensure it is readable and appeals to the target audience;
- Ensuring articles have catchy headlines and appropriate photos or illustrations;
- Identifying contributing writers from the region to contribute to the website;
- Mentoring and coaching contributors on editorial standards and internal house policies;
- Utilising news sources like press releases, radio, television and web reports to generate articles;
- Checking content for plagiarism and authenticity.

RINGIER AFRICA

CONSULTANT HEAD OF CONTENT (EAST AFRICA)

September 2016 – November 2016

During this consultancy, I was heading content generation for Ringier Africa Digital Publishing in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Ethiopia.

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

Benjamin Muindi & Caroline Kiarie. (2021). University Crises in Africa: A Situational Crisis Communication Study of Daystar University. *Communicatio*.

10.1080/02500167.2021.1976239. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02500167.2021.1976239>

Benjamin Muindi (2021). Assessing the impact of terrorism and counterterrorism laws on media freedom in Kenya. In Maweu, Jacinta & Mare, Admire. *Media, Conflict and Peace building in Africa*. Routledge. London. DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429344862>

Benjamin Muindi & Caroline Kiarie. (2020). Students' experiences and perceptions of online collaborative learning in Kenyan universities. *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in the South*, 4:2, 138 – 159. DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.36615/sotls.v4i2.130>

Benjamin Muindi (2018) Negotiating the Balance between Speed and Credibility in Deploying Twitter as Journalistic Tool at the Daily Nation Newspaper in Kenya, *African Journalism Studies*, 39:1, 111-128, DOI: [10.1080/23743670.2018.1445654](https://doi.org/10.1080/23743670.2018.1445654)

Benjamin Muindi, Hayes Mabweazara & Admire Mare (2019) Mobility, Agency and Appropriations: Mobile Phone News Consumption and Engagement in Africa. *Digital Journalism*

Benjamin Muindi & Sadichchcha Pokarel (2018) Agency and structure: assessing the impact of fake news laws and regulation on freedom of expression in Kenya. *African Journalism Studies*

SELECT EXPECTED

Benjamin Muindi, Rhonda Breit, Nancy Booker & Sadichchcha Pokarel (2018) Artificial Intelligence in Kenya. A case study of Kiki and the Daily Nation in Kenya. *Journalism Studies*.

Benjamin Muindi & John Ngirachu (2018) Paradigm Repair In Kenyan Journalism Practice: A Critical Appraisal Of How Mainstream Journalists Covered Two Colleagues Saddled In Two Murder Cases. *Journalism Studies*.

Benjamin Muindi. 2018. A critical appraisal of the impact of terrorism and counter-terrorism on media freedom in Kenya. *African Journalism Studies*

Benjamin Muindi. 2018. Deploying the Bible as a tool of political communication during the 2017 Kenyan elections. *African Affairs*, University of Oxford

UPCOMING BOOK CHAPTERS

Benjamin Muindi, Haron Mwangi & Njoki Chege. (2018). The Kenyan Media Models. In. Ed. Kioko Ileri. *A Handbook of Kenya Media Landscape. Origins, History, Developments, Current Status & Future*. Sage

Benjamin Muindi, Don Bosco Onyalla & William Ogonda. (2018). Media Ownership in Kenya. In Ed. Kioko Ileri. *A Handbook of Kenya Media Landscape. Origins, History, Developments, Current Status & Future*. Sage

Benjamin Muindi & Jimmy Ochieng. (2018). Media Governance in Kenya. In. Ed. Kioko Ileri. *A Handbook of Kenya Media Landscape. Origins, History, Developments, Current Status & Future*. Sage

Benjamin Muindi. (2018). Media Audiences in Kenya. In Ed. Kioko Ileri. *A Handbook of Kenya Media Landscape. Origins, History, Developments, Current Status & Future*. Sage

SELECT CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

International Association of Media and Communication Research (IAMCR 2018) Reporting Religion: A comparative analysis of Coverage of Christianity and Islam in Kenya's Media". University of Oregon, United States

East African Communications Assembly (EACA 2017) Social Media and Political Campaigns in Kenya: Testing Inter-Media Agenda Setting Between Twitter and The Daily Nation Newspaper in Kenya During the 2017 General Elections

New Research Agenda in the Role of the Media in Countering and Preventing Terrorism (September 2018) Forum organised by University of Sussex, British Council and the Centre for Human Rights and Policy Studies. Naivasha, Kenya

Mapping areas of collaboration among the media, civil society and the government to enhance social impact. Forum organised by the Kenya Human Rights Commission (September, 2018). Machakos, Kenya

SELECT NON PEER-REVIEWED RESEARCH PAPERS

News production, media ownership and the ethics of news business - supervised by Dr Chris Patterson (University of Leeds, 2014/2015)

The rise of the new media & the increase in places to read news: The risk of a diminishing original reporting on complex and less accessible stories due to rise in new media – supervised by Prof Judith Stamper (University of Leeds, 2014/2015)

How technological, economic and social change have ‘reconfigured the job of the journalist and production of news’ and the consequences for journalism practice and also for public trust in the news – supervised by Judith Stamper. (University of Leeds, 2014/2015)

Contemplating the future of journalism in Kenya – supervised by Prof Levi Obonyo (Daystar University). (2016/2017)

Hierarchy of influences on media content in Kenya – supervised by Prof Levi Obonyo (Daystar University) (2016/2017)

The dialectic of structure and action in organizational communication – supervised by Prof Murej MakOchieng (Daystar University) (2016/2017)

Theorizing approaches to leadership – supervised by Dr Fred Olwendo (Daystar University) (2016/2017)

SOCIAL MEDIA AND IMPACT

News and analysis of social issues published by the Daily Nation since 2007. See profile in Daily Nation website here:
<https://www.nation.co.ke/authors/1959272-1958042-mvgrxez/index.html>

Media Council of Kenya. Guest column profile
<http://mediaobserver.co.ke/index.php/2018/09/17/guest-column-should-media-owners-be-vetted/comment-page-1/>

LinkedIn Profile: @Benjamin Muindi <https://www.linkedin.com/in/benjamin-muindi-b848712b/>

Twitter Profile: @MuindiMutie
<https://twitter.com/MuindiMutie>

Facebook Profile: @Muindi Mutie
<https://www.facebook.com/Benjamin.Key.Muindi>

IMPACT AND SERVICE TO COMMUNITY OF RESEARCHERS DIRECTOR and CO-FOUNDER

Institute for Research on Africa Media and Policy
Web portal: africamerp.com & NuancedAfrica.com

About

We are an institute that showcases the status of African scholarship in media research and policy with the aim of spurring the intellectual capacity of Africa.

We provide the first-ever global repository of theses and dissertations of Africans and research on Africa in this field. In this way, the Institute plays a pivotal role in democratizing knowledge, making it accessible for all and building a sense of community among scholars on Africa.

What do we do?

1. We evaluate, analyse and chronicle the state of media research and policy in Africa
2. We collect and archive post-graduate research works by the African intelligentsia and researchers on Africa in the field
3. We generate content for academic and research publications
4. We give universities a platform to showcase their academic pursuits, inquiries and breakthroughs and make them more accessible through the mass media

RESEARCH ARTICLES REVIEWER

2018: African Journalism Studies

GRADUATE COURSES TAUGHT AT USIU-AFRICA

MAC6030: Introduction to Digital Communications

UNDERGRADUATE COURSE TAUGHT AT USIU-AFRICA

JRN3024: Communication Research Methods

JRN4025: Creative Writing

GRADUATE COURSES INVOLVED IN AT AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

GSMC 7001: Past, Present & Future: The Changing World of Journalism

GSMC 7003: Media Law & Ethics

GSMC 7005: Advanced Digital Journalism I & II

GSMC 7007: Media Development & Social Impact

COURSE TAUGHT AT DAYSTAR UNIVERSITY

Graduate courses:

COM 608A: Special Topics in Media Studies (New Media)

Masters students research supervisor and examiner.

Undergraduate courses:

COM419X: Media Law & Ethics

COURSES TAUGHT AT KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

CCM208: Fundamentals of Online and Interactive Media Production

CCM106: Introduction to Communication and Information Technologies

TEACHING INTERESTS

UNDERGRADUATE

1. Digital Communication (Theory & Practice)
2. Communication Research
3. Introduction to Mass Communication
4. Reporting, Writing and Editing
5. Mass Communication Theories
6. Media and Globalization
7. Media and Public Opinion

8. Media in Africa
9. International Communication
10. Media Law & Ethics

GRADUATE

1. 1. Digital Communication (Theory & Practice)
2. Introduction To Graduate Studies
3. Communication Research Methods
4. Communication Theories
5. Media Effects
6. Communication and Politics
7. Public Opinion
8. Comparative Global Journalism
9. Media and Globalization
10. Media Law & Ethics

REFEREES

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Appendix H: Plagiarism Report

Benjamin Muindi dissertation - 22nd October 2021			
ORIGINALITY REPORT			
15%	10%	4%	10%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS
PRIMARY SOURCES			
1	Submitted to Daystar University Student Paper		3%
2	Submitted to Aga Khan University Student Paper		1%
3	Submitted to University of Leeds Student Paper		1%
4	unesdoc.unesco.org Internet Source		<1%
5	www.tandfonline.com Internet Source		<1%
6	hdl.handle.net Internet Source		<1%
7	cis-india.org Internet Source		<1%
8	www.awcfs.org Internet Source		<1%
9	mediacouncil.or.ke Internet Source		<1%